Narrow gap between urban and rural health care services: President

President U Thein Sein meets Union ministers, Chief minister, deputy minister, patrons, chairperson and members of Public Health Foundation.—MNA

"The President called on the foundation to assist in bridging the gap of health standard between urban and rural regions as much as possible"

Thane, U Tin Naing Thein and foundation patron Dr Ko Ko Gyi gave account of the foundation.

In his guidance, the President called on the foundation to turn itself into a reliable organization in promoting the health standard of the country with devotions of its citizens. He also asked the foundation to cooperate with GPs abroad and social organizations, calling for systematic expenditure of the fund. He also promised government assistance, urging the foundation to assist in promoting the health standard of people through establishment of worldwide links with local and foreign organizations.

Public Health Foundation was founded as a social organization on 21 December, 2012 and its mission is said to be to work toward ensuring equal public access to health care service nationwide.—MNA

President U Thein Sein felicitates Italian President, PM

Nay Pyi Taw, 2 June—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to Dr Giorgio Napolitano, President of the Republic of Italy and Mr Enrico Letta, Prime Minister of the Republic of Italy, on the occasion of the Proclamation Day of the Republic of Italy, which falls on 2 June 2013.—MNA

President U Thein Sein, President of the State, on Sunday, 2 June, 2013, felicitates Italian President, Prime Minister and the delegation of the Republic of Italy

In his guidance, the President called on the foundation to assist in bridging the gap of health standard between urban and rural regions as much as possible.
Third Myanmar Job Fair kicks off

YANGON, 1 June — As New Bogyoke Market will be upgraded by Yangon City Development Committee in cooperation with Shwedagon Company, a temporary market is being built at the corner of Shwedagon-Pagoda Road and Anawrahta Road for the convenience of shopkeepers.

So far construction of the temporary market has been completed by 90 per cent.

“The new Bogyoke market was put into service on 17 December 1980. Now, there are 436 shops in the new Bogyoke market including twenty shops which were opened three years later,” says the chairman of the market development committee. As the wooden market has become old and it is required to build a new

Motorbike accident kills one, hurts other one in Myinmu

Mandanay, 1 June — A fire broke out in a house in Mite Ekin ward in Aung-myethazan Township in Mandalay at about 9 am yesterday.

The fire is believed to have started from an overheated iron which was left unattended in a state of being plugged into the socket at the house of Daw Yee Htet who left home for Thabeikkyin at about 8.50 am as her husband telephoned her to go there. The fire swept through the whole house and spread to two huts in the same compound and two nearby houses, leaving four house-holds homeless.

Fire crews accompanied by 20 fire trucks of Mandalay Region Fire Services Department managed to bring the fire under control in cooperation with auxiliary fire bridge members and local people. No one was hurt in the fire.

Kyemon-Ko Ko
Ning-Myinmu

Overturned bus kills one passenger in Kawthoung District

KAWTHOUNG, 1 June — A passenger bus en route to Myeik from Bokpyin had caught into an overturned car accident at mile post No (102/2-3) near Nan-taung Village in Pyigyi Mandine sub-township in Kawthoung District of Taninthayi Region at about 8.30 am on 23 May.

The bus carrying 51 passengers—23 men, 24 women and four children—of Myeik Tagun bus line overturned on the road between Bokpyin and Myeik. The rollover passenger bus accident left one young man killed and six men and eight women injured. The victim was identified as Maung Phyoe Soe, 18.

Local authorities and a rescue team rushed to the place of accident and transported the injured to Pyigyi Mandine hospital.

Kyemon-Kyaw Soe
Kawthoung

MPF launches emergency, complaint-handling phone lines

NAY PYI TAW, 1 June—Myanmar Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs has put hotline lines into place at Myanmar Police Force HQ and region/state police stations to enable the public to submit tip-offs and complaints over illegal acts, misappropriation and corruption.

The public may reach the numbers for their information and complaints but are requested to avoid manners causing disruptions to these phone lines.

Myanmar Police Force HQ, Nay Pyi Taw Police Force, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhae and Shan State Police Forces, Sagaing, Taninthayi, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Region Police Forces, Offices of Commanders of East, West, South and North District Police Forces in Yangon Region. No (1) Police Station in Taunggyi, Office of Dep.

ACCIDENT

Drowsy driver causes car accident on expressway

TOUNGOO, 1 June — A road accident happened to a bus carrying 21 passengers heading from Taunggyi to Yangon from Mandalay Expressway near Kyauktakiya Township of Bago Region on 27 May.

The passenger bus driven by Kyaw Naing Linn, 32, skidded out of control and ended up hitting 13 crash barriers and nine cat eyes

Kyemon-Soe Win-MLA

New Light of Myanmar

Construction of temporary market for New Bogyoke market nearing completion

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MNA

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MYINMU, 1 June — A motorcyclist with dangerous driving killed one person and injured another one in Myinmu Township.

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Kyemon-Soe Win-MLA
UN experts see no increased cancer risk among Fukushima residents

In the 1986 nuclear accident in Chernobyl, many children consumed milk with a high iodine concentration, leading to high thyroid doses and an increase in thyroid cancer. The panel said the quick evacuation of the local population after the accident has reduced the radiation dose to people by a factor of 10. Radiation doses were also reduced because taking in food contaminated with radioactive substances was prevented. The results presented in the report differ from those in a previous report published by the World Health Organization in February, which warned of higher cancer risks for residents and nuclear power plant workers around Fukushima than the average for the country’s entire population. On this, UNSCEAR said the WHO only had access to data from the first three months after the accident and then calculated the estimates by using models and plausible parameters, while UNSCEAR made use of precise dose distributions from an additional year of time, which helped present updated results.

Kyodo News

US may introduce F-35 stealth jets in Dec 2015 at earliest

WASHINGTON, 1 June—The US Defence Department said on Friday it is trying to introduce the F-35 stealth fighters in the military in December 2015, after keeping the country and others concerned such as Japan long guessing about the schedule due to a delay in development. The Marine Corps plans to introduce a model of the F-35 equipped with technology that can evade radar detection in December 2015 and the Air Force plans to do likewise a year later, a department official said. The US military notified Congress on Friday of the schedule. Lt Gen Chris Bogdan, who serves as F-35 programme, executive officer in the department, said that the aircraft design and technological capabilities of the F-35 are “sound” and the department “will deliver on our commitments to meet service timelines.”

Japan’s Air Self-Defence Force plans to get a total of 42 F-35s in its next-generation main fighter jet and introduce four in fiscal year 2016. Israel also plans to use the fighters. The US military stopped short of deciding when to deploy the aircraft due mainly to a delay in software development. The F-35 aircraft has been developed jointly by the United States, Britain, Australia and six other countries.

Lockheed Martin Corp as a key designer developed three types of the aircraft each for the Navy, the Air Force and the Marine Corps and the US military plans to have about 2,400 units of the aircraft.—Kyodo News

Most Americans oppose US military involvement in Syria

WASHINGTON, 1 June—A majority of Americans believe the United States should not use military action to attempt to end the civil war in Syria even if all economic and diplomatic efforts fail, finds a poll released on Friday.

Sixty-eight percent of Americans voiced opposition to US military involvement in Syria, compared to 24 percent who favor such action to try to end the prolonged civil war in Syria, according to the Gallup poll conducted on 28-29 May.

At the same time, 58 percent of Americans say they are not optimistic that the conflict in Syria will be solved through economic and diplomatic means, while 27 percent agree that such efforts will succeed, it shows. Americans also pay less attention to the Syrian civil war, as the poll finds that less than half (49 percent) of respondents say they are following news about the conflict “very” or “somewhat” closely. This is below the historical average of 60 percent for more than 200 news events that Gallup has measured since 1992.

“Thus, Americans seem to have a clear preference for keeping the US military out of the Syrian conflict, given their opposition to such involvement even though they expect that diplomatic efforts will fail to bring peace,” Gallup said.

US Senator John McCain, who visited Syria recently, has said he favours providing arms to the anti-government forces there. But so far the US government remains wary of arming Syrian rebels, even after the European Union (EU) on Monday lifted its arms embargo on Syrian rebel forces.

Xinhua
Large asteroid, with small moon in tow, to fly by Earth

CAPE CANAVERAL, 1 June—A large asteroid accompanied by its own small moon was approaching Earth on Friday, the latest in a string of celestial visitors drawing attention to the potential dangers of objects in space.

Asteroid 1998 QE2—a body not named for the Earth on Friday, the latest moon was approaching June—A large asteroid across—is about 1.7 miles in diameter, about 20,000 miles from Earth, which is roughly 15 times farther away than Earth’s moon.

For an asteroid of this size, it’s a close shave,” said Paul Chodas, a scientist with NASA’s Earth Object programme office at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

NASA is tracking 95 percent of the large asteroids with orbits that come relatively close to Earth. The US space agency, as well as Russia, Europe and others, plans to beef up asteroid detection efforts to find smaller objects that could still do considerable damage if they hit a populated area.

Scientists used radar to get a preview of the asteroid on Wednesday and discovered it had a small moon in tow. —New York Times

LinkedIn boosts security, offering similar technology as Twitter

NEW YORK, 1 June—LinkedIn Corp unveiled technology to improve the security of the social networking site for professionals, about a week after Twitter introduced similar tools following a surge in high-profile attacks on its users. The optional service, known as two-factor authentication, is designed to verify the identity of users as they log in by requiring them to enter numeric codes sent via text message.

LinkedIn told Reuters the service on Friday, about a week after a publicly disclosed breach that exposed passwords of millions of its users. Some security experts criticized LinkedIn at the time, saying the firm had failed to use best practices to secure its passwords. The site provided instructions to its 225 million users on how to turn on the optional service at http://linked.in/1a4Fv3D

Yelp open to partnering with Facebook’s rival offering

NEW YORK, 1 June—Consumer review aggrega-
tor Yelp Inc, which analysts say could face intense competition from Facebook Inc’s “graph search”, is open to partnering with the social networking website’s latest offering, Yelp’s Chief Financial Officer Rob Kro-
ik told Reuters.

Facebook, in January, unveiled its graph search feature, available in a beta version, letting users trawl their network of friends to find everything from restaurants to movie recommendations, bringing it into direct competition with Yelp.

Analysts have viewed this as a big negative for Yelp as companies such as Facebook have a lot of opportunity to imitate smaller companies, and over a larger audience.

“We are actually happy to partner with Facebook (for graph search) if that’s something that they’re interested in,” Krolik said.

Facebook declined to comment on any possible partnership.

Yelp’s mobile app makes it easier for people to discover local businesses. It combines Yelp’s reviews and other relevant information with knowledge of the consumer’s location. It also allows consumers to “check-in” at local businesses.

Google Inc, through its Google Plus Local product, also recommends businesses to its users based on circles, past reviews, location and allows them to publish reviews and photos of favorite places.

“Facebook and Google and some other players really are attacking the local space via technology,” Krolik said.

Krolik said Yelp, which is integrated into Apple Inc’s Maps product and their Siri product, would definitely monitor Facebook’s graph search and see what it’s all about.

“I just don’t think people go to Facebook to find a great local business. I think they connect with their friends, see a lot of photos,” Macquarie Research analyst Tom White said it was not particularly likely that the partnership would happen, because Facebook thinks they have enough data to do it themselves.

He, however said, if it was to happen, it would benefit Yelp, and would cut down competition from Facebook.

“It would mean broader distribution for their reviews, and more people reading their reviews,” White said.

“It’s not directly a revenue generator, but in theory it would increase the value of advertising on Yelp, just because you’re getting it out to more people.”

The success of graph search, which will rely heavily on local information, depends on Facebook launching a mobile app. In addition, graph search lacks the depth of review content offered by Yelp.

If Yelp were to partner with Facebook for graph search, the consumer review aggregator would be in a better position to compete with Google. Jeffries analyst Brian Fitzgerald told Reuters.

“We already have a tie-up with Facebook Connect, which allows users to login with their Facebook credentials without having to create separate accounts for different websites.

A Yelp user can see if a Facebook friend has reviewed a business. (r.reuters.com/lfp8R)

Jeffries’ Fitzgerald said Yelp could also make a good acquisition target for Apple, Google or Facebook.

“One of those guys could acquire Yelp and they would be able to use it pret- ty productively,” he said.

Yelp was founded by former PayPal engineers Jeremy Stoppelman and Russell Simmons as a start-up idea in a business incubator in 2004. It has never been profitable since its inception.

Analysts expect the company to post its first profit of 1 cent per share for the first quarter of 2014, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

Self-sustaining building strives to be Canada’s greenest home

TORONTO, 1 June—Imagine living in a home that not only generates its own electricity, but also filters rainwater and turns human waste into fertilizer. This self-sustaining building is now a reality in the Canadian city of Peter-
borough, some 150 km east of Toronto. The newly built house that’s now up for sale in Peterborough, Canada, is as green as it gets, said Chris Magwood, project manager and executive director at the Endeavor Center, a local non-profit sustainable building school.

Painted with a nature-themed palette inside and out, the spacious, open-style layout is not only aesthetically pleasing, but offers up a myriad of innovative and eco-friendly options. Nam-
ing their project Canada’s ‘Greenest Home, Magwood told Xinhua in a recent interview that they wanted to put the envelope and create something that’s never been done before.

“We really wanted to try building a house that had a lot of green components to it, but that met a sort of modern, more conventional appearance, and fit into the regular construction market more than some of the alternative houses that we’ve been done in the past,” he said.

The 2,300 square-foot three-bedroom home, complete with a wheelchair accessible main floor and 23 windows - at least two in each room - was built completely from scratch over an eight-week period of 800,000 Canadian dollars as is green as it gets, said Chris Magwood, project manager and executive director at the Endeavor Center, a local non-profit sustainable building school.

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The 2,300 square-foot three-bedroom home, complete with a wheelchair accessible main floor and 23 windows - at least two in each room - was built completely from scratch over an eight-week period of 800,000 Canadian dollars. Every detail was taken into careful consideration. Magwood stressed.

“We really tried to cover all the bases with this one. I myself have been doing green construction for almost 20 years, and this is sort of the culmination of all that experience,” he added. “This is the one building where we’ve been able to put everything together to try to make it the best it can be.”

One of the biggest differences between their project and other green homes that already exist is that it is a full-size house that has the aspect of green building, according to Magwood. Instead, it strived to have it all.

The builders integrated a number of mechanical systems into the home to help create a living space that was energy-efficient, had optimal indoor air quality, generated renewable energy and produced minimal waste. Having those features combined all into one building, especially a home, is a rare sight, said Magwood.

One of the big features is the human waste composting system set up in the basement. With the composting toilets using only one tenth of a liter of water per flush, the system not only minimizes water usage, but the easy-to-use and odor-free composter also completely eliminates sewage output by sending all clean compost to the front of the building to create fertilizer.

Beside the composting toilets, the house also collects rainwater and treats waste water, so that it doesn’t need to rely on city water.

Overall, the house will cost buyers 60,000 to 80,000 dollars more than an average home of that size in the area just because of all the mechanical systems they’ve built into the home. But Magwood stressed that most of initial cost will be offset by the money saved in the long run. —Xinhua

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**The first radar images of asteroid 1998 QE2 were obtained when the asteroid was about 3.75 million miles (6 million kilometers) from Earth, as pictured in this image courtesy of NASA.** —Reuters

The logo for LinkedIn Corporation, a social networking website for people in professional occupations, is pictured in Mountain View, California on 6 Feb, 2013. —Reuters

An exhibitor displays Weenie Bear printed by a 3D printer at China Beijing International Fair for Trade in Services (Beijing Fair) in Beijing, capital of China, on 29 May, 2013. —Xinhua
SAC redemptions grow, as Magnitude Capital joins in

NEW YORK, 1 June—Investor redemptions from Steven A. Cohen’s SAC Capital Advisors continue to mount, with Magnitude Capital emerging as the latest outside investor asking to get money back from the $15 billion hedge fund.

Magnitude Capital, a fund of hedge funds that manages $3.1 billion of client money, began redeeming funds in the first quarter of this year and intends to submit another withdrawal notice for the second quarter, according to a person with knowledge of the investment.

Cohen’s firm also recently received withdrawal requests from two large institutional investors, Blackstone Group LP and Ironwood Capital, as an insider trading probe focusing on Cohen’s firm moves forward.

SAC Capital’s second-quarter redemption deadline is Monday 3 June.

Magnitude’s investors will have their money back from Cohen’s hedge fund by the end of the year, according to that person and another person familiar with the investment.

Several calls to partners at Magnitude Capital were not returned. A spokesman for SAC Capital declined to comment.

It was not immediately clear why Magnitude had decided to take back its money. The amount of money the fund has with SAC Capital also is not known.

Blackstone, which is the largest outside investor in Cohen’s fund, has decided to redeem a significant portion of its roughly $550 million stake in SAC Capital, according to a letter from pension consulting firm Russell Investments, which Reuters earlier reported on.

The letter said Blackstone decided to submit a redemption notice to SAC Capital after reviewing the terms of a $616 million agreement SAC Capital reached in March with the US Securities and Exchange Commission to settle allegations that the hedge fund’s employees had engaged in insider trading in four stocks.—Reuters

DirecTV, two others bid over $1 billion for Hulu

LOS ANGELES, 1 June—Satellite operator DirecTV and two other bidders have offered more than $1 billion apiece to buy Hulu, a source with knowledge of the bidding process said on Friday, increasing the like- lihood that owners News Corp and Walt Disney Co will be able to shed the video streaming service they failed to sell in 2011.

Hulu board members, who are being advised by Guggenheim Partners on the auction, fielded at least seven buyout offers last week, the source said.

That number will be whittled down in the next two or three weeks, the source told Reuters on condition of anonymity because the process was private.

It was unclear which two other bidders offered $1 billion for Hulu. The service has more than 4 million subscribers and generates revenue of about $700 million through sub- scriptions and a free ad- assisted service.

The proposed price tag heighens the likelihood that News Corp and Disney will find an acceptable offer price, which was the stick- ing point of the 2011 round of buyout negotiations.

DirecTV spokesman Darris Gringeri declined to comment, as did Meredith Kendall, a spokeswoman for Hulu. Bloomberg first reported the news on Fri- day.

Sources have said the other bidders are Yahoo, former News Corp presi- dent Peter Chernin, private equity firm KKR, cable opera- tor Time Warner Cable, and Blackstone. Disney is also interested but is just one of several teams vying to buy Hulu.—Reuters

China’s May manufacturing PMI rises to 50.8

In Beijing, 1 June—China’s Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) for the manufacturing sector rose to 50.8 percent in May from 50.6 percent in April, data from the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing (CFLP) showed on Saturday.

May marked the eighth consecutive month that the PMI figure stayed above 50 percent, which demarcates expansion from contraction, according to a statement of the CFLP.

A modest rise in the May PMI and steady sub- indices suggest the re- covering trend in China’s economy becomes more obvious, said Zhang Liqun, an analyst from the Develop- ment Research Centre of the State Council.

According to the CFLP, the sub-index for production moved up from 52.6 percent in April to 53.3 percent, a major driver of the May PMI and repre- senting expanding output.

Orders received by manufacturers picked up in May, as the sub-index for new orders edged up 0.1 percentage points from the previous month to 51.8 percent.

After tumbling 10.5 percentage points to below-50 percent level in April, the sub-index for purchas- ing prices of raw materials rebounded 5 percentage points to 45.1 percent in May, indicating improved market expectation, accord- ing to Zhang.

The sub-index for raw materials inventories was slightly up 0.1 percentage points from the previous month to 47.6 percent in May, but still marking a fourth consecutive month of shrinking stocks.

The CFLP data also showed that the employ- ment index, by the guide- line, declined 0.2 percentage points to 48.8 percent, indicat- ing job cuts, while the sub-index for supplier deli- very times was unchanged at 50.8 percent.

The official PMI, based on a survey of purchas- ing managers from 3,000 companies in 21 industries, diverged from the HSBC’s flash PMI reading issued last week.—Xinhua

BDSM practitioners aren’t mentally ill

NEW YORK, 1 June—Some good news for people who enjoy restraints, riding crops and floggers in the bedroom: A new study says you probably don’t have a mental disorder.

The results “seem con- tradictory to what the gen- eral public and profession- als believe,” said Andreas Wisniewer of Tul- bury University in the Netherlands, who published the study along with Marcel van As- sen.

Previous studies had suggested that BDSM activi- ties were linked to mental disorders and vulnerability to abuse, according to the researchers, who published their results in The Journal of Sexual Medicine.

But in the new study, researchers found people who like BDSM, which stands for bondage-discipline, dominance-submis- sion and sadism-masoch- ism, were well adjusted and reported slightly better wellbeing than people who don’t take part in those activities.

“We do have a lot of academic literature that’s finding these positive things and not finding harmful characteristics,” said Dr Beverly Stiles, who has studied BDSMers but was not involved with the new research.

“The people that iden- tify as being part of the (BDSM) subculture, this is who they see themselves as in their core,” said Stiles, chair of sociology at Mid- western State University in Wichita Falls, Texas.

“The study has been a number of studies in Fin- land and other places that basically concluded there was no more or less psychopathology (or mental ill- nesses) among those who practice BDSM compared to control groups,” said Dr Richard Knueger, who researches sexual be- havior but wasn’t involved in the new study.

“They were fairly well adjusted or better function- ing,” said Knueger, an as- sociate clinical professor of psychiatry at the Columbia University College of Physi- cians & Surgeons.—Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

A nurse takes care of newborn babies at a hospital in Heifei, Anhui Province on 21 April, 2011.—Reuters

Jason Kilar, CEO of Hulu, participates in the Holly- wood Radio and Television Society presentation of “The Digital Chiefs: A Special Conversation on the Future of new Media in the Digital Age” panel discussion in Los Angeles on 8 Sept, 2009.—Reuters

Not all very short kids need screening tests: study

NEW YORK, 1 June—Kids who are short for their age but otherwise healthy probably don’t need exten- sive blood tests to deter- mine if a disease is stunting their growth, researchers said in a new study.

Of 235 short kids with- out symptoms who were re- ferred for specialty testing, just three had a possible diagno- sis picked up on those labs, and only one diagno- sis — for celiac disease - was confirmed, researchers found.

“Most of the screening tests are for diseases you re- ally wouldn’t want to miss, but it’s rare that any of those diseases (would only) present with short stature,” said Dr Stephanie Sts- ley, who led the study.

Guidelines on short stature from endocrinol- ogy groups recommend lab screening for very short children, including those who don’t have any prob- lems picked up on a physi- cal exam. That screening includes blood tests for thy- roid and growth hormones as well as calcium and other nutrients.

But one of the authors of those guidelines agreed that based on the new find- ings, kids who are short but have no other symptoms probably don’t need exten- sive screening.

Stley and her col- leagues reviewed the medi- cal charts of 1,373 short children who were referred to the endocrinology clinic at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Centre between 2008 and 2011. Of them, 235 were below the third percentile for height and had a normal check- up and no record of having stopped growing.

A 10-year-old girl who is four feet, one inch tall would fall just below the third percentile, for exam- ple, as would a six-year-old boy who is three feet, five inches.

Few of those children underwent all tests recom- mended by the guidelines. In the average kid had about two-thirds of them. One was diagnosed with celiac disease — when the body can’t process certain grains — and two others had signs of underlying conditions but didn’t finish follow-up tests. There were 10 false- positive lab results that didn’t pan out on further testing.—Reuters
EU member states to allow Japanese beef imports from June

TOKYO, June—The European Union member states can start importing Japanese beef from June, with the lifting of a ban due to the Fukushima nuclear accident and mad cow disease, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Japan’s agriculture ministry said Friday.

The European Union will only allow Japanese beef that has been processed at slaughterhouses which conform to food security standards.

Concerned with effects of the 2011 nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant in northeastern Japan, the European Union said beef from 10 prefectures including Fukushima can be exported only if they come with a certificate of inspection that assures consumers that the food is free from radioactive substances.

The rest of Japan’s prefectures are urged to provide certificates showing products’ place of origin.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries said the European Union in March included Japan in the list of countries that can export beef to the region, but details about restrictions regarding specific radioactive substances have not been set.

Kobe beef and other high-grade beef brands are expected to draw brisk demand among EU member nations amid the growing popularity of Japanese food.—Kyodo News

Tornadoes hit near Oklahoma City, five dead

OKLAHOMA CITY, June—Violent thunderstorms spawned tornadoes that menaced Oklahoma City and its already hard-hit suburb of Moore on Friday, killing a mother and her baby, and officials warned that drivers stuck on freeways could be trapped in the path of dangerous twisters.

The mother and her baby were killed while travelling on Interstate 40, just west of Oklahoma City, when their vehicle was picked up by the storm, said Betsy Randolph, spokeswoman for the Oklahoma Highway Patrol.

“We are in a dire situation,” Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin told CNN that motorists stuck on any freeway in the path of a twister should try to go in the opposite direction to where the twister was coming from.

“We saw from the tornadoes that came through Moore and the other ones last week was that people who were in cars on the Interstate were killed,” Fallin told CNN.

A semi-trailer truck is turned over as it is blown off Interstate 40 during a tornado in El Reno, Okla., June 1, 2013. — Reuters

Indian chains worry phone, tablet makers give top terms to e-tailers

MUMBAI, June—Brick and mortar electronics retail chains in India say heavy discounting by online retailers is hurting them and they have asked manufacturers to take measures to stop such deals, the Economic Times reported on Friday. The chains such as Future Group’s eZone and Reliance Digital have asked brands including Samsung, Nokia, Apple and Blackberry to impose strict pricing policies on popular Indian e-tailing websites such as Flipkart, Infibeam and Snapdeal.

“Indiscriminate discounting by online stores affects our sales to quite an extent,” said Rajan Mahotra, president of India’s largest listed retailer Future Group, which runs 38 eZone stores.

“If we get pushed due to such discounting, we definitely have to push back with the brands,” he said while confirming his firm has taken up the issue with the manufacturers.

The Apple iPhone 5 16GB, for example, is available online for Rs 49,950 ($725) while at retail chains and Apple’s own stores it is sold for Rs 45,500. Brian Bade, chief executive at Reliance Retail’s electronics retailer Reliance Digital, said the brands need to take a tough stand against online deals that hurt the regular retail business.

A policeman patrols the Rocinha slum during an operation against drug dealers in Rio de Janeiro in this 14 Nov 2011 file photo. According to local media, a German tourist was shot on 31 May.

German tourist shot and seriously wounded in Rio slum

BRASILIA, June—A German tourist was shot and seriously wounded in the stomach on Friday in one of Brazil’s largest slums, where drug traffickers still control areas despite a crackdown in 2011.

Frank Daniel Benjamin, 25, was shot in an alley of the Rocinha slum in Rio de Janeiro’s south side, a police source told Reuters.

A local resident picked him off the ground and carried him to a police unit from where he was rushed to hospital with a serious wound to the liver.

The shooting added to a recent wave of violence that has hit visitors in Rio, including the brutal kidnapping and rape of an American tourist that shocked the tourist trade.

The violence just weeks before Rio hosts football games in a warm-up for the 2014 World Cup has raised alarm over the city’s ability to control crime and ensure the safety of visitors in a city that will also hold the Olympic games in 2016.

In July, hundreds of thousands of Catholics are expected to descend on Rio to see Pope Francis on his first trip abroad as pontiff.

The recent violence has raised questions about the effectiveness of efforts to “pacify” Rio’s large slums by sending in troops and police to dismantle drug-trafficking rings.

The Rocinha slum, part of a shanty town perched on steep hillsides, was “pacified” in November 2011 and now attracts visits by foreign tourists on guided tours, a police source told Reuters.

A friend who was with the wounded man told police they were surprised in an alley by an armed man who shot at them when they ran off.

Vehicles slowly pass by a semi tractor-trailer, which was blown off the highway by a tornado, in the Eastbound lane of Interstate-40 just east of El Reno, Oklahoma on 31 May 2013. —Reuters

US vice president pledges to deepen ties with Brazil

BRASILIA, June—US Vice President Joe Biden promised on Friday during his official visit to Brazil to deepen bilateral relations.

“I leave Brazil with much optimism on the fact that relations can reach another level. We are the first economy in the world, you are the seventh. I hope we can work a lot together,” he told a Press conference after his meeting with Brazilian President Dilma Roussef on the last day of his three-day visit.

“We’re ready for a deeper, broader relationship across the board on everything from the military to education, trade and investment,” Biden said.

Biden said he expressed to Rousseff the will of his country to strengthen relations in all areas.

“I do not think there is any obstacle we cannot overcome,” he said, adding that “we have of strengthening relations, which were never distant, is stressed by these visits and meetings,”

Biden said one of the goals of his visit was to officially invite the Brazilian president to visit Washington next October.

He promised that the US government would work to issue tourist visas to Brazilians in a faster manner, saying he had talked to the Brazilian authorities to significantly reduce the waiting time for a visa from 12 weeks to two or three days. “To do that, we are doubling the number of consulate vessels,”

Biden also praised Brazil for achieving the magic of successfully conciliating economic growth with democracy and social advances.

At the Press conference, Biden was accompanied by his Brazilian counterpart Michel Temer, who said Brazil’s foreign policy is never to distance itself from the United States, despite the fact that it has favoured the South-South relations.

Biden arrived in Brasil from Rio de Janeiro after visiting Colombia, and Trinidad and Tobago. This was Biden’s fourth visit to Latin America.—Xinhua
Abandoned ammunitions found in Monywa

MONYWA, 1 June—Grenades and bullets were found in black plastic bag by Bogoke street in Kyegyi ward in Monywa of Sagaing Region on 30 May morning.

The local battalion seized two grenades and 17 bullets and the police of No (1) Police Station in Monywa the mobile phone in the bag for further investigation.

The Nokia brand mobile has a SIM card inside with no battery. —Myanma Alinn

Illegal teak boards seized in Mansi

MANSI, 1 June—Forest officers of Forest Department in Mansi Township in Bhamo District seized illegal teak boards in a Pajero near Namaphwe village on Shweku-Bhamo street, Kachin State, on 28 May morning.

A combined team of Mansi police, foresters and local authorities seized the car carrying the illegally-extracted teak boards.

Passenger bag stolen on Mandalay-Myitkyina train

KAWLIN, 1 June—A passenger’s bag was stolen on Mandalay-Myitkyina train bound for Mandalay on 22 May morning between Wayonegon village in Kawlin Township in Sagaing Region and Koedangboe village in Kanbalu Township.

Ma Yi Oo lay back using her sling bag as a pillow on the first-class coach and found her bag abruptly dragged away by a man who jumped down the train and ran away about 15 minutes away from the arrival at Kawlin railway station. The bag includes about K 70,000. —MMAL-Lu Poe (Mansi)

CRIME

Drugs seized in Tamu

TAMU, 1 June—Acting on tip-offs, an anti-narcotics squad led by Police Sub-Instructor Tun Lwin intercepted a Kenbo 125 bike bound for Myothit Sub-Township from Tamu Township, Sagaing Region, on 27 May afternoon.

They seized opium powder, stimulant tablets and other illegal drugs hidden under the seat of the bike.

Rider of the bike Htan Kho Se of Myothit Sub-Township has been charged with drug-related cases.

Further investigation led to the arrest of two more suspects Aung Naing Tun of Khamain village and Sein Lin of Kaipiyan village in Phaungpyin Township.—MMAL-Win Naing (Tamu)
We were shocked by the recent tragedy where 11 died and 16 were wounded in a passenger bus accident on the expressway. This incident was the worst slaughter among the road fatalities occurred on it. An incident of this magnitude is horrifying.

During the past four years, 216 lives were lost in 432 traffic crashes in which 305 cases of reckless driving were the most. Nearly two-third of road accidents with the high number of fatalities and injuries was due to errors of human judgment. So, it can be said that the sheer follies of drivers in going so fast on the road is a significant number of expressway greater percentage of reckless driving cases than others. The end result of the investigations into the recent fatal accident of the passenger bus indicates a speed infringement of the driver. The errors and stupidities of the speedsters are widely attributed to the unwanted slaughter on the expressway. Excessive speed and drunken driving, drowsiness while driving, a momentary lapse of concentration at turn or at the time of use of mobile phone and a poor judgment on mechanical failures, especially related to faulty brakes and bald tyres, account for a major number of road accidents — deaths and injuries. According to facts and stats, 90 per cent of traffic crashes on the expressway are due to the driver’s downness and use of unqualified tyres.

The shocking death toll of passenger bus crash alarm us that concrete actions are critically needed to ensure the expressway as safe as possible. Making it safer calls for action plans of upgrading road safety infrastructure, building engineering safety countermeasures and ensuring improvement in emergency services, enhancement of safety in vehicles and improvement in road user behaviours. Moreover, enhancing penalty for undisciplined vehicles and drunken drivers have to be addressed as bad behaviours of the men behind the steering wheel are often their own worst enemies.

Urban development and management discussed

**NAY PYI TAW, 1 June—**Jointly organized by Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development, Ministry of Construction and Asian Development Bank, Talks on Urban Development and Management were held at the meeting hall of the ministry yesterday noon, with an address by Union Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin.

Then, Principle Infrastructure Specialist Mr. Hideki Iwasaki extended greetings.

Technical Advisor Mr. Alistair C. Biall of Asian Development Bank submitted paper on policy and reforms for urban development in Myanmar, necessities for economic and social development, system for drawing urban planning and made clarification on tactic paper.
Union FM felicitates Italian counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 2 June—U Winna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to Ms Emma Bonino, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Italy, which falls on 2 June 2013.—MNA

22nd WEF to focus social, ...

(from page 16) Q: Is there any difficulty for sound engineering in preparing for the forum?

A: For TV debate, the issue will be our sensitive mics. We have a lot of sensitive mics for the discussion. Difficulty will be that we have to make sure that they don’t feed back. So, that will require some skills.

And, also we have to advise microphones for different broadcasting stations.

Because some of them will prefer to use forum microphones. Some of them prefer to use other mics.

We have let them know that the number of people they have it is okay to use forum mics or other mics.

These are the things that we have to make sure that we know which is better.

If we don’t know, they will feed back. So, we can address problems like when sound is not enough for audience to hear.

Michel Meca, Chief Chef of Kandawgyi Hotel

We arrived here four days ago and we have been organizing the whole MICC. We will have to cook for the prime minister and many many VIPS in the forum.

Q: How many staff are assigned here for the forum?

A: We have two groups. Over 60 staff for the kitchen and over 60 waiters to serve the guests.

We have to cook 1200 buffet and 150 reserves.

English proficiency course concludes

YANGON, 1 June—The concluding of English Proficiency Course No. 1/2013 for English Lecturers from Universities, Degree Colleges and Colleges of the Higher Education Departments under the Ministry of Education took place at National Center for English Language on Pyay Road yesterday evening, with an address by Deputy Minister for Education Dr Myo Myint. The course is aimed at improving language proficiency of English Lecturers, effective teaching with English usages and idioms and learning practical activities which can apply in language teaching.

YANGON, 1 June—At the invitation of Chairman of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for Relations with the ASEAN States of the Federal Republic of Germany Dr Thomas Gambke, a Myanmar parliamentary delegation led by member U Ba Shin of Pyithu Hluttaw Bill Committee left here for Germany this afternoon. They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by officials of the Hluttaw Office.

The Myanmar parliamentary delegation led by the member of Pyithu Hluttaw Bill Committee comprises six members from Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw and the Hluttaw Office.

Myanmar parliamentary delegation leaves for Germany

MNA

He wards off natural disaster

(from page 8) seas, after crossing the Suez Canal and passing the strait of Gibraltar and the Bay of Biscay in the Atlantic before arrival at Liverpool seaport and Yangon harbour home bound. Scurially rains and stormy times were experienced but he was safe and sound. His mother and Chinese friends were now no more. But the statue of Upagupta is still in his shrine room.

During one Christmas, he happened to be a guest of his Scottish classmate in Edinburgh. In the guest room of his house was found a bronze statue of Upagupta with its shrine with flowers and fruits. His father a retired ship captain explained how he got the statue and the shrine. It was a very stormy evening in the Bay of Bengal. Their ship lost visibility. In complete darkness a lightning struck, and he and his men saw a raft with that statue in the shrine allout on the rolling waves. They managed to salvage it and put them in the reception room. Incredibly, the storm subsided and the next day was a pleasant sunny day. Since then they kept the statue and shrine in the captain’s room. When he retired he brought it to his house as seem in the guest room. When the writer studied the statue, the inscriptions on its base says “Made in 1935 and floated down in that year” in Burmese language.

There are three Shin Upagupta in Yangon that the writer visits frequently. (1) A big shrine with the statue at the foot of Shwedagon Pagoda’s north-west direction in a depression which used to be full of water some years ago. A long corridor connects the main car road in the compound with the shrine. (2) A big bronze statue in a sumptuous copper shrine kept in the centre of a water lake-shaped tank with aquatic creatures in the precinct of the largest bronze Buddha Image in Yangon named “Maha Zeya Atula Marazein” located to the east of Shwedagon Pagoda Hill (3) A medium size statue with its bronze shrine in the precinct of Aindawya Pagoda in Dagon Township, next to Myoma high school. When the writer first visited the third statue, he found an inscription which says that “a retired ship captain U Thant Lwin during one of his sea voyages salvaged it from the sea waves and kept on board. After retirement he kept it at his house. Now, he moved it there, for public worship. The writer saw young seaman of all creeds and climes paying respect to the statue before they depart for sea service on board.

This year May, the entire country was busy with preparations for encountering the impending cyclone Mahasen. Every hour, media gave out warning and informing the condition of the Mahasen yellow to orange. Then on the 16th May, orange to near red. The writer was praying to the Buddha and his treasured Upagupta statue on the shrine chanting paritta and seamen being long journeys to and back with that statue and arrived home safe and sound with that statue. “Pray ward off Mahasen.” On the 17th May, TV gave out the happy tidings. The storm was over completely though it brought strong wind and heavy showers, no damage, no destruction of life was caused. Right now Myanmar is a country undergoing a period of reconstruction reform, renovation politically, economically, socially, culturally and religiously. It is a country where good deeds of religious merits and social welfare works are being carried out. So Saint Upagupta would not allow Mara the evil opponents to molest us.

But we Myanmar people have to keep our moral and religious duty — to observe moral precepts, to observe religious precepts, to live religiously. It is a country where good deeds of religious merits and social welfare works are being carried out. So Saint Upagupta would not allow Mara the evil opponents to molest us. ***
Kalay-Monywa-Mandalay express coaches change to Kalay-Gangaw route

Kalay, 1 June—Due to continuous rainfall beginning the first week of May, Kalay-Monywa-Mandalay express buses are using Gangaw Road instead of the regular route through Yagyi Road, said a driver.

The downpour on 24 May flooded the Kalewa-Yagyi Road section from Kyaw Village to Yagyi and around 30 vehicles were stranded on the road for three days. The passengers were also cut off from the outside world temporarily losing access to telecommunications, according to a passenger.

“What I saw last year was Yagyi Road is vulnerable to even a shower. It (the road foundation) is quite good in summer. But, once the rain touches the ground, it becomes something like clay. So, it would be the safest to use Gangaw rather than Yagyi in monsoon,” explained a driver.

It is 224 miles from Kalay to Mandalay through Yagyi Road but is 297 miles through Gangaw Road.

Kyemon-Shin Nay Min

Self-reliant school building opened in Yedashe Tsp

Yedashe, 1 June—Opening of a new self-reliant Basic Education Primary School building was held in Shanpaing Ward in Yeni Village, Paung Township, Mon State, on 29 May.

Village, Paung Township, Mon State, on 29 May.

The school building was constructed with the contributions of townsenders, local people and neighboring villages.

Present at the ceremony were officials of Yedashe Township Education Office, ward administrator and townsenders, parents, teachers and pupils.

Kyemon-Ko Lwin (Swa)

Farming rights certificates presented in Singaing

Singaing, 1 June—Farming rights certificates were presented to the farmers at the meeting hall of Singaing Township General Administration Department, here, yesterday morning.

On the occasion, Singaing Township Administrator U Myint Thein explained the purpose of presenting certificates. Then, he presented 93 certificates to the Ward administrator on behalf of 55 farmers in Thitkhouk Villag-tract.

A total of 20679 certificates will be presented to the farmers of Singaing in 2013.

Kyemon-Tun Tun (Nay Pyi Taw)

Medics give free medical treatment to patients in Paung

Paung, 1 June—Head of Township Health Department Dr Maung Maung Lwin and assistant surgeons and medics gave free treatment to patients and shared talks on health knowledge at Pango Village, Paung Township, Mon State, on 29 May morning.

The head of Township Health Department and medics provided 83 patients with free medical treatment and gave talks on preventive measures against DPH.

They then gave out pamphlets to villagers.

Kyemon-Paung IPRD

Chin traditional Longyi popular in Magway market

Kalay, 1 June—Chin traditional Longyi manufactured in Kalay Region are popular in Magway market.

There are over 50 Chin traditional weaving designs according to Chin national’s region. The prices of Chin Longyi are from K 8000 to K 30000.

“Kalay Township population is over 30000 and Myanmar and Chin are 50 percent each. Over 1500 looms run by 246 entrepreneurs in three wards and three villages are producing Chin traditional Longyi and transporting it to Yangon, Mandalay, Magway and Pyay markets. K 500,000 loan was disbursed to six entrepreneurs by the Region Fund in 2012-2013 fiscal year. Thanks to loan disbursement for development of rural area small enterprises, the entrepreneurs made more investment in cotton textile industry and could create job opportunities and increase productivity. In 2013-2014 financial year, Sagaing Region Government will disburse K 30 million loan to the entrepreneurs,” said a local woman who sells Chin traditional Longyi from Kalay.

Kyemon-Hla Myint (Magway)

Nay Pyi Taw Police Force grants stipends to offspring of police staff

Nay Pyi Taw, 1 June—Stipends were granted to offspring of staff members of Nay Pyi Taw Police Force Office for 2013-2014 academic year at the ceremony held at the meeting hall of the office on 29 May.

The stipends totalling K 900,000 were distributed to 106 students from primary level to university level.

Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Police Force Police Col Aung Aung presented the stipends to the students.

MMAL-Ko Ko Lwin (Nay Pyi Taw)

ACCIDENT

A 10-wheeled truck overturns in Khamaukgyi Township, hurts seven workers

Kawthoung, 1 June—A 10-wheeled truck owned by Yuzana Palm Oil Company overturned near mile post 34 on Kawthoung-Bokpyin Road in Khamaukgyi Township of Kawthoung District, Taninthayi Region, at 9:15 pm on 29 May.

The truck carrying seven workers from Kawthoung to the company overturned at mile post No. 34 at the exit of Khamaukgyi due to out of control.

Seven workers on board were wounded in the accident.

Driver U San Shae (a) Kadon run away shortly after the accident.

Khamaukgyi local police force is taking necessary measures over the case and to arrest the traffic rule breaker.

Kyemon-U Kyaw Soe
Japan plans to more than triple foreign visitors by 2030

The government has drafted a plan to more than triple the annual number of foreign travelers to Japan to 30 million by 2030 by publicizing Japan’s attractions, sources close to the matter said on Friday.

The draft plan, which the sources made available to Kyodo News, estimates that if the target is achieved, foreign travelers’ spending in Japan may expand to 4.7 trillion yen in 2030 from 1.3 trillion yen in 2010 when foreign arrivals totaled a record 8.61 million.

That increased spending is estimated to boost travel-industry-related employment to 830,000 people from 250,000 people in 2010.

The draft plan — prepared as part of an economic growth strategy which the government will adopt in June — urges government agencies to prepare to establish and publicize high-quality tourism resources as part of the “Japan Brand.”

The government and private sectors should cooperate to increase foreign television programs covering Japan, the plan says.

It also calls for easing visa conditions within this year for travelers from Southeast Asian countries and considering long-stay visas for wealthy foreigners.

The government aims to attract travelers from Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries in the wake of a substantial decline since last fall in Chinese travelers due to a bilateral territorial row.

The plan also calls on the government to make Japan Asia’s largest sponsor of international conferences. And it urges the government to consider developing a new railway network linking Haneda and Narita airports and central Tokyo, based on a feasibility study in fiscal 2014.

The draft indicates the government expects to attract many more travelers, particularly from fast-growing Southeast Asian countries.

The UN World Tourism Organization estimates the number of international travelers globally will double to 1.81 billion in 2030 from 2010, with robust growth expected in travel to Northeast Asian countries including Japan, and to Southeast Asia.

“Growing low-cost carriers are leading to a rise in the number of people who can afford to enjoy international travel,” said Takeshi Sakimoto, associate professor of tourism at the Osaka University of Tourism.

India inducts new Swiss-made trainer-aircraft

NEW DELHI, 1 June— The Indian Air Force (IAF) has inducted a new Swiss-made basic trainer Friday to augment the air force’s training capacity.

Junior Defense Minister Jitendra Singh inducted the PC-7 MkII trainer at a ceremony at an academy in Hyderabad, a Press release from the Defence Ministry said.

India has contracted for 75 of the aircraft from Switzerland and the first flight of cadets is expected to be trained in the planes from July.

Singh said the PC-7 MkII is an important “landmark” as India modernizes its armed forces.

“The aircraft, with its excellent handling characteristics, user friendly onboard instrumentation and modern navigation systems, is ideally suited for IAF’s training requirements,” Singh said.

“I assure the nation that no effort will be spared to equip IAF with the latest training aids and infrastructure.”

The PC-7 MkIIIs are to be used for basic training of all pilots in the air force as well as navy and coast guard pilots.

Vietnam decides to take part in UN peacekeeping operations

SINGAPORE, 1 June— Vietnam has decided to send military personnel to the UN peacekeeping force, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung said on Friday.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of an annual Asia security forum known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, Dung said Vietnam’s initial participation will be in the areas of “military engineering, military medicine and military observation.”

“It is our desire to establish strategic partnerships with all the permanent members of the UN Security Council to establish the principles of independence, sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of each other, mutual respect, equal and mutually beneficial cooperation are committed to and seriously implemented,” Dung said.

The United Nations currently has peacekeeping operations in regions including Africa, the Middle East, Europe and South Asia.

The Vietnamese leader maintained, however, that his country “will not be a military ally to any country,” nor will it allow any country to set up military bases.

Vietnam’s defence policy is that of peace and self-defence. Vietnam will not ally itself with any country to counter another,” Dung said.

Sri Lanka, Thailand to enhance maritime security

COLOMBO, 1 June— Sri Lanka and Thailand on Friday decided to enhance maritime security during a meeting between President Mahinda Rajapaksa and visiting Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Rajapaksa said that sharing experiences and expertise will contribute to eradicating terrorism and other security threats in the region, the President’s Office said.

He pointed out that despite the end of the war in Sri Lanka in 2009, supporters of the Tamil Tigers are continuing their fight to divide Sri Lanka from foreign shores.

“We must cooperate more closely in security-related information and intelligence sharing,” Rajapaksa said. Rajapaksa also expressed gratitude to Thailand for its “firm support” to Sri Lanka at the 19th and 22nd UN Human Rights Council meetings, adding that Sri Lanka “should be entitled to have time and space to proceed with a delicate process of national reconciliation.”

Asian youth gather in Cambodia to discuss peace, development

PHNOM PENH, 1 June— The 2013 Asian Youth Forum opened here on Friday to exchange views on strengthening peace, stability and development in the region.

The two-day forum brought together youth delegates from 22 countries of the Asian Youth Council, including Malaysia, Cambodia, China, Brunei, South Korea and Mongolia, he said. “They would discuss challenges, share experiences and reflect their commitments to a significant and proactive role in building a culture of peace and development in the region in particular and the world at large,” said Hun Man, son of Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Prime Minister Hun Sen said the forum provided a rare opportunity for Cambodian youth to share views on strengthening peace, stability and development in the region and the world, as well as share experiences and create regional network.

“I am really proud of Asian youth who are dynamically working together for the cause of peace, development and prosperity in each country, the region and the world,” the premier said.

“This is the real spirit of cooperation and partnership that must take root among youth, the core force of development in the future.”

He said the forum, held under the theme “Youth and Peace: Strengthening Peace, Stability and Development through Education”, was right and timely in the context that the possibility of turmoil and civil war were threatening many countries and regions.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh speaks at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore on 1 June 2013. The 12th Shangri-La Dialogue kicked off in Singapore on Friday.
Three killed, four injured in explosion in Manila

MANILA, 1 June—Three people were killed and four others, including a foreigner, were injured on Friday night in a loud explosion in a posh apartment in Taguig City, Manila, Philippines, authorities said.

The blast happened at around 8:10 pm at Two Serendra, Global City, Fort Bonifacio, a shopping and residential area in Taguig City, Interior and Local Government Secretary Mar Roxas confirmed, in a news briefing, the death of the three people on board a delivery van that was hit by a slab from Unit 501 of Two Serendra.

He withheld the identities of the victims as their next of kin would be informed first.

Those injured were rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment, he said.

Roxas asked the public not to speculate as to the cause of the explosion since investigation has been ongoing. “This could be an accident, the explosion could be from a chemical, it could be anything,” he said.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino III went to the explosion site and ordered all concerned agencies to help in the investigations.—Xinhua

Workers gather shattered glass after an explosion in Taguig City, the Philippines on 31 May, 2013. Three people died in the explosion, while four people were injured according to reports.—Xinhua

Economic cooperation, partnership framework dominate Canada, Chile leaders’ meeting

OTTAWA, 1 June—Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper met with Chilean President Sebastian Pinera here on Thursday, with bilateral economic cooperation and the renewal of a strategic framework at the top of their agenda.

At a joint news conference held in the Parliament building, Harper noted bilateral trade has more than tripled since Canada signed a free trade agreement with Chile in 1997 — the first such a deal that Chile had struck with a developed country. Merchandise trade between the two countries reached almost 2.5 billion US dollars last year, according to the Canadian Prime Minister’s Office.

“Canada has also become the largest source of new direct investment in Chile over the past decade,” Harper said.

The two countries agreed to several joint initiatives, including cooperation in the energy sector and a “strong commitment to responsible resource management” — a prickly point picked up by the media.

Pinera was asked about the Chilean government’s decision last Friday to fine Barrick Gold Corp. 16.4 million Canadian dollars (15.91 million US dollars) and suspend the Canadian company’s multibillion-dollar mining operation in the Andes Mountains for causing environmental damage.

The Chilean president said that while Canada was the “most important” foreign investor in his country, Barrick failed to comply with an environmental impact assessment, but had since agreed to improve its “behaviour with respect to the environment” in 23 areas identified by Chile.

Xinhua

Tourists stroll through a hill covered by moss pink flowers, called shibazakura in Japanese, in full bloom at a park in the town of Ozoro, Hokkaido, on 31 May, 2013.—Kyodo News

A special meeting dedicated to discussing issues confronting Somalia is held in Yokohama, near Tokyo, on 31 May, 2013, ahead of the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development on 1 to 3 June.

KYODO NEWS

YOKOHAMA, 1 June—Prime Minister Shinzo Abe renewed Japan’s commitment to supporting Somalia’s nation-building efforts on Friday, saying Tokyo will resume direct aid to the East African nation that is confronting Somalia is held in Yokohama, near Tokyo, on 31 May, 2013, ahead of the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development on 1 to 3 June.

KYODO NEWS

Yokohama dedicated to discussing issues confronting Somalia, Abe said Japan’s new assistance to the country will focus on enhancing its socio-economic conditions, maintaining law and order, and invigorating the country’s fragile industries.

“The stability of Somalia is important for the stability and prosperity of East Africa and indispensable for solving Somalia’s piracy problem fundamentally and ensuring the safety of one of the world’s major sea arteries, which connects the Indian Ocean with the Red and Mediterranean seas,” Abe told participants.

The one-day meeting, held on the sidelines of a conference on African development involving leaders mostly from the continent that will take place from Saturday through Monday, also drew dignitaries such as Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn.

In his remarks, Mohamud expressed his determination to strengthen the resilience of Somali society by securing cooperation from the people of Somalia and assistance from the international community.

KYODO News

Hacker group Anonymous warns Japan not to conduct whaling

WASHINGTON, 1 June—The hacker group Anonymous has warned the Japanese government not to hunt whales in a message recently posted on the video-sharing website YouTube.

“This is not just a warning,” Anonymous said in what appears to be the first verbal offensive the group has taken over the issue. It also urged the people of Japan not to “follow the idiotic belief of your government.”

The Japanese government is aware of the message posted on Wednesday and braced for following actions, an official said.

The group criticized Japan for “actively participating in the destruction of marine life worldwide,” posting undated movies that show Japanese ships hunting whales using harpoons in an unnamed sea.

The group warned last year of cyberattacks on the Japanese government to protest against revision of the country’s copyright laws.—Kyodo News
Canadian songwriter-producer David Foster honoured with star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

LOS ANGELES, 1 June—Canadian songwriter-producer David Foster received a star on the fabled Hollywood Walk of Fame on Friday, crowning a prolific career which spanned more than four decades. The popular musician, who has won 16 Grammy Awards from 47 nominations, received the 2,499th star at an event held in front of the Capitol Records building where his “Skylerk” album was launched in 1972.

Outgoing Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa joined a group of speakers including Leron Gubler, President and CEO of Hollywood Chamber of Commerce which hosted the ceremony, and popular daytime television host Dr Phil McGraw to congratulate Foster on the occasion. “It’s an honor to be here to celebrate David Foster, a good friend and one of the most talented people I know,” said Villaraigosa. “We don’t call this the Walk of Fame for nothing. Here are the stars, here are the people who touched our lives and stirred our hearts with their talents.”

Foster, recollecting the time when he arrived in Hollywood more than 40 years ago to launch his career, was moved. “This is an extremely fantastic day for me, obviously, and it also a reflective one,” Foster, born 1 Nov, 1949 in Victoria, British Columbia, began studying piano when he was 4 years old.

A keyboardist for the former Canadian pop group Skylark, Foster was instrumental in discovering Celine Dion, Josh Groban, Michael Buble and Andrea Bocelli. He also worked with a starry pack of superstars including Barbra Streisand, Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson, Madonna and Stevie Wonder and helped them to realize their musical dreams.


Jennifer Lopez’s TV show inspired by her life

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LOS ANGELES, 1 June—Jennifer Lopez has admitted her new TV show—which features a same-sex couple raising adopted, biological and foster children—was inspired by her own “non-traditional family”. Jennifer Lopez’s personal life inspired her new show, The Fosters for ABC—which features a same-sex couple raising adopted, biological and foster children — and Jennifer, who has twins Max and Emme, five, with ex-husband Marc Anthony, admitted she has taken some inspiration from her own situation.

She told ABC News: “I am a non-traditional family. Me being a single mom, their dad doesn’t live at home with them. They have three stepbrothers from two moms—that’s not traditional. Do I want my children to feel weird about that? No I don’t. … So putting a show like this one to me is, look, there is no perfect (image of) what family is supposed to be.”

While Jennifer — who is currently dating dancer Casper Smart — has three failed marriages behind her, she says the only thing that matters to her is that her children are healthy and loved.

She explained: “The show is about love and that’s what I constantly remind myself of because I kind of let society get inside my head, ‘Oh, it shouldn’t be like this. I did this, I did that, I failed.’ And it’s like, no, they’re happy, they’re healthy, they’re loved more than anything in the world and they’re going to be fine. I want them to know that.” —Xinhua

Jesse Eisenberg explores world of street magic for heist film

LOS ANGELES, 1 June—Actor Jesse Eisenberg may be best known for his Oscar-nominated performance as Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, but in his latest film, the fast-talking actor explores the underground world of magic for comedy heist caper, “Now You See Me.”

The film, out in theaters on Friday, sees a group of street magicians come together as the “four horsemen,” staging large scale magic shows during which they rob a bank and distribute the money among the audience. Eisenberg plays silver-tongued sleight-of-hand expert J. Daniel Atlas, a role he said he was drawn to because of the character’s confidence and his own need to overcome stage fright in 2011 while performing in an off Broadway production called “Asussen,” which he had also written.

“I thought it’d be like a perfect challenge for me, and maybe help me deal with some of the stage fright I was dealing with. My character is the greatest magician in the world and he has an attitude of someone who’s earned that, so I forced myself to feel and behave like him,” the actor explained. In the film, which co-stars Morgan Freeman, Michael Caine and Mark Ruffalo, Eisenberg joins forces with three other street magicians, played by Isla Fisher, Woody Harrelson and Dave Franco, to stage a complex and captivating series of shows.

Reuters

‘After Earth’ leaves critics cold ahead of competitive weekend

LOS ANGELES, 1 June—Will Smith may be one of Hollywood’s most bankable stars, but his new film, “After Earth,” in which he stars with his 14-year-old son Jaden, has opened to cold reviews from critics and faces stiff competition in a busy box office weekend.

“After Earth” is a futuristic post-apocalyptic tale of a father and his teenage son in which the young boy must embark on a life-saving mission. Sony Pictures Entertainment, a division of Sony Corp., spent about $130 million to produce the movie, making it one of the studio’s biggest summer releases.

The story is centered on the father-son relationship and the dynamic of a father passing the mantle to his son is mirrored both on screen and off, as the younger Smith leads the action. Will Smith, 44, who wrote the initial story and was the executive producer of the film, said the project gave him valuable time to spend with his son, with whom he first starred in the 2006 family drama, “The Pursuit of Happyness.”

“Filmmaking and entertainment is our family business,” Smith said at a recent news conference. “So, it really gave us an opportunity for the last year to spend ten or twelve hours a day together, every day. And for me it’s just the best way, for me at least, to parent.”

Jaden Smith bears a strong resemblance to his famous father and won over most critics as the lead in 2010’s reboot of “The Karate Kid.” However, he has not been received as warmly for his performance as ranger Kitai Raige in “After Earth.”

Reuters
**Santos sack coach Ramalho**

Rio de Janeiro, 1 June—Santos have sacked coach Muricy Ramalho, just days after selling Brazil starlet Neymar to Barcelona. The role will be temporarily filled by the Brazilian club’s under-20 coach Claudenei Oliveira.

**New Zealand spurns big rule changes as it preps for America’s Cup**

New Zealand’s America’s Cup team that suffered a 10th straight loss to the defending champion Miami Heat in the 2012-13 America’s Cup World Series, said on Wednesday, it would decline to adopt any of five rule changes such as smaller sail areas and shorter races that the United States offered.

**Vulnerable Nadal needs to find form against flashy Fognini**

Paris, 1 June—After two lacklustre performances and an out-of-character rant at organizers all eyes will be on Rafa Nadal to see if he can shoulder the claycourt matador or this week’s vulnerable imposter shows up to face Fabio Fognini on Saturday.

Times champin Nadal let his feelings be known after Parisian downpours and lopsided scheduling left him with only one day’s rest before facing the showman Italian, who has had an extra 24 hours recuperation.

After being taken to four sets by Daniel Brands in round one and Martin Kizan on Friday, Nadal expects Fognini, with his flashy winners, to be in better shape. “Probably my opponent is better than me, talking about physical performance, but the only thing I can say is I’m going to work as much as I can to be 100 percent ready,” Nadal said.

“Tomorrow will be a really tough match, and I need to play better than today. I need to do it.”In contrast to Nadal, Novak Djokovic looked imperious in his second-round victory over Argentina’s Guido Pella, but in Grigor Dimitrov he faces a player who beat him in the second round of the Madrid Masters this month.

**Haas takes Memorial lead, Woods labors to 74**

Dublin, 1 June—Rejuvenated by the recent birth of his first child, American Bill Haas rebounded from successive missed cuts on the PGA Tour to grab a three-shot lead in Friday’s heat-hit second round at the Memorial Tournament at Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio on 28 May, 2013.—Reuters

Haas hit his final hole, the par-four 18th, after hitting his approach over the back of the green, he was delighted to take control of the popular PGA Tour event hosted by Jack Nicklaus with a nine-under total of 135. “I’ve been very fortunate,” Haas told reporters after a round which included five birdies, an eagle at the par-five fifth and two bogeys to finish three ahead of compatriot Matt Kuchar (70).

“I hit a couple of loose shots. On 11, the wind was right-to-left and I hit a provisional. I thought it was out of bounds there. ‘We got out there and it (the first tee shot) must have hit a tree and it was fine.’ I ended up making birdie.”

**Bucks reach agreement with Drew to become head coach**

Toronto, 1 June—Former Atlanta Hawks coach Larry Drew has been named head coach of the Milwaukee Bucks, the National Basketball Association team said on Friday.

Drew, who led Atlanta to playoff berths in each of his three seasons there, reached an agreement in principle to replace Jim Boylan, who stepped in on an interim basis after the Bucks and Scott Skiles parted ways in early January.

“It was clear to us that Larry’s track record in Atlanta, along with his experience as an assistant coach and player, make him the right choice to lead our club,” Bucks general manager John Hammond said in a statement. “We look forward to what he will bring to this franchise and we welcome him and his family to Milwaukee.”

Drew, 55, who had an 11-year playing career that included stints with the Kings in Kansas City and Sacramento and in Los Angeles with the Lakers and Clippers, has a 128-102 record as a coach. He takes over a Bucks team that was swept out of the first round of the playoffs by the defending champion Miami Heat.—Reuters

**Ex-NBA player Mookie Blaylock in critical condition after crash**

Atlanta, 1 June—Former NBA player Mookie Blaylock was in critical condition at an Atlanta hospital on Friday after being involved in a car crash that killed another person, police said. Jonesboro Police Chief Frank Allen told Reuters that Blaylock, 46, was taken off life support when his condition stabilized.

Atlanta Medical Center spokeswoman Nicole Gustin said Blaylock, who played most of his career with the Atlanta Hawks, was listed in critical condition on the facility, but she could not release other details. Blaylock was behind the wheel of a 2010 Cadillac Escalade on Friday in Clayton County, south of Atlanta, when he crossed over the center line into oncoming traffic and struck a minivan head-on, Allen said.

“We have reason to believe he may have suffered a seizure,” Allen said. “He had been previously treated for a seizure disorder.”

A husband and wife in the minivan were injured along with Blaylock, and all three people were transported to Atlanta Medical Center, where the woman later died, Allen said. The man in the minivan suffered injuries that were not life-threatening, police said.

Blaylock played in the National Basketball Association from 1989 to 2002. His ability to shut down opposing players twice earned him a place on the NBA All-Defensive First Team. He played with the Hawks from 1992 to 1999 and also spent time with the New Jersey Nets and Golden State Warriors. An arrest warrant for Blaylock was issued on 21 May for failure to appear in court on drug possession and drunk-en driving charges, Allen said. —Reuters

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Experts see Ghana’s pension funds as catalyst for growth in capital market

Acrea, 1 June—Experts claim ongoing reforms in Ghana’s Pension Regulations could be a potential catalyst for growth of the country’s capital market and rapid economic transformation.

They called on the authorities on Friday to develop the capital market and bond market into which pension funds could be invested to realize its full potential.

Sam Pee Yalley, chief executive officer (CEO) of the National Pensions Regulatory Authority (NPRA), believes the pension funds, if developed well, could become the main catalyst for the growth of Ghana’s bond market.

He said pension funds, which are long-term investment funds sought by governments, are the right type of alternatives for foreign loans.

“Most countries that Ghana borrows from, such as DFID, lend Pensions Funds to us because pension is a long-term commitment; so if we also streamline our pension well, and Ghana can sell long-term bonds of between 10 and 30 years, pension funds would be available for these projects,” he told Xinhua in an interview here on Friday.

Ghana’s new Tiered Pensions Scheme came functional on 1 Jan, 2010 under the new Pensions Law, the National Pensions Act, 2008 (Act 766) passed on 12 Dec, 2008.

It requires that out of the total contribution of 18.5 percent of one’s monthly income, the employer will remit 13.5 percent to a restructured Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) towards the first tier pension scheme, out of which 2.5 percent will be National Health Insurance (NHI) levy.

Xinhua

Brazil striker Fred declares fitness for England friendly

RIO DE JANEIRO, 1 June—Brazil striker Fred has declared himself ready to start in Sunday’s international friendly against England at the revamped Maracana stadium, despite nursing a broken rib.

The 29-year-old Flamengo frontman suffered the injury during the early stages of his side’s 2-1 defeat to Olimpia in Rio on Wednesday, a result that eliminated the Rio outfit from the Copa Libertadores.

“It’s difficult but it’s important to make the sacrifice,” Fred said during Brazil training at Flamengo’s Gavea base on Friday. “Pain is normal. Every player knows what it’s like to play through it. I am able to play normally. If I cop a knock I will have to grin and bear it until the end.”

England also have their share of injury concerns with forwards Jermain Defoe (Achilles), Danny Wellbeck (knee) and Alex Oxладe-Chamberlain (calf) in doubt for Sunday’s match.

The team’s ‘dearth of attacking options means coach Roy Hodgson could deploy Arsenal’s Theo Walcott as a central striker and Rooney in a deep-lying role. Walcott trained in an advanced position at the Urca military base on Friday and admits he would relish the opportunity be England’s target man at the Maracana. “It will be fantastic, I said I wanted to play up front,” Walcott said. “People say I have played up front, but I have had limited opportunities this year I have played on the wing and got most of my goals from there.”

“Playing for England in any position is a dream. The manager picks the team and whoever plays will go out and do a job and hope to win,” —Xinhua
Myanmar Engineering Council draft law discussed prior to its submission to parliament

YANGON, 1 June — Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann delivered an address at a coordination meeting on Myanmar Engineering Council draft law at Hluttaw Office (Yangon) on Thanlwin Road, here, this afternoon.

It was also attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Union Minister for Industry U Aye Myint, Pyithu Hluttaw Committee Chairmen U Soe Tha, U Thein Zaw, U Thein Swe, U Htay Myint, Deputy Ministers U Aye Kyu, Dr Win Myint, Dr Zaw Min Aung, U Han Sein, U Chan Maung and U Thaung Tin, Yangon Region Minister for Electric Power and Industry U Nyan Tun Oo, committee secretaries and members, departmental officials, rectors of the members, departmental committee secretaries and for Electric Power and Maung and U Thaung Tin, Aung, U Han Sein, U Chan Win Myint, Dr Zaw Min Aung, Ministers U Aye Kyu, Dr U Htay Myint, Deputy Thein Zaw, U Thein Swe, U Htay Myint, Deputy Ministers U Aye Kyu, Dr Win Myint, Dr Zaw Min Aung, U Han Sein, U Chan Maung and U Thaung Tin, Yangon Region Minister for Electric Power and Industry U Nyan Tun Oo, committee secretaries and members, departmental officials, rectors of the Technological Universities, President of Myanmar Engineering Society U Win Khaung and members, officials from VYCDC and MCDC and guests.

In his address, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker said that he was informed of a plan to enact Myanmar Engineering Council Law through a report by Myanmar Engineering Society and officials concerned about two years ago. Today’s coordination meeting was meant to hold discussions on the draft law prior to its submission to the parliament, he added. The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker stressed the importance of the enactment of Myanmar Engineering Council Law as engineering works would play a certain role in industrial sector and construction projects when construction of Thilawa Industrial Zone and Dawei Industrial Zone started and foreign investments entered the country. He continued that unless the law was promulgated, Myanmar engineers would be appointed to inferior positions below their counterparts from foreign companies; and that the enactment of the law was required to avoid it. He stressed the need to work harder to be professional engineers, urging Myanmar engineers to be dutiful ones by taking the same amount of responsibility like foreign engineers in implementing the industrial zones and other sectors.

He continued that the parliament’s main function was to make laws for the sake of the country and its people; that listening to the voices of people and understanding their wills was necessary for enactment of laws; that the parliament had to listen to the voices and inspirations of engineers as they were among the people; that the parliament was charged with watching laws to protect the rights of the people and to enjoy more benefits; and that the parliamentarians were willing to discharge their duties. The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker called for mass participation in the legislative processes and capacity building of Myanmar engineers. He vowed to continue holding discussions on the draft law to be able to submit it to upcoming parliament session.

Next, the region minister and the MES president discussed the draft law and Union Minister U Aye Myint elaborated on amendment and modification of the draft law. Those present took part in discussions and the meeting came to an end with concluding remarks by the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker.

22nd WEF to focus social, economic development opportunities and challenges of Myanmar, East Asia

As part of efforts for opening up development opportunities in Myanmar, seeking advices from world business leaders, giving them the chance to understand Myanmar’s reform in depth and building relations with leaders from governments and organizations, Myanmar will host the 22nd World Economic Forum on East Asia from 5 to 7 June at the Myanmar International Convention Centre in Nay Pyi Taw for the first time.

We interviewed some officials and staff preparing for the WEF at the MICC. U Myint Kyaw, Director of the Information and Public Relations Department and Head of Information Centre for the forum

Q: What are the objectives of Myanmar to host this international forum?
A: “We host the forum with the aim of promoting FDI in Myanmar, getting advices from world’s business leaders to help Myanmar’s economic development, promoting relations between Myanmar and foreign countries and ensuring foreign countries to understand and witness Myanmar’s reform.”

Q: How can the forum help Myanmar?
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