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President U Thein Sein felicitates First Secretary of Worker's Party of Korea, First Chairman of National Defense Commission and Supreme Commander of DPRK

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Sept—On the occasion of the Day of the Foundation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which falls on 9 September 2012, U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Kim Jong Un, 1st Secretary of the Worker's Party of Korea, 1st Chairman of the National Defense Commission of the DPRK and Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.—MNA

President U Thein Sein felicitates President of Presidium of Supreme People's Assembly of DPRK

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Sept—On the occasion of the Day of the Foundation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which falls on 9 September 2012, U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Kim Yong Nam, President of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.—MNA

President U Thein Sein sends message of felicitations to DPRK Premier

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Sept—On the occasion of the Day of the Foundation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which falls on 9 September 2012, U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Choe Yong Rim, Premier of the Cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.—MNA

Myanmar needs international level education: Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham speaking at the ceremony to mark International Literacy Day 2012.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Sept—"No doubt we would need a considerable number of intellectuals and intelligentsia in building a modern developed nation. Therefore, the education standard of the country must be promoted to international level" said Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham at the ceremony to mark International Literacy Day 2012.

In line with the theme of "Cultivating peace, the role of literacy", the ceremony to mark International Literacy Day was held at Myanmar International Convention Centre here this morning, with an address by Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham.

Present on the occasion were Union ministers, members of National Education Committee, deputy ministers, departmental heads, diplomats, resident representatives of UN agencies and guests.

First, students of No.1 Basic Education School, Lewe

sang a song to open the ceremony.

In his inaugural speech, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham said it is no doubt a large number of intellectual and intelligentsia, competent human resources are needed in building the Republic of the Union of Myanmar into a modern developed nation. The human resources development of the entire nation including the younger generation who will assume the responsibility of future nation is fundamental requirement and thus the education standard of the country must be promoted to international level.

In so doing, employment of modern science and technology in various fields and production of highly competent intellectuals and technical know-how is the top priority for effective facilitation of national development. The second priority is to build a continuous learning society enabling every citizen to have access to basic literacy

through collaborative efforts.

International Literacy Day was born out of the world's conference of ministers of education on eradication of illiteracy in Tehran of Iran in 1965.

It was proposed to designate September 8, the beginning day of the meeting, as International Literacy Day and celebrate International Literacy Day worldwide annually.

Since 1966, International Literacy Day has been celebrated yearly with a view to acquiring advices, interests and support of the international people in UNESCO literacy campaign. Under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and the UNESCO, International Literacy Day has been celebrated in Myanmar annually at State level up to this time.

Studying the illiteracy rate of the world, out of 775 million advanced-age illiterates, two-thirds are young and old women. One of every six of the world's adult population does not even know ABC. In addition, over 122 million children in the primary and secondary education level age group have no access to schooling, losing rights to pursue education.

Therefore, the ten year period from 2003 to 2012 was unanimously designated as United Nations Literacy Decade under the convention of the United Nations General Assembly 2012 with the aim of guaranteeing primary education to everyone and supporting literacy programmes for the adult. Since then, literacy for all programmes have been implemented and now it has reached the final year of UN literacy decade.

Reviewing the literacy rate of Myanmar, the literacy rate had reached 85 per cent in monarchical period thanks to monastic education. Again, the literacy rate was down to 35 per cent after independence due to legacy of colonial education system.

(See page 6)

Russia, US sign documents on bilateral cooperation



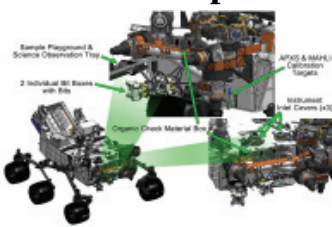
Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov (1st R) presides over the APEC senior officials meeting in Vladivostok, Russia, on 2 Sept, 2012. PAGE 3

Drilling to lakes under Antarctic may give clues to sea rise



A mountain is reflected in a bay that used to be covered by the Sheldon glacier on the Antarctic peninsula, 14 Jan, 2009. PAGE 4

NASA Mars rover Curiosity begins arm-work phase



This engineering drawing shows various components needed to support tools at the end of the arm on NASA's Curiosity rover. PAGE 4

Union Information Minister meets chairman and CEC members of Myanmar Writers Association

YANGON, 8 Sept—Union Minister for Information U Aung Kyi sought advices from chairman and CEC members of Myanmar Writers Association for public services at Myanma Radio and Television here this evening, citing the President's guidance for people-centered approach and providing public services.

The Union Minister urged the men of letters to produce works, fiction or non-fiction, profitable to the people from children to older persons.

Chairman of Myanmar Writers Association U Tin Hlaing (Ledwintha Saw Chit) reported on site for association building, prize presentation to offspring of writers and respect paying



Union Minister for Information U Aung Kyi meets chairman and CEC members of Myanmar Writers Association.

MNA

ceremony to doyen literati and the Union Minister attended to the needs.

The meeting was attended by chairman of Myanmar Writers Association, vice-chairmen, CEC members and officials.

MNA

Union Foreign Affairs Minister felicitates DPRK counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Sept—On the occasion of the Day of the Foundation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which falls on 9 September 2012, U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Pak Ui Chun, Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.—MNA

Discussion between ASEAN Region production and market competitiveness work committees and entrepreneurs held

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Sept—A discussion between ASEAN Region production and market competitiveness promotion work committees and entrepreneurs from private business organizations was held at the conference hall of the

business organizations.

At the discussion, officials from respective work committees presented implementation of AEC-AFTA by Myanmar, findings and advices by studying AEC Scorecard from Yangon Institute of Economics of ASEAN and East Asia Economic Research Department, preparation and advices for AEC of Myanmar Industrialists Association.

Officials discussed results of 44th Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers and related meetings and dialogue partners held in Siem Reap of Cambodia from 25 August to 1 September and measures to be taken by Myanmar.

The National Planning and Economic Development Ministry organizes to conduct two part time courses for citizens, entrepreneurs and industrialists—Certificate for ASEAN Economic Studies-CAES and Diploma in ASEAN Economic Studies-DAES at Yangon Institute of Economics in October to understand ASEAN Economics Community 2015 (AEC 2015) and to make necessary preparations.

MNA



Discussion between ASEAN Region production and market competitiveness promotion work committees and entrepreneurs in progress.—MNA

Motorboats with illegal timber seized in Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Sept—Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry constantly places emphasis on conservation and protection of forest resources and protection of wildlife with the participation of the people.

Acting on tip-off, staff of Forest Department (Head Office) and staff of Gwa Township Forest Department and members of Myanmar Police Force arrested 13 persons along with 215.2295 tons of illegal timbers on two boats, 2160 bags of charcoal weighing 345.6 tons in Gwa Creek,

Bagankwe Creek, Taman Creek, U Shwelekon Creek, Thitkaikywa Creek, Htantaung Creek and wards in Gwa.

The Township Court takes action against U Thet Naung, son of U Hla Tun seized together with motorboat under Section 42(b) of Pa-109/2012. According to the confession of U Thet Naung, motorboat operator was U Than Phone Ni and owner U Win Ko of Gwa. Officials are carrying out tasks to take action against remaining seized persons under the law.

MNA

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.

District News

One dead, 13 missing in boat capsized

MAGWAY, 8 Sept—A ferry boat carrying nine men and six women capsized in Kaw Creek near Nyaungwunpauk Village of Pauk Township in Magway Region at 3 pm on 4 September due to speedy current of creek water.

The capsized boat left one woman dead, nine men and three women, totaling 13 missing in the accident.

Officials of Pakokku District General Administration Department and Pauk Township GAD performed rescue works.—Kyemon

Illegally medical practitioners seized

YANGON, 8 Sept—A squad led by SIP Myint Oo of Kadonpaw Police Station, acting on tip-off, searched that a woman gives medical illegal treatment to the people in various areas in Thongwa Township, at 12.20 pm on 3 September.

At the house of U Thein from Kainggon Village, the

squad seized Ma Thanda Myint, 40, bringing along with syringe, drugs, blood pressure equipment, diabetes equipment and one headphone.

Thongwa Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against her under Section 41 of 2000 Myanmar Medical Council Law.—Kyemon

Marine product eel of Myanmar marketable in China

YANGON, 8 Sept—Export of eel fetches good price, according to an official of Myanmar Eel Entrepreneurs Association at a meeting of meat and fish entrepreneurs on 4 September.

Eel is exported to China through Muse 105-mile and Chinshwehaw border trade stations.

Although eel was sold

at US\$3500 per ton in early August last year, export of eel fetches US\$ 4020 per ton this year.

Sales of eel set on record at US\$ 5140 per ton in early July this year. Myanmar Eel Association has fetched about US\$ 14 million against the target in 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Myanma Alin



CASH DONATED: Civil Engineering Cooperative Society of Kyimyindine Township donated K 350,000 to Hninzigon Home for the Aged through Executive Committee Chairman Lt-Col Kyaw Shein (Rtd) recently.—NLM

World

US to blacklist Pakistan-based Haqqani as terrorists

WASHINGTON, 8 Sept — The United States is preparing to designate the Pakistan-based Haqqani network as a terrorist group as early as Friday, the *New York Times* said on its website. The Haqqanis, a Pashtun tribe with strongholds in southeastern Afghanistan and across the border in Pakistan, have been blamed for an attack on the US embassy in Kabul and other high-profile assaults in Afghanistan.

The United States accuses Pakistan's

intelligence agency of supporting the Haqqani network and using it as a proxy in Afghanistan to gain leverage against the growing influence of its arch-rival India in the country. Pakistan denies the allegations. A senior Pakistani security official said blacklisting the Haqqani network would be counterproductive and put unnecessary pressure on Islamabad, a strategic US ally. "If the United States wants to have a constructive relationship with Pakistan, then this is a bad move," the

official told *Reuters*. "This will push Pakistan into a corner."

In June, Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said the United States was reaching the limits of its patience with Pakistan because of the safe havens that groups like the Haqqanis found there. Designation by the State Department as a Foreign Terrorist Organization would bring sanctions such as criminal penalties for anyone providing material support to the group and seizure of any assets in the United States. The Obama administration is facing a congressional deadline this weekend to determine whether the network met the criteria for such designation.

The *New York Times* said senior officials who argued against blacklisting the group were concerned it could further damage relations with Pakistan and possibly jeopardize the fate of US Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl who is being held by the militants.

Reuters



An Afghan security personnel holds his weapon as he leaves the area after a battle with insurgents who took over a building near the US embassy in Kabul on 14 Sept, 2011.—REUTERS

Russia, US sign documents on bilateral cooperation

VLADIVOSTOK, 8 Sept — Russia and the United States on Saturday signed several documents on the sideline of the ongoing forum of 2012 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in this Russian Far Eastern port city.

The documents, signed by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, included an MoU between the two governments on cooperation in the Antarctic, a joint statement on strengthening Russia-US inter-regional cooperation, and a statement on cooperation in the Bering Strait region. Lavrov said that the signing of MoU had moved bilateral cooperation on the South Polar continent to a brand-new level. Clinton, representing the US president in the APEC forum, described the agreement on easing visa regime between the two countries as having special historical bearings. The agreement on visa regime will come into effect this Sunday.—Xinhua



Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov (R) shakes hands with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton after signing the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in Antarctica during APEC meetings in Vladivostok, east Russia, on 8 Sept, 2012.—XINHUA

UN stresses importance of reading, writing in promoting peace, development

UNITED NATIONS, 8 Sept — UN officials have stressed the importance of literacy in accelerating peace and development, calling for greater efforts to enable children, youth and adults to read, write and transform their lives. The officials, including UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, have made statements or delivered messages to mark the International Literacy Day, which is observed on 8 September annually. This year's International Literacy Day has a special focus on the fundamental relationship between literacy and peace.

In a message to mark the International Literacy Day, the UN secretary-general said that great strides have been made during the United Nations Literacy Decade that closes this year as some 90 million young men and women have become literate. Launched in 2003, the United Nations Literacy Decade is a UN initiative that provides both a platform and an impetus for increasing literacy levels and developing literate environments worldwide. However, an estimated 775 million young people and adults around the world still cannot read or write, while 122 million children of primary and lower secondary school age remain out of school, and millions more still graduate with inadequate literacy skills, according to the message.

"The persistence of such numbers hobbles our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to build the inclusive knowledge societies we need for the twenty-first century," said Ban. "We must move faster to reach the most marginalized and uphold this basic human right," he said. "That is why, later this month, I will be launching a new Education First initiative." The three priorities of the initiative will be putting every child in school, improving the quality of learning and fostering global citizenship. "I call on world leaders and all involved with education to join this initiative. The cost of leaving millions of children and young people on the margins of society is far greater than the funds required to reach the international goals for education," he said.

Ban's remarks have been echoed by the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Irina Bokova, who said, in her message given ahead of the International Literacy Day, that literacy transforms the lives of people, allowing them to make informed choices and empowering individuals to become agents of change.

Xinhua

IRAN



Photo taken on 7 Sept, 2012 shows the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa. Canada announced on Friday that it has demanded Iranian diplomats leave the country within five days.—XINHUA

OTTAWA, 8 Sept — Canada has suspended its diplomatic relations with Iran and instructed Iranian diplomats here to leave within five days, Foreign Minister John Baird said on Friday. "Canada has closed its embassy in Iran, effective

Canada suspends diplomatic ties with Iran

Teheran on such issues as the Syria crisis and Iran's nuclear programme.

"The Iranian regime is providing increasing military assistance to the (Syrian President Bashar) Assad regime; it refuses to comply with UN resolutions pertaining to its nuclear programme; it routinely threatens the existence of Israel and engages in racist anti-Semitic rhetoric and incitement to genocide," he added. Iran is also among the world's worst violators of human rights, and shelters and materially supports terrorist groups, he said, adding that that requires Canada to formally list Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism under Canada's Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act.

Xinhua

Iran: Canada has hostile attitude

BEIJING, 8 Sept — Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman says Canada follows the hostile policies of the UK and Israel towards the country.

The remarks came after Canada announced on Friday to suspend its diplomatic relations with Iran, and instructed Iranian diplomats in Canada to leave within five days. Canada has been an active player in imposing sanctions to suspend Teheran's uranium enrichment-related activities.—Xinhua

Venezuela's presidential race enters final stage

Venezuela

CARACAS, 8 Sept — Venezuela's presidential race entered the final stretch on Friday, when the two leading candidates have geared up their campaign before voters go to the polls on 7 October. President Hugo Chavez, who is seeking a third term, met with his campaign strategists on the day in the capital Caracas, and later addressed supporters.

"The last stage of this campaign kicks off today," Chavez said, calling on supporters to avoid overconfidence, though polls showed Chavez would have a comfortable lead over pro-business Henrique Capriles, the candidate of the opposition Coalition for Democratic Unity. "We must

not underestimate them," said Chavez, who aims to win 10 million votes. Eligible voters exceed 18 million nationwide.

Meanwhile, Capriles pressed his message of change, saying Chavez's time is running out.

"A month to go before opening the doors to the future, each day more Venezuelans board the Bus of Progress," the former governor of Miranda state told rallies covered by the opposition-controlled Globovision TV channel.

"We have no doubt that the road we are on arrives at a single destination, and that's victory on 7 October," said Capriles.

Xinhua



Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff (C) attends the military parade marking the 190th anniversary of Brazil's Independence Day, in Brasilia, Brazil, on 7 Sept, 2012.—XINHUA

Technology

HTC to launch two tablets on 19 Spetember?

TAIPEI, 8 Sept—After the big announcements from Samsung, Sony, Nokia, Microsoft, Motorola and Amazon all eyes are now on HTC and its 19 September event. According to CNET, the Taiwanese smartphone and tablet maker is expected to showcase at least two new tablets at the event to be held in New York.

In the past too there had been talks about HTC planning to launch new range of tablets but there had been nothing substantial to report. Things are looking a bit different this time as a lot of handy details about these



tablets have been leaked.

One of the tablets is expected to be HTC Flyer successor and will have a 7-inch screen and will run on Android Jelly Bean topped by HTC's Sense. This tablet will support the Scribe digital pen. The other speculated specs include 1280X768-pixel display, a Snapdragon S4 processor, a 3-megapixel rear camera and 1-megapixel front camera.

The other tablet is rumoured to be a 10-inch tablet powered by a Tegra 3 processor. This is the same tablet that had leaked online just a few days back. Other specifications aren't clear, except for the fact it will come with 1GB RAM and will sport an unusual design.

Given that 10-inch tablet will be competing head-on with the newly launched Samsung Galaxy Note 10.1 (aka Samsung Galaxy Note 800) and Apple iPad, HTC will have to make sure that it packs in a great user experience. The other major make or break factor for this tablet is going to be its pricing.—PTI

Amazon's new high-end tablet lacks FCC approval for sale

Technology

An employee demonstrates the new Kindle Fire HD 8.9" at Amazon's Kindle Fire event in Santa Monica, California on 6 Sept, 2012.



note: "We will send you an email asking you to confirm your pre-order of Kindle Fire when it is approved for sale by the Federal Communications Commission." Amazon is accepting pre-orders now and plans to ship the 4G devices on 20 November. A company spokeswoman said Amazon expects to receive FCC approval before 20 November.

SANTA MONICA, 8 Sept—Amazon.com Inc trumpeted cutting-edge wireless technology as a key selling point for the fanciest of the new Kindle devices introduced by CEO Jeff Bezos on Thursday. There's just one problem: the devices have not yet been approved for sale by the Federal Communications Commission.

FCC approval is required for wireless communications products, to assure that they operate safely and won't improperly interfere with other signals.

A pre-order confirmation email sent by Amazon late on 6 September, for the \$499 Kindle Fire HD 8.9-inch 4G tablet included the following

tablets are a crucial part of Amazon's attempt to challenge Apple Inc's iPad at the premium end of the booming tablet market.

The lack of FCC approval at this stage is likely a result of Amazon's lack of experience with wireless hardware, according to Charles Golvin, a wireless analyst at Forrester Research.

Lazarus said Apple Inc, Motorola, now owned by Google, Samsung and Microsoft have never had such issues. "These companies have dedicated staff whose job it is to ensure FCC compliance and they do their job very well," Lazarus added.

Sprint Nextel, a leading wireless carrier, does not release phones for pre-order unless they have already been FCC approved. "In the vast majority of cases, we will not accept a phone into our formal lab process that has not already received FCC approval," said Sprint spokeswoman Michelle Leff Mermelstein.

Attorneys and analysts familiar with FCC compliance procedures agreed that the FCC is unlikely to reject the Amazon devices out of hand, or prolong the approval process past its ship date. But they say it's very unusual for a company to announce major new products without first getting the sign-off from the agency.

"I can't think of an instance where a device has been offered by a US carrier or an independent retailer that has not had FCC approval yet," said John Jackson, a wireless analyst at CCS Insight. An FCC spokesman declined to comment.

The 4G Kindle Fire

Reuters

Drilling to lakes under Antarctic may give clues to sea rise

Science

OSLO, 8 Sept—A British plan to drill into a sunless lake deep under Antarctica's ice in December could show the risks of quicker sea level rise caused by climate change, scientists said on Friday.

Sediments on the bed of Lake Ellsworth, which is several hundred meters (yards) below sea level and buried under 3 km (1.6 miles) of ice, may include bits of ancient seashells that could be dated to reveal when the ice sheet last broke up.

Experts say the West Antarctic ice sheet over the lake contains enough ice to

raise world sea levels by 3-5 meters if it ever broke up - a threat to low-lying areas from Bangladesh to Florida, from Buenos Aires to Shanghai.

"Society needs to know the risk of a collapse," of the ice sheet, said Martin Siegert, of the University of Bristol and principal investigator for the mission that will also look for unknown life forms in a rivalry with Russian and US scientists.

There are 360 known sub-glacial lakes in Antarctica - formed by heat from the Earth melting the bottom of the ice.

"One way to find out (the risks of collapse) is to know when it last happened," he said of the mission that has been in the planning stages for 16 years. "We are finally ready to hit the 'go' button," he said.



A mountain is reflected in a bay that used to be covered by the Sheldon glacier on the Antarctic peninsula, 14 Jan, 2009.

Reuters

"We set foot on the ice again in October and hope to bring samples to the surface in December 2012," Chris Hill, programme manager at the British Antarctic Survey, said in a statement.

Reuters

J K Rowling's Wonderbook: Book of Spells coming to PlayStation 3 on 13 Nov

Gaming

WASHINGTON, 8 Sept—At E3 this year, Sony announced a new experience for PS3 owners called Wonderbook that makes use of augmented reality technology and the PlayStation Eye camera. The latest update is that the first title in the Wonderbook series called Book of Spells is releasing on 13 November in the US for the PlayStation 3.

Posting about the development of this new project on the Sony PlayStation blog, Jenny Barbour Associate Producer said, "We recently sat down with the team to create a series of 'making of' diaries that give you a closer look at the development of Wonderbook. To kick off these developer diaries, the team focused on the core technology that helped form the foundation of the project."

In this regard, Sony published a 3min 30sec YouTube video titled "The Making of Wonderbook: Book of Spells, Developer Diary 1" to give users a closer look at the

development of Wonderbook.

Book of Spells is authored by J.K. Rowling, the highly acclaimed writer of the Harry Potter series. It is the first product from Sony's partnership with Pottermore. The title allows you to cast spells like Incendio, Wingardium Leviosa and Expelliarmus using the PlayStation Move controller that acts as a magic wand.

To help users get started with their Wizarding skills, Sony is also offering PS3 fans the Wonderbook: Book of Spells Move Bundle that comes with the Book of Spells game, Wonderbook peripheral, PlayStation Eye camera and a PlayStation Move motion controller — all for just \$79.99.

Those who already own a PlayStation Eye camera and a PlayStation Move controller, can buy the Wonderbook: Book of Spells standalone for \$39.99 that comes with the Book of Spells game and the Wonderbook peripheral.

Wonderbook, developed by London Studio, is an experience which involves a physical book that will include educational and scientific content as well from diverse authors. Additional Wonderbook titles in the making include Diggs: Nightcrawler by Moon Bot Studios, BBC's Walking with Dinosaurs and experiences from Disney.

Here's a look at one of the many Developer Diaries to come from Sony in the Wonderbook series.

PTI



NASA Mars rover Curiosity begins arm-work phase

Space

WASHINGTON, 8 Sept—After driving more than a football field's length since landing, NASA's Mars rover Curiosity is spending several days preparing for full use of the tools on its arm, US space agency NASA announced on Thursday.

Curiosity extended its robotic arm on Wednesday in the first of 6-10 consecutive days of planned activities to test the 7-foot (2.1-metre) arm and the tools it manipulates, NASA said.

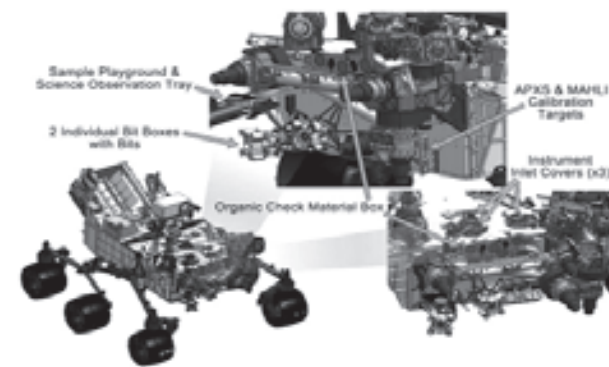
The work at the current location will prepare Curiosity and the team for using the arm to place two of the science instruments onto rock and soil targets. In addition, the activities represent the first steps in preparing to scoop soil, drill into rocks, process collected samples and deliver samples into analytical instruments.

Checkouts in the next several days will include using the turret's Mars Hand Lens Imager to observe its calibration target and the Canadian-built Alpha

Particle X-Ray Spectrometer to read what chemical elements are present in the instrument's calibration target.

Since the Mars Science Laboratory spacecraft placed

After the arm characterization activities at the current site, Curiosity will proceed for a few weeks eastward toward Glenelg. The science team selected that area as likely to offer a good



This engineering drawing shows various components needed to support tools at the end of the arm on NASA's Curiosity rover.—XINHUA

Curiosity inside Mars' Gale Crater on 6 August, the rover has driven a total of 358 feet (109 meters). The drives have brought it about one-fourth of the way from the landing site, named Bradbury Landing, to a location selected as the mission's first major science destination, Glenelg.

target for Curiosity's first analysis of powder collected by drilling into a rock.

Curiosity is one month into a two-year prime mission on Mars. It will use 10 science instruments to assess whether the selected study area ever has offered environmental conditions favourable for microbial life.—Xinhua

“Food environment” in **Health** schools getting a bit better

NEW YORK, 8 Sept—US schools took small steps toward encouraging students to make healthier food choices between 2006 and 2010, but there’s still a lot of room for improvement, according to a new study.

Researchers found that on a scale from zero to 100, public schools collectively increased the score for the healthiness of their food environments by about 3 points, while private schools increased their score by 5 points.

The hope was, according the researchers, that there would be improvements between 2006, when schools across the country were ordered to create wellness policies to address nutrition topics, and the end of the study in 2010.

“The bottom line is that there have been some changes in specific areas, but generally there has to be more changes to create an optimally healthy environment,” said Lindsey Turner, the study’s lead author and a research scientist at the Institute for Health Research and Policy at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

For their study, Turner and her colleague collected surveys taken during the 2006-2007 and 2009-2010 school years by principals and food service managers at 1,830 public and private elementary schools across the country.

The surveys asked about what the school offered when it came to physical activities, nutrition education, policies, lunches and what foods students had access to at school.



Students get their lunch from a salad bar at the school cafeteria as some of more than 8,000lbs of locally grown broccoli from a partnership between Farm to School and Healthy School Meals is served at Marston Middle School in San Diego, California. —REUTERS

Overall, between the 2006 and 2009 surveys, public schools increased nutrition restrictions on school fundraisers and reduced the number of contracts with beverage companies that often sell sugary drinks. They also offered more whole grains at lunch.

Both public and private schools offered only lower-fat milks at more schools and increased the number of school gardens. Private schools also stepped up their nutrition education.—Reuters

Cranberry juice may beat kids’ bladder infections

NEW YORK, 8 Sept—Cranberry juice rich in certain antibacterial substances may help prevent repeat urinary tract infections in kids, a small study suggests.

Researchers found that cranberry juice made with high concentrations of proanthocyanidins (PACs) cut kids’ risk of repeat urinary tract infections by two-thirds, versus a comparison juice.

Since the juice on your supermarket’s shelves may not have that PAC level, the researchers say their findings are not an endorsement of any product. But the results, published in the Journal of

Urology, do give support to cranberry as a UTI fighter, according to a pediatric urologist not connected to the study.

PACs are the compounds thought to give cranberries their bacteria-fighting potential. Women have long turned to cranberry juice and supplements to help prevent recurrent urinary tract infections (UTIs) — though studies have been mixed on whether they work.

There has been little research on kids, even though UTIs are relatively common in children. Girls have about an 8 percent chance of

contracting the infection at some point in childhood; boys have a 2 percent chance.

Besides being uncomfortable, recurrent UTIs can eventually damage the kidneys in some children. So doctors may prescribe antibiotics to help prevent them. But antibiotics can have side effects, and using them long-term can breed drug-resistant bacteria. So researchers are looking at whether cranberry products can be a good alternative.

For the new study, doctors at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada,

Health

recruited 40 children who’d had at least two UTIs in the past year. They randomly assigned the kids to drink one of two juices made for the study: a cranberry juice rich in PACs or a juice free of all “cranberry products.”

Over the next year, kids who drank cranberry juice had UTIs at a rate of 0.4 per child, compared with 1.15 in the comparison group. The power of cranberries against UTIs “was initially regarded as an old wives’ tale,” said Dr Hiep Nguyen of Boston Children’s Hospital, who was not involved in the study.

Reuters

China’s Alibaba to pass Amazon, eBay in transaction value **Business**

HANGZHOU, 8 Sept—China’s largest e-commerce firm, Alibaba Group, expects to sell merchandise this year worth more than that sold by Amazon Inc and eBay combined, Alibaba’s chief strategy officer said on Saturday.

The company is aiming for 3 trillion yuan (\$473 billion) in annual transaction value from its Taobao e-commerce units in the next 5 to 7 years, Zeng Ming told reporters.

Alibaba’s founder, Jack Ma, said last year that Taobao’s transaction value for 2012 would reach 1 trillion yuan. The company has not said what percentage of online sales come from Taobao, but it is the crown jewel of the Alibaba Group and its profit engine. “From their annual reports we did a rough calculation and we were

similar last year but we are growing faster than them this year, so this year we are probably larger than them,” Zeng said of Amazon and eBay, America’s top online retailer and auction site.

“The gap is just going to get bigger and bigger when we grow faster,” he said. In May, Alibaba ended more than two years of often fractious negotiations with Yahoo Inc to buy back much of a stake held by the US web giant and, crucially, reduce the voting power of foreign stakeholders including Yahoo and Japan’s Softbank Corp. As part of the deal with Yahoo, there are incentives for Alibaba to list its shares by December 2015. The company has said there is no timetable for a listing. This year, Alibaba took its Alibaba.com unit private.

Reuters



An employee walks past a logo of Alibaba (China) Technology Co. Ltd during a media tour organised by government officials at its headquarters on the outskirts of Hangzhou, Zhejiang province 20 June, 2012.—REUTERS

Job growth cools, posing challenge for Obama, Fed **Business**

Health

NEW YORK, 8 Sept—About one in four professional volleyball players surveyed in the Netherlands had symptoms that could suggest a potentially serious injury to a shoulder artery, according to a new study that urges doctors to keep an eye out for the condition. After encountering arterial aneurysms —dangerous bulges in a blood vessel wall - in the shoulders of a half dozen pro volleyballers, Dutch researchers canvassed nearly 100 players to see how many more had possible signs of the same injury.

The main symptoms — cold, blue or pale fingers during or right after intense play —which according to the researchers could be the result of little blood clots emanating from the damaged artery, were reported by 27 percent of the volleyballers. The study did not actually examine the athletes to determine whether they had artery damage, though.



An unidentified Japanese player prepares to serve during a women’s team practice session at the Peace and Friendship Olympic stadium in Athens on 11 Aug, 2004. —REUTERS

“We only did a questionnaire and we still need to relate whether the questionnaire is in accordance to a vascular problem,” said Dr. Mario Maas, senior author of the study and a radiologist at the Academic Medical Centre/University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands. Maas and his colleagues at the hospital had seen six cases of blood clots in the fingers of male pro volleyball players in the course of three years, mainly in each man’s dominant hand.

In each case, they traced the problem back to arterial aneurysms in the athletes’ shoulders on the same side of

the body, and performed surgery to repair the injured blood vessel. The players were able to return to competition after a few weeks.

Daan van de Pol, the study’s lead author, told Reuters Health that the problems can be due to compression of an artery in the shoulder when a player is going for a smash or a serve.

The overhead reaching movement squeezes the artery “like a tube of toothpaste,” the authors wrote in the study in *The American Journal of Sports Medicine*, potentially causing clots to shoot out and circulate down to the fingers.

Reuters

WASHINGTON, 8 Sept—Jobs growth slowed sharply in August, dealing a blow to President Barack Obama as he seeks re-election and setting the stage for the Federal Reserve to pump additional money into the sluggish economy next week.

Nonfarm payrolls increased only 96,000 last month, the Labour Department said on Friday, well below what would normally be needed to put a dent in the jobless rate. Payrolls had grown by 141,000 jobs in July.

While the unemployment rate dropped to 8.1 percent from 8.3 percent, it



People wait in line to enter a job fair in New York on 18 April, 2012. REUTERS

was only because many Americans gave up the hunt for work. The survey of households from which the jobless rate is derived actually showed a decline in employment for a second straight month.

“The economy is crawling up the down escalator and today’s report can only give ammunition to the activist members of the Fed board to loosen monetary policy further next week,” said Patrick O’Keefe, head of economic research at JH Cohn in Roseland, New Jersey.

The lackluster report piled pressure on Obama ahead of the November vote,

with the health of the economy looming large.

While acknowledging the tepid pace of job growth, Obama laid the blame for the labour market’s woes on Congress, and Republican lawmakers in particular.

“If Republicans are serious about being concerned about joblessness, we could create a million new jobs right now if Congress would pass the job plans I sent them a year ago,” he said at a campaign rally in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney said Obama’s economic policies had failed.

“There’s almost nothing the president’s done in the last three and a half, four years that gives the American people confidence he knows what he’s doing when it comes to jobs and the economy,” Romney told reporters in Sergeant Bluff, Iowa.

Reuters

Myanmar needs international level...

(from page 1)

Therefore, successive governments after the independence have made efforts for literacy achievement as a national duty. Thanks to the public education course and 3-Rs courses of the Public Education Council beginning March, 1949, the literacy rate of the country had risen to 57 per cent in 1963.

3-Rs literacy movement was launched in Meiktila in 1964 to accelerate the momentum of literacy programmes. The programme could be extended yearly and in consequence, Mandalay Division, Yangon Division, Magway Division, Bago Division, Ayeyawady Divi-

sion and Mon State have seen division-wise and state-wise achievement of literacy. Thanks to Myanmar's committed efforts to increase literacy rate, it was awarded "Mohammad Reza Pahlavi Prize" and "Noma Prize" by UNESCO in 1971 and 1983.

Conference on Development Policy Options with Special Reference to Education and Health was organized in last February in Nay Pyi Taw in cooperation with UN agencies.

The drafting of Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) has started. Cohesive efforts would be put into weak spots in cooperation with the UN agencies, international organizations and

educational donors.

Changes are tangible in both formal and non-formal education arenas. The education is not only a matter of classrooms but it should be connected with the development of one's own environment, region and country.

As plans for schooling all school-age children were implemented, the rate of enrollment of the five years old is increasing year after year. The cooperative measures would continue to be taken to reduce drop-out rate and untimely school leaving rate.

For granting easy access to middle and high school education after completing the primary education, a total of 42153 basic education schools—29762 primary schools, 6664 post-primary schools, 3267 middle schools and 2460 high schools—are opened.

With the aim of compulsory primary education, text books have been distributed to all primary students free of charge as of 2011-2012 academic year and the free distribution also features the exercise books.

Mobile schools are also kept open for the sake of children of displaced families. Education opportunities for children with disabilities equal to the ordinary ones have been created.

The Education Ministry, UNICEF and donors are launching 3Rs and Sustainable Programmes for adult illiterates and Non-Formal Primary Education



Union Education Minister Dr Mya Aye presents prize to a winner in article, essay and poster contests.—MNA

YANGON, 8 Sept—The investigation commission arrived in Rakhine State to make necessary inquiries on the tour of Rakhine State; the problem was subtle and needed to be solved for long term; and the commission believed that every problem had resolution, said Chairman of the Commission Director-General Dr Myo Myint of Religious Affairs Department (Retd) in meeting with Rakhine State level organizations.

The chairman and members of Investigation Commission constituted with the aim of investigating the events occurred in May and June 2012 and ensuring promotion of national interests arrived in Sittway by air at 2.45 pm yesterday to make enquiries in Rakhine State. In meeting with state level organization members at the office of Rakhine State

Government in Sittway, the chairman and members of the commission heard clarification on loss and damages in riots of Rakhine State, relief and supplies, rehabilitation and possible solving the problems and reviews presented by State Chief Minister U Hla Maung Tin.

The State Chief Minister said that the state government is attending to basic needs of the local people while giving priority to restoring peace and stability. He added that efforts are being made for prevention of the recurrence of riots in the state. He thanked the commission members for their trip to serve the interest of the state and kept promise for fulfilling the requirements. He expressed his confidence that the commission could seek an acceptable answer for the world including people of Rakhine State.

Commander of Western Command Brig-Gen Ko Ko Naing said that the chairman and members of the commission are famous in various fields and they would apply their experiences for their best to serve the interest of the state. Chairman Dr Myo Myint, Secretary Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing and party were constituted as the Investigation Commission on 17 August 2012.

The commission plans to make trips to the places where riots had occurred and other places to enquire root causes of riots.

The commission will investigate firm evidences based on the public on their first trip of villages. After that, the commission will submit the report on how to prevent more occurrences in the long run and how to carry out regional development.

Those of the



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits 2012 Literacy Day Commemorative Booth.—MNA

(NFPE) for children who did not join or early dropped school.

A total of 619943 people received 3Rs trainings at 21717 camps in regions and states in 2012 while 49007 people were equipped with basic literacy skills from 1518 summer camps in border areas.

Building on the increase of the basic literacy rate, sustainable education plans must be developed. Sustainable education schemes—post-literacy campaigns and community learning centres that could promise increased incomes and welfare of the people—should be carried out.

The centres should provide not only the life-long learning but social development and community development. A total

of 3040 community learning centres have been opened. Rural libraries also contributed a lot to the centres.

The Vice-President concluded the address, demanding the rationality based on the attained literacy and cooperation in the literacy and education promotion campaign by all Myanmar citizens, in line with the theme of 2012 International Literacy Day "Cultivating peace, the role of literacy".

In-charge of Myanmar UNICEF Office Education Division, on behalf of the UN resident representatives' group, read out the message sent by UN Secretary-General Mr Ban Ki-moon. General Secretary of Myanmar UNESCO National Commission Rector Dr Lwin

Lwin Soe of Yangon University of Foreign Languages read out the message of the UNESCO Director-General.

Schoolchildren sang a song.

National Education Committee Chairman Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye and Vice-Chairman Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Ko Ko Oo awarded winners in commemorative article, essay and poster contests.

The documentary video of Myanmar literacy campaign was screened before the schoolchildren's song brought down the curtain of the ceremony.

The Vice-President and party then viewed the commemorative booth.

MNA

Investigation commission to enquire firm evidence in Rakhine State



Chairman and members of Investigation Commission meet Rakhine State level organization members in Sittway.—MNA

commission paid homage to member of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Pandita and members of the Sangha of

Saddhammagaru Patheina Monastery at Maha Waiyan Dhammayon in precinct of Lawkananda Pagoda in Sittway. Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha

Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Chanda of Dekkhinayama Monastery gave advice to those of the commission.

MNA

Vice-President U Nyan Tun...

(from page 16)

Council Area and steps being taken for development of agricultural sector, Union Minister U Win Myint on assistance to be provided by the Ministry of Commerce in the establishment of 200-ton advanced SATAKE rice mills to ensure market security for farmers and produce quality rice while striving for producing quality paddy in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area through mechanized farming, the director-general of Irrigation Department and the director-general of Agriculture Mechanization Department on measures to be taken for developing of mechanized

farmlands and the director-general of Agriculture Department on factors to be considered in calculation of profits according to crop items.

In his address, Vice-President U Nyan Tun said that the paddy cultivation is being done in model paddy plots with the establishment of model mechanized farmlands in townships of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area; and that the establishment of model paddy plots of the mechanized farming in Nay Pyi Taw, which is the central of the Union, will contribute a lot to the regions and states. And he stressed the need to widely implement



Vice-President U Nyan Tun cordially greets those present at concluding of ploughing at 200-acre advanced farm.—MNA



Union Minister at President Office Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Mayor U Thein Nyunt presents seeds of hybrid maize to farmers of eight townships in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.—MNA

the mechanized farming in the regions and states and called for farmers, agriculturists and personnel concerned to actively participate in the tasks.

Afterwards, the chairman of the National Prosperity Company presented 35 tons of maize for cultivation in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, regions and states to Union Minister U Myint Hlaing.

Next, Vice-President U Nyan Tun presented hybrid maize seeds for ten acre of each region and state though the region and state

ministers concerned and uniforms to female paddy transplanter.

After that, the Union Ministers presented 8,000 kilos of hybrid maize seeds to farmers in eight townships of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area to be cultivated in 1,600 acres at the rate of five kilos per acre.

Later, Vice-President U Nyan Tun and Union ministers cordially greeted those present on the occasion, viewed modern farm equipment put on display and progress in cultivation of 200-acre

Palethwe special high yield paddy and presented gifts to young women paddy transplanter.

Next, Vice-President U Nyan Tun looked into the cultivation of paddy in 262-acre model mechanized farms in Yanaungmyin Village, Dekkhinathiri Township, progress in cultivation of 440 acres of Palethwe hybrid paddy near Ahlyinlo Village in Pyinmana Township and cultivation of ten-acre groundnut in Zabuthiri Township.

MNA

Rule of Law and Tranquility...

(from page 16)

servants and government staff. It is required collaborative efforts. The Speaker said he welcomed the steps of Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee.

Next, Chairperson of Pyithu Hluttaw Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said it is difficult to explain the functions of the committee. It is aimed to learn from the discussion. Law and equality are not just enough to define the meaning of the rule of law. It is required to make sure that every citizen knows how it affects the law.

In his concluding remarks, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker said small Hluttaws within Hluttaw are undertaking legislation and check and balance. It is required to work openly with transparency and accountability in line with democracy system. The time now calls for bold actions. Democratic reforms demand mental, physical and verbal efforts. It is not just enough with thought and lip service but needed practical actions.

in coordination with departments concerned in taking practical steps for rule of law.

Next, legal experts, U Myo Nyunt, U Tin Yu, U Ko Ni, Daw Nam Kham Ohn, U Myint Lwin and U Myat Toe discussed legal affairs, followed by discussion of member of Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission U Myint Lwin and supplementary discussions of the attendees.

Then, the committee chairperson and the secretary made follow-up discussion.

In his concluding remarks, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker said small Hluttaws within Hluttaw are undertaking legislation and check and balance. It is required to work openly with transparency and accountability in line with democracy system. The time now calls for bold actions. Democratic reforms demand mental, physical and verbal efforts. It is not just enough with thought and lip service but needed practical actions.

Taking lessons from the past, reforms must be carried out with innovative inspirations suited to changing circumstances. The media plays a crucial role in future plans. Transparency demands accountability and responsibility. News media are invited to criticize the Hluttaw anytime. Developed and peaceful nations today practise democracy system. It is required to keep on practising democracy to be able to enjoy development and tranquility.

High Court Advocate U

MNA

Heavy rains cause floods hitting rural areas

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Sept—Heavy rains hit Bawdigon, Khayankaing and Hsinseik villages near Yangon-Mandalay Highway in Lewe Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 5 September.

As of 11 pm, the villages were flooded. Due to the floods, the road from Hotel Zone to Ela Airport and 50 acres of farmlands inundated. Schools were temporarily closed. A total of 300 houses in Bawdigon Village, 400 in Khayankaing and 200 in Hsinseik villages were flooded. Local people and Red Cross Brigade members participated in the rescue works.

The villages were also flooded last October in torrential rains.

District News

Myanma Alin

News in Brief

Protection of wildlife talked

Talks on conservation of wildlife was held at Iron Market in Lanmadaw Township on 1 September. Staff Officer U Hnin Aung Hsan and Senior Forester U Hla Shwe gave lectures on conservation of wildlife, prohibition of endangered animals and protection of bio-diversity.

Price of palm oil down

Palm oil price declined to K 1685 per viss on 6 September. The price of palm oil reached K 1726 per viss at the port. The oil was bought at mid-August. As its price at port was K 1670 per viss, the palm oil brokers got narrow margin of profit.

Tailoring courses conducted in Kawthoung

Vocational Training School of Ministry of Border Affairs in Kawthoung opened advanced tailoring course No 33/2012 and basic domestic science course No 62/2012 on 27 August.

Car blazed near traffic light of Inya Road

A fire broke out at a Suzuki car near Inya Road traffic light at the corner of Pyay Road and Inya Road at about 5 pm on 7 September. Firefighters from Hlinethaya and Kyimyindine fire stations put out the fire with the use of fire engines.

Mid-Level Officer Management Course concludes

A concluding ceremony of Mid-Level Officer Management Course No 36 was held at Padamya hall of Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar) on 8 September morning. A total of 83 trainees attended the 4-week course.—MNA

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 9 September, 2012

In any place of the motherland

In fact, stability and the rule of law are essential elements of socio-economic progress in border areas as without them there cannot be any effective support for regional development undertakings covering agriculture, livestock breeding, education and health and so on.

In this regard, the government in office has been in the mission of ensuring stability in every part of the Union, while making peace with all the ethnic armed groups in the jungles, generating progress in rural areas including remote regions, alleviating poverty everywhere, launching literacy and non-formal education campaigns, extending formal educational opportunities through building more schools, assigning more teachers and providing more teaching aids and facilities, encouraging reading habits and opportunities through the establishment of libraries in villages all around the country including those in faraway places.

Because of the lingering ethnic armed conflicts some of the border regions, especially the remote corners of the country still lag behind in development in many aspects. Accordingly, the government in office has been devising and delivering plans and taking actions which may be the best to solve the ethnic issue. Over and above, we also have the national races affairs ministers who can be ardent and important supporters of the national peace process. What is encouraging is the marked progress the government has been achieving in restoring peace and stability as most of the ethnic armed groups are at the negotiation table where many logical options and opportunities and compromises for peace and stability are available. Moreover, the government has been channeling a large amount of financial assets and material in the resettlement and rehabilitation plans for those who come back to the legal fold.

Only when peace and stability prevails in every single part of the whole Union, will all the over 100 Myanmar races or the kith and kin be able to enjoy peace of mind in staying or working in any place of the motherland.

You see no division
between the rich and
the poor. In terms of
attorney fee?



Lonegyitin

Seven questions

What kind of aid package does Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, UNFPA Executive Director, have for Myanmar?
NLM. Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, this is your first visit to Myanmar. What makes you visit our country, specific developments?

Dr. BO Indeed, this is my first visit to Myanmar and I am the first UNFPA Executive Director to visit the country. There are good reasons for my visit as it comes amid a series of political and economic reforms with a promise of a better future for the people of Myanmar. I am very touched by the beauty of your country and by the warmth of your people.

UNFPA has scaled up its support to Myanmar both at the upstream policy level and at the programmatic and technical assistance level.

At the policy level, UNFPA has forged strong partnership with the National Commission on Population and Development and the Parliamentary Committee on Population and Social Development. The later will apply for membership of the Asian Forum for Parliamentarian on Population and Development which includes similar committees in 25 countries throughout Asia. Both the Parliament Committee and National Commission provide viable forums for policy dialogue on a wide range of population and development issues in Myanmar such as demographic transition, ageing, youth empowerment, reproductive health and rights, environment, urbanization and gender equality and women's empowerment.

UNFPA is supporting national strategic plans on advancement of women, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, and a plan of action on ageing.

At the programmatic level, UNFPA has launched its 3rd Programme of Assistance to Myanmar (2012-2015) which adopts a human rights based approach. In this context, support is provided to the 2014 population census as a national priority to provide much needed data to guide policy making, national development plans and programmes and promote good governance. Another programme priority is to strengthen the health system, improve maternal health, reduce maternal mortality and save women's and children's lives. Emphasis is on meeting the needs of a large cohort of young people for information, counselling and age appropriate reproductive health, education and services and prevention of HIV/AIDS among population at risk.

I had the pleasure of meeting with President Thein Sein, the Speaker of the People's Assembly Thura U Shwe Mann, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Minister of Immigration and Population U Khin Yi, representatives of the business community, the UN country team and other development partners and discussed with them means to maximize the impact of UNFPA's support to improve the quality of life of the people of Myanmar.

NLM. As our National Action Plan for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation involves eight sectors, which ones of them UNFPA will focus on?

Dr. BO UNFPA's mandate cuts across all the eight areas of the rural development plan as it pertains to all of them. Improving access to quality reproductive health including maternal health care to rural women is essential to reduce maternal mortality and morbidities which are higher in rural areas than urban settings. Research has shown that maternal mortality is attributed to three delays: the first is a delay in taking decision to seek institutional health care at the household level due to lack of awareness or poverty; the second delay is due to difficulties to reach health service delivery point due to bad roads or inadequate transportation and the third delay is due to weak infrastructure and lack of trained health personnel in health facilities. Addressing these delays to prevent maternal death requires investments in strengthening the health system in rural settings including ensuring adequate number of trained midwives, basic health staff and obstetricians, effective referral system to manage complications during pregnancy and delivery, innovative health financing scheme to overcome financial barriers to accessing reproductive health services, and information, education and behaviour change communication programme to overcome socio-cultural taboos and promote demand for services. Availability of modern contraceptives



is key to reducing maternal mortality as it enables women to space their children and avoid too early, too late or too closely spaced pregnancies. Effective contraceptives would help women avoid unintended pregnancy and abortion which is one of the leading causes for maternal deaths in Myanmar. Research has shown that 5% of all pregnancies in Myanmar end in abortion.

Another area of UNFPA's support is the 2014 population census. It is designed to count all the population in urban and rural areas and will provide a much needed data on the number of people residing in the country, their age structure, sex, their geographical locations, their characteristics in terms of education and employment and their access to water and health care, etc. Census data will be crucial to guide management, monitoring and evaluation of the national rural development and poverty alleviation plan.

Advocacy and action programmes to promote gender equality and women's empowerment are another area of UNFPA's support. In partnership with UNDP and UNESCO and UNFPA support community-based initiatives in rural and urban areas to strengthen community learning centres to implement women's and community empowerment programmes through skill-development, vocational training, free of interest loans and reproductive health information, counselling and referral. These community learning centres will have outreach activities to respond to the needs of vulnerable women, such as victims of trafficking, provide them with livelihood and psycho-social support and reintegrate them into their families and communities. This initiative follows the successful model adopted by women friendly spaces established by UNFPA to address vulnerable women in cyclone Nargis affected area in the Delta region.

It should be noted that principles of gender equality will be mainstreamed within all programme interventions to ensure that women and men benefit equally from development dividend. Since Myanmar, especially rural areas is prone to natural disasters, such as current floods, UNFPA's emergency preparedness and humanitarian response is an integral component of UNFPA's Programme of Assistance.

NLM. We have heard from the very beginning that your visit is to affirm UNFPA's partnership with Myanmar, especially in advancing reproductive health, development and the empowerment of women and young people, do you find extra areas for UNFPA involvement in Myanmar after your meetings with the Head of State, other high ranking officials, and representatives of civil society and the business community?

Dr. BO There are many areas that need to be addressed in the country's pursuit for development, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Partnership among all development actors including Government, civil society, private sector, UN and donors is key to address these needs. Since Myanmar is a multi-ethnic society, ensuring equity, social inclusion and social cohesion is a pre-requisite to the success of on-going efforts for nation-building.

UNFPA works in cooperation with all other development partners to address issues pertaining to its mandate of reproductive health and rights, population and development and gender equality. In my discussion with H.E the President, the speaker of the People's Assembly and other senior officials, the issue of capacity development of human resources and institutions came out as a priority. We will be working with our partners to see how we can maximize the impact of our programmes to develop capacities and strengthen national systems and institutions. The UN plays a pivotal role in capacity development utilizing its convening
(See page 9)

Seven questions

(from page 8)

power and ability to transfer knowledge and knowhow and facilitate sharing of the state of the art advances through north-south and south-south cooperation modalities. Development of human resources capacity requires investment in the empowerment of young people as a driving force for development. UNFPA is planning to play a lead role in this area by fostering collaboration with other partners to address wide range of development needs of young people for health including reproductive health, skill development, vocational training, employment opportunities and leadership.

NLM. You also met with the Speaker of Parliament and other lawmakers. Did you suggest any legal measures to further improve maternal health and birth spacing services, save the lives of mothers and infants and support reproductive rights in Myanmar at the meeting?

Dr. BO Yes indeed, I had the pleasure of meeting with H.E the Speaker of the Parliament and U Maung Maung Swe, the Chair of the Parliament Committee on Population and Social Development and other lawmakers and I did address policy and legal issues related to reproductive health. I underscored the importance of universal access to reproductive health including family planning (birth spacing) as a human right to enable women to decide on the number, timing and spacing of their children; to go safely through pregnancy and child birth; and to have a healthy infant. Also reproductive health has far reaching health, social and economic benefits. Satisfying the unmet need for contraception and providing adequate maternal and new born care in the developing world reduce maternal deaths by more than two thirds and new born deaths by more than half. Universal access to reproductive health is crucial in Myanmar where maternal mortality, infant mortality and unmet need for contraception are still high. Nearly one fourth of women of reproductive age in Myanmar would like to practice birth spacing but they do not have access to free contraceptives. This results in unintended and unwanted pregnancy and abortion which is one of the leading causes of maternal death and morbidities. Access to youth friendly RH services is necessary for the health, wellbeing and development of young people in Myanmar who represent nearly one third of the population. I also highlighted a number of policies, legislation and funding gaps include the need to:

- Ensure free reproductive health commodities and services for the poor
- Revise the narcotic law that prohibits basic health staff from using syringes and needles which limits access to injectables, a contraceptive method preferred by considerable number of women in Myanmar
- Revise the recent guidelines that stipulate that IUDs should be inserted only in labour rooms. It is enough to ensure safe and hygienic practices through training, supervision and infection control.

However, I must commend the Parliament for increasing the national health budget. I also pay tribute to the Government, especially the Ministry of Health for issuing commitments to the UN Secretary General Global

Indian Expo showcases products

YANGON, 8 Sept—The Federation of Indian Export Organization and Indian Embassy to Myanmar jointly organized the Indian Expo on the first floor of

UMFCCI Office Tower on Minye Kyawswa Road in Lanmadaw Township on 4 September.

Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr VS Seshadri,



Strategy on Women's and Children's Health, for increasing the number of midwives recruited in the public health sector and for establishing a budget line for reproductive health commodities. These are concrete and commendable actions. We hope to see increased Government budget allocation to reproductive health care and a more holistic approach to health system strengthening that squarely addresses issues of health finance, human resources, infrastructure, logistics, information management and quality of services. I also wish to commend the donor community for launching initiatives, such as the 3 MDG Fund to promote maternal, new born and child health, strengthen the health system and complement efforts to combat HIV, TB and Malaria.

I am confident that there will be particular attention to bridge the funding gaps for contraceptives. The projected contraceptive needs amount to about \$5.8 million in 2012, of which UNFPA covers about \$2 million which leaves a gap of \$3.8 million.

NLM. Can you elaborate on UNFPA's role in the planned 2014 population and housing census, the country's first in 31 years, which will provide data essential to national development efforts?

Dr. BO UNFPA is the focal agency for supporting the census in Myanmar and in many developing countries around the world. We have recently supported the 2010 round of censuses in many countries including in Asia. The Myanmar census is quite challenging since it is the first census in 30 years and there is a need to strengthen human resources and technical capacities to ensure a successful census. There are significant financial requirements for the census estimated at \$53 million, of which the Government has committed to cover \$15 million, while UNFPA is planning to cover \$5 million. This leaves a funding gap of \$33 million.

The success of the census will hinge on the mutual commitment by both the Gov't and the international community. We are confident that the donor community will address such funding gaps considering that Myanmar is an LDC with lower ODA per capita than many of its peers (e.g. \$68 in Laos and \$51 in Cambodia) and the necessity of census data.

The data generated by the census will be invaluable to development plans and programmes and will provide essential benchmarks and monitoring tools to donors to assess aid effectiveness. The high returns of the census certainly justify its cost. We would like to invite donors for detailed discussion of the census budget and the workplan.

UNFPA's role is to provide state of the art technical assistance, training and capacity development, hard ware and software equipment for mapping, data capture and processing, share experiences and knowledge and put in place quality assurance mechanisms to ensure credibility and reliability of data. The census project that UNFPA helped the Ministry of Immigration develop includes "built in" components on capacity development including:

- Recruitment of chief technical advisor (CTA) and other long term and short term consultants to provide on the job training and technical advice and guidance and share experiences and good practices in various aspects of census taking, such as questionnaire design, mapping, data processing, communication and publicity, etc.)
- Recruitment of national experts on census to boost the capacity of Ministry of Immigration and population.
- Organizing study visits for census staff to gain first-hand experience from other countries, such as Thailand, Indonesia, China and Vietnam.

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Win Aung and Regional Chairman Ramesh Kumar Agarwal of Eastern Region of India visited the expo.

Textile, garments, jade products, handicrafts, fancy works, flowers, fragrances, hard goods, tiles, tubes, furniture and engineering equipment are available at the expo from 9 am to 5 pm on 5 September.—Kyemon

- Promoting the participation of other statistics units of Government, such as Centre Statistics Organization (CSO) to provide inputs to the census
- Supporting development of census enumeration manual and training of enumerators and supervisors.

It is reassuring to see that the Government made commitments to conduct the census in accordance with international standards for census taking. UNFPA is working with the Government and has put in place robust monitoring, evaluation and quality control measures to ensure adherence to such standards and credibility of census data.

NLM. What will be the requirements for a comprehensive program to empower the 30% of Myanmar's population aged 10-24?

Dr. BO Today, world population of young people reaches 1.8 billion. The number of youth is fast increasing in a world that is changing with unprecedented speed. Young people have tremendous power to bring about positive change if adequate investments are made to facilitate their development and if they are empowered to participate fully in decision making about their future. Myanmar has a large youth bulge representing nearly one third of the total population. They represent a demographic window of opportunity for socio-economic development. Utilizing this demographic bonus requires developing a comprehensive youth policy and development programmes which should cater for their needs for health, education, skill development, vocational training and employment opportunities. Improving access of young people to age appropriate sexual and reproductive health information, education, counselling and services is central to their development and physical, psychological and social well being. It is also important to create favourable environment where young people can participate meaningfully to respond to these challenges in innovative ways using their energy, dynamism and skills. The vision and activism of today's young people should be recognized as central to development and breaking the cycle of poverty.

UNFPA has adopted a Framework of Actions for adolescent and young people, in four key areas:

- creating a supportive policy environment
- facilitating gender-sensitive, life skills-based sexual and reproductive health education
- promoting access to adolescent friendly services and
- fostering young people's leadership and participation.

Implementation of this framework requires concerted and collaborative efforts by Government, Parliament, NGOs, civil society, community-based organizations and youth themselves. Given the multi-sectoral nature of youth development needs, a youth policy and programme should be led and guided by a high political body with an overarching development mandate.

NLM. Any special message for Myanmar people?

Dr. BO We are pleased about the changes that are taking place in your country which usher a new era full of hope for a better future for all. It is important that you embrace and nurture such positive developments and ensure that the Myanmar society is inclusive and equitable, where everyone regardless of his/her ethnic background, race or religion fully enjoys human rights.

Our ultimate goal is to work with you in Government, civil society, Parliament and communities, adopting a people-centred approach to development to improve your quality of life. UNFPA's mission is to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every child birth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

Cash, paddy strains provided for recultivation

PEINZALOK, 8 Sept—Overflow of Shwegyin, Mokkhamu and Sittoung rivers flooded 5282 acres of farmland in Shwegyin Township and 11974 acres in Nyaunglebin Township as of 3 August.

"This year, flood areas were wider and flooded time was longer than that of last year. The Union government

and region government provided quality paddy strains to local farmers. Silt was left on farmland flooded. We all are to strive for boosting production"

The Union government and Bago Region government provided K 14,080,000 for 2816 acres

of Shwegyin Township and K 31,530,000 for 6306 acres.

Moreover, the authorities distributed 450 baskets of Yadana Aung, Manawthukha and Palethwe hybrid paddy strain seeds to Nyaunglebin Township and 637.50 baskets to Shwegyin Township.

Myanma Alin

International News

CANADA

Bank of Canada says strong commodities good for economy

CALGARY, (Alberta), 8 Sept — Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney said on Friday that high commodity prices are unambiguously good for the economy and he made clear the central bank would not counter commodity-driven increases in the value of the Canadian dollar.

In a speech in Calgary, Carney dismissed the idea put forth by the country's main opposition party that the economy is suffering from so-called Dutch disease, wherein high commodity prices increase the value of the currency so much that the manufacturing sector is hollowed out.

Canada is a leading exporter of crude oil and its currency has been persistently strong against the US dollar, hammering the

competitiveness of manufacturers, many of which export primarily to the US market.

"Most fundamentally, higher commodity prices are unambiguously good for Canada," Carney said, predicting that sustained global demand for commodities would keep prices elevated. Carney said

any moves by the central bank to curb commodity-driven movements in the value of the Canadian dollar would be futile in the long term. Taking such steps would eventually lead to volatile inflation and employment, and an estimated 1 percent cut in output over five years, he said. "The logic of Dutch Disease requires that we undo our

successes in order to depreciate our currency," Carney added. "Taken to its natural conclusion, this logic dictates that we shut down our oil sands, abandon our resource wealth, have high and variable inflation, run large fiscal deficits and diminish our financial sector.

"Such actions would surely weaken the Canadian dollar, but they would also weaken Canada," he said.

The Canadian dollar touched its strongest level in nearly a year on Friday after Canadian employment data showed the economy added 34,300 jobs in August, more than expected.

The currency firmed to C\$0.9766 against the greenback, or C\$1.0240, from C\$0.9818, or \$1.0185 just before the data was released.

Reuters



Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney listens to a question during a news conference upon the release of the Monetary Policy Report in Ottawa on 18 July, 2012.
REUTERS

Prince Harry in Afghanistan to fly helicopters

LONDON, 8 Sept — Prince Harry has returned to Afghanistan to fly attack helicopters on the frontline just two weeks after he was photographed frolicking naked in Las Vegas. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) said on Friday that the Queen's grandson would serve a four-month tour, based out of Camp Bastion in Helmand Province — one of the most volatile regions in the country where Britain has been fighting alongside the United States against the local Taliban since 2001.

"Working alongside his colleagues in the squadron, he will be in a difficult and demanding job," said Lieutenant Colonel Tom de

la Rue in a statement. The prince, known in the military as Captain Wales, first served in Afghanistan in 2008 as an on-ground air controller, but his tour was cut short after foreign media broke a news blackout requested to protect him while on the front line. The MoD said the danger was less severe in helicopters.

"Captain Wales's deployment has been long planned and the threat to him and others around him thoroughly assessed," the ministry said. The 27-year-old, who is regularly in the headlines due to his penchant for partying, has spoken out about his desire to return to active service. "I would love

to go back, I really would," he told ABC's "Good Morning America" TV programme in 2010. "At the end of the day you train for war, it's as simple



Britain's Prince Harry is shown the Apache helicopter flight line by an unidentified member of his squadron at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan on 7 Sept, 2012. — REUTERS

as that. If we could be at peace then fantastic, but if we're at war then you want to be with your brothers in arms."

Prince Harry is the first

member of the Royal Family to see active combat since his uncle Prince Andrew fought in the Falklands war.

Reuters

Family feud one theory in French Alps murder probe

another woman was involved in a financial feud with his

A state prosecutor confirmed the people killed in the car were a couple from Britain — on a camping holiday in the Annecy region with their two daughters — and an older woman. The girls, aged seven and four, survived and are under police protection in hospital after the shootings on a remote forest road near the village of Chevaline on Wednesday.

Prosecutor Eric Maillaud identified the dead car driver as Saad al-Hilli, an Iraqi-born Briton. He said Hilli's four-year-old daughter — who hid for eight hours with the bodies in the car, too scared to move — had confirmed she had been with her parents and sister when the attack took

place. "She said, 'It's my father', she gave his first name, 'It's my mother', she gave her first name, 'It's my sister'," Maillaud told a news conference in the town of Annecy, near Chevaline. The older girl was badly beaten in the attack.

Maillaud cautioned that a tip-off to British authorities that Hilli and his brother were involved in a money dispute was "an interesting line of investigation, but one among many". "Just because there is a dispute between two brothers doesn't make him the No. 1 suspect," said Maillaud, adding: "No lead, no information is considered far-fetched."

Reuters

Vehicles of French gendarmerie drive on the "Combe d'Ire" road in the French Alpine village of Chevaline.
REUTERS



CHEVALINE, (France), 8 Sept — Police investigating a gruesome family murder in the French Alps are looking at several theories, including that the British man shot dead in his car with his wife and

brother. As forensics experts performed autopsies on the four victims, who include a local cyclist who was passing at the time of the attack, a team of French investigators landed in Britain.



Britain's Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall smile during a visit to the MENCAP Community Centre, Tottenham, north London, on 25 July, 2012. — REUTERS

Royals to attend James Bond "Skyfall" world premiere

UK

LOS ANGELES, 8 Sept — British royal couple Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla, will attend the world premiere of the newest James Bond film, "Skyfall," at the Royal Albert Hall in London on 23 October, producers said on Friday.

The premiere will benefit charities that support former and current members of Britain's intelligence agencies. The Bond film franchise has a history with Britain's royal family. Over the years, many of them — including Princes William and Harry — have attended premieres and used the event to help support

various charities. More recently, the 86-year-old Queen made her film debut with James Bond star Daniel Craig during the opening ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics in July, in a spoof video that ended with her appearing to jump from a helicopter into the Olympic stadium.

"Skyfall," which stars Craig, Judi Dench, Javier Bardem, Ralph Fiennes, Naomie Harris and Albert Finney, will be released in the UK and internationally on 26 October. The film, directed by Sam Mendes, hits US theatres on 9 November. — Reuters

Environment

New government may raise Quebec's carbon target

WASHINGTON, 8 Sept — Quebec's new government would not change the province's plans to launch a carbon market that would link to California's next year, but its new leadership may try to raise its target to cut greenhouse gas emissions to 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. The left-leaning, separatist Parti Quebecois (PQ) last week won 54 out of 125 seats in the Canadian province's legislature, giving it a narrow four-seat edge over the incumbent Liberal party and control of a minority government.

While the PQ's leader Pauline Marois will face a tough battle pushing certain agenda items in the new coalition government, such as reversing tuition hikes, she is unlikely to alter the outgoing party's greenhouse gas plans. Analysts said, however, the PQ may try to raise the province's 2020 greenhouse gas reduction target to 25 percent below 1990 levels. Under current legislation, Quebec must cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 to roughly 51

million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

"It's quite certain they (PQ) will raise it (the target) to -25 percent. It's in their electoral platform and they are well committed to do it," said Patrick Bonin, climate and energy director for the Quebec Association for the Fight Against Air Pollution. The PQ party has also said in its platform that it wants to pursue links to other carbon trading schemes, such as California's and Europe's emissions trading system." The PQ has generally been strong on the need to deal with climate change and the expectation is that they'll continue to be supportive of Quebec's participation in the Western Climate Initiative (WCI)," said Matt Horne, a climate change analyst at Canadian think tank the Pembina Institute.

In January, Quebec announced it would launch an emissions trading system to help reduce its greenhouse gas output, which would link to the WCI — a North American carbon market, whose main member is the US state of California. — Reuters

REGIONAL

Chinese, Russian presidents meet on cooperation

CHINA

VLADIVOSTOK, 8 Sept — Chinese President Hu Jintao met his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin here on Friday to discuss bilateral ties and other major issues of common concern. The two leaders were meeting on the sidelines of the annual Economic Leaders' Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) slated for Saturday and Sunday in the Russian Far-Eastern city of Vladivostok.

Hu said that he would like to have a thorough exchange of views with Putin on how to promote the comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination between the two countries and on regional and international issues. "I am also looking forward to a successful APEC

meeting to be presided by President Putin," he added. Putin said the Russia-China relations have reached a very high level thanks to personal contribution of Hu, who would be invited to be the first speaker at the APEC leaders' meeting.

The China-Russia strategic partnership has developed steadily in recent years. The two countries have further boosted strategic and political mutual trust, enhanced their trade and economic cooperation, and coordinated closely on major world and regional issues. Hu and Russian leaders agreed to develop a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination featuring equality, mutual trust and support, common prosperity



Chinese President Hu Jintao (L) meets with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Vladivostok, Russia, on 7 Sept, 2012. — XINHUA

and lasting friendship in the new decade during a visit to Russia last year.

Putin, who visited China and had talks with Hu in June, decided to further strengthen the Russia-China comprehensive strategic partnership. Under a blueprint, the two countries are striving to boost

bilateral trade to 100 billion US dollars in 2015 and 200 billion dollars in 2020. In 2011, two-way trade reached record high of 79.2 billion dollars. In the first seven months of this year, bilateral trade stood at 50.9 billion dollars, up 17.7 percent year-on-year. — Xinhua

Canada ready to assist earthquake-hit SW China

OTTAWA, 8 Sept — Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird said on Friday that Canada is ready to provide assistance to those affected by the earthquakes in southwest China.

Baird said in a statement that although China has significant experience with natural disasters and proven capacity in responding to them, Canada stands ready to provide assistance if requested.

"Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with those affected by the earthquakes," he said. Baird said that through its embassy in Beijing and consulate in

Chongqing, the Canadian government is in close contact with local authorities to determine the impact of the earthquakes.

"Canadian diplomatic offices in the region are ready to provide consular assistance to Canadians as required," he added.

Two quakes measuring 5.7 and 5.6 on the Richter scale hit a border area near Yiliang in Yunnan Province and Weining county in Guizhou Province around on Friday noon.

Eighty people have been killed in the earthquakes and the death toll may further climb, authorities said on Saturday.

Xinhua

Landslides, floods kill 29 in Vietnam

HANOI, 8 Sept — Landslides and floods in Vietnam have killed at least 29 people in recent days as heavy rains soak northern and central areas, state media and the government said on Saturday.

More rain was forecast to strike the flood-hit Nghe An Province and authorities were getting people out of dangerous areas, the government said. In one incident, 16 people were killed in landslides while

they were going to tin mine on Friday in the mountainous northern province of Yen Bai. Another person died in hospital, the Defence Ministry-run People's Army newspaper said.

The affected provinces are far from the Central Highlands coffee belt. Rice production in the Mekong Delta is also not affected. Vietnam is the world's second largest coffee producer and comes second after Thailand in rice exports. Vietnam, parts

of which are densely populated and low-lying, is regularly battered by heavy weather and floods during the rainy season.

An average of 430 people were killed each year by natural disasters between 2007-2011 in Vietnam, with property losses estimated at 1 percent of gross domestic product, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung told a conference on food security and climate change in Hanoi on Thursday. — Reuters

VIETNAM

Citizens rest on the ground at quake-hit Luozehe Town, Yiliang County, southwest China's Yunnan Province, on 8 Sept, 2012. Sixty-seven people have been confirmed dead and 731 others were injured after multiple earthquakes struck a mountainous region in southwest China's Yunnan Province on Friday, the province's civil affairs department said. — XINHUA



Rescuers focus on remote areas as China quake toll at 80

Earthquake

SHANGHAI, 8 Sept — Rescuers in southwestern China tried on Saturday to reach remote communities rocked by back-to-back earthquakes that killed at least 80 people and damaged tens of thousands of buildings, the official Xinhua news agency said. Friday's shallow 5.6 magnitude quakes struck an impoverished, mountainous part of the country with poor infrastructure and telecommunications and the death toll could rise as news trickles out of cut-off areas, it

said.

Most of the victims were from Yiliang county in Yunnan Province, near the epicentre. Footage from state broadcaster CCTV showed boulder-covered roadways, abandoned cars and black smoke billowing from buildings. President Hu Jintao, visiting the Russian city of Vladivostok for an Asia-Pacific summit, called for efforts to help the victims and Premier Wen Jiabao headed to the quake zone, Xinhua reported. Rescuers in Yunnan said late on Friday

they had reached 90 percent of the six quake-hit counties under the jurisdiction of Zhaotong city, where 740,000 people had been affected by the quakes, it said.

Direct economic losses tallied 3.5 billion yuan (\$552 million), Yunnan's civil affairs department was quoted as saying. Officials in neighbouring Guizhou said two people were injured and the lives of nearly 28,000 people were disrupted in Weining county, on the Yunnan border.

Reuters

Chinese and Indonesian presidents meet on cooperation

NEIGHBOUR

VLADIVOSTOK, 8 Sept — Chinese President Hu Jintao and his Indonesian counterpart Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono met on Saturday in Vladivostok, Russia, on bilateral cooperation and other issues of common concern. The two leaders were meeting on the sidelines of the annual Economic Leaders' Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum.

Hu said that he is looking forward to having a thorough exchange of views with Yudhoyono on bilateral relations and issues of common concern on the

occasion of the APEC meeting. Yudhoyono said that bilateral relations between Indonesia and China have been advancing smoothly on the basis of the strategic partnership established seven years ago. China and Indonesia established a strategic partnership in April 2005 when Hu paid a state visit to the Southeast Asian nation.

The strategic cooperation between China and Indonesia is increasingly reflected in the active cooperation between the two countries on major global and regional issues against

the backdrop of the current complicated international situation. During his meeting with Yudhoyono in Jakarta last month, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said further strengthening China-Indonesia strategic cooperation not only conforms to the fundamental interests of both countries, but serves as a role model for the region. — Xinhua

Pakistani PM says political consensus emerges over good ties with India

ISLAMABAD, 8 Sept — Pakistani Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf on Friday told the visiting Indian Foreign Minister, S M Krishna, that there is a political consensus in Pakistan over having good relations with India. Indian Foreign Minister, S M Krishna, who arrived in Islamabad on Friday on a three-day visit to push the peace process and to boost people-to-people contacts, met Prime Minister Ashraf and said that India is

committed to the stability, peace and prosperity of Pakistan, the PM office said on Friday.

Prime Minister Ashraf expressed the confidence that relationship between Pakistan and India will improve and move forward as both have set a direction.

The Prime Minister said that the visit of the Minister of External Affairs of India is of great importance as the people of both countries desire good relations. "We must learn from the past. We

cannot change neighbours," he said. The Prime Minister said, "terrorism anywhere in the world is a threat to humanity."

Terrorism, he said, is a common enemy of both countries. Pakistan, the Prime Minister said, is a front line state in the war of terrorism and has suffered enormously, a PM office statement said.

Foreign ministers of the two countries will hold formal talks on Saturday and both sides will ink a relaxed visa regime to facilitate the

people-to-people contact. The prime minister said "no doubt Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek and other issues need to be resolved" but we need to have a positive approach to resolve these issues, he emphasized.

He extended an invitation to the Prime Minister of India to visit Pakistan and asked the Indian Foreign Minister to convey his best wishes to the Prime Minister and the people of India.

Xinhua



Chinese President Hu Jintao (2nd R) meets with his Indonesian counterpart Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2nd L) in Vladivostok, east Russia, on 8 Sept, 2012. — XINHUA

International News

Ford recalls 2013 Escape in North America markets for engine issue

CHICAGO, 8 Sept—Ford is issuing a recall for its redesigned 2013 Ford Escape model that went on sale in June, as an improperly-installed engine part could lead to risk of fire, the US automaker announced on Wednesday on its website.

The recall covers over 7,000 2013 Escape SUVs

built with 1.6-liter engines, including 6,150 in the United States and 1,300 in Canada. This is the second recall for fire risks issued since July.

The recall is being taken to replace an engine compartment fuel line, which could split and leak fuel, potentially resulting in an underhood fire, Ford said.



Ford Escape

No injuries have so far been reported, the company added.

In July, Ford recalled

11,500 new 2013 Ford Escape with 1.6-liter engines because of fire dangers.

Xinhua

Pentagon maps Japan radiation, says US personnel safe

WASHINGTON, 8 Sept — The Pentagon on Wednesday posted a website mapping the amount of radiation to which the tens of thousands of Americans in Japan at the time of last year's earthquake and nuclear disaster were exposed and said none of the doses posed health risks. The 9.0 magnitude 11 March, 2011 earthquake and tsunami devastated the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant north of Tokyo, triggering meltdowns, spewing radiation and prompting the Pentagon to announce voluntary evacuation for families of service members stationed in Japan.

The temblor generated a tsunami wave of up to 10 meters (33 feet) that swamped the Fukushima plant and the surrounding Tohoku region of central Honshu. The website, <http://registry.csd.disa.mil/otr>, showed radiation dosages between 12 March and 11 May at 13 locations in Japan where most of the nearly 70,000 US military-affiliated population lived. It showed the highest rate of adult exposure at Camp Sendai, just north of Fukushima, where the estimated adult dose of whole body radiation was 0.12 rem and 1.20 for the thyroid - the organ most affected by radiation. By comparison, a full-body CAT scan yields a whole body exposure of 5.0 rem. Those American personnel who were stationed at Camp Sendai who check the website will see a message saying: "Your whole-body and thyroid radiation dose estimates are well below levels associated with adverse medical conditions."—Reuters



(From L to R) The No 1, the No 2, the No 3 and the No 4 reactor buildings are seen at the Tokyo Electric Power Co's (TEPCO) tsunami-crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Fukushima prefecture on 26 May, 2012.—REUTERS

Hundreds of Afghan soldiers detained, sacked for insurgent links

AFGHANISTAN

KABUL, 8 Sept — The Afghan army has detained or sacked hundreds of soldiers for having links to insurgents, the Defence Ministry said on Wednesday, as it tries to stem the rising number of so-called insider attacks. It made the announcement as NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen called Afghan President Hamid Karzai to express his concern over the attacks, in which Afghan servicemen have killed at least 45 NATO-led troops this year, including 15 in August, compared with 35 for all of last year.

"Hundreds were sacked or detained after showing links with insurgents. In some cases we had evidence against them, in others we were simply suspicious," Defence Ministry spokesman Zahir Azimi told reporters in Kabul. "Using an army uniform against foreign forces is a serious point of concern not only for the Defence Ministry but for the whole

Afghan government," Azimi said, adding that Karzai had ordered Afghan forces to devise ways to stop insider attacks. Azimi declined to say whether the detained and fired soldiers were from Taliban strongholds in the south and east, saying they were from all over the country.

In a briefing with Pentagon reporters, Lieutenant General James Terry, the deputy commander of US forces in Afghanistan, said efforts to double-check vetting of the some 350,000 Afghan national security forces would take time but would not slow the pace of NATO operations. NATO only attributes about a quarter of insider attacks to the Taliban and it is unclear how much vetting will do to limit the number of killings. Terry blamed Afghanistan's "gun culture" for many of the insider attacks. "This is a society that's really been traumatized by 30-plus years of war. It also has a gun culture out there," Terry said. "And we also understand that a lot of grievances and dispute resolutions are done, frankly, at the barrel of a gun out there." In his call to Karzai, Rasmussen outlined measures taken by NATO-led forces to stop the insider attacks and he urged Karzai to join the efforts, according to a NATO spokeswoman. The measures include giving troops cultural awareness training, strengthening vetting procedures and better counter-intelligence.—Reuters



Roland Stuart competes in the Drum Major Challenge event at the Braemar Gathering in Braemar, Scotland on 1 Sept, 2012.

REUTERS

Despite delays, China seeks full Iran oil volume for third month

BEIJING, 8 Sept — For the third month in a row, China has nominated full contract volumes of Iranian crude for September, but refineries have begun to complain about delays in oil deliveries posing a problem, trading sources said.

China, Iran's largest oil customer and top trading partner, is expected to load about 15.5 million barrels of Iranian oil this month, the third that it will be using the tankers of National Iranian Tanker Co to carry home oil and get around a European Union insurance ban that began in July. But the downside of relying only on NITC vessels has started to show, with delays piling up as the transport volumes stretch the capabilities of the Iranian firm's fleet.

"The delivery dates have become very unpredictable," said one Chinese buyer who declined to be identified because he was not authorized to speak to the media. "This has become quite a headache. It shows their shipping capacity is really over-stretched." At 15.5 million barrels a month, or roughly 520,000 barrels per day, China alone would account for almost half of Iran's total exports last estimated by the International Energy Agency at 1 million bpd in July.

Iranian oil exports have plunged from a year-ago figure of some 2.3 million bpd because of tough Western sanctions aimed at choking off Teheran's oil revenue in a bid to halt its controversial nuclear programme.—Reuters

IRAN

Russian firm to halt Iran ship work as pressure grows

LONDON, 8 Sept — A Russian firm has decided to stop verifying safety and environmental standards for one of Iran's biggest shipping groups, a letter showed, the latest international company wary of being caught up in Western sanctions on the Islamic Republic. Iran is under growing pressure over its disputed nuclear programme and companies are cutting ties with its vital shipping sector, which transports most of its crude oil, for fear of losing lucrative US business. Moscow opposes concerted trade pressure on Teheran by Washington and its allies, making the Russian company's decision unusual. A letter seen by Reuters showed St Petersburg-based Russian Maritime Register of Shipping (RS), among the top 13 global ship classification societies, had decided to suspend its activities in Iran after being urged to pull out by US pressure group United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI). A targeted campaign by UANI, which includes former US ambassadors on its board and is funded by private donations, has already led to other classification societies exiting Iran.

Without certification from classification societies, vessels are unable to secure insurance cover or call at most international ports. "The decision has been taken to suspend RS activities in Iran," its chief executive Mikhail Ayvazov wrote in a letter to UANI dated on 31 August. "Since its foundation in 1913, RS never was a political organization and didn't carry out any tasks connected with realization of any political interests of other organizations and states," Ayvazov said in a separate note.—Reuters



African apprentices practise kungfu at the Shaolin Temple on the Songshan Mountain in Dengfeng City, central China's Henan Province, on 4 Sept, 2012. Ten apprentices from Africa have practised kungfu and learned Shaolin culture at the Shaolin Temple since last November. The temple provides them with a five-year training programme and accommodation free of charge. —XINHUA

Four killed, one injured in French Alps shooting

PARIS, 8 Sept — Four people were found shot dead and a girl was seriously wounded in a scenic spot in the eastern French Alps, local authorities said on Wednesday. The bodies of a man and two women were discovered in a car with British license plates. The corpse of a second man, a cyclist, was found near the car, with dozens of bullet casings scattered on the ground.

A young girl, discovered at the site with gunshot wounds, was rushed to a regional hospital on Wednesday afternoon. The bodies were found by a cyclist who was on a leisure ride Wednesday afternoon. Police have fanned out in the forest of Chevaline to search for possible perpetrator. Till now, they could not establish a theory about what happened there and the victims' nationalities and identities are unclear.—Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

Venice credits roll, US, Korean films in awards race



Directors Jessica Woodworth (L), Peter Brosen and actress Aurelia Poirier.

REUTERS

VENICE, 8 Sept —The credits are about to roll on this year's Venice film festival, and the world's oldest cinema showcase pits Hollywood's finest against up-and-coming American talent and movies by directors from South Korea, France and beyond.

The 11-day stretch of screenings, parties and

interviews on the Lido waterfront ends on Saturday with the awards ceremony where the Golden Lion for best picture is handed out.

The prize is one of European cinema's most prestigious and can help a small-budget movie not in English find an audience in the West. It also puts smaller US productions in the awards

frame at the start of the journey to the Oscars, most notably "Brokeback Mountain" in 2005 and "The Wrestler" three years later.

This year's frontrunners for jury president Michael Mann to pick from include the ultra-violent Korean film "Pieta", Paul Thomas Anderson's Scientology story "The Master" and French 1970s drama "Apres Mai".

Italy has a reasonable chance of a first home win in Venice since 1998 with "Bella Addormentata" (Sleeping Beauty), the well-received account of Eluana Englaro, centre of a 2009 right-to-die case that deeply divided opinion in the Catholic country.

And "wild card" possibilities include Russian adultery tale "Betrayal" and raunchy American teen romp "Spring Breakers", which

features former Disney starlet Selena Gomez and Oscar-nominated James Franco as an over-the-top gangster rapper.

The world's oldest film festival, which celebrates its 80th anniversary this year, has been seen as a low-key edition with too few stars to generate the kind of media buzz it thrives on.

But incoming director Alberto Barbera did present a slimmed-down selection of movies that had enough quality to make the trip to the notoriously expensive Canal City worthwhile.

"Despite falling audiences due to the economic crisis, a not always glamorous red carpet and grey sky, it held its own with a lineup that may not have been impressive but was still pretty good," said La Stampa film critic Alessandra Levantesi Kezich.—Reuters

Wasn't aiming at a glamorous Bollywood debut: Ileana D'Cruz

MUMBAI, 8 Sept—Making her debut in Bollywood with 'Barfi', Telugu actress Ileana D'Cruz says she did not want a glamorous opening in her first film here. While Bollywood exudes a glamorous mix of dance and song element in a movie, Anurag Basu's 'Barfi' is different as it is a story of a deaf-mute boy, a mentally challenged girl and a normal girl.

"In Bollywood it is like there would be little bit of acting to do, look pretty throughout and dance with a handsome in a masala movie. That is what I had in mind and I did not want to get into such a film," Ileana said in an interview. Known down south as a glamorous

beauty, Ileana doesn't want that label to continue in the Hindi film industry, but wants author-backed roles and not arm candy parts.

"I have been doing south films for six years. And there were lot of offers from Bollywood earlier which did not interest me much. The story line and my role in 'Barfi' is something I really liked a lot. It is different from what I have done so far, hence I chose to do this film. It is all about right time," she said.

Releasing on 14 September, 'Barfi' is a romantic comedy around three characters. There is Murphy (Ranbir) whom everyone calls Barfi. He is always ready with a prank and cannot speak or hear.

Jhilmil (Priyanka) is an autistic girl, while Ileana plays Shruti, who falls in love with Barfi.

Ileana had earlier turned down an offer to star opposite actor Salman Khan in 'Wanted', which was a remake of her own south film 'Pokhiri'. She chose to wait for a more challenging role.

"When I was offered this role I was flattered as it required me to show my ability as an actor. Anurag told me the story and role...he said he has found his Shruti," Ileana said.

"He was sure I was fit for the role. But I was completely taken off guard did not expect a launch with a film like this," she said adding that since 'Barfi' is not a regular Bollywood



Telugu actress Ileana D'Cruz

film, she was worried whether she would be able to do justice with the role.

"Considering it's a big film and different, I was like will I be able to pull through this? It required a lot of me. He (Basu) had blind faith in me. He was encouraging...It was flattering..." Ileana said.

PTI

Aamna Sharif will make her television comeback with "fusion look"

NEW DELHI, 8 Sept—Aamna Sharif is making her comeback on the small screen with Honge Judaa Na Hum after a hiatus of five years and is set to create the magic with her fusion look in the show. She says that the stylists worked on her look for months. The actress became popular as Kashish with her debut show Kahiin To Hoga and was later seen as a style icon. Be it her bright coloured-suits, her bindis, bangles, dangles or the saris, crazy fans followed her style statement religiously.

"After Kahiin To Hoga there are a lot of expectations regarding my look in the show. There is an entire team that has been working on my character's look, costumes

and make-up for almost three months," Aamna told IANS over the phone from Mumbai.

"I am going to wear a lot of Indian wear including anarkalis as well as kurtas and churidar. I will also be wearing a lot of Indo-Western clothes. There is a completely different look to what Muskaan would be wearing at home," she added.

Her entire look is taken



Aamna Sharif

care of by television designer Shivani Shirali, who has styled for shows like Dil Mil Gaye and Iss Pyaar Ko Kya Naam Doon.

She will essay the lead role Muskaan in Honge Judaa Na Hum that goes on air on Monday on Sony. It is a romantic saga also starring actors Raqesh Vashisht and Aamir Ali. Aamna is both surprised and happy to see the television industry so organized and said: "There are a lot of changes. I did not expect everything to be so organized. The involvement of the entire team is so much, which generally happens in films.

"We have been doing a lot of workshops. Even they know what all is required when

we go on the sets. All these things were not like that earlier. Now a lot of detailing goes into everything," she said.

After Kahiin To Hoga wrapped up in 2007, the actress tried her luck in Bollywood. She made her silver screen debut with Aloo Chat in 2009, and then went on to do films like Aao Wish Karein and Shakal Pe Mat Jaa. Although she couldn't replicate small screen success on silver screen, Aamna says it was worth the experience.

"Overall my film journey was good. Some of the projects that I took were good whereas some were not that good but that is a part and parcel of life. All this makes you grow in terms of experiences.—PTI

For me everything is a risk right now says Esha Gupta

NEW DELHI, 8 Sept—Model-turned-actress Esha Gupta says she has taken a risk with the kind of roles she is presently doing, as she is new to the industry.

Making her debut opposite Emraan Hashmi in Mukesh Bhatt's 'Jannat 2', Esha played a doctor in the movie, while she is essaying the role of an actress in Vikram Bhatt's 'Raaz 3' (to release on 7 September) and a cop in Prakash Jha's 'Chakravayuh' (releasing on 12 October), which explores the problems of naxalism.

"For me right now everything is a risk. But today if I don't take a risk where will I reach? It's not about playing safe or anything. Of all the options I had got I think whatever films I have chosen to do are best," Esha said in an interview.

"It was one of the best things to be working with a director like Vikram in 'Raaz'. Right now, it doesn't matter to me if it's a big or small role, because all three of my films are really different," she said.

Esha is taking every film



Model-turned-actress Esha Gupta

as a learning experience with the different kind of roles that she is portraying.

"Right now what matters to me is the learning experience. I am not saying that I won't do big commercial films. All the characters that I have played so far have been very different," Esha said.

"I still don't know what genre I fit into. I want to try my hand at different things and find out what I am best at. I want to discover myself as an actress," she said.

PTI

Religion, superstition very much part of Bollywood: Bipasha Basu

MUMBAI, 8 Sept—Defending Bollywood's fondness for visiting shrines and temples ahead of film releases, actress Bipasha Basu says religion and superstition are very much part of the industry.

Filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar along with lead actor Kareena Kapoor decided to launch the music of his forthcoming film "Heroine" at Siddhivinayak Temple in Mumbai, causing a stampede like situation.

While producer Ekta



Actress Bipasha Basu

Kapoor caused controversy when she visited Ajmer Sharif Dargah before the release of "Kyaa Super Kool Hain Hum". She was accused of using the shrine visit to promote the adult comedy

by some religious heads.

"Religion and superstition are part of our country and they also exist in our business. We actors pray a lot. Before any release everyone is going to dargahs, temples and it shows the vulnerable side of an actor. It is not that we are selfish people. We are there to just ask for a hit. There is nothing wrong in doing so," Bipasha said.

The 33-year-old actress is all set for the release of her film "Raaz 3", which will see her portray the role of a fading actress, who resorts to black magic to bring down an upcoming star's career.

In a unique promotional strategy for the film, Bipasha was recently spotted handing out nimboo-mirchi (lemon and chilly) to autowallahs in Mumbai.

"It is fun. It is not leading to anything which is wrong. Nimboo-mirchi is something we all do. It is just to ward off the evil. Every Saturday I buy it and put it in my car. My mother has made it a tradition and asked me to do it. Putting it on auto-rickshaws was a fun way to promote the film," she said.

PTI

US OPEN

Williams and Azarenka through to US Open final

NEW YORK, 8 Sept—Serena Williams and Victoria Azarenka stormed into the final of the US Open with crushing victories in Friday's semis to set up a classic showdown between the greatest player of her generation and the current world number one.

Williams was at her ruthless best as she demolished Italian Sara Errani 6-1, 6-2 to continue her golden summer while Azarenka was

overwhelming favourite.

"I think it will probably be the best summer I've ever had," she said.

"It will be up there because if you win the Olympics and Wimbledon and this, it would be kinda cool."

Few players have ever been able to keep pace with Williams when she is fit and in form and Azarenka knows the enormity of the challenge she faces.



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus

opponent there is in the draw," said Azarenka. "And being in the final makes it even more difficult so it's definitely gonna be a tough one."

Williams has won nine of 10 career matches against Azarenka.

Reuters

Licked Sharapova ready for ice cream after slam exit

NEW YORK, 8 Sept—Maria Sharapova was frustrated by her three-set defeat to world number one Victoria Azarenka in Friday's US Open semi-final, but the Russian preferred to look on the bright side.

"I'm looking forward to checking out the ice cream truck that's around the corner from my hotel," she said after her grand slam campaign ended one hurdle short of the final in a 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 loss.

"It's been haunting me."

Sharapova dominated many of the statistical categories in the two-hour 42-minute match, blasting 44 winners to just 19 for

Azarenka and ripping eight aces to none for the Belarusian. However, she neutralized those numbers with 42 unforced errors compared to Azarenka's 19, while committing 10 double-

faults. The third-seeded Russian put her defeat down to her failure to take opportunities and a weaker return of serve, especially in the deciding set.

Reuters



Maria Sharapova of Russia

WORLD CUP QUALIFIER

Shelton stunner gives Jamaica shock win over US

KINGSTON, 8 Sept—A magnificent long-range free-kick from Luton Shelton gave Jamaica a surprise 2-1 comeback victory over the United States in their CONCACAF region World Cup qualifier on Friday.

Jamaica's first ever win over the US was thoroughly deserved after they fought back with determination from the early blow of Clint Dempsey's first minute goal.

The two sides meet again in Columbus, Ohio on Tuesday and while both are expected to advance from



Jamaica's Luton Shelton (R) celebrates with teammates Rodolph Austin (2nd R) and Je Vaughn Watson after he scored their second goal, as Geoff Cameron of the US returns to position in their 2014 World Cup qualifying soccer match in Kingston on 7 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

group one into the six-team final qualifying phase, the pressure is on Juergen Klinsmann's US team.

Having only drawn their opening game, away to Guatemala before beating Antigua and Barbuda, the US are now second in the group on four points, trailing Jamaica by three.

Dempsey, who recently moved from Fulham to Tottenham Hotspur in the English Premier League, put the US ahead in just the 36th second, slotting home after Herculez Gomez's shot was blocked on the line.

But the 'Reggae Boyz' drew level in the 24th minute when Rodolph Austin, who also plays in England with second tier Leeds United, struck a low free-kick which took a slight deflection off Kyle Beckerman in the US wall.

It was a scrappy battle for the rest of the first half with the Americans struggling to retain possession in midfield against the hard-working Caribbeans.

Reuters



Brazil's Neymar (L) and South Africa's Lerato Chabangu fight for the ball during their international friendly soccer match in Sao Paulo on 7 Sept, 2012.

REUTERS



Serena Williams of the US

no less impressive as she clawed her way out of trouble to beat Maria Sharapova 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 at Flushing Meadows.

With momentum on her side after winning a fifth Wimbledon title in July then the Olympic singles and doubles events at the London Games, Williams will start Saturday's final as the

The Belarusian has been the most consistent player in the world this year and won her first grand slam title at the Australian Open in January but her previous results against Williams have been poor, with the American winning nine of their 10 clashes.

"She's the toughest

GOLF

Singh in BMW drivers seat, Woods and McIlroy one back

CARMEL, 8 Sept—Former world number one Vijay Singh rolled back the clock with a six-under 66 on Friday to grab the second round lead at the BMW Championship, while Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy were a further shot back.

With heavy rain forecast for later in the day, play started early at Crooked Stick Golf Club and Singh went right to work mixing seven birdies with a single bogey for a two day total of 13-under 131 in the penultimate FedExCup playoff event.

"I've got to keep it going," Singh, who has not won on the PGA Tour since 2008, told reporters. "I've been playing well for two days for a while now, but I need four days of

good playing.

"Sooner or later I think four days is going to happen, and hopefully it starts this week."

Reuters



Vijay Singh of Fiji

Brilliant Messi leads Argentina to top of World Cup table



Argentina's Lionel Messi (back to camera) takes a free kick during their World Cup 2014 qualifying soccer match against Paraguay in Cordoba on 7 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

CORDOBA, 8 Sept—Lionel Messi's Argentina brushed aside Paraguay 3-1 to go top of the South American 2014 World Cup qualifiers at the Mario Kempes stadium on Friday.

Goals from Angel Di Maria, Gonzalo Higuain and Messi, with a brilliant free kick, gave Argentina their first home win

over Paraguay in a World Cup qualifier in 39 years.

Argentina lead the South American group with 13 points from six matches, one more point than Chile and Ecuador and two ahead of Uruguay. Paraguay, quarter-finalists in South Africa in 2010, remained one from bottom with four points before basement team Peru's match at home to Venezuela.

Argentina went ahead in the second minute when Ezequiel Lavezzi crossed square into the middle, Higuain played the ball back to him and the winger passed to Di Maria who found the top corner with a sweet left-footed shot.

Paraguay got a lucky break and equalized in the 17th minute when holding midfielder Rodrigo Bran, playing for the suspended Javier Mascherano, gave away a penalty for handball.—Reuters

Focus Myanmar TV Programme

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(9-9-12 09:30 am ~ 10-9-12 09:30 am) MST

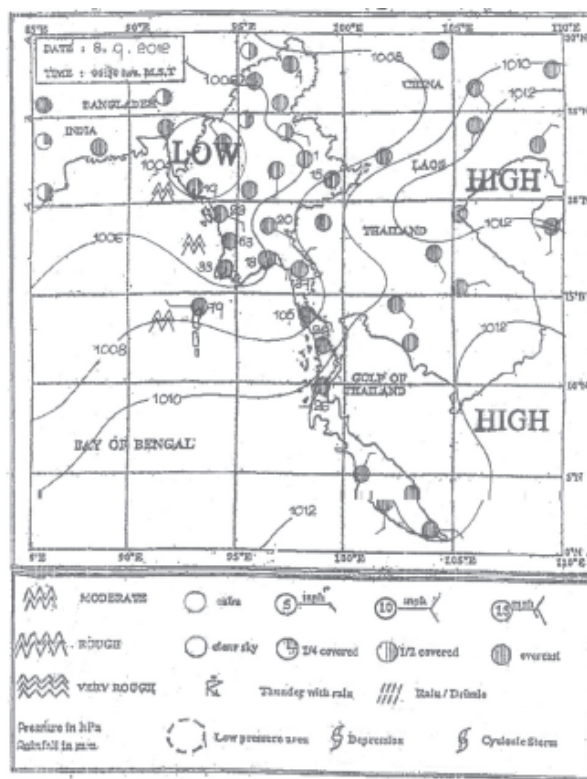
- * News
- * Road to 27th SEA Games (Gymnastics)
- * News
- * Completion Ceremony of 1st Intake Ground School of Golden Wings @ Jenko Flight
- * Topic on Journal "Grapes for Health & Income"
- * News
- * Enchanting Rakhine Land
- * News
- * Reflected Glory
- * News
- * MI People's Celebrities "Megnetic Songs"
- * The First General Assembly of Myanmar Seamen's Federation
- * News
- * Mother's First & Best Present
- * Workshop on ICT Development
- * News
- * Generous Donation in The Month of Waso
- * "Travelling in Shan Mountain Ranges" Inle Phaung Daw U Pagoda Festival (Part-2)
- * News
- * ASEAN Economic Communication (AEC) Workshop
- * Myanmar Movie "Gardener"

MYANMAR TV

(9-9-2012) (Sunday)

- 7:00 am**
1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw
- 7:25 am**
2. To Be Healthy Exercise
- 7:50 am**
3. Nice & Sweet Song
- 8:00 am**
4. Selected Songs For 19th Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions (2012) (Oldies & Mono Classical) (Basic Education Level) (Women)
- 8:25 am**
5. Islands of Dhamma
- 8:30 am**
6. Nine Precepts Administred
- 11:10 am**
7. Musical Programme
- 11:25 am**
8. Round Up Of The Week's International News
- 12:30 pm**
9. How It's Works
- 1:00 pm**
10. Myanmar Movies
- 4:00 pm**
11. Martial Song
- 4:40 pm**
12. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Fourth Year (Law)
- 5:15 pm**
13. Sing & Enjoy
- 6:40 pm**
14. Tamyethnar Takwetsar
- 8:00 pm**
15. News
 16. Cartoon Series
 17. TV Drama Series
 18. New Melody

Weather Map of Myanmar and Neighbouring Areas



Weather forecast for 9th September, 2012

Sr. No.	Regions/States	Temperature (°C/°F)		For Tomorrow	
		Maximum	Minimum	Forecast	Percent
1	Kachin	35/95	25/77	Scattered rain or thundershower	(100%)
2	Kayah	33/91	20/68	Scattered rain or thundershower	(100%)
3	Kayin	31/88	22/72	Widespread rain or thundershowers	(100%)
4	Chin	20/68	17/63	Widespread rain or thundershowers (IH)	(100%)
5	Upper Sagaing	35/95	24/75	Fairly widespread rain or thundershowers	(100%)
6	Lower Sagaing	38/100	27/81	Fairly widespread rain or thundershowers	(100%)
7	Taninthayi	29/84	24/75	Fairly widespread rain or thundershowers	(100%)
8	Bago	32/90	24/75	Widespread rain or thundershowers (IH)	(100%)
9	Magway	32/90	24/75	Fairly widespread rain or thundershowers	(100%)
10	Mandalay	37/99	28/82	Scattered rain or thundershower	(100%)
11	Mon	32/90	23/73	Widespread rain or thundershowers (IH)	(100%)
12	Yangon	32/90	21/70	Widespread rain or thundershowers (IH)	(100%)
13	Rakhine	32/90	21/70	Widespread rain or thundershowers (IH)	(100%)
14	Southern Shan	26/79	20/68	Scattered rain or thundershower	(100%)
15	Northern Shan	33/91	20/68	Scattered rain or thundershower	(100%)
16	Eastern Shan	29/84	22/72	Scattered rain or thundershower	(100%)
17	Ayeawady	32/90	23/73	Widespread rain or thundershowers (IH)	(100%)
18	Neighbouring Nay Pyi Taw	33/91	24/75	Isolated rain or thundershowers	(100%)
19	Neighbouring Yangon	32/90	21/70	Some rain or thundershowers	(100%)
20	Neighbouring Mandalay	37/99	28/82	Isolated rain or thundershowers	(100%)

Summary of observations at 09:30 hr MST on today

During the past (24) hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing Region, rain or thundershowers have been isolated in Mandalay Region, scattered in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin and Kayah States, fairly widespread in Magway Region and Shan State, widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavy falls in Yangon, Taninthayi Regions and Mon State and isolated heavy falls in Magway Region Chin and Rakhine States. The noteworthy amount of rainfall recorded were Launglon (5.67) inches, Kyeikkhame (5.08) inches, Dawei (4.41) inches, Mindat (4.14) inches, Mudoon (3.94) inches, Taungpyi and Ye (3.82) inches each, Pang (3.70) inches, Chaungzon and Hmawbi (3.62) inches each and Aungmye (1.69) inches.

Bay Inference: Monsoon is moderate to strong in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

State of the Sea: Squalls with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) mph.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Strong monsoon.

Storm Leslie downgraded on path toward Bermuda

HAMILTON, 8 Sept—Hurricane Leslie was downgraded to a tropical storm on Friday as it swirled over the Atlantic on a track toward Bermuda but is expected to regain hurricane strength before passing by the island on Sunday, the US National Hurricane Centre reported.

A wealthy British overseas territory and global

reinsurance center, Bermuda is not expected to take a direct hit from Leslie, which could re-strengthen by Sunday to a Category 1 hurricane, the lowest on the Saffir-Simpson scale of intensity.

Leslie then is expected to intensify into a Category 2 hurricane with wind speeds of 100 mph on Monday.

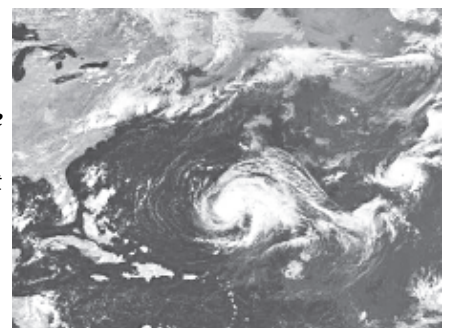
Forecasts show the storm will veer slightly east of the tiny island of 20 square miles (52 square km) with 65,000 residents.

Residents in the rocky archipelago stocked up on food and water — as well as alcohol, for traditional hurricane parties. Most government offices and all of the island's schools and beaches were closed on Friday.

Some of the island's hotels have advised guests to consider leaving early before

Hurricane Leslie (C) and Hurricane Michael (R) are seen in this NOAA handout satellite image taken on 6 Sept, 2012.

REUTERS



the worst of the storm is felt.

Tropical storm-force winds are expected by Sunday morning to batter the island located 640 miles off the east coast of the United States, as the season's sixth Atlantic hurricane follows its slow trajectory northward.

The Miami-based National Hurricane Centre said Leslie was about 390 miles south-southeast of Bermuda moving in a northerly direction at 5 miles per hour, with maximum sustained winds of 65 miles per hour. Before being downgraded to tropical storm status, Leslie had spent two days as a Category 1 hurricane

over the Atlantic.

The large span of storm winds combined with its slow movement "will produce large waves and life-threatening rip currents on Bermuda and along much of the US East Coast through the weekend," the hurricane center said.

Southeasterly swells have been generating hazardous surf and rip currents in Bermuda's waters since Wednesday.

Farther out in the ocean, Hurricane Michael, the first Category 3 storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, was downgraded to Category 2 late on Thursday.—Reuters

England, Germany, France win but Italy stumble

Soccer



Netherlands' Robin van Persie (2nd L) celebrates his goal against Turkey with teammates Jetro Willems (L), Arjen Robben (2nd R) and Wesley Sneijder during their 2014 World Cup qualifying soccer match in Amsterdam 7 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

LONDON, 8 Sept—England, Germany, France and the Netherlands all started the long road to the 2014 World Cup finals in Brazil with victories but Italy stumbled out of the blocks when the European qualifying campaign began on Friday.

World champions Spain do not begin their bid to reach the finals until Tuesday, but

apart from the Italians, held to a 2-2 draw in Group B in Bulgaria, there were no major problems for the continent's big guns. England won their opening Group H match 5-0 in Moldova, while Germany strolled to a relatively modest 3-0 Group C win over the Faroe Islands.

A first-half goal from Abou Diaby gave France a winning 1-0 start in their Group I campaign against Finland in Helsinki, while the Netherlands beat Turkey 2-0 in Amsterdam in Group D with Robin van Persie and Luciano Narsingh, who hit the second

in stoppage time, scoring for the Dutch. Italy, who have been world champions four times, had a topsy-turvy start in Sofia before drawing 2-2 with Bulgaria with Pablo Osvaldo scoring both their goals to put them 2-1 up after they conceded first.

Georgi Milanov equalized for the home side with 24 minutes to play and Italy could not find a winner.

Two Italians who had better nights than their national team were Fabio Capello and Giovanni Trapattoni, the managers of Russia and Ireland respectively.—Reuters

NLM-ner Joke

An extremely loyal fan

There was a Packers fan with a really crappy seat at Lambeau. Looking with his binoculars, he spotted an empty seat on the 50-yard line. Thinking to himself "what a waste" he made his way down to the empty seat.

When he arrived at the seat, he asked the man sitting next to it, "Is this seat taken?" The man replied, "This was my wife's seat. She passed away. She was a big Packers fan." The other man replied, "I'm so sorry to hear of your loss. May I ask why you didn't give the ticket to a friend or a relative?"

The man replied, "They're all at the funeral."

Korea bringing 'Gangnam Style' to Formula One



Singer Psy (front) performs during his concert in Seoul on 11 August, 2012.—REUTERS.

SEOUL, 8 Sept—Infectious K-Pop smash "Gangnam Style" thrust South Korean entertainment culture into the international spotlight and organizers of

the country's Formula One grand prix hope to harness that success for their race in October.

Singer Psy's music video has had almost 115 million

views on YouTube since mid-July and his horse-riding dance has been parodied and copied by fans around the world, including at Major League Baseball games in the United States.

Organizers of the Korean Grand Prix have named Psy as a promotional ambassador for the race in Yeongam, South Jeolla Province and the chubby singer said he hoped to raise the sport's profile.

"I will do my best as a promotional ambassador to make sure the... race is a success," said Psy, who will also stage a concert for spectators at the race.—Reuters

Vice-President U Nyan Tun attends ceremony to conclude paddy cultivation in Bawdigon Village, Lewe Township

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Sept— Vice-President U Nyan Tun this morning attended a ceremony to conclude the paddy cultivation of the 200-acre modern farmland being held at the Chaungmange creek irrigated temporary pandal near Bawdigon Village, Lewe Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, and made a speech on the occasion.

Also present on the occasion were Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing, Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, Union Minister at the President Office Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council Mayor U Thein Nyunt, Deputy Ministers for Agriculture and Irrigation



Vice-President U Nyan Tun speaking at concluding of ploughing 200-acre advanced farmland in Lewe Township.

MNA

U Ohn Than and U Khin Zaw, members of Nay Pyi Taw Council, agriculture and livestock ministers from regions and states, heads of department, heads of Settlement and Land Records Department from

regions and states and others.

Union Minister U Thein Nyunt reported on substituted cultivation of 18,740 kilos of Palethwe hybrid paddy which could yield two times the quality

strain paddy in 2,356 acres in 2011-2012 summer paddy cultivation season, substituted cultivation of 27,156 kilos of Palethwe hybrid paddy in 3,879 acres in this year's paddy cultivation season in eight

townships of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Union Minister U Myint Hlaing on arrangements being made for the cent per cent change of 3,000-acre farmland in Dekkhinathiri Township into mechanized farming as

a pilot project according to the guidance of the President calling for introducing mechanized farming in each chosen township with irrigated water in regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw (See page 7)

Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee to be beneficial to both legislature and country: Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker



safeguarding the interest of the country and its citizens. The existing laws that do not serve the interests of the country and its citizens should be amended or revoked. The Hluttaw is trying to amend and revoke the laws with the interests of the people putting before anything else. Respective departments need to abide by the laws. All the elected lawmakers, government institutions and civil servants should adhere to the prescribed and existing laws. Only then, will the rule of law be achieved. The parliament is trying to adjust all the laws to serve the interests of the country and the citizens.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was elected to the Hluttaw in 1 April by-election by Kawhmu Constituency. As she was known for her eagerness for the rule of law and stability, an offer was made to her for the formation of Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee. She was assigned as chairperson of the committee by her consent. The committee would be beneficial to both the Hluttaw and the country. The community peace and tranquility were once focused. Now, the focus is on the rule of law and tranquility. The rule of law is crucial to the State. It is the fundamental of stability, the foundation of internal peace, the cornerstone of national development. A particular committee or Hluttaw alone cannot accomplish the tasks for development of the Union which demands full participation of citizens, the government elected by people's representatives, civil (See page 7)

Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann delivers an address at meeting between Pyithu Hluttaw Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee and legal professionals.—MNA

YANGON, 8 Sept—Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann addressed the meeting between Pyithu Hluttaw Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee and legal professionals at Mingala Hall of Yangon Region Hluttaw this afternoon.

The Speaker said the legislatures should devise laws

Department of Meteorology and Hydrology Weather Forecast for Second Dekad of September, 2012

(Issued on 8-9-2012)

Bay of Bengal Condition

A Low Pressure Area may form over Bay of Bengal and it's likely to intensify into a depression. Moderate to strong Monsoon is likely in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

Rainfall and Rainy day Forecast

Rain will be below normal in Lower Sagaing Region, above normal in Magway and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Mon States and about Normal in the remaining Regions and States.

Rainy days are expected about (3) days in Lower Sagaing Region, (6) to (8) days in Magway and

Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Mon States and about (5) days in the remaining Regions and States.

Water Level

The water levels of the Ayeyawady river are forecast to rise above the present water levels by (90) cm (about 3 feet) at Myitkyina, Bhamo and Katha, (60) cm (about 2 feet) at Mandalay, Sagaing, Pakokku, NyaungU, Chauk, Minbu, Magway, Aunglan, Pyay, Seiktha, Hinthada and Zalun.

The water levels of the Chindwin river are forecast to rise above the present water levels by (120) cm (about 4-feet) at Hkamti and Homalin, and (90) cm (about 3 feet) at Mawlaik, Kalewa and Monywa.

Canada suspends diplomatic ties with Iran Page 3

Prince Harry in Afghanistan to fly helicopters Page 10

Pakistani PM says political consensus emerges over good ties with India Page 11

Ford recalls 2013 Escape in North America markets for engine issue Page 12

Venice credits roll, US, Korean films in awards race Page 13

Williams and Azarenka through to US Open final Page 14

Shelton stunner gives Jamaica shock win over US Page 14

Singh in BMW drivers seat, Woods and McIlroy one back Page 14