Education University grads to fill vacant teacher posts

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Feb—About 900 graduates from Education University and College will fill the gaps of teachers in basic education schools and local graduates will also be recruited for education services in the coming academic year.

Deputy Education Minister Dr Ba Shwe said at today’s session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw as the parliament continued its debate on the National Plan for 2013-2014 FY.

He also said the ministry will open mobile schools for children of internal migrant workers.

Daw Mi Myint Than of Ye Constituency said, “They say the primary education is free of charge. Though, a student in my region costs from K 5000 to 10000 a month.”

Union Health Minister Dr Pe Thet Khin confirmed the parliament that the ministry would continue to expand universities of medicines as the country needs more doctors.

“The government is committed to fulfilling the health sector, but there are still necessities,” U Saw Taw Pale of Kayin State Constituency (7) pointed out.

Deputy Defence Minister Maj-Gen Kyaw Nyunt proposed some amendments for the National Planning Bill.

Union Border Affairs Minister Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win updated the Hluttaw on the ministry’s efforts for development of less-developed regions in Myanmar.

High price expected as more farmers go for watermelon

Myanmar’s summer watermelon was beaten by the Vietnamese kind in the Chinese market during the previous year. As the market shows some signs of demand rise, more growers now turn to the watermelon this summer, according to a farmer of Tatkon Township.

“Our watermelon business suffered loss the previous year. China was our market,” farmer Daw Shwe Win of Khayansetgon Village in Tatkon Township said.

“But we later fetched a good price in the local market. Therefore we, see an increase of watermelon farmers.”

She also said summer watermelon is the priority for farmers, indicating an increase in price.

Watermelon growing villages in Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon Township are Khayansetgon, Nyaunglunt, Kyangin, Aik, Nyaunggon and Kayingawng villages. Farmers are found busy in the watermelon plantations.

The watermelon plantations are fed by Sinthe dam which also irrigates cabbage, carrot and maize plantations in Nweyit village.

Farmers of Ngweyit village make their living on vegetable cultivation as the village sits on the favourable soil irrigated by Sinthe creek.

The current market price for a standard watermelon is around K 1600. Brokers are also buying the watermelon plantation-wise, giving more hope of high prices to farmers.

Union Alinn:

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**LOCAL NEWS**

**Mandalay ethnic market festival attracts globetrotters**

Mandalay, 18 Feb—A flock of globetrotters thronged to take part in the second national races market festival held at the building of Shan national race social and religious association on 35th street between 66th and 68th streets in Mandalay from 9 to 11 February. Local and foreign visitors posed for documentary photos together with national races in their traditional costumes giving a warm welcome to the visitors at the festival. Traditional goods, costumes and food of national races including Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Kokang, Chin, Ta-aung (Palaung), Mon, Bamar, Rakhine and Shan were on display at more than 40 booths there. A programme of performing traditional dances of national races included in every night starting from 6 pm. The market festival was intended to maintain traditions, customs and cultural heritages of national races, to cement amity and friendship among them, boosting the Union spirit based on mutual understandings and respects and to perpetuate the Union in which all national races have been living together with the sense of peaceful co-existence.

**Five missing in motorized boat sinking near pontoon bridge in Seikkan Township**

Yangon, 18 Feb—A Seikkyi Khaunaungto-bound motorized boat carrying passengers and their goods had capsized and sunk while leaving from Phonegyi Street pontoon bridge No (2) in Seikkan Township of Yangon Region on 16 February, leaving five women missing. “It is the only motorized boat running from Yangon to Thasi village in Seikkyi Khaunaungto Township. I have no idea how many people were on board the boat. It takes about an hour to reach the village. I lost my money and goods in the boat sinking. The boat capsized after crashing into the back of Pyaewa Thalon motorized boat docked at Shwetaungdan pontoon bridge No (1) while the boat was allowed for drift. When the boat had sunk, I fell down in the water. Then I had managed to arrive back on the water and I was rescued by men on the pontoon bridge. My sister and I were alive in the boat sinking”, Daw Sein Hlaing of Thasi village said. Seikkan Police Station filed a lawsuit against the helmsman who is still at large. Five women including Ma Tin Tin Maw (a) Mi Maw, 35, of Kalandan village are still missing.—Kyemon

**Educative talks on traffic rules given in Swa**

Yedashe, 18 Feb—As Bago Region sees fatal road accidents frequently, Yedashe Township Police Force conducted an educative talks on traffic rules at Basic Education High School in Swa on 15 February.

Head of Yedashe Township Police Force Police Major Nyan Win and Police Inspector Thaung San gave talks on dos and don’ts regarding traffic rule enforcement measures. The educative talks was attended by local people and students.—Kyemon

**Summer paddy cultivation in Sagaing Tsp**

Sagaing, 18 Feb—Zeechaung village-tract formed with Uyin, Kyaukse and Pyukan villages is situated four miles from Sagaing. Farmers are busy during the summer paddy cultivation season. U Shwe Win of Pyukan village said that Manaw Thukha paddy strain which is suitable to the region was being cultivated at 350-acre summer paddy farmland in the village-tract. During the period from the days of cultivation season to the harvest time, the engine was used to pump water to be able to supply water to summer paddy. A gallon of diesel cost K 3800 or 4000. The engine consuming a gallon of good quality diesel could run for six hours. Two bags of fertilizer had been needed to spread on one acre. We used hire cattle for ploughing fields as only single cropping was allowed in the region where river water enters the farmlands every year. We fetched about K 70000 for sale of sheaf of paddy per acre. As farmers were allowed to get loans with low interest rate from Myanmar Agriculture Bank, it was worth growing summer paddy.—Kyemon

**32 plywood factory workers get food poisoning in Sagaing Region**

Monywa, 18 Feb—After having their breakfast with cabbage salad at 6 am on 11 February, 32 workers from a plywood factory of Lapaye Nagar Company at Yatpha village in Hmanthi village-tract of Sagaing Region fell sick from food poisoning at about 8 am. Food poisoned workers—17 men and 15 women—were taken to Hmanthi station hospital and they are being given treatment there. While receiving intensive care at the hospital, Ma Tin Tin Myint, 22, of SouthOb-bowardinMonywa and Ma Ei Ei Khine, 18, of Kantha village in Myinnu Township were pronounced dead at about 1.40 pm on that day. Arrangements are being made to transfer Kyaw Myo Thu, 18, of Kantha village in Myinnu Township and Kyaw Myo Aung, 16, of South Ob-ward of Monywa who are in critical condition to Homalin Township People’s Hospital. Further investigation revealed that food poisoning occurred due to lack of washing cabbage sprayed with pesticide thoroughly before having it.—Kyemon

**Kyaukse gets another transformer for growing electricity demand**

Kyaukse, 18 Feb—Upgrading of 33/11 KVA switch yard, construction of 45 feet long and 30 feet wide control building and installation of new 10 MVA transformer were carried out on 9 February at 33/11 KVA sub-station in Kyattinwyo ward which is supplying electricity to Kyaukse Township of Mandalay Region. With a rise in electricity consumption in Kyaukse where only 10 MVA transformer is being used in supplying electricity, a new transformer was installed with the aim of supplying more electricity to local people.—Kyemon
British PM Cameron on India trade trip amid graft scandal

LONDON, 18 Feb — British Prime Minister David Cameron arrives in India on Monday to try to win new investment in the face of fierce global competition as a scandal engulfs an Anglo-Italian helicopter deal.

Making his second visit to India as prime minister, Cameron's trip comes days after a similar trade mission by French President Francois Hollande, underlining how Europe's debt-stricken states are competing to tap into one of the world’s fastest-growing economies.

His delegation, which includes representatives of over 100 companies, cultural and educational bodies, is the biggest taken abroad by a British prime minister and includes four ministers and nine lawmakers.

However, the timing of Cameron's trip is not ideal. India said on Friday it wanted to cancel a $750 million deal for a dozen helicopters made by AgustaWestland, the Anglo-Italian subsidiary of Italy's Finmeccanica, over bribery claims. That will not make Cameron’s job of persuading India to buy more civil and military hardware easier, and Indian officials have told the local Press they intend to press Cameron for “a fully fledged report” on what Britain knows about the scandal. Britain has said it wants to wait until the end of the Italian investigation before commenting in full, but has given India an interim report on the subject.

At a time when Britain’s government is struggling to get its economy growing, officials see India, projected to become the world’s third largest economy by 2050, as a key strategic partner in what Cameron has called a “Global Race.” “I think Britain and India can be one of the great partnerships of the 21st Century,” he told the Hindustan Times. “India is going to be one of the great success stories of this century - a rising power in the world. And I want Britain to be one of your partners as you grow and succeed.”

Two earthquakes shake Greece, no injuries reported

ATHENS, 18 Feb — Two moderate earthquakes shook on Sunday morning southern and western Greece with no injuries or extensive material damages reported, according to local media.

The first tremor measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale jolted the southern part of the Peloponnesian peninsula two hours later. The second tremor’s epicenter was located at approximately 24 kilometers southwest of the city of Methoni and about 245 kilometers south of Athens—at a depth of 20 kilometers.

Greece is earthquake-prone and has been regularly hit by moderate and stronger earthquakes which have caused great destruction throughout centuries.

In the most recent catastrophe in 1999, a tremor measuring 6 on the Richter scale hit Athens, causing dozens of casualties.—Xinhua

Iran will never shut down underground enrichment facilities

TEHERAN, 18 Feb — Senior Iranian lawmaker, Alaeddin Boroujerdi, said on Sunday the Islamic republic will never shut down its underground bunker of Fordow uranium enrichment facilities and will not halt its “peaceful” nuclear activities.

Alluding to recent media reports about world powers’ decision to case gold sanctions on Iran in exchange for the closure of Fordow, Boroujerdi, speaking to the head of Iran’s Majlis’ (parliament) National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, said that “Fordow site will never be shut down,” the semi-official ISNA news agency reported.

Western media reported on Saturday that the P5+1 (Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States plus Germany) are working on a proposal to be offered in the nuclear talks with Iran to ease sanctions on gold and other precious metals trade with Iran in return for shutting down Fordow uranium enrichment plant.

According to the reports, the offer will be presented in the upcoming talks between Iran and the P5+1 slated for 26 Feb in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Boroujerdi told ISNA that Iran has built the Fordow site to defend its nuclear facilities in the face threats from Israel.

The Fordow nuclear plant, located near the Iranian central holy city of Qom, is used for producing enriched uranium with a purity of up to 20 percent.

Also, Boroujerdi stressed on Sunday that “If the Americans think that they can halt Iran’s peaceful (nuclear) activities by mounting pressures, they are beating the air,” local Press TV reported.

Top 100 arms makers’ arms sales fall in 2011

STOCKHOLM, 18 Feb — Arms sales by the 100 biggest weapons makers fell for the first time since the mid-90s in 2011 as economies slowed and military equipment purchases were reduced for operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, a leading think-tank said Monday.

Sales totalled $410 billion (264 billion pounds), a 5-percent fall adjusted for currency swings, from $411 billion ($265 billion) in 2010, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which carries out independent research on international security, armaments and disarmament said in a statement.

SIPRI, which has been compiling the list since 1989, does not include Chinese-based firms due to lack of available data.

“Austerity policies and proposed and actual decreases in military expenditure as well as postponements in weapons programme procurement affected overall arms sales in North America and Western Europe,” it said in a statement.

“The drawdowns in Iraq and Afghanistan and the sanctions on arms transfers to Libya also played a role.”

Spending fell for the first time since the mid-90s, when defence spending had been falling after the end of the Cold War, said Susan Jackson, a researcher at SIPRI.

Sales growth had already slowed in 2010, to 1 percent from 8 percent in 2009, as the withdrawal of foreign troops from Iraq held back demand. To the extent arms makers are affected by economic swings, many are late-cycle as they have long delivery times and long-running contracts with governments.

Of the firms monitored by the group in 2011, 74 were based in the United States and western Europe, generating 90 percent of the sales, roughly unchanged from 2010.

The top spots were little changed from 2010 with US firm Lockheed Martin still at the top, US Boeing, overtaking British BAE Systems as number two, and General Dynamics retaining Norrhop Grumman number three.

SIPRI said a strong recent trend among big arms makers was diversification into cyber-security—protecting computers and networks against intrusions and attacks—as public spending in this area remained a privileged area in Western countries despite budget austerity.—Reuters
Chinese CSC, Australian billionaire to build modern replica of Titanic

Tel Aviv, 18 Feb—Israel more than doubles exports, mulls new investment

TEL AVIV, 18 Feb—Intel’s Israeli subsidiary more than doubled its exports in 2012 to $4.6 billion and is seeking to bring manufacturing of the company’s next generation of chips to Israel. Intel’s export, which rose 109 percent from $2.2 billion in 2011, were boosted by the start of production of chips using 32 nanometer technology at its Kiryat Gat plant in southern Israel, which is now operating at full capacity.

Intel, the world’s No 1 chipmaker, will build chips over the next two to three years with features measuring 14 nm in Ireland and the United States but the company is already thinking about where it will produce 10 nm chips. The narrower the features, the more transistors can fit on a single chip, improving performance. Intel Israel executives said they would like to see 10 nm production in Israel.

“The average life of a technology is two to six years so we need to be busy to get the next technology, 10 nanometer,” Maxine Fassberg, general manager of Intel Israel, told a new conference on Sunday. “We need to get a decision far enough in advance to be able to upgrade the plant. The decisions will need to be made this year.”

CERN’s LHC starts two-year break for maintenance, upgrade

GENEVA, 18 Feb—The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) announced on Thursday the first long shutdown (LS1) of its Large Hadron Collider (LHC) after three years of successful running, including the discovery of a Higgs boson-like new particle in July. At 7:24 am (0624 GMT), the shift crew in the CERN1 Control Center extracted the beams from the LHC, CERN said in a statement.

“We have every reason to be very satisfied with the LS1. It is a very good result,” said Rolf Heuer, director-general of CERN.

Global sales of LG’s Optimus L smartphones top 15 mn

SEOUL, 18 Feb—Sales of LG Electronics’ Optimus L Series smartphones topped 15 million units globally since its introduction in February 2012, the company said on Friday.

Global sales of Optimus L Series devices breached the 10 million mark in December last year, before adding sales of 5 million units, equal to sell a device every second over the past two months, LG said in an e-mailed statement.

After its launch at Mobile World Congress (MWC) in February 2012, LG rolled out Optimus L3, L7, L5, and L9 in a serial order at around 50 countries in North America, Europe, Asia and Latin America.

Building on the success of the predecessors, LG planned to unveil the second generation of Optimus L Series later this month at the MWC 2013 with an upgraded design and improved features.

“The new Optimus L Series 2 expands upon the design philosophy of the original series and we are quite confident that we’ll have another hit on our hands,” said Park Jong-seok, president and chief executive of LG Electronics’ mobile communications division.

Chinese CSC, Australian billionaire to build modern replica of Titanic

Beiing, 18 Feb—Australian billionaire Clive Palmer plans to build a modern replica of Titanic, in cooperation with state-owned Chinese company CSC Jingli Shipyard, based in Jiangsu province, according to the media reports on Sunday.

Officials say it was a romantic story of Rose and Jack, people around the world are showing a great interest in Titanic II and willing to be the first paying passengers.

“We’ve probably had half a dozen people already offering more than $1 million to get on the maiden voyage,” said James Donald, global marketing director of Palmer’s Blue Star Line company. But the company does not reveal how much Titanic II will cost.

According to the Blue Star Line, the launch of Titanic II project was 26 Feb 2012, and its maiden voyage from England to North America will be made for late 2016. The Titanic II will stay true to the design of the ill-fated original, but more focus on a safety deck.

Florida hit by “tsunami” of tax identity fraud

MIAMI, 18 Feb—Bruce Parton was only a few weeks from retirement after 30 years as a mail carrier in sunny Florida. He never lived to fulfill his retirement plan of moving back to a quiet life in the Catskill mountains of New York, not far from where he grew up on Long Island.

Instead, he was gunned down on his daily mail route in December 2010 by members of an identity theft ring who stole his master key as he was delivering mail to the first passing caregivers.

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Seized fraudulent tax mailings are displayed during a news conference in Tampa, Florida, in this undated photo. Tax identity theft skyrocketed to 46 times over the past two months, according to the US Treasury Department.

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Chinese booming e-commerce nibbles traditional retailers

BEIJING, 18 Feb— China’s e-commerce giant Jingdong Mall announced on Saturday that it has secured 700 million US dollars in its latest fundraising effort. Canada’s Ontario Teacher Pension Fund and Kingdom Holding Co, a multinational investment fund of Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, were among the consortium of investors. Jingdong said that the new funds will go to company operations, new business development and logistics system construction. “So far, Jingdong has finished four rounds of fundraising with a total financing at a remarkable high of 2.3 billion US dollars, which is shocking in a depressed year. Investment became more cautious as the capital market remained sluggish in 2012. Statistics showed that the total funds raised through IPO around the globe last year plummeted to 112 billion US dollars, the lowest level since the 2008 global financial crisis. Against such a background, the bounty demonstrated the confidence of the international capital market in Jingdong and the recognition of China’s vigorous online business market,” Xinhua

Germany wants comprehensive EU-US free trade deal

BERLIN, 18 Feb — German Economy Minister Philipp Roesler wants the European Union and the United States to reach a comprehensive transatlantic free trade agreement rather than settle for the limited deal some southern EU nations favour. Roesler told Der Spiegel magazine on Sunday he and the German government want a sweeping free trade deal, while France and southern EU nations, by contrast, want to protect their agriculture industry with regulations and also keep out genetically modified US foodstuffs, the magazine said. Roesler has backing from a study by the Ifo economic institute think tank that said the advantages of the free trade zone would be larger with a comprehensive deal. “We’re striving to achieve a major breakthrough and we’re not just looking for a minimal consensus,” Roesler told Der Spiegel. “It would be damaging to put limits on the agenda for the talks beforehand and exclude certain sectors.”

Medical tourists coming back to Singapore

SINGAPORE, 18 Feb— Foreign patients are flocking to Singapore hospitals, again, after a dramatic decline in 2009 triggered by the global financial crisis, local daily Straits Times reported on Monday. Figures from the Ministry of Health showed that about 36,000 non-resident foreign patients were either hospitalized or underwent day surgery in the city state in 2011, said the report.

Indians continue to top the numbers list, accounting for almost half of the foreign patients who consulted Singapore, followed by Malaysians and patients from Bangladesh, Vietnam and Myanmar. Xinhua

India cracks down on taxation of transfers within foreign firms

MUMBAI, 18 Feb — India is aggressively pursuing tax claims against foreign firms operating in the country as the government seeks to rein in its budget deficit, taking particular aim at IT and back-office functions, tax officials say. It has targeted several multinational companies in the past for tax abuse on transfer-pricing, but over the past 12 months has widened the scope of the investigations, tax officials said. Authorities are now checking deals involving more than three dozen companies, transferring transactions worth at least 250 million rupees ($4.7 million), officials said. Having just issued claims for the financial year to March 2009, it has shifted focus to 2009/2010.

Transfer pricing is the value charged by companies for trade products, services or assets between units across borders, a regular part of doing business for a multinational. Revenue authorities in many countries including Britain, France, Germany and the United States are increasingly challenging efforts to minimize tax liabilities by moving taxable income from higher-taxing jurisdictions to lower-tax ones. In India’s case, critics worry overly aggressive tax authorities could undermine foreign investment although tax officials say they have been working overtime as Finance Minister P Chidambaram looks to make up a revenue shortfall and head off the threat of another credit rating downgrade.

“On some days we had to work through the night to meet the deadline,” said one official. “There are so many cases that are coming to us but we don’t have an adequate number of people.”—Reuters

Nepali govt’ slashes economic growth forecast to 4.2 pc

KATHMANDU, 18 Feb— The government of Nepal has slashed the economic growth forecast from 5.3 percent to 4.2 percent for the current fiscal year 2012/13. Absence of a full budget coupled with feeble capital spending in the second half of the current fiscal year have been attributed as the major reasons for the decrease in the forecast. “Though we arranged sufficient fund for some important projects the overall government budget could not boost up the capital expenditure,” Finance Minister Barseman Pari said. “This brought the growth forecast down from 5.3 to 4.2 percent,” the minister said. In the mid-term review period from July 2012 to January 2013, Nepal’s capital expenditure recorded only Rs 7.66 billion (around 0.011 million US dollars) while regular expenditure stood at Rs 86.9 billion (around 1.02 billion US dollars).

In last December, the World Bank predicted Nepal’s economy to grow 3.8 percent this year against 4.5 percent in the previous year. Sharp decline in terms of capital expenditure and other sectors’ average performance were cited as the reasons for lower forecast. “The government forecast sounds a bit unrealistic and seems to have landed without proper research,” economist Dr Rewat Bahadur Karki told Xinhua on Monday.

“The present economic indicators show that the growth rate of 4.2 percent is not possible right now,” he said. “Nepal will have to struggle even to achieve what the World Bank has predicted,” added Dr Karki, who is also a former economic advisor to Nepal Rastra Bank, the central bank of the country.

Novo to sell Tresiba in Europe at 60-70 percent premium over Lantus

COPENHAGEN, 18 Feb —Denmark’s Novo Nordisk, the world’s biggest insulin producer, will sell its long-acting insulin Tresiba in Europe at a 60-70 percent premium over rival product Lantus from France’s Sanofi. Novo is in the process of negotiating prices of the new insulin in Europe, and recently agreed with authorities in the United Kingdom to price the insulin 60-70 percent above competing products in the market, as it is believed to hold some advantages over its rivals. “The prices in Europe will be more or less at the same level (as in the UK),” Novo’s head of marketing and medical affairs Jakob Riis told Reuters on Friday.

As the world suffers from an epidemic of type 2 diabetes tied to over-eating and lack of exercise, demand for treatments has snowballled and competition intensified. Earlier this week, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) refused to approve Novo’s Tresiba until it conducts extra tests for potential heart risks, dealing a major blow to a key product for the Danish drugmaker.

Shares in Novo, the world’s leading insulin maker and the most valuable company in the Nordic region, slumped 12.5 percent as it said the decision would make it harder to meet long-term financial targets. Tresiba has already been approved in Europe and Japan. Sanofi’s Lantus is expected to continue its double-digit sales growth after the FDA refused to approve Tresiba.

The French company said on Wednesday it would invest 44 million euros ($59 million) on its site in Waterford, Ireland, to boost production of Lantus.

Novo Nordisk has said it expects to launch Tresiba in the UK and Denmark in the first half of 2013, and in other European countries later this year and next year.

Reuters

India’s Finance Minister P. Chidambaram speaks during an interview with Reuters at a hotel during his visit for the G20 meeting in Mexico City on 4 Nov, 2012. REUTERS

India’s Finance Minister P. Chidambaram looks to make up a revenue shortfall and head off the threat of another credit rating downgrade.

Germany’s Economy Minister Philipp Roesler attends the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos on 25 Jan, 2013.—Reuters

Novo to sell Tresiba in Europe at 60-70 percent premium over Lantus

Xinhua

Xinhua

Reuters

Novo Nordisk
French, Malian troops secure rebel stronghold near Gao

The plane made emergency landing in Russia’s Far East

Egypt pound will not collapse

Storm brings snow, gusty winds to New England
Bags of rice, clothes donated to earthquake victims

Mandalay, 18 Feb—A ceremony to donate 200 bags of rice and clothes by media persons and artistes to victims from earthquake-hit areas of Thabeikkyin Township in Mandalay Region on 6 February morning.

Pathein gyi BEPS-35 gets new building

Mandalay, 18 Feb—A ceremony to open new school building was held at No 35 Basic Education Primary School in Kankanwai Village of Pathein gyi Township in Mandalay District on 5 February. Present on the occasion were Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint, Region Minister for Social Affairs Dr Win Hlaing, Pathein gyi Constituency Hluttaw Administrator and clothes to the Township Education Officer respectively.

Sports training camps of SPEI (Yangon) inspected

Yangon, 18 Feb—Chairman of Myanmar National Sports Committee Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan inspected construction of training swimming pool and cleaning of water, placing of artificial turf at Fatsal ground, placing of nylon rubber tracks at track and field ground, fitness practices of athletes for track and field events and cyclists, two-storey building and hostels for selected players, progress of gymnastic players and upgrading of trainers at Sports and Physical Education Institute (Yangon) in Tamwgyaw Township on 8 February afternoon.

Prizes presented to outstanding trainees, students in Pobbathiri Township

Pobbathiri, 18 Feb—Certificate presentation for Buddhism Culture Course and prize presentation for outstanding students of No 112 Basic Education Primary School for 2011-2012 academic year was held at the school in Wegyi Village of Pobbathiri Township on 17 February.

Cash assistance, relief items donated to victims of hailstone

Kengtung, 18 Feb—Shan State Government donated cash assistance to those of damaged houses recently hit by hailstones at Buddha Win Monastery in Kattaung Village of Kengtung Township on 7 February.

Free clinics open for public healthcare service in Pyapon

Pyapon, 18 Feb—Zabu Thukha free clinic was opened in the precinct of Zabu Hteinlin Monastery on Bogyoke Aung San Street in Pyapon of Ayeyawady Region in the third week of January.

Hoisting of umbrella atop Pagoda coordinated

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Feb—A coordination meeting on hoisting of umbrella atop Shweutaungsa Pagoda was held at the hall of Taninthayi Region Government Office in Dawei on 7 February morning, with an address by Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko.

Free clinic opened for public healthcare service in Pyapon

Pyapon, 18 Feb—A Lenovo computer was opened in the precinct of Zabu Hteinlin Monastery on Bogyoke Aung San Street in Pyapon of Ayeyawady Region in the third week of January.

Hoisting of umbrella atop Pagoda coordinated

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Feb—A coordination meeting on hoisting of umbrella atop Shweutaungsa Pagoda was held at the hall of Taninthayi Region Government Office in Dawei on 7 February morning, with an address by Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko. Members of the leading committee and subcommittees, region ministers, and responsible persons of Pagoda Board of Trustees discussed plans for holding the ceremony.
Basic factors

The government in office understands the fact well that the Republic of the Union of Myanmar needs greater political, economic and defence strength for its perpetuation. And only if the nation lives long with robust force, can a modern developed democratic country be built.

So, the government’s prime concern for flourishing of democracy in the country is no other than the peace, political stability and the silence of guns in the whole Union. As a result, it is making continuous efforts for ensuring all-inclusiveness in the political process, while its priority programs include peace and stability, the rule of law and socio-economic development to reach this end. But the task will be tougher and longer if the government alone is carrying it out. So, it is the concern and cause of every national race of the Union, as democracy flourishes well only in a peaceful, stable and prospering environment.

But the root cause of internal instability that has direct interrelations with lack of peace was the disagreement and mistrust between the brethren themselves. After the country regained independence, there was no unity among the national brethren due to personal cults, factionalism, localism and racism, which in point of fact were the evil forces behind the lingering armed conflicts among the national people. And all these evil forces were the results of the divide-and-rule practice exercised by the colonialists to prolong their stay in power as of the divide-and-rule practice exercised by the colonialists to prolong their stay in power. So taking the bitter lessons of disunity all the stakeholders of the country are working to build unity among the national brethren.

Whatever the cause is, disunity brings instability and lack of peace that obstruct all hopes of prosperity and progress of the brethren.

So the stakeholders are working to build unity among the national brethren for the sake of peace and stability and progress. The government is continuously engaging in discussion with the breedsmen to bridge the gap between them. It is also working to make all the people participate in the socio-economic development of the country.

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Feb — Under the capacity-building programme for the parliament, a delegation from Richardson Centre for Richardson Centre for Development Workers and Members from the Pyithu Hluttaw, led by Dr Maung Maung Thein, met with Dr Bill Richardson of the United States conducted a workshop on drawing budget for parliamentarians and staff at the Hluttaw Office, here, today.

Bill Richardson of the United States conducted a workshop on drawing budget for parliamentarians and staff at the Hluttaw Office, here, today.

Tender to be submitted for sponsoring XXVII SEA Games

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Feb — Ministry of Finance and Revenue and the Ministry of Commerce, in its report to Union Minister for Finance and Revenue U Win Shwe at a work coordination meeting here today, Deputy Minister Dr Maung Maung Thein clarified the plans of the ministry for inviting the international sponsors for the XXVII SEA Games.

During the meeting, the participants discussed matters related to seeking ways for inviting international sponsors and advertisements, transportation and medals.

During the meeting, the participants discussed matters related to seeking ways for inviting international sponsors and transportation and medals.

MAI to ply Mandalay-Bangkok-Mandalay flight soon

Yangon, 18 Feb — To be able to satisfy increasing demands of local and foreign passengers, Myanmar Airways International (MAI) will run the Mandalay-Bangkok-Mandalay route as of 31 March.

The flight will be extended for providing international level aviation safety service to the passengers with the use of Airbus A 320 that can accommodate 180 passengers.

The airplane will depart Mandalay at 8.35 am and arrive in Bangkok at 11 am on Mandalay-Bangkok flight.

Likewise, the flight on Bangkok-Mandalay will leave Bangkok at 6.30 am and arrive in Mandalay at 7.55 am.

Officials of MAI held talks with those of Air France Consulting in Yangon on 6 February. They focused on cooperation between MAI and France Consulting in passenger service and commercial sectors.

In line with the agreement with Air France Industries, technological training course is being provided to the personnel for extending flights and aviation services.

Myanna Alinn

Stake driven for Myanmar-Laos Mekong River-Crossing Friendship Bridge

Nay Pyi Taw, 18 Feb — The stake driven ceremony for Myanmar-Laos Friendship Mekong River-Crossing Bridge was held at the pandal in Kengtuk Sub-township of Tachilek District.

The ceremony took place at the pandal in Kengtuk Sub-township of Tachilek District. The bridge will be 691.6 meter long and will have 8.5 meter wide two lane motorway and which will withstand 75 tons of load per vehicle. Upon completion of the bridge, the two countries will be able to see smooth and speedy road transportation, thereby contributing towards swift flow of commodities and better economic development.

Minister Mr. Sommad Pholsena, Shan State Chief Minister U Soe Aung Myat and the Louangnamtha Province Governor drove the stand pipe with vibrohammer.

Myanmar Airways International (MAI) to ply Mandalay-Bangkok-Mandalay flight soon.

Stake driven ceremony for Myanmar-Laos Mekong River-Crossing Friendship Bridge.
U Zaw Tun concurrently accredited as Ambassador to Hungary

NAT PYI TAW, 19 Feb—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Zaw Tun, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Serbia, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Hungary.—MNA

Rural library put into service

NA NGON, 18 Feb—A ceremony to open the new building of Pyinnya Rural library was held in Kakhk au Village of Nanmon Township of Putao District on 7 February.
In his speech, Kachin State Hluttaw representative U Ma Bu Dagon and Head of Township Information and Public Relations Department U Hein Lin cut the ribbon to open the building of library. Books donated by Kachin State Rawam national race minister U Gwam Rein Dee were handed over to the village administrator. Officials accepted donations from departmental personnel. The library building cost over K 800,000.

Myanma Alinn

Union Cup Games Dates and Venues for Sports Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nos</th>
<th>sport categories</th>
<th>Event Period</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Track and field</td>
<td>28-2-2013 - 7-3-2013</td>
<td>Wunna Theikdi Stadium (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>23-2-2013 27-2-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Badminton Training Hall (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>1-3-2013 6-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-1, Basketball Training Ground (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Billiards and snooker</td>
<td>23-2-2013 2-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-2 Billiards Hall, Lewe Township</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Physical fitness</td>
<td>12-2-2013</td>
<td>MCC (Yangon), Thingyangyu Township</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Boxing</td>
<td>24-2-2013 1-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 boxing training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Chess</td>
<td>26-2-2013 2-3-2013</td>
<td>Gold Camp (mess hall) (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Cycling (Cross Country)</td>
<td>1-3-2013 6-3-2013</td>
<td>Mount Pleasant cycling ground (Ottarathiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cycling (Down Hill)</td>
<td>1-3-2013 6-3-2013</td>
<td>Mount Pleasant cycling ground (Ottarathiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cycling (BMX)</td>
<td>1-3-2013 6-3-2013</td>
<td>Mount Pleasant cycling ground (Ottarathiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cycling (Road Race)</td>
<td>1-3-2013 6-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Cycling training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td>Pinlaung road/ Taungka Village and Leini bridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Football (Men/women)</td>
<td>20-2-2013 7-3-2013</td>
<td>Wunna Theikdi Stadium (Zabuthiri Township)/ Paunglaung ground (Pyinmana Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Judo</td>
<td>23-2-2013 6-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Fustal training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Karatedo</td>
<td>25-2-2013 27-2-2013</td>
<td>TC-2 Judo training gym (Lewe Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sepak Takraw</td>
<td>4-3-2013 6-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-2 Karatedo training gym (Lewe Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Table Tennis</td>
<td>23-2-2013 27-2-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Table Tennis training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Taekwondo</td>
<td>1-3-2013 3-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Taekwondo training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>23-2-2013 28-2-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Tennis training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Pancek Silat</td>
<td>3-3-2013 6-2-2013</td>
<td>TC-2 Martial Arts training gym (Lewe Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Traditional Boxing (Muay)</td>
<td>3-3-2013 5-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Boxing training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>27-2-2013 7-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-1 Volleyball training gym (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Weightlifting</td>
<td>1-3-2013 3-3-2013</td>
<td>Paunglaung Gymnasium (Pyinmana)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Wushu</td>
<td>1-3-2013 3-3-2013</td>
<td>TC-2 Wushu training gym (Lewe Township)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>4-3-2013 7-3-2013</td>
<td>Paunglaung gym (Pyinmana Township)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closing Ceremony</td>
<td>7-3-2013</td>
<td>Wunna Theikdi Stadium (Zabuthiri Township)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Johns Hopkins University agrees tech cooperation with MSD

NAT PYI TAW, 18 Feb—The Medical Science Department under the Ministry of Health and Johns Hopkins University signed an MoU at the University of Medicine (1) (Yangon) on Lanmadaw Township in Yangon on 16 February afternoon.

The MoU covers giving training to medical staff of the University of Medicine (1) (Yangon) for human resource development and advancement of teaching methods of medicine.

On the occasion, Director-General of MSD Dr Than Zaw Myint and President Ronald J. Daniels of Johns Hopkins University exchange the MoU on tech cooperation.—MNA

Director-General of MSD Dr Than Zaw Myint and President Ronald J. Daniels of Johns Hopkins University exchange the MoU on tech cooperation.

SEAMEO Council President Brunei Education Minister visits YUFL

YANGON, 18 Feb—President of SEAMEO Council Brunei Education Minister Mr. Pehin Dato Haji Abu Bakar Apong visited Yangon University of Foreign Languages, here, this morning.

There, hemtaw director, pro-rectors and professor, heads of departments and his delight for the MoU which facilitates technical cooperation between the University and Johns Hopkins University and programmes for capacity building.—MNA

Suzuki to resume production of cars in Yangon

YANGON, 18 Feb—Suzuki Co, one of top automobile manufacturing companies in Japan, will resume its production line in Yangon, according to its recent press release.

The automobile assembling factory closed its production in 2010 after running over its licence period. As of coming May, the factory will manufacture about 100 cars per month as part of efforts to create job opportunities for the Myanmar people, said the company.

A plan is underway to distribute cars at reasonable price in Myanmar, said Osamu Suzuki, Chairman of the company.

Suzuki Co thought a future plan to build a new assembling factory in Myanmar, but it is at a meeting level, he continued.

It was reported that the Japan’s car company produced motor cars and motorcycles as a joint venture company with Myanmar government up to 2010.

Myanmar has imported about 130,000 cars including Japan’s products up to end of January during 15-month period, according last week’s release of the Customs Department. Almost of a half of the imported cars to Myanmar were good second hand ones, it was learnt.

Myanma Alinn
Scottish govt urges retailers to review meat sourcing policy

EDINBURGH, 18 Feb—Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Richard Lochhead on Sunday urged retailers to rethink their sourcing policy on all meat products they stock as investigations into the current horse meat issue continue.

Speaking ahead of a further meeting with retailers, processors and the British government in London on 17 Feb, Mr. Lochhead urged retailers to take action and highlighted that the food sector in Scotland must make sure they are equipped, and have assurances in place, to help retailers purchase meat locally.

“Recent events across Europe are completely unacceptable. Consumers need to be confident that food is what it says on the label and I have spoken to major retailers this week to urge them to reconsider their sourcing policies,” said the Scottish cabinet secretary in a Press release.

“Retailers respond to this issue swiftly and have raised serious questions. Of course testing is the priority, but it is also the very least they should be doing. They must also be reflecting on their sourcing and purchasing policies. It is deeply concerning if not,” he added.

Lochhead called on the retailers to consider how to short their supply chains as well and source more of their product locally, urging the food sector in Scotland to be ready and have assurances in place to help retailers to do that.

He also noted that Friday’s initial test results offer some reassurance that the issue is not widespread, while detailed inspections continue to be carried out.

“Anecdotal evidence from companies supplying meats to the public sector in Scotland is that the issue is not present, which is encouraging,” he said.

Iran sentences four to death over bank embezzlement

TEHRAN, 18 Feb—Iran’s Supreme Court confirmed on Sunday death sentences for four people involved in a big embezzlement case, official IRNA news agency reported.

In the summer of 2011, Iranian media reported that a woman fed a child canned mixed porridge while waiting for their bus at Jinyang bus station in Guiyang, capital of southwest China’s Guizhou Province, on the way to school. The girl’s family accompanied her, and the child’s parents, together with their children, started to return to the urban areas to work after the one-week Spring Festival holiday ended.

Abu Dhabi int’l defence fair starts on big note

ABU DHABI, 18 Feb—The biennial International Defence Exhibition and Conference (IDEX) 2013, which starts here on Sunday and ends on Feb. 21, has attracted most of the top defense and military equipment companies from the world.

TEHRAN, 18 Feb—Iran’s Supreme Court confirmed on Sunday death sentences for four people involved in a big embezzlement case, official IRNA news agency reported.

A woman feeds a child canned mixed porridge while waiting for their bus at Jinyang bus station in Guiyang, capital of southwest China’s Guizhou Province, on the way to school. The girl’s family accompanied her, and the child’s parents, together with their children, started to return to the urban areas to work after the one-week Spring Festival holiday ended.

Brahimi backs Syrian opposition’s dialogue call as gov’t promotes Assad’s vision

DAMASCUS, 18 Feb—International envoy to Syria Lakhdar Brahimi threw his support on Sunday behind negotiations made by head of Syria’s opposition coalition Moaz al-Khatib, as Syrian Prime Minister Wael al-Halqi urged all Syrian parties to engage in the political process outlined by President Bashar al-Assad.

At a joint Press conference with AL Secretary-General Nabil al-Arabi in Cairo, Brahimi urged on Sunday all sides of the conflict in Syria, the Arab region and the international community to respond to al-Khatib’s call for dialogue.

The veteran Algerian troubleshooter also suggested that initial dialogue sessions better be held in the headquarters of the United Nations. “We believe that if the dialogue starts at the UN headquarters between the opposition and a delegation from the Syrian government, it will be beginning for getting Syria out of this dark tunnel,” Brahimi said.

For his part, al-Arabi said he would head a delegation of at least four Arab countries to Moscow to partake in an Arab-Russian forum, noting that the Syrian crisis would top its agenda.

The opposition leader recently declared his readiness to embark on negotiations with the Syrian government so long as it would finally lead to the departure of the Damascus administration.

However, the government said earlier that the dialogue should not be based on preconditions and stressed that any dialogue should be held on the Syrian soil. Earlier on Sunday, Prime Minister Wael al-Halqi called on all Syrian people to engage in a political process on the Syrian soil to end the country’s long-standing crisis in accordance to the political vision outlined by al-Assad.

The minister’s remarks came during a cabinet session, during which he said his government has given assurances to make the political process a success, stressing that “no one would be excluded from the dialogue... We will not exclude anyone.” The Syrian government is working to establish the political programme on the Syrian soil and is serious about embracing on a national dialogue, he noted, saying that the political plan put forward by Assad was based on “national goals.”

Assad offered a three-phase initiative to politically resolve the crisis, which includes a cease-fire, a comprehensive national dialogue on a “national charter”, and the establishment of a broad-based government and parliament.

Tourists visit the Humble Administrator’s Garden in Suzhou, east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 13 Feb, 2013. The number of tourists during the week-long Spring Festival holiday topped 203 million across the country, up 15.1 percent from the same period last year, according to the latest statistics by the National Tourism Administration, The Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, fell on 10 February this year.—Xinhua

Buildings reglazed after meteorite strike in Russia

MOSCOW, 18 Feb—Most buildings damaged by Friday’s meteorite fell in Russia’s central Urals Region on Friday morning and have been restored, and educational institutions will operate as usual on Monday. Xinhua reporters saw in the hardest-struck Chelyabinsk Region that many buildings had been reglazed as operation teams were still working at several major sites.

A meteorite ripped the sky and slammed into the region, causing widespread damage and thousands of buildings in the region had to be shut down. The total area of window glass shattered in buildings in the region has reached 200,000 square meters, local authorities said.

Some 1,200 people, including over 200 children, have been injured, mainly by shards of the glass. About 30 people were hospitalized, and at least two people were reportedly in grave condition. Russia’s consumer rights watchdog also said in a statement on Sunday that “all the medical and educational buildings have been restored.”

The 33-year-old British mother Charlene Machin had given birth to twin boys Oliver and Harry, but doctors discovered baby Harry had been born with a severe facial deformity, according to newspaper Daily Mail. Charlene and her two sons have overcome other people’s prejudices and are a loving, close family.—Xinhua

Iran sentences four to death over bank embezzlement

Abu Dhabi int’l defence fair starts on big note

Brahimi backs Syrian opposition’s dialogue call as gov’t promotes Assad’s vision

Buildings reglazed after meteorite strike in Russia

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Brahimi backs Syrian opposition’s dialogue call as gov’t promotes Assad’s vision

Buildings reglazed after meteorite strike in Russia
Royal Bill paves way for gender equality for NZ’s head of state

Wellington, 18 Feb — New Zealand is to update its antiquated laws on its monarchy to allow a woman to succeed to the throne ahead of any male siblings, Justice Minister Judith Collins announced on Monday.

The current law restricts succession to the oldest male heir and only allows a daughter to succeed in the absence of a son.

Collins said the Royal Succession Bill would be introduced to the New Zealand Parliament on Monday.

“The new laws will apply to any children in the Royal line of succession born after 28 Oct, 2011. This means the change will apply to the child of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, due to be born in July,” Collins said in a statement.

The new rules would also allow a person married to a Roman Catholic to become King or Queen, ending the disqualification of prospective heirs who are married to Catholics.

However, the Bill retained the ban on a Catholic acceding to the throne and the rules requiring the sovereign to swear to maintain the Protestant religion.

The Bill also removed the requirement that all members of the Royal family must seek the sovereign’s permission to marry, and instead required just the first six in line to the throne to seek such consent.

All 16 countries sharing Queen Elizabeth, who resides in the United Kingdom, as head of state, must have the same laws of succession, she said.

“The United Kingdom, a Bill to make these changes to Royal succession laws is currently going through Parliament. “New Zealand also needs to make changes to our laws because changes in our laws do not automatically apply here,” said Collins.

After its first reading, the Royal Succession Bill would be referred to a select committee where it would be opened to submissions.

10 killed in landslide, floods in North Sulawesi, Indonesia

Jakarta, 18 Feb — Landslide and floods in Manado, the provincial capital of North Sulawesi, in central part of Indonesia, on Sunday killed 10 people, official said here.

Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of national disaster management and mitigation agency said that the natural disaster had forced about 1,800 people taking shelters.

Heavy rains starting after midnight had triggered floods and landslides on Sunday morning, he said.

37 injured after tour bus falls on railway track in Japan

Osaka, 18 Feb — Thirty-seven people were injured after a tourist bus fell from a road onto a railway track around 2.7 metres below in Oita Prefecture in southwestern Japan on Sunday afternoon, Kyodo News Agency reported.

Four people suffered serious injuries while 33 others were slightly injured in the accident that happened in the town of Koko-no-ike in the prefecture at around 5:40 pm local time.

The bus carrying 43 passengers fell onto the train track of the JR Kyudai Line after crashing through guardrails on the road, the report said. The bus driver attributed the accident to the failure of the brake, it added. Kyushu Railway Co. has halted services on the line between Yufuin and Bungomori stations due to the accident, according to the report.

“Nine people were killed by the landslide this morning and another was swept by the waters,” he told Xinhua by phone.

Indonesia has been frequently hit by floods and landslide during heavy rains.

Two Afghan militants killed in security operation

Kabul, 18 Feb — Afghan security forces backed by the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) killed two anti-government militants and captured another on Sunday, ISAF said in a statement. The two militants were killed in Logar province 60 km south of Afghan capital Kabul.

“An Afghan and coalition force killed two insurgents during security operations in search of a Taleban leader in Charkh District, Logar Province today,” the statement added.

It did not say if the Taleban leader was located or captured, adding during the operation the security forces seized multiple assault rifles along with ammunition and several grenades. In another operation, a joint Afghan and coalition force arrested a local Taleban leader in Baghlan-e Jadid District, Baghlan Province.

Australian Labour Party’s primary vote slumps in latest poll

Canberra, 18 Feb — Australian Labour Party’s primary vote stands at just 30 percent, down 5 points since December, the latest Herald/Nielson poll published in Fairfax newspapers showed on Monday.

This is the first time that Tony Abbott is the preferred prime minister over Julia Gillard in seven months. According to the result, Abbott’s approval rating has jumped 9 points to 49 percent, while Gillard’s has dropped 5 points to 45 percent.

It means the Coalition gained 4 points to 47 percent, the highest level it has been since just after the carbon tax was introduced in 2012. And Labor’s primary vote dipped to 30 percent, 5 points lower than the last survey in December and only 4 points higher than its lowest recorded level.

The national poll of 1,400 voters also found the gap between Gillard and former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has grown, with Rudd favoured by 61 percent of respondents to just 35 percent for her.

Fishermen from Sri Lanka, India clash at sea

Colombo, 18 Feb — A group of fishermen from Sri Lanka and India clashed in Sri Lankan waters in the early hours of Sunday, a navy spokesman said.

The clash had occurred along the International Maritime Boundary which divides both countries, in the northwestern seas of Mannar, said Sri Lankan navy spokesman Kosala Warnakulasuriya.

Warnakulasuriya told Xinhua that they had received information about the clash and had sent a navy boat to make inquiries and defuse the situation.

However he said that when the boat was on its way, the navy was informed that the situation
Afghan forces discover drugs in southern province

LAKSKARGAN, 18 Feb—Afghan police has seized nearly 1,250 kg of drugs in the country’s southern province of Helmand, in the latest raid against narcotics and drug trafficking in the war-hit country, police said on Sunday.

“Afghan Special Counter-Narcotic Police supporting by national police found and seized over 1,000 hashish and 240 kg dry opium in Khanshin and Garmser districts over the past two days,” the provincial police chief Gen. Nabi Ilham told reporters.

He said a tractor, two vehicles and a motorcycle were also confiscated in the raids, adding no person was detained during the seizure in the province 555 km south of Afghan capital Kabul.

The insurgency-hit Afghanistan produces about 90 percent of the world’s opium, the raw element for making heroin. An estimated 3,700 tons of opium was produced in 154,000 hectare of land in Afghanistan in 2012 with nearly 90 percent of cultivation taking place in southern and western provinces, according to assessments of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Afghan Ministry of Counter-Narcotics.
New Himmatwala updated with Gangnam Style moves

MUMBAI, 18 Feb —

Though he may be remaking the 1983 Jeetendra-Sridevi starrer Himmatwala, but director Sajid Khan has included 2012’s hugely popular Gangnam style dance moves in his upcoming film.

One of the tracks in his movie starring Ajay Devgn and Tamannaah has the Korean rapper Psy’s steps, which has created a storm across the world.

A source said, “The song featuring Tamannaah with a bunch of kids is a funny track. When the makers were deciding on which steps to include for the song, everyone suggested Gangnam style. That’s when we realised that the audience especially the tiny tots will love it.”

The source added, “Sajid Khan wanted it to be a fun song and as Gangnam style is easily recognised, he settled for the Gangnam moves.”

Jessica Simpson scraps plans for menswear range

LONDON, 18 Feb—Singer-designer Jessica Simpson has reportedly scrapped the plans to add a menswear collection to her fashion empire following unsatisfactory work from her team.

The 32-year-old founded her self-titled brand in 2006, with products including women’s clothing, handbags, shoes, fragrances and accessories. She has since turned it into a USD one billion business.

I was curled up in agony for 20 years: Padma Lakshmi

LOS ANGELES, 18 Feb—

Reportedly said specialists even told her that she would not be able to have children, even with the help of IVF, reported Daily Mail.

But the 42-year-old is now a proud mother to baby girl Thea Krishna, who will turn three next week. “It (endometriosis) ended up happening accidentally,” Padma Lakshmi, 42, who was once married to celebrated author Salman Rushdie, said.

Oscars to enjoy surround sound for 1st time in new Dolby Theatre

LOS ANGELES, 18 Feb—

In a week’s time the Academy Awards ceremony will for the first time have 5.1 surround sound effect said Dolby Laboratories, the new owner of the Oscars venue. “We work with the theater owner as well as the Academy, to make sure that from the sound treatment perspective, the theater itself sounds like nothing before,” Ramzi Hadamas, Dolby’s executive vice president of marketing and business development, told Xinhua.

Since last June, when Dolby officially took the name of former Kodak president of marketing and business development, told Xinhua.

Trying not to think about Oscars: Jennifer Lawrence

LONDON, 18 Feb —

Actress Jennifer Lawrence, who is nominated for Oscars for her work in “Silver Linings Playbook”, says she does not want to think about what it might be like to win the coveted prize.

The 22-year-old said she is trying to keep her excitement in check. The Oscar ceremony will take place on 24 February, reported Contactmusic.

“It’s very important to not separate it, then it blends into your personal life.”

Country singer Mindy McCready dead of apparent suicide

PHOENIX, 18 Feb —

Country music star Mindy McCready, whose albums include “Ten Thousand Angels” and “If I Don’t Stay The Night,” has died at age 37 apparently from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, an Arkansas sheriff said on Sunday.

McCready was found dead on the porch of a house in Heber Springs, Arkansas, on Sunday afternoon with what appears to be “a single self-inflicted gunshot wound,” the Cleveland County Sheriff’s Office said in a statement.

LOS ANGELES, 18 Feb —

The fifth movie in the Bruce Willis “Die Hard” franchise scored the biggest opening ever, pulling in $25 million at US and Canadian theaters over the three days, estimated business development, told studio executives.

The tally was expected to approach a total of $40 million for the five days that began with Thursday’s Valentine’s Day and ended with Monday’s Presidents Day holiday in the United States.

“Die Hard” beat “Safe Haven,” an adaptation of a Nicholas Sparks novel that was aimed at luring couples during the week of Valentine’s Day. The film, which stars Julianne Hough and Josh Duhamel, pulled in $21.4 million over the three days.

Last weekend’s box office winner, the Melissa McCarthy comedy “Identity Thief,” stayed strong and ended up taking second place with $23.4 million from Friday to Sunday. Willis prevailed with his reprisal of a role he played four previous times starting with the original “Die Hard” in 1988. Those movies grossed $1.1 billion around the world and made Willis a global action star.

One of the tracks in Himmatwala starring Ajay Devgn and Tamannaah has the Korean rapper Psy’s steps, which has created a storm across the world.—PTI

Actor Dean Cain escorts his girlfriend, country music singer Mindy McCready, to the premiere of the new horror film “Scream 2” at Mann’s Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, California in this 10 Dec, 1997 file photograph.

One of the tracks in Himmatwala starring Ajay Devgn and Tamannaah has the Korean rapper Psy’s steps, which has created a storm across the world.—PTI
**New Light of Myanmar**

### Sports News

#### Nadal wins Brazil Open

**Rio de Janeiro, 18 Feb—**Deco set up two goals in Fluminense win

Porto defeated Ponte Preta 0-2. —**Xinhua**

Deco

#### Neymar sent off in 3-1 Santos defeat

**Sao Paulo, 18 Feb—**Brazil international striker Neymar was sent off as Santos suffered a shock 3-1 defeat to Ponte Preta in the Campeonato Paulista on Sunday. He and Ponte Preta defender Artur were shown straight red cards after an altercation just before half-time at the Moses Lucarelli Stadium.

Neymar did not hide his anger at being shown the fifth red card of his career. “Who did I hurt? I tried to kick the ball and ended up making contact with Artur, but not even he complained,” Neymar said after the match. The 21-year-old will not play his next match until Santos and Ponte Preta meet in the next round of the competition.

#### McIlroy to meet Lowry in Match Play first round

**Pacific Palisades, (California), 18 Feb—**World number one Rory McIlroy was drawn on Sunday to play Ireland’s Shane Lowry in the first round of next week’s WGC-Accenture Match Play Championship at Dove Mountain in Marana, Arizona. Northern Irishman McIlroy, who clinched his second major title at last year’s PGA Championship by a record eight shots, was beaten 2&1 by American Hunter Mahan in last year’s Match Play final.

World number two Tiger Woods, a three-times winner of the elite World Golf Championships event, will meet fellow American Charles Howell III in Wednesday’s opening round while third-ranked British Luke Donald takes on Germany’s Marcel Siem. South African Louis Oosthuizen, ranked fifth, faces Britain’s Richie Ramsay and sixth-ranked Englishman Justin Rose in the opening round of the event.

Two members of the world’s top 10 are not playing in the 64-player event, fourth-ranked Brandt Snedeker pulled out because of sore ribs while ninth-ranked Phil Mickelson will be absent due to a family holiday. —**Reuters**

#### Azarenka topples Serena to win in Doha

**London, 18 Feb—**Outgoing world number one Victoria Azarenka showed that being second best was not an option for her as she outclassed Serena Williams 7-6, 6-3 to win the Qatar Open on Sunday.

Williams will re-arrange up top on the WTA rankings when the new list is released on Monday but the American’s hopes of capturing a memorable week with a 48th singles title were dashed by an opponent who extended her 2013 record to 12-0.

William’s game sparkled as brightly as the diamond ring on her playing right hand during the second set but it was Azarenka who was running rings around her in the third.

The Belarussian leapt to a 3-0 lead and never relinquished that advantage, polishing off Williams with an unreturnable serve in just under 2½ hours. In case anyone in the crowd had forgotten that she had entered the tournament as top dog in the world rankings, she celebrated by holding both arms aloft and wagging her index fingers towards the night sky of Doha. —**Reuters**

**Former world No 1 Rafael Nadal**

said: “Big things started to happen after I won here in 2005 and hopefully this is the start of something good again.” The tournament was Nadal’s second event since suffering a left knee injury during his second-round Wimbledon defeat to Czech Lukas Rosol in June last year.

He returned to play the Chile Open last week, losing to world No.73 Horacio Zeballos in the final. The 26-year-old said he was yet to reach full match fitness, but said victory in Brazil gave him the hope he needed. “When the knee is feeling better like today I feel like I can do more of the things that I used to do,” he said. “If the pain is bearable, then it’s fine.”

Nalbandian, playing in his first final since being disqualified for kicking an advertising sign and injuring a line judge at Queen’s Club last June, conceded he had been outplayed by Nadal. —**Xinhua**

#### McIlroy edges Bingham to win Welsh Open

**London, 18 Feb—**World No 6 Stephen Maguire fought back from behind to edge out Stuart Bingham 9-8 to win the Welsh Open at the Newport Centre on Sunday.

The two players were deadlocked at 4-4 into the final evening session. Englishman Bingham looked dominant to lead 7-5 but Maguire took the next three frames in a row to make it 7-5. Bingham gave the crowd a deciding frame when he levelled, but Maguire’s impervious 82 saw him home. “I forgot what it felt like to be a winner at the end of a tournament, it’s the best feeling ever,” Maguire said. —**Xinhua**

#### Hirscher ends Austrian wait for individual gold

**Schladming, (Austria), 18 Feb—**Marcel Hirscher, who entered the world’s top skier last season, won the men’s slalom to give host nation Austria their first individual gold at the Alpine skiing world championships in the final of the ten events on Sunday. The 23-year-old sent the 30,000 crowd into raptures as he beat Germany’s Felix Neureuther, the son of former Olympic champion Rostimir Mittermayer and 1970s slalomist Christian Neureuther, by 0.42 seconds over the two runs.

Hirscher’s compatriot Mario Matt completed an excellent day for the hosts, whose only previous gold was in the low-key team event, by finishing third to add to the gold medals he won in the slalom in 2001 in St Anton and 2007 in Are. Hirscher, who won silver in Friday’s giant slalom, led after the first run and nearly came a cropper as he attacked on the second, but recovered his balance just in time. American Ted Ligety’s hopes of a fourth gold medal ended early.

Marcel Hirscher of Austria skis during the first run of the men’s Slalom race at the World Alpine Skiing Championships in Schladming on 17 Feb, 2013. —**Reuters**

**Novak Djokovic**

hit a double fault to give the match to Roger Federer but then was deadlocked with the Swiss material. —**Reuters**

**Azarenka topples Serena to win in Doha**

Former world No 1 Rafael Nadal clinched his first tournament victory since returning from a seven-month lay-off, by defeating Argentina’s David Nalbandian 6-2, 6-3 in the final of the Brazil Open on Sunday. Trailing 3-0 in the second set, Nadal rallied to win six consecutive games and defeat Nalbandian in one hour and 18 minutes in the indoor clay-court event. It was the Spanishard’s second Brazil Open triumph, having won the tournament as an 18-year-old in 2005.

Despite its relatively modest status as an ATP 250 event, Nadal pumped his fist in the air in jubilation upon securing his 51st singles title at the Brasiliana arena. “Brazil will always be in my heart,” the 11-time grand slam winner said. “Big things started to happen after I won here in 2005 and hopefully this is the start of something good again.” The tournament was Nadal’s second event since suffering a left knee injury during his second-round Wimbledon defeat to Czech Lukas Rosol in June last year.

He returned to play the Chile Open last week, losing to world No.73 Horacio Zeballos in the final. The 26-year-old said he was yet to reach full match fitness, but said victory in Brazil gave him the hope he needed. “When the knee is feeling better like today I feel like I can do more of the things that I used to do,” he said. “If the pain is bearable, then it’s fine.”

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**Nadal wins Brazil Open**

**Rio de Janeiro, 18 Feb—**Deco set up two goals in Fluminense win

Porto defeated Ponte Preta 0-2. —**Xinhua**

Deco

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Ross wins slam dunk title, Irving top long-range gunner

HOUSTON, 18 Feb—Toronto Raptors guard Terrence Ross won the NBA’s Slam Dunk Contest on Saturday with a one-handed, though-the-legs rim-rattler after leaping over a ballboy.

The windmill slam earned the wild applause of the sold-out crowd at the Toyota Centre and lifted the 22-year-old rookie to the title over Jeremy Evans of the Utah Jazz. “I feel blessed, but it’s still overwhelming,” he told reporters. “I’m just trying to soak it all in.”

Ross garnered 58 percent of the votes from the public in the two-hand dunk, championship round to claim the title.

In another skills test, second-year guard Kyrie Irving of the Cleveland Cavaliers defeated San Antonio Spurs power forward Matt Bonner 23-20 to win the three-point shooting contest.

East All-Star Terrence Ross of the Toronto Raptors competes in the slam dunk contest during the NBA basketball All-Star weekend in Houston, on 16 Feb, 2013.—Reuters

In an effort to modernize the sport after the International Olympic Committee’s controversial elimination of wrestling from 25 core sports for the 2020 Games on Tuesday, FILA decided in its executive board meeting in Phuket to form a female committee and ethics panel.

FILA has also decided to work on changing the rules for the Greco-Roman style wrestling, which has gained a reputation for being unpopular because it is difficult for spectators to understand.

On Saturday, Raphael Martinetti was ousted as FILA president after being issued a vote of no confidence by his peers. Nenad Lalovic has taken over as acting FILA president. FILA vice president Tomiaki Fukuda said, “Under our new (acting) president, we plan to make contact with the IOC with this new administration.”

FILA will also hire a consulting firm in its lobbying efforts as it attempts to build a case to make a presentation to the IOC executive board in May in St Petersburg, Russia. It will be in close contact with nearly 180 member countries in a joint lobbying effort.

Yoshida and three-time Olympic champion Alexander Karelin of Russia, are expected to take part in the presentation, where the IOC is expected to narrow down the number of sports from eight to three. The final decision will come down at the IOC assembly in September in Buenos Aires, where the host of the 2020 Games will be decided.

Kyodo News
Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, USAID Director Dr. David Yang of US Agency for International Development Agency of the United States and party. —MNA

Also present at the call were Chairman of Amyotha Hluttaw committees Col Maung Maung Htoo, U Aung Nyein and Daw Nann Ni Ni Aye, committee secretary U Htay Maung and officials of Hluttaw Office. —MNA

Panamanian-flagged ship sank off Philippines

Coast : Marine Administration Dept

The department released the names of the missing 14 crew. They are U Win Kyi, U Myo Aung, U Ye Lwin, U Mann Maung Maung, U Aung Thura Win, U Myint Maung Maung Kyi, U Kyaw Min Min Win, U Khin Maung Myint, U Ye Lwin Htay, U Khin Maung, U Kyaw Thu Win, U Myo Thant, U Aung Kyaw Zaw and U San Lwin Oo.

The name of the dead victim is U Myint Aung, the department said.

The nine crew who were rescued are U Kyi Win, U Khin Maung Win, U Aung Kyaw Khang, U Cho Aye, U Aung San San, U Aung Thu Nyein, U Win Saw, U Win Min Thein and U Thant Zin Moe. Further information will be released. The previous report said that the China-bound ship loaded with coal sank yesterday. —MNA

Sustainability of fish species in Inlay Lake calls for mass participation

Inlay Lake in Nyaungshwe Township of Shan State (South) is the world famous destination.

The Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry is implementing the project for the rehabilitation and conservation of Inlay Lake in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme for sustainability of the lake.

According to the project, the ministry is cooperating with Friends of Wildlife, conducting Negotiating Sustainable Fisheries Practices and Conservation of Wildlife in the Inlay Wildlife Sanctuary with the aim of ensuring sustainable production of marine resources from the lake.

Moreover, educative talks are being given to local people to desist from the use of improper fishing methods which are harmful to sustainability of fish species in the lake.

Setting up of fishing free zones includes in the project. Aiming at accumulating the numbers of fish, improving the ecosystem of wetland region, organizing local people to do their bit in the natural resources management system, and ensuring sustainability of Inlay Lake, plans are underway to set up restricted zones for fish farming.

The project is in good shape at 12 villages. Coordination between the township level departments concerned and townswelders and heads of fishermen was made prior to designating fishing free zones in the Inlay Lake.

Close supervision is being made by staff of Inlay Lake Wildlife Sanctuary and Fisheries Department for ensuring fishing free in the zones. Zone-1 with the area of 303 acres is situated around the Yele Bote and Zone-2 with the area of 1440 acres near InlU, Sitha, Hission and Myanma villages.

During the project period from 15 July 2012 to 15 September 2013, Friends of Wildlife will conduct setting up of fishing free zones, releasing fingerlings into the lake, helping local people with fish farming on a managerial scale and patrolling around the zones in cooperating with authorities concerned.

At present, Inlay Lake sees deterioration in ecosystem and locally-bred fish species are at risk of being endangered. That’s why, sustainability of Inlay lake and wildlife sanctuary calls for mass participation in the project in cooperation with officials concerned.

Myanna Alinn
(18-2-13)
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