President U Thein Sein felicitates French President, PM

Only mutual respect and trust, understanding and religious tolerance could bring peaceful co-existence: President

Yangon, 13 July — President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein met with the patron, the chairman and executives of Interfaith Friendship Group at the hall of Yangon Region Government’s Office today. Also present were Union Ministers at President Office U Soe Thane, U Aung Min, U Tin Naing Thein, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Citizen’s Fundamental Rights, Democracy and Human Rights Committee U Htay Oo.

In his address, the President said that the process of State Building, Nation Building and Peace Building was in progress in Myanmar; that now is the time when the country is on the track to shaping a New National Identity which is acceptable to all citizens, all national races and all religions to be able to build a peaceful and harmonious society; that there could be unity, trust, friendship and sense of patriotism among citizens and national races, regardless of race and religion, if it existed in the society; that religious conflict and misunderstanding were deeply rooted since the colonial period, but tolerance and harmony among the different races with different beliefs brought a pluralism to live together for many years throughout the history. The two communities gave protection to each other, during the conflicts caused by extremists of the two communities, and provided relief aids to families who had become victims of the conflicts; that lower educational standard and economic difficulties were attributed to conflicts; that the government was striving to implement social and economic reforms so as to address the problems; and that protection should be given to freedom of religion and freedom of expression so that democracy in Myanmar will flourish.

He added that only mutual respect and trust, understanding and tolerance for ensuring the freedom of religion could bring a peaceful coexistence; that Myanmar society would be proud of being a pluralistic society; that he would like to call on each and every citizen to pay mutual respect on different beliefs and to fight against religious hatred. All need to oppose those who are trying to fuel the conflicts by using the

Noteworthy amounts of rainfall

(13-7-2013)

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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<td>Manaung</td>
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JICA to upgrade Myanmar’s rail transport network

Yangon, 13 July — As the city of Yangon is home to around six million residents, it can be said that 10 per cent of the total population of the country is concentrated in it. So, the largest city of the country is always packed with daily social and business visits of the people far and wide of the country and foreign visitors.

In order to speed the city’s commuters and visitors from the length and breadth of the nation and globetrotters on their way as they have to encounter traffic delays in Yangon’s congested roads daily, Myanmar Railways has a plan to cooperate with Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA to improve its railway network, it is learnt.

U Kyaw Myint, minister of transport and communications, said AGM U Kyaw Kyaw Myo of Myanmar Railways.

He added that JICA engineers took the train to Bago on 6 July and performed a study with the use of vibration machine. They pledged to conduct on-job trainings for Myanmar railway engineers while carrying out railroad works together with them. It was aimed at sharing knowledge to others.

Regarding the need for construction of foot over bridges and roadover bridges at intersections between railroads and motorways on circular rail network, he said that Yangon Region Government proposed three designated places — Insein bridge, Parami 2nd street and Kanbe (Thitsar) road; and that repair of some foot over bridges are underway through invitation of tenders in the daily.

He also expressed his view to build more bridges like Pazundaung bridge to be able to increase number of trips and income of circular train service.

Now, circular train service performs 200 trips a day. Moreover, 34 up and down trains are being used for rail service from Yangon to Pyay, Tharawaw, Bago, Nau Pyi Taw, Mawlamyine, Ye, Dawei, Mandalay and Shwenyaung. Departments concerned in cooperation with JICA are carrying out implementation of Greater Yangon Strategic Development Plan.

Kyemon-Soe Win (MLA)

Thriving pre-monsoon Ngwechi-6 long staple cotton plantations in Myinmu Township

Myinmu, 13 July — Following the steps of two cotton growers who started putting pre-monsoon Ngwechi-6 long staple cotton on the three-acre farmland each at filed No. (376), west of Nabekyi rest house, in the area of Pyawt village river water pumping project in Myinmu Township and produced over 1000 viss of cotton per acre last year, 17 other cotton growers cultivated 23 acres of cotton on 25 April this year.

As a result, a total of 157 farmers from 25 village-tracts were invited to observe thriving 78-day-old Ngwechi-6 long staple cotton plantations at the field on 12 July.

At the ceremony, officials concerned of the agriculture department gave talks on agricultural methods and farmer U Aung Tint shared his experience in cotton growing to the visiting farmers.

Kyemon-Ko Ko Naing (Myinmu)

Car crash near Hledan overpass

Kamayut Township. But no one is injured in the accident occurred at about 2.15 pm on 11 July.

A taxi with U Thiha Phyo at the wheel collided with a light truck driven by U Kyaw Myint while competing each other for the lane near the Hledan bridge.

Action is being taken against the car crash by Kamayut traffic police.

Kyemon-Kyaw Myint Aye (IPRD)

Agriculture

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Pakistan’s Malala, shot by Talaiban, takes education plea to UN

NEW YORK, 13 July—Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani girl who was shot in the head by the Talaiban last year for demanding education for girls, marked her 16th birthday with a passionate speech at the United Nations headquarters in New York, on 12 July, 2013. —XINHUA

Malala Yousafzai (L), a Pakistani girl who was shot by the Talaiban for going to school, poses for a photo with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the United Nations headquarters in New York, on 12 July, 2013. —XINHUA

Red Cross calls for ‘humanitarian pause’ in Syria’s Homs

BEIRUT, 13 July—The Red Cross appealed on Friday for a halt in the fierce fighting between President Bashar al-Assad’s forces and rebels in the Syrian city of Homs, to bring in life-saving supplies to trapped residents. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said thousands of Syrian lives were at risk in the old city of Homs, where Assad’s forces have been pushing a heavy offensive with air and artillery strikes to try to retake rebel areas.

The Red Cross said combatants in the more than two-year conflict were hampering the delivery of aid to beleaguered locals and had failed to secure safe passage for trapped residents trying to flee the area.

“We call on the Syrian authorities to permit delivery in the old city of food and medical supplies,” said Magne Barth, the head of the ICRC delegation in Syria. “We also call on all the armed groups that are in control of the old city to ensure that civilians who want to leave can do so safely.”

Syria’s uprising-turned-civil war has become increasingly violent, killing more than 100,000 people so far. International powers at the UN Security Council are deadlock over how to find a diplomatic solution. China and Russia, Assad’s main arms supplier, have blocked efforts to sanction Assad by the United States and Europe, who back the rebels. Homs is the epicenter of the armed insurgency that grew from popular street protests struggling to end more than four decades of Assad family rule.

Egypt’s Islamists take to streets of Cairo, but protests peaceful

CAIRO, 13 July—Tens of thousands of Egyptians marched on Cairo’s streets in the early hours of Saturday to demand ousted Islamist President Mohamed Morsi be reinstated, but there were none of the deadly clashes that swept Egypt a week ago.

Morsi’s Muslim Brotherhood called on Friday for “a day of marching on”, and 10 days after the military overthrew Egypt’s first freely elected president, large crowds descended on the capital waving flags and chanting slogans.

A week earlier similar scenes of protest turned violent when pro- and anti-Morsi demonstrators clashed in cities and towns across the country, killing 35 people and widening the rift between Egyptians on different sides of the political divide.

Three days after that, Egypt was left reeling again when soldiers opened fire on a group of pro-Morsi demonstrators outside the Republican Guard compound in Cairo where he is being held, killing 53. Four soldiers also died.

The powerful military blamed the confrontation on “terrorists”. Mursi’s supporters call it a massacre and say those who died were praying peacefully when troops opened fire. “I am here to say ‘no’ to the military coup and ‘yes’ to Mursi,” who I see as my legitimate president, although I am not in the Brotherhood and nor did I vote for him,” said Ahmed Adel, a 22-year-old student, in downtown Cairo.

The army denies Mursi’s overthrow was a coup, saying it ousted him to enforce the will of the people after millions took to the streets at the end of June to demand his resignation. The Brotherhood contends it is the victim of a military crackdown, evoking memories of its suppression under autocrat Hosni Mubarak, toppled in an uprising in 2011.

Obama discusses status of Snowden with Putin

WASHINGTON, 13 July — US President Barack Obama discussed the status of Edward Snowden with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Friday, hours after the former US spy agency contractor made clear his intention to seek political asylum in Russia.

In their phone conversation, the two leaders “noted the importance of US-Russian bilateral relations and discussed a range of security and bilateral issues, including the status of Mr Edward Snowden and cooperation on counterterrorism in the lead-up to the Sochi Winter Olympics,” the White House said in a terse statement. Snowden, who has been marooned in the transit zone of Moscow’s Sheremetyevo airport since his arrival there on 23 June, disclosed his intention to seek asylum in Russia through his meeting with a group of Russian and foreign human rights activists, lawyers and parliamentarians earlier in the day. Russian lawmaker Vyacheslav Nikonov told reporters that the 30-year-old American has agreed to stop damaging US interests, a precondition set by Putin days earlier for Snowden to stay in Russia.

White House spokesman Jay Carney on Friday reiterated Washington’s call for Russia to hand over Snowden to face espionage charges back at home. “We continue to discuss with Russia our strongly held view that there is absolute legal justification for him to be expelled, for him to be returned to the United States to face the charges that have been brought against him for the unauthorized leaking of classified information,” he said at a regular press briefing.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the United Nations headquarters in New York, on 12 July, 2013. —REUTERS

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Members of the Muslim Brotherhood and supporters of deposed Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi gather at the Rabaa Adawiya square, where they are camping, in Cairo on 12 July, 2013. The Arabic text on the banner reads “Mursi is my president.” —REUTERS

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US military unveils Atlas humanoid robot

WASHINGTON, 13 July —The US military unveiled on Thursday one of its most-advanced humanoid robots known as Atlas, which was created to assist in future emergency situations, the American Forces Press Service reported on Friday.

The 1.9-metre tall, 150-kilogram Atlas robot, built by Boston Dynamics, is funded by the Pentagon’s Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), according to the report.

The Atlas robot can make a range of natural movements and has an onboard, real-time control computer, it said. The Atlas also boasts 28 hydraulically-actuated degrees of freedom, two hands, arms, legs, feet and a torso as well as an articulated sensor head that employs laser beams to measure distances, it said.

Seven copies of the robot are being provided to the teams to take part in a DARPA-funded competition in December 2014, with a $2 million-dollar prize to the one that programs their Atlas to best perform a rescue mission in a hypothetical scenario, said the report.

“These seven teams will see if their simulation-honed algorithms can run a real machine in real environments,” the report quoted DARPA Programme Manager Gill Pratt as saying. “We expect all the teams will be further refining their algorithms using both simulation and experimentation.”

Pratt said the agency hopes to employ the competition to prove that robots can be compatible in environments engineered for people — opening doors, climbing stairs and moving around, even in environments degraded by some sort of disaster.

DARPA also wants to demonstrate that robots can be made to use tools designed for people, from screwdrivers to fire trucks, and that robots can be supervised by people who aren’t trained to operate robots, Pratt added. —Xinhua

Microsoft pushes US Customs to enforce phone import ban

WASHINGTON, 13 July —Microsoft Corp, which won a ban last year on importing some phones made by a Google Inc subsidiary, filed a motion in a US court on Friday asking the US Bureau of Customs and Border Protection to enforce the measure.

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IAU president says Tibetan observatory to be best in Asia

LHASA, 13 July —An observatory that is under construction in Tibet is expected to become the best astronomical observatory in Asia after its completion, International Astronomical Union (IAU) President Norio Kaifu said.

The observatory, based in Tibet’s Ngari Prefecture, is located in an ideal place for astronomical monitoring due to its high altitude, transparent atmosphere and mild weather, Norio Kaifu said during an inspection tour in Tibet from 28 June to 1 July.

The Ngari observatory, perched at an altitude of 5,100 metres above sea level, can compete with Hawaii’s Mauna Kea Observatories, the world’s largest observatory for optical, infrared and submillimeter astronomy, he said.

The Ngari observatory, the first observatory built above 5,000 meters in the northern hemisphere, will also help to promote cooperation among Asian astronomers, he said.

The observatory will enable scientists from the Chinese mainland, Taiwan, Japan and the Republic of Korea to build large-scale telescopes and carry out joint research programs, said Yao Yongqiang, chief researcher with the National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The observatory, built on a total investment of more than 30 million yuan (4.87 million US dollars), is expected to be completed within ten years, Yao said.

A 0.5-metre telescope has been set up in the research to carry out research on planetary science, star formation and other astronomical projects, Yao said. The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has long been a popular location for stargazers.

Nokia’s buyout chances in focus ahead of results

Helsinki, 13 July —Next week could be crunch time for Nokia Oyj and its Chief Executive Stephen Elop in their battle to prove the Finnish mobile phone company can survive on its own. Investors will be scrutinizing second-quarter results to see whether there’s enough cash to stay with a turnaround plan which Elop said would take two years but is now into its third.

Elop’s bold bet in 2011 to adopt Microsoft Corp’s untested Windows Phone software has yet to pay off, with no sign of catching Samsung and Apple Inc in smartphones. Analysts also expect Thursday’s results to show a steep fall in handset shipments, led by a drop in sales of regular mobile phones as consumers switch to smartphones and cheaper models from Asian rivals.

Nokia’s weak market position has made it a perennial target of takeover speculation, but such deal talk has intensified in the past month after a media report said it had held abortive talks with Microsoft.

The company’s recent decision to buy Siemens AG’s stake in their joint venture Nokia Siemens Networks is seen straining its balance sheet further when the deal closes later this year.

The Microsoft logo is seen at their offices in Bucharest on 20 March, 2013. —REUTERS

International Astronomical Union (IAU) President Norio Kaifu

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Guests at Nokia’s unveiling of its new Lumia 1020 smartphone use the new phone’s 41-megapixel camera with a grip in New York on 11 July, 2013. —REUTERS

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**Wells Fargo rides high on ‘mortgage horse,’ but run may end soon**

**NEW YORK, 13 July**—The home loan business came through for Wells Fargo & Co (WFC.N) in the second quarter, helping the biggest US mortgage lender beat Wall Street’s profit expectations, despite fears that lending volume would drop as rates rose.

Rising mortgage rates, driven by expectations that the US Federal Reserve will eventually cut back its economic stimulus programme, are expected to weigh on banks’ mortgage business in the coming months. But Wells, the No 4 US bank by assets, long been the symbol for Wells Fargo. The bank’s shares were up 1.5 percent to $42.51 in afternoon trading on the New York Stock Exchange after touching a new 52-week high of $43.05 earlier in the session.

The stock has risen 21 percent this year, compared with a 25 percent rise in the KBW index of bank stocks.

**BFX:**“With Wells Fargo, there were a lot of doubts from large institutional investors who were shorting the shares leading into earnings because of the 30-year (mortgage) rate rising,” said Tom Jalics, a senior investment analyst with Key Private Bank.

“But it turns out the worry in investors’ minds was from a placebo effect — or mind over matter. Spinal fractures, however, can lead to more problems than just chronic pain. They have, for example, been tied to a doubled risk of death. Therefore, some believe the procedure may help reduce the risk of death in people with fractures. For the new study, the researchers used medical billing data for people on Medicare, the US health insurance for the elderly and disabled, between 2002 and 2006.

They identified 10,541 people who had spinal augmentation to treat their fractured back bones, and 115,851 people who used more conservative approaches, which typically include pain medicine and back braces or girdles.

**Surgery may not be better for spine fractures**

**NEW YORK, 13 July**—Researchers, who had so-called spinal augmentation had a similar likelihood of dying or having major complications as those who didn’t have the surgery.

“I can’t say there is no effect in patients who swear by their procedure, but in looking at objective measures we can’t say it’s effective,” said Dr. Brendan McCullough, the study’s lead author who did the research while at the University of Washington in Seattle. During spinal augmentation, doctors fill compression fractures —usually caused by the bone-thinning condition osteoporosis—in people’s vertebra with a bone cement.

Research has found that spinal augmentation relieves the pain of back fractures, but more recent studies suggest the procedure’s perceived benefits may be due to a placebo effect — or mind over matter. Spinal fractures, however, can lead to more problems than just chronic pain.

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**Air pollution linked to over 2 million deaths each year**

**WASHINGTON, 13 July**—US researchers claimed on Friday that human-caused outdoor air pollution may be responsible for over two million deaths worldwide each year. The study, published in the journal Environmental Research Letters, estimated that around 470,000 people die each year because of human-caused increases in ozone.

It also estimated that around 2.1 million deaths are caused each year by human-caused increases in fine particulate matter, tiny particles suspended in the air that can penetrate deep into the lungs, causing cancer and other respiratory disease. “Our estimates make outdoor air pollution among the most important environmental risk factors for health,” co-author of the study, Jason West, from the University of North Carolina, said in a statement. “Many of these deaths are estimated to occur in East Asia and South Asia, where population is high and air pollution is severe.”

In their study, the researchers simulated the concentrations of ozone and fine particulate matter in 1850, when the industrial era began, and in the year 2000. A total of 14 models simulated levels of ozone and six models simulated levels of fine particulate matter.

According to the study, the number of these deaths that can be attributed to changes in the climate since the industrial era is, however, relatively small. It estimated that a changing climate results in 1,500 deaths due to ozone and 2,200 deaths related to fine particulate matter each year. Climate change affects air quality in many ways, possibly leading to local increases or decreases in air pollution, it said. For instance, temperature and humidity can change the reaction rates which determine the formation or lifetime of pollutant, and rainfall can determine the time that pollutants can accumulate.

**Timing of first solid food tied to child diabetes risk**

**NEW YORK, 13 July**—When babies already at increased risk for type 1 diabetes had their first solid foods before four months of age or after six months, their chances of developing the disorder at least doubled, according to a new study. Four to six months is the recommended age window for all kids to start on solid foods, but the new results suggest timing could be even more important for babies at high risk for type 1 diabetes (T1D) because of genetic susceptibility.

The results weren’t totally surprising, according to senior author Jill Norris, since type 1 diabetes is a lifelong disease in which the immune system attacks the cells that make insulin and previous research has found that the development of certain immune cells is related to the introduction of solid foods. “We did not choose this window out of the blue,” said Norris, who studies chronic diseases like diabetes at the University of Colorado, Denver. But this was the first study to examine how many kids were actually diagnosed with diabetes.

“We think the clearest message for parents is to wait to introduce any solid foods until after their 4 month birthday,” Norris told Reuters Health in an email. “And when baby is ready, solid foods should be introduced by 6 months of age or soon thereafter, preferably while the mother is still breast-feeding the baby.” Norris and her coauthors followed 1,835 children at high risk for type 1 diabetes — based on genetic testing done at birth or family history— until they were eight years old. Fifty-three children were diagnosed with the disease.

**India ready for investment treaty talks with US**

**WASHINGTON, 13 July**—India is ready to begin talks with the United States on a bilateral investment treaty as part of its effort to reinvigorate ties with a valued trade partner, the country’s commerce and industry minister said on Friday. “We have said that yes, we are ready for it. We are in favour,” Anand Sharma told reporters after meetings with US Trade Representative Michael Froman and other US officials.

Sharma said there was no date for the first round of talks on the pact, which would set terms and condition for US and Indian investment in each other’s country. “No, it was discussed today, and we have signaled our acceptance,” Sharma said. The United States and China agreed this week to restart talks on a bilateral investment treaty, a move welcomed by the US business community as a sign of new Chinese President Xi Jinping’s commitment to economic reform.

US business groups have been anxious for a breakthrough from India and were disappointed when a date for talks was not announced after Secretary of State John Kerry visited the country in late June.
Obama emphasizes US commitment to Syrian rebels in Saudi call

WASHINGTON, 13 July—President Barack Obama told Saudi Arabia’s king on Friday that he is committed to providing US support to Syrian rebels who have been waiting for shipments of light arms that have been stalled in Washington. In a phone call, Obama and King Abdullah also discussed events in Egypt a week after the Egyptian military ousted elected President Mohamed Mursi.

No US arms have reached the Syrian rebels, who are struggling to hold back an offensive by the Syrian government. The American weapons have been caught in a Washington imbroglio as some members of the US Congress fear the arms will end up in the hands of Islamist militants. A White House statement said the two leaders discussed the civil war in Syria and expressed strong concerns about the impact of the conflict on the region. “The President emphasized the United States’ continued commitment to provide support to the Syrian Opposition Coalition and the Supreme Military Council to strengthen the opposition,” the statement said. On Egypt, Obama expressed concern about deadly violence that broke out after the military took over. He stressed his desire for an inclusive political process that will enable an early return to a democratically elected civilian government in Egypt, the White House said.

304,000 evacuated for Typhoon Soulik in E China

Fuzhou, 13 July — A total of 304,000 people have been evacuated in east China’s Fujian Province, as Typhoon Soulik began to hit the province on Saturday, the provincial flood control headquarters said.

The National Meteorological Centre (NMC) said Soulik, the seventh typhoon this year, made landfall in the southernmost prefecture, where public antipathy has grown to ward the government’s US base relocation plan and US aircraft deployment, party sources said on Saturday. Wind speeds at the typhoon’s centre reached a top speed of 118 km per hour as it landed, the NMC said. All maritime transport to Taiwan has been suspended. Operations in the ports of Fuzhou, Xiamen and Meizhou Bay have also been suspended, according to the provincial headquarters.

Public transportation in the city of Ninge, which is expected to be hit hard by the typhoon, has been suspended since 9:30 am Saturday. A total of 142 flights have been canceled at the Changle International Airport of Fuzhou, the provincial capital, since Friday night. High-speed train services have also been suspended.

Some 5,500 soldiers have been deployed to 18 counties to engage in rescue efforts. The National Marine Environmental Forecasting Centre on Saturday maintained a top-level warning for sea waves caused by Typhoon Soulik. During Saturday daytime and night, Soulik is expected to whip up sea waves as high as 6 to 10 metres in the southern part of the East China Sea, 16 to 20 metres in the northern part of the East China Sea, 12 to 15 metres in the northern part of Fujian and 9 to 12 metres in the southern part of Fujian, Xinhua said. Some 3,500 vessels near the Diaoyu Islands of the East China Sea, including those of the navy, are to stay at sea, Xinhua reported.

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Abe plans to stump in Okinawa from Tuesday

TOKYO, 13 July—Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will visit Okinawa on Tuesday and Wednesday to stump for his ruling party’s upper house election candidates in the southernmost prefecture, where public antipathy has grown toward the government’s US base relocation plan and US aircraft deployment, party sources said on Saturday.

On Tuesday, Abe will give speeches on the main island of Okinawa and attend a meeting for a candidate to be held in Ginowan, which hosts the US Marine Corps’ Futenma Air Station, the sources said.

Okinawa is among the constituencies where LDP candidates are thought to be facing a tough challenge in the 21 July House of Councillors election. It has been picked for stump duty by LDP executives in the party’s campaign strategy.

Antipathy toward US bases has risen in Okinawa since the deployment in October last year of the MV-22 Osprey aircraft, which has a history of crashes, at the Futenma base. Additional Ospreys will be deployed at the base as early as next month.

Despite local opposition, Abe’s government is also pushing for the Futenma base to be relocated within Okinawa to Nago, sticking to a bilateral agreement between the United States and Japan.

Emergency crew stands near the tail section of a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, operated by Ethiopian Airlines, which caught fire at Britain’s Heathrow airport in this 12 July, 2013 still image. —Reuters

At least six dead as French train derails

BRETEGNY-SUR-ORGE, (France), 13 July—At least six people died and 22 were seriously injured when a train derailed and hit the platform at a station in central France on Friday, leaving several carriages torn open and one lying on its side, officials said.

Local officials said dozens of other passengers were being treated in nearby hospitals for minor injuries, and Interior Minister Manuel Valls said the death toll could rise.

The train — a regional service that travels more slowly than France’s TGV express trains — veered off the track en route from Paris to the city of Limoges at the station of Bretegny-sur-Orge, 26 km (16 miles) south of Paris.

President Francois Hollande said there would be a thorough investigation into what had happened.

It said six of the train’s carriages derailed. The train had not been scheduled to stop at Bretegny-sur-Orge and passengers told local media it was travelling fast as it approached the station.

TV images showed one of the carriages smashed against a platform at the station, 26 km (16 miles) south of Paris. Trapped passengers were still being helped to safety.

Passengers told local media the victims had been crushed or electrocuted, and many of those hurt had been hit by flying glass from the train windows.

“We felt a big impact—as if we had run up onto something—then the train started to keel over and it came off the track. I was in the carriageway that fell over,” a passenger named Annie told France Info radio.

France’s last major rail accident was in 1988, when a commuter train headed into Paris’s Gare de Lyon crashed into a stationary train, killing 56 people, after its brakes failed.

People look at a derailed intercity train after an accident at Bretegny-sur-Orge train station near Paris in this 12 July, 2013 picture provided by tigrouet via Instagram.—Reuters

Boeing Dreamliner catches fire at London’s Heathrow airport

LONDON, 13 July—A Boeing 787 Dreamliner operated by Ethiopian Airlines caught fire at Britain’s Heathrow airport on Friday in a fresh blow for the US plane maker whose new model was grounded for three months after one high-tech battery caught fire and another overheated.

External scorching from the fire was located in a different part of the aircraft from the cells containing batteries, and the cause of the fire was unknown.

Boeing shares closed down 4.7 percent at $101.87, knocking $3.8 billion off the company’s market capitalization after television footage showed the Dreamliner surrounded by firefighting foam at Heathrow. Heathrow briefly closed both its runways to deal with the fire which broke out while the aircraft was parked at a remote stand. There were no passengers aboard the plane.

Pictures of the plane at Heathrow showed an area just in front of the tail that appeared to be scorched.

The Dreamliner’s two batteries are in electrical compartments located low down and near the front and middle of the plane, while the visible damage to the Ethiopian plane appears to be on top of the fuselage, further toward the rear, according to video from the scene. “A Boeing 787 Dreamliner suffered an on board internal fire,” a Heathrow spokeswoman said. “The plane is now parked at a remote parking stand several hundred me ters away from any passenger terminals.”—Reuters
Thanks to combined efforts of Township General Administration Department, Township Development Affairs Committee and other groups to ease the traffic jams, vendors on Hledan 50-ft road in Kamayut Township in Yangon were seen in perfect harmony with the traffic on 4 July. MMAL-163

Tamu market reopens after being closed over security concerns

Kalay, 13 July—Nan Falon market in border township Tamu in Sagaing Region reopened on 11 July after being closed by the consensus of shopkeepers for security reasons in the aftermath of the extortion of money by an Indian rebel from an Indian merchant that took place near the market.

The Indian merchant who had been held captive by the rebel was freed by a group of shopkeepers of the market. After the event, they unanimously decided to close the market for three days from 8 to 10 July to avoid any possible danger.

The market is at the centre of border trade between Myanmar and India. “We Tamu Nan Falon market ever give precedence to the order. If it prevails, the region will develop,” a shopkeeper explained.

The market was established more than 50 years ago and had trading relations with the Indian merchants since then.

MMAL-Shin Nay Min

Patheingyi fire burns down 11 houses, one silo

Mandalay, 13 July—A fire broke out in Patheingyi Township in Mandalay Region yesterday, causing the loss equivalent to K 155.1 million. It is allegedly started by a house of U Soe Tin and wife Daw Thet Wai and turned eight houses in Aung Thukha ward, three in Thi Cho Gon ward and a silo to ashes.

Mandalay Region Development Affairs Minister U Aung Moung and officials rushed to the scene with 43 fire engines and 200 firefighters who put out the fire one hour later.

Some 50 families from 11 households were sheltered in Taik Chan Hla Pagoda and 200 firefighters put out the fire one hour later.

MMAL-Nan Myo Thar

Scientific Palethwe approach introduced

KyaukTan, 13 July—A ceremony to introduce scientific approach in Palethwe hybrid paddy plantation to ensure 100-basket yield per acre was held in 10-acre farm of farmer U Tham Win in Nyaungwai village-tract in Kyauktan Township in Yangon South District in Yangon Region on 11 July morning.

The move is aimed at boosting incomes of farmers. The ceremony was attended by Deputy Head of Region Agriculture Department U Myint Lwin, District Agriculture Department U Kyaw Kyaw, Head of Township Agriculture Department U Hlay Maung, Head of Township Settlement and Land Records Department U Saw San and staff. They attended to the needs of the farmers.

MMAL-019

The best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago. The second best time is now.
BRTs for Yangon’s traffic snarl-up

A news report carried in a recent Kyemon daily brought the good news to Yangonites that the commercial heart of Myanmar will be introduced to a Bus Rapid Transit-BRT system and the city’s mass transit system will be efficient to a certain degree soon. It is a ray of hope for commuters who are always frustrated with traffic woes and robbed of their priceless time every day in the traffic moving at a snail’s pace.

First of all, we welcome a plan for introduction of the BRT system in Yangon where dawn-to-dusk congested roads fuel public dissatisfaction with existing urban bus service which is not punctual and reliable. We are fairly optimistic that the high quality bus transit system can work on nose-to-tail vehicles on the main bus routes where traffic is frequently brought to a grinding halt and can serve as a cost-effective solution to the commercial hub’s traffic snarl-up.

BRT system is designed to transport a large number of people to and from their destinations at one time without being held up in traffic congestions as quality buses run on dedicated lanes and can carry up to some 120 passengers. Moreover, the BRT system is a cost-benefit urban mobility as it cost four times less than the sky transit efficiency in Yangon.

Public transport bus service is a must for public convenience. Investing in the high performance BRT system is designed to transport a large number of people to and from their destinations at one time without being held up in traffic congestions as quality buses run on dedicated lanes and can carry up to some 120 passengers. Moreover, the BRT system is a cost-benefit urban mobility as it cost four times less than the sky transit efficiency in Yangon.

Firstly, the country is just one land entity with both land borders and a long coastline providing it with both terrestrial and maritime accessibilities. Myanmar is not a landlocked country for an isolated existence, but a country, sandwiched between two most populous great countries—India to the west and China to the northeast, thus receiving influence and impact of cultures of both neighbours, tangible and intangible.

Physical features determine Myanmar’s geography and history. Thickly forested mountains and hill ranges face north to south. Similarly its aquatic bodies in the forms of rivers, streams, falls, springs and lakes follow the same north to south direction creating valleys and plains of the same north to south design. Though generally tropical climate predominates, variations create differences—be it a monsoon in the south and along the coastline, dry and arid in the rain shadow middle areas and temperate and cold in the northern north, where, amazingly, there are year-round snow capped mountain peaks that are actually offshoots of great Himalayas. Into this peculiar patterns of climate and physical features human habitation originated appropriately, becoming nucleuses of indigenous ethnic groups who in course of time came to mix, mingle and assimilate happily with migrants. They form a mosaic of Myanmar anthropology today.

The wealth of natural resources above and underground and under water clearly explain the earliest existence of living creatures that go through the cycle of Darwinian evolution for aeons of time. Fossils discovered by chance form the first scientific remains of early man. “Anthropithicus Enectus” [the first man who could walk upright on two legs] which they scientifically term called “Pondaung Primates”, honouring the name of the place near Monywa, Myanmar. Much to the surprise and marvel of them, after assaying these fossils in the laboratories of their respective universities they gave out their consensus of their results that “Pondaung Primates” fossils proved over 40 million years earlier than hitherto accepted oldest primate fossils found in the Nile valley. This is merely a piece of story of Myanmar’s cultural heritage.

Since the two well-known geologists Dr. Morvius and Dr. de Terra chance-found stone tools of man of Palaeolithic Age in the dry zone area of mid Myanmar Yanangyaung and Magway, which they scientifically examined and confirmed by their colleagues as the stone implements of the old stone Age, Myanmar has become a paradise for scientific researchers. Morvius and de Terra fittingly christened their finds as “Anyathian culture”. Myanmar people call upper Myanmar “Aya” and lower Myanmar “Akyy”. Since they found old stone implements in upper Myanmar they gave due honour by terming them “Anyathian culture”. Since then Anyathian culture has been used in the wider context of Myanmar cultural heritage. Later, researchers who followed their footsteps discovered human settlements in coastal regions as well.

Though the country seems so remote and less known worldwide, Myanmar’s natural resources and cultural heritages are long standing and the world boasts of it. New horizons in fields of education and research reflect the new frontiers. After Myanmar regained independence on January 4, 1948, she became a member of the world organization UN in that year, and so in the activities of the UN and its associated agencies including UNESCO. Myanmar participated with full cooperation and spirit and was committed to all international obligations and agreements. In the Myanmar Agenda 21 “which was the happy outcome of the world’s Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Myanmar, like all other attendant countries at that Summit had undertaken to plan, programme and implement the preservation and protection of our planet the Earth for future generations in the 21st century.” It is specifically stated, defined and outlined regarding the preservation of physical (natural) environment and cultural environment. In defining the meaning and demarcating the extent of these two types of environments, Myanmar Agenda 21 covers specific domains with two aspects—tangible and intangible. Especially in the case of cultural environment, three types are clearly defined—(1) cultural environment created by nature only (2) cultural environment created by nature and man combined and (3) cultural environment created by man only.

A single piece of land, the second largest territorial size among ASEAN ten-member nations, is Myanmar noted for its bio-diversities and cultural heritages, both natural, man and nature—combined creation and man-made. Though a tropical country like other ASEAN member nations, unique geographical and climatic features bestowed upon Myanmar many striking specialties. Firstly, the country is just one land entity with both land borders and a long coastline providing it with both terrestrial and maritime accessibilities. Myanmar is not a landlocked country for an isolated existence, but a country, sandwiched between two most populous great countries—India to the west and China to the northeast, thus receiving influence and impact of cultures of both neighbours, tangible and intangible.

The wealth of natural resources above and underground and under water clearly explain the earliest existence of living creatures that go through the cycle of Darwinian evolution for aeons of time. Fossils discovered by chance form the first scientific remains of early man. “Anthropithicus Enectus” [the first man who could walk upright on two legs] which they scientifically term called “Pondaung Primates”, honouring the name of the place near Monywa, Myanmar. Much to the surprise and marvel of them, after assaying these fossils in the laboratories of their respective universities they gave out their consensus of their results that “Pondaung Primates” fossils proved over 40 million years earlier than hitherto accepted oldest primate fossils found in the Nile valley. This is merely a piece of story of Myanmar’s cultural heritage.

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U Bein Bridge: This 1.6 kilometre (one mile)-long wooden bridge across Taung Thaman Lake was built with discarded palace timbers which have stood firm for more than 150 years.—MYANMAR HOTELS & TOURISM GUIDE 2013

Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

Union FM felicitates French counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 14 July—U Wiinna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, on the occasion of the Bastille Day of the French Republic, which falls on 14 July 2013.—MNA
Only mutual respect and trust, understanding and religious...

(from page 1)

religion as a political tool in their interests and take legal actions against those people. He called for providing assistance to those victims, regardless of races and religions and remedies for their trauma. He urged local people to join hands in government’s cooperation with Civil Societies Organizations (CSOs) town elders and respective international organizations.

Myanmar, a paradise...

(from page 8)

international arenas. Her isolated far crises are either unheard or ignored or unheeded. Nevertheless, individual scientists, researchers and scholars are not wanting. They do visit Myanmar despite many difficulties and obstructions in the formalities of passports and visas.

Myanmar in the last five decades was not entirely “isolated.” Despite its cautious foreign policy dictated by the existing international political climate, doors were open to friends, well-wishers, scholars and scientists, who courageously and honestly exposed to the world “what they see, discover, and feel of their research findings in Myanmar and clamour for Myanmar’s deserving place in the world.”

A turning point came with the assumption of state office by the present government under the leadership of President U Thein Sein. Though barely over two years on the road to democracy, the process, the speed, momentum, and the results so far, together with sincerity and honesty of the leaders have earned admiration and even marvel in international communities, organizations and fora including UNESCO.

Among many cultural heritage sites throughout the country, those most well-known, emerged in the limelight of the world especially UNESCO. With the cooperation of foreign and local experts and scholars attempts are afoot for the inclusion of Myanmar cultural heritages in the World’s List. The listing of “Kuthodaw marble Inscriptions shrines in the Register of World’s Memory by UNESCO in June this year was Myanmar’s debut on the World’s cultural Heritage Theatre.”

Now both UNESCO and Myanmar are working for the inclusion of cultural heritage sites of Myanmar in the UNESCO List. In the lineup are the three ancient cities—Pehtho, Sri Kestra and Hanlin. Other cultural heritage sites in States and Regions of the country are queuing up.

Now the country is open 360 degree and the influx of foreigners with different interests into the country is booming. International attention focuses on Myanmar’s progress and prosperity augurs well for Myanmar cultural heritage.

Higher competitiveness...

(from page 16)

relaxation of international economic sanctions against the country. He called on private sector to use sophisticated machinery and to apply modern techniques in value-added production process so that competitiveness of private sector will be improved in ASEAN market. He called for government-private sector cooperation to be able to reduce the transaction cost.

He highlighted participation of all for betterment of supply chain, factories and workshops and more job opportunities. He urged all merchants to work hand in hand. Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint called for increasing export of value-added products and import of goods that can help boost long-term economic development. He highlighted the federation’s leading role in an attempt to integrate Myanmar’s economic entities into global supply chain.

As of 13 June, 2012, Myanmar would have to enjoy (Generalized System of Preference) GSP scheme with retroactive benefit for exports. He called for making strenuous efforts for exportation of quality products.

After that, UMFCCI President U Win Aung explained the facts about the association and accepted K 200 million donated by UMFCCI Patron Chairman of KBZ Bank Ltd U Aung Ko Win.

General Secretary Dr Myo Thet submitted annual financial report. Afterwards, Director-General U Hla Maw Oo of Directorate of Trade announced the name of elected CEC members and executive members for (2013-2016).—MNA
Knowledge shared about Myanmar insurance services

**BAGO, 13 July**—Myanmar Insurance of Bago Region gave an educative talk on insurance activities at the meeting hall of Kyunghtha Highway Bus Terminal, here, on 10 July.

The regional in charge of Myanmar Insurance of Bago Region shared knowledge on various kinds of insurance services being provided by the Myanmar Insurance, fire insurance and general insurance and travel insurance, and then answered the queries raised by those present at the talk.

It was attended by region level departmental heads, the district police force commander, the chairman of district/township Private Bus Lines Control Committees, the secretaries, businessmen and officials concerned from Myanmar Insurance. **Kyemon-588**

**Milk fed to schoolchildren at BEPS in Twantay**

**TWANTAY, 13 July**—Milk feeding process is in progress at basic education schools for ensuring fitness and health of schoolchildren. Head of Twantay Township Information and Public Relations Department U Thut Oo and family fed milk for a day to 194 students at Basic Education Primary School in Konwetchaung Village in Twantay Township of Yangon South District recently. **Kyemon-MyoHlaing (Twantay)**

**Complaints for bribery and corruption**

Complaints about bribery and corruption can be addressed to the Anti-Corruption Committee, the President Office at Office No. 18, Nay Pyi Taw, by anyone with his/her name, CSC No., address and firm evidence.

Action will be taken against those who got involved in bribery and corruption in accordance with the law after a thorough investigation. **MNA**

**Environmental conservation and mangrove forest tree planting activities in Maungtaw**

**MAUNGTAW, 13 July**—The environmental conservation and planting of mangrove trees was held outside the border post near Pyinphyu Creek in Paungza Village-tract in Maungtaw Township on 9 July.

First, Commander of Western Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko Naing made an opening speech and staff Officer U Ko Ko Tun of Township Forest Department explained the purpose of tree planting. Altogether 4000 saplings were planted by district/region level departmental officials, Tatmadawmen, townsenders and NGOs at the ceremony. **Kyemon-Maungtaw District IPRD**

**Bilin, 13 July**—Bilin Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Township Health Department are providing health care services to people at Shwehle village monastery here on 9 July.

Chairperson of Township MCWA Daw Thinzar Win made an opening speech. Next, the health staff gave educative talks on TB disease, anti-DHF and traditional medicines. They responded to the questions raised by those present.

Theresponsibleperson took preventative measures. The township traditional medicine clinic gave free health care services to 41 villagers. **Kyemon-Township IPRD**

**Business talks between Myanmar and Japan**

**NAY PYI TAW, 13 July**—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Win Aungmet with Executive Managing Director Mr. Masaki Takahara of Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Yangon-based, at the UMFFCCI’s Office on 9 July.

The meeting focused on visit of Japanese entrepreneurs to Myanmar, separately holding meetings between Myanmar and Japanese entrepreneurs on making investments in industry, garment and export and import sectors, paying a visit of UMFFCCI President-led Myanmar entrepreneurs to Japan, and bilateral cooperation. **MNA**

**Crime**

**Drugs, arms and ammunition seized in Hpa-an Tsp**

**NAY PYI TAW, 13 July**—Police of Kayin State Police Force Commander’s Office, acting on tip-off, together with witnesses seized Win Maung, 52 of roadside shop near Shwedaw Village in Hpa-an Township at 5.30 pm on 8 July and seized 58 WY brand stimulant tablets weighing 5.8 grams worth K 191,400.

While the team was searching the house, 20 feet from opposite roadside, Lu Deik, 41 opened fire three time with the use of M-22 to the squad. The policemen after opening fire twice at him. The police seized 48 pink WY brand stimulants weighing 4.8 million worth K 158,400, one M-16, one magazine, 20 5.36 rounds of ammunition, one M-22, one magazine, 11 7.62×39 rounds of ammunition, 20 .30 rounds of ammunition, US-made M-57 grenade with fuse and one CDMA mobile phone.

The police squad also arrested Sanay Tin (a) Soe Soe, 30, of Shwedaw Village in addition to one Mighty-X car and three motorcycles from the shed.

Htonaing Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against Win Maung, Lu Deik and Sanay Tin under Sections 15/16(c)/20(a)/21 of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law and Section 19-a of the Provisionsal Arms Law. **Kyemon-Ko Ko Yupa**

**National Sports**

Prizes awarded in Sagaing University Rector’s Cup

**SAGAING, 13 July**—The final match of Sagaing University Rector’s Cup Inter-Subject Men’s Football Tournament for 2013 Academic Year took place at the sport grounds of District Sports and Physical Education Department on 10 July evening.

In the final match, Physics Team beat Arts All Stars Team 6-0.

Among the spectators were Sagaing University Rector In-Charge Dr Thura Oo, Cooperative University (Sagaing) Rector In-Charge Dr Yi Yi Win, the professors and faculty members, students, Township Development Committee Chairman U Zaw Win and officials, invited guests and football fans.

At the prize awarding ceremony, Rector Dr Thura Oo presented championship trophy to Physics Team, Tamadhi Saw Mill and Nyein Thiri Hotel owner U Nyein Zaw Tun, cash awards to first and second winning teams.

Then, the officials awarded gold, silver and bronze medals to first, second and third winning teams and best player awarders. **Kyemon-Myo Win**

**Heavy rain causes landslide, uproots trees in Momauk Tsp**

**NAY PYI TAW, 13 July**—A heavy rain in Momauk Township, Kachin State, caused a landslide and uprooted trees that blocked Mile Post No 17 on the Momauk-Lweje Road on 8 July.

The block to the road has been cleared up by the Momauk Township Public Works.

Momauk No 2 Basic Education Primary School was also shut on that day due to the overflow water from the Momauk River which also inundated the low-lying area in Momauk. The school reopened the next day as the flood receded slowly. Meanwhile, a bridge across the Tapan River near Manaung Village was swept away by the flood water of the river. **Kyemon-Ko Ko Yupa**
Japanese farmers struggle to make election choices over TPP

Tokyo, 13 July — As voting for the upper house election approaches, Japanese farmers and their lobby groups are staging protests to see who will best speak up for their interests.

While they have been a traditional support base for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, many have grown skeptical about backing its candidates after the LDP chief, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, announced in March an intention to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, creating one of the world’s largest free trade zones.

The pact, now being negotiated by 11 nations and set to involve Japan from late July, is estimated to boost the country’s gross domestic product by 3.2 trillion yen but may risk losing the time-slash Japan’s agricultural output by 3 trillion yen from 7.1 trillion yen if all tariffs are eliminated without compensation measures.

Alarmed, the Hokkaido agricultural cooperative has decided not to back the LDP candidate fielded in its prefecture’s proportional representation block for the first time in its history. Some other prefectural cooperatives have also decided to support candidates from opposition parties.

But whether they have the power to sway the overall outcome of the House of Councillors election on 21 July remains murky as other agricultural cooperatives still support LDP candidates, with some local officials saying they deem it more important to keep up their ties with the LDP given that the party is expected to score a resounding victory.

“We are adamantely opposed to the aspect of the TPP that will devastate Japan’s agriculture, but the LDP and the government have said they will protect it for sure,” said Akira Banzai, president of the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperative Societies, at a Press conference last month.

He urged the LDP-led government to keep its promise, saying the government backed LDP candidates who share its stance against the TPP in the general election in December through which the party returned to power.

“Politics is about trust,” he said.

Even without the impact of the TPP, Japan’s agriculture faces many challenges, including the rapid aging of farmers and often-low profitability.

According to the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry’s white paper for fiscal 2012, the average age of farmers topped 66 and is almost at 70 for rice farmers. Among cattle farmers, the percentage of those with sales of 10 million yen or greater was 85 percent, but it was just 1 percent for rice farmers.

The government has taken measures to ease the worries of farmers by including in its growth strategy a plan to double agricultural income by raising crop exports to 1 trillion yen by 2020 from the current 450 billion yen among other steps.

But economic experts have criticized the plan as unrealistic and called for bringing peace to the region as a prerequisite for economic growth.

A worker maintains the green rooftop of a building at the Beijing University of Technology. Photo shows a busy street in Blutan’s capital Thimphu on 11 July, 2013. — Kyodo News

First verdict on Delhi gangrape case deferred till 25 July

New Delhi, 13 July — A juvenile court Thursday deferred till 25 July the first verdict in the horrific and fatal gangrape case of a 23-year-old medical student by six accused on a moving bus in the Indian capital in December last year, the public prosecutor said.

Public prosecutor Madhav Khurana said that the Juvenile Justice Board had finished the trial of one of the accused, who was actually a minor at the time of the incident, but not enough for a conviction and the judgment, “The court has completed the hearing. The order has been deferred to 25 July,” he told the media in the national capital.

The accused, whose name has been withheld as he was a minor at the time of the incident, is charged with rape, murder, destroying evidence, and other crimes, including kidnapping. If convicted, he faces up to three years in a reform facility as he was below 18 years of age when he had participated in the gangrape. The prosecution has described the juvenile as the “most brutal of the six accused.” — Xinhua

Pakistan sees multiple challenges to Afghan peace process

Islamabad, 13 July — Pakistan admitted on Thursday that the Afghan reconciliation process faces many challenges but all sides will have to show patience to achieve the goal of elusive peace.

Earlier this week, comments came days after the Afghan Taliban temporarily closed their office in Qatar, dashing hopes for beginning of the long-awaited process. “Pakistan is of the view that reconciliation is the only way forward for bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry said.

Responding to the queries of media persons at this weekly news briefing in Islamabad about the reported closure of Taliban office in Doha, the Foreign Office spokesperson said there are many challenges in the reconciliation process and Pakistan has always called for patience and perseverance to settle the Afghan issue.

The Taliban office was closed after President Hamid Karzai objected at the Taliban white flag and their plaque of the “Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan” the name they had used during their 1996-2001 rule.

Karzai and his aides had termed the Taliban office as a parallel government. The Qatari authorities later removed the Taliban flag and the plaque. “All stakeholders should be engaged for the positive outcome of the reconciliation process,” Chaudhry said. — Xinhua
At least 10 injured in partial building collapse in Chinatown, NYC

NEW YORK, 13 July — At least 10 people were injured, three of them critical, after a building partially collapsed in Manhattan’s Chinatown on Thursday, according to fire officials.

The victims suffered from burns and smoke inhalation, the officials said.

The accident happened in a beauty salon in the rear of the building, but the cause of the collapse was not immediately clear. Initial reports from the scene suggested it was caused by a gas explosion.

“We had a fire and an explosion on the first floor. We had minimum collapse but heavy fire on the first floor with extension to the second and third floor,” Fire official Robert Boyce said. Four firefighters suffered minor injuries during the rescue, he added.

The building had previous codes violations but it’s unclear if they had anything to do with the explosion, according to fire officials.

S Africa, US forces to conduct joint exercise

CAPE TOWN, 13 July — The South African and US armies (SANDF) will conduct a joint exercise in Eastern Cape to raise preparedness for intervention in an unstable country, it was announced on Thursday.

The exercise, code-named Shared Accord 13, is a joint peacekeeping and humanitarian exercise. It is part of the efforts by the US Army Africa (USARAF) to incorporate a partner nation in an exercise prior to going to Africa.

Turkey not to risk ties with Egypt over differences on Morsi’s removal

ANKARA, 13 July — Relations between Turkey and Egypt will survive the recent hiccup caused by the Egyptian army’s deposition of President Mohamed Morsi in response to millions of protesters’ demand, Turkish analysts believe.

Turkey has taken a strong position condemning what it called a “military coup” that removed Egypt’s first democratically elected president from power and criticized the United States and the EU for not terming the army intervention “a coup.”

Most rhetoric of Ankara on Egypt stems from its domestic concerns as the country suffered a series of military coups in its modern history, Hasan Kambolat, Director of Centre for Middle East Strategic Studies (ORSAM), told Xinhua.

However, “I do not expect any serious deterioration in bilateral relations between the two countries,” he anticipated.

On Wednesday night, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan seemed to have softened his criticism on developments in Egypt. He said Turkey had to deal with the grave consequences of coups and that he would not want “the Egyptian people” suffering from same problems.

Erdogan’s comments came after Egypt had summoned Turkish Ambassador Duygu Arıv Boztali one day before to protest what it views as Ankara’s interference in Egyptian domestic affairs.

The fact that Turkey did not retaliate by summoning the Egyptian ambassador signals that Turkey wants to maintain strong ties with Egypt under the provisional government that has the backing of the military.

A Turkish diplomatic source, speaking to Xinhua on condition of anonymity, ruled out any severance of ties with Egypt. “We have no intention whatsoever to suspend our ties with Egypt and do not plan to recall our ambassador in Cairo,” Kerim Balci, editor-in-chief of Turkish Review, agreed that Turkey’s own experience with the military is the major factor behind Turkish tough reactions to Morsi’s removal.

“Turkey has suffered from various kinds of military interventions throughout its late Ottoman and republican history,” Balci said. “What happened and what will happen in Egypt is indirectly but strongly relevant to what happened and what will happen in Turkey.”

Ankara stood out from the crowd in its strong condemnation against the Egyptian army’s ouster of Morsi as some oil-rich Gulf countries rushed to support the new government with billions of US dollars in loans.

China’s compulsory education to cover more disabled children

BEIJING, 13 July — Chinese education authorities on Thursday vowed more efforts to enable access to compulsory education for the 80,000 registered disabled children of school age who are not currently receiving equal schooling as their peers.

Various measures including allowing them to learn in regular classes will be implemented by the Ministry of Education, Xinhua learned from the ministry. China had 378,800 disabled students attending the country’s 1,853 schools for the disabled by the end of last year, representing 108 per 10,000 school-age children, the ministry said.

Father of Cambodian PM dies at age of 90

PHNOM PENH, 13 July — Hun Neang, the father of Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, died of natural causes at the age of 90, according to an obituary by his relatives on Friday.

“We are all in deep sorrow over the passing away of Hun Neang, who was father, grandfather and great grandfather, in the early morning of Friday at the age of 90,” said the obituary.

The funeral is being held at the Prime Minister Hun Sen’s residence near the Independence Monument in Phnom Penh until next Wednesday, it said.

Hun Neang was a person who had devoted himself to Buddhism and had built a lot of Buddhist pagodas and schools in Cambodia. According to his biography, Hun Neang had 6 children, 30 grandchildren and 66 great grandchildren.

His wife, Dy Pok, died in 1998 at the age of 79.
Justin Bieber apologizes to Bill Clinton for abusing him

LOS ANGELES, 13 July—Singer Justin Bieber, who was filmed while urinating in a mop bucket of a restaurant and saying “F**k Bill Clinton”, has reportedly apologized to the 47-year-old Mendes for the incident. Bieber told Clinton that there was anything he could do for the Clinton Global Initiative, he would love to help.

Clinton, in turn, reportedly told Bieber to focus on the good that he can do for the world and to keep an eye on his friends (one of whom leaked the video).

Mendes has been rumoured as the director of the latest Bond project for months, but his participation was not a certainty while he was involved in the creation of a stage musical version of children’s writer Roald Dahl’s “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory”, which opened last month.

“I am very pleased that by giving me the time I need to honour all my theatre commitments, the producers have made it possible for me to direct Bond 24,” said Mendes in the statement. Mendes has long background in theatre direction and burst on to the movie scene by winning an Academy Award for his debut feature “American Beauty” starring Kevin Spacey. —Reuters

Filmmaker Sam Mendes to direct Daniel Craig in James Bond 24

LONDON, 13 July—Sam Mendes will direct Daniel Craig as 007 in the 24th instalment of the blockbuster James Bond film franchise about the fictional British spy, its producers said on Thursday.

The film is set for release in the autumn of 2015 and follows on the success of Mendes-directed predecessor “Skyfall”, which earned $1.1 billion at the box office worldwide and was the highest-grossing film of all time in Britain, producers Michael G Wilson and Barbara Broccoli said in a statement.

The screenplay for the Sony Pictures Entertainment (6758.T) and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc MGMYR.UL film will be written by John Logan, who also worked on “Skyfall”.

“Following the extraordinary success of ‘Skyfall’, we’re really excited to be working once again with Daniel Craig, Sam Mendes and John Logan,” Wilson and Broccoli said.

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Halle Berry, Olivier Martinez to marry this week?

LOS ANGELES, 13 July—Actress Halle Berry and fiance Olivier Martinez are reportedly planning to get married this week.

The couple is expecting a child and they were spotted leaving LAX with Halle Berry’s daughter Nahla in tow, reported E! Online.

Berry, 46, had vowed never to wed again after the end of her second marriage but the actress admitted that her engagement to Martinez, 47, came as a surprise last year. This would mark the third marriage for Berry, who previously tied the knot to David Justice in 1993 and singer Eric Béart in 2001.

Nahla is Berry’s child from her relationship with Gabriel Aubry. —PTI

Halle Berry and fiance Olivier Martinez are expecting a child together

George Clooney to receive BAFTA honour

LOS ANGELES, 13 July—Actor George Clooney will be honoured for his achievements by officials at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA). Clooney, BAFTA Los Angeles chair-man Gary Dartnall reads: “George Clooney is without question one of our industry’s true icons. His work has captivated audiences from all corners of the globe, and BAFTA Los Angeles is proud to be celebrating his immeasurable contributions to our craft.” —PTI

Halle Berry will be honoured with the Stanley Kubrick Britannia Award for Excellence in Film.

Kristen Stewart texts Robert Pattinson

LOS ANGELES, 13 July—Actress Kristen Stewart reportedly sent a message to her ex-boyfriend, actor Robert Pattinson and his rumoured girlfriend Riley Keough, to find out if they are dating.

Pattinson is said to be dating late singer Elvis Presley’s actress granddaughter Keough, who also worked with Stewart in The Runaways. And Stewart is clearly not happy about it.

“Kristen is furious and has texted Rob and called Riley to find out what is going on, but apparently none of her calls have been answered.” femalefirst.co.uk

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Pattinson is believed to have first met Keough through Stewart. “Rob only knows Riley because of Kristen. Now they’ve been inseparable in the last few weeks and have been having low key dates at his Los Angeles home,” said the source. The source said Kristen is “seething” even though she “understands things are over between her and Rob”. “But to see him now dating one of her closest friends is just too much for her to deal with and seeing the pictures really hurt her,” the source added.

Stewart split from Pattinson for the second time in May, after he discovered she had been back in contact with her Snow White And The Huntsman director Rupert Sanders, with whom she had a short affair last year. —PTI

Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson split in May this year.

Actor Daniel Craig and director Sam Mendes (R) pose while launching the start of production of the new James Bond film “SkyFall” at a restaurant in London on 3 Nov, 2011.—Reuters

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Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson split in May this year.
Maria Sharapova splits from coach Thomas Hogstedt

WASHINGTON, 13 July — World number two Maria Sharapova has ended ties with her Swedish coach Thomas Hogstedt after working together for almost three years.

She announced the news on her official website on Thursday. She stated that due to personal issues, Hogstedt will not be able to travel in the near future and they both agreed it was the right time to go their separate ways. “I am very thankful for all his work, and wish him much success in the future,” Sharapova said on her website.

The news comes after Sharapova crashed out of the second round of the 2013 Wimbledon Championships that ended earlier this month.

Hogstedt joined Sharapova at the end of 2010 season and helped her win the French Open and retain the number one ranking after coming out of her shoulder injury. Sharapova will be announcing the name of her new coach in a few days.

Real pay $51 million to lure Illarramendi from Sociedad

MADRID, 13 July—Real Madrid extended their new policy of snapping up promising home-grown talent by paying 39 million euros ($50.9 million) to buy Spain Under-21 midfielder Asier Illarramendi out of his contract with La Liga rivals Real Sociedad on Friday.

Big-spending Real president Florentino Perez is known for luring “galacticos” like David Beckham, Zinedine Zidane and Cristiano Ronaldo to the Bernabeu but Illarramendi’s capture follows hard on the heels of the purchase of playmaker Isco from Malaga and the return of fullback Daniel Carvajal from Bundesliga side Bayer Leverkusen.

The trio were in the Spain squad that won the Under-21 Euros championships in 2013 and Isco and Illarramendi were both named in UEFA’s team of the tournament.

Real sealed the deal for Illarramendi when they deposited the 23-year-old’s buyout fee of 32.19 million euros (27.8 million pounds) plus value-added tax (VAT) of 6.76 million with Spain’s professional league (LFP).

Illarramendi is seen as a long-term replacement for Spain midfielder Xabi Alonso, another former Sociedad player who will be 32 in November, and he will also compete for a place with Germany’s Sami Khedira and Croatia’s Luka Modric.

He has agreed a six-year contract and will be presented at the Bernabeu stadium on Saturday after undergoing a medical. Real said on their website (www.realmadrid.com). “I thought long and hard with the people around me and I came to the conclusion that it was a unique offer and opportunity, one I couldn’t refuse,” a tearful Illarramendi, a product of San Sebastian-based Sociedad’s youth academy, told reporters. “I will give my all in all the training sessions and if I play I will give my all then too,” he added. “I love (Sociedad) but a decision had to be taken and of course Real Madrid excites me too.”

Real are looking to bounce back from a poor season under former coach Jose Mourinho, who quit and returned to Chelsea after failing to win any major silverware.

Jose Mourinho warns rivals he’s better than ever

BANGKOK, 13 July—Jose Mourinho has warned that he is returning to Chelsea as a much better manager as he bids to win back the Premier League trophy and secure an elusive Champions League title with the London club.

Mourinho, looking greyer and weightier than English fans will remember, said his experiences at Inter Milan and Real Madrid would put him in good stead in his second stint. “I think some white hairs in my case is a good sign because it means that I’m better now than before,” he told journalists in Bangkok, where he will begin his new era with a pre-season friendly on Wednesday.

“I think I’m better now because my job is the kind of job where experience means a lot,” explained the Portuguese. “Especially like in my case after my period with Chelsea I went around Europe, I had two years in Italy, three years in Spain, so I have more football culture than before. I have more experience than before so I think I’m in a better condition now than before. Because I think my job is about that, it’s about learning experiences.”

Valencia take Chelsea midfielder Romeu on season loan

MADRID, 13 July—La Liga club Valencia have agreed to take Oriol Romeu on loan from English Premier League side Chelsea next season as they seek to bolster their midfield to help them in their domestic and European League campaigns.

The 21-year-old, a product of Barcelona’s youth academy, had passed a medical and would be presented to fans later on Friday at Valencia’s Mestalla stadium, the club said on their website.

Romeu, who moved to London from Barca in the summer of 2011, made nine appearances for Chelsea last term but missed the second half of the season due to injury.

Chelsea’s Fernando Torres (L) and Oriol Romeu (R) attend a practice session in Munich on 18 May, 2012. Reuters

David Moyes says injured Wayne Rooney not leaving Manchester United

MANCHESTER, 13 July—Manchester United manager David Moyes says Wayne Rooney injured his hamstring before the club’s pre-season tour to Asia and Australia and dismissed suggestions the striker is set to leave the club.

Rooney returned home after only one day in Thailand and is expected to be out of action for a month, placing him in doubt for United’s first match of the Premier League season against Swansea on 17 Aug.

Moyes says Rooney “felt his hamstring tighten up right at the end of training” on the day the team went on tour, and that after it arrived a scan revealed “a small grade one injury.” Rooney’s early return provoked further speculation about his future.

The 27-year-old England international has been linked with a transfer away from the club.—PTI

Jose Mourinho

Mourinho, 50, is a good bet to return the Premier League trophy to Chelsea after winning back-to-back titles as coach for two League Cups and the FA Cup during his first stint from 2004 to 2007. At Inter Milan, he achieved the Italian treble of the Champions League, Serie A and the Coppa Italia in 2010—PTI

Mourinho’s visit to Thailand nearly began in embarrassing fashion when, after performing a Thai bow for waiting media, he tripped on the steps to the press conference dais and almost crashed onto the stage.
Arsene Wenger tight-lipped over Luis Suarez bid

**GENERAL**

Portugal’s agriculture sector a boon for youth

**LISBON, 13 July—** Portugal’s agriculture sector is offering many unemployed youth in the country a beam of hope as farming takes a more prominent role in the national economy.

Faced with an increasingly harsh job market, many young people in Portugal have started to look for work in agriculture.

Joao Meneses, a design student who attended a university in Oporto, Portugal’s second largest city, recently quit school to work at his parents’ nearby farm in Amarante.

“I saw how my schoolmates were struggling to find a job and I didn’t want to go through the same, so I decided to start a mushroom-cultivation project,” Meneses said.

Starting with $50,000 in government funding, Meneses now has already commercialized his project. Official statistics showed that by the end of 2012, some 3,000 young farmers have received government funds for various projects under a five-year program started in 2007 to boost agriculture.

Agriculture in Portugal employs more than 1 million workers, which accounts for 10 percent of the country’s total employment, the latest statistics show.

While agriculture lures more job seekers, it has also registered higher export figures and taken up a larger share of overall Portuguese exports.

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Luis Suarez

JAKARTA, 13 July— Manager Arsene Wenger refused to be drawn Friday on whether Arsenal would match Liverpool’s reported asking price for striker Luis Suarez, after a 30 million-pound ($60.7 million) bid was said to have been rejected.

Arrested

The club have also been linked with Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney and Real Madrid’s Gonzalo Higuain.

Suarez will miss the start of the new season as he is yet to complete a 10-game ban for biting Chelsea defender Branislav Ivanovic.

Arsenal will play Indonesia Dream Team in an exhibition match on Sunday. Indonesia has more than a million Gunners’ fans on Facebook.—PTI

Colombian police arrest criminal kingpin

BOGOTA, 13 July— Colombian authorities announced Friday that Nilson Alberto Avila, one of the most wanted men in the country, has been arrested.

The No. 2 leader of criminal group “Los Rastrojos” was captured in the municipality of Tulua in southwest Colombia, the police said in a statement.

“One of the crimes committed by the band is murdering important social leaders and dismembering their enemies, to cause terror among the population,” said the statement.

Avila’s arrest was part of the operations aimed at weakening and dismantling Colombia’s most dangerous criminal groups, the statement said. Avila, who runs his group’s financial affairs, has been wanted by the police for homicide, criminal association, drug trafficking and extortions.

He is suspected of killing several prominent figures, including Ernesto Victoria, executive presidnet of Tulua’s Chamber of Commerce, at a party of the victim’s family on March 10. A nephew of Victoria’s was killed and five other people were injured on the same occasion.

Xi urges utmost landslide rescue efforts

BEIJING, 13 July— Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday urged sparing no efforts in searching for people left missing after a serious landslide in southwest China’s Sichuan Province.

Xi said the government will also do its best to assist the families of victims, according to a statement issued by the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee to Xinhua.

The landslide, which took place on Wednesday morning due to continuous rainfall and sudden downpours, has led to 26 deaths in Dujiangyan City as of Friday afternoon.—Xinhua
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hosts dinner to Malaysian Armed Forces Chief

NAY PYI TAW, 13 July—Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla hosted a dinner to Chief of Malaysian Armed Forces General Tansri Dato’ Sri Zulkifeli Bin Mohd Zin and wife at Function Hall of Thingaha Hotel, here, yesterday evening.

It was attended by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and wife Daw Than Than Nwe, senior military officers from the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Army) and their wives and Myanmar military attaché to Malaysia and wife. The Chief of Malaysian Armed Forces was accompanied by Lt-Gen Datuk Hadi Bin Hjussin and wife and the Malaysian military attaché to Myanmar and wife.

After the dinner, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife and General Tansri Dato’ Sri Zulkifeli Bin Mohd Zin and wife exchanged gifts and presented a flower basket to the artistes.—MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing having conversation with Chief of Malaysian Armed Forces General Tansri Dato’ Sri Zulkifeli Bin Mohd Zin at the dinner.—MNA

Higher competitiveness creates international market accessibility means

In his addresses at the meeting, Union Minister at President Office U Tin Naing Thein said that a significant increase in activities of the federation reflected further economic cooperation of international organizations and local and foreign entrepreneurs brought about by over two-year-old sweeping reform process of the government, pointing out a surge in foreign investments and private investment in private sector.

The Union minister stressed the need to work hard to be competitive with other countries in price and quality as opportunities to have access to the international market have emerged following the process of the government, pointing out a surge in foreign investments and private investment in private sector.

In doing so, the ministry has planned to carry out development tasks for the villages with the aim of making the best use of forest resources to build infrastructures for transportation, supplying safe drinking water, education, health and agriculture and basic needs for the people in rural areas.

The Communication Bill which was submitted by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology to the Hluttaw is under discussion at Pyithu Hluttaw. It is hereby announced that the public are invited to make complaints about the bill in person at No.(I-2), Bill Committee Building in the compound of Hluttaw, Nay Pyi Taw at 13:00 hr to 18:00 hr (daily) from 12 to 15 July or dial 067-591358.

The Land Allocation and Utilization Scrutiny Committee which was organized under the directives of the President to help ensuring socio-economic development and comfortable livelihood of the people, has already announced that it will grant legal status to the villages with over 50 houses and which were illegally established in the reserve and protected public forests since many years ago. The scrutiny committee, under the supervision of related ministries and region and state governments, conducted a ground survey and collect the data for the plan.

To improve the socio-economy of the rural people and the environment, the committee has also planned to exclude the villages with under 50 houses and which have been illegally settled in forests from the list of forests of Ministry of Forest and Environmental Conservation in accordance with the rules and regulations of the ministry and to integrate and resettle them.