Vice-President U Nyan Tun receives Chairman of Jardine Matheson Holdings Ltd

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb—Vice-President U Nyan Tun received a delegation led by Sir Henry Keswick, Chairman of Jardine Matheson Holdings Limited (London), at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, on Tuesday morning.

They discussed matters related to services in engineering, construction, transportation, hotel and beverages, trading of motor vehicles included in the world’s top list, real estate, retailing of personal goods, investment in supermarkets and hypermarkets and trading opportunities.

Deputy Ministers U Tin Oo Lwin and Dr Daw Thet Thet Zin and officials also attended the meeting.

MNA

Khabaung Dam, reliable for summer paddy in Toungoo, Ottwin Tsp

Irrigation Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation is building dams and reservoirs in the nation, aiming at developing the regions, carrying out greening tasks and preventive measures against floods and boosting productions of crops.

Among many dams and reservoirs, Khabaung Dam is located 1.25 miles downstream of Khabaung and Paraing creeks in Ottwin Township of Bago Region. One diversion weir is under construction five miles downstream of the dam.

Damming Khabaung Creek, earthen Khabaung Dam Project, kicked off in 2002. The embankment is 200 feet high. Main embankment is 920 feet long and saddle dike, 800 feet long. The dam can store 878,570 acre-feet of water at its full brim. Water diversion tunnel is 12.12 feet diameter and 1200 feet long.

A hydropower station at the dam is installed with two 15 megawatts generators to generate 120 million kilowatt hours yearly.

Khabaung Diversion Weir is of ogee type, five miles downstream of the dam. It is 150 feet wide and 25 feet high facility. Main canal is 46.40 miles long, right canal 30.63 miles long and left canal 15.77 miles long. Left tributary canal is 29.30 miles long and the left one, 11.49 miles.

It is estimated that all irrigation system would be completed in 2014 to benefit 65,000 acres of farmlands.

In construction of the diversion weir, a total of 3,934,968 suds of soil were dug for the right main canal and 1,599,942 suds for the left canal. In 2013-14 cultivation season, a total of 20,000 acres of farmlands can be put under summer irrigated by left canal and 40,000 acres by right canal, totalling 60,000.

In the future, Khabaung Dam and diversion weir will be an engine for creating job opportunity of the local people, greening the environs, boosting production of crops and alleviating poverty of the rural people.

Trs: TTA

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Saw Tsp to get 12 bridges, 19-mile inter-village road

Saw, 25 Feb—Rural Development Department under the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development is giving priority to transport, availability of safe water, education and health care tasks for development of rural people.

Saw Township Rural Development Department of Gangaw District is building 19 miles long earthen inter-village road linking seven villages and 12 concrete foundation bridges.

Sein Shwewah Co uses machines and heavy machinery for construction of the road and bridges to be completed on schedule.

Head of Magway Region Rural Development Department U Nay Htet Shein and Head of Gangaw Township Development U Myo Min Thant looked into progress of the earthen road.

Head of Saw Township RDD U Htay Win conducted them round the worksite.

One 200 feet long bridge, one 100 feet long bridge and 10 under 50 feet long bridges are being constructed at a cost of K 589 million.

In the past, local people faced difficulties in transport. Now, the road and bridges are being built so the people are pleased for betterment of road transportation.

MMAL—Yazana

Free health care, educative talks given in Bilin

Bilin, 25 Feb—Jointly organized by Thaton District Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee and Women’s Affairs Organization, Township MCWA and Health Department, the medical team provided health care services to the local people at mobile clinic on 21 February.

Officials of the team gave educative talks to the local people and gave clothes and refreshment to pre-primary children at the hall of Kazaing Village administrator.

Chairperson of Thaton District MCWSC Daw Sein Sein Soe made a speech. Assistant Surgeon Dr Daw Ei Ei Kyaw of Township Health Department gave talks on TB diseases and other health knowledge. Officials presented clothes and toys to 32 children.

Medical team also provided free health care to 79 patients.

Township level departmental officials and Headmistress Daw Khan Aye Myint of Kazaing BEHS lectured human trafficking, traffic rules and culture and traditional costumes.—Kyemon-Township IPRD

Action taken against undisciplined 30 bikers

Kyaukdaga, 25 Feb—A team comprising departmental officials, members of auxiliary fire brigade and ward administrators led by Kyaukdaga Township Traffic Rules Enforcement Committee Township Administrator U Htet Aung Phyo stopped the motorcycles on Yangon-Mandalay Highway in front of the ward administrator office in Kwin Nauk Ward of Kyaukdaga Township, Bago Region on 24 February. The authorities opened files of lawsuit against 30 motorcycles that offended the traffic rules.

Kyaukdaga Township Court charged them at 1000 per motorcycles and Region Traffic Rules Enforcement Committee charged K 5000 per motorcycles.—MMAL-Khin Ko (Kyaukdaga)

Outstanding students honoured:

Member of Myawady District Census Committee Commander of District Police Force Police Lt-Col Aung Myint made a speech. Assistant Director U Win Myat Soe of District Immigration and National Registration Department explained the census taking process. Officials awarded prize winners in essay contest at Myawady Basic Education High School in Myawady, Kayin State.—MMAL-Nadi Myint Mo (Myawady)

Red Cross Society of Thailand meet with Meiktila Township Red Cross Society

Meiktila, 25 Feb—Organizational Development Section of Myanmar Red Cross Society and Thai Red Cross Society held a meeting with Chairperson of District Red Cross Society Daw Kyi Kyi Khang and Chairperson of Township RC Brigade at the hall of Meiktila Township Red Cross Society on 22 February.

Responsible persons of the guest team explained activities of Thai Red Cross Society and training matters.

Meiktila Township Red Cross Society explained its activities in the township, and conducting training course on Inter-Ward Basic First-Aid Course 1/2014.

They visited the training course and held discussions with three groups of trainees who conducted practical works and lectures.

They also viewed activities of Meiktila Township Red Cross Society.

The Thai team arrived in one month stay for realizing amity and gaining experiences.

Three members of Myanmar Red Cross Society will pay visits to Thailand in March.—MMAL-Then Myint Kyaw (Meiktila)

A police member take action against a motorcycle that offends traffic rules in Kyaukdaga Township, Bago Region.
New Zealand committed to NATO cooperation in Afghanistan

Wellington, 25 Feb — New Zealand Defence Minister Jonathan Coleman will pledge his country’s continued commitment to NATO operations in Afghanistan and other areas in Brussels this week.

Defence ministers of NATO-ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) states would discuss the military drawdown in Afghanistan and planning for NATO’s post-2014 training, advice and assistance mission, Coleman said in a statement on Tuesday.

“New Zealand remains committed to supporting the final stages of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan to December 2014. It is important to secure the gains made by the international community over the last decade,” he said.

“Our 27 NZDF (New Zealand Defence Force) personnel make a small but valuable contribution. The government has previously confirmed that a small number of personnel are expected to remain at the UK-led Afghan National Army Officer Training Academy in training assistance and capacity building roles beyond 2014.”

New Zealand was also committed to supporting NATO’s common interest, such as international maritime security efforts including NATO’s anti-piracy mission Operation Ocean Shield, in the Gulf of Aden region.

Fugitive Ukrainian leader wanted for murder, Russia sounds alarm

Kiev, 25 Feb — Ukraine’s fugitive president was indicted for “mass murder” on Monday over the shooting of demonstrators as new leaders in Kiev sought urgent Western aid to make up for a loss of funding from Russia, which is angry at the overthrow of its ally.

Moscow said it would not deal with those who led an “armed mutiny” against Viktor Yanukovich, who was elected in 2010, and said it now feared for the lives of its citizens, notably in the Russian-speaking east and Crimea on the Black Sea. Russia’s top general agreed with NATO to maintain contact on a crisis that has raised fears of civil war and which UN chief Ban Ki-moon said called for an “inclusive political process” that “preserves Ukraine’s ... territorial integrity”.

While Russia, its strategy for maintaining influence in its former Soviet neighbour in shreds, made clear its $15-billion package of loans and cheap gas deals was in jeopardy, the European Union — said the 63-year-old was now on trial for the mass murder of peaceful citizens has been opened,” Arsen Avakov wrote on Facebook, referring to the shooting by police of protesters as new leaders in Kiev at the weekend after mass protests sparked by his re-election of closer ties with the European Union — said the 63-year-old was now on trial for the mass murder of peaceful citizens has been opened,” Arsen Avakov wrote on Facebook, referring to the shooting by police of protesters as new leaders in Kiev at the weekend after mass protests sparked by his re-election of closer ties with the European Union — said the 63-year-old was now on trial for the mass murder of peaceful citizens has been opened.”

They were responding to warnings from Ukraine’s acting head of state that the country was heading for bankruptcy.

The acting interior minister — appointed by parliament when Yanukovich fled at the weekend after mass protests sparked by his re-election of closer ties with the European Union — said that the 63-year-old was now on trial for the mass murder of peaceful citizens has been opened,” Arsen Avakov wrote on Facebook, referring to the shooting by police of protesters as new leaders in Kiev at the weekend after mass protests sparked by his re-election of closer ties with the European Union — said the 63-year-old was now on trial for the mass murder of peaceful citizens has been opened.”

The Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC), an Amsterdam-based group lobbying for better conditions in the garment industry, on Monday demanded that all 27 brands linked to factories in the Rana Plaza complex should contribute by the first anniversary of the collapse.

“Compensation efforts to date have been completely haphazard, unequal, unpredictable and non-transparent, and have left large groups of victims with nothing,” Ineke Zeldenrust of the CCC said in a statement.

Anti-gov’t protest leaders guarded by armed men at protest sites in Bangkok

Bangkok, 25 Feb — Leaders of anti-government protesters are being guarded by armed men at several protest sites in the heart of the Thai capital, said a high-level government official Tuesday.

Acting Labour Minister Chalerm Yubthumrong, who heads the government’s Centre for Maintaining of Peace and Order, said no less than 500 men have armed themselves with handguns to provide tight security for protest leaders. They are headed by former Deputy Premier Sunthip Thaugsuban, who has been persistently pressuring acting Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra to step down over the past few months.

Hundreds of the armed guards have circled around the protest leaders at street areas around Patumwan, Rajprasong and Lumpini intersections where they have had their followers occupy since last month, according to Chalerm.

“The unarmed policemen could not arrest protest leaders at the protest sites because they would otherwise get shot by gunmen hired as their guards,” he said.

Chalerm said that the police will not use force against the protest leaders or their followers despite emergency rule currently enforced in the capital and outlying provinces.

The CMPO chief said he knew who hired those armed men but was declined to tell. “We not only know who they are and where they come from but know what types of weapons they’re using,” Chalerm said. The remarks came after Tuesday’s arrest of three ex-navy officers in Rayong Province, about 200 kilometers southeast of Bangkok. —Xinhua

The parents of two children who were killed in a bomb blast near an anti-government protest site on Sunday mourn as family members arrive to collect bodies from a hospital in Bangkok on 24 Feb, 2014. —Reuters

Firms urged to pay into fund for Bangladesh factory victims

Berlin, 25 Feb — Campaigners urging all 27 clothing brands linked to a collapsed Bangladeshi factory that killed more than 1,100 people to pay into a compensation fund by the anniversary of the disaster in April.

The disaster has galvanized most of the clothing industry’s big names to work together to improve safety standards but many brands have shunned a fund that is trying to raise $40 million for families of the dead and over 2,000 injured.

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Discount fashion retailer Primark, owned by Associated British Foods, and Canadian grocer Loblaw have already paid short-term support to Rana Plaza workers, but have expressed frustration at slow progress in setting up a fund.

Reuters
Italy PM Renzi wins confidence vote, pledging tax cuts, reform

ROME, 25 Feb — Prime Minister Matteo Renzi won his first confidence vote in parliament, pledging to cut labour taxes, free up funds for investment in schools and pass wide institutional reforms to tackle Italy's economic malaise.

Facing parliament for the first time, the 39-year-old Renzi who is Italy’s youngest premier, sketched out an ambitious programme of change in an hour-long speech delivered in his trademark quickfire style interspersed with occasional jeers from the opposition benches.

“If we lose this challenge, the fault will be mine alone,” he told the Senate.

The euro zone’s third-largest economy is in urgent need of potentially painful reforms and is weighed down by a 2-trillion-euro public debt.

Backed by his own centre-left Democratic Party (PD), the small centre-right NCD party, centrist and other minor groups, Renzi won the backing of the upper house by 169 votes to 139 in a vote taken in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

The outgoing 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 criticising his government’s record.

Obama approves civilian nuke deal with Vietnam

WASHINGTON, 25 Feb — US President Barack Obama on Monday approved a civilian nuclear deal with Vietnam that allows for US export of civilian nuclear technology and facilities to the Southeast Asian nation.

In a memo to Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, the president said he has approved the proposed agreement for cooperation with Vietnam on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and authorized Kerry to “arrange for its execution.”

“I have determined that the performance of the agreement will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security,” Obama noted.

The US Congress has 90 days to review the pact, which will go into effect if lawmakers do not act.

Under the deal reached in October, Vietnam pledged not to enrich its own uranium but to acquire what it needs on the international market instead.

Iraq signs deal to buy arms, ammunition from Iran

BAGHDAD, 25 Feb — Iran has signed a deal to sell Iraq arms and ammunition worth $195 million, according to documents seen by Reuters — a move that would break a UN embargo on weapons sales to Teheran.

The agreement was reached at the end of November, the documents showed, just weeks after Iraq’s Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki returned from lobbying the Obama administration in Washington for extra weapons to fight al-Qaeda-linked militants.

Some in Washington are nervous about providing sensitive US military equipment to a country they worry is becoming too close to Iran. Several Iraqi lawmakers said Maliki had made the deal because he was fed up with delays in US arms deliveries.

Cuba continues to trim state payroll, build private sector

HAVANA, 25 Feb — Cuba continued to shed state jobs and move workers into the private sector in 2013, according to a report issued by the official labor federation at the weekend, as President Raul Castro pressed forward with reforms to the Soviet-style system.

The Cuban Communist Party adopted plans in 2011 to “modernize” the economy in search of greater efficiency and improved salaries for state workers.

The plan includes shedding secondary economic activity in favor of markets, private businesses, cooperatives and leasing systems, while concentrating resources on major state-run companies in hopes of making them more competitive.

The official Juventud Rebelde newspaper said on Sunday that the main report approved by the labour federation’s congress over the weekend stated more than 10 percent of state jobs had been cut since 2009. “Jobs in the state civil sector have decreased by 596,300 since 2009,” Juventud Rebelde quoted the report as saying.

Cuba has a potential labor force of over 6 million, of which 5 million were reported employed in 2012, the last official figures available. At the same time, the number of private, or “non-state” workers as Cuba calls them, rose to over 1 million in 2012, close to double the number reported in 2009.

The majority of the non-state workers were farmers, whose numbers have grown under Castro’s agricultural reforms, which include leasing state lands to individuals. The goal is to stimulate local food production and cut the need for budget-draining food imports.

More radiation detected at US nuclear waste dump

HOUSTON, 25 Feb — Elevated amounts of airborne radiation was detected on Monday in and around an underground nuclear waste repository in New Mexico, according to US media reports.

The results of the new monitoring data show slightly elevated levels of airborne radiation in and around the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in southeastern New Mexico, local newspaper quoted officials with the US Energy Department as saying.

Officials said the results were from samples collected last week at numerous air monitoring stations at the facility and in the surrounding area. At the same time, officials were reassuring the public that the leak poses no threat to public health.

No death penalty for 2 Italian marines as India drops anti-terror charge

NEW DELHI, 25 Feb — The Indian government Monday dropped the contentious anti-terror charge against two Italian marines accused of killing two Indian fishermen in 2012, thus exempting the duo from death penalty.

The government conveyed its decision to the Supreme Court which was approached by Italy last month amid apprehensions that the two marines — Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone — could be tried on the controversial anti-terror charge which carries death penalty.

Meanwhile, the apex court has also agreed to look into Italy’s plea challenging the jurisdiction of the anti-terror National Investigation Agency to probe the case.

Rescuers guide students to extinguish a fire during a defence drill at the Ulpana Bnei Akiva school for girls, Psigat Ze’ev, East Jerusalem, on 24 Feb, 2014. Israeli Education Ministry, together with the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) Homefront Command, the local authorities, the police, Magen David Adam (MDA) as well as fire and rescue forces, held a nation-wide defence drill, including evacuation of wounded students, fire extinguishing and preparation for rocket strikes on Monday to sharpen procedures in case of an emergency for students from elementary through high school, as well as at kindergartners.—Xinhua

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki looks on during a confidence vote at the Senate in Rome on 24 Feb, 2014. —Reuters

Cuba’s President Raul Castro addresses the audience during the opening session of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) summit in Havana on 28 Jan, 2014.—Reuters

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Gov’t says nuclear power important in latest draft energy policy

“Tokyo, 25 Feb — The government on Tuesday unveiled a draft energy policy that characterizes atomic power as an important electricity source, although the draft waters down some wording in an earlier version that was seen as strongly pro-nuclear in tone.

In the draft, the government said nuclear energy is an “important base-load power source” that usually supplies electricity continuously through the day, while vowing to push for the restart of reactors that have satisfied new safety requirements introduced after the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi complex disaster. Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, who is responsible for compiling the draft of the so-called Basic Energy Plan, told a press conference that the direction of the policy has “not changed in principle” despite the revisions.

The draft is expected to become official with Cabinet approval in March, after consultations with the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition ally, the New Komeito party.

The government initially wanted to finalize the plan in January, having already unveiled a draft document a month earlier. But it apparently decided to proceed more slowly after seeing how the content stirred controversy among some ruling party lawmakers who found the tone of the plan to be too strongly pro-nuclear.

The original draft said nuclear power is “important” and also serves as a “foundation” for the stability of Japan’s energy supply, but the word “foundation” was removed in the latest draft.

Kyodo News

A 158.8-metre chocolate roll cake is exhibited and offered for humanitarian benefit sale during the 6th International Gastronomy, Hotel and Restaurant Equipment and Catering Fair in Zagreb, capital of Croatia, on 22 Feb, 2014. Croatian pastry chefs used more than 60 kilograms of chocolate to set a new Guinness Book of Records entry for the largest roll cake in the world.—Xinhua

Egypt government resigns, paving way for Sisi to seek presidency

CAIRO, 25 Feb — Egypt’s government resigned on Monday, paving the way for army chief Field Marshal Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to declare his candidacy for president of a strategic US ally gripped by political strife.

After the July overthrow of elected Islamist President Mohamed Mursi and subsequent crackdown on Islamists and liberals with hundreds killed and thousands jailed, critics say Cairo’s military-backed authorities are turning the clock back to the era of autocracy.

The military, which has governed for four decades, has imposed an iron fist in alliance with top businessmen. The ousting of Mursi, widely seen as symbolic for compiling the draft watered down some wording in an earlier version that was seen as strongly pro-nuclear in tone.

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Kyodo News

Egypt’s Army chief Field Marshal Abdel Fattah al-Sisi is hanged in central Cairo on 3 Feb, 2014.—Reuters

Suicide bomber kills two, injures 11 in Peshawar, Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 25 Feb — At least two people including a Frontier Constabulary (FC) man were killed and 11 others injured when a suicide bomber blew himself up in Pakistan’s northwest Peshawar city on Monday afternoon, local media and officials said.

Nisar Khan Durrani, inspector general of police, and a civilian were killed when the suicide bomber blew himself up after being stopped by the troops at a check post near the Iranian consulate located at University Road area of Peshawar, capital of the country’s northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

Some media reports said that the bomber was dropped near the consulate by his two accomplices who later fled to unknown place after shootout with guards of the Iranian consulate, following the blast.

Senior Superintendent Police Peshawar Ahsanullah Khan said that Iranian consul-general’s house is also located near the consulate so it is unclear whether the suicide bomber wanted to attack the house or the consulate.

Eyewitnesses said that a bomber wearing police uniform parked his car near the consulate and walked towards it when he was stopped by FC personnel at the check post.

They said that the bomber exploded himself upon when the security personnel tried to frisk his body.

Local TV channel Geo reported that the blast also injured 11 people including three FC personnel and seven passersby.—Xinhua

US Coast Guard reopens Mississippi River after oil spill

HOUSTON, 25 Feb — The US Coast Guard reopened a stretch of the Mississippi River on Monday, two days after a vessel collision caused an oil spill and prompted closure of the river.

The affected portion of the Mississippi River, a 65-mile (104-km) stretch between New Orleans and Baton Rouge in Louisiana, reopened conditionally to water traffic on Monday, the US Coast Guard said in a Press release. After “a comprehensive assessment of the affected portion of the river,” the Coast Guard “determined the river was safe to transit with restrictions, but “marine operations must comply with a broadcast notice by the Coast Guard,” the release said.

The Coast Guard did not specify the restrictions in the release, which, according to media reports, include reduced speed through the area and notification to the Coast Guard of the condition of the particular vessel. A total of 29 vessels have been delayed due to the spill, which happened Saturday afternoon when a tank barge carrying light crude oil collided with a tugboat near Vacherie, 47 miles (about 75.6 km) west of New Orleans.—Xinhua

New Light of Myanmar

A man stands on a bridge where huge posters of Egypt’s Army chief Field Marshal Abdel Fattah al-Sisi are hanged in central Cairo on 3 Feb, 2014.—Reuters

Wednesday, 26 February, 2014

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Vegetarian diets may lower blood pressure

New York, 25 Feb — People who eat a vegetarian diet tend to have lower blood pressure than non-vegetarians, according to a new review of past studies. Researchers said for some people, eating a vegetarian diet could be a good way to treat high blood pressure without medication. Vegetarian diets exclude meat, but may include dairy products, eggs and fish in some cases. They emphasize foods of plant origin, particularly vegetables, grains, legumes and fruits.

High blood pressure contributes to a person’s risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney disorders and other health problems. For many people, the only treatment has been medication, but that means costs and possible side effects, lead author Yoko Yokoyama told Reuters Health in an email. “If a diet change can prevent blood pressure problems or can reduce blood pressure, it would give hope to many people,” Yokoyama said. She is a researcher at the National Cerebral and Cardiovascular Centre in Osaka, Japan.

“However, in order to make healthful food choices, people need guidance from science,” she said. “Our analysis found that vegetarian diets lower blood pressure very effectively, and the evidence for this is now quite conclusive.”

According to the American Heart Association, blood pressure readings under 120 mm Hg systolic and 80 mm Hg diastolic (120/80) are considered normal. High blood pressure starts at 140/90. The new review, published in JAMA Internal Medicine, combined results from 39 previous studies, including 32 observational studies and seven controlled trials.

“Observational studies show what happens when people have chosen their own diets and stuck with them, often for years,” Yokoyama said. “Controlled trials are different — a diet is given to people who had not tried it before, and that will show the effect of beginning a new way of eating.”

Together the studies included close to 22,000 people. The researchers found that in the observational studies, people who had been eating a vegetarian diet had an average systolic blood pressure that was about 7 mm Hg lower than among meat-eaters and a diastolic blood pressure that was 5 mm Hg lower and a diastolic blood pressure that was 2 mm Hg lower than participants in control groups who were not on vegetarian diets.

Researchers develop simple paper test for cancer

WASHINGTON, 25 Feb — US researchers said on Monday they have developed a simple, cheap paper test that could reveal within minutes whether a person has cancer.

The diagnostic, based on a urine sample, works much like a pregnancy test, researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) reported in the US journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The approach involves using a technology to amplify signals from tumor proteins that would be hard to detect on their own, simply by injecting special nanoparticles into the body, the researchers said.

These nanoparticles, coated with peptides, can interact with tumor proteins called proteases. In a patient’s body, these particles congregate at tumor sites, where cancer proteases cleave the peptides, which then accumulate in the kidneys and are excreted in the patient’s urine. These biomarkers are easily detectable using an approach known as a lateral flow assay, the same technology used in pregnancy tests. In tests in mice, the researchers were able to accurately identify colon tumors, as well as blood clots. MIT professor and the paper’s senior author Sangeeta Bhadra described these tests as the first step toward a diagnostic device that could someday be useful in human patients. “This is a new idea — to create an excreted biomarker instead of relying on what the body gives you,” Bhadra said.

“To prove this approach is really going to be a useful diagnostic, the next step is to test it in patient populations.” — Xinhua

Five restaurants with Japanese chefs in France earn Michelin star

PARIS, 25 Feb — Five restaurants with Japanese chefs have earned places in the 2014 French edition of the Michelin guide, raising the total number of starred restaurants led by Japanese cooks to 20 in France, according to its publisher. Of the five new restaurants, three are based in Paris — Jim Okuda and Yoshikatsu Namae restaurant Jin opened in January last year. “I’m glad my desire to serve authentic Japanese cuisine has been accepted in France,” said owner Nina Nikkhou.

Okuda, another Japanese restaurant which opened in Paris last year, is run by chef Toru Okuda who has won Japanese Michelin stars for his Tokyo restaurants as well. It serves contemporary French cuisine under chef Takayuki Hongo. Lyons-based Takao Takano, run by chef Takao Takano serves creative French cuisine. He earned a Michelin star while he was a chef at another restaurant in 2011.

Chef Masafumi Hamano of Au 14 Fevrier, which specializes in creative French cuisine in Saint-Amand-Fureve in Bourgogne, earned a star, just as he did when he was a chef at the restaurant’s original branch in the village of Saint-Valentin. “I’m relieved, as earning a star has been my minimum goal” for this restaurant, he said. — Kyodo News

Kyushu farmers join forces for upcoming Hong Kong export fair

FUUKOYA, 25 Feb — Producers of agricultural and fishery goods in the seven prefectures of Kyushu island are jointly holding their first export promotion event in Hong Kong on Wednesday and Thursday to promote a regional brand in place of lesser known local names for their wide-ranging commodities. About 60 organizations will exhibit products such as vegetables, fruits, meat, seafood and processed foods, expecting to attract at least 200 visitors such as buyers and restaurant chefs. The event is sponsored by the All Kyushu Agriculture Business Promotion Council, with the cooperation of Hong Kong businesses. The council comprises around 500 academic, industrial and government entities. A producer group from Mi-namishimabara, Nagasakiki Prefecture, will show strawberries. It has not been able to export the produce on a consistent basis so far.

“Having a large number of buyers is attractive,” an official of the group said of the Hong Kong fair. “An event of this scale is not possible without involving all producers in Kyushu.”

An official of the JA agricultural cooperative in Kumamoto Prefecture with some experience of exporting rice, said, “We’ve exported only a limited amount so far. It’s better for various prefectures to work together.” The organization will promote its rice and tomatoes at the event. Kyushu, which also includes Fukuoka, Saga, Kumamoto, Oita and Kagoshima prefectures, accounts for 20 percent of Japan’s agricultural output measured in value. — Kyodo News

Israeli researcher advances Type 1 diabetes treatments

JERUSALEM, 25 Feb — A study led by an Israeli researcher shows that patients suffering from Type 1 diabetes can go for two years without insulin shots, according to a newsletter released by Ben-Gurion University on Monday. Type 1 diabetes occurs when the body’s own immune system destroys the insulin-producing cells, or beta cells, of the pancreas, which are vital in helping the body stay healthy.

Eli Lewis, a doctor and department director at Ben-Gurion University, worked in collaboration with the University of Colorado Health Science Center to study the effects of a new therapy that uses an anti-inflammatory serum protein to control glucose levels in diabetic patients.

Lewis says that following an eight to 12 week treatment, several patients were able maintain proper glucose levels without the need for insulin injections for more than two years. — Xinhua
Astronaut Wakata to start ISS command on 3 March

Tokyo, 25 Feb — Astronaut Koichi Wakata will become the first Japanese to serve as commander of the International Space Station on 3 March, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency said on Tuesday.

A change of command ceremony, which according to JAXA will be broadcast live on the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration website, will see current commander Oleg Kotov of Russia pass on the role to 50-year-old Wakata. Wakata will hold the post for about two months before he returns to Earth on 14 May.

Hakubun Shimomura, Japan’s minister of education, culture, sports, science and technology, said at a press conference that he is “proud as a Japanese person” that Wakata is taking the post. “It will give Japan a great boost.”

Wakata departed on his current mission on 7 November aboard a Russian Soyuz rocket from Kazakhstan. It is his fourth trip to space and his second extended stay on the ISS. — Kyodo News

Windows designer moves to new Microsoft job

SEATTLE, 25 Feb — Julie Larson-Green, one of Microsoft Corp’s most senior women executives and a leading force behind the latest design of Windows, is moving to a new job in charge of harmonizing the look and usability of Microsoft’s wide range of software. Larson-Green, who oversaw the design of Windows 7 and its less popular successor Windows 8, was promoted to run Microsoft’s Devices and Studios group as part of former chief executive Steve Ballmer’s sweeping reorganization of the company last July.

However, when Microsoft agreed to buy Nokia’s handset unit only a few months later, Microsoft planned to put former Nokia boss Stephen Elop in charge of that group, with Larson-Green reporting to him. Elop is still set to take over that group when the Nokia deal is completed, expected in the next few weeks, but with the move Larson-Green is no longer set to report to him.

“I will remain in (the role leading the DnS (Devices and Studios) organization in the interim until the Nokia deal closes and Stephen Elop makes his transition to Microsoft,” said Larson-Green in an email to colleagues which was obtained by Reuters.

The memo and job change were earlier reported by Seattle-area tech news site GeekWire.

The new job means Larson-Green, known for introducing the ‘ribbon’ bar to the Office suite of applications, returns to software-focused design after leading the Devices and Studios group which is centered on hardware such as the Xbox game console and Surface tablet. Her official title will be Chief Experience Officer of the My Life & Work Team, which is part of Microsoft’s Applications and Services Group, led by Qi Lu.

Facebook CEO riding high — for now, after WhatsApp deal

Facebook Inc Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg took a victory lap at the world’s largest mobile technology conference in Barcelona on Monday, after beating out Google Inc in a $19 billion acquisition of free messaging service WhatsApp. But he faces bigger hurdles on the horizon.

Just 18 months after appearing at risk of getting crushed by the swelling mobile wave, the No 1 social network is riding high.

It gets a huge chunk of ad revenue on world-wide users of smartphone and tablets, from virtually nothing several years ago. Now, Zuckerberg’s purchase of WhatsApp — while raising eyebrows with the hefty price paid for a company that boasts 450 million users but has little revenue last year and will lose $32 billion in text revenue this year — is sure to have some telecom operators bracing for the experience of having to make wireless Internet access easier and more affordable in developing countries.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg delivers a keynote speech during the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona on 24 Feb, 2014. — Reuters

ZTE launches new products at Mobile World Congress

BARCELONA, 25 Feb — The Chinese telecommunication giant ZTE presents two new smartphones at the Mobile World Congress 2014 which opens here on Monday.

The ZTE Grand Memo II LITE would be a smartphone that “makes the difference,” according to Angel Sanchez Diaz, Telefónica Global Account Director at ZTE. The device allows users to operate the device while wearing gloves. Meanwhile it has an An-droid 4.4 KitKat operating system and uses a dual-core Snapdragon 400 processor.

The second device being presented is another part of the ZTE Open C family which was first launched in MWC 2013. The device has a 4-inch screen and uses a 1.2 GHz dual core processor.

The annual Mobile World Congress will be held in Barcelona for three more days until 27 February.

It brings together 75,000 delegates from the mobile communications industry this year.

New Samsung Galaxy S5 smartphone (L), Gear 2 smartwatch (C) and Gear Fit fitness band are displayed at the Mobile World Congress on 23 Feb, 2014. — Reuters

Samsung debuts wearables and latest Galaxy smartphone

BARCELONA, 25 Feb — Samsung Electronics unveiled a new smartwatch and fitness band along with the latest version of the Galaxy smartphone on Monday, demonstrating how the battleground for innovation is shifting from the hand to the wrist.

The world’s biggest smartphone maker set a trend less than six months ago for wearable devices that link to mobile handsets with its Galaxy Gear watch, which has seen rivals like Sony and Huawei follow in its wake.

The switch in focus also underlines the challenges the South Korean firm is facing. Low-price Chinese rivals are chewing out products that look increasingly similar at a time when smartphone sales have started to carry a toll on Samsung’s earnings. To fight back, Samsung is taking a less glity marketing approach to control costs. It has also performed a U-turn, abandoning its previous heavy focus on sweeping hardware improvements to highlight more subtle features in its devices and accessories in a bid to appeal to a wider audience.

“With the Galaxy S5, Samsung is going back to basics,” JK Shin, co-chief executive and president of Samsung’s mobile business, told an audience of Samsung employees, partners and media at the annual Mobile World Congress technology trade show in Barcelona. Samsung will roll out the S5 globally on 11 April, with pricing details yet to be disclosed.

Harry Van Hoesen, foreign editor of the My Life & Work Team, which is part of Microsoft’s Applications and Services Group, led by Qi Lu.

Three Essential Windows 8 Consumer Preview presentation at Hotel Miramar during the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona on 29 Feb, 2012. — Reuters

Facebook Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg delivers a keynote speech during the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona on 24 Feb, 2014. — Reuters
Work more than one job

An abundance of employment opportunities is an essential prerequisite for development of a certain country. It is required to set up more factories and industries allowing full-time and part-time employment of the people. Job creation is needed, particularly in commercial towns. Each and every person needs to be in employment.

It can be witnessed in the developed countries where everyone has a job. There are various types of job not only for the young people but for those wanting to work, but living in retirement. Jobs are available and employment opportunities are abundant. It is possible to work full-time or part-time. There are a number of different job positions, ranging from cleaners to factory workers.

Some work full-time and get second part-time jobs. Some work part-time while doing full-time school. Their part-time jobs provide them with some economic concepts and good experiences, accumulating knowledge and building capacity.

It is important to be able to enjoy benefits from working. It is required to have a decent salary in particular. It is impossible for those working long hours for low salaries to gain a better life. A decent salary is needed to live well. Only a win-win situation could benefit both employees and employers. Then a democratic society can be realized and development can be achieved.

Most of people like working a full-time job. It is hard to see those taking on a second part-time job. More incomes can be generated by working more than one job. Writer P. Moe Nin stressed the need to work harder than others to get rich quickly. We need to work more than one job.

All in all, emergence of part-time and full-time is imperative for development of the country. It is required to pay decent wages to workers in accord with their working hours. We all have to work hard. If we want our nation to be a prosperous nation, we have to work ourselves too hard, working two or three jobs. Only then, quick win can be realized.

Union minister calls for harmonious efforts in rural development tasks

Nay Pyi Taw, 25 Feb—Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun met with Kyaukpadaung Township support committee for development on 24 February. He called for making harmonious efforts in carrying out rural development tasks hoping that Kyaukpadaung Township could be developed as quickly as possible since it has been in NyaungU District’s administration.

The Union minister stressed the need to promote social status of the people by narrowing the gap between rural and urban regions.

He urged the civil servants to cooperate with locals in promoting rural development in line with the rules and regulations. He emphasized that will rural development tasks gain momentum only when the Union government, the region/state government and locals join hands in hands.

Next, the Union Minister attended to the needs on reports presented by Kyaukpadaung Township Administrator and the township development support committee.

The support committee was urged to make short or long term plans to fulfill basic requirements of local people in cooperation with the governmental organizations.

He highlighted regional peace and tranquility and socio-economic development can bring about prosperity of the State.—MNA

Formation of Anti-Bribery…

(from page 1)

(13) Daw Than Than Yi Member Director (Rtd, Office of Auditor-General of the Union)
(14) U Aung Hlaing Soe Member Director (Rtd, Office of Auditor-General of the Union)
(15) U Tin Oo Secretary Ambassador (Rtd)

Sd/ Thein Sein
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Pyi Khema Library put into service for readers of Wetlet Tsp

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Khemacara, Sagaing Region Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding U Saw Myint Oo and Library Committee member U Than Naing formally opened the library. Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye formally unveiled the signboard of the library.

The Chief Minister donated books and publications to the library and visited there.

It was also attended by departmental officials, officials of Shwebo District and Township authorities, guests and local people.

At the ceremony, Chairman of Mandalay Region Sangha Nayaka Committee (Shweyin) Bhaddanta Sijjanasara and Chairman (Sudhamma) Vicittarabhivamsa made a speech.

The Chief Minister offered alms to members of the Sangha and presented prizes to outstanding students.

A local spoke words of thanks for opening of the library.—Kyemon-Po Chan (Monywa)

Population, housing, census taking process talked in Thantlang Tsp

The educative talks on population, housing and census taking process were given in Ward 3 and Ward 1 in Thantlang Township, Chin State, on 23 February afternoon.

At the talks, Township Administrator U Kyaw Win, Head of Township Immigration and National Registration Department U Aung Thein Tan and Head of Township Information and Public Relations Department U M Inn Lam gave lectures on aims of the taking census process, correct answers of people to respond the queries of staff of the census taking teams.

They said that only when the correct data are collected will the government draw effective plans for fulfilling the requirements of the people.

Over 300 local people attended the talks and raised questions to the officials.

Heads of township level departments discussed their questions in detail.

MMAL-Township IPRD

Globetrotters in flocks arrive in Mandalay

Over 300 local people visited Maha Muni Buddha Pagoda, Swethaunggyi, Mandalay Hill, embryology industry, U Bein Bridge, Amarpura silkworm industry and Sagaing Bridge.

On 25 February, they will leave for NyauungU and visit ancient pagodas.

Kyemon-Thiba Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Experience recounted for meeting between Chief Justices

Myeik, 25 Feb—A ceremony to recount experiences in meeting between Supreme Court of the Union, Region/State High Courts was held at the hall of Taninthayi Region High Court on 21 February.

Chief Justice of the region U Myint Win made a speech.

Myeik, 25 Feb—Rural Development Department under Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development and Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department conduct the rural youth training course at Wezayanta Dhammayon of Wundawpyae Monastery in Kyidawgon Ward of Meiktila on 24 February, said Head of Mandalay Region Fisheries Department U Myo Aung.

“Rural development tasks will be provided to the trainees from 24 to 28 February. At present, six staff of LVBD and 13 from Rural Development Department totalling 19 are attending the course. The trainees are representing the departments from Meiktila, Mahlaing-Wundwin, Thazi, Pyayhwe and Yamethin townships. On completion, they have to share their knowledge to rural youths,” he added.

Head of the District Rural Development Department U Myo Aung, Head of District LBVD Dr Win Myint Thaing and officials gave lectures on food security, ways to assess poverty, control of infectious diseases, biosecurity, fish breeding, rural road and bridge construction, rural water supply, electrification, rural housing.—MMAL-Chan Tha (Meiktila)

Rural youth training course kicks off

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VENezuela death toll rises to 13 as protests flare

CARACAS, 25 Feb — Anti-government demonstrators put up barricades and set fire to trash in Caracas on Monday despite calls from within the opposition to rein in protests that have led to 13 deaths in Venezuela over the weekend.

Turkish PM’s office says Erdogan recordings are faked

ANKARA, 25 Feb — Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan’s office said voice recordings on YouTube purportedly of Erdogan telling his son to dispose of large sums of money on the day news broke of a graft inquiry into his government were fake and “completely untrue”.

Reuters could not verify the authenticity of the audio recordings, which were posted on the video sharing site late on Monday. In the recordings, a voice supposedly of Erdogan can be heard asking his son to remove the money from his home.

The recordings are purportedly of Erdogan and his son Bilal discussing how to reduce the funds to “zero” by distributing them among several businessmen. At one point, the voice supposedly of Bilal says some 30 million euros ($40 million) remain to be disposed of.

The recordings, which appeared two days after Erdogan’s AK Party officially began campaigning for local elections at the end of March, may be the latest purported revelation in a graft scandal Erdogan has cast as orchestrated to unseat him.

“The recordings, which were released via the Internet this evening, accompanied with the allegation that they were a telephone conversation between our Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his son, are completely untrue and the product of an immoral montage,” Erdogan’s office said in a statement.

“Their creation was a part of the new strategy of the coalition parties to destroy our government, destroy our movement and all our institutions,” Erdogan wrote on Twitter Monday.

UNHCR envoy calls for end to violence in Syria

BEIRUT, 25 Feb — The UN Higher Commissioner for Refugees’ special envoy, American actress Angelina Jolie, called Monday for an end to the violence in Syria after visiting to some Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon. According to a statement by the UN refugee agency, Jolie held talks with Lebanese Prime Minister Tamam Salam, where she highlighted “the generosity and solidarity shown by Lebanon and Lebanese to its neighbour.”

Jolie, on her third visit to Lebanon on behalf of the agency, is to learn the plight of Syrian children as the Syrian conflict enters its fourth year. She welcomed the adoption of a UN resolution on humanitarian assistance to Syria, which she described as “a long overdue step in the right direction for the hundreds of thousands of innocent Syrian men, women and children.”

Jolie met with orphaned Syrian children who are living in eastern Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley, noting “they have lost their families and their childhood has been hijacked by war. They are so young, yet they are bearing the burdens of their reality as if they are adults.”

The UNHCR envoy also met with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and President Michel Suleiman during the three-day visit.

According to the latest UNHCR report, there are over 934,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon but Lebanese officials say the actual number has surpassed 1.2 million.

Private cars remain popular in Beijing despite heavy smog

BEIJING, 25 Feb — Despite the appeal of public transportation in the Chinese capital, private vehicles remain many residents’ first choice for getting around.

“It is horribly crowded in the subway and hard to be on time when taking the bus,” said Hu Yanrong, a 32-year-old consultant who drives 18 kilometres to her office every day. “We all know car exhaust contributes to the haze, but it’s too exhausting to take a bus to work every day.”

No one wants to make the pollution worse, but you can’t sacrifice your career either.”

Hu said the government is neglecting its responsibilities by making it the obligation of residents to improve air quality while depriving them of the right to drive.

On Monday, the capital maintained its orange pollution alert, the second-highest level, and severe smog is forecast to linger in Beijing until Thursday.

The concentration of PM2.5 in Beijing soared on Sunday night, the government said. PM2.5 is particulate matter with a diameter less than 2.5 micrometers, a major contributor to the smog.

Beijing Commission of Transport data put this weekend’s traffic index at the second-lowest of the past 10 weekends, showing that traffic congestion — or the amount of private vehicles on the road — was significantly reduced.

The commission said the index is based on the average speed of the city’s more than 60,000 taxis. An index of 0 to 4 suggests smooth traffic, 4 to 6 reflects slight congestion, 6 to 8 severe congestion, and 8 to 10 the highest congestion.

Shimon Peres, who will award Merkel with the Presidential Medal of Distinction — the highest civilian order, and with opposition parliament leader Isaac Herzog from the Labour party. — Xinhua

Israeli PM, German chancellor express hope to advance Mideast peace

JERUSALEM, 25 Feb — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and visiting German Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed on Monday evening their hopes to advance the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians.

Netanyahu, for his part, said he and the people of Israel “want peace which would end the conflict.”

Merkel’s visit comes amid the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Israel and Germany. A joint cabinet meeting will be held on Tuesday morning.

Merkel is also slated to meet with Israeli President Shimon Peres, who will award Merkel with the Presidential Medal of Distinction — the highest civilian order, and with opposition parliament leader Isaac Herzog from the Labour party. — Xinhua

Visiting German Chancellor Angela Merkel (L) and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shake hands during a news conference in Jerusalem, on Feb. 24, 2014.— Xinhua
Women more likely to experience partner violence

Canberra, 25 Feb — Women were two and half times more likely to men to experience violence by a partner, according to the Gender Indicators report released on Tuesday by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

ABS Director of Living Conditions, Caroline Daley, said that 1.5 percent of women, or 133,000, aged 18 years and over had experienced violence by a partner in 2012 compared to 0.6 percent of men, or 52,000.

Women were also more than twice as likely as men to have experienced sexual violence — 1.2 percent, or 102,000, of women compared to 0.5 percent, or 41,000, of men, according to the ABS.

The new data shows a decrease in the proportion of men who had experienced violence from 11 percent of men in 2005 to nine percent in 2012. But it signals no statistically significant change for women from six percent of women in 2005 to five percent in 2012.

“While the number of men experiencing physical violence in 2012 has declined by around 18 percent since 2005, men remain nearly twice as likely as women to experience physical violence,” Daley said. — Xinhua

Seven elephants found dead in plantation on Indonesia’s Sumatra

Jakarta, 25 Feb — Seven rare Sumatran elephants have been found dead, apparently from poisoning, on a plantation area on Indonesia’s Sumatra Island, a conservationist said on Monday.

Suhandri, a project manager dealing with Sumatran elephants for WWF-Indonesia, said Kyodo News the cause of the elephant deaths is still under investigation “but some indications show that they have been poisoned.”

The dead elephants were found on Friday in a plantation area that belongs to PT Riau Andalan Pulp and Paper, one of the world’s biggest pulp mills, near the Tesso Nilo National Park in Sumatra’s Riau Province.

According to Suhandri, who likes many Indonesians goes by one name, the seven elephants — an adult male, an adult female and five cubs — appeared to have been dead for at least three weeks.

The discovery brings the number of elephant deaths in Riau to nine so far this year. All of them are believed to be caused from the private sector, including special- ists on foreign affairs, national security, economy, society and culture, as well as civic organizations.

Kyodo News

Australia eyes concluding FTA with Japan in April

Singapore, 25 Feb — Australia’s trade minister on Monday expressed his readiness to strike a free trade deal with Japan in April and have it signed in July, when Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is expected to visit Canberra, according to a Japanese ruling party law- maker.

Koya Nishikawa and Australian Trade and In- vestment Minister Andrew Robb, who are both currently in Singapore for a ministerial meeting related to the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade talks, met and discussed trade-related issues.

The momentum for striking a Japan-Australia free trade deal has been picking up toward April, when Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott is expected to visit Tokyo.

Nishikawa, a House of Representatives member who heads the Liberal Democratic Party’s TPP committee, also told reporters after the meeting that Robb showed readi- ness to reduce auto tariffs, while calling on Japan to cut duties on farm products. Nishikawa declined to comment on details.

According to negoti- ation sources, Australia is asking Japan to cut tariffs on beef, which is current- ly subject to 38.5 percent tariff. Japan wants Aus- tralia to scrap 5 percent tariff on Japanese auto- mobiles.

Japan and Australia launched FTA negotia- tions in April 2007, but the talks have been stalled due to differences over how to deal with tariffs on products such as auto- mobiles and beef. The two countries renewed their commitment to accelerat- ing FTA talks after Aus- tralia’s change of govern- ment in September.

The move to promote bilateral FTA talks comes as 12 Pacific-Rim coun- tries, including Australia and Japan, are struggling to strike a TPP deal amid differences between Tokyo and Washington. Japan apparently hopes to draw a concession from the United States, which wants Tokyo to scrap tariffs on farm products including beef, in the TPP talks by showing that bilateral FTA negotiations with Australia are well advanced. — Kyodo News

Indian defence minister meets with deputy chief of General Staff of PLA of China

New Delhi, 25 Feb — Indian Defence Minister AK Antony on Monday met with visiting Depu- ty Chief of General Staff of the People’s Libera- tion Army of China Wang Guanzhong, who was here for holding the 6th round of meeting of Defence and Security Consultation between China and India.

Antony highly evalu- ated the results of the just concluded meeting and said that the Indian gov- ernment and armed forces are committed to maintain- ing peace and tranquility along the border areas of the two countries and im- plementing relevant agree- ments in the field. He said there exist opportunities for the two countries and their armed forces to develop good relations and India is willing to enlarge the fields of dialogue and exchanges with China and push for- ward the relationship with China to contribute to re- gional peace and stability.

The Indian defence minister also said India and China, while having a long tradition of friendship and exchanges, are experienc- ing a stable development of relationship now. He said India is glad to see the develop- ment of China and looks forward to sharing common development with China.

Wang said China and India are two important neigh- bours, big countries and emerging economies and it is good for the common develop- ment of the two countries as well as international and regional peace and stability that they maintain peace and tranquility of the border areas and keep a healthy and stable relation- ship between their armed forces.

He said China is willing to strengthen dialogue and consultation between the in- stitutions of defence affairs and the military of the two countries and seriously im- plement the spirit of bilateral agreements and work out the consensus reached between the leaders of the two countries. Wang said that China is ready to deepen pragmatic cooperation in all fields with India, properly handle the existing differences between the two countries, and push for- ward relations between the armed forces of the two countries to a new stage. —Xinhua

Seven elephants found dead in plantation on Indonesia’s Sumatra
**Venezuela implements new foreign currency exchange system**

CARACAS, 25 Feb — Venezuela on Monday officially launched a new foreign currency exchange system that allows two different exchange rates to be applied to the public and private sectors. The new system, ordered by President Nicolas Maduro in January, also regulates the supply of dollars, by placing an exchange limit on private individuals and entities, and giving priority to state agencies.

All transactions will be under the supervision of the Venezuelan’s central bank and the Finance Ministry.

**France**

PARIS, 25 Feb — A French soldier was killed in a road accident in Bangui, Central African Republic’s capital, bringing the total number of French fatalities in the country to three since December 2013, the Defence Ministry announced.

A corporal of the Pottiers Marine Infantry Tank Regiment died in a road accident 400 km from Bangui, during a reconnaissance mission of roads in the region of Bocar. Last month, the minister said in a statement issued late on Sunday. Two other soldiers on board of the light armored vehicle were also injured in the accident. Their lives were not in danger, the ministry added.

In early December, France, with the United Nations’ support, gave the green light to its forces to launch a military offensive in its former colony to protect civilians following an escalation of the violence in which thousands of people were killed. —Xinhua

**Vietnam**

HANOI, 25 Feb — Vietnam has set to give measles injection to the country’s 200,000 9-to-23-month-old babies from February to April 2014 to prevent the epidemic from spreading.

Vietnam’s state-run radio Voice of Vietnam on Monday quoted the announcement released by an online conference on combating measles in capital Hanoi as saying the goal of the campaign is to bring the ratio of measles vaccinated children at certain ages to more than 95 percent. In capital Hanoi, about 60,000 kids will be vaccinated against measles during the occasion, said VOV.

Nguyen Khac Hien, Director of the Hanoi Department of Health said on VOV on Monday that a total of 500 suspected measles cases are reported in capital Hanoi since the beginning of 2014, with 159 cases showing positive test results with the virus. The city plans to control the plague in the coming two months. —Xinhua
Oscar producers bank on ‘funny, very kind’ host Ellen DeGeneres

LOS ANGELES, 25 Feb — Now they know how big the show is and how much people care, but the producers of the Oscars aren’t making any apologies for their maiden effort running Hollywood’s biggest show last year or the provocative humour of its host, Seth MacFarlane.

Despite some harsh reviews from TV critics, Craig Zadan and Neil Meron pulled in the largest US audience in three years, a ratings bump in the 18-49 demographic coveted by TV networks and, perhaps most importantly for them, a second chance to show what they could do. “I would say this year we are undaunted,” Meron told Reuters backstage at the Dolby Theatre from where ABC will broadcast the Academy Awards on Sunday. Last year, 40.3 million US viewers tuned in to watch the film industry’s top honours, a glamorous event broadcast to 200 countries.

For this year, the producers have teased a hommage to movie heroes, like Erm Brookovich, Harry Potter and Nelson Mandela, and a heavy dose of hit Oscar-nominated songs by hot artists, including Pharrell Williams and U2. There will be surprises, they promise. But the single biggest reason to tune in on Sunday in their minds? Ellen DeGeneres, comedian, day-time talk show maven and soon-to-be two-time Oscar host. “She is funny and yet in her way she is very kind as well, and I think it’s a great blend,” said Meron.

“We are very proud of last year’s show and we love Seth,” Meron added. “Seth represents current comedy as does Ellen. They are both experts in their field.” But Meron bristles at the notion that the 56-year-old DeGeneres is a safe choice, someone who won’t offend like MacFarlane, the existing hosts every year. Before MacFarlane there was a return to tradition with nine-time host Billy Crystal after a widely panned appeal to youth with co-hosts Anne Hathaway and James Franco.—Reuters

Jennifer Lawrence planning a long vacation

LONDON, 25 Feb — Oscar-winning actress Jennifer Lawrence, who has been shooting constantly for various films, is apparently planning to take a year-long hiatus from Hollywood.

The 23-year-old actress has been shooting for her films like The Hunger Games series and X-Men franchise without taking a break, reported Daily Mirror. The 23-year-old actress has been shooting for her films like The Hunger Games series and X-Men franchise without taking a break.—PTI

Jennifer has been shooting for her films in The Hunger Games series and X-Men franchise without taking a break.—PTI

Paris Jackson hands out her Oscar statuette to Miley Cyrus

LOS ANGELES, 25 Feb — Pop stars Miley Cyrus and Paris Jackson kissed everyone by surprise after they shared a kiss during the concert.

When the 21-year-old singer recently spotted Paris with Miley at the Staples Centre in LA during her on-going Bangerz Tour, the Wrecking Ball hitmaker plunged in for a kiss, reported Ace Showbiz. Paris, whose hit ‘Kissed a Girl’ rose her to fame, willingly accepted the kiss. “The Roar hitmaker later posted a photo of her and Cyrus on Twitter. ‘I adore you Miley Cyrus,’ she wrote. Perry had even requested Cyrus to perform her favourite songs on Twitter.—PTI

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Paris Jackson hands out her Oscar statuette to Miley Cyrus

LOS ANGELES, 25 Feb — Pop stars Miley Cyrus and Paris Jackson kissed everyone by surprise after they shared a kiss during the concert.

When the 21-year-old singer recently spotted Paris with Miley at the Staples Centre in LA during her on-going Bangerz Tour, the Wrecking Ball hitmaker plunged in for a kiss, reported Ace Showbiz. Paris, whose hit ‘Kissed a Girl’ rose her to fame, willingly accepted the kiss. “The Roar hitmaker later posted a photo of her and Cyrus on Twitter. ‘I adore you Miley Cyrus,’ she wrote. Perry had even requested Cyrus to perform her favourite songs on Twitter.—PTI

From bathrooms to museums: odd sets for Oscar statuettes

— The most valuable piece of hardware in Hollywood is the 13-and-a-half-inch (34-cm) golden Oscar statuette, so it is no surprise recipients of the top film honors keep theirs in a variety of safe spots. From Jennifer’s Thomp- son, a two-time winner for “Howards End” and “Sense and Sensibility,” has stowed her Oscars in a living room, like Charlize Theron for her “Monster” Oscar, or the office, the home for George Clooney’s two awards for “Argo” and "Michael Clayton.” But Jennifer Hudson created an award wall and put her statuette for “Dreamgirls” in a starring role. “It’s ac- tually a hidden wall,” said Hudson. “You don’t realise it’s a wall and it goes into my future office, this is the truth, and it sits there in the middle of all the other awards and goes, ahhhh!” Sandra Bullock has entrusted her “The Blind Side” best actress trophy to a confidant: her young son, Louis. “I’ll let him tell you if he wants to tell you, but it’s his and he knows where it is,” she said. Reuters

Katy Perry, Miley Cyrus kiss during a concert

LOS ANGELES, 25 Feb — Pop stars Miley Cyrus and Katy Perry took every- one by surprise after they shared a kiss during a concert.

When the 21-year-old singer recently spotted Katy watching her performance at the Staples Centre in LA during her on-going Bangerz Tour, the Wrecking Ball hitmaker plunged in for a kiss, reported Ace Showbiz. Perry, whose hit ‘Kissed a Girl’ rose her to fame, willingly accepted the kiss. “The Roar hitmaker later posted a photo of her and Cyrus on Twitter. ‘I adore you Miley Cyrus,’ she wrote. Perry had even requested Cyrus to perform her favourite songs on Twitter.—PTI
Barca pay 13.5 million euros in Neymar tax case

Madrid, 25 Feb — Barcelona have paid 13.5 million euros ($18.53 million) to the Spanish treasury after they were charged last week with tax fraud in the signing of Brazil forward Neymar.

The treasury case is the latest legal challenge that Spanish giants have faced in the transfer market.

Barca paid the tax after an internal audit found that the club had understated the value of Neymar’s transfer.

The club had initially paid 26 million euros ($33.33 million) for Neymar in 2013, but the tax authorities argued that the actual price was higher.

Barcelona’s tax authorities have now paid the 13.5 million euros in back taxes.

The club had previously paid 5 million euros ($6.5 million) in fines for tax evasion.

The tax authorities are investigating other transfers involving Neymar and other players.

Lewis Graff

Mayweather to face Maidana on 3 May

LOS ANGELES, 25 Feb — Fivedivision world champion Floyd Mayweather Jr will face Marcos Maidana of Argentina in a welterweight title fight on 3 May, the American boxing promoter announced on Monday.

Mayweather, who turns 37 on Monday, revealed the news via Twitter, ending months of speculation about his next opponent.

Mayweather defeated Saul Canelo Alvarez in his most recent bout in September and subsequently announced the May fight without identifying his next opponent.

The site for the matchup has yet to be announced.

Mayweather has a perfect 45-0 record while Maidana is coming off an impressive win against Adrien Broner to be 33-3.

Colorado Avalanche’s Milan Hejduk (R) scores the first goal in the shoot out against Edmonton Oilers’ Semyon Varlamov (L) during their NHL hockey game in Denver, Colorado on 10 March, 2012.—REUTERS

Parma draw with Fiorentina 2-2

Roma, 25 Feb — Parma and Fiorentina played to an action-packed 2-2 draw which witnessed three red cards on Monday.

Parma, who were trying to extend their record 12-game unbeaten run, went ahead in the 39th minute through Antonio Cassano, but Juan Cuadrado equalised for the visitors two minutes later.

Amauri put Parma in front again in the 51st minute, two minutes before Viola defender Modibo Diakite was sent off.

Matteo Fernandez levelled for the visitors five minutes from time with a thrilling free-kick which stirred up a tense finale where Gianni Munari and Borja Valero were dismissed.

Fiorentina head coach Vincenzo Montella criticised his players for losing their minds. “We could’ve finished the first half better and it’s a real shame to have lost two players,” he said. “We must learn to control ourselves and be more clear-headed when dealing with certain situations. Even with 10 men in a tough arena, the team had a great reaction to equalise,” he said.

His Parma Roberto Donadoni gave Fiorentina credit for fighting back with 10 men to hold Parma. “It’s a shame about the draw, as it was legitimate to expect the victory, but we must give credit to our opponents and to Matt Fernandez for that goal,” he said.”

Xinhua

Scorer Hejduk officially retires from Avalanche

NEW YORK, 25 Feb — Milan Hejduk, who spent all 14 of his National Hockey League seasons with the Colorado Avalanche, on Monday announced his retirement from hockey.

Hejduk, a three-time NHL All-Star and an Olympic gold medallist, had helped the Avalanche win the Stanley Cup in 2001-02, scoring 23 points in the playoffs.

The 38-year-old Czech native, an unrestricted free agent this summer, had not played this season. He had 11 points from 29 games last season. “I was fortunate to play many years at this level with a great organization and unbelievable teammates. We’ll have the privilege of competing with,” Joe Sakic, the Avalanche’s executive vice president of hockey Operations, said. “On the ice, he had one of the quickest and smoothest hands of any teammate I ever played with. His release, along with his hockey sense and vision, made him one of the premier goal scorers in the NHL during his prime.”

Reuters

Rangers extend manager Washington through 2015

NEW YORK, 25 Feb — Texas Rangers manager Ron Washington, who twice led the American League team to the World Series and posted 370 wins over the past eight seasons, has been given a one-year contract extension through 2015.

The Rangers made the announcement after Monday’s intrasquad game at their spring training complex in Surprise, Arizona. Washington’s contract was set to expire after the upcoming season. Entering his eighth year as Texas manager, Washington has compiled 661 wins, the most ever by a Rangers manager, and his .538 winning percentage is highest for the franchise.

General manager Jon Daniels said there was never a question about an extension for Washington, whose chief disappointments were World Series defeats in 2010 to the San Francisco Giants and in seven games to the St. Louis Cardinals in 2011 when the Rangers were twice within one strike of victory.

Reuters
Villarreal snatch 2-1 win at Espanyol

Madrid, 25 Feb — Villarreal earned a 2-1 victory at Espanyol Monday thanks to goalkeeper Sergio Asenjo’s heroic performance to deny a stoppage-time penalty in the Spanish La Liga. Asenjo dove correctly to his right to deny Sergio García’s spot kick after Villarreal defender Gabriel Armando handled inside the area.

Villarreal led 2-0 by the 50th minute, starting with teenage midfielder Matias Nahuel picking out Moises Gomez’s run into the area before Jeremy Perbet doubled the advantage by scoring from a through ball into the area.—Xinhua

Pentagon chief plans to reduce US army size

WASHINGTON, 25 Feb — US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel outlined on Monday his priorities for 2015 defence budget cut, including plans to reduce the size of the US army to its pre-World War II levels.

“We are repositioning to focus on the strategic challenges and opportunities that will define our future: new technologies, new centres of power and a world that is growing more volatile, more unpredictable and in some instances more threatening to the United States,” Hagel said at a Pentagon Press conference. The Pentagon chief unveiled his budget-cut proposals as the Obama administration is preparing to pull out most US troops from Afghanistan following an almost 13-year war. “As we end our combat mission in Afghanistan, this will be the first budget to fully reflect the transition (the Department of Defence) is making after 13 years of war, the longest conflict in our nation’s history,” said Hagel.

Among the proposals, Hagel announced his plans to further reduce the size of US Army to between 440,000 to 450,000 active-duty soldiers. This would mark the US Army’s smallest force since World War II. The active-duty troop level has already been slated to go down to 490,000 by 2015 from a peak of 570,000 after 11 September attacks, 2001. Hagel’s proposals also include to retire the US Air Force’s entire A-10 fleet and to seek another round of base realignment and closure.

Hagel said the recommendations favour “a smaller and more capable force, putting a premium on rapidly deployable, self-sustaining platforms that can defeat more technologically advanced adversaries.”—Xinhua

Three out of four Aussie internet users shop online

Canberra, 25 Feb — In 2012 - 13, 76 percent of Australia’s 15.4 million internet users made a purchase or ordered online, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on Tuesday. Data shows that the proportion of internet users is 84 percent among males, slightly higher than women’s 83 percent. However, the reverse is true for online shopping in 2012 - 13. Some 76 percent of female internet users shopped online compared to 75 percent of male internet users.

The most popular types of purchases were travel, accommodation, memberships or tickets of any kind for both males and females, ABS Assistant Director of the Innovation and Technology Statistics Branch, David Taylor said.

The second most popular online shopping items for females were clothes, cosmetics or jewellery (59 percent), in comparison to males second most popular purchases of CDs, music, DVDs, videos, books or magazines (50 percent).

The two most popular activities performed on the internet at home were paying bills or banking online and social networking. Social networking was more common for younger people — 90 percent of 15 to 17 year olds and 92 percent of 18 to 24 year olds performed this activity.

Olympic athletes receive enthusiastic welcome home from Sochi

NARITA, Japan, 25 Feb — Approximately 900 fans welcomed athletes of Japan’s Sochi Olympic team at Narita airport on Tuesday morning as they returned home aboard a chartered plane.

The athletes, including men’s figure skating champion Yuzuru Hanyu and women’s snowboard parallel giant slalom silver medalist Tomoka Takeuchi, were met with a deluge of camera flashes when they showed up in the arrival lobby 90 minutes later than scheduled.

“I came to see gold medal winner Yuzuru Hanyu,” said Ayumi Tobia, 26, from Chiba Prefecture.

Mami Ogawa, 25, also from Chiba, said, “I was impressed by Mao Asada’s performance.” Asada put a poor short programme behind her with a strong free skate to finish sixth.

Japan took home its second most medals at a Winter Olympics after the 1998 Nagano Games where it won 10, winning eight medals for its largest haul overseas — one gold, four silvers and three bronzes.

Mao Asada arrives at Narita airport near Tokyo on 25 Feb, 2014, as the Japanese figure skating team at Narita airport on 25 Feb, 2014, as the Japanese figure skating squad returned from the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.—Kyodo

Kyodo News

Wednesday, 26 February, 2014
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves Anti-Bribery Commission

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb — Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approved Anti-Bribery Commission comprised of 15 members led by U Mya Win on Tuesday.

Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Lin Aung presented Union Taxation Bill 2014 to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. He gave an account of the submission of the Bill, saying that Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is responsible to amend tax laws before passing the Bill as of this year in accord with the Constitution. Then, the deputy minister made clarifications on the report on the Union Budget account for the first six months of fiscal year 2013-2014. Afterwards, the Public Accounts Joint Committee submitted its findings on the report to the Hluttaw. —MNA

Advice sought from members of SSMNC for relocation of religious buildings in Letpadan Valley

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb—Chairman of the Implementation Committee for the Report of the Investigation Commission on Letpadan Valley Copper Mine Project Union Minister U Hla Tun, together with Union Ministers U Win Tun and Dr Myint Aung, Chief Minister of Sagaing Region U Tha Aye and deputy ministers, sought advice on removal and construction of religious buildings at Letpadan Valley from members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Region Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee and members of the Sangha from Letpadan Valley on Tuesday afternoon.

At the office of Salingyi Township Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Chairman of SSMNC Bhano Monastery Sayadaw Dr Bhdantta Kumara, Chairman of Sagaing Region Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, the Vice-Chairman (Shwegyin) Salingyi At the office of Salingyi Township Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Chairman of SSMNC Bhano Monastery Sayadaw Dr Bhdantta Kumara, Chairman of Sagaing Region Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, the Vice-Chairman (Shwegyin) Salingyi (Shwegyin) Salingyi (See page 8)

2nd diploma in emergency medicine course opened

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb—The 2nd diploma in emergency medicine course, jointly organized by Royal Australia College of Surgeons, Austral-ia College of Emergency Medicine and International federation of Emergency Faculty, was opened at the University of Medicine 1 (Yangon) on 24 February. Union Minister for Health Dr Pe Thet Khin made a speech on the occasion.

In Ms. Bronte Moules, Australian Ambassador to Myanmar, explained purpose of the course.

Dr Than Zaw Myint, Director-General of the Medical Science Department, presented certificates of honour to the organizers of Australia and Hong Kong.

The Union minister also attended the opening of a training course at the University of Public Health in Yangon.—MNA

Promotion of tourism sector discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb—Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Tin Shwe attended the 5th World Eco-tourism Conference which was held in Cebu City of the Philippines from 20 to 22 February. The deputy minister said conservation of biodiversity and wet land mangrove forest are being carried out along waterway and coastal areas of Myanmar. He also highlighted outbound tourism service will be kept open in Myanmar soon. He encouraged the travel agencies in Philippines and travel tours companies in Myanmar to cooperate with each other to create mutual benefit.

He then met the Cebu Mayor of the Philippines and discussed promotion of tourism sector.—MNA

Public Works, SAMBO sign MoU

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb—Deputy Minister of Construction Dr Win Myint delivered an address at the ceremony of signing MoU between Public Works under the Ministry of Construction and SAMBO Engineering Co. Ltd of the Republic of Korea on Tuesday morning.

Managing Director of Public Works U Kyaw Linn and Chairman of SAMBO Engineering Co. Ltd Mr. Lee Chang Yoon signed an MoU and exchanged the notes.

Myanmar golf tournament to kick off first event

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Feb—Myanmar golf tour 2014 will be held from March to November in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, PyinOoLwin, Mandalay and Bagan.

The first event will take place from 13 to 16 March at Royal Myanmar Golf Club in Nay Pyi Taw. Professional, amateur (handicap 0-12) and women golfers will be allowed to take part in the event. Those wishing to take part in the round robin matches may enlist at Royal Myanmar Golf club in Nay Pyi Taw and Myanmar Golf Training Club in Yangon with K 20,000 fee. Transport service will be given for players along Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw route. For further information, anyone may dial 09 517936, 09 73080112, 09 420017835 and 09 2037671.—Pho Thaw Zin

Two primary schools in Taninthayi Region through Japan’s GGP


The hand-over and opening ceremonies of the newly constructed two primary school buildings were held at each location in Taninthayi Region on 19 and 20 February 2014 respectively. Mr. Kei MAEDA, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan, and officials attended those ceremonies.

The two primary school projects in Myeik Township and Palaw Township in Taninthayi Region will benefit around 1,000 students, who are now studying under insufficient learning environment in old buildings. Under such circumstances, the Government of Japan provided funding for reinforced concrete school buildings and necessary furniture at those buildings through its GGP Scheme. The Government of Japan has helped 667 various grass-roots projects in Myanmar under this GGP scheme since 1993. Among them, 299 education projects, 170 health care projects, 133 public welfare and environment projects, 30 infrastructure projects and 35 other projects are included. It is expected that these assistance will further strengthen existing friendly relations between Japan and Myanmar which falls 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in this year. —NLM