Thilawa Special Economic Zone: An engine for job creation in Yangon

Byline: Maung Sein Lwin; Photo: Min Htet

Thai investments in Thilawa Special Economic Zone which is expected to become the largest industrial complex in Southeast Asia is about to take shape in this May, said Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Sett Aung who accompanied the President during the latter’s visit to the zone on Saturday.

Aiming at boosting national economy along with sweeping reforms in the country, implementation of the establishment of Special Economic Zones—Thilawa, Kyaikpyu and Dawei—in Myanmar is taking place.

U Sett Aung stressed the importance of water and electricity supply which are key to the timely completion of the projects. He continued: “So far land preparation of Thilawa SEZ has been completed by 80 percent. It is required to finish some sections, especially in water and electricity supply and road construction, of the project ahead of the start of (See page 8)
Myat Pyinnya Library put into service in South Dagon

YANGON, 24 Feb—With the aim of broadening horizon of the students and local people and raising reading habits, a ceremony to inaugurate Myat Pyinnya Library was held in Ward 65 of Dagon Myothit (South) Township, here, on Sunday.

World Vision donated 4.4 million and local people K 2.6 million for construction of library that has 20 feet wide and 60 feet long. Region Hluttaw MP Daw San San Win, Deputy Director U Myint Swe of Yangon Region Information and Public Relations Department, Township Administrator U Myint Lwin and Chairman of Township Supportive Committee U Tin Maung Nyent formally opened the library.

Representative Daw San San Win, Staff Officer U Soe Nyant Shwe of Yangon East District IPRD and Township Administrator U Myint Lwin accepted TV set and publications donated by wellwishers. Also present at the opening ceremony were departmental personnel, students, responsible persons of NGOs and local people.—MMAL-Soe Nyunt Shwe

Myanmar Libraries Foundation to fund construction of village library

Myeik, 24 Feb—Staff Officer Daw Hla Hla Htay and staff of Myeik District Information and Public Relations Department on 21 February made field trips to the villages where libraries will be constructed through the fund of Myanmar Libraries Foundation.

They viewed the site chosen for construction of the village library and discussed with village administrator and supportive committee members.

At Basic Education Middle School Branch, the staff officer gave talks on emergence of outstanding students.

They inspected the construction of library in Mayanbinchaung Village and discussed durability of the library. The village library is located beside Myeik Dawei road. It will be 27 feet long, 18 feet wide and 11 feet high. As of 14 April 2013, the construction was started by local people under the aegis of Ashin Chandobhasa of Masooyein Monastery of Mandalay. At present, they have spent K 7 million on construction tasks.

On completion, the library will serve the readers with various subjects of books. The library will conduct computer course at the hall. Kyemon-Khaing Htoo (Myeik District IPRD)

National Objectives of 69th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

- To uphold Our Three Main National Causes as national policy
- To work on national security by the Tatmadaw joining hands with the government and the entire people
- To cooperate with the government in implementing rural development and poverty alleviation scheme, and
- To actively participate in restoring eternal peace and building a developed democratic nation based on the Union through peace ad stability

Myingyan Township residents focusing on electrification for rural areas

Myingyan Township formed with 19 wards and 186 villages is gaining development momentum due to opportunity to enjoy electricity.

A total of 47 villages of 186 need electrification while 139 villages are enjoying supply of electricity.

Fourteen villages of 47 are making arrangements to supply electricity to the people. Myingyan District Electrical Engineer U Kyaw Miint and electricians are striving for illuminating 1114 villages in its area through various ways and means.

In 2013-14 fiscal year, Myingyan District applies power grids, solar panel system, hydropower, diesel engine and bio-gas power supply facilities to supply power to 139 villages in Myingyan, 181 villages in Kyaukpadaung, 78 villages in Taungtha, 29 villages in Natogyi and 54 villages in Ngazun townships.

However, 47 villages of Myingyan Township needs electrification, 158 in Kyaukpadaung Township, 165 in Taungha Township, 159 in Natogyi Township and 104 in Ngazun Township.

District and township electrical engineers install transformers ranging from 100 KVA to 315 KVA depending on consuming loads of villages. Myanma Electric Power Enterprise in Myingyan gives assistance to the villages that wish to do electrification on a self-reliant basis, according to District Electrical Engineer U Kyaw Myint.

Township Electrical Engineer U Aung Tun Min said that cost of electrification will differ from using consuming loads, and it may be K 50 million to K 100 million.

The power consumers are to abide by preventive measures against danger of electricity prescribed by MEPE.

Trs: TTA

Take Fire Preventive Measures
Meeting between Venezuela government, opposition may help ease protests

**CARACAS, 24 Feb** — A meeting between a top Venezuelan opposition leader and President Nicolas Maduro on Monday may help ease nearly two weeks of violent anti-government protests that have killed at least eight people.

State governor Henrique Capriles will meet Maduro at a routine gathering of governors and mayors and will likely get a chance to present the opposition’s grievances.

The daily unrest has sharpened the bitter divide between critics and supporters of the ruling Socialist Party, although even Maduro’s rivals appear to be growing weary of blocked streets and constant clashes between students and police. “Dialogue is not about listening to what the government wants to say, it’s about making sure the demonstrators’ voices are heard,” Capriles, a two-time opposition presidential candidate, wrote on Sunday in his weekly column.

Five people have died from gunshot wounds in the unrest that began on 12 February with the death of a student protestor and was later fueled by the arrest of hard-line opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez.

A 23-year-old female student died on Saturday after being shot in the face with rubber bullets, while others have died in accidents caused by the roadblocks.

Maduro, who has vowed to nurture the self-styled socialist revolution he inherited from late president Hugo Chavez, calls the demonstrations acts of terrorism by “fascists” seeking a coup similar to the one that briefly ousted Chavez in 2002.

But he has expressed willingness to meet Capriles.

---

**SYDNEY, 24 Feb** — The Group of 20’s proposal to lift economic activity by 2 percent over the next five years has so many holes in it, there’s no wonder it was the first official target that all members felt happy to agree on.

Each country has until November to come up with its own supposedly “concrete” plans, but there is nothing to enforce their implementation except the moral suasion of other members. The International Monetary Fund has said it will be watching for progress on the plans, but it has no power to compel or punish.

The target is also a moving one, as it is based on beating an estimate for growth which itself is just a best guess. Forecasting is by its nature a highly imprecise art and the IMF is forever revising its forecasts up or down. Predicting growth for the next quarter is tough enough, no matter over five years. “We’re not even sure where we are on growth. How will we be able to judge if these targets are being met?” said Michael Blythe, chief economist at Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

---

**BANGKOK, 24 Feb** — Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, the target of anti-government protesters who have blocked parts of Bangkok for weeks, has left the city and is staying 150 km (90 miles) away, her office said on Monday, without specifying the location.

The protests, punctuated by occasional gunfire and bomb blasts, including on Sunday which killed a woman and a young brother and sister, are aimed at unseating Yingluck and easing the influence of her brother, ousted ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra, regarded by many as the real power behind the government. Yingluck’s office told reporters she was not in Bangkok and asked media to follow a convoy outside the city where they said Yingluck was “undertaking official duties” 150 km away.

The office would not specify the location. Yingluck’s administration is staying 150 km (90 miles) from outside the capital.

---

**BANGKOK, 24 Feb** — Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who is staying 150 km (90 miles) from outside the capital. She said on Monday that Yingluck will hold a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, “It is highly likely that we will hold the cabinet meeting outside of Bangkok. As for the prime minister’s exact whereabouts today, I have not been informed about her location,” Surapong told reporters.

---

**TEXT CONTINUES...**
S Korea, US begin joint military exercises

SEOUL, 24 Feb — South Korea and the United States on Monday began their annual joint military drills designed to increase the alliance’s readiness to defend against a North Korean attack.

Key Resolve, a computer-based command post exercise, lasts until 6 March, while Foal Eagle, a field training drill involving ground, air, naval, expeditionary and special operations, ends on 18 April, according to the headquarters of US forces in South Korea.

North Korea has called the drills a rehearsal for invasion and demanded they be cancelled, but South Korea and the United States have insisted the drills are purely defensive in nature.

The drills come as North and South Korea are holding reunions of families that remain separated since the 1950-1953 Korean War at Mt Kumgang, a resort on the North’s east coast.

North Korea had earlier threatened to boycott the family reunions, citing the South Korea-US military drills, but later agreed to hold them as planned.

The reunions, the first in nearly three years, started last Thursday and will end Tuesday.

Kyodo News

Italy’s new PM Renzi faces first parliamentary test

ROME, 24 Feb — Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi faces his first test before a fractious national parliament when he goes before the Senate on Monday to put flesh on his ambitious reform plans and seek to win a confidence vote in his newly installed government.

Backed by his own centre-left Democratic Party (PD), the small centre-right NCD party, centrists and other miscellaneous groups, he should have enough support in the 320-seat upper house.

But there will be close attention to the size of his majority after some left-wingers in his own party threatened to vote against the government if he falls significantly below the 173 secured by his predecessor Enrico Letta in December, his authority could be weakened from the start.

With the euro zone’s third largest economy in urgent need of potentially painful reforms and weighed down by a 2-trillion-euro public debt, Renzi’s room for maneuver is limited and an uncertain parliamentary majority will not help. “If parliament is with us, good. Otherwise, Renzi is certainly not afraid of the ballot box,” his chief of staff Graziano Delrio told Rai state television.

The 39-year-old mayor of Florence, who won the leadership of the PD in December, forced his party rival Letta to resign as prime minister earlier this month after repeatedly attacking his government’s reform record.

He took office on Saturday promising a radical increase in tempo, with an overhaul of the electoral and constitutional system to ensure more stable governments in future, tax and labor reforms and a shake-up of the bloated public administration, all within his first 100 days. Delrio said the government would cut taxes on non-wage labor costs, financing the reduction through spending cuts and privatization revenues.

It may also raise taxes on financial earnings from investments like short-term treasury bills, which are popular with many savers.

But Delrio ruled out a new wealth tax, which some opposition politicians have suggested could be in the pipeline. He also said that the government would respect the European Union’s deficit ceiling of 3 percent of gross domestic product after comments from Renzi suggesting that he will seek room to breach the limits temporarily to finance structural investments. —Reuters
Japan not to rule out arms exports to nations involved in conflicts

Tokyo, 24 Feb — Japan plans to ease its self-imposed restrictions on arms exports by not ruling out delivering weapons to nations involved in international conflicts, signaling a major policy shift in its long-held “three principles” on arms exports that ban such action, a Japanese government source said on Sunday.

Critics warn the change could undermine Japan’s pacifist stance after World War II and pave the way for Japanese-made weapons and technology to be used in global conflicts.

The change is expected to be reflected in Japan’s envisioned new arms export control guidelines as the government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is reviewing the current rules, believing that weapons exports would help boost Japan’s security ties with its allies.

Tokyo adopted the three principles on arms exports in 1967 to block the transfer of weapons to communist states, countries subject to embargoes under UN resolutions and those involved in international conflicts.

The rules became a virtual blanket ban in 1976, with some exceptions made by past governments. In 2011, Japan relaxed the rules to allow exports for humanitarian and peaceful purposes, and made it easier to participate in joint development and production of weapons. — Kyodo News

France risks long stay after misjudging CAR

PARIS/DAKAR, 24 Feb — When France sent troops to halt violence between Christians and Muslims in Central African Republic, commanders named the mission Sangaris after a local butterfly to reflect its short life. Three months later, it is clear they badly miscalculated. Buoyed by a swift victory in last year’s war against Islamists in Mali, France’s military predicted six months would be enough to quell sectarian conflict in Central African Republic, which began in March when Muslim Seleka rebels seized power in the majority Christian country.

Some defence ministry officials said in private that a show of French force would be enough to restore order and no shots need be fired. With its military budget stretched by Mali, Paris gambled on sending a small force of just 1,600 men. Now, with the country sliding into what the top UN human rights official termed “ethnic-religious cleansing”, as Muslims flee northward to escape vicious reprisals by Christian militia, France faces a long fight with scant support from Western allies to stop the nation of 4.5 million people splitting in two.

France’s parliament is due to vote on extending Sangaris on Tuesday, but officials say Paris has already accepted its troops will stay at least until elections due by February next year, at the request of interim President Catherine Samba Panza. “It will take longer than expected because the level of hatred and violence is worse than we had imagined,” French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian admitted last week. “No-one can accept partition. It must be stopped.” — Reuters

Pakistan jets pound militant hideouts, killing 38

PESHAWAR, (Pakistan), 24 Feb — Pakistan fighters attacked suspected militant hideouts in tribal areas on the Afghan border on Sunday, killing at least 38 insurgents, officials said, in the third air strike in recent days.

The raids came after peace negotiations with Taleban insurgents broke down last week and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif authorized the army on 20 February to take on militants in the volatile region on the Afghan border.

“Fighter jets pounded training facilities of the terrorists in Tirah valley early on Sunday,” said one military official.

He said the facilities destroyed had been used to train suicide bombers and make explosives.

“There are confirmed reports that 38 terrorists including some important commanders were killed,” said another security official, adding that at least six hideouts were destroyed.

There were no immediate reports of civilian casualties.

Despite the violence, both sides insist they are still open for negotiations. Many observers are skeptical about peace talks with a group which has killed 40,000 people since 2007.

The Sunni Islamist Taleban told the government last week there was no chance of peace in the country unless Pakistan changed its political and legal system and officially embraced Islamic law.

This year has been marked by a surge in violence and Sharif is under intense pressure from hawks in the armed forces to mount a tougher military response against the insurgents.

— Reuters

A shop assistant arranges red coral accessories in a craft market in Tunis, capital of Tunisia, on 23 Feb, 2014. Tunisia is prolific in the production of red corals. — Xinhua

Tariff, intellectual property on agenda on 3rd day of TPP talks

SINGAPORE, 24 Feb — Countries involved in the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade talks will tackle contentious issues including tariff removal and intellectual property rights on the third day of a ministerial conference on Monday in Singapore.

On the margin of a plenary session, Tokyo and Washington are seeking to solve outstanding bilateral issues of whether Japan can retain tariffs on its sensitive farm goods and the phase-out period of US auto duties. But a Japanese minister attending the four-day conference through Tuesday said more working-level bargaining needs to be done before bringing the issues to the ministerial level. Akira Amari, Japan’s minister in charge of the TPP, and US Trade Representative Michael Froman held bilateral talks over the issues on Saturday.

Holding ministerial talks without enough preparation is “not necessarily a good idea,” Amari told reporters on Monday morning, suggesting that many differences remain between the two sides.

“We need to know (before setting up next ministerial talks) that we won’t end up having the same results” as the previous bilateral meeting, he said. Japan has been under strong pressure from other negotiating peers, especially Washington, to further open up its agricultural market, as the US-led TPP aims for the abolition of all tariffs in principle.

— Kyodo News
China’s Huawei seeks US foothold in smartphone race

BARCELONA, 24 Feb — China’s Huawei Technologies believes it can take advantage of recent changes in how operators in the United States sell phones to get a foothold in the all-important market, an executive with its consumer division said on Sunday.

Huawei, best known as a maker of telecom network gear, became the world’s third-biggest smartphone manufacturer last year, through the sale of mid-priced handsets within its fast-growing domestic market and an increasing appeal to price-conscious consumers in western Europe. But the group, which lags market leader Samsung and Apple, has yet to gain a foothold in the high-end segment of developed markets such as the United States, where it is viewed with suspicion after lawmakers flagged Chinese telecommunications equipment as potential security risks.

It has also suffered from its difficult-to-proounce brand name, its executives have acknowledged. After launching five new devices at the Mobile World Congress trade fair in Barcelona, Huawei’s Colin Giles said the group was taking early steps in the United States to build better relationships with mobile operators and directly with consumers via online shops.

“We recognize that the US is a very competitive and very tough market for us,” Giles, the executive vice president of Huawei’s consumer business group, told Reuters. “Recently there has been quite some change in the US in terms of the wholesale subsidy landscape, and so that provides a new opportunity for players like us to come with a slightly different distribution strategy than what we used to have.”

In the third quarter of last year, Huawei accounted for 3 percent of all phones sold in the United States, respectively, trailing Apple’s 36.2 percent and Samsung’s 32.5 percent, according to IDC.

Traditionally, mobile operators buy phones in bulk from manufacturers like Apple and then offer them for free or a low upfront cost to customers when they sign a new one- or two-year contract. Reuters

Microsoft resets Windows Phone to reach lower cost markets

WASHINGTON, 24 Feb — Microsoft Corp is pushing to reach a far wider audience for smartphones running its Windows Phone software by turning to cheaper chipsets and easing restrictions on how phone makers use its software to encourage them to drive down costs.

Nick Parker, Microsoft’s senior vice president for handset makers, said the changes have attracted a range of new handset makers to build Windows Phones, including South Korea’s LG Electronics, India’s Xola and Karbonn, and ZTE, Foxconn, Lenovo, Gionee and Longcheer.

“We are open for business on Windows Phone to anyone who wants to build a Windows phone,” Parker said at the Mobile World Congress trade fair on Sunday.

Windows Phones typically sell for several hundred dollars a piece, although Nokia’s Lumia 520 handset has an unsubsidized price of about 139 euros ($190) in Europe. The sub-$100 smartphone market, however, is dominated by Google’s Android operating system, which has lower licensing costs, is more adaptable by device makers, and runs on more, and cheaper, chipsets that run radio and other functions. Android phones from dozens of handset makers accounted for almost four out of every five smartphones sold, or 781.2 million units, last year, according to Strategy Analytics. Microsoft was a distant third in market share terms, behind Apple, which shipped 153.4 million smartphones.

Some 5.7 million Windows Mobile units were shipped worldwide, Strategy Analytics said. While it gained a more than 10 percent share in some markets, for example Italy, other markets like the United States remained tough, Vice President Joe Belgiore said in Barcelona.—Reuters

Uneasy rest begins for China’s troubled Yutu rover

BEIJING, 24 Feb — China’s lunar rover Yutu entered its third planned dormancy on Saturday, with the mechanical control issues that might cripple the vehicle still unresolved.

According to the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence (SASTIND) on Sunday, Yutu only carried out fixed point observations during its third lunar day, equivalent to about two weeks on Earth. Yutu’s radar, panoramic camera and infrared imaging equipment are functioning normally, but the control issues that have troubled the rover since January persist.

The rover went to sleep mode on Saturday afternoon. During the lunar night, there is no sunlight to power Yutu’s solar panels. In this period, the rover is expected to stay in a power-off mode and communication with Earth is cut. Yutu, named after the pet rabbit of the lunar goddess Chang’e in Chinese mythology, touched down on the moon’s surface on 15 December, some hours after lunar probe Chang’e-3 landed.

The rover was designed to roam the lunar surface for at least three months to survey the moon’s geological structure and surface substances and look for natural resources.

But problems emerged before the rover entered its second dormancy on the moon on 25 January as the lunar night fell.

According to SASTIND, the mechanic control abnormality occurred due to the “complicated lunar surface”. Experts had feared that it might never function again, but Yutu “woke up” on 12 February, two days behind schedule, and caused a stir in China’s social networking circles.

A the awakening was announced by an unverified user named “Hale Rabbit Lunar Rover”, which posts first-person accounts in the “voice” of the probe, and has gone viral on Weibo, or Twitter.

“Hi, anybody there?” it asked, prompting over 60,000 reposts and 40,000 comments within two hours.—Xinhua

Rock around the clock: zircon crystal is oldest piece of Earth

WASHINGTON , 24 Feb — To put it mildly, this is one gem of a gem. Scientists using two different dating techniques have shown that a tiny zircon crystal found on a sheep ranch in western Australia is the oldest known piece of our planet, dating to 4.4 billion years ago. Riting in the journal Nature Geoscience on Sunday, the researchers said the discovery indicates that Earth’s crust formed relatively soon after the planet formed and that the little gem was a remnant of it.

ohn Valley, a University of Wisconsin geoscience professor who led the research, said the findings suggest that the early Earth was not as harsh a place as many scientists have thought.

To determine the age of the zircon fragment, the scientists first used a widely accepted dating technique based on determining the radioactive decay of uranium to lead in a mineral sample. ut because some scientists hypothesized that this technique might give a false date due to possible movement of lead atoms within the crystal over time, the researchers turned to a second sophisticated method to verify the finding. hey used a technique known as atom-probe tomography that was able to identify individual atoms of lead in the crystal and determine their mass, and confirmed that the zircon was indeed 4.4 billion years old.

To put that age in perspective, the Earth itself formed 4.5 billion years ago as a ball of molten rock, meaning that its crust formed relatively soon thereafter, 100 million years later. The age of the crystal also means that the crust appeared just 160 million years after the very formation of the solar system.—Reuters

China’s Huawei seeks US foothold in smartphone race

The Huawei Ascend Mate2 4G mobile telephone with an Android operating system is shown at the annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada on 8 Jan, 2014.— Reuters

A Windows Nokia Phone is seen on display at Microsoft’s annual shareholder meeting in Bellevue, Washington 19 Nov, 2013.— Reuters

A 4.4 billion-year-old zircon crystal from the Jack Hills region of Australia is pictured in this undated handout photo obtained by Reuters on 23 Feb, 2014.— Reuters
Global warming won’t cut winter deaths as hoped

Oslo, 24 Feb — Global warming will fail to reduce high winter death rates as some officials have predicted because there will be more harmful weather extremes even as it gets less cold, a British study showed on Monday. A draft UN report due for publication next month says that, overall, climate change will harm human health, but adds: “Positive effects will include modest improvements in cold-related mortality and morbidity in some areas due to fewer cold extremes.” The findings were likely to apply to other developed countries in temperate regions that risk more extreme weather as temperatures rise.

Excess winter deaths (EWDs), the number of people who die in winter compared to other times of the year, roughly halved to 31,000 in England and Wales in 2012-12 from 60,000 typical in the 1950s, official data show. Staddon’s report said the decline was due to better home insulation, heating, health care and other non-climate factors with no link to a decline in the number of cold days. “Winter cold severity no longer predicts the numbers affected,” the authors wrote. “The correlation between the number of cold winter days per year and EWDs, which was strong until the mid-1970s, no longer exists.” Staddon’s findings are at odds with a 2012 Climate Change Risk Assessment by the British Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) that said global warming would bring “some potential benefits, for example, a projected reduction in winter mortality.” Asked to comment on Sunday’s report, a Defra spokesman said an updated climate assessment was due in 2017. “We will continue to take account of the latest scientific evidence,” he said.

Many governments are reviewing health spending priorities and summer heat waves are often seen as a bigger threat than winter cold. UN studies say it is at least 95 percent probable that most warming in recent years is man-made. Staddon said developed nations should avoid a radical shift in spending to heatwave protection, such as better air conditioning in homes for the elderly, from measures to ease cold such as subsidies for insulation or winter heating. “Heatwave deaths will increase a lot but there will still be more winter deaths,” he said. In 2003, the worst European heatwave in centuries killed up to 70,000 people, including about 3,000 in Britain.

China overtakes India as top gold consumer

BEIJING, 24 Feb — China overtook India as the world’s largest gold consumer for the first time in 2013, official data showed.

China’s gold consumption hit 1,176 tonnes in 2013, up 41.4 percent, as declining gold prices enticed buying, according to the Ministry of Information and Technology (MIIT). The precious metal fell 26 percent last year to 1,670 US dollars to 1,243 US dollars per ounce.

Last year was the 7th consecutive year that China was the world’s No1 gold producer and production rose 6.2 percent to reach 428 tonnes, nearly 15 percent of the world’s total.

Tokyo, 24 Feb — Toshiba Corp said on Monday it has won an order to supply steam turbine equipment for a thermal power plant in Darlipali, India, for about 18.6 billion yen.

The Japanese electrical machinery manufacturer said its local unit will deliver two 800-megawatt super-critical steam turbines and other equipment for the power station to be operated by NTPC Ltd, India’s largest state-owned energy service provider, by early 2018.

Toshiba said it aims to expand its energy-related business in India and neighboring countries where rapid growth in power demand is expected.

The General Mills logo is seen on a box of Cheerios cereal in Evanston, Illinois, on 26 June, 2012.— Reuters

Big consumer companies cut costs, Wall Street wants bolder steps

BOCA RATON, (Florida), 24 Feb — Investors are growing impatient with the makers of global brands like Cadbury chocolate, Campbell Soup and Tide laundry detergent, as these stalwart consumer products companies try to boost profits through cost cuts and brand makeovers while smaller rivals take risks and grab market share.

Organic and soy milk seller WhiteWave Foods Co, privately owned yogurt maker Chobani Greek and Keurig coffee brewer seller Green Mountain Coffee Roasters Inc have shaken up their categories and chalked up enviable growth while big companies such as ConAgra Foods Inc, Danone SA and General Mills Inc struggle.

Shares of the companies that make everything from Cheerios and Pepperidge Farms to Pampers disposable diapers have been a defensive play for investors in uncertain times. But the companies have been struggling with weak demand in North America and Europe, cooling emerging markets and increasingly fickle consumers empowered by social media and online search and comparison tools.

The stocks still aren’t cheap.” Helped by predictable, strong cash flow and generous dividends, the 25 biggest consumer staples firms still trade at 18 times forward earnings estimates, according to Thomson Reuters data. That’s not far from the 20 multiple enjoyed by the fast-growing technology stocks.—Reuters

Consumers wait in a line to check out at a gold jewellery shop in Nanjing, capital of east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 18 April, 2013. — Xinhua

China overtake India as top gold consumer

Toshio Hasegawa

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Oslo, 24 Feb — Climate warming will fail to reduce high winter death rates as some officials have predicted because there will be more harmful weather extremes even as it gets less cold, a British study showed on Monday. A draft UN report due for publication next month says that, overall, climate change will harm human health, but adds: “Positive effects will include modest improvements in cold-related mortality and morbidity in some areas due to fewer cold extremes.” The findings were likely to apply to other developed countries in temperate regions that risk more extreme weather as temperatures rise.

Excess winter deaths (EWDs), the number of people who die in winter compared to other times of the year, roughly halved to 31,000 in England and Wales in 2012-12 from 60,000 typical in the 1950s, official data show. Staddon’s report said the decline was due to better home insulation, heating, health care and other non-climate factors with no link to a decline in the number of cold days. “Winter cold severity no longer predicts the numbers affected,” the authors wrote. “The correlation between the number of cold winter days per year and EWDs, which was strong until the mid-1970s, no longer exists.” Staddon’s findings are at odds with a 2012 Climate Change Risk Assessment by the British Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) that said global warming would bring “some potential benefits, for example, a projected reduction in winter mortality.” Asked to comment on Sunday’s report, a Defra spokesman said an updated climate assessment was due in 2017. “We will continue to take account of the latest scientific evidence,” he said.

Many governments are reviewing health spending priorities and summer heat waves are often seen as a bigger threat than winter cold. UN studies say it is at least 95 percent probable that most warming in recent years is man-made. Staddon said developed nations should avoid a radical shift in spending to heatwave protection, such as better air conditioning in homes for the elderly, from measures to ease cold such as subsidies for insulation or winter heating. “Heatwave deaths will increase a lot but there will still be more winter deaths,” he said. In 2003, the worst European heatwave in centuries killed up to 70,000 people, including about 3,000 in Britain.

China overtake India as top gold consumer

BEIJING, 24 Feb — China overtook India as the world’s largest gold consumer for the first time in 2013, official data showed.

China’s gold consumption hit 1,176 tonnes in 2013, up 41.4 percent, as declining gold prices enticed buying, according to the Ministry of Information and Technology (MIIT). The precious metal fell 26 percent last year to 1,670 US dollars to 1,243 US dollars per ounce.

Last year was the 7th consecutive year that China was the world’s No1 gold producer and production rose 6.2 percent to reach 428 tonnes, nearly 15 percent of the world’s total.

Tokyo, 24 Feb — Toshiba Corp said on Monday it has won an order to supply steam turbine equipment for a thermal power plant in Darlipali, India, for about 18.6 billion yen.

The Japanese electrical machinery manufacturer said its local unit will deliver two 800-megawatt super-critical steam turbines and other equipment for the power station to be operated by NTPC Ltd, India’s largest state-owned energy service provider, by early 2018.

Toshiba said it aims to expand its energy-related business in India and neighboring countries where rapid growth in power demand is expected.

The General Mills logo is seen on a box of Cheerios cereal in Evanston, Illinois, on 26 June, 2012.— Reuters

Big consumer companies cut costs, Wall Street wants bolder steps

BOCA RATON, (Florida), 24 Feb — Investors are growing impatient with the makers of global brands like Cadbury chocolate, Campbell Soup and Tide laundry detergent, as these stalwart consumer products companies try to boost profits through cost cuts and brand makeovers while smaller rivals take risks and grab market share.

Organic and soy milk seller WhiteWave Foods Co, privately owned yogurt maker Chobani Greek and Keurig coffee brewer seller Green Mountain Coffee Roasters Inc have shaken up their categories and chalked up enviable growth while big companies such as ConAgra Foods Inc, Danone SA and General Mills Inc struggle.

Shares of the companies that make everything from Cheerios and Pepperidge Farms to Pampers disposable diapers have been a defensive play for investors in uncertain times. But the companies have been struggling with weak demand in North America and Europe, cooling emerging markets and increasingly fickle consumers empowered by social media and online search and comparison tools.

The stocks still aren’t cheap.” Helped by predictable, strong cash flow and generous dividends, the 25 biggest consumer staples firms still trade at 18 times forward earnings estimates, according to Thomson Reuters data. That’s not far from the 20 multiple enjoyed by the fast-growing technology stocks.—Reuters

Consumers wait in a line to check out at a gold jewellery shop in Nanjing, capital of east China’s Jiangsu Province, on 18 April, 2013. — Xinhua
Information is knowledge and knowledge is power

Generally data means measurements or statistics used as the basis for reasoning or discussion. But philosophically the word refers to things known or assumed as facts, forming as the base for reasoning or calculation. In some fields such as computer science data is a kind of semi-information and not fully reliable yet. Technically, data is a mixture of fact and fiction. It is like a raw material that can be refined into finished good.

On the other hand, information is knowledge that we get about someone or something or facts or details about a subject. Some dictionaries define the word as knowledge communicated or received concerning a particular fact or circumstance. So, normally, any collection on something or some person that is accurate and credible can be called information.

But how do we make information? It is something like manufacturing a product. A manufacturer refines raw materials into consumer-friendly finished goods. Likewise, data can be called raw material or semi-finished good that can be distilled into reader-friendly information.

Actually, it is the work of the media and mass communication networks. They first collect data and then filter it into information meaning removing all the parts that are unreliable and inaccurate. Here, constant research, careful analyses, human capital, knowledge and ethics are the devices for producing accurate and reliable information. In the media, the people of the newsroom or editorial staff as they are called make the information more attractive and reader-friendly. We are receiving daily such kind of information from the media as news. So it is important that every piece of news must be accurate, credible, striking, harm-free and digestible. All in all, information is knowledge and knowledge is power.

---

12th Meeting on Implementation of Myanmar-China Border Areas Management & Cooperation Agreement held

**Nay Pyi Taw**, 24 Feb—A Chinese delegation led by Mr. Ouyang Yujing, Director-General of the Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, which arrived in Myanmar on 19 February 2014 to attend the 12th Meeting on the Implementation of the Myanmar-China Border Areas Management and Cooperation Agreement, left Yangon yesterday afternoon by air.

The Chinese delegation was seen off at Yangon International Airport by officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the staff of the Chinese Embassy in Yangon.

The 12th Meeting on the Implementation of the Myanmar-China Border Areas Management and Cooperation Agreement was held at Myat Mingalar Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on 20 and 21 February 2014.

U San Lwin, Director-General of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Ouyang Yujing, Director-General of the Department of Boundary and Ocean Affairs of China co-chaired the said meeting and discussed the issues relating to Myanmar-China Border Areas and boundary related matters.—MNA

Myanmar Independent Living Initiative Organization opens Mohnyin branch

**Mohnyin**, 24 Feb—Myanmar Independent Living Initiative Organization of persons with disabilities opened its branch in Mohnyin of Kachin State on 23 February.

Mohnyin Township administrator U Kyaw Swa Aung and four young people with disabilities cut the ribbon to open the new branch.

The organization targeted at the disabled persons to stand on their own and to enjoy equal rights in social field.

A total of 45 disabled youths attended the ceremony.

---

Thilawa Special Economic ...

*(from page 1)*

Under the 51 per cent rule, 10 per cent is owned by Thilawa SEZ management committee and 41 per cent by Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Public Limited. MMS Thilawa Development Co., Ltd groupings of three Japanese companies—Mitsubishi, Marubeni and Sumitomo—has 39 per cent and the Japan International Cooperation Agency 10 per cent.

It is learnt that 2.145 million shares will go on sale for public in the early of this March, pricing one share at K 10,000.

Farmer service area. The president stressed the need to employ not only graduates but also ordinary people. I have no idea what will happen but no doubt that local people are looking forwards to seeing the start of the project for employment in the zone.

During the President’s visit to the zone, the Union ministers reported that measures are being undertaken in the areas of electricity and water supply for sooner completion of the project. It is learnt that there is a plan to build a power plant developed with clean coal technology in the zone for adequate supply of electricity.

“We are ready to help local and foreign investors as much as we can, facilitating their investments. It is envisaged that more foreign investments will take place this year. The government, on its part, is introducing relaxations to promote FDIs. It is sure the under-construction Thilawa SEZ which is the zone of international standards will bring more job opportunities, contributing towards better socio-economic status of local people”, said U Aung Naing Oo, director-general of the Directororate of Investment and Company Administration.

Thilawa Special Economic Zone located 14-mile south-east of Yangon is one of the country’s largest development projects attracting the wide interest from local and foreign investors.
Myanmar’s step towards... (from page 16) and has been undertaking development task for women and gender equality in collaboration with international donors, UN agencies and departments concerned, he added. Plan is underway to establish an enhancement of women and gender equality division led by a director. At the session, the Hluttaw sought the approval of the MP’s for “Anti-Terrorism Bill”. The Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development cooperated with UNDP in compiling Integrated Household Living Condition Assessment Survey-IHLCA with the assistance of UNICEF and SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency) in 2004 and 2010, said Daw Lei Lei Hall, here, today.

Union government gives first... (from page 16) and洛阳 Minister for Education and Allowance U Aye Myint inspects Center for Vocational Training School on Strand Road.—MNA

Knowledge on parliamentary affairs of Germany shared

Union Minister visits training schools in Yangon Region

Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Aye Myint inspects Center for Vocational Training School on Strand Road.—MNA

Kyaukpyu SEZ project implementation taking shape

Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Aye Myint visits training schools in Yangon Region.—MNA

MMCWA’s community-based mobile clinic arrives in Lewe Township

Nay Pyi Taw, 24 Feb—As part of efforts for providing basic healthcare to local people, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association organized a community-based mobile clinic program at Yayka village in Lewe Township in Nay Pyi Taw on Saturday.

MMCWA members and dental and eye special...


**Plums earn increased income for rural people**

Magway, 24 Feb—Local people can earn income from sales of plums collected from plum trees around the villages in Magway Township during their spare time after completion of farming works in summer.

They sell one basket of ripe plum per K 1200 and dried plum per K 1800. They can sell seeds of plum at the price of one basket per K 7000.

Plum can be made as jam. Seeds of plum can be produced as fuel for production of bricks. Purchase centres are kept open for plums. These centres near 30-ton Oil Mill of Thandaw Village near Taungdwin Road at the exit of Magway and Kanbya Village on Magway-Nay Pyi Taw Road.

Thus, the local people can earn increased income for their families through marketable plums.

**Boards “Your Speed” installed on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway for transport security**

It is estimated that about 5000 vehicles run along the expressway daily, according to the statistics of toll gates.

The traffic accidents occur on the expressway based on three factors—man, vehicle and road errors. For example, some drivers dizzied in driving, reckless driving in alcohol and misdriving of ways. Some drivers run their vehicles in high speed so they cannot control driving. In consequence, the vehicles caused overturns severally.

From January to December 2013, there were a total of 259 traffic accidents on the expressway.

With regard to the installation of the board Your Speed, the Ministry of Construction has installed 14 boards along the expressway. Drivers should take care of their vehicles after checking speed. The board put their speeds on record. So the drivers cannot argue their speeds. As a result, the over speed vehicles can be controlled by the police.

A plan is underway to install more 20 speed feedbacks along the expressway.

I had given advice that it is necessary to install the speed boards near police stations and police outposts for security of them.

Some solar panels and batteries lost on the road. It was due to lack of security because police members take a break at day time after discharging duties the whole night. If the solar panels and batteries are kept near the police stations and outposts, police can safeguard them not to be lost.

The police outposts are assigned three miles distance each. The police squads led by the station heads go patrol at night for security.

If necessary, the police stations and police outposts will be extended for security of expressway.

Motorcycles are not allowed to drive on the expressway for prevention against traffic accidents. However they are allowed to run along Original Ground on either side of the expressway for their convenient transportation. In the future, the ground will be concreted for motorcycle way.

From January to date 2014, there were 52 traffic accidents on the expressway due to man and vehicle errors.
India's Modi widens lead, BJP may win half the seats in key state

**REUTERS**

Gujarat’s chief minister and Hindu nationalist Narendra Modi, the prime ministerial candidate for India’s main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), wearing a turban addresses his supporters during a rally ahead of the 2014 general elections in the northeastern Indian state of Assam on 22 Feb, 2014.

New Delhi, 24 Feb — Opposition leader Narendra Modi has widened his lead as candidate to become India’s prime minister and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party is likely to emerge as the single largest party in coming elections, according to a new opinion poll.

The BJP also picked up support in Uttarakhand.

Laos to draft national plan to end violence against women, children

Vientiane, 24 Feb — The Lao National Commission for the Advancement of Women met to draft a national plan for the eradication of violence against women and children, local media reported on Monday.

The draft was part of the Lao government’s efforts to this effect, said Chansoda Phonphip, head of the commission’s secretariat, at the meeting.

“We need participants to give advice on the sentences of the draft’s contents after the presentation from the officials of the secretaries so as to make it perfect,” she said.

The commission is in the final stage of drafting the national plan for 2014-2020 before submitting it to the government for approval.

According to a secretariat official, Laos still lacks clear statistics regarding the level of violence against women and children. The commission in cooperation with the National Committee for Mother and Child and the Statistics Center of the Ministry for Planning and Investment are carrying out surveys about violence nationwide.

A Lao Women’s Union interview of over 1,200 men and women over the last decade including interviewees from six provinces showed that violent events were exacerbated by drunkenness and monetary concerns.

**UN chief urges immediate end to escalating violence in Thailand**

United Nations, 24 Feb — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Sunday called for an immediate end to escalating violence in Thailand, urging all sides to engage in meaningful dialogue towards ending the crisis.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson here, Ban condemned “the escalation of violence in Thailand over the past week, in particular armed attacks against protesters in which even children have been killed.”

He called for violence from any quarter to cease immediately, and for the government to bring those responsible to justice.

“The Secretary-General believes strongly that there should be no place for violence by any side in resolving political differences and disputes,” stressed the statement, adding that Ban is ready to assist in any way possible.

The UN chief urged the parties to respect human rights and the rule of law, prevent any new attacks and “engage in meaningful dialogue” towards ending the crisis and advancing reform.

Thailand has seen sporadic violence since political unrest erupted in late 2013. The protesters are reportedly seeking to overthrow Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra’s administration and implement anti-corruption reforms. At least 24 people, including three children, were injured in a bomb explosion near an anti-government protest site in the Thai capital of Bangkok on Sunday afternoon. On Saturday night, unidentified attackers shot and threw grenades at a protest site in east Thailand’s Trat Province, leaving a five-year-old girl dead and 34 others injured.

**Major fire breaks out at Mumbai suburb**

Mumbai, 24 Feb — A major fire broke out at a tyre factory in the eastern suburban of Naurah in Mumbai area on Sunday evening, local media reported.

Ten fire engines and eight water tankers rushed to the spot. The fire broke out at 5:40 pm and firefighting operations are still under way. Eyewitnesses said they saw the flame rising as high as 20 metres, engulfing the entire area with smoke. Train services of the Central Railway were affected by the fire. Passengers at Naurah station panicked when they saw a huge blaze from the station.

Many commuters left the platform and went to other station by taking auto-rickshaws.

**Landslide in Papua, Indonesia kills 11**

JAKARTA, 24 Feb — Heavy downpours wreaked havoc in the provincial capital of Papua that incurred flash floods and landslides, killing 11 people and leaving two missing on Saturday night, official said on Sunday.

Three rivers burst their banks and drove huge flash floods carrying heavy materials, smashing houses, Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of national disaster agency, told Xinhua via phone on Saturday.

“Eleven people have been dead and two remain missing,” he said.

Rescuers, soldiers and police rushed to the scenes to search for the missing persons and repair the blocked roads, said Sutopo. Scores of people have fled homes to escape the catastrophe, he said.

Seasonal downpours have often incurred floods each year in Indonesia, a chain of 17,500 islands where over millions of people live in vulnerable flood plains near rivers.

**UN chief urges immediate end to escalating violence in Thailand**

United Nations, 24 Feb — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Sunday called for an immediate end to escalating violence in Thailand, urging all sides to engage in meaningful dialogue towards ending the crisis.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson here, Ban condemned “the escalation of violence in Thailand over the past week, in particular armed attacks against protesters in which even children have been killed.”

He called for violence from any quarter to cease immediately, and for the government to bring those responsible to justice.

“The Secretary-General believes strongly that there should be no place for violence by any side in resolving political differences and disputes,” stressed the statement, adding that Ban is ready to assist in any way possible.

The UN chief urged the parties to respect human rights and the rule of law, prevent any new attacks and “engage in meaningful dialogue” towards ending the crisis and advancing reform.

Thailand has seen sporadic violence since political unrest erupted in late 2013. The protesters are reportedly seeking to overthrow Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra’s administration and implement anti-corruption reforms. At least 24 people, including three children, were injured in a bomb explosion near an anti-government protest site in the Thai capital of Bangkok on Sunday afternoon. On Saturday night, unidentified attackers shot and threw grenades at a protest site in east Thailand’s Trat Province, leaving a five-year-old girl dead and 34 others injured.

**Major fire breaks out at Mumbai suburb**

Mumbai, 24 Feb — A major fire broke out at a tyre factory in the eastern suburban of Naurah in Mumbai area on Sunday evening, local media reported.

Ten fire engines and eight water tankers rushed to the spot. The fire broke out at 5:40 pm and firefighting operations are still under way. Eyewitnesses said they saw the flame rising as high as 20 metres, engulfing the entire area with smoke. Train services of the Central Railway were affected by the fire. Passengers at Naurah station panicked when they saw a huge blaze from the station. Many commuters left the platform and went to other station by taking auto-rickshaws.

**Landslide in Papua, Indonesia kills 11**

JAKARTA, 24 Feb — Heavy downpours wreaked havoc in the provincial capital of Papua that incurred flash floods and landslides, killing 11 people and leaving two missing on Saturday night, official said on Sunday.

Three rivers burst their banks and drove huge flash floods carrying heavy materials, smashing houses, Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of national disaster agency, told Xinhua via phone on Saturday.

“Eleven people have been dead and two remain missing,” he said.

Rescuers, soldiers and police rushed to the scenes to search for the missing persons and repair the blocked roads, said Sutopo. Scores of people have fled homes to escape the catastrophe, he said.

Seasonal downpours have often incurred floods each year in Indonesia, a chain of 17,500 islands where over millions of people live in vulnerable flood plains near rivers.
"Expression of Our Deep Appreciation"

We would like to express our sincere thanks to heads of the Government Departments, Representatives of the Foreign Banks, distinguished persons from the business circles and our valued customers for their honorable presence at the signing ceremony of agreement on "Global Trade Finance Program – Guarantee Facility" between Myanmar Oriental Bank Limited, and International Finance Corporation held at Traders Hotel (Bago Room) on 18th February 2014.

Myanmar Oriental Bank Limited

The Ministry of Science and Technology
The Department of Advanced Science and Technology
Call for Application: Post Graduate Diploma in Software Development Course

1. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar in cooperation with the Republic of India is offering a 9-month Post-Graduate Diploma in Software Development Course on 5th May, 2014.
2. The first six months of the PGDSD will be held at The International Institute of Information Technology, Bangalore (IIITB) in India, and the last three months at Mandalay.
3. The Government of India shall meet all the costs toward course fees, living expenses and travel expenses during their stay in India for six months.
4. The cost of boarding and lodging for the three months period at Mandalay will have to be met by the candidates.
5. M.E (IT), M.C.Sc, M.C.Tech, B.E (IT), B.C.Sc (Hons), and B.C.Tech (Hons) degree holders are eligible to apply the course but they are required to obtain 60% or more marks in every year of their college education and complete the college education not earlier than June 30, 2011.
6. Interested eligible candidates may submit applications online at (http://www.ucsm.edu.mm) not later than 28 February, 2014.
7. One passport size photo (taken in the last six months period), a copy of Degree certificate, and certificates of marks in every year of college education must be attached.
8. Applicants who meet the submission requirements have to take the entrance examination on 15th March, 2014.
9. List of exam Seat-No and exam centers will be announced on The University of Computer Studies, Mandalay Website.
10. Visit The University of Computer Studies, Mandalay Website or call 09-6502215, 09 6505012 for additional information.

S Korea proposes to DPRK for FMD vaccine aid

SEOUL, 24 Feb — South Korea proposed on Monday to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) to offer vaccines and disinfection equipment against foot-and-mouth disease which has swept over the Northern neighbour, multiple local media reported.

An unidentified official at Seoul’s Unification Ministry told reporters that the South Korean government offered to hold working-level talks with the DPRK Monday morning to discuss how to help prevent the further spread of the foot-and-mouth disease in the North. No detailed schedule for the dialogue was predetermined, the official said.—Xinhua
Britney Spears turns into redhead

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Singer Britney Spears has changed her hair colour yet again with a red-flaming locks. Britney Spears, 32, is known for her long blonde locks, flaunted her new look just two weeks after debuting a brunette hairdo on an Instagram picture, reported Ace Showbiz. The mother of two showed off her new fiery tresses while performing for her residency show at Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino in Las Vegas. She strutted her stuff in various outfits that included a black leather corset and a sparkly mesh bodysuit. Spears kicked off her show in the Sin City late December last year and is expected to run around 100 shows. Britney earlier sported this hair colour when she was seen in Los Angeles arm-in-arm with her friend Eva Mendes' Hollywood Hills home thereby squashing the rumours of a split between him and the actress. Ryan Gosling, 33, was photographed holding onto his phone as he stood behind Eva Mendes’ driveway gate. With only his upper body exposed, the Gangster Squad actor was spotted smiling in the picture, reported Us magazine. Speculation of a split between the couple of two years has surfaced as of late. Ryan Gosling was also seen driving Eva Mendes’ SUV in Beverly Hills on 9 February. The hunk and Girl in

Tabu discharged from hospital after having breathing problems

SRI NAGAR, 24 Feb — Bollywood actress Tabu, who was admitted to a hospital here following breathing problems, got discharged after remaining under observation for three hours. The 42-year-old actress is currently shooting in Kashmir for Vishal Bhardwaj’s Haider. Tabu had to be taken to a hospital on 21 February and she got released by the evening and returned to shooting. “Tabu was hospitalised here on Friday (February 21) and kept under observation for three hours. She was discharged in the evening,” an official of the Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) told PTI.

Tabu is shooting for Vishal Bhardwaj’s Haider in Kashmir. — PTI

Nelson Mandela’s daughters invited for 2014 Oscars

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Former South African President Nelson Mandela’s daughters Zindziwa and Zenani have been invited to the 86th Academy Awards, where song Ordinary Love from Mandela: Long Walk To Freedom will be performed.

The song Ordinary Love from Mandela: Long Walk To Freedom will be performed at the Oscars. — PTI

Claire Danes, Ryan Gosling are still together

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Actor Ryan Gosling was spotted visiting girlfriend Eva Mendes’ Hollywood Hills home thereby squashing the rumours of a split between him and the actress.

Ryan Gosling, 33, was photographed holding onto his phone as he stood behind Eva Mendes’ driveway gate. With only his upper body exposed, the Gangster Squad actor was spotted smiling in the picture, reported Us magazine. Speculation of a split between the couple of two years has surfaced as of late. Ryan Gosling was also seen driving Eva Mendes’ SUV in Beverly Hills on 9 February. The hunk and Girl in

The couple hadn’t been photographed together in three months. — PTI
Sochi closes Olympics in the glow of success

The Sochi Winter Games closes on Sunday night. International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach hails the Olympics as “the athletes’ Games”.

Xinhua

Sochi, 24 Feb — Russia has delivered a “spectacular” Olympics as the Sochi Winter Games closed on Sunday night with the whole country basking in athletic achievements and compliments from the Olympic chief. In a fitting end to the Sochi Olympics, Alexander Legkov led Russia’s podium sweep at the men’s 50km cross country skiing and the host four-man bobsled team won a second gold, consolidating Russia’s top place on the medal table — an ending few would have imagined after it finished only 11th in the 2010 Games.

Despite a few glitches including an unopened Olympic ring that marred the otherwise perfect opening ceremony, the Games was generally well-run. International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach congratulated Russia in the closing ceremony for delivering “all what it had promised” and thanked President Vladimir Putin for his role in ensuring their “extraordinary success”. Bach said the Games showed “the face of a new Russia, efficient and friendly, patriotic and open to the world”, hailing the Olympics as “the athletes’ Games”.

Earlier in the day, Bach rated the Sochi Olympics as a “great” Games without a single complaint from athletes. Bach said all participants had “overwhelmingly positive” response to the Games and they “loved” the venues and facilities. “Whether you speak with the athletes, national Olympic committee, international federations, sponsors or broadcasters you hear a lot of praise for these Games,” he said. Bach’s recognition was music to ears to the hosts who spent more than 50 billion US dollars on a world-class resort, six stadiums and long-term infrastructure improvements for the Sochi region.

Russia, according to Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kokoz, has fulfilled every pledge made by President Putin when he successfully bid for the Olympics in 2007 and promised a “really spectacular event”. Russia, shut out of top 10 spots in 2007, has delivered a “really spectacular event”.

Victor An, who won Russian hearts by sweeping three golds and one bronze to be the most successful athlete in Sochi. An now has eight Olympic medals in total after also winning three golds and a bronze for South Korea in 2006.

Norway, spearheaded by Marit Bjergen and Ole Einar Bjoerndalen, came second overall with a 11-5-10 haul. Bjergen, 33, won a record sixth gold in the women’s 30km mass start, equaling the record of Soviet speed skater Lidia Skoblikova and Russian cross country skier Lyubov Veygorova in taking six golds at Winter Olympics, the most by any woman. Bjoerndalen became the greatest Winter Olympian in history by taking a record 13th medal. His eight winter Olympic golds tied compatriot Bjoern Daehlie’s record.

Canada ranked third overall, on its 10th gold from the 3-0 ice hockey victory over Sweden. It also swept two curling titles.

Motor racing—Earnhardt Jr wins Daytona 500

DAYTONA BEACH (Florida), 24 Feb — Dale Earnhardt Jr. drove his Chevrolet to victory in the rain-interrupted Daytona 500 on Sunday in the season-opening NASCAR race.

Denny Hamlin was second in a Toyota and Brad Keselowski finished third in a Ford.

The crashed-marred race was a marathon contest, completed after a six hour, 21 minute rain delay that was the longest single day delay in the 56 years of the race. — Reuters

Losing finalist Dubuisson makes big PGA Tour splash

LOS ANGELES, 24 Feb — Three months after bursting into the limelight with his maiden victory on the European Tour, Victor Dubuisson elevated his profile on the PGA Tour in spectacular fashion Sunday at the WGC-Accenture Match Play Championship.

Despite never having played matchplay golf until this week’s elite event in Marana, Arizona, the 23-year-old Frenchman produced several moments of magic, along with a bucketful of birdies, as he stormed through to Sunday’s final. Though bitterly disappointed after losing one down to Australian Jason Day in a marathon title match that lasted 23 holes at Dove Mountain, Dubuisson had much to be proud of after making only his fifth start on the US circuit.

“I’m happy but, at the same time, disappointed because this afternoon I didn’t play very well,” the Cannes native told reporters after a birdie by Day at the 23rd hole, the driveable par-four 15th, ended the match. “I just battled, especially the back nine. And at the end, I really battled hard because I wanted to take a chance, at least try to take my chance. “I’ve learned that my nerves, my mental approach, can be very solid in a difficult situation. I’ve learned that anything can happen. I did well this week and I had some good nerve against my opponent. I know what I have to do now to improve.”

Dubuisson, who in November won the inaugural Turkish Airlines Open where Tiger Woods and US Open champion Justin Rose were also in the field, conjured two spectacular recovery shots on Sunday that fans watching will never forget. — Reuters
Two kids killed by rock slide in southeast France

PARIS, 24 Feb — Two children were killed on Sunday morning after a rock crushed a cottage located in Isola village in southeastern France, local media reported.

The two victims, aged seven and ten years old respectively, were found under the rubble by rescue teams while five adults were unharmed, the local broadcaster Europe 1 said.

“Early this morning, north of Aosta, a large rock of tens of cubic meters fell on the road and slammed into the three-storey cottage which stood at roadside,” colonel Guel Marchand, commander of gendarmerie group of Alpes-Maritimes, was quoted as saying.

A total of 60 firefighters were deployed to carry out rescue operation, according to the report. Earlier this month, a rock slide had derailed a tourist train in les Alpes-de-Haute-Provence in southern France, killing two people and injuring several others.—Xinhua

Australian youth unemployment reaches crisis point

SYDNEY, 24 Feb — Youth unemployment in Australia has hit a crisis point, with jobless rate reaching 21 percent in some key hotspots of the country, according to an analysis of official figures released on Monday by welfare group Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence says its analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows the unemployment rate for those aged 15 to 24 at an alarming 12.2 percent across Australia in the year to January, up from 8.8 percent in 2008. The organization says its snapshot reveals youth unemployment rate in some parts of Australia including Cairns in far north Queensland, west and north-west Tasmania, and northern Ade laide has topped 20 percent.

Brotherhood of St Laurence Executive Director Tony Nicholson said the data showed a crisis that Australians could not afford to ignore.

“It’s a disaster for our young people who want to work but are getting locked out of the workforce and locked into welfare dependency because they have no choice,” he said in a statement on Monday.

“It’s a disaster for communities, leading to more homelessness and despair for young people and their families.”—Xinhua

Int’l community calls for unity in Ukraine after president ousted

KIEV, 24 Feb — International community has called on all sides in Ukraine to preserve the country’s unity and avoid violence after President Viktor Yanukovych was dismissed by parliament following more than three months of protests.

Expressing strong support for actions taken by the Ukrainian parliament, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Sunday urged all sides in the conflict to refrain from violence and respect Ukraine’s democratic institutions.

In a telephone talk with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov, he said his country hoped Ukraine’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and democratic freedoms would be respected by all the parties.

The top US diplomat also hoped that Russia could join the United States and the European Union in helping Ukraine “turn the page and emerge from this crisis stronger, united and moving forward through new elections and critically needed reforms.”

U.S. President Barack Obama’s National Security Adviser Susan Rice said “it’s not in the interests of Ukraine or of Russia or of Europe or of the United States to see the country (Ukraine) split.”

On Sunday, Ukrainian lawmakers voted to hand over the duties of the president to new parliament Speaker Oleksandr Turchynov, one day after the lawmakers ousted Yanukovych from his post and set an early election for 25 May. Considering the escalation of the situation in Ukraine, Russia decided on Sunday to call its ambassador to Ukraine Mikhail Zurabov back to Moscow for “consultations.”

In a telephone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed that “Ukraine must quickly get a government capable of acting and its territorial integrity must be preserved.”

The European Union also expressed its support for Ukraine to stabilize the country’s economic situation and find a lasting solution to the political crisis.

EU’s foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton will pay a visit to Ukraine on Monday for talks, saying that everyone in the conflicts should behave responsibly with a view to protecting the country’s unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius on Sunday urged Ukrainians to preserve the country’s unity and integrity and to refrain from violence.

“We want a respect of the constitution, the formation of a new government and the preparation of elections as soon as possible,” he said.—Xinhua

RIO DE JANEIRO, 24 Feb — Rafael Nadalbrushed aside injury concerns by winning the Rio Open on Sunday, beating Alexander Dolgopolov 6-3, 7-6 (4). In his first tournament since tweaking his back during his loss to Stanislas Wawrinka in the Australian Open final last month, Nadal secured his 88th ATP title on Rio’s outdoor clay. He needed just 39 minutes to take the first set but Dolgopolov emerged with renewed verve in the second, breaking the Spaniard as he served for the match.

Having taken the set to a tie-break, the Ukraine’s composure buckled with a double fault followed by an unforced error as Nadal marched to his 43rd clay-court title. “Clearly, it was important for me to get back and win after what happened in the final in Australia,” Nadal said.

The 27-year-old is already looking forward to defending his title next year and returning for the 2016 Rio Olympics.

“It leave with the sensation that Brazil is something special for me,” he added. Earlier, Japan’s Kurumi Nara clinched the women’s title by beating top-seeded Klara Zakopalova of the Czech Republic 6-1, 4-6, 6-1. “I love Rio. I can’t believe I won the tournament but I am very happy,” Nara said.

A woman does the shopping while sitting on Honda Motor Co’s Uni-Cub personal mobility device during a demonstration at the Grand Front Osaka shopping and business complex in the city of Osaka on 21 Feb, 2014. —KYODO NEWS

MYANMAR TV
6:00 am — 1. Parrita by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadow
7:40 am — 2. Documentary
8:00 am — 3. News/ International News
9:30 am — 4. Documentary
10:15 am — 5. T V Drama Series
11:30 am — 6. Musical Programme
12:00 pm — 7. News/ International News/ Weather Report
12:25 pm — 8. Miami Open
3:00 pm — 9. News
4:15 pm — 10. University Student Examination Entrance Examination (Chemistry)
5:00 pm — 11. News
6:20 pm — 12. Kyae Pwint Myay Moe Yin Khone Tha
6:35 pm — 13. TV Drama Series
8:00 pm — 14. News/ International News/ Weather Report
9:35 pm — 15. Pyl Thu Ni Ti
9:00 pm — 16. News
17:00 pm — 17. Documentary
18:00 pm — 18. Alinka Wat Yi Music Troupe
19:15 pm — 19. TV Drama Series

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL
25-2-14 07:00 am ~ 26-2-14 09:00 am MST
1. Local News
2. Hiker’s Journey (Taung Gyi City)(Ep-1)
3. World News
4. Dengue Fever
5. Local News
7. World News
8. Trishaw Man
9. Local News
10. Let’s Unite (Lishu Traditional Dance)
11. World News
12. An Allisonado of Alluring Antiques
13. Local News
14. The Photographer: Kyaw Kyaw Winn
15. Local News
16. Han Taw Drums (Part-II) “Dobat”
17. World News
18. In the Studio: Sunee
19. Local News
20. Food Trip (EP-2)
21. World News
22. Art Students: Theatrical Art
23. Local News
24. Rakhine Tourist Area
25. World News
26. [Doctor][Painter]
27. Local News
28. Lawka Nandar Wildlife Sanctuary And Its Rare Star Tortoises
29. World News
30. A Monk’s Robe

Crematorium, West Sussex on 27th Feb ‘14.

Friends and relatives please accept this as the only intimation.

Than, passed away peacefully at home in UK aged 79 years on 30th January, 2014 at 1:20 pm.

Beloved husband of Sheila Joyce (a) Mya Mya, beloved daughter of David and Elizabeth McCormack, lived in Nara, St Laurence.

Memorial service will be held in Auckland on 27th February, 2014. All friends and family are cordially invited to attend.
**Myanmar’s step towards a democratic country at the crossroad:**

**Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham**

It was attended by Vice-Chairmen of the Committee Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Union Ministers U Aung Min, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Thein Zaw, Union Ministers, Region/State Chief Ministers, deputy ministers, MPs, deputy Attorney-General, Police Chief and officials.

In his speech, the Vice-President said that a series of peace talks with armed groups have been opened during four months after the current government took office. In an attempt to ease the country’s longest armed conflicts with several armed national races groups, the government has systemically formed the committee for inclusiveness of all stakeholders. In that regard, Union Peace-Making Central Committee and Work Committee were formed in May 2012. The government has spent 30 of 35 months of its tenure for peace-making efforts. The peace-building is an uphill battle, which causes a loss to lives and distort among national races.

That’s why, the government is seeking every possible way to bring the cases to the negotiation table. The country sees good potentials for finalizing the peace talks in the near future.

**Union government gives first priority to rural development and poverty alleviation**

It is stated in the Constitution, adding Social Welfare Department held two workshops with the participation of representatives from political parties and MPs for enactment of a law on violence against Myanmar women in coordination with Gender Equality Network. Women made up of 51.42% of staff population in the government organizations in 2008-09, 51.65% in 2009-10 and 52.39% in 2010-11.

Myanmar has signed the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in July 1997 and launched National Level Strategic Plan for Advancement of Women for 10-year period. Twelve tasks were designated depending on Beijing Platform for Action and UNCEDAW and its fundamental purpose is to alleviate poverty and enhance likelihood of women.

Social Welfare Department formed Working Group for Enhancing Women’s Empowerment (See page 9)

**Myawady, February 24**

Thai-Myanmar Friendship Cycling Festival was held on Maeot-Myawady Friendship Bridge on 22 February. The chairman of Tak District of Thailand and party, the Myawady District deputy commissioner and officials opened the ceremony. Over 900 cyclist students from Maeot of Thailand and over 300 cyclist students from Myawady stopped over at Wei Shan Middle School compound near Myawady Friendship Bridge.

Funfairs and lucky draw arrangements for students followed. The team left Wei Shan Middle School for Thailand passing through the friendship bridge.

**Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham delivers an address at coordination meeting of Union Peace-Making Work Committee.—MNA**

**Myanmar, China discuss amity & bilateral cooperation**

Nay Pyi Taw, February 24—Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thu Miri Kyaw Htoo and unions of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw were present at the call to together with the Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw were Chargemen of Pyithu Hluttaw Committee U Thaw, U Maung Maung Then, U Thein Zaw, U Thein Swe, Thu Aung Ko, U Hla Myint Oo, U Htay Myint, commission member U Khin Maung Tun and responsible persons from the Hluttaw Office. The visiting delegation was accompanied by the Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar. They had a cordial discussion on amity and bilateral cooperation.—MNA

**Myanmar seeks way to implement integrated water resources management**

Yangon, February 24—Myanmar is cooperating with other countries in the sector of water resources development at present. Water requirement of the country is rising due to population and economic growth and it needs to conserve river basins for sustainable use of water. Myanmar has been carrying out integrated water resources management (IWRM) phase by phase, said U Han Sein, Member of National Level Water Resources Committee and Deputy Minister for Transport, at the Workshop on How to Implement Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Roles of River Basin Organizations at Micasa Hotel in Yangon on Monday.

Chairman of Ayeyawady River Basin Research Organization (ARBRO) Dr Swe Swe Aye and Representative Mr Shigeharu JIKAN of Japanese Water Agency & NARBO explained matters related to integrated water resources management and river basins. Then, the scholars gave suggestions on integrated water resources management of Myanmar, integrated water resources management of ASEAN countries and Japan and ways to implement integrated water resources management in Myanmar.—MNA