Union Government to draw people-centered plan to achieve goals: President U Thein Sein

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan — To achieve the short-term and long-term goals for the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year, the Union Government will draw a people-centered plan which will be in conformity with the needs of Myanmar and the political, economic and social relations of neighboring countries, said President U Thein Sein at the fifth meeting of the Planning Commission here today.

Regarding the implementation of the projects, he stressed the need for giving priority to fulfilling the basic needs of the people such as stable livelihood, transportation, education and health care.

The president also stressed the importance of creating job opportunities for the country’s workforce which stands at 60 percent of the total population, in order to improve the livelihood of all people.

Though Myanmar has good opportunities for sustainable development, it needs to attract foreign investment to develop technology and human resources, he added.

President U Thein Sein also stressed the need for doubling domestic production focusing on seven sectors: production, agriculture, basic infrastructure, energy and mining, tourism, financial and communication in order to reach an 8-percent increase of the GDP.

He urged the region and state governments to draw and implement local level development plans for their respective regions and states as part of efforts for proportional development.

President U Thein Sein called on the Union, region and state governments to work together harmoniously in order to implement projects and to use the allocated budgets efficiently.

He urged participants of the meeting to work hard for the stability and the rule of law of the country as Myanmar will conduct its first census in 30 years this year and will also chair ASEAN in the 2014-2015 FY.

Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw reported on drafting the national plan for the 2014-15 fiscal year that will emphasize the importance to improve electricity and water supply, development of agriculture, job creation, the tourism industry, monetary affairs, and the trade and investment sectors.

The plans were set to increase 3.9 percent in agriculture, 10.4 percent in industry and 12.4 percent in service sectors. The regions and states must try hard to develop the sectors with 2 percent in Kayin State, 10.1 percent in Kayah State, 15.4 percent in Kayin State, 26.4 percent in Chin State, 9.6 percent in Sagaing Region, 9.4 percent in Taninthayi Region, 8.7 percent in Bago Region, 8.2 percent in Magway Region, 12.4 percent in Mandalay Region, 10.4 percent in Mon State, 5.7 percent in Rakhine State, 9.3 percent in Yangon Region, 5 percent in Shan State, 6.2 percent in Ayeyawady Region and 28.5 percent in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

The Chief ministers of regions and states and chairmen of leading bodies of self-administered division and zones submitted reports on their plans and work processes.

Following the meeting, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham expressed his satisfaction about the (See page 8)

Bayintnaung Bridge No. 2 to be completed mid of the year

By Win Win Maw & Nandar Win

Bayintnaung Bridge No. 2 will be one of four bridges crossing the Hline River and is located about 200 feet upstream from Bayintnaung Bridge No. 1 which was constructed in 1994.

The four lanes of Bayintnaung Bridge No. 1 and the two lanes of Bayintnaung Bridge No. 2 will reduce traffic congestion to a great extent, said U Tin Lwin who is in-charge of the construction of bridge No.2, which he said can withstand 75 tons of load.

While the first bridge with only two motorways has often been congested, the second one will have a number of benefits according to U Tin Lwin. “The special features of the bridge No. 2 are the ten-foot-in-width walkways for the convenience of pedestrians. The walkways of the bridge No. 1 are just five feet wide,” he said.

According to the supervising engineer, the new bridge will improve access to Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State and will also help in the development of those regions.

Kyeemon:6-1-2014
Trans: AMS
(Edited by Kerstin Winter)
Foreign Heads of Government send felicitations to President U Thein Sein

From Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey
Excellency,

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I would like to convey my sincere congratulations to Your Excellency on my behalf and on behalf of the Turkish people and my Government.

It is our sincere desire to further develop the cooperation between Turkey and Myanmar with our joint efforts on the basis of the mutual interest of our two peoples in the forthcoming period.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey my best wishes for the well-being and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

From Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia
Excellency,

On behalf of the Royal Government and people of Cambodia, I have the great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency and through you to the Government and people of Myanmar, my heartfelt congratulations on the auspicious occasion of the 66th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I strongly believe that based on our common aspiration, the relations of good long-standing friendship and close cooperation in all fields between our two countries will be further strengthened and developed in the years to come for the mutual interests of our two peoples as well as for the ASEAN Community Building.

Meanwhile, I would also like to express my sincerest appreciation to the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, which has successfully hosted the recent 27th SEA Games.

Please accept Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and all my best wishes for your personal good health, happiness and greater success in fulfilling your noble tasks and for the greater prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Sheik Hasina
Prime Minister of People’s Republic of Bangladesh
Excellency,

On the happy occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, it is great pleasure to convey, on behalf of the Government and the people of Bangladesh, our warmest greetings and heartfelt felicitations to you and the friendly people of Myanmar.

The Bangladesh Myanmar relations are based on commonality to culture and heritage and shared history as well as aspiration for socioeconomic development. It is my firm conviction that the existing bonds of friendship between our two countries will grow further in the days ahead.

I take this opportunity to wish you good health, happiness and long life and the friendly people of Myanmar progress, peace and prosperity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Shinzo Abe
Prime Minister of Japan
Excellency,

On the 66th anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to extend to Your Excellency, on behalf of the Government and the people of Japan, my warm congratulations.

I am deeply grateful for the kind hospitality extended to me during my official visit in May last year, and pleased that I was able to host you in Japan in December for the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting. As I stated on these occasions, Japan will remain committed to supporting the various reform efforts in your country.

Noting the importance of this year as the 66th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries and Myanmar’s ASEAN presidency, I believe that we have an excellent opportunity to take our bilateral relations to an even higher ground. I look forward to working with you in our continued efforts to promote broad cooperation between our two countries.

I wish your country and its people great prosperity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From Lee Hsien Loong
Premier of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China
Excellency,

Upon the auspicious occasion of the 66th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I would like to, on behalf of the government of the People’s Republic of China and in my own name, extend to Your Excellency and through you to the government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar the warmest congratulations and best wishes.

I am pleased to see that our bilateral relations developed smoothly and fruitfully with frequent high level visits, ever-expanding exchanges and cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, culture and etc. The Chinese government attaches importance to the relations with Myanmar, and is willing to make joint efforts with Myanmar to deepen all-area mutually beneficial cooperation, constantly push the healthy development of China-Myanmar Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey my best wishes for the great prosperity to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and well-being to the people of Myanmar.

ASEAN, Japanese and gov’t experts discuss energy policy

YANGON, 6 Jan—The use of energy and a future energy policy were discussed at a workshop in Yangon attended by experts from the Ministry of Energy, ASEAN and Japan. The Top on the agenda was the establishment of a legal framework according to the ASEAN-Japan Energy Efficiency Partnership-AEEEP Project. The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Industry in collaboration with the Energy Conservation Center-Japan (ECCJ) and the ASEAN Center for Energy (ACE).

Tatkon Township residents receive tetanus shots, health care service

TATKON, 6 Jan—Residents of Saya San Ward in Tatkon Township have been examined and vaccinated against tetanus by a medical team from the Health Department.

The medical team led by Daw Thin Thin Hlaing conducted the immunization campaign on 5 January, vaccinating 12 pregnant women and 36 children under the age of two.

Several other medical teams have also started providing health care services to residents in the remaining wards of the township, officials said.—Tatkon Township IPRD (Edited by Kerstin Winter)
Finance Minister Aso eager to raise sales tax rate to 10% as planned

Tokyo, 6 Jan — Finance Minister Taro Aso on Monday expressed his eagerness to raise Japan’s sales tax rate to 10 percent in October 2015 as scheduled, saying the government cannot realize integrated social security and tax reforms without the tax increase.

The reform plan has been mapped out based on the “5-percentage-point” consumption tax hike, Aso said in a New Year address to his ministry staff, adding, “Unless the tax rate reaches that level, we cannot achieve our intended purposes.”

Aso suggested the government will decide by the end of this year whether to proceed with the second round of the two-stage sales tax hike, while watching how the economy moves following the consumption tax hike to 8 percent in April from 5 percent at present.

The tax increase is aimed at covering swelling social security costs for Japan’s graying population, as the nation’s fiscal health is the worst among major developed economies with public debt equivalent to more than 200 percent of gross domestic product.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has said he will make a final judgment on the tax issue after assessing economic data for the July-September period which will be released through December.

Former First Lady of Bangladesh to be opposition leader in parliament

DHAKA, 6 Jan — Rowshan Ershad, wife of former Bangladeshi President HM Ershad, will become the leader of the opposition in the country’s 10th parliament, a party leader said on Monday.

“We’ll join parliament as main opposition led by Rowshan Ershad,” Jatiya Party leader Kazi Firoz Rashid told Xinhua. “She will be leader of the opposition in the 10th parliament.”

Out of 300 seats, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s Awami League (AL) has won so far 232 seats, which are more than enough to form a government.

Jatiya Party emerged as main opposition party by winning 31 seats in Sunday’s parliamentary election marred by opposition boycott and widespread violence.

Former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia’s Bangladeshi Nationalist Party (BNP) has called a nationwide 48-hour strike from Monday morning, demanding cancellation of Sunday’s poll results.

Bangladesh ruling party wins poll hit by violence, boycott

Activists of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami set fire to an office of ruling party Bangladesh Awami League during a clash in Narayanganj on 5 Jan, 2014. —Reuters

Bangladesh ruling Awami League won a violence-plagued parliamentary election whose outcome was disputed by the main opposition in the 10th parliament, a party leader said on Monday.

With fewer than half of the 300 seats being contested, voters in modest numbers cast ballots on Sunday amid heavy security in polling that lacked the festivity typical of Bangladeshi elections and was shunned by international observers as flawed. Low voter participation could pile new pressure on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to find a compromise with the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) for holding new elections.

Either Hasina or BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia has been prime minister for all but two of the past 22 years. The two are bitter rivals. The Awami League won 105 of the contested seats, on top of the 127 seats where it ran unopposed, giving it a more-than-two-thirds majority.

Bombs kill at least 19 people in Iraqi capital

Baghdad, 6 Jan — Car and roadside bombs exploded in commercial areas of Baghdad on Sunday, killing at least 19 people, police and medical sources said. The deadliest attack took place in northern Baghdad’s mainly Shi’ite district of Shaab where two car bombs went off.

People gathered at the site of bomb attack in Baghdad on 5 Jan, 2014. —Reuters

Bombs killed at least 19 people and wounding 25.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for Sunday’s attacks but Sunni Muslim insurgents have stepped up attacks on Iraqi security forces and supporters of the Shi’ite-led government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

Islamist militants linked to al-Qaeda and tribal fighters have taken control of Ramadi and Falluja, the main cities in the Sunni Muslim-dominated north and northeast are expected to return her to power — if the vote goes ahead.

Thousands of demonstrators marched through Baghdad on Sunday as a prelude to rallies starting on 13 January, when they plan to block government offices and occupy key intersections for days in a bid to force Yingluck out and scuttle the poll.

Bangkok, 6 Jan — Thailand is heading for a political showdown as protesters plan to shut down Bangkok next week to sabotage an election while the government’s supporters have vowed to stage massive counter-rallies in the country’s provinces.

Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra is facing swelling opposition in Bangkok ahead of the 2 February election in which her supporters in the rural north and northeast are expected to return her to power — if the vote goes ahead.

The protesters accuse Yingluck of being a puppet of her self-exiled brother and former prime minister, Thaksin Shinawatra. They want an appointed “people’s council” to oversee a vague reform platform, which includes electoral changes and decentralizing power over a 12-month period before any election.

Thai markets are expected to face pressure this week over the growing uncertainty. The baht slid on Friday to its lowest against the dollar since February 2010 and the benchmark stock index has lost 15 percent since early November, when the latest crisis began.

“We will keep walking, we won’t stop,” protest leader Suthep Thaugsuban, a former top opposition lawmaker, said during Sunday’s march.

“We will walk until we win and we won’t give up.” Yingluck, 46, is refusing to postpone the poll, which she says would be unconstitutional. Any election delay could heighten the uncertainty and make it harder for her caretaker government to function.

Yingluck enjoyed two smooth years in power until November, when her Puea Thai Party tried to force through an unpopular amnesty bill that would have nullified a 2008 graft conviction against Thaksin and allowed him to return a free man. Protests erupted.

Thai tensions to rise as power struggle intensifies

Thai citizens wearing white shirts take part in a demonstration to support the general election, in Bangkok, capital of Thailand, on 5 Jan, 2014. —Xinhua

Thai election commission said it expected the election to go ahead on 2 February despite the crisis. The commission had recommended a delay after Yingluck last week agreed to hold a poll on time.

However, Yingluck’s opponents are demanding an immediate election to give them a chance to replace the caretaker government.

Many are calling for Yingluck to resign, saying any vote is invalid due to the electoral fraud.

The opposition demands Yingluck should step down, or will call for a new poll in any case.

Yingluck could still face legal trouble over an immigration case. She was recently summoned to appear in court over alleged tax evasion.
Italy’s former centre-left leader hit by serious brain problem

ROME, 6 Jan — Italy’s former centre-left party head Pier Luigi Bersani on Sunday was rushed to hospi
tal due to a brain problem, local reports said.

According to ANSA news agency, Bersani was hit by a “serious brain problem’ and immediately
transported to a hospital in Piacenza, a city in northern Italy, accompanied by his wife and brother.

Bersani reportedly was hit by a malaise and bouts of vomiting, and the brain problem was found after a first examination. He was then transferred to a depart-
ment of neurosurgery in the nearby hospital of Parma.

Hospital sources quoted
by La 7 television said he was hit by a “transient ischemic attack.”

Bersani, 62, was a for-

He began his career with Italy’s Communist party and was Secretary of the Democratic Party (PD), Italy’s leading centre-left party which shares power in the current government with the centre-right, from
2009 to 2013.

Czech police find 12
weapons at Palestinian mission

PRAGUE, 6 Jan — Czech police found 12 weapons, including pistols and sub-
machine guns, at the Pal-
estinian mission in Prague after an explosion killed the Ambassa-
dor at his resi-
dence last week, the police chief was quoted as saying on Sunday.

Police said the explo-
sion that killed Ambassa-
dor Jamal al-Jamal after he opened a safe might have been caused by mishan-
dling a device meant to se-
cure it.

After the incident, investigators found un-
licensed weapons at the com-
plex of the Palestinian
mission that includes the embassy and residence. But
the police had not immedi-
ately detailed the amount or type of weapons.

Daily newspaper Mla-
da Fronta Dnes’ website
reported that 12 weapons discovered, con-
firmed the number with
national police chief Mar-
tin Cervicek, who declined to say how many pistols
or sub-machine guns were found.

“We have to put the weapons through genetic and ballistic testing, until then we will not release this information,” inides.cz quoted Cervicek as saying.

A police spokesman was not available to com-
ment. A Palestinian official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters on Thursday that the mission’s staff had submitted the arms to the Czech authorities.

He said the weapons had been retrieved from an old sack and had been unchained since Cold War
times.

Czech police were not investigating the safe explosion as an attack, al-
though the Ambassador’s daughter has alleged he was “deliberately killed”.

Adding to the uncer-
tainty, an embassy spokes-
person said mission staff were not aware of any explosives in the safe, which he said was used on a regular basis.

The National Weather
Service said in an advisory posted at its website Sun-
day that the northern and central parts of the US will expect the coldest tempera-
tures in about two decades this week because of the polar cold front, with some
140 million people to be impacted.

Combined with gusty winds, the temperatures will result in “life-threaten-
ing wind chill values as low as 60 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit or minus 51 degrees Celsius)” in some areas.

The frigidly cold weather has caused travel nightmares for people who are heading for home from holidays, said local media reports.

As the city was brac-
ing for the winter storm Sunday, local officials say they are expecting 25 cen-
timetres to 30 centimetres of snow to accumulate in the Chicago area by Sunday evening.

John F Kennedy Inter-
national Airport in the East Coast’s New York City, which had heavy snowfall
from Thursday night to ear-
ly Friday, also announced to temporarily suspend op-
erations for domestic and international flights due to icy conditions early Sun-
day morning. It reopened for arriving and departing flights later in the day, but with residual delays.

More than 3,000 flights
were canceled on Sun-
day at the country’s air-
ports nationwide because of the bone chilling cold and icy weather, according to flight-tracking website flightaware.com.

Schools and govern-
ments in some cities will remain closed because of the deep freeze which will also affect certain southern US states, said local news reports.

New Light of Myanmar

WORLD

Palestinians to get gas
for power plant from
Israeli well

Ramallah, 6 Jan — A
Palestinian company signed a deal with an international energy company and its Is-
raeli partners on Sunday to get natural gas for an up-
coming power plant in the West Bank for 20 years, a Palestinian official said.

The agreement was signed in Jerusalem be-
tween Palestine Power Generation Co, Texas-
based Noble Energy Inc and the latter’s Israeli part-
ners to extract gas from Israel’s newly-discovered Leviathan gas and oil field.

Under the deal, the Palestinian side will obtain
4.75 billion cubic meters of gas with 1.2 billion US dollars to run a power plant it plans to build near the West Bank city of Jenin, Omar Katanah, head of the Palestinian Power Author-
ity, told Xinhua.

Yitzhak Tshuva, whose Delek Group is one of the Israeli partners, told report-
ers after signing the deal that he believes “a strong and stable economy shared by the two sides will bring peace and stability to the entire region, so that eve-
ryone will enjoy prosperity and economic growth.”

Xinhua

Ecuador may arrest suspects
in attack on Japanese couple
in days

QUITO, 6 Jan — Ecuador’s Interior Minister said on Sunday key sus-
ppects have emerged in late
last month’s shooting of a Japanese couple honey-
mooning in Guayaquil and
indicated they may be ar-
ested in a few days. While
not disclosing details about the suspects in speaking to
Japanese media, Jose Serrano identified the victims as 28-year-old Tetsuo Hitomi,
who was shot and killed in the 28 December attack, and his 27-year-old wife
Markko, who was shot and seriously injured. Japanese
authorities confirmed their
identities but have not yet
disclosed Tetsuo Hitomi’s age.

Serrano said the Japa-
nese honeymooners were attacked in a taxi they
boarded after dining at a hotel separate from the one they were staying at. Tetsuo Hitomi was shot three times inside the taxi and robbed of cash and other belong-
nings while his wife was shot after the couple was thrown out of the vehicle, accord-
ing to the minister.

The couple had hailed a passing taxi rather than
taking one stationed at the hotel, he said. The belong-
ings taken from the couple
included some $500

in cash, a credit card and
a mobile phone. Ecuador-
ian authorities are focus-
ing their investigations on surveillance cameras at
automatic cash dispens-
ers, they said. The couple
held a wedding ceremony
in Japan on 22 December

Photo taken 4 Jan, 2014, shows the scene where a Japanese couple were shot by robbers while on
honey moon in Guayaquil, the largest city in Ecuador, on 28 Dec, 2013. The 28-year-old husband died and 27-year-
old wife suffered serious injuries. — KYODO NEWS

Xinhua

Arctic cold front bites
northern, central regions of
United States

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan — Wind chills are weakening
in the northern and central parts of the United States while it has snowed
heavily from the Eastern Plain to the Great Lakes of the country due to invasion of
arctic cold air.

The National Weather
Service said in an advisory posted at its website Sun-
day that the northern and central parts of the US will expect the coldest tempera-
tures in about two decades this week because of the polar cold front, with some
140 million people to be impacted.

Combined with gusty winds, the temperatures will result in “life-threaten-
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Schools and govern-
ments in some cities will remain closed because of the deep freeze which will also affect certain southern US states, said local news reports.

Xinhua
Egypt convicts activists in one case, opens probe into another

CAIRO, 6 Jan — Twelve Egyptian activists were given one-year suspended jail terms on Sunday in a case that brought over an attack on the campaign headquarters of defeated presidential candidate Ahmed Shafik during the 2012 election.

The activists include siblings Alaa Abdel Fattah and Mona Seif, leading figures in the protest movement that triggered the 2011 uprising against autocrat Hosni Mubarak. The movement has been targeted in a widening crackdown by the army-backed authorities.

In a move that could open the way to more legal measures against prominent dissidents, the authorities opened an investigation into allegations that six activists took part in the storming of Egypt’s domestic spying agency in 2011 — an important moment in the revolt against Mubarak’s order.

It intensifies what activists see as an effort to discredit the secular protest movement as the government also pursues a crackdown on Islamist supporters of deposed president Mohamed Mursi ahead of elections later this year.

Sunday’s verdict related to an attack on Shafik’s campaign headquarters ahead of the presidential run-off against the Muslim Brotherhood’s Mursi in the 2012 election.

The Cairo court convicted them of “displaying force,” a charge they denied. “The ruling was political,” Mona Seif told Reuters TV after the verdict was announced.

The case was brought earlier this year by public prosecutor Ahmed Moursi. At the time, activists said it was an attempt to intimidate the pro-democracy movement. —Reuters

Syria rebels push al-Qaeda back; US open to Iran role

A Free Syrian Army fighter mans a checkpoint in Idlib, to stop members of the al-Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) from entering Haas village, on 4 Jan, 2014. —Reuters

AMMAN, 6 Jan — Syrian rebel fighters loyal to al-Qaeda ceded ground near the Turkish border to rival Islamists on Sunday, activists said, in what seemed to be a tactical withdrawal to end clashes.

Bahrain calls on neighbouring countries to monitor security threats

MANAMA, 6 Jan — Bahrain’s interior minister on Sunday called on neighboring countries to crack down upon weapons trafficking, which is part of strategy by some radical elements to export terror to Gulf States, the Bahrain News Agency reported.

Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid bin Abdulah Al Khalifa highlighted this issue during a meeting here with Under-Secretaries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Interior Ministries in which he spoke about the threats the country faces.

During the meeting, Bahrain’s Public Security Chief Taqar Al Hassani briefed GCC officials on the four terror plots they uncovered recently, which included defusing of a car bomb, arresting 13 wanted persons, seizing a shipment of ammunition being smuggled from Iraq to Bahrain as well as said the police were on a warehouse in Sitra village.

For his part, GCC Assistant Secretary-General for security affairs, Hazza bin Mubarak Al-Hajeri, said that all GCC countries are against any external security threat.

He noted that future meetings of GCC interior ministers will consider the unified Gulf police (GCC-POL) project as a big threat and deter new threats.

The GCCPOL would be similar to Europol, the European Union’s law enforcement agency that deals with serious organized crime. —Xinhua

At least 29 injured in plane’s emergency landing in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH, 6 Jan — At least 29 passengers who were among the injured Sunday morning during their plane’s emergency landing in Riyadh are against any external security threats.

As Syria’s civil war gets ever more complex amid a broad regional confrontation between Sunni and Shia Muslims, the United States raised the prospect of Assad’s sponsor Iran, the Shia’s power long at odds with Washington and its Sunni Arab allies, playing some role in this month’s Syrian peace talks.

US Secretary of State John Kerry said Tehran still should not take formal part in the peace conference scheduled to start on Lake Geneva on 22 January because it had not endorsed a 2012 accord calling for a new Syrian leadership. But he said there might be ways that Iran could “contribute from the sidelines”.

There is little prospect of a rapid end to the Syrian conflict but the resurgence of odds in Iraq of mutual enemy al-Qaeda, and a recent rapprochement between Iranian president, have raised speculation about a common effort between the United States and Tehran to contain instability in the region. —Reuters

Ex-NBA star Rodman heads for N Korea for exhibition game

BEIJING, 6 Jan — Former US basketball superstar Dennis Rodman on Monday headed to Pyongyang for an exhibition game to mark North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s birthday.

“He is my friend,” Rodman, heading a team of former National Basketball Association players, told a crowd of reporters at Beijing airport before boarding a flight to Pyongyang, Referring to Kim.

“This time you will see me with him the whole time,” Rodman, wearing dark sunglasses and a cap, also said about Kim.

The game, scheduled to take place on Wednesday between the former NBA players and North Korea’s national team.

Former US basketball superstar Dennis Rodman is pictured at Beijing Airport in China on 6 Jan, 2014, en route to Pyongyang for an exhibition game to mark North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s birthday. —Kyodo News

Bahrain’s Public Security Chief Taqar Al Hassani briefing GCC officials on the four terror plots they uncovered recently, which included defusing of a car bomb, arresting 13 wanted persons, seizing a shipment of ammunition being smuggled from Iraq to Bahrain as well as said the police were on a warehouse in Sitra village.

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The GCCPOL would be similar to Europol, the European Union’s law enforcement agency that deals with serious organized crime. —Xinhua
Fiat shares could double in two years

NEW YORK, 6 Jan — Italian automaker Fiat SpA’s (FIA.MI) shares could double in the next two years as its operating leverage will get a boost from the US economy’s continued recovery and an improving outlook in Europe, according to Barron’s.

Fiat shares closed down 2.3 percent at 5.67 euros on the Milan stock exchange on Friday. —Reuters

A Fiat logo is seen on the wheel of a Fiat car in Turin in this picture taken 10 Feb, 2013. —Reuters

Norwegian Air CEO to meet Boeing over Dreamliner problems

OSLO, 6 Jan — The Chief Executive of budget airline Norwegian Air Shuttle (NWC.OH), Bjorn Kjos, plans to meet Boeing (BA.N) management in the United States next week to discuss problems with its Dreamliner planes, Norwegian media reported on Sunday.

Norwegian Air, Europe’s third-biggest budget airline after Ryanair (RYA.I) and EasyJet (EZJ.L), launched long-haul operations last year and hoped to capitalize on the Dreamliner’s lower operating costs.

But during the autumn its first two Dreamliners broke down more than half a dozen times, forcing it to lease back-up planes at short notice or cancel flights.

Its newest, the third, plane was grounded in the United States before Christmas, and the company said spare parts had to be ordered for the replacement.

“As far as I know the plane is not back in service yet, we have a wetleased (Boeing) 777 to-day between Oslo and New York,” Anne-Sissel Skaanvik, a spokeswoman for the Norwegian, said in an email to Reuters. “Wetleasing means hiring a plane with a crew.

Norwegian Air might see whether it needs to replace its maintenance service provider, daily VG quoted Kjos as saying in an interview.

Skaanvik could not confirm the quote, but said Kjos, who was already in the United States, was planning a number of meetings there next week.

The Dreamliner was intended as a game changer for the aviation industry as its lightweight body and so-called Dream Engines cut fuel consumption by 20 percent. But it has been beset by problems, including battery fires that grounded the model for months last year and forced Boeing to come up with a new battery design.

The first two Dreamliners bought by the Norwegian Air have previously suffered hydraulic and electrical faults. Boeing promised to fix problems quicker after its executives met with Norwegian Air in Oslo in September.

After that, Norwegian ordered two more Dreamliners for delivery in 2016.

Chinese herbal compound may fight chronic pain

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan — A plant used for centuries as a pain reliever in Chinese medicine may help fight chronic pain, US and Chinese researchers said on Thursday.

The flowering plant Corydalis, a member of the poppy family, contains a key pain-relieving ingredient known as dehydrocorybulbine (DHCB) in their roots, the researchers wrote in the US journal Current Biology.

“Our study reports the discovery of a new natural product that can relieve pain,” Olivier Civelli of the University of California, Irvine, said in a statement.

“This analgesic acts in animal assays against the three types of pain that afflict humans, including acute, inflammatory, and neuropathic or chronic pain.” Civelli, along with

Xinniao Liang of Chinese Academy of Sciences, made the discovery as part of the “herbalome” project which aims to catalogue all of the chemical components of traditional Chinese medicine.

The Corydalis plants grow mainly in central eastern China, where underground tubers are harvested, ground, and boiled in hot vinegar. Those concoctions are often prescribed to treat pain, including headaches and back pain.

The researchers found that Corydalis appeared to act in a manner similar to morphine. “We landed on DHCB but rapidly found that it acts not through the morphine receptor but through other receptors, in particular one that binds dopamine,” Civelli said.

While Corydalis extracts or isolated DHCB work against all types of pain, they hold special promise for those who suffer with persistent, low-level chronic pain, the researchers said.—Xinhua

New York facility offers to care for brain-dead girl

NEW YORK, 6 Jan — A 13-year-old California girl who was declared brain-dead after complications from a tonsillectomy will be moved to a new care facility “come hell or high water,” a family attorney said on Sunday.

The family of Jahi McMath reached an agreement on Friday with Children’s Hospital and Research Center in Oakland allowing her to be moved to a different facility if they do so before 5 pm local time on Tuesday, when a restraining order keeping the hospital from removing her from life support is set to expire.

McMath was admitted to Children’s Hospital on 9 December to have her tonsils removed and for other procedures to address sleep apnea. After the surgery, she went into cardiac arrest and suffered brain swelling.

The hospital declared her brain-dead three days later, and made plans to remove her from the ventilator, but her family has fought in state and federal court to keep her on life support.

“The case has drawn international attention, as well as support from relatives of Terri Schiavo, who died in Florida in 2005 after a 15-year battle over whether to keep her body alive in a persistent vegetative state.

“I have everything in place, I just need to get it moving,” Chris Dolan, an attorney for the family, told KPIX 5 in San Francisco on Sunday. He said McMath will be moved “come hell or high water” before the deadline, though he did not elaborate.

To move the girl, her family would need to provide transportation and find a facility willing to take her, both the hospital and the family have said. —Reuters

Goose meat tests positive for H7N9 in Chinese city

ZHANGZHE, 6 Jan — Samples of goose meat taken from a Guangzhou market in south China’s Guangdong Province have tested positive for H7N9 avian influenza.

Two goose meat samples and one sewage water sample from two poultry booths in a wet market in Zengcheng, a satellite city of Guangzhou, tested positive for H7N9 avian influenza.

The longer they stay in the coops, the risk of being infected rises,” said Yang Zhichong, deputy chief of the Guangzhou municipal CDCP. The city government of Guangzhou, the provincial capital, is tracking the poultry source. The market was shut down on Saturday for three days so disinfection and cleaning can take place. Meanwhile, 17 sales people working in nine poultry booths in the market are undergoing a week-long medical observation. So far, they have shown no signs of being infected with the bird flu, said Yang.—Xinhua

CEO of Norwegian Air Shuttle, Bjorn Kjos, poses at a news conference where he spoke about the low-cost airline’s plans to buy 222 new aircraft in Oslo on 25 Jan 2012. Reuters
India successfully launches heavy lift rocket GSLV D5 with satellite

NEW DELHI, 6 Jan
India on Sunday successfully launched its first heavy lift Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) D5 using indigenous cryogenic fuel technology, after two previous failures.

The launch is widely believed to be a great boost to the country’s rocket and outer space technology and its international prestige in the field. The white rocket blasted off from the Satish Dha- war Space Centre in Sri Harikota, southeast India, at 16:18 pm local time and successfully boosted a 1,982 kg communication satellite, GSAT 14, into the geosynchronous track.

This launch is also crucial for the launching of manned missions into outer space and other space pro-

The white rocket blasts off from the Satish Dhanwar Space Centre in Sri Harikota, southeast India, on 5 Jan, 2014. India successfully launched its first heavy lift Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) D5 using indigenous cryogen-
ic fuel technology, after two previous failures. This launch is widely believed to be a great boost to the country’s rocket and outer space technology and its international prestige in the field. — Xinhua

jects, as well as for seeking international market share for satellite launch, said officials of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). It can also be very useful for defence purposes, said the officials.

The launch was ISRO’s second attempt at deploying independently developed cryogenic upper stage fuel technology for its heavy lift rockets, after the first attempt on April 15, 2010 ended with the cryogenic third stage of the GSLV failing to fire. A second attempt on 19 August, 2013 was aborted as well.

The cryogenic technology enables rockets to place satellites weighing more than 2,000 kg in geo-
synchronous orbits in space which is known to be available only to five countries in the world — United States, Russia, Japan, France and China.

Indian space scientists have been working on the cryogenic fuel technology for nearly 20 years, according to Indian Express daily. ISRO had tried to source the technology in the 1990s from the United States but was denied the “strategic technology” in the aftermath of its nuclear tests in 1998. ISRO subsequently worked with seven cryogenic engines provided by Russia for early develop-
ment of the GSLV program while working in parallel on its own cryogenic stage for the rocket. — Xinhua

App developers see wearable devices as next big thing

SAN FRANCISCO, 6 Jan — Wearable computers like Google Glass and the Sam-
sung Galaxy Gear watch may not have caught fire yet, but that hasn’t stopped mobile game developers from rushing to create apps for the new devices, eager to seize what they hope is the next big moment in con-
sumer technology.

Niccolo DeMasi, the CEO of mobile games mak-
er Ghu Mobile, compares the potential of wearables to that of Apple Inc’s iPhone launch in 2007 — an event that was the catalyst to create many of the mobile app world that exists now.

DeMasi and others are betting that by developing compelling apps designed with the wearables’ special features in mind, they can create overwhelming de-
mand for the products.

“A whole new app ecosystem is going to be born,” said Shawn Hardin, chief executive officer of Mind Pirate, which will re-
lease “Global Food Fight,” its first game for Google Glass, this month. “Those who are going to make that happen in a big way are going to be valuable compa-
nies because of it, and those who wait too late won’t be a part of it.”

The market for mobile games apps is expected to grow to $17 billion this year from just $6 billion in 2010, analysts said, and wearable devices like fitness tracker Fitbit will go on display this week at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, heralding a potential break-
through for the devices in 2014. Google Glass is ex-
pected to launch broadly sometime this year. So far, its user-testing version has only been available at a $1,500 price to about 15,000 developers and con-
sumers who registered to be part of its early adopter programme.

Galaxy Gear smart-

watch from Samsung has garnered mixed re-
views since its Septem-
ber launch, and consumers have not warmed to them yet. Despite the slow start, Juniper Research expects more than 130 million smart wearable devices will ship by 2018. Moreover, global shipments of wear-
able “smart glasses” alone will reach 10 million each year by 2018, compared with an estimated 87,000 in 2013, according to the re-
search firm.

Wearable computing devices basically function as mini-computers, mainly strapped on a user’s wrist or face, though they may end up being worn on other parts of the body, too. In developing apps for them, programmers will focus on their voice-command fea-
tures as well as GPS, gyro-
scope, compass and WiFi capabilities. — Reuters

UFO lights” may help predict earthquake

BEIJING, 6 Jan — The mysterious “UFO lights” may occur at rifts, or nearly vertical faults as the crys-
talline structure of the mag-

more likely to occur on or near a rift, an elongated de-
pression in the Earth’s crust bounded on both sides by normal faults. Stress-activated mo-

bles could fuel growth in the years to come.

An array of new smart-

watches and devices like

fitness tracker Fitbit

will go on display this week

at the Consumer Elec-
tronics Show (CES) in Las

Vegas, heralding a potential break-
through for the devices in 2014. — Reuters

A man uses Google Glass to photograph examples of Motorola’s new Moto X phone next to other mobile phones at a launch event in New York, in this 1 August, 2013 file photo. — Reuters

“UFO lights,” known as “ground lights” or “earthquake lights”, sometimes appear before or during earth-
quakes and take a number of forms, including spheres of light orbs floating through air.

Some have confused the глобальные luminous air masses with UFOs. For in-
stance, seconds before the 2009 L’Aquila, Italy, earth-
quake struck, pedestrians saw 10cm high flames of light flickering above the Francesc Crispí Avenue in the town’s historic city center.

In 1988 a bright purple-
pink globe of light moved through the sky along the St Lawrence River near the city of Quebec, Canada, 11 days before a power-
ful quake. Scientists said the “earthquake lights” are

“UFO lights” may help predict earthquake

The white rocket blasts off from the Satish Dhanwar Space Centre in Sri Harikota, southeast India, on 5 Jan, 2014. India successfully launched its first heavy lift Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) D5 using indigenous cryogenic fuel technology, after two previous failures. This launch is widely believed to be a great boost to the country’s rocket and outer space technology and its international prestige in the field. — Xinhua

Yahoo says some ads on its European sites spread malware

SAN FRANCISCO, 6 Jan — Some advertisements on Yahoo Inc’s European websites last week spread malicious software, Yahoo said on Sunday, potential-
ly infecting thousands of users.

On Friday, Fox-IT, a Delft, Netherlands-based computer security firm, wrote in a blog that at-
tackers had inserted mali-
cious ads served by ads. yahoo.com. In statement on Sunday, a Yahoo spokes-
man, said: “On Friday, January 3 on our Euro-
pean sites, we served some
Time to share the wealth and give children a future

The most heartbreaking thing for any foreign visitor to see are the many small children that roam the streets of Yangon or the beaches in Ngwe Saung and Chaungtha trying to make a living by selling grilled fish or banana leaf hats. Some of them might serve you in an upmarket restaurant, mechanically repeating the few phrases of English they have learnt. “How are you” and “Is it ok?” they will ask you with a serious face, looking years beyond their age.

It is good for foreigners to get to know the stories of these children, because none of them has ever seen a school from the inside: A 12-year old who works for K 1,000 14 hours per day in a restaurant is worried because he cannot buy the medicine for his sick mother. A 5-year old who is trying to sell sea shells to Western tourists is scared to go home because he will be beaten if he hasn’t earned anything.

And then you look on the streets of Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon where you will see Lexuses, Rolls Royces and Hummers driving by. The offspring from rich families wear designer clothes, drink champagne and have BBQs with their friends at the swimming pools of their family homes. One of the well-off who does not want to be named said: “Myanmar is a poor country. There is no money to put those children in school.”

Indeed?

How many children in how many villages could be put in school if you were to donate a diamond ring or one of your six cars?

None of these children has a future without basic education. Without a school certificate they cannot even get a cleaning job in a hotel, no matter how good their English.

People talk about a new Myanmar—new business opportunities and more investment, but perhaps they fail to realize the most important investment is into the future of children.

Those who can leave will try and make money in China, Thailand, Laos or elsewhere. The others will breed yet another generation of uneducated, underprivileged people exploited by those in the big cars.

(by Kerstin Winter)

Union Government to draw people-centered plan...

(from page 1) achievements of the Union Government in the past three years. Vice-President U Nyan Tun called on the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Electric Power to coordinate with each other to be able to sufficiently supply natural gas to the five natural-gas fired power plants in Yangon. During the discussion, President U Thein Sein stressed the need for giving priority to implementing projects that will benefit the people within a short time while laying foundations for sustainable development of the country within the remaining 26 months of the government.

He also urged the participants of the meeting to set up assessment teams to improve on the weak points of the ministries.—MNA

Conference on commerce and investment opens

UNION TAY, 6 Jan—Union Attorney-General Office and ALLEN & OVERY, an international legal expertise organization, jointly organized a conference on commerce and investment at the hall of the Union Attorney-General Office this morning, attended by Union Attorney-General Dr Tun Shin.

The Union attorney-general said that Myanmar is practising a market-oriented economy according to Section 35 of the Constitution, adding that a special economic zone law and a foreign investment law have already been enacted in the country. Those laws ensure the attraction of foreign investors with tax relaxation and land use rights. Myanmar has signed the New York Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards as a member to protect and promote foreign investment in July 2013, he said.

As part of bilateral investment treaties, Myanmar signed contracts with Thailand, India, Vietnam, the Philippines, China and Laos and a framework agreement with the United States. He expressed his hope that legal officers and legal experts from the Union ministries will apply resolutions from the conference effectively.

Director Mr. Simon Makinson said that ALLEN & OVERY has been conducting technical courses for two years with a view to facilitating a legal framework and investment in Myanmar. The conference effectively.

Director Mr. Simon Makinson said that ALLEN & OVERY has been conducting technical courses for two years with a view to facilitating a legal framework and investment in Myanmar.

Gurkha graduate students hold get-together ceremony

MANDALAY, 6 Jan—Gurkha graduate students held the first get-together ceremony in conjuction with a traditional dance performance at the National Theatre here on 3 and 4 January.

“We are trying to contribute to the health and education sectors much more than ever before. In addition, we want each generation to know how to preserve their customs and their fine tradition. The ceremony is organized by Gurkha Stipends Committee,” said U Baw Kha Lay from that committee.

About 850 Gurkha people attended the ceremony in which the literacy talks were held. Several dance groups from all corners of the regions where the Gurkha people live performed dances on the evening of 4 January.

The Gurkha people have been living in Myanmar since 1885 and have been proud citizens ever since.—Kyemon-Aye Mya (Mandalay) (Edited by Kerstin Winter)

Storm News

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—According to the observations at 17:30 hrs MST today, the depression over Southwest Bay of Bengal has crossed North Sri Lanka Coast and now lies Gulf of Mannar. It would weaken into a low pressure area, announced by Meteorology and Hydrology Department.—NLM
Uncut gemstones & utility jade sale starts in Nay Pyi Taw

Nay Pyi Taw, 6 Jan—A utility jade and uncut gemstones sales started here on Sunday, with the event running until 10 January, according to the central committee organizing the sales.

About 1,300 gem merchants came to inspect the precious stones in the Mani Yadana Jade Hall and showed great interest in the computer numerical control (CNC) machine and other machinery needed for the sale of the gems.

The event is under the supervision of the Central Committee of Myanmar Gems Emporium which operates under the Ministry of Mines.

The sale will run till 10 January.

Khin Zaw (Mingala)
(Edited by Kerstin Winter)
Pyawbwe Tsp to organize exam for Buddhist monks

PYAWBWE, 6 Jan—A meeting successfully organized exams for Buddhist monks held in Pyawbwe Township on 4 January. Among the topics discussed were fundraising, accommodation and prize presentation to outstanding candidates.

Magway Region schools mark Family Day

MAGWAY, 6 Jan—Family Day in schools was celebrated across Magway Region, with the No 1 Basic Education High School in Magway marking the day on 5 January with several events.

Magway Region Chief Minister U Phone Maw Shwe visited several booths that displayed information on computer science, biology and other subjects taught at the school.

Since some of the staff members and students had participated as volunteers in the recent SEA Games, the minister handed out gifts and awarded several prizes to outstanding students of the 2013-14 academic year.

International NGO and Mawlamyine University sign MoU on education

MAWLAMYINE, 6 Jan—Mawlamyine University and a Bangkok-based NGO have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on education focussing on marine science.

Dr Htay Aung, Rector of the university and Design Director Rochelle Ardesher of Point B Designer & Training

The institutions will cooperate in research and development of marine science subjects.

The signing of the MoU was attended by high-ranking officials, including Mon State Minister for Social Affairs Dr Hla Oo in Mawlamyine. Rochelle Ardesher has worked for the marine science and academic research survey team of the University of California.

Women’s Futsal tournament kicks off in Magway Region

GANGAW, 6 Jan—A Women’s Futsal Tournament kicked off on 4 January in Gangaw township in the northwest of Myanmar, with officials

awarding the winners with several prizes.

Daw San San Oo, Chairperson of Gangaw District Women’s Affairs Organization awarded the first prize to the Lapoh Village Basic Education Post-Primary School and the second prize to Gangaw Basic Education High School.

Six teams from basic education schools competed in the tournament.

Journalists, reporters in meeting to develop PSM

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—A meeting of journalists and reporters was held at Thabyaylon ward (in front of Aung Thabyay cinema), Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on 5 January.

In the meeting they discussed participation in surfing the difficulties, sharing news items to emerge a news network and developing public service media.

Singu Tsp in Mandalay Region to increase cooperative activities

SINGU, 6 Jan—Officials of Mandalay Region and representatives from 65 cooperatives met on 2 January to discuss the management of micro-credits and boosting the activities of the cooperatives in Singu Township. Singu Township has put an emphasis on rural development and poverty alleviation by disbursing loans to micro-credit organizations to increase cooperative activities.

Saw U Khin Maung Myint, the Head of the Yamethin District Agriculture Department, explained several methods to boost the production of sunflower seeds, with U Hla Nyein, manager of seeds production at the farm, demonstrating the production process of the hybrid sunflower seeds.

The event was held at the Chaungmagyi seeds production farmland 3 January, with U Hla Myint Aung, Head of the Mandalay Region’s Agriculture Department attending.

He urged farmers to follow suit and make use of the production of the sunflower seeds to increase the production of oil.

Medicines worth K 5 million donated to Hospital in Sagaing Region

DABAYIN, 6 Jan—A ceremony to hand over assorted medicines donated by Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint to Dabayin People’s Hospital was held on 4 January in Shwebo District, in Sagaing Region. On behalf of the union minister, Taze Township Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Tin Myint handed over 10 different kinds of medicines worth K 5 million to the Township Hospital.

Agriculture Department introduces production of hybrid sunflower seeds

PYAWBWE, 6 Jan—The Agriculture Department of Pyawbwe Township has demonstrated the production process of Yezin-1 hybrid sunflower seeds.

The event was held at the Chaungmagyi seeds production farmland on 3 January, with U Hla Myint Aung, Head of the Mandalay Region’s Agriculture Department attending.

He urged farmers to follow suit and make use of the production of the hybrid sunflower seeds.

Agriculture Department introduces production of hybrid sunflower seeds

Pyawbwe, 6 Jan—Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Myint Soe highlighted the importance of religious affairs and vowed the exams — the third of such kind in the township — will be held successfully.

Pyawbwe, 6 Jan—Officials of Mandalay Region and representatives from 65 cooperatives met on 2 January to discuss the management of micro-credits and boosting the activities of the cooperatives in Singu Township. Singu Township has put an emphasis on rural development and poverty alleviation by disbursing loans to micro-credit organizations to increase cooperative activities.

In the meeting they discussed participation in surfing the difficulties, sharing news items to emerge a news network and developing public service media.

Min Min Latt (Mann Tekkatho)/Edited by Kerstin Winter
First community-led smoke-free zone on trail in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 6 Jan — Singapore’s first community-led smoke-free zone went on trail on Sunday in the constituency of Neo Soon South, leaving only “designated points” in public areas that people could light up, local paper the Straits Times reported on Monday.

The one-year pilot project is aimed at improving the air quality in the communal spaces of the community. Under the project, six designated smoking points are set up in the trail area named Nee Soon South Zone D. The designated smoking points, each measuring 3 metres by 3 metres, are located in open-air areas like grass patches. Each has partitions on three sides, a parapet shelter and a cigarette disposal bin, the report said.

Smokers are urged to keep to the six designated points when they smoke in public in the zone. But the smokers will not be penalised if they are caught lighting up away from the designated points, the Straits Times added.

“It’s a voluntary ground-up initiative by residents,” the paper quoted grassroots advisor Lee Bee Wah as saying.

The initiative follows the extension of the smoking restrictions that areas such as covered linkways and walkways, outdoor hospital compounds and common areas of residential buildings are also included as the smoke-free zone one year ago. The offenders may be fined a penalty of up to 1,000 Singapore dollars (788.6 US dollars).

The residents in the area raised their concerns when the community initially announced their plan to be the first “100 percent smoke-free” constituency, which means smokers cannot puff in any place other than “designated points” in public areas.—Xinhua

14 killed in stampede during religious gathering in NW China

BEIJING, 6 Jan—14 people were killed and ten people injured in a stampede during a religious gathering in northwest China’s Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region on Sunday afternoon, according to the local government.

The stampede occurred at one o’clock pm during the process of handing out traditional religious food to attendees at an event to commemorate a late religious figure in a mosque in Ningxia’s Xiji Town of Guyuan city.

The injured were hospitalized immediately, with four in critical condition. Investigation is underway.—Xinhua

Nearly decade after tsunami, Aceh eyes becoming tourist destination

BANDA ACEH, 6 Jan — On a night in late December, in a coffee bar along a street in Indonesia’s northernmost Aceh Province, around 70 young men and women were still laughing around, laughing and chatting.

This is Banda Aceh, nine years after a tsunami triggered by a 9.1-magnitude earthquake devastated the provincial capital.

The disaster that struck on 26 December, 2004, wiped out Aceh’s 800-kilometre coastline, leaving about 180,000 people dead in Aceh alone and some 100,000 others dead in other Indian Ocean countries such as India, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Nine years on, Aceh is now thriving.

“Aceh has improved a lot,” 55-year-old Banda Aceh resident Nurjanah said. Following the natural disaster, international assistance flowed into Aceh. More than 50 countries contributed to its infrastructure reconstruction. About 140,000 houses have been rebuilt, more than 250 km of roads have been paved and hundreds of schools have been built.

The government has also preserved many reminders of the disaster as heritage sites. A 2,600-ton floating generator ship that was pushed some 3 km inland in Banda Aceh by the tsunami has become one of the local tourist attractions.

A smaller fishing boat that was lodged in a house in the capital’s Gampang Lampulo area has also been preserved by the local government. Salmi Hardiyanti, 22, who lost seven members in the tsunami, works as a tourist guide in the area. The local government pays her salary.—Kyoobo News

150 flights hit as thick fog envelopes Indian capital

NEW DELHI, 6 Jan—Some 150 flights were severely hit due to dense fog which enveloped the Indian capital since late Sunday night, according to aviation official said on Monday.

“A total of 150 domestic and international flights have been affected. While a large number of domestic and international flights to the Indira Gandhi International Airport were diverted to other cities, others have been delayed as the runway visibility dropped below 50 meters due to thick fog,” the official said.

The fog set in at the airport around 9.30 pm Sunday and stayed till 3.30 am this morning, he added.

Meanwhile, some 40 trains to the national capital have been running behind schedule and 10 others to different parts of northern India were delayed due to the fog, a senior Indian Railways official said.

The Indian Meteorological Department has predicted clear sky later in the day. Fog is common in northern India during the winter months of December and January.—Xinhua

Computer at Monju reactor found infected with virus

TOYO KYO, 6 Jan — A computer at the offline Monju experimental nuclear reactor complex in central Japan was found to be infected with a virus, a source close to the project said on Monday.

The server administrator noticed last Thursday that a single employee-use workstation at the prototype fast-breeder reactor in Tsuruga, Fukui Prefecture, was not operating normally, the source said.

According to the source at the reactor operator, the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, while data on the computer could have been breached outside the server, none of it is crucial to safety at the reactor. The JAEA is investigating how the infection occurred while going over the data that could have been accessed.

The operator was admonished by the Nuclear Regulation Authority last November for breaching security rules aimed at protecting nuclear material from terrorism and other malicious acts.—Kyodo News

Gov’t campaign to ensure migrant workers’ wages

BEIJING, 6 Jan — The Chinese government on Monday launched a wages overhaul to ensure that millions of migrant workers from the country’s rural regions get properly paid before they return home for a major traditional Chinese holiday.

The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security said in a statement that five working teams will be sent to eight provinces including Zhejiang and Hubei to inspect employers’ salary payments to migrant workers as well as local governments’ related supervisory work. The statement said that the campaign will urge local authorities to take effective measures to ensure migrant workers get paid in full before the Spring Festival, which falls on 31 January.

According to the statement, 10 ministries are participating in this campaign.

Violations by employers such as wage deductions and delays are an old problem in China that has presssed the government to conduct such a yearly overhaul in recent years to protect workers’ rights.—Xinhua
New Light of Myanmar

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV TRANS PACIFIC-5 VOY NO (-)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV TRANS PACIFIC-5 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE No: 256924/256912

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BLUE ANGEL VOY NO (-)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV BLUE ANGEL VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE No: 256924/256912

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV ROYAL-18 VOY NO (-)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV ROYAL-18 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE No: 256924/256912

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV NOBLE BREEZE VOY NO (032)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV NOBLE BREEZE VOY NO (032) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE No: 256924/256912

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV GUNKUL-1 VOY NO (-)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV GUNKUL-1 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(6) where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE No: 256916/256919/256921

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV DUN CAN BAY VOY NO (D 131301)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV DUN CAN BAY VOY NO (D 131301) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE No: 256916/256919/256921

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV GSS YANGON VOY NO (1009)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV GSS YANGON VOY NO (1009) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

PHONE No: 256908/378316/376797

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
Margot Robbie feared getting sued for slapping Leonardo DiCaprio

Los Angeles, 6 Jan — Actress Margot Robbie, who slapped Leonardo DiCaprio on the set of The Wolf Of Wall Street, says she was afraid that she will be sued for her action.

“I got a little lost in the moment. I slapped his face and said, ‘F**k you!’ There was a stunned silence then they all burst out laughing,” femalefirst.co.uk quoted Margot Robbie.

“I thought they were going to sue me. I apologized profusely but Leo said, ‘That was brilliant. Hit me in the face again’” she added.

Directed by Martin Scorsese The Wolf Of Wall Street is based on the true story of stockbroker Jordan Belfort. It also features Jonah Hill.

Sholay the “dada of all movies” for Salman Khan

Mumbai, 6 Jan — Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is in awe of Sholay 3D and the stars associated with it.

The 3D version of the cult movie Sholay came out on Friday.

Director Ramesh Sippy had pulled a casting coup for Sholay, which featured big names like Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra, Sanjeev Kumar, Amjad Khan, Hema Malini and Jaya Bachchan.

Salman said Sholay was like a journey.

Produced by G P Sippy, it became the biggest hit of 1975.

Kate Winslet: I prefer natural look

London, 6 Jan — Actress Kate Winslet feels that she would rather go bare-faced than go over the top with her make-up.

The 38-year-old actress says she prefers a natural look as her fashion critics, don’t want her to alter her make-up, reported Contactmusic.

“I don’t like wearing too much. I prefer a fresh look instead of heavy, smoking eyes. My children are great critics. They’ll say, ‘Why have you got all that stuff around your eyes?’ and then I know it’s not a good look,” Kate said.

Winslet has a 13-year-old daughter Mia, 10-year-old son Joe, and a 4-week-old baby boy.

The Titanic star says her daughter is always asking to borrow her beauty products, but she only allows her to wear a few items on special occasions.

“I lend my daughter my beauty products but only as a treat. If she’s going to a party I’ll let her borrow mascara or moisturiser. She’s only 13 and I always remind her how lucky she is to be using mummy’s things,” Kate added.—PTI

Robert Pattinson dating British artisste?

London, 6 Jan — Hollywood heartthrob Robert Pattinson has fuelled another dating rumour after he was reportedly spotted enjoying a couple of dates with a British artiste.

The 27-year-old Twilight star, who previously dated co-star Kristen Stewart, was recently seen visiting a number of London pubs with Nettie Wakefield over the festive season, reported Contactmusic.

“They were very touchy-feely. They were trying to keep a low profile but Rob teased Nettie by messing with her hair and they had a flirty play fight. Afterwards they were giggling like teenagers,” a source said.

Pattinson and Stewart fell each other while filming the vampire romance series but suffered a setback when Stewart’s affair with her Snow White and the Huntsman director Rupert Sanders became public.

After the scandal and the couple tried to patch things up after a brief split before finally ending their three-year-old romance in May, last year.

The actor has been linked to many women post-split including Sean Penn’s model daughter, Dylan.—PTI

Pitbull and Ke$ha top British music charts

London, 6 Jan — American musicians Ke$ha and Pitbull claimed the first British number one single of 2014 on Sunday, after their collaboration “Timber” racked up above-average sales for early January.

The newly-released single sold 139,000 copies to knock “Happy” by Pharrell Williams off the top spot and into second place, the Official Charts Company said.

Chart-toppers Ke$ha and Pitbull have each held the number one title twice before with solo singles or collaborations, but neither had hit the number one spot for more than two years until Sunday.

Avicii and Jason Derulo held on to third and fourth places respectively while British singer Ellie Goulding climbed to fifth spot with her charity single “How long will I love you”.

Goulding had more to celebrate after racking up her second number one album with “Halcyon” — an album first released in October 2012 and re-released in August 2013.

Its slow rise to the top pushed last week’s number one artist, Robbie Williams, down to fourth, with Gary Barlow holding onto second place and Beyoncé remaining at number three.

John Newman’s album “Tribute” made up the top five.

Sholay — the dada of all movies

“Sholay — the dada of all movies.”

Salman Khan

Philadelphia: Bollywood super star Salman Khan is in awe of Sholay 3D and the stars associated with it.

The 3D version of the cult movie Sholay came out on Friday.

Director Ramesh Sippy had pulled a casting coup for Sholay, which featured big names like Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra, Sanjeev Kumar, Amjad Khan, Hema Malini and Jaya Bachchan.

Salman has said Sholay was like a journey.

Produced by G P Sippy, it became the biggest hit of 1975.
Man United humbled by Swansea, West Ham humiliated by Forest

LONDON, 6 Jan — Manchester United suffered a stinging 2-1 home defeat by Swansea City in the FA Cup third round on Sunday as their former fortress of Old Trafford was ransacked for the fifth time this season.

Reduced to 10 men for the closing stages after Fabio was sent off, Swansea’s battering ram striker Welsh Bony climbed high to head home a powerful 90th-minute winner and leave United boss David Moyes to face questions about his management.

West Ham United’s woes intensified as the Premier League club were thrashed 5-0 by second-tier Nottingham Forest, increasing the heat on their manager Sam Allardyce. Forest’s Jamie Paterson netted a hat-trick in the humiliating rout, but the spotlight was on

Hewitt grinds down Federer to claim Brisbane title

BRISBANE, 6 Jan — Roger Federer’s hopes of starting the year with a long-overdue title ended in failure on Sunday when the Swiss was beaten by local hero Lleyton Hewitt in the Brisbane International final.

The 17-times grand slam champion, who won the last of his 77 titles last June, was beaten 6-1, 4-6, 6-3 by a typically gutsy Hewitt who ended a more than three-year title drought.

World number six Federer, who had led their rivalry 18-8 before the final, looked to have turned the match his way after recovering from a slow start but Hewitt showed responded to claim the title in a little over two hours.

“To beat possibly the greatest player in the final means a lot,” Hewitt said. “I don’t need to say anything else. I was on it.”

Federer had seven break points in the third set but failed to convert any of them as Hewitt ended a 15-match losing run against his fellow 32-year-old.

Despite the disappointment Federer remained hopeful for this month’s Australian Open.

“I was able to sort of serve better overall, more consistent this week than I have in a long time — so that’s very good,” Federer, who had not dropped a service game and performed a complete air-shot off one attempted backhand return.

“I have a clear idea what I need to work on and I have a clear idea where my mind and body is at,” Federer can scarcely have opened a match in worse touch.

He hit 22 unforced errors in the first set, lost three service games and performed a complete air-shot off one attempted backhand service return.

“I was really struggling with all sorts of rhythm,” Federer said. “I wouldn’t say I was serving poorly, but it was just a tough set for me. I was put on the back foot very often.”

Hewitt did not lose a point on his first serve in the opening set, making just three unforced errors as he took command with his trademark precision.

Clippers’ Paul out for to up to six weeks, no surgery needed

LOS ANGELES, 6 Jan — All-Star point guard Chris Paul will be sidelined for up to six weeks because of a separated right shoulder but will not require surgery, the Los Angeles Clippers said on Sunday.

The Clippers announced the prognosis after Paul, 28, had a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) exam earlier in the day and was re-evaluated by team doctors.

Paul suffered the injury during the third quarter of the Clippers’ 119-112 win against the Mavericks in Dallas on Friday when he tripped over guard Monta Ellis.

He has since been diagnosed with a joint separation and “will be out up to six weeks”, the Clippers said in a statement. Paul, a six-time All-Star, has appeared in 34 games for the high-flying Clippers this season, averaging 19.6 points, a league-high 11.2 assists and 4.6 rebounds.

The 23-13 Clippers, who sat tied for fourth in the 15-team Western Conference, were hammered 116-92 by the San Antonio Spurs on Saturday in their first game without Paul.—Reuters

Sanchez hat-trick returns

Barca to La Liga summit

BARCELONA, 6 Jan — Alexis Sanchez hit a hat-trick as Barcelona swept aside Eibar 4-0 to return to the top of La Liga on goal difference ahead of Atletico Madrid on Sunday.

Showing no sign of missing the injured Lionel Messi and rested Neymar, Barca took an early lead through Sanchez and Pedro made it 2-0 after 15 minutes.

Xavi Hernandez missed a penalty at the start of the second half before Sanchez added another and completed his hat-trick with a free kick. “It was important to win and not make mistakes at home. We scored good goals and worked hard. There are five tough months still to go,” Pedro told reporters.

Barcelona play Atletico next weekend. “We know it is going to be difficult and we will go step by step,” Pedro added. “First we face Getafe in the (King’s) cup.”

Barca and Atletico, who beat Malaga on Saturday, both have 49 points, eight more than third-placed Real Madrid who face Celta Vigo on Monday.—Reuters

No divers at Chelsea, says Mourinho

LONDON, 6 Jan — Chelsea are not a team of divers, according to manager Jose Mourinho, whose side had a player booked for the offence for the second week running on Sunday, Midfielder Ramires was cautioned by referee Andre Marriner for simulation in the FA Cup third round 2-0 victory over Derby County.

Fellow Brazilian Oscar received the same punishment from referee Martin Atkinson in the Premier League match against Southampton on New Year’s Day. Both decisions came after Mourinho accused Liverpool’s Luis Suarez of diving in the Londoners’ 2-1 win at Stamford Bridge on 26 December.

“I maintain (there are no divers at Chelsea),” he told reporters. “Isolated episodes. The referees attacking it. The manager supporting the referees. I think we are doing well. Let’s see if the others do the same as us.”

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho

Santander Cup third round soccer match against Manchester City on Wednesday.

Chelsea showed their fellow Londoners how to negotiate a potentially tricky Cup tie in the east Midlands, winning 2-0 at second-tier Derby County. Liverpool avenged last season’s Cup defeat by Oldham Athletic, winning 2-0 at Anfield with Iago Aspas scoring his first goal for the club, and Sunderland also came through 3-1 against Carlisle.—Reuters

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300,000 observers to monitor Afghanistan’s election

KABUL, 6 Jan — Afghans’ election body has revealed that 300,000 national and international observers will monitor the country’s upcoming presidential elections slated for 5 April, local newspapers reported on Sunday.

“Up to 300,000 national and international observers will monitor the coming presidential elections,” the English Daily Outlook Afghanistan reported, quoting Noor Mohammad Noor, the spokesman for the election commission.

Another newspaper, the Mamekgar Daily, also quoted Noor in its Sunday edition, as saying, “Invitations have been sent to international observers from the European Union and South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation countries.”

The spokesman for the Independent Election Commission (IEC) said “1,400 representatives of 120 local and international entities have already been listed by the election body to monitor.”

Around 12 million of Afghanistan’s 27 million population are estimated to be eligible voters.

However, the Hasht-e-Subh newspaper reported that the majority of the remote and militancy-plagued provinces including Nuristan, Daikundi and Helmand have not received voting cards so far.

Citing Nuristan provincial governor, Tamim Nuristani, the paper said that only 16,000 out of 70,000 eligible voters have obtained voting cards in one of the districts in the province. Legislator Nahid Parid has called on Afghan youth to fully use their suffrage in the coming elections, which is the third in the post-Taleban central Asian state, reported the newspaper.—Xinhua

Australians buy record number of cars in 2013

SYDNEY, 6 Jan — Australians bought a record number of 1.14 million cars in 2013, figures released by the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) showed on Monday.

The FCAI said Toyota Corolla was the top-selling car in 2013 market in Australia, with 43,498 sales recorded nation-wide during the year, followed by the Mazda3 (42,082), Toyota HiLux (39,531), Hyundai i30 (30,582) and Holden Commodore (27,766).

Toyota also took the title of top selling brand with 18.9 percent of the market. FCAI Chief Executive Tony Weber said passenger cars remained the most popular, accounting for 49.9 percent of the market.

“However, this is a slight decrease compared to 2012, where passenger cars held 51.7 percent of the market,” Weber said in a statement.

“The SUV (sports utility vehicles) and light commercial segments increased their share of the market in 2013, holding 29.4 and 18 percent, respectively, compared to 27.6 and 17.8 percent in 2012.”

The Australian-made Holden Commodore, Toyota Camry and Holden Cruze were all in the top ten list for sales in 2013, the FCAI said.

GOLD COAST, 6 Jan — AustralianSq remained on course for a successful title defence at the Hyundai Tournament of Champions in Hawaii as he ended a wildly fluctuating third round in a three-way tie for the lead on Sunday.

Johnson, who spectacularly eagled the par-five ninth after hitting a four-iron 211 yards to within two feet of the pin, fired a four-under-par 69 in sunny but breezy conditions at picturesque Kapalua Resort.

He had a chance to seize the outright lead at the par-five last but narrowly missed his birdie attempt from 15 feet to finish at 14-under 205, level with fellow Americans Webb Simpson (68) and Jordan Spieth (69).

Overnight leader Zach Johnson was two ahead of the chasing pack with seven holes to play but bogeyed 14 and 16 on the way to a 74 and fourth place at 12-under.

Dustin Johnson won last year’s title, his seventh on the PGA Tour, by three shots in a tournament reduced to three rounds and forced to a rare Tuesday finish because of relentless howling winds at the Kapalua Resort.

He began Sunday’s third round three strokes off the pace and launched his timely surge up the leaderboard with his stunning eagle at the ninth.

“I hit a great drive there right to the end of the fairway and had a good number, 211 yards (with uphill),” Johnson told Golf Channel. “I just hit a great four-iron right at the flag and it ended up being pretty close.”

Asked how he would attempt to close the deal in Monday’s final round in pursuit of his ninth PGA Tour victory, Johnson replied: “I’ll have to take advantage of the par-fives.

“Today, I made a birdie and an eagle but I parred the two on the back which was tough for me, especially (after) hitting good drives.”—Reuters

Holder Johnson in three-way tie for lead


MYANMAR TV

(7-1-2014, Tuesday)

6:00 am
1. Parita By Venerable Mingun Saydaw
2:45 pm
3:00 pm
20. News
3:15 pm
21. India Drama Series
4:00 pm
22. News
4:15 pm
23. India Drama Series
4:45 pm
24. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - First Year (English)
5:00 pm
25. News
5:15 pm
26. Business News
5:30 pm
27. India Drama Series
6:00 pm
6:20 pm
29. Teleplay
6:45 pm
30. Documentary
7:00 pm
31. News
7:20 pm
32. Teleplay
8:00 pm
8:35 pm
34. Hit Songs of Stars
9:00 pm
35. News
9:15 pm
36. Sing A Song
9:30 pm
37. India Drama Series
9:45 pm
38. View Points
10:00 pm
39. The Mirror Images of the Musical Oldies
10:15 pm
40. India Drama Series
10:30 pm
41. News
10:45 pm
42. Documentaries
11:00 pm
43. News/International
11:15 pm
44. My World
11:30 pm
45. News/International
11:45 pm
46. News/Weather Report

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL TV

(7-1-2014, Tuesday)

6:45 pm
25. News
5:00 pm
26. Business News
4:00 pm
22. News
4:15 pm
23. India Drama Series
4:45 pm
24. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - First Year (English)
5:00 pm
25. News
5:15 pm
26. Business News
5:30 pm
27. India Drama Series
6:00 pm
6:20 pm
29. Teleplay
6:45 pm
30. Documentary
7:00 pm
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41. News
10:45 pm
42. Documentaries
11:00 pm
43. News/International
11:15 pm
44. My World
11:30 pm
45. News/International
11:45 pm
46. News/Weather Report
President says development partners instrumental in policy making process

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—President U Thein Sein has called for the recognition of development partners as stakeholders rather than donors and said their cooperation should be utilized as development tools in the policy making process.

Speaking today at the meeting of the Central Committee for Foreign Aid at the President’s Office, U Thein Sein stressed the need to build trust between the government’s foreign aid management committee and international donors.

He highlighted the importance of the development of strategies and tactics best suited for a local context.

Chairing the committee, he said that foreign assistance would be sought as required by the country’s development objectives, reform strategies and areas of priority.

He revealed that poverty alleviation and socioeconomic improvement of the rural population that makes 70 percent of the entire population are priorities in the government’s development scheme.

The government has been working on its framework on economic and social reform through a people-centered approach for 34 months. It has set accessibility of electricity and water, agricultural development, employment, tourism development, monetary sector development, and trade and investment development as priorities for the last 26 months of its term.

The President said international grants, loans and technical assistance are flowing into the country, a shift from the government-funded development projects to projects funded by international development partners.

A brief on projects needing foreign grants and loans was given by Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw Jiklu.

Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein elaborated on loans and due dates for payment.

The President also called for the participation of all stakeholders in the policy making process by initiating regional development projects.

He also called for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of each project.

The president urged those present at the meeting to ensure transparency, effectiveness and thorough administration in managing the projects.

He also said a series of reforms initiated by the government has put the country again on the world map.

Myanmar organized the first-ever Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum from January 19-20 followed by the declaration of the Nay Pyi Taw Accord. The second forum will be organized later this month, according to the President.

He also said most of the projects are in implementation process and the systematic management of the loans, aids and technical assistance would show significant outcomes within 26 months.

The meeting was attended by several officials, including Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Union ministers, the Union Attorney-General, the Union Civil Services Board Chairman, Region and State Chief Ministers and Chairmen of Leading Body of Self-Administered Division and Zones.

MNA(Edited by Kerstin Winter)

Merkel in skiing accident, cancels visits

BERLIN, 6 Jan—German Chancellor Angela Merkel has fractured her pelvis in a cross-country skiing accident and is walking with the help of crutches, forcing her to call off some foreign visits and official appointments, her spokesman said on Monday.

Merkel fell while skiing over the Christmas vacation. What she first thought was heavy bruising turned out to be a partial fracture, meaning she must take it easy for three weeks and work from home where possible, said her spokesman Steffen Seibert.

The news comes a week after Germany was shocked by the far more serious skiing accident of former Formula One champion Michael Schumacher, who is in critical condition in a French hospital.

"The chancellor is of course able to work and is in full communication," said Seibert. He added that Merkel's accident occurred "at low speed" but he declined to give further details.

The 59-year-old chancellor, a keen hiker who has said she prefers cross-country to downhill skiing, has postponed a visit to Warsaw scheduled for Wednesday and a meeting in Berlin with Luxembourg’s new prime minister, Xavier Bettel.

But she will lead her first cabinet meeting of 2014 on Wednesday. Merkel began her third term last December, her first cabinet meeting of the year, and the meeting in Davos at the end of January clashed with a scheduled German government meeting.

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MNA(Edited by Kerstin Winter)

Arrangement for media to cover AMM (Retreat)

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan — Journalists can register at the News and Periodicals Enterprise of the Ministry of Information to cover the ASEAN Foreign Minister’s Meeting Retreat, AMM (Retreat) which will be held in Bagan from 15 to 18 January 2014. Contact persons for the registration are U Ye Naing (General Manager), Ph: 067-36137; 067-412119; 09-8306358, U Hlaing Myint (Director), Ph: 067-412126; 09-49205014. Journalists can send their registration forms to npemoi@gmail.com and myogyi.npe@gmail.com and media can collect accreditation cards at the NPE to cover the vents of the meeting. Foreign Journalists can apply visa at nearby Myanmar embassies and can download the visa format asean2014.gov.mm. The media persons are to arrive there later than 10th January. For more information, anyone can contact U Hlaing Myint, Director, News and Periodicals Enterprise.—MNA

File photo of German Chancellor Angela Merkel standing next to the Eqi Glacier near the town of Ilulissat in Greenland, 17 August, 2007. Credit—Reuters

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File photo of German Chancellor Angela Merkel standing next to the Eqi Glacier near the town of Ilulissat in Greenland, 17 August, 2007. Credit—Reuters