

No problems unsolvable with mutual trust, understanding and empathy: President

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—President U Thein Sein met Chairman of Karen National Union (KNU) General Mutu Sae Phoe and party at the meeting hall of 500-acre farm in Pobbathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area this evening.

The meeting was also attended by Vice-Chairman of Peace-making Working Committee Union Minister U Aung Min, members of the working committee Union Ministers U Soe Thein and U Khin Yi, officials of Myanmar Peace Center, peace negotiators, KNU General Secretary Phado Saw Kwe Htoo Win, KNU Secretary-2 Phado Saw Mahn Mahn, KNU CEC members Phado Saw Roger Khin, Phado Mahn Nyein Maung and Phado Saw Hla Tun. The President cordially greeted the KNU chairman and those present at the meeting. The KNU chairman presented Kayin national costume to the President as a New Year gift.

The President expressed his wish to keep constant contact with KNU as he opened the second meeting and congratulated the chairman and members for their re-election at 15th congress of the organization. He also said he is committed to bringing about lasting peace during his term, expressing his confidence that the KNU would share the same stance.

He called for cooperation on common ground for granting equal constitutional

rights to all national races despite political differences. He also stressed the need to grasp the chance to build up the society where the eternal peace prevails.

The KNU chairman said he had received the invitation of the President from Union Minister U Aung Min. He also expressed KNU's strong desire to build peace on ceasefire and negotiations, guaranteeing that KNU has no plan to reverse. The chairman also said KNU is considering how it could help bring peace to conflict-prone Kachin State.

The KNU secretary-general and four members discussed continuation

future plans. Challenges are unavoidable in realizing own wishes and they must be overcome with patience and tolerance, said the President. Nationalist fervor, spirit to safeguard sovereignty and desire for peace and stability are common behaviors of both sides, he said. With such common ground, it would not be difficult to undertake the remaining works. However, it needs time.

There would also be diversities, but coordination is to be made on matters of

to restore peace, he said.

Though the country possesses sound foundations for development, it lagged behind other countries in development due to over-60-year-old instabilities, he said. The government does not want to hand down the unrest to the younger generations and wishes to end it in its time, which demands collaborative efforts of all, the President said.

Negotiations are being held at different levels to ensure joint efforts, he said.

KNU considering a role to help calm Kachin conflict: General Mutu Sae Phoe



President U Thein Sein and KNU General Mutu Sae Phoe pose for documentary photo. MNA

of peace talks, ceasefire, liaison offices and regional development tasks.

The President said the discussions of the KNU chairman and members were commensurate with the realities and envisaged the

common interests, setting aside the differences, he said.

The government has been trying to make negotiations on points where both sides agreed, having entered ceasefire agreement with KIA and would continue

The parliament constituted with representatives of all national races is the best place for discussion in the final stage of political negotiations, he said.

National races residing in the Union together are indeed members of a large family, he said. A peaceful and democratic nation, aspiration of all citizens, can be achieved only when all join hands to find a solution, he said.

coordination based on those common desires. He had instructed the Tatmadaw not to launch attacks other than self-defence, the President said. The government would like to hand down the peace to younger generations, he said.

Therefore, it would discuss in pursuit of peace for many times to ensure lasting peace, the President said. Approximately, 80 per cent of the border regions

peace and coordinated efforts must be made to enable every citizen to enjoy it, the President said.

The President continued to say that job opportunities are a must for development of a region for which foreign investments have been invited with FDI Law promulgated. Peace and stability are required to attract FDI as special economic zones have been implemented. There will be more jobs upon completion of those special economic zones. As to resources management, importance must be attached not to harm national interests, national integrity and sovereignty and environment as well, he said. All depend on peace. If there is only mutual trust and understanding and empathy, problems could be solved easily. He said he hoped to continued dialogue with them, he said.

Union Minister U Aung Min elaborated on future programmes for making peace.

The President stressed the needs and the talks came to an end. After the discussion, the President presented gifts to the KNU Chairman and party and posed for a documentary photo together with them. KNUs observed 500-acre plantation.

MNA



President U Thein Sein and KNU General Mutu Sae Phoe at maize plantation.—MNA



LOCAL NEWS

Talks on anti-narcotic drugs given

YANGON, 5 Jan—Jointly-organized by Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association and Myanmar Motion Picture Association and Myanmar Music Association, an educative talks on prevention against narcotic drugs and side effects was held at Yankin Education College, here, on 3 January.

Chairman of MANA (Central) Retired Police Col U Khin Maung Tun, executives, MMPA Chairman U Zin Waing, MANA Ambassadors Dr Pyu Pyu Kyaw Thein and Dr Chit Thu Wai gave talks on dangers of narcotic drugs. Next, wellwishers presented cash donations to

the MANA.

Then Project Manager of Prevention against Danger of Narcotic Drugs of Health Department Dr Hla Htay of Ywathagyi Mental Hospital and MANA Vice-Chairman Professor Dr Khin Maung Gyi also gave educative talks on anti-narcotic drugs.

MNA

Indoor, outdoor games held in Yezagyo

YEZAGYO, 5 Jan—Hailing and honouring the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, Pyinnya Beikman Monastic Primary Education School organized indoor and outdoor games at the compound of Ma-O

monastery in Yezagyo Township of Pakokku District on 3 January.

For school children to be fit, both physically and mentally, monastic school head Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kavida and teachers

conducted Myanmar traditional outdoor games for physical fitness and Maths and English contests as indoor games for brain development. Next, prizes were given to outstanding students.—Kyemon



Dagon BEHS (1) celebrates School Family Day

YANGON, 5 Jan—School Family Day of No (1) Basic Education High School was held at the school in Dagon Township, here, on 3 January.

School Headmaster Dr Aung Ko Ko, Secretary of parent-teacher association Dr Khin Ko Latt and member the board of trustees of the school U Aung Ko Zaw formally

opened the ceremony.

Next, prize-presentation ceremony followed at Dagon Thiri Hall of the school. Patron of parent-teacher association Daw Khin Than Nwe and responsible persons presented prizes to outstanding students. Students performed songs and dances at the ceremony.

Kyemon

New tarred road emerges in Muse

MUSE, 5 Jan—Hailing the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, a new tarred road that links between Muse and Saw Mon Hla NannU Pagoda in Salant village-tract was held on 2 January. The 5280-foot

tarred road was built with the contribution of K 51,317,000 by the State.

Thanks to emergence of the new tarred road, pilgrims to the Pagoda will be able to go there by car, saving time and energy.—Kyemon



Kyangin Township sees new concrete road



KYANGIN, 5 Jan—Hailing the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, the opening of a new concrete road was held in Kyangin Township on 3 January.

The new concrete road is 1815 feet long, 20 feet

wide and 8 inches thick. It was built by Kyangin Township Development Affairs Committee.

Officials concerned formally opened the new concrete road.

Kyemon

House fire in Myawady

MYAWADY, 5 Jan—A fire occurred at a house in Ward-1 of Myawady Township at about 12 am on 3 January.

The house caught fire by a lit candle. The fire swept through the whole house and spread out other adjoining three houses.

Firefighters and local people with the help of

four fire engines, one administrative vehicle and 20 water bowsers managed to bring the fire under control at about 1 am. In the incident, an eight-year-old girl was pronounced dead. The fire left four households homeless. Myawady Police Station filed a lawsuit against the suspect for fire negligence.

Kyemon

Cartoon, paintings and photo show held in Mandalay



MANDALAY, 5 Jan—To mark the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, Cartoon, paintings and photo show was organized at Mandalay District Information and

Public Relations Department in Pyigyidagun Township, here, on 2 January.

Works—25 cartoons, 273 paintings and 125 photos—of cartoonist, artists and

photographers in Mandalay were on display at the show which was being kept open till yesterday (Independence Day).

Kyemon

New tarred road opened to mark Independence Day in Pyinmana

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Hailing the 65th Anniversary Independence Day that falls on 4 January 2013, the opening of Shwechi (1) new tarred road was held in

Pyinmana Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 26 December.

The member of Nay Pyi Taw Council the Pyinmana Township In-charge, the member of Nay Pyi Taw Development Affairs Committee and the Pyinmana Township Administrator formally opened the new road. Like

Shwechi (6) and Shwechi (9) streets, the new Shwechi (1) street is also important one linking Bogyoke Street, Bo Tauk Htain Street and streets to Pyinmana Myoma market, Ahayathukha market, school and hospital in the township. As it was upgraded into a tarred road, people will be able to use the road as an all-weather one.—MNA

Apartment fire in Kyimyindine Township

YANGON, 5 Jan—A fire broke out at an apartment on the third floor of a six-storey building on Kathit street in Thida ward of Kyimyindine Township at about 6 pm on 3 January. A total of five fire engines and

two administrative vehicles together with 75 fire crews put out the fire in cooperation with local people at about 6.15 pm.

The investigation into the cause of the fire is ongoing.—Kyemon

Stimulant tablets seized in Lashio

LASHIO, 5 Jan—A combined force of Lashio District Police Force and special anti-narcotic squad led by Police Inspector Maung Maung Oo seized 386 stimulant tablets from

a man in the compound of Yan Taing Aung pagoda in ward-1 of Lashio on 27 December while conducting anti-narcotic task according to a tip-off.

Kyemon



WORLD



An exhibition of the works of Zhang Zexun, the fifth-generation descendant of Tianjin-based clay sculpture art Clay Figure Zhang, is opened in south China's Macao, on 4 Jan, 2013. The exhibition will be held at the UNESCO Centre of Macao from 4 to 13 January. —XINHUA

Italy's Monti unveils alliance, rules out minister role

ROME, 5 Jan — Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti on Friday unveiled the alliance he will lead into February's parliamentary election and said he was unlikely to agree to serve as a minister in another premier's cabinet after the vote.

The 69-year-old former European commissioner, who replaced Silvio Berlusconi as prime minister in November 2011 when Italy was scrambling to avert a financial crisis, announced last week that he would run for a second term. Monti said on Friday the grouping would be called "With Monti for Italy", whose logo is a circular symbol with the colours of the Italian flag and his surname in the centre.

"I hope that (the new alliance) helps improve politics, and that it renews the interest of those Italians who had turned their back on politics, involving them actively

again in public affairs," Monti said.

Opinion surveys have shown that up to 50 percent of the electorate plan to abstain or are undecided in the 24-25 February election that is a three-way battle between rightist Berlusconi, Monti and centre-left frontrunner Pier Luigi Bersani.

Focusing the campaign strongly around Monti could be a risky tactic, with his popularity dented by the tough tax hikes and spending cuts he has introduced over the past 13 months. Roughly 60 percent of Italians are against the idea of him standing for a second term, polls show.

A poll by the Tecne research institute released on SkyTG24 on Friday showed that Monti's grouping would likely attract slightly more than 12 percent of the vote.

Monti, who wants to form a broad coalition of pro-Europe, pro-reform par-

ties after the election, said on Friday that his goal was to continue as prime minister, and he was unlikely to accept a job in someone else's cabinet.

When asked if he would consider being, for example, the economy minister under another prime minister, he told La 7 television channel:



Outgoing Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti unveils the symbol of his party reading "Civil choice with Monti for Italy" during a news conference in Rome on 4 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

Ghanaian President urges national unity ahead of new term

ACCRA, 5 Jan—Ghana's President John Dramani Mahama in a state of the nation address to parliament here Friday called on all Ghanaians to forge ahead in unity.

While appraising the country's collective achievements over the past four years, Mahama, who won the 7 December presidential election on the ticket of the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC), reminded Ghanaians of the hard work that lay ahead of them.

He therefore admonished the citizenry, especially politicians, to work towards greater cooperation and collaboration, irrespective of their political differences.

"Keeping the nation safe, anchoring our constitu-

tional and democratic legacy on stronger moral and cultural values, growing stronger institutions; delivering on infrastructural development and social services, infrastructure and amenities to all parts of this nation, as well as affirming our status as a Pan African giant, remain far from finished," he said. President Mahama reminded the country's Members of Parliament (MPs) that maintaining that success would only come in their shared responsibility to work towards the achievement of these goals.

Mahama also recalled the latest economic achievements of the nation, particularly in prudent fiscal and macro-economic management. "Through hard work

and implementation of prudent fiscal and monetary policies, we were able, over the last four years, to stabilize the macro-economic environment. This resulted in remarkable acceleration of our growth," said Mahama, against the backdrop of the distressed economy the NDC government inherited in January 2009.

A year after commercial oil production, Ghana's economic growth in 2011 hit 14.4 percent and got touted by the World Bank as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, while the production figures for cocoa, Ghana's largest foreign exchange earner, reached over one million metric tons.

Reuters

EU says Iran not responded to nuclear talks proposal

BRUSSELS, 5 Jan—The European Union has proposed a time and place for further talks on Iran's nuclear programme, but Iran has yet to respond, an EU spokesman said on Friday.

Iran said earlier on Friday it had agreed to resume talks in January with six major powers—represented by the EU—but the EU spokesman said Tehran had not yet replied to proposals made on 31 December.

"We offered dates and a venue, but we are still waiting to hear back from Iran," said Michael Mann, spokesman for EU foreign affairs

chief Catherine Ashton, who leads negotiations on behalf of the United States, Russia, France, Britain, Germany and China.

Mann declined to say which dates and venue the EU had proposed.

The countries involved in the talks—particularly in the West—want to rein in Iran's uranium enrichment work—which Teheran says is for peaceful purposes only but which produces material

which, if processed further, can be used to make nuclear bombs.

There was no breakthrough in three rounds of talks since April 2012. But neither side has been willing to break off totally, partly because of concerns this could lead to war if Israel attacks Iran—something it has threatened to do if the Islamic Republic looks close to getting nuclear weapons.—Reuters

Obama to name Hagel as Defence Secretary

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan—US President Barack Obama is expected to name former senator Chuck Hagel to serve as his next Defence Secretary, and the announcement could come early next week, US reports said on Friday.

Media outlets such as CNN, Foreign Policy magazine, all quoted government sources as saying the announcement could come on Monday or Tuesday. White House officials would not confirm the reports.

Hagel's name has been floated as a potential Defence nominee last month, but was met with resistance from pro-Israel groups. Several Republican senators have also voiced their opposition. Hagel has made comments that the "Jewish lobby" intimidated people in Washington, and has expressed willingness to engage diplomatically with Hamas and Iran.

Hagel was also faced with criticism from gay rights groups over comments



Senator Chuck Hagel

he made in 1998 about a gay ambassadorial nominee. Hagel apologized for those comments. Obama defended Hagel in an interview last week, saying there was nothing that disqualified Hagel from being selected.

Hagel, 66, is a moderate Republican. He served for two terms from 1997 to 2009 as senator for Nebraska, and is now chairperson for President's Intelligence Advisory Board. Other contenders for the Pentagon post were said to be Michele Flournoy, former defence undersecretary for policy, and Ashton Carter, deputy defence secretary, reports have indicated.

Xinhua

Chavez swearing-in can be delayed

CARACAS, 5 Jan—President Hugo Chavez's formal swearing-in for a new six-year term scheduled for 10 January can be postponed if he is unable to attend due to his battle to recover from cancer surgery, Venezuela's

vice president said on Friday.

Nicolas Maduro's comments were the clearest indication yet that the Venezuelan government is preparing to delay the swearing-in while avoiding naming a replacement for Chavez or

calling a new election in the South American OPEC nation.

In power since 1999, the 58-year-old socialist leader has not been seen in public for more than three weeks. Allies say he is in delicate condition after a fourth operation in two years for an undisclosed form of cancer in his pelvic area.

The political opposition argues that Chavez's presence on 10 January in Cuba—where there are rumors he may be dying—is tantamount to the president's stepping down.

But Maduro, waving a copy of the constitution during an interview with state TV, said there was no problem if Chavez was sworn in at a later date by the nation's top court.—Reuters



Venezuela's Vice President Nicolas Maduro (C) speaks next to Venezuelan National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello (R) and Agriculture Minister Juan Carlos Loyo, during a visit to Fama de America's coffee processing plant in Caracas on 3 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Armstrong's moon speech not so improvised, brother tells BBC

CAPE CANAVERAL, 5 Jan—Astronaut Neil Armstrong may not have been speaking entirely off the cuff when he delivered the most iconic quote in the history of manned space flight. Armstrong wrote out the sentence, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind," before blasting off from Cape Canaveral, Florida, with Apollo Astronauts Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins in July 1969, his brother now says, according to the transcripts of a documentary recently aired on BBC Two.

Because of a radio communications glitch, millions of people watching on television as Armstrong became the first human being to step onto the surface of the moon never heard him utter the

word "a" before man. Armstrong, who died in August at the age of 82, had always maintained he composed the words after touching down on the moon on 20 July, 1969, while he waited to leave the Eagle lunar lander.

But Armstrong's younger brother Dean, speaking in an interview for the documentary, "Neil Armstrong — First Man on the Moon" aired on Sunday, said that was not entirely accurate. "Dean told me that Neil shared the words with him shortly before he left for the Cape, so maybe a couple weeks before the mission," producer Chris Riley told Reuters. An Armstrong family spokesman did not reply to a request from Reuters for comment. "I find the timing of Dean Armstrong's revela-

tion to be curious," said Robert Pearlman, owner and curator of CollectSpace.com, a space history website. "Why wait until after his brother died? He was interviewed for Neil's authorized biography in 2002 and apparently never mentioned this story, despite Neil giving permission to his family and friends to speak



Apollo 11 crew's portrait session shows astronauts Neil A Armstrong, Michael Collins and Edwin Aldrin in this July 1969 handout photo courtesy of NASA.—REUTERS

openly," Pearlman said. Andrew Chaikin, author of "A Man on the Moon," which served as a template for an HBO miniseries produced by Tom Hanks, said Armstrong was asked many times over the years when he came up with the quote and always replied that it was spoken spontaneously.—Reuters

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Novell's board must face investor suit over Attachmate sale

WILMINGTON, (Delaware), 5 Jan —Novell Inc directors who approved the information technology company's 2010 sale for \$2.2 billion must defend a lawsuit that alleges they unfairly favored Attachmate Corp over other bidders. The shareholders brought a reasonably conceivable claim that the directors acted in bad faith based on their "unexplained, extremely favorable treatment of Attachmate," Delaware Court of Chancery Judge John Noble wrote in a 50-page opinion. His ruling on Wednesday will allow the case to proceed.

Novell's board agreed in November 2010 to sell the company to Seattle-based software firm Attachmate for \$6.10 per share. As part of the deal, Novell also agreed to sell a collection of patents to a group led by Microsoft Corp for \$450 million. Novell shareholders, led by pension funds for Oklahoma firefighters and Louisiana police, sued and alleged that the board did not allow another potential buyer, which initially had the higher bid, to partner with others as Attachmate did. Attachmate was also told of the simultaneous

patent sale, while the other bidder was not.

Bret Fitzgerald, a spokesman for Novell, which is based in Waltham, Massachusetts, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Judge Noble refused the directors' request for an early dismissal, and the case will now proceed to trial where the defendants can present evidence and testimony to counter the plaintiffs' claims. Many investor lawsuits settle after surviving a motion to dismiss.

However, Noble did dismiss claims against Attachmate and Elliott Asso-

ciates. The hedge fund had been accused of gaming the sale of Novell to get what plaintiffs said was nearly \$10 per share for its 7 percent stake in the company. Elliott's unsolicited bid for Novell jump-started the sale process and the hedge fund helped finance the deal with Attachmate.—Reuters

Lenovo seeks top smartphone spot

BEIJING, 5 Jan—Lenovo Group aims to challenge Samsung Electronics Co Ltd to become the No 1 smartphone vendor in the Chinese market this year, according to the company's chief executive officer. "Innovation, strong distribution channels and effective operations have been the key factors that help Lenovo smartphones stand out," said Yang Yuanqing, chairman and chief executive officer, in an interview in Beijing on Friday.

Founded in Beijing's Zhongguancun technology hub in 1984, Lenovo has become a personal computer giant, competing with rivals including Hewlett-Packard Co and Dell Inc, and extending its reach to the smartphone market. Lenovo was China's second-largest smartphone vendor by shipment in the third

quarter last year, behind only Samsung, while Apple Inc fell two places to sixth in the same period, according to reports from the International Data Corporation. Specific market share figures from local research firm Analysys International showed Lenovo's share rose to 14.2 percent in the third quarter, from 4.8 percent a year ago.

"Lenovo does not want to be the second player ... we want to be the best," Yang told *China Daily*, adding that he hopes the company will gain the top position in China's smartphone market this year. "Lenovo has the confidence to outperform Samsung and Apple, at least in the Chinese market," he said. Yang said Lenovo has long been dedicated to the mobile phone business. As early as 2002, it started re-

search and development work on mobiles. It was the first company to offer smartphones and tablet computers in the Chinese mainland market, launching Le-Phone, a smartphone model, five years ago.

IDC analysts said Lenovo's rise is largely due to "aggressive ramping-up and improvements in channel partnerships". Compared with Apple, which launches one smartphone model annually on average, Lenovo introduced 46 smartphone models, covering all price ranges, to the Chinese market in 2012. It also invested 5 billion yuan (\$793.5 million) in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei Province, to build a manufacturing base with a production capacity of 30 million to 40 million smartphones a year. Yang said such factories will help the company maintain low stocks but with steady supplies.

Wang Ying, an analyst at Analysys International, said: "Lenovo possesses an obvious advantage over rivals in terms of sales channels."

Xinhua

Samsung expected to widen smartphone lead over Apple this year



People walk at a Samsung Electronics store in the Gangnam area in Seoul on 22 Oct, 2012.—REUTERS

SEOUL, 5 Jan—Samsung Electronics Co Ltd is expected to widen its lead over Apple Inc in global smartphone sales this year with 35 percent growth, helped by a broad product lineup, market researcher Strategy Analytics told Reuters on Friday. Apple, returning the offensive, could roll out a smaller,

cheaper "iPhone Mini" next year to grab market share by targeting demand from users of lower-end smartphones, Strategy Analytics said.

"We expect Samsung to slightly extend its lead over Apple this year because of its larger multitier product portfolio," Neil Mawston, Executive

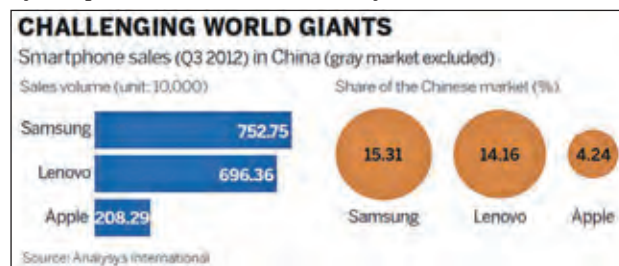
Director at Strategy Analytics, said in an e-mail interview with Reuters. Global smartphone shipments will jump 27 percent to 875 million this year, slowing from last year's torrid 41 percent pace as growth is easing in many key markets such as North America, China, the developed economies of Asia, and Western Europe, Mawston said.

South Korea's Samsung Electronics is forecast to sell 290 million smartphones this year, up from a projected 215 million in 2012, the research firm said. Apple's smartphone sales are projected to reach 180 million this year, up 33 percent from last year, slightly trailing Samsung's 35 percent increase.

Reuters



People walk past a logo next to the main entrance of the Google building in Zurich on 9 March, 2011.—REUTERS



BUSINESS & HEALTH



The logo for China-based networking and telecommunications company Huawei is pictured at the ITU Telecom World in Geneva in this 24 Oct, 2011 file photo. China's Huawei Technologies Co Ltd HWT. UL, the world's No 2 telecom equipment maker, expects its 2012 revenues to exceed \$35 billion, up 10 percent from a year earlier, its acting CEO Guo Ping said.—REUTERS

China's Huawei expects profit jump after reporting drop in 2011

HONG KONG, 5 Jan — China's Huawei Technologies Co Ltd, the world's No 2 telecom equipment maker, expects a 2012 profit gain after reporting a sharp drop a year ago, thanks to new projects and increased sales in high-end mobile phone markets such as Japan. Net profit is expected to be around \$2.4 billion, rotating and acting Chief Executive Officer Guo Ping said in a New Year message to employees on Friday. That would be a rise of 29 percent from 11.6 billion yuan (\$1.86 billion) in 2011, based on

his forecast.

Revenue is expected to exceed \$35 billion, Guo said. In 2011, sales rose 11.7 percent to 203.9 billion yuan, or about \$32 billion. Privately held Huawei and its crosstown rival ZTE Corp have been expanding their footprint in the global telecom equipment and mobile phone sectors over the past few years. While Huawei has boosted sales and gained market share in Europe, Africa and Asia, it ran into a few obstacles last year in other markets such as the United States and Australia due to

national security and cyber espionage concerns.

Slower telecom spending stemming from a weak global economy and stiff competition in the increasingly crowded mobile phone sector have also weighed on the outlook of equipment providers and handset manufacturers. "We should devote our limited energy to specific business objectives, and avoid the impulse to expand business blindly," Guo said. "Managers who expand business blindly must be held accountable."

Reuters

Racial gaps in access to robotic prostate surgery

NEW YORK, 5 Jan — Minority and Medicaid cancer patients are less likely to have their prostates removed at hospitals that use robot-assisted surgery, according to a new study that stops short of suggesting the robotic technique represents better care. "People who are poor - frequently Hispanic, African American or black, and Medicaid patients -- tend to get what is considered to be less high-quality care than those who are middle class and wealthy," said Dr Otis Brawley, chief medical and scientific officer of the American Cancer Society.

But Brawley, who

wasn't involved in the new study, also said there is no evidence that removing a prostate with a robot is better than the old-fashioned way, with "open" surgery that requires an incision across a man's stomach. Those are two of several treatment options available for prostate cancer, including radiation as well as active surveillance, also known as watchful waiting. The American Cancer Society estimates approximately 250,000 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2012, and about 28,000 died from it.

Despite a lack of evidence showing its

superiority, robot-assisted prostate removal has become the predominant method since being approved by the US Food and Drug Administration in 2000, according to the researchers, led by Dr Simon Kim at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Robotic surgical tools allow doctors to operate through small incisions with the aid of a tiny video camera, an approach that is considered less invasive but also tends to be more expensive. Kim and his colleagues write in *The Journal of Urology* that evidence does exist to

show that black patients are already less likely to get radiation or to have their prostates removed, but there is less data on whether they and other minorities have equal access to robot-assisted prostate removal.

For the study, Kim's group used two national databases to compare the differences between the approximately 20,500 cancer patients who had their prostates removed at hospitals offering robotic surgery, and the 9,500 who had their surgery at hospitals without robots between 2006 and 2008.

Reuters

India tablet computer sales to double in 2013

NEW DELHI, 5 Jan — Sales of tablet computers in India are expected to at least double this year to 6 million, the market's third year of growth, as new devices attract business users and low costs draw consumers, research firm CyberMedia forecast. Sales are likely to have reached 3 million in 2012, up from about 0.5 million in 2011, the firm estimated on Friday, citing data for the quarter to end-September, when companies led by Samsung Electronics Co Ltd sold 1.1 million

tablets.

With the launch of low-cost devices running on Google Inc's Android platform by local firms, sales of tablets and smartphones have grown rapidly in the last two years. A slew of global makers of tablets have also entered the market. In 2013, new tablets based on Microsoft Corp's Windows 8 platform and companies' adoption of tablets for business applications will change the market significantly again, Faisal Kawoosa, lead analyst at



An Apple logo is reflected in the screen of a new Apple iPad at an electronics store in Mumbai on 27 April, 2012.—REUTERS

CyberMedia's telecoms practice, said in a statement.

India is the world's second biggest telecommunications market with about 900 million mobile phone accounts. But computer penetration is low, and only about a tenth of its

1.2 billion people have access to Internet. Samsung had a 23.9 percent share of tablet computers sold in India in the July-September quarter last year, CyberMedia Research said.

Reuters

India's Infosys denies report of firing 5,000 staff

MUMBAI, 5 Jan — India's Infosys Ltd said on Friday a newspaper report it was planning to fire up to 5,000 poorly performing workers was "wrong", although it encourages "chronic underperformers" to leave as part of its routine staff management. The *Economic Times* newspaper had earlier said Bangalore-based Infosys, India's second-largest software services exporter and an icon in the country's \$100 billion outsourcing sector, was sacking up to 5,000 workers to trim costs.

Infosys, which has more than 150,000 staff, said there was no mass lay-off planned at the company and the number of underperformers that could potentially leave was "significantly lower" than the 5,000 mentioned in the paper. "We have a robust performance management system that includes structured appraisals and performance feedback," it said in a statement. "This is done regularly and is not a

one-time event."

Infosys, for years an investor favourite for exceeding its earnings targets, has struggled recently as its big customers cut costs, missing its own revenue guidance in three of the past four quarters. The software exporter may cut its revenue forecast for the year to March when it reports its December quarter earnings on 11 January, as US business clients put off spending and balk at signing big deals.

With about 60 percent

of its business in the United States, Infosys is particularly vulnerable to swings in US corporate sentiment and has been hit hard by spending deferrals by the companies in the world's largest economy. However, Infosys executive co-chairman S Gopalakrishnan was quoted by other media reports on Friday as saying 2013 would be better than last year for India's export-driven information technology industry.

Reuters



A general view shows workers at a cafeteria inside a building at the Infosys campus at the Electronic City area in Bangalore on 4 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

Competition affects who gets a liver transplant

NEW YORK, 5 Jan — More competition between medical centres that perform liver transplants may mean sicker patients get lower-quality donor organs, a new analysis suggests.

When more than one centre has patients on the same donor list, the centres have an incentive to get organs for as many of their own patients as possible, researchers explained.

So doctors are more likely to take the first available organ when their patient is at the top of the transplant list — whether or not that pairing has the best chance to succeed — rather than risk the organ will go to another centre.

"There is the question whether competition decreases the ability of a centre to better match donor and recipient characteristics," Dr John Paul Roberts from the University of California, San Francisco and his colleagues wrote.

They analyzed data on more than 38,000 liver recipients who had transplants from non-living donors between 2003 and 2009.

The transplants were done at 112 medical centres in 47 so-called distribution areas — some that were

covered by only one centre and some that fed organs to multiple transplant centres.

Roberts and his colleagues found "clinically important differences" showing patients who received organs were initially worse off, with a higher risk of dying or having their transplant fail, in areas that had more medical centres in competition for the same organs.

For example, 10 percent of patients who received organs at centres with no competition had the worst scores for liver disease severity pre-transplant, compared to more than 28 percent of those in the high-competition distribution areas.

Areas with high competition also transplanted more organs that were considered at higher risk of failing, according to the new findings published in the journal *Liver Transplantation*.

Although that might not be the best way of distributing organs on a society-wide scale, it could be considered a plus for the people who otherwise wouldn't get an organ or for livers that would otherwise be considered too low quality and be discarded.

Reuters

WORLD

22 civil society actors to take part in Central African Republic's peace talks

YAOUNDE, 5 Jan — The Central African Republic's civil society groups will take part in the peace negotiations over the ongoing conflict between the government and the Seleka coalition of rebels, scheduled to take place in Libreville from 8 January under the guidance of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC), *Xinhua* heard on Thursday.

"There will be 22 civil society actors who will

represent youths, women, trade unions, the private sector, development NGOs as well as human rights NGOs during the Libreville talks," said Modeste Gonda, the chairman of the Central Africa's Network of NGOs.

This is one of the recommendations that were made on the same day in Bangui by colonel Ben Agourou who is the deputy head of the CEEAC's Peace Consolidation Mission in the Central African Republic,

who had been sent from Libreville to prepare for the process to find a solution to the crisis that began on 10 December when the rebels took up arms with an objective of removing President Francois Bozize from power.

While citing the statement by Agourou, Gonda said that although 8 January has been chosen as the date for the beginning of talks in Libreville, the government and the rebels

have not yet confirmed if they are comfortable with the date.

The two parties have declared their support for the talks, even though the armed rebels have demanded a transition without Bozize who on his part has promised to form a government of national unity with his adversaries. Other sources within the diplomatic circles in Bangui said that the peace negotiations in Libreville may start on 10 January.—*Xinhua*



Rescue vehicles wait on the fire accident site in Lankao County, central China's Henan Province, on 4 Jan, 2013. A fire broke out in a residential building in Chengguan Township of Lankao County at about 8:30 a.m. on Friday and was extinguished about two hours later.—*XINHUA*

Gunmen kidnap oil marketer in Nigeria

PORT HARCOURT, (Nigeria), 5 Jan— Nigeria's police in southeast Rivers State on Friday confirmed the abduction of a senior staff of the Pipelines, Products Marketing Company in the state.

State police spokesperson Ben Ugwuegbulam told reporters in Port Harcourt, the oil rich state capital city, that the victim was a Deputy manager at the PPMC.

The manager was abducted at Ozuoba in the outskirts of Port Harcourt on 3 January, he added, noting that the details of the incident are still sketchy.

"Our anti-kidnap unit has commenced investigation into the incident.

We will give you more details as soon as we get them," he said, adding that no group had claimed responsibility for the abduction and no ransom had been demanded.

Nigeria is one of the worst countries in the world for kidnapping, where it is a lucrative criminal enterprise worth millions of dollars a year. Kidnapping has become everyone's nightmare in Nigeria. People are being abducted as they go about their daily business.

Xinhua

Pakistani girl shot by Taleban leaves British hospital



Pakistani schoolgirl Malala Yousufzai (C) waves with nurses as she is discharged from The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham in this handout photograph released on 4 Jan, 2013.—*REUTERS*

LONDON, 5 Jan— A Pakistani girl shot in the head by the Taleban for advocating girls' education has been discharged from a British hospital after doctors said she was well enough to spend time recovering with her family.

Fifteen-year-old Malala Yousufzai, who was shot by the Taleban in October

and brought to Britain for treatment, was discharged on Thursday but is due to be re-admitted in late January or early February for reconstructive surgery to her skull, doctors said.

The shooting of Yousufzai, in the head at point blank range as she left school in the Swat valley, drew widespread

international condemnation.

She has become an internationally recognized symbol of resistance to the Taleban's efforts to deny women education and other rights, and more than 250,000 people have signed online petitions calling for her to be nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize for her activism.

Doctors at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham where Yousufzai was treated said that although the bullet hit her left brow, it did not penetrate her skull but instead travelled underneath the skin along the side of her head and into her neck.

She was treated by doctors specializing in neurosurgery, trauma and other disciplines in a department of the hospital which has treated hundreds of soldiers wounded in conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"Malala is a strong young woman and has worked hard with the people caring for her to make excellent progress in her recovery," said Dave Rosser, the hospital's medical director.

"Following discussions with Malala and her medical team, we decided that she would benefit from being at home."

Yousufzai has already been leaving the hospital on a regular basis on "home leave" in recent weeks to spend time with her parents and younger brothers, who have a temporary home in central England, Rosser said.

"During those visits assessments have been carried out by her medical team to ensure she can continue to make good progress outside the hospital," Rosser said.

Yousufzai's father said in October he was sure she would "rise again" to pursue her dreams after medical treatment.—*Reuters*

Ecuador's highly supported president vows to win re-election

QUITO, 5 Jan— Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa on Friday vowed to win the 17 February presidential elections as he currently enjoys a support rate of more than 60 percent.

"Today we begin to build a path towards a new victory of our revolution, our campaign will be with happiness,

unity and harmony. Let's leave bitterness to the ones who can't defeat us in the elections," Correa, also head of the ruling PAIS Alliance Movement, told supporters in Quito on Friday when the official election campaign began.

The opposition has accused the ruling party of making use of government

resources to promote Correa's reelection. To avoid affecting his duties, the president has applied for a 30-day leave to run his campaign.

Another candidate, the center-right former banker Guillermo Lasso, who came second in the polls with 11 percent support, has been a tough critic of the president,

blaming Correa, a former economy minister, for the country's 1999 bank crisis.

Ex-president Lucio Gutierrez is also among the eight presidential candidates.

Meanwhile, there are 1,381 candidates vying for seats in the National Assembly and 45 for seats in the Andean Parliament.

Xinhua

Brazil registers record-high aircraft accidents in 2012

RIO DE JANEIRO, 5 Jan — Brazil registered in 2012 a record number of aircraft accidents, the Centre for Investigation and Prevention of Aircraft Accidents (Cenipa) announced on Friday.

The country witnessed

a total of 168 aircraft accidents in 2012, up from 159 in 2011. 146 of them involved planes and 22 involved helicopters. But the number of deaths in aircraft accidents fell to 71 in 2012, down from 90 in 2011, according to Cenipa.

"Last year, we started several actions focusing on prevention and improving aircraft maintenance, in order to reduce the number of accidents in the country. 2012 was a transitional year, and we believe there will be a reduction in 2013," head

of Cenipa Luiz Roberto do Carmo Lourenco said.

He also said that Cenipa is working alongside the National Civil Aviation Agency and the presidency's Civil Aviation's Secretariat to boost supervision in the sector.—*Xinhua*



The designer of the small hand lantern shows the lantern featuring a cartoon snake during a news conference at the Grand Hotel in Taipei, southeast China's Taiwan, on 4 Jan, 2013. The conference held on Friday was to issue the shapes of the main lantern and small hand lantern of 2013 Taipei Lantern Festival. The festival will kick off in Taipei on 24 February.

XINHUA

WORLD

Syria blames “terrorists” for deadly petrol station blast

BEIRUT, 5 Jan—Syria said on Friday a car bomb at a crowded petrol station in Damascus was set off by “terrorists”, a term it uses for rebels seeking to topple President Bashar al-Assad.

The blast on Thursday night killed 11 people and wounded 40 at a station packed with Syrians queuing for fuel, which has become scarce in the 21-month insurgency against Assad, in the second petrol station attack in the capital this week, opposition activists said.

“Terrorists ... blew up an explosive device at Qassioun Petrol Station near Hamish Hospital in Barzeh, Damascus, martyring several civilians,” state news agency SANA said.

The United Nations says more than 60,000 people have been killed in the civil war, the longest, bloodiest conflict born from uprisings across the Arab world in the past two years.

Dozens of people were incinerated in an air strike as they waited for fuel at another Damascus pet-

rol station on Wednesday, according to opposition sources.

The semi-official al-Ikhabariya television station aired its own footage from Barzeh, indicating the attack struck a government-held area. Barzeh’s residents include members of the Sunni Muslim majority and religious and ethnic minorities. The rebels hold a crescent of suburbs on the southern and eastern edges of Damascus, which have come under bombardment by government forces. Rebel forces also seized territory in Syria’s north and east during advances in the second half of 2012.

The war pits rebels, mainly from the Sunni Muslim majority, against a government supported by members of Assad’s Shi’ite-derived Alawite sect and some members of other minorities who fear revenge if he falls. Assad’s family has ruled for 42 years since his father seized power in a coup.

US soldiers who will man Patriot anti-missile

batteries to protect Turkey from the spillover of the Syrian conflict began arriving in the NATO ally on Friday, the US military said, but the missiles themselves are due later.

Turkey formally asked NATO for the missiles in November to bolster security along its 900-km (560-mile) border with Syria.

Turkey repeatedly has scrambled fighter jets along the frontier and responded in kind when Syrian shells came down inside its borders, fanning fears that the civil war could spread to destabilize the region.

Fighting has forced 560,000 Syrians to flee to neighbouring countries, according to the United Nations, causing a growing humanitarian problem in the region. Lebanon, a country which has so far tried to distance itself from the conflict for fear it will inflame sectarian tensions, approved a plan to start registering 170,000 Syrian refugees and ask international donors for \$180 million in aid.—Reuters



Candidates queue to enter examination rooms for sitting the National Entrance Examination for Postgraduate (NEEP) at North China University of Technology in Beijing, capital of China, on 5 Jan, 2013. Examinees to take the exam on 5 January are expected to hit a record high of 1.8 million this year.—XINHUA

Man charged with spying for Israel in Yemen

ADEN, 5 Jan—A man in Yemen has been charged with spying for Israel and will soon face trial in the southern port City of Aden, official sources said on Friday.

The man was arrested three weeks ago in the city of Taiz after a period of surveillance, and was named as 24-year-old computer engineer Ibrahim al-Dharahi,

the defence ministry’s official newspaper reported on Friday, citing a judicial source.

He was brought to Aden where, following an investigation by the criminal prosecutor, he was charged with being an agent working for the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad, the source said.

His case will be re-

ferred to Aden’s criminal court in the coming days, the source told the 26 September newspaper.

Dharahi had travelled to several Arab countries as well as to Israel, the report said. “The man carried two ID cards—one Yemeni, one Israeli,” a security official in Aden told Reuters, declining to be named.

Reuters



Rescuers transfer an injured man to a hospital in northwest Pakistan’s Peshawar on 4 Jan, 2013. At least two people were killed and one injured in a bomb blast in Peshawar on Friday night, local media said.

XINHUA

More regions to reform migrant education system

BEIJING, 5 Jan—More Chinese Provinces and municipalities have announced education reforms that would allow children of migrant workers to enter senior high schools and sit college entrance exams locally.

Educational authorities in Ningxia, Shanxi, Hubei, Sichuan, Gansu, Henan, Shaanxi and Jiangsu announced in recent days their respective plans to ensure that children following their migrant parents to cities can enjoy the same rights in education as their urban peers.

The announcements came after 13 other provinc-

es and municipalities, including Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong, published similar plans amid nationwide cries for fairer educational opportunities for children of migrant workers.

China currently has more than 250 million migrant workers living in cities. An estimated 20 million of their children have migrated to the cities, while some 10 million are left behind in their rural hometowns.

China’s household registration system used to confine kids to attending schools in their home provinces. A 2003 regulation amended

this by allowing migrant workers’ children to receive the country’s nine-year compulsory education in cities where their parents work.

However, children of migrant workers continued to face the problem of having to return to their hometowns for further schooling when they were about to enter senior high schools or at times of college entrance exams.

In early 2012, the Ministry of Education asked Chinese cities to formulate plans regarding further education and college entrance exams for migrant workers’ children.—Xinhua

Two New York police officers shot in leg in separate encounters

NEW YORK, 5 Jan—Two New York City police officers were shot in the leg late Thursday in separate incidents, including a shooting aboard a subway train, police said. Two plainclothes officers aboard a subway train headed toward Manhattan from Brooklyn at about 7:30 pm EST (0030 GMT) asked a man walking between train cars for identification, said Police Commissioner Ray Kelly in a statement.

The man appeared to be reaching for his wallet but instead pulled out a 9-mm Taurus handgun and opened fire.

Officer Lukasz Kozicki, 32, was struck once in each of his upper thighs and once in the groin, Kelly said.

His partner, officer Michael Levay, 27, was shot in the lower back but protected by his bulletproof vest. Levay returned fire and killed the gunman, Kelly said.

A passenger in the subway car suffered a graze wound in the leg, he said.

Roughly an hour earlier on Thursday, police officer

Juan Pichardo was working off duty at his family’s car dealership in the Bronx when two men attempted an armed robbery. In a struggle with one of them, Pichardo was struck by a bullet in the right thigh.

The wounded officer held the gunman for arresting officers, who took him into custody and later arrested the other man and another accomplice, Kelly said.

The officers were being treated at Lutheran Medical Centre in Brooklyn and Jacobi Medical Centre in the Bronx.—Reuters



Photo taken on 4 Jan, 2013 shows a “year of snake” stamp, which is to be formally released on 5 Jan, at Handan Post Office in Handan, north China’s Hebei Province. The lunar year 2013 is the “Year of the Snake” in the Chinese zodiac. The stamp of “year of snake” will be released by China Post on Saturday. XINHUA

Polish naval ship to take command of NATO mine counter-measures mission

WARSAW, 5 Jan—The Polish naval ship *Kontradmiral Xawery Czernicki* will take command of NATO’s Standing Mine Countermeasures Group in a mission beginning later this month, the Polish Navy’s Press service said on Friday.

According to the Navy, this mission will include vessels from Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Germany and Poland and will cover the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the Norwegian Sea.

In 2002-2003, the Polish ship took part in the Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom missions in the Persian Gulf.

The Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group is part of NATO’s Response Force, a joint force geared to react to diverse threats.

Xinhua

NATIONAL

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets people of Bago district



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann cordially converses with local people.—MNA

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 6 January, 2013

The year 2013: A time of peace and prosperity

We left behind the year 2012 that witnessed a series of exciting and impressive reform processes producing both the challenges and positive developments. There were unpleasant events in the previous year arising from misunderstanding between the parties concerned who fail to do something on mature consideration. Whatever twists and turns and ups and downs we faced in the last year we hope this New Year will bring greater peace and prosperity to Myanmar in all of its pursuit of genuine democracy.

Although our country has been widely acknowledged as a miracle in the transition from the military rule to the parliamentary democracy among the some nations struggling to reach democratic goal, internecine strife that inflicts casualties on both sides is likely to remain as a serious obstacle to reaching everlasting peace. It became apparent to all stakeholders that it is required to make negotiated political culture healthy. This culture, in fact, once flourished when Panglong agreement was reached during the time of independence struggle.

Now is the time to revitalize this culture for the success of our drive to forge national reconciliation. Only the negotiation based on mutual trust could help us attain our common goal of ensuring peace and prosperity. In building trust through it, all stakeholders are to desist from employing tactics in a manner of tit-for-tat to restore balance or to initially gain advantages before the process.

In shaping the promising future through ongoing reform process, those concerned are to set aside differences and respect the aspiration for peace of the population of 60 million. Flexibility of approach, the only way acceptable to all parties, is an essential prerequisite to the country's quest for peace and prosperity.

The entire people far and wide the nation, on their part, are to clearly know what they need and what they want. The onus is on all of us wherever we live in the Union to show one hundred percent commitment to supporting the peace process for the sake of our country.

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan— Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann, accompanied by Pyithu Hluttaw Committee Chairmen U Soe Tha and U Thein Swe, deputy ministers and officials of the Hluttaw Office, met local people from eight townships in Bago District

at Bago Region City Hall this morning.

The meeting was also attended by Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win, region ministers, region Hluttaw Speaker U Win Tin and Hluttaw representatives, departmental officials, members of social organizations, townselders

and local people.

He said the meeting was aimed at collecting opinions of the people in the district, inviting frank discussions. He called on the region Hluttaw representatives to keep in touch with the people in their constituencies to serve the interests of the people

by reflecting their views in the Hluttaw. He urged the regional authorities to listen to the people and attend to their needs and to report the Hluttaw provided that the case needs specific legislation.

The regional authorities and townselders reported on issues of the district. The deputy ministers and departmental officials made clarifications.

In his concluding remarks, he stressed the need to respect the laws and regulations.

Bago district is formed with Kyaukdaga, Shwegyin, Nyaunglebin, Daik U, Waw, Bago, Kawa and Thanatpin townships.—MNA



A departmental official submits reports on respective sectors.

MNA

Myanmar, Japan focus on financial, monetary sectors

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan — Union Minister for Finance and Revenue U Win Shein met Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Mr Taro Aso and party at his office, here, on 5 January.

They held talks on clearing of foreign debts of Myanmar, Japanese assistance for development of finance and monetary sectors in Myanmar and bilateral cooperation.

MNA

Yatanarpon Teleport elects new chairmen

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan— Managing Director of Myanma Posts and Telecommunications U Aung Maw was elected as Chairman of Yatanarpon Teleport Co., Ltd and Chairman of A-1 Construc-

tion Co., Ltd U Yan Win, as Vice-Chairman, at the BOD meeting of the Company held on 2 January.

BOD Chairman Union Minister for Communications and Information Technology, Vice-Chairman

Kachin power plants still non-operational due to security concerns

MOHNYIN, 5 Jan — Despite completed repair of power grid, power plants in Kachin State including Tarpein and Chipwenge hydropower plants can not resume operation due to security concerns, Mohnyin Township Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Kyaw Soe

Deputy Minister and BOD member Director-General of the Directorate of Telecommunications have decided not to include in the BOD at BOD meeting on 24 November, 2012 as the company is going to transform into a public company soon.—MNA

Lay said in his meeting with Nanma villagers.

The villagers reported to their MP on various issues that range from mobile communications to road construction. He presented 20 barrels of tar contributed by Myitkyina Township Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Thein Zaw and K 1 million by himself — for construction of tarred road in the village.

Galaingchaung small-scale hydropower plant built since 1990s is supplying electricity to Mohnyin, Hopin and Nanma one hour in each two-day routine.

NLM-001

We don't need to worry about strong quakes, Coz we've strong donors now!

If old buildings fall down, we'll build new ones!



Shwe Min Tha

LOCAL NEWS

Athletes gearing up for XXVII SEA Games

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Secretary of Myanmar National Sports Committee Deputy Minister for Sports U Thaung Htaik inspected training of players in Judo, Karatedo, Taekwondo and weightlifting events at Training Centre No. 2 in Lewe Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 31 December morning.

After hearing the reports presented by departmental officials, the deputy minister fulfilled the requirements of the athletes.

At the meeting room of the training centre, the deputy minister met those in-charge and coaches of the sports events and gave necessary instructions.

Myanma Alinn



Natmauk Tun Shein Library opens

NATMAUK, 5 Jan—A ceremony to open Natmauk Tun Shein library was held in Baw-aing Village of Wapan Village-tract in Natmauk Township of Magway Region on 28 December.

Wellwisher National Literary Award winner Natmauk Tun Shein, Head of Township Information and Public Relations Department Daw Ohnma Khin and Village administrator U Kyaw Win formally opened

the library.

The wellwisher explained the purpose of donation.

Then, the wellwisher donated 550 books and 1500 copies of magazines and journals, Head of Township IPRD Daw Ohnma Khin 30 books and rural people K 50,000 to the library.

The building, 20 feet long, 15 feet wide and 12 feet high, was constructed at a cost of K 2.5 million.

Myanma Alinn

Cash donated to education foundation in MraukU

MRAUKU, 5 Jan—With a view to promoting education standard of local students in MraukU Township of Rakhine State, a ceremony to donate cash to the U

Aung Htay Oo Education Foundation was held at the hall of MraukU Basic Education High School No. 1 on 31 December.

In commemoration of the 51st birthday of U Aung Htay Oo, his family donated K5.1 million to Headmistress Daw Ma Khin Win so as to set up U Aung Htay Oo Education Foundation.

Myanma Alinn

Chanayethazan writers meet

MANDALAY, 5 Jan—Chanayethazan Township Writers Association of Mandalay held the annual general meeting and the Sarsodaw Day at the hall of Township Information and Public Relations Department on 35th Street in Mandalay on 30 December.

Writer Maung Than-MA, chairman of the township association, made a speech. Secretary Writer Tin Ma Ma Khaing-Mann Tekkatho read the message sent by Myanmar Writers Association.

Staff Officer Daw Than Than Wai of Mandalay District Information and Public Relations Department and Head of Township IPRD U Bo Bo Han discussed establishment of public book corners.

Bukha-Phone Myint submitted the annual report.

Later, officials presented certificates of

honour to those who donated books to the Township Writers Association.

Myanma Alinn

Samples of foodstuff checked at Aharathukha Market



PYINMANA, 5 Jan—Under the guidance of Nay Pyi Taw Council, Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee

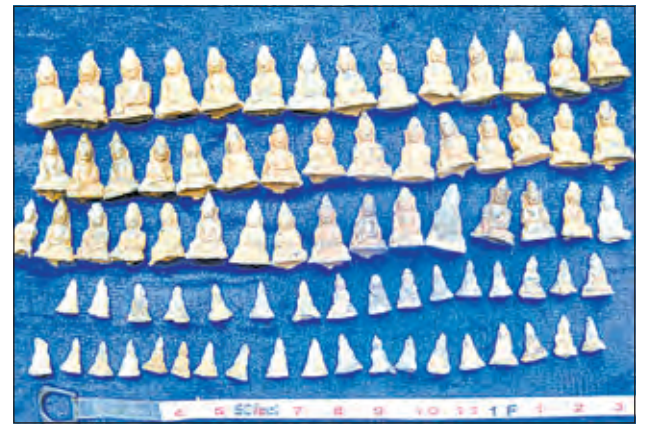
performed talks on health knowledge and checked foodstuffs at Aharathukha Market in Pyinmana on 28

December.

Staff Officer U Maung Maung of the market, U Thein Htaik Soe of Health Department of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee, Assistant Surgeon Dr Kyaw Myo Naing of Pyinmana People's Hospital (200-bed), Deputy Head of Pyinmana Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department Daw Hla Hla Nwe and officials of Health Department and Pyinmana Police Station checked samples of foodstuffs at Aharathukha Market.

Myanma Alinn

MraukU yields more ancient Buddha images



NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—While carrying out sanitations at Myadazaung encircled zedi and Ngwehtihsaung Pagoda in MraukU of Rakhine State, the devotees saw 80 Buddha images each of which is one inch high near Myadazaung zedi on 28 December.

The encircled pagoda is located half a mile north of MraukU Nandawgon. The pagoda is one of the pagodas

built by King Min Saw Mon in 1430 AD. The Buddha images were cast in lead with Bhumi-passa Mudra.

The structure of the pagoda collapsed. To be able to maintain the collapsed structure, the devotees found the Buddha images.

At present, the Buddha images are being kept at MraukU Archaeological Museum.

MNA



CSC ISSUED: Staff led by Head of Chin State Immigration and National Registration Department U Soe Paing Myint issue citizenship scrutiny cards to local people in Haka while implementing Moe Pwint-4 plan recently.—MNA

Taunggyi University welcomes fresher students

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Taunggyi University held the fresher welcome party for students from all majors for 2012-2013 academic year

on 31 December.

The rector and the pro-rector extended greetings to the students.

MNA

Poultry farms fumigated in Kanbalu

KANBALU, 5 Jan—Head of Kanbalu Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department Dr Kyaw Win, Deputy Heads of Department Dr Aung Shwe Tun and Dr Myat Lin and departmental officials supervised Zigon (a) livestock breeding zone in Kanbalu Township on 22

and 23 December.

They inspected death of poultry in the farms

They fumigated the poultry farms so as to prevent outbreak of avian influenza disease and disseminated knowledge of raising bio-security to poultry raisers.

Myanma Alinn

Water tanks in regular functions after cleaning in Myinmu

MYINMU, 5 Jan—The water tanks of Myinmu Township Development Affairs Committee in Minye Kyawswa Ward were damaged in the past and in consequence, water flowed into Ayeyawady River via the sewerage water tank.

A person who inspected the tank said that mud and sand in addition to sediments of the water are seven feet deep in the 125,500-gallon-capacity water tank.

Due to concerted efforts of the workers under the supervision of Township Development Affairs

Committee, the two water tanks have been cleaned.

The mud and sand were

removed from the tanks from 23 to 26 December. As of 27 December, the tanks supply

water to the local people regularly, said plumber U Zaw Myint.—Myanma Alinn



Take Fire Preventive Measures



Women Members of the Democratic Caucus pose for a group photo on Capitol Hill in Washington, the United States, on 3 Jan, 2012 to highlight the historic diversity of the House Democratic Caucus in the 113th Congress and celebrate the increased number of women joining the Democratic Caucus.
XINHUA

Iran says talks with big powers to be held in January

NEW DELHI, 5 Jan—Iran has agreed to hold talks with six major powers about its atomic program in January but the date and venue has yet to be decided, the country's top nuclear negotiator said on Friday.

The six powers want to rein in Iran's uranium enrichment program to ensure it is geared only for civilian energy, through a mix of diplomacy and sanctions. Iran denies Western assertions it is seeking nuclear weap-

ons capability. "We have accepted that these talks should be held in January, but until now, the details have not been finalized," Jalili said through a translator during a trip to India.

The six powers—the United States, Russia, France, Britain, Germany and China—have failed to achieve a breakthrough in three rounds of talks since April. But neither side has been willing to break off totally, partly because of

concern this could lead to war if Israel attacked its arch-foe.

The powers last met Iran for talks in Moscow. That meeting was followed by low-level technical talks in Istanbul. Jalili is the second member of Iran's nuclear team to visit India in the past month. He said he welcomed the two countries' strong ties but said India had no particular role in getting nuclear talks restarted.—Reuters



Iran's Supreme National Security Council Secretary Saeed Jalili answers questions during a joint news conference with Iraq's National Security Adviser Faleh Al-Fayad (not pictured) in Baghdad, on 8 gust, 2012.
REUTERS

Four French hostages in Niger alive but in poor conditions

PARIS, 5 Jan—Four French hostages kidnapped two years ago in northern Niger are still alive but in poor conditions, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said here on Thursday.

Fabius told the families of the four hostages that "their loved ones were alive and in good health, even if they are obviously being held in poor conditions," according to a statement released by the foreign ministry following his meeting with the family members.

The four French nationals were abducted by Al-Qaeda militants in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) more than two years ago when they were working for the French nuclear firm Areva and its subcontractor Satom. French expatriates have been the targets of Islamist groups in the Sahel region in response to Paris' military commitment in Afghanistan and its continued support of a planned military operation to oust Islamists insurgents from the northern region of Mali.

Three weeks ago, 30 gunmen kidnapped a French national in northern Nigeria and killed two people after storming a residence where expatriate workers were staying.

French President Francois Hollande firmly condemned the kidnapping, saying Islamist insurgents from AQIM were responsible for incident. "I can not accept that there are continued threats to our citizens. We must be firm while maintaining contacts (to release hostage)... I refuse the trade of hostages," Hollande affirmed.—Xinhua

Violence drags on in Syria, trilateral talks expected

DAMASCUS, 5 Jan—Clashes continued between armed rebels and President Bashar al-Assad's troops near the Syrian capital of Damascus and elsewhere despite international efforts to defuse the 22-month crisis. A car bomb tore through a gas station in Damascus late Thursday, killing at least nine people, including children, and injuring 40 others.

All the killed were civilians standing in queues to fill their buckets and plastic containers with heating diesel at Qasioun gas station near the Hamish military hospital, pro-government al-Ekhbaria TV said.

Blasts have become in-

creasingly common in Syria at a time when the United Nations said more than 60,000 people had died in the Syrian conflict.

Earlier on Thursday, a suicide car bomb went off near an army checkpoint in Syria's northern province of Idlib, causing only material damages.

Clashes between rebel groups and government forces continued unabated in several areas across the country.

The drumbeat of shells reverberated across several districts of Damascus, where insurgents attempted to take control of military bases but fared poorly.

The government troops

unleashed a strong firepower to clear the peripheries of Damascus from armed rebels. The pro-government *al-Watan* daily said Thursday that the suburb of Daraya, a flashpoint, was expected to be declared secure within several hours.

Opposition forces said a day earlier that more than 70 people were killed in an airstrike on the Damascus suburb of Mlaihah.

Gen Abdullah Ayoub, Syrian army chief of staff, stressed on Thursday the "conspiracy against Syria has fallen" and urged the Syrian troops to continue their holy tasks in "crushing armed terrorist groups and their hideouts."—Xinhua

A little boy carries a shop bag for his mother outside a shop in downtown Brussels, capital of Belgium, on 3 Jan, 2013. The big sales season for new year began here on Thursday.
XINHUA



Ex-Austrian Airlines employees plan sue for 50 mln euros in payments

VIENNA, 5 Jan—More than 200 former Austrian Airlines (AUA) pilots and flight attendants are planning to take action against their former employer over severance packages they believe were calculated incorrectly, "Der Standard" reported in its Friday edition.

The operations of AUA were taken over by subsidiary Tyrolean Airways on 1 July, 2012, with 117 pilots and 220 flight attendants, including those now

lodging the complaints, deciding to resign rather than continue under the new management.

AUA spent a total of 60 million euros (79.2 million US dollars) on severance packages, for some individuals up to 700,000 euros. Lawyer for the ex-employees Roland Gerlach said those involved are entitled to more, and plans to launch a class-action lawsuit against the AUA in February to claim at least 50 million euros. Gerlach

said still-active employees also had a case to make for further entitlements, which could bring the total sum to "well over 100 million euros." The AUA denies any fault in the matter, with spokesman Peter Thier telling *Der Standard* the company was "confident we have acted legally correctly," and that the company was "forced" to adopt new measures in its pension payments system to ensure survival of the company.

Xinhua

Arrested Italian marines return to India after Christmas

NEW DELHI, 5 Jan—The two Italian marines who were facing murder charges in India for allegedly killing two Indian fishermen mistaken as pirates have returned to India after celebrating Christmas with their families at home, reported local media on Friday.

Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone were allowed to go home for two weeks by the High Court in Kerala, south India. They

returned to Kochi on Friday morning on a flight from Rome, said *Press Trust of India*. They will soon leave for a court to surrender their passports and go back to police custody.

The marines were arrested on 19 February last year for shooting dead two Indian fishermen from the merchant vessel *Enrica Lexie* off India's southern coast, mistaking the fishermen as pirates.—Xinhua

China stresses support for urban public transport development

BEIJING, 5 Jan—The Chinese government has vowed to introduce more measures to prioritize the development of public transport systems in the country's increasingly congested urban areas.

In downtown areas, there should be a bus stop every 500 meters. The use of public transport should account for about 60 percent of motor vehicle use, according to a statement by the State Council, China's cabinet, released Saturday on the official website of the Chinese government, www.gov.cn. Airport shuttle buses, school buses and shuttle buses for specific institutions can use public transport lanes, and more efforts will be made to improve the taxi booking system, according to the statement.

Authorities will expand the public transport vehicle

fleet and ask bus operators to increase driving speeds.

According to the statement, between 2011 and 2015, public transport vehicles will be exempt from the consumption tax and they will enjoy favorable rates in vehicle and vessel tax and electricity charges. They will also receive subsidies for fuel and diesel use. Roads have become overcrowded in many Chinese cities, especially in mega-cities like Beijing and Shanghai, due to the explosion in private car consumption and poor driving habits.

According to a survey on daily commutes conducted by IBM in 2011, Beijing has the second worst traffic jams in the world, after Mexico City. Shenzhen, a booming economic hub in southern China, ranked third on the list.—Xinhua

REGIONAL

S Korea's president-elect meets with Japanese envoys

SEOUL, 5 Jan—South Korea's President-elect Park Geun-hye on Friday met with a delegation dispatched by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

The envoys, led by former Japanese finance minister Fukushima Nukaga, gave Park a letter in which

Abe voiced hope for progress in bilateral relations, Park's spokeswoman Cho Yoon-sun told reporters.

The Japanese leader, who returned to power in general elections last year, said in the letter the two countries share values of democracy and market

economy, Cho added.

While domestic issues dominated the presidential campaign, the president-elect has said the disputed islets are not subject to negotiations and urged Japan to "squarely face" the issues.

The 63-year-old man, who was taken to a local hospital, was arrested last year for ramming a truck into the Japanese embassy in Seoul.—Xinhua



South Korea's President-elect Park Geun-hye (R) meets with former Japanese finance minister Fukushima Nukaga, who leads a delegation dispatched by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, in Seoul, South Korea, on 4 Jan, 2013. XINHUA

Philippine gov't condemns N Philippine shooting rampage

MANILA, 5 Jan—The Philippine government on Friday condemned the shooting spree which killed at least nine people and injured 11 others in the northern Philippine Province of Cavite.

Deputy presidential spokesman Abigal Valte said in a news briefing that the tragic incident should

spur the Philippine National Police (PNP) to boost its campaign against loose firearms in the country.

"We condemn the shooting incident, especially since the victims included children," Valte said.

She said state investigators are already investigating the possibility that the suspect, who was

identified as Ronald Bae, was under the influence of drugs when he committed the crime.

Bae used a .45-caliber pistol to shoot his neighbors in Tabon 1 village in Kawit town, Cavite.

The suspect was also killed after he engaged responding policemen in a shootout.—Xinhua

1,000 ships stuck in E China sea ice

JINAN, 5 Jan—A cold snap has created a layer of thick sea ice on Laizhou Bay in east China's Shandong Province, leaving about 1,000 vessels stranded in the water. Zheng Dong, chief meteorologist at the Yantai Marine Environment Monitoring Centre under the State Oceanic Administration, said the ice expanded to 291 square km this week and is continuing to grow.

Zheng said the ice this year is the worst the area has experienced in three years. Local aquafarmers said the ice is thicker than in years past, which may lead to heavy losses, as the farmers are unable to penetrate the ice to provide adequate ventilation for sea cucumbers and other aquatic organisms. Coastal police warned that the ice may cause damage to vessels passing through deeper sea areas near the Bohai and Yellow seas.—Xinhua

Cambodia to spend 21 mln USD for July general election

PHNOM PENH, 5 Jan—Cambodia will spend about 21 million US dollars to cover for the proceedings of the general elections on 28 July, a senior official at the National Election Committee (NEC) said on Friday.

"The budget for the forthcoming elections is about 21 million US dollars, up from about 17 million US dollars in the last elections in 2008," Tep

Nytha, NEC's secretary-general, said in a press briefing, saying that the government covers all expenses.

The increase in budget was due to the rise in turnouts, he said, explaining that in the 2008 elections, there were only about 8 million eligible voters, but in the forthcoming elections, there are up to 9.67 million voters.

Cambodia holds a gen-

eral election once in every five years. The last one was conducted in July 2008.

At that time, the Cambodian People's Party of Prime Minister Hun Sen won 90 seats in the National Assembly, followed by the Sam Rainsy Party with 26 seats, the Human Rights Party 3 seats, the Norodom Ranariddh Party 2 seats and the Funcinpec Party 2 seats.

Xinhua

China kicks off election of engineering academicians

BEIJING, 5 Jan—The Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE), one of the country's top think tanks, started its biennial election of academicians on Friday.

According to regulations, the academy will be joined by no more than 60 academicians during the elections, and in most cases nominated candidates should be under the age of 70. There are special circumstances where nominees can be above 70.

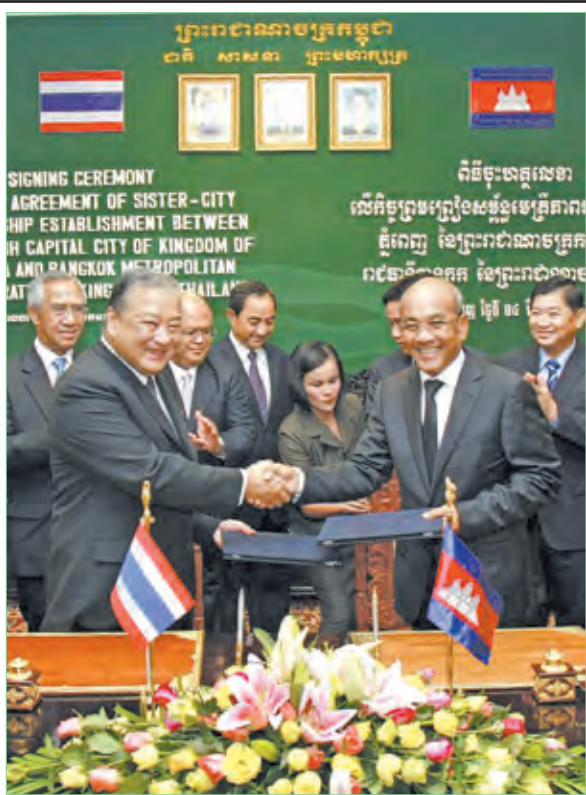
Punishment will be

handed out to those involved in election fraud, including falsifying applications and using influence to gain votes, the CAE said.

The election result will be publicized at the end of 2013.

The Academician of the CAE is the highest academic title in the field of engineering. Currently there are 765 CAE academicians who have the life-long honorary title.

Xinhua



Phnom Penh Governor Kep Chuktema (R, Front) shakes hands with visiting Bangkok Governor Sukhumbhand Paribatra in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 4 Jan, 2013. Cambodia and Thailand entered into an agreement on Friday to establish a "sister cities" relationship between Phnom Penh and Bangkok in a bid to promote broader relations and cooperation. XINHUA

Mongolia names 2013 as environmental education year

ULAN BATOR, 5 Jan—Mongolia designated 2013 as the environmental education year to promote public awareness of environmental protection.

Instead of treating pollution afterwards, it was crucial to enhance people's awareness of environmental protection, Environment Minister Sanjaasuren Oyun told reporters on Friday.

Government departments and social groups

should act together to promote the concept of green growth and drafted regulations for environmental protection. In addition, the authorities should prioritize sustainable development, Oyun said.

Official data show Mongolia is facing a serious shortage of water resources, with about 70 percent of land suffering different degrees of desertification.

Xinhua

Singapore sees faster increase of foreign lawyers than locals

SINGAPORE, 5 Jan—The number of foreign lawyers has been growing faster than that of local lawyers over the past several years, said Lok Vi Ming, president of the Law Society of Singapore, on Friday.

Lok said that Singapore's legal profession is

growing steadily and that the number of lawyers holding practising certificates exceeded 4,000 in 2012. The number of local lawyers grew by 27 percent between 2007 and 2012, while that of foreign lawyers by 42 percent during the same period of time.—Xinhua



Chinese Ambassador to France Kong Quan shows the commemorative stamps for China's upcoming lunar new year, Year of the Snake, at a post office in Paris, capital of France, on 4 Jan, 2013. The French postal department began to sell on Friday the commemorative stamp for China's Year of the Snake which is due to begin on 10 Feb, 2013. XINHUA

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Dated 6 January 2013

Teheran to close gov't offices, educational centres due to air pollution

TEHERAN, 5 Jan—Iran's Air Pollution Committee of Tehran's Governor's Office announced on Thursday that educational centres and governmental institutions in the Iranian capital will be closed on Saturday due to the alarming high air pollution in the city, the official IRNA news agency reported.

Iranian Vice President Mohammad-Javad Mohammadzadeh told IRNA that the air pollution committee decided to announce the shut-down of educational centers and governmental offices due to alarming air pollution.

During the past days, some measures, including imposing restrictions on the traffic flow in the city, were adopted but the resistance of the pollution

led to the decision, Mohammadzadeh was quoted as saying.

He denied the death reports in Teheran because of the air pollution, said the report.

In recent years, Iran's government and parliament have made several efforts to solve air pollution problem in Teheran, including passing laws to urge for safer fuel and to replace old, inefficient cars with new ones.

Also, the Iranian government announced plans of decentralizing policies in the country in a move to slow down the accumulation of people and industries in the capital to a considerable degree. However, the plans were left unimplemented for unannounced reasons.

Xinhua

Donate Blood

A Japanese nurse (L) attends to a patient in the newly opened Basic Health Care Unit on 3 Jan, 2013, in Baganga town on Mindanao island, which was hit by a strong typhoon a month ago. Set up by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the seven-member health care unit led by health workers from the Japanese Red Cross Society aims to fill the gap in the medical services that local practitioners cannot provide.—KYODO NEWS



US targets armed groups operating in DR Congo

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan—The US government on Thursday slapped sanctions on two militant groups accused of "fomenting violence and instability" in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The Department of Treasury blacklisted Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23) and the Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR), alleging that as armed groups operating in eastern DRC, they have committed "serious crimes" involving the targeting of children in the conflict in the African country.

"These crimes, which include recruitment as

well as killing, maiming and sexual violence, violate international law and are the basis for the groups' designation today," the Treasury said in a statement.

M23 was targeted also for receiving arms and material related to military activities that have contributed directly to the ongoing conflict, the agency said.

The M23 rebellion started in April last year, when a militia that had been integrated into the DRC armed forces mutinied. The militant group has since taken control of large parts of eastern DRC, which is rich in mineral resources, and captured

Goma, the capital of the North Kivu Province, in November but withdrew soon to start negotiations with the government.

The FDLR is led by Rwandan Hutus who were involved in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, the Treasury said, noting that top commanders of both groups, M23's Bosco Ntaganda and FDLR's Sylvestre Mudacumura, are wanted by the International Criminal Court.

"Both groups have been actively recruiting and using children in armed conflict," the agency said. "They have been responsible for campaigns of horrific violence against the civilian population in

the DRC, and they have used their resources to undermine peace efforts in the region."

"The United States is committed to working with the international community to end the violence perpetrated against children in the DRC and exposing those responsible for these atrocities," David Cohen, under secretary of Treasury for terrorism and financial intelligence, was quoted as saying.

"We also urge Rwanda to halt its assistance to M23 and prevent any and all forms of support to Congolese armed groups," he added.

Xinhua

Fatal E China fire confirmed as arson

HANGZHOU, 5 Jan—A major fire that killed three firefighters on Tuesday in east China's Zhejiang Province has been confirmed to be an act of arson, local police said on Friday.

A suspect surnamed Li is in custody, the police said, adding that the fire is still under investigation.

The blaze broke out around 3 am in a workshop operated by Hangzhou Yu-

sei Machinery Co, Ltd. in the Xiaoshan District of the provincial capital of Hangzhou.

It took nearly 400 firefighters about nine hours to bring the fire under control.

Suicide car bomber kills 27 Shi'ite pilgrims in Iraq

HILLA, 5 Jan—A suicide bomber driving a car killed at least 27 Shi'ite Muslims at a bus station in the Iraqi town of Mussayab on Thursday, police and medics said, as they were gathering to return home from a religious rite.

The attack, which also wounded at least 60, underlines sectarian tensions that threaten to further destabilize the country a year after US troops left.

Police said the bomber drove into a busy bus station where pilgrims were catching buses back to Baghdad and the northern provinces after the Arbain rite in the holy city of Kerbala, where thousands make an annual pilgrimage.

Mussayab is 60 km (40 miles) south of the capital Baghdad. "I was getting a sandwich when a very strong explosion rocked the place

and the blast threw me away. When I regained my senses and stood up, I saw dozens of bodies," said Ali Sabbar, a pilgrim who witnessed the explosion.

"Many cars were set on fire. I just left the place and didn't even participate in the evacuation of the victims."

Arbain has been a frequent target for militants since the US-led invasion that toppled Sunni dictator Saddam Hussein, who banned Shi'ite festivals.

A roadside bomb targeting a minibus transporting Shi'ite pilgrims back from Kerbala also wounded 8 people in New Baghdad.

The latest violence followed nearly two weeks of protests against Shi'ite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki by thousands of people from the minority Sunni community in the western province of

Anbar, which shares a border with Syria.

The protesters accuse Maliki of being under the sway of non-Arab Shi'ite neighbor Iran and of marginalizing Sunnis, who dominated Iraq until the 2003 US-led invasion.

They want Maliki to abolish anti-terrorism laws they say are used to persecute them.

The conflict in neighbouring Syria, where a Sunni majority is fighting to topple government backed by Shi'ite Iran, is also whipping up sectarian sentiment in Iraq and the wider region.

Although violence is far lower than during the sectarian slaughter of 2006-2007, a total of 4,471 civilians died last year in what one rights group described as a "low-level war" with insurgents.

Reuters

Poland's PM explained resignation of ABW chief

WARSAW, 5 Jan—Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk on Thursday explained Internal Security Agency (ABW) chief Krzysztof Bondaryk's resignation, saying that he had a different vision of its work.

Last year, Tusk revealed plans to deprive ABW of most of its investigative powers and

transform it into a terrorism-combating and data-processing unit. However, Bondaryk, who resigned on Wednesday, disagreed with the plans and wanted ABW to remain in its present form.

Tusk told the Press conference that Bondaryk's

notice will come in force on 15 January, adding that project with the planned changes in ABW should be ready at the turn of March and April.

Bondaryk, 54, took over the ABW chair in January 2008.

Xinhua



An Eurasian Eagle Owl stands during the annual stocktake at London Zoo in London, Britain, on 3 Jan, 2013. More than 17,500 animals are counted in the annual stocktake at the zoo.
XINHUA

Snowcat accident kills six Russians, injures two in northern Italy

ROME, 5 Jan—Six people were killed and two others seriously injured as a snowcat lost control and its passengers went over a 100-metre cliff on Friday night in Italy's northern Trentino region, local media reports said.

According to Sky television, all victims were from Russia traveling from a dew of Cermis, a mountain in eastern Trentino, aboard a rented snowcat.

But suddenly the snow-

cat lost control and went off the road. All passengers were thrown in a cliff, police officer Stefano Sandri was quoted as saying by Sky television.

He said that five teams were working on the spot, but the bumpy road and the snow made the rescue operations difficult. The two injured, reportedly in serious condition, were rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT



A poster of movie "Zero Dark Thirty"
XINHUA

Al Pacino inhabits Phil Spector in Mamet's HBO film

PASADENA, 5 Jan—Playwright David Mamet had little interest in legendary music producer and convicted murderer Phil Spector, dismissing him as a "freak"—until he watched a documentary that shed light on a complicated personality. Now, the "Glengarry Glen Ross" writer is bringing to HBO a movie inspired by Spector's life that imagines his relationship with the attorney who defended him against charges of killing actress Lana Clarkson in Los Angeles in 2003.

The film, "Phil Spector," written and directed by Mamet, stars Al Pacino as the music producer and Helen Mirren as his attorney. When Mamet's agent urged him to watch a documentary about Spector, the playwright said he felt he already knew enough about the eccentric producer who sported wild hair and was found guilty of murder.

"You start out saying this guy's a freak," Mamet told reporters at a Television Critics Association meeting on Friday.

Learning more about Spector, "you start to think, how could I be so prejudiced? The guy sounds brilliant." "Then you say, maybe he's not guilty," Mamet said. In the TV film that debuts March 24 on Time Warner Inc.-owned HBO, Mirren plays Linda Kenney Baden, who defended Spector in his first murder trial that ended in a mistrial with jurors deadlocked. He was convicted in a second trial in 2009 and is serving a sentence of 19 years to life. Spector, now 73, revolutionized pop music in the 1960s with his layered "Wall of Sound" production techniques, working with the Beatles, the Ronettes, Cher and Leonard Cohen at the height of his fame.—Reuters



National Medal of Arts recipient, actor Al Pacino acknowledges the applause after receiving the medal from US President Barack Obama at a ceremony in the East Room of the White House in Washington, on 13 Feb, 2012.—REUTERS

"Zero Dark Thirty," "Lincoln" finish among nominees for WGA awards

LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan—Writers of films including "Zero Dark Thirty," "Lincoln" and "Argo" were named as nominees in contention for top honours to be bestowed by the Writers Guild of America (WGA), the WGA, West and WGA, East announced on Friday. "Zero Dark Thirty" will vie against "Flight," "Looper," "The Master" and "Moorise Kingdom" for the best original screenplay, one of the three awards the group will hand out at the 65th annual event to be simultaneously broadcast in Los Angeles and New York on 17 February.

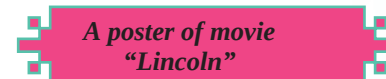
"Lincoln" was nominated for the best screenplay along with "Argo," "Life of

Pi," "The Perks of Being a Wallflower" and "Silver Linings Playbook." A trio of the Academy Awards hopefuls, "The Invisible War," "Searching for Sugar Man" and "Mea Maxima Culpa: Silence in the House of God," will compete with "The Central Park Five," "We Are Legion: The Story of the Hacktivists" and "West of Memphis" in the best documentary screenplay category.

A number of the Academy Awards frontrunners including "Les Misérables," "Beasts of the Southern Wild," "Django Unchained" and "Amour" have failed to make the cut as they are deemed ineligible under the stringent WGA

rules. Only screenplays written by WGA members or those which fall under the jurisdiction of the guild can qualify. The WGA awards have been regarded as one of the major honors which closely correlate with the Oscar winners. Among the past 20 WGA winners, 15 went on to nab the Oscars.

Xinhua



A poster of movie "Lincoln"

LA sisters Haim lead hopes of pop revival in 2013

They include MTV's "Brand New for 2013" survey, the band topped BBC's "Sound of 2013" poll on Friday decided by over 200 experts and also appeared on the cover of music magazine NME's new music edition out this week. Matt Wilkinson, New Bands Editor at NME, was upbeat about indie music in 2013 because up-and-coming acts like Haim had the attitude to succeed unlike more "reluctant" stars of the past.

"The difference (from recent times) is that they want to be pop stars, want to be on the front of NME, want to create their own

scene and want to be No 1," he told Reuters. "It's been quite a long time since bands really wanted to do that."

Haim is made up of Este, Alana and Danielle, all in their early- to mid-20s—as energetic as they are photogenic and signed to the Polydor label in Britain. Dorian Lynskey of the Guardian praised their "fantastic, inventive songs", and said they were part of a revival from "the current sickly condition of chart pop" dominated by familiar faces like Rihanna and producers David Guetta and Calvin Harris.—Reuters



Fans react as Canadian singer Justin Bieber performs during his concert at the Hallenstadion in Zurich, on 8 April, 2011—REUTERS

LONDON, 5 Jan—Three sisters from Los Angeles producing fun and infectious folk-pop could be the tonic that chart music needs to lift it from what some experts are calling a creative slump. As music chan-

nels, journalists and record labels step up their search for the "next big thing" in 2013, the Fleetwood Mac-inspired Haim sisters have appeared in a growing number of lists produced at the start of each year.

Scarlett Johansson looks for creative streak in partner

LONDON, 5 Jan—Scarlett Johansson always looks for "creative" partners.

The Hitchcock actress was married to fellow actor Ryan Reynolds from 2008 to 2011 and has since been linked to Sean Penn, advertising executive Nate Naylor and journalist Romain Dauriac, and says the most important thing for her is that her partner has a creative streak.

She said: "It's nice that [fellow actors] can relate and it's nice you have a shorthand when you're talking about work, but that can also be monotonous. For me, most importantly, I look for a partner

who is creative. I like people who have a colorful way of looking at things, that are inspiring and like art, music and film."

Scarlett, 28, also says the best friends she has are the ones she has known from when she wasn't famous, when she was growing up a working class girl.

She added in an interview with the February edition of Britain's ELLE magazine: "I have friends I've made as I've got older, but the majority of my closest friends I've known since I was a kid."

And a lot of them are still dependent [on welfare]. I also think living

in New York keeps you pretty grounded. I'm not particularly fancy."

PTI



Scarlett says the best friends she has are the ones she has known from when she wasn't famous.
PTI

Azarenka quits Brisbane for Grand Slam

MOSCOW, 5 Jan— Belarusian tennis player Victoria Azarenka withdrew Friday from the Brisbane International tennis tournament, in a bid to recover from a toe injury to defend her Australian Open title when the year's first Grand Slam starts in 10 days.

"I have to make sure I will be fully recovered and ready for the Australian Open. It's a compromise I have to make," Azarenka told a Press conference in Brisbane. "It's a right toe infection. It's been there for about 10 days and getting worse a little bit ... I have to take something out of my toe," the RIA Novosti

quoted she as reporting.

Azarenka's withdrawal sent her semifinal opponent Serena Williams of the United States right into the final, where the latter would face off with Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova on Saturday.

Williams expressed sympathy for Azarenka and was sorry for missing the chance to play with each other.

"I had that toe problem just a couple of weeks ago and it's painful ... I hope she gets better fast," the world No 3 said on the WTA website. Depending on results in Brisbane and at the Australian Open,



Belarusian tennis player Victoria Azarenka

Williams can become the oldest-ever world No 1 if she overtakes Azarenka in the rankings. — Xinhua

Robinho would need to take paycut at Santos

SAO PAULO, 5 Jan — Santos coach Muricy Ramalho has warned Brazil striker Robinho he will need to take a substantial

pay cut if he is to rejoin the Brazilian club. Ramalho is confident the player is willing to return to the side where he made his name,

but revealed the two parties still have differing financial expectations.

"For the numbers mentioned it won't work. That's why players of Robinho's stature don't come to Santos. Many players return to Brazil looking to get back into the national side. But the club can't sign a player when the wage demands are impossibly high," Ramalho said.

Robinho is reportedly demanding over one million reais a month after tax, equal to the sum he receives at Italian club AC Milan. Santos are capable of paying approximately half the amount requested.

Xinhua

Brazil striker Robinho



More woe for Sydney organizers after Tsonga withdrawal

SYDNEY, 5 Jan — Fresh off losing their top two men's seeds, Sydney International organizers were left with a nightmare scenario on Saturday when their top two local hopes were drawn against each other in the first round. Just hours after top seed Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and his French compatriot Richard Gasquet withdrew from the Australian Open warmup tournament, Australian number one Marinko Matosevic was drawn against compatriot Bernard Tomic in the first round.

The 27-year-old Matosevic, who was the ATP Tour's most improved player last year after jumping from 201 to 49th in the world, has moved ahead of Tomic, who faded in 2012 after a meteoric rise in 2011 and finished the year ranked 52nd. The 20-year-old Tomic, who was also

dumped from the Australian Davis Cup team because of doubts about his commitment, has actually been in good form at the Hopman Cup in Perth, winning all three singles matches, including a 6-4 6-4 victory over world number one Novak Djokovic.

World number eight Tsonga was earlier forced to withdraw from the Sydney tournament with a hamstring injury that he sustained at the Hopman Cup and he will be facing a battle to be fit for the January 14-27 Australian Open in Melbourne. "Unfortunately Jo-Wilfried Tsonga sustained an injury in Perth and has been forced to pull out ... with a left hamstring

injury," Sydney tournament director Craig Watson said in a statement. Gasquet, who would have been top seed after Tsonga's withdrawal, pulled out for "personal reasons", Watson said.

The 10th-ranked Gasquet reached the final of the Qatar Open against a resurgent Nikolay Davydenko and possibly felt he had enough match practice under his belt before the year's first grand slam begins at Melbourne Park on 14 January. American John Isner, who was forced to withdraw from the Hopman Cup with a nagging knee injury, was installed as the top seed at Sydney and has a bye into the second round.—Reuters

Jo-Wilfried Tsonga



NFL: Pioli out as Chiefs' general manager

NEW YORK, 5 Jan — Kansas City Chiefs' general manager Scott Pioli has parted company with the National Football League team paving the way for the club's expected hiring of former Philadelphia Eagles coach Andy Reid.

"We made the difficult decision to part ways with Scott Pioli and allow him to pursue other opportunities," Chiefs Chairman and CEO Clark Hunt said in a statement on Friday.

Pioli, 47, was Kansas City's general manager for four years and helped assemble a team that won the 2010 AFC West title

before slipping to a 2-14 mark this season that will give the Chiefs the number one overall pick in the 2013 NFL Draft.

"The bottom line is that I did not accomplish all of what I set out to do," Pioli said in a statement. "I truly apologize for not getting the job done."

Kansas City went a cumulative 23-41 under Pioli's tenure. Reid, dismissed after 14 seasons as Philadelphia head coach on Monday following a 4-12 record, is widely reported to be poised to replace Kansas City's fired head coach Romeo Crennel.—Reuters



Kansas City Chiefs head coach Romeo Crennel (L) is hugged by general manager Scott Pioli before the start of their NFL game against the Carolina Panthers on 2 Dec, 2012. — REUTERS

Alpine skiing-Shiffrin crowned in Zagreb slalom

ZAGREB, 5 Jan — Mikaela Shiffrin was crowned a snow queen at 17 when she won the classic floodlit slalom in Zagreb on Friday to show she is not just a one-hit wonder. The American teenager, who celebrated her maiden World Cup victory last month in Are, dominated both runs to win in two minutes and 1.73. Sweden's Frida Hansdotter was second, like in Are, a considerable 1.19 seconds adrift while Canada's Erin Mielzynski, her country's own slalom prodigy, finished third some 1.76 off the pace.

Totally dumbfounded when winning her first laurels in Sweden three weeks ago, Shiffrin again said she was unable to take in what was happening. "After Are, I thought I'd be able to handle

it the next time, but I'm not," she told reporters. "I chose the same tactics of shutting down my brain and letting the skis go." Her exceptional technique paired with a relaxed approach worked wonders again, allowing her to claim back the red bib as the discipline's World Cup leader. "To be honest I didn't know what it was when I took (the bib) for the first time in Are. Now I'm just going to make sure I keep it clean," she said.

Overall World Cup leader Tina Maze, who had finished on the podium in the last nine technical events she entered, failed to complete the course for the first time this season when she straddled a gate halfway down the second run.

Reuters



Bernadette Schild of Austria clears a gate during the first run of the Alpine Skiing World Cup women's slalom ski race in Zagreb on 4 Jan, 2013. REUTERS

GENERAL



Ward Administrator U Tun Win and staff, members of Maternal and Child Welfare Association and locals made sanitation task on roads and street in Bawga Ward of Kyimyindine Township on 30 December. MYANMA ALINN

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL
(6-1-13 09:30 am ~ 7-1-13 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * The 13th Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners' Conference
- * Explore the Relaxation through cruising
- * Huawei's Globalized Process
- * Journey to Unimaginable Sports (Episode-1)
- * All Lives Under The Sky: "Catch of Fish By Cooperation of Fisherman and Dolphin"
- * 15th AGM of U Hla Tun Hospice (Cancer) Foundation
- * Myanmar Movies Impact "Heart Hit (Part-2)"
- * Orchid Survey in Hponkanrazi
- * Process of Planet correlated with Horoscope for 12 Sign Ascendants
- * Shall We Beautify Fruits?
- * "Place of Interest" A beautiful city in Myanmar
- * Meet Peculiar Salamander
- * Myanmar Movies "That's how your love change Meo"

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| <p>7:00 am
1. Paritta By Venerable MinGun Sayadaw</p> <p>7:10 am
2. Dhamma Puja Song</p> <p>7:25 am
3. To Be Healthy Exercise</p> <p>7:30 am
4. Morning News</p> <p>7:40 am
5. Nice & Sweet Song</p> <p>7:50 am
6. Health Programme</p> <p>8:00 am
7. (38) Phyar Mingalars</p> <p>8:25 am
8. "Road to 27th SEA GAMES"</p> <p>11:20 pm
9. Round Up Of The Week's TV Local News</p> <p>11:30 pm
10. TV Drama Series</p> <p>12:30 pm
11. Myanmar Movies</p> <p>4:00 pm
12. Martial Song</p> <p>4:15 pm
13. Instrumental Music</p> | <p>4:30 pm
14. Song of National Races</p> <p>4:35 pm
15. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Third Year (Economics)</p> <p>4:50 pm
16. Songs For Upholding National Spirit</p> <p>5:00 pm
17. Documentary</p> <p>5:15 pm
18. Sing & Enjoy</p> <p>6:00 pm
19. Evening News</p> <p>6:20 pm
20. Cartoon Series</p> <p>6:40 pm
21. Tamyethnar Takwetsar</p> <p>7:00 pm
22. TV Drama Series</p> <p>8:00 pm
23. News</p> <p>9:00 pm
24. Myanmar movies</p> <p>10:00 pm
25. New Melody</p> |
|---|---|

NLM

Word!

Learning English

A new year has rung in, but old issues have yet to be fixed.

"Neither Democrats nor Republicans got everything they want."

Barack Obama

US President

US Senate has approved so-called "fiscal cliff" deal to raise some taxes on the wealthy and levy permanent low taxes on the middle class to address budget deficit. The president called on the senate to "pass it without delay" before the deal was approved.

"Our last chance, our only chance, is dialogue with the rebels."

Jerome Lega

Bus driver of Bengui

Rebel forces were sitting at the gate of Bangui while the people of the riverside capital of resource-rich Central Africa Republic fled the city in overloaded cars and boats. The rebels responsible for killing civilians in four African countries are challenging the former French colony's President Francois Bozize who has been about 10 years in power.

"My prayer is that we have peaceful elections and elect credible leaders who will steer this country to greater heights."

George Abuya

Kenyan citizen

The citizen of the east African nation which will see a general election in about two months wished for the successful election. The election will see the incumbent President Mwai Kibaki outgoing and retiring.

NLM

Stevens looks to emerge a better rider than before



Jockey Gary Stevens arrives at the Hollywood premiere of the HBO series "Luck" in Los Angeles, California on 25 Jan, 2012. — REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan—Happy, healthy and chock-full of confidence, Hall of Fame jockey Gary Stevens says he is returning to the track after a seven-year hiatus for one reason: because he can. In fact, Stevens believes he can return to the saddle as a better rider than the one who won the Kentucky Derby three times and over \$221 million in purses. "My body and my brain are telling me I can come back," Stevens told Reuters on Friday in a telephone interview from Santa Anita Park outside Los Angeles.

"It's not something that

just happened overnight. "I've spent the better part of the last three months preparing for what's about to happen. I'm basically trusting my instincts." Stevens announced on Thursday his intention to ride again and that his first time in the starting gate will be aboard Jebrica on Sunday in a \$50,000 claiming race at Santa Anita. The affable jockey had hung up the tack in late 2005 with a battered body and a right knee that caused so much pain it was hard to walk. His road back was almost by accident.

"It started out I just wanted to get on a couple horses in the morning for exercise and fun — for my own well-being," he said. "The way I felt I was thinking, 'Man, I wish I felt like this the last six or seven years I was riding.' "My body just continued to improve." A three-time winner of the Belmont Stakes and a two-time Preakness champion, Stevens captured 4,888

rides during his illustrious career, which began in 1979. "If I get any inkling I'm not a shadow of what I once was and that I'm not an asset to the horses I'm riding, the boots will get hung up as quick as they're going back on," he said.

Reuters



PGA golfer Webb Simpson gestures as he answers a question about using a long putter during a media conference at the World Challenge golf tournament in Thousand Oaks, California, on 27 Nov, 2012. —REUTERS

Strong winds wipe out first day at Kapalua



Shiffrin Mikaela (C) of the United States celebrates during the victory ceremony for the 2013 woman's Alpine Skiing World Cup slalom race in Zagreb, Croatia, on 4 Jan, 2013. Shiffrin Mikaela claimed the title of the event. —XINHUA

Tournament of Champions in Hawaii was abandoned because of strong winds. Following an earlier suspension in play due to adverse conditions at the Kapalua Resort, the players were summoned off the course as winds gusted up to 45 mph and balls oscillated on the exposed green at the par-three second.

With no realistic hope of a resumption on Friday, PGA Tour rules official Slugger White announced the interrupted first round would be washed out and that the players would try to complete 36 holes on Saturday with a two-tee start. "We started in almost

unplayable conditions and it just got worse," White told reporters. "We tried to play and Mother Nature just wouldn't help us. We have decided to scrub this round, wash it out completely. No shots count.

"We are going to start the first round tomorrow morning. I can honestly say the forecast isn't real good but maybe we'll get lucky. That's the hope." US Open champion Webb Simpson had been the early leader in Friday's aborted round, moving to three under par after just seven holes in the elite, winners-only event on the Hawaiian island of Maui. Swede Jonas Blixt

was at one under after five holes, a stroke in front of compatriot Carl Pettersson (after one hole) and Americans Kyle Stanley (four), Ryan Moore (three), Johnson Wagner (two) and Scott Piercy (one).

"It stinks for me," American Simpson said of the abandoned round. "I got off to a great start but that's the way it goes. I'm sure they made the decision that's best for all the guys. "But the good news is, I had a good start and I'm playing well. I was able to make a couple of putts and that's what you have to do on a day like today."

Reuters

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Thein Sein

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—The following are messages of felicitations from foreign Heads of State/Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein, on the occasion of the 65th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Mr Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
His Excellency,

With great pleasure I wish to extend my congratulations to Your Excellency, the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the arrival of the New Year of 2013.

I hope all human beings, currently facing all kinds of social, ethical and cultural crises, will enjoy and taste real peace and welfare by returning to ethical values leading to establishment of sustain-able peace and security throughout the world.

I avail myself of this opportunity to wish a prosperous year and good health and success for Your Excellency as well as further well-being and dignity for the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma
President of the Republic of South Africa
Excellency,

On the auspicious occasion of the celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Independence Day Banquet of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 04 January 2013 the Government and people of the Republic of South Africa join me in conveying to His Excellency, the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, our warmest greetings and sincere congratulations.

May I take this opportunity to express the wish for His Excellency's good health, and also reaffirm our desire to further enhance and consolidate the excellent bond of friendship that exists between our countries.

Please accept Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Peace talks between President and KNU leaders bear fruits: Union Minister U Aung Min



NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Vice-Chairman of Union-level Peace-making Group Union Minister U Aung Min called for mutual cooperation between the government and KNU towards eternal peace as Union-level Peace-making Group and KNU held press conference at

Tawwin Kumudra Hotel here this evening.

Chairman of KNU General Mutu Sae Phoe stressed the need for continued negotiations, affirming his commitment to restore peace. He cited the skirmishes in Kachin State as a small barrier though it is not

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham calls for patience, tolerance and diligence of both parties to ensure long-lasting peace



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham delivers an address at the dinner hosted to KNU Chairman General Mutu Sae Phoe and party.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Chairman of Union Peace-making Work Committee Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham hosted a dinner to KNU Chairman General Mutu Sae Phoe and party at Tawwin Kumudra Hotel here this evening.

Present on the occasion were Union ministers, Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win from

Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), deputy ministers, deputy attorney-general and invited guests.

The Vice-President in his address said the government has been engaging in peace process since 2011 with some success thanks to the principle of setting aside the differences and working together in common

interests. Peace process requires the actions of both sides as well as vertical contributions. Only with this, over-60-year-old conflicts could be resolved. Peace process is not an easy task but comprises such complicated elements as political, economic, social and military affairs. Therefore, personnel concerned must to cooperate with each other

with tolerance and diligence to achieve results. The Vice-President wished success of efforts for bringing about long-lasting peace in 2013.

The KNU Chairman spoke words of thanks. The Vice-President and attendees had a dinner together. The Vice-President presented gifts to the KNU Chairman and members after the dinner.—MNA

ASEAN women donate cash to Lewe philanthropic centre

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—The Myanmar ASEAN Women's Friendship Association (MAWFA) and Women of ASEAN in Yangon (WAY) donated K 9.6 million to Maha Parahita Development Centre (MPDC) in Lewe Township here for water supply project today.

Abbot of the centre Sayadaw Bhaddanta Naninda accepted the donation.

Daw Lynn Lynn Tin, wife of Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, and Dr Daw Khin Thiri, wife of Deputy Minister U Zin Yaw are also present at the ceremony.

MNA

UMFCCI hold talks with Chongzhou Mayor and party

YANGON, 5 Jan—Vice-Presidents of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Zaw Min Win and U Tun Aung met a Chinese delegation led by Mr. Huang Ke, Mayor of Chongzhou of Guangxi Province of the People's Republic of China,

at UMFCCI Building, here, on 28 December.

They held talks on cooperation with Myanmar entrepreneurs in the industrial sector of Chongzhou and participation of Myanmar in China-ASEAN Expo to be held in Nanning of Guangxi Province in September in 2013.—MNA

Vice-Chairman of Union-level Peace-making Group Union Minister U Aung Min and KNU General Mutu Sae Phoe meet the press.—MNA

an impediment to ongoing peace talks.

Union Minister U Aung Min described today the negotiation today between the President and the KNU leaders as a fruitful one,

conveying the President's invitation for continued dialogues with KNU leaders to ensure lasting peace.

Next, responsible persons replied to queries raised by journalists.—MNA