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Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Thein Sein

NAY PYI TAW, 6 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 King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
His Excellency,

It gives us great pleasure on the Anniversary of your country's Independence Day, to send to Your Excellency on behalf of the people and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and our name. Congratulations and Best Wishes for Health and Happiness and to the Friendly People of Myanmar most Progress and Prosperity.

Our Best Regards for Your Excellency.

From Mr Joachim Gauck
President of the Federal Republic of Germany
Excellency,

On the occasion of the 65th anniversary of Myanmar's independence permit me to offer you and the people of Myanmar warmest congratulations on behalf of myself as well as my compatriots.

In Germany, too, the political, social and economic reforms that you have initiated are widely recognized and appreciated. In this endeavour we will continue to support you and your country in every way we can. Having intensified our bilateral relations over the past year, we now have a good basis for this, a basis on which we can build also in 2013.

From Md Zillur Rahman
President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Excellency,

On behalf of the people of Bangladesh and on my own behalf, I extend to Your Excellency and through you to the friendly people of Myanmar, our warmest greetings and felicitations on the joyous occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

It is a matter of deep satisfaction that Bangladesh and Myanmar maintain excellent bilateral relations based on common history, culture and shared vision for development. I strongly believe that the existing bond of friendly relations between our two countries will further be strengthened in depth and dimension in the coming years.

I avail of this opportunity to convey my best wishes for your good health, long life and happiness as well as for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

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

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker assists in fulfilling desires of local people in Maubin

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the Union government have committed to fulfilling the needs of the people, giving priority to the tasks that should be carried out first, said Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann at the meeting with local people at Toe Shwewah Hall in Maubin today.

The Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw visited the area along with Chairmen of Hluttaw committees U Htay Oo and U Soe Naing, deputy ministers and officials of the Hluttaw Office to listen to voices of the people as part of efforts for assisting in overcoming obstacles and challenges of the people.

Speaking on the occasion, the Speaker also expressed the role of the representatives, urging the Hluttaw representatives to make field trips to be able to listen to voices of the local people and stressed the need of the representatives for cooperating in implementing the development of agricultural, livestock breeding and other economic sectors of the farmers in a bid to alleviate the poverty in the rural areas.

Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann meeting with departmental personnel and local people at Toe Shwewah Hall in Maubin.—MNA

The meeting was also participated by Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Thein Aung, region ministers, Speaker of Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw U Hsan Hsint, representatives of Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw and local people.

In his concluding remarks, Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann underscored the importance of the rule of law for flourishing the democratic system in the country and urged the local people not to do any acts that would harm others and to practice law and disciplines as the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the Union Government have committed to promoting the fundamental rights of citizens, democracy and human rights in the country.—*MNA*

Mon State marks 65th Anniversary Independence Day

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan — The 65th Anniversary Independence Day was celebrated on 4 January at Mawyawady Park in Mawlamyine of Mon State. State Hluttaw Speaker U Kyin Pe, state ministers, national races representatives and social organizations attended the State flag hoisting ceremony.

State Chief Minister U Ohn Myint read out the message sent by the President on 65th Anniversary Independence Day.

The chief minister and party also attended state-level prize awarding ceremony and presented prizes to winners at essay, poem, computer-paintings contests, sport events and performing arts competitions.

The people from the state participated in various sport events in commemoration of the 65th Anniversary Independence Day.—*MNA*

Second Embraer arrives in Yangon

YANGON, 6 Jan—The second Embraer 190-AF XY-AGP leased by GE Capital Aviation Services (GECAS) to Myanma Airways under the Ministry of Transport arrived at Yangon International Airport this evening, together with US pilots and co-pilots Mr Cornelius Joseph Stanton and Mr Miner III Harlow James.

U Than Tun, Managing Director of Myanma Airways accepted the plane.—*MNA*

Second Embraer 190-AF XY-AGP for Myanma Airways arrives at Yangon International Airport.—MNA

LOCAL NEWS

Baby show marks 65th Anniversary Independence Day in Sittway

SITTWAY, 6 Jan — To mark the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, a Baby Show was held at the town hall in Sittway on 3 January.

It was attended by Chairperson of Rakhine State Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee Daw Nyo Nyo Lwin and members, doctors and nurses of state/township health departments, officials concerned and mothers and their children.

Children under two including 10 twins took part in the baby show, and prize-giving ceremony was held on 4 January.

During the show, Rakhine State Chief Minister U Hla Maung Tin and wife Daw Nu Nu Zan, state ministers and their wives and officials visited there.

Kyemon

Shwedagon Pagoda sees more than 300,000 tourists in 2012

YANGON, 6 Jan— According to the figures that show the number of tourists who visited Shwedagon Pagoda in 2012, there has been an annual increase in arrival of tourists at Shwedagon Pagoda throughout four successive years since 2008.

The number of globetrotters thronging to Shwedagon Pagoda has reached 78323 in 2008, 113529 in 2009, 175054 in 2010, 225381 in 2011 and 345333 in 2012.

U Win Kyaing of the board of trustees of Shwedagon Pagoda said that it is expected that the number of foreign visitors will be the same that of local pilgrims soon. Among tourists, arrival of British, French, and Russian visitors has dramatically increased with the number of 11771, 15386 and 6801 respectively in 2012 compared to the last year when 3201 British, 13478 French and 3735 Russian visitors visited there.

During the last year, more than 300,000 foreign visitors from 57 countries arrived there and the board received 1,415,139 US dollars and 83136 FECs as cash donation.

Kyemon

New umbrella hoisted atop Kyantaingaung Sutaungpyae pagoda in Kyangin

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan — An umbrella-hoisting ceremony of Kyantaingaung Su-taungpyae pagoda was held at the pagoda in Zeepinkwin village of Kyangin Township of Ayeyawady Region on 2 January, attended by Region Chief Minister U Thein Aung.

The region chief minister and wellwishers hoisted Seinbudaw (diamond orb), Hnget-myatnadaw (pennant-shape vane) and Shwehtidaw (golden umbrella) atop the pagoda and enshrined Buddha relics in the pagoda.

Next, the Chief Minister attended the opening of Phyo Sithu fuel station where Ayeyawady Region Minister for Electricity and Industry U Saw Mya Thein and responsible persons formally opened the fuel station.

MNA

Overturned Hilux pick-up hurts nine passengers

BAGO, 6 Jan — A passenger Hilux pick-up of No (6) Kyaikto-Yangon bus line skidded and overturned near a bridge on Yangon-Mandalay Highway in Zainganai (North) ward in Bago yesterday.

The Hilux pick-up driven by Babu from downtown Bago to Yangon skidded and overturned at a place between mile post Nos (49/7) and (49/8) on Yangon-Mandalay Highway, leaving nine passengers wounded. The injured were taken to Bago People's Hospital where they are being given medical treatment as inpatients and outpatients.

Kyemon

Car crash kills driver in Taungdwingyi

TAUNGDWINGYI, 6 Jan — An accident happened to a Nissan truck driven by Thein Htaik (30 years) in Shwe Kyar Inn ward of Taungdwingyi Township, Magway Region on 3 January. The road accident occurred while the truck went into a skid and crashed into the lamp-post after its break failed. The accident caused a loss of life of the driver.

Taungdwingyi Myoma Police Station filed a lawsuit against the case.

Kyemon

Scouts formed nationwide to boost morale and morality of schoolchildren

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan — According to Chairman of the Supervisory Committee for the Scouts U Tin Nyo, the scouts were formed nationwide and training are being given to the members of the scouts with the aim of nurturing talent scouts and improving their morale and morality and physical, mental and spiritual well-being. "Scout course covers activities that boy and girl scouts take part to be able to get knowledge and experience in helping others", Dr Khin Maung Kywe who was very experienced in scouting in Canada said.

U Tin Nyo said that now the scouts were formed with the membership of 50 each grade seven school boys and girls for each region and state in the country. A total of 18000 scouts far and wide of the nation would learn about practical skills and do a lot of activities during the course and it is planned to increase members of the Scouts.

Training for trainer courses had already been conducted for 90 teachers from regions and states and nine officials from three basic education departments totaling 99.

Myanmar saw the first-ever girl scouts in 1916. The various levels of boy scouts were formed in 1920 and activities of the scouts terminated in 1963. The first-ever Scout Association was formed in England in 1908. A total of 190 countries around the word have formed the scouts with the membership of 30 million scouts including 10 million girl scouts.

Kyemon

Cotton growers generate more incomes in Tatkon Township

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan — Cotton growers in Tatkon Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area expect to see a high cotton yield about six million viss from their forthcoming harvest of Ngwechi-6 long staple cotton. Although growers fetched K 900 per viss of cotton last year, the purchase price of private-owned cotton purchasing centers for a viss of cotton at the beginning of harvest time is only K 850.

Thanks to a coordinated approach to the price by Nay Pyi Taw Council in order to generate more incomes of cotton growers, mobile cotton purchasing centers of the Ministry of Industry and Tatmadaw textile factories were being kept open to buy cottons at reasonable prices. As a result, the market price of cotton has reached K 1100 per viss, thereby generating more incomes of cotton growers.

Kyemon

Mongnawng BEHS observes Independence Day

MONGNAWNG, 6 Jan — To mark the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, sports activities were held at the playground of Mongnaung sub-township Basic Education High School on 4 January.

Schoolchildren in the sub-township participated in the outdoor games and the school head presented prizes to winners of respective sports events.

Kyemon

Venezuela lawmakers elect Chavez ally as Assembly chief

CARACAS, 6 Jan— Venezuelan lawmakers re-elected a staunch ally of Hugo Chavez to head the National Assembly on Saturday, putting him in line to be caretaker president if the socialist leader does not recover from cancer surgery.

By choosing the incumbent, Diosdado Cabello, the "Chavista"-dominated legislature cemented the combative ex-soldier's position as the third most powerful figure in the government, after Chavez and Vice President Nicolas Maduro.

"As a patriot ... I swear to be supremely loyal in everything I do, to defend the fatherland, its institutions, and this beautiful revolution led by our Comandante Hugo Chavez," Cabello said as he took the oath, his hand on the constitution.

He had earlier warned opposition politicians against attempting to use the National Assembly to "conspire" against the people, saying they would be "destroyed" if they tried.

Thousands of the president's red-clad supporters gathered outside parliament hours before the vote, many chanting: "We are all Chavez! Our comandante will be well! He will return!"

If Chavez had to step down, or died, Cabello would take over the running of the country as Assembly president and a new election would be organized within 30 days. Chavez's heir apparent, Maduro, would be the ruling Socialist Party candidate.

Chavez, who was diagnosed with an undisclosed form of cancer in his pelvic area in mid-2011, has not been seen in public nor heard from in more than three weeks.

Officials say the 58-year-old is in delicate condition and has suffered multiple complications since the 11 December surgery, including unexpected bleeding and severe respiratory problems.

Late on Friday, Maduro gave the clearest indication yet that the government was preparing to delay Chavez's inauguration for a new six-year term, which is scheduled for Thursday.

*Venezuelan Vice President Nicolas Maduro (L) listens to National Assembly President Diosdado Cabello speak during the assembly inauguration in Caracas on 5 Jan, 2013.—*REUTERS

Brandishing a copy of the constitution after his win in the Assembly, Cabello slammed opposition leaders for writing a letter to foreign embassies in which they accused the government of employing a "twisted reading" of the charter.

"Get this into your heads: Hugo Chavez was elected president and he will continue to be president beyond 10 January. No one should have any doubt ... this is the constitutional route," he said as fellow Socialist Party lawmakers cheered.

Reuters

Lebanese president postpones national dialogue

BEIRUT, 6 Jan— Lebanese President Michel Suleiman postponed on Saturday a national dialogue session originally set to take place at the Baabda Palace next Monday.

According to a statement issued by the presidential palace, Suleiman informed all participants of the postponement without setting a new date.

The decision came following Suleiman's meeting with Prime Minister Najib Miqati and Progressive Socialist Party chief Walid Jumblat on Friday night.

The opposition 14 March camp has announced its boycott to the dialogue, stressing that they would not participate unless Prime Minister Miqati resigns.

The president has been carrying out consultations with political forces to push for national dialogue since the assassination of Chief of Information Department of Lebanon's Internal Security Forces Wissam el-Hassan on 19 October.—*Xinhua*

*Travelers arrive at Narita Airport near Tokyo on 5 Jan, 2013, after spending the year-end and New Year holidays abroad.—*KYODO NEWS

Chinese media groups urged to enter world stage

BEIJING, 6 Jan—China's media and publishing groups have been urged to compete globally by reforming their operations and promoting their products overseas.

At a meeting on Saturday, Jiang Jianguo, Deputy Director of the General Administration of Press and Publication said, "While securing their places in the domestic market, news media and publishing groups should positively participate in global competition by setting up branches and publications overseas through share-buying and other methods."

According to Jiang, the administration will help the country's leading publishing groups enter the global market while supporting key publications from renowned writers and groups in a bid to expand the influence of Chinese culture.

Jiang urged media and publishing companies to attract readership by targeting specific groups with different publications.

Jiang stressed reforming operations, highlighting transformation of publicly-funded organizations, such as state-owned performing arts troupes and publishing houses, into enterprises that assume sole responsibility for their profits or losses.

Xinhua

Connecticut gun show goes on despite Newtown tragedy

STAMFORD, 6 Jan—An antique gun show went ahead as planned on Saturday 40 miles from the site of the 14 December mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, even as other gun shows gave in to pressure to cancel after the tragedy.

The two-day East Coast Fine Arms show at a Stamford hotel, the first in Connecticut since a gunman killed 20 children and six adults at the school, drew several hundred people, some of whom were disappointed that more modern weaponry was not available.

"It's neat, it's different but it's not what I expected," said Sue McCrery of Southington, a town that borders Newtown. "I mean the bad guys can have them (modern weapons) and I think it's our right to be able to own them too."

Other gun shows canceled, include one this weekend in Danbury, about 12 miles from Newtown, promoter Big Al's Silver Bullet Productions announced on its website. Two shows in New York state—23-24 February in Poughkeepsie and 2-3 March in Suffern—were also canceled, the website site. In nearby Waterbury, Police Superintendent Michael Gugliotto imposed a moratorium on gun shows the day after the Sandy Hook killings, saying a gun used in a future mass shooting could be traced to a purchase made at a gun show in his city.

Westchester Collectors Inc had planned a firearm and knife show for Waterbury on 12 and 13 January. Show organizer Newman Chitenden said canceling the show would not improve security.

Stamford's Republican mayor, Michael Pavia, had asked organizers of the Stamford show to reconsider having the event "in light of the recent tragic events in Newtown."

"As a community, we are sensitive to the emotions and feelings of all of those who have suffered losses and are still grieving. Holding such an event—at this time, and in such close proximity to the Newtown, seems untimely and insensitive," Pavia said.—*Reuters*

*A man looks at a shotgun during the East Coast Fine Arms Show in Stamford, Connecticut, on 5 Jan, 2013. The show is being held despite the mayor's plea that the event not be held so soon after last month's massacre at an elementary school in nearby Newtown.—*REUTERS

Syria's Assad rejects dialogue with "puppet" opposition

BEIRUT, 6 Jan—Syrian President Bashar al-Assad announced what he described as a peace plan on Sunday, calling for a reconciliation conference with "those who have not betrayed Syria", to be followed by the formation of a new government and an amnesty.

"The first stage of a political solution would require that regional powers stop funding and arming (the opposition), an end to terrorist operations and controlling the borders," he said in a speech in central Damascus, his first public comments in months.

*Syria's President Bashar al-Assad speaks at the Opera House in Damascus in this still image taken from video on 6 Jan, 2013.—*REUTERS

"We will not have dialogue with a puppet made by the West," he said.

Reuters

Drone attack in Pakistan kills at least 10

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, 6 Jan—A US drone strike killed at least 10 people suspected to be Taleban fighters in Pakistan's northern tribal areas on Sunday, intelligence sources said, days after another drone strike killed a top militant leader in the area.

Between 10 and 12 people were killed in the attack on three compounds in Babar Pehari, South Waziristan, six intelligence sources said. More militants were believed to be in the compounds when they were hit, officials said, meaning the death toll may rise.

The compounds were believed to house fighters belonging to the Punjabi Taleban, a group with close links to al-Qaeda, intelligence officials said.

The Pakistan Taleban has established sanctuaries in the mountainous Babar area, 140 km (87 miles) northeast of Wana, the headquarters of South Waziristan, they added.

South Waziristan is controlled by the Pakistani army, which operates under an uneasy truce with militants from the local Wazir tribe.

Reuters

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Clearwire investor seeks to block sale to Sprint

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan—A large Clearwire Corp shareholder on Friday stepped up its campaign against the planned sale of the wireless service provider to its majority owner, Sprint Nextel Corp, saying it plans to ask the US telecoms regulator to block the deal.

Crest Financial's general counsel also said on a call with reporters that it will ask the US Federal Communications Commission to block Sprint's plan to sell 70 percent of itself to Softbank Corp of Japan for $20 billion.

Going to the FCC is a new line of attack on the Sprint deal by Crest, which has also filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of Clearwire investors. Dave Schumacher, Crest's general counsel, said the fund said other minority investors told Crest they did not support the Sprint deal, but he did not provide details.

The investment fund, which owns around 8 percent of Clearwire, has said Sprint's offer of $2.97 share for the roughly 50 percent of Clearwire it does not currently own, "grossly undervalues Clearwire." Sprint's offer is worth about $2.2 billion, but Schumacher said Crest had not done its own valuation and was basing its criticism of the price on estimates by analysts.

In going to the FCC, Crest will argue that the Clearwire deal artificially undervalues the company's spectrum holdings, Schumacher said. That in turn potentially devalues future revenue for the US government when it auctions off spectrum licenses.

"The merger is therefore a bad deal all around for Clearwire shareholders and also for the public at large," said Schumacher.

Sprint spokesman Scott Sloat said the deal with Clearwire was the right one for Sprint, Clearwire and American consumers. He said the class action lawsuit was baseless.

People walk past a Sprint store in New York on 17 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

A spokesman for Clearwire, Mike DiGioia, declined to comment on Crest's intention to go to the FCC. He said a special committee of the board conducted a rigorous evaluation of the company's options before agreeing to the Sprint deal.

Clearwire's chief executive, Erik Prusch, has said the company does not have attractive alternatives as it seeks funding to continue to upgrade its own network and could risk bankruptcy if the Sprint deal does not succeed.

Crest has sued Clearwire in the Court of Chancery in Delaware, where the company is incorporated, to permanently block the deal.

The Delaware court will hear arguments next week on Crest's request to expedite the case and Schumacher said Crest hopes to move to a trial in April.

The deal needs approval by a majority of Clearwire's minority shareholders and Sprint has said it has the support of three large Clearwire investors—Comcast Corp, Intel Corp and Bright House Networks LLC—which hold 13 percent of Clearwire stock. Schumacher said the fund would try to prevent the three from voting because of their affiliation with Sprint.

As Clearwire's fight with its shareholders heats up, Sprint has its own shareholders to contend with.

A Kansas court on Friday declined Sprint's request for an early dismissal of a lawsuit by a union pension fund that holds Sprint stock.

The lawsuit alleged that Sprint's chief executive, Daniel Hesse, rushed merger talks with Softbank and did not get a fair price.

The ruling by Thomas Sutherland, the judge for the District Court of Johnson County, Kansas, will allow the pension fund to begin to demand documents and witnesses as it tries to prove its case.

Sloat, the Sprint spokesman, said the ruling only addressed the technical adequacy of the pension fund's pleading and did not address the merits of the case. He said Sprint continued to believe the case was without merit.—*Reuters*

SAP CEO says China to become as important as US

FRANKFURT, 6 Jan—German business software maker SAP sees potential for one million new customers in China, five times the number it currently has world-wide, German weekly paper Frankfurter *Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* said.

"China will be as important for us as the United States," SAP's co-Chief Executive Jim Hagemann Snabe told the paper, according to an advance extract.

Snabe said SAP wants to open the Chinese market by securing a deal with authorities to allow cloud computing services.

"We want to find a solution with Chinese authorities this year if possible," Snabe told the paper. As part of SAP's growth strategy, it plans to invest around $2 billion in China by 2015.

Reuters

CEO of German software group SAP Jim Hagemann Snabe attends the company's balance sheet news conference in Frankfurt on 25 January, 2012.
REUTERS

Cars, homes smarten up at Vegas tech extravaganza

SAN FRANCISCO/NEWYORK, 6 Jan—At the world's largest technology conference that kicks off on Monday, the most intriguing innovations showcased may be gadgets and technology that turn everyday items into connected, smarter machines.

This year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas promises a new generation of "smart" gadgets, some controlled by voice and gestures, and technology advancements in cars, some of which already let you dictate emails or check real-time gas prices.

Pundits have long predicted that home appliances like refrigerators and stoves will be networked, creating an "Internet of things." With advancements in chips and the ubiquity of smartphones and tablets, it's now happening.

"We've been talking about this convergence of consumer electronics and computers and content for 20 years. It will actually be somewhat of a reality here, in that your phone, your tablet, your PC, your TV, your car, have a capability to all be connected," said Patrick Moorhead, principal analyst at Moor Insights & Strategy.

Despite the absence of tech heavyweights Apple Inc and Microsoft Corp, CES still draws thousands of exhibitors, from giants like Intel Corp and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd to startups hungry for funding.

Wireless chip maker Qualcomm Inc's CEO, Paul Jacobs, opens the festivities with a keynote speech on Monday, taking a spot traditionally reserved for Microsoft, which decided last year to sever ties with the show.

Jacobs said in a recent interview on PBS that he will show how wireless technology will be pushed way beyond smartphones into homes, cars and healthcare.—*Reuters*

World's largest radio telescope in Chile

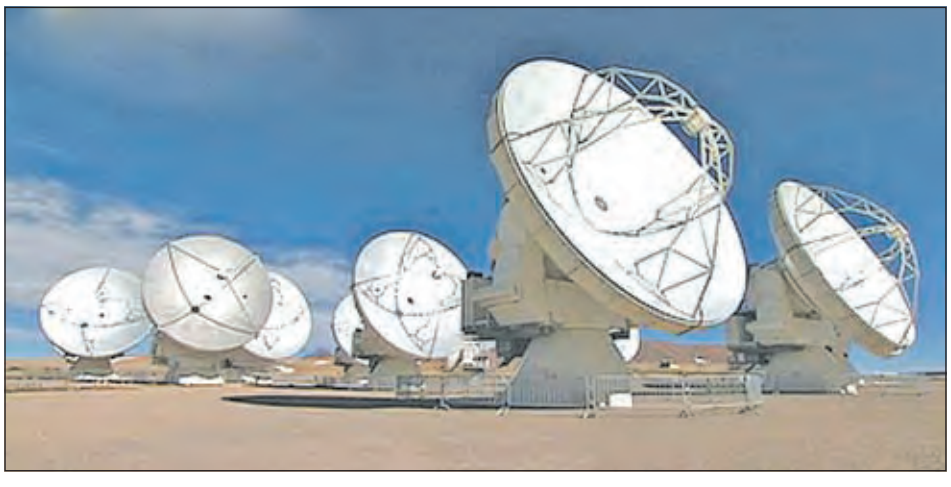


Photo shows the Alma radio telescope observatory in Chile, which will begin full-scale space observations in this month.—NHK

TOKYO, 6 Jan—The world's largest radio telescope is about to begin full-scale space observations this month.

The Alma radio telescope observatory in Chile has a total of 43 antenna dishes, about twice the number than before. It is located in the Atacama Desert, 5,000 meters above sea level.

The multi-national project involving Japan, the United States and European nations began with 16 antennas in 2011.

With the new antennas, the telescope will be 2.5 times stronger than before, and will be able to capture the birth of planets.

Scientists also hope the enhanced telescope will be able to detect organic compounds such as amino acids in outer space.

The telescope will eventually have 66 antenna dishes. Officials from Japan's National Astronomical Observatory say they expect to obtain new information within 4 to 5 years which could overturn past knowledge of the universe.

NHK

New fault found on seabed near Kanto region

TOKYO, 6 Jan—Japanese researchers have discovered a new fault on the seabed off Japan's east coast. They say the fault may have formed fairly recently during an earthquake that hit the Kanto region that includes Tokyo.

A group led by Professor Emeritus Takashi Nakata of Hiroshima University located the fault in November, 20 kilometres off Miura Peninsula in Kanagawa Prefecture.

They used sonar to survey the shape of the seabed 1,200-metres deep.

The fault consists of a 5 to 8-metre cliff. The sonar identified bulges on the cliff that are believed to have been shaped by the movement of the seabed.

The fault is situated along a trough where an oceanic plate is sliding below a continental plate.

The trough is believed to have been the cause of massive earthquakes in the region.

The researchers say the fault could have been formed as recently as 1923 when the Great Kanto Earthquake killed tens of thousands of people.

Professor Emeritus Nakata says the discovery will help in the study of massive earthquakes in the region.

NHK

Dave Mills (L) and Richard Halfpenny prepare an Audi booth in the automotive electronics area of the International CES show at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada on 4 Jan, 2013. —REUTERS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Portugal does not need debt restructuring: IMF's Lagarde

LISBON, 6 Jan—Any restructuring of Portugal's debt is out of the question and the country's bailout programme is progressing well, the head of the International Monetary Fund said on Saturday.

IMF chief Christine Lagarde told Portuguese weekly *Expresso* that she was also confident Portugal would not follow Greece into a spiral of economic recession.

The European Union and IMF gave Portugal a 78-billion-euro ($102-billion) bailout in 2011 and the lenders have praised the country for meeting most of their terms. They relaxed Portugal's tough budget goals last year as the country's deepest recession since the 1970s eroded tax revenues.

"It is out of the question," Lagarde told the weekly, when asked if Portugal may be forced to restructure its debt.

"The Portuguese authorities are determined to do what is necessary to complete the programme in order to regain access to (bond) markets," she said.

She added that she expected the IMF to approve the country's next loan tranche, after the sixth review that was carried out in the autumn.

"The Portuguese authorities and the Portuguese have been extremely courageous and firm in applying difficult and painful reforms," she said.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Christine Lagarde at a news conference at the Finance Ministry building in Santiago, on 13 Dec, 2012. —REUTERS

Some economists have said Portugal may be forced to extend the loan deal beyond this year, when it is scheduled to return to financing itself in bond markets in the third quarter.

Lagarde said the Portuguese should not expect any changes to the loan agreement. "But we have to adapt the program, review after review, bearing in mind all the implications," she said. Asked if she was convinced Portugal would not follow in Greece's path, she said: "Yes, I am."

Reuters

Japanese firms putting more focus on farm business

TOKYO, 6 Jan—Japanese companies are starting to enter the new agriculture business of growing plants indoors with advanced technology.

Major chemical company Showa Denko has developed a technology to accelerate growth in plants using red LED light.

The company plans to open a new lettuce factory in Kawauchi Village, Fukushima Prefecture, in April.

Showa Denko says lettuce can be harvested around 20 times a year at the factory, about 5 times more than ordinary greenhouse cultivation.

Mitsubishi Chemical has also developed a vegetable cultivation system using LED technology. The firm has begun selling the system to Russia and other countries with low temperatures and limited sunshine hours.

Nisshinbo Holdings has started indoor hydroponic cultivation of strawberries as part of its strategy to diversify its business. The company is considering selling both strawberries and its cultivation system. Chiba University Professor Eiji Goto says the new technologies developed by Japanese companies may lead to unprecedented farming methods.—*NHK*

Women put greenhouse-grown cherries into packs in Tendo, Yamagata Prefecture, on 4 Jan, 2013, for the season's first shipment. KYODO NEWS

***Kiyoshi Kimura, president of sushi restaurant chain operator Kiyomura Co, shows a 222-kilogram bluefin tuna at the Metropolitan Central Wholesale Market in Tokyo's Tsukiji District on 5 Jan, 2013.*—KYODO NEWS**

Bluefin tuna sells for record $1.76 million at Tokyo auction

TOKYO, 6 Jan—A bluefin tuna was sold for an all-time high of 155.4 million yen (about $1.76 million), or 700,000 yen per kilogram, on Saturday at the year's first auction at Tokyo's famous Tsukiji fish market. The price of the 222-kilogram tuna caught off northeastern Japan was nearly three times the previous record set at last year's first auction at Tsukiji, the world's largest fish market.

The buyer was sushi restaurant chain operator Kiyomura CO, which paid the previous record of 56.49 million yen.—*Kyodo News*

China to improve rural students' nutrition

BEIJING, 6 Jan—China plans to build enough school canteens to provide safe and nutritional meals for all primary and junior high school students in impoverished rural regions by 2015.

According to a circular, jointly released Saturday by the ministries of education and finance, local governments should submit their dining hall building plans to the two ministries for approval and the granting of funds before construction starts.

Chinese students in poor regions often rely on government-funded or charitable lunch for sufficient nutrition.

Last year, the "Free Lunch for Children" project, initiated by some 500 journalists and domestic media, received millions of donations. It allocates three yuan per person each day to provide free lunch for impoverished school children.

The circular said that some local governments are not fully aware of the importance of the issue. It said substandard canteen construction plans as well as insufficient financial support have hindered the drive to improve students' nutrition.

The circular urged local administrations to focus on areas such as seating capacity and quake-resistance levels.

Also on Saturday, the General Administration of Press and Publication urged local publishing groups to purchase enough government-funded dictionaries for primary and junior high school students in rural areas.

The move comes after widespread media reports that counterfeit dictionaries had seriously misled students during their studies—especially those in impoverished areas where an official copy was hard to obtain.

According to the administration, more than 30 printing firms across the country will supply 100 million dictionaries for primary and junior high school students in rural regions this year.—*Xinhua*

France won't buy troubled Petroplus refinery: Hollande

VAL-DE-REUIL, 6 Jan—France - France will not take over insolvent Swiss refiner Petroplus' oil refinery in Normandy, but could help the plant financially once a suitable buyer is found, President Francois Hollande said on Saturday.

About 500 jobs at the 161,000 barrels-a-day Petit-Couronne refinery are at risk, the latest industrial headache for the Socialist leader who has vowed to stem rising unemployment by the end of the year.

"It's difficult to find a serious buyer. We must do everything to find one," Hollande told reporters after meeting union leaders in Val-de-Reuil, a town about 110 kilometres (70 miles) north-west of Paris.

"The state will do its duty, but it cannot take the plant over, and the workers know that," he said.

He added the state could at some point provide financing.

Petroplus poses a major test for Hollande's government after it faced criticism over the tactics it used in a two-month battle over the future of ArcelorMittal's (ISPA.AS) Florange steel plant, which unnerved investors in the euro zone's second largest economy and confused France's unions. His administration is struggling to stop a haemorrhage of industrial jobs which has helped push unemployment to 15-year highs, while curbing public spending and raising taxes to help slash debt in a stagnant economy.

A French court set a deadline of February 5 for interested parties to submit bids for the Petit-Couronne refinery. Shell RDSA.L, which had a six-month oil processing deal with the troubled plant running to mid-December, has not extended its contract, making the refinery less attractive for buyers due to expensive restart costs.

So far only NetOil, a company led by Middle Eastern businessman Roger Tamraz, has submitted an offer while 7 others have filed letters of intent to buy France's oldest refinery.

Net Oil's offer includes an oil supply deal with BP (BP.L) and an agreement with Hyundai (005380.KS) to upgrade the plant.

Union spokesman Yvon Scornet told reporters after the meeting that Hollande had promised to do everything possible to push the project forward, but had given no guarantees.

Reuters

***France's President Francois Hollande (C), flanked by Foreign Minister and local representative Laurent Fabius (C Rear), Val-de-Reuil's Mayor Marc-Antoine Jamet (L Rear) and French Minister for Industrial Recovery Arnaud Montebourg (R Rear), talks with Swiss Petroplus Petit-Couronne refinery workers in Val-de-Reuil, near Rouen, on 5 Jan, 2013.*—REUTERS**

WORLD

Sudan, South Sudan agree once again to set up buffer zone

ADDIS ABABA, 6 Jan—The presidents of Sudan and South Sudan agreed on Saturday to set up a demilitarized zone along their disputed border, a condition for restarting oil exports, an African Union mediator said on Saturday, without giving a time frame.

Sudan's Omar Hassan al-Bashir and South Sudan's Salva Kiir had agreed in September to withdraw their armies from the border area, a move both say is necessary to allow oil to flow again from landlocked South Sudan through Sudan.

After weeks of deadly clashes early last year the two came close to all-out war but agreed a ceasefire in April. However, South Sudan says Sudan has bombed its side of the border several times since then and neither has withdrawn its army since the deal was struck in September.

They also accuse each other of supporting rebels on each other's side of the border, accusations denied by both, and part of Sudanese side is controlled by Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-North) rebels.

The AU called this week's summit, two days of talks in Ethiopia, to defuse tensions after months of often unproductive talks between two countries which remain deeply mistrustful of each other, a legacy of one of Africa's longest civil wars.

"They've ... agreed that actions should be taken as soon as possible to implement all the existing agreements unconditionally," AU mediator Thabo Mbeki said after the summit which Bashir and Kiir left without making statements.

"The presidents have also agreed that ... the necessary decisions are taken to create the safe demilitarized border zone," Mbeki told reporters. The AU would present a time frame next week, he said.

The AU, backed by Western powers, had threatened both with sanctions should they miss a September deadline to resolve the dispute and has since then granted more time to negotiate.

Sudan has rejected calls by Western powers and the AU to start peace talks with the SPLM-North, which complains of marginalization and wants to topple Bashir.—*Reuters*

Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir attends a meeting with leaders from South Sudan at the National Palace in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa on 5 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

Pollution cuts off water supply in N China city

SHIJIAZHUANG, 6 Jan—Contamination in a north Chinese river has led to the water supply in Handan, a city with more than 1 million people in Hebei Province, being cut off since Saturday afternoon.

A statement by the city government said the cut-off was caused by an accident in the neighbouring Shanxi Province where industrial pollutants poured into the upper reaches of the Zhanghe River.

A statement from the Shanxi provincial government said a flexible tube rupture at a chemical plant in Changzhi City caused aniline to leak into the Zhuozhang River, the upper reaches of the Zhanghe River, on 31 December.

The statement did not tell the amount of the leakage. Aniline is a toxic chemical widely used as precursors in the manufacture of pigments, herbicides and other chemicals.

Authorities in Shanxi said they received the report on Saturday, and that an emergency response had been initiated to stop the leak and clean up the pollutants.

A statement from the Changzhi City said the accident had not caused casualties so far, and that water quality in the Zhuozhang River was improving.

They said cities along the river, including Handan and Anyang City in Henan Province, have been warned to be on alert.

The city of Handan has cut off its water supply from Yuecheng Reservoir located on the river and switched to another underground water source.

Authorities in Handan did not say how many households were affected by the cut-off. Residents in several parts of Handan told *Xinhua* reporters that the water supply had not resumed on Saturday evening.— *Xinhua*

Police officers transport a climber (R) recovered in a rescue operation by helicopter from a mountain in Takayama, Gifu Prefecture, on 5 Jan, 2013. The climber, a 50-year-old man, was later confirmed dead due to exposure.—KYODO NEWS

Georgia pledges continued contribution to Afghan mission

TBILISI, 6 Jan—Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili on Saturday pledged continued contribution to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

Ivanishvili made the pledge after attending the funeral for a Georgian soldier who had been found dead after missing for 10 days in Afghanistan in December last year.

Describing the participation as "a source of pride for our country," he stressed that "we should further strengthen our role in this process in the future, because it is important for our country's international image."

Meanwhile, the prime minister said his government should spare no efforts to minimize casualties.

Georgia is now the largest non-NATO troop contributor to ISAF, with a total of 1,560 Georgian servicepersons in Afghanistan, mostly deployed in the Helmand Province.

The South Caucasus country so far has lost 19 soldiers in Afghanistan.

The US-led war in Afghanistan, which has now turned into a NATO-led ISAF operation, has become the longest military conflict in US history.

Reuters

11 killed, 33 injured in bus accident in central Colombia

BOGOTA, 6 Jan—At least 11 people were killed and 33 others injured early Saturday in a bus accident on a highway in central Colombia's Caldas Province.

The bus from the city of Quibdo was heading to the Colombian capital Bogota when the accident happened. The bus lost control on a dangerous curve and crashed into a hill, according to the commander of the Highway Police, General Francisco Patino.

The authorities are investigating if excess speed is the main reason to have caused the accident.

"It is regrettable that 11 people were killed in this incident, " said the officer, offering his condolences to the families of the victims.

Nine people were killed on the spot and their bodies were taken to the city of Fresno, which is nearest to the accident site. Two more passengers died in the hospital of Manizales city, capital of Caldas Province.

According to initial reports, the bus conductor has driven 12 hours at the time of the accident.

"We are investigating about the journey and whether driver had taken rests (...) whether licenses and vehicle documents are up to date," Patino said.

Most of the 33 injured are hospitalized in Manizales' care centres, including the bus conductor and his assistant. Some bus passengers told local media that the automobile was stranded three times before the accident. This is the most serious accident recorded in Colombian national roads since the start of the holiday season.

Xinhua

Russia, Sweden to conduct joint submarine rescue drills

MOSOCWO, 6 Jan—Russian and Sweden navy troops will conduct a joint submarine rescue exercise this year, a Russian military spokesman said on Saturday.

Russian Baltic Fleet's search and rescue troops, together with experts from the Swedish Navy, would hold a search and rescue operation later this year, the Russian fleet's spokesperson Vladimir Matveyev said. The exercise will include searching operation for a "submarine in distress" on the seabed, the exploration of its hull with the use of remote controlled submersible and the rescue of its crew members, *RIA Novosti* news agency quoted Matveyev as saying.

The navy drills will be held under preliminary agreements reached between Baltic Sea chief Vice Admiral Viktor Kravchuk and Swedish Navy commander Rear Admiral Jan Thomqvist last October in Russia, according to the spokesman.

Russian Defence Ministry said earlier this week that warships from its Northern, Baltic, Black Sea and Pacific Fleets will hold drills in the Mediterranean and Black Seas late this month.—*Xinhua*

Vice premier meets model rural doctors

BEIJING, 6 Jan—The country's model rural doctors have been praised by Chinese Vice Premier Li Keqiang, who called on health institutions to provide the practioners with more health care.

While meeting the model doctors on Saturday, Li said, "You fully demonstrate benevolence as all doctors should. You've done good deeds and made unimaginable sacrifices for other people."

The practioners were dubbed "the most beautiful rural doctors" after the media reported their devotion to treating people despite their own health problems, poverty and, in some cases, disabilities. During a symposium with Li, the doctors voiced their concerns including medical risks, lack of study opportunities, outdated equipment, low incomes and the absence of retirement insurance.

Li promised to investigate these issues and called on rural doctors to protect themselves during their work. Three of the doctors also attended a meeting held by the State Council's leading group for medical and health care reform to provide their opinions on policies.—*Xinhua*

Tourists enjoy sunbath at a beach in Sanya, a popular winter tourism destination in south China's Hainan Province, on 5 Jan, 2013.
XINHUA

WORLD

*Visitors view the exhibition "Werner Berg: from Expressionism to Pop Art" in Beijing, capital of China, on 5 Jan, 2013. The exhibition, which was opened at the National Art Museum of China (NAMOC) on Saturday, displays more than 70 oil paintings and 16 woodcuts created by Austrian painter Werner Berg (1904-1981).—*XINHUA

Chinese drivers question new traffic rule

BEIJING, 6 Jan—Chinese drivers are complaining about a new regulation that increases penalties for running yellow lights, with some doubting the new rule's legality.

Netizens have claimed that the rule runs contrary to the laws of physics, as drivers who are operating their vehicles at normal speeds cannot bring their vehicles to a full stop within seconds of seeing a yellow light.

Vehicles must come to a complete stop at yellow lights unless part of the vehicle's body has already crossed the line, according to a revised regulation from the Ministry of Public Security that took effect on New Year's Day.

In an online poll hosted by Sina Weibo, a major microblogging site, opponents of the regulation outnumbered supporters by almost 5 to 1, with over 40,000 people responding to the poll.

"The three lights serve their purposes respectively in accordance with the law. Treating a yellow light the same as a red one is unreasonable and could be legally contradictory," said Li Wei, chief lawyer at the Beijing Fada Law Office.

Yellow lights in China flash for just a few seconds before turning red, making it difficult to bring vehicles to a full stop in time. In addition, few intersections have visible countdown timers, making it even more difficult for drivers to figure out how much time they have to stop.

"There are so many intersections that do not have countdown screens to help drivers time their stop," said Wang Cheng, a law professor at Peking University.

Other experts have centered their opposition on the origin and legality of the revision.

Wu Bihu, another professor at Peking University, has filed a request for the details surrounding the revision at the Ministry of Public Security.

Sun Xiaoxia, a law professor at Fudan University, said the revision seemed to have come out of thin air, as there was no prior notice given to the public.

Xinhua

Russian PM calls for full implementation of Sochi constructions

MOSCOW, 6 Jan—Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev on Saturday called for full implementation of sports constructions for the Sochi games.

"Of course, this issue cannot be discussed: the 2013 schedule should be implemented in full," Medvedev said during a meeting about Sochi Olympics test events.

In 2012, 44 sports facilities were put into operation. However, the construction of several facilities still lagged behind the schedule, he said.

The success of the Olympics and Russia's prestige depended on the construction of Sochi facilities, Medvedev said, adding much preparation work should be done ahead of the games.

"That is why the commissioning of sportive facilities and the infrastructure, as well as the test events is our strategic priority," Itar-Tass news agency quoted Medvedev as saying.

According to the prime minister, the International Olympics Committee gave positive assessment of the sports facilities which have been put into service. The sports venues should go through more serious tests in 2013, he added.

Under the motto of "Hot. Cool. Yours," the Sochi Games which features 98 medal events will open on 7 February, 2014 and run until 23 February.

Xinhua

*A man views fish-like lanterns during Hwacheon Sancheoneo Ice Festival in Hwacheon, Gangwon-do Province of South Korea, on 5 Jan, 2013. The annual Hwacheon Sancheoneo Ice Festival held here from 5 to 27 January attracts over one million people every year.—*XINHUA

Mongolian government to regulate Internet comments

ULAN BATOR, 6 Jan—The Mongolian government said it has decided to set up a system to regulate Internet commenting.

The Information Technology, Postal, Telecommunication Authority has been instructed to introduce relevant software and technical solutions, according to a government Press release about Saturday's cabinet meeting.

In addition, the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority is tasked with developing requirements for news websites and the issuance of domain names.

The new measures, according to the Press release, will allow authorities to investigate any comment of criminal nature at the request of relevant parties and conduct law enforcement activities.

The database of the National Registration Authority and that of cell phone users will be used to verify information about Internet users, but secrecy and privacy regulations will also be applied.

Xinhua

Iran plans to double natural gas production from southern fields

TEHERAN, 6 Jan—Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Saturday that the country plans to double natural gas production from the South Pars field, Press TV reported.

Iran plans to double natural gas extraction from the South Pars gas field in the next six months, Ahmadinejad was quoted as saying during a ceremony to inaugurate Iran's biggest natural gas storage facility.

According to the report, Iran is currently producing 300 million cubic metres of natural gas per day from South Pars field.

The South Pars/North Dome field is a natural gas condensate field located in the Persian Gulf. It is the world's largest gas field, shared between Iran and Qatar. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), the field holds an estimated 1, 800 trillion cubic feet (51 trillion cubic meters) of in-situ natural gas and some 50 billion barrels (7.9 billion cubic metres) of natural gas condensates.

In December, Iranian Oil Minister Rostam Qasemi said that his ministry would soon strike gas deals with different countries.

"We are finalizing (agreements for) gas exports to different countries," he said.

Xinhua

Russia's Caspian Flotilla to get new assault ships

MOSCOW, 6 Jan—The Russian Caspian Flotilla will get new missile ships and assault ships this year, a military spokesman said on Saturday.

The flotilla's naval infantry will get two small-sized missile ships by summer and three amphibious assault ships by spring, said the spokesperson with the south military district.

The Caspian Flotilla will also get two service ships later this year, the spokesman said in a statement.

Currently, Russia's navy is composed of the Pacific Fleet, Northern Fleet, Baltic Fleet, Black Sea Fleet and Caspian Flotilla. Stationed in the Caspian Sea, the Caspian Flotilla is the oldest Russian military flotilla.

The navy will receive more than 50 new warships by 2016, including 18 surface warships, 30 special-purpose and counter-subversion vessels, and six multi-purpose strategic submarines, according to a statement made earlier this week by the Defence Ministry.

Xinhua

*Rescuers work at the blast site in southern Pakistani port city of Karachi on 5 Jan, 2013. Three explosions struck central locations in the city including a grenade attack on a police van and a remote controlled bomb blast outside the office of a political party leader on Saturday, local media reported.—*XINHUA

Eight militants killed in military operation in NW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 6 Jan—At least eight militants were killed and three hideouts destroyed in an operation launched by the Pakistani army in the country's northwest tribal area of Orakzai Agency on Sunday, reported local media Geo.

According to the report, the operation was conducted in the Mamozai area of the northern part of Orakzai, or called Upper Orakzai, on Sunday with the backup of air force.

Jet fighters pounded the militant hideouts in the afore-said area, leaving three of them destroyed and eight militants killed.

On Saturday, at least 20 militants were killed, 14 others injured and five militant hideouts destroyed during an army operation launched in Khyber Agency which lies next to Orakzai Agency.

Xinhua

The New Light of Myanmar

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 7 January, 2013

Vultures are only birds

Recently, six vultures took a rest at the Great Pagoda Shwedagon in Yangon, the commercial hub and the most populous city of Myanmar. People had contrasting views on their visit. Some took it as a bad omen, while others view it as a good sign.

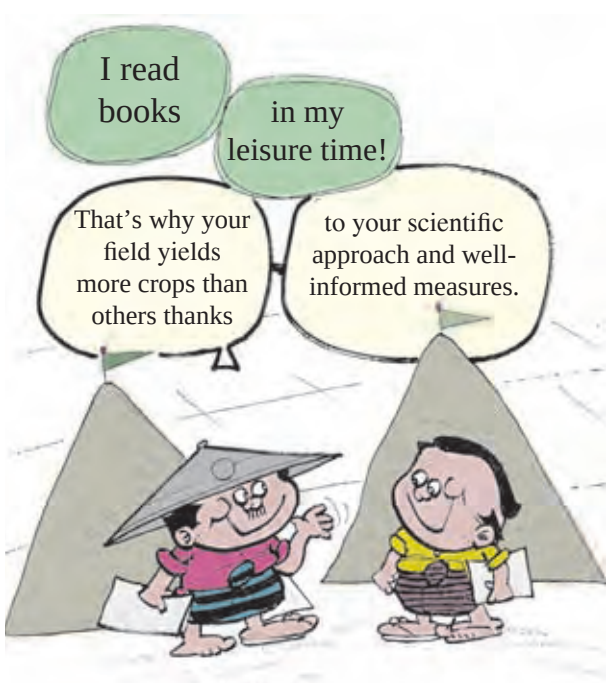
In fact, these big birds would be in their seasonal journey south just trying to escape the harsh northern winter. Many bird species do wintering, migrating in groups, some in very large groups, to warmer regions of the south. So these vultures made a short stay at our awe-inspiring pagoda while in kittle on their way towards wintering grounds in temperate regions.

Many Myanmar people see vultures as ungraceful and inauspicious, and some even regard them evil or ominous just for dining on dead or decaying animals.

In reality they like hyenas are scavengers Mother Nature has created as public workers that clean all dead animals by feeding on carrion. If Mother Nature has not created scavengers, forests and natural grasslands everywhere around the world will be contaminated with a large number of decaying carcasses as predators mostly hunt and feed only on living prey.

Vultures or condors as they are called can fly high in the sky for long hours in search of food. They can endure and survive the harsh environs and weather conditions, as many of the species live in semi-desert regions. Even the Japanese-made car Nissan Condor is named after these big birds in honour of their strength and endurance.

In point of fact, vultures are just like other wintering birds. They do not bring or represent any bad omen or good sign for any particular place or person. The six vultures were visitors taking a short refuge at our sacrosanct pagoda as the fast growing city has less trees and more high-rise concrete buildings. There should not be any illogical fear because vultures are only birds.



Maung Maung San Lwin (GAD)

NATIONAL

Stake-driving ceremony of Hline River crossing Bayintnaung Bridge-2

A ceremony to launch driving of stake for construction of Bayintnaung Bridge-2 in progress.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan— A stake-driving ceremony of Hline River crossing Bayintnaung Bridge-2 was held at the pavilion near the bridge this morning.

Union Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe drove the bored pile by vibrohammer.

Special Project Group-5 of Public Works will build the bridge that links Mayangon and Hlinethaya Townships of Yangon Region.

The main structure of the Hline river crossing bridge made of steel trusses is 1624.1 feet long.

Each approach bridge on both sides is 2644.48 feet long. The bridge with two-lane motorway can withstand 75-ton loads.

Upon completion, Yangon Region will be able to see smooth and speedy transport, thereby contributing towards regional development of Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions.

MNA

Villagers object elected village administrator

MOHNYIN, 6 Jan — Villagers of Nanma Village-tract in Kachin State have filed complaints about the newly elected administrator of the village-tract to the Mohnyin Township Administration Office as he is not eligible for a village administrator.

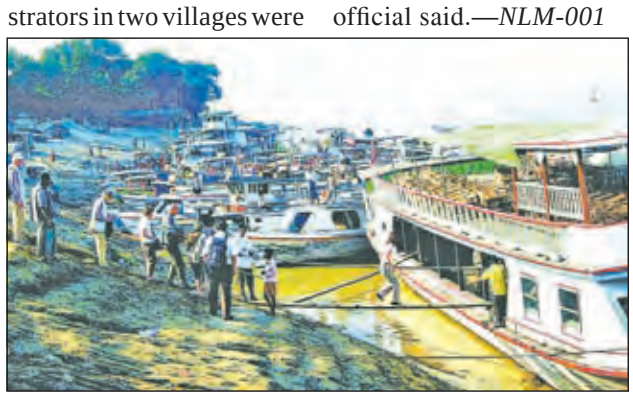
A villager who is one of the local people who have lodging complaints about the newly-elected administrator said that the villagers have concrete evidences of his lack of three qualifications ouf of 11 to serve as a village admi-nistrator.

Former three administrators were re-elected in the three wards and two were elected as the new administrators in two wards in the town of Mohnyin.

Meanwhile, some objections against the election of two administrators in two villages were brought to the township administration office, complaining about the five-member supervisory committee of the elections, said an official of the office.

"Elections will be held again in the villagers where complaints arouse," the official said.—*NLM-001*

Visits of globetrotters increase at Mingun this year



MANDALAY, 6 Jan— About 200-300 tourists visit Mingun Region from Mayanchan jetty on Strand Road in West Thiri Marlar Ward of Aungmyethazan Township in Mandalay Region daily; and the number of tourists in December 2012 was higher than that of the previous year, said U Thet Tun, Chairman of Globetrotters Water Transport Association.

"The globetrotters including various kinds of races across the world leave Mayanchan Jetty for Mingun Region. Our motorboat association is constituted with 28 motorboats.

These motorboats leave Mayanchan Jetty at 9 am and Mingun at 1 pm. The fare of the boat is K 5000 per passenger. The chartered boat collects K 25000 for five. This year, the passengers for Mandalay-Bhamo and Mandalay-Bagan routes are on the increase. The motorboats are facilitated with life jackets and rescue equipment for the passengers," said U Thet Tun.—*Myanma Alinn*

KIA blasts trucks, abducts local women, sabotages rails, bridge

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan— KIA blasted trucks, abducted local women, sabotaged railroad and bridges and planted mines in urban area in Kachin State on 2 and 3 January.

A KIA group stopped three trucks carrying cement and iron rod/sheet at the Mile Post No. 91 on Myitkyina-Sumprabum Road and blasted the three trucks and 16 tons of cement and eight tons of iron rod/sheet worth K 9.8 million. The drivers of the trucks were released later.

A KIA group comprising about ten members abducted Ma La Ngan Khaung Naw, 32, Ma La Nay Daung Nywe, 34, and Ma La Ton Yein Hmyaw, 28, of Nant Wah Village, Waimaw Township, around 12.15 pm on 3 January.

Around 7.30 pm on that day, KIA fired heavy artilleries to troops who are providing security to rail transportation at Mile Post No. 620-8/9 between Kardu and Mawhan villages in Mohnyin Township.

There was no causalities nor damages to the rails in the attack. However, the Express Up-train No.40 en-route from Mandalay to Myitkyina had to stop at Mawhan Station and it could proceed to Mohnyin around 9.30 pm.

Similarly, a KIA group blew up an iron-reinforced bailey bridge which is 280 ft long and 12 ft wide on across the Manyut Creek on Bhamo-Mansi Road, collapsing about 20 ft of the bridge and leading to a halt in traffic.

Besides, a mine exploded near the Mile Post No. 378/3 and 378/4 on the Bhamo-Myitkyina Road around 11 pm and another mine about 100 yards west of the first blast site on 3 January.

There was no causalities due to the blasts, but the blasts damaged some concrete and iron structures.

According to local authority, KIA set off the mines in attempts to attack convoys on the assumption that convoys would pass that area.— *MNA*

LOCAL NEWS

Plans to provide US$ 5 million to Naga Self-Administered Zone, Chin State

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thein Htay received Indian Ambassador Dr Villur Sundararajan Seshadri at the Ministry of Border Affairs, here, on 2 January afternoon.

They discussed road and bridge construction tasks, education and health tasks to be jointly undertaken by the ministry and India in Naga Self-Administered Zone and Chin State, and construction of schools in Rakhine State.

India is projected to provide five million US dollars yearly in Naga Self-Administered Zone and Chin State. In 2012-2013 fiscal year, a plan is underway to build 10 basic education primary schools, eight rural health centres, three bridges of 100 feet long in Naga Self-Administered Zone and 11 schools, nine rural health centres and five bridges of above 200 feet long bridge in Chin State.

MNA

Elephant camp in Katha attracts globetrotters

KATHA, 6 Jan—A total of 21 globetrotters who arrived in Katha by Pandaw cruiseliner from Australia and Britain visited Natpauk Elephant Camp in Phatsuk forest reserve, 11 miles west of Katha on 1 January morning.

They were welcomed by Assistant Manager U Thura Tun of Indaw Region Timber Extraction Region and staff.

Next, 15 elephants performed entertainments to the tourists. The guests then observed nature of the elephants by taking documentary video.

The elephant camp collects 10 FECs per tourist for observing elephants, 20 FECs per tourists for riding elephant, 20 FECs for video camera and 10 FECs for camera.

Myanma Alinn

Tube-well supplies water to local people

SEIKPYU, 6 Jan—A ceremony to launch a two-inch diameter tube-well was held in Maungtwinchaung Village of Shapinaing Village of Seikpyu Township in Magway Region on 1 January.

The tube-well was sunk with the assistance of UNICEF under the supervision of Township Development Affairs Committee for 2012-2013 fiscal year.

The 250 feet deep tube-well, the water pump station and 3400-gallon-capacity water tank were built for supplying water to 216 local people.

All tasks of water supply to the local people cost K 4 million.—*Myanma Alinn*

Ward administrator elected in Kyimyindine Township

YANGON, 6 Jan—The election of ward administrator was held in Wayonseik Ward of Kyimyindine Township on 15 August under the prescribed rules and regulations.

Of 22 wards in Kyimyindine Township, Panhlaing Ward held the similar ceremony on 30 December.

At the ceremony, Township Administrator U Kyaw Ye Thway and officials supervised the election of ward administrators.

Myanma Alinn

Cultivation of organic paddy on increase in Labutta

YANGON, 6 Jan—Cultivation of paddy with the use of organic matter is increasing day by day. In Labutta Township, the cultivation of organic paddy reaches 1000 acres of farmland in 2012.

Pawhsanhmwe paddy strain produces 40 baskets per acre through organic matter use pattern. In the market, organic rice is sold at K 3000 per pyi. Due to lack of chemicals and other fertilizers, the organic rice is suitable for consumption.

Organic rice is sold at supermarkets and shopping malls in Yangon.

Myanmar plans to export 1.5 million tons of rice in 2012-2013 fiscal year. Myanmar will be trying hard to export about 3 million tons of rice to the world market in 2017. At present, Myanmar stands 8th position among the top rice exporting countries across the world.

Now, Myanmar exports 100,000 tons of rice monthly. From April to October 2012, Myanmar fetched 260.315 million US dollars through export of rice. So, Myanmar will extend cultivation of paddy in coming years.

Myanma Alinn

Rector Dr Hla Tint confers certificate of BA Myanmar on graduate Ma Thuza Khaing at the convocation hall of Yangon University for 113th convocation of Yangon University of Distance Education on 5 January.—MAUNG TIN HLAING (H&T)

Traditional boat race honours Independence Day in Ye

YE, 6 Jan—In honour of the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, the Myanmar traditional boat race was opened at Myakantha Moat in Ye of Mon State on 2 January.

It was opened by Acting Township Administrator U Soe Lin Thein, Amyotha Hluttaw Representative U Min Thein Han and Chairman of the boat race committee U Zaw Min Oo.

Altogether 17 teams participated in the race. The prize awarding ceremony was held on the Independence Day.

Myanma Alinn

Overspeed motorbike hits roadside post

LETPADAN, 6 Jan—An over speed motorcycle hit the post of roadside on Yangon-Pyay Highway in Letpadan of Thayawady District in Bago Region at 3 pm on 27 December. The JLM 110 brand black colour motorcycle driven by Soe Gyi (a) Soe Win Than, 33 of Phalangon Village of Kyauktwin Village-tract of Thayawady Township, from Yangon to Pyay, with Myint Oo, 32 of the same village on the pillion seat was out of control and hit the post in front of High Yield Educative Farm between mile post 87/4 and 87/5 on the highway.

In the incident, Myint Oo on the pillion seat was rushed to the hospital, but he died on the way due to critical condition of his injury. The respective police station opened a file of lawsuit against Soe Gyi under the laws.—*Myanma Alinn*

Drive Safely

WORLD

Major quake hits Alaska, tsunami warning canceled

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan—A 7.5-magnitude earthquake struck off the coast of the US state of Alaska early Saturday, triggering a tsunami warning that was later lifted.

The temblor, whose magnitude was initially placed at 7.7, occurred at 0858 GMT, with its epicentre located 106 km west of Craig, Alaska, at a depth of 9.9 km, according to the US Geological Survey (USGS).

The major earthquake prompted tsunami observers to issue a warning for coastal areas near the epicentre, which was eventually expanded to cover the shores from Cape Fairweather, Alaska, to the northern tip of Vancouver Island, Canada.

But the feared "significant widespread inundation of land" did not come, and the Alaska Tsunami Warning Centre canceled the warning, saying just small sea-level changes were detected in some areas.

"A tsunami was generated during this event but no longer poses a threat," said the centre.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. But some voluntary evacuations were reported in some of the affected coastal communities.

Last October, a 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck off Canada's Queen Charlotte Islands, not far from the epicenter of the latest one. A tsunami warning was issued, but the resulting tsunami was below dangerous levels.

Xinhua

Members of the chorus of Beijing Fuxue Lane Primary School sing a song at the New Year's Concert in Beijing, capital of China, on 5 Jan, 2013. —XINHUA

Men in Heian era (eighth to 12th centuries) aristocratic attire demonstrate "kemari" (ancient football) in an event at Shimogamo Shrine in Kyoto on 4 Jan, 2013.
KYODO NEWS

Iranian lawmaker says Turkey implements West's policies on Syria

TEHERAN, 6 Jan — An Iranian lawmaker said that Turkey has turned into a performer of the West's policies on Syria, Press TV reported on Saturday.

Hossein Sobhani-Nia, a member of the Iranian Majlis (parliament) Presiding Board, said on Friday that the Turkish government is implementing macro policies drawn up by the Western countries on the ongoing crisis in Syria.

US personnel and equipment began arriving at the southern Turkey's Incirlik Air Base on Friday to support NATO's Patriot battery deployment, US Embassy in Ankara said.

The deployment of six Patriot batteries, including two each from Germany and the Netherlands, is in response to Turkey's request to NATO against possible missile threat from Syria. All six batteries will be under NATO's command and scheduled to be operational by the end of January.

The 21-month protests against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has turned increasingly bloody, with heavy fighting often erupting along Syria's border with Turkey.— *Xinhua*

1 dead, 39 injured in E China road accident

NANCHANG, 6 Jan—One people died and 39 others were injured after a coach overturned in east China's Jiangxi Province, firefighters said on Sunday.

The accident occurred around 2 am on a section of the Fuyin expressway, which links the city of Fuzhou in southeast China's Fujian Province with Yinchuan in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

Fifty-nine people were in the vehicle, which has a designed capacity of 55 people, the firefighters said.

The injured have been sent to nearby hospitals, although their condition is not yet known. Rescuers said slippery road conditions resulting from persistent rain and snow over the past few days may have caused the accident.—*Xinhua*

Egypt's cabinet reshuffle on Sunday to include ten new ministers

CAIRO, 6 Jan— Ten new ministers are expected to swear into office in a cabinet reshuffle in Egypt on Sunday, official news agency *MENA* reported.

The new ministers, according to *MENA*, include Mohamed Ibrahim as minister of interior, Basem Kamal as supplies minister, Al- Morsi al-Sayed Hegazi as finance minister, Atef Helmi as communication minister and Omar Mohamed Salem as parliamentary affairs minister.

They also include Hatem Abdel-Latif as minister of transportation, Ahmed Imam as minister of electricity, Mohamed Ali Bishr as minister of local development, Wael al-Maaddawi as minister of civil aviation and Khaled Mohamed Fahmi as minister of environment, Egypt's President Mohamed Morsi said in a speech late December 2012 that he had discussed with Prime Minister Hesham Qandil an imminent cabinet reshuffle to improve the government's performance and make it able to cope with the ongoing political, social and economic challenges.

Xinhua

Four dead in townhouse shooting in Aurora, Colorado

AURORA, 6 Jan—A gunman who barricaded himself inside a townhouse after killing three people in the home was shot to death by police on Saturday in Aurora, Colorado, the same Denver suburb where 12 people were slain in a movie house massacre last July, police said.

The gunman and his three victims, as well as a woman who fled safely from the home at the outset of the violence and alerted authorities, were all believed to be related to one another, police spokeswoman Cassidee Carlson said.

But the motive for the killings was not immediately understood. "We're trying to find out what set this guy off," she told *Reuters.*

A hostage-negotiation team called to the scene had sought to talk the suspect into surrendering for about five hours before police moved to shoot tear gas into the home at about 8:00 am (10:00 am EST/1500 GMT), prompting the gunman to open fire on officers from inside, police said. About an hour later, the gunman began firing at police again from a second-floor window, and police returned fire, killing the suspect, according to a police statement following the incident. No police were wounded.

Officers entering the townhouse found the bodies of the gunman and three other people—two men and a woman—who were presumed to have been shot hours earlier before police were called to the scene.

"None of the officers heard gunshots until they were directed at us at about 8 o'clock," Carlson said. The woman who escaped the home also told police the victims were shot before she fled. The names of the gunman and his three victims were being withheld until the coroner could confirm their identities and notify next of kin, authorities said.

The episode kept residents in much of the surrounding community awake overnight, as police notified neighbours of an emergency situation and evacuated several adjacent blocks.

One neighbour, Sunil Pawar, 59, said he received a reverse 911 call advising him to stay inside and away from windows before police later showed up to ring doorbells and escort residents of the townhouse development to safety.— *Reuters*

Five killed in plane crash in southeastern France

PARIS, 6 Jan— Five people died on Saturday when their private plane crashed a few moments after taking off from the Grenoble airport in south-eastern France, local police said. "There were five passengers. Five people died," police told *AFP*.

The plane crashed a few moments after taking off from the airport, in the village of Saint-Pierre-de-Bressieux. It was heading to Morocco and was due to make a stop in Spain, police sources said. The plane was registered in Morocco.—*Xinhua*

Sanitationmen clear the snow on the trees in Ji'an County, east China's Zhejiang Province, on 4 Jan, 2013. Zhejiang Weather Bureau on Friday issued the first orange alert for road icing after the heavy snow and freezing weather since Thursday.
XINHUA

Nearly 130 Afghan prisoners released from Bagram prison

KANDAHAR, 6 Jan— Nearly 130 Afghan prisoners, who were formerly held by the NATO and US forces in charges of being involved in anti-government activities, were released from Bagram prison, an official said on Saturday.

"Up to 129 prisoners, who have been detained and held in Bagram prison over the last couple of years but there were no evidence to proof their involvement in the insurgency, were released and would join their families today," General Mohammad Yar Barakzai, an Afghan defence ministry official in charge of the prisons, told a ceremony here.

The NATO-led coalition forces handed over the control of the Bagram detention centre to the Afghan government in March last year. Afghan President Hamid Karzai has ordered the concerned authorities to review the cases of more than 3,000 prisoners held in the detention center after the Afghan government took control of the prison.

Xinhua

Cambodian police arrest over 70 Chinese nationals for telephone fraud

PHNOM PENH, 6 Jan— The Cambodian police on Saturday arrested more than 70 Chinese nationals who were involved in telephone fraud in China following a complaint filed by the Chinese police, according to the latest police report.

A number of telephones and computers used by the suspects for threatening and extorting money from many people in China were also confiscated.

The raids were made simultaneously in several locations in Phnom Penh City and its immediate suburbs after the Chinese police identified those suspects to the Cambodian authorities, Lt Gen Chhay Sinarith, head of the Interior Ministry's internal security department, said on Saturday.

"They are charged of using VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol, a type of Internet phone service) from Cambodia to threaten and extort money from victims in China," he told *Xinhua* over telephone.

It was the fifth time that the Cambodian police in cooperation with their Chinese counterpart conduct massive crackdown on Chinese nationals accused of operating a Phnom Penh-based international extortion ring.

Telephone fraud has become a major social security problem in China. Suspects often use overseas servers to make phone calls from overseas, making it more difficult for the Chinese police to trace them.

Xinhua

The Shizuishan segment of the Yellow River is frozen due to persisiting cold weather in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on 5 Jan, 2012. Two segments of the Yellow River in Ningxia region have been frozen up due to low temperature. —XINHUA

Tropical storm Sonamu leaves 1 dead, 500 displaced in Philippines

Rene Diano tries to collect nails and debris from his wrecked house in New Bataan town in Compostela Valley province in southeastern Mindanao in the Philippines on 2 Jan, 2013, about a month after typhoon Bopha devastated the area.
KYODO NEWS

MANILA, 6 Jan— Tropical storm Sonamu (local name " Auring") left one person dead and about a hundred families still in evacuation centre in western and southern Philippines, the country's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) said on Saturday. The casualty was identified as Pedro Francisco, a 35-year-old man at Iraan village, Rizal town of western Philippine province of Palawan, the agency said.

Francisco died after he was hit by an uprooted coconut tree, it added.

Meanwhile, about a hundred families or some 500 people were evacuated in a basketball court in Quezon town, southern Philippine province of Bukidnon on Friday afternoon as flash flood occurred in the area due to continuous rains brought by the storm, NDRRMC said.

According to the agency, power interruptions were also being experienced in Puerto Princesa City, Aborlan, Brookes Point and Quezon, all in Western Philippine island of Palawan.

The weather forecasting agency of the Philippines said that the tropical storm had left the Philippine Area of Responsibility.

Xinhua

S Korean president-elect's way of democratizing economy

SEOUL, 6 Jan— South Korean president-elect Park Geun-hye has seemingly conflicting images. Park is the daughter of the country's longest-serving dictator Park Chung-hee, but she is set to become the first female president in the country's history. Park garnered over half of all votes in the presidential election for the first time since democratic elections were introduced in 1987, but Park's conservative ruling Saenuri party has been by and large identified with business conglomerates, or chaebol, and the establishment, representing the small number of population.

During her election campaigns, Park sought to recast her pro-business, conservative image by putting forth an agenda of " economic democracy." The buzzword was yelled throughout the presidential race by both conservative Park and Moon Jae-in, the liberal candidate of the main opposition Democratic United Party.

During the 2007 presidential election, then-conservative candidate Lee Myung-bak won a landslide victory over liberal candidate Chung Dong-young. At that time, voters in Seoul favored pro-business Lee who promised higher economic growth rather than Chung with pledges focusing on equal distribution of income.

Closing the income gap was not a top concern for South Korean politicians until the 2008 global financial crisis, since solid growth and the asset price boom from 2005 to 2007 improved living conditions for everyone.

Political agenda, however, has changed since 2008 as the country's income inequality deepened further during the post- crisis period. According to the Fair Trade Commission, total assets of the country's top five chaebols, including Samsung, Hyundai Motor, SK, LG and Lotte, surged to 57 percent of GDP in 2012 from 36 percent in 2007.

According Nomura Global Economics, monthly wages in small- and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs) increased by an average of 7.4 percent in the three-year period through 2011. It was lower than a 9 percent expansion for large firms over the same period, not to mention the many other non-wage benefits available to large firm employees.

Xinhua

Four killed as train attacked by militants in SW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 6 Jan— At least four people were killed and about a dozen injured when a train was attacked by unknown militants in Pakistan's southwest Balochistan Province on Saturday night, reported local media *Samaa*.

The attack took place at about 8:00 pm local time when some unknown gunmen opened fired at a passenger train near Mach, a small town lying some 50 kilometres southeast of Quetta, capital of Balochistan Province, according to the reports. The passenger train named Jaffar Express was heading towards Quetta from Rawalpindi, a city in east Pakistan's Punjab Province, when it got attacked, said local media.

Assistant Commissioner of Mach confirmed the attack and said that the engine of the train was also damaged in the attack. Four members of Frontier Corps, a paramilitary force in the country, were killed in the attack, according to the local media.

The attackers fled the scene after the security forces fought back, said a local Urdu TV channel ARY. No group has claimed the responsibility for the attack.

Xinhua

Photo taken on 5 Jan, 2013 shows the night scenery of the Ice and Snow World during the 29th Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival in Harbin, capital of north-east China's Heilongjiang Province. The festival kicked off on Saturday.
XINHUA

One soldier killed, four wounded in ambush in restive S Thailand

BANGKOK, 6 Jan— One soldier was shot dead while four others were wounded in a roadside ambush by presumed insurgents in restive southern province of Pattani, *Thai News Agency* reported on Saturday.

The incident occurred late on Friday night when a group of 7 soldiers were leaving from their base on an army truck to change shifts with other soldiers in the provincial seat.

An unknown number of assailants opened fire at them, and Private Saravut Srinakorn, 22, was shot dead at the scene.

Four others were injured and rushed to Pattani Hospital.

The police blamed suspected separatists for the crime.

More than 5,000 people have been killed and more than 9,000 hurt in over 11,000 incidents, about 3.5 incidents a day, in Thailand's three southern border provinces — Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat — and four districts of Songkhla since violence erupted in January 2004, according to Deep South Watch, which monitors the regional violence.

Xinhua

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Saudi, Egypt calls for peaceful transition in Syria

RIYADH, 6 Jan—Saudi Arabia and Egypt affirmed on Saturday the importance of peaceful transition of power in Syria, *Saudi News Agency* reported.

After a meeting in the Saudi capital of Riyadh, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal and his Egyptian counterpart Mohammed Kamel Amr called for the peaceful transition of power to spare the Syrian people of tragedies and sufferings.

The foreign ministers said in a Press conference that the situation in Syria was the top topic of their talks. "We also discussed in this framework the results of the on- going efforts and international communications and the need to push them to achieve the aspirations of the Syrian people towards ending bloodshed and maintaining the security and stability and the unity, sovereignty and independence of the Syrian territory," the Saudi foreign minister said.

Amr said the meeting also discussed enhancing bilateral ties between the two countries, especially commercial relations.

Xinhua

Rescuers work at a fire accident scene in Causeway Bay, south China's Hong Kong, on 5 Jan, 2013. A fire broke out from the top of a building in Causeway Bay, a shopping centre of Hong Kong on Saturday afternoon. There is no immediate report of casualties.—XINHUA

Identities of 19 Chinese missing in ROK confirmed

XI'AN, 6 Jan—Nineteen Chinese tourists who went missing after entering the Republic of Korea (ROK) at the end of last year have been identified, local authorities said on Sunday. The tourists, all males, are from two counties in northwest China's Shaanxi Province and its capital city of Xi'an, respectively, sources with the provincial government said.

The tourists departed northeast China's port city of Dalian on 28 December and arrived in Inchon in the ROK on 29 December, according to reports released by the ROK's *Yonhap* news agency on Thursday.

The tourists went missing the second day after staying at a hotel in Inchon for the night, the reports said. The Shaanxi Tourism Bureau said in a Saturday statement that the tourists had not registered with local tourism authorities in Shaanxi. The Shaanxi provincial public security department has dispatched a team to look into the case.—*Xinhua*

Egyptians debate over draft law limiting protests

CAIRO, 6 Jan—The draft law limiting protests in Egypt, which is currently being studied after recently being announced by Justice Minister Ahmed Mekki, stirred up an overwhelming debate in the Egyptian political arena.

Contradictory reports emerged these days on whether the Shura Council, the country's temporary legislative authority, had received a proposed law to regulate demonstrations, sit-ins and strikes.

Mekki's statement made it clear that the intended law was not a ghost but a reality, even if it has not yet been submitted to the Shura Council for discussion.

Leaked reports said the controversial law specifies the time of protests from 7 am to 7 pm, regulating that protests can neither cause traffic jam nor include damage or sabotage and they cannot be held outside the presidential palace.

The proposed law also stipulates that strikes must be staged at least 14 days after prior notice and cannot affect work and production, which is seen as "ridiculous" by opposers of the law, as strike worldwide means halting production as a means of pressure.

Most political parties and movements in Egypt, including some Islamist ones, strongly rejected the draft law, arguing it limits freedom of expression and serves only the current administration.

The main opposition bloc dubbed "the National Salvation Front" denounced the law as "notorious," saying it represents a copy of the repressive laws adopted at the time of former President Hosni Mubarak.

"The Front, with its various political parties and revolutionary forces, will stand against this law and will take all necessary political and legal measures to hold protests against such a freedom-limiting law," Hussein Abdel-Ghani, the Front's spokesman, told *Xinhua*.

For his part, political activist and Front member Karima al-Hifnawi said the law "is an unforgivable crime against human rights. Whoever proposed this law is more evil than the devil as it prepares for a terrorist, repressive, fascist, police state."

Al-Hifnawi added that Egyptians broke the barrier of fear and held anti-government protests despite the emergency law during the time of Mubarak and they would not give up their right of expression under any circumstances.

Xinhua

Nixon to be remembered in centennial salute at California birthplace

LOS ANGELES, 6 Jan—A planned yearlong centennial celebration of Richard Nixon's birth is due to kick off on Sunday at his presidential library in Southern California, with military honors and the laying of a wreath by the eldest daughter of the late 37th US president.

Nixon, the Cold War-era Republican stalwart who opened US relations with communist China and became the only American president to resign from office, leaving the White House in disgrace over the Watergate scandal, would have turned 100 this week.

He died in 1994 at age 81.

The Richard Nixon Foundation plans to observe his complicated legacy with various events throughout the year, starting with the event on Sunday at the official Nixon library run by the foundation and the National Archives in Yorba Linda, California — his birthplace.

Among those set to attend are his eldest daughter, Tricia Nixon Cox, who will lay a White House wreath from President Barack Obama, organizers said.

Bruce Herschensohn, who was a speech-writer for the president, will deliver the keynote address, followed by a flyover by a squadron of US fighter jets, musical presentations by a US Marine band and a 21-gun salute.

Building his political career with stints in the US House of Representatives and Senate following World War Two, Nixon served for eight years as vice president under President Dwight Eisenhower before seeking the White House himself in 1960.

He was defeated by Democrat John Kennedy in one of the closest presidential elections in modern times. He ran two years later for California governor and lost, leading to a bitter concession speech in which Nixon famously declared, "You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore."

But he came back to win the Republican nomination and presidential election in 1968 in a tumultuous campaign season marred by civil unrest over the Vietnam War and the assassinations of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. and Democratic presidential hopeful Robert Kennedy.

Although Nixon had campaigned on a promise to achieve "peace with honor" in Vietnam, he initially escalated the conflict by approving a secret bombing campaign against communist North Vietnamese positions in Cambodia. A peace deal was eventually reached in 1973 leading to an end of US military involvement before South Vietnam ultimately fell to the communist North.—*Reuters*

South Carolina woman ranked as oldest American dies at age 114

NEW YORK, 6 Jan—A 114-year-old South Carolina woman who was born when William McKinley was president of the United States and had ranked as the oldest known living American for just over two weeks, has died, her daughter said on Saturday.

Mamie Rearden died on Wednesday at a hospital in Augusta, Georgia, about 20 miles south of her South Carolina home, her youngest daughter, Sara Rearden, told *Reuters*.

She had recently broken her hip and was having difficulty breathing earlier in the week, her daughter said, adding, "I was looking right at her when she took her last breath."

Even at Rearden's advanced age, she was younger than the oldest known living person in the world, identified as a 115-year-old Japanese man, Jiroemon Kimura, according to the Gerontology Research Group.

The group's figures show Rearden became the oldest living person in the United States just 16 days before her death.

Rearden was born on 7 Sept, 1898, in Edgefield, South Carolina, where she was raised and lived all her life, her daughter said. She was a school teacher early in life, but after getting married and starting a family she left the job to become a homemaker, and went on to have 11 children in all.

She obtained her first driver's license at age 65, and at about the same time became a case worker for an anti-poverty program, according to her daughter. Her husband, Oacy Rearden, died in 1979 at the age of 88.

Reuters

Investments in Jordan rise by 58 pct in 2012

AMMAN, 6 Jan—Investments registered in Jordan rose by about 58 percent in 2012 compared to 2011, the Jordan Investment Board said on Saturday.

Investments in 2012 reached about 1.614 billion dinars (about 2. 3 billion US dollars) compared to 1.023 billion dinars (1.44 billion dollars) in 2011, the board said in a statement of which a copy was obtained by *Xinhua*. Of the total investments in 2012, about 49 percent were local investments and the rest foreign investments, according to the statement.

Awni Shdaifat, acting executive director of the board, said the majority, or about 1.27 billion dinars (1.79 billion dollars) of the investments, was in the industrial sector, increasing by 96 percent compared to 2011. About 99 million dinars (140 million dollars) worth of investments were in the hospital sector in 2012, followed by the agricultural sector with 24.6 million dinars (34.5 million dollars) and 64.6 million dinars (91 million dollars) in the hotel and hospitality sector.—*Xinhua*

Policemen examine ice condition at Xidayang Fishing Wharf in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province, on 5 Jan, 2013. The ice conditions in the Bohai Sea and the Yellow Sea this January may be more serious than that in the past years, forecasted by North China Sea Marine Forecasting Center of State Oceanic Administration.—XINHUA

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SPORTS

Li Na lifts seventh career title at Shenzhen Open

SHENZHEN, 6 Jan — Former French Open winner Li Na bagged the seventh career title when she overcame Cezch Klara Zakopalova 6-3, 1-6, 7-5 to win the inaugural Shenzhen Open on Saturday. The two 30-year-old battled it out in the three-set thriller where Li managed to nail the victory on her first match point.

"Today was an especially big test," said the top seed. "We've played a few times, and it's never once been an easy match. The way she plays just isn't my favorite — she hits a particularly flat ball — so for every point I win, I really have to able to control the tempo."

Li will then compete in next week's Sydney event as a warm-up to the Australian Open where she will try to restore her glory as a former Grand Slam winner.

Li became not just the first Chinese but the first Asian to win a Grand Slam title in 2011 in the French Open. In the doubles final, No 1 seeds from Chinese Taipei, Chan Hao-Ching and Chan Yung-Jan, defeated unseeded Irina Buryachok of Ukraine and Valeria Solovieva from Russia 6-0, 7-5.— *Xinhua*

Former French Open winner Li Na

Nagatomo extends contract with Inter

MILAN, 6 Jan— Japanese players Yuto Nagatomo has officially extended his contract with Inter until June 2016.

"FC Internazionale is pleased to announce that Yuto Nagatomo has signed a contract extension with the club," read a statement.

"All the paperwork relating to the Japanese defender's new deal, which runs until June 2016, has been completed."

The left-wing-back joined from Cesena and made his debut for the Nerazzurri in a 5-3 victory over Roma on 6 Feb, 2011.

He has scored six goals in 86 official appearances for the club.—*Xinhua*

Japanese players Yuto Nagatomo

NFL: Vikings QB Ponder to miss playoff game with elbow injury

NEW YORK, 6 Jan — Minnesota Vikings starting quarterback Christian Ponder will miss Saturday's playoff game against the Green Bay Packers with an elbow injury, the National Football League (NFL) team said.

Ponder, who hurt his elbow during last week's regular season finale, will be replaced by Joe Webb, who is 1-1 as a starter in his NFL career and has not thrown a pass all season.

Minnesota plays Green Bay in the opening wild-card weekend of the NFL playoffs at 8:00 pm ET (0100 GMT).

Reuters

Minnesota Vikings quarterback Christian Ponder looks for a pass during the first half of their NFL football game against the St Louis Rams in St Louis, Missouri, on 16 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Spain overcome Djokovic and Ivanovic for Hopman Cup shock

PERTH, 6 Jan — Spain secured a surprise victory in the Hopman Cup with a comeback triumph against Serbia in the final of the mixed teams event in Perth on Saturday.

Fernando Verdasco and Anabel Medina Garrigues beat the more fancied pairing of Novak Djokovic and Ana Ivanovic 6-4, 7-5 in the deciding mixed doubles to secure a 2-1 win. World No 1 Djokovic had already defeated Verdasco 6-3 7-5 in the opening singles before Medina Garrigues survived a tense clash against Ivanovic, 6-4, 6-7, 6-2.

"Thanks to Fernando because without him, the doubles would have been impossible," Medina Garrigues said. Verdasco led Djokovic 3-0 in the second set of their singles rubber before being overhauled. "It's difficult to play against a player like him," Djokovic said. "He's very aggressive and serves over 200kmh."

Djokovic is chasing his third successive Australian Open at Melbourne Park from 14 January. He suffered a shock loss to Australia's Bernard Tomic during the round robin stage of the Hopman Cup but recovered with back-to-back singles wins against Andreas Seppi and Verdasco.

Reuters

Fernando Verdasco (L) and Anabel Medina Garrigues of Spain hold up the Hopman Cup and their diamond encrusted silver balls after defeating Novak Djokovic and Ana Ivanovic of Serbia in the final of the Hopman Cup tennis tournament in Perth on 6 Jan, 2013.
REUTERS

Dida 'best Brazilian goalkeeper of 21st century'

SAO PAULO, 6 Jan — Former AC Milan and Brazil goalkeeper Dida has been ranked the best Brazilian goalkeeper of the 21st century by the International Football Federation of History & Statistics (IFFHS).

Dida is in seventh position on the list, ahead of compatriots Julio Cesar and Rogerio Ceni. Italian Gianluigi Buffon heads the ranking. QPR's Julio Cesar is in eighth place and is the only other Brazilian in the top ten. Sao Paulo's Rogerio Ceni is in 13th.

Goalkeeper Marcos, who was first choice for the Selecao in 2002 when they won their fifth World Cup, lies in 34th. He hung up his gloves this year after representing Paulista club Palmeiras for the entirety of his career.

Three more Brazilans made this century's top 50; Tottenham's Gomes, Corinthians' Cassio — who made four outstanding saves as his club won the Club World Cup at the expense of Chelsea — and Liverpool's Doni.

Dida spent a decade with Milan, winning one Italian league title and two Champions League crowns. He recently signed for Brazilian club Gremio, who will compete in this year's Copa Libertadores. Dida made 91 appearances for the Brazilian national side before retiring in 2006, following Brazil's elimination to France in the World Cup quarter-final.

The top 10 are as follows:

1 - Gianluigi Buffon
2 - Iker Casillas
3 - Petr Cech
4 - Edwin Van der Sar
5 - Oliver Kahn
6 - Victor Valdes
7 - Dida
8 - Julio Cesar
9 - Jens Lehmann
10 - Roberto Abbondanzieri

Xinhua

Former AC Milan and Brazil goalkeeper Dida

NBA: Timberwolves top scorer Love has broken hand

TORONTO, 6 Jan — Minnesota Timberwolves leading scorer Kevin Love has refractured his right hand, the National Basketball Association (NBA) team said on Saturday.

The injury to Love, who missed the first three weeks of the 2012-13 season with a broken right hand, is a severe blow to the Timberwolves (15-14), who are battling to stay in playoff contention in the NBA's Western Conference.

Love, 24, suffered the latest injury in the third quarter of Thursday's game at Denver. An update to Love's status will be provided after he is examined by a hand specialist later this week, the team said in a statement. The two-time All-Star forward, who was on the gold-medal winning US team at last summer's London Olympics, leads the Timberwolves with an average of 18.3 points and 14 rebounds per game.

Reuters

Minnesota Timberwolves forward Kevin Love (42) wipes sweat from his face during the first half of the Timberwolves' NBA basketball game against the Los Angeles Clippers in the Target Centre in Minneapolis, on 5 March, 2012. — REUTERS

GENERAL

Tomato at Sarlingyi Market

SARLINGYI, 6 Jan— Now, Local people from Sarlingyi Township Monywa District can buy onion, pepper and tomato at market.

The price for tomato was 350 kyats per viss in Myoma Market at Sarlingyi.

In recent months, the price of tomato was 7 or 800 kyats per viss. one of the vendor said.

Tomato producer can get a lot of profit and it was the good news of this year.

Myanma Alinn

Berdych completes Kooyong line up

MELBOURNE, 6 Jan — World number six Tomas Berdych has been confirmed as the final player in the eight-man invitational Kooyong Classic. Tournament director Colin Stubs had held the final spot in the field open until as late as possible, hoping to secure a top-10 player for the tournament that serves as warm up for the Australian Open.

Stubs had said earlier he had contacted representatives of the world's top four players, Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer, Andy Murray and Rafa Nadal, about filling the spot. Djokovic instead chose to play Hopman Cup in Perth, the 31-year-old Federer has not played any competitive warmup matches this year as he manages his schedule to improve his longevity, Murray is in Brisbane, while Nadal withdrew from the Australian Open due to illness.

Berdych, however, who reached the quarter-finals in Chennai earlier this week, felt he needed more match practice and asked to join the Kooyong tournament, Stubs said in a statement on Sunday. The 27-year-old Czech joins 2009 US Open champion Juan Martin del Potro, world number nine Janko Tipsarevic, top-20 players Juan Monaco, Milos Raonic and Japan's Kei Nishikori, Melbourne crowd favorite Marcos Baghdatis and former world number one Lleyton Hewitt in the 9-12 January tournament.

World number six Tomas Berdych

The event has traditionally attracted a high quality field as it guarantees players three competitive matches on the same surface used at the Australian Open a few kilometers down the road at Melbourne Park the following week.—*Reuters*

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(7-1-13 09:30 am ~ 8-1-13 09:30 am) MST

* News
* Recycled Art by San Zaw Htwe
* 100 Plus Trade Launching Ceremony
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* Visit to Myanmar (RT Hon Hugo Swire MP)
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* Sittway, Evergreen Seaside Town
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* Let's take part in Good Deed
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* President U Thein Sein talks to the press (Phnom Penh, Cambodia)
* News
* Award for Production of Sultan Fish
* News
* Myanmar Movies "Love between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea"

MYANMAR TV

(7-1-2013, Monday)

7:00 am
1. Paritta By Venerable MinGun Sayadaw

7:10 am
2. Dhamma Puja Song

7:40 am
3. Nice & Sweet Song

7:50 am
4. Health Programme

8:00 am
5. Cute Little Dancers

8:10 am
6. Teleplay (Health)

8:25 am
7. "Road to 27 th SEA GAMES" (Karatedo)

8:35 am
8. Dance Of National Races

4:00 pm
9. Martial Song

4:10 pm
10. Dance Variety

4:20 pm
11. Musical Programme

4:30 pm
12. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -First Year (Botany)

4:15 pm
13. Instrumental Music

4:45 pm
14. Songs For Upholding National Spirit

4:55 pm
15. Myanmar Language

5:10 pm
16. Musical Programme (The Radio Myanmar Modern Music Troupe)

5:20 pm
17. Documentary

5:40 pm
18. Songs Programmes

6:00 pm
19. Evening News

6:15 pm
20. Weather Report

6:20 pm
21. Sing & Enjoy

7:00 pm
22. TV Drama Series

8:00 pm
23. News

9:00 pm
24. Myanmar movies

10:00 pm
25. Cartoon Series
26. India Drama Series

Ski jumping: Takanashi earns 3rd World Cup win of season

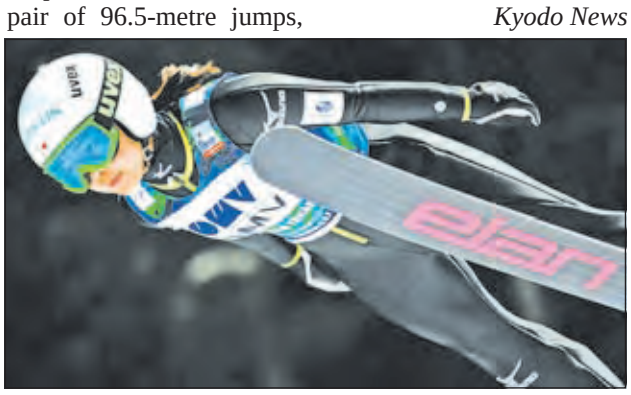
Japanese teenager Sara Takanashi

SCHONWALD, (Germany), 6 Jan—Japanese teenager Sara Takanashi returned from a training crash in spectacular form on Saturday, with her third victory this season on the women's World Cup ski jump circuit in Schonwald, Germany.

The 16-year-old from Hokkaido was competing for the first time since 20 Dec, when she suffered a concussion after tumbling in practice. She landed a pair of 96.5-metre jumps, a distance matched just once all day, and finished with 242.1 points. In five individual events this season, Takanashi has won three times, with one second and one third.

"I got full marks, two jumps in good form in a row," she said. "I just managed to get into my Telemark position (for landing). It's a good thing I did as that has been an issue."

Kyodo News



Japanese teenager Sara Takanashi

D'Antoni says Lakers need better starts, tighter defence

LOS ANGELES, 6 Jan -- Faster starts and a much improved defense are sorely needed by the Los Angeles Lakers if the 16-time NBA champions are to resurrect a bitterly disappointing campaign, according to their head coach Mike D'Antoni. Lakers fans had lofty expectations for 2012-13 after Kobe Bryant and Pau Gasol were joined by fellow All-Stars Dwight Howard and Steve Nash during the off-season but the once mighty franchise has failed to gel, slipping to a 15-17 record.

An ageing line-up has not been helped by a spate of injuries and three different head coaches, though the return of veteran point guard Nash from a leg fracture for the last six games certainly gave the team a much needed lift. "We just have to get better starts," D'Antoni told reporters after Lakers team practice at their El Segundo training facility on Saturday. "Whatever we're doing isn't working right now. "And defensively, we need to work harder. We lose our energy on defence sometimes because the offense sputters." The Lakers lost a tense battle with their city rival Clippers 107-102 on Friday after clawing back from a 19-point deficit early in the fourth quarter at the Staples Centre.

In their previous game they also fell short, going down 103-99 on their home court against the struggling Philadelphia 76ers on New Year's Day after trailing by 11 points in the first quarter. "We competed," D'Antoni said of his team's spirited revival against the Clippers when Bryant finished with a game-high 38 points. "We came back and we had a shot at the end to win. "We're always shooting under pressure, down eight or 10, and the ball has to go in. Then you're down 15 or 17, and it's 'Oh man'. We're struggling with that a little bit. "So there are spots where we're really good and there are spots where we seem to dissolve a little bit as a team. We have to find guys that can make shots and we have to get back to that." The Lakers have very little time to get back as they host the Denver Nuggets on Sunday and their three-time defensive player of the year Howard has billed himself a "game-day decision". Centre Howard put up 21 points and 15 rebounds for the Lakers against the Clippers on Friday but hurt his shoulder in a tangle with Caron Butler and woke up on Saturday in some pain.

Howard skipped team practice on Saturday and received treatment from the Lakers' training staff but D'Antoni was not too worried, saying the centre's chances of playing on Sunday were "good." Bench player Jordan Hill, who sprained his right ankle against the Clippers, was listed as "probable" for Sunday's game against the Nuggets. The Lakers, who have lost three of their last four games, have gone 10-12 since D'Antoni took over from interim coach Bernie Bickerstaff.—*Reuters*

Los Angeles Lakers' Steve Nash (L), head coach Mike D'Antoni (C) and Kobe Bryant react after losing possession of the ball in the final minute of the fourth quarter against the Los Angeles Clippers in their NBA basketball game in Los Angeles on 4 Jan, 2013.— REUTERS

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Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, KNU Chairman hold talks

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, KNU Chairman General Mutu Sae Phoe and party pose for documentary photo.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing held talks with KNU Chairman General Mutu Sae Phoe at Bayintnaung Yeiktha here this morning.

Present on the occasion were Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Hla Htay Win, Vice-Chairman of Peace-making Working Group Union Minister U Aung Min, and senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), KNU General Secretary Phado Saw Kwe Htoo Win, Secretary-2 Phado Saw Mahn Mahn, central committee members Phado Roger Khin, Phado Mahn Nyein Maung and Phado Saw Hla Tun from the KNU side.

The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services said approximately 75 per cent of peace process has been completed between the government and KNU and coordination would be the final stage of the process. He expressed the military's commitment to do its fair share for peace and stability of Kayin State, vowing to strengthen the prevailing peace for development of the nation. He added that the military has dispatched mobile medical teams to stable regions to provide health care to local national races and the work has achieved considerable success. Those mobile medical teams are also taking care of locals in some parts of Kayin State. He made known the military's wish to make a contribution toward health and transportation sectors of Kayin State for its development. He described the Tatmadaw as the armed forces of the Union made up of national people of the Union from four corners of the nation, stressing that every national race must have Union spirit.

The KNU Chairman said gunshots could hardly be heard since the ceasefire negotiation was initiated. He pledged to strengthen the peace process without a single thought of return. KNU has formed seven committees after its conference and it has been planned to reconstitute peace-making committee.

The KNU General Secretary and the Secretary-2 expressed KNU's wish to re-discuss the principles to be observed by the two sides in detail so as to strengthen the peace process, adding that it would do a lot for building mutual trust, emphasizing the instrumental role of transportation for progress of Kayin State. They requested cooperation of military mobile medical teams with KNU's medical teams in improving education and health for the locals. They cited the conflict in Kachin State as a barrier to peace process, adding that doubts still remain among national races due to the civil war which has been dragging on for over the half of a century. And Kachin incident could be a question to the country's democratization process, they said.

The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services vowed to cooperate in potential matters with seven committees that will be formed by KNU, adding that he believed KNU's pursuit of peace for development of Kayin State as every one who loves the country wants to see national development. He called for moving towards the positive side keeping honesty and promise. Common goal of all national brethren could be reached one day as national races are family members of the Union. The responsibility of Tatmadaw is to safeguard the country and protect the lives and property of the people. Due to attacks of KIA on non-military targets, Tatmadaw had to take military action as self-defence and protect the people and peace and stability of the region. The KIA committed forced recruitment and extorting money. If all national races had upheld Our Three Main National Causes, there would not have any problems. He invited KNU to visit Kachin State to be able to witness real situations which were different from outside media statement. He praised the KNU for showing goodwill in education and health sectors for regional development before peace agreement had reached. He encouraged the preservation of literature, language and culture of national races and stressed the need for learning of Myanmar language, English and computer in schools. Health and education tasks in Kachin State for regional development were jeopardized. He guaranteed that Tatmadaw was keen to see peace and stability and prosperity of the country. He said that he believed peace accord could be reached in Kachin State.

Next, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hosted breakfast for KNU Chairman General Mutu Sae Phoe and members.

Then the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services presented gifts to the KNU Chairman and members and posed for a documentary photo together with them.—*MNA*

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and KNU Chairman General Mutu Sae Phoe exchange gifts at the breakfast.

MNA

Kayin State celebrates Independence Day

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—Myanmar Police Force led the state-flag hoisting ceremony on 65th Independence Day on 4 January at Pyidaungsu Thiri Sports Ground in Hpa-an in Kayin State.

State Chief Minister U Zaw Min, the state ministers, departmental officials and Hpa-an people paid tribute to martyrs and fallen soldiers.

The chief minister read out the message sent by the President.

The chief minister cordially greeted Chairman of Karen National Union General Mutu Sae Phoe and party, national races leaders and officials.

MNA

Summary of observations at (9:30)hr M.S.T today

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Jan—During the past (24) hours weather has been partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Yangon and Taninthayi Regions, Rakhine and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Night temperatures were (3°C) below January average temperatures in Chin State, (3°C) above January average temperatures in Mon State and about January average temperatures in the remaining Regions and States. The significant night temperatures were (-1°C) in Haka and (2°C) in Loilem.

NLM