President proposes to replace post of Union Minister for Border Affairs with Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, to assign Gen Myat Hein to Union Minister for Communications & Information Technology

JICA to grant 66 billion Yen ODA to Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb—President U Thein Sein sent a message to the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw today asking to assign Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thein Htay to his previous military post and to replace his post with Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win and to assign General Myat Hein to the post of Union Minister for Communications and Information Technology.

During the meeting, Union Minister for Finance and Revenue U Win Shein reported on ODA Loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA.

According to his report, JICA will grant aid package worth about 66 billion Yen (US$ 704.28 million).

The aid package include 17 billion Yen for infrastructure projects which will help alleviate poverty in states and regions, 20 billion Yen for the first step of the development of infrastructure for the Thilawa Special Economic Zone, 29 billion Yen for infrastructures for power supply in Yangon and for upgrading Kyangin Cement Plant.

Regarding the report, findings and remarks of the Joint Bill Committee were discussed and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approved it. The report also suggested Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to approve the ODA loan as it should be used in the development of the country.

U Win Than of Thabaung constituency urged Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to reconsider the forming of investigation commission for “Above the Law” article written by Dr Seik Hpwa, criticizing Hluttaw.

U Thein Nyunt of Thingangyun Constituency seconded the forming of the investigation commission, urging to take actions against the writer who criticized the Hluttaw.

In his clarification, he also urged the media to use polite usage and to have positive attitude when they criticized the Hluttaw.

National Kandawgyi Garden, significant botanical garden in Myanmar

National Kandawgyi Garden, significant botanical garden in Myanmar
Good news for mangrove forests

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb—Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry has planned to set up a mangrove forest department to speed up efforts for the mangrove forest conservation, said Deputy Minister U Aye Myint Maung.

The ministry and Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA held a meeting for completion of the project for re-establishing and managing mangrove forest in the Ayeyawady Delta at the ministry here today.

In his key-note address, the deputy minister also called for cooperation of the local people to achieve success in conserving the ecology system in the delta region as the mangrove forests play an important role in socio-economy of the local people.

The ministry has also planned to enact mangrove policy and rules and regulations for mangrove conservation so that the mangrove forests and services for the mangrove ecological system can benefit the local people, he added.

Mangrove re-estalishment and management project was carried out in the Ayeyawady Delta from April 2007 to March, 2013, in Mawlamyine and Papyon districts in Ayeyawady Region by JICA in cooperation with Forest Department, Fisheries Department, Agriculture Department and Settlement and Land Records Department.

During the meeting, experts from Myanmar and Japan read papers focusing on sustainable development of mangrove forests.

MNA

Cash assistance for sunken vessels

YANGON, 8 Feb—Myanmar Coastal Liners Association gave cash assistance to its member vessels that sank in accidents, said the head office of the association.

In mid-January, the association provided cash assistance for the vehicle that sank near Bayinnaung Jetty. In 2012, the association presented cash assistance for three vehicles. Moreover, the association disseminates information about weather forecast to its member vessels. —Kyemon

Strong winds, heavy rains destroy villages in Hpa-an Township

HPA-AN, 8 Feb—Strong winds and heavy rains hit Nangkyan Village-tract of Hpa-an Township in Kayin State from 8 am to 8.20 am on 31 January. In the incident 31 houses collapsed and roofs of nine were blown off.

Two persons were injured. Moreover, about 150 acres of farmlands were destroyed in Kayin and Nangkyan villages and 150 more acres in Khamaindo East and Thayahinoh fields.

In addition, the strong winds and heavy rains destroyed rubber plants, roofs of monastery and some school buildings in Kawkwe Village. Deputy Commission-er of the district presented cash assistance for three vehicles. Moreover, the association disseminates information about weather forecast to its member vessels. —Kyemon

U-ye Naing, local authorities, local battalions, members of Township Fire Brigade and Myanmar Police Force, Thanlwin West Maga Social Association members and local people participated in the rescue and relief works.

The deputy commissioner provided 100 pieces of roofing and a half basket each of rice to the victim households. —Kyemon

Essay contest hails Union Day

YWANGAN, 8 Feb—Jointly organized by Ywangan Township Information and Public Relations Department, Township Women's Affairs Organization and Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association, the essay contest to mark the 66th Anniversary Union Day was held at the library of the township IPRD on 27 January morning.

Students from Ywangan Basic Education High School participated in the contest. Officials will award the winners on the Union Day. —Myanma Alinn

Illegal two-digit lottery seller arrested in Meiktila

MEIKTILA, 8 Feb—In accord with the instruction of the commander of Meiktila District Police Force, IP Myint Than of Meiktila Police Station No 2 and party together with local authorities searched the shop of Aung Ko Ko at the market in Thiri Mingala Ward of Meiktila on 25 January.

The authorities seized voucher in use of selling illegal two-digit lottery and K 41,000.

Meiktila Police Station No 2 opened a file of lawsuit against Aung Ko Ko. —Myanma Alinn

Umbrella hoisted atop pagoda in Kyaukme

KYAUKME, 8 Feb—A ceremony to hoist the umbrella atop Aungzeyar Pagoda was held in the precinct of Aung Mingala Taung-Palaung Monastery in Htuple area of Ward 8 in Kyaukme of Shan State (North) on 26 January.

Present on the occasion were the chairman Sayadaw of the Township Sangha Nayaka Committee and member Sayadaws, departmental personnel members of religious associations, social organizations and local people.

Yaksawk ward administrators get proficiency training

YAKSAWK, 8 Feb—The work proficiency course for ward/village-tract administrators was opened at the hall of Yaksawak Township General Administration Department of Shan State (South) on 28 January morning.

Licences for businesses auctioned in Nyaunglebin

NYAUNGLEBIN, 8 Feb—The licences auction for 2013-2014 fiscal year was held at Township Development Affairs Committee on Azani Road on 4 February morning.
EP President warns against deficit amid EU budget talks

BRUSSELS, 8 Feb—European Parliament President Martin Schulz on Thursday warned against an EU with a deficit as the Union’s top leaders are looking in sensitive negotiations over the 27-member bloc’s 2014-2020 budget scheme.

The seven-year budget could be set at roughly 960 billion euros (1.3 billion US dollars), while actual pay- ments would fall short by around 50 billion euros to accommodate the Britain’s scream for spending cuts, Schulz said in a Press confer- ence here on Thursday night.

The difference between commitments and payments would lead to a deficit for the EU, the European Parliament President complained, adding that the EU’s current budget already had a 16-billion-euro deficit. “If we carry on with this methodology and set the commitments far higher than the payments, we are going to end up as an EU with a deficit,” he said.

Schulz also called on EU leaders to take the budget summit as the start of the process instead of an ending point, stressing that the European Parliament would carefully follow the case. This week’s summit is the second time for EU leaders to focus on budget bargaining, since the first budget summit last November achieved little largely due to sharp conflicts of national interests.

Germany and the Brit- ish are clearly in favor of spending cuts, in sharp contrast to outcries mainly from France and Italy.

The final deal also has to obtain the consent of the European Parliament according to the EU law. “If the Parliament is brought on board early, it will be likely for the Parlia- ment to agree,” Schulz said.

If no deal is to be reached by the end of 2013, the 2013 budget ceiling will be rolled over into 2014 with two-percent inflation adjustment, which may bring much uncertainty for long-term projects.

WASHINGTON, 8 Feb—Top Democrats in the House of Representatives unveiled a broad proposal on Thursday to curb gun violence that mirrors the one offered last month by President Barack Obama. “We’ve always had a ban on semi-automatic assault weapons. But it remained unclear if the proposals will be put to a vote. The House Rep- publican leadership has said it doesn’t intend to bring legislation to the floor until the Senate has acted, and there are doubts the Senate will pass gun control legis- lation.

“We know it’s going to be tough, but we also know this is important,” said Mike Thompson, chairman of the 12-member House Democratic Gun Violence Prevention Task that draft- ed the proposals.

Opponents led by influ- ential and well-financed pro-gun groups charge that new restrictions on firearms would rule the right to bear arms. Backers disagree. They argue that while Ameri- cans have the right to own guns, the government has the responsibility to impose restrictions for the public good.

There has been unprec- edented public support for tougher gun laws in wake of the Connecticut school massacre in December that killed 20 children and six adults.—Reuters

House Democrats unveil gun control package; mirrors Obama’s

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Mortar shells kill six people in Damascus

Two blasts rock two Afghan northern towns, wounding two

The shells, allegedly fired by rebels from nearby areas, struck a group of armed fighters in al-Qaboun area, reports said, adding that three kids were among those killed. Meanwhile, opposition activists reported heavy clashes and shelling in the Qaboun, giving no details on the bus station’s area, activists also reported heavy security presence in some district of the capital after the armed rebels tried to wage attacks on Damascus a day earlier.

Iraqi media reported that the Iraqi military downed the US Q-170 in the eastern part of Iraq after finding it transgressing the country’s state TV later showed the footage of the drone.

Islamic State enforces strict Sharia law in northern Iraq

IRAQ, 7 Feb—Islamic State, the armed group that declared the formation of a “caliphate” in the Iraqi province of Nineveh, has declared the implementation of a strict form of Islamic law called Sharia in the areas it controls.

Iraqi security forces have taken control of the city of Mosul, the last district captured by Islamic State. The militant group has been trying to control the city for years.

The announcement comes as the situation remains tense in the area, with the Islamic State continuing to carry out executions and other violent acts.

The Islamic State, also known as ISIS, has been operating in the region for several years, controlling large parts of Iraq and Syria.

The group has been known for its brutal tactics, including beheadings and executions.

The announcement follows a recent decision by the Islamic State to impose Sharia law in all areas under its control, which has led to controversy and criticism from various groups.

The Islamic State has been involved in fighting with Iraqi forces and the US-led coalition, and is considered a major threat to regional security.

Meanwhile, the Islamic State has been facing increasing pressure from both Iraqi forces and the US-led coalition, with frequent air strikes and ground operations targeting the group’s positions.

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**Sweater-clad Canadian grannies spring into action for climate change**

**TORONTO, 8 Feb** — In this week's sweater-clad grannies spring into action in the Canadian city of Toronto this week ahead of the third annual National Sweater Day which falls on Thursday to remind people the importance of energy conservation.

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)-Canada is mobilizing over 30 grannies to deliver one simple message. And that’s for people to put on every sweater they can to warm up their thermostat by two degrees Celsius.

WWF-Canada’s director of climate and energy Josh Laughran believed that grannies are the appropriate spokespersons who can deliver an effective message on behalf of WWF.

“How we use energy is really at the heart of cli- mate change,” said Laughran. “We thought, how could we engage people into thinking about ways to conserve it? Who knows more about conserving energy than the previous generations who lived through scarcity, and who do we listen to more than our grandparents... and who knits sweaters?”

According to WWF, if all Canadians turned down their heat by two degrees this winter, they could re- duce greenhouse gas emissions by up to four mega- tons. That’s equivalent to shutting down a 600 mega- watt coal-fired plant.

Loblaws, a supermar- ket chain that’s sponsoring the event, will be going one step further by turning down their heat by three degrees throughout all their stores across Canada. But Laughran stressed the importance of individual action.

“It is symbolic. We are not expecting climate change to be solved by that one day, but I think it is no less impor- tant for being symbolic,” he added. “If we are going to tackle climate change, we need govern- ments and businesses to lead the way and we also need to change some of our behav- ior.”

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**New Light of Myanmar**

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

**Ubuntu OS smartphones coming in October, will take on Google’s Android**

**NEW DELHI, 8 Feb** — In an attempt to get a foothold in the smartphone market which is already dominated by Google’s Android, Can- onical Ltd is soon going to release its Ubuntu OS for smartphones. According to a Wall Street Journal re- port, smartphones running Ubuntu OS are on their way and will be available to cus- tomers in October this year.

Mark Shuttleworth, the founder and CEO of Canonical, said that app developers will get access to the OS later this month. Though the company has not made it clear that which all smartphones will be seen running the Ubuntu OS, but it has been made clear that application developers will get to play with the operat- ing system on Samsung’s Galaxy Nexus.

Ubuntu is a Linux-based operating system for computing. CNET reports, the Ubuntu OS, which is be- ing ready for small screens, will use the same drivers as Android smartphones; it will also be able to run on entry-level smartphones.

“She is a Kickstarter project and will be sold at Amazon, Best Buy, Target, and GameStop from June onwards. How- ever, Ubuntu will not be available to every user. The Verge in an interview that her company is thinking much farther ahead than June. Uhrman said that her team is planning on releas- ing a new version of the Ubuntu each and every year.

“Even so, Uhrman told the Wall Street Journal, “the company’s $99 price point. If we could do it for less than $99, we would.”

The report states, “The Ouya’s Nvidia Tegra 3 chipset is no slouch, (but) it’s going to be a bit more power- ful than a comparable Tegra 4 in- bound, and at least one de- veloper is already question- ing the Ouya’s hardware limitations. But now there’s no telling there won’t be a Tegra 4-based Ouya next year.”

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**Champion Computers launches 7-inch Wtab 705 Talk for Rs 6,300**

**CHENNAI (India), 8 Feb** — Champion Comput- ers Pvt Ltd has launched its newest tablet, the Wtab 705 Talk./tablet comes with Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich and comes with a 7-inch capacitive touch- screen that has a resolu- tion of 800 x 480 pixels. It weighs 320gm, which the company claims makes the tablet one of the lightest in its class.

The Wtab 705 Talk is powered by a Cortex A8 processor clocked at 1.5GHz and has 512 MB of RAM. It offers 4GB of stor- age space for apps and me- dia, and supports expanda- ble memory up to 32GB via microSD cards. The tablet has two cameras: one on the front and one on the back.

The Wtab 705 Talk has a SIM card slot and will let you make voice calls, it has built-in support for 2G networks, but if you want to use your 3G connection, you’ll have to connect a 3G USB dongle. The Wtab 705 Talk tablet is priced at Rs 6,300.

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**Samsung may be gearing up to launch Galaxy S4 on 15 March**

**SEOUL, 8 Feb** — Sam- sung is changing lanes and speeding up production to aim for a 15 March launch of the Galaxy S IV, ac- cording to SamMobile, who claim to have gotten their info from a trusted in- sider. The report also states that the phone will have the model number GT-I9500 and will be seen in black and white colours.

SamMobile also expects to announce the Galaxy S IV at the Unpacked event in March and not at MWC, just like last year when it launched the Galaxy S III. The source believes Samsung is waiting for the Barcelona event to con- clude before sending out invites.

SamMobile states that the smartphone will be out in Europe first, before it is launched pan-Asian by the end of April. The handset will make it to the shores of North America, Aus- tralia and Africa by the end of Q2. This is in line with what we heard ear- lier this year from Sam- sung’s Lebanon office, who said that the Galaxy S IV would be out by May, which is towards the end of Q2.

A March launch also makes sense considering that the company will put its 1080p Super AMOLED display (ex- pected to grace the front of the S IV) into mass pro- duction at the Samsung Display plants near the end of February. The display should be with Sam- sung Electronics in early March, just in time for the launch of the Samsung Galaxy S III’s successor.
NY Times posts higher revenue on digital growth

NEW YORK, 8 Feb— The New York Times Co (NYT.N) on Thursday reported higher digital revenue as more people paid for its digital newspapers.

Circulation revenue jumped 16.1 percent, mainly because of growth in digital subscriptions.

Paid digital subscribers to the Times and The International Herald Tribune totaled 640,000 at the end of the fourth quarter, an increase of 13 percent from the third period.

Benchmark Co analyst Edward Atorino called the circulation revenue "phenomenal."

"It looks better than I thought," he said about the overall results. Shares rose 9.2 percent to $9 in early trading.

The company, which also publishes The Boston Globe, is reaping the benefits of charging readers to pay for its digital newspapers, a programme it introduced almost two years ago.

Still, there were some troubling signs in the fourth quarter, which included an extra week. Advertising revenue was down 3 percent. Stripping out the additional week, ad revenue tumbled 8.3 percent on a decline in both print and digital.

This quarter is the first under new Chief Executive Mark Thompson, who took the helm in November. He was director general of the BBC, which was rocked by a scandal involving allegations of sex abuse by Jimmy Savile, a popular TV host. Thompson has insisted he was unaware of the accusations.

"For the first time in our history, annual circulation revenues surpassed those from advertising," Thompson said in a statement.

"By contrast, the advertising environment remained challenging in the fourth quarter." Fourth-quarter revenue totaled $575.8 million, a 5.2 percent rise from the same quarter a year ago. Analysts were expecting $570.42 million, according to Thomson Reuters 1/4/12/ES.

Wall Street flat after claims data, retailers’ sales

NEW YORK, 8 Feb—Stocks were little changed on Thursday after data showed modest improvement in the labour market and retailers posted mixed monthly sales.

Weekly initial jobless claims dipped last week, with the four-week-moving average falling to its lowest level since March 2008, signaling the economy continues to recover slowly.

A separate report said fourth-quarter productivity registered its biggest drop in nearly two years, while unit labour costs jumped 4.5 percent, more than economists expected.

Women should avoid eating for two during pregnancy

WELLINGTON, 8 Feb—Women who “eat for two” when they are pregnant are increasing the chances of problems giving birth and lifelong health issues for their children, according to a New Zealand-led international study.

The study found that 74 percent of women pregnant for the first time, gained excessive amounts of weight during pregnancy, quadrupling the chance of having an excessively large child at birth and increasing the number of cesarean deliveries in labour.

"Big babies become big children and big adults later on," said Professor Lesley McCowan, of the University of Auckland, who led the study.

"Babies born large are at risk of traumatic birth, and cesarean delivery increases the chance of complications for the mother," said McCowan in a statement.

"These adverse outcomes can be modified by achieving optimal weight gain in pregnancy. This should be an important focus of ante-natal care.

"Weight gain during pregnancy was also an important cause of obesity in women. “Most women who gain too much weight are not able to lose that weight after pregnancy and it puts those women on a trajectory to becoming obese,” she said.

"Excessive weight gain during pregnancy will not only exacerbate existing obesity, but will contribute to later obesity in women who start pregnancy with a normal body mass index but have excessive weight gain in pregnancy," she said.

Jobless claims point to healing in labour market

WASHINGTON, 8 Feb— The number of Americans filing new claims for jobless benefits fell last week and a trend reading hit a near five-year low, a sign the grinding recovery in the labour market remains on track.

Other data on Thursday showed a sharp drop in productivity in the fourth quarter due to weak economic output.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropped by 5,000 to a seasonally adjusted 366,000, the Labour Department said.

That was a higher level than analysts had expected, although the downward trend in layoffs still suggests the economy is strong enough that employers will need to add to their staffs.

"The labour market is improving, but certainly not at a robust rate by any means," said Russell Price, an economist at Ameriprise Financial in Troy, Michigan.

Claims have trended lower in recent weeks and are around their lowest levels since the early days of the 2007-09 recession.

The four-week moving average for new claims, a gauge of the trend in the fourth quarter due to weak economic output.

Claims didn’t look too exciting. They are around their lowest level since March 2008, suggesting a steady improvement in labour market conditions.

However, while employers have pulled back on layoffs, they have only added jobs at a lackluster pace since the end of the recession.

Claims report showed the number of people still receiving benefits under regular state programmes after an initial week of aid increased 8,000 to 3.32 million in the week ended 26 January.

"This still shows that the US job market is on a lethargic pace to recovery," said Joe Manimbo, a market analyst at Western Union Business Solutions in Washington.

Claims were volatile in January due to the timing of holidays and the dates on which weeks ended, but a Labour Department analyst said some of that volatility appeared to be from one-week lags.

The analyst said there was nothing unusual in the data, and no states estimated their readings.

Greenlight’s Einhorn sues Apple, says has “cash problem”

SAN FRANCISCO, 8 Feb— Fund manager David Einhorn’s Greenlight Capital sued Apple Inc, saying the company needs to do more to unlock value for shareholders.

Einhorn, a well-known short seller, is long Apple shares and said in a television interview on Thursday that while he admires the company, it has a “cash problem” that it needs to fix.

Greenlight filed suit in federal court in New York to force Apple to modify a proposal in its proxy, which Greenlight believes does not conform to regulatory rules.

Greenlight said it is opposed to the proposal, No 2 on Apple’s proxy, which the firm said would remove Apple’s ability to issue preferred stock from its charter.

In a filing with the US Securities and Exchange Commission, Greenlight said it was “disappointed with Apple’s capital allocation strategy.”

Apple could not be immediately reached for comment. In a CNBC interview, Einhorn said shareholders would be happy to receive preferred stock with a 4 percent yield.

Calling Apple shares “utterly misvalued” at current levels, Einhorn said the company no longer needs to grow at the near-triple digit rates of the past.

In a statement, Greenlight said it spent part of 2012 in discussions with Apple on the idea of perpetual preferred stock, but that the company rejected it last September.

"We understand that many of our fellow shareholders share our frustration with Apple’s capital allocation policies."
Fire breaks out in Turkish prison, seven hospitalized

ISTANBUL, 8 Feb—A fire broke out in a prison in Turkey’s southeastern province of Adana on Thursday and seven inmates were hospitalized due to smoke inhalation.

Local media quoted Ceyhan District Governor Gurbuz Karakus as saying that the fire broke out around 5 pm (GMT 1900) on Thursday in a part of the prison where convicted drug dealers were jailed.

He said seven inmates were suffocated by smoke inhalation and had been sent to hospital, and that firefighters had brought the blaze under control.

The district governor added the district prosecutor has launched an investigation into the cause of the fire.—Xinhua

Ukraine refuses to pay Russian gas bill

KIEV, 8 Feb—Ukraine would not pay a 7 billion US dollar bill for Russian gas it was obliged to buy last year but never took, Energy and Coal Industry Minister Eduard Stavitsky said here on Thursday.

“We do not consider it appropriate to pay the 7 billion dollar bill, because we have no reasons for that. We complied with required terms of the contract,” Stavitsky told journalists.

To reduce its dependence on Russian gas, Ukraine was exploring additional options of reverse gas supply from Europe, Stavitsky said.

Under the contract between Ukrainian run Naftogaz and Russia’s Gazprom in 2009, Kiev agreed to buy 52 billion cubic meters of gas per year or pay for a minimum of 80 percent of that volume, regardless of the actual amount taken.

Ukraine reportedly imported 24.9 billion cubic meters of gas from Russia and 55 million cubic meters from Europe last year.

On 25 January, Gazprom demanded that Ukraine pay 7 billion dollars to cover the shortfall in the contracted amount of gas.—Xinhua

Gunmen attack police centre in southern Yemen, three injured

ADEN, (Yemen), 8 Feb — Unknown gunmen on motorbikes attacked a police station in Yemen’s southern province of Lahj on Thursday, injuring three policemen, a military official told Xinhua. The masked attackers fired at the main gate of a police station in Houta city, the provincial capital of Lahj, injuring at least three policemen, the local military official said on condition of anonymity.

“Unidentified gunmen attempted to invade the area with a heavy shooting in different directions while using explosives on the police headquarters,” the military official said.

“The attack failed as the gunmen, who were repelled, were unable to storm the police centre or cart away any ammunition,” he added.

A local government official confirmed the incident and casualties, and accused al-Qaeda militants of masterminding the attack.

The Yemen-based al-Qaeda branch, known locally as Ansar al-Sharia (Partisans of Islamic Law), took advantage of a political upheaval in 2011 in Yemen to take over several towns of the southern restive regions.—Xinhua

Israel’s Netanyahu, Lapid conclude second round of coalition talks

Jerusalem, 8 Feb — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met with Yesh Atid leader Yair Lapid on Thursday, seeking to iron out sharp divisions and reach compromise that may facilitate the latter’s incorporation in the government.

Both men first met on 24 January, two days after the centrist Yesh Atid stunned the political establishment and the Israeli public by winning 19 seats in parliament elections, making Lapid, formerly a popular newsman, the leader of the second-largest party in the Knesset.

Local media outlets cited both Netanyahu and Lapid reporting “a very good atmosphere” at Thursday’s two-hour meeting at the prime minister’s official residence in Jerusalem, “but made no real progress” on the matter of the latter joining the next Israeli coalition.

Details of the meeting were not made available, but the two agreed to meet again in the near future.

With three weeks remaining to form a government, Netanyahu is seeking as broad a coalition as possible to ensure stability in his third term as premier. Likud-Beitenu officials said Netanyahu envisions a coalition that includes Yesh Atid (There is a Future) and the ultra-Orthodox parties, as well as the far-right Jewish Home and smaller center-left parties.

But Lapid, unenthusiastically invited Israeli voters to end the sweeping exemptions from military service given to the country’s Orthodox Jewish community, is awaiting Netanyahu’s intentions regarding this issue that for decades has divided Israelis.

The Times of Israel on Thursday quoted sources in Yesh Atid as saying that, Lapid, who decisively announced in the immediate aftermath of the elections that he would not be part of an anti-Netanyahu bloc in the Knesset, was now “genuinely prepared” to remain out of the coalition “if it became clear to him that Netanyahu was not intent on passing legislation” to draft the ultra-Orthodox into either military or national service.

In the sources under-scored that the religious draft highlighted Yesh Atid’s election campaign and remains a key component of the party’s platform. Lapid’s proposal calls for a gradual inscription of the ultra-Orthodox over a five-year period, during which men would also be integrat-ed into the work force.

US state Oklahoma reports six more flu deaths

HOUSTON, 8 Feb — Six more flu deaths had been reported in the US state of Oklahoma in the last week, bringing the total flu-related deaths in the state for this season to 23, authorities said on Thursday.

A total of 798 people have been hospitalized with the flu in Oklahoma since the season began in September 2012, the Oklahoma State Department of Health said.

Tulsa County leads the state with 236 flu-related hospitalizations, and six flu-related deaths. Oklahoma County is second with 106 hospitalizations and three deaths. Health officials continued emphasizing the importance of flu shots because people who already have the flu but show no symptoms can still spread it to others.

The US is experiencing one of its worst flu seasons. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said in a report last week that 42 states are now reporting widespread flu activity, down from 47 states from the agency’s previous report. The CDC’s report shows that the number of flu-related deaths in the country has fallen during the week of 20 to 26 January, however, eight more children died from flu during the week, raising the total to 45 for the 2012-2013 influenza season, according to the CDC.—Xinhua

Chilean probe uncovers naval negligence, coverup in 2010 tsunami

SANTIAGO, 8 Feb — Officials investigating the handling of the February 2010 tsunami that killed more than a hundred Chileans has uncovered negligence and a coverup on the part of the navy, media reports said on Thursday.

A report by the Investigative Police (PDI) says records kept by the Chilean Navy’s Hydrographic and Oceanographic Service (Shoa) on the earthquake and ensuing tsunami were later altered.

The report, submitted Tuesday to the General Attorney’s office, says the logbook’s original entry was erased and rewritten.

Investigators said the entry “tsunami emergency warning” is logged at 3:40 am, when at that hour the agency had dismissed any danger of a tsunami in a report sent to then President Michelle Bachelet.

The original entry, according to the investigators, said “03.55 Zafarrancho,” naval jargon indicating trouble and meaning roughly “all hands on deck.”

Around that same time, several towns along Chile’s south-central coastline were already being battered by monstrous waves.

In the early hours of 27 February, 2010, a magnitude 8.8 earthquake, the sixth-strongest quake ever recorded, hit Chile, sparking a tsunami that took coastal residents by surprise, because the navy’s Shoa emergency service state said “all hands at deck.”

The PDI report additionally, claims mistakes and negligence on the part of Chilean Navy officials along the affected region, especially a lack of concern for the victims’ welfare.

The navy personnel “at no time showed a willingness to go out and carry out an evacuation of the coastal sector ... or any attempt to rescue the people trapped on the islands” off the coast, the report alleges.—Xinhua
**Yemen demands Iran halt support for insurgents**

**CIA nominee pressed on US drone policy, waterboarding**

**Iran’s Khamenei rebuffs US offer of direct talks**

**Colombian police arrest 15 gang members**

**Syrian jets bomb Damascus ring road to halt rebel push**

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**WASHINGTON, 8 Feb—John Brennan, President Barack Obama’s nominee for CIA director, said on Thursday he did not try to stop waterboarding, an interrogation technique that some consider torture, as he faced tough congressional questioning on that issue, security leaks and the use of drones to kill US terrorism suspects.

Lawmakers pressed Brennan on controversial counterterrorism tactics employed while he was a CIA official under former President George W Bush, and others whose use he helps oversee in his current role as chief counterterrorism adviser to Obama.

The issue of the now-banned harsh interrogation techniques derailing Brennan’s consideration for CIA director four years ago, and he met head-on at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee. “I did not take steps to stop the CIA’s use of those techniques. I was not in the chain of command of that programme,” Brennan said. “I had expressed my personal objections and views to some agency colleagues about waterboarding, a form of simulated drowning, nudity and other techniques, he said.

“But I did not try to stop it, because it was something that was being done in a different part of the agency under the authority of others, and it was something that was directed by the administration at the time,” he said.

In a bid to smooth congressional concerns about counterterrorism activities under his watch, Obama on Wednesday ordered the Justice Department to give House and Senate intelligence committees access to a classified legal opinion on killing US terrorism suspects with drone strikes.

Brennan, 57, has been central in overseeing US government policy on the use of the armed, unmanned aircraft in counterterrorism operations in the Obama administration.—Reuters

**AMMAN, 8 Feb—Syrian government jets bombarded the Damascus ring road on Thursday in a bid to halt a rebel advance which threatens President Bashar al-Assad’s hold on the capital, insurgent commanders and opposition activists said.

Warplanes fired rockets at southern parts of the route where rebels have spent the past 36 hours overrunning army positions and road blocks encircling the heart of the city, the site of key state security and intelligence installations.

Assad, battling to crush a 22-month-old revolt in which 60,000 people have died, has lost control of large parts of the country but his forces, backed by air power, have so far kept rebels away from the centre of Damascus.

World powers fear the conflict — the longest and deadliest of the uprisings that started spreading through the Arab world two years ago — could envelop Syria’s neighbours, further destabilising an already explosive region.

The regime really wants its positions on the ring road back. It is a major defence line for the capital,” Aby Ghazi, a rebel commander based in the eastern suburb of Ibleben told Reuters.

Ghazi said the rebels have reached the edges of the city’s main Abbasside Square where the Syrian military had turned a football field into a barracks. Authorities have banned most independent media from the country, making it difficult to verify events on the ground.

Units of Assad’s elite Republican Guard based on the imposing Qasirun Mountain overlooking the captured firefights round and rockets at Jobar, an eastern neighbourood bordering the square, and at the ring road, rebel and activist sources said.

Damascus residents, long accustomed to the sounds of war, said Thursday’s shelling was some of the heaviest they had heard.

“They’ve gone insane. All of them. They’re insane,” one central Damascus resident said by telephone.

US State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said the Assad government had responded to the rebel offensive by “in-discriminately shelling unarmed civilians”.

**Sanaa, 8 Feb—Yemen’s president has asked his Iranian counterpart to stop backing armed groups on its soil after coastguards seized a consignment of missiles and rockets believed sent by the Islamic Republic, a government official said on Thursday.

Yemen has denied any connection to the weapons, found aboard a vessel off the coast on 23 January in an operation coordinated with the US Navy.

But government official Abdel-Rashid Abdel Hafiz said President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi had contacted Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Yemeni People’s National Congress leader, to demand Tehran stop smuggling in weapons. Hafiz gave no further details of the message.

“This is the most dangerous arms shipment being smuggled to Yemen,” Yemeni Deputy Interior Minister Abdel-Rahman Hanadi told Reuters. “It contained anti-aircraft missiles, C4 high explosives materials which only a few countries in the Middle East possess.” Yemen, a majority Sunni Muslim country, said last week the vessel had been loaded in Iran. Yemen has complained to the UN Security Council and asked for the weapons shipment be investigated by the council’s group of experts that monitors compliance with the Iran sanctions regime. It includes a ban on arms exports, UN special envoy to Yemen, Jamal Benomar, said on Thursday.

The council has imposed four rounds of sanctions on Iran for refusing to halt its nuclear enrichment programme, which the United States, European Union and their allies suspect is at the heart of a weapons programme. Iran rejects the allegations and refuses to halt what it says is a peaceful energy programme.

“The shipment contains weapons and some of the weapons are sophisticated weapons, surface to air missiles, for example. The government made a request to the sanctions committee for a full investigation,” Benomar told reporters. “They (the sanctions committee) will establish the facts on what happened, where the shipment came from, who were the recipients, etcetera,” he said.—Reuters

Yemen’s President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi attends Arab summit in Riyadh on 21 Jan, 2013.—Reuters

**NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR**

**IRAQ**

**A Free Syrian Army fighter walks in the Haresta neighbourhood of Damascus on 7 Feb, 2013. Reuters**

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**Dubai, 8 Feb—Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei attends a meeting with Iranian nuclear scientists and managers in Teheran on 22 Feb, 2012.**

Khamenei named Peru Jacinto Nicolas Sanhueza, a former member of right-wing paramilitary groups and worked for various leaders of the United Self-Defences of Colombia (AUC), which was disbanded in 2008, when its leaders were extradited to the United States and its 30,000 paramilitary fighters were demobilised.—Xinhua

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**Bogota, 8 Feb—Colombian police have arrested 15 members of a drug-trafficking gang, including three police officers, the National Police said on Thursday. The 15 men, all members of the Los Urabenos ring, were arrested for their suspected role in the deaths of two police officers in the northern state of Antioquia.**

Police confirmed that the three police officers detained have been members of the gang for several years. The operations were carried out in the northern cities of Valledupar, Santa Marta, Fundacion and Maicao, police said, without giving a specific date.

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos on Wednesday highlighted the capture of a drug kingpin named Peru Jacinto Nicolas Fuentes, alias Don Leo. According to Colombian authorities, Fuentes is pressure and negotiations are not compatible and our nation will not be intimidated by these actions,” he added.

Relations between Iran and the United States were severed after the overthrow of Iran’s pro-Western monarch in 1979 and diplomatic meetings between officials have since been very rare. Currently US-Iran contact is limited to talks between Teheran and a so-called P5+1 group of powers on Iran’s disputed nuclear programme which are to resume on 26 February in Kazakhstan.

In Washington, US State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland brushed off Khamenei’s remarks and urged Iran to show up in Aarhus “prepared to discuss real substance” either in a group setting or in bilateral talks.—Reuters

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**Saturday, 9 February, 2013**

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NATIONAL

Pyidaungsu and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker receives French Ambassador and party

Nay Pyi Taw, 8 Feb—Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Khin Yi received a delegation led by French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Jacques VALADE, ambassadors from EU countries and officials at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Complex, here, this afternoon.

The delegation was led by French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Jacques VALADE, accompanied by Mr James Lynch, Resident Representative of UNOCHA, and Mr Talvala, UNHCR's Representative in Myanmar.

The delegation's visit was aimed at increasing the number of French tourists in Myanmar, with the intention of fostering a better understanding of the country and its culture.

Books donated for raising reading habit

Indaw, 8 Feb—The book donation ceremony was held at Basic Education Primary School in Thila Village of Indaw Township in Katha District on 27 January afternoon.

Staff Officer U Chi Maung of Katha District Information and Public Relations Department, San Oo (Katha), U Tin Shwe (Zwe Myint Naing-Indaw) of Indaw and Daw Nan Nyunt Khin (Ma Sabei-Katha) gave lectures on environmental conservation and raising reading habit.

Later, they donated books for the village.

Myanma Ailian

Books donated by Thailand to arrive Yangon in Feb, March

Two thermal power plants donated by Thailand to arrive Yangon in Feb, March

Yangon, 8 Feb—The first 200MW Thermal Power Plant donated by Electricity Generation Authority of Thailand will arrive here in the third week of February and the second one in mid March.

The two thermal plants will be equipped at Ywama Power Plant, upon completion of the installation, the power station will be able to produce sufficient power for Yangon.

As the two thermal plants are heavy, it will take time to transport them to Ywama power Plant.

Yangon Region Government and Ministries are working together to complete the work in time.

NLM

Perspectives

Saturday, 9 February, 2013

Protect wildlife

Myanmar’s thick forests used to serve as a safe haven for wildlife with tigers prowling and elephants trumpeting. However, predators like big cats in these days have turned prey to human greed and are subject to poaching and illegal trading. Hunting remains a serious threat to Myanmar’s ecosystems.

Seizure of ivory often makes headlines in international media outlets but until the recent poaching of elephants in Ngapudaw Township and Kyaukda gas Township, less is known about the commercial hunting of elephants in Myanmar. The high demand for ivory products in Asian markets has become a cause of concern for survival of elephants.

 Likewise, tigers and turtles are at great risk as illegal trade is booming for these animals whose parts are thought to be good for health and used as amulets. Today, a number of wildlife has been classified as endangered species across the world, facing the threat of extinction. Tigers are no more powerful and magical creatures but pitiful beasts at the mercy of humans. Though elephants do cause deforestation, it is not as much as illegal logging and mining, both human actions. Not only on land but also in water over-fishing has resulted in depletion of fish stocks. In case of illegal gecko trading between late 2011 and the first half of 2012 in Myanmar, gecko families had experienced the complete chaos while some got to a neighbouring country without visa.

Myanmar at present has established national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and reserves across the nation for wildlife conservation. Although Myanmar with the help of Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is conducting biological surveys, monitoring populations of key wildlife species, it would be required certain education programmes to boost public awareness of the importance of biodiversity. In addition, if the national parks could be turned into tourist destination of eco-tourism, it could be much beneficial in both environmental conservation and economic growth.

Sooner the better to invest in dairy farm

Nay Pyi Taw, 8 Feb—Chairman of Breeding of milk Cows and dairy products development Supervisory Committee Deputy Minister for Livestock and Fisheries U Khin Maung Aye, the Holland-based Royal Friesland Compina Finance Director and party and region/state level officers of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department had discussed about dairy produce and breeding sector in Myanmar at his office, here, yesterday.

The director said, Royal Friesland Compina has invested in 30 countries.

The Company would also like to invest in Myanmar and sign MoU with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries. The Deputy Minister said in his comment that Myanmar welcomed the Co’s investment. The Deputy General Director of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and entrepreneurs from Livestock Breeding Federation would sign MoU.

Sooner the better to implement MoU in conformity with rules and regulations, the deputy minister said.—MNA

Thai Armed Forces Supreme Commander donates cash to promote religious affairs

Yangon, 8 Feb—Supreme Commander of the Royal Thai Armed Forces General Tanasak Patimakorn and wife donated cash to the fund for spending it on religious affairs through Presiding Sayadaw of Naga Cave Monastery on 7 February.

Tanasak Patimakorn and wife presented robes and 1,468,340 baht to Naga Cave Sayadaw Bhaddanta Jagarbuvamsa of the monastery.

The donation will be spent on promoting religious affairs, on reconstruction of temples and edifices that were destroyed by natural disasters and on promotion of Pariyatti Sasana at the monastery.

NLM

Pyidaungsu and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker receives French Ambassador and party

Nay Pyi Taw, 8 Feb—Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint received a delegation led by French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Jacques VALADE, ambassadors from EU countries and officials at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Complex, here, this afternoon.

Present on the occasion together with the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw were Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyein, chairman of Amyotha Hluttaw Affairs Committees and responsible persons of Hluttaw Office.

They had a cordial discussion on Myanmar’s political reforms, dissemination of knowledge on democracy system, poverty alleviation, power sharing to region/state governments, peace-making process of Hluttaw Committees and EU’s assistance to Myanmar reform processes.

MNA

Rehabilitation of Rakhine State discussed

Nay Pyi Taw, 8 Feb—Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Khin Yi held talks with Asia and Pacific Regional Director Mr Kasidis Rochanakon of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and SEA Director Mr James Lynch, Resident Representative Mr Johannes G ten Feld at the ministry, here, this afternoon.

Their discussions focused on undertakings of immigration tasks after outbreaks of conflicts two times in Rakhine State, matters related to the Myanmar Citizens Law 1982 and assistance of UNHCR for development of rehabilitation in Rakhine State.—MNA

Union Minister U Khin Yi receives Asia and Pacific Regional Director Mr Kasidis Rochanakon of the Office of UNHCR and party.—MNA

Bhaddanta Jagarbuvamsa of the monastery.
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives ambassadors from EU member countries

**Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives Ambassadors from EU member countries.**—MNA

Khin Soe and officials from the Hluttaw office. At the meeting, they had a cordial discussion on political and economic reforms, and further cooperation between Myanmar and EU member countries. MNA

**Union Commerce Minister receives Indonesian guests**

Indonesia’s assistances for hosting ASEAN Chairmanship in 2014 and sharing of Indonesia’s experience. MNA

**Investment opportunities for development of milk and dairy products discussed**

Investment opportunities for development of milk and dairy products in Myanmar. The delegation comprising the managing directors then observed Myanmar milk-processing factory and milch cow farm in Nay Pyi Taw. MNA

**School milk programme goes on**

The department is making sure to get fresh and clean milk from milk cow farms and donors are also making contributing for milk programme. MNA

**Journalism students in field works**

Students from Journalist Course No 3 of National Management Course in Botataung Township started their practical works at the training hall of News and Periodicals Enterprise on Theinbyu Road, here, on 4 February. MNA

**Road/ bridge, urban housing development between Myanmar-Indonesia discussed**

The workshop discussed the road/bridge and urban housing development between Myanmar and Indonesia, progress of road networks linking neighbouring countries, development of urban area and economic growth. MNA

**Workshop on renovating, upgrading YGH held**

The workshop was opened with an address by Pyithu Hluttaw Representative Prof Dr Kyaw Myint. The participants of the workshop discussed renovation and upgrading of the hospital, medical services, teaching and learning on medicine at the hospital and plans for raising funds for the renovation and upgrading the hospital. MNA
US regulator raises prospect of longer delay for Boeing 787

WASHINGTON/New York, 8 Feb — Regulators need to rethink how they ap-
proved the batteries on the Boeing Co 787, a top US safety official said on Thurs-
day, adding a new and poten-
tially time-consuming wrin-
tle to the plane’s grounding.

National Transportation Safety Board head Deborah Hersman said regulators must review the “special conditions” used in approving lithium-ion bat-
tery technology on the 787 Dreamliners, after two bat-
tery related safety incidents in a matter of days.

The 50 Dreamliners in service were grounded worldwide on 16 January, after a series of battery in-
cidents, including a fire on a parked 787 in Boston and an in-flight problem on an-
other plane in Japan. The groundings have cost air-
lines tens of millions of dol-
ars, with no end in sight.

“There have now been two battery events result-
ing in smoke, less than two weeks apart, on two differ-
cent aircraft,” Hersman said. “The assumptions used to certify the battery must be re-
considered,” she added.

Boeing investors took the news in stride, pushing shares higher on the day. Analysts said the market was focusing on the wrong issue: the short-term ques-
tion of fixing the battery versus the longer-term prospect the whole battery system might need to be ap-
proved again.

If the battery needs to be re-certified, “you’re talk-
ing about changes to the 50 they’ve delivered, signifi-
cant amount of engineering commitment on the 787,” she said. I see this as still having a sig-
nificant amount of question marks,” said Ken Herbert, an analyst at Imperial Cap-
ital in San Francisco.

Boeing shares are 3 percent higher since the 787 was grounded on 16 Janu-
ary, despite the headaches it has caused the planebuilder and the demands for com-
pensation.

Since finished 787s are already undelivered, and Boeing customers are al-
ready agitating for compen-
sation, that could compli-
cate Boeing’s assumption the grounding would not significantly affect it finan-
cially this year.—Reuters

Albania, Turkey strategic partners: Albanian president

TIRANA, 8 Feb — Alba-
nian President Bujar Nisha-
ni on Thursday stated that Albania and Turkey were strategic partners during a visit to Tur-
key by Turkish Defence Minister Ismet Yilmaz.

Yilmaz is on an official
visit to Tirana at the invita-
tion of his Albanian coun-
terpart Arben Imer.

President Nishani and
Minister Yilmaz said coop-
eration between their coun-
tries in all fields, especially defence, could serve as a model for NATO member states.

Yilmaz praised Alba-
nia’s overall progress on the path of reforms. He also praised Albania’s role as a factor of peace and stability in the region.—Xinhua

British Library to release rare literary archives in exhibition

LONDON, 8 Feb — The British Library announced on Thursday that it will hold exhibitions of 20th century state propaganda, newly-acquired archives of Sir Alex Guinness, and publish the last work of Virginia Woolf this year.

The exhibition Propa-
ganda: Power and Persua-
sion will run from 17 May to 17 September this year, in a bid to explore how different states have used propaganda during the 20th and the 21st centuries, in peace and in war.

Among the exhibits is a selection of propaganda leaflets dropped on occupied territories by the Al-
lowed powers during WW II. Acquired from the Foreign

Office during the war, these leaflets will be displayed in public for the first time.

They were dropped on France, Germany and Italy, containing inventive mes-
sage encouraging civilian resistance and urging armed forces to surrender.

In a separate event, the personal archive of Oscar-
winner actor Alec Guin-
ness who charted his career from the late 1930s to his death in 2000 will be pub-
licly available for the first time.

The archive contains more than 900 of Guin-
ness’ letters to family and friends, and over 100 vol-
umes of diaries, offering an intimate account of his life.—Xinhua

First Israeli underground hospital underway in northern city

JERUSALEM, 8 Feb — The construction of a first of its kind underground hospital is underway and set to be completed in May in Israel’s northern city of Haifa, the Ma’arriv daily re-
depor on Thursday.

According to the re-
port, the underground facility will protect the patients and staffers from any attacks of mis-
iles, whether biological or chemical, against Israel.

The new hospital fa-
cility’s construction comes amid growing tensions be-
tween Israel and its north-
ern neighbours, Syria and Lebanon.

where they discussed how to foster stronger the rela-
tions of the two countries.

Among the issues dis-
cussed by Del Rosario and Westerwelle were the po-
itical consultation process between the Philippines and Germany, the framework agree-
ment for Mindanao peace, economic relations, including the issue about the German airport opera-
tor Fraport AG, and defense cooperation. South China

Sea issue, Filipino seafar-
ers’ welfare, official devel-
opment assistance (ODA), and the ongoing activities of German foundations in the Philippines, the Depart-
ment of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said.

Despite the contentious
Fraport issue which re-
main a sticking point for both countries, Del Rosario said “this single case should not prevent German companies from working with their

Filipino partners to exploit opportunities in the energy, manufacturing, business process outsourcing, tour-
ism and other infrastructure projects under the public-
private partnership and other

schemes.”

Fraport was the foreign partner of the Philippine International Air Terminal Corp. (PIATCO), which built the Ninoy Aquino In-
ternational Airport Termi-
nal III (NAIA-3). But the Philippine government de-
cared the NAIA-3 contract with PIATCO as null and void.

Westerwelle arrived in the Philippines as both countries prepare for the 60th anniversary of the es-
tablishment of diplomatic relations next year.

Xinhua

Minister Yilmaz said coop-
eration between their coun-
tries in all fields, especially
defence, could serve as a model for NATO member states.

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tween Israel and its north-
ern neighbours, Syria and Lebanon.
One killed, seven injured as blast hits Pakistan’s Karachi

ISLAMABAD, 8 Feb—At least one policeman was killed and seven others were injured when a bomb blast hit a police mobile in Pakistan’s southern port city of Karachi on Thursday night, reported local TV channel Geo.

Local TV Geo said that the incident happened at about 9:30 pm (local time) when a police mobile carrying three policemen was targeted in Orange Town area of Karachi, the capital city of the country’s southern Sindh Province.

The bomb was triggered off by a remote control and explosives were hidden in a garbage heap on the ground.

The injured people including two policemen and five civilians were shifted to a nearby hospital.

No group claimed responsibility for the attack.

Mongolian officials to continue talks with Rio Tinto

ULAN BATOR, 8 Feb—Mongolian officials ended their first shareholders’ meeting with Rio Tinto officials on Thursday without reaching agreements and criticizing the mining giant’s unpreparedness.

The meeting began on Wednesday afternoon to discuss Oyu Tolgoi LLC, a Mongolia-Tinto joint venture developing a large gold-copper mine in the south Gobi region of Mongolia.

The two sides agreed to meet later this month.

Mining Minister Gankhuyag Davaajav said at a Press conference after the meeting that the Rio Tinto manager working for Oyu Tolgoi LLC did not read the investment agreement or feasibility study.

“Therefore, I told them to change the situation in the next talk,” the minister said.

Batbayar Nyamjav, the economic development minister, also warned the investors “to respect Mongolian customs and traditions and follow Mongolian laws and regulations.”

In response, Rio Tinto Copper Chief Executive Andrew Harding said in a statement that the project construction was finished “ahead of schedule and in line with the budget submitted to the Oyu Tolgoi board and government shareholder representatives.”

“We produced our first copper concentrate last week, and remain on schedule for commercial production in the first half of 2013,” Harding said.

He said, though, that “substantive issues about the ongoing development have been raised by shareholders.”

Oyu Tolgoi CEO and President Cameron McRae also said that Tinto “has always been fully transparent with all our shareholders regarding our project’s finances, costs and operations.”

Making traditional cakes features Lunar New Year in Vietnam

HANOI, 8 Feb—Most of the nations around the world often have their own traditional dishes for special events, and Vietnam is no exception.

In Vietnam, making glutinous rice cakes, or traditional Chung cake as called by the Vietnamese people, is an indispensable preparation for the Lunar New Year festival. As a result, Chung cake is always present among other Vietnamese traditional dishes throughout the holiday.

According to the legend, Chung cake was first made by Prince Lang Lieu, a son of Hung King, who is said to wear the crown some 3,000 to 4,000 years ago. The prince made Chung cakes in square shape and Day cakes in round shape to symbolize the Earth and the sky respectively, and offered them to the king to express his respect and gratitude for parents, and also to thank Gods for blessing bumper harvests during the year.

The tradition has been well kept by the Vietnamese people nationwide although the way they make the cakes is different depending on regions where they live. Northern Vietnamese make the Chung cake in square shape, while the southerners or ethnic minorities in mountainous areas wrap the cakes in a round shape.

“I make Chung cakes for my family usually during Tet holidays and maybe as gifts to my close friends. They are special Tet gifts, actually,” Nguyen Van Ky, a 67-year-old man, told Xinhua recently in Hanoi.

Ky said he has three children, and each will have some couples of cakes to put on the ancestor altar during the New Year.

According to Ky, making Chung cake requires simple materials and ingredients which can be found in every market in Vietnam.
American Airlines, US Airways on verge of merger

American Airlines and US Airways are expected to announce as early as next week that the two companies will seek to combine in a deal that will be announced as soon as 15 February. A deal for the two US carriers is likely to be agreed on next week, the reports said.

The board of directors of Fort Worth-based American Airlines’ parent company, AMR Corp, is expected to meet next Monday to consider the deal, and an announcement could be made the next day, according to a local TV channel KHOU.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday that AMR Corp is in the final stages of talks with US Airways Group on a merger deal, and that an agreement could be reached as soon as 15 February.

CBS station KTVT in Dallas said it has learned that US Airways CEO Doug Parker would probably run the new airline, which would be named American Airlines and is likely to stay headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram reported that a merger “could be announced as early as next week as the two companies move closer to finalizing details of a deal.” The two carriers’ boards of directors have to give the green light for the merger to occur.

The judge overseeing AMR’s bankruptcy also has to sign off on any agreement, according to the reports. American Airlines is coming out of bankruptcy proceedings that went through two river deltas, Turkish capital Ankara and Istanbul.

People enjoy themselves at a tulip field in the garden landscape park of Liuzhou City, south China’s Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, on 7 Feb, 2013. Xinhua

51 people die in Zambia’s bus accident

LUSAKA, 8 Feb.—At least 51 people have been confirmed dead after a public bus they were traveling in collided with a truck in central Zambia’s Chibombo District in the early hours of Thursday, police said.

The accident occurred when the bus, belonging to a state-run Postal Bus Services, was traveling from Ndola city on the Copperbelt Province to the Zambian capital Lusaka and the 51 people died on the spot, according to Zambia Police Spokesperson Elizabeth Kanjela.

The police spokesperson said the accident occurred as the truck lost control after hitting into another vehicle before colliding with the bus which overturned.

Ministry of Information

Invitation to open tender for purchasing equipments for Myanma Radio and Television

1. Open tender documents are invited to purchase the following equipments for Myanma Radio and Television under the Ministry of Information—

(a) Studio Lighting System
(b) 6.6 KV VCB Panel

2. Open tender forms are available at Myanma Radio and Television, Nay Pyi Taw (Tatkon), from (9:30 to 16:30) hours as of 9-2-2013.

3. Open tender forms are to be submitted in the presence of Tender Board of Myanma Radio and Television, Nay Pyi Taw (Tatkon), from (9:30 to 16:30) hours on 13-2-2013. Overdue tender forms will not be accepted.

4. Tender form rules, lists of equipments and detailed information are available at the following address.

5. Price scrutiny will be made at 9:00 am on 14-2-2013 at Office No. 7, Ministry of Information, Nay Pyi Taw.

Equipment procurement Committee

Myanma Radio and Television, Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon, Ministry of Information.

Ph: 067-79411, 067-79135

Turkish northern city battles hard against air pollution

ISTANBUL, 8 Feb.—Lying along the Black Sea coast between two river deltas, Turkish northern city Samsun was once among the world’s “top cities with the best air quality.” However, the city, now with a population of almost 1.5 million, is battling hard against air pollution caused by rapid industrialization, unplanned urbanization, narrow roads, and high-rise buildings that prevent wind flowing freely.

“Because of these conditions, heat-borne air pollution reaches its highest levels, especially during evening hours,” professor Yüksel Arıçali, head of the Department of Environmental Engineering in Ondokuz Mayıs University, told Xinhua. Due to changes in the direction of dominant wind in Samsun’s industrial zone, the polluters sometimes move toward Tekkeköy District of the city, said Arıçali. This movement of wind causes a severe “industrial pollution” in Tekkeköy. In 2007, when industrial plants had been built in Tekkeköy, air pollution was posing serious health risks in the area. The concentration of particulate matter like sulphur dioxide, nitrogen and carbon monoxide in the air was measured at 1000 to 3000 microgram, according to data from Ondokuz Mayıs University. The limit for particulate matter concentration in industrialized regions is set as 400 microgram. The results of the university’s measures revealed the reality that in 2007 people in Tekkeköy respired the carcinogenic PM100 65 times more than normal rates.

Istanbul, 8 Feb—Lying along the Black Sea coast between two river deltas, Turkish northern city Samsun was once among the world’s “top cities with the best air quality.” However, the city, now with a population of almost 1.5 million, is battling hard against air pollution caused by rapid industrialization, unplanned urbanization, narrow roads, and high-rise buildings that prevent wind flowing freely.

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Robert De Niro's prints immortalized in cement

LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb—Robert De Niro has had his hand and footprints immortalized in cement.

The Silver Linings Playbook actor became the latest film icon to have his prints enscribed outside Hollywood's historic TCL Chinese Theatre—formerly known as Grauman's Chinese Theatre—in a ceremony celebrating his career on Monday (04.02.13).

The 69-year-old star—whose impressive filmography includes Casino, Raging Bull and Taxi Driver—told the crowd: “They say everyone in the film industry has three homes: The home where they live, the home where their first wife lives, and Hollywood. I love New York and I am proud to be a citizen of Hollywood. Thank you for this honour and thank you for making me feel at home here.”

Robert, who is best known for making gangster movies, then joked to the crowd: “You know, Joe Pesci (Goodfellas co-star) always said I’d end up with my face in cement!”

Stars including Billy Crystal and Silver Linings Playbook director David O Russell paid tribute to the veteran actor, who was accompanied by his proud wife, Grace Hightower.

The excited actor mistakenly placed his cement plaque ‘2/14/13’ (14 February), but representatives for the TLC Chinese Theatre have corrected the date to 4 February. Robert is currently celebrating a Best Supporting Actor Academy Award nomination for his role in the Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper-starring comedy about mental illness. It marks the actor’s first Oscar nomination since 1991 for Cape Fear.

He has previously won two Oscars; a Best Supporting Actor prize for 1974’s The Godfather Part II, and Best Actor for 1980’s Raging Bull, a biopic on boxer Jake LaMotta. —PTI

Kangana Ranaut’s sister gives her a hard time over party outfit
day bash for the latter’s husband Ayjay Chandel. A source says, “It was Ayjay’s birthday a few days ago. Kangoli had arranged for a lavish party for him. Kangana, who was supposed to attend the party, had been tied up at work all day. She decided to go casual for the event.”

However as luck would have it, Rangoli spotted Kangana walking in a pair of track pants and immediately put her foot down. The source adds, “Her sister forced her to go home and come back dressed. And right before she left her house, she got an SMS from Rangoli reading: Don’t forget to do your hair.”

The SMS apparently left Kangana furious. A friend of the actress says, “Kangna narrated the entire incident to me. She believes Kangoli did so because she wanted her husband to have a perfect birthday party.”

Catherine Zeta Jones is more beautiful than ever:

LONDON, 8 Feb—Michael Douglas thinks Catherine Zeta Jones is “more beautiful than ever”.

The 68-year-old Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps star—who has been married to the Side Effects actress for 12 years with whom he shares son Dylan, 12, and daughter Carys, nine—says he supports the 43-year-old Welsh star with everything because she is “simply the best”.

He told People.com: “Catherine and I are doing well. She is more beautiful than ever inside and out. I support her with everything and she is simply the best.”

Meanwhile, Michael claims he isn’t an “over-protective dad” and has already given his youngest son dating advice despite being scared to see him grow up.

He said: “I’m trying to digest it all, and I’m just trying to remember what it’s like to be in a teenage romance. And what I remember scares me as a father!”

“I’m not the over-protective dad. Dylan is a great kid and I trust him. He’s having fun and conducting himself very well.”

The Oscar winner also insisted he doesn’t try to push his son to date certain girls but is impressed by his choices.

He said: “I don’t have much say in it. I keep my mouth shut. But I like his choices so far. “Unsolicited advice is a hostile gesture. I remembered that from a long time ago. But I want him to know to always be polite and respectful.”

Just don’t try too hard. If he asks me for specific advice, I’ll have a long talk with him.”

The actor’s eldest son Cameron, 34, from his previous marriage to Diandra Morrell Douglas—who is serving a 10-year sentence for drug dealing—was moved to an isolated cell last after failing a drug test at the federal prison in Loretto, Pennsylvania. —PTI

Satyagraha for Kareena on Valentine’s Day

MUMBAI, 8 Feb—Kareena Kapoor, who tied the knot with actor Saif Ali Khan in October last year, will be busy shooting for Prakash Jha’s film Satyagraha in Bhopal on Valentine’s Day (14 February).

“This year, my Valentine’s Day will be with Amrit ji (Arniab Bachchan), Ajay Devgn and Prakash Jha. So it’s not bad,” Kareena Kapoor said.

On what gift she give to Saif Ali Khan on V-Day, she said: “This year, Saif will have to gift me, I gave him the biggest gift in October. I have transformed myself into a begum. He should come and give me a gift.”

The actress, who is fond of diamonds, said there was no special day to gift diamonds.

“There is no special day to gift diamonds to a women. So there is no particular day. Any time, whenever he (Saif) feels like,” Kareena said.

Asked if gifting diamonds would affect Saif’s budget, Kareena said: “This question you should ask him. But now that Race 2 is also a hit, I don’t think there should be any budget issue.” —PTI

No issues with Aditi Rao Hydari: Sara Loren

MUMBAI, 8 Feb—Actresses Sara Loren and Aditi Rao Hydari reportedly gave each other the cold shoulder on the sets of their new film Murder 3.

However, Sara tells us that all’s well between the two. Sara states, “Once when the food on the sets was over, I even gave away my portion so that Aditi could eat. As you see there is no issue between us. In the film, our characters are not friends. Maybe our onscreen tension was missed by people.”

Ask her why she changed her name from Mona Lizza to Sara and the starlet says, “My agency told me that my name was not suitable and wouldn’t work in my favour in the industry, I decided to change it to Sara.” —PTI

PTI
SCOREBOARD

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La Dolce Vita turns sour for Raptors’ Bargnani

ROMA, 8 Feb.—Manchester United midfielder Shinji Kagawa returned to Europe on Thursday, a day after he helped set up two goals in Japan’s 3-0 victory in a friendly over Latvia.

“The way we scored was down to our having a good shared image,” Kagawa said before leaving from Kansas International Airport. “Next time, I want to score.”

Before leaving Japan, Kagawa inked a three-year sponsorship deal with Audi Japan that will give the 23-year-old use of a red Audi, valued at around 20 million yen, in Britain. —Kyodo News

Liverpool defender Carragher to retire

LONDON, 8 Feb.—Liv- erpool defender Jamie Carragher announced on Thursday that he will retire at the end of the season, concluding a distinguished one-club career.

The 35-year-old Carragher, labeled “Mr Liv- erpool” by the club, has played 723 times for the first team since making his debut in 1997, which made him the second on the all-time appearance list behind Ian Callaghan. “It has been a privilege and an honor to represent this great club for as long as I have,” Carragh- er said on Thursday. “And I am immensely proud to have done so.” —Xinhua

Williams, reinstated after bounty affair, joins Titans

NEW YORK, 8 Feb.—Gregg Williams, banned for orchestrating the New Orleans Saints’ bounty program, was reinstated by the NFL on Thursday and hired as a defensive coach by the Tennessee Titans, now that the coach’s contract had been approved. “The commissioner cited several reasons for the reinstatement, including Williams’ forthcoming acknowledge- ment of and acceptance of responsibility for his role in the bounty programme at the Saints, his commitment to never again be involved in a pay-for-performance or bounty system, and his pledge to teach safe play and respect for the rules at all levels of the game,” the Titans said in a statement. “The commissioner em- phasized that Williams must fully conform to league rules and will be subject to periodic monitoring to confirm his compliance.” Williams was banned last March after an NFL investigation deter- mined the defensive coordi- nator had a leadership role in the Saints bounty scandal, a programme that gave players cash rewards for knock- ing opponents out of games from 2009-2011. —Reuters

India retain No 3 spot in ICC T20 rankings

DUBAI, 8 Feb.—India managed to retain their third rank among T20 teams, while Virat Kohli has held on to his sixth spot in the ICC rankings for Twenty20 batsmen issued today. India placed at third with 119 points in the ICC T20 Championship table is headed by Sri Lanka followed by the reigning World T20 champions West Indies.

Sri Lanka are the clear leaders with 131 ratings points, nine points ratings points ahead of Darren Sammy’s men.—PTI

Li Na to miss Qatar Open

DOHA, 8 Feb.—Chinese tennis player Li Na will miss the Qatar Open next week due to her ankle injury she suffered in her Australia Open final in which she lost to Victoria Azarenka of Belarus.

“Li Na has withdrawn from Qatar tennis due to her ankle injury from the Australian Open final,” said the WTA on its Twitter ac- count on Thursday.

Li suffered the unexpected left ankle injury in the second set at the Aus- tralia Open final in January and losing the match 4-6, 6-4, 6-3.—Xinhua

Kagawa heads back for club challenge in style

Manchester United midfielder Shinji Kagawa is pictured with an Audi car in Izumisano, Osaka Prefecture, on 7 Feb, 2013, as he inked a three-year sponsorship deal with Audi Japan that will give him use of a red Audi, valued at around 20 million yen, in Britain.—Kyodo News

NFL’s Redskins, others should junk names, make money

WASHINGTON, 8 Feb.—showing the profits of rebranding is more effec- tive than moral arguments in prodding sports teams such as the NFL’s Washington Red- skins to drop names seen as offensive to Native Americans, symposium pan- elists said on Thursday. Ar- guments against stereotyp- ing Native Americans will carry less weight than new revenue in changing names such as the Redskins, the target of political debate and a legal fight, the panelists at the National Museum of the American Indian said.

Teams could launch a new revenue stream by junk- ing their mascots and names —such as Major League Baseball’s Cleveland Indian- s, the NFL’s Kansas City Chiefs and the Florida State University Seminoles—and Roman who is losing fan support with play that is often as bewildering as a Fed- erico Fellini film. Indeed, things have turned decidedly sour for the Italian, who was greeted to a chorus of boos from a frustrated home crowd when he returned to the Raptors lineup on Wed- nesday against Boston after missing 26 games with el- bow and wrist injuries. “I’m disappointed,” Raptors head coach Dwane Casey told reporters after the Rap- tors fell 99-95 to Boston. “This young man has done nothing to deserve that. He’s been hurt.

“Fans have a right to boo, to cheer, to boo me. But I don’t think Andrea deserves it, coming back from a serious injury.” With each passing season the criticism has grown louder and more frequent as Bargnani fails to develop into the fras- chie player expected from a number one overall selec- tion. Even Raptors team Manager Bryan Colangelo, who used the top pick in 2009 to claim Bargnani, once labeled him as the “enigma of all enigmas,” openly suggesting it might be time to finally trade the 27-year-old. —Reuters

Williams, reinstated after bounty affair, joins Titans
**NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR**

**Saturday, 9 February, 2013**

**GENERAL**

**Fire drill practised in Bhamo timber extraction region**

**BHAMO, 8 Feb—** As part of efforts to take fire preventive measures, Bhamo Region Timber Extraction Region (Myanma Timber Enterprise) of Kachin State and Township Fire Services Department jointly performed fire drill at 2nd-mile heavy machinery yard of the region on 28 January afternoon.

**District Manager U Hay Lwin of Timber Extraction Region, Assistant Managers U Zaw Mar and U Aung Naing Soe, staff and workers, Head of Township FSD U Maung Maung Aye and members. They practised fire drill with the use of fire extinguishers and fire engine. Myanma Alinn

**Jennifer Aniston, Justin Theroux enroll in “marriage boot camp”**

**LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb—** Jennifer Aniston enrolled her and fiance Justin Theroux into a “marriage boot camp”.

The former Friends star is determined to make her union with the 41-year-old actor work so before they tie the knot, she got them to have a three-day therapy session in Santa Monica. A source said: “Jennifer and Justin are super excited about their big day, but she thought it would be a good idea to start married life rid of any problems. Justin seems to be as much a believer in the therapy as Jennifer is. On arrival, they had to hand over their mobile phones and undertake counselling, couple massages and screaming therapy — where you howl your feelings out at the top of your voice.”

Jennifer, 43, also had to acknowledge the end of marriage to first husband Brad Pitt — with whom she split with in 2005 — in order to move on and make this relationship a success. The source added to Britain’s Grazia magazine: “It was pretty tough going and they had to address all of their deepest fears and worries.”

Jennifer — who has been dating Justin for around two years — has previously spoken about having the therapy and says she found it very rewarding. She said: “It’s true that I spent some time regularly taking part in sessions with a psychiatrist. I find it very normal to lie on a couch every once in a while and to let your head be straightened out and your heart.” — PTI

**Singer Mika Singh arrested, released on bail at Mumbai airport**

**MUMBAI, 8 Feb—** Singer Mika Singh was arrested at the Mumbai International Airport on Wednesday for allegedly coming from abroad and carrying over Rs 7,500 and US $5,000 need to make declaration about the same upon arrival, he said. He was detained by the Customs department earlier in the evening after he arrived from Bangkok by a private airline. The singer was booked for violating the Foreign Exchange Management Act or FEMA.

During checking, he was found in possession of US $12,000 and Rs 3 lakh in cash, a senior Customs official said.

As per Customs norms, Indian passengers coming from abroad and carrying over Rs 7,500 and US $5,000 need to make declaration about the same upon arrival, he said.

The 35-year-old singer was unable to give satisfactory answers about the currency in his possession, the official said. — PTI

**Dozens missing as ferry capsizes in southern Bangladesh**

The official said that fire brigade personnel and locals including fishermen are searching for those missing people.

He said that many passengers were able to swim ashore after the ferry capsized being hit by a sand-laden bulkhead.

No bodies have so far been retrieved, said the police official who did not like to be named.

**Fire drill practised in Bhamo timber extraction region**

**11 dead in China expressway pile-ups**

**CHANGSHA, 8 Feb—** Eleven people died and 68 others were injured after multiple vehicles piled up each other on an expressway in central China’s Hunan Province on Friday morning, traffic authorities said.

The pile-ups occurred at around 4:05 am on the stretch in Changde City of the expressway from Changde to Zhangjiagai in Hunan, said an expressway administration official.

Twelve suffered serious injuries and two of them were in critical condition, according to the Changde City Health Bureau. All the injured are being treated in four hospitals in Changde.

Traffic control in the section were canceled at 11:10 am.

The cause of the accident is being investigated. Snow is still falling in the area on Friday. — Xinhua

**Photo taken on 8 Feb, 2013 shows a pile-up scene on the Changde-Zhangjiagai Expressway in Changde, central China’s Hunan Province. Eleven people died and 68 others were injured after multiple vehicles piled up in the Changde section of the Changde-Zhangjiagai Expressway on Friday morning, traffic authorities said. Xinhua**

**Nikkei plunges 1.80 pct on Friday**

**TOKYO, 8 Feb—** Nikkei closed 1.80 percent lower on Friday as the depreciation of yen paused due to uncertain outlook of the eurozone economy. The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average plunged 203.91 points, or 1.80 percent, from Thursday to 11,153.16.

The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange was down 11.83 points, or 1.22 percent, at 957.35. Decliners were led by the glass, paper and sea transport sectors, while airlines and nonferrous metals were the only gainers. The turnover was about 2,702.7 billion yen (about 28.93 billion US dollars). — Xinhua

**MNA/Xinhua**

**A giant spitting cobra, measuring nearly nine feet and carrying enough venom to kill at least 15 people, has been discovered in Kenya, a conservation group said recently. — Xinhua**

**Former Guangdong official stripped of Party membership**

**BEIJING, 8 Feb—** The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) of the Communist Party of China (CPC) said on Friday it has investigated Zhou Zhenhong, a former official in Guangdong Province for “serious discipline and law violations.”

Zhou was stripped of his Party membership and removed from his official posts, according to a decision of the CPC’s CCDI.

Zhou was former member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Guangdong Provincial Committee and head of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Guangdong Provincial Committee. — Xinhua

**PTI**

**Mena News Agency**

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Management Committee for observing 66th Anniversary Union Day meets

Union Minister at the President Office U Thein Nyunt delivers a speech at work coordination meeting of Management Committee for Observing 66th Anniversary Union Day.—MNA

Nay Pyi Taw, 8 Feb—Management Committee for observing 66th Anniversary Union Day held its third work coordination meeting at Nay Pyi Taw City Hall this morning, with an address by Chairman of the management committee Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Union Minister Htwe Myint Naing (Sagaing).

Asian Tour Champions to light up Zaykabar Myanmar Open

Yangon, 8 Feb—Zaykabar Myanmar Open will be held late this month, attracting Asian Tour Champions.

Hiratsuka, who is a three-time tour winner, is tipped to reclaim the Asian Tour Champions title at the US$300,000 Zaykabar Myanmar Open which will be held late this month, 21 to 24 February, at Mingalardon Golf and Country Club from February 21 to 24.

Grant contract for construction of bridge in Myitkyina signed

Nay Pyi Taw, 8 Feb—The government of Japan, under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots human security projects scheme decided to extend humanitarian assistance of US$120,952 for construction of community bridge in Kyar Yar Patty village-tract in Myitkyina Township of Kachin State.

Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Mikio Numata and Chairman of Bridge Construction Committee signed the grant contract yesterday. It is known that emergency patients from that village-tract are rushed to Myitkyina Hospital since there is no hospital there. School children who have finished their primary school have to attend middle school in Myitkyina since the village-tract has primary schools only. Moreover, local agricultural products are brought to the markets in Myitkyina by the villagers to earn their families.

Four-mile long earth road to Myitkyina, will be upgraded into gravel one. However Kyar Yar Patty bridge needs repairing and it will be rebuilt as RC Type one.

This assistance will further strengthen the existing friendly-relations between Myanmar and Japan.—MNA

Join hands for increasing dolphin population

Ayeayawady dolphins, unique to the historic Ayeyawady River, are the friends of fishermen. The traditional fishing, the perfect cooperation between fishermen and dolphins is the frequent scene on Ayeyawady waters. In this fishing technique, dolphins voluntarily herd fish into nets of fishermen and take the fish that fall out of the nets.

Fishermen in protected area of Ayeayawady dolphins were given talk on conservation of this endangered species recently. The talks was jointly organized by the Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Livestock and Fishery and Conservation Group which are formulating approaches for Ayeayawady dolphin conservation management plan.

Ayeayawady dolphins like humans are mammals. Ayeayawady River has been home to them for over thousand years.

The cooperative fishing of human and dolphin has been also conserved for many decades and this tradition has attracted many observers from abroad.

Annually, over 70 dolphins can be seen in Ayeayawady River between Bhamo and Mandalay.

A group of 19 dolphins has been making their home between Mandalay,Sagaing and Mingun for over a month and dolphin viewers are visiting them every day.

As more and more globetrotters are visiting there, locals are benefitting from there. However, fish population, food for dolphins is shrinking due to irresponsible fishing. Therefore, locals there are urged to use appropriate fishing technique to ensure sustainability of fish stocks, joining efforts for conservation of dolphins that are serving human interests.

Byline: Htwe Myint Naing (Sagaing)

Weather Forecast for Second Dekad of February 2013

Bay of Bengal Condition

A low pressure area may form in the South Bay of Bengal. Weather will be partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Rainy Condition

Rainy days expected about (2) to (3) days in Bago, Yangon, Ayeayawady and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin and Kayin States, weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagraing Region and Kayah and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

Night Temperature

Night temperature will be slightly above February average temperature in Mandalay, Magway, Yangon, Ayeayawady and Taninthayi Regions, and Mon State and about February average temperature in the remaining Regions and States.

Fog Condition

Fog days are expected in the morning about (5) to (7) days in Upper Sagraing Region, Kachin, Chin, Shan, Rakhine, Kayah and Mon States and (4) days in the remaining Regions and States.

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