Nay Pyi Taw, 16 March—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein visited Shipherd nurseries in southern part of Auckland, New Zealand, this morning.

The President heard reports on growing of different kinds of rose and other flowers through greenhouse system and exporting of it to the market by nursery in charge Mr. Frans Van Dorsser.

Then, the President and party visited the greenhouse garden. Afterwards, they went to milk cow farm in Kara Kar where they were conducted the breeding of milk cow and milk production by local farmer Mr. Murray Shaw.

The President and party raised questions over milk production. In the evening, the President and party proceeded to Auckland Marine Rescue Centre where they were clarified the production of speed boats and the process of marine rescue by Hamilton Jet speed boat production project by Manager Mr. Brent Cleand.

The President and party observed the trial run of Hamilton Jet speed boat. They also visited Auckland War Memorial Museum and observed cultural artifacts. Director Mr. Rob Clare explained the historical background of the museum.

The President met the Myanmar ambassador to New Zealand and embassy staff families, Myanmar students studying in New Zealand and presented souvenirs to them. 

President U Thein Sein observes nursery, trial of Hamilton Jet speed boat, Auckland Museum

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President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein observing the trial run of Hamilton Jet speed boats at Auckland Marine Rescue Centre.—MNA

Viectel Group donates computers, cash

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 March—A donation ceremony of computers and cash by Viectel Group of Viet Nam to the Ministry of Education and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association was held at the meeting hall of MMCWA (Central) this morning.

Mr Nguyen Duy Tho, Director-General of Viectel Group, presented computers and cash to Education Ministry and MMCWA.

"The computers would be distributed to schools under the Ministry of Education and cash would be spent on reconstruction of schools in storm- and quake-hit areas," said President of MMCWA Dr Mon Mon Aung.—MNA

Daewoo E & P donates cash for HIV infected children

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 March—A ceremony to donate nutrition powder for children living with HIV through Specialist Hospital Mingaladon was held at head office of Daewoo E & P on 4 March.

Package of nutrition powder worth K 35,016,300 was handed over to Specialist Hospital Mingaladon by Daewoo E & P on behalf of Shwe Consortium.

Since 2006, in consideration of Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR), on behalf of Shwe Consortium, Daewoo E & P has provided ARV drugs for opportunistic infections and supplementary food items of nutrition powder worth around US$ 300,000 for the HIV infected.

Daewoo E & P will continue to provide drugs and nutrition powder to HIV infected children in coming years.—NLM
Smuggle goods confiscated in Waw Township

Mobile Team-2 confiscated smuggled goods while searching vehicles carrying goods which are not included in customs forms at mile post No (81/4) near Satthwarchon village in Waw Township of Bago Region on 12 March.

The team seized 50 water coolers, five cartons of fish sauce, 64 packages of tower and 50 bottles of soft drink worth K 2,396,000 on the vehicle driven by Kyaw Oo. Likewise, the team confiscated 15 cartons of beer which were hidden in a box near fuel tank and at place for spare tyre on the vehicle by Than Win.

Upgradation of each road section on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway in progress

NAY PYI TAW, 16 March — The Yangon-Mandalay Expressway is being upgraded paving it with asphalt.

Tarmacking of each road section is being carried out mainly at accident-prone road sections with turns and weak foundation. “It is found that car accidents are frequent at the road sections with turns and weak foundation on the expressway. That’s why the expressway is being upgraded to be equipped with standard characteristics of a road with the aim of mitigating road accident and ensuring road safety along the expressway,” an official of Yangon-Mandalay Expressway Police Commander Office said.

The Yangon-Mandalay Expressway was put into service in March 2009 and an average number of vehicles on the expressway are 10000 a day.

Deputy Minister inspects construction works at University of Forestry (Yezin)

NAY PYI TAW, 16 March — Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Aye Myint Maung made an inspection tour of University of Forestry (Yezin) where he oversaw construction of a two-storey school building and housing for faculty members on 12 March.

The deputy minister stressed the need to be equipped with teaching aids that facilitate e-learning and e-education at the theater which is under construction so that the theater can be used as multipurpose one. Moreover, he called for timeliness completion of construction works meeting set standard. Upon completion of the school building, it can admit 624 students.

Woman killed in road accident in Pyay Township

PYAY, 16 March — A woman died of severe injuries while she was taken to the hospital after she was knocked down by a motorcycle on Pyay-Paukhaung road in Pyay on 10 March. The motorbike driven by Hein Win, 31, of West Ghetto in Paungdale village-tract of Pyay Township hit Daw Ma Myint, 58, of Kalarkan village of Hnawwar village-tract in Pyay Township who was crossing over the road at about 7.30 am on that day. Daw Ma Myint was seriously wounded in the incident and died of severe injuries while she was taken to Pyay hospital.

Mandalay fuel shop fire in Mandalay

MANDELA, 16 March — An outbreak of fire at a private fuel shop on 39th Street between 86th and 87th streets in Mandalay caused a public panic as a haul of fuel containers were found at the shop after the flame flickered and went out.

A fire broke out at That-tant-yaung fuel shop at about 2.50 pm on 12 March. According to the responsible persons of fire services department, the outbreak of fire was due to static electricity while filling fuel from a plastic container to a metal jar.

Although there was no spread of fire to nearby houses, the fire gutted the whole shop, destroying furniture, 50 gallons of petrol and 25 gallons of diesel. As soon as the fire started, the crowds of local people fought the fire with the use of fire extinguishers and they were joined by about 100 fire fighters accompanied by 11 fire trucks. They struggled to control the fire and put out it at about 3.15 pm. Soon after the flame went out, the news of finding out the fuel storage came as a shock to local people. But the fire did not lick the fuel containers.

Two women and one fire officer were wounded in the fire. Shop assistant Hein Tha, 24, was charged with the cause of fire by police.

Monk killed after being run over by train

OTWIN, 16 March — A monk, who is believed to be struck by a train, was found dead at a place between mile post Nos (158/15) and (158/16) on Yangon-Mandalay rail road near Otwin railway station in Bago ward of Otwin Township on 11 March morning.

A car went out of control and hit the pavement of That-tant-yaung fuel shop and went out.

Car crash causes sever injury to speedster in Mayangon Township

MANDELA, 16 March — A car accident caused heavily damage to the car and severe injury to the speedster.

Young man drowns while trying to remove fishing hook underwater

BAO, 16 March — As Myohla police station was informed that a young man died of drowning in Sittoung River near Chaungkyo village in Yedashe Township on March 9, police members led by Police Sub-inspector Nann Oo rushed to the scene of incident and carried out investigation into the case.

Investigation revealed that the monk died of severe injuries after being run over by No (933) Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw up-train at about 3 pm on that day. Ottwin police field a case about the death of the monk and investigating is ongoing to identify the name of monk.

Car crash causes sever injury to speedster in Mayangon Township

The car driven by Kyaw Zaw Lwin, 42, of Hlinethaya Township skidded out of control and crashed into the pavement at the corner of Thamaing Butayon street and Tabinshwehti street. The car accident caused heavily damage to the car and severe injury to the speedster.

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Obama touts 2-billion-dollar fund for energy research

US President Barack Obama remarks on the topic of energy policies at the Argonne National Laboratory outside Chicago, the United States, on 15 March, 2013. Obama announced that he would ask the Congress to create an energy security trust to fund research into alternatives to gasoline. — Xinhua

CHICAGO, 16 March—US President Barack Obama on Friday unveiled the set up for a 2-billion-dollar Energy Security Trust during a speech made at the Argonne National Laboratory outside Chicago, which will bolster clean energy research and development in the US. “We have to keep investing in scientific research,” Obama said, lamenting the impact of the federal budget sequester on US research. “We can’t afford to miss these opportunities while the rest of the world races forward.”

The fund builds on an idea Obama floated during his State of the Union speech to boost energy production increases and demand falls. Obama’s idea enjoys some bipartisan and business support, but is likely to encounter strong resistance from Congressional Republicans, who will portray it as a tax on energy producers. However, the White House says the money will come from growth in drilling revenue from leases on public lands and waters over the next decade and is not a new tax.

The Argonne research facility, is one of the US Department of Energy’s largest national laboratories for scientific and engineering research focusing on energy, the environment and national security. — Xinhua

US drone strikes violate Pakistan’s sovereignty

UNITED NATIONS, 16 March—The United Nations has violated Pakistan’s sovereignty and shattered tribal structures with unmanned drone strikes in its counterterrorism operations near the Afghan border, a UN human rights investigator said in a statement on Friday. UN special rapporteur on human rights and counterterrorism, Ben Emmerson, visited Pakistan for three days this week as part of his investigation into the civilian impact of the use of drones and other forms of targeted killings.

“As a matter of international law, the US drone campaign in Pakistan is...being conducted without the consent of the elected representatives of the people, or the legitimate Government of the State,” Emmerson said in a statement issued by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva.

Rome, 16 March—Italy’s new parliament sat on Friday for the first time since an inconclusive general election produced a political stalemate that meant deputies and senators were unable even to elect speakers for either chamber.

The February election gave the centre left a majority in the lower house but not in the Senate, leaving it unable to form a government and raising the spectre of a return to the polls and the threat of renewed market turmoil.

Centre-left leader Pier Luigi Bersani has so far ruled out any deal with Berlusconi’s centre-right bloc, the second-biggest force in parliament. But his overtures to the major new force in Italian politics—Beppe Grillo’s anti-establishment Five-Star Movement—have been rebuffed.

“We are ready for anything,” Roberta Lombardi, a Five-Star Movement leader in the lower house, told reporters when asked if she was prepared to go back to the ballot box.

Only once the two speakers have been elected can President Giorgio Napolitano begin formal consultations with party leaders to see if there is any prospect of forming a government.

But in a stark symptom of the stalemate, the 630 lower house deputies and 315 senators sitting on Friday failed to elect either. Voting in both houses will resume on Saturday.

After the votes, Berlusconi accused Bersani’s Democratic Party (PD) for “irresponsible tactical manoeuvres” that “ignore the election result,” according to a statement posted on his Facebook page.

Bersani said a government “not only must be found but will be found” and harangued Bersani for ignoring his overtures to form a left-right government.

Businesses, bankers and foreign governments have all voiced hope that Italy can form a government capable of reforms needed to lift the euro zone’s third-largest economy out of stagnation.

The fiery Grillo has promised not to support any government not led by his own movement. He has rejected any backroom deal with the parties he blames for dragging Italy into crisis. — Reuters

Gridlocked Italian parliament fails to elect speakers

Japan seeks to join US-led Pacific trade talks, reform hopes rise

Tokyo, 16 March—Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced on Friday that Tokyo will seek to join talks on a US-led Pacific free trade pact which proponents say will help tap vibrant emerging countries in Asia are shifting to an open economy one after another. If Japan alone remains an inward-looking economy, there would be no chance for growth,” Abe told a news conference. “This is our last chance. If we miss this opportunity, Japan will be left behind.” The government estimates that joining the TPP will boost Japan’s gross domestic product by 3.2 trillion yen ($33.3 billion), or 0.66 percentage points, offsetting the negative impact on agriculture by boosting exports in other sectors and domestic private consumption.

“Abenomics” has been playing to rave reviews in the Tokyo stock market and with voters, around 70 percent of whom support the prime minister.

Business executives and economists say the real test will be whether Abe buckles down to more controversial reforms such as deregulation, which can hurt vested interests. — Reuters

Netanyahu signs coalition deal with major political allies

JERUSALEM, 16 March—Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud-Beytenu party signed a coalition agreement with the Jewish Home party on Friday, after weeks of negotiations, local media reported.

Shortly after the ink dry, the other major political ally, Yesh Atid, led by Yair Lapid, also signed its coalition agreement with the Likud-Beytenu party.

The signing of the agreements is made at the nick of time, as Saturday was supposed to form a new government imposed on Netanyahu.

In the past three days, political parties have already signaled reaching final understandings but disagreements over several topics like the identity of the next Education Minister and the amount of ministers in the next government, prolonged the negotiations until the very last minute.

As part of the agreement, the Jewish Home’s chief Naftali Bennett will be appointed to the “Economy and Industry” position, an upgraded version of what was formerly known as the Industry, Trade and Labour ministry.

In addition, lawmaker Uri Ariel will become the Housing Minister responsible, among others, over the construction in the West Bank settlements.

The party would also get another minister’s appointment and two deputy-ministers appointment and will get to head the parliament’s Finance Committee. The new government will be inaugurated in upcoming Monday.

The Likud-Beytenu party won 31 seats out of a possible 120 in the parliament in the 22 January elections. Israeli President Shimon Peres appointed Netanyahu to build a new government after 80 lawmakers recommended him for the task.

Xinhua

The United Nations logo is displayed at a door at UN headquarters in New York on 26 Feb, 2011. — Reuters
EU could impose pesticide ban to protect bees

BRUSSELS, 16 March—EU governments failed to agree on a ban on three widely used pesticides linked to the decline of honeybees on Friday, but the European Commission could force one through by the summer unless member states agree to a compromise.

A sharp fall in bee populations around the world, partly due to a phenomenon known as colony collapse disorder, has fuelled concerns over the impact of widespread use of pesticides, notably the neonicotinoids class.

Syngenta and Bayer, leading global producers of neonicotinoids, say the harmful effects on bees is unproven and that a ban would cost the EU economy billions.

But campaign groups and some scientists accuse governments of caving into pressure from the agribusiness lobby.

Under EU rules, member states now have two months to reach a compromise or the Commission will be free to adopt the proposal.

“Forcing through the ban is one of the options available to us but first we need to reflect politically on the best way to proceed,” said EU health spokesman Frederic Vincent.

The Commission, which could also try to get a majority for a compromise proposal, put forward the restrictions in January after the EU’s food safety watchdog EFSA said neonicotinoids posed an acute risk to honey bee health.

However, the survey found no link between use of the pesticides and the specific problem of colony collapse.

Bees and other insects are crucial in pollinating most crops in Europe but neonicotinoids are used on more than 8 million hectares to boost yields of rapeseed, wheat and other staples.

The proposal would ban neonicotinoids on all crops except winter cereals and plants not attractive to bees, such as sugar beet. It would apply from 1 July, 2013, otherwise the EU’s planned ban on bee-killing neonicotinoids sowing is unaffected, with a review after two years.

BRAZIL launches billion-dollar programme to boost innovation

RIO DE JANEIRO, 16 March—Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff unveiled a 16-billion-US-dollar plan on Thursday to encourage companies to invest in technological innovation.

The government will allocate 32.9 billion reals (16.6 billion dollars) in the next two years for research and development by companies under a programme dubbed “Innovate.” The programme is the result of collaboration between private and public sectors, Rousseff said, adding innovation was a government strategy to spur development.

Brazil needs to add more value to its products, otherwise it is merely a commodities producer, she said. The programme will target seven main areas: agribusiness, energy, oil and gas, healthcare, defence, information and communication technology, and environmental sustainability.

A state-controlled company, the Brazilian Industrial Research Corporation (Embrapii), will be established to boost productivity in the industrial sector and promote cooperation between private companies and state-owned research institutions.

China TV consumer show criticizes Apple and Volkswagen

SHANGHAI, 16 March—Technology giant Apple Inc and car maker Volkswagen AG were singled out by state-run China Central Television (CCTV) in its annual corporate malpractice expose. On its “3.15” investigative special aired late on Friday, CCTV said that Chinese customers were not given the same post-sales service from Apple as it gave to users in other markets.

The report also said that the direct shift gearbox (DSG) transmission, a long-standing issue for Volkswagen, was causing cars to speed up or slow down during driving. Volkswagen, which plans to almost double production capacity in China to 4 million cars in the next five years, promised action in response to the “3.15” show, whose name refers to the date of World Consumer Rights Day.

“We will keep this up very seriously and we will quickly make contact with our consumers to resolve the issue,” it said on its official Chinese Weibo microblog.

Apple officials in China and Volkswagen’s headquarters in Cupertino, California, were not immediately available for comment. The television show has named and shamed a number of prominent

SEUL, 16 March—Samsung Electronics, the world’s largest maker of memory chips, mobile phones and display panels, unveiled on Friday its new flagship smartphone Galaxy S4.

Galaxy S4 featured a 5-inch Full HD Super AMOLED display with a resolution of 1920 by 1080. It had a pixel density of 441 pixel per inch (ppi).

It came with a “dual camera” function that allows simultaneous use of both front and rear cameras. Users can select eight different ways to combine the two photos taken by both cameras.

The newest model of Galaxy S series supported 3G network as well as the 4G LTE, which allows it to function in most LTE coverage areas and enable global LTE roaming.

The model came with 1.9GHz quad-core processor and 1.6 GHz Octa-core processor, running on 4.2.2 Jelly Bean, the latest version of Android operating system (OS).

“Following the successful Galaxy S series, this phone is yet another great proof point of people-inspired innovation,” said Shin Jong-kyun, president and head of Samsung’s mobile business.

“At Samsung we’ll never stop pursuance innovation conceived by people, so we can inspire them in return.”

Bad weather may postpone landing of Russian spacecraft

MOSCOW, 16 March—The landing of a Russian spacecraft to Earth might be postponed as bad weather conditions could hamper rescue of the crew, said an official on Thursday.

“The unfavourable weather conditions—heavy rain at the place of landing—makes the work of rescuers very hard,” Andrei Pryanishnikov, representative of the Russian aviation security watchdog Rosaviatsia, told Interfax news agency.

Rosaviatsia is in charge of search and retrieval of the cosmonauts from the landing spacecraft module. The rescue squad consists of three planes, 14 helicopters and seven ground vehicles. All of them have arrived at the landing area near the town of Arkalyk in Kazakhstan.

Russia’s Mission Control Centre said on its website that the undocking of the Soyuz TMA-06M from the International Space Station (ISS) was scheduled for Friday at 04:30 Moscow time (0030 GMT).

Landing of the 33/34 Russian Mission to the ISS was scheduled for Saturday, 17 March—In order to achieve bipedal flight, birds first had to ditch two hind wings over the course of their evolution, according to a study to be published on Friday in the journal Science.

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A man walks in front of a company logo outside an Apple store in downtown Shanghai on 24 Jan, 2013. Reuters
Green tea, coffee may help lower stroke risk

WASHINGTON, 16 March—Green tea and coffee may help lower the risk of stroke, especially when both are taken regularly as part of the diet, according to a research published on Thursday in Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association.

Researchers asked 83,269 Japanese adults about their green tea and coffee drinking habits, following them for an average span of 13 years. They found that people who drank at least one cup of coffee daily had about a 20-percent lower risk of stroke compared to those who rarely drank it. People who drank two to three cups of green tea daily had a 14-percent lower risk of stroke and those who had at least four cups had a 20-percent lower risk, compared to those who rarely drank it.

And people who drank at least one cup of coffee or green tea daily had a 32-percent lower risk of intracerebral hemorrhage, compared to those who rarely drank either beverage. Intracerebral hemorrhage happens when a blood vessel bursts and bleeds inside the brain. About 13 percent of strokes are hemorrhagic. Participants in the study were 45 to 74 years old, almost evenly divided in gender, and were free from cancer and cardiovascular disease.

**Merck anesthesia-reversal agent faces new delay**

LONDON, 16 March—Treating people with HIV rapidly after they have become infected with the virus that causes AIDS may be enough to achieve a “functional cure” in a small proportion of patients diagnosed early, according to new research.

Scientists in France who followed 14 patients who were treated very swiftly with HIV drugs but then stopped treatment found that even when they had been off therapy for more than seven years, they still showed no signs of the virus rebounding. The research, published in the journal PLoS Pathogens, follows news earlier this month about a baby girl in Mississippi in the United States being effectively cured of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) after receiving very early treatment. Christine Rouzioux, a professor at Necker Hospital and University Paris Descartes and a member of the initial team who identified HIV 30 years ago, said the new results showed the number of infected cells circulating in the blood of these patients, known as “post-treatment controllers”, kept falling even without treatment for many years.

“Early treatment in these patients may have limited the establishment of viral reservoirs, the extent of viral mutations, and preserved immune responses. A combination of those may contribute to control infection in post-treatment controllers,” she said. “The shrinking of viral reservoirs...closely matches the definition of ‘functional’ cure,” she said. A functional cure describes when the virus is reduced to such low levels that it is kept at bay even without continuing treatment.

The virus, however, is still detectable in the body. Most of the some 34 million people with HIV across the world will have to take anti-AIDS drugs known as antiretroviral therapy for the whole of their lives.

**Consumer prices post largest increase in nearly four years**

WASHINGTON, 16 March—Consumer prices recorded their largest increase in nearly four years in February as the cost of gasoline surged, but there was little sign of a broad pickup in inflation that could trouble the Federal Reserve. Other data on Friday showed factory activity in New York slowed in March. That suggests overall manufacturing remained on a steady growth path, which should give the central bank no reason to scale back monetary support.

“I have my doubts whether the Fed is that concerned about inflation right now. The way the data has been playing out it gives them a free hand to be extremely aggressive to bring down unemployment,” said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Pierpont Securities in Stamford, Connecticut. The Labour Department said its Consumer Price Index increased 0.7 percent last month, the largest gain since June 2009, after being flat in January. Gasoline accounted for about three quarters of the rise in consumer inflation. Economists polled by Reuters had expected the CPI to advance 0.5 percent. In the 12 months through February, consumer prices rose 2.0 percent, the largest gain since October. They had increased 1.6 percent in January.

Fed officials are likely to dismiss the gasoline-driven jump in price pressures as temporary. Policymakers meet next week to assess the economy and are widely expected to keep purchasing $85 billion in bonds per month in an effort to spur even stronger economic growth.

That Fed’s belief it would keep up asset purchases until it saw a substantial improvement in the labor market outlook.

**Macao’s per capita GDP reaches 76,588 USD in 2012**

Macao, 16 March—Macao’s GDP for the whole year of 2012 reached 348.2 billion patacas (47.7 billion US dollars), with per capita GDP amounting to 611,930 patacas (76,588 US dollars), the city’s Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) said on Friday.

Macao’s GDP rose by 9.9 percent in real terms last year and economic growth for the fourth quarter of last year stood at 8.5 percent in real terms, according to the DSEC figures. Macao’s per capita GDP in 2012 rose by 80,207 patacas over 2011, an increase of 15.08 percent year-on-year.

The DSEC said that growth in exports of services and the escalating domestic demand are principal driving forces of the economic expansion.

Analyzed by major components, exports of gaming services increased by 6.9 percent and total visitor spending rose 6.4 percent. In respect of domestic demand, private consumption expenditure increased by 9.1 percent.

**Rapid HIV treatment points to “functional cure” for AIDS**

An HIV-infected patient displays medicine at a hospital in Naypyidaw, about 660 km (373 miles) north of Bangkok on 28 Nov, 2007.—Reuters

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Soldiers and investigators inspect the site of an explosion in the village of Jesus Tepactepec, near the state capital Tlaxcala on 15 March. —REUTERS

TAXCALA, 16 March— At least 11 people were killed and 36 others injured on Friday when a truck containing fireworks exploded in a freak accident in the central Mexican state of Tlaxcala, casting a pall over a Catholic patron saint’s day, said a police authority.

The explosion was ignited when a stray firework fell into a truck carrying more fireworks, said Jose Magno Morales, director of emergency services for Tlaxcala state.

The fireworks were set to be used in a ceremony honouring Jesus Tepactepec, patron saint of a village named after him in the municipality of Nativitas. The blast happened on the highway just outside the village.

REUTERS

Three killed in small plane crash in Florida

MIAMI, 16 March— Three people were killed on Friday when a small plane crashed and burst into flames shortly after takeoff from a South Florida airport, authorities said.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said the Piper PA31 aircraft crashed into a warehouse area near Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport around 4:20 pm EDT.

“Shortly after takeoff the aircraft had some sort of difficulty,” she said.

“It attempted to circle back and land at the airport. Unfortunately it was unsuccessful,” Vezina said, adding that the plane plowed through numerous vehicles from the north all afternoon,” Love said.

Along with the winds, unseasonably high temperatures and low humidity have fanned the fire that is burning about 75 miles northwest of Denver, he said.

No structures have been lost and no injuries have been reported, Love said, but the evacuations were ordered in case winds pushed the flames toward residential neighbourhoods.

UK police examine 600 new hacking claims at Murdoch paper

The Guardian said the same insider behind new allegations of phone hacking at The News of the World also hacked paper since 2007, and after the success of News International’s hacking revelations emerged two years ago.

Four British journalists have come under scrutiny after The Sunday Mirror reported that News of the World, now published by News International inherited, had a special team of reporters from the News of the World to cover sporting events. "We've been experiencing strong, erratic winds since the last rainfall." — Reuters

MADRID, 16 March— Spain will make it harder for people to take early retirement, in order to increase contributions to the social security system and make it more sustainable, Labour Minister Fatima Banez said. Companies will be penalised for letting go older workers under the new measures. The government will also raise the minimum amount of contributions a worker must make in order to be eligible for early retirement.

"Today early retirement and partial retirement cost the system more than 9 billion euros a year. When these measures go into effect, we will save half of that amount every year," Banez said.

One out of two Spaniards retire before the current legal age of 65, and the current effective age of retirement is 63, Banez said.

In 2011 the then Socialista government reformed pensions to phase in retirement at 67 by 2027, and to increase the number of years of contributions required to be eligible for a state pension. Brussels has recommended that Spain take additional measures to reinforce its social security system, such as introducing more quickly a stability factor that would be applied to make periodic adjustments for demographic factors.

Reuters

Firefighters hose down the scene of a fire in this video screen capture courtesy NBC6, after a small twin-engine plane crashed and burned shortly after takeoff from Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on 15 March, 2013. Three people are reported killed in the incident.—Reuters

DENVER, 16 March— Two wind-driven wildfires erupted in northern Colorado on Friday, prompting the evacuation of about 50 residents and signaling an early start to the wildfire season in the parched Rocky Mountain west.

The largest of the two blazes that prompted the evacuations, the Soldier Canyon Fire, has charred about 800 acres near Lory State Park, according to the Colorado Division of Natural Resources.

"We’ve been experiencing strong, erratic winds from the north all afternoon," Love said.

Along with the winds, unseasonably high temperatures and low humidity have fanned the fire that is burning about 75 miles northwest of Denver, he said.

No structures have been lost and no injuries have been reported, Love said, but the evacuations were ordered in case winds pushed the flames toward residential neighbourhoods.

A second, smaller fire broke out west of the town of LaPorte, six miles north of Fort Collins, the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management said in a statement. Officials had no estimate on its size.

The causes of the fires were under investigation on Friday.

The early-season wildfires could be a bad omen for drought-stricken Colorado, which had one of its worst ever wildfire seasons in 2012.

All of Colorado is experiencing moderate to exceptional drought conditions, according to the US Drought Monitor.

The alert followed two bomb attacks on law-enforcement targets in the past two weeks that police said were likely carried out by Irish Republican nationalists. A suspicious object described as a “mortar type device” was discovered on wasteland near 500 metres from the rear of New Barnsley police station in the north of the city.

"Those who are behind this attack had very clear and, at times, brazen intentions,” Superintendent Emma Bond told reporters as army bomb disposal experts continued to work on defusing the device.

The alert came after police intercepted a van carrying four mortar bombs in Londonderry earlier this month, which authorities said was likely destined for a police station.

Last weekend three police officers escaped injury when a bomb detonated yards from them while they patrolled a coastal path on the outskirts of north Belfast on foot.

On Friday, British media reported that Richard Wallace, a former editor of the Sunday Mirror, was questioned by police but was not arrested.—Reuters

 Copies of the final edition of the News of the World are printed on the presses at the News International print works in Waltham Cross, southern England on 9 July, 2011.—Reuters

Wind-driven wildfires trigger evacuations in Colorado

Copies of the final edition of the News of the World are printed on the presses at the News International print works in Waltham Cross, southern England on 9 July, 2011.—Reuters

Dublin, 16 March— Two schools and several dozen homes were evacuated in Belfast on Friday after a suspected mortar bomb was found near a police station in the Northern Ireland capital. The alert followed two bomb attacks on law-enforcement targets in the past two weeks that police said were likely carried out by Irish Republican nationalists.

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Last weekend three police officers escaped injury when a bomb detonated yards from them while they patrolled a coastal path on the outskirts of north Belfast on foot.

A 1998 peace deal largely ended more than three decades of violence in the British-controlled province between mainly Catholic Irish nationalists seeking union with Ireland and predominantly Protestant unionists who want to remain part of the United Kingdom.

But dissident nationalist, who include former officers who split from the Irish Republican Army after it declared a ceasefire, still stage sporadic gun and bomb attacks.—Reuters

Drought Monitor.
Border Affairs Dy Minister holds talks with US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar

NAI PYI TAW, 16 March—Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Win, Secretary of the work committee for development of rural areas and national races, held a meeting with Mr Patrick Murphy, Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar, US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Derek Mitchell and Ms. Cecili Brewer of the US Department of State at his office here today.

During the meeting, they discussed matters on short-term and long-term plans for prevalence of peace, rule of law and rehabilitation in Rakhine State.

FFS of Indaw Township Cooperative Society donates bags of rice

INDAW, 16 March—A total of 12 villages from FFS of Indaw Township Cooperative Society of Katha District in Sagaing Region donated 33 bags of rice to needy families on 6 March morning.

The ceremony was held at the railway station in Indaw.

Chairman of FFS U Hsan Pe handed over the bags of rice to Daw Mary Sai Moon who is a representative of HIV/AIDS Project being implemented by Myitta Development Foundation (Myitkyina) of Katha State.

The bags of rice will be provided to needy families through Myitta Development Foundation.

Myanma Alin

Workshop on agriculture on 18 March

YANGON, 16 March—The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry will organize the workshop on agriculture, seeds laws, fruits and flowers and vegetable production and import, fertilizers and pesticides at its office tower on Minye Kyawswa Road in Lanmadaw Township on 18 March morning.

The workshop will be attended by representatives of Asia & Pacific Seed Association of Bangkok of Thailand.

Myanma Alin

Objectives of the 68th Anniversary

Armed Forces Day 2013

1. To uphold the national policy namely non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity, and perpetuation of sovereignty
2. To play the leading role in the national politics by the Tatmadaw joining hands with all national races with Union Spirit and the true patriotism in line with the Constitution
3. To crush all destructive elements at home and abroad through the strength of State, People and Tatmadaw
4. To build up a strong, competent, modern, patriotic Tatmadaw to safeguard the security and sovereignty of the nation

Post-graduate Course and Training Workshop conducted on Acute and Chronic Liver Disease

YANGON, 16 March—Jointly organized by Liver Department of University of Medicine-1, Gastroenterology and Hepatology Society of Myanmar Medical Association and University of Pennsylvania of the United States of America, the MSD (Merck & Co Inc) sponsored the Postgraduate Course and Training Workshop on Acute and Chronic Liver Diseases at the hall of Yangon University of Medicine-1 in Lanmadaw Township from 8 am to 7 pm on 18 February and at Sedona Hotel in Mandalay from 3 pm to 7 pm on 19 February.

The discussions were participated by professors and specialists of the Gastroenterology and Hepatology Department of Liver Department of Myanmar, University of Pennsylvania of the US and Princve of Songkla University and Mahidol University of Thailand.

Also present at the workshop were Departmental personnel and health officials from Yangon General Hospital, New Yangon General Hospital and Yangon University of Medicine-1, and students from post-graduate courses under the Ministry of Health.

At present, they are making concerted efforts for conducting effectively treatments on Peglinton medicine that can cure the Hepatitis C disease of the patients in Myanmar in joining hands with the liver specialists of Myanmar.

Moe Thanar Soe-NLM

Mobile library serves students in Tamway Township

YANGON, 16 March—Head of Tamway Township Information and Public Relations Department of Yangon Region Daw Hla Hla Myint and staff on 8 March conducted tasks of mobile library in Tamwayalay ward of the township for easy reading of students on summer holidays.

Head of department Daw Hla Hla Myint gave talks on uplift of living standard through literature.

Then, the staff displayed various subjects of books, publications and documentary photos.

The ward administrators and volunteers contributed to successfully carrying out of mobile library.

Myanma Alinn
Among many old towns around Nay Pyi Taw, the capital of Myanmar, Yamethin is noted for producing good quality paddy due to the favorable climate and abundance of fresh water supplied by rain through streams, springs, lakes and falls naturally formed in eastern Shan mountains under thick cover. There is old Myanmar saying ကမ္ဘာ့ရှင် ရေမှု မှာ ဗျိုင်းတို ဖျင်သည် ဟုသော်လည်း [Taungdwin is noted for fields and Yamethin is noted for paddy].

About seven miles to the east of Yamethin town lies Sacred Shwe Myin Tin Hill Range. Sanpya village circle. 1008 feet high above sea level Shwe Myin Tin Hill Range is locally called “Shwe Yin Mi” or “Shwe Yin Kyaw” or “Taung Pulu”.

Take a far look to the north-east direction from Yamethin town, emerald green eastern Yoma Range will appear in your view. Thickly forested and well fed by clear rain water, the Range is shrouded by haze and mist. In Zubudipa Ok Hsaung Kyaw [an old Treatise on old Myanmar geography and history] this Range is mentioned “located in the middle of Tampadipa county”. So it was called Keylatha Range.

The legend of this Hill Range tells the tale of a natural cave near Pan Tin Hill to the east of Keylatha hill. It is believed to be a cave den in which Lord Gotama Buddha in one of his previous existences as lion king had lived. In that cave, there also lived a big Fly created by the deities. The Fly was golden and very beautiful. It had mighty power. Its beak was like thunder and its wings could make a daily one flight around the universe.

The King of Meikthila Kingdom had a dream that if he could get that mighty golden Fly, he would become “Chakravartin” [universal monarch] and ruling all cardinal contents. Foreseeing the flourish of Buddha Sasana in the areas of Yamethin, Sukka Deva the Thunder god gave that dream to the king. The king sent out his two sons, Surasi the elder and Neyru the younger with many armed forces to capture the golden Fly in south Shwe Yin Myin Hill.

The mighty golden Fly’s attempts to escape the capture by the chasers took it to many distant places such as Haung Tet, Haung Tete, Shwe Htoe Kone villages and from them to Min Wun hill range. Later King Sri Dhamma Soka built memorial pagodas there. They still stand today— Shwe Umin hill and Shwe Umin Pagoda, Wimmang Pagoda at Wimmang village and Shwe Hmuyaw Pagoda on Shwe Yin Thaumang of Shwe Yin pagoda of Yamethin by Yin Khe Maung Maung “King Alaung Sithu of Bagan brought a Buddha statue named ‘Bone shin’ from Zimmme of Thagala with pomp and ceremony. He wanted to enshrine it in a pagoda on a hill. He saw the golden Fly resting on the summit of that hill. So the hill was named Shwe Yin Tin.”

There was yet a second version. King Kyanzittha of Chakraz to Yamethin. He kept his royal steed on this hill. So it called Shwe Myin Tin Hill which corrupts to Shwe Myin Tin Pagoda.

The range is rich in biodiversity. Several medicinal plants and trees, timber trees and rare orchids thrive due to fertile soil and fresh water. Injyn [Sal tree], Tharaphi [Orochacopus Siemans], Pon Nyeet [Calophyllum Inophyllum], Yin Mar [Chamaejas Tabularis], Sago [Champac Michelia], Gant Gaw [Mesusa ferrea], Maha Hlyega, Saykalama, Win U white and red, Pinku gamonke, Microwave gamerke, Nau Kone gamerke, Mett Hkyo, Lott Hkyo and Ta zoe hito grow wild. Wild birds and animals haunt the entire range. Local names of the hills, lakes, and villages suggest deposits of gold, copper, lime, and other metals, minerals and rocks. There are isolated communities in the valleys where washing and panning gold foils from streams and lakes.

Legend says that Gotama Buddha in his previous existence as a jackal lived in this hill for seven times. Therefore, Buddha Sasana arrived there at the early date of history.

Monuments on Shwe Yin Kyaung Zedii stands on the summit of Shwe Kyaw Hill where the golden Fly flew and passed over from Shwe Yin Pone [present Pinyipa village]. Locals call it Taung Pulu.

Shwe Yin Mi Zedi is on the eastern branch of Shwe Myin Tin Hill. It is a religious monument to commemorate the capture of the golden Fly which became totally exhausted and gave itself up to the chasers.

Sakka deva the Thunder god with his retinue came down to pay homage to the Zedi and enshrined sacred relics of Buddha in it. Later Sri Dhamma Asoka visited it to enshrine sacred relics in it and built the western cause way leading up to the Zedi. King Anawrahta and King Kyanzittha of Bagan paid state visit to the Zedi. The latter built the cause way, stone steps and monuments on the northern branch of the hill. Later royal visitors from Bagan were King Alaung Sithu and Narapati Sithu who added more sacred relics into the Zedi and religious buildings on the summit.

King Nga Zi Shin of Pinya Period and King Moe Hnyin Mintara of Inwa Period, and his younger son King Narapati and chief queen Saw Sal Devi paid state visits to the Zedi to perform religious deeds. Monuments built by this queen still stand on the western side of the southern cause way.

King Bodawpaya of Amarapura and his chief queen marched with his armed forces to Shwe Myin Tin Pagoda. He made stops at Nan Lone village and Taung Pachote village. He stayed at a temporary palace at Nandaw Kone. With the guide who was a novice monk Thuzeya the king went up the summit to worship the Zedi. The king built the southern cause way.

World renown Hermit U Khanti came to the hill in 1899 and lived on the hill for 8 years, meditating and building religious monuments. The cause way he built on the south side had 152 apartments with 545 stone steps. It was an iron and steel structure.

(See page 9)
Anarchic acts, mobocracy, misuse of democracy damage the nation: Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann offers religious objects to the Sayadaw.

**NATIONAL**

**Sunday, 17 March, 2013**

Anarchic acts, mobocracy, misuse of democracy are neglected,” said Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann.

“Today, governance is not administered by men, but by principles,” said the Speaker in meeting with local people in Dala Township, Yangon Region, this noon.

This era sees the governance characterized by wishes, voices and opinions of the people, said the Speaker stressing that both the government and civilians are to abide by whatever legislation once it is enacted. He warned against acts putting the nation into the reverse direction. Challenges are unavoidable in changing from one system to another, nonetheless, democratization and market economy must be continued, said the Speaker calling for public participation and the rule of law.

He called participation of the entire nation essential in building modern, developed, disciplined, and democratic nation.

New golden umbrella was hoisted atop historic Kyauk Danok Hair Relic Pagoda in Dala Township in Yangon Region earlier in the morning.

Abhidhaja Maha Rathika Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Abbot of Nyaungdon Monastery Bhaddanta Chandavara, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann and wife, Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyin, Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, officials and donors attended the ceremony.

**YANGON, 16 March—**

“The nation will suffer loss if anarchic acts, mobocracy and misuse of democracy are not rectified,” said Union Minister for Information U Aung Kyi.

The union minister called for changing values, beliefs, attitude and social principles in line with democratic cause. He urged the literati and writers to try as much as they can to provide the various subjects of the democratic cause.

Principles in line with democratic cause in the future was called for changing values, beliefs, attitude and social principles in line with democratic cause.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann cordially greets local people in Dala. —**MNA**

**Eco and cultural touristic attraction...**

(from page 8)

On the west side of the wooden cause way built by Monk U Nandyah. It has 147 apartments and 579 stone steps.

Ashin Silasara, a missionary monk of Theingone repaired and renovated monuments looted and destroyed by treasure hunters.

Among lay donors, Broker U Toe and wife Daw Thiri of Sanpya Theingone village preceded Hermi U Khanti in the maintenance, renovation and development of Shwe Myin Tin hill range. It was Hermi U Khanti who raised the height of the Zedi, and ensnared 28 statues of 28 Buddhas in the Zedi. Five wonders of the sacred Hill

1. Among strange rock formations, is a big rock in the shape of a frog of 27 feet high at the north side of the archway of western cause way. Four Zedis stand on this rock frog, maintained and renovated by U Thein Nyunt and Daw Yin Shwe of Sanpya Theingone village.

2. A spring well on the surface of a big boulder at the midpoint uphill by the western cause way. The spring well measures a cubit in diameter, and 3 cubits in circumference, and over a cubit in depth. It produces abundance of cold and clear and therapeutic water.

People believe its water is panacea curing all diseases.

3. A big rock formation in the design of a big trunk. Its legend tells the story— the guardian spirit opened the rock trunk and invited a poor cowboy to take some treasures from it. On his return home with the treasures he took, he told his friend about his story. His friend went to the rock trunk to take treasures but the trunk suddenly closed up cutting off his hand. Today this rock trunk is called Kyauk Hnat Kyi.

4. On the north side of the hill is the cause way built by King Kyanziththa of Bagan. To the west of this cause way at the foot of the hill is a natural pond stretching about 4 cubits into the hill. How deep and how long it goes into the hill is unknown. The water in the pond is supplied by sub-terranean springs. People believe its water is potent for longevity, good look, pleasant voice and good smell.

5. At the eastern branch of the hill, there is a big cavern with smooth walls, known as Zawgyi Gu. [Alchemists’ Cave] in which Zawgyis and forest monks meditated.

Grottoesquely shaped rock formations and stones, thickly green covered hill ranges and natural aquatic bodies created by springs, streams and falls make Shwe Myin Tin Hill range the most sacred and attractive place in Yamethin District.

There is a big Buddha Image of lacquered wicker work of 7 feet 5 inches high, now gilt, in a summptuous image house to the west of Shwe Myin Tin Zedi. It is said to have been donated by King Kyanziththa of Bagan. The design and gesture of the Image indicate Bagan Period.

During his study tour, the writer of this article had interviews with forest monks, villagers and cowboys of the locality. He gathered from them first hand information and knowledge about the hill range of the past and present. They told him about visits of foreigners, tourists as well as scholars and researchers to visit forest areas. Some collected stones, rocks, rare orchids, plants, insects especially butterfly. As the writer listened to them, he saw vehicles of different kinds, bicycles, motorbikes, trucks, cars, old army jeeps etc commuting on the main high way with overloaded logs, stones, rocks, lime stones and other forest products, destroying the road very badly. Cowboys told him that some gold merchants came to collect gold foils from gold washers and panners in the remote valleys. They brought food ration to swap. On the way to and from Yamethin he had to make two stops. At tea shop and local restaurants the writer learnt from the public the potentials of the sacred Shwe Myin Tin hill range notably as a religiously and culturally attractive spot, but also as a big storage of economic resources for people’s prosperity in the near future.
A man driving an electric car enters a power station in Hangzhou, capital of east China’s Zhejiang Province, on 15 March, 2013. Hangzhou launched a rental service of electric vehicles recently, offering a three-month term with a fee of 998 Yuan per-month.

**WORLD**

**New Light of Myanmar**

16 March—

**Ankara, Turkey**—Visiting Romanian Foreign Minister Titus Corlatean on Thursday expressed his support for Turkey’s EU membership process. Because, we believe this would create a win-win situation for both Turkey and the EU member states.

Turkey’s growing clout in the region, both economically and politically, may have given a boost to Turkey’s membership bid. Most EU member states support Turkish membership, while the other few led by Germany and France are finding it increasingly difficult to make their case against Turkey.

The 27-member bloc’s highest decision-making body, the EU Council, reiterated last December the bloc’s commitment to active accession negotiations with Turkey, while calling for a new momentum in these negotiations, which was interpreted as an indication that France and Germany increasingly find themselves isolated in the bloc in their opposition to Turkish membership.

During her visit to Turkey last month, German Chancellor Angela Merkel pressed Ankara to open its ports and airports to ships and planes from Cyprus, while expressing her support for reviving the stalled accession talks between Turkey and the EU.

Turkey opened accession talks with the EU in 2005 but has only been able to finish talks on one of the 35 chapters that a candidate country has to complete before joining the bloc. No chapter has been opened for talks for the past two and a half years.—Xinhua

**Vienna, 16 March—** Austria, fearing for the safety of its peacekeepers on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, said on Friday it opposed a French push to lift a European Union ban on arming Syrian rebels battling President Bashar al-Assad. Austrian Defence Minister Gerald Klug also demanded United Nations guarantees that the observers can be rotated and get supplies via Syria, amid growing concerns about their safety. Speaking at a joint press conference with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu in the Turkish capital of Ankara, Corlatean said Romania supported Turkey’s EU process.

He said “Romania supports the opening of chapters in Turkey’s EU accession process. Because, we believe this would create a win-win situation for both Turkey and the EU member states.”

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**Maribor, 16 March—** Horsemeat has been found in France in a shipment of 320 tonnes of meat labelled “pure beef” that was imported from eastern Europe via the Netherlands, a local prosecutor said on Friday. The horse meat, found during tests in the south-eastern city of Ca vaillon in meat intended for use in ready-made meals, was the largest consignment that has spread across Europe since equine DNA was found in beef products in Ireland in January.

“The tests, carried out three weeks ago, have shown the presence of horsemeat in most batches,” Vaclavice prosecutor Yannick Blanc told Reuters. The firms could not immediately be reached for comment. Last month, after a senior Romanian food safety official identified Drap Trading as a buyer of horsemeat from Romania, a lawyer for Drap official Ion Fasan denied all allegations, including of being a major player in a fraud network.

No horsemeat was found in one batch that came directly from Romania with out going through the Nether lands, Blanc said. A spokesman from the Dutch food safety authority declined to comment about the specific case but said there was a continuing investigation to trace the supply chain for beef potentially containing horsemeat, imported to the Netherlands and then re-exported to France.

French President Francois Hollande called last month for compulsory labelling and traceability of meat used in processed foods in Europe to prevent a repeat of the horsemeat scandal.—Reuters

**Eight Iraqi soldiers killed in ambush**

**Baghdad, 16 March—** Eight soldiers in the Iraqi army were killed in an ambush by unknown gunmen on Friday in the north part of the country, police said. The attack took place in AL Rajash village, north of Baji, about 200 km north of the capital city Baghdad. A local police source told Xinhua.

The soldiers, who were on vacation, were going from Mosul to their base in Taj, 40 km north Baghdad, when they were attacked by the unidentified gunmen, he said.

No one has so far claimed responsibility for the attack, but al-Qaeda front in Iraq frequently claimed the responsibility of most deadly attacks in the country, raising fears that the terrorist group could return to widespread violence.—Xinhua

**South African bus crash kills 22, toll could rise**

**Cape Town, 16 March—** At least 22 people were killed in South Africa on Friday when a double-decker bus crashed into the side of a mountain while navigating the dangerous Hex River Pass 140 km (80 miles) northeast of Cape Town, police said.

“It appears as if the brakes failed and the driver lost control,” said Kenny Africa, the police traffic spokesman for the Western Cape Province. Two children were among the dead and 44 passengers were injured. “We are recovering more bodies and the death toll may rise,” Africa told Reuters from the accident scene, adding it was unclear how many people were on board the bus.

The pass, situated in the picturesque Hex River Valley, is notorious for accidents because its straight and long descent allows vehicles to gather momentum before it leads suddenly into a dangerously sharp left turn.

Road use is the primary means of travel in Africa’s largest economy, and the government has introduced tough laws to clamp down on reckless driving and poorly-maintained vehicles as it tries to curb an annual toll of some 14,000 deaths.—Reuters

**Mozambique, Australia sign agreement on mining development in Mozambique**

**Maputo, 16 March—** Australia is to develop the mining sector in Mozambique, under an agreement signed on Thursday evening in Canberra of Australia, according to Radio Mozambique and the Mozambican Television on Friday.

The two stations reported that the accord was signed by Mozambican foreign minister, Oldemiro Baloi, and Australian secretary of parliament, Richard Marles. Baloi was quoted by the radio and the TVM as saying the accord aims to the developing country’s mining sector, and has an essential component of institutional capacity and training of human capital.

The Mozambican government wants the wealth from the mineral resources exploitation to be beneficial by all Mozambicans.—Xinhua

**France finds horsemeat in beef imported via Netherlands**

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French President Francois Hollande called last month for compulsory labelling and traceability of meat used in processed foods in Europe to prevent a repeat of the horsemeat scandal.—Reuters

**Austria fears for its Golan settlers, wants Syria arm ban kept**

Vienna, 16 March—Austria, fearing for the safety of its peacekeepers on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, said on Friday it opposed a French push to lift a European Union ban on arming Syrian rebels battling President Bashar al-Assad. Austrian Defence Minister Gerald Klug also demanded United Nations guarantees that the observers can be rotated and get supplies via Syria, amid growing concerns about their safety.

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Turkey opened accession talks with the EU in 2005 but has only been able to finish talks on one of the 35 chapters that a candidate country has to complete before joining the bloc. No chapter has been opened for talks for the past two and a half years.—Xinhua

One can never rule out whose hands more weapons will end up in, and that’s why I am against this suggestion,” Klug, who took office on Monday, told national broadcaster ORF.

The vulnerability of the 1,000-member UN peacekeeping force on the Golan was highlighted last week when Syrian rebels detained 21 unarmed observers, all Filipinos, for three days.

The UN troops have since scaled back patrols. Diplomats told Reuters on Thursday. Diplomats at UN headquarters in New York have expressed concern over the future of the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), whose mission began in 1974.

Austria, the only participating EU state, contributes 375 peacekeepers to UNDOF.

Asked whether there were evacuation plans for the Austrians, Klug said this “is a very sensitive subject.”

“I demand from the U.N. that we get assurances that supplies and troop rotations are possible via Syria. In addition we demand that the contingent that is being withdrawn by Croatia is replenished by the UN,” he said.

Japan announced its withdrawal from UNDOF three months ago due to the violence in Syria. Croatia said last month it would also pull out its troops as a precaution after reports, which it denied, that Croatian arms had been shipped to Syrian rebels to prepare a Western peacekeepers were wounded in November when their convoy came under fire near Damascus airport.

Once the Croatians leave, UNDOF will have contingents only from Austria, India and the Philippines. A senior Western diplomat has said Manila is considering pulling its troops out.—Reuters

**Photo released by the Presidential Palace of Turkey shows Turkish President Abdullah Gul meeting with visiting Romanian Foreign Minister Titus Corlatean at the presidential Cankaya Palace in Ankara, Turkey, on 16 March, 2013.—Xinhua**
Sri Lanka to launch massive tourism campaign in Russia, Ukraine

COLOMBO, 16 March—
The Sri Lankan government on Friday said it will launch a massive tourism campaign in Russia and Ukraine in order to attract more tourists to visit the island nation.

The Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTBP) said that with the objective of furthering the promotion of the tourism industry, the Sri Lankan Embassy in Russia with the support of the SLTBP has organized a three-week tourism promotional campaign, the “Mega Tourism Road Show” in Russia and Ukraine.

The road show will commence on 17 March in Singapore’s new private home sales fall sharply in February

SINGAPORE, 16 March—A total of 708 units of new private homes were sold in Singapore in February, down by almost 65 percent from January’s 2,016 units, according to official figures released on Friday.

Analysts said the sharp fall may be attributable to the Lunar New Year holidays, fewer launches and the government’s latest round of cooling measures.

However, it may be still too early to gauge the effectiveness of the latest round of cooling measures.

With executive condo

Indonesia secures contract to produce more helicopters for armed forces

JAKARTA, 16 March—Indonesia’s state-run aircraft manufacturer PT Dirgantara Indonesia (PTDI) has secured another contract to produce 16 Bell 412 EP helicopters for the military worth 170 million US dollars, a senior PTDI official said on Friday.

PTDI President Director Budi Santoso said that delivery on the 16 helicopters was scheduled next year as production would take at least one year.

A contract was signed in March last year to produce six Bell 412 helicopters which were handed over to the armed forces on Friday.

“The procurement contract on those six helicopters was worth 65 million US dollars,” he said, quoted by the detik online.

Bell 412 EP is the advanced version of Bell 412 series, designed as multipurpose helicopter. It is fitted by Pratt and Whitney PT6T-3D twin engines, using four blades in its main rotor and two blades in its tail rotor and is capable to board up to 13 people.—Xinhua

Cambodia warns of dangers from lightning, thunderstorms

HANOI, 16 March—
Vietnam will host the 47th Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Council (SEAMEO) conference from 19 to 21 March, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training announced on Friday.

SEAMEO is a forum for regional education ministers to discuss initiatives and policies in the ASEAN region, and set forth guidelines to implement projects of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) and its affiliates.

During the three-day conference, major events will take place, including the signing of legal documents of SEAMEO on lifelong learning; approval of the resolution on organizing the ceremony to admit Pakistanis acts to avoid water crisis

MANILA, 16 March—
The Philippine government is working on measures to prevent any water crisis in the country, a senior government official said on Friday.

In a Press briefing, deputy presidential spokesperson Abigail Valte said that water czar, Public Works and Highways Secretary Rogelio Singson, is coordinating with local government officials on certain measures to ensure the water situation in the Philippines.

“So far, there’s no problem on that front. But the secretary is also well aware of what needs to be done in order to prevent an event like that (water crisis) from happening,” she said.

Valte issued the statement in response to a study conducted by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) raising concern on the water situation in 37 economies, including the Philippines.

“Public utilities are responsible for supplying water and sanitation services to communities in India and the Philippines were found to lack capacity in all aspects of sustainability, including effective functioning, financing and demand responsiveness,” said the ADB report on Asian Water Development Outlook 2013.

This is worrisome because these governments are increasing investment to meet the Millennium Development Goals without committing the necessary investment to building the capacity to adequately maintain existing systems, the report said.

The report said there is a need to focus programmes to ensure that water services reach—and continue to reach—all communities, poorly designed investments may reinforce existing inequities and exacerbate social injustice, it added.

Philippines acts to avoid water crisis

A rescued miner is helped to get to the surface after a rock outburst took place at the Junde Coal Mine in Hegang City, northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province, on 15 March. Sixteen miners had been rescued and four others remained trapped underground in the coal mine accident which occurred early Friday. The coal mine is owned by the state-owned Heilongjiang Longmay Mining Holding Group.—Xinhua

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV SINGAPORE BRIDGE VOY NO (035)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINGAPORE BRIDGE VOY NO (035) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT**

**MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY**

**AGENT FOR: MS SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

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**More Americans use mobile device while driving than Europeans**

WASHINGTON, 16 March—A study has found that 69 percent of US drivers talked on their cell phone while driving compared to 21 percent of drivers from the United Kingdom.

The study released on Thursday by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also found that 31 percent of drivers in the United States reported that they had read or sent text messages or e-mail messages while driving, compared to 15 percent of drivers in Spain.

The study, published in CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, examined two specific types of self-reported distracted driving behaviours: cell phone use while driving and reading or sending text or e-mail messages while driving, among drivers aged 18-64 years in the United States and in seven European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom) within 30 days before they were surveyed.

“The cell phone can be a fatal distraction for those who use it while they drive,” CDC Director Tom Frieden said in a statement. “Driving and dialing or texting don’t mix. If you are driving, pull over to a safe place and stop before you use your cell phone.”

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**China envoy says there was no $8 billion South Sudan aid offer**

BEIJING, 16 March—China never promised South Sudan $8 billion in development funds when South Sudanese President Salva Kiir visited Beijing in April last year but much less than this could be offered if the country achieves lasting peace, a senior diplomat said on Thursday.

South Sudan’s government announced the figure following the trip, and until now Beijing has neither confirmed nor denied it.

Speaking to Reuters in an interview, China’s special envoy to Africa, Zhong Jianhua, who has helped in mediation efforts between the two Sudans and knows both countries well, said there was no $8 billion development deal.

“If there was any promise, it was that after South Sudan achieves peace with Sudan then it is a very promising country and can ramp up development, and then China is willing to play a development role in South Sudan and help them. But those plans have to wait for peace before we can talk about this,” Zhong said, sitting in a meeting room inside the Foreign Ministry.

“I don’t believe that this is something both sides acknowledged following the visit. This was not mentioned in any of the official Chinese reports following the visit; there was nothing about $8 billion,” he added.

“It’s not impossible—maybe in the future, and maybe not only $8 billion.” Zhong said, without elaborating.

“Certainly, it needs a development plan, and a big one at that. It faces a lot of challenges. I’ve been to Juba many times. Running water, electricity, road lights, bridges—it needs a lot.”

Relations between the two Sudans soured soon after South Sudan achieved independence in 2011 following a long and bloody civil war, due to arguments over oil revenues and territory.

Landlocked South Sudan shut down its 350,000 barrel-per-day crude output in January last year in a row with Sudan over how much it should pay to send the oil through Sudanese pipelines to the Red Sea. South Sudan said on Tuesday it would be ready to restart oil production within three weeks after finalising a deal to resolve bitter border and security disputes with Sudan.

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**Slovenia to deploy 150 soldiers to Afghanistan**

BRATISLAVA, 16 March—Slovenia is to send up to 150 soldiers to the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan within two tours of duty as part of the Special Operation Training Group, Slovak Defence Minister Martin Glavic said on Thursday.

“The exact numbers will be known after talks with our coalition allies,” said Glavic. The expenses for deployment of Slovak soldiers will be covered by the Defence Ministry budget and be financially assisted by the United States with 20 million euros (25.9 million US dollars) in total.

“Through the change in configuration that was approved today, reflects the latest developments and the needs of our allies. On one hand, we are extending the activities of our unit in Kandahar by another year, while on the other, we’re preparing to send a special unit,” said Slovak Foreign and European Affairs Minister Miroslav Lajcak.

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**US envoy to travel to North Africa next week**

UNITED NATIONS, 16 March—The UN envoy dealing with Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, will travel to North Africa next week for consultations on the next phase of negotiations aimed at resolving the long-running conflict in the region, a UN spokesman announced here on Friday.

“The current conflict in Mali and the heightened risks of instability and insecurity in the Sahel and beyond make a solution to the Western Sahara conflict more urgent than ever,” deputy UN spokesman Edward duBuey said at a daily news briefing.

“Within the framework of his mandate and successive resolutions of the (UN) Security Council, the purpose of Mr Ross’ trip is to prepare for the next phase in the negotiating process and a possible resumption of direct talks to achieve ‘a mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara,’” du Buey said.

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**Croatia to withdraw troops from UN mission in Golan Heights**

UNITED NATIONS, 16 March—Croatia has decided to pull all its military personnel out of the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), which is monitoring the ceasefire line between Syria and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, but no specific time for the withdrawal has been set, Eduardo del Buey, the deputy UN spokesman, told reporters here on Thursday.

“On 28 February, the Permanent Mission of Croatia (to the United Nations) has informed the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations that the government of Croatia had decided to withdraw all Croatian military personnel from UNDOF due to the deteriorating security situation,” del Buey said in response to a question at a daily news briefing.

“From 27 February, all operations of the Croatian contingent within UNDOF were restricted to static activities,” he said.

“The timeline for their withdrawal has not yet been set.

At present, the mission has 1,008 troops, del Buey said, adding that current troop contributors to UNDOF include the Philippines, India, Austria, and Croatia, which has some 100 troops in the UN peacekeeping mission.

The UNDOF has been in the Golan Heights since 1974.

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**Canada to keep C-17 with Mali mission as long as needed**

OTTAWA, 16 March—Canada will extend the loan of its C-17 military cargo plane to France’s military operations against Islamic rebels in Mali as long as it’s needed, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said on Thursday.

“We’re obviously very pleased to assist with our plane and its team. It will remain there as long as we feel there’s a need,” Harper told a joint news conference with French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault.

“The plane first flew in the Mali operation on 15 January, and in mid-February, Canada extended the mission until 15 March. Harper reiterated Canada would not take a combat military role in Mali but would provide development and humanitarian aid.”

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**People walk during a snowfall in Moscow, Russia, on 14 March. A rare heavy snowfall hit Moscow on Wednesday and Thursday, causing traffic jams and disturbing scheduled flights.**

Xinhua

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**File photo shows Zhong Jianhua, China’s special envoy to Africa, poses for a photograph during an interview with Reuters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing.**

REUTERS
Depeche Mode, ‘pessimists at heart,’ never imagined longevity

The band Depeche Mode—famous for their 1980s hits such as “People are People”—are marking their fourth decade in the music industry with the release of “Delta Machine” on 26 March.

“We’ve always been pessimists at heart, so we never think further ahead than whatever’s coming next,” Dave Gahan, 51, told Reuters. “We feel like our music is a blend of organic and inorganic,” Gore said.

Cindy Crawford’s marriage to Richard Gere was a “great chapter” in her life

New Delhi, 16 March—47-year-old supermodel Cindy Crawford has revealed her first marriage to the Arbitrage actor, Richard Gere, 63, was a great chapter in her life. Cindy has been happily married to Rande Gerber since 1998, with whom she shares son Presley, 13, and 11-year-old daughter Kaia. She told ‘Oprah’s Master Class’: “I just think your twenties, for women, is such a time when you’re starting to come into your own and feel your own power and connect to your inner strength, and it’s hard to do that—it’s hard to change—in a relationship, because what one person might have signed up for, all of a sudden, you’re not that anymore.”

“I think I was more willing at 22 to be, like, ‘Okay, I’ll follow,’ but then you start going, ‘Well, I don’t want to just follow—I want to lead sometimes and I want to walk side by side sometimes.”

Kristen Stewart is planning a romantic reunion with Robert Pattinson

New Delhi, 16 March—22-year-old actress Kristen Stewart—whose relationship with her Twilight Saga co-star Robert Pattinson has been strained since his fling with married director Rupert Sanders was exposed last August—is reportedly planning a “special romantic reunion”.

A source close to the on/off couple told OK! Magazine: “Kristen’s got a very special night planned for Rob when he gets back. She wants to surprise him by waiting in the backseat of a limo at the airport.

It’s rare for celeb couples to do that because it doubles the chances of a security issue. So he’ll be really surprised when he gets in that limo. “Rob has a huge group of friends who are all dying to take him out, but Kristen’s told them to back off until she’s had some time alone.”

Robert Pattinson was last seen being spotted with model Suki Waterhouse in London in September last year. Kristen said they both still want to be friends. ”

Bradley Cooper may have found a new girlfriend

New Delhi, 16 March—Bradley Cooper has invited British model Suki Waterhouse to visit him in Los Angeles.

The 38-year-old Silver Linings Playbook star, who split from actress Zoe Saldana for the second time late last year—has reportedly asked the 20-year-old British model to fly over for a second date with him after he became smitten with her when they met at the Elle Style Awards in London last month.

A source close to the model told gossip website RadarOnline.com: “Bradley has been texting Suki every day since they met. He wants her to come to Los Angeles and visit him; he’s intrigued by her and she’s very interested in him.”

Ang Lee moves into TV after ‘Life of Pi’ Oscar win

Los Angeles, 16 March—Double Oscar winner Ang Lee is planning over to television after winning the Best Director Academy Award last month for “Life of Pi.”

Cable channel FX executive producers and creators of the psychological thriller “Homeland”—are set to produce a new miniseries with Chinese filmmaker Ang Lee. Lee said on Thursday that the mini-series, which is set in an unassuming American family drawn into the affairs of a turbulent Middle Eastern nation, was inspired by real events following an unexplained family tragedy.

The title “Delta Machine” reflects the band’s textured sound and organic lyrics. The album “Delta Machine” was released on 26 March.

It is Lee’s first venture into directing for television and his first project since 2012’s “Life of Pi,” the tale of a young Indian boy shipwrecked with a tiger that won four Oscars in February.

Production is due to start in the summer but no broadcast date or casting has been announced. However, FX President John Landgrafl—photocall before a press conference in Paris to announce the dates for their 2013/2014 world tour on 23 Oct, 2012.

 OPTIONS

Depeche Mode

Depeche Mode has come a long way since its 1980s debut as part of Britain’s New Wave scene, and as it prepares to tour behind its 13th album, no one appears more surprised at the group’s longevity than the band members themselves.

The British synthpop pioneers—singer Dave Gahan, guitarist-keyboardist Martin Gore and keyboardist Andy Fletcher—are marking their fourth decade in the music industry with the release of “Delta Machine” on 26 March.

“We’ve always been pessimists at heart, so we never think further ahead than whatever’s coming next,” Gore, 51, told Reuters. “We feel like our music is a blend of organic and inorganic,” Gore said.


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Robert Pattinson has already been informed of the plans. “He’s been jet-lagged in the first 24 hours he’s back. He’ll be jet-lagged of course, but she’s got a relaxing night planned with a bottle of wine, pizza, and the two of them. That’s all they both want.”

The pair are both said to have really missed each other during their time apart and can’t wait to spend some quality time on their relationship.

The source said: “They provide huge comfort to each other and it was hell hitting that Oscar red carpet on crutches without him. That night really brought home how much she needs him in her life.”

Kristen and Rob have been on again-off again ever since she was caught kissing a married director. But the couple are said to be keen to repair their relationship now.

PTI

Bradley Cooper may have found a new girlfriend

New Delhi, 16 March—Bradley Cooper has invited British model Suki Waterhouse to visit him in Los Angeles.

The 38-year-old Silver Linings Playbook star, who split from actress Zoe Saldana for the second time late last year—has reportedly asked the 20-year-old British model to fly over for a second date with him after he became smitten with her when they met at the Elle Style Awards in London last month.

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PTI
Nigeria striker Martins joins Seattle Sounders

INDIAN WELLS, (Califor- 
nia) 16 March—Victoria 
Azarenka’s boyfriend, 
American musician and rapper Redfoo, has entered 
the US Open national play-
offs in a bid to earn a spot in 
the final grand slam of the 
year.

Redfoo, who will play 
under his given name of 
Stefan Gordy, has entered 
the Northern California 
sectional qualifying tourn-
ament in Salinas from 18-23 
June, the United States Ten-
nis Association (USTA) 
said on Friday.

“As a kid, it’s always been a dream of mine to 
play professional tennis,” the 37-year-old Redfoo said 
in a statement.

“Thanks to the US Open national playoffs for giving 
good players with a dream the chance to qualify for 
one of the biggest tournaments — the US Open.”

Unconvincing Chan completes world hat-trick

Kazakhstan’s Denis Ten delivered the performance of the night easily winning the free skate to take silver with a score of 266.48, becoming the first skater from his country to 

\[\text{LONDON, 16 March—Patrick Chan put a season of frustration behind him by completing a hat-trick of world titles on Friday with a victory that establishes the Canadian as the man to beat going into next year’s Sochi Olympics.}\]

\[\text{A lthough his sloppy free skate to Pacin-}\]

\[\text{Nokia’s “La Bo-}\]

\[\text{skate to Puc-}\]

\[\text{Victoria Azarenka of Belarus (R) laughs with her boy-}\]

\[\text{friend singer Redfoo, also known as Stefan Gordy of the band LMFAO, during a practice session as she prepares for the BNP Paribas Open WTA tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California, on 6 March, 2013.—Reuters}\]

Murray ousted by Del Potro, Djokovic cruises

Robertshaw Stefan

\[\text{Murray ousted by Del Potro, Djokovic cruises}\]

\[\text{Indian Wells, (Califo-}

\[\text{rnia) 16 March—Eratc serv-}

\[\text{ing cost Andy Murray dearly as the US Open champion was knocked out of the BNP Paribas Open quarter-finals 6-7, 6-3, 6-1 by Argentina’s Juan Martin Del Potro on Friday. Though the Brit-}

\[\text{ish world number three edged a close first set 7-5 on the tiebreak, he lost serve once in the second and three times in the third to make a premature exit from the ATP Masters 1000 event at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden. Seventeenseeded Del Potro will next face world number one Novak Djokovi-\}

\[\text{c’s “La Bo-}\]

\[\text{skate to Puc-}\]

\[\text{Victoria Azarenka of Belarus (R) laughs with her boy-}\]

\[\text{friend singer Redfoo, also known as Stefan Gordy of the band LMFAO, during a practice session as she prepares for the BNP Paribas Open WTA tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California, on 6 March, 2013.—Reuters}\]

\[\text{Musician and rapper Redfoo set for US Open bid}\]

\[\text{LONDON, 16 March—Former Inter Milan and}

\[\text{New Light of Myanmar}\]
Six injured in Syrian tanker explosion in northern Lebanon

BEIRUT, 16 March—A Syrian tanker loaded with diesel exploded in Lebanon’s northern port city of Tripoli on Friday, leaving six people injured, a security source confirmed to Xinhua.

One of the trucks, which were set ablaze late Thursday, exploded early Friday, injuring six people, among them three children, the source said.

Young men in the Bab el Tebbaneh Sunni neighbourhood of Tripoli set ablaze three trucks and damaged four others with Syrian plate numbers in protest of transporting diesel to Syria.

The Lebanese side has forbidden Syrian trucks from entering Lebanon through the Arida border crossing checkpoint, for fear of being attacked again, according to the source.

The truck drivers are unharmed and have been released, the source said.

Two guerrilla groups claim responsibility for Athens bomb attack

ATHENS, 16 March—Two Greek guerrilla groups claimed on Friday responsibility for a bomb attack at a courier firm in Athens on 10 March, which caused material damage, while warning of more violence ahead, local media reported.

The so-called “Informal Anarchist Federation” and the “International Revolutionary Front—Intrek Revolutions” groups released a statement saying that Sunday’s attack was to “take revenge” on an employee of the firm who helped in the arrest of terrorists two years ago.

In November 2010 a parcel bomb addressed to a foreign embassy in Athens went off at the hands of an employee inside the same courier company.

The incident triggered a police investigation which led to the arrest of members of the “Conspiracy of the Nuclei of Fire.”

Accusing the employee for “deadly curiosity,” extremists threatened that they intend to attack more targets on their black list, including police officers and judges presiding over the trials of “Conspiracy of the Nuclei of Fire” members.

Greece has a long history of domestic terrorism. Following the outbreak of the debt crisis in 2009 which has led the country to the brink of bankruptcy, several groups have linked attacks with harsh austerity measures implemented to resolve the crisis.

In January, unidentified assailants opened fire at the Greek party headquarters, and a few days later, a strong bomb blast occurred inside a shopping mall, slightly injuring two guards.

Bobs Worth lands Cheltenham Gold Cup

LONDON, 16 March—Irish jockey Barry Geraghty won the Cheltenham Gold Cup on a horse he once owned when favourite Bobs Worth prevailed in stamina-sapping conditions to land British jump racing’s showpiece event on Friday.

Geraghty was patient and timed his run to perfection on the 11-1 chance to win by four lengths in the three mile and a quarter slog on ground softened up by persistent heavy rain on the final day of the four-day festival.

The jockey purchased Bobs Worth, now an eight-year-old, as a yearling for 16,000 euros (13,842 pounds) before sending him to the sales ring for a small profit three years later.

Bobs Worth, whose victory was worth 313,225 pounds to his owners, has

Nigeria beeps up security for airports after robbery incident

LAGOS, 16 March—The Nigerian government has beefed up security at the Lagos Murtala Mohammed International Airport (MMIA), and other areas of the airport to forestall future armed robbery incident.

The new security measure came on the heels of the recent robbery which snuffed lives out of two police officers and one of the robbers. Also, the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) on Thursday ordered all the operators of Bureau de change operating across airports in the country to leave the airports environment immediately.

Spokesperson for the organization Yakubu Dati told reporters in Lagos that preliminary reports have shown that the activities of operators of Bureau de change had been attracting attention of armed robbers to the airports, adding that such would no longer be condoned.

Dati said the organization’s task force would begin to implement the order for the currency hawkers to begin to leave the airports environment.

Heavy rain forecast in S China

BEIJING, 16 March—Heavy rainfall will hit most of south China over the next three days, meteorological authorities forecast on Saturday. Regions south of the Yellow and Huaihe rivers, including parts of the Jiangxi and Jiangnan plains, regions south of the Yangtze River and the eastern parts of south China, will see moderate to heavy rain, the National Meteorological Centre (NMC) said in an online statement.

From Saturday to Sunday morning, heavy rain or thunderstorms are expected in parts of Anhui, Hubei, Guangdong, Hunan and Jiangxi provinces, with the rainy weather spreading further east to affect Shanghai and the Provinces of Jiangsu and Zhejiang the following day, the centre said.

The NMC also forecast temperature drops of up to 10 degrees Celsius and high winds in parts of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, northeast China and north China from Saturday evening through Monday due to a strong cold snap.

Some areas of Inner Mongolia and neighbouring Guansu Province will be hit by sandstorms from Sunday to Monday, the centre added.
Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham calls for timely completion of ASEAN Summit venues

During the work coordination meeting with special development projects supervisory committee and responsible personnel from construction companies at the Ruby Hall construction site in Dekkhinathiri Township today, the vice-president stressed the need for stepping up the project to complete the buildings fully equipped with necessary systems.

He also urged ministries concerned which are responsible for reception, transportation, hosting, entertaining, security and media for ASEAN summits and meetings to cooperate with the construction companies to be able to host the summits and meetings in 2014 in style.

U Kan Chun, Secretary of the special development project supervisory committee and member of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, and the chief executive officer of Shwetaung Development Company reported on composition of Ruby Hall and Jade Villa buildings, progress of the construction works and tasks to be carried out, progress of water and power supply and communications.

Deputy ministers from Ministry of Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Information, Culture and Hotels & Tourism and the deputy chief of Myanmar Police Force discussed necessary measures to be taken for the buildings to met international standards.

Committee meets for implementing Latpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project Investigation Commission’s report

Chairman of the committee for implementing the report of Investigation Commission on Latpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project Union Minister U Hla Tun making a speech at the coordination meeting.—MNA

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 March—A committee for implementing the report of Investigation Commission on Latpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project held a coordination meeting at the Win Unity Resort Hotel in Monywa yesterday.

Speaking at the meeting, Chairman of the committee Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun, said that the committee would form groups for scrutinizing lands, environmental conservation, socio-economic development, moving and re-building religious buildings to be able to speed up the works of the committee.

He also stressed the need for settling issues related to compensation for land grabs, reclamation of farmland, revising contracts, environmental conservation and health care and safety at work-sites, getting international certificates, creating new job opportunities for local people and socio-economic development of the local people.

To settle the issues, authorities concerned should reach out to the grass root and should carry out the tasks in accordance with the law, he said.

During the meeting, Vice-chairmen of the committee for implementing the report of Investigation Commission on Latpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project Union Minister U Hla Tun and party visited the Ruby Hall and Jade Villa construction sites in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA

Union Information Minister invites MPC (Temporary) to discuss Printing and Publishing Bill

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 March—Union Minister for Information has invited representatives of the Myanmar Press Council (Temporary) to discuss the Printing and Publishing Bill on 23 March.

The meeting will focus on advices and suggestions for amending the bill to be submitted to the Pyithu Hluttaw Bill Committee.

Government budget reviewed

Nay Pyi Taw, 16 March—Ministry of Finance and Revenue has taken steps to review the budget of the government at the ministry here yesterday.

To settle the issues, authorities concerned should reach out to the grass root and should carry out the tasks in accordance with the law, he said.

Chairman of the committee Li-Gen Ko Ko, U Win Tun and deputy ministers discussed facts and figures related to the Latpadaungtaung Copper Mine, environment conservation and ecological system, and socio-economic and job-opportunities for local people.

After the meeting, Committee chairman U Hla Tun and party visited the project in a motorcade, and held a meeting with Mr Geng Yi, Managing Director of Myanmar Wanbao Co Ltd.

The meeting was participated by international development partners led by Mr Kanthan Shankar, Country Manager of WB to Myanmar, representatives from AusAID, DFID and ADB, the Central Bank of Myanmar, Myanmar Economic Bank, Internal Revenue Department, Planning Department, Project Appraisal and Progress Reporting Department, Education Planning and Training Department, Health Planning Department and Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise.

MNA

Summary of observations at 9:30 hr MST on 16.3.2013

Bay Inference

Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. Outlook for subsequent two days

State of the Sea

Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

Generally fair in the whole country.—NLM