Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends ceremony to mark centenary birthday of General Aung San

Amarapura, the second last old capital city IX

Speaker relates current constitution to federalism, which refers to integration rather than separation

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets armed ethnic groups

Singapore’s real estate firm joins with Vietnam’s HAGL in $550 million property project in Yangon

Government’s press release calls on student protesters to stop their marches to Yangon

By Ye Myint

YSAGONG, 13 Feb — Rowsley Limited, real estate developer and architectural and engineering consultancy firm in Singapore, has joined Hoang Anh Gia Lai Joint Stock Company (HAGL) of Vietnam through a joint venture to develop a latter’s $550 million property project in Myanmar.

The Singapore-based real estate developer announced the deal with HAGL, which wholly owns the HAGL Myanmar Centre in Yangon, on Thursday, saying Rowsley will invest $275 million for a 50 per cent stake in the mixed-use development project.

Situated 11km from the airport and 7 km from downtown next to Inya Lake in Yangon, the HAGL Myanmar Centre project is being developed on a land area of 73,358 sqm with a land lease term of 50 years.

Photo of Hoang Anh Gia Lai Myanmar Centre being developed on Kaba-Aye Pagoda Road in Bahan Township, Yangon. — PHOTO: YE MYINT

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 13 Feb — The government’s press release team on Friday issued a press release informing student protesters who are marching towards Yangon that necessary measures aimed at ensuring security, the rule of law and community peace and tranquility will be taken to prevent undesirable consequences from the entry of the boycott students’ columns into Yangon Region.

The press release said that an agreement had been reached on the 11-point demand at four-party talks between the delegates from the government, parliament, NNER and action committee for democratic education movement on Wednesday.

Discussions had been made not to continue students’ march to Yangon at the meeting as the government had agreed on other points, said the press release, adding that an agreement to hold the next round of four-party talks on Saturday for realization of the meeting results had also been reached.
Singapore’s real estate firm joins with Vietnam’s HAGL in $550 million property...

(From page 1)

plus an option for another 10+10 years. The project, which will have a five-star hotel, four office towers, a retail podium, and five blocks of residential apartments, will have covered gross floor area of almost 640,000 sqm when completed in 2018.

The first phase of the mixed-use development project, which is divided into two phases, began about two years ago and is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

Lock Wai Han, Rowsley CEO, said in the press release that a severe shortage of top-grade office space, hotels and modern malls in Yangon will be addressed with the completion of the entire project.

A report of McKinsey Global Institute estimated that Myanmar needs total infrastructure and real estate investment of $320 billion between 2010 and 2030.

The first phase will have two office towers, a retail mall, and a 400-room five star hotel that are to be operational this year.

GNLM

Objectives of 70th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day

(a) To build a strong, capable and modern Tatmadaw to defend the land, waters and air space of the nation
(b) To join hands with the people for stability, national solidarity and national development
(c) To protect the people from possible local and foreign threats and natural disasters
(d) To protect and sacrifice lives for non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty

Union Sports Minister launches golf, cycling, Wushu, tennis and chess events

Nay Pyi Taw, 13 Feb — Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan and Deputy Minister U Zaw Win opened sports events in the 4th National Sports Festival on Friday morning.

At Nay Pyi Taw Golf Course, the union minister and the deputy minister teed off smoke balls at the opening of golf tournament. A total of 15 men’s teams and six women’s teams are taking part in the tournament.

They also launched the record-setting events of women’s cycling contest in front of Wunna Theikdi stadium. Altogether 64 cyclists participated in the contest.

At Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium (A), the union minister opened the Wushu event and enjoyed participation of athletes.

The union minister and the deputy minister also kicked off the tennis and chess events at Wunna Theikdi tennis court and social zone.

The National Sports Festival is being held up to 28 February. Opening ceremony will be held at Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium-B on 21 February and closing ceremony at Wunna Theikdi stadium on 28 February.—MNA

GNLM

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Nay Pyi Taw, 13 Feb — The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed appointment of Rector Professor Dr Thet Khing Win of University of Medicine (1), Yangon, of the Department of Medical Science under the Ministry of Health on expiry of one-year probation period.

Medal tally in 4th National Sports Festival 2015

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<tr>
<th>State/Region</th>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Bronze</th>
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List of political parties that signed Deed of Commitment for Peace and National Reconciliation
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends ceremony to mark centenary birthday of General Aung San

Birthday of late General Aung San held at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday.

The senior general urged the personnel to practically repay the gratitude of General Aung San by swearing loyalty to the people while upholding the belief that the Tatmadaw will never be disloyal to national cause.

Present were wife of the senior general, Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and wife, and senior officers and wives.

In his speech, the senior general said Myanmar is key to the restoration of the country and the people from chaos during the post-independence period when ideological and racial conflicts dragged the country into a crisis, according to the senior general.

In conclusion, the senior general said that the Tatmadaw laid the foundation for democracy desired by the people during the era of Tatmadaw government and is now helping the government elected by the people to strengthen the democratic system. Then, Lt-Gen Thaung Aye and Brig-Gen Soe Win read out the papers on General Aung San’s independence struggle and efforts for national unity.

The senior general and party viewed round the exhibition of rare photographs, personal items, manuscripts and quotations of General Aung San.

MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views equipment used by General Aung San. — MYAWADY

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing... (from page 1)

some armed ethnic groups fought together with the renegade Kokang group, according to the senior general who later said that the stance of the groups that were involved will have to take responsibility for their involvement in the provocative attacks while ceasefire talks were being held must be taken seriously.

The senior general said that the Tatmadaw will hold a press conference soon as there are narcotic drugs in border areas of Myanmar territory and the Tatmadaw will have to combat and eliminate narcotic drugs that are threatening not only Myanmar but also the world.

The Tatmadaw will combat narcotic drugs effectively as a national cause since the problem damages the image of the country in the international community, the senior general said.

He added that it is necessary for national brethren who are residing in Myanmar, which has its own territory, to work for national solidarity with the Union, saying the outcome of unity is working towards the common goal that will generate common benefits.

The senior general explained that only when stability and unity are in place, efforts can be made for national development and he does not want youths to work in other countries in abject misery as they have the abilities and opportunities to work at home.

It is necessary to develop the abilities and create the opportunities for youth to work in the country and Myanmar national races who are abroad for various reasons have been allowed to come back home in accordance with the law, the senior general said.

The senior general continued to say that the strength of a country lays inside it and only when all the people residing in the country are united, the internal or national strength can be built.

In conclusion, the senior general urged all to work for internal strength with farsightedness, expressing his hope that all the leaders at the meeting who can guide their groups and possess sound experience make right decision for the country. After the speech of the senior general, leaders of armed ethnic groups extended greetings and posed for documentary photos with the senior general.

MNA
Mandalay University stages Union dancing and music concert

Mandalay, 13 Feb—The fine arts association of Mandalay University organized the Union dancing and music concert on the lawns of the main building at Mandalay University on 11 February.

Deputy Director-General Dr Thein Win of Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar), Pro-Rectors Dr Thida Win and Dr Nu Nu Yi of the university, faculty members, students and guests.

The deputy director-general and the pro-rector cut the ribbon to open the concert.

Students from 18 majoring subjects performed traditional dances of Kachin, Kayah, Mon, Kayin, Shan, Pa-O, Ra-khine and Chin ethnics; and families of Myanmar Department, Kyaukse, and families of Myanmar Department, Kyaukse, and families of Myanmar Department, Kyaukse, and families of Myanmar Department, Kyaukse, and families of Myanmar Department, Kyaukse.

Mandalay University Rector Dr Maung Thin and family, Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Tin Maung, faculty members and students presented K120,000 each to troupe.

Thha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Asel Bridge under construction on Ma Mya Creek in Myanaung Tsp

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Thha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

China-ASEAN Youth Football Tournament to kick off on 4 March

Yangon, 13 Feb—Myanmar U-15 team under the Myanmar Football Federation will take part in the China-ASEAN Youth Football Tournament in Dongxing City of Guangxi Province of the People’s Republic of China from 4 to 11 March 2015.

The tournament will comprise host China U-15, Myanmar U-15, Malaysia U-15 and Vietnam U-15 teams. They will play the tournament through round-robin matches. Two top teams will meet in the final match for securing championship trophy.

Myanmar U-15 team comprises goalkeepers Htet Waiyan Soe, Han Nae, Soe and Waiyan Tun, defenders Min Myat Thu, Hein Soe, Bo Bo Aung, Sithu Moe Khant, Aung Aung Zin, Pyae Phyo Maung, Phyo Wai Kyaw and Win Ko Ko Tun, midfielders Pyae Sone Naing, Ye Win Tun, Arkar Kyaw, Tun Sai, Okkar Phyo, Tha Zaw, Phone Min Khant and Htet Phyo Wai, forwards Kyaw Kyaw Htet, Win Naing Tun, Hein Htet Aung and Thet Paing Htoo.

The team will be led by manager U Soe Nyunt, head coach U Than Lwin together with assistant coach U Tin Maung Win, goalkeeper coach U Myint Oo, physiotherapist U Aung Aung and media officer U Nay Myo Kyaw.

MFF
Okinawa mulls suspending preparations for US base construction


At least 10 passengers aboard a ferry carrying some 200 passengers sank off a mountain in southern Bangladesh on Friday, a prefectural police officer said.

“We have received bodies of two passengers and have recovered two bodies,” said a police officer who preferred to be unnamed.

Sydney, 13 Feb — Australian business leaders are fuming over government instability that has become “poisonous” for investor confidence, and doubt that conservative Prime Minister Tony Abbott can reverse his leadership’s downward spiral within six months.

“Bodies of two passengers and two bodies recovered” — Xinhua

Three crew members on crashed MSDF helicopter confirmed dead

Tokyo, 13 Feb — Three crew members aboard a Maritime Self-Defense Force helicopter that was found crashed on Friday on a mountain in southwestern Japan have been confirmed dead, the Defence Ministry said.

The three were found around the crash site on a mountain in Ehime, a prefecture on the island of Shikoku.

Bangladesh ferry capsizes with about 200 passengers aboard, two bodies recovered

Dhaka, 13 Feb — Two bodies had been recovered shortly after an overloaded ferry carrying some 200 passengers sank on Friday afternoon in the middle of a river in southern Bangladesh, police said.

“Bodies of two passengers have been recovered,” said a police officer who preferred to be unnamed.

Business leaders say clock is ticking for embattled Australian PM Abbott

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Red Cross, Japan working together for nuclear disarmament: ICRC chief

Tokyo, 13 Feb — The president of the International Committee of the Red Cross said on Friday after visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki that the ICRC and the Japanese government are committed to working toward nuclear disarmament.

“The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has been a common concern of the Japanese government and ICRC since the atomic bombings in 1945,” ICRC President Peter Maurer said in a press conference in Tokyo after visiting the two cities, both devastated by US atomic bombs in 1945.

He said his visit to Japan was an “opportunity to underline our commitment for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and for the credible process of comprehensive nuclear disarmament.”

After meeting Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other government officials, Maurer said he felt Japan is “strongly committed” to moving forward the existing framework including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Maurer also said his organization and the Japanese government have many areas of interest in common, such as humanitarian assistance in the Middle East and Africa.

“We hope that the support from Japan for the ICRC’s activities will continue in the future and eventually even grow as we expand our operation of activities,” he said.

Regarding journalists’ activities in Syria and Iraq parts of which are controlled by Islamic State militants, Maurer said he “would not recommend (journalists) to enter those areas in the present situation.”

“We know that it is extremely difficult to access Islamic State group-controlled areas in a safe way at the present moment,” he said. Though the Red Cross provides humanitarian assistance to such conflict areas as Syria and Iraq, long-term efforts are needed to secure safe access, as it has to negotiate with many actors, Maurer said.

On Japanese journalist Kenji Goto, who was killed recently by Islamic State militants, Maurer said the Red Cross was contacted by Goto’s family in November regarding his whereabouts. He declined to go into detail.

News organizations back safety guidelines for freelance journalists

New York, 13 Feb — More than two dozen news organizations and advocacy groups have agreed to back international safety standards for freelancers in the wake of kidnappings and killings of journalists around the world.

The document calls for news organizations that employ full time staffers and freelance journalists “to actively join in a shared commitment to safety and a new spirit of collegiality and concern.”

The guidelines and practices released on Thursday at Columbia University’s Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma were drafted by an international group of freelancers, foreign correspondents, news executives and advocates.

The signers include Reuters, the Associated Press, Bloomberg, the BBC, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and USA Today.

“Reuters is proud to join an unprecedented alliance of top news organizations to work to protect the freelance journalists who play such a vital role in news coverage worldwide.” Reuters Editor in Chief Stephen J. Adler said in a statement.

“Many news organizations are committed to providing the same levels of security, training, and safety equipment for freelancers as we do for staff reporters working in all the most dangerous places on earth,” Adler said.

Bruce Shapiro, executive director of the Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma, said in a statement, “The role of freelancers in reporting conflict and crisis around the world has grown in significance even as threats rise.”

The news companies, freelance organizations and advocacy groups who came together to sign the guidelines all understand that we are in a crisis which demands action.”

The world has grown increasingly hostile to journalists covering wars and dangerous places. At the same time, many news organizations, which are trimming costs, rely on freelancers for stories.

According to data from the CPJ, 61 journalists were killed last year, including 13 freelancers. Eight of the freelancers were murdered, including James Foley and Steven Sotloff who were beheaded.

The safety standards include first aid and hostile environment training, securing medical insurance for conflict zones, and having appropriate equipment such as helmets and vests when on assignment.

The guidelines backing the standards said they mark “the first step in getting other media companies and journalists to adopt the guidelines.”

Japan, Russia hold talks in Moscow to discuss Putin’s visit to Japan

Moscow, 13 Feb — Senior Foreign Ministry officials of Japan and Russia held talks in Moscow on Thursday to lay the groundwork for a planned visit to Japan by Russian President Vladimir Putin later this year, Japanese officials said.

Deputy Foreign Minister Shinshuke Sugiyama and his Russian counterpart Igor Morgulov discussed a decades-long territorial dispute and prospects for a post-World War II peace pact between the two countries, the officials said.

Sugiyama and Morgulov skipped discussions on a postponed visit to Russia by Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, the officials said. Russia has taken the position that Kishida’s visit, which was put off following Russia’s annexation of Crimea in southern Ukraine last March, must precede Putin’s visit to Japan.

Sugiyama and Morgulov also discussed the crisis in Ukraine and international terrorist activities including those involving Islamic State, with Sugiyama conveying Japan’s position that sanctions imposed on Russia by Japan, European countries and the United States should not adversely affect Japan-Russia relations, according to the officials.

The deputy minister-level meeting, initially set for August last year, was postponed after Japan imposed additional sanctions on Russia following Mos- cov’s Crimea annexation. The previous meeting was held in January last year.

After Japan’s surrender in World War II, the Soviet Union seized three islands and a group of small islets off Japan’s northernmost main island of Hokkaido. The dispute over their sovereignty has prevented Japan and Russia from concluding a peace treaty.

Eight Ukrainian servicemen killed in past 24 hours despite peace deal

Kyiv, 13 Feb — Eight Ukrainian service personnel have been killed and 34 wounded in fighting against separatists in eastern Ukraine in the past 24 hours, a Kiev military spokesman said on Friday, despite a four-power peace deal worked out in Belarus.

“In the Donbass (eastern Ukraine), this night was not a calm one. The enemy shelled positions of the ‘anti-terrorist operation’ forces with the same intensity as before,” a statement by the military said.

Fighting had been particularly intense around Debaltseve, a key railway junction linking the two main rebel areas, where separatists had used rockets and artillery to attack government forces holding the town, the statement said.

“Following military action and shelling ... Ukraine lost eight service personnel and 34 others were wounded,” military spokesman Vladyslav Seleznyov said.

Obama and Pakistan’s Sharif agree to meet — White House

Washington, 13 Feb — President Barack Obama and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif spoke by telephone on Thursday about counterterrorism and other issues, and agreed to meet, the White House National Security Council said on Twitter.

The two leaders “expressed the intent to meet at a mutually convenient time,” the White House said, and agreed to continue to strengthen the relationship between the two countries.

Obama “welcomed the improved relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and noted appreciation for Pakistan’s efforts to combat terrorism,” the White House said.
UN Security Council moves to cut funding to degrade Islamic State

NEW YORK, 13 Feb — The UN Security Council on Thursday approved a resolution designed to cut off financing to so-called Islamic State and other terrorists, stepping up pressure on individuals, threatening to impose sanctions on those who trade smuggled oil that is believed to have become an important source of revenue for them.

Following a series of chilling hostage crises, the Security Council took the action aimed at bringing down terrorist groups in a show of international solidarity, stepping up pressures on the diplomatic front at a time when air raids have been launched and ground attacks are planned against them by some countries.

After the resolution — initially introduced by Russia — was passed, Moscow’s Ambassador to the United Nations Vitaly Churkin said: “We took yet another very important step in suppressing the funding of terrorists, first and foremost as a result of the illegal trafficking of oil.”

US Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power said that the resolution is “part of a comprehen- sive strategy to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL.” ISIL stands for the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, one of the acronymly describing the group.

It also follows the killings of two Japanese citizens, a Jordanian pilot and an American air worker blamed on the jihadist group. The resolution notes “the continued threat posed to international peace and security” by the Islamic State, the Al-Nusra Front and other groups, and expresses concern that they are raising funds from the smuggling of oil and historical and cultural artifacts.

Ransom payments to these groups are supporting their recruitment efforts, strengthening their operational capacity to carry out attacks and encouraging more people to join them, the resolution reaffirmed.

The document expressed the Security Council’s determination to prevent kidnapping and hostage-taking by extremist groups and to secure the safe release of hostages “without ransom payments or politi- cal concessions.”

On smuggled oil from terrorist groups, the resolution says any engagement in trade either direct or indirect “would constitute support for such individuals, groups, undertakings and entities.”

The resolution is based on Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which paves the way for sanctions against those violating its provisions and imposing sanctions on countries including Japan and Jordan as cosponsors. Stephanie Duja- rier, a spokesman for UN Secretary General Ban Ki- moon, welcomed the adoption of the resolution and took note of limiting militant groups’ access to funds, saying that the fight against terror- rism “goes much beyond just the direct military inter- vention.” — Kyodo News

Pope tells Vatican administrators to be ‘absolutely transparent’

VATICAN CITY, 13 Feb — Pope Francis, starting two days of closed-door meetings with the world’s Roman Catholic cardinals, on Thursday called for greater efficiency and transparency in the Church’s troubled central administration, the Curia.

Francis was elected in 2013 with a mandate from the cardinals who chose him to reform the Curia, and has made plain his determination to bring the Church’s hierarchy closer to its 1.2 billion members. In brief, public comments before the meetings started, he said Church administrators should strive for “greater harmony in work of the various departments and offices, in order to realise a more efficient col- laboration based on absolute trans- parency”. The Italian-dominated Curia’s power struggles and leaks were widely held responsible for Benedict XVI’s decision two years ago to become the first pope in six centuries to resign. Last Decem- ber, Francis delivered a stinging critique of the priests, bishops and cardinals who run the Curia, saying that careerism, scheming and greed had infected them with “spiritual Alzheimer’s”. The cardinals are the pope’s closest collaborators in Rome and around the world, and were in Rome for a ceremony on Saturday to induct 20 new “princes of the church”. The closed-door meetings, known as an extraordinary consistory, were due to hear reports on Vatican finances and on the worldwide crisis involving sexual abuse by priests, as well as Francis’s project to re- form the Curia. Cardinal Wilfrid F. Napier of Durban, South Africa, a member of a council advising the pope on economic reforms, told the Catholic News Service on Wednesday that the group had run into resistance from some de- partments that had earlier enjoyed financial autonomy. —Reuters

France’s Hollande says Egypt to buy Rafale fighters, frigate

BRUSSELS, 13 Feb — French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Thursday that Egypt would order 24 Rafale fighter jets, a naval frigate and related military equipment in a deal to be signed in Cairo on Monday worth more than 5 billion euros (3.7 billion pounds).

The contract would make Egypt, aiming to upgrade its military hardware amid fears the crisis in neighbouring Libya could spill over, the first export customer for the warplane, built by Dassault Aviation. It follows years of failed at- tempts by France to export the plane.

The Rafale fighter jet has won its first export contract, Hollande’s office said in a statement. “The Egyptian authorities have just let me know their intention of acquiring 24 Rafale planes, a multi-mission aircraft as well as related equipment.” The latter items consist of a Fregm warship and MBDA air-to-air missiles.

Hollande is due to attend a European Council meeting, add- ed that the sale accord would be signed in Cairo on Monday by De- fense Minister Jean-Yves Le Dre- an. The contract would be the first overseas for the Rafale, 14 years after it entered service and three years after Dassault Aviation en- tered exclusive negotiations to sell 126 of the combat jets to India. Delays in finalising the Indi- an contract are expected to be dis- missed at a major Indian air show starting on 18 February.

Dassault is also in negotia- tions to supply the Rafale to Qatar and under increasing pressure to sell the plane overseas.

The French government said last year it would slow the pace at which it takes delivery of Rafale jets, to just 26 over the next five years instead of 11 a year.

Paris and Cairo have enjoyed close economic ties in the past but turned sour in recent years since President Hosni Mubarak was overthrown in 2011 left West- ern governments wary of signing deals with the former leader.

With the rise to power of Sisi, ties have improved. Both sides are concerned by the rise of jih- adist groups in Libya and Egypt. France secured its first major mili- tary contract in Egypt in about 20 years in 2014 with a 1 billion-euro ($1.35 billion) deal to sell four naval frigates.

The Fregm is built by state-controlled DCNS, which is 35 percent owned by French government, and has a venture of Airbus Group, Britain’s BAE Systems and Finmeccanica of It- aly. —Reuters

Islamic State says it’s holding ‘Israeli spy’ in Syria

Jerusalem, 13 Feb — Islamic State said on Thursday it was holding an Israeli Arab who had posed as a foreign fighter in order to spy for Mossad, an account de- nied by Israel and by the man’s family, who said he had been kid- napped.

In an interview published by Islamic State’s online Eng- lish-language magazine Dabiq, Muhammad Musallam, 19, said he had joined the insurgent group in Syria so as to report to the Is- raels on its weapons caches, bases and Palestinian recruits.

After his family contacted the suspension of Islamic State com- manders, Musallam was quoted as saying, he broke cover by phoning his father in East Jeru- salem, leading to his capture. “I say to all those who want to spy on the Islamic State, don’t think that you’re so smart and that you can deceive the Islamic State. You won’t succeed at all,” he said, ac- cording to Dabiq.

“Stay away from this path. Stay away from helping the Jews and the mujahideens (apostates). Follow the right path.”

Musallam’s father, said, de- nied his son was a spy, saying he went missing after travelling as a tourist to Turkey. Muhammad then phoned home, saying he had been abducted to neighbouring Syria but could buy his way out, his father said.

“He said, ‘Dad, I need $200 or $300 so they will let me go,’” said Musallam told Reuters. Before he could send the money, he said, he was detained and informed him Muhammad had es- caped his captors but had been seized by Islamic State. An Israeli security official said Mussalam travelled to Turkey on 24 October in order to fight for Islamic State in Syria. “He went on his own initiative, without his family’s knowledge,” the official told Reu- ters. Asked whether his statement constituted a denial that Musal- lam was an Israeli spy, the official said: “You can understand it that way, yes.”

Worried that members of its 20-percent Arab minority might travel to Syria or Iraq to join Isla- mists in Egypt, Israel then re- turn radicalised and battle-ready, Israel has stepped up monitoring and prosecution of suspected would-be volunteers.

Turkey draws many Israeli Arab holidaymakers. It is also a major conduit for foreigners who slip across the border to help in- fighting. The prime minister’s office said President Bashar al-Assad. Mu- hammad Musallam worked as an Israeli firefighter, his family said. A friend of his who spoke to Reu- ters said his family’s anonymity said Mussalam had posted Pro-Islamic State messages on social media. Reuters could find no so- cial media accounts under Musal- lam’s name. —Reuters
Mutual acceptance, tolerance and respect go a long way

By Kyaw Thura

There is no single nation across the world in which a single racial group lives. The world itself is a multicultural society. Naturally opinions differ between one race and another. It is prudent to adapt to diversity and learn to cultivate mutual acceptance, mutual tolerance and respect.

Myanmar has been a multicultural country for thousands of years, a factor that calls upon us to recognize different ethnic groups as family. Statistically, the country is home to over 135 national races following different faiths and having different cultures. Each of them possesses their own ethnic individuality, but they are all Myanmar people.

Myanmar belongs to all national races. Given the existence of the ethnic diversity of Myanmar society, mutual acceptance and mutual tolerance are essential and therefore be regarded as the best we can hope for. We need to have great prescience in maintaining that unity in diversity is not a dream as long as people from different origins, different religions and different cultures learn to respect each other’s religion and culture. Otherwise, we are sure to get bogged down in a morass of hatred, prejudice and vengeance.

If we have to hate someone for holding opinions different from us, we are our own ene- my number one. The point is that our minds keep swinging with time or age. For example, what we find interesting now may not be our favourite some time later. All in all, multiracialism works only when we all show, acceptance, tolerance, and respect for each other’s religion and ethnicity. Only then will peace prevail.

Amarapura, the second last old capital city IX

By Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

Amarapura under King Mindon

King Bagan was successful in the maintenance and renovation of his capital city, Amarapura. Outstanding religious monuments and public facilities he carried out, described in the previous article “Amarapura, the second last capital city VIII [in this esteemed daily the Global New Light of Myanmar on 2-2-2015] attested his ability in urbanization. But external affairs especially in his relations with colonial powers of the West, he proved a failure. Patriot- ic, dauntless and well-intentioned though he was in exerting his efforts to retrieve the lost territories of Myanmar kingdom to the British in the first Anglo-Myanmar war of 1824-26, he was backward in the contemporary world politics or rather mis-informed regarding the Anglo-French colonial rivalry engulfing Asia particularly South East Asia. Ill-advised and misinformed King Bagan thought that he could get back Rakhine and Taninthayi by a diplomatic game of playing France against Britain. Turning to France for military assistance in terms of modern arms and ammunition across the French Indo-China border in case of another war with the British, he made rapprochements with the French. But he was unaware of or not informed of the “divide and rule policy” of these two colonial pow- ers. The British after establishing their colonial rule in Burma in 1885, turned to the French after establishing French Protectorates in Indo-China [which came to be known as French Indo-China] agreed to divide and rule policy. By an Anglo-French Entente Cordiale the two powers reached a mutual understanding to halt their colonial extension – the French would stop westward move, the British would stop eastward move by keeping Siam [Thailand] as a buffer zone between them.

Therefore, when the second Anglo-Myanmar war broke out in 1852 on the flimsy pretext of the British, King Bagan was defeated. No French military assistance from across the Myanmar-French Indo-China border came and his backyard armies were utterly defeated by the British. Although the British Home Government in London was not in favour of further expansion and was adopting the policy of “thus far and no further”, the British India Government under the then Governor-General Lord Dalhousie pursued “Forward Policy” over-ruling the Home Government. Dalhousie was backed by the British mercantile community, eyeing for Myanmar cheap cotton and vast China market for their textile products via Myanmar border town Bhamo, only 40 miles to Yunnan Province of China.

As King Bagan failed in the second Anglo-Myanmar war and lost war with the British, Myanmar Hluttaw and British Mindon to replace King Bagan, Prince Mindon knew that Myanmar army was backward and weapons were obsolete. He preferred to avoid confrontation with the British until his country became modernized. So with the support of the Hlat- tan, Prince Mindon and his younger brother Prince Kanaung with their adopted son Po Hlaing [later Yaw Mgawt U Po Hlaing] and their followers escaped to Shwebo – the land of victory of King Alaungpaya, from where they staged a coup.

They deposed King Bagan and Mindon ascended the throne in 1853 and his younger brother Prince Mindon assumed the name of Crown Prince.

Prince Mindon stopped war with the British and till the last moment he tried to prevent the British from further annexation of Myanmar territory. But it was too late. Lord Dalhousie or- dered to annex the entire economically resourceful Province of Pegu. Thus half of Myanmar kingdom was annexed to the British Indi- an Empire. Lower Myanmar became the British Raj.

Peaceful, pious and diplomatic, King Mindon stopped the war with the British, but he never con- cluded the peace treaty. He began to feel ungodly and therefore continued to reside in Amarapura. Though auspiciously named Amarapura Im- mortal city, Amarapura was waning after 62 years of grandeur and glory, just as the eternal city of Rome de- clined after nearly 500 years of heydays. That is the Law of Impermanence Lord Buddha had preached. Am- arapura was the capital city twice with an interregnum of 13 years [1824-1837] during which it ceased to be a capital city. Like King Bodawpaya who re- sided at capital city Inwa for a yearly and a half and moved to Amarapura, a new capital city he founded, King Mindon resided in Am- arapura only 5 years, and he moved to a new capital city Ratanapagon he founded in the year 1857 and moved in that year.

King Mindon did not do anything for the urbanization or renovation of Am- arapura. On the contrary, he was responsible for mov- ing of major Buddha Imag- es from Amarapura to his new capital city Ratanapagon and dismantling many of the palace and public build- ings to be used in his new Office. At each corner of the palace city still stands a pa- goda – “Mya Nan San Kyaw”.

In the second year of King Mindon’s reign at Am- arapura that is 1855, Lord Dalhousie sent a British diplo- matic mission led by Ar- thur Phayre to King Mindon at Amarapura to negotiate regarding the Brit- ish annexation of the Prov- ince of Pegu, as well as to gather information about all aspects of upper Myanmar. Attached as members of the mission were one photographic artist, Sir Linnaeus Tripe and one painter Colesworthy Parkinson. Tripe was deputed to take photographs of scenes of Jataka stories carved in bold relief. The history of the pagoda is recorded on an inscription on the pedestal of the big pagoda still hung in a big pedestal in the precinct. In addition to U Pein wooden bridge, Taungtha- ngon Kyauk Tan Gy and Amarapura Bokaya monument already de- scribed in the previous articles there is an unusual ar- chitecture in Amarapura which the present Phaya, a vaulted pagoda with a big statue of Naga [dragon]’s hood over it.

Within the city, the only surviving monument is the Royal Treasury and the Record Office. At each corner of the palace city still stands a pa- goda “Mya Nan San Zedi”.

Not far from the south wall, outside the city, stands Patho-daw-gyi pagoda built by King Bogyidaw in 1820. It is an imposing stupa, with three lower terraces adorned with marble slab and its scenes of Jataka stories covered in bold relief. The history of the pagoda is recorded on an inscription on the pedestal of the big pagoda still hung in a big pedestal in the precinct. In addition to U Pein wooden bridge, Taungtha- ngon Kyauk Tan Gy and Amarapura Bokaya (concluded)
MFF to hold General Aung San Shield football tournament as of 2015

YANGON, 13 Feb—In memory of late national leader General Aung San, Myanmar Football Federation will hold the General Aung San Shield football tournament instead of the MFF Cup knockout football tournament as of this year.

The General Aung San Shield tournament had been held as of 1957 but it could not be organized due to various reasons.

The General Aung San Shield will allow participation of football clubs from first and second divisions.

MFF improved its football standard by holding the Myanmar National League Cup in 2009 for professional footballers.—MFF

Wushu athletes representing Mandalay Region under training

MANDALAY, 13 Feb—Officials of Mandalay Region Wushu Subcommittee met athletes, coaches and manager of Mandalay Region Wushu team that will take part in the 4th National Sports Festival, at Balthoo Gymnasium in Mandalay on 11 February.

Deputy Director of Sports and Physical Education Department U Wai Zin, Vice Chairman of Wushu Subcommittee U Thet Wai of Asia Energy and officials enjoyed skill demonstration of Wushu athletes.

The team led by head coach U Kyaw Aye and seven coaches comprises seven men and five women in Sanshou attack event and 14 athletes in the Taolu event.

The players are under training with the assistance of Mandalay Region government.—Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Mandalay Mayor Mandalay Region Minister for Development Affairs U Aung Moung and officials presented first, second and third prizes to the winners.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Nyaunglebin Tsp celebrates 68th Anniversary of the Union Day

NYAUNGLEBIN, 13 Feb—A ceremony to mark the 68th Anniversary of the Union Day was held at the sports ground of No 1 Basic Education High School in Nyaunglebin, Bago Region, on 12 February morning.

Township Administrator U Thein Zaw Kan and departmental officials, social organization members, teachers, students and local people were in attendance.

The township administrator read out the message sent by President U Thein Sein on the occasion of the 68th Anniversary of the Union Day.

Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)

Mandalarians enjoy vegetables and fruits show and contest

MANDALAY, 13 Feb—The 13th Mandalay Mayor’s Trophy Vegetables and Fruits Show and Contest is being held at the Kandawgyi Public Park in Mandalay from 12 to 18 February, attended by Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint and ministers.

The show and contest displays flowery arrangements, seasonal flowers, flowery plants, orchid, rose, bonsai, fruits, vegetables and fruit arrangements.

Mandalay Mayor Mandalay Region Minister for Development Affairs U Aung Moung and officials presented first, second and third prizes to the winners.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Traditional sports events mark centennial birthday of General Aung San

MANDALAY, 13 Feb—In commemoration of the centennial birthday of General Aung San, the traditional sports events, poem recitation and essay contests were held in seven townships of Mandalay District as of 7 February.

The centennial birthday of the general was celebrated in Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay. On 12 February, traditional sports events were held for the people.

In the evening, Yar Pyae Anyeint troupe and Yadana Thae Htaung performed entertainment to the local people.—Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)
Battle lines emerge in US Congress over Obama Islamic state war plan

WASHINGTON 13 Feb — House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner said on Thursday Republicans want a "strong, robust" authorization for military action against Islamic State, underlining sharp differences with Democrats over President Barack Obama’s plans for the campaign.

A day after Obama sent his proposed authorization to Congress, Boehner told a news conference he and his fellow Republicans wanted to give US military commanders enough flexibility to defeat the militant group wherever it exists. "I want to give our military commanders the flexibility and the authority they need to defeat the enemy," Boehner said.

"If we’re going to win this fight, we need a strong robust strategy and a strong, robust authority."

While Republicans said Obama included too many restrictions in the plan, such as a pledge there would be no "enduring" involvement by US ground troops, the president’s fellow Democrats worry the plan is too broad.

Many Democrats — particularly the most liberal members of the House — said they wanted a blanket prohibition on US ground combat forces. Some also called for geographic restrictions on combat, which are not in Obama’s draft proposal.

Both the Senate and House must approve the war authorization for it to take effect.

Leaders of both chambers promise to hold hearings and briefings in the coming weeks as lawmakers debate and amend the proposal.

The House Democratic leader, Nancy Pelosi, acknowledged that it will be difficult for Obama’s measure to pass. "It is going to be hard" for Republicans and Democrats to reach consensus, she told a weekly news conference.

Republican control a majority of seats in both the House and Senate, but there are too many objections from members of both parties for the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) to pass without bipartisan backing.

Obama has also called for both parties to get behind the plan, in order to show the world — and Islamic State militants — a united front.

Boehner was asked if he thought a plan could pass. He did not give an answer, saying only, "Let’s take it one day at a time."

UN says Yemen collapsing, on brink of civil war

Anti-Houthi protesters demonstrate to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the uprising that forced former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in Yemen’s southwestern city of Taiz on 11 Feb, 2015.—Reuters

The country is also home to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, one of the global network’s most active arms that has carried out attacks and officials in the Jazeera and Badaya operations commands.

The officials said another group of insurgents then attacked the heavily-guarded Ain al-Asad air base five km southwest of the town, but were unable to break into it.

About 320 US Marines are training members of the Iraqi 7th Division at the base, which has been struck by mortar fire on at least one previous occasion since December. Pentagon spokeswoman Navy Commander Elissa Smith confirmed the fighting in al-Baghdadi. She said there had been no direct attack on the air base, adding: "There were reports of ineffective indirect fire in the vicinity of the base."

An Iraqi defence ministry spokesman declined to comment on the situation in Anbar.

The death toll from the fighting was not immediately clear.

Most of the surrounding towns in Anbar fell under Islamic State control after the group’s rapid advance across the Syrian border last summer.

Elsewhere in Iraq, five civilians were killed when 22 bombs went off in two towns south of Baghdad, police and medical sources said. Such attacks are not uncommon in and around the capital.—Reuters

UN says Yemen collapsing, on brink of civil war

United Nations, 13 Feb — The United Nations warned on Thursday that Yemen is "collapsing before our eyes", on the brink of civil war and prime for al-Qaeda militants to grow stronger in the country as talks on a political settlement continue.

Al-Qaeda and other Sunni Muslim militants have stepped up attacks since rival Iran-backed Sh’ite Muslim Houthi fighters from the north seized the capital in September and started expanding across the country.

The Houthis have sidelined the central government in Yemen, which borders oil giant Saudi Arabia.

Islamic State fighters seize western Iraqi town — officials

Baghdad, 13 Feb — Islamic State insurgents took control on Thursday of most of the western Iraqi town of al-Baghdadi, threatening an air base where US Marines are training Iraqi troops, officials said.

Al-Baghdadi, about 85 km (50 miles) northwest of Ramadi in Anbar Province, had been besieged for months by the radical Sunni Islamists who captured vast swathes of northern and western Iraq last year.

"Ninety percent of al-Baghdadi district has fallen under the control of the insurgents," district manager Najr Arak told Reuters by phone.

Militants attacked al-Baghdadi from two directions earlier in the day and then advanced on the town, intelligence sources said.

"We must do everything possible to help Yemen step out of this crisis."—Ban Ki-moon to the 15-nation council.

Benomar also warned on Thursday that the local currency could fall under the control of the insurgents, with the capital Adden being isolated.

"It is a coup against the legitimate government in Yemen," she said. "We should bring pressure to bear on the Houthis to stop using force and to withdraw from all governmental institutions."

Britain’s UN Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant said that Britain and Jordan were planning to draft a resolution on Yemen that he hoped could be adopted within days. He declined to elaborate on what the key elements of the resolution could be.—Reuters

Jordan’s air force resumes raids against Islamic State

A Jordanian woman lights a candle near a poster of Jordan’s King Abdullah (R) and a poster depicting a Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasasbeh during a candlelight vigil in solidarity with the family of Kasasbeh, who was burnt alive by the Islamic State, in Amman on 7 Feb, 2015.—Reuters

An official said the kingdom had begun lending crucial logistical and intelligence backing to the Iraqi military as it prepares for a major offensive in coming months to regain control of the northern city of Mosul, which fell to the militants last year.

Another military source ruled out Jordan joining any ground offensive against Islamic State but said the country’s elite special forces could have an important role to play.

UN-led coalition fighting the militants in both Syria and Iraq.

"The airforce has bombed and destroyed selected targets of the Daesh criminal gang this afternoon," it said. "Daesh" is a derogatory term for the militants.

The raids are the first the Jordanian military have announced since three straight days of aerial bombing that ended last Saturday.

However, Jordanian military experts say the kingdom may soon struggle to sustain the intensity of air strikes, given the limited supply of F-16 jets at its disposal.

King Abdullah told US lawmakers in Washington last week that Jordan needs precision munitions, aircraft parts and night vision equipment.

Separately, an army source said a squadron of F-16 fighters which arrived earlier this week in Amman from the United Arab Emirates had conducted a second series of sorties on Thursday against Islamic State targets.

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Reuters
World's oceans clogged by millions of tons of plastic trash

WASHINGTON, 17 Feb — The world’s oceans are clogged with plastic debris, but how much of it finds its way into the seas annually? Enough to place the equivalent of five grocery bags full of plastic trash on every foot (30 cm) of every nation’s coastline around the globe.

That’s according to scientists who released research on Thursday estimating that a staggering 8 million metric tons of plastic pollution enter the oceans each year from the world’s 192 coastal countries based on 2010 data. Based on rising waste levels, they estimated that more than 9 million tons would end up in the oceans in 2015. Experts have sounded the alarm in recent years over how plastic pollution is killing huge numbers of seabirds, marine mammals, sea turtles and other creatures while suffocating ocean ecosystems.

China’s Xiaomi to start small in US, with earphones and bands

SAN FRANCISCO, 13 Feb — Xiaomi (XTC.UK), China’s largest smartphone company, will begin selling headphones, smart wristbands and other accessories online in the United States in coming months, taking its first tentative step onto Apple Inc’s home turf without its signature Mi mobile devices. The company also said it is close to securing a manufacturing partner in Brazil, which will help it skirt punishing tariffs on imported electronics when it begins sales in Latin America’s largest economy in the first half of this year.

China's 5G test network

HELSINKI, 13 Feb — VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland and the University of Oulu have started building a 5G test network in Oulu, a northern city of Finland, in cooperation with industrial partners, VTT said in a press release issued on Thursday.

In the test network, critical technologies can be developed and the performance of the novel technologies will be checked out in a realistic environment, said VTT. The test network have two components: a restricted network conducted by VTT and a public network set up by the University of Oulu. In the restricted network, companies involved in the project can test the functions of their technologies, while in the public network, network performance under heavy load can be examined. “In the test network, we will develop new technologies, and build 5G test environment for the research purposes based on the technologies. It enables long-term cooperation among various actors in the wireless communications ecosystem,” Also Hekkala project manager from VTT, was quoted as saying.

Furry forerunners: Jurassic arboreal, burrowing mammals unearthed

WASHINGTON, 17 Feb — It may or may have been the most opportune time to be a furry little critter, what with all those hungry dinosours and flying reptiles hanging around. But early mammals still managed to make their mark during the Jurassic Period.

Scientists on Thursday described fossils unearthed in China of two shrew-sized creatures that represent the oldest-known tree-climbing and burrowing mammals and show that early mammals had claimed a variety of ecological niches.

Agilodocodon scansorius, an omnivore that lived about 165 million years ago, possessed paws with curved claws for climbing, limb dimensions characteristic of other tree-dwelling mammals and flexible elbows, wrist and ankle joints good for scrambling up trees with agility.

Skeletal and life style reconstructions of Agilodocodon scansorius, a docodont mammal form is shown in this illustration courtesy of University of Chicago released to Reuters on 12 Feb, 2015. — REUTERS

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South African parliament descends into chaos as Zuma gets hostile reception

CAPE TOWN, 13 Feb — South Africa’s parliament descended into chaos on Thursday as opposition lawmakers were removed by force after disrupting Jacob Zuma’s annual address, an unprecedented sign of discontent at his administration.

The President’s first State of the Nation speech since his re-election last May had been billed as an opportunity to highlight the achievements of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and its plans for the year ahead.

But he received a hostile reception from lawmakers who started a far-left Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), led by firebrand Julius Malema, former ANC youth leader and former lawmaker.

Malema, whose T-shirt said “Colombia fights for peace,” began speaking when EFF members began interrupting, demanding to ask the president about when he would repay part of a $23 million state-funded security upgrade of his rural home.

A clearly angry Speaker Baleka Mbete, warned several EFF members to sit down before ordering them to be removed by security officers, prompting a brief brawl in which several people were injured, witnesses said.

“We have seen that we are part of a police state,” Malema, whose T-shirt was torn in the fracas, told reporters after being bundled out of parliament in a scrum.

Lawmakers from the main opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) also left the chamber.

Zuma then delivered his speech to claps and cheers of support from ANC lawmakers as he highlighted the strides South Africa has made since the end of white-minority rule two decades ago.

The president’s popularity has been waning, however, following what was seen as extravagant spending on his rural home expense and as South Africa’s economy has slowed sharply.

DA parliamentary leader Mmusi Maimane accused Mbete’s decision to call in security officers undermined democracy in South Africa, evoking how much he has been fought for by the country’s first black president, Nelson Mandela.

“South Africa cannot escalate the issue by sending police into the chamber,” Maimane told reporters outside parliament.

“It robs the people of South Africa of what President Nelson Mandela fought for, which is the upholding of the rule of law and the constitution.”

Ex wife of dead Argentine prosecutor says ‘stop politicising’ case

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb — Argentina has made high-level criminal charges against the president of its ruling party, which now goes to the lower house of Congress for a vote. Fernandez says the SI — the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,” to the Inter-American Commission.

Sandra Arroyo Salgado, ex-wife of late prosecutor Alberto Nisman, speaks to a group of opposition senators in Buenos Aires on 12 Feb, 2015.— Reuters

Nisman, 3 Feb — Thousands of civilians fled their homes in the southern Nger town of Diffa this week, officials said on Thursday, following waves of cross-border raids and suicide bombings by Niger’s new militant group Boko Haram.

Attacks in Niger are deepening a humanitarian crisis in the remote border zone. The area, struggling to feed some 150,000 people who have run to escape violence in northern Nigeria, has seen around 7,000 arrive this week in Zinder, Niger’s second biggest town some 450 km (280 miles) west of Diffa.

Niger’s military said its forces had killed 260 Boko Haram militants and had arrested others in fighting since 6 February. A suspected local leader of the group was arrested and several weapons including rocket launchers seized from his home. The International Rescue Committee, which supplied the population estimates, has teams working around Diffa and Zinder.

Matias Meier, country director, said some families in Zinder, one of the poorest regions in Niger, were having to host 20 people, while other displaced were sleeping in the stadium.

A local politician said the flow of people out of Diffa continued on Thursday even though the town was calm.

“Everyone wants to get as far from Boko Haram as possible,” the politician said, asking not to be named.

The IRC’s Meier said: “Those who went on the trucks are the lucky ones. Bus tickets are sold out until the end of next week. Many are just walking or going by bicycle.”

A tout at Diffa’s bus station said hundreds of mini-busses, coaches and trucks had ferried people out of town. The cost of a seat in any vehicle travelling to Zinder had nearly tripled to 15,000 CFA francs ($26), he said.

Boko Haram’s insurgency has killed thousands in northeastern Nigeria. Regional armies are mobilising a joint force of 8,700 men to defeat the group that is increasingly threatening neighbouring countries.

Colombia’s FARC rebels raise minimum recruitment age to 17

The FARC’s ranks have been halved to around 8,000 by a US-backed military offensive that has run for more than five years, and breached the group, and its smaller counterpart, the National Liberation Army (ELN), deeper into their jungle hideouts.

The FARC initiated a unilateral ceasefire shortly before Christmas as both sides seek to de-escalate. The FARC and the government are negotiating a five-point agenda for peace.
Workers evacuated in Namibian mine fire with fear of radiation leakage

SWAKOPMUND, (Namibia), 13 Feb — Over 1000 miners at an open-pit uranium mine in Namibia’s coastal Namib Desert were evacuated on Thursday after a fire broke out.

The fire-hit Rossing Uranium is located near the town of Arandis, some 65 kilometres from the coastal city of Swakopmund. Its main shareholders are British-Australian mining cooperation Rio Tinto Group (69 percent), the Iranian government (15 percent) and the Namibian government (three percent).

The mine’s emergency service evacuated all workers to safe areas after the fire broke out at the final product recovery plant of the mine, where uranium oxide is packed for export, according to a statement issued on Thursday afternoon by the mine. There were no injuries among the employees.

Mining operations in the areas were not affected by the incident and continue as normal, the statement said. “The fire happened in a sudden and spread quickly within the plant. We had to call the fire brigades from Swakopmund and Arandis to assist us,” said a worker who declined to name himself. The fire was contained two hours later, however some workers feared a possible radiation leakage.

“Our only worry now is the possibility of a radiation leakage as this is the final plant where we pack uranium,” the worker said.

The mine’s spokeswoman Botha Ellis said the mine is assessing and monitoring the situation. “We are aware of such a possibility, but it is too early to comment on it as we are currently busy with the assessment and investigation to find out the cause of the fire,” Ellis said.

Discovered in 1928, the Rossing Uranium Mine is one of the largest and longest-running uranium mines in the world and in 2013 produced 3.4 percent of global output of uranium. — Reuters

Workers take photos of the fire-hit Rossing Uranium near the town of Arandis, some 65 kilometres from the coastal city of Swakopmund, Namibia on 12 Feb, 2015. Over 1,000 miners at an open-pit uranium mine in Namibia’s coastal Namib Desert were evacuated on Thursday after a fire broke out.— Xinhua

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair in the Central Bay and partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 14th February, 2015: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagarir, Mandalay, Bago and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

China entering New Year with fewer crackers, less pork, more thrift

SHANGHAI, 13 Feb — The coming Lunar New Year will be a damp squib for Ding Shen, the 34-year-old owner of Beautiful Scenery Fireworks, who like a lot of China’s entrepreneurs is counting the cost of an economy growing at its slowest for nearly a quarter of century. “If you don’t have money, you’re not going to buy fireworks,” said Ding, who runs a store in Shanghai and a factory in the south-central province Hunan. Fireworks, an essential part of the celebrations, are traditionally set off everywhere — on streets, in courtyards and even off rooftops — during the week-long holiday. But they are an expense that people can easily cut.

“We’ve seen our domestic sales drop 40 percent and the fundamental reason has been because of China’s economic slowdown,” said Ding, who runs a store in Shanghai and a factory in the South-Central province Hunan. Fireworks, an essential part of the celebrations, are traditionally set off everywhere — on streets, in courtyards and even off rooftops — during the week-long holiday. But they are an expense that people can easily cut.

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Hosting Oscars better than being nominated: Neil Patrick Harris

New York, 13 Feb — Fannnyman Neil Patrick Harris admits being nervous for his first hosting stint at upcoming Academy Awards but feels it is any day less pressurising than being a nominee.

The 41-year-old ‘How I Met Your Mother’ star is making his debut as a host at the 87th Oscar nominees.

He is expected to hold a news conference in Beijing on Saturday.

Celebrities have been a major linchpin in the government’s campaign to get tough on drugs.

Jaycee Chan is among a string of other mostly B-list celebrities detained last year by Chinese authorities on drug-related charges that have been publicised widely in both state and social media. They have included movie and television stars, film directors and a prominent screenwriter.

Illegal drugs, especially synthetic substances like methamphetamine, ketamine and ecstasy, have grown in popularity in China in tandem with the rise of a new urban class with greater disposable income.

State media has reported that Jackie Chan felt ashamed of his son’s drug abuse and hopes that one day he will speak out about the dangers of taking drugs.

The older Chan had served as a goodwill spokesman for the China National Anti-Drug Committee in 2009, promoting anti-drug education.—Reuters

Lady Gaga to perform at Oscars

Los Angeles, 13 Feb — Pop sensation Lady Gaga has joined the lineup of stars performing at the Oscars. Gaga, 28, will make a special tribute performance at the 87th Oscars, said show producers Craig Zadan and Neil Meron.

“Lady Gaga is a once in a lifetime artist who’s musical evolution keeps growing. We are proud to have her perform on the Oscars for the very first time.” Zadan and Meron said in a statement.

Producers have earlier announced singers Jack Black, Anna Kendrick, and Jennifer Hudson will participate in the ceremony.

Multiple Grammy-winning singer Gaga has so far sold over 27 million albums, 130 million singles, and over 4 million tickets globally to her award-winning live performances.—PTI

Pierce Brosnan’s home damaged in fire

New York, 13 Feb — A portion of Pierce Brosnan’s home in Malibu has been damaged in a fire. According to KABC, the local ABC affiliate, about 50 Los Angeles County firefighters responded to the blaze, which broke out 9:48 pm on Wednesday in the former James Bond actor’s garage.

No one was injured in the fire. A distressed-looking Brosnan was pictured outside the house, which he shares with wife Keely Shaye Smith. The fire was controlled before it spread to the main part of the house.—PTI

Ben Affleck, Jessica Chastain, Viola Davis among Oscar presenters

Los Angeles, 13 Feb — Hollywood stars Ben Affleck, Jessica Chastain, Viola Davis, Kevin Hart, Shirley MacLaine, Chris Pine, Miles Teller and Naomi Watts will be presenters at this year’s Oscars.

The Academy awards, hosted by Neil Patrick Harris, will take place on 22 February.

Affleck, a two-time Academy Award winner, received an Original Screenplay Oscar for ‘Good Will Hunting’ and a Best Picture Oscar for ‘Argo’. His most recent role was opposite Rosamund Pike in ‘Gone Girl’.

Chastain has received two Oscar nominations, one for Best Supporting actress for ‘Zero Dark Thirty’ and another in the supporting category for ‘The Help’.

Davis has been nominated for two Oscars, one for her supporting role in ‘Doubt’ and one for her leading role in ‘The Help’.

Hart currently stars in the feature comedy ‘The Wedding Ringer’.

MacLaine won an Oscar for her role in ‘Terms of Endearment’.

Pine most recently appeared as Cinderella’s Prince in ‘Into the Woods’ (2014).

Teller stars in the current Best Picture nominee ‘Whiplash’.

Watts has twice been nominated for Actress in a Leading Role, for ‘The Impossible’ and ‘21 Grams’. —PTI

Whitney Houston’s family pays tribute on third death anniversary

Los Angeles, 13 Feb — Members of Whitney Houston’s family post tributes to the singer-actress on her third death anniversary.

As Houston’s daughter, Bobbi Kristina Brown, remains hospitalised, the family has been praying for her but in the meantime they have taken a moment to honour their late relative, reported E!Online.

Tina Brown, Houston’s sister-in-law, posted on Facebook a message about the Grammy winner.

“I miss you MY sister… Rip…I miss you sis, like crazy!” she posted, adding she is “feeling heartbroken” in the status. She also included several photos of Houston.

Kristina’s cousin, Jerod Brown, posted a lengthy message in honour of the ‘My Love Is Your Love’ singer and included the last photo he ever took with his aunt.

“You will never know the last moment you will experience, the last conversation you will have, the last photo you will take. Well this was the last photo we took with you auntie and I would have known that I would’ve taken a few more,” he wrote.

“In life we forget to take a few more photos, share a few more laughs, shed a few more tears, overcome a few more struggles, mentor a few more people,” he added.

Shayne Brown, Houston’s nephew, wrote about his restlessness in anticipation of the tragic anniversary.

“Interview at 6 am but unfortunately I can’t sleep way 2 much on my mind,” he wrote. “So room service it is…” Houston died on 11 February, at the age of 48. —PTI

Pierce Brosnan

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No one was injured in the fire. A distressed-looking Brosnan was pictured outside the house, which he shares with wife Keely Shaye Smith. The fire was controlled before it spread to the main part of the house.—PTI
**GENERAL**

**Icebreaker planning to tow Australian vessel from Antarctic ice**

**Wellington, 13 Feb** — A United States Coast Guard vessel is expected to reach an Australian fishing boat trapped in Antarctic ice early on Saturday, New Zealand’s maritime rescue service said on Friday.

The Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ), which is organizing the rescue, said the skipper of icebreaker *CG Polar Star* had indicated he intended to tow the fishing vessel into open waters, if conditions permitted.

The 63-metre Antarctic Chieftain became trapped on Wednesday after damaging three of the four blades of its propeller.

RCCNZ Search and Rescue Coordination Greg Johnston said in a statement that the damage prevented the vessel from returning to the open sea without assistance.

The vessel had a crew of 26 aboard, 13 of them New Zealanders. The New Zealand-flagged fishing boat, *Janas*, was also heading to the area to provide assistance if required.

The *Janas* was around 730 nautical miles (1,350 km) from the non-polar and expected to reach the area early Sunday.

Weather conditions for all three vessels continued to be Favorable, said Johnston. The Antarctic Chieftain was located at the eastern edge of New Zealand’s search and rescue region, approximately 900 nautical miles (1,700 km) from McMurdo Sound.

The boat’s hull was not damaged, although there had been no spill of oil from the vessel. —*Xinhua*

**Even with Turkish Stream, Russia can’t avoid sending gas via Ukraine**


Governor of Rio de Janeiro state Luiz Fernando Pezao said on Friday that 11 of 56 people who have close contacts of the nurse who tested positive for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome-CoV (MERS-CoV) have manifested symptoms of the disease.

“11 symptomatic patients will undergo another round of tests using sputum and rectal swab samples,” she said.

Garin clarified that the nurse had 220 co-passengers on the flight she took. Ninety two of them have been located and agreed to be tested.

The government continued to call on the remaining passengers to contact DoH to be tested for the virus. —*Xinhua*

**Manila, 13 Feb** — The Philippine government said on Friday that 11 of 56 people who have close contacts of the nurse who tested positive for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome-CoV (MERS-CoV) have manifested symptoms of the disease.

The nurse’s mother-in-law and house helpers are also undergoing quarantine at RTFM although they showed no symptoms at the moment. Sadie Janette Garin, DOH acting secretary, said in a press briefing.

“All 56 people yielded a negative result in the first round of tests using nose and throat swab samples. However, the 11 symptomatic patients will undergo another round of tests using sputum and rectal swab samples,” she said.

**11 under quarantine after showing MERS-CoV symptoms in Philippines**

**Wellington, 14 Feb** — New Zealand’s search and rescue team spent but the waters remain unclean, the government confirmed on Saturday.

The boat’s hull was damaged, but the waters remain unclean, the government confirmed on Saturday.

**Entertainment Channel**

(14-2-2015, Saturday)  
6:00 am  • Honour Song for Alinka Kyaw Swar Myoma Nyen  
6:20 am  • Teleplay  
7:00 am  • Fashion Show Music  
7:30 am  • Myanmar Series

(14-2-2015, Saturday)  
6:00 am  • Partita by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw  
6:45 am  • Documentary  
7:30 am  • Head Line News  
7:35 am  • Hyper Sports  
8:00 am  • News/International News  
8:35 am  • People’s Talks  
9:35 am  • MRTV’s Youth Programme  
10:35 am  • Science and Technology Programme  
11:35 am  • Current Affairs  
12:00 noon  • News/International News /Weather Report  
12:35 pm  • Round up of the week’s TV News

**News Channel in Brief**

(14-2-2015, Saturday)  
6:00 am  • Partita by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw  
6:45 am  • Documentary  
7:30 am  • Head Line News  
7:35 am  • Hyper Sports  
8:00 am  • News/International News  
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**Local News**  
• U Kyaw Thu: From Artist to Philanthropist (Part-I)  
• World News  
• Myanmar Masterclass: Performance Art

**World News**  
• A Journey To Southern Shan State (Ep-2)  
• World News  
• General Aung San Museum  
• Local News  
• Snow Flakes...Scenic Confluence...To Kachin State  
• World News  
• Great Minds of Myanmar  
• Local News  
• Myanmar Wedding Dress  
• World News

**World News**  
• Kyaihtikeeuye: My Father The Porter  
• Local News  
• The Long-Lasting Royal Tradition  
• World News  
• Distinguished Myanmar Ladies “Ma Myint Zu”
Chelsea and Everton charged for mass scuffle

LONDON, 13 Feb — Chelsea and Everton have been charged by the FA after Wednesday's Stormy Premier League encounter but Branislav Ivanovic will face no action for his clash with James McCarthy.

"Both Chelsea and Everton have been charged by the FA for failing to ensure their players conducted themselves in an orderly fashion and/or refrained from provocative behaviour," the governing body said in a statement on Thursday. Tempers flared in the 96th minute of Chelsea's 1-0 victory at Stamford Bridge as players from both teams confronted each other and Chelsea defender Ivanovic went unpunished after grabbing Everton midfielder McCarthy in an untimely tussle.

Serb Ivanovic will face no action, however, after the FA said a three-member panel that reviewed the incident did not agree it was a sending-off offence. Chelsea, who are seven points clear at the top of the table, have been without striker Diego Costa for the last three matches after he was banned for stamping. Manager Jose Mourinho was also recently fined by the FA for suggesting there was a "campaign" to influence referees' decisions against his team.

Coentrao joins long list of Real Madrid injured

MADRID, 13 Feb — Real Madrid had mixed news on the injury front on Thursday, with centre back Fabio Coentrao joining a lengthy list of sidelined players. Coentrao, like Pepe a Portugal international, had picked up a calf muscle injury, Real said on their website.

Fabio Coentrao (L) fights for the ball with Giacomo Bonaventura during their friendly soccer match in Dubai on 30 Dec, 2014. Reuters

Hazard signs new long-term Chelsea contract

LONDON, 13 Feb — Chelsea's Player of the Year last season despite some criticism from manager Jose Mourinho who described him as not a team player.

But Mourinho believes Hazard has evolved into one of the world's best attacking talents and there is more to come. He is already a top player and his evolution has been fantastic. He is still very young and he can become the best," Mourinho said. "I am very happy that Eden has signed a new contract. It shows he believes in the club's coaching staff and players to help him become the best player in the world." — Reuters

Hodgson hints Kane and Ings are set for England call-up

LONDON, 13 Feb — Hodgson has been aware of Kane's qualities for some time as he has played 10 times for England's Under-21s over the last two seasons.

Yet the manager admitted he has come a long way in that time. "Eighteen months ago Harry was not a starter in the Under-21s," he said. "He came on and he scored if I remember correctly, but there is no doubt he has moved on enormously since then." He also said that Ings, who has played seven times and scored four goals for the Under-21s, had impressed him this season. "We have the best of both worlds," the manager said. "Sometimes we have had to split centre forwards... this one is the target and that one isn't much of a target but does run behind the defenders. "But with Harry and Danny you've got the best of both — both can do