Deputy Minister for Transport U Zin Yaw approved Mawlamyine airport will be liberalized to private sector at a coordination meeting with Mon State government in order to invite tenders for privatization of the airport on 16 January.

In meeting with Mon State Chief Minister U Ohn Myint, Bamar Nation Affairs Minister U Thet Win and Secretary of Mon State Government U Zaw Lin Tun, the deputy minister said local companies will be allowed to operate Mawlamyine airport business. Tenders will be invited to upgrade the airport and the upgraded plan will include construction of a recreation centre, restaurants, stores and money exchange counters, he added.

He continued, regarding the inland water transport, that jetties in Mawlamyine will be handed over to Mon State government as the jetties once offered a round-the-clock service to large vessels from foreign countries to moor are needed to be upgraded.

By: Aung Nay Min

Thai court defers election date ruling, capital calm

Abe pledges corporate tax cuts to attract investment

Chinese leaders meet senior US envoy
meeting held to organize Buddha Pujaniya of historic Bawkyo Pagoda

Doctors from Imphar of India to give free health care to people of Kalay

Nay Pi Taw, 23 Jan—Altogether 44 doctors from Imphar of India will arrive in Kalay of Sagaing Region on 25 January to provide health care to 1000 people of Kalay on 26 January at Kalay People’s Hospital. They will focus on treatment of cancer, liver and HIV diseases to the people. If necessary, the Indian doctors will take registration of the patients to give surgical operations when they arrive there once more. Those wishing to receive medical checkup are to enlist at the outpatient department of Kalay People’s Hospital on 24 and 25 January.

Raw opium, related items seized in drugs camp raids in Shan State

Nay Pi Taw, 23 Jan—Acting on a tip-off, anti-narcotics squads of Myanmar Police Force in cooperation with a local battalion raided camps used for production of heroin, south of Nanineint village in Lonpyin village-tract in Pinlaung Township of Shan State on 21 January. The joint force stationed at the junction between Nanineint village and Bawyan village in Khaung-ei village-tract in Pekho Township seized 89.9 kilos of raw opium from Soe Maung, Maung Koh, Ko Ra, Maung Ko and Moe Myat who arrived on motorbikes at about 4 am on 21 January.

During a raid on a heroin-producing camp on a hillock at about 6 am, they arrested Ta Pay and Ta Naing together with two kilos of opium grease, 20 liters of opium liquid, 1.6 kilos of ammonia chloride and related items in a makeshift tent. While clearing an encampment on Lonehu hill, they confiscated 6.070 liters of opium liquid, 10 kilos of morphine, three kilos of opium grease, four kilos of opium grease, four kilos of ammonia chloride, 12 liters of hydrochloric acid and related items and one percussion lock firearm in the two huts.

Pinlaung Myoma police station filed lawsuits against seven suspects including Soe Maung who were caught together with opium and related items valued at K 200,742 million.

MMAL-Hsipaw Ko Latt

Mobile library gives services to local people

Yangon, 23 Jan—Dala Township Information and Public Relations Department of Yangon South District manages mobile library services to villages and wards of the township, departments and schools for enabling the local people to have reading access as of January, this year.

On 21 January evening, staff of Township IPRD gave mobile library services at Dala Township Police Station.

Head of the police station Khin Maung Lwin, police officers, servicemen and family members borrowed about 100 books in various genres. Only when will the number of library increase and there will the people have good habit of reading in rural and urban areas, said Head of Township IPRD Daw Hla Hla Nwe.

MMAL-Lin Let Kyei Sin

Narcotic drugs and related materials seized from two opium refineries near Nanineint

MMAL-Banya Maung Maung

Meeting held to organize Buddha Pujaniya of historic Bawkyo Pagoda

It was also attended by Township Administrator U Myo Tint Zaw, Chairman of the pagoda board of trustees U Aung Khin, local authorities and officials. The Buddha Pujaniya of the pagoda will include religious ceremonies, Shan and Myanmar theatrical dramas, stage show of Shan Literature and Culture Troupe, Chinlone contest and Sepak Takraw Contest, first Lashio-Kyaukme-Namtu-Nawngkho-Hsipaw invitational volleyball tournament from 10 to 15 March.

MMAL-Hsipaw Ko Latt

Health Care
Thai court defers election date ruling, capital calm

Bangkok, 23 Jan — Thailand’s Constitutional Court on Thursday deferred a ruling on whether a general election scheduled for 2 February can be postponed, as protesters who say they will boycott the vote kept up pressure on the government to step down. Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra declared a 60-day state of emergency in Bangkok and surrounding areas from Wednesday, hoping to prevent an escalation in the protests now in their third month.

The Election Commission says the country is too volatile to hold a general election now and that technicalities mean it is anyway bound to result in a parliament with too few lawmakers to form a quorum. The government says the decree to hold the election on that date has been signed by the king and cannot be changed.

“The Constitutional Court has accepted this case and we will look at the legal issues involved. If there is enough evidence, we may hand down a decision tomorrow,” said court spokesmen Pinel Thamphuk pong. The protests are the latest eruption in a political conflict that has gripped the country for eight years. The emergency decree failed to clear the demonstrators, though the capital has been relatively calm this week.

BROADLY, the conflict pits the Bangkok middle class and royalist establishment against the mainly poorer supporters of Yingluck and her brother, ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra, who was toppled by the military in 2006.

Nine people have been killed in outbursts of violence, including two grenade attacks on Bangkok last weekend. A leading pro-government activist was shot and wounded on Wednesday in Thailand’s northeast, a stronghold of the Shinawatra family, in what police said may have been a political attack, adding to fears the violence could spread. A ruling in favour of the Election Commission would deepen Thailand’s political quagmire, already weighing on investor enthusiasm for Southeast Asia’s second-biggest economy.—Reuters

Abe pledges corporate tax cuts to attract investment

Davos (Switzerland), 23 Jan — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged to world business and political leaders on Wednesday that Japan will “set about further reform on corporate tax this year,” expressing eagerness to carry out tax cuts in order to attract investment from abroad.

In the speech he gave at the opening session of the World Economic Forum in the Swiss resort of Davos, Abe also emphasized that uncertainties in Asia would affect “the entire world,” apparently warning against China’s aggressive military expansion.

Abe, who is trying to beat nearly two decades of deflation, became Japan’s first prime minister to deliver a keynote speech at the main session of the annual forum.

In the speech, Abe put emphasis on the significance of structural reforms in Japan, particularly aimed at restoring the country’s international competitiveness and reinforcing its innovation capacity.

The Japanese government must “make the tax system for companies internationally competitive,” Abe said.

“We will also encourage companies to use the cash they have gathered towards capital investment, R&D (research and development), and raises in workers’ salaries. To do this, we will put tax incentives into place in a way completely different from before,” he added.

To invigorate private-sector investment, Abe promised that the government will end its decades-long policy of protecting rice farmers by limiting their production and allowing firms to enter the retail electricity market, saying, “In Japan, people have long said that such a thing is just impossible.”

The measures are set to be implemented under the government’s economic growth strategy, which is the “third arrow” of the premier’s policies dubbed “Abenomics,” along with drastic monetary easing by the Bank of Japan and massive public investment.

Abe also demonstrated his strong intention to promote negotiations on the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade framework, noting in the speech that entry into the tariff-cutting TPP “will remain a central pillar of my economic policies.”

Kyodo News

Italy’s Renzi flexes muscles in electoral reform drive

Rome, 23 Jan — Italian centre-left Democratic Party (PD) leader Matteo Renzi gestures as he appears as a guest on the Rai television show Porta A Porta (Door to Door) in Rome on 21 Jan, 2014. REUTERS

Italy’s centre-left Democratic Party (PD) leader Matteo Renzi flexes muscles in electoral reform drive

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Romania arrests suspected hacker of Bush family emails

Bucharest/San Francisco, 23 Jan — Romanian authorities have arrested a man they suspect of being the hacker “Guccifer,” famous for breaking into the email accounts of former US President George W. Bush’s family and other prominent political and entertainment figures.

Romania’s Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism said on its website on Wednesday that it had detained a suspect with the initials LML in the county of Arad, near the border with Hungary.

The agency said there was “reasonable suspicion” that throughout 2013, the suspect “repeatedly and illegally accessed, breaking security rules, email accounts belonging to public persons in Romania with the aim of getting electronic mail confidential data.”

Police declined to give LML’s full name. A Romanian prosecutor, who did not want to be identified, told Reuters that the suspect is believed to be the hacker known as Guccifer and The Small Flame.

Guccifer has said he used a variety of methods, including guessing the answers to security questions, to get access to customer accounts at Facebook, Comcast Corp, AOL Inc and other companies.

Romania’s public radio Radio Romania identified the suspect as Marcel Lazar Lehel, who received a suspended sentence in 2012 after a hacking charge. Reuters could not independently verify the name.

For years, as Italy’s economy slid deeper into crisis, politicians had wrung their hands but failed to act over an electoral system almost universally blamed for the alienation of voters and the chronic inability to create stable governments capable of passing effective reforms.

He’s succeeded in dealing with all sides that were willing to discuss the issue and came up with a deal that left no one completely satisfied but which was practical,” said Lorenzo De Sio, coordinator of the Italian Centre for Electoral Studies at Rome’s LUISS university.

As things stand, the proposals would favor big parties and squeeze out the host of smaller groups blamed for thwarting viable governments. They would also concentrate power in the lower house of parliament, all but eliminating the Senate, which at present has virtually exactly equal powers with the Chamber of Deputies.

Reuters

Russian court orders release of Khodorkovsky’s business partner

Moscow, 23 Jan — The ex-business partner of former oil tycoon and Kremlin critic Mikhail Khodorkovsky was released from prison early under a ruling by Russia’s Supreme Court on Thursday.

Platon Lebedev and Khodorkovsky were sentenced to jail in 2005 after falling out with Vladimir Putin. The president pardoned Khodorkovsky last month, ahead of the Sochi Winter Olympics, but Lebedev did not seek a pardon and stayed in jail.

Lebedev had been due for release in May but the Supreme Court ruled that his sentence should be reduced and that he would be able to walk free on Friday.

It did not change a court order under which Lebedev and Khodorkovsky were sentenced to 17 billion roubles ($521 million) in tax arrears - an obstacle to Khodorkovsky’s return to Russia after leaving for Germany in December.

 Reuters

Platon Lebedev, jailed business partner of Russian ex-tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, gestures after hearing the verdict inside the defendants’ box during a court hearing to consider a request for parole in Arkhangelsk Region on 27 July, 2011. REUTERS

Reuters

Kremlin critic Mikhail Khodorkovsky -- in prison for months. The package was condemned in back-room amendments to the initiative lies with the lobbyists is long practiced in Rome, where a wily caste of senators is long practiced in LUISS university.

As things stand, the proposals would favour big parties and squeeze out the host of smaller groups blamed for thwarting viable governments. They would also concentrate power in the lower house of parliament, all but eliminating the Senate, which at present has virtually exactly equal powers with the Chamber of Deputies.
Chinese leaders meet senior US envoy

BEIJING, 23 Jan — Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao and State Councilor Yang Jiechi on Wednesday met separately with visiting US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns.

Noting that this year marks the 35th anniversary of the establishment of Chi-na-US diplomatic relations, Li called on the two countries to implement the important consensus of their presidents and stick to the direction of building new-model relations between major powers.

Li urged the two countries to actively expand pragmatic cooperation, properly manage differences and sensitive issues, advance multi-tier and all-round exchanges and seek positive growth of China-US relations.

Burns said good China-US relations matter not only to the two countries, but also to the whole world. He underscored US commitment to advancing positive and all-round cooperation with China and building new-model relations between major powers.

In his meeting with Burns, Yang said China-US relations are faced with new important opportunities this year, calling for stronger trust and cooperation, proper settlement of differences and new progress in China-US relations.

Burns said the United States would like to strengthen dialogues and cooperation in bilateral and multilateral spheres, manage differences and advance new-model relations between major powers.

Burns arrived in Beijing on Tuesday on the second leg of his three-nation tour after a stop in Republic of Korea. He will travel to Japan on Thursday.

Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao (R) meets with visiting US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns in Beijing, capital of China, on 22 Jan, 2014. —Xinhua

Tokyo gubernatorial election campaign begins

TOYKO, 23 Jan — Campaigning officially started on Thursday for the 9 Feb Tokyo gubernato-rial election, with the main points of focus being a possible massive earthquake, the 2020 Olympics and the aging of society, as well as whether Japan should continue to rely on nuclear power.

The election, the third in as many years, follows the resignation of Naoki Inose as governor last month over his receipt of 50 million yen from scandal-tainted hospital chain Tokushukai.

Major candidates include former Prime Min-ister Morihiro Hosokawa, 76, former health minis-ter Yoichi Masuzoe, 65, former Air Self-Defence Force chief Toshio Ta-noyagi, 65, and Kenji Usutomiya, 67, the for-mer president of the Japan Federation of Bar Associa-tions.

Tokyo gubernatorial election candidate Morihiro Hosokawa (L), a former Prime Minister, speaks outside the metropolitan government hall of the Japanese capital after the official campaigning kicked off on 23 Jan, 2014, for the 9 February election. —KYODO NEWS

Seven dead in tit-for-tat killings in Central African Republic

BANGUI, 23 Jan — Seven people from the inter-ethnic and religious attacks and reprisal killings in Central African Republic’s capital Bangui on Wednesday, a human rights campaigner said, underlining the challenge the new interim president faces in restoring peace.

The local Red Cross said it also found another 11 corpses, most burnt beyond recognition. Close to one million people, or a quarter of the population, have been displaced in the former French colony by clashes that began when mostly Muslim Seleka rebels seized power in a coup in March.

Christian self-defence groups known as “anti-balaka” (anti-machete) have split into camps against them, and the United Na-tions estimates that tit-for-tat violence has claimed more than 2,000 lives.

Wednesday’s violence erupted after Seleka fighters left a military base looking for food and shot and killed two children. Human Rights Watch (HRW) said.

In reprisal, “the youth from the neighbourhood went to the prison and took out five Seleka detainees and killed them,” Peter Bouckaert, an HRW researcher in Bangui, told Reuters.

The other 11 bodies were found behind another military camp in another part of the city.

Antoine Mbao Bogó, presidential candidate, briefed the Bangui Red Cross Society, said nine of the bodies collected in the mostly Muslim north-ern neighborhood of PK11 had been burnt.

“They were not buried, they were dumped on the ground,” he told Reuters by telephone.

The arrival of a 1,600-strong French military mission and another 5,000 African Union peacekeepers has so far failed to stop the violence in Central African Republic.—Reuters

African Union (AU) peacekeeping soldiers stand on the perimeter of a military base belonging to ex-Seleka soldiers during a dispute between members of the local Christian community and ex-Seleka soldiers in Bangui on 22 Jan, 2014. —REUTERS

Russian lawmakers warn Western politicians not to interfere in Ukraine’s standoff

MOSCOW, 23 Jan — Foreign politicians should not interfere in the confrontation between the government and opposition in Ukraine, Russian lawmakers said on Wednesday.

“The State Duma once again admonishes from mounting outside pressure on Ukraine, enforcing a pro-EU geopolitical choice,” the resolution pub-lished on the Duma website said.

Russian MPs pinned the responsibility for the deepening crisis on both “extremists wing of the opposition” and western politici ans who have sided with the opposition.

“The State Duma once again admonishes from mounting outside pressure on Ukraine, enforcing a pro-EU geopolitical choice,” the resolution published on the Duma website said.

Meanwhile, the Duma called on the opposition in Ukraine to refrain from vio-lence, halt the standoff with special police units and seek constructive dialogue with the authorities.

The Russian parliament’s upper house, the Fed-eration Council, supported the Duma declaration, saying it was inadmissible that Ukrainian politicians would advise the US leaders how they should conduct their policy.—Xinhua

Putin sees nuclear disarmament as matter of distant future

MOSCOW, 23 Jan — The humankind is far from making a decision to aban-don nuclear weapons, Russian President Vladimir Pu-tin said on Wednesday.

“I personally believe that someday the mankind will have to refuse from nu-clear weapons, but this will be a long time before that happens,” Putin told stud-ents at Moscow’s MEPHI University which prepares professionals for nuclear energy industry.

Putin noted that many countries, including Russia, possess nuclear weapons and none of them is ready to denounce it.

Any unilateral start by Russia of nuclear dis-armament presently would be “highly strange,” Putin said, adding that such a step could lead to “big and hard consequences” for the countries.

Currently, Russia is focusing on modernization of nuclear military tech-nologies, communications, high-precision weapons and the Glonass navigation system, he said.

Last December, the Russian Defence Ministry said Moscow would put more emphasis on develop-ing long-range, high-accuracy communications in the country’s massive defense upgrade. Also, Russia plans to upgrade 85 percent of its strategic nuclear weapons by 2020.

The government has earmarked 20 trillion rubles (about 660 billion US dol-lars) for the massive rear-mament programme during that period.

Xinhua
China's reform leading group holds first meeting

BEIJING, 23 Jan — China's leading group for overall reform on Wednesday convened its first meeting, which approved the working rules of the group as well as the working rules and members of six sub-groups. Xi Jinping, Chinese president and leader of the group, presided over the meeting, which was also attended by deputy group leaders Li Keqiang, Liu Yunshan and Zhang Gaoli, all members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee.

The leading group for overall reform was established upon a decision passed at a key meeting, the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Central Committee of the Political Bureau. Xi said at the meeting that the responsibility of the leading group is to implement all reform measures put forward at the Plenary Session. He urged attendees to understand the spirit of the session, which serves as the basis of decision making.

A series of reforms have already been put in place after the Plenary Session, including the axing of the one-child policy, and reform of the industrial and commercial registration system. However, Xi said, some problems exist in implementing the spirit of the Plenary Session, calling for adequate understanding of the difficulty, complexity and urgency of reforms, as deeper and deeper interest group will be affected as reforms go further.

He urged the leading group to study different situations, firmly grasp the reform in the right way, and take a firm stand on fundamental issues. He also called for participation by the people.

The Chinese president urged sub-groups and the general office of the leading group to closely coordinate with other departments, make projects for reforms, monitor and guide the implementation of reforms, and study major issues. Other members of the leading group, and officials responsible for departments of the central authority also attended the meeting.

Ukraine opposition say they’ll brave bullets after talks with Yanukovich fail

KIEV, 23 Jan — Ukrainian opposition leaders emerged from crisis talks with President Viktor Yanukovich on Wednesday saying he had failed to give concrete answers to their demands, and told their supporters on the streets to prepare for a police offensive. Using emotional language following the deaths earlier in the day of at least three protesters - two of them from gunshot wounds - the three opposition leaders who met Yanukovich said they were ready to face police bullets.

Boxer-turned-politician Vitaly Klitschko told the thousands of protesters gathered on Kiev's Independence Square that during three hours of talks the president had given no clear response to their demands that the government be dismissed and sweeping anti-protest laws ditched. "Today they (the police) are preparing to clear us out of the 'Maidan' (Independence Square)," Klitschko declared.

"We must do all we can to stop them clearing us out," he said. He urged people to stay overnight and defend the square in central Kiev, and drew a roar of support from protesters when he declared: "If I have to go (on to the streets) under bullets, I shall go there under bullets."

"Tomorrow if the President does not respond ... then we will go on the offensive," he added.

Former economy minister Arseny Yatsenyuk echoed his words, and referred to the overnight shooting deaths which the opposition has blamed on police despite official denials. A third man died after plunging from the top of Dynamo football stadium while fighting with police.

Kidnapped S Korean trade official freed in Libya

SEOUL, 23 Jan—A South Korean trade official abducted by gunmen in Libya at the weekend has been freed unharmed after Libyan forces arrested the kidnappers, South Korea's Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

Han Seok Woo, who heads the Tripoli office of the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency in Libya, was brought to the South Korean Embassy in Libya late Wednesday.

"Han is in good health and was handed over to the South Korean Embassy," the ministry said in a statement.

Han, 39, who has been in Libya since July 2012, was being driven home from work when several men in a car forced his vehicle to stop last Sunday.

The four kidnappers were arrested in Tripoli by Libyan security authorities and found to be members of an armed group, according to the statement.

Colombian army steps up offensive against rebels

BOGOTA, 23 Jan—The Colombian army has stepped up military offensive against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), "demobilizing" 39 rebels along with 49 other guerrillas in the past 24 hours across the country.

On Wednesday, it captured five FARC members in the municipality of Vista Hermosa in the central Meta department, local El Nuevo Siglo news website reported. In a different operation, the army caught eight rebels, confirmed Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, who is currently in Spain.

Santos welcomed the military's commitment to weakening the outlawed rebel group. Seven FARC members were "demobilized" in the San Miguel municipality of Planadas. Among all the "de-mobilized," 14 rebels were killed in the destruction of a camp in Tame, Arauca.

Despite the fighting, the government and the FARC rebels are in peace talks in Havana, Cuba, with the aim of putting an end to the five-decade conflict.

Time to end al-Qaeda presence in Falluja

BAGHDAD, 23 Jan — Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said on Wednesday it was time to clear al-Qaeda-linked militants out of the rebel-held city of Falluja, but set no deadline for any military assault.

The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), an al-Qaeda offshoot also on the frontlines of Syria's civil war, overran Falluja with help from other Sunni Muslim groups on 1 January.

Iraqi troops and security forces have set up a loose cordon around the city, 50 km (31 miles) west of Baghdad, and have clashed sporadically with insurgents inside, but Maliki has said community leaders and tribesmen should force ISIL to withdraw, in order to spare Falluja more bloodshed and destruction.

"The time has come to settle this issue and end the presence of this gang in this city and save its people from their evil," Maliki said in his weekly televised address to the nation.

Three hours later, helicopter gunships bombarded eastern and northern districts of Falluja, residents said. It was not clear if that was the prelude to wider military action. Helicopters have been in action before on the outskirts of the city.

On Tuesday, Iraqi air force strikes killed more than 50 militants of various Arab nationalities and destroyed large amounts of ammunition in the western Province of Anbar, a Defense Ministry statement said. It did not say exactly where the raids on "garth-erings of terrorist groups" took place.

Maliki again urged the people of Falluja to "take crucial positions on the presence of those dirty people without losses and without sacrifices," but set no precise time limit.

Supporters of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad hold a demonstration in support of his government near the venue of Syrian peace talks in Montreux, Switzerland, on 22 Jan, 2014.—KYODO NEWS

A pro-European protestor throws tyres into a fire during street violence in Kiev on 23 Jan, 2014.—REUTERS

Gunmen fighters walk with their weapons in the streets of the city of Ramadi, 100 km (62 miles) west of Baghdad, on 21 Jan, 2014.—REUTERS

New Light of Myanmar
Mediterranean diet may be good for leg arteries, too

NEW YORK, 23 Jan — People who eat a Mediterranean diet high in olive oil or nuts may reduce their likelihood of developing clogged leg arteries, according to new research from Spain. The finding follows results from the same trial published last year that showed sticking to a Mediterranean diet could lower the risk of heart attack and stroke.

“Now we have this very strong reduction in the risk of peripheral arterial disease.” said Martinez-Gonzalez, from University of Navarra in Pamplona, told Reuters Health. “This is very reassuring.” Peripheral artery disease arises when plaque builds up in the arteries that carry blood to the legs and feet, restricting blood flow. The condition often causes leg pain and fatigue, especially during walking. The current trial, Martinez-Gonzalez said, is the first to randomly assign people with already-damaged arteries to a Mediterranean or other diet and see how they fare.

He and his colleagues assigned 7,477 older Spaniards to one of three diet plans: a Mediterranean-style diet supplemented with extra-virgin olive oil, a Mediterranean diet with extra nuts or a standard low-fat diet. Participants met with a dietician four times each year to track eating habits and set goals for how to follow their prescribed diet more closely. The researchers also gave them shopping lists, menus and recipes as well as free olive oil or nuts for those assigned to the Mediterranean diets. Although none of the participants had heart disease at the start of the study, all were deemed to be at risk because they had diabetes or a combination of other risk factors.

Over an average of almost five years, 89 people in the study developed peripheral arterial disease. That included 18 in the olive oil group, 26 in the nuts group and 45 in the low-fat comparison group, the researchers wrote in the Journal of the American Medical Association. They found the Mediterranean diet supplemented with olive oil cut people’s risk of peripheral arterial disease by 44 percent, and the one with extra nuts cut the risk in half. But because the condition was relatively rare, they calculated that more than 300 people would have to eat a Mediterranean-style diet instead of a low-fat one to prevent one case of peripheral artery disease.

China’s Lenovo nears deal to buy IBM’s server

NEW YORK, 23 Jan — Lenovo Group Ltd is nearing a deal to buy IBM’s low-end server business for $2.5 billion, a deal that would help the Chinese company counter the shrinking personal computers market, people familiar with the matter said.

The timing of the deal was uncertain, with one of the people saying an announcement could come as early as Thursday. The final price could be close to the bottom end of the range, the person said. Lenovo, the world’s biggest PC maker, halted trading in its shares pending an announcement in respect of a transaction. The potential deal comes after IBM missed revenue expectations for the fourth consecutive quarter when it reported earnings earlier this week.

IMF raises global economic forecast as constraints on growth gradually ease

WASHINGTON, 23 Jan — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday slightly raised its growth forecast for the world economy to 3.7 percent in 2014, 0.1 percentage point higher than its October projection. “Global activity strengthened during the second half of 2013,” the IMF said in an update of its World Economic Outlook report. “Activity is expected to improve further in 2014-15, largely on account of recovery in the advanced economies.”

Growth in advanced economies was expected to be 2.2 percent in 2014, up from 1.3 percent in 2013. It was 0.2 percentage point higher than the growth rate projected in October.

“The euro area is turning the corner from recession to recovery,” noted the report, the IMF’s Global Economic Outlook report. “Activity is expected to slow down slightly in 2014-15, largely on account of recovery in the advanced economies.”

Mediterranean diet may be good for leg arteries, too

NEW YORK, 23 Jan — Even drivers with a slight “buzz” are more likely to be at fault for accidents than the sober drivers they hit, according to a new study. The authors looked at fatal car crash data from a US national database of more than 570,000 collisions between 1994 and 2011 and found there appears to be no safe level of alcohol in the bloodstream when it comes to driving.

“This has a very wide range of implications,” lead author David Phillips, a sociologist at University of California, San Diego, said. “For the individual driver it means don’t drive while buzzed, and for a passenger, don’t get in a car with a driver who is buzzed. Find a way to make the sober one the driver.” The data Phillips and his colleagues analyzed included blood alcohol content (BAC) measurements for the drivers as well as clear indicators of blame for the accident, such as which driver ran a red light or drove in the wrong lane.

Drivers with a BAC of 0.1 percent, the lowest level recorded in the dataset, were 46 percent more likely to be solely blamed for the crash than a sober driver, according to the results published in the journal Injury Prevention. An adult man would need half of one 12-ounce beer to generate a 0.1 percent BAC reading on a breathalyzer test. That is well below the US legal driving limit of 0.08 percent. For men and women, as blood alcohol level increased, so did the possibility of blame for the accident.

That’s what would be expected based on previous research, Phillips said, and this study won’t be particularly surprising to researchers, but it is the first nationwide analysis of data on “buzzed” drivers. “There’s nothing magical about 0.08,” he added. No research indicates that a great change in driving capacity takes place between 0.07 and 0.08. “The lower we can make the legal BAC, the safer everyone will be,” he said. Many European countries have legal limits of 0.05, and limits in Sweden and Japan and are even lower, Phillips said.
Facebook tests ad network business on other companies’ mobile apps

San Francisco, 23 Jan — Facebook Inc said on Wednesday that it is displaying ads from a small group of marketers on other companies’ smartphone apps, the latest sign that the world’s No 1 online social network is closer to launching an ad network business.

Facebook said that the test is currently limited to a “few” advertisers and mobile app publishers. “Our aim is to demonstrate even greater reach with the same power of Facebook targeting for advertisers both on and off Facebook,” the company said in a post on its official business blog.

Facebook generates the bulk of its revenue from ads that appear on its own pages and in the Facebook mobile app. It has experimented with offering ads beyond the confines of its own social networking website in the past, including an effort last year in which it partnered with other ad networks and a previous experiment with social game company Zynga Inc.

Ad networks, which distribute online ads across a constellation of independent websites and apps, typically share a portion of the ad revenue with their partners. Selling ads that appear in mobile apps could provide Facebook with a new source of revenue by expanding the amount of ads it sells. In the current test, Facebook said it will effectively operate its own ad network.

Analysts expect Facebook, which has roughly 1.2 billion users, to report revenue of $2.34 billion for its fourth quarter next week. Facebook declined to comment on the financial aspects, including any revenue sharing arrangements, of its mobile ad network test.—Reuters

Mystery white rock inexplicably appears near NASA Mars rover

CAPE CANAVERAL, (Florida), 23 Jan — Scientists are stumped as to how a rock mysteriously appeared in images taken two weeks apart by NASA’s Mars rover Opportunity. The rover, which landed in an area known as Meridiani Planum a decade ago, is exploring the rim of a crater for signs of past water. Another rover, Curiosity, touched down on the opposite side of the planet in 2012 for a more ambitious mission to look for past habitable environments.

For the moment, however, scientists are pondering a more immediate question. On 8 January, while preparing to use its robotic arm for science investigation, Opportunity sent back a picture of its work area.

Oddly, it showed a bright white rock, about the size of a doughnut, where only barren bedrock had appeared in a picture taken two weeks earlier. Scientists suspect the rock was flipped over by one of the rover’s wheels.

It also may have been deposited after a meteorite landed nearby. Either way, the rock, dubbed “Pinnacle Island” is providing an unexpected science bonus. “Much of the rock is bright-toned, nearly white,” NASA said in a statement on Tuesday. “A portion is deep red in color. Pinnacle Island may have been flipped upside-down when a wheel dislodged it, providing an unusual circumstance for examining the underside of a Martian rock.”

Water vapour plumes raise question about life on dwarf planet Ceres

WASHINGTON, 23 Jan — The dwarf planet Ceres, one of the most intriguing objects in the solar system, is gushing water vapour from its unusual ice-covered surface, scientists said on Wednesday in a finding that raises the question of whether it might be habitable to life.

Using the European Space Agency’s Herschel infrared space telescope, researchers spotted plumes of water vapour periodically spewing from Ceres, the largest object in the asteroid belt residing between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

The discovery comes just over a year before the scheduled arrival of NASA’s Dawn spacecraft for a closer look at Ceres, a round body measuring about 590 miles in diameter—less than a third of the size of the moon. “This is the first time water vapor has been unequivocally detected on Ceres or any other object in the asteroid belt and provides proof that Ceres has an icy surface and an atmosphere,” Michael Kueppers of the European Space Agency in Spain, who also led the research published in the journal Nature, said in a statement.

The question is what is causing these plumes of water vapour from two locations on Ceres. One idea, according to scientists, is that the sun sometimes warms parts of the icy surface enough that water vapor emerges. Another possibility, they say, is that there is liquid water under the frozen surface of Ceres and that vapour is shooting out of geysers or icy volcanoes before the discovery in 1930 of the more famous — and more distant — dwarf planet Pluto. It is one of the few places in the solar system aside from Earth where water has been located. A big question about the discovery of water vapour on Ceres is what it means regarding the possibility of life.

A NASA combination handout photograph shows the surface of Mars in front of the Mars rover on 26 Dec. 2013 (L) and on 8 Jan, 2014.—Reuters

VMware to buy mobile security firm AirWatch for $1.54 billion

NEW YORK, 23 Jan — Cloud software maker VMware Inc said it would buy privately held mobile security company AirWatch for $1.54 billion to tap into rising demand from companies to secure the smartphones and tablets used by employees.

While some analysts view the deal as a threat to BlackBerry Ltd, which has long been the go-to for security products, others say the deal could spur more acquisitions in the mobile security market. VMware itself has entered this market recently. Its main business is making virtualization software, which creates a virtual machine that acts like a real computer. This helps companies cut IT costs by saving on server and storage space.

“The deal will make it more challenging for BlackBerry as it now faces strong competitors,” said Amitabh Passi said the deal will make it more challenging for BlackBerry as it now faces strong competitors and said he expects Google Inc, Apple Inc and Microsoft Corp to look for acquisitions to bolster their presence in the mobile enterprise market.

VMware shares were 2.3 percent up at $99.57 in afternoon trade on the New York Stock Exchange after the company also forecast fourth-quarter and current-quarter revenue above analysts’ estimates.
Peaceful co-existence

Peaceful co-existence is one the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence of the United Nations. It means the peaceful co-existence of all mankind living in the world, regardless of race, religion and color. Despite differences, peaceful co-existence could bring substantial benefits for global citizens.

If each and every family, community, country and region live together in peace, it is sure all will have the benefit of peaceful co-existence. If the concept of peaceful coexistence prevails among the people of the world, regardless of the level of wealth and color, peace is possible.

Peaceful coexistence is one and only way to ensure peace in the world. A genuine will for peace is imperative. World peace can only be brought about by those who wish and long for peace. It is the only way to ensure a peaceful region and peaceful society.

Stability can be realized by establishing a lasting peace in a region or in a society. Stability is not possible in a region or a society that lacks security. Stability is important for achieving sustainable development in a certain country.

There can be true happiness and peace through the fullest respect for peace and stability. Without peace and stability, development cannot be realized. It is required to value peace and stability for achieving development.

Likewise, prosperity can be obtained only through effective development project implementation management. Prosperity would come as a result of sustainable development that enables a certain country to achieve prosperity and develop a prosperous society.

Let’s build a prosperous world through our commitment to peaceful co-existence for ensuring peace, stability, sustainable development and prosperity.

Sniper scopes, military equipment seized on Mongla-Kengtung road

KENGUTNG, 23 Jan — A combined team seized sniper scopes, military equipment and illegal cans of meat while conducting a search of a six-wheeled truck heading for Kengtung from Mongla at about 11 am yesterday.

Officials said 250 sniper scopes measuring 11.5 inches in length with a diameter of 1.5 inch, 250 containers of sniper accessories, 500 military equipment and 1656 cans of meat were found in the truck. It is learnt that actions will be taken against driver Sai Sam Aung, 34, and his colleague Aye Tun, 40, who have been taken into police custody in accord with the law.—Kengtung IPRD

Equal aid for both communities in Rakhine State discussed

NAO PYI TAW, 23 Jan — Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win held talks with EU Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Roland Kobia at the Border Affairs Ministry this evening.

At the meeting, they discussed aid of EU member countries for both communities in Rakhine State and more humanitarian assistance, equal assistance of EU for both communities in Rakhine State and more assistance for needy regions, and further cooperation between EU and Ministry of Border Affairs. — MNA

Union Minister holds talks with UNSG’s Adviser

NAO PYI TAW, 23 Jan — Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Myat Myat Naing held talks with UNSG’s Special Adviser Mr. Vijay Nambiar at the ministry, here, this afternoon.

The Union minister talked about completion of formulation of social security policies and laws for women, children, persons with disabilities and the aged and ongoing works, works being carried out for provision of assistance to IDPs in Rakhine State in cooperation with UN agencies and INGOs and homecoming of 134 Myanmar fishermen who drifted out to the sea due to the bad weather in 2013 and were rescued in neighbouring countries.

The UNSG’s adviser insisted that the UN’s humanitarian agencies have helped both communities.

Regional stability ...

(form from page 16)

They visited Kantha Htewta and Taunggaw relief camps and donated offerings to Thiri Mingala Southern monastery Sayadaw.

They looked round basic education primary schools being constructed with the assistance of Indonesia in Minbya Township and met with locals in MraukU Township.

On 22 January, they visited Kyeinippin and Hsintetmaw relief camps in Pauktaw Township and coordinated the essentials. They also inspected relief camps, rehabilitation and progress of housings in Sittway in the evening. — MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission

Nay Pyi Taw
Notification No. (6/2014)
8th Waning of Pyatho, 1375 ME
(23 January, 2014)

Union Pa-O National Organization allowed to register as political party

The Union Election Commission announced today that Union Pa-O National Organization headquartered at No. (Nya/1094), region (3), West Circular Road, Nyaungphusakan Ward, Taunggyi Township, Shan State, has been allowed to register as a political party as of 23 January, 2014 in accord with Section 9 of Political Parties Registration Law. The registration number of the party is 73.

By order,
(Myint Naing)
Member
Union Election Commission
Barack Obama, President of the US, said the US and Myanmar should continue to work closely and cooperate on issues of mutual interest. He also thanked the government of Myanmar for its hospitality and support during his visit. "The United States and Myanmar have a long and complex history, but we are now on a new and promising path," Obama said. "I look forward to continued cooperation and partnership with Myanmar as we work together to build a stronger, more prosperous, and more secure future for our countries and the region."

Tourists travelling Myanmar in their automobiles

This morning, Deputy Ministers for Hotels and Tourism Dr Tin Shwe and Dr Sai Kyaw Oo welcomed them at Golden Palace Hotel. The classic car rally left here for Kalaw. The rally will go along the route Yangon-Toungoo-Nay Pyi Taw-Kalaw-Inlay-Pindaya-Mandalay-PyinUOoLwin-Monywa-Bagan-Popa-Bagan-Pyin-Yangon. Their trip started on 19 January and will finish on 8 February.—MNA

Two children injured as Mingaladon explosion in critical condition

YANGON, 23 Jan—An explosion occurred at 7:20 am today in Mingaladon, injuring two children. An unidentified item exploded at the backyard of Room No 6 (U) Hla Win and Daw Khin Khin Win at staff quarters No (A) in Hlaingtaw Island Akarit Ward on Yangon-Bago Road in Mingaladon Township while 8-year-old Maung Myo Ko was playing it along with his 10-month-old sister Ma Khaing Thazin Win.

The two children got life-threatening injuries in the explosion. They were rushed to Yangon General Hospital where intensive care is given to them. Photo shows child injured in explosion in Mingaladon Township.—MNA

Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye meets faculty members and trainees from Master of Public Administration of Institute of Economics.—MNA

Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye met with the professor (Dean), faculty members and trainees from Master of Public Administration Course of Yangon Institute of Economics at UEC Office, here, this afternoon.

UEC Chairman U Tin Aye clarified programmes for holding free and fair elections, arrangements for casting vote of eligible citizens, establishment of political parties, rights of eligible voters and preparation for the election held in Nepal and replied queries raised by the trainees.

UEC members Dr Daw Myint Kyi and U Win Kyi explained formation of UEC and its responsibilities and reviewed the election held in Nepal and replied queries raised by the trainees. UEC Chairman U Tin Aye clarified programmes for holding free and fair elections, arrangements for casting vote of eligible citizens, establishment of political parties, rights of eligible voters and preparation for the election held in Nepal and replied queries raised by the trainees.

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The two children got life-threatening injuries in the explosion. They were rushed to Yangon General Hospital where intensive care is given to them.
LOCAL NEWS

6th Rakhine Traditional Coach pulling festival on 12-14 Feb

SITTWAY, 23 Jan—Rakhine traditional coach pulling ceremony will be held for the sixth time at Wingabar Ground in Ywagyiyaung Ward of Sittway, Rakhine State from 12 to 14 February. The organizing committee will hold the ceremony in Rakhine traditions. It is a significant traditional festival of Rakhine national. The winning team has to incinerate the coach before noon of the fullmoon day of Tabodee.

Suspects in playing card, illegal two-digit lottery seized in Meiktila District

MEIKTILA, 23 Jan—Under the supervision of Meiktila District Police Force Commander Police Lt-Col Sao Nay Lin, plans are underway to install three more traffic lights at downtown Meiktila of Meiktila District in Mandalay Region.

“As Meiktila is a district level town, it has five highways in a junction. The town is bustling with runs of vehicles. Hence, three more traffic lights will be installed in three junctions of the town such as the junctions near No 1 Basic Education High School in Nandawgon Ward, near Meiktila Education College in Paukchaung Ward and near Highway Bus Terminal in Thiri Mingala Ward. Tenders have been invited for the works. The installation of traffic lights will be completed soon,” said Township Administrator U Myo Hlaing.

Three traffic lights to be installed in downtown Meiktila

MEIKTILA, 23 Jan—Plans are underway to install three more traffic lights at downtown Meiktila of Meiktila District in Mandalay Region.

“The organizing committee will hold the ceremony in Rakhine traditions. It is a significant traditional festival of Rakhine national. The winning team has to incinerate the coach before noon of the fullmoon day of Tabodee.”

The traffic lights and traffic police outposts have been built in Tawwinnan Junction in Aungzeyar Ward, Yoma Bank junctionin Myanmar Ward in Meiktila. The already built traffic lights are located on the inner circular road of the town heading for Yangon-Mandalay-Myingyan-Kyaupadaung-Taunggyi.—MMAL-Chan Tha (Meiktila)

National Objectives of 67th Anniversary Union Day 2014

- For all the national races to cultivate the Union Spirit to perpetuate the Union
- For all the national races to live in unity and harmony
- For all the national races to build up the prevailing national reconciliation
- For all citizens to participate in tasks for tranquility and the rule of law
- For all the national races to join efforts for modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation

CONSTRUCTION

Corridor recently collapsed under repairs

MEIKTILA, 23 Jan—The circular corridor of Meiktila Lake collapsed at 8 pm on 7 October 2013 near Yangon-Mandalay Road in Meiktila. The collapsed corridor was worth K 6 million. It was built 60 years ago.

Meiktila District Deputy Commissioner U Tin Maung Soe inspected the collapsed corridor at the night and said the plan will be implemented to repair the corridor as soon as possible. After three months, the corridor is being repaired.

PAY YOUR TAX

Special sales of Chanmyae Trading Cooperative Society

MANDALAY, 23 Jan—Chanmyae Cooperative Trading Cooperative held the special sales at its office at the corner of 22nd and 86th Streets in Aungmyethazan Township of Mandalay on 21 January in commemoration of its 20th anniversary ceremony.

It was attended by Township Cooperative Department Staff Officer U Kyaw Hsan Lin and officials, Chairman of Township Cooperative Syndicate U Han and party. The Staff Officer met with Chairman of the cooperative society U Ba Kyi and party, accountant U Tun Hla Aung and staff at the office.

The chairman reported on purpose of holding the special sales after abolishing the consumer cooperative society in line with the 1992 Cooperative Law. The accountant explained the financial statement. The staff officer and party cordially greeted the customers at the special sales and viewed the display of goods. Members of the cooperative society got the opportunity when they bought goods worth K 3000, they would get one Pyi of Manaw Thukha rice worth K 1500.—MMAL-387
Tokyo, 23 Jan — A group of ruling Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers on Thursday compiled a proposal calling on the government to devise an energy policy that seeks to phase out nuclear power generation in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear crisis.

“The region should make clear that new commercial reactors should not be built...and that reactors that have operated for 40 years should be scrapped,” the group of about 50 lawmakers, led by anti-nuclear lower house member Taro Kono, said.

The proposal, which also calls for the need to end Japan’s long-standing spent fuel recycling policy, goes against the content of a draft energy plan devised by a government panel in December.

“The draft said that nuclear power must be an important base-load power source” that should continue to be used. Base-load power refers to electricity sources that are cheap and stable, and can also be used continuously.

Kono said the group opposes nuclear power being given such a status and that it should be referred to as “an energy source in a transition period.”

“We must not allow the government to decide a Basic Energy Plan that does not show our regret over the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant,” Kono told reporters.

The group plans to submit the proposal to the government in the near future.

In 2012, the previous government led by the Democratic Party of Japan crafted an energy strategy that sought to phase out nuclear power by the end of the 2030s.

But the LDP returned to power in December the same year, seeking to re-extend the goal and shape it as a “responsible” energy policy.

Nuclear power supplied about 30 percent of Japan’s total electricity before the Fukushima crisis, but concerns over its safety have led to a prolonged halt of many nuclear reactors.

Kyodo News

Indonesian police prepares to dispatch personnel to catastrophe-hit areas

Jakarta, 23 Jan — Indonesian national police plans to deploy 3,500 of its personnel to catastrophe-affected areas nationwide to help affected people as fears for risks of heavy downpours linger in months to come, police officer said here on Wednesday.

Badrodinoh Hait, senior police officer at the police headquarters, said that the deployment was part of police participation in a quick response to the possible catastrophe in the country, which has a large number of street children as the meteorology agency foresees rain is going to peak up to March. We are preparing to take part in efforts to handle its risks in a long term,” Hait said.

“Once the provincial police require help from us, we are ready to comply with it, sending personal and equipment.”

Photo taken 24 Oct, 2013, shows “rokyoku” storyteller Keiko Haruno, who will make her first overseas performance in New York in March 2014 with money raised on an online crowdfunding platform.— Kyodo News

Philippine president gets “very good” rating from typhoon victims

MANILA, 23 Jan — The performance of Philippine President Benigno Aquino III was rated “very good” by victims of Typhoon Haiyan, locally known as Yolanda, according to a survey published by research institute Social Weather Stations (SWS) on Thursday.

Results of the SWS fourth quarter survey, which was conducted on 11 to 16 December, showed that 13 percent of Filipino households suffered “serious harm” during the recent super typhoon.

SWS noted that the survey found higher satisfaction ratings for Aquino among typhoon victims compared to those who were not victimized by Haiyan. Among typhoon vic- tims, 73 percent reported that they were satisfied with Aquino’s performance as president. This boosted the net satisfaction rating of Aquino to +54 which the SWS classifies as “very good.”

In contrast, 69 percent of non-victims said they were satisfied while 21 per- cent were dissatisfied with Aquino’s performance, bringing his net satisfaction rating to +48. SWS said this is classified as “good.”

According to the survey, 48 percent of respondents expressed satisfaction over the president. This boosted the president’s satisfaction rating to +13, a “satisfactory” level.

The draft said that nuclear power must be an important base-load power source” that should continue to be used. Base-load power refers to electricity sources that are cheap and stable, and can also be used continuously.

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Kyodo News

Photo taken 24 Oct, 2013, shows “rokyoku” storyteller Keiko Haruno, who will make her first overseas performance in New York in March 2014 with money raised on an online crowdfunding platform.— Kyodo News

Philippine education chief fears rise of out-of-school youth

MANILA, 23 Jan — The Philippines’ education minister expressed fear on Wednesday of a possible increase in the number of the country’s out-of-school youth as a result of the devast- ation caused by super typhoon Haiyan on 8 Novem- ber last year.

Armin Luistro said even as the government is working doubly hard with private donors for the re- habilitation of damaged schools in the central Philip- pines, there are also ef- forts to account for children who have failed to return to their schools.

“When I toured the af- fected places at a time that schools have already reo- pened, I saw some children walking around on a Thurs- day, which is supposed to be a school day. I was wondering why they were not in school, or do they re- ally intend to go to school?”

Luistro told reporters after receiving pledges and ac- tual donations from several private organizations and companies for the recon- struction of wrecked school buildings.

According to the government, close to 2,800 classrooms in various el- ementary and high schools were totally destroyed while 13,021 others were partially damaged by what was described as the strongest typhoon to hit land ever.

Some 1.5 million el- ementary and high school students, representing around 7 percent of the country’s total enrollment for the current school year, were affected, of which, 254,723 need to be covered by a month-long free food provision in school.

On Luistro’s prod- ding to encourage the start of normalcy, almost all af- fected schools started op- erations on 2 December last year to account for and de- brief their students. Formal, partial classes resumed only on 6 January this year.

“Uzumaki” in his talks with Cho and said he “would like to move the relationship forward with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se.”

Cho said he will con- vey Kishida’s message to Yun and expressed hopes that the two countries will enhance effective discus- sions, the Japanese minis- try said.

Kishida and Cho met on the sidelines of an interna- tional conference on Syria in Montreux.

Kyodo News

Japan calls on S Korea to move bilateral ties forward

MONTREUX, (Switzer- land), 23 Jan — Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida on Wednesday stressed the need for moving Tokyo’s relations with Seoul forward in a meeting with South Korean Second Vice Foreign Minister Cho Tae Yul.

According to the Japanese Foreign Minis- try, Kishida described Ja- pan’s relations with South Korea as “important to Japan” in his talks with Cho and said he “would like to move the relationship forward with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se.”

Cho said he will con- vey Kishida’s message to Yun and expressed hopes that the two countries will enhance effective discus- sions, the Japanese minis- try said.

Kishida and Cho met on the sidelines of an interna- tional conference on Syria in Montreux.

Kyodo News
China shoe workshop collapse kills five, injures two

CHONGQING, 23 Jan — Five people were crushed to death and two injured after a building rented by a small leather shoe factory as workshops in southwest China collapsed on Tuesday night, local authorities announced Wednesday.

The accident took place at about 7:45 pm Tuesday when 13 workers were having meals in the first floor of a three-story building in a village in the Nan’an district in the city of Chongqing, the district government said in a statement.

The rescue operation ended on Wednesday and among seven buried, two were pulled out alive and five were already dead. An investigation into the cause of the collapse is underway.

Nigerian parliament seeks end to communal crisis nationwide

LAGOS, 23 Jan — The Nigerian House of Representatives on Wednesday urged President Goodluck Jonathan to intervene in the incessant communal clashes resulting in deaths between herdsmen and farmers. The House also urged the Nigerian leader to convene a stakeholders’ meeting of leaders of ethnic groups to put an end to the incessant clashes.

More than 500 people were killed in various communal clashes across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria in 2013.

The resolution followed a motion moved by a member of the parliament from central north Kogi State Sunday Karimi, which was unanimously adopted. Karimi told the lower chamber that the continued attacks on communities across the country by herdsmen and the counter-attacks has become a daily occurrence.

He said within the last 30 days over 100 innocent lives have been lost on account of these needless attacks and counter attacks. According to him, the duty of any government, as enshrined in section 14(2) of the 1999 Constitution, is to guarantee the welfare of the people.

He stressed that as representatives of the Nigerian people they owed them the duty to protect them.

The west African country has a population of 167 million and disputes about land and the ensuing violence has long been a headache for the Nigerian government, who is struggling to fight the rampant Boko Haram militants in the north. —Xinhua

First chocolate salon in Brussels set for February

BRUSSELS, 23 Jan — The first chocolate salon in Brussels will be held from 7 to 9 February in the Belgian capital, announced Vice Mayor Marion Lemesre at a press conference on Tuesday.

The salon will be attended by 89 chocolatiers, Belgian and international. At the salon, visitors can not only follow the great masters and sample their recipes, but also try their skills at the workshops.

The event will also include a parade of chocolate dresses, fashion creators and chocolate masters’ common work. Famous Belgian chocolatier Leonidas will show a colossal chocolate sculpture, measuring nearly four meters high, for its 100th anniversary.

A work of Jean-Luc Decluzeau, the sculpture is an efigy of the king of Sparta, the emblem of the brand Leonidas since its creation. It is created to pay homage to its founder Leonidas Kestekides who bore the same name as the Greek king.

Chocolate is considered as one of the three specialties of the small kingdom Belgium, along with diamond and beer.

Belgium is now the second largest consumer of chocolate in the world, behind Switzerland, with an average of nearly ten pounds per year per person. Belgian chocolate is known for its original and diverse tastes.

Chocolate is a major player in Belgium’s local economic development.

The pentagon of Brussel alone has 32 companies specializing in the manufacture of cocoa and chocolate. For between 2004 and 2009, the turnover of the chocolate rose 53 percent in Brussels, while investment rose in the same period by 50 percent, from 10 million to 15 million euros (13.68 million to 20.52 million US dollars). —Xinhua
Boy band, The Wanted, to take a break after tour

NEW YORK, 23 Jan — Boy band, The Wanted, said on Wednesday they were taking a break and that their upcoming Word of Mouth Tour would be their last for a while.

The group, whose members are British and Irish and whose hit singles include “I Found You,” “Chasing the Sun” and “Glad You Came,” said they had decided to pursue their own personal plans.

“The band wants to stress to their fans that they will continue on as The Wanted and look forward to many successful projects together in the future,” they said on their website, which also announced the release of a new video and single “Glow in the Dark.”

The group, comprising Max George, Siva Kane-swaran, Nathan Sykes, Tom Parker and Jay McGuiness, was formed in 2009 and its members are in their early 20s.

They were signed by Justin Bieber’s manager Scooter Braun and hit the US pop charts in 2012 with their infectious dance songs.

Known for their rau-cous behaviour, the band appeared in a reality show produced by Ryan Seacrest Productions on US cable network E! that premiered in June. It followed the band as they prepared for their album and world tour.

The Wanted’s 2014 tour will take them to Eu-rope and Britain and Ireland during February and March, and to the US in April and May.

Bruce Springsteen’s ‘High Hopes’ lands atop Billboard chart

LOS ANGELES, 23 Jan — “The Boss” is back on top of the Billboard 200 album chart on Wednes-day as Bruce Springsteen scored his 11th No 1 album with “High Hopes,” more than three decades after first reaching the chart’s apex.

The album from the 64-year-old rocker sold 99,000 in its opening week to top the soundtrack of the film “Frozen,” which had topped the charts for the past two weeks and sold 87,000 copies last week, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

Springsteen now has the third-most albums to reach the top of the weekly Billboard chart, surpassing Elvis Presley and trailing only rapper Jay Z, who has 13 No 1 albums, and the Beatles’ record 19 chart-topping albums, Billboard said.

But “High Hopes” is Springsteen’s first studio album to have fewer than 100,000 in first-week sales since Nielsen SoundScan began compiling figures for Bill-board in 1991, the magazine said.

More than a third of the album’s sales were physical copies sold online, Billboard said, noting that Amazon.com’s special offer of the album paired with a DVD of a Springsteen concert helped boost over-all sales.

“Kidz Bop 25,” the newest release from the Kidz Bop series of albums in which children sing pop hits, entered the charts at No 3, selling 76,000 copies.

Country singer Jennifer Nettles, half of the duo Sugarland, entered the chart at No 5 with her first solo album, “That Girl,” selling 54,000 copies.

Christian alternative rock band Switchfoot capped the new entries in the top 10 at No 6 with their ninth studio album, “Fading West,” selling 39,000 copies.

Pop singer Katy Perry’s song “Dark Horse,” featur-ing rapper Juicy J, kept its top spot on the digital songs chart with 261,000 downloads in the past week, up 7 percent from last week.

Total album sales for the week were 4.4 million, an 11 percent decline from the same week last year but up 4 percent from sales last week.

Album sales for the year to date are 14.1 mil-lion, a 14 percent decline from the same period in 2013.

Individual song download sales total 80.3 million for the year so far, off 12 per-cent over the same period last year.

Kareena Kapoor not sure about Shuddhi

MUMBAI, 23 Jan — Actress Kareena Kapoor is not sure about the status of Shuddhi and says she will now “decide whether to do it” depending on her “mood”.

Karan Johar’s produc-tion Shuddhi, to be directed by Karan Malhotra, fea-tures Hrithik Roshan in the lead role. But the movie has been delayed.

At an event for a tea brand, when Kareena was asked about doing the film when it goes on the floors, she said, “I will decide whether to do it. It will de-pend on my mood at that time.”

The film got postponed following Hrithik’s health issues. The actor had to under-go brain surgery follow-ing a blood clot.

Shuddhi is yet to go on the floors, Kareena says she doesn’t know about what lies ahead for the project.

“As of now I don’t know what is happening re-garding that film (Shuddhi) as since one and half years it is being postponed,” Ka-reena said.

“I have not met Karan Johar and I don’t think he even has got Hrithik’s dates for the film as he is busy with Bang Bang,” she add-ed.—PTI

Selena Gomez parties with mystery man

Singer Selena Gomez was partying with a mystery man at the Sundance Film Festival.

The Come & Get It singer, who was recently thought to have reunited with her ex-boyfriend Justin Bieber, appeared at the festival to promote her new film Rudderless Tuesday night (21 January) and attended the Grey Goose party alongside a man described as having shaggy blond hair and wearing a green sweater. “She went right up to him really early on,” people.com quoted a source as saying.

Selena Gomez was then seen getting very close to the mystery man.—PTI
**Real Madrid stay top of money league despite barren year**

London, 23 Jan — Spain's Real Madrid retained the title of the world's richest soccer club in the past year thanks to sponsorship and TV deals robust enough to endure a season without a major trophy, a study showed on Thursday.

Real's revenue of 519 million euros put the club ahead of domestic rivals Barcelona in fiscal 2012/2013, with European champions Bayern Munich edging into third ahead of Manchester United, in the annual Football Money League compiled by accountants Deloitte.

Qatar-owned Paris St Germain (PSG), where former England captain David Beckham ended his career last year, underlined its emergence as a soccer power with an 81 percent rise in revenue to almost 400 million euros to claim fifth spot.

Revenue for the top 20 teams rose by 8 percent to 4.4 billion euros, Deloitte said, underlining the appeal of soccer to broadcasters and sponsors targeting mass consumer markets.

Real Madrid and Barcelona are two of the most consistently successful teams in Europe, fielding top players such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi respectively.

The two clubs enjoy the financial advantage of being able to negotiate their own TV deals, rather than pooling TV rights income as teams in other major leagues have to do. Yet Spain's TV rights model and the country's economic crisis have left many of its smaller clubs facing a challenge to survive and develop a bigger share of cash from broadcasters.

Speaking to Reuters this week, Barcelona Vice President Carles Vila rubi said only the bigger teams could deliver the kind of viewing figures TV companies demand. "It's a question of balance because people want to watch Barca and Real Madrid and PSG and Bayern Munich games," Vilarrubi said.

"We should equalise a little bit the income of the clubs but at the same time we should consider that the TV channels need to offer the games that people want to watch." Manchester United won the English premier league for a record 20th time last year, but the team has struggled on the pitch this season and risks missing out on qualification for a place in the lucrative UEFA Champions League.

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**Li Na beats Bouchard, reaches third Australian Open final**

Melbourne, 23 Jan — When Alex Ferguson took the microphone at Old Trafford in May to import Manchester United supporters to back his self-appointed successor, David Moyes, he did so with a warning of tough times ahead. Few, though, would have expected it to be this trying.

"I'd like to remind you that we've had bad times here," Ferguson said after signing off his last match in charge of United's fortress home he had spent 27 years building up with a 2-1 win over Swansea City.

"The club stood by me. All my staff stood by me. The players stood by me. So your job now is to stand by our new manager. That is important."

Following Wednesday's League Cup semi-final exit at the hands of struggling Sunderland, that request is being severely tested by United fans all over the world who have gorged on the glory of trophy after trophy arriving at Old Trafford.

Their trophy hopes this season now lie only in the Champions League, where the English champions will remain confident of beating Greek Olympiakos Piraeus in the Last 16 next month but less so of taking out others after that.

The challenge of European giants such as Barcelona, Real Madrid or Bayern Munich looks far beyond a confidence sapped side who have seen long unbeaten home records against everyone, Newcastle United and West Bromwich Albion all end this season.

The absence of Wayne Rooney and Robin van Persie from the starting lineup in recent weeks has been greatly felt, with reports linking both forwards away from the club, but the problems lie deeper than their return to fitness.

Defenders are making mistakes, midfielders are being overrun, chances not being created, while commentators question why Moyes is opting to be more defensive and shy away from the crowd-pleasing, attacking style his predecessor implemented.

"Of course, you would expect a better standard because, don't forget, there are a lot of internationals out there," Moyes said after the penalty shootout loss to Sunderland, who will play Manchester City in the final at Wembley.

"In the end, I just don't think we got the level of performance we needed to go through the game. If we had got through, I would have been disappointed with the performance, but I'm doubly disappointed that we haven't got to the final."

United are not in action this weekend as their rivals City, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea compete in the fourth round of the FA Cup, a tournament Ferguson once famously shunned in favour of going after what is now the Club World Cup.

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**Cibulkova beats Radwanska to make first-ever Grand Slam final**

Melbourne, 23 Jan — Dominika Cibulkova became the first Slovakian tennis player ever to reach the final of a Grand Slam event when she beat Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland 6-1, 6-2 at the semi-finals of the Australian Open here on Thursday.

Dominka Cibulkova of Slovakia celebrates after winning women's singles semifinal against Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland at 2014 Australian Open tournament in Melbourne, Australia, on 23 Jan 2014. — Xinhua

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**Moyes suffers nightmares at Theatre of Dreams**

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**Toronto Mayor Rob Ford calls latest rant video a ‘minor setback’**

**TOLENTO, 23 Jan — A video of Toronto Mayor Rob Ford ranting in a Jamaican accent and slamming his words on Monday was a “minor setback,” he said, maintaining that his personal life did not interfere with his job. “Monday was unfortunate. I had a minor setback. We all experience these difficult bumps in life,” Ford said at a press conference called on Wednesday to discuss the city’s budget vote.

“...This is completely a private matter. There are some counselors who claim that my personal life is somehow impacting their work,” he said. “Folks, that is absolute nonsense.” Ford, who pledged last year to clean up his act after a crack-smoking scandal, admitted on Tuesday he had been drinking the previous evening when the video was shot at a suburban eatery.

“In the video, taken from a low angle and posted on YouTube, Ford stands at the counter of a fast-food restaurant and rants about surveillance that police carried out last year during a drug investigation.

“Chase me around five months, man,” he said, before using a Jamaican pro-fanity. In much of the video, Ford puts on a Jamaican accent. “He’s hiding here; I’m hiding here. You know how much money that costs?”

In November, Ford said he had smoked crack while in a “drunken stupor” and driven a car after drinking. Those admissions came after police revealed they had a video of the mayor smoking what looked to be crack. The video had been uncovered in the course of a drug investigation. —Reuters**

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**42 killed in Afghanistan since Friday, with Taleban vowing to speed up attacks**

**KABUL, 23 Jan — The ongoing violent at-tacks mostly in the shape of suicide bombings have claimed 42 lives with ma-jority of them civilians in the militancy-hit Afghani-stan since Friday amid the Taleban threat to continue fighting until eviction of foreign forces from the country. In a massive sui-cide attack against a res-taurant in the diplomatic enclave of Wazir Akbar Khan District in Kabul on Friday which has drawn worldwide condemnation, 24 people including three attackers and 21 civilians were killed. Among the 21 civilians, 13 were foreign-ers, according to officials. Taleban outfit imme-diately after the incident claimed responsibility for the deadly suicide attack. The Taleban purported spokesman Zabihullah Mu-jahid immediately after the attack said in a statement that the armed outfit tar-geted elements supported invaders in Afghanistan.

In a related incident, three Afghan youths were killed when three others wounded when a rocket fired by the Taleban landed in Maidawat District of southern Kandahar Prov-ince on Saturday evening, spokesman for provincial government Jawed Faisal said. In another bloody sui-cide bombing which took place on Monday in the south of Kandahar province, 12 people including two civilians, one US sol-dier and nine attackers were killed, according to local of-ficials.

However, Qari Yusuf Ahmadi who said to speak for the Taleban outfit in talks with media on phone from unknown loca-tion claimed that dozens of foreigners were killed in the suicide attacks and gunfire lasted for several hours in a main base of foreign forces in Kandahar on Monday, which was rebuffed by of-ficials. A day later on Tues-day, three more civilians and their lives as a mine planted by militants on a road in Maiwand District of Kandahar province exploded.

Anti-government mili-nants in another incident but bloodless kidnapped 63 de-miners from Pashtun Zar-gham district in the western Herat Province on Tuesday morning but set them free in the afternoon. —Reuters**

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**Tiger likes look of firm and fast Torrey Pines**

**NEW YORK, 23 Jan — Tiger Woods could not wish for a better place to launch his 2014 PGA Tour campaign than at the Torrey Pines Golf Club for this week’s Farmers Insurance Open outside San Diego where he will be hunting a record eighth victory. Not only was the pictur-esque venue perched above the Pacific Ocean the scene of his remarkable playoff win at the 2008 US Open but the firm, fast and dif-ficult conditions this week mirror those of six years ago. “The greens, I haven’t seen them this firm maybe since the (2008) Open,” the 14-times major champion told reporters on the eve of the tournament on Wednesday. “It’s hard to imagine watching wedges, nine-irons and some of the short irons, balls bounce up as high as the top of the flag-stick but that’s what was happening this morning. “If they keep the golf course like this it’s going to be one hell of a test as the week progresses. It’s going to get really difficult to post some good numbers.”

Tiger Woods

Asked whether he liked the challenging, sun-baked conditions at Torrey Pines, the world No. 1 smiled broadly. “I find it good,” said Woods. “It’s hitting it well. I have the option now as my swing has evolved working with (coach) Sean (Foley) that I can start elevating it again. “Probably going to need a little bit this week. We’re going to have to start setting some balls up, but it’s important to get the ball in the fairway. The rough is thick.”

Woods, who won last year’s Farmers Insurance Open by four shots in a fog-delayed Monday finish, has always relished competing at Torrey Pines. “I feel comfortable here, there is no doubt,” said the 14-times ma-jor champion, who will launch his title defence on the South course, one of two layouts co-hosting this week’s event. “It’s fantastic to be able to have had the success that I have had on this golf course, and not just playing here in the Tour event but also putting a stamp on it with a US Open win. “That was a very special week, especially considering the circumstances, the things that I had to kind of go through to get to that point. Woods won the 2008 US Open in a playoff with fellow American Roc-co Mediate, sealing victory at the 91st hole despite hav-ing suffered a double stress fracture in his left shun-down two weeks. “He has not landed another major title since then but, at the age of 38, be-lieves he has enough time to pile up the additional five he needs to overhaul the record total set by Jack Nicklaus. “All I know is that I feel like I’ve got a peak years, I’m still playing well,” he said. “There have been a number of guys who have gone on in their early 40s to win major champi-onships. “Mark (O’Meara) in 1998, (Jack) Nicklaus in 1986, and I feel the old-est one to do it, to win multiples in the same year. Jack won in his 40s, (Ben) Hogan won multi-ple times in his 40s, actually 38 and above. “I feel like I’ve got a number of years ahead of me. I’m really looking forward to that.”

This week, Woods will attempt to win his 80th PGA Tour title with only San Diego (72) ahead of him in the all-time stand-ing...—Reuters**
MoI no plan to publish Book on Panglong Conference

Two sent to prison for banned sexual stimulant tablets sales

Regional stability and development tasks inspected

C-in-C receives UNSG’s Special Adviser on Myanmar

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing poses for documentary photo together with Mr Vijay Nambiar, UN Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Myanmar and party. — MYANM AR

CNA officially opens Myanmar News Bureau in Yangon

In his opening speech, Ms Debra Soon, Managing Director of Channel News Asia said that CNA would step up not only news cover age, but also documentaries and programmes on Myanmar in the past few years.

"Today, we are adding another thrust to our engagement with Myanmar with a regional business seminar. This provides a platform for political and business leaders to understand more about the changing face of Myanmar,” Ms Debra Soon said.

The ceremony to open the news bureau was formally opened by Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Htut and Ms Debra Soon at the Sedona Hotel.

The opening ceremony was followed by the seminar, Business Insights—Understanding the Changing Myanmar at the Sedona Hotel, gathering think tanks, captains of industry and leaders from the governmental and private banking sectors. (See page 9)

Mr Vijay Nambiar said the UN pushed Myanmar to do reforms in the past and it was currently assisting in reforming process of the country. He continued to say that the UN recognized the efforts of the Defence Services to achieve peace with ethnic armed groups.

The United Nations is interested in role of the Defence Services in implementing democratic and peace making process and willing to cooperate with the Defence Services of Myanmar in providing social security of the people, Mr Nambiar said. (See page 9)