Vice-President U Nyan Tun Leaves for Belgium

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Sept—U Nyan Tun, Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar left for the Kingdom of Belgium this evening for a working visit there at the invitation of the Government of Belgium.

The Vice-President and party were seen off by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and officials at Yangon International Airport.

The Vice-President was accompanied by Union Minister U Nyan Tun Aung, Deputy Minister U Thant Kyaw and officials. During the visit, the Vice-President will observe the State water and waste management and river basin management projects, infrastructure development in the port city of Antwerp and renewable energy projects arranged by the Government of Flanders of the Kingdom of Belgium.

Minister U Myint Swe and party were seen off by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and officials at Yangon International Airport before departure for the Kingdom of Belgium.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets Malaysian dignitaries

YANGON, 28 Sept—At the invitation of Speaker of House of Representatives of Malaysia Tan Sri Datuk Ronald Kiandee and officials of the House and Myanmar Ambassador U Tin Latt.

They were welcomed at the airport by Deputy Speaker of House of Representatives of Malaysia Hon Datuk Abdul Aziz bin Mohd Yussoff and party at the commission office and observed electoral system of Malaysia and its processes.

On 26 September afternoon, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker and party visited Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia. They were welcomed back at Yangon International Airport by Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, chairmen of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Committees, officials of Yangon Region Hluttaw and the Hluttaw Office, Malaysian and Thai Ambassadors and the charge d’ affaires ai of the Brunei Darussalam.

Chairman of the Pyithu Hluttaw National Races Affairs and Internal Peace-making Committee U Thein Zaw, Chairman of International Relations Committee U Hla Myint Oo, Chairman of Investment and Industrial Development Committee U Htay Myint and Hluttaw representatives also arrived back on the same flight.

Foreign companies eye Myanmar for electricity generating through wind power

Assistant Director U Aung Myo Win of the Ministry of Electric Power said Gunkul Engineering Public Co., Ltd of Thailand and China Three Gorges Co., inked a MoU on generating thousands of megawatts of electricity by using wind power in some parts of the country.

According to the ministry, Gunkul Engineering Public Co., Ltd is carrying out feasibility studies for construction of windmills at seven places in Mon, Kayin, Taninthayi Region and Shan State in order to produce 2930 megawatts. China Three Georges Co., is also conducting feasibility studies on building windmills in Chin and Rakhine States and Ayeyawady and Yangon Regions and it is aimed to produce 1102 megawatts.

Two MoUs were signed for wind power projects in Myanmar. Feasibility studies are underway for developing commercial wind power. Now is the beginning of conducting feasibility study for wind power and it could take more than one year. They will push ahead with the business if wind power is economically feasible,” U Aung Myo Win added.

“A large amount of electricity can be generated by wind farms, but significant amount of investments are needed for wind energy production,” a retired officer of the ministry gave his comment on the development of clean energy.

Kyemon: 27-9-13
Trs: YM

Samples for windmills to generate electricity.
**Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon-Pathein bus line takes passengers to destinations**

The 27th SEA Games will be held in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Pathein (Ngwehsaung). The 7 sports events will be organized in Yangon, football tournaments in Mandalay and beach sports events in Pathein (Ngwehsaung). The remaining sports events will be hosted in Zeyathiri Sports Village in Nay Pyi Taw, Lewe Sports Grounds, and Wunna Theikdi Sports Grounds. The Zeyathiri Stadium and sports village in Zabuthiri Township will accommodate the athletes conveniently to be able to compete in the games. Preparations have been made for the athletes to take training at the gymnasiums, stadiums and hostels. The fans from Nay Pyi Taw wish to enjoy the sports events to be held in Ngwehsaung Beach of Pathein, Yangon and Mandalay. Likewise, those of Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon-Pathein route wish to enjoy the international level sports competitions within their reach while Myanmar has the opportunity to host the SEA Games. That is why the transport plans are being drawn for holding the international sailing contest and beach football tournaments at Ngwehsaung Beach in Pathein Township of Ayeyawady Region under the arrangements of the Myanmar Sailing Federation. Transport is playing a key role in enabling the spectators and fans to enjoy the sports matches and international level sports competitions within their reach while Myanmar has the opportunity to host the SEA Games. The fans from Nay Pyi Taw wish to enjoy the sports events to be held in Ngwehsaung Beach of Pathein, Yangon and Mandalay. Likewise, those of Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon wish to watch the sports matches in other towns.

**Accident**

**Small vessel carrying 10 tourists drifts in Ayeyawady River**

Mandalay, 28 Sept — A small vessel Soe Soe Aung carrying 10 tourists of Mandalay-Mingun tour water transport service drifted in the Ayeyawady River due to engine failure at 1:30 pm on 20 September. Another vessel helped the vessel to dock the jetty in Mandalay Mayangyan port. Malaysian Ms Dam Lai Song and other 10 foreigners chartered the Soe Soe Aung vessel from Mayangyan Port of Mandalay at 8 am to go to Mingun.

**Maha Bandooola Park facilitated with playground for the children**

On their way back to Mandalay, the vessel floated into the water for about 20 minutes near Yayhla Village of Pathinagyi Township due to engine failure. The vessel Golden Butterfly saw it and pulled the floated vessel to Mandalay safely. Vessel Soe Soe Aung carried out tourist transport without any licence of Myanmar Hotels and Tourism Services.

**Crime**

**Opium oil solid, opium liquid seized in Namkham**

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 Sept — Members of Muse Special Anti-Drug Squad of Shan State, acting on tip-off, raided the house of Kyaw Myint, 57, of No 75/261 of Aung Myitta Ward in Namkham on 23 September. They saw 800 grams of opium oil solid worth K 4 million from the chest drawer, one plastic container of opium liquid weighing five litres and 10 materials to be used in making opium oil solid, one unlicensed Hilux, one 20-litre opium liquid, one 10-litre opium bottle, totaling 35 litres worth K 3.15 million. Action was taken against Kyaw Myint under the law.—Kyemon-Police Information

**Artefacts smuggler arrested**

Nay Pyi Taw, 28 Sept — Near the illegal gate of two near Tetkham Hotel, Policemen from Muse Myoma Police Station, acting on tip-off, searched Ma Yin Yin Shwe, 32 of Sint Ohdan Street in Latha Township of Yangon on 23 September. They seized 300 folded Parabeks in gold colour, 123 pieces of lacquerware leaves, 19 pieces of wooden sheets in of silver colour, five bronze Buddha images, one Maha Peinne Bronze Image and one Bronze Buddha image on elephant statue.

File of lawsuit was opened against Ma Yin Yin Shwe under the Archaeological Act.

**Motorcycle thief arrested in Dagon Myothit (North) Township**

Yangon, 28 Sept — A motorcycle thief in front of the house in a ward of Dagon Myothit (North) Township was arrested on 21 September. Members of the special crime combating section of Yangon North District, acting on a tip-off, detained and interrogated Phy Oo (a) Pyae Phy Oo of Mingaladon Township who had committed a series of motorcycle thefts. He confessed that he had stolen CZI motorcycle in front of the house at 39/B Ward in Dagon Myothit (North) Township in September. Dagon Myothit (North) Township Myoma Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against him under Sections 379/54 of the Criminal Law.

**Workers of Yangon City Development Committee repairing the damaged roads caused by heavy rains in Thanlyin Township of Yangon South District recently.**

Kyemon-608

**Development**

Yangon, 28 Sept — The playground in the compound of Maha Bandooola Park in Yangon is crowded with children and parents on 22 September as office holiday. The equipment and dolls were imported from Singapore. Officials of Parks and Playgrounds Department of Yangon City Development Committee opened the new playground for the children, according to the officials of the Parks and Playgrounds Department. MNA

**Workers of Yangon City Development Committee repairing the damaged roads caused by heavy rains in Thanlyin Township of Yangon South District recently.**
US, Iranian presidents speak by phone, 1st top contact since 1979

WASHINGTON, 28 Sept — US President Barack Obama said on Friday he had spoken by phone with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to discuss Teheran’s nuclear programme, marking the two countries’ first highest-level contact since 1979, when they broke off diplomatic relations following a hostage crisis at the US Embassy in Teheran.

“While there will surely be important obstacles to moving forward, and success is by no means guaranteed, I believe we can reach a comprehensive agreement,” Obama said at a Press conference at the White House, referring to nuclear negotiations with the Rouhani administration.

“President Rouhani and I have directed our teams to continue working expeditiously...to pursue an agreement,” Obama said.

“The test will be meaningful, transparent and verifiable actions, which can also bring relief from the comprehensive international sanctions that are currently in place against the Middle Eastern country, he said.—Kyodo News

Building collapse kills 29 in India’s Mumbai, more feared trapped

MUMBAI, 28 Sept — A five-storey apartment block collapsed on Friday in the Indian financial centre of Mumbai, killing at least 29 people.

Rescuers worked into the night to pull out survivors and casualties from the concrete rubble. City authorities said 46 people were rescued by evening. It was not clear how many more were still in the rubble.

Employees of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, also known as the BMC, were housed in the building.

A neighbour in the next block said she heard a loud cracking sound as the building caved in.

“As dust settled, I realized the BMC building was gone,” the neighbour, Cathrine James, told Reuters.

Rescue workers used six cranes to remove debris. The building was believed to have been about 35-years-old and home to about 20 families.

“Five members from my family were trapped inside. So far, two have been rescued. I am praying to God others will also come out alive,” said Preeti Powar, who was standing among crowds of relatives and onlookers outside the collapsed block.

The cause of the collapse was not known.

Mumbai mayor Sunil Prabhul said the block was not on an official list of dilapidated buildings.

In April, a building collapse killed 72 people in Thane, just outside Mumbai. Officials later said the structure had been built using poor materials and did not have proper approvals.

A shortage of cheap homes has led to a rise in illegal construction by developers who use substandard materials and shoddy methods and then offer cheap rents to low-paid workers.

A rise in property prices in densely populated Mumbai over the past five years has put affordable housing out of reach of tens of thousands of people, many of them migrants who move to the city for work.

“Again and again, the same kind of tragedies are striking but the government is not learning anything,” said Vinod Tawde, a politician from the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party.

“The government should evacuate all people staying in dangerous buildings.”—Reuters

UN Security Council demands elimination of Syria chemical arms

UNITED NATIONS, 28 Sept — The UN Security Council adopted a resolution on Friday that demands the eradication of Syria’s chemical weapons but does not threaten automatic punitive action against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s government if it does not comply.

The unanimous vote by the 15-member Security Council capped weeks of intense diplomacy between Russia and the United States.

It was based on a deal between the two countries reached in Geneva earlier this month following an 21 August sarin nerve gas attack on a Damascus suburb that was a Damascus suburb that had been launched by the August attack. The US-Russia deal averted punitive US military action against Syria’s president Bashar al-Assad’s government if it does not comply.

The unanimous vote by the 15-member Security Council capped weeks of intense diplomacy between Russia and the United States.

Russia’s permanent representative to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, described by the US as a “decisive step forward”.

The US-Russia deal showed that “actions have consequences.”

“Again and again, the so-called Group of Four — Brazil, Germany, Japan and India — Thursday agreed to aim for “concrete” progress in Security Council reform by 2015 in pushing for reform of the UN Security Council.

The G-4 “stressed the need to intensify efforts to translate, at the latest by

G-4 aims for “concrete” progress in Security Council reform by 2015

NEW YORK, 28 Sept — Foreign ministers from the so-called Group of Four nations — Brazil, Germany, India and Japan — on Thursday agreed to aim for “concrete” progress by 2015 in pushing for reform of the UN Security Council.

The G-4 “stressed the need to intensify efforts to translate, at the latest by

2015, the existing agreement into concrete outcomes,” the ministers said in a joint statement issued after a meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The G-4 said reform of the council is “long overdue” and that developing countries, including those in Africa, must be better represented in both the permanent and nonpermanent membership, the ministers said.

Japan has been calling for reform of the Security Council, which has five permanent members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told the General Assembly on Thursday that the structure of the council is “frozen” and that Japan’s aspiration to become a permanent member “has not changed in the slightest.”

To change the structure of the permanent and nonpermanent members, the UN Charter needs to be revised with the backing of two-thirds of UN member states.

Rescue crews search for survivors at the site of a collapsed residential building in Mumbai on 27 Sept, 2013.—Xinhua

Rescuers take a child out of the rubbles of a collapsed building in Mumbai, India, on 27 Sept, 2013.—Xinhua

Members of the United Nations Security Council raise their hands as they vote unanimously to approve a resolution eradicating Syria’s chemical arsenal during a Security Council meeting during the 68th United Nations General Assembly in New York on 27 Sept, 2013.—Reuters

Reuters
**EA settles NCAA student-athlete cases, no game next year**

SAN FRANCISCO, 28 Sept — Electronic Arts said it had reached a settlement with former college football athletes who have accused the company of using their images without permission and would not be making a new game for the popular “NCAA Football” series in 2014.

The athletes sued the video game publisher and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which has strict rules prohibiting them from sharing in the millions of dollars that schools receive from television and licensing deals. The case against the NCAA is still pending.

Electronic Arts’ move follows a decision by the NCAA in mid-July to not renew a contract to license its name and logo for EA’s college football game.

**Fossil fish find in China fills in evolutionary picture**

**Min Zhu, professor at the Chinese Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology, shows a fossil of the heavily armoured fish, Entelognathus primoralis, in front of a computer screen showing a life restoration image of the fish during a photo opportunity at his laboratory in Beijing on 27 Sept, 2013.—REUTERS**

A team of Chinese paleontologists has discovered a 280 million year-old fish that could be a missing link in the development of vertebrates.

The fossil find in China’s Xixiang Xingqiao, reported by the journal “Nature” on Thursday, is the most primitive vertebrate discovered with a modern jaw, including a dentary bone found in humans.

“Finally solves an age-old problem about the origin of modern fishes,” said John Long, a professor in paleontology at Flinders University in Adelaide.

Scientists were surprised to find that the heavily armoured fish, Entelognathus primoralis, a previously unknown member of the now extinct placoderm family, had a complex small skull and jaw bones.

That appeared to disprove earlier theories that modern vertebrates with bony skeletons, called osteichthyans, had evolved from a shark-like creature with a frame made of cartilage.

Instead, the new find provides a missing branch on the evolutionary tree, predating that shark-like creature and showing that a bony skeleton was the prototype for both bony and cartilaginous vertebrates.

“We now know that ancient armored placoderms gave rise to the modern fish fauna as we know it,” said Long, who was not part of the team in China.

Long described the discovery as “the most exciting news in palaeontology since Archaeopteryx or Lucy”, referring to two fossil discoveries that are crucial to our understanding of the evolution of birds and humans.

“Nature” did not detail when the fossil was found.

**Rover Curiosity finds “abundant” water in Martian soil**

WASHINGTON, 28 Sept — The first scoop of soil analyzed by the Curiosity rover reveals that fine materials on the Martian surface may contain “abundant” water, US researchers said on Thursday. Curiosity touched down on Mars last August and began its 100-day mission of collecting and analyzing samples of all kinds in Gale crater, which is near the Martian equator, with its high-tech lasers and scoops.

The researchers then baked the sample also revealed a compound containing chlorine and oxygen.

“We now know that chlorine and oxygen found in Mars’ soil are likely the result of ancient life,” said lead author Leshin.

**Bago Region**

Bago, about two hours’ drive from Yangon, is the former capital of the mighty 16th century Mon kingdom of Hanthawady. It is a small, busy town dominated by the golden spire of the Shwe Maw Daw Pagoda.

Shwe Maw Daw Pagoda

One of the most famous sites in Bago is the Shwe Maw Daw Pagoda, whose golden spire reaching to a height of 134 metres (440 feet) dominates the city’s skyline. The pagoda enshrines two hairs from the Lord Buddha and is one of the most revered Buddhist pilgrimage destinations in Myanmar.

**Kyeik Pun Pagoda**

Four huge seated images of the Buddha are placed back to back, facing the cardinal points of the compass. The pagoda was built by King Dhamma Zedi, who reigned from 1472 to 1492.

Hinthagon Pagoda

Near the Shwe Maw Daw pagoda is the small Hinthagon Pagoda. Spirit worshippers hold ritual celebrations at the pagoda on some weekends.

**Maha Kalayani Thein Ordination Hall**

It was originally built in 1476 by King Dhamma Zedi over a layer of sand from the Kalayani River brought from Sri Lanka. Over the centuries it has been damaged and rebuilt several times. Around the hall is the ten inscribed stone pillars dating from the time of its consecration.

**Mya Thar Lyaung reclining Buddha image**

Near the Shwe Thar Lyaung is the Mya Thar Lyaung reclining Buddha image, which is 82 metres (270 feet) long. This image was built in 2000. It is 15 metres (49 feet) high and is hollow, enabling visitors to go inside.

**Reclining Buddha image**

One of the famous sites in Bago is the 54.8 metre (180 feet) long Shwe Thar Lyaung a beautiful reclining Buddha image that was discovered in the 19th century under the jungle that had covered it.

**Kanbawzathadi Palace**

Kanbawzathadi is the name of an imposing palace built by the founder of the second Myanmar Empire, King Bayint Naung. The palace was destroyed many years ago but detailed descriptions of its design on ancient palm-leaf manuscripts enabled architects to reconstruct a replica in its place. The palace site covers more than 3844 hectares (9500 acres) and excavations have exposed the brick foundations and many teak pillars. An archeological museum at the excavation site hints at the grandeur of the original palace.
Health problems of elderly linked to lifestyle

BEIJING, 28 Sept—More than half of China’s elderly have health problems and their lifestyles are believed to be a leading contributor, officials and medical experts said on Thursday.

China’s population is rapidly aging and the number of citizens older than 60 is expected to reach 202 million by the end of 2013, including 23 million older than 80, said Wu Yushao, vice-president of the China National Committee on Aging. By then, 37.5 million elderly Chinese, or 19 percent of the senior population, will require daily care because of disabilities.

Only about 40 percent of Chinese people over 60 are considered healthy, compared with 60 percent in developed economies, Wu said, citing 2008 statistics from the World Health Organization.

Tao Guoshu, a retired doctor from the Chinese PLA General Hospital who specialized in geriatrics in Beijing, said cardiovascular disease, cancer and cerebrovascular disease are common among elderly Chinese patients, and about 60 percent of health issues were triggered by unhealthy lifestyles.

High blood pressure, a common complaint among elderly Chinese, is closely related to the dietary habit of eating too much salt, he said. “People in China lack common sense about health,” he said. “There is an urgent need to popularize basic health knowledge and encourage people to improve their way of life in order to further increase the life expectancy in China.”

On Thursday, the China National Committee on Aging and the National Health and Family Planning Commission released an instruction book for seniors on how to live healthily.

Wu said the brochure includes 36 suggestions for diet, sports, mental health, health management and social interaction.

Regarding nutrition, the book advises the elderly to eat more fresh food and dairy products and avoid eating leftovers.

Copies of the book will be provided for free in community activity centers for the elderly, universities dedicated for the aged and elderly associations, he said.—Xinhua

US consumer spending rises as wages boost family income

WASHINGTON, 28 Sept—US household spending rose in August as incomes were buoyed by solid wage gains, signs that momentum could be growing in the economy despite months of harsh government austerity.

American families spent 0.3 percent more last month than the month before, which was in line with expectations, Commerce Department data showed on Friday.

Higher wages drove incomes up 0.4 percent, the most since February. Analysts said the increase could drive faster spending in the months ahead.

Rising wages and spending also appeared to give businesses a little more leverage to raise prices, with inflation outside food and energy picking up in August. That could bolster the case for the US Federal Reserve to move forward with winding down a bond-buying stimulus programme. “This acceleration in core inflation will likely be encouraging to the Fed,” said Milan Martic, an economist at TD Securities in New York.

The data backs the view that tax hikes and federal budget cuts are dragging on the economy less as the year goes on. Washington increased tax rates in January and slashed the federal budget in March. But Wall Street and the Fed have appeared increasingly concerned that political gridlock in Washington could trigger a government shutdown next week and perhaps a debt default after mid-October, either of which could deliver blows to the economy.

Worries about the future are also rising among families.

US consumer sentiment slid in September to its lowest level in five months as Americans saw higher interest rates and sluggish economic growth ahead, according to the final reading of the Thomson Reuters/University of Michigan’s consumer survey.

The data had little impact on sentiment among investors, who remain preoccupied with the potential for fiscal crises. US stocks fell and the dollar closed in on a seven-month low.

Teen health programme fights obesity, depression

NEW YORK, 28 Sept—A skills-building programme offered as part of high school health classes may help prevent obesity, depression and drinking among teenagers, a new study suggests.

“Our hope is that schools after seeing these outcomes will say, ‘Hey, we want to implement this in our curriculum,’” Bernadette Melnyk, from The Ohio State University in Columbus, told Reuters Health. “We’re talking about 15 hours in a high schooler’s education that can have some pretty profound positive outcomes.”

Melnyk developed the COPE (Creating Opportunities for Personal Empowerment) Healthy Lifestyles TEEN (Thinking, Emotions, Exercise, Nutrition) programme, and is the lead author of the new study. One-third of young people in the US are overweight or obese, she and her team note. Obese teens are at higher risk of depression and are more likely to perform poorly in school.

However, most programs targeting youth obesity don’t also address mental health, Melnyk said.

“If we change the way that people are thinking, there’s less likelihood that any behavioral change is going to sustain,” she added.

The COPE programme is designed to help teenagers recognize and change irrational and negative thoughts. “We teach the teens that how they think directly relates to how they feel and how they behave,” Melnyk said. Other components include education on healthy lifestyles, self-esteem building, goal-setting and problem-solving, coping with stress and regulating emotion and behavior. Each of the 15 weekly sessions also includes 20 minutes of walking, dancing or other exercise.

Penney to raise up to $932 million in share sale, lowers cash forecast

NEW YORK, 28 Sept—JC Penney Co Inc (JCP.N) on Friday cut its forecast of year-end cash reserves as it expects to raise up to $932 million in a share sale, suggesting that the retailer is burning through cash faster than expected.

The retailer, whose shares have tumbled in the last year as it struggled to improve sales, said it would have about $1.3 billion in cash by the end of the year. In August, it had forecast $1.5 billion.

“While an equity raise improves (near-term) liquidity, we remain concerned that JCP will need to burn cash in ’14 and beyond,” UBS analyst Michael Binetti, who has a “sell” rating on the stock, wrote in a note.

Customers ride the escalator at a JC Penney store in New York on 14 Aug, 2013. (Reuters)

JC Penney said shareholders have priced it at $9.65 each. Penney offered 84 million shares, which will severely dilute current shareholders. The stock fell 11 percent to $9.30 in afternoon trading. The share sale would increase Penney’s shares outstanding by 38 percent, excluding the 12.6 million additional shares the underwriters have the option to buy.

UBS’ Binetti said the pre-holiday capital-raising, along with cautious comments from Penney’s mall peers, increased concerns that near-term trends were not improving as anticipated.

So far some financing companies, known as factors, are not changing terms on the loans they provide Penney suppliers.

Minty, the managing director at Rosenthal $ Rosenthal, a large factor, said his firm has kept approving orders.

A woman walks through a shopping mall in San Francisco, California on 5 Jan, 2012. (Reuters)

Franco Bernabe, Telecom Italia chairman and CEO, poses in his office in Rome, on 19 April, 2013. (Reuters)
Italy’s Prime Minister Enrico Letta speaks during a news conference following his address to the high-level meeting on Islamist groups in the Sahel region, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly at the UN Headquarters in New York on 26 Sept, 2013. REUTERS

Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta will call a confidence vote in parliament after a showdown with centre-right partners in his fragile coalition scuppered a vital package of budget measures on Friday and took his government to the brink of collapse.

Letta flew back from a visit to New York with coalition unity already in tatters after a threat by centre-right lawmakers to walk out over former premier Silvio Berlusconi’s battle against a conviction for tax fraud.

“Efficient government action is obviously incompatible with the mass resignation of a parliamentary group which should support the government,” Letta said in a statement after a cabinet meeting on Friday.

“Either there is a new start and the interests of the country and its citizens are put first or this experience is at an end,” he said.

Regional Affairs Minister Graziano Delrio let Letta, who met President Giorgio Napolitano on Friday, would go before parliament in the next few days to seek backing to continue.

After two days of mounting tension and with financial markets on edge, Letta met ministers in a last-ditch bid to secure approval for additional budget measures needed to bring Italy’s deficit within European Union limits.

The meeting was also intended to satisfy a key demand of the centre-right and avert the sales tax from rising to 22 percent, from 21 percent. The tax increase was passed by the previous government of Mario Monti and rates are due to rise on Tuesday.

However with the meeting still in progress, officials made clear that no deal could be reached. Reuters

Senegal seeks French, Chinese help as water crisis hits capital

Dakar, 28 Sept—Senegal has appealed to France and China for help to repair damage to a water pipeline that has deprived much of the capital of running water for two weeks, triggering pockets of violent protests.

President Macky Sall cut short his visit to New York for the UN General Assembly this week to tackle the crisis, which is the most serious since he came to power last year and has highlighted pressures on basic services in the country.

“The president of the republic has called on his French counterpart Francois Hollande and teams of experts will be sent in to bring technical assistance,” Senegalese Prime Minister Aminata Toure said on state television late on Thursday. “China will also send experts to find out what the problem is and bring its know-how,” Toure added.

The appeal for international help follows repeated local efforts over the last two weeks to repair a pipeline carrying water to Dakar from a water plant at Keur Momar Sarr, 250 km (155 miles) to the northeast.

The plant supplies 40 percent of the water for the estimated 3 million people who live in Dakar and its suburbs.

Senegalese engineers have tried and failed to repair the damage several times.

The water supply company says the underground pipeline was damaged by wear and tear, though some experts have questioned whether it was maintained properly.

Unlike many other countries in the region, Senegal has enjoyed decades of political stability and Dakar has become a major regional hub for West Africa.

However, the government has struggled to keep up with rapid urbanization and the water shortages have brought to the fore simmering frustrations, especially in poor neighbourhoods.—Reuters

Pakistani quake death toll reaches 515, insurgents hamper aid efforts

Awaran, (Pakistan), 28 Sept—The death toll from an earthquake in southwestern Pakistan has reached 515, a provincial official said on Friday, as insurgent attacks threaten relief efforts and survivors complain of lack of shelter from the scorching sun.

Babar Yaqoob, the Chief Secretary of Baluchistan, gave the updated death toll as he toured the destroyed region of Awaran, where the 7.7 magnitude quake struck on Tuesday.

Bodies were still being discovered in houses whose mud walls and wooden roof beams had collapsed.

“My daughter was killed when my house collapsed — I was also inside my house but manage to run out,” said 70-year-old Gul Janus “We are sitting under the scorching sun and need shelter.”

In Labash village near Awaran, more than half of the 3,000 houses have collapsed and those still standing have wide cracks.

“There is a law and order situation here and other hurdles but despite everything, we will get to every last person,” said Lai Gen Nasir Jangia, the highest ranking military official in the province. Aid must travel by pitted roads that cut through mountains held by the insurgents. Reuters

People carry containers of water from a communal source in Senegal’s capital Dakar on 27 Sept, 2013. REUTERS

US internal watchdog finds NSA workers spied on significant others

Washington, 28 Sept—At least a dozen US National Security Agency employees have abused secret surveillance programmes in the past decade, most often to spy on their significant others, according to the latest findings of the agency’s internal watchdog.

In a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee’s top Republican, Charles Grassley, NSA Inspector General George Ellard outlined 12 instances of “intentional misuse” of the agency’s intelligence gathering programmes since January 1, 2003.

Grassley said the provision was ruled unconstitutional, the high court on Friday rejected his demand for compensation.

The court said the state cannot be held responsible for not eliminating the provision, saying there was not enough public debate on the matter while he was in prison. The state argued at the high court that “prisoners substantially lack law-abiding spirit and it cannot be expected that they fairly exercise the right to vote.”

Kyodo News

Court rules denying prisoners voting right unconstitutional

Osaka, 28 Sept—The Osaka High Court has ruled that denying prisoners the right to vote in a public election is unconstitutional, in the first judgment on the Public Offices Election Law’s provision restricting franchise for those serving time.

The lawsuit was filed by Hiroshi Inagaki, 69, who was locked in Shiga Prison between March and November of 2010 for stag- ing a demonstration without authorization in a Road Traffic Law violation and could not vote in an upper house election on 11 July that year.

Article 11 of the election law denies a person sentenced to imprisonment or a graver form of penal sentence the right to vote or be elected until the sentence is served. After serving his time, Inagaki sued the state, seeking 10 million yen in compensation, saying he suffered mentally. While the provision was ruled unconstitutional, the high court on Friday rejected his demand for compensation.

The court said the state cannot be held responsible for not eliminating the provision, saying there was not enough public debate on the matter while he was in prison.

The agency’s operations have come under intense scrutiny since disclosures this spring by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden that the US government collects far more Internet and telephone data than previously publicly known. Many members of Congress and administration officials staunchly de- fend the NSA surveillance programmes as a critical defence tool against ter- rorist attacks, but privacy advocates say the spying agency’s authority has grown to be too sweep- ing.—Reuters

An undated aerial handout photo shows the National Security Agency (NSA) headquarters building in Fort Meade, Maryland.—REUTERS
Stipends granted to offspring of WVO members in Twantay

**Twantay, 28 Sept—** Ceremony to grant stipends to members of War Veterans Organization in Twantay Township in Yangon Region was held on 22 September. Chairman of Township War Veterans Organization Captain Mya Thaung Reid and officials presented stipends to offspring of War Veterans Organization.

The amount of stipends provided to the students was K 1,500,000.

**MMAL-Myo Hlaing (Twantay)**

Business

International KBZ Insurance opens Shan State HQ

**Taunggyi, 28 Sept—** International Kanbawza Insurance opened its Shan State Headquarters in Bogyoke Aung San street in Taunggyi in Shan State yesterday morning.

Present were Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat, Chairman of International Kanbawza Insurance U Aung Ko Win, Insurance Industry Supervisory Committee Myanma Insurance Managing Director U Aye Min Thein and party, departmental personnel, entrepreneurs, insurance agents and guests.

International Kanbawza Insurance is one of nine licensed insurance firms.

It launched the insurance works in Yangon on 12 September and opened upper Myanmar office in Mandalay on 24 September.

Managing Director U Nyo Myint of International Kanbawza Insurande said the insurance industry would profit the state by covering damages and losses.

**MMAL-Maung Thin Pyant**

Traffic victims back home

**Monywa, 28 Sept—** Myanma Police Force rescued four Myanmar women from human traffickers on the way to Bangkok of Thailand and transferred them to their parents in a meeting at Sagaing Region Police Office on 25 September, according to Commander of Sagaing Region Police Force Col Nay Don.

Four girls of Chinpone village in Yinnabin Township gave K 400,000 to two self-acclaimed employment agents on 11 July who promised the job in Thailand and would refund twice if they failed to find a job there.

They were sent to Bangkok and locked in a room. One of the victims phoned their parents in Myanmar, giving the address and phone number of the room they were locked.

The trafficking victims were rescued in time in cooperation with international anti-human trafficking squads under the supervision of the Chief of Myanma Police Force. They were received at Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge by Myawady In-charge of Myanmar Anti-Human Trafficking Squad Police Major Aung Huay.

**MMAL-Kyu In**

Kalay University to get convocation

**Kalay, 28 Sept—** Kalay in Sagaing Region has three universities—University of Computer Studies, Technological University and Kalay University. Kalay University was upgraded from Kalay Degree College in 14 May 2003. It started as Kalay College in 1993 and then upgraded to the degree college in 1999.

Kalay University is providing higher education to the students in Kalay, Kalewa, Mingin, Tamu and Mawlai Townships in Sagaing Region and Falun, Haka, Thantlang, Tiddim, Tunzang, Reed and Kyikha Townships in Chin State.

More than 4500 students are attending classes at the university, turning out more than 1000 graduates a year.

**MMAL-Ja Nine**

Railroad needs to be repaired in Indaw Township

**Indaw, 28 Sept—** Acting on a tip-off by a responsible citizen, authorities repaired a railroad near Nankin village between Indaw railway station and Hseywa station on Mandalay-Miyitkyina road in Indaw Township on 16 September.

Another damage was found on the same railroad on 24 September and has been repaired by the authorities immediately.

**MMAL-Ko Min-Indaw**

Trainees of CICS visit ISPE (Mdy)

**Mandalay, 28 Sept—** Trainees of Special Refresher Course No 53 of the Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar) visited Institute of Sports and Physical Education in Mandalay on 23 September afternoon.

Deputy Principal of the institute U Myint Naing extended greetings. Athletes demonstrated their skills in respective sports. The trainees donated K 100,000 to the fund of the institute.

**Kyemon-Kyaw Thita**

Myanmar-Laos border committee meeting held in Tachileik

**Tachileik, 28 Sept—** The Myanmar-Laos Border Committee held a meeting at the hallof the committee in Tachileik Station on 15 September.

The Laotian delegation led by Chairman of the Border Committee Col Faththal Phouthavong arrived at Wampon Port by boat to attend the meeting. They were welcomed by Col Thaung Haik Shwe, Tactical Operations Commander of Tachileik (Base) of Triangle Region Command and officials.

The meeting was held at the guest house in the station in Tachileik at 1 pm.

It was attended by Chairman of the Regional Border Committee Tachileik based Tactical Operations Commander Col Thaung Haik Shwe, Director U Soe Lin Han of Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Commander of Shan State Police Force Police Lt-Col Kyaw Tun, Assistant Judge Advocate-General Lt-Col Thant Zaw, Head of Division-2 U Sithu Aung of Consular and Legal Affairs Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Captain Zin Min Tun, G-III of Tactical Operations Command (Tachileik), Staff Officer U Myo Thet Aung of Tachileik District General Administration Department and Head of Branch-II Daw Khan La Pyae Tun of Political Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Laotian delegation comprised 10 members.

The meeting continued on 16 September.

**MMAL-La/015**
Healthy heart for happy life

World Heart Day takes place on the last Sunday of September each year, aiming at heightening awareness about the prevailing risks of heart disorders which are the leading cause of death among people across the globe. According to statistics based globally, the number of annual deaths caused by heart diseases is on a constant rise, claiming around 17.3 million lives in 2008 and predicting that it would be as high as 23 million by 2030.

The goal of this year’s World Heart Day is to stress the importance of a life-course approach towards the prevention and control of cardiovascular disease (CVD) with special emphasis on the health of women and children. It is because the health of women and children tend to have a higher impact on the overall health of the society.

Cardiovascular diseases caused by disorders of the heart and blood vessels are number one cause of death in the world. Of people died of CVDs in 2008, estimated 7.3 million were due to heart attack and 6.2 million, stroke.

Today, the risk of developing the heart diseases can be minimized by keeping strict adherence to simple health tips — watch your weight, make healthy food choices and live an active life. The campaign of adopting heart-healthy lifestyle from childhood throughout adulthood highlights precautions such as eating a healthy diet low in the amount of salt, saturated fats and bad cholesterol, taking regular physical activity and avoiding tobacco and harmful use of alcohol to be taken through a person’s life to prevent or, at least, lower their own and family’s risk of developing heart diseases.

Healthy children lead to healthy adults and healthy adults lead to healthy families and communities. So, we would like to call on you to take above-mentioned healthy habits today, World Heart Day, in order to protect your own heart and encourage your friends and families to develop heart-healthy living for their hearts too. Don’t be a victim of heart attack and stroke, protect yourself.

Lasting peace will be achieved only through political dialogue

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Sept — Mon Nation Conference took place at Mon State Hall in Mawlamyne this morning, attended by Union Minister U Aung Min, Vice-Chairman of Union Peace-making Work Committee, Union Minister U Ohn Myint, Mon State Chief Minister U Ohn Myint and state ministers, leaders of political parties, leaders and representatives of national race armed groups, who had agreed a ceasefire, leaders of civil societies and officials.

In his opening address at the conference, New Mon State Party Chairman Naing Htaw Mon called for collective efforts to bring peace and prosperity to Mon State.

Union Minister U Aung Min said both parties have agreed principally to hold Union-level peace talks between the government and KIO in Myitkyina at the end of the first week of October. Up to date, state-level and Union-level agreements, numbering 37, have been made with 14 non-state armed groups and negotiations with remaining groups are in progress, he added.

The government understands that peace process is a continuing process of holding a series of negotiations. He underscored the importance of political dialogue that will bring about a lasting peace, understanding that process of making effort to reach ceasefire is part of the whole process. Although some conflicts have still remained in the more than two-year long peace-making process, now is the time to step into the next level, National Dialogue, as some positive outcomes have emerged, he added.

He made a vow to bring all 16 groups to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and no group is left behind. It is planned to carry on it at the end of October this year, he said.

Nationwide ceasefire agreement will lead to the political dialogue. In the interim, formulation of political dialogue framework for the political dialogue will be carried out in coordination with national race groups and it is planned to formulate the framework in November or December with the participation of the government, Tatmadaw, the parliament, national races, armed groups that had agreed a ceasefire and political parties.

Next, the state chief minister gave an account of ongoing tasks for the development of Mon State.

Then, Dr Min Kyi Win, Chairman of Mon National Conference organizing committee, explained the aims of the conference and follow-up tasks.

Afterwards, the Union ministers, the chief minister and those present posed for documentary photos.

MON

5th International Conference on Public Health among GMS opened

YANGON, 28 Sept — The opening of 5th International Conference on Public Health among GMS, jointly organized by Medical Science Department, University of Public Health (Yangon) under the Ministry of Health, WHO and China Medical Board, took place at National Theatre on Myomakyaw Street, here, this morning.

At the ceremony, Rector Dr Nay Soe Maung of the University extended greetings.

Conference on Public Health among GMS is annually held in GMS countries and it is the fifth of its kind.

The representatives from GMS countries Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and Myanmar and delegates from WHO, CBM, INGOs and IGOs will attend the conference. The conference will discuss public health and difficulties and technological challenges in modern age and read 139 papers.

MON

Photo shows ceremony to mark 5th International Conference on Public Health among GMS.—MNA
**Construction**

Tatmadawmen, people join hands in construction of roads

**Business**

Soft interest loans disbursed to SME industries in Sagaing Township

**Trade**

Myanmar, Thai merchants meet in Ranong

**Retaining walls collapse at bridge on Shwebo-Myitkyina Road in heavy rain**

In Daw, 28 Sept—The retaining walls of a small bridge collapsed on Shwebo-Myitkyina strategic road in Paygon Village of Indaw Township in Sagaing Region from 25 to 27 September.

Under the patronage of Sayadaw Bhaddanta Ṣārintha of the monastery in Paygon Village, village administrator U Thaung Shwe, members of Ponnya Mamaka Social Organization, members of Tatmadaw and local people constructed the road swith the use of 300 vehicles of sand and gravel.

They placed sand and gravels on Phone-dawgyikyaung Street, Station Street, Ywamagyi Road, No. 1 Kweithit road, Lanmadaw Street and a concrete bridge.

**Talks on taxation held in ChaungU**

ChaungU, 28 Sept—The talks on taxation was held at the hall of ChaungU Township General Administration Department in Sagaing Region on 26 September. Chairman of the Township Development Affairs Committee U Kyaw Myint Thein and Township Education Officer U Than Htay made speeches. Next, the talks were entrepreneurs from ChaungU Township and guests.

**Fertilizers provided to farmers free of charge**

Hopin, 28 Sept—A ceremony to present Urea fertilizers to the local farmers free of charge was held at the Dhammayon of Myen Village in Myohitgale Village-tract in Hopin Sub-Township of Kachin State on 26 September.

The farmers were needy for inputs of their farmlands.

Officials of Mohnyin Township Pyithu Hlutaw Office presented fertilizers to 20 farmers from eight villages of Paygon and two wards of Mohnyin Township.
**NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR**

**WORLD**

**Bus blast kills 17 government employees in northwest Pakistan**

**PESHAWAR,** 28 Sept—At least 17 people were killed on Friday when a remote-controlled bomb exploded on a bus carrying government officials in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, officials said.

The attack took place on a road in Peshawar, near the frontier tribal areas of the northwest where Islamists militants have their strongholds.

**US FHA to tap 1.7 billion dollars from Treasury**

**WASHINGTON,** 28 Sept—US Federal Housing Administration (FHA) said on Friday it would tap 1.7 billion dollars from the US Department of Treasury at the end of this month to cover its losses in a mortgage programme.

The agency has about 30 billion dollars in liquid assets on hand and needs more money because it is required by law to keep enough reserves to cover all expected future losses for the next 30 years, FHA Commissioner Carole Galante told the Senate banking committee in a letter.

The shortfall was mainly driven by 5 billion dollars in losses in the agency’s Home Equity Conversion Mortgage program (HECM), which allows seniors to withdraw equity from their homes, launching peace talks with the Pakistani Taliban. Last week, two suicide bombers blew themselves up outside a 130-year-old Anglican church in Peshawar, killing at least 81 people in the deadliest attack on Christians in the predominantly Muslim country.

**Firefight kills two Afghan Taleban, wounds two police**

**LASHIKAR GAH,** (Afghanistan), 28 Sept—Two Taleban insurgents were killed and two police sustained injuries as conflict erupted in Marja District of the southern Helmand Province early Friday, a local official said.

“A group of Taleban rebels attacked a police checkpoint in Marja District early today morning and police returned fire killing two rebels on the spot, forcing others to flee,” spokesman for Helmand’s governor, Omar Zawak told Xinhua.

He also confirmed that two police constables sustained injuries in the firefight which lasted for a while.

Meantime, Qari Yusuf Ahmadi, who claims to speak for the Taleban outfit, confirmed the conflict in talks with media via telephone from unknown location, insisting five police were killed in the clash, a claim denied by Zawak as groundless.

**Eight held over Nairobi mall attack, al Shabaab issues new threat**

**NAIROBI,** 28 Sept—Kenyan authorities are holding eight people in connection with an attack by Islamist militants on a Nairobi shopping mall and have released three others after the assault that killed six, officials said.

**At least three killed in explosion at Paris work site**

**PARIS,** 28 Sept—At least three people were killed on Friday in a large explosion on a work site in central Paris which the fire brigade said was likely an accident caused by a fuel tank ignition.

The blast on a narrow street in northern Paris ripped through an underground garage where several workers were gathered, causing surrounding buildings to shake. A building across from the blast site had been evacuated and the fire brigade was reinforcing its foundations to avoid collapse, a firefighter said.

A fuel tank was the most likely cause of the blast, he added. Rescuers were using dogs to search for a possible fourth victim under rubble.

“The circumstances of this tragedy are not yet clear and an investigation will shed light on this terrible accident,” Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë said in a statement.

**Gambian president says gays a threat to human existence**

**UNITED NATIONS,** 28 Sept—Gambia’s president warned the United Nations General Assembly on Friday that gays were a threat to human existence, along with excessive greed and obsession with world domination, and criticized other countries for regarding homosexuality as a human right.

“Those who promote homosexuality want to put an end to human existence,” Gambian President Yahya Jammeh told the gathering of world leaders in New York. “It is becoming an epidemic and we Muslims and Africans will fight to end this behaviour.”

“Homosexuality in all its forms and manifestations which, though very evil, antithem as well as anti-Allah, is being promoted as a human right by some powers,” said Jammeh, who is accused by activists of human rights abuses during his rule.

As the police investigation advanced, a leading Muslim cleric urged security forces to avoid harassing Muslims in their pursuit of those responsible.

Investigators trying to determine the identity of the attackers were making “good progress” in their search through the rubble of the mall where three floors collapsed after a series of blasts and a huge blaze, Interior Minister Joseph Ole Lenku said.

Five of the attackers were killed, he said, but survivors of attack have said some may have escaped. “Police are holding eight suspects as they seek to unmask the face behind the terror attack. Three others were interrogated and released,” Ole Lenku told a news briefing.

Kenyan officials have said they are investigating a theory that the Islamists may have hired a shop in the mall before the assault to store weaponry, including a heavy machine gun.

“We have so far received 17 bodies,” said the spokesman for the Lady Reading Hospital. “There were several people on the roof of the bus, which was full, so we expect the death toll to rise.” The bus was carrying employees of the civil secretariat, said police officials. A spokesman for Ansar al Mujahideen, a group allied to but not part of the Pakistani Taleban, claimed responsibility for the blast. Abu Baseer said that the attack was in retaliation for US drone strikes.

Islamist violence has been a growing concern in Paki- stan in recent months, under- dermining Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s efforts to tame the insurgency by
India’s Rahul Gandhi slams move to shield convicted politicians

NEW DELHI, 28 Sept — India’s Nehru-Gandhi dynasty scion Rahul Gandhi on Friday slammed a cabinet move to protect politicians found guilty of crimes, embarrassing the government led by his own party just months from a general election. About 30 percent of lawmakers across federal and state assemblies have criminal charges against them.

The government has come under fire since it passed an order this week that could allow convicted lawmakers to continue to hold office and stand in elections. Critics say the move was designed to shield allies that Gandhi’s Congress party may need to form a ruling coalition after elections due by next May. A contender for prime minister if Congress returns to power, the normally publicity-shy Gandhi called a news conference to lambast the ordinance passed on Tuesday by a government that has been dogged for years by corruption scandals.

“My opinion on the ordinance is that it’s complete nonsense and it should be torn up and thrown out,” he said. “I feel, personally feel, that what our government has done as far as this ordinance is concerned is wrong.”

Gandhi’s rare public utterances mean that there is huge interest in what he says when he does speak. Little is known about what the 43-year-old thinks about important issues of the day and what he would do if he were to become prime minister.

His father, grandmother and great-grandfather were prime ministers and his mother, Sonia Gandhi, who is head of the Congress party, is arguably India’s most powerful politician. The Congress party appointed him as its vice president this year to boost his profile. But he has been eclipsed by Narendra Modi, a charismatic pro-business leader who is now the prime ministerial candidate of the opposition Bhartiya Janata Party.

Commentators on Indian TV news channels said Rahul Gandhi may have stepped into the convicted politicians debate to distance himself from Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his corruption-tainted cabinet ahead of the election.

Private-sector salaries drop again, part-timers get 3 ym less

TOKYO, 28 Sept — Workers at private-sector companies earned an average 4.08 million yen in annual salary in 2012, marking a fall of 10,000 yen from a year earlier for the second straight year of drop and a decrease of around 590,000 yen from a peak of 4.67 million yen in 1997, according to the National Tax Agency’s annual survey released on Friday.

The agency said non-regular workers including part-timers, manpower agency-dispatched workers and fixed-term contractors got 1.68 million yen, 3 million yen less than regular workers. The agency checked data in these two categories of workers for the first time.

Salaried income earners who worked for the entire year dropped 100,000 to 45.56 million yen, Non-regular workers were 9.88 million yen.

While salaries paid to all the workers totaled 185.85 trillion yen, down 0.5 percent, income tax withheld from salary earners at source dropped 255.2 billion yen, or 3.4 percent, from a year earlier to 7.30 trillion yen, the agency said.

Kyodo News

Philippine troops rescue last hostages, kill 15 rebels

MANILA, 28 Sept — Philippine forces said on Friday they had rescued the last civilians held by Muslim rebels on a southern island after nearly three weeks of fighting that has raised doubts about government efforts to end decades-old insurgencies.

Hundreds of members of a Muslim rebel faction, angered by a pact struck with the main Muslim rebel group, marched into Zamboanga City on 9 Sept., about 300 of the gun-battle victims were killed. On 18 Sept. It plans to publish its study guide and comics, including the popular “Do-raemon,” throughout Asia. It has also raised questions about the government’s ability to handle such challenges to its authority.

— “I think the entire affair has been an embarrassment for the government: an armed band of thugs taking over parts of a major urban centre for nearly three weeks,” Richard Jacobson of the security consultancy Pacific Strategies and Assessments (PS&A) told Reuters. — Reuters

Shogakukan establishes Singapore subsidiary to publish in Asia

TOKYO, 28 Sept — Shogakukan Inc has established a subsidiary in Singapore aiming to publish its study guides and comics, including the popular “Do-raemon,” throughout Asia. Its immediate plan is to publish comics and picture books in English, primarily in Singapore.

“In this region with its high educational requirements, we want to provide materials that improve children’s proficiency through study and more,” Shogakukan Asia President Bunsho Kajiya told reporters.

Shogakukan has group publishing companies in the United States, Europe, China and Taipei, and joint publishing agreements with companies in other regions.

Kyodo News

Flooding leaves 22 dead in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, 28 Sept — Rainy season flooding in Cambodia has killed 22 people, most of them children, since last month, a spokesman for the country’s disaster management body said on Friday.

Keo Vy, spokesman of the National Committee for Disaster Management, told Kyodo News that 22 Cambodians, 12 of them were under 15 years old, died by drowning or other causes due to flooding in five provinces of Udor Meanchey, Kompong Cham, Kratie, Stung Treng and Ratanakiri.

Three of the provinces are located along the Mekong River. He said 56,838 families were affected while 40,442 houses, 136 schools and 82 pagodas were flooded, as were more than 32,000 hectares of paddy fields.

Cambodia’s rainy season lasts from May through October and flooding during that period is a common occurrence.

Kyodo News

File photo shows a train crash at an apartment building after a derailment in Amagasaki, Hyogo Prefecture, on 25 April, 2005, in which 107 people were killed. On 27 Sept, 2013, the Kobe District Court found three former heads of West Japan Railway Co not guilty over the derailment.

Kyodo News
Turkey issues security alert on PKK militants’ jailbreak

ANKARA, 28 Sept—Turkey has issued a security alert for prisons nation-wide with members of the banned Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK) detained after 18 PKK militants broke out of a prison on Wednesday, an official statement said on Friday.

The statement, issued by the Ministry of Justice’s General Directorate of Prisons and Prisons, underlined that the authorities should take additional security steps in prisons to prevent further jailbreak.

“The wing, yard, kitchen, stairwell and areas beneath wardrobes and beds, as well as places where the prisoners spend most of their time, should be carefully examined,” read the statement, adding that any spot that a tunnel could run beneath should be carefully examined as well.

On Wednesday, 18 PKK inmates broke out of the prison through a tunnel they dug in the eastern Turkish province of Bingol. Seventeen of them have been caught en route to a PKK shelter and one remains on the run. About 2,000 Turkish gendarme forces have participated in the operation to recapture the escapees.

The PKK, listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey and part of the international community, took up arms in 1984 in an attempt to create an ethnic homeland in southeastern Turkey. Since then, over 40,000 people have been killed in conflicts involving the group.

Lin Yilun, a star singer, shows the pictures drew by autistic children during an activity of the Beijing Design Week 2015, at the Summer Palace in Beijing, capital of China, on 27 Sept, 2013. 15 autistic children were invited to visit the Summer Palace and draw pictures of the giant yellow rubber duck in their mind.—Xinhua

UN chief saddened by death of peacekeeper in eastern DRC

UNITED NATIONS, 28 Sept—UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday expressed his sadness at the death of a Tanzanian peacekeeper who was wounded during clashes in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

According to a statement issued here by Ban’s spokesperson, the peacekeeper was wounded last month when the M23 rebel military group directed artillery fire on a UN position close to Kibati heights, north of Goma.

On Aug. 28, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) supported an action by the Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) in launching an attack against M23 positions on the Kibati heights. He was the second Tanzanian peacekeeper to die as a result of this attack.

In the statement, Ban “offers his sincere condolences and sympathy to the family of the victims, and to the government of the United Republic of Tanzania.”

“The Secretary-General condemns in the strongest terms the killing and wounding of MONUSCO peacekeepers,” the statement said, adding that the world body “remains committed to taking all necessary actions in line with Security Council resolution 2098 (2013) to protect civilians in eastern DRC.”

Over the past year, the M23, along with other armed groups, have clashed repeatedly with the FARDC. The rebels briefly occupied Goma in November 2012. The fighting resumed last month, this time dragging in a group of Ugandan-based rebels.

According to UN figures, the conflict has displaced more than 100,000 people, exacerbating the region’s ongoing humanitarian crisis, which includes 2.6 million internally displaced persons and 6.4 million in need of food and emergency aid.—Xinhua

UN, Mideast partners reaffirm support for resumed Israeli-Palestinian talks

UNITED NATIONS, 28 Sept—The United Nations and its diplomatic partners in the search for peace in the Middle East on Friday reaffirmed their determination to provide maximum support to the Israelis and Palestinians as they resumed talks aimed at reaching a comprehensive peace.

The Middle East Quartet, a diplomatic grouping of the UN, the European Union, Russia and the United States, met at UN headquarters in New York on the margins of the annual high-level debate of the General Assembly, which entered its fourth day Friday.

The meeting is the first in one and a half years that the Quartet members met at the level of principals and it follows the most recent round of direct talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians held last month.

“‘The Quartet reaffirmed its determination to lend effective support to the efforts of the parties and their shared commitment to reach a permanent status agreement within the agreed goal of nine months,’” the group said in a statement.

The Quartet is a diplomatic group in search of the two-state solution, which means a secure Israel to live in peace with an independent State of Palestine.

It commended the leadership of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and their commitment to remaining engaged in sustained and continuous negotiations to address all of the core issues.

“The Quartet called on all parties to take every possible step to promote conditions conducive to the success of the negotiating process and to refrain from actions that undermine trust or prejudice final status issues,” the statement said.

During the meeting, the Quartet received an update from US Secretary of State John Kerry on the progress made since talks resumed on 29 July, as well as a joint briefing on the negotiations by chief negotiators from both sides.

The group also discussed efforts to boost support to the Palestinian economy, as well as the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the importance of both sides demonstrating a commitment to improving the atmosphere for the negotiations.

Honduras to adopt Japanese digital TV standard

TOKYO, 28 Sept—Honduras has decided to adopt Japan’s digital terrestrial television standard, the Japanese telecom ministry said on Friday.

Honduras is the 15th foreign country to introduce the Japanese standard, one of four competing variants of digital terrestrial broadcasting technology in the world, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

The country has chosen the Japanese standard in view of its effectiveness in mountainous areas and its performance in past disasters, the ministry said.

Honduras decided in 2007 to adopt the US standard but had been reviewing the decision as other Latin American countries have adopted the Japanese standard.—Kyodo News
Lindsay Lohan’s half-sister gets plastic surgery to look more like her

LOS ANGELES, 28 Sept—Lindsay Lohan’s half sister Ashley Horn has spent USD 25,000 on plastic surgery to look more like the troubled actress.

Ashley, who shares the same father as Lindsay, debuts her new look in the latest issue of a lifestyle magazine, reported Ace Showbiz.

“I’ve gotten rhinoplasty, a bit of refinement underneath my cheeks and jawline, some fat injected into my chin and some fat injected into my upper cheeks,” Ashley said.

“My goal was to look like Lindsay in her good days, when she was around 18, 19 years old. I’m hotter than Lindsay! I have no problem saying that,” she added.

Ashley said that she is not like her actress sister in terms of personalities.

“I’m not Lindsay. I wasn’t raised in that family,” she insists. Ashley also says that she does not have any relationship with the Lohans and she does not want one.

“I don’t drink, do drugs or party. I like being a responsible person,” she said.—PTI

Dakota Fanning to star in indie film Franny

LONDON, 28 Sept—Twilight actress Dakota Fanning is in talks to star alongside Richard Gere in independent drama Franny.

Actor Theo James is also set to join the new film about an older gentleman who wedges himself into the lives of a young couple, reported Contactmusic.

Director Andrew Renzi will helm the film based on a screenplay he wrote himself and Treehouse Pictures will produce the budget drama.

Newcomer James is set to become one of Hollywood’s most sought after leading men when new teen sci-fi thriller Divergent hits cinemas next March.

The film, which is expected to rival The Hunger Games and launch a franchise, will co-star Shailene Woodley and Kate Winslet.

PTI

Drake teams up with Beyonce

LOS ANGELES, 28 Sept—Rapper Drake has revealed that he has collaborated with pop star Beyonce Knowles for her forthcoming album. “I reached out to her and asked if I could come and be a part of her project and she was kind enough to invite me out there. And we did some work together,” aceshowbiz.com quoted Drake as saying. The rapper then went on praising the Single Ladies singer.

“I believe strongly in her talent and her position in our generation. I think she’s one of the biggest stars ever...,” he said.—PTI

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan once said no to this producer because of alleged domestic violence

MUMBAI, 28 Sept—Aishwarya Rai Bachchan may have given her nod to Gaurang Doshi’s film Happy Anniversary to be directed by adman Prahlad Kakkar, but the actress seems to have strangely forgotten something. To jog your memory, in 2007 it was widely reported that Ash had walked out of Doshi’s project which was then called Happy Birthday. She took this step after he was allegedly accused of physically assaulting his ex-girlfriend starlet Flora Saini.

Flora had found an unlikely supporter in the midst of her ordeal in B-Town’s leading star. Ash had apparently taken the stance after working in Jagmohan Mundra’s 2006 film Provoked that tackled domestic abuse. After playing a victim on screen, she had decided against being part of Doshi’s film as he was involved in a domestic violence case. The film was to have John Abraham as Ash’s co-star.

Interestingly, Doshi had even admitted at that time that due to his problems with Flora, Aishwarya decided not be part of his project. The filmmaker had claimed that there were certain forces working against him as he was at that time also going through a bitter divorce.

Says a source, “Aishwarya’s nod to his project now has come as a surprise. She may have agreed to be part of it due to her association with director Prahlad Kakkar. But she seems to have forgotten her past decisions.”

After being embroiled in a legal tussle, Doshi makes a comeback in Bollywood with the Ash film that will also apparently star her husband Abhishek Bachchan. Doshi’s earlier productions include Aankhen and Deewar Let’s Bring Home The Heroes which starred Amitabh Bachchan.

PTI

The two actors reportedly play World War II soldiers in the movie.

Brad Pitt, Shia LaBeouf bond in the forest for Fury

LOS ANGELES, 27 Sept— Actors Brad Pitt and Shia LaBeouf reportedly stayed in a forest for two days so they could bond well and act perfectly in the upcoming movie Fury.

Directed by David Aye, Fury is based on World War II. Pitt and LaBeouf play characters that are part of close-knit troop.

“They play soldiers in the same World War II troop and the director wanted to make sure they bonded. So, he dropped them in the wilderness - without their cellphones,” US magazine quoted a source as saying.

Pitt, 49, and LaBeouf, 27, were joined by fellow co-stars Logan Lerman, Jon Bernthal, and Kevin Vance.—PTI

Dakota Fanning

Beyonce

Drake

Ashwarya is reportedly making her comeback with Gaurang Doshi’s film Happy New Year.
McIlroy goes it alone after splitting from management firm

**New York, 28 Sept—**

Tiger Woods was named on Friday as the PGA Tour’s Player of the Year for a record 11th time with fellow-American Jordan Spieth voting rookie of the year. Both awards were determined by votes cast by tour members who played in at least 12 official money events in 2013.

Woods named PGA Tour player of the Year

“Tiger’s five wins came against some of the strongest fields in golf including the Players and two World Golf Championship ships, while Jordan’s rookie season was historic in terms of his accomplishments for a player just 20 years old,” said PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem in a statement.

“The member vote reflects the respect their peers have for both players.”

Woods, 37, won five of his first 11 events in a spectacular start to the year, winning the Farmers Insurance Open, the WGC-Cadillac Championship, the Arnold Palmer Invitational, the Players Championship and the WGC-Brasilian. World number one

Wood said winning the award remained a special achievement for him, especially as he has battled back from knee and back ailments to thrive once again on the tour. “I’ve had to work my way back from injuries on numerous occasions throughout the years,” Woods said. “These last couple years is no exception to that.”

“There were a lot of people saying I could never win again, and two years later I’ve got eight wins on our tour. I’m very proud of where I’ve come from, from being ranked outside the top 50 to being ranked where I am now, and to have had the success that I’ve had this year just makes it all the more rewarding.” — Reuters

London, 28 Sept—

Rory McIlroy has set up his own company to run his business interests after terminating his contract with Dublin-based Horizon Sports Management, the golfer said on Friday.

Both McIlroy and Horizon have called in lawyers to try to settle details of an acrimonious split which comes only two years after they began working together.

The dispute follows a frustrating season when the 24-year-old from Northern Ireland has struggled for form after switching to clubs supplied by Nike in one of the biggest sponsorship deals in sport.

His new management company, Rory McIlroy Incorporated (RMI), will be headed by Donal Casey, an actuary who was already an adviser to the golfer.

His father Gerry will also be on the board of the company, with businessmen and family friend Barry Funston.

Neither side gave details of the reason for McIlroy’s departure, the subject of media rumors for some months. McIlroy was believed to be unhappy with the commission that Horizon was charging for its services.

Horizon said it was disappointed that McIlroy was ending a contract that had a number of years left to run.

“Since October 2011, Horizon has achieved exceptional results for Rory in realizing his commercial objectives,” the company said in a statement.

“Under Horizon’s management, Rory has signed some of the most lucrative endorsements in sports history.”

McIlroy began the year as the hottest property in golf after signing a 10-year deal with Nike worth a reported $250 million and moving to the top of the world rankings.

Woods will be their first star in the company — the 2008 and Williams competitor in tennis.

Venus’ run in Tokyo stopped in semis by Kvitova

In the semifinals, Kvitova will face Angelique Kerber, who advanced 6-4, 7-6(5) past Caroline Wozniacki.

The 33-year-old Williams played her third straight three-setter, with Thursday’s quarterfinal victory over teenager Eugenie Bouchard lasting more than three hours. The match against Kvitova was 2 hours, 24 minutes.

Williams said fatigue wasn’t the reason she lost to the 23-year-old Kvitova, who saved a total of 11 break points.

“I was probably a little tired, but I don’t think it affected the match,” said Williams, who will rise from No 63 to 38 in the rankings despite the loss. “She was probably a little tired, too, since she played two matches yesterday.”

“At the end, she played amazing in the tiebreaker. I don’t think I’m at my best off the ground yet. My serve has improved tremendously with each match here.”

She hit a lot of unreturnable shots in the tiebreaker and sometimes that happens. She just played great.”

Kvitova and Kerber, both left-handers, reached their first Pan Pacific Open final.

“After winning, it’s always a good feeling,” Kvitova said. “Every game was up and down, and it was about the few points. I always love playing here.”

“I had a great result in 2011, when I reached the semifinals and I love being on center court before a great crowd. I’m looking forward to the final tomorrow.”

Williams, who appeared at the tournament for the first time since 2009, fell two wins short of her first title since last October, when she won in Luxembourg. Williams had nine aces for the match, but also had a half-dozen double faults that undid her in another grueling affair for the seventh-time Grand Slam champion.

After splitting the first two sets, Williams and Kvitova traded punch for punch in the deciding set, both holding serve to force the tiebreak.

But Kvitova dominated the final game, jumping out to a 6-0 lead after Williams hit a smash into the net. Williams pulled two points back in a face-saving effort before her Czech opponent capitalized on her third match point.

Fifth seed Kerber, who is eyeing her first title in three years, split the first set last year, but was out-classed by Williams.

“It was very good, I really enjoyed the semifinals,” Kerber said. “I really enjoyed the whole week.” — Kyodo News
European environment festival
kicks off in Bulgaria

KARDZHALI (Bulgaria), 28 Sept—The Eighth European Environment Festival “Green Wave — 21st Century”, the oldest such event in Bulgaria, kicked off here on Friday in the Rhodope mountain town.

More than 70 movies from 24 countries and regions will compete for the Grand Stork’s Nest Prize during the three-day event, including five Chinese productions: A Battle for Water; Forest China; Life with Rainforests: A Battle for the Grand Stork’s Nest Prize from 24 countries and regions will compete for the prize.

Chavdar Georgiev, Mayor of Kardzhali Municipality, said at the opening ceremony that the festival would promote the protection of natural heritage. “The festival, which aims to present contemporary films and TV programs on ecology and environmental protection as well as acquaint the people with environmentalist activities, also includes a variety of activities such as a photo exhibition.”

Hasan Aziz, Mayor of Kardzhali Municipality, said at the opening ceremony that the festival would promote the protection of natural heritage.

London, 28 Sept—Arsene Wenger would happily see the rest of his years at the north London club whose consistent support over nearly 17 years in the post has made him shun plenty of other job offers.

The longest-serving manager in the Premier League by around 14 years, Wenger told a news conference on Friday that majority shareholder Stan Kroenke’s belief that the Frenchman was central to his long-term vision for the club was a big boost. “I am very honoured to have the support of Stan Kroenke and that he thinks I can help the club. That is a huge confidence vote, that is of course for me something that is very positive,” Wenger said.

Kroenke was full of praise for the 63-year-old manager, whose contract runs out at the end of this season, in an interview with British newspaper The Daily Telegraph published on Friday. “There’s no one I feel more strongly about and I think he is doing a great job,” Kroenke said.

“We have been very supportive, we have never wavered, we are proud of him, proud of the club, the way the club is run and how it holds itself out to the world.”

With Kroenke backing him so openly, Wenger talking about his love for the club and Arsenal enjoying an excellent start to the season, a new deal seems likely to be a formality.

“The good thing with me, if I have one quality, you don’t need a lot of talks to extend the contract,” Wenger said.

Asked when he would sign a deal, he replied: “I don’t know. When we find time. I don’t think that’s the most important problem at the moment.”

Wenger, whose team are top of the Premier League on goal difference from Tottenham Hotspur with 12 points from five games, put his longevity down to the club’s mentalty in an era where trigger-happy owners sack managers just months into a job.

“I’m very grateful to this club because during the 17 years we had up and downs they have always shown big faith in me and they let me always do the job like I thought it had to be done,” he said.

“If I’m still here today it’s because I got that consistent support from inside the club. I turned many offers down because I rate what I’ve got here and I always thought this club is special on that front.”

“Honestly, I would love to be here forever but...”
**Education sector budget increased fourfold; health sector threefold: U Khin Aung Myint**

**Yangon Region’s 20th traditional performing arts competitions kick off**

**Myanmar, Thailand discuss boundary demarcation**

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NAY PYI TAW, 28 Sept — U Khin Aung Myint, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, met with Hluttaw representatives in Pyaywbe Township today. During the meeting, he clarified measures for Hluttaw affairs, measures being taken by the Hluttaw for national unity and making laws for the interests of State and people. Though Hluttaw had not yet fully matured, the law makers had worked without sectarianism, racism and regionalism, making 58 laws in 30 months while he was working as the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint said. Paper reading sessions of intellectuals and intelligentsia were conducted and Hluttaw representatives were sent to foreign countries to visit parliaments to improve their skills, he added. He also stressed the importance of listening to the voice of the people in transformation from one system to another, noting that at people have the rights to make complaints about the judiciary and administrative sectors.

Regarding the education and health sectors, Hluttaw approved to increase the budget for the education sector fourfold and for the health sector threefold, the Speaker said. The Amyotha Hluttaw speaker also met with Hluttaw representatives in Yamethin Township and shared experiences with them.

During both meetings, regional Hluttaw representatives clarified the participation of Hluttaw representatives in regional development tasks and Hluttaw affairs.

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NAY PYI TAW, 28 Sept — Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and Korean International Co-operation Agency (KOICA) has signed a record of discussion on establishing a training school for agricultural mechanization at Yezin in Zeyathiri Township yesterday.

The two sides signed the Record of Discussion for the Project for farmland consolidation and agricultural machinery training for agricultural mechanization in Myanmar at the Irrigation Department here today. The project is aimed at promoting the agricultural mechanization sector, boosting agricultural production, encouraging the transformation to agricultural mechanization in terms of human resource development, increasing the income of farmers and promoting the socio-economic development of Myanmar people through Korea-Myanmar friendship.

According to the project, farmland in Taegyigon Village in Zabuthiri Township will be upgraded and a training school for mechanized farming will be established in Yezin in Zeyathiri Township.

The record of discussion was signed by U Kyaw Myint Hlaing, Director-General of the Irrigation Department and Mr Nam Ko Htwe, Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

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A & I Ministry, KOICA ink Record Discussion

NAY PYI TAW, 28 Sept — Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe called on artists to contribute their performing skills to the competitions as part of efforts for perpetuation of Myanmar’s society which has high cultural standard and conserve traditional customs and safe-guard its national races. The competitions were formally opened by the chief minister, Yangon Region Finance and Revenue Minister Daw San San Nwe and Region Social Affairs Minister Dr Myint Thein.

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NAY PYI TAW, 28 Sept — Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe presented a flower basket to the artists.