President U Thein Sein 
receives Prime Ministers 
of Bangladesh, India

Nay Pyi Taw, 3 March—President U Thein Sein received Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and party at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday afternoon.

Both sides discussed matters on strengthening amity and friendship between the two countries, development of bilateral trade and investment, promotion of transportation between the two countries, peace and tranquility in border area, anti-terrorism and prevention of transnational crimes and stability and development in Rakhine State.

The diplomatic tie between Myanmar and Bangladesh has turned 42 years.

The President also met with Prime Minister of the Republic of India Dr. Manmohan Singh and party at the same venue.

They discussed matters related to further providing technical assistance for development of information technology, education, agriculture and industrial sectors, cooperation in energy sector and banking industry, defense security cooperation and development of SMEs and agricultural sector.

The President clarified progress of political and economic reforms in Myanmar and peacemaking process. The Indian Prime Minister disclosed that he fully supports Myanmar’s democratization and efforts for national reconsolidation and pledges that India will cooperate with Myanmar.

Present at the calls were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Thane, U Myint Hlaing, U Khin Maung Soe, U Khin Yi, U Zeyar Aung, Dr Kan Zaw and U Win Myint, Deputy Minister U Ye Htut, Myanmar Ambassador to Bangladesh U Myo Myint Than, Myanmar Ambassador to India U Aung Khin Soe and officials. The Bangladeshi and Indian Prime Ministers were accompanied by the Foreign Affairs Minister of Bangladesh and the External Affairs Minister of India, senior officers and the ambassadors of Bangladesh and India to Myanmar.

The Indian Prime Minister paid a goodwill visit to Myanmar in May 2012.

National race peace groups and political parties ready to cooperate in census taking process

Nay Pyi Taw, 3 March—The 14th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting was held at Myanmar International Convention Centre (MICC) in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday.

At the meeting Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin delivered an address. The senior officials from BIMSTEC countries exchanged views on bilateral cooperation in 14 sectors of BIMSTEC, approved the proposal on the 16th Senior Officials Meeting. They discussed final decision to be made in the 3rd Summit.

Mr Sumith Nakadala, Ambassador from Sri Lanka was appointed as the first ever secretary-general of BIMSTEC.

The main idea approved by the Foreign Ministers from BIMSTEC Countries is to cooperate in the 14 sectors.

The fields they are going to make cooperation are trade and investment, transportation, tourism industry, fishery, energy, technology, poverty alleviation, agriculture, culture, fighting against terrorism and transnational crimes, environmental conservation, public health care, people to people connectivity and climate change.

In the evening, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin met Minister for (See page 8)
**HISTORIC ANCIENT PAGODA OF MEIKTILA**

Meiktila, 3 March—Buddha Puja of Kyeywa Pagoda has been holding in the last days of Wagaung (July-August) on a grand scale every year since yore. The 108-foot high Pagoda is located near Nyankan-Shouttaw Village in Wundwin Township, Meiktila District. The Monywa Sayadaw accepted an image from the son of King Bodaw on 1st Waning of Nayone in 1146 (Myanmar Era). King’s architects, King’s workers and local villagers involved in the construction of the Pagoda. The pagoda was built in Kyeywa Village so the local people called Kyeywa Pagoda. It is an ancient pagoda in Myanmar and it was enshrined holy relics of Buddha and Arahat. King Bodaw built 230 images and ordered his vicememan to make contribution to building of Pagodas in which the son of King Bodaw donated one to the Monywa Sayadaw. The 200 viss bronze bell of the Pagoda was donated by Monywa Sayadaw. Now, the Monastery of Nyankan Village is maintaining the bell.

**BASIC BUDDHIST CULTURE COURSE, BASIC ENGLISH SPEAKING COURSE OPENED IN ZABUTHIRI TSP**

Nay Pyi Taw, 3 March—Dhamayon board of trustees organized the 1st Basic Buddhist Culture Course and Basic English Speaking Course free of charge in Wunnatheikdi Ward in Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday morning. U Tun Tun Oo gave lectures on Basic Buddhist Culture and U Maung Maung on Basic English and English Speaking. A total of 100 trainees attended the one-month courses.

Than Naing (Zabuthiri)

**BE RESOLUTE ENOUGH TO REPAIR DAMAGE: A dangerous crack seen on Bago River Crossing Bridge in Bago on 2nd March 2014. The crack can lead to accidents as the bridge is located on a busy traffic. — THAN ZIN**

**FARMERS IN PWINTPHYU TOWNSHIP EARN AMPLE INCOME**

Pwintphyu, 3 March—Farmers living in villages across Pwintphyu Township, Magway Region, reaped a great profit by storing paddy harvested in the monsoon period. Paddy brokers rushed to those villages and offered a good price for the products. Farmers living on the east bank of Mone Creek which flows into the mighty River Ayeyawady put approximately 5000 acres under paddy, beans and pulses, sesame, garlic and onion. Climate change is to be blamed for the decrease in crop output last year. But storage system of the farmers helped them increase their income. “Last year the paddy yield stood at 75 to 90 baskets per acre but the price fell but though the paddy output dropped by 60 to 70 basket per acre this year we eared over K 800000 per 100 baskets. We can say it’s a handsome profit.” Said a villager. He recounted his experience that he stored the paddy waited for a good price for two kinds of paddy - the special one gets 820000 Kyat per 100 baskets to 830000 Kyat and the ordinary one gets 750000 Kyat per 100 baskets.—Zwe Htet Shin

**FOREIGNERS’ GENEROSITY: TOURISTS ON BOARD MV EXPLORER DOCKING AT INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL THILAWA PORT IN THANLYIN OF YANGON REGION MADE A STUDY TOUR OF THANLYIN MINKYAUNG PATAMBAN MONASTERY RECENTLY. AN AMERICAN NAMED MRS MERRIA LED THE 20-MEMBER TOURIST GROUP. THEY WERE Conduct-ED ROUND THE MONASTERY BY MONK BHADDANTA KUMARA, RETIRED POLICE OFFICER U KYAW MOE KYI AND TEACHER DAW SAN MYINT WHO EXPLAINED THE GUESTS ABOUT THE MONASTERY AND HISTORY OF LORD BUDDHA. THE TOURISTS EXPRESSED THEIR THANKS TO THE HOSTS AND MADE CASH DONATIONS.**

**TIN MAUNG NGWE (THANLYIN)**

**SELF-RELIANT TARRED ROAD OPENED IN NAMTLAN IN NORTHERN SHAN STATE**

Thibaw, 3 March—Mahasi Sasana Yeiktha Monastery initiated a plan to build a 1200 feet long tarred road in Namtlan, Thibaw Township in northern Shan State on 1 March. The road linking Kongnyaung Ward and Kaungling Sasa-na Yeiktha is 15 feet wide. It was built at a cost of 10 million Kyat contributed by Abbot Monk Bhaddanta Nyamika and well-wishers. The opening ceremony was graced by the presence of members of Township Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee. Local authorities, religious associations, teachers and students and locals. —Thibaw Ko Latt
At least 11 killed in brazen attack on Pakistani court

ISLAMABAD, March — Gunmen burst into a court in a busy shopping area in the center of the Pakistani capital on Monday, killing at least 11 people in a brazen attack likely to shatter any prospect of meaningful peace negotiations with Taleban insurgents.

A loud explosion reverberated across central Islamabad just after 9 am, followed by bursts of gunfire. Police said at least 30 were wounded. A judge was among those killed.

“There was a blast, then there was a lot of gunfire. Gunmen were spraying bullets at everyone,” said Faisal Ali, a businessman who witnessed the attack.

No one immediately claimed responsibility, but the attack is likely to show that the central Taleban leadership, which declared a month-long ceasefire over the weekend, is not fully in control of its operations.

Taleban fighters stage frequent attacks around the country, but such assaults are rare in Islamabad, the leafy and hilly seat of Pakistan’s government. Broken glass and charred human remains littered the site of the blast at the F8 market area as residents and police rushed around in bloodstained clothes. A severed leg lay atop the rubble.

Pools of blood and severed body parts were scattered on the floor of several offices. Police said gunmen fired at random targets in the area after the initial court explosion. Police blocked entry and exit points to the area, a maze of narrow, dusty streets lined with one-room shops and offices. Camouflaged commandos knocked on doors and secured street corners as they combed through the area for more militants.

“There is one policeman among the dead,” local police station head constable Mohammad Yousaf told Reuters.

“We also have unconfirmed reports that two lawyers have died. There is a lot of chaos on the scene right now and things will become clearer soon.”

The Taleban, a fragmented group consisting of dozens of smaller bands of militants, said this weekend they would observe a one-month ceasefire to try to revive peace talks and called on all groups to observe it.

Talks broke down last month after a series of attacks and counterattacks by the army and the insurgents.—Reuters

Putin builds up armour near Crimea, Russian assets plummet

KIEV (Ukraine), 3 March — Ukraine said Russia was building up armoured vehicles on its side of a narrow stretch of water near the Ukrainian region of Crimea after President Vladimir Putin said he had the right to invade its neighbor, prompting a sell-off in Russian assets.

Ukraine mobilized for war on Sunday and Washington threatened to isolate Russia economically after Putin’s declaration, provoking Moscow’s biggest confrontation with the West since the Cold War.

The Russian central bank raised its key lending rate 1.5 percentage points to the 7.25-7.5 percent to an all-time against the dollar at the opening of exchange trading on Monday, while the MICEX index of Moscow stocks tumbled 10 percent to 1,294 points. Russian gas monopoly Gazprom, which supplies Europe through Ukraine, was down more than 13 percent.

Ukraine’s Prime Minister Arseny Yatseniuk, head of a pro-Western government that took power when former president Viktor Yanukovych, a Russian ally, fled on February 21 after three months of street protests against his rule, said Putin had effectively declared war on his country. A Ukrainian border guard spokesman said on Monday that Russian forces had been moving in and around the Crimean port city of Sevastopol, where the Russian Black Sea Fleet has a base, and that Russian forces had blocked mobile telephone services in some parts of Crimea.—Reuters

Ceremony held for 384 staff joining Nuclear Regulation Authority

TOKYO, March — The Nuclear Regulation Authority on Monday held an initiation ceremony for 384 staff joining from the now-defunct Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization to support the NRA with their technical expertise.

The JNES was abolished Saturday and absorbed into the NRA, which is a new organization created in the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster in 2011.

With the intake, staff at the regulatory body doubled to around 1,000.

NRA Chairman Shunichi Tanaka said during the ceremony that he has “high expectations” for the engineers, especially after the nuclear crisis taught the country the importance of expertise among regulators to strictly monitor nuclear safety.

“We have learned through the Fukushima Daichi accident that regulators’ lack of expertise led them to be captured” by the nuclear industry, Tanaka said, referring to a phrase used in a report on the nuclear accident.

Masashi Hirano, a 62-year-old former JNES official, told reporters after the ceremony that he will work hard to improve the NRA’s technical capabilities.

The NRA is led by five commissioners and has a secretariat under it. —Kyodo News

Japan, N Korea hold Red Cross meeting in China

SHENYANG, (China), 3 March — The Red Cross societies of Japan and North Korea held a meeting on Monday in Shenyang, northeastern China, with government officials from the two countries participating.

Japanese Foreign Ministry officials plan to hold informal talks with their North Korean counterparts on the sidelines in the hope that the contact will lead to resuming bilateral negotiations suspended since November 2012, a month before Prime Minister Shinzo Abe returned to power.

In the Red Cross meeting, the two organizations were to discuss the possibility of retrieving the remains of Japanese who died around the end of World War II in what is now North Korea.

The meeting brings together Osamu Tsakaka, director general of the International Department at the Japanese Red Cross Society, Keiichi Ono, director of the Northeast Asia Division of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Ri Ho Rim, secretary general of the North Korean Red Cross Society, and Ryu Song Il, second from L, secretary general of the North Korean Red Cross Society, attended the meeting.—Kyodo News

The Red Cross societies of Japan and North Korea hold a meeting in Shenyang, northeastern China, on 3 March, 2013, with government officials from the two countries participating. Osamu Tsakaka (2nd from R), director general of the International Department at the Japanese Red Cross Society, and Ri Ho Rim (2nd from L), secretary general of the North Korean Red Cross Society, attended the meeting.—Kyodo News
Japan hopes for peaceful outcome to Russia-Ukraine confrontation

TOKYO, 3 March — Japanese Prime Minister Shinszo Abe expressed hope on Monday for a peaceful resolution to the escalating confrontation between Russia and Ukraine.

“Japan strongly hopes that the situation in Ukraine will be settled in a peaceful manner,” Abe told a meeting of the government and ruling parties. He added Tokyo “strongly urges all the parties concerned to behave with self-restraint and responsibility, to observe the relevant international laws, and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.”

His comments came after the Group of Seven nations on Sunday condemned Russia’s intervention in Ukraine and decided to call off preparations for the Group of Eight summit slated to be held in Sochi later this year.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a press conference earlier in the day that “under the current situation, we cannot hold any meaningful discussion even if we get together” at the scheduled summit.

The G-7 leaders said in a statement that they had agreed not to return to the G-8 process “until the environment comes back where the G-8 is able to have meaningful discussion.” The statement was released as a US senior government official said Russia, a G-8 member since 1997, has already effectively taken control of Ukraine’s Crimea region.

Kyodo News

Incumbent re-elected in Ishigaki mayoral race

NAHA, (Japan), 3 March — The incumbent mayor of Ishigaki, Okinawa Prefecture, was re-elected Sunday, defeating a former mayor. Independent Yoshitaka Nakayama, 46, who was endorsed by the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito party, won 15,903 votes against 11,881 garnered by Nagateru Ohama, 66, also an independent, according to the municipal election board.

The LDP, headed by Prime Minister Shinszo Abe, strongly supported Nakayama, keen to see his re-election after an LDP-backed candidate lost the mayoral race in Nago, also Okinawa, in January.

The main issue in the Ishigaki mayoral race was how to deal with security for Japan’s remote southwestern islands. Nakayama indicated after winning the race that he is ready to discuss possible deployment of the Self-Defense Forces in Ishigaki. Ohama, meanwhile, argued during the campaign that a local referendum should be held before accepting the deployment, saying, “Our island is incompatible with the SDF.”

Kyodo News

M6.6 quake jolts southwestern Japan

TOKYO, 3 March — An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.6 jolted southwestern parts of Japan early Monday morning, the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

No tsunami warning was issued after the 5:11 am quake, originating around 120 kilometers underground off the coast of the main island of Okinawa.

The quake registered intensity 4 on the Japanese seismic scale of 7 in several parts of Kagoshima and Okinawa prefectures, including the town of China on Okinoru-bu Island in Kagoshima and the city of Uruma on Okinawa, according to the agency.

Kyodo News

Japan’s Holocaust museum to honour Anne Frank’s memory

Hiroshima, 3 March — A memorial museum in western Japan will host an exhibit memorializing the 85th anniversary of Anne Frank’s birth.

The Holocaust Education Centre in Fukuyama, Hiroshima Prefecture, will host the exhibition from 15 March to 3 May, according to the museum.

The exhibition comes against the backdrop of the mysterious vandalism of over 300 copies of Frank’s diary and related books in libraries across Tokyo.

Makoto Otsuka, the museum’s director, said that staff had planned the exhibit before the incidents were reported.

“It’s important to never forget the past and recognize the truth,” he said.

Last month, after the destruction of the books first came to light, Frank’s cousin, Buddy Elias, 88, sent Otsuka an e-mail from Switzerland, saying that he was shocked by the news.

When Otsuka phoned him to “apologize on behalf of the Japanese people,” Elias said that he wanted to create an opportunity for people to learn more about Frank.

Kyodo News

Village leader kidnapped by PKK militants in southeastern Turkey

ANKARA, 3 March — A village leader was kidnapped by suspected members of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in southeastern Turkey on Sunday, the military said.

The three suspects were believed to have kidnapped the leader of the Eski village in the southeastern Province of Hakkari, prompting authorities to launch an operation for his release, the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces said.

Meanwhile, hundreds of sympathizers of the PKK clashed with riot police early on Sunday after throwing Molotov cocktails at a bank and smashing the windows of several stores in the Feth district of Turkey’s largest city, Istanbul, Turkey’s Daily News reported.

A group of PKK supporters torched a bank, setting several other stores on fire, said the report, adding that the group blocked roads with barricades.

Riot police then fired water cannons and tear gas to disperse them.

The Turkish authorities started peace negotiations with the PKK in October 2012, which led to a ceasefire in March 2013, and in May 2013 PKK fighters started to return to their strongholds in northern Iraq.

Xinhua

Steller’s sea eagles gather on drift ice off the Shiretoko Peninsula in Hokkaido, northern Japan, on 2 March, 2014.

KYODO NEWS

“Samurai” warrior dolls for Boys’ Day in May are put on display at Yokohama Sogo Department Store in Yokohama west of Tokyo on 25 Feb, 2014, one month earlier than usual, to stimulate last-minute demand before an increase in the national sales tax from 5% to 8% in April.

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Venezuela opposition musters thousands for march despite Carnival holiday

CARACAS, 3 March — While many Venezuelans went to the beach to enjoy the Carnival holiday, thousands of anti-government demonstrators marched in the capital on Sunday, trying to keep up the momentum from weeks of protests demanding President Nicolas Maduro resign.

There are no signs that Maduro, who says the protests are part of a US-backed coup plot, could be ousted in a Ukraine-style overthrow despite widespread discontent with soaring inflation and chronic product shortages.

Government leaders have urged Venezuelans to skip the protests and make their traditional trips to the beach during the Carnival holiday. State television was filled with images of packed beaches and smiling holidaymakers.

Opposition marchers that ranged from students to middle-aged professionals and senior citizens filled a square in the east of Caracas to protest problems including 56 percent annual inflation and one of the world’s highest murder rates.

“We have nothing to celebrate at the beach,” said Carlos Torres, 34, an engineer. “Going on vacation would give credence to the government’s version that there’s nothing going on.”

The unrest evolved from sporadic regional protests into nationwide movement after three people were shot dead following a February 12 march. At least 17 people have been killed in the South American nation’s most violent unrest in a decade.

Maduro sought to keep up the momentum by extending the usual four-day Carnival holiday by two days.

Cameron, Obama agree on “urgent need” for de-escalation: spokesperson

LONDON, 3 March — British Prime Minister David Cameron and American President Barack Obama on Sunday “agreed on the urgent need for de-escalation and for Russia to engage in a dialogue directly with Ukraine” in a phone call, a Downing Street spokesperson said in a statement.

“They agreed that Russia’s actions were completely unacceptable,” the spokesperson said, adding that the two leaders spoke over phone at 9:00 pm Sunday. “They agreed there must be ‘significant costs’ to Russia if it did not change course on Ukraine,” the spokesperson continued.

Suspected Islamists kill 85 in northeast Nigeria

MAIDUGURI, 3 March — Suspected Islamist militants have killed at least 85 people in northeastern Nigeria, witnesses and officials said on Sunday, in a further setback to President Goodluck Jonathan’s military campaign.

Two bomb blasts in the city of Maiduguri killed at least 46 people on Saturday evening while, around 50 km (30 miles) away, dozens of gunmen were razing a farming village, shooting dead another 39.

The attacks will heap pressure on Jonathan, whose intensified military push to end the Islamist rebellion has at least had some success in confining it to remote rural areas in recent years. The army had at least had some success in confining it to remote rural areas in recent months, so that the attack on a densely populated market area in Maiduguri will be seen as a setback.

Jonathan is expected to run for re-election next year in what is expected to be a close contest. Boko Haram, which has killed thousands in its fight for an Islamic state in northern Nigeria and become the biggest threat to security in Africa’s top oil producer, is increasingly targeting the civilian population.

The attack on the village of Mainok on Saturday evening is typical of recent raids by Boko Haram as its fighters continue to target anyone they view as supporting the government’s effort to end its insurgency.

TEPCO walks tightrope over toxic water buildup 3 yrs after crisis

TOKYO, 3 March — Japan will mark the third anniversary of the start of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear complex crisis on 11 March, struggling to tackle the buildup of highly radioactive water that is proving to be a major challenge in the decommissioning process.

Just weeks before the anniversary, senior officials of plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Co. were again apologizing for a series of troubles, including the leak of 100 tons of highly toxic water from one of the huge tanks set up at the site.

The direct cause of the incident was wrong valve operation, which caused contaminated water to flow into a tank that was nearly full. But what was more disturbing was how workers had overlooked signs that something was wrong. The incident triggered renewed concerns over TEPCO’s ability to oversee the ongoing clean-up.

“If we had acted more watchfully after hearing an alarm warning of a rise in the tank’s water level, we would have been able to minimize the consequences,” TEPCO spokesperson Masayuki Ono told a press conference after the company announced the leak on 20 February, referring to the alarm that went off more than nine hours before workers found water spilling from the tank’s lid.

Because the water-level readings showed irregular movements following the alarm and because people on patrol were not able to find any trace of a leak near the tank in the two hours or so after the warning sounded, the utility judged that the water-level gauge had malfunctioned. But Ono admitted that workers could have noticed the leak sooner had they gone up to the 10-meter-high tank to check how much water it contained or if workers in a control room had paid attention to data showing that the water level in tanks designated to receive the water was not rising.
Iran hopes to mend trade ties with Japan

**Two Microsoft executives to leave company**

Tokyo, 3 March — Capital spending by Japanese companies rose for the third straight quarter during the October-December period, as growth in corporate profits on the back of the yen’s slide prompted the corporate sector to bolster investment, the government said on Monday. Business investment by all nonfinancial sectors for purposes such as building plants and introducing new equipment gained 4.0 percent from a year earlier to 9.44 trillion yen ($93.19 billion) in the three months through December, following a 1.5 percent climb in the previous quarter, the Finance Ministry said.

“Capital spending has been picking up” with the nation’s economy moderate-ly recovering, a ministry official said, but he added some firms are skeptical whether the world’s third-biggest economy will continue to recover given a planned sales tax hike in April.

The tax measure, however, could still hurt consumer spending and stifle the nascent economic recovery, making the corporate sector reluctant to beef up business investment, which Abe views as a pillar of growth, analysts said.

“Concerns are likely to intensify that Japan’s economy may not be able to gain momentum and completely overcome deflation,” a major focus of the premier’s policies dubbed “Abenomics,” Minami said.

A preliminary GDP report was released on 17 February. Capital spending accounts for around 15 percent of Japan’s GDP. Monday’s reading showed business investment by manu-facturers increased for the first time in five quarters, up 0.7 percent from a year earlier to 3.08 trillion yen, and nonmanufacturers logged a 5.7 percent rise to 6.36 trillion yen, up for the third straight quarter.

Japan Oct-Dec business investment up for 3rd straight qtr

**Generic drugmakers ramp up campaign against FDA label proposal**

Washington, 3 March — A new federal pro-gramme aims to standard-ize inspection procedures for pet food and farm ani-mal feed produced in the United States, making them safer, the US Food and Drug Administration said on Friday.

The Animal Feed Regulatory Programme Standards comprise a series of new voluntary standards for inspections by state and other regulatory programs that oversee the production of pet food and feed for farm animals such as cattle, chickens and pigs.

Concern over the safety of pet food and farm animal feed has mounted in recent years, as discoveries of salmonella-contaminated dog food and livestock feed contaminated with a com-bined toxin led to waves of product recalls and worries about the safety of the US food production system.

Pet food is a more than a billion-dollar grain-based business in the United States, while livestock feed accounts for primary use of the two biggest row crops in the country.

But routine inspection and enforcement can differ among the vari-ous state agencies responsi-ble for conducting in- spections of the companies that make these products.

and problems can often fall through the gaps, critics say. The new standards aim to help unify this process, with guidelines that range from on-site inspection protocols at feed plants to how to respond to food contami-nated illnesses or deaths.

While the program is not mandatory, “the FDA is encouraging state pro-grammes to implement the feed standards because this will build uniformity and consistency among state feed regulatory pro-grammes,” the agency said in an email.

The new programme follows the 2011 fed-eral Food Safety Modern-ization Act, which shifted the focus of federal regula-tors away from responding to food contamination to preventing it.— Reuters

**China Eastern Airlines orders 70 Airbus planes**

Shanghai, 3 March — China Eastern Airlines, a major Chinese airliner, has signed an agreement with global aircraft maker Airbus for the purchase of 70 Airbus A320NEO planes for 6.37 billion US dollars.

The planes will be de-livered starting from 2018 till 2020. The airliner will pay in installments, accord-ing to a company statement released on Saturday by the Shanghai Stock Exchange.

The company said that it will finance the deal through income from business operations, bank loans, and other financing tools. It said the purchase will not have a major impact on liquidity and its business operations.

It said that the new planes aim to cater to the rising demand for medium and short-distance trips.

**Iran hopes to use his upcoming visit to Japan to rebuild bilateral trade relations that have been affected by US and European san-cations against Iran over its nuclear programme.**

“Japan has been an important trading partner to Iran, but unfortunately because of sanctions, there has been a sharp drop in our trade relations,” Zarif said in an interview with Japanese media in Tehe-ran on Saturday.

“It is important for us to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the result of development in the international scene,” he said, referring to a deal between Iran and six coun-tries struck in November to curb Tehran’s uranium enrichment in exchange for the easing of tough interna-tional sanctions.

**Two Microsoft Corp executives, Tony Bates and Tami Reller, are pre-paring to leave the company as Satya Nadella takes over as chief executive, according to a media report.** Bates, the former Skype CEO in charge of Microsoft’s business development, will leave immediately, technology news site Re/code report-ed on Sunday citing un-named sources.

Bates, who has also worked at Cisco Systems Inc, was considered one of the potential CEO can-didates to succeed Steve Ballmer, who announced in August that he would retire. Eric Rudder, head of advanced strategy, will temporarily take up Bates’ duties and marketing ex-ecutive Chris Capossela will replace Reller, the re-port said.

Reller, one of the top female executives at the company and co-head of Microsoft’s Windows unit, will remain with Mi-crosoft for some time to help with the transition. The report said Nadella, who was appointed CEO on 4 February, told staff of the changes on Friday and the company plans to announce them public-ly on Tuesday. Microsoft declined to comment on the report.

**Skype CEO Tony Bates speaks during a news confer-ence at Facebook headquarters in Palo Alto, California on 6 July, 2011.— Reuters**

**Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is pictured during an interview with Japanese media in Teheran on 1 March, 2014, ahead of his planned visit to Japan.** Kyodo News

**Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif**
President U Thein Sein and wife pose for documentary photo with Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the Royal Thai Government Mr Sihasak Phuangketkeow and Indian Prime Minister Dr Mamanohan Singh.—MNA

Myanmar hosts 11th AMIIM, 4th AMOIM

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Hla Htay Win hosted a breakfast for participants to 11th ASEAN Military Intelligence Informal Meeting (AMIIM) and 4th ASEAN Military Operation Informal Meeting (AMOIM) from ASEAN countries at Thingaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday morning.

Myanmar hosted 4th ASEAN Military Operation Informal Meeting (AMOIM) at Amara Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday.

Chief of Staff (Army) Maj-Gen Mya Tun Oo chaired the meeting and delivered an opening address.

Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Hla Htay Win greets participants to 11th AMIIM and 4th AMOIM.—MNA

Interview with Mr. Sihasak Phuangketkeow

Q: Which ways do you find to enhance connectivity, transport, trade, tourism with Myanmar?
A: Thailand and Myanmar are immediate neighbours, so trade, tourism, transport and connectivity development between the two countries are of great importance.

Thailand attached much importance to the relations with Myanmar because Myanmar is our immediate neighbour and we share a long border and we support to the process of the political reforms in Myanmar. Connectivity is a key to more trade, more investment and more integration. So we have been trying utmost for strengthening economic connectivity in terms of physical connectivity and in terms of harmonizing rules and regulations so that we have cross border flow of good, people and goods. For example, we are opening up more border check points along the border between the two countries.

Thailand is helping with construction of roads along the border such as the road from Mae Sot to Myawaddy, later on to-Mawlamyine. Development of border trade, Thai will open more check border checkpoints for the border trade development can create job opportunities. Moreover, seaport is important to Thai and Myanmar as well as the region.

We are constructing the Mae Sot-Myawaddy-Kawkareik most road. This also creates job opportunities and prosperity along the border.

The important project is Dawei deep sea port project and this is special potential southern economic corridor. This project is great importance to Myanmar, to Thailand and also to the region. Even countries like Japan are very interested in it and in becoming a partner. They need some more time. There would be industrial estate, petro chemical and manufacturing industries projects. All these projects are related to enhancing connectivity.

Q: To which extent, this summit can contribute to public health of Myanmar?
A: For this summit, we believe that BIMSTEC should be more than just economic cooperation. Economic cooperation is very important but how do we bring the benefits in the BIMSTEC cooperation to the people about the region. There are many issues including poverty eradication, education and health. Health is the very important issue. When we open up the border, we have both opportunities and problem crossing the border. One challenge is pandemic. So we need to cooperate more closely on health. In the case of Thailand, universal health coverage system and everyone has health access to affordable medical care and treatment. So, we want to share our experiences with other BIMSTEC countries especially with Myanmar. We also want to see more cooperation in all areas concerned helpful for people. This is the priority issue of Thailand. Because we’d like to make BIMSTEC more people centered.

Q: Can this meeting pave the way for fighting transnational crimes by bilateral cooperation?
A: We open up the border and we become more connected and we benefit and promote trade and investment. We also have to deal with the negative sides of being more connected. One of the negative sides is transnational organized crime. We have to cooperate more and transnational organized crime is one of the important issue in this upcoming summit. We have a convention on counter terrorism and convention against the transnational organized crime and all of us have already signed the convention. Thailand have signed and every one want to proceed the ratification. We can have to work more closely within BIMSTEC on counter terrorism and transnational organized crime. At the bilateral cooperation, we have to work closely with Myanmar to deal with transnational organized crime is related to drug, human trafficking. Because this is very important issue for Thailand and bilaterally and regionally important issue for BIMSTEC and we need to work more closely.—Thadin Lulin

Next, the Chief of Staff (Army) handed over a commemorative gift to Brig-Gen Datuk Haji Samion bin Haji Swe and Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe and Lt-Gen Datuk Abdul Hadi Bin Hj Hussin of Malaysia that will host 12th AMIIM greeted delegation leaders. Then, the Chief of Military Affairs Security held bilateral meetings with delegations from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam separately at Thimgaha Hotel in the evening.

Likewise, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesian and Vietnamese delegations held bilateral meetings with other ASEAN delegations.

The Chief of Military Affairs Security and senior military officers from ASEAN delegations read out respective papers and held discussions on draft joint statement of the 11th ASEAN Chief of Defence Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM). Next, Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe and Lt-Gen Datuk Abdul Hadi bin Hj Hussin of Malaysia that will host 12th AMIIM greeted delegation leaders. Then, the Chief of Military Affairs Security held bilateral meetings with delegations from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam separately at Thimgaha Hotel in the evening.

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Three R’s
Every day, we throw away packaging materials, food and drink cans, glass bottles, and plastic metal. The three R’s - reduce, reuse and recycle - all help to cut down on the amount of waste we throw away. Reducing the amount of waste you produce is the best way to help the environment. We should buy products that don’t have a lot of packaging. We can reduce waste by using a computer, save energy by turning off lights that you are not using, save water by turning off the faucet. Some ways to reduce the environmental damage caused by cars include walking, taking the bus, or riding your bike instead of driving. Instead of throwing things away, we need to find ways to use them again. It makes economic and environmental sense to reuse products. Many of the things we use every day, like paper bags, soda cans, and milk cartons, are made out of materials that can be recycled. Recycled items are put through a process that makes it possible to create new products out of the materials from the old ones. Plastic containers and reusable lunch bags are great ways to take your lunch to school and office without creating waste. The schools need to create recycling awareness clubs in order to give young students an insight on recycling and encourage students to not only recycle at school, but at home as well. Everyone can help save natural resources, energy, and money by following the three R’s.

One way to help save natural resources is by disposing of waste you produce is the best way to help the environment. We should buy products that don’t have a lot of packaging. We can reduce waste by using a computer, save energy by turning off lights that you are not using, save water by turning off the faucet. Some ways to reduce the environmental damage caused by cars include walking, taking the bus, or riding your bike instead of driving. Instead of throwing things away, we need to find ways to use them again. It makes economic and environmental sense to reuse products. Many of the things we use every day, like paper bags, soda cans, and milk cartons, are made out of materials that can be recycled. Recycled items are put through a process that makes it possible to create new products out of the materials from the old ones. Plastic containers and reusable lunch bags are great ways to take your lunch to school and office without creating waste. The schools need to create recycling awareness clubs in order to give young students an insight on recycling and encourage students to not only recycle at school, but at home as well. Everyone can help save natural resources, energy, and money by following the three R’s.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura
U Shwe Mann receives representatives of Special Regions and SSPP, meets Bangladeshi PM

Appointees to Anti-Bribery Commission... (from page 16)
Stamp Act and Bill amending Office Tax Act were approved and the report on findings of Planning and Financial Development Joint Committee on the report on national planning work progress in the first six months for 2013-2014 FY was under discussion. Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Lin Aung made clarifications on the report of Joint Public Accounts Committee, saying that budget surplus occurred in 2012-2013 FY as state-owned economic enterprises’ capital expenditures on purchase of raw materials was not included in the budget. More emphasis will be placed on the proposed budgets of the ministries concerned, he added. Regarding the suggestion on the possible impacts of monetary policy changes in world nations against Myanmar, the deputy minister replied that Central Bank of Myanmar will be responsible for monetary policy while the Ministry of Finance will take care of fiscal policy.

According to the Public Financial Management PFM Reform Strategy, Fiscal Policy and Strategy Division will be formed as of 2014-2015 FY for effective formulation of fiscal policies. — MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura
U Shwe Mann shaking hands with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. — MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura
U Shwe Mann receives representatives of Special Regions and SSPP, meets Bangladeshi PM

Foreign leaders arrive in Nay Pyi Taw
NAY PYI TAW, 3 March — Leaders from foreign countries arrived in Nay Pyi Taw by air to attend the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit on Monday.

Union Minister U Aye Myint and officials welcomed Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina at the Hluttaw Office. The visiting delegation was accompanied by the Bangladeshi ambassador to Myanmar. At the meeting, the Speaker said that both countries need to strengthen comprehensive cooperation and he honoured Bangladesh’s cooperation with neighbouring and world countries. He disclosed that he wishes to cooperate between the two governments, parliaments and peoples.

The Bangladeshi PM expressed her hope that both Bangladesh and Myanmar will reach as developed as the two countries if the two countries promote bilateral relations and cooperate in the area of development and trade. — MNA

Myanmar youth golfers leave for Bangladesh
YANGON, 3 March — Myanmar youth golf team (Women) on 3 March left here for Bangladesh to participate in the 29th Bangladesh Amateur Golf Championship 2014 to be held at Kurmitola Golf Club, Dhaka, Bangladesh on 5-8 March, 2014. They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by officials from Myanmar Golf Federation and their relatives.

The golf team comprising Yin May Myo and May Oh Khung was led by U Myint Oo (executive officer of Myanmar Golf Federation). — NLM

Nay Pyi Taw

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Union Minister U Aye Myint and officials welcomed Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Nepal Mr Sushil Koirala, Prime Minister of Bhutan Mr Lyonchen Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh and President of Sri Lanka Mr Mahinda Rajapaksa. — MNA

Ministerial... (from page 1)
Foreign Affairs of Nepal Honourable Mr Mahendra B. Pandey and Minister of External Affairs of India Mr Salman Khursheed exchanged views on amities and bilateral cooperation between the countries.

The Union Minister also met the External Affairs Minister of India and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal at 1 pm, Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and Special Representative to the Thai Prime Minister Permanent Secretary Mr Sihakun Phuangketkew at 3 pm and Nepalese Prime Minister Sushil Koirala in the evening separately. — MNA

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura
U Shwe Mann shaking hands with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. — MNA
Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker meets delegates from Wa Special Region-2, Mongla Special Region-4, SSPP, trainees of MDevs & CAES

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Aung Myint met with U Kyaw Kyone Tan and party of Wa Special Region-2, U Sam Lu and party of Mongla Special Region-4 and U Sao Khun Hsai and party of Shan State Progress Party-SSPP at the hall of Amyotha Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday.

In the afternoon, the Speaker met with the trainees from Master of Development Studies-MDevs conducted by the Yangon Institute of Economics-YIE and Certificate in ASEAN Economic Studies-CAES jointly conducted by YIE and the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development at assembly hall of Amyotha Hluttaw building. At the meeting, the Speaker made clarifications on legislative matters raised by the trainees.

National race peace groups and political parties ready to cooperate in census taking process

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—The Union Minister for Immigration Committee and Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Khin Yi held a meeting with the delegates from national race peace groups and political parties for nation-wide census taking process at the Ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday.

During the meeting, the Union Minister said that the national people’s cooperation is important to achieve success in the process for census taking and they need to tell the truth when ask questions by the officials to exactly confirm the numbers of population of Myanmar.

The delegates shall disseminate knowledge on census taking process and its usage to the local people in their regions and parties, he urged.

After that, Vice-Chairman U Thein Zaw clarified the purpose of census taking process.

Next, the Union Minister and officials replied the queries raised by the attendees.

The delegates from national race peace groups and political parties are ready to cooperate the census taking process and welcome this process for development of the nation.—MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing calls for unity among ASEAN countries

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior-General Min Aung Hlaing received the representatives of ASEAN countries, who attended the 11th ASEAN Military Intelligence Informal Meeting (AMIIIM) and the 4th ASEAN Military Operations Informal Meeting (AMOIM), at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday.

At the call, the Senior General called them for unity among ASEAN countries despite difference of their participation in the ASEAN’s activities.

Besides, he stressed the needs for implementing beneficial results of the meetings.

Also present at the call were Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Maj-Gen Tisna Komara of Indonesia, Lt-General Srisuwan of Thailand, Brig-Gen Virgilio A Henandez of Philippines, Brig-Gen Faltas A Ismail of Laos, Brig-Gen Maj-Gen Huynh Ngoc Ha of Vietnam, Lt-Gen Datuk Virgilio Henandez of Philippines, Brig-Gen Dato Haji Sanusi Bin Haji Samion of Malaysia, Brig-Gen Chean Hoong of Singapore, Lt-Gen Tarnchaiyan Srisuwan of Thailand and Maj-Gen Huynh Ngoc Ha of Vietnam.

Police impersonators arrested

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—Two men and one woman who are accused of impersonating police and robbing sum of money and gold items from a 26-year-old Htattabin woman have been brought to North District Court recently. Yangon Region police force said a 45-year-old wife of one of suspects was also taken into police custody and investigation is ongoing in order to arrest two other suspects who still at large.

Police said a 26-year-old woman had fallen victim to police impersonators in Htanabbin Township in Yangon Region on 24 December, 2013. Three unknown men and one woman impersonating police from No (2) Htanabbin Police Station entered the victim’s house and robbed a sum of money and six different kinds of gold items worth Ky. 7,340,000.

Police Information
**LOCAL NEWS**

**Maw Tin Zun Pagoda Festival on 1-15 March**

AYEYAWADY, 3 March—The Maw Tin Zun Pagoda Festival is being held at the pagoda from 1 to 15 March on a grand scale in Ngapudaw Township, Pathein District of the Ayeyawady Region. The Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister Thiri pinyachti U Thein Aung and his family and other wellwishers hoisted umbrella, diamond orb, pennant-shaped vanes and sixteenth encircled zedis atop the pagoda on 28 February.

People from all over the country come to the festival. The festival is prominent and popular in Ayeyawady Region.

**Israel’s Cooperation in Myanmar in archaeological research and conservation**

YANGON, 3 March—As part of the cooperation between the two countries, this time in the archaeological field, a special cooperation program was launched between the Department of Archaeology at Haifa University, Israel, the Pyay Field school of Archaeology and the Ministry of Culture in Myanmar, Prof Sariel Shalev, Chair of the Department of Archaeology of the Haifa University, visited Myanmar between 6th to 20th of February 2014.

During his visit, Professor Shalev visited numerous pagodas in Yangon, Pyay and Mandalay, and helped conducting a survey of the bells, together with scholars, staff and students from Pyay Field school of Archaeology and Ministry of Culture.

The aim of this research is to provide the necessary analysis and typological documentation of the bells. Furthermore, by analyzing of the chemical composition of the metal that was use for casting them, the results will provide an important data base in the study of the traditional techniques, that were used for the bells production and casting during the years.

The entire project is an initiative of Israeli entrepreneur Amnon Nahamias, active for many years in Myanmar.

**Shan State Chief Minister attends Taungyoe national cultural festival**

TAUNGYOE, 3 March—Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat attended opening of 5th Taungyoe national cultural festival at Bawinn Village in Kalaw Township on 2 March.

The chief minister and Chairman of Taungyoe Literature and Culture Association U Thaung Shwe formally opened the festival. Taungyoe, Danu and PaO national cultural troupes performed entertainment. The chief minister and wife Daw Phyu Phyu Nyunt, State Minister for Finance U Khan Thein Maung and the State Hluttaw representative and chairman of Taungyoe Literature and Culture Association presented K 1 million each to officials. Then, they posed for a documentary photo.

Next, they donated offerings to the monastery in the village.

**Tachilek to build circular road**

TACHILEK, 3 March—Due to various reasons such as increasing population and vehicles, the need of building border circular road as in Maesai, the next door of Tachilek, which has built such a road and emergence of a route on which a trade flow of ASEAN Free Trade Area goes well, initial meeting on building a circular road in Tachilek took place on 28 February. Locals in inspiration to build the road and reducing traffic accidents also led local authorities to organize the meeting participated by government officials, locals and media.

Engineer U Marku clarified axis of the road and sought the advice of locals. After a thorough discussion, an agreement which pays great attentions on not to have serious impact on religious buildings, residential areas and work places has been reached unanimously to build the road.—Maung Yin Kye

**Hovercraft shuttle service halves travel time**

Myeik, 3 March—For the comfort and convenience of local people, Kyan-taung Aung hovercraft shuttle service was launched in Kyunsu Township as of 27 February. Now, local people are able to take the shuttle from Kyunsu to Myeik within 50 minutes. The roundtrip hovercraft shuttle services is being operated two times a day, departing Myeik at every 8 am and leaving for Myeik at every 9 am and departing Kyunsu at every 3.30 pm after heading back Kyunsu at every 2.30 pm daily. The one-way hovercraft ride ticket is priced K 1000 per head. The one-way motorized boat trip to Kyunsu from Myeik once took about two hours. No change in ticket price, but travel time was halved.

The remote town surrounded by waters can only be reached by water and it is 16 miles far from Myeik.—Khin Htoo (Myeik IPRD)

**Union Commerce Minister holds discussion with Chinese governmental heads in Muse**

MUSE, 3 March—Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint held a meeting with the entrepreneurs from Muse District at the hall of Muse Trader’s Association in Muse, Shan State (North) on 2 March.

First, the Union minister made an opening speech. The chairmen and members of Muse-Namkham Trade Association reported on prospects for exportation of beans and pulses, corn and sesame, difficulties facing in exporting commodities, tariff matters and further promoting bilateral trade. The secretary of Kunlong, H tags, and Chinshwehaw Trade Association reported on scrutinizing durability of Kunlong Bridge and the departmental officials made clarifications.

In the afternoon, Myanmar delegation led by the Union minister, State Planning and Economic Minister U Aung Kyaw Nyunt and Chinese governmental heads discussed matters on ensuring bilateral trade and arrangements to be opened border trade gates.

**Holding 700th anniversary of Founding Sagaing discussed**

SAGAING, 3 March—First meeting on setting up committee for holding 700th anniversary of founding Sagaing in 2015 took place at Thudhamma Rest House in Sagaing on 2 March. The committees and sub-committees were formed to be able to hold 700th anniversary of Founding Sagaing in 2015.

The purpose of holding 700th anniversary of founding Sagaing is to excavate historic ancient heritages and records, said a local writer.

The 700th anniversary of founding Sagaing will be held on a grand scale including plan to publish 700th anniversary magazine and calendar, hold paper reading session, show Sagaing historical documentary and entertainment programmes.

Myanma Alinn (137)
Nepal to host int’l trade fair

KATHMANDU, 3 March — Nepal’s apex business body is all set to organize Nepal International Trade Fair 2014 in Kathmandu in a bid to promote Nepali products in the international arena, organizer said on Sunday.

Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), the host of the event, said that the upcoming edition of the five-day annual fair, which will be staged on Thursday, will be inaugurated by Nepal’s President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav.

The trade fair will feature a total of 350 stalls among which 200 stalls will showcase Nepali products. Of the rest, 82 stalls which present Bangladeshi products, 16 Pakistani, 5 Indian and two stalls for Bhutanese and Thai products each.

“The Nepal International Trade Fair has already been established as a brand in the international level,” Bhaskar Raj J Karnikar, senior vice-president of FNCCI told Xinhua.

“We want to promote local products at regional level, regional products at national level and national products at international level through the trade fair,” he said.

Xinhua

After vacating Bangkok’s streets, Thai protesters look to courts

BANGKOK, 3 March — Anti-government protesters in Thailand have retreated to a central Bangkok park, freeing up traffic after blocking big intersections for more than a month, but Thailand’s four-month political crisis looks no closer to a solution.

The protesters, who moved to Lumpini Park over the weekend after orders from protest leader Suthep Thaugsuban, are now banking on judicial intervention from courts hostile to Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra to bring down her government.

“Bangkokians are able to go to work more easily but the state of play in Thailand has not changed since protesters scaled back,” said Siripan Nogsun-an Sawasdee, a political analyst at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok.

“He (Suthep) realizes that the fate of the government won’t be determined by his group but lies in the hands of independent organizations — the anti-corruption body and the courts.”

Demonstrators seeking to overthrow Yingluck took to the streets in November and have since blocked major traffic intersections in Bangkok.

They want Yingluck to resign to make way for an appointed “people’s council” to overhaul a political system they say has been taken hostage by her billionaire brother and former premier, Thaksin Shinawatra. Yingluck faces several legal challenges, the most significant being negligence charges for mishandling a disastrous rice subsidy scheme.

The scheme paid farmers above the market price to produce rice, leading to a huge oversupply and a subsidy bill of billions of baht. The state of play in Thailand’s political crisis looks no closer to a solution

Xinhua

Abe aims to push N Korea on abduction issue at bilateral talks

TOKYO, 3 March — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Monday Japan will press North Korea to work toward a possible solution to the issue of abductions and other bilateral concerns, as diplomats from the two countries are expected to hold talks in China.

“We will make thorough efforts to elicit a positive response from North Korea,” Abe told a meeting of the government and ruling party bodies, referring to North Korea’s abductions of Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s.

Kyodo News

Cambodia’s Prince Ranariddh to return to politics

PHNOM PENH, 3 March — Cambodian Prince Norodom Ranariddh, a son of the late King Norodom Sihanouk, has decided to return to politics and plans to form his new party within the next two weeks, his aide said on Monday.

Noranarith Anandayat told Kyodo News that the prince, who hopes to mobilize royalists and Sihanoukists to “save” the country, will announce his intentions in a meeting with old supporters on 16 March, at which they will also formulate plans for the new party. Since last July’s general election, the two parties that won seats in the National Assembly — the ruling Cambodian People’s Party of Prime Minister Hun Sen and the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party of Sam Rainsy and Kem Sokha — have remained at loggerheads, with the opposition party boycotting all sessions of the assembly and continuing to protest the official election results.

Anandayat said that the new party will be named “The Community of Royalist People’s Party” and that he is now preparing to submit paperwork to the Interior ministry around middle of this month to register it as a political party. Ranariddh, who once headed the royalist FUNCINPEC party, announced his resignation from politics in August 2012.

The 70-year-old prince has since been acting as supreme privy councilor to King Norodom Sihamoni, his half-brother.

Reuters

Farmers take part in a rally demanding the Yingluck administration resolve delays in payment, at the office of the auditor general in Bangkok on 3 March, 2014.

Reuters

Volunteers wait to donate blood at a mobile blood collection station in Kunming, capital of southwest China’s Yunnan Province, on 2 March, 2014. Twenty-nine people died and more than 130 were injured in the Kunming Railway Station terrorist attack as of 9 am on Sunday. As more and more citizens volunteered to donate blood for the injured people of terrorist attack, the local blood centre set up 12 collection stations and prolonged opening hours. — XINHUA

Kyodo News
**Taleban inmates freed on forged letter from jail in S Afghanistan**

**KABUL, 3 March —** A dozen of Taleban detainees have been released from Kandahar prison on forged letters. A local newspaper reported on Monday, “Twelve high profile Taleban inmates have mistakenly been freed from the central jail in Kandahar with falsified documents,” citing police, the English paper Daily Outlook writes in its Monday edition. Quoting deputy police chief of Kandahar, Rahmatullah Atrafi, the newspaper added that a letter from the Attorney’s office had ordered the release of 16 prisoners who had their jail terms served but later it appeared that the latter bore fake signature of the Attorney. A local official in Kandahar on the condition of anonymity confirmed the release of the inmates and told Xinhua that the wardens of the jail, after receiving a fake letter claiming to be from the national intelligence agency, set free 12 detainees on Saturday.

It is not the first time that Taleban detainees made their escape from Kandahar prison. Prime Minister in 2008 and 2011 more than 1,500 Taleban detainees had made their good escapes from Kandahar central jail respectively.—Xinhua

**Taleban militants killed in Afghan cleanup operations**

**KABUL, 3 March —** Two dozen of Taliban militants were killed during cleanup operations in different Afghan provinces since early Sunday, the country’s Interior Ministry said on Monday.

“Taliban National Security Forces (ANSF) carried several cleanup operations in Kabul, Kunar, Nangarhar, Laghman, Kandahar, Pakthka and Helmand Provinces. As a result 24 armed Taleban members were killed, three wounded and 11 others were arrested by the ANSF,” the ministry said in a statement providing daily operational updates. The ANSF also found and seized weapons and ammunition during the above raids, according to the statement.

The Taleban has not made comments so far. The Afghan National Police has found and defused six improvised explosive devices and roadside bombs over the same period of time, the statement added.—Xinhua

**Australia condemns brutal attack in southwest China**

**CANBERRA, 3 March—** The Australian government condemned the mass stabbing at a train station in southwest China’s Kunming city that left 29 civilians dead, said a statement by Australian Ambassador to China Frances Adamson, which was made available here on Monday. “ Australians have been shocked by the violent and indiscriminate attack by a knife wielding mob at Kunming railway station resulting in multiple deaths and horrific injuries,” the statement said. “The Australian government condemns this brutal attack on innocent people and extends its condolences and deepest sympathy to the victims and their families.”

Xinhua

**Iditarod mushers begin dog-sled trip across Alaskan tundra**

**NEW YORK, 3 March —** Nearly 70 competitors from around the world set off from a frozen lake on Sunday to challenge reigning Iditarod champion Mitch Seavey at the true start of Alaska’s famed and grueling sled-dog race. The nearly 1,000-mile (1,600-km) Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race kicked off a day earlier when 69 mushers and their canine teams made a ceremonial jaunt through Anchorage.

The business end of the race began in Willow, a small community about 50 miles north of Anchorage, where the teams embarked in a journey across the Alaskan tundra that the fastest will compete in a little over nine days.

After Willow, the next checkpoint was 42 miles away at the tiny settlement of Yentna Station, with Danny Kaduce reaching it the quickest time and then setting off for the next checkpoint.—Reuters
Alfonso Cuaron wins best director
Oscar for ‘Gravity’

Mexican director Alfonso Cuaron won the Oscar for best director on Sunday for the space thriller, “Gravity,” in which an astronaut fights for her survival after being cut loose from her space shuttle.

It was the first Academy Award for Cuaron, 52, and the first best director Oscar for a Mexican. His 3-D film starring Sandra Bullock and George Clooney mixes dazzling special effects, suspense and human drama.

Accepting the Oscar, Cuaron paid special tribute to Bullock: “Sandy, you are ‘Gravity’, you are the soul and heart of the film. You are an amazing collaborator and one of the best people I have ever met.” Cuaron had been hotly tipped to win the best director category, having swept the prize in other awards ceremonies before Sunday’s Oscars, including from the Directors Guild of America.

Disney’s ‘Frozen’ wins animated feature Oscar

The blockbuster movie “Frozen,” a Walt Disney Animation Studios musical fairy tale about the bond between two royal sisters in an icy Scandinavian kingdom, won the Academy Award on Sunday for best animated feature film.

The win is the first in the category for Walt Disney Animation Studios, the animation house founded by the man who pioneered the genre. The animated feature category was created in 2002 and has been dominated by Disney-owned Pixar, which has won it seven times but was shut out of the nominations this year for the second time in three years. “Frozen” cemented a resurgence for Disney Animation Studios, becoming a global phenomenon with over $1 billion in movie theater ticket sales, according to Rentrak.

‘12 Years a Slave’ wins best picture Oscar

The slavery drama “12 Years a Slave” won the best picture Oscar on Sunday, becoming the first film from a black director to win the film industry’s top honour in the 86 years of the Academy Awards.

The film from British director Steve McQueen is based on the memoirs of a free black man, Solomon Northup, who is tricked and sold into bondage in Louisiana in an unflinching account of pre-Civil War slavery in America.

Italy’s ‘The Great Beauty’ wins best foreign language Oscar

Visually stunning Italian drama “The Great Beauty” won the Oscar for best foreign language film on Sunday, capping its successful awards season run in the United States and Europe.

Director Paolo Sorrentino’s film about an aging writer’s reflections on life and his search for meaning among Rome’s idle rich also won top foreign film honors at the Golden Globes and Britain’s BAFTAs. It was the first Oscar for Sorrentino and the 11th win for an Italian film since foreign language film became a competitive category in 1956, the most of any country. Italian films earned three additional Academy Awards before that time.

McConaughey wins best actor Oscar for
‘Dallas Buyers Club’

Matthew McConaughey won the Oscar for best actor on Sunday for his role in “Dallas Buyers Club” as a homophobic, rodeo-loving Texan who contracts AIDS and becomes an unlikely savior for gay patients and drug addicts desperate for treatment. McConaughey lost some 50 pounds (23 kg) for the role, looking gaunt as real-life crusader Ron Woodroof, a cowboy who fought the US government during the early AIDS epidemic of the 1980s to provide patients with medicines he imported from foreign countries.

Magic moments help City sink Sunderland in League Cup final

LONDON, 3 March — Two moments of magic inside two second-half minutes helped Manchester City avoid a second successive Wembley meltdown on Sunday as they landed the season’s first silverware with a 3-1 victory over Sunderland in the English League Cup final. Memories of last season’s FA Cup final defeat by relegation-bound Wigan Athletic were re-surfaces as Manuel Pellegrini’s side trailed to Fabio Borini’s clinical 10th-minute strike.

This time, however, City’s slickers showed their pedigree with Yaya Toure’s spectacular curling shot and Samir Nasri’s piledriver turning the final on its head. Relegation-threatened Sunderland continued to dream of a first piece of silverware since their epic 1973 FA Cup final defeat of Leeds.

Henley wins Honda Classic in four-way playoff

CARY, (NC), 3 March — American Russell Henley emerged as the last man standing to win his second PGA Tour title in a four-way playoff for the Honda Classic at Palm Beach Gardens in Florida on Sunday. Henley, 24, birdied the first extra hole, the par-five 18th, from two feet in fading light to edge out Norwegian Ryan McIlroy, American Ryan Palmer and Scotland’s Russell Knox on a dramatic afternoon at PGA National.

McIlroy surrendered a big lead with an err-strwn 74 in the final round, though he made a birdie at the 72nd hole to qualify for the playoff after hitting a superb second shot to 11 feet, only to miss the eagle putt. Henley (72), Palmer (69) and Knox (71) also made mistakes over the closing stretch to finish level with McIlroy at eight-under-par 272. Henley sounded as if was still in shock as he spoke of his victory, “I hope I can have a bunch more Sundays just like that in my career,” he told Golf Channel. “It was a rush to be out there playing with Rory and the crowd.

“I’ve never been part of a crowd so big cheering for me. It was an amazing feeling. It was so much fun.” Henley appeared to have thrown away a chance of winning when he dunked his six-iron into the water at the par-three 15th for a double-bogey. But he steadied his apparently sinking ship with pars on the final three holes, which was enough to make the playoff.

Nadal to team-up with Sampras for Mumbai in new league

MUMBAI, 3 March — World number one Rafa Nadal will team up with 14-times major champion Pete Sampras for Mumbai in the inaugural International Premier Tennis League (IPTL) later this year, tournament organizers said on Sunday. Serena Williams, the top-ranked women’s player, will headline the Singapore team alongside Tomas Berdych and Andre Agassi in the off-season tournament from November 28 to December 14, which is styled on cricket’s franchise-based Indian Premier League.

Four teams — Bangkok and Dubai being the others — will compete in men’s and women’s singles, men’s and mixed doubles and a men’s legends singles with one set per match, and no advantage scoring. Serb Novak Djokovic and former women’s number one Caroline Wozniacki will lead Dubai while Britain’s Andy Murray, Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and Victoria Azarenka of Belarus were picked by Bangkok when the teams were drafted on Sunday in Dubai. The 2014 season will feature 24 matches across the four host cities with all four teams competing in a round-robin format in each of the four cities, organizers said.

Hokkaido residents make new sport out of shoveling snow

SAPPORO, 3 March — The president of a consulting firm in Otaru, Hokkaido, has established a nationwide association to promote snow shoveling, with the aim of turning the work of shoveling snow into a seasonal sport. The first international competition took place in the city in January and attracted 80 participants from 10 countries, including exchange students at local universities.

“Agm communities in snow-heavy regions lack the human resources to shovel snow, and face the risk of sliding accidents and of transportation being cut off,” said Hiyoshiy Mutsuro, 51. “But I expect snow shoveling to become a tourist attraction some day.” He got the idea from a Tokyo-based organization that stages a regular competition for collecting trash rather than considering it volunteer work.

Spanish tennis player Rafa Nadal poses with placard depicting some of his 11 Grand Slam victories after an interview with Reuters in Madrid, on 18 Sept, 2012. — Reuters
Karzai says Afghan war not fought in his country’s interest

WASHINGTON, 3 March — Expressing “extreme anger” toward the US government, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said in an interview with the Washington Post that the war in Afghanistan was not fought with his country’s interests in mind.

“AFghans died in a war that’s not ours,” Karzai said in the interview published on Sunday, just a month before an election to pick his successor.

He was quoted as saying he was certain the 12-year-old war, America’s longest and launched after the attacks of 11 September, 2001, was “for the US security and for the Western interest.”

Karzai’s refusal to sign a security deal with Washington that would permit foreign troops to stay in Afghanistan beyond this year has frustrated the White House, and President Barack Obama has told the Pentagon to prepare for the possibility that no US troops will be left in Afghanistan after 2014.

Obama told Karzai in a phone call on Tuesday he had given the order to the Pentagon. The phone call was the first substantive discussion between the two leaders since June.

But staking out a new position, the White House said in a statement it would leave open the possibility of concluding the bilateral security agreement later this year.

“It’s good for them to sign it with my successor,” Karzai told the Post. He has insisted the United States must jump-start peace talks with Taliban insurgents and end raids and strikes on Afghan homes before he signs the deal.

The NATO-led force in Afghanistan has a current strength of more than 52,000 soldiers, including 33,600 US troops. More than 3,400 coalition forces have been killed in the fight against the Taliban, including more than 2,300 US troops.

While Afghanistan’s police and army are seen as having made big strides in their ability to fight militants, doubts remain about whether they can keep a still-potent Taliban at bay, especially in remote areas.

WASHINGTON, 3 March — Atletico and Real Madrid produced 90 minutes of high-adrenaline tension in their vital BBVA Primera Liga clash which was the standout game of the weekend in Spain. In a game littered with foul, dives and bad-tempered moments which saw Atletico assistant coach Mono Burgos sent off and then need to be physically restrained by other members of the Atletico bench, Real Madrid took the lead after 2 minutes.

Recent history indicated that they would then probably go on to a com-

Clear of Atletico, but gave Barcelona the chance to close the gap on the top of the table to just one point with a win at home to Almeria. Barca started brightly and quickly took a 2-0 lead thanks to a Messi free kick and a goal from Alexis Sanchez, but Almeria pulled a goal back as Angel Trujillo took advantage of Barca’s habitual inability to defend corner kicks.

The second half saw Barca once again look far from convincing, but Carles Puyol made the points safe from close range after Messi had headed against the crossbar following a corner eight minutes from time and a fine curling shot from Xavi Hernandez assured a 4-1 win that was not as convincing as the score suggests.

Athletic Club Bilbao strengthened their grip of fourth place with a 4-0 victory over Granada on Friday night thanks partly to a magnificent hat-trick from striker, Aritz Aduriz and a late strike from Carlos Gurpegui.

Athletic were then able to enjoy as their two closest rivals, Villarreal and Real Sociedad dropped points.

Draw in Madrid derby allows Barca to close gap at top of La Liga

Madrid, 3 March — The result means Real Barcelona the chance to close the gap on the top of the table to just one point with a win at home to Almeria. Barca started brightly and quickly took a 2-0 lead thanks to a Messi free kick and a goal from Alexis Sanchez, but Almeria pulled a goal back as Angel Trujillo took advantage of Barca’s habitual inability to defend corner kicks.

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President hosts dinner to BIMSTEC leaders

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win hosted a dinner to leaders from BIMSTEC member countries at Myanmar International Convention Center (MICC) in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday.

Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bhutan Mr Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of India Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of Nepal Mr Sushil Koirala, President of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaksa, Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Special Envoy of the Royal Thai Government Mr Sihakul Phuangketsow, Union ministers and officials attended the dinner.

In his speech, the President said that Myanmar is very proud to host the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit. He expressed his delight to see leaders all here in Nay Pyi Taw. The participation of leaders demonstrates the very fact that BIMSTEC is receiving full political impetus from the leadership. He firmly believes that this Summit would further enhance friendship and cooperation among BIMSTEC member states. He is confident that meeting and working together in Nay Pyi Taw will come up with excellence results and concrete progress.

During the dinner, artists from Fine Arts Department under the Ministry of Culture entertained the attendees with Myanmar traditional dance and songs. Later, the President and wife had a documentary photo taken with leaders.

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives representatives of Special Regions and SSPP, meets Bangladeshi PM

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker meets delegates from Wa Special Region-2, Mongla Special Region-4, SSPP, trainees of MDevs & CAES

Appointees to Anti-Bribery Commission take oaths in Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—The appointees to the Anti-Bribery Commission took affirmation collectively before the Speaker in the 19th day session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Monday.

After presenting the President’s message to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on matters to be addressed as soon as possible in order to relieve the suffering of farmers as a result of confiscation of farmland and others, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced the message was documented.

In his message, the President stressed the need to address farmland grabbing cases in a transparent and speedy way, not later than the end of this June for lands of monsoon crops and the start of this September for lands of winter crops.

He called for collaboration and cooperation of representatives in the tasks of the respective township land utilization management committees that are making field trips under the supervision of the central committee led by Vice-President U Nyan Tun.

At the today’s Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session, Bill amending Myanmar Constitution on Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (See page 8)

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing calls for unity among ASEAN countries

Myanmar, Norway sign MoU on provision of technical assistance

NAY PYI TAW, 3 March—A ceremony to sign an MoU between the Ministry of Electric Power and Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate (NVE) on provision of technical assistance took place at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday.

At the ceremony, Union Minister U Khin Maung Soe said that the government has been carrying out works for distribution of power to fill increased electricity demand by adopting short- and long-term plans, adding National Electricity Plan is being drawn in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to generate power. He continued that Norway is one of most developed countries in hydropower technology and NVE’s hydropower sector achievements are good example for the ministry.

Norwegian Ambassador Mrs. Ann Ollestad and Director-General of NVE Mr. Per Sanderud explained matters on cooperation for provision of technical assistance.

Then, Director-General U Thuang Han of Hydropower Implementation Department and the NVE Director-General signed the MoU.

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