Development tasks can be implemented with greater success only after peace has been built

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—The following is unofficial translation of the message sent by President U Thein Sein on the occasion of the 68th Anniversary Shan State Day.

I am privileged to convey a message to all nationalities residing in Shan State on the auspicious occasion of the 68th anniversary of Shan State Day, which falls on 7 Feb ruary.

The history of Myanmar reveals that all national people have long been going through their share of prosperity and adversity amid the international community. Our country is endowed with underground and aboveground resources and our own culture and literature alongside glorious progress. However, it fell under colonial rule in 1885, with its natural resources lost; culture, literature and languages controlled; and national races segregated to disturb unity.

Shan nationals led by their community leaders raised their voices to win back independence, while General Aung San, a national leader in Myanmar’s struggle for independence, was holding talks with the British government to reclaim the country’s sovereignty. That enabled General Aung Sun to discuss with leaders of national races in the hilly region and win their agreement in Panglong to recover independence together with the mainland. It was on 7 February 1947 that they reached an accord on “the proclamation of independ ence from colonial rule in tandem with the mainland”. That day has since been commemorated as “Shan State Day”. The celebration has now entered its 68th anniversary.

Today, the government is carrying out democratic reform on all fronts while striving for internal peace as has been desired by successive generations of national races. It is our earnest belief that political dialogue is a sole solution to this mission. Only when political agreements reached at such talks are solid and trustworthy will they be able to guarantee a lasting peace in the Union. The ending of over 60 years of armed conflict is an absolute prerequisite for political dialogues to start soonest. Negotiations are under way to bring fighting to an end.

It is our responsibility to lay a solid foundation for any future government to continue with the peace processes which we have initiated. Stability and peace are entwined with development, which is why development tasks can be implemented with greater success only after peace has been built.

The government is striving to realize two public desires: one is stability and peace and the other is socioeconomic development. It is therefore incumbent on all the national people across the country to join hands with the government by upholding Union Spirit, which is a genuine patriotism. In addition, it is necessary for all nationalities in Shan State to walk in unison in our march towards a modern, prosperous democracy by maintaining stability and progress in place.

More foreign students enrolling in YUFL to study Myanmar language

It is regretted.—

YANGON, 6 Feb—Vice-Chancellor of Yangon University Dr Daw Lwin Lwin Soe told The Global New Light of Myanmar on February 6 that the number of foreign students had increased in recent years, up from 200 in the previous year. “A total of 290 foreign students were enrolled this year, up from 200 in the previous year,” Rector Dr Daw Lwin Lwin Soe told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Friday.

Nearly half, or 150, of all the foreign students majoring in the Myanmar language came from China, followed by around 70 from South Korea, with the remaining foreign students coming from Japan and elsewhere, said the rector. About 50 are taking the evening class, the rector added.

With its economic boom following sweeping reforms in recent years, Myanmar has caught the attention of countries including regional economic giants like China, Japan and South Korea, which has resulted in a marked increase in foreign student enrollments at the university.

“I took an evening class at YUFL last year to get a better understanding of Myanmar, thereby facilitating greater language communication with my Myanmar counterparts,” a Vietnamese banking officer who is assigned here for business purposes told The GNLM.

Besides providing a unique learning environment for international students who have a strong interest to learn the Myanmar language, the foreign language facility is also enabling Myanmar students to learn other languages, numbering nine including Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Thai.

“Nowadays, it seems easier for graduates of YUFL to find employment as their language skills definitely make job hunting easier,” said a Yangon resident who is also a father of three children studying in basic education.

“We have 12 native speakers helping us in teaching our students foreign languages,” Dr Daw Lwin Lwin Soe, recognizing the benefits of cooperative relations with foreign universities through memoranda of understanding.

According to university, 16 MoUs have been signed with universities, foundations and centres and work is underway to ink MoUs with 10 more universities with the aim of enabling students and teachers to win grants (See page 2)
Strategic EIA to be conducted at hydropower dams on Thanlwin River

By Khang Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 6 Feb — Myanmar’s tallest condominium, “Diamond Inya Myanmar” will emerge in minimum and K430,000 per floor and view. The condo includes car parking lots from 1st to 5th floors where more than 500 cars can park. Under the payment system, buyers will have to pay 50 per cent of the condo apartment through four-time installments over seven months. The remaining 50 per cent is to be paid after completion. In addition to condo projects, the company is developing hotel complexes and business centers in Yangon, Bagan and Mandalay.

More foreign students . . .

(from page 1)

and scholarships and take short-term overseas study tours for enhancement of their career prospects. The rector revealed that it is expected to sign a MoU with Mahidol University of Thailand soon and with China’s Yunnan University of Nationalities next month. With its popularity among matriculated students who have become more interested in learning foreign languages, the YUFL now hosts a student population of 4,552, including foreign students majoring in the Myanmar language.

Development of energy policy in Myanmar discussed at symposium

Nay Pyi Taw, 6 Feb — An international symposium on the development of energy policy in Myanmar was held at Grand Amara Hotel here, with an address by Chairman of National Energy Management Committee Union Minister for Energy U Zeyar Aung, a source reported.

Myanmar’s tallest condominium to emerge in commercial hub Yangon next year

By Khang Thanda Lwin

The conference was organized by the NEMC-Myanmar, in partnership with three Japanese bodies—the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Organization (HIDA) and the University of Tokyo. The symposium is a part of Energy Policy Work shop series which was held from September, 2014 to February, 2015, an official said. Those who attended the energy policy work shop series shared their knowledge on developing the energy policy at the conference.—MNA

Philippines donates culture materials to Myanmar

By Khin Yadana

YANGON, 6 Feb — Officials of Thailand-based Air Asia airlines started marketing flights so as to raise daily flights this year for ensuring convenient travelling of international passengers in Myanmar, according to the press release of Air Asia on 5 February.

Being a reliable air lines for middle class travellers, Air Asia plans to extend flights for convenience of passengers from Myanmar and Cambodia, the press release said. “Number of passengers rises in developing countries to cooperate with the press council for development of media, effectiveness of measures of the press council on ethical issues and effectiveness of news release of the government, the deputy minister added.

The Ministry of Information and the press council is now cooperating for the media law, the deputy minister said.

The deputy minister said that the media has been permitted to cover news in accordance with the law and legal action will not be taken against journalists if they abide by the law and ethic code of the press council.

The session voted against the motion.

MNA

Ais Asia to extend daily flights in 2015

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MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw session goes on for twelfth day

Nay Pyi Taw, 6 Feb — Amyotha Hluttaw session continued for twelfth day on Friday, with submission of a report and two proposals and five questions that were answered.

On a question whether a plan for establishment of pine forests to prevent deforestation in Chin State through cooperation between the Ministry of U Steven Tha Beik of Chin State Constitution No (4), Deputy Minister U Aye Myint Minng revealed a plan to commercially establish 100-acre pine plantations funded by the Union budget and set up community forest plantations at 10 villages in Chin State with the use of the funds of the state government in 2015-2016 FY.

The ministry will cooperate with UN agencies and international organizations if it receives requests from them, the deputy minister added.

On a question raised by U Hla Swe of Magway Region Constitution No (12) asking how to realize the transformation of Red Cross Society, Deputy Minister Dr Win Myint said that a directive to increase membership of region/state/district Red Cross Society supervisory committee with two more town warders each until 31 December 2015 was released.

During the session, U Myo Myint of Mandalay Region Constituency No (6) submitted a motion calling for implementation of projects that can guarantee equality of having access to electricity in the country. Amyotha Hluttaw decided to discuss the proposal.

MNA

Piythu Hluttaw

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MNA
Myanmar, Republic of Korea to promote bilateral relations

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham received Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Ri Kil Song and party of the Republic of Korea at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, on Friday.

They discussed promotion of bilateral relations, and cooperation in trade, economy and international community.

Also present at the meeting were deputy ministers Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun, U Thant Kyaw and Dr San Lwin and officials. —MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets ROK Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann held talks with Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Ri Kil Song and party of the Republic of Korea at Pyithu Hluttaw Hall, here, on Friday.

Also present at the call were Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee U Hla Myint Oo and ROK Ambassador Mr Kim Sok Chol.

The EU reaffirms... (from page 1)

situation closely throughout 2015 in order to track potential new unmet needs that may arise from the evolving situation in this period of transition”.

During his stay, Mr. De Brouwer visited Rakhine state, in order to take stock of the situation faced by populations who were displaced by inter-communal violence in 2012. After exchanging with both communities, he expressed concern about the prevailing ethnic segregation, and the deterioration of living conditions in the camps. “These camps were meant to be temporary, but as we are now facing a protracted displacement, they urgently need to be refurbished”, he explained.

“The absence of freedom of movement for the Rohingya minority is also of particular concern, as it has serious implications both on livelihood opportunities for members of the community, and on any potential for reconciliation”, he added.

While in Sittwe, the Director also joined the EU Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. Roland Kobia, in attending the launch of an EU-funded education initiative for the children of Rakhine. Implemented by the Lutheran World Federation, this project will continue and expand the work initiated last year through ECHO’s Children of Peace Initiative, dedicated to bringing education to children affected by conflicts around the world.

Through its Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), the European Commission has been funding relief programs in Myanmar for over 20 years, providing a total of €191 million worth of humanitarian assistance to victims of man-made and natural disasters, including €129 million for the year 2015.

ECHO-funded operations presently focus on channelling relief to people displaced by the Kachin conflict, and those affected by the inter-communal violence which erupted in Rakhine State in 2012. Sources of intervention include food and non-food items, health care, nutrition, water and sanitation, livelihoods, coordination, education and protection.

In order to build up the resilience of communities regularly affected by natural disasters, ECHO has also allocated €49.9 million since 2010 to support community disaster preparedness projects in coastal flood-prone areas and for urban earthquake risks measures.

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker holds talks with New Zealand Ambassador

Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint received New Zealand Ambassador Mr Bruce Shepherd at the hall of Amyotha Hluttaw, here, on Friday.

They discussed further strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries.

Also present at the call were Deputy Speaker U Mya Nyein, chairman of Amyotha Hluttaw committees and officials of the Amyotha Hluttaw.

Resumption of four-party talks coordinated

Deputy Minister for Education U Thant Shin and Dr Thein Lwin of National Network for Education Reform-NNER discussed participation for representatives of the government, Hluttaw, NNER and democracy education movement leading committee students in the meeting. On 9 February, the coordination meeting will focus on venue for the four-party talks and agenda.

It was also attended by Rector of Yangon University of Education Dr Aung Min and Daw Thu Thu Mar of NNER. —MNA

Deputy Minister for Education U Thant Shin meets Dr Thein Lwin of NNER at coordination meeting. —MNA
Large Buddha image emerges while renovating ancient pagoda

MOHNIN, 6 Feb—A large Buddha image was found in a damaged pagoda in the precinct of monastery in Sahtar Village, Mohnin Township, Kachin State, in the last week of January, members of the pagoda renovation committee told media. The Buddha image is about 13 feet high. Even older persons of above 90 years old in the village cannot tell any story about the Buddha image. So, the committee supervises digging of image carefully to be able to seek any evidences from the images.—GGLNM-001

MMA (Central) assigns duty to executive committee of Tatkon Township Music Association

TATKON, 6 Feb—The formation for executive committees of Tatkon Township Music Association was held at the hall of Township General Administration Department on 3 February.

Chairman of Myanmar Music Association (Central) U Tin Oo Lay, Joint Secretary U Thein Myint Hlaing of the association and Township Administrator U Kan Saw Hlaing presided over the formation of the association.

The chairman and officials explained future tasks of the association and improvement of Myanmar music to meet international standard.

MOGE laying natural gas pipelines

NAW PYI TAW, 6 Feb—Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy is laying 35 miles long and 30 inches diameter natural gas pipeline from Ywama natural gas control station to Thakaya natural gas control station.

The pipeline will supply natural gas to gas turbines and power plants for generating electricity for the people. The pipelines are laid in the three feet deep ground not to harm the environment and to ensure safety.

Technicians from private companies are conducting non destructive testing for pipeline connections, installation of cathodic protection system and nitrogen purging services.

Up to 1 February, they have completed 31.3 percent of testing works.—MOGE

INRD issues citizenship scrutiny cards to locals

DAWEI, 6 Feb—Staff Officer U Maung Maung and staff of Launglon Township Immigration and National Registration Department and staff together with staff of Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) issued citizenship scrutiny cards and household registration certificates to local people at the monastery in Maungmagan Village, Launglon Township, Taninthayi Region, on 2 and 3 February.

Taninthayi Region Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding Dr Win Aung and Head of Dawei District Immigration and National Registration Department Deputy Director U Yin Htwe supervised issuance of the CSC to the local people.

The minister and officials presented citizenship scrutiny cards to 277 local people from 24 households.

Po Shwe Than (Dawei)

Mandalay Region government honours victorious athletes

MANDALAY, 6 Feb — A ceremony to honour victorious athletes in the 17th Asian Games, 7th ASEAN Paralympic Games, Asian Youth Chess Championship, SEA Vovinam (Ban- do) Championship and Inter-Region/State sports competitions was held at the National Theatre in Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay, on 4 February.

Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint said that the government places emphasis on improvement of sports standards of the nation. He urged victorious athletes and sports teams to maintain their achievements and beef up their efforts in taking training systematically.

Managers and coaches of victorious teams handed over their championship trophies to the chief minister.

The speaker of the region Hluttaw, region ministers and officials presented cash awards to prize winning athletes who bagged 192 medals in the international and internal sports competitions.

The chief minister and party enjoyed skill demonstrations in respective sports events.

Mandalay Region government

ChaungU Township IPRD refreshes skills of village librarians

CHAUNGU, 6 Feb — The village librarian multiplier course concluded at the hall of Township General Administration Department in ChaungU Township, Sagaing Region, on 4 February.

Chairman of Township Management Committee U Hla Thein made a concluding remark.

The chairman presented first and second prizes to Ma Khang Khang Thwe Moe of Kotuanggan Village and U Aung Kyaw Kyaw Zaw of Thanbingan Village. Member of Sagaing Region Libraries Foundation member U Aye Myint awarded third prizes to Daw San San Win of Myothit Ward and Ma Cherry Myint of Butar Village.

Head of Township Information and Public Relations Department Daw Yu Yu Win presented certificates to trainees.

Township IPRD
**Mandalay Mayor presents certificates of honour, cash assistance to senior citizens**

Mandalay, 6 Feb—

Certificates of honour of the President and K200,000 as cash assistance were presented to senior citizens of above 100 years old.

**Vice Mayor inspects cultivation of vegetables, sanitation at staff quarters**

Nay Pyi Taw, 6 Feb—

Vice Mayor of Nay Pyi Taw U Than Kyaw Htoo and deputy director-general U Soe Win of Administration Department inspected sanitation tasks inside and outside staff quarters of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee and cultivation tasks on 4 February.

The vice mayor instructed officials to supervise sanitation of staff quarters, carry out proper flow of water at drains and cultivate perennial and seasonal crops.—*Township IPRD*

**Launching solar power, water supply hails Union Day**

Kyaunggon, 6 Feb—

As a gesture of hailing the 68th Anniversary Union Day, a ceremony to launch installation of solar lamps and a tube-well was held in Thayetcaung Village in Kyaunggon Village, Ayeyawady Region, on 4 February.

Deputy Speaker of Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw Dr Htein Win, Township Administrator U Aung Kyaw Hsan and Chairman of Township Development Affairs Supporting Committee U Tin Maung formally launched the solar lamps and tube-well.

The deputy speaker switched on the solar power supply for 83 houses.

Head of Township Rural Development Department U Myint Aung explained rural development tasks.

A total of 83 households are now enjoying electricity and water.—*Township IPRD*

**World professionals to perform juggling skills for the first time**

By Khin Yadana; Photo: May Oo Moe

Yangon, 6 Feb—The world famous juggling festival will be held for the first time free of charge at parks and hotels in Yangon city from 9 to 15 February.

“We invited international professionals for showing their excellent juggling skills to the people. I think the show will be greater attractions for local circus professionals and enthusiasts,” Ko Myo Win of Smile Education, manager of the show, told media.

The professionals will give training to staff at Inya Lake Hotel on 9 February and at Sule Shangri-La Hotel on 10 February.

At 6.30 pm on 11 February, international professionals will show off their skills in juggling at Kandawgyi Karaweik Garden.

They have plans to perform their juggling skills at the busy places in Yangon City on 12 February, Franch Culture Department on 13 February, and Kandawgyi and Mahabandoola Park on 14 February.

“They are in a group formed with 25 professionals from Europe, North America, Asia and Pacific region. They will perform their skills together with some Myanmar Chinlone professionals, comedians Joker and Thura Thein.”
Regional

E Timor Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao tenders resignation

JAKARTA, 6 Feb — East Timor’s Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao has tendered his resignation, a government press statement said on Friday.

The statement issued by Gusmao’s office confirmed that he “has sent his letter of resignation from the post of prime minister to the president,” namely Taur Matan Ruak.

“It is now for the president of the republic to consider and respond to the letter of resignation,” it added.

Kyodo News

Japanese, Chinese, South Korea eye foreign ministerial talks in March

Tokyo, China, S Korea to hold foreign minister meeting in late March

Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se are planning to hold a foreign ministerial meeting in late March in Seoul, Japanese government sources said on Friday.

The meeting, which would be the first since April 2012, is expected to set the stage for a trilateral summit involving Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and South Korean President Park Geun-hye.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se are planning to hold a foreign ministerial meeting in late March.

Kyodo News

Philippines Aquino faces growing political storm over deadly raid

Philippines President Benigno Aquino delivers a speech in front of the caskets of the slain members of the Special Action Force (SAF) who were killed in Sunday’s clash with Muslim rebels, during a service inside a police headquarters in Taguig city, south of Manila on 30 Jan, 2015. — Reuters

Philippine police chief Director General Jesus Corneliños and three other top police officials have resigned following deadly clashes with Muslim rebels that killed 17 SAF members.

The SAF, a paramilitary special forces unit, has been at the center of a corruption and rights abuses scandal.

Aquino has faced growing pressure over the SAF’s role in the anti-terrorism campaign, with critics blaming the SAF for the deaths of civilians.

The SAF is responsible for countering Muslim rebels in the southern Philippines, where the conflict has been ongoing for decades.

Aquino has ordered an investigation into the deaths and has promised to take action against those responsible.

S Korea offers to lift sanctions on DPRK if talks resume

SEOUL, 6 Feb — South Korea’s top policymaker on inter-Korean affairs said on Friday that the country could lift sanctions against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) if inter-Korean talks are resumed.

“I think it could be an opportunity to lift the 24 May measures if south-north talks are held,” Unification Minister Ryoo Kihl-jae told a lecture in Seoul.

“Economic cooperation between the two Koreas is not allowed due to the 24 May sanctions, and the government has already studied on (the lifting of the sanctions),” Ryoo said.

The 24 May sanctions, which banned all inter-Korean cooperation except for the Kaesong industrial complex, were imposed by South Korea in 2010 after a South Korean Navy corvette sank in waters off the disputed western sea border.

South Korea said it was caused by a DPRK torpedo attack, but Pyongyang denied its involvement.

The DPRK cited the lifting of the sanctions as one of its preconditions for resuming inter-Korean dialogues.

Ryoo stressed that the two Koreas should meet for talks, saying South Korea should continue to persuade the DPRK to keep its promises.

Kyodo News

Japan, China, S Korea eye foreign ministerial talks in March

The ministers are also expected to exchange views on North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs and anti-terrorism measures in the wake of the recent killing of two Japanese men taken hostage by the Islamic State militant group, they said.

Asked about the envisaged meeting, Kishida told reporters on Friday that a specific date “has yet to be decided,” and that he expects South Korea, which currently chairs the trilateral framework, to arrange the meeting in collaboration with Japan and China.

Kyodo News
German, French leaders head for Moscow to press for Ukraine peace

Moscow/Kiev, 6 Feb — The leaders of Germany and France are expected to take peace proposals to Moscow on Friday on the second leg of a dramatic initiative to end a conflict in Ukraine that has killed more than 5,000 people and driven Russia-West relations to new lows.

The planned trip by Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Francois Hollande to see Russia’s Vladimir Putin on Friday evening follows five hours of late-night talks with Ukrainian leader Petro Poroshenko in snow-bound Kiev on Thursday.

Back in their respective capitals in the east, Hollande called the talks “the first step”, while Merkel said it was unclear whether the meeting in Moscow would secure a ceasefire.

Their initiative follows fierce fighting and territorial gains in eastern Ukraine by Russian-backed separatists since a peace blueprint was agreed in Belarus in September.

The Ukrainian military reported that two more soldiers had been killed in the past 24 hours in the east, with 26 wounded.

The growing military pressure has shaken the Ukrainian economy and driven a debate over the possibility of the United States providing Kiev’s hard-pressed army with arms.

Merkel said she and Hollande were not on the road as neutral mediators but were representing European interests. “These interests are peace, maintaining Europe’s peaceful order.”

A statement on Poroshenko’s website said the sides had expressed the hope that “Russia had an interest in” a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

For Moscow’s part, Russia’s ambassador to France Alexander Orlov told Europe 1 radio there was an urgent need to avoid war. “I wouldn’t say it’s a last chance meeting, but it’s not far off,” he said. Merkel’s spokesman Steffen Seibert said there “was no sign whatsoever” of a breakthrough so far.

The Ukrainian presidential statement said he and the German, and French leaders had called for a quick ceasefire, the withdrawal of foreign forces from Ukraine, the pull-back of heavy weapons and equipment, the closure of the border and the release of all prisoners.

On the ground, the rebels are advancing on a railway hub held by Ukrainian troops, who are almost encircled.

A collapse in Ukraine’s hryvnia currency further highlighted the importance of reaching a deal. It lost nearly a third of its value on Thursday after the central bank halted daily auctions at which it sold hard currency to banks.

Though details of the peace deal were under wraps, much might depend on whether Ukraine is being pressed to acknowledge existing front lines as the new negotiating reality — and whether Kiev would accept this.

German government sources said on Thursday the key problem for resuming peace talks was that current front lines no longer tally with what was agreed at talks in Minsk, Belarus, last year.

One idea was that a new attempt at a ceasefire should take in the current front lines, which reflect rebel gains, without Kiev having to give up its claim to these areas as part of the Ukrainian state. German government sources continued to say however on Friday that the Minsk talks last September were still the basis for negotiations — the view also of Kiev, France and the United States.

Reuters

G-20 likely to discuss preventing funding of terrorism

Tokyo, 6 Feb — Finance chiefs of the Group of 20 economies are likely to discuss how to prevent the funding of terrorism at their two-day meeting starting on Monday in Istanbul, Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso said on Friday.

“Two Japanese people became victims. Terrorists cannot act without funds,” Aso, who is also deputy prime minister, said at a Press conference, referring to the recent murder of two Japanese by the Islamic State militant group.

At the G-20 gathering, Japan will also thank countries in the Middle East and its vicinity such as Turkey, the host of the meeting, for their support in dealing with the hostage crisis, Aso said. As for macroeconomic issues, Aso said he will tell G-20 nations that Japan’s economy has been recovering on the back of its “Abenomics” policy mix, centering on drastic monetary easing and massive fiscal spending.

He said he will also explain that Japan has been making efforts to restore its fiscal health, the worst among major industrialized economies.

Aso is to attend the G-20 gathering along with Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda.—Kyodo News

Taipei plane black boxes reveal attempts to regain thrust

Taipei, 6 Feb — A twin-engined TransAsia plane that crashed into a river in Taipei, killing 35 people, failed to produce enough thrust after take-off, authorities said on Friday, revealing that one apparently functioning engine was turned off and restarted.

The almost-new turboprop ATR 72-600 was unable to regain power in time after the engine was turned back on, Aviation Safety Council officials told a news briefing.

The plane, which can fly on one engine, was carrying 58 passengers and crew when it lurched nose-up between buildings, clipped an overpass and a taxi with one of its wings and then crashed upside down into a shallow river on Wednesday. Fifteen people survived.

The blackbox data and voice recorders showed that the plane was still operating, but neither engine produced power.

The aircraft could fly with one engine. The plane was powered by two Pratt & Whitney PW127M engines. Pratt & Whitney is part of United Technologies.

A fuller report on the crash will be available in next 30 days, with a final report expected in the next three to six months.

The pilot, 42-year-old Liao Chien-tsung, has been praised by Taipei’s mayor for steering the plane between apartment blocks and commercial buildings before directing the stalled aircraft in a river.

The bodies of Liao and his co-pilot were retrieved from the cockpit, with their legs badly broken, investigators said.

“They were still trying to save this aircraft until the last minute,” media quoted unidentified prosecutors involved in the crash investigation as saying.

Eight people are still missing. Aviation officials have said they have not given up hope of finding them.

The plane took off from Taipei’s downtown Songshan airport and was bound for the Taipei island of Kinmen. Among those on board were 31 tourists from China, mainly from the southwestern city of Xiamen.

A German regulator has ordered TransAsia and Uni Air, a subsidiary of EVA Airways Corp, to conduct engine and fuel system checks on the remaining 22 ATR aircraft it still operate.

The crash was the latest in a string of Asian air disasters.

Indonesia has expanded its search for bodies of AirAsia Flight QZ8501 that crashed into the Java Sea in December, killing all 162 people on board.

After a lull in search and recovery efforts, more bodies and wreckage were found in the past few days off the coast of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. A total of 96 bodies have been found.

Reuters

Rescuers look on as part of the wreckage of TransAsia Airways plane Flight GE235 is lifted after it crash landed into a river, in New Taipei City, on 5 Feb, 2015.—Reuters

Saturday, 7 February, 2015
Saturday, 7 February, 2015

The same old recurring problems hinder progress of society

By Myint Win Thein

Every society has its own problems, but some societies successfully overcome them while others still struggle with them. Those societies that successfully overcome their problems and have come to solve new ones, attain a higher degree of achievement whenever they deal with a new problem. Those societies that are struggling are found to be encountering the same old recurring problems they failed to solve in the past.

It is necessary for a society to solve one problem after another for it will cease to be a society with the society whether they are new ones or old unresolved recurring ones. It is obvious that problems are troublesome as long as they have not been solved. That is why the society is challenged by the same problem again and again in its history and although it repeatedly claims it has left it behind forever, the problems are repeatedly returning.

A problem must be solved once and for all as for soci-ety cannot escape them. As history has shown, blaming others for problems will not help either as the same old problems will still recur again in the same way as before. It is important that a society should deal with problems as soon as they occur.

Property is not for Investment

By San Shwe Aung

Since 2012 property prices in Myanmar have sky-rocketed beyond the reaches of ordinary families. It has been known widely domesti- cally as well as international- ly that one square foot of prime land costs the same as or even more than that of in New York. It is very bad news for most of ordinary hardworking simple, peace-loving Myanmar families. Cost of a plot in sub-urban area is now more than sever-al hundred million Kyats and most families do not afford to buy. Their average in- come is 1.2 to 2.4 million Kyats per year. Many earn even less than that salary or income bracket. Many fam- ilies have to work very hard to make ends meet and to solve daily living, education, health and other social responsibilities. Why have the land, flats, and other residential property prices gone up months after months since 2012? Here are many schools of thoughts and opinions regarding the caus-es and reason. However, it is apparent that there are sever-al or many reasons. Whatev-er are the causes and/or the reasons for the skyrocketing prices of properties in Myan- mar, this is crucial for the Government to cool down the prices by introducing various measures. Price in- creases does not confine only to the big cities and rural areas but other commercial lands such as industrial es- tate, agriculture, livestock, plantation and land for the special economic zones.

Many potential foreign investors from many countries around the world have flocked into Myanmar since the promulgation of Foreign Investment Law in 2012. Many have left with disap-pointment on the incredibly high land prices and confu-sion related to land disputes. As a result Myanmar has lost initial opportunities for floods of investment as well as tax revenue. One of the high profile examples is Samsung’s thwarted plan for building modern mobile phone handsets arguably due to very expensive land and building costs. They are said to have moved the investment to Vietnam instead.

One of the widely known causes of exponential increase in property prices is: (a) Air pollution. In other words rich and well connected people have bought lands, flats, condo-minium and other properties to make quick profit in future selling. Some areas call them “Investment”. But it is very bad investment for the ma-jority of the national people. While it is understandable that people have rights to make business investments to ensure their future. One thing that should be clear control measure by the Government since land speculation is hin- dering the economic pro-gress, social development, employment and most impor-tantly severely affecting the efforts for the reduction of poverty in our country. Due to high cost of residen-tial property poor people cannot afford for a decent homes but to become illegal dwellers by trespassing pri- vate or public properties. We are almost daily witnessing in the media the clashes be- tween the authorities and il-legal dwellers.

The answers will of course lie in the authority of the Government. Several measure to size the fly away and return some property prices that have been intro-duced by the Government notably by taxation. Howev-er, it is very important to stop by introducing laws & regu-lations to discourage the rich who are most harm-fully investing in the prop-erty sector. On the other hand rich people have alternate opportunities to in-vest their money in other areas like: (b) painting benefits (neces-sary to the people of Myan-mar) including stock ex-change.

The author of this article is an engineer living in Yangon.

Hazards of smoking

The following is the reproduction of an article from The Guardian Daily issued on 20 December 1987.—Ed

By Kyaw Zan Hla

I am grateful to my par-ents simply because they brought me up in a big fam-ily of non-smokers. Now I am 33. However, I have never touched even a chee-root and I am proud of it.

That is why, whenever I see young school children smoke cigarettes, I can not help but scolding them or pointing out the se-rious consequences of smoking. Actually, smoking, the undesirable habit, can cause dire effects.

In this regards, medical experts tried to emphasize that smoking is probably the biggest single preventa-ble cause of ill health in the world, according to a book-let issued by the Depart-ment of Health in South A-frica.

The smoker breathes in a dangerous gas, carbon di-oxide, reducing the oxygen taken to the body cells. Ciga-rette smoke slows down and later stops the action of the tiny hairs, known as cili-a, that line the bronchial tubes and act as brushes to sweep dirt and mucous ac-cumulated in the lungs, causing coughing.

Eventually, the bronchial tube may become swol-len and the person develops chronic bronchitis. Moreo-ver, air sacs become fragile and burst more easily in smokers and if a number of the air sacs burst, the smok-er develops emphysema. Chronic breathless is a symptom of these diseases.

Nicotine, found in to-bacco, makes the heart beat faster and the blood vessels constrict. It also causes a smoker to become addicted to tobacco.

It is also learned that cigarette smokers are nine times more likely to get lung cancer than non-smok-ers. The risk is less for pipe or cigar smokers. The more cigarettes that are smoked and the earlier a person starts smoking the more likely he is to suffer from the lung cancer and heart disease.

Medical experts main-tain that a smoker is nearly twice as likely to have heart attack as a non-smoker.

Like people under 45 years of age, smokers are 16 times more likely to suffer from diseases of the heart and the blood vessels. Also other diseases more common in smokers are cancer of the bladder, cancer of the mouth and voice box. In ad-dition, smoking dulls the senses of taste and smell, and damages the liver.

Chronic bronchitis. Moreover, the smoker breathes in a dangerous gas, carbon di-oxide, reducing the oxygen taken to the body cells. Cigarette smoke slows down and later stops the action of the tiny hairs, known as cilia, that line the bronchial tubes and act as brushes to sweep dirt and mucous accumu-lated in the lungs, causing coughing.

Eventually, the bronchial tube may become swollen and the person develops chronic bronchitis. Moreover, air sacs become fragile and burst more easily in smokers and if a number of the air sacs burst, the smoker develops emphysema. Chronic breathlessness is a symptom of these diseases.

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Medical experts maintain that a smoker is nearly twice as likely to have heart attack as a non-smoker.

The medical experts also pointed out to children that smoking is not glamorous nor is it grown up to tough behavior. It is responsi-ble for all health, death and damage and is a habit that once started is difficult to stop or in other words it is easy to acquire, but hard to quit.

Now, some nations in the world spotted on smokers and took steps to reduce smoking. They have developed a per-fume using Chinese herbal medicine which they said that the perfumed was tested on 100 people and found to be 98 percent effective in helping smokers kick the habit.

The perfume is only 20 yuan (5.40 US dollars) per bottle. The World Health Or-ganization held its annual conference on 15th May this year and altogether deleg-ates from 166 Nations at- tended. A resolution was promul-gated to mark May 7, 1988 as “World No Smoking Day”, urging all nations to prohib-it and to cease smoking and selling all forms of tobacco on that very date.

According to a recent report, smoking was banned in Belgium with a New Law introduced with effect from 1.9.87 for smokers who light up in public building were fined 350 US dollars. However, the Law did not stop us. As history has shown, blaming others for problems will not help either as the same old problems will still recur again in the same way as before. It is important that a society should deal with problems as soon as they occur.

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The author of this article is an engineer living in Yangon.
By Sayar Mya

(Continued from yesterday)

Gifted Education Program in Singapore

The “Gifted Education Program” (GEP) was set up by the Ministry of Education in 1984 to cater to intellectually gifted students. This program aims to develop gifted children to their top potential and it places a special emphasis on higher-order thinking and creative thought.

There are currently 9 “primary schools” offering the Gifted Education Program. (1) Anglo-Chinese School (Boys):; (2) Raffles Girls’ Primary School; (3) Raffles Institution Primary; (4) Nan Hua Primary School; (5) Nan- yang Primary School; (6) St. Hilda’s Primary School; (7) Tao Nan School; (8) St. Hilda’s Pri- mary School; (9) Raf- fles Girls’ Primary School.

The “Secondary School Gifted Education Program” (SSGEP) was continued at the end of 2008 as more students take the Integrated Program (IP). At that juncture, this has been replaced by a “School- Based Gifted Education” program.

Secondary Education in Singapore

Based on results of the PSLE, students are placed in different secondary education tracks or streams. They are “Special”, “Express”, “Normal (Academic)”, or “Normal (Technical)”. Singapore students are able to attend international schools on the island without MOE permission.

“Special” and “Express” are four-year courses leading up to the Singapore-Cambridge GCE “O” Level examination. The dif- ference between these two courses is that in the “Special” stream, students take ‘Higher Mother Tongue’ (available for Standard Mandarin, Malay and Tamil only) instead of ‘Mother Tongue’.

A pass in the Higher Mother Tongue ‘O’ Level Examination constitutes the fulfillment of the Mother Tongue requirement in Sin- gapore. “Higher Mother Tongue” Students will have to go through one more year of study in their Mother Tongue after their ‘O’ Levels to take the ‘A’ Level H1 Mother Tongue Examination and fulfill the MOE’s requirement.

A foreign language, either French, German, Japanese or Spanish can be taken in addition to the mother tongue or can replace it. This is especially popular with students who are struggling with their mother tongue or Spanish or students returning from abroad.

Non-Chinese students may also study Standard Mandarin and non-Malay students Malay as a third language. This program is known as CSP (Chinese Special Program) and MSP (Maly Special Program). Mother Tongue teachers conduct these lessons in school after usual hours.

The Ministry of Educa- tion Language Centre (MOELC) provides free language education for other additional languages that other schools may not cov- er, and provides the bulk of such education, admitting more than 15,000 students each year.

“Normal” is a four- year course leading up to a Normal-level (N-level) exam, with the possibility of a fifth year following either by an O-level. Normal is split into “Normal (Academic)” and “Normal (Technical)”.

“Normal (Technical)”, students take subjects of a more technical nature, such as Design and Technology, while in “Normal (Academic)” students take subjects such as Mathematics and English.

Centralized Institute in Singapore

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Centralized Institutes

Centralized Institutes in Singapore provide 3-year diplo- ma courses. They accept students based on their GCE “O” Level, GCE “A” Level or Institute of Technical Edu- cation (ITE) results. Unlike polytechnics, in some other countries, they do not offer degree courses.

Polytechnics offer a wide range of courses in various fields, including en- gineering, architecture, accountancy, tourism and hospitality management, mass communications, dig- ital media and biotechnology. There are also special- ized courses in marine engineering, naval studies, nursing, and optom- etry. They provide a more industry-oriented education as an alter- native to junior colleges for post-secondary studies. About 40% of each Secondary 4 cohort would enroll in Polytechnics.

Graduates of poly-technics with good grades can continue to pursue fur- ther tertiary education at the universities, and many overseas universities, nota- ble those in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, give exemptions for modules completed in Polytechnic.

Polytechnics have also begun to accept A-level graduates from many foreign universities to provide their graduates a chance to study nichi Uni- versity Courses locally. For example, Ngie Ann Poly- technic has engaged with Chapman University in the US to provide a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Pro- ducing for graduates of the School’s Film and Media Studies department.

Technical Engineering Diploma (TED) (from 2007)

There are other skills courses through which intermediate courses conducted jointly by ITE and industrial companies.

Teacher and Principal Quality

While polytechnics recruit its teachers from the top third of high school graduates. Each year, Singapore calcu- lates the number of teachers it will need, and opens only that many spots in the training programs.

On average, only one out of eight applicants for admission to their teacher Certification programs is ac- cepted, and that only after a grueling application process. Those who are accept- ed have typically not only taken Singapore’s A-level exams (the most challeng- ing of all the exams available) for Singaporean students) but will have scored at least in the middle of the score range, a very high level of accomplishment.

The many other steps in the application process include tough panel inter- views that focus on the per- sonal attributes that make for a good teacher, as well as intensive reviews of their academic record and their contributions to their school and community. Teaching in Singapore is highly re- fined in Singapore, not simply because it is part of the Confucian culture to value teachers, but because everyone knows how hard it is to become a teacher and everyone else knows that Singapore’s teachers have year in and year out achieved the top marks in subjects who are among the world’s highest achievers.

While teachers’ base salaries are not particularly high compared to many oth- er top-performing countries, they are high enough to make compensation an un- important consideration for students weighing teaching against other professions as they make their career choices.

Singapore also has a system of generous bonuses that boost teachers’ salaries by several thousands over the course of their careers. The bonuses are based on Singapore’s rather sophis- ticated teacher appraisal system in which teachers are evaluated individually in 16 areas, including in the con- tributions they make to the school and community.

This teaching compet- ition model forms the bedrock of Singapore’s “Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS)”. Recognizing that the quality of its teaching force is vital to its success, the Ministry of Education developed this system to promote increasingly high levels of performance, even for teachers who are al- ready excellent.

Ministry officials re- sponsible for hiring and school leaders responsible for leading teachers use the complex model in conjunction with the achieve- ment of performance goals at each stage of employ- ment to the followings.

(1) Hire and train aspiring teachers;
(2) Set annual competency goal tar- gets;
(3) Evaluate competency levels throughout the year;
(4) Match each teacher to a career path; and
(5) Determine annual bon- uses.

Conclusion

The writer of this artic- le has the pleasure and hon- or to present “Education in Singapore: Pre-school Playgroup to Junior College” to the esteemed and valued readers of the Global New Light of Myanmar and also for the interested persons in the field of edu- cation in Myanmar. (Concluded)
US pressing Cuba to restore diplomatic ties before April

WASHINGTON, Feb 9 — The United States is pressing Cuba to quickly establish an official embassy in Washington by April, US officials told Reuters, despite the Communist island’s demand that it first be removed from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism.

A refusal by Cuba to allow the United States to quickly establish an official embassy for the first time in half a century could complicate talks between the Cold War foes, reflecting enduring mistrust as they move to end decades of confrontation. Striking Cuba from the terrorism list could take until June or longer, although the White House is pushing officials to move quickly, said two US officials with direct knowledge of the State Department’s review to take Cuba off the list.

Washington is eager to re-establish diplomatic ties before a regional summit on Thursday, before roaring Islamic State targets in Syria and Iraq, Reuters said.

India says 11 nurses rescued in Iraq

NEW DELHI, Feb 9 — India said on Friday that 11 Indian nurses being held in the war-torn Iraqi city of Kirkuk, have been handed over to Indian officials in the Kurdish city of Irbil.

“Eleven Indian nurses from Kerala, evacuated from Kirkuk, to return home from Irbil on 7 February,” ministry spokesperson Syed Akbaruddin tweeted.

In July, 46 Indian nurses, who were working at a hospital in the northern city of Tikrit and kidnapped by ISIS militants, were freed and returned to India.

Jordhan military jets pound IS as king comforts pilot’s family

AMMAN, Feb 6 — Jordanian fighter jets pounded Islamic State targets in Syria on Thursday, before roaring over the hometown of the pilot killed by the militants, while King Abdullah consoled the victim’s family.

A statement from the Jordanian armed forces said tens of jets were deployed in the attacks, which destroyed ammunitions depots and training camps run by the Islamic State. Witnesses overheard the monarch telling the pilot’s father the planes were returning from the militant-held city of Raqqa.

The show of force came two days after the ultra-hardline Islamic State released a video showing captured Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasaesbeh being burned alive in a cage as masked militants in camouflage uniforms looked on.

“It’s actually the beginning of our retaliation over this horrific and brutal murder of our brave young pilot, but it’s not the beginning of our fight against terrorism and extremism,” Jordan’s Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh said in an interview with CNN later on Thursday.

State television aired footage of fighter jets taking off to carry out the raids. It later broadcast footage of the actual bombing before the jets returned safely to Jordan.

Several men and women were shown writing Koranic verses and anti-Islamic State slogans on what appeared to be bombs used in the attacks.

“We’re going after them with everything that we have,” Judeh said.

US military aircraft joined the mission to provide intelligence, surveillance as well as reconnaissance and targeting support, a US official told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The official also said the strikes focussed on multiple targets around Raqqa, Islamic State commanders briefed King Abdullah after the missions about the details of the strikes, state television said.

The monarch has vowed to avenge Kasaesbeh’s killing and ordered commanders to prepare for a stepped-up military role in the US-led coalition against the group.

But many Jordanians fear being dragged into a conflict that could trigger a backlash by hardline militants inside the kingdom.

Jordan is a major US ally under a 50-year military alliance with the United States, and has hosted US troops during operations that led to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The country is also home to hundreds of US military trainers bolstering defenses at the Syrian and Iraqi borders and is determined to keep the jihadists in Syria away from its frontiers.

The king, wearing a traditional Arab headgear, was met by cheering crowds with cries of “Long live his majesty the king, long live the king,” in traditional Bedouin chanting.

Thousands of Jordanians flocked to pay their respects. The region’s influential tribes form an important pillar of support for the Hashemite monarchy and supply the army and security forces with manpower.

“You are a wise monarch. These criminals violated the rules of war in Islam and they have no humanity. Even humanity disowns them,” Safi Kasaesbeh, father of the pilot, told the king.

The Jordanian monarch has vowed that the pilot’s death, which has stirred nationalist fervour across the country, will bring severe retaliation against Islamic State.
Syrian air strikes kill 82 after rebel rocket attack

BEIRUT, 6 Feb — Syrian air force strikes killed 82 people in an opposition district outside Damascus following rocket attacks by rebels that hit the government-controlled centre of the capital, a monitoring group said on Friday.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war in Syria, said the air force conducted 60 strikes on the Eastern Ghouta district on Thursday and into Friday. Eighteen children and 11 fighters were among the dead, it said.

High death tolls from air attacks are not rare but the Observatory said the focussed barrage was a response to rocket attacks by Islam Army insurgents on Thursday, which killed 10 people in Damascus. Syria’s state news agency SANA said on Friday that the army had “eliminated scores of terrorists, the majority of them from the so-called ‘Islam Army’ organization in the villages of Eastern Ghouta in the Damascus countryside.”

It said the army had also carried out a series of strikes in the districts of Jobar, and special operations in Zamalka and Erbin.

The Observatory said 26 people were also killed in insurgent-held areas of Aleppo on Thursday.

A message on Thursday on a Twitter account thought to belong to Islam Army chief Zahran Alloush said Thursday’s rocket attack was revenge for what the Syrian military had done to Eastern Ghouta. Alloush described Damascus as a “military zone” and said his group would respond to any air force strikes.

Islam Army was formed by a merger of rebel factions in 2013 and has been killed since 2011 in Syria’s civil war, which started with peaceful protests in late 2011 that turned violent after Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s government responded with violence.

Egypt, Norway urge donors to pay $5.4 billion aid pledged for Gaza

OSLO, 6 Feb — Egypt and Norway urged donors on Thursday to increase aid for the Palestinians after Israeli shelling during a 50-day conflict last summer, east of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on 27 Jan, 2015. —Reuters

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said the two felt it had become necessary to remind donors who had promised to help rebuild Gaza that they “should fulfill their obligations in this regard.”

“No one has said to us that they’re not committed to what they have pledged, but also due to oil price and other issues in the Gulf, there has been a bit of a lingering,” Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende told a news conference.

The two ministers, after a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Oslo, did not single out any nations for criticism nor say how much of the $5.4 billion pledged had reached the Palestinians.” — Reuters
Heavy fighting in Libya’s Benghazi as army pushes to take port

BENGHAZI, (Libya), 6 Feb — Clashes erupted in the centre of Libya’s main eastern city Benghazi on Thursday as pro-government forces pushed to take the port district from Islamists, militants, and seven soldiers were killed, witnesses and military officials said.

The fighting comes after a wider struggle in the oil-producing North African state where two governments and parliaments, allied to rival armed groups, are vying for control almost four years after Muammar Gaddafi fell to an armed uprising.

Backed by forces led by General Khalifa Haftar, army special forces in mid-October launched an offensive against Islamists in Benghazi, expelling them from the airport area and from several camps the army had lost during the summer. Army forces have been trying to retake the port area and two other districts where pro-government forces say fighters from the militant Islamist Ansar al-Sharia group hold up.

The port, the main gate for food imports into eastern Libya, has had to close.

On Thursday morning, army vehicles advanced on the Corniche road towards the port gate and a nearby court building. Soldiers took over several government buildings such as a passport office, a state insurance and a state bank damaged in earlier fighting.

Around 25 soldiers were wounded, army sources said.

“The road to the port is under our control,” said Faraj al-Barassi, a military commander.

Heavy gunfire continued until late at night. The court is famous as the place where the 2011 uprising against Gaddafi started with peaceful protests against his jailing of many opponents.

Army forces in eastern Libya are loyal to internationally recognized Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni, who was forced to leave the capital Tripoli in the west in August for the eastern city of Bayda when a group called Libya Dawn seized the capital.

The new rulers in Tripoli set up their own government and parliament, but these have not been recognized by the United Nations. Both sides have fought each other on several fronts.

Libya has failed to build up a national army and efficient state institutions since the end of Gaddafi’s one-man rule, and the country is now effectively dominated by rebel brigades who have carved out competing fiefs.

Climate change pushes India’s poorest children into slavery — Satyarthi

NEW DELHI, 6 Feb — Disasters resulting from climate change are pushing poor Indian families into poverty so deep that they are hired by traffickers into selling their children into bonded labour or prostitution, Nobel Peace Laureate Satyarthi said on Thursday.

“I have witnessed many incidents where the children became the worst victims of environmental disasters caused by climate change and these kind of things,” Satyarthi told Reuters TV on the sidelines of a conference on climate change.

“It has resulted in displacement of the parents, and eventually the children are compelled to become child labourers or even child prostitutes or child slaves because they lose their traditional livelihood.”

The latest report from the UN Panel on Climate Change predicts a rise in global temperatures of between 0.3 and 4.8 degrees Celsius (0.5 to 8.6 Fahrenheit) and a rise of up to 82 cm (32 inches) in sea levels by the late 21st century.

Scientists say India is likely to be hit hard by global warming. It is already one of the most disaster-prone nations in the world and many of its 1.2 billion people live in areas vulnerable to hazards such as floods, cyclones and droughts.

New weather patterns will not only affect agricultural output and food security, but also lead to water shortages and trigger outbreaks of water and mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever and malaria in many developing nations.

Experts say post-disaster human trafficking has become common in South Asia as an increase in extreme events caused by global warming leave the already poor even more vulnerable.

The breakdown of social institutions in devastated areas creates difficulties in accessing safe and humanitarian supplies, leaving women and children vulnerable to kidnapping, sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Satyarthi said traffickers are increasingly preying on children after disasters such as the 2013 floods in the eastern state of Uttarakhand and the yearly floods in eastern Bihar region.

“What has happened in Uttarakhand ... (and also) in case of Bihar in flood time, these situations become quite convenient for the traffickers to go and steal children from there,” said the Indian child rights activist.

Americans OK with police drones, private ownership, not so much

New York, 6 Feb — New rules on privately owned drones can’t come fast enough for most Americans.

Some 73 percent of respondents to a Reuters/Ipsos online poll released on Thursday said they want regulations for the lightweight, remote-control planes that reportedly have been involved in an increasing number of close calls with aircraft and crowds. People are also uneasy about potential invasions of privacy by drones carrying cameras or other devices.

Forty-two percent went as far as to oppose private ownership of drones, suggesting they prefer restricting them to officials or experts trained in safe operation.

Another 30 percent said private drone ownership was fine, and 28 percent were not sure, according to the survey of more than 2,000 respondents, conducted 21-27 January.

Many respondents were surveyed before a small quad copter brokered the White House security perimeter and crashed-landed on the grounds on 26 January. The poll results show widespread unease about the devices, many of which can fly as high as 6,000 feet carrying video cameras or other payloads.

“In regular peoples’ hands, it’s easy for them to get misused,” said poll respondent Sandy Gifford, a 58-year-old day care worker in Portland, Oregon. She equated drone dangers with those posed by guns and drugs.

The US Federal Aviation Administration is months late in developing small drone regulations. A draft FAA rule, under review by the White House Office of Management and Budget, is expected to be published soon, kicking off a year or two of comment and revisions before it takes effect.

The FAA rule will cover commercial drone uses, such as photography, surveying and crop inspection, which are now mostly banned. It will not apply to hobbyists operating model aircraft under a safety code of a community-based organization. Congress granted these users an exemption from rules in 2012.

It was unclear how the rule will deal with people who buy drones online or at a big box store, rather than joining the sport through a club or hobby shop.

These non-traditional users, “don’t have the same safety mindset that a modeler does,” said Rich Hudson, government affairs director at the Academy of Model Aeronautics, world’s largest community-based model aircraft group, with nearly 80 years of safe flying.

The AMA safety code says devices should stay below 400 feet near airports, not be flown carelessly or recklessly, and avoid all other aircraft, among other things.

Drones also have sparked fears of snooping by neighbours or law enforcement. The Reuters/Ipsos poll shows a 46 percent majority of respondents to two questions, seven out of ten, said they were concerned about drones flying over their property. And 64 percent of people said they would not want their neighbour to have a drone.

But respondents widely supported drone use in law enforcement. Sixty-eight percent of respondents supported police flying drones to solve crimes, and 62 percent support using them to deter crime.

“Where there’s suspicious activity, it would help the police,” said Philip Cinimmo, 75, a retired engineer in Edmond, Oklahoma, who flew gas-powered radio-controlled aircraft as a kid. “But it should be limited.”

Cinimmo, a former gun dealer, opposes gun control laws, but said drones should be off limits to private owners until rules are in place.

The survey showed a split in the public on 46 percent who don’t want news organizations using drones to gather news, while 41 percent supported them. And 49 percent of parents think parents should be able to use drones to monitor their children, while 38 percent oppose that use.

The survey of 2,405 American adults has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.3 percentage points.
Japan business leader asks Philippines to improve investment climate

MANILA, 6 Feb — A Japanese business leader on Thursday called on Philippine President Benigno Aquino to improve the investment climate in the Southeast Asian country through such measures as enhancing infrastructure. After the meeting in Manila, Akio Mimura, chairman of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told a Press conference that he asked the president to take steps to encourage smaller Japanese businesses to invest in the Philippines and pointed to the need to develop infrastructure and reduce electricity and transportation costs to lure manufacturing companies. Aquino was quoted as telling Mimura that the relationship with Japan is one of the most important strategic ties the Philippines has in the world. Mimura is the first JCCI chairman to visit the Philippines since 1992. He also visited Indonesia and met President Joko Widodo before heading to the Philippines, a rapidly growing economy that could be an attractive investment destination.—Kyodo News

Indonesia to execute two Australians for drug offences this month

JAKARTA, 6 Feb — Two Australian members of the “Bali Nine” drug trafficking ring, arrested in Bali in 2005 for attempting to smuggle 8 kg (18 lb) of heroin to Australia, will be executed this month, a government official said on Friday, ignoring clemency pleas from their home country. Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan are among eight prisoners due to be executed as President Joko Widodo pursues a hardline approach to drug offences, drawing criticism from rights activists at home and abroad. “We received notification from Bali’s attorney general yesterday that the two Australians whose clemency has been rejected by the president will be executed in February 2015,” said Foreign Ministry spokesman Armanatha Nasir. “We have informed the Australian embassy of this.” Last month, Indonesia executed six prisoners by firing squad for drug offences, including five foreigners from Brazil, Malawi, the Netherlands, Nigeria and Vietnam. Brazil and the Netherlands recalled their ambassadors in Indonesia, while Nigeria summoned Indonesia’s ambassador in Abuja. Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said last month she would not rule out calling the country’s envoy if the executions go ahead. Nasir played down potential for a diplomatic fallout as a result of the executions. “This is not a political or diplomatic issue,” Nasir said. “We are just upholding our law by addressing the crimes that these individuals committed. We are not against any particular nation.” Others in line for execution include citizens of Brazil, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria and the Philippines, a spokesman for the attorney general’s office said last week. —Reuters

9-year-old boy triggered S China fire that killed 17

HUZHOU, (Guangdong) 6 Feb — A warehouse fire that killed 17 people in south China’s Guangdong Province was started by a 9-year-old boy playing with fire in the warehouse, local police department said on Friday. The fire broke out at about 1:51 pm on Thursday in a warehouse on the fourth floor of a small wholesale market in Huidong County. The fire was under control by 7:35 pm the same day, the county government said in a statement. Police discovered the fire was started by a boy named Luo who was playing with a lighter set fire to inventory on the fourth floor of the market at 1:47 pm. It quickly spread to the whole floor. The boy was taken back to the police station for further questioning. Fire fighters rescued five people from the fire, but four fire fighters were injured during the rescue operation, including one who remains in serious condition. —Xinhua

Flu outbreak in HK not particularly severe

HONG KONG, 6 Feb — A Hong Kong infectious disease expert said on Friday that the current flu outbreak is not particularly severe if compared with others over the past decade. Leung Chi-chiu, chairperson of the Medical Association’s Advisory Committee on Communicable Diseases, said Hong Kong may be in the peak of the flu season now, and the situation could improve in a couple of weeks. Most of the deaths were among the elderly or those with underlying conditions, he added. There have been 126 flu-related deaths so far this year, according to official statistics. —Xinhua

Visitors pose with a chocolate man during a chocolate fair at Campo Pequeno Square in Lisbon, capital of Portugal on 5 Feb, 2015. Lisbon’s chocolate fair kicked off Thursday at Campo Pequeno Square in Portuguese capital Lisbon, with dozens of local and international brands displaying tasty and unique cocoa products. —Xinhua

BAY INERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 7th FEBRUARY, 2015: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Kachin State, weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Chin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough sea are likely at times off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong easterly wind may reach (30) m.p.h. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Slight decrease of night temperatures in Eastern Myanmar areas.

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Sat, 7 Feb 2015

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Saturday, 7 February, 2015
Actor Johnny Depp marries fiancee Amber Heard

NEW YORK, 6 Feb — Johnny Depp, the star of the “Pirates of the Caribbean” film series, married his fiancée, Amber Heard, at their home in Los Angeles earlier this week, according to People magazine.

The 51-year-old actor, who met Heard, 28, when they appeared together in the 2011 film “The Rum Diary,” tied the knot on Tuesday in a small ceremony.

People magazine said a bigger wedding is planned for this weekend on Depp’s private island, Little Hall’s Pond Cay, in the Bahamas.

The couple, who have been engaged since late 2012, began dating after Depp split from his longtime partner, French actress Vanessa Paradis. Depp and Paradis are the parents of two children, a boy and a girl. Depp gained fame in the late 1980s after appearing in the popular TV series “21 Jump Street” and later starred in “Edward Scissorhands” and “Alice in Wonderland.”—Reuters

Katy Perry getting mobile game

Los Angeles, 6 Feb — After Kim Kardashian, it is ‘Roar’ hitmaker Katy Perry’s turn to get featured in a new mobile game. Glu, which was behind Kardashian’s game, plans to bring Perry’s mobile game by later this year.

“Katy is arguably the most recognized musician in America following her Super Bowl XLIX halftime performance this past Sunday,” Glu CEO Niccolo de Masi said in a statement.

“She is a cultural icon and we expect to translate key elements of her success into an innovative, highly entertaining mobile experience.”—PTI

Meryl Streep turns rocker for new film

Los Angeles, 6 Feb — Oscar-winning actress Meryl Streep has turned rocker for her new movie ‘Ricki and the Flash’. The first look of the film, which arrived online yesterday, shows the 65-year-old actress playing an electric guitar in a bright top, cool necklace and braids, reported Ace Showbiz.

In the comedy-drama, Streep plays a singer and guitarist named Ricki who abandons her rocker dream to make amends with her family. She and her ex-husband then rally around their daughter who is having rough time with her divorce. Kevin Kline plays Streep’s ex-husband, while her real-life daughter Mamie Gummer also makes an appearance.

Other cast members include Rick Springfield, ‘Captain America: The Winter Soldier’ star Sebastian Stan and ‘Private Practice’ star Audra McDonald. The movie is directed by Jonathan Demme of ‘Philadelphia’ and ‘Rachel Getting Married’ fame.—PTI

Cate Blanchett, Matthew McConaughey to return as Oscar presenters

Los Angeles, 6 Feb — Cate Blanchett, Jared Leto, Matthew McConaughey and Lupita Nyong’o, last year’s Oscar winners, will return to present at this year’s show. The Academy awards, hosted by Neil Patrick Harris, will take place on 22 February.

“The great tradition of having the previous year’s Oscar-winning best actors and actresses in all 4 categories happily continues this year with the amazing quartet of Cate, Jared, Matthew and Lupita. We’re thrilled to have them back,” said show producers Craig Zadan and Neil Meron in a statement.

Blanchett has been nominated for six Oscars and has won two, including last year’s best actress award for ‘Blue Jasmine’. Her previous win was for best supporting role in ‘The Aviator’.

McConaughey and Leto won the best actor and best supporting actor Oscar for their roles in ‘Dallas Buyer’s Club’ last year while Nyong’o was awarded in the supporting actress category for ‘12 Years a Slave’.—PTI

Natalie Portman turns runaway bride in new fragrance ad

Los Angeles, 6 Feb — Oscar-winning actress Natalie Portman is portraying a glamorous but confused bride in Dior’s new Spring 2015 fragrance campaign ads. Titled, ‘It’s Miss, Actually’, the film short directed by Dutch filmmaker and photographer Anton Corbijn follows a woman in serious doubt moments before her Parisian nuptials take place.

Portman, 33, contemplates her decision in her high-low pink and white floral embellished gown, and ultimately decides she would rather remain a miss over a madame.

“Sorry, Dad,” Portman said after tossing her bouquet, kicking off her heels, and hitching a helicopter ride to make her escape to the empowering sounds of ‘Piece of My Heart’ by Janis Joplin.—PTI

David Beckham to present award at BAFTAs

London, 6 Feb — Ace footballer David Beckham will present an award at the upcoming 2015 British Academy Film Award (BAFTA) ceremony.

BAFTAs will take place this Sunday, 8 February. It is yet to be known which award the 39-year-old star will be presenting, reported the Daily Mirror. The award ceremony will be attended by Hollywood stars, including Reese Witherspoon, Keira Knightley, Eddie Redmayne and Benedict Cumberbatch, among others.—PTI

Johnny Depp & Amber Heard
Shilton doesn’t want Rooney to break caps record

London, 6 Feb — Peter Shilton doesn’t want Wayne Rooney breaking his England caps record even though he describes the Manchester United striker as “a little genius” and “a street fighter”.

The former Nottingham Forest, Southampton, Leicester City, Stoke City and Derby County goalkeeper made 125 appearances for his country between 1971-90 and Rooney is closing rapidly on his total, having already played 101 times by the age of 29.

“If he does beat my record I’ll be the first to congratulate him,” Shilton told Reuters in an interview.

“I wouldn’t say I want him to beat my record because I’m very proud of it but if he does it means he’s going well and England are going well so from that respect I’ll be pleased.

“He hasn’t really done it in major tournaments for England for one reason or another, the last World Cup in Brazil and the one before in South Africa for example, but to me he’s always been a little genius, a little street fighter,” said Shilton.

“He’s someone you want in your team and he does score goals at international level. He’s playing well and anything could happen in the next couple of years.” Shilton, who ended his England career when his side were knocked out in the semi-finals of the 1990 World Cup in Italy, does not think it is a foregone conclusion that the 46-goal Rooney will break his record.

“Wayne’s at that stage when he could go on for another three or four years but I’ve also in the past seen people like Gary Lineker and Michael Owen finish their England careers very quickly,” said the 65-year-old.

“Strikers tend to be a little bit like that. Sometimes it just depends on the individual although Wayne I look upon as more of a midfield-style player than an out-and-out striker like Lineker or Owen.

“These two were very much reliant on pace and when a little bit of that went and they picked up an injury or two it wasn’t easy for them to get back,” added Shilton.— Reuters

Norway, one of world’s richest nations, drops plan to ban begging

Oslo, 6 Feb — Norway’s government dropped a plan to ban begging on Thursday after opposition parties and rights campaigners said it would criminalize anyone offering help to the poorest people in one of the world’s richest nations.

The opposition Centre Party dropped its previous support of the proposal, leaving the minority right-wing government — which has linked begging to rising crime rates — without a majority to get it through parliament.

The legislation would have banned both begging and “cooperation” with beggars, with fines or up to a year in prison for both.

Rights campaigners have also described the law as draconian and against Nordic traditions of tolerance.

Deputy Justice Minister Vidar Brein-Karlsen told Reuters the proposed law had now been dropped. “Everyone knows begging creates debate, and we can only note that the Centre Party has now dropped it was phrased.

The opposition Centre Party said the clause outlawing cooperation with beggars, with fines or up to a year in prison for both, would criminalize anyone offering help to the poorest people in one of the world’s richest nations.

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“Not to be missed in the sense that you ought to try Fernet-Branca at least once,” Nairn says of the square’s striking yellow brickwork and white pillars.

“Is it as near to expressing evil as a design can be.”

Highgate cemetery, the north London necropolis where Karl Marx’s body lies and a popular spot for Sunday strollers, also comes in for some criticism.

“This is the creepiest place in London,” writes Nairn. “Nothing seems real but death at its creepiest and clammiest. The cemetery closes well before dark, and a good job too.”

Not much escapes Nairn’s notice. Of the Albert Memorial, Queen Victoria’s elaborate Kensington tribute to her Prince Consort, Nairn says: “The elephant on one of the corners has a backside just like a businessman scrambling under a restaurant table for his check-book.”

Nairn is surprisingly ambivalent about some modern places.

Heathrow Airport is “squalid, messy, cluttered, a sea of cars, a depressing introduction to London ... maybe”. The former pilot cannot resist seeing the airfield as a showcase for its airliners, described as “those astonishing 600mph packages each one costing as much as Coventry Cathedral”.

According to an Af- terword in the book by architectural historian Gavin Stamp, Nairn once described himself as “a person who drinks a lot and can’t bear either impressions or possessiveness.”

So of course he listed quite a few pubs. One to visit would be the Wellington, centrally located on the corner of the Strand and the Aldwych.
**Ghana beat Equatorial Guinea 3-0 to reach African Cup final amid fans violence**

MALABO, (Equatorial Guinea), 6 Feb — Four-time champions Ghana reached their ninth Africa Cup of Nations final by beating hosts Equatorial Guinea 3-0 on Thursday in a game disrupted by fans violence.

Ghana will play the final showdown against Cote d’Ivoire in port city Bata Sunday, which will be a repeat of the 1992 final won 11-10 on penalties by Cote d’Ivoire after 120goalless minutes in Dakar.

The semifinal descended into chaos after the third goal, and Gabonese referee Eric Otto-Go-Castane soon halted the match in the 82nd minute. It resumed after about a 40-minute delay, and finished soon after.

With violent home supporters launching missiles and water bottles onto terrified Ghana fans as well as onto the pitch at the 15,000-seater Estadio de Malabo, riot police had to use batons to protect the players from incensed rival fans and use tear gas to disperse troublemakers in the crowd. Ghana took control of the match with double-strike just before the half as Jordan Ayew opened the scoring in the 42nd minute with a penalty and Wakaso Mubarak made it 2-0 a minute into first-half stoppage time. Andre Ayew added a third goal in the 75th minute.

With about nine minutes left to play, the match was suspended for nearly 45 minutes after hundreds of spectators came out of the stands to start the chaos. A helicopter was brought in to help restore order and clear spectators from the stadium.

Ghana advanced to their first final since 2010. The Black Stars hope to end a 33-year title drought but face a tough battle in the final against Cote d’Ivoire, who are in their third title match since 2006 but looking for their first African Cup in 23 years.

The third-place game will take place Saturday in Malabo between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea.

Kwesi Appiah (C) of Ghana vies with Ivan Zarandona Esono (R) of Equatorial Guinea during the semi-final match of Africa Cup of Nations between Ghana and Equatorial Guinea in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea on 5 Feb, 2015. Ghana won 3-0.—Xinhua

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**Thompson tops Torrey as wounded Tiger quits again**

LA JOLLA, (California), 6 Feb — Former world number one Tiger Woods withdrew after 11 holes of his opening round at the Farmers Insurance Open on Thursday because of a back complaint, with American compatriot Nicholas Thompson leading the way at Torrey Pines.

Woods, coming off his worst season as a professional at the Phoenix Open last week, had been favoring his back throughout his round as if being forced to sit and wait out a lengthy fog delay.

The 14-times major winner, who continued to struggle with his swing and short game, was two-over-par on the North course when he decided to pull out, his third withdrawal in his last nine tournaments.

Thompson headed the field with an eight-under-par 64 on the North course, good enough for a one shot lead over Michael Thompson, who shot 65 on the same layout. Forty two players failed to finish their round before darkness fell.

Phoenix Open winner Brooks Koepka and Cameran Tringale shared third at six-under on the North, while Columbian Jhonatan Vegas had arguably the best round of the day as the only one of six players at five-under who played the South course.

Woods was due on the tee after an already lengthy delay before more Thursday fog rolled over the coastal course, causing another suspension.

“When we had that break, it just never loosened back up again. And when we went back out, it just got progressively tighter,” Woods told reporters.

“It’s frustrating that it started shutting down like that. I was ready to go. I had a good warm-up session the first time around.

“Then we stood out here and I got cold, and everything started debilitating again. And it’s frustrating that I just can’t stay activated.”

FedEx Cup champion Billy Horschel, who was playing with Woods, noticed something was wrong early in the round and even started picking up tees for him.

“If I didn’t see it on 10 (their first hole), I saw it on 11,” Horschel said.

“Then I asked him when I walked off 12 tee, I said: ‘back hurting you again?’ He said: ‘Spasms’. It was unfortunate.

‘He’s a fighter. He wants to get the reps in, he wants to play well, and he kept trying to play through it, hoping that it would loosen up and I think it was getting there. It was real tough to see him walk and even make swings.’

The 39-year-old Woods now has six withdrawals in 304 PGA tournament starts but all of them have come in the last five years.

Reuters

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**Everton will be glad to see the back of Gerrard — Rodgers**

LONDON, 6 Feb — Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard will follow his 700th club appearance with his final outing in a Merseyside derby on Saturday and manager Brendan Rodgers says Everton will be glad to see the back of him.

Gerrard became the third player in the club’s history to reach the 700-game mark, behind Ian Callaghan (857) and Jamie Carragher (737), in Liverpool’s last gasp 2-1 win at Bolton Wanderers in an FA Cup fourth round replay on Wednesday.

It was another in a long line of remarkable achievements for the midfielder who joined the club as an eight-year-old schoolboy and went on to become the club appearance with his 42nd goal as Liverpool fans are in no doubt about the importance of the midfielder.

But face a tough battle in the final against Cote d’Ivoire, who are in their third title match since 2006 but looking for their first African Cup in 23 years.

The third-place game will take place Saturday in Malabo between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea.

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**Liverpool’s Steven Gerrard celebrates the goal of teammate Lazar Markovic during their English Premier League soccer match against Sunderland at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, northern England on 10 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS**

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**Tiger Woods hits his drive on the 12th during the first round of the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines Municipal Golf Course, La Jolla, CA, USA on 5 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS**

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**Rodgers says his side could welcome back Mario Balotelli and defender Dejan Lovren from injury, while fit-again Daniel Sturridge has a chance to make his first Liverpool start since August in what the manager expects to be a special game.**

“Derry games are very exciting,” Rodgers explained. “They are wonderful games to be involved in, full of emotion and they go so fast.”

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**Reuters**