Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Laungprabang Province in Lao PDR

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Governor of Laungprabang Province Mr. Kham Pheng Saisompheng at the latter’s office in Laungprabang.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited Laungprabang Province in Lao PDR on 15 February. The Senior General, who arrived from Bagan on a motorcade and visited Royal Palace Museum and donated offertories and robes to the monks at a temple. In the evening, the Senior General and party donated robes and offertories to the monks at the rice offering ceremony in Wat Sain Village on 16 February morning.

First, the commander of Laungprabang Command and the Senior General extended greetings. Before and during the dinner, Laungprabang Province’s traditional dance troupe performed traditional dance and songs. Then, the Senior General and officials of Laungprabang Command exchanged gifts and presented gifts to the cultural troupe.

March towards an accountable and responsible media world

Mobile Medical Unit provides free health care to workers in Mingaladon industrial zone

Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) provided health care services to the workers of Asia Optical Factory in Mingaladon Industrial Zone on 15 February. The MMU is a clinic on the wheels that can offer basic health care to the people.

Deputy Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security Daw Win Maw Tun observed giving free healthcare to the factory workers by the MMU there.

In meeting with workers’ representatives, employers and officials, the deputy minister talked about three insurance benefits—health and social care insurance, family assistance insurance and occupational injury insurance—that will be among in the new social security law. She also elaborated ongoing process of issuing social security smart cards.

In the morning, the deputy minister attended a stake-driving ceremony for construction of a new operation theater for Htantabin Workers’ Hospital in Hinthay Township.

It is learnt that efforts are being made to widely cover more workers in providing primary health care to them with the use of such mobile medical facilities. Moreover, plans being implemented by the ministry aim at enabling workers who contribute their regular payments to the social security funds to have access to free healthcare at other people’s hospitals and private hospitals apart from clinics of social security board and workers’ hospitals in the future.

By: MNA

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By: MNA
Relics, Buddha images enshrined at Dhammarajika Pagoda in Mogaung Tsp

MONGAUNG, 16 Feb—A ceremony to enshrine relics, religious objects and ornaments into the reliquary was held at Dhammarajika Pagoda in Dhammekha Hill of Pinbaw Village of Mogaung Township, Kachin State, on 14 February.

A total of 484 Buddha images, relics and ornaments were sprinkled with scented water in process of enshrinement. Officials conveyed the Buddha images, religious objects and ornaments into the reliquary. Members of the Sangha recited religious verses.

The pagoda is 108 feet in height, 120 feet in circumference. It has four archways. The construction of the pagoda will cost more than K 2000 million.

It was also attended by Abbot Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Koddita of Pinbaw Dhamma Thukha Monastery and members of the Sangha, Kachin State Hluttaw MP U Kyaw Myint, Township Administrator U Tin Swe Myint, Chairman of the Pagoda Board of Trustees U Tun Shein and members, wellwishers and local people totalling over 3000.

MMAL-Hsimeekhon Nan Yi

Mongkai Township WAO organizes Ms Union Contest

MONGKAI, 16 Feb—Mongkai Township Women’s Affairs Organization held the Ms Union Contest in conjunction with the concert at the hall of Mongkai Township of Shan State on 12 February evening.

Chairperson of Township WAO Daw Khai Khaing Hiwe made a speech.

The Ms Union Contest was categorized as two classes for primary level girl event and the above-16 event.

Officials of the association presented prizes to the winners two classes.

MMAL-Huang Hlaing Hlaing Oo (Mongkai)

Lakes dredged to store rainwater

KANMA, 16 Feb—Kanma Township Rural Development Department of Thayet District in Magway Region spent the fund on sinking tube-wells in 2013-14 fiscal year so as to store rainwater for supply of water to the local people.

Head of District Rural Development Department U Aung Gyi supervised dredging of the earthen lakes in Thitmezi Village on 15 February.

Lakes are being dredged to store rainwater in six other villages.

MMAL-Township IPRD

Gravel road constructed for rural development

MAUBIN, 16 Feb—Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development Department are building nine miles long Achan-Htawngwe gravel road spending the fund for 2013-14 fiscal year.

The construction started on 1 February. The road will be eight feet wide and eight inches thick.

Officials of the District and Township Rural Development Departments supervised land preparations for construction, placing of gravels along the road section, use of heavy machinery and stockpile of gravels.

MMAL-Aung Tha Kyaw

Nation-building Endeavours

Mandalay-Bagan railroad upgraded

NATOGYI, 16 Feb—Thanks to substitution of concrete sleepers along the railroad section from Mandalay to Bagan and maintenance of the rail tracks, the trains along that route can drive safely.

Myanmar Railways is placing emphasis on maintenance of the rail tracks, runs of the trains on time and speeding the driving rate of locomotives, the passengers enjoy convenient travelling.

Fare of train ticket has been risen similar to that of bus fare. However, the Myanma Railways does not meet loss in its runs due lack of motor roads along its route. That is why local people rely on the rail transportation.

The express train, local train and commuter trains are running along Mandalay-Bagan railroad.

MMAL-Htay Myint Maung

Animals distributed to local breeders for rural development

YEBYU, 16 Feb—Yebyu Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department of Dawei District in Taninthayi Region distributed animals to 11 villages of the townships under the supervision of Taninthayi Region government on 13 February morning.

In accord with the Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, Staff Officer Dr Min Zin Oo of Township LBVD presented 148 pigs, three cows and 215 ducks worth K 9 million to 61 breeders of 11 villages in the first week of February to develop rural regions.

MMAL-Yebyu Township IPRD
Thai police fail to reach deal with protesters

BANGKOK, 16 Feb—Thai police and a prominent protest leader failed to reach a deal on Sunday to reopen state offices and roads in Bangkok that have been occupied for months by protesters seeking to overthrow Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Talks with Buddhist monk Luang Pu Buddha Issara, a protest leader, failed to bring up an occupied government complex in the north of the capital as a third day of a security operation designed to retake sites occupied by protesters drew to a close.

Buddha Issara said the police were using roads as an excuse to crack down on protesters.

"If there is blood loss... will the police take responsibility? Or will you blame it on provocateurs?" he asked.

A temporary “No Entry” warning sign stands on an access road to the harbour wall in Tenby, Pembrokeshire, Wales, on 14 Feb, 2014.

Egypt’s deposed president Morsi on trial on terrorism charges

CAIRO, 16 Feb—Deposed Egyptian president Mohamed Mursi appeared in court on Sunday on charges of conspiring with foreign groups to commit terrorist acts in Egypt, in a further escalation of the crackdown against his Muslim Brotherhood.

Mursi’s trial is the biggest case of conspiracy in the history of Egypt, prosecutors said.

In a televised hearing, Mursi’s lawyers said they would appeal the ruling, which would prevent the Muslim Brotherhood presidential candidate from standing in the elections.

The Brotherhood had been banned by the courts in Egypt in 2013.

Two killed as more storms batter Britain

LONDON, 16 Feb—Two people were killed and 32 people were rescued from a seaside restaurant on Friday as storms and strong winds battered Britain, adding more misery to areas already hit by widespread flooding and transport chaos.

Gales of up to 80 miles per hour and heavy rain lashed southern England and Wales overnight, Britain’s Met Office said, while severe flood warnings remained in place for much of southern and central parts of Britain.

More than 140,000 people have been left without power after high winds brought down power lines, the Energy Networks Association said.

Iraq’s Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr quits politics

BAGHDAD, 16 Feb—Iraq’s firebrand Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr on Sunday announced that he is leaving political life and closed his offices in order to stop the “evil acts” by some people, naming the family of his slain mentor.

“I announce that I do not intervene in public political affairs, and there is no bloc would represent us anymore, nor any position inside and outside the government and the parliament,” a statement read in his official website.

The statement also said that al-Sadr has closed all of his political offices except for some charities and said that “no one has the right to represent and speak on their behalf and under their title.”

An anti-government protester uses a clapper during a rally near the Government Complex in Bangkok 16 Feb, 2014.

Continued vigilance urged against heavy snow in northern Japan

TOKYO, 16 Feb—The Japan Meteorological Agency on Sunday urged continued vigilance about heavy snow and strong winds in northern Japan, as the low pressure system that brought record snowfalls centering on the country’s eastern region moved to the northeastern Pacific coast.

The heavy snow has caused 12 deaths since Friday in seven prefectures — Gunma, Saitama, Yama- nashi, Nagano, Shizuoka, Aichi and Oita.

The low pressure system, which dumped 27 centimetres of snow in Tokyo and broke snowfall records in other cities, is expected to further strengthen by Monday, coming close to the Kuril Islands, to bring heavy snow and strong winds in coastal areas in northern Japan, the agency said.

A poster of deposed Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi that reads “Yes to legitimacy; no to the coup” lies amid the debris of a cleared protest camp outside the burnt Rubin Adawiya mosque in Cairo 15 Aug, 2013.

According to the statement, al-Sadr’s surprise decision came to “protect his family’s name, and to end all evil acts that occurred and likely to occur under the name of our family or under the name of our offices.”

Sadr’s move would have some impacts on the political process as his par- ty’s leader, Al-Hakim and his allied politicians would lose their religious legitimacy after Sadr’s withdrawal.

Moqtada al-Sadr, 40, is the son of a prominent Shiite leader, Ayatollah Mohammad Sadeq al-Sadr, who was murdered pre- sumably by the regime of Saddam Hussein in 1999.

Succeeding his father’s career, al-Sadr became the head of the al-Sadr group. He was also enrolled at the Najaf Hawza Seminary and then in Iran’s Qum Hawza Seminary.

A coral reef is seen in the sea off the coast of Australia’s Great Barrier Reef.

Reuters

Monday, 17 February, 2014

3
Tokyo, 16 Feb — An official of railway operator Tokyu Corp suggested on Saturday heavy snow may have weakened the brakes of a train involved in the commuter train collision that occurred near Tokyo shortly after midnight.

Fumiaki Shiroishi, general manager of Tokyu’s railway business, said the brakes of the train that rear-ended another “were not as effective as expected due to the effects of snow.” He noted that the automatic train control system worked properly at the time of the accident that left 19 passengers with light injuries.

“We apologize for causing much anxiety and trouble to everyone,” Shiroishi said.

At around 12:30 am, a train on the Tokyo Tōyoko line linking Tokyo and Yokohama bumped into another train that was stopped at Motosumiyoshi Station in Kawasaki city’s south of Tokyo after overrunning the stop line by about 30 metres.

The first and second cars of the moving train derailed after the collision and the driver said he had applied the brake but not in time, according to Kanagawa prefectural police.

Train services were disrupted at the time of the accident due to heavy snow, and Shiroishi said there had been 10 previous instances on Friday of trains halting beyond the stop line on the same line, including two at the same station. Transport authorities have launched an investigation and found that the driver of the colliding train had been notified of the other train stopping prior to the accident, an official said.—Kyodo News

Gov’t to submit bill to parliament to ratify arms trade pact

Tokyo, 16 Feb — The government plans to submit to parliament by the end of this month a bill to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, the first international pact to regulate trade in conventional arms, government sources said on Saturday.

The measure, coming less than a year after Japan said on Saturday heavy snow may have weakened the brakes of a train involved in the commuter train collision that occurred near Tokyo shortly after midnight.

The treaty, which advocates the world’s express drive to stop the sale of weapons, was ratified by 127 countries last year and entered into force last June. It will go into effect when 20 countries notify the United Nations of their ratification, a move that is expected to take less than a year, according to Kanagawa prefectural police.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s government has signed the treaty. One country must ratify it, with no prospect of obtaining approval from Congress anytime soon. Neither Russia nor China has signed the treaty. One government source dismissed the notion of inconsistency in Tokyo’s export policy on the grounds that the country’s restrictions on arms exports, even if relaxed, would still be more strict than the regulations imposed by the treaty.—Kyodo News

Marshall Islands leader finds similarities on visit to Hiroshima

Hiroshima, 16 Feb — Marshall Islands President Christopher Loeak visited the Hiroshima peace museum on Saturday and spoke of similarities between his country and the Japanese city that suffered US atomic bombing in 1945.

Loeak, who met with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Tokyo on Friday, visited Hiroshima ahead of the 60th anniversary of the US hydrogen bomb test 1 March, 1945, on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

At the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Loeak was briefed by museum director Kenji Shiga and atomic bomb survivor Keiko Ogura, 76, on framework, according to the sources. However, the move appears incongruous with the policy of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s government in seeking to relax the nation’s restrictions on arms exports. The treaty would regulate trade in such weapons as tanks, attack helicopters, combat aircraft and small arms. Countries that accede to the pact would be banned from importing, exporting or brokering arms trades if there are risks the weapons could be used for terrorism or genocide or the trade could violate a UN Security Council resolution.

Japan took the lead in drafting the treaty along with Britain and Australia, and signed the pact last June. It will go into force when 50 countries ratified the treaty, but just over 10 countries have so far done so. The United States signed the pact last September but has yet to ratify it, with no prospect of obtaining approval from Congress anytime soon. Neither Korea nor China has signed the treaty. One government source dismissed the notion of inconsistency in Tokyo’s export policy on the grounds that the country’s restrictions on arms exports, even if relaxed, would still be more strict than the regulations imposed by the treaty.—Kyodo News

Iraqi PM visits battlefield in Anbar, 21 killed in violence

Baghdad, 16 Feb — Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said on Saturday paid a surprise visit to the battlefield in Anbar Province to announce a rebuilding plan, while violence across the country left 21 people killed and 26 wounded, government and security sources said. Maliki spent several hours in his first visit to the province, during which he met with top military and tribal leaders, who briefed him on the security situation and the development of military operations in the provincial capital city of Ramadi, some 110 km west of Baghdad, a statement from Maliki’s office said. Maliki pledged to restore security and stability across province and announced a comprehensive reconstruction plan for cities destroyed by militant groups or in clashes with them, the statement said.

The plan also includes training thousands of local young men, who fight the militant groups to protect their homeland in the place of the army, which will withdraw for other missions, the statement added.

Meanwhile, an official from the main hospital in Fallujah told Xinhua that his hospital received Saturday three bodies and four people with artillery and mortar wounds, a statement from Maliki’s office said. Maliki pledged to restore security and stability across province and announced a comprehensive reconstruction plan for cities destroyed by militant groups or in clashes with them, the statement said.

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Obama signs increase in US debt ceiling

RANCHO MIRAGE, Calif. (Calif.), 16 Feb — President Barack Obama signed legislation on Saturday that raises the US debt limit through March 2015, taking the politically volatile issue off the table with congressional elections coming up this November.

Without an increase in the statutory debt limit, the US government would have soon defaulted on some of its obligations and would have had to shut down some programs that would have caused severe market turmoil.

On a long holiday weekend in a desert resort area in southern California, Obama put his signature on the legislation without fanfare, while behind closed doors at the Sunnyslands retreat. It was a quiet end to the latest chapter in what has been one of the more challenging aspects of his presidency, and as his fellow Democrats have repeatedly sparred with Republicans over increasing the country’s borrowing authority.

Extending the debt ceiling to March 2015 means the issue may not get caught up in election-year politics.

Congress had given final approval to the increase after final action in the Senate on Wednesday, but only over the objections of Texas Republican Ted Cruz, a favorite of the conservative Tea Party movement.

It appeared at first there would not be enough Republicans to join the Democratic majority and advance the bill, but a decision by Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell and No 2 Senate Republican John Cornyn, who are both up for re-election this year, to vote to advance the measure ensured that it would survive.

The House of Representatives, where Republicans hold a majority, passed the measure in a close vote on Tuesday after Republicans dropped the confrontational tactics they had used in similar votes over the past three years.

The advance of the measure has brought relief to financial investors. Barack Obama was becoming increasingly jittery ahead of 27 February, the date by which the US Treasury had been warning its borrowing authority would be exhausted, with no federal payments at risk.

Confab calls for actions to outlaw nukes on 70 years after Hiroshima

NEW YORK (EVA), 16 Feb — A major conference drawing representatives from more than 140 countries ended on Friday with an appeal for action to outlaw nuclear weapons ahead of the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki next year.

The chair’s summary of the two-day Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Nayarit, Mexico, reiterated the growing risk of nuclear weapons use globally because of their proliferation and vulnerability to cyber attacks.

A man carries a cart at the flood-ravaged Kushinga school in Chivi, Masvingo province, about 380 km south of Harare, Zimbabwe, on 13 Feb, 2014. Zimbabwe on 13 February appealed for about 20 million US dollars from foreign governments and international aid agencies to evacuate 20,000 villagers near a brimming dam in the country’s southeast region. Heavy downpours of this rainy season have caused many Zimbabweans to evacuate. — Xinhua

Over half Osaka voters question Hashimoto re-election bid

OSAKA, 16 Feb. — A majority of voters in the city of Osaka, western Japan, questioned Toru Hashimoto’s recent resignation to seek re-election with the aim of achieving his proposed local administrative reform, a Kyodo News survey showed Wednesday.

In the telephone survey conducted Saturday and Sunday, 64.2 percent of respondents voiced doubts about Hashimoto’s move, while 27.3 percent welcomed it.

On 7 February, Hashimoto submitted his resignation in order to elicit public opinion in an election regarding his plan to merge the Osaka prefectural and municipal governments into a metropolitan government similar to Tokyo’s.

The 1,014 respondents to the random-digit-dialed survey were divided about the reform plan, with 39.1 percent in favor and 40.3 percent against, and also about whether to back Hashimoto, with 47.8 percent supportive and 41.8 percent opposed.

New Light of Myanmar WORLDS

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Washington, 16 Feb — Japan and the United States moved no closer to an early conclusion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade pact in ministerial talks Saturday, remaining divided over thorny farm produce and auto trade issues. Both governments will “continue to work” on narrowing the gaps ahead of an upcoming plenary ministerial meeting in Singapore, Japanese TPP minister Akira Amari told reporters after meeting with US Trade Representative Michael Froman in Washington.

Amari said bilateral negotiations with the United States on the TPP had been “deadlocked” since top officials from both governments met on the sidelines the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last month.

“We shared a view on how to narrow down our differences,” Amari said, after being asked what the main progress was in the talks with Froman was.

Amari said both governments agreed on the importance of bridging gaps over the issue of market access including agricultural products and rules in the TPP framework.

The USTR said in a statement that Froman and Amari “noted that differences remain, particularly in the negotiations on automotive trade.” The ministers “instructed their teams to continue this work next week in Singapore and Tokyo,” the statement said.

The talks between the two biggest economies in the envisioned TPP pact came before the first ministerial gathering for the TPP countries in the Southeast Asian country since they missed the primary deadline for concluding a pact at the end of last year.
Ogilorie, 16 Feb — Nor-
way’s Opera Software now
expects to pay $35 mil-
lion less than anticipated for
Skyfire, a video and data
compression technol-
ogy firm bought in Febru-
ary 2013, as sales under-
performed the unit’s own
expectations, the company
said on Tuesday.
Opera’s shares traded 4.1 per-
cent lower, after hitting
a low of $10.50 GMT.” As we got through
the end of 2013, we realized
that the earn-out targets set
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the rest to be paid over three
years. Skyfire helps tel-
coms operators and broadcast
providers compress
as a result, in the fourth
quarter of 2013, we reduced the estimated earn-out pay-
ments to Skyfire by $35
million. We continue to feel
good about the Skyfire tech-
nology, its business and its
prospects going forward,” Opera Chief Financial Of-
cier Erik Harrell said.
The original deal set a
price tag of up to $155 mil-
lion for Skyfire with an up-
front payment of $50 million and the rest to be paid over three
years. Skyfire helps tel-
coms operators and broad-
band providers compress
data through cloud comput-
ing technologies and there-
by save money by allowing them to invest less in physi-
cal infrastructure. “Many in the market had expected the
operator business to grow faster than it actually has,” Arctic
Securities analyst Markus Bjerke said. “Opera must also have thought so
since they’re now changing the previously announced payment.”
He said the share price fall was linked to the
Skyfire announcement. “The share has performed
strongly on Skyfire expec-
tations so it’s not entirely surprising that it’s falling on a disappointment there,” Bjerke added. Chief Execu-
tive Lars Boilesen said he was pleased with signing two Skyfire deals during 2013 and that prospects for the
unit were good. “If there is a disconnect between ana-
lysts’ expectations and what we actually deliver, then
that’s something we have to work on,” he told Reuters.
“There are many (po-
tential customers) that are
testing the product. It’s a
complex and time consum-
ning process that we believe will lead to several deals in
2014,” he said. “The video compression is now becom-
ing part of all our products, and that’s the main reason why we bought them.” Op-
era maintained it is on track to meet its long-held 2015 sales target of $500 mil-
lion and core earnings of $150 million. Analysts in theReuters poll on average ex-
pected next year’s revenues to hit $487 million.
The analysts expect-
ed 2015 earnings before
interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBIT-
DA) of $159 million. Op-
era’s forecasts for 2014 were also broadly in line with analyst expectations. Fourth-quarter 2013 rev-
ues totaled $89.6 million, beating the predictions from all eight analysts in the Reu-
ters poll, which had an av-
erage expectation of $86.1 million. Analysts’ expec-
tions for the period was exactly in line with forecasts, at $24 million, while operating profit (EBIT) was margin-
ally lower.—Reuters

South Korea to route sensitive US
communications away from Huawei gear

SEOUL, 16 Feb — South Korea has agreed to route
sensitive US and South Ko-

Whashington, 16 Feb —
The Securities and Exchange
Commission said on Friday
that it plans to hold a round-
table next month to discuss
cybersecurity, after massive
retailer breaches refocused the attention of the business
community and policymakers
on the area. The SEC said that it would hold the event
on 26 March to talk about the
challenges cyber threats pose
for market participants and
public companies.
Recent breaches at Tar-
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discussion among government
officials in meetings with
South Korean counterparts in
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risk that Huawei’s equip-
ment could be used for
spying on communications
between the allies as well as
compromise networks used by
US military and intelli-
gence officials in South Ko-

South Korea hosts
about 28,500 US troops as
part of the two countries’

"To address these secu-
rity concerns, South Korea
decided to make changes to
the project so that sensitive
South Korean government
communications won’t pass
through Huawei equip-
ment,” the Journal quoted US
officials briefed on the
discussions as saying. A US
official confirmed the report
but declined to provide fur-
ther details. A South Ko-

The logo for Chinese phone maker Huawei hangs above their booth on the first day of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas on 8 Jan, 2013. — Reuters

Inside retailer breaches, SEC plans roundtable
on cybersecurity

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but declined to provide fur-
ther details. A South Ko-

The logo for Chinese phone maker Huawei hangs above their booth on the first day of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas on 8 Jan, 2013. — Reuters

Ericsson says Ciena deal will boost IP
networks presence

STOCKHOLM, 16 Feb —
Ericsson’s agreement on
Friday with Ciena for the
development of joint trans-
port switching systems for optical
convergence will help Eric-
sson to reach its goal of becom-
ing the No 3 player
within the IP networks mar-
ket, an Ericsson spokes-
man told Reuters. Ericsson, the
No 1 global supplier of mobile network gear,
is smaller than the likes of
Cisco, Juniper and Alcatel-
Lucent within IP-networks.
The Sweden-based
telecoms supplier has the
ambition to reach the No 3
position within IP-networks
within a few years, Jan Ha-
glund, head of IP and Broad-
band within Ericsson’s big-
est business area Networks,
told Reuters. “In year 2020
about 30 percent of these
markets will be dependent on
common solutions for IP and
optical systems, which is the
underlying financial driver for this agreement with Ciena,” Haglund said.
Haglund said the mar-
ket for IP networks is worth
about 15 billion dollars cur-
rently with an annual
growth of about 5 percent and
that the market for op-
tical systems is worth 10 to

People surf the web during the annual “Campus Party” Internet users gathering in Valencia on 28 July, 2009.— Reuters

Spain to force search
engines to pay to display some content

MADRID, 16 Feb —
News media companies in
Spain will be able to
charge search engines such as
Google for displaying
copyrighted content under a
new law proposed by the
Spanish government on
Friday.
The measure echoes similar
drives around Europe. Pub-
lishers in Portugal, France, Belgium and
Germany have pushed for
compensation in some form
or another for links, snip-
pets, headlines and lead
paragraphs that appear in
news search engines and
aggregators such as Google
News and Yahoo news.
The search engines draw reve-
 nue from advertising placed
near news content and me-
dia companies have fought for
a share of it.
The new rule was intro-
duced in the draft of an
intellectual property law
that the centre-right Peo-
ple’s Party government will
present to parliament for
approval, Deputy Prime
Minister Soraya Saenz de
Cantambria told a weekly
news conference. Under
the proposed changes, the
search engines would not
have to seek permission to
publish brief fragments but
would have to pay “an equ-
itative remuneration for the
use.”
The government did not
dsay how it would be de-
termined which fragments
must be paid for and how
amounts would be calcul-
ated.
This has been a matter of
debate elsewhere in
Europe. A spokeswoman for
Google in Spain said the
company could not com-
municate because it had not
yet seen the exact wording of
the intellectual property re-
form bill.—Reuters

The exterior of Ericsson’s headquarters are seen in
Stockholm on 30 April, 2009.—Reuters
Converged Packet Optical portfolio, Ericsson said.
Reuters

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man told Reuters. Ericsson, the
No 1 global supplier of mobile network gear,
**Health experts call for soft drink tax to curb New Zealand obesity**

New Zealand health researchers on Friday called for a tax on sugary carbonated soft drinks in order to save lives and increase public health spending. The call came in the run-up to a symposium hosted by the University of Auckland next week under the theme “A Sugary Drink Free Pacific by 2030?” The researchers from the universities of Auckland and Otago estimated a 20-percent tax on fizzy drinks would reduce energy consumption by 0.2 percent a day and help avert or postpone about 67 deaths from cardiovascular disease, diabetes and diet-related cancers a year.

Investor Tom Perkins says progressive taxation ‘persecutes’ the rich

SAN FRANCISCO, 16 Feb — Tom Perkins, the Silicon Valley venture capitalist who compared the plight of the wealthiest Americans to Jews in Nazi Germany, offered up a provocative new idea on what the rich deserve: more votes in public elections for every dollar they pay in taxes.

If you pay a million dollars, you should get a million votes,” Perkins, the retired co-founder of venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, told an audience at San Francisco’s Commonwealth Club in comments that he later said were meant to be provocative. He also said that only taxpayers should have the right to vote.

Last month, Perkins wrote a much-discussed letter-to-the-editor published in The Wall Street Journal that likened the Nazi party’s war on Jews to what he called “the progressive war on the American one percent, namely the ‘rich.’”

He later apologized for the analogy, which included a reference to Kristallnacht, the 1938 attack on Jews in Nazi Germany and Austria. He expressed regret again on Thursday for those words, saying, “You shouldn’t compare anything to the Holocaust.” But on Thursday night, he doubled down on his comments about the treatment of the nation’s wealthiest citizens.” The extreme progressivity of taxation is a form of persecution,” he said.

Over 5,000 Cubans receive stem cell treatment

HAVANA, 16 Feb — More than 5,000 patients have received stem cell treatment in Cuba since that procedure was introduced in 2004, a medical expert said on Saturday.

Doctor Porfirio Hernandez, research vice director at the Hematology and Immunology Institute in Cuba, said in an official media outlet that the stem cell treatment method has been implemented in 13 of the entire 15 provinces of the island country.

As a widely acknowledged pioneer of this practice in Cuba, Hernandez indicated that more than 60 percent of patients receiving this treatment had suffered from severe ischemia at lower limbs and other blood vessel related ailments.

The therapy has also been used to reduce the sufferings of patients with severe problems in orthopedics and cardiology, Hernandez added. Stem cells are capable of self-renewing, regenerating tissues damaged by diverse disease, traumas, and aging, and stimulating the creation of new blood vessels.—Xinhua

Aveo, Astellas end pact to develop cancer drug tivozanib

BANGALORE, 16 Feb — Aveo Oncology and Astellas Pharma Inc said they would end an agreement to develop and manufacture a potential drug that has shown a string of failures in multiple cancer indications. Aveo, which cut 62 percent of its workforce last year to focus on developing the drug, tivozanib, as a treatment for breast and colon cancers, said in December that the drug was not likely to succeed in a mid-stage trial testing its use in colon cancer.

The companies said on Friday they would discontinue the study. A mid-stage trial testing tivozanib as a treatment for breast cancer was stopped last month due to the drug’s enrolments. Tivozanib was rejected by US health regulators in June for use in kidney cancer, citing inconsistent study results.

The termination of the collaboration will be effective 11 August, after which Aveo will retain the rights, the companies said in a statement.

The two companies had signed a worldwide agreement to develop and market tivozanib outside of Asia for the treatment of a broad range of cancers in February 2011. Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Aveo’s shares have lost nearly 7 percent of their value since December 13, when the company said the drug was unlikely to succeed as a treatment for colon cancer. The stock closed at $1.75 on the Nasdaq on Thursday.—Reuters

**China’s Wanxiang wins US bankruptcy auction for Fisker Automotive**

NEW YORK, 16 Feb — Wanxiang Group, China’s largest auto parts company, won a bankruptcy auction for the assets of Fisker Automotive, the defunct manufacturer of the Karma plug-in hybrid sports car, Fisker said on Friday.

Wanxiang’s bid has been valued at about $149.2 million, representing $126.2 million of cash, $8 million of assumed liabilities, and a contribution of common equity in an affiliate designated by Wanxiang, Fisker said in a statement.

The sale will be presented to the US Bankruptcy Court in Wilmington, Delaware, on Tuesday for approval by Judge Kevin Gross.

Wanxiang outbid an affiliate of Richard Li, a Hong Kong billionaire and Fisker investor, and two sources who were briefed on the auction. The auction began on Wednesday and ended on Friday. Li had presented an initial bid of around $55 million, the sources said. There were 19 rounds of bidding, according to Fisker.

California-based Fisker was the brainchild of Henrik Fisker, a former BMW designer. The company’s elegant cars were hobbled by cost overruns and tech glitches and in 2012 it stopped production to conserve cash. Wanxiang has been building a US manufacturing presence and last year

A logo of Wanxiang Group is seen at China International Auto Parts Expo in Beijing, on 24 April , 2012. REUTERS

**Venture capitalist Tom Perkins is interviewed in his office in San Francisco, California on 12 Sept, 2011. REUTERS**
March towards an accountable and responsible media world

It can trigger misunderstanding and hatred among the interfaith that could lead to violent clashes. And it may also undermine the State’s security, peace and stability, defame world and organizations and lead to the outbreak of unexpected issues.

For the emergence of an accountable and responsible media environment, the Ministry of Information has signed an MoU on media development cooperation with International Media Support in November, 2013. The media development programme provided training course for photojournalists and those from print media, photo exhibition and establishment of a Myanmar Journalism School in cooperation with Myanmar Forever Group, UNESCO-CAN, France Internationale (CFI), DW Akademie of Germany and Fojo Media Institute of Sweden. Here I want to explain the facts about the Myanmar Journalism School. The establishment of this school was discussed at a ceremony to sign Film and Media Sector Cooperation Agreement between Union Information Minister U Aung Kyi and Culture and Media Mr David D Oxensord. The school is aimed at ensuring the development of reliable news coverage through journalist ethics being practiced in international media and the designation of Myanmar’s media quality. Plans are under way to conduct one-year diploma course in coming July. The main areas of cooperation under the MoU between the Ministry of Information and IMS is the peace process. After years of civil war, the government led by the President is striving for peace with the ethnic armed groups. Reporting peace efforts is crucial for success of peace process and democratization. But there were biased reporting or reporting which depicted violence indirectly due to lack experience in objective journalism. To prevent undesirable consequences, conflict sensitive journalism courses were conducted from November 2012 to June 2013 in 11 cities—Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Monywa, Kalay, Myitkyina, Taungyi, Lashio, Magway and Pathein. Myanmar is currently drafting a handbook of conflict sensitive journalism and is increasing efforts on monitoring media coverage on peace process. The MoU also covers supports to other organizations and courses to develop capacity of working journalists.

Under the media development cooperation MoU, the Ministry of Information agreed to provide necessary inter-government cooperation, support regional projects through local governments, coordinate with government agencies to smoothen process of the project, provide necessary services (eg. Visa) to IMS consultants and international scholars, allow IMS to register, and support its implementations.

Teams of spokespersons have been formed in each ministry to bring equal and clear media access with respect to each ministry to enable the public to access the information from all sources in the society of professional ethics—Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Monywa, Kalay, Myitkyina, Taungyi, Lashio, Magway and Pathein. Myanmar is currently drafting a handbook of conflict sensitive journalism and is increasing efforts on monitoring media coverage on peace process. The MoU also covers supports to other organizations and courses to develop capacity of working journalists.

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Htmane meal offered to Pyay Shwehsandaw Pagoda at its Pujaniya

PAY, 16 Feb—The light offering ceremony was held at Shwehsandaw Pagoda in Pyay in conjunction with the 91st Htmane meal donation ceremony in Pyay Township of Bago Region yesterday morning.

After the congregation had received the Five Precepts from the Abbot Sayadaw of Zawtkayon Pali Tekkatho Monastery, members of the Sangha recited Paritta and the Sayadaw sang religious verses and poems in honour of the venerable Sayadaw. Later, the attendees offered rice to 500 members of the Sangha including Ovadacariya Sayadaws and the monks who recited the Pathana treatise.

The ceremony was closely supervised by ward administrator and members of ward supportive committee.

Rice offering ceremony for members of the Sangha

TATKON, 16 Feb—The 39th rice offering ceremony organized by Mogaung Pagoda rice offering group was held along Yangon-Mandalay Highway leading to Mogaung pagoda in Tatkon of Ottara District in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 14 February afternoon.

Wellwishers offered rice to 500 members of the Sangha including Ovadacariya Sayadaws and the monks who recited Pathana treatise. The ceremony was closely supervised by ward administrator and members of ward supportive committee.

Thatta Thataha Maha Bawdi Pagoda

The Thatta Thataha Maha Bawdi Pagoda on 14 February in conjunction with the 91st Htmane meal donation ceremony in Pyay Township of Bago Region yesterday morning.

A total of 19 teams participated in the contest. The Sayadaw recited Paritta and the monks who recited religious verses and poems in honour of the venerable Sayadaw.

Poultry farms fumigated in Mohnyin Tsp

A total of 44 poultry farms is underway to fumigate the remaining poultry farms so as to raise bio-security.

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The ceremony was closely supervised by ward administrator and members of ward supportive committee.

Mikeikila, 16 Feb—A tragic motorbike accident occurred at the top of Industrial Zone (4) Road in Mikeikila of Mandalay Region, taking the life of a man away on 1 February. According to the information, Gwet Gwet a Mya Tin Lwin, 19, son of Ma Khin Swe Toe (a) Ma Toe, 54, got severe injuries at head and back after his motorbike hit another driven by Ko Ko Lwin and died the next day at Mandalay General Hospital.

No. 3 Police Station in Mikeikila opened a file of lawsuit against motorcyclist Ko Ko Lwin under the law.
Gaza leader says not to accept peace deal between PNA, Israel

GAZA, 16 Feb — The Hamas chief in the Gaza Strip said on Saturday that his movement will not accept any framework peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) based in the West Bank.

“Such a deal is meant to perpetuate (Israel’s) occupation of Palestine,” Ismail Haniya said at the opening ceremony of a charity organization in Gaza that cares for freed female prisoners from Israeli prisons.

He said the government had also held the Taleban accountable for killing innocent people in public places.

“I am seriously concerned at the terror attacks during the ongoing peace process,” Sharif told Geo TV on board his special plane while returning from visit to Turkey.

“The Taleban has sent an encouraging message to us through their intermediaries and we are happy that the process has started,” he said.

SIPA

Tanzania police seize 58 tuskers, arrest three in connection

DAE ES SALAM, 16 Feb — Police in Tanzania’s southern region of Mtwar said on Saturday that they have seized 58 pieces of ivory valued at 440,000 US dollars and arrested three people in connection with the haul.

The seizure of the ivory comes hardly three days after President Jakaya Kikwete appealed to the international community to assist his East African country in stopping ivory and rhino horn trade in the world in order to protect the wild animals from extinction.

“If the ban is effective, elephants and rhinos will be safe. There will be no demand for ivory and horns and thus no enticement to kill an elephant or rhino,” Kikwete said when speaking to delegates at the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade last Thursday.

He cited a ban on ivory trade in 1989 by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which played a crucial role in stopping the trade.

Acting Mtwar regional police commander Maima Maganga told a news conference on Saturday that the 58 pieces of ivory were being ferried from Nanyumbu District in Mtwar region to the country’s commercial capital Dar es Salaam.

He said the ivory was intercepted on Friday after members of the public had tipped off police on the contraband.

“The final count has revealed that 29 elephants were killed by the poachers to get the 58 pieces of ivory,” said Maganga, adding that the suspects cut-off the floor of a Landcruiser and made an artificial fuel tank to stock the ivory.

Plane forced to turn around after hitting birds in China

HEFEI, 16 Feb — An airplane was forced to return to the airport in eastern Chinese city of Hefei after hitting birds on route to Beijing on Saturday, but no casualties have been reported.

The China Eastern Airlines plane, MUS5109, was struck by birds on its right engine, about 10 minutes after take-off at 7:58 am, a spokesman with the Hefei Xinquiao International Airport said.

The bird strike led to a mechanical fault in the engine, forcing the plane to turn around. The flight was canceled later and passengers were transferred to another plane. It is the second such accident in two days at the Xinquiao Airport.

On Friday afternoon, an Air China plane also returned to the airport due to a bird strike about nine minutes after takeoff. No casualties have been reported.

Visitors are seen at a wedding expo in Beijing, capital of China, on 15 Feb, 2014. The 2014 China Wedding Expo opened here on Sunday.—Xinhua

1 bln USD in loan guarantees for Jordan

RANCHO MIRAGE, 16 Feb — US President Barack Obama announced Friday that his country will provide 1 billion US dollars in loan guarantees for Jordan to help the key Arab ally deal with the Syrian refugee crisis.

He made the pledge before a meeting with Jordanian King Abdullah II at Annenberg Estate, located in Rancho Mirage, California.

The promise, which follows a 1.25-billion-dollar loan guarantee announced last year, will make it easier for Jordan to enter the capital markets and borrow money.

Jordan’s economy is under pressure because of hosting nearly 600,000 refugees from Syria. It will cost the Jordanian government 900 million dollars in 2014, according to the US Agency for International Development.

“The people of Jordan have been very generous in absorbing hundreds of thousands of displaced persons from that war-ravaged country,” Obama said.

“Puts a great strain on the resources of Jordan and it’s very important for us to make sure that we’re supportive of the Kingdom in accommodating all these refugees,” he added.

Acknowledging that the Syrian crisis would not be resolved in the short term, Obama said he is considering new ways to pressure the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Eleanor Roosevelt is top US first lady, survey says

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb — Eleanor Roosevelt was named the greatest first lady of the United States in a survey of historians released on Saturday, while Michelle Obama, in fifth place, edged out Hillary Clinton in sixth.

Roosevelt, whose husband, Franklin, served as president from 1933 to 1945, has come up No 1 each of the five times the survey has been conducted by Stena College Research Institute since 1982. In the top finishers after Roosevelt were Abigail Adams, Jacqueline Kennedy and Dolly Madison.

Least impressive, according to the survey, was Jane Pierce, the wife of 14th US president, Franklin Pierce. Although historians disagree over exactly when the title of first lady came into common usage, it has traditionally been given to a president’s wife and is an unofficial, but potentially powerful, role. Pollsters asked 242 historians and political scientists to rate 38 presidents’ wives in 10 categories such as “courage,” “integrity,” “value to the country” and “accomplishments.”

Women pray during the celebration of the Lantern Festival in Calcutta, capital of eastern Indian state West Bengal, on 14 Feb, 2014. According to the Chinese Lunar calendar, the Lantern Festival falls on the 15th day of the first lunar month.—Xinhua

Plane forced to turn around after hitting birds in China

Pupil Ou Jitong attends the 10th Chinese Bridge Chinese Proficiency Competition in San Francisco, the United States, on 15 Feb, 2014.—Xinhua

US pledges 1 bln USD in loan guarantees for Jordan

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DENPASAR, (Indonesia), 16 Feb — Rescuers on Sunday continued to search for seven Japanese women who have been missing since Friday while scuba diving in waters off the Indonesian resort island of Bali.

Authorities said rescuers, operating from boats and aircraft, have so far not found any clues regarding the fate of the seven women, two diving instructors and five tourists from Japan.

Japanese government officials said the seven were seasoned scuba divers, all having taken part in at least 50 scuba diving tours.

Nusa Lembongan, a favorite spot for seasoned scuba divers, is known for fast currents and transparent waters where coral reefs and tropical fish abound.

Kyodo News

Search continues for seven Japanese scuba divers missing off Bali

Existing home sales in Tokyo area hit record highs in 2013

Tokyo, 16 Feb — Sales of existing homes, both condominiums and single-family houses, rose to record highs in 2013 in Tokyo and three surrounding prefectures on the back of the improving national economy, a real estate information firm said on Saturday.

The number of used condominiums sold in Tokyo and Chiba, Kanagawa and Saitama prefectures jumped 16.0 percent from the year before to 36,432, the most since the Real Estate Information Network for East Japan began collecting data in 1990.

Sales of existing single-family homes also hit a record high.

Family members of some of the missing Japanese women have been missing since Friday while scuba diving in waters off the Indonesian resort island of Bali.

Authorities said rescuers, operating from boats and aircraft, have so far not found any clues regarding the fate of the seven women, two diving instructors and five tourists from Japan.

Family members of some of the missing Japanese are scheduled to arrive in Bali on Monday.

The two diving instructors, Shoko Takahashi, 35, and Saori Furukawa, 37, work for Bali scuba diving operator Yellow Scuba, local sources said.

One of the five missing Japanese tourists is aged 59 and the others are in their late 20s. The seven women went missing while diving near Nusa Lembongan off the southeastern coast of Bali, according to the Japanese Consulate General in Denpasar.

Japanese government officials said the seven were seasoned scuba divers, all having taken part in at least 50 scuba diving tours.

Nusa Lembongan, a favorite spot for seasoned scuba divers, is known for fast currents and transparent waters where coral reefs and tropical fish abound.

Kyodo News

Nepal to elect constitution drafting body Chairman on Tuesday

KATHMANDU, 16 Feb — Nepal’s Constituent Assembly (CA) on Jan. 22 elected late last year with a main purpose of drafting a new constitution, is all set to elect its Chairman on Tuesday.

The meeting of CA on Sunday, which was chaired by senior lawmaker Surya Bahadur Thapa, announced the date for the election of CA chairman, which is regarded as a powerful post in the constitution drafting process.

Thapa is chairing the CA till its first meeting on Jan. 22.

Nepal’s CA is failing to make any progress in the constitution drafting process.

With the election of Chairman, CA is likely to expedite the constitution drafting body.

It has been one month since the first meeting of CA but there has not been any progress on constitution drafting process.

Parties have made a public commitment to promulgate a new constitution within a year, but they are yet to start the constitution drafting process.

The Nepali Congress has agreed to support the CPN-UML candidate in the House as a part of a power sharing between the country’s two largest parties.

And the UCPN (Maoist) is demanding the post of CA chairman. “First and second largest parties have formed the government, we are outside the government so we should get CA chairman,” Manist Spokesperson Dina Nath Sharma told media persons after CA meeting.

Xinhua

Small Nepal Airlines plane with 18 aboard missing in western Nepal

A small Nepal Airlines aircraft with 18 people aboard missing in western Nepal, an airline official said Sunday.

The Twin Otter, with a three-person crew, was carrying 14 Nepali passengers and a Danish passenger, said Mahesh Kumar Moktan, a Nepal Airlines official.

The plane was heading from Pokhara resort town in western Nepal to Jumla district and is believed to have crashed in Argakhanchi district.

A helicopter sent from Pokhara could not reach the site due to bad weather.

The pilot contacted Bhairahawa airport around 1:15 p.m. asking for weather conditions around the airport and contact was lost with the plane soon afterward, he said.

The controller said weather conditions in the region were good at the time the plane took off from Pokhara.

Bhairahawa is about 200 kilometers southwest of Kathmandu.

Kyodo News

Thai delegation to visit Iran eyeing trade boost

TEHERAN, 16 Feb — A trade delegation from Thailand, grouping officials of the country’s food, car, electronics, and shipping industries, will travel to Iran on Sunday for discussing cooperation with Teheran.

Thailand can be a reliable source for exporting electronic components and car parts to Iran, Mohammad Hossein Barkhordar, head of the union of Iranian importers, was quoted as saying.

In turn, Iran can meet Thailand’s needs of chemical, industrial and mineral products, Barkhordar said.

Last week, Thailand ambassador to Iran Adisorndej Sukhasvasti expressed hope for an increase in the trade cooperation between Bangkok and Teheran. There are a lot of opportunities for expanding economic cooperation between Thailand and the Islamic republic, said Sukhasvasti, adding that he and the Iranian Ambassador to the Southeast Asian country, Hossein Kamalaki, “are now planning different projects in this regard.”

The Thai ambassador said Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has been trying to establish friendly ties with all countries since the beginning of his term in office, dashed all doubts regarding the two countries, including Iran and other countries, including Thailand, will improve.”

Xinhua
US, China agree to work on climate change

BEIJING, 16 Feb — China and the United States, the world’s top emitters of greenhouse gases, pledged on Saturday to try to hide their casualties, he said, making fighter death tolls very difficult to gauge. “The Observatory would like to point out that these statistics do not include the fate of more than 180,000 people missing inside the regime’s prisons,” it said in a statement. “Nor does it include more than 7,000 detained by regime forces and armed groups loyal to it, or the hundreds of people kidnapped (by rebel groups) because they are believed to be regime loyalists.”

The Observatory called for an immediate ceasefire for the Geneva peace talks, now planned to go into a third round. "It is shameful that the international community has done nothing to show that it will defend human rights," Abdelrahman told Reuters by telephone.

French minister says CAR operation to last longer than expected

PARIS, 16 Feb — France’s military operation in the Central African Republic will last longer than initially planned because the situation in the country is worse than anticipated, French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Saturday.

“I think it will be longer than expected because the level of hatred and violence is more important than we had imagined,” Le Drian told France Inter radio. “A military operation is not decreed as clockwork, we have to adapt.” France said on Friday it would send another 400 troops to help combat the crisis in the African country as UN chief Ban Ki-moon pleaded for more swift, robust international help to stop sectarian violence that could turn into a genocide.

Almost a million people, or a quarter of the population of the former French colony, have been displaced by fighting which erupted after the mostly Muslim Seleka rebel group seized power in March last year in the majority Christian country.

French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian (C) and Central African Republic’s interim President Catherine Samba Panza (2nd R) look at seized weapons during his visit to Mbaiki, about 105 km (65 miles) away from Bangui, on 12 Feb, 2014. Picture taken 12 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

US Secretary of State John Kerry listens to a question during a discussion with Chinese bloggers in Beijing on 15 Feb, 2014. REUTERS

The Observatory’s toll on both sides was likely much higher—by perhaps more than 60,000. Groups on both sides try to hide their casualties, he said, making fighter death tolls very difficult to gauge. “The Observatory would like to point out that these statistics do not include the fate of more than 180,000 people missing inside the regime’s prisons,” it said in a statement. “Nor does it include more than 7,000 detained by regime forces and armed groups loyal to it, or the hundreds of people kidnapped (by rebel groups) because they are believed to be regime loyalists.”

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Composer Penderecki is witness to history of native Poland

TEL AVIV, 16 Feb — Krzysztof Penderecki, one of the world’s most celebrated living composers, says his music bears witness to the harrowing history of his native Poland in the 20th century. Now 80 but showing no signs of slowing down, Penderecki is performing with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra this week in Israeli cities as his Polish Requiem, a monumental composition with soloists and choir first performed 30 years ago.

“I am emotionally very much involved in this piece because it tells us the story of our history and the history of the last decades to which I was a witness,” Penderecki told Reuters in an interview between rehearsals in Tel Aviv. “I have lived through very difficult times,” said Penderecki, reflecting on the Nazi occupation of Poland in World War Two, the Holocaust and postwar communist oppression. “When the Second World War started, I was only five but I still remember... Being a witness... I wanted people to remember what happened in our country and elsewhere,” he said.

Among the events commemorated in Polish Requiem are the Jewish uprising against the Nazis in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943 (Dies Irae) and the Soviet massacre of some 22,000 Poles in Katyn Forest in 1940 (Libera me, Domine).

Penderecki embarked on the Requiem in 1980 with the brief, lyrical “Lacrimosa” section commissioned for the unveiling of a monument at the Gdansk shipyard to the Solidarity trade union, which helped topple Poland’s communist regime nine years later.

“It was an idea from (then-Solidarity leader and future Polish president) Lech Walesa,” Penderecki said. “A year later, my friend Cardinal (Stefan) Wyszyński, who was a very important political figure in our postwar history, passed away, so I wrote the Agnus Dei.”

“And then I started to write the requiem, but it took me 25 years. The last movement for strings was only written to commemorate the death of Pope John Paul II (in 2005),” he said.

Simon Cowell’s girlfriend gives birth to boy in New York

LONDON, 16 Feb — British TV and music mogul Simon Cowell, who had long said fatherhood was not in his plans, welcomed a son on Friday, his representative AnnMarie Thomson said.

“The former “American Idol” judge’s girlfriend, Lauren Silverman, gave birth to the 6 pound, 7 ounce (2.9 kilograms) boy in New York. It is her second child and Cowell’s first.

Cowell, 54, who gained fame as an acid-tongued judge on television singing contests in the United States and his native Britain, has yet to open in territories such as Germany, Russia and Korea.

American Hustle grosses $200 mn worldwide

LOS ANGELES, 16 Feb — David O Russell’s American Hustle has earned $200 million at the box office worldwide. The film is the highest grossing film for producer Megan Ellison’s Annapurna Pictures and has also set a domestic record for its writer-director Russell, reports hollywoodreporter.com.

It has grossed $138.7 million in the US, setting a career high record for Russell at the domestic box office, surpassing the $132.1 million take for his Silver Linings Playbook. Internationally, the movie has earned $64 million and it has yet to open in territories such as Germany, Russia and Korea.

American Hustle, which features Christian Bale, Amy Adams, Bradley Cooper, Jeremy Renner and Jennifer Lawrence, is nominated in 10 categories at the forthcoming 86th Academy Awards.—PTI

Indian wins 250,000 pounds on British TV game show

LONDON, 16 Feb — A Sikh man in Britain has become only the second male contestant to win a popular television game show, getting 250,000 pounds (around $416,000) in the process.

Roop Singh, 54, from Leeds became only the second male contestant to take such a large sum on Channel 4 game show Deal Or No Deal hosted by popular anchor Noel Edmonds, and the seventh overall since the programme was first broadcast eight years ago.

Roop Singh went all the way to the end despite having just five pounds, 100 pounds, 500 pounds, 1,000 pounds and 250,000 pounds in his last five boxes, the channel said in a media release on 12 February.—PTI

Sridevi made her much awaited comeback to the silver screen with English Vinglish.—PTI

Sridevi approaches for comedy, drama films

MUMBAI, 16 Feb — Bollywood veteran Sridevi, who made a comeback on the silver screen with a sterling performance in English Vinglish has been approached for a comedy and drama film.

“There are two-three subjects lined up including a comedy, drama and a revenge drama film,” Sridevi and Boneyji (producer husband Boney Kapoor) have shortlisted a couple of stories but we are looking to sign a right director,” sources close to the actress said. “She (Sridevi) wants to do a film which a family audience can enjoy and also her role has to be exceptional,” the source said.

The movie is nominated in 10 categories at the forthcoming 86th Academy Awards.—PTI

‘Juno’ actress Ellen Page comes out as gay

LAS VEGAS, 16 Feb — Actress Ellen Page, who was nominated for an Oscar for her role in “Juno,” came out as a lesbian on Friday at a Las Vegas conference for gay teens. “I am tired of hiding and I am tired of being...,” the 26-year-old actress said in a speech that drew roaring support from an audience at the Time to Thrive conference sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign.

“I’m here today because I am gay. And because... maybe I can make a difference,” she said. “To make others have an easier and more hopeful time. Regardless, for me, I feel a personal obligation and a social responsibility.” Page, who in 2007 played a pregnant teen in “Juno,” has also starred in “Inception”, “To Rome with Love” and “X-Men: The Last Stand.”

Page is also working on “Freeheld,” a drama about a terminally ill police detective fighting to assign her retirement benefits to a lesbian lover. Page said in her speech that she suffered for years because she was scared to be public about her sexuality. “My spirit suffered, my mental health suffered and my relationships suffered,” she said. “And I’m standing here today, with all of you, on the other side of all that pain.”

The Human Rights Campaign, a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy group that posted her speech on its website, congratulated Page for completing the “deeply personal and arduous journey” of coming out.—Reuters

Stoch edges Kasai to gold, former S Korea hero An wins title for Russia

Sochi, (Russia), 16 Feb — Polish ski jumper Kamil Stoch edged to gold in the men’s large hill event on Saturday, the third day of the 2014 Olympic Games.

Stoch’s second men’s large hill title, after his gold at the 2010 Vancouver Games, sandwiched a silver for the Russians.

Dutch skier Sjoerd Scharp, who won gold in the men’s 1,500 metres and China’s Zhou Yang, who retained her title in the women’s 1,500, both also accounted for the 1500.In high drama at the Russki Gorki Jumping Centre, 41-year-old Kasai leapt into first place with his final jump, notching up 277.7 points, but normal hill winner Stoch made it double gold with his last leap, falling short of Kasai’s length but totaling 288.7.

33-year-old has amazingly strung together scores of two-over-par 73, 64 and 67 to surge into a tie for fourth place at nine-under after 54 holes, just three strokes behind leader William McGirt.” This is somewhat of a new situation for me but I sure am having fun,” Allred told reporters after posting a nine-under total of 204 on Saturday.

It feels so good to be out there and have a blast. I told my wife a couple weeks ago, if I can look back on the week and say I really enjoyed it and stayed present in the moment, whatever happens I’ll be proud of myself for that.

“ ‘It’s so special to be back in this Pepperdine area. Coach is one of my best friends in the world and he had a lot of the team out here today so just a really special treat to be here,’ Allred, who worked as a whitewater rafting guide after college, was a member of the PGA Tour in 2005 and 2008 but has otherwise played most of his professional golf on the satellite circuits. His most significant achievements include winning the 1997 US Junior title and competing in the British Open (2005) and the US Open (2006 and 2010). This week’s experience at Riviera can certainly be added to that list. Gosh, yesterday I happened to hit a great shot at 14 and I made a great putt there (from 25 feet) today,” Allred said of the reaction he has earned from the supportive fans at Riviera over the past three days. (Reuters)

Allred’s Cinderella story yet not over at Riviera

Pacific Palisades,(California), 16 Feb — Whatever happens in Sunday’s final round of the Northern Trust Open, American Jason Allred will be able to celebrate a fairytale week of the unexpected at Riviera Country Club. A graduate of Pepperdine University, Allred is playing his first PGA Tour event since the 2010 US Open, where he tied for 26th after carding one of four spots in the Riviera field via Monday qualifying.

Allred had decided to try to qualify for this week because he and his wife are expecting their third child at the end of the month and so far, so good.

Bayern midfielder Shaqiri out of Arsenal clash

LONDON, 16 Feb — Bayern Munich’s Switzerland midfielder Xherdan Shaqiri will miss next week’s Champions League, last 16 match at Arsenal with a thigh injury he picked up in the Bundesliga on Saturday, the German champions said.

Schaqiri scored twice for runaway league leaders Bayern in a 4-0 win at home to Freiburg but had to come off just past the hour mark because of the injury.

“Post-match medical showed the player ruptured a muscle in the back of his right thigh (and) will now definitely miss the Champions League round of 16 first leg away to Arsenal on Wednesday and the following Sunday’s Bundesliga trip to Hanover,” Bayern said on their website (www.fcbayern.de).

The injury is a blow for Bayern coach Pep Guardiola who is already without France wing-

Bayern Munich’s Xherdan Shaqiri celebrates a goal during the German Bundesliga first division soccer match against Freiburg in Munich on 15 Feb, 2014. — REUTERS

Sterling’s form has boosted his World Cup chances-Hodgson

London, 16 Feb — Liverpool winger Raheem Sterling’s outstanding form has made the teenager a strong contender for a place at this year’s World Cup finals in Brazil, said England manager Roy Hodgson.

After making his debut away to Sweden in 2012, Sterling, 19, was left out by England and his club since being restored to Liverpool’s first team he has again impressed Hodgson.

“He lost his place for a while and wasn’t on the radar to quite the same extent,” said Hodgson.

“Then I was very impressed with him in an England under-21 game and since he got back into the Liverpool team his form seems to be going up and up.” England seem certain to be without injured Arsenal winger Theo Walcott for the World Cup but Hodgson believes they are “awash” with potential replacements.

As well as Sterling, he mentioned Walcott’s club mate Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, Aaron Lennon (Tottenham Hotspur), Adam Johnson (Sunderland), Wilfried Zaha (on loan to Cardiff City from Manchester United) and Nathan Redmond (Norwich City). Another youngster who has forced his way into contention is 18-year-old Southampton left back Luke Shaw, now challenging the more experienced pair of Ashley Cole, who has not been playing regularly for Chelsea, and Everton’s Leighton Baines.

“arly 2014...”

TOMORROW

SPORTS

Back to the future — looking ahead to the future...
Fireman Brodka douses Dutch hot streak

Soczi, (Russia), 16 Feb — Poland’s Zbigniew Brodka denied the Dutch another Olympic speed skating gold medal by winning the men’s 1,500 meters by just three thousandths of a second on Saturday, while a chance of suit failed to reverse America’s slide on the Adler Arena ice. Part-time fireman Brodka clocked one minute, 45 seconds in the 17th of 20 heats but then was left with his heart in his mouth as Dutch skater Koen Verweij crossed the finish line in the same time in the final pairing. All eyes were fixed on the giant scoreboard at the Adler Arena as organizers tried to split them before determining the Pole had been victorious by the tiny margin. “It’s unbelievable,” Brodka told reporters “First of all I wasn’t sure, but in the back of my mind I believed I had won. When I saw I had won it was an unbelievable feeling.” Brodka, 29, grabbed the Polish flag and took off on a lap of honor as he celebrated his country’s first Olympic gold medal in speed skating despite not having a covered oval to train on at home.

He said he had consulted with Verweij on the podium during the flower ceremony but added “that is sport.” Verweij’s medal was the 13th for the Dutch in speed skating in Soczi, tying East Germany’s record for most medals in a sport at a Winter Olympics. That stat was of little consolation to the long-haired 23-year-old, who was despondent at missing out on his country’s fifth gold of the Sochi Games.

“When I crossed the finish line, I had the same time. You hope it falls on your side but it didn’t. You can’t describe it.” Verweij told reporters. “Still silver, I don’t know, it doesn’t feel that good. I really wanted gold. The silver medal is for the first loser,” Denny Morrison of Canada took bronze to go with the silver medal he won in the 1,000 meters on Wednesday. Morrison’s double is two more medals than the United States has managed after seven speed skating events in Soczi.

Panama says freed North Korean ship set sail for Cuba

The North Korean-flagged cargo ship Chong Chon Gang is pictured in Port Shelter Bay, a former US base, on the outskirts of Colon city on 12 Feb, 2014.

Turkey’s parliament approved a law boosting government control over the appointment of judges and prosecutors on Saturday, after a heated debate and a brawl that left one opposition lawmaker hospitalized.

Dzens of MPs broke into fights during the tense 20-hour debate and insults were traded across party lines. When an opposition deputy called Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan a dictator, deputies from the leader’s party shouted back “are you drunk?”

The battle for control of the Higher Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK), which appoints senior members of the judiciary, lies at the heart of a feud between Erdogan and influential US-based cleric Fethullah Gulen.

Gulen, whose followers say they number in the millions, is believed to have built up influence in the police and judiciary over decades and leads a powerful worldwide Islamic movement from a forested compound in the United States. Erdogan, head of the ruling AK Party, blames Gulen for unleashing a corruption investigation he sees as an attempted “judicial coup” designed to undermine him in the run-up to local and presidential elections this year.

Opposition parties said the HSYK bill aimed to stifle a graft investigation launched on 17 December in which dozens of prominent business people, some of the three cabinet ministers, and state officials were questioned.

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PALAPA CITY, 16 Feb — A North Korean ship detained near the Panama Canal for smuggling Cuban weapons set sail Friday for the Caribbean island on Saturday with most of its crew on board after it paid a fine, the government said.

The Chong Chon Gang ship was seized in July for smuggling Soviet-era arms, including two MiG-21 jet fighters, under thousands of tons of sugar.

Thirty-two sailors in good health were on the ship when it left the country’s Colon port Saturday morning, Panama’s foreign ministry said in an emailed statement. The captain and two other officers remained jailed on weapons trafficking charges.

The ship was released after paying two-thirds of a $1 million fine imposed after two MiG-21 aircraft, 15 MiG engines and nine anti-aircraft missiles were found hidden beneath its declared cargo of sugar.

After the discovery, Cuba acknowledged it was sending “obsolete” Soviet-era weapons to be repaired in North Korea and returned to Cuba.

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Special Rapporteur visits Central Prison, Thilawa SEZ, Myitkyina

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb — Mr. Quintana, Special Rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar, and party visited Central Prison of Myanmar Correctional Department in Insein Township in Yangon on 14 February.

He met Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Set Aung who was also the chairman of Thilawa Special Economic Zone Management Committee and party at the briefing hall of the Thilawa SEZ project in Thanlyin-Kyauktan Township on 15 February.

Mr. Quintana and party observed initial construction works of the project.

In meeting with the Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai, he asked about measures taken for acquisition of humanitarian assistance for relief camps and matters related to political prisoners and Laiza road.

Next, Mr. Quintana and party held talks on his plan to visit Laiza with responsible persons of KIO Liaison Office in Sitapu ward in Myitkyina.—MNA

Follow-up news to arson attack on Pyinmana custody

PYINMANA, 16 Feb—Pyinmana custody facility fire caused panic among nearby residents and locals in urban wards on 15 February morning.

It was, police said, due to an arson attack of Maung Maung Naing, one of detainees at the facility, who is currently on trial for a murder case. The fire swept through his detention room and spread three others.

We called authorities concerned shortly after spotting the fire. As detainees failed to follow our verbal warnings, we had to fire about 18 warning shots into the air with blank bullets to control the situation, said one of the police officers.

“We took quick action in order to return to normal with the use of police force. Now, calms returned to the facility. Further action will be taken against those who got involved in the disorder,” said Police Major Than Myint, head of Pyinmana Township Police Force, while giving an interview to media persons.

According to witnesses, arson attacks by detainees turned into a riot as they damaged the walls. Some firefighters suffered injuries as detainees threw bricks at them.

A total of 282 suspects—236 men and 46 women—are held at the custody facility, it is learnt.—NLM

Investigation Commission on inspection tour for exposing true incident of Ducheeratan Village

Chairman of Investigation Commission Dr Tha Ha Shwe and party observe incident of Ducheeratan Village in Maungtaw Township.—MNA

It is learnt that fruits and vegetables show is being held in commemoration of Peasants’ Day at the organic farm near Koeywa Thabyagyon Village in Ottarathiri Township on 9 February. Out of 900 acres of farmland, saplings are being nurtured at 40-acre and water for saplings are taken from Setsetyo and Chaungmagyi Dams. The purpose of the show is to understand benefits of organic pesticide and organic fertilizer by the farmers.

Use of pesticides and fertilizers for fruits and vegetables can be harmful to not only consumers but also to growers. The show aims at raising awareness among farmers about chemical fertilizer. If the farmers change chemical fertilizers to organic fertilizer, chemical fertilizers are not required for the saplings, said Staff Officer the commission officials will tour Bengal villages, Rakhine national villages and the suspected places reported by some international news agencies and organizations and meet with responsible persons of UN agencies and those of local and foreign social organizations.

During its investigation tour, the commission will carry out to probe the cause of death of Police Sergeant Aung Kyaw Thein at Ducheeratan village on 13 January, 2014 and whether there is foul play on his death, the cause of fire at Ducheeratan (west) village and whether it is an arson attack, false reporting about the village fire and who are behind it, deaths and injuries and loss of property in the incident and present suggested measures in order to avoid the recurrence of such incident.

A team of forensic and legal experts will accompany the commission during the investigation tour in order to help the commission’s probe into incidents, it is learnt.

Organic fertilizer introduced to farmers at organic farm in Ottarathiri Tsp

By Kyaw Thura (Nay Pyi Taw)

Daw Aye Aye Nwe of Agriculture Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Number of plantations such as cabbages, pumpkin, lady’s finger, chilly, tomato, cucumber, banana, papaya and pineapple are grown at the organic farm. Surplus saplings of crops will be given to the farmer free of charge, she continued.

Cultivation of cucumber contributes much to the farmers as the fruits are ready to be plucked after 35 day-old and its duration is only 80-85 days. Moreover, musk melon is marketable and very popular in the neighbouring countries. Fruits and vegetables grown with the use of organic fertilizer are more expensive than that of grown with chemical fertilizer in international horticulture and vegetable markets, she added.

Trs: KHS