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We need to catch up with neighbouring agro-based economies by enthusiasm, mindset change, land reform, mechanization, and high-yield strains

NAY PYI TAW, 2 March—*The following is the translation of the message sent by President Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of Peasants Day, which falls on 2 March, 2013.*

Esteemed peasantry,

Today is honourable Peasants Day. On this auspicious occasion of the Peasants Day, I wish you the peasantry physical and mental well-being and greater success in the agricultural farming.

The new government which took office on 30 March, 2011 in accord with multiparty democracy system turns two years. For the long-term national interest, the government could lay down eight rural development and poverty alleviation tasks as a national goal in such short period of time. First priority is given to the development of farmers which account for 70 percent of country's total population.

Our country is an agro-based one. Special emphasis is placed on better living standard of farmers and agricultural development for further cementing national strength. Our government is paying special attention to cent per cent completion of current irrigation system for effective use of dams and river water pumping projects built in the time of former government, development of agriculture produce and higher per capita income.

Implementation of irrigation system in farm lands would help the farmers grow paddy from single cropping pattern to multiple cropping pattern. It can lead to increase job opportunities and income in farm sector. Our government is also implementing the long-term and short-term plans for transformation of conventional farming into mechanized farming across the country by centering Nay Pyi Taw Council Area which is the Union territory.

For high quality and yield of crops, agriculturalists' efforts for dissemination of knowledge on advanced growing methods to the famers in the fields are a good foundation for development of farm sectors. For high yields and marketable quality of all crops including main staple crop paddy, efforts are being made for production of more hybrid paddy, corn, sunflower, bean and pulses and crop seeds. It is heartening to see the private sector's active participation in this drive.

Our government is planning to increase agricultural loans to address the peasants' need of the injection of capital. The loan for paddy and sugarcane will be increased to K 0.1 million and that for other seasonal crops to K 20,000 per acre. It would be more helpful to the peasants. The peasants could now be engaged in relentless pursuit of success of their farms. *(Seepage8)*

President U Thein Sein observes Solbergfoss Hydropower Plants

***President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein observes Solbergfoss Hydropower Plants in Askim north of Oslo in Norway.*—MNA**

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein observed Solbergfoss Hydropower Plants in Askim, north of Oslo in Norway this morning.

The President viewed hydropower generation, turbines and control room at No 1 Solbergfoss Hydropower Plant. The President was conducted round by President and Chief Executive Officer Mr. Tore Olaf Rimmereid and Factory Manager Mr. Oystein Rafoss of E-Co Energy Co.

Norwegian Trade and Industry Minister Mr. Trond Giske and Director Mr. Oistein Andresen from Statkraft Energy Co made clarifications on natural resources management, development of hydropower generation industries and environmental conservation which are vital for industries of Norway, construction of hydropower plants around the world to the President at the conference hall of No. 2 Hydropower Plant.

Norway has 100 years experience in hydropower generation. Moreover, Norway is the six largest hydropower producer in the world and largest renewable energy power producer in Europe. Hydropower fulfills most of electricity demand of the country. Norway has put emphasis on environmental conservation and on economic and social benefits of local people in hydropower generation funded by foreign investments and investments of state/local governments. It can satisfy local electricity demand and can even export the surplus.

The President raised questions for his knowledge and expressed that Myanmar wishes to put the Norwegian experience of hydropower management into practice.

In the evening, the President attended the luncheon hosted by Norwegian Environment Minister Mr. Bard Vegar Solhjeel at Ekebergrestauranten in Oslo.

The President viewed ancient manuscripts on Buddhism kept by Professor Mr. Jens Braarvig of Oslo University.

The President invited the professor to cooperate with senior venerable monks of Myanmar to join efforts to precisely translate the manuscripts as Myanmar is the most Theravada Buddhism flourishing country in the world. Those manuscripts are handwritings from AD 1, 3 and 8 written in Brahmin words on palm leaves and are important historical evidences of Buddhism and education and were found in a small cave in Afghanistan.

The President observed Opera Building and enjoyed the opera in the evening.

MNA

HONOURING THE PEASANTS DAY

LOCAL NEWS

Fire breaks out at fuel station in Toungoo

Toungoo, 1 March—A fire broke out at the fuel station owned by Ma Thanda Lwin, 38, near Timber Sales Housing on Mingyi Nyo Road in Ward 18 of Toungoo at 11.30 am on 22 Ferbuary.

The fire started from siphoning of fuel into the container.

In the fire, one building, 10 gallons of petroleum and 15 gallons of diesel were lost with their value of K 100,000. Owner Ma Thanda Lwin was injured in the fire.

Head of Toungoo District Fire Services Department U Htin Aung Lin and 40 fire fighters, Commander of Township Police Force Police Major Zaw Lin and 30 policemen, ward administrators and over 50 people participated in fire fighting with the use of four fire engines and one water tanker of Township Development Affairs Committee. They managed to put out fire at 12 noon.

Toungoo No. 1 Police Station opened a file of lawsuit for outbreak of fire.—*Myanma Alinn*

Collective Htamane making contest held

Mandalay, 1 March—To offer Htamane snacks to members of the Sangha on the Fullmoon Day of Tabodwe for the second time, the collective Htamane making ceremony was held at Pale Ngweyaung Fire Station in Aungmyethazan Township on 24 February.

The local people and members of Auxiliary Fire Brigade actively participated in the Htamane making contest.

They were supervised by Head of Township Fire Services Department U Aung Thu, Chairman of Mandalay District Auxiliary Fire Brigade Supervisory Committee U Bo Min and ward administrator U Win Ko.

On the fullmoon day of Tabodwe, they offered Htamane meals to 200 members of the Sangha.

Myanma Alinn

Visits of tourists on increase at Yangon National Museum

Yangon, 1 March—As every Monday has been designated as holiday of state cultural museums including the National Museum in Yangon and archaeological museums in states, the number of tourists would rise the National Museum in Yangon daily.

At present, about 300 globetrotters visit the Yangon National Museum. Growing number of visitors at the museum can earn foreign exchange daily.

Due to requests of local and foreign visitors, the archaeological museums, other cultural museums and various museums in regions and states including the Yangon National Museum are closed every Monday.

Depending on increasing of opening days for the museums, the globetrotters who arrive in Myanmar through various ways will have more time to observe Myanmar ancient artefacts.

Most of the tourists who arrive at the archaeological museums came from Asia. Now, the number of tourists from Europe is increasing day by day.

Myanma Alinn

Hospital Management Course conducted in Mandalay

Mandalay, 1 March—Myanmar Medical Association, Hospital Management Education Society and Myanmar Private Hospital Association jointly opened the hospital management course at the City Hospital on Theikpan Road in Mandalay on 23 February.

Patron of the Hospital Management Education Society of MMA Professor Dr Mya Oo, Chairman of MMA (Central) Professor Dr Kyaw Myint Naing, Chairman of MMA (Mandalay) Dr Thit Lwin, Chairman of Hospital Management Society Dr Kyaw Win and Chairman of Myanmar Private Hospital Association Dr Ye Moe Myint explained the purpose of the training course.

The course was attended by 100 trainees from private hospitals and clinics across upper Myanmar.

The training courses including 33 subjects were conducted to the trainees from 23 to 26 February at Padauk Hall of MMA (Mandalay).

Myanma Alinn

Traffic rules enforced in Yesagyo

Yesagyo, 1 March—Members of Myanmar Police Force, departmental officials of Township Law Office, Township Development Affairs Committee, Fire Services Department, Traffic Police Corps, Transport Department and Pakokku District Directorate of Road Administration checked driver's licence and work licence of vehicles and motorcycles at the entrance gates of Yesagyo on 23 February.

The combined team gave educative talks on traffic rules and disciplines for road users to the drivers and vehicle owners.

Myanma Alinn

Traditional medicine practitioners give health care services

Monywa, 1 March—In order to horizon of the local people on advantages of traditional medicine and of providing health care services to them, a 10-member team led by Medical Superintendent U Nay Aung of Monywa Traditional Medicine Hospital (50-bed) made a field trip to villages of Nyaungbingan Village-tract of Myinmu Township on 24 February.

They gave health knowledge talks to the local people and health care services to patients.

Medical Superintendent U Nay Aung gave lectures on symptoms of diabetes and hypertension diseases, dos and don'ts for patients.

The traditional medicine practitioners provided health care services to 254 patients.

Myanma Alinn

***Two US citizens and two Italians from Bill and Media Foundation, Asia Foundation and Beyond Access led by member of Myanmar Libraries Foundation Dr Thant Thaw Kaung, accompanied by Staff Officer U Khin Maung Tun of PyinOoLwin District Information and Public Relations Department visited Lunge Ahman Library in Nyaungbinpu Village and Shumawa Library in Kyaungseik Village in Singu Township of PyinOoLwin District on 22 February.*—Myanma Alinn**

Bonfire held in Kyondoe

Kyondoe, 1 March—The 187th Kayin traditional bonfire festival was held in Kyondoe of Kawkareik District in Kayin State on 23 February.

At first, Kayin songs were sung and then fireworks set off. Next, don dance troupes performed entertainment in the festival.

Myanma Alinn

WORLD

Hungary PM seen picking his "right hand" to head central bank

BUDAPEST, 1 March — Prime Minister Viktor Orban is expected to nominate the man he calls his "right hand" to head Hungary's central bank on Friday, a move that could prompt cheap money being pumped into the economy ahead of elections in 2014.

Orban, who has often been at loggerheads with the European Union, banks and the International Monetary Fund, is widely seen as appointing Economy Minister Gyorgy Matolcsy, one of his closest allies, to replace hawkish Governor Andras Simor, whose six-year mandate is expiring.

Such a move would ensure Orban's influence on the National Bank of Hungary even beyond next year's elections, as the new governor will stay for six years.

Matolcsy has been the frontrunner for the job. He is the mastermind behind most of Budapest's experimental economic policies — including Europe's biggest bank tax and a huge private pension takeover — that have at times upset the EU, IMF and investors in the past three years.

*Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban presents his annual state-of-the-nation speech in Budapest, on 22 Feb, 2013.—*REUTERS

Orban could yet surprise and nominate someone else — he likes to finalize his decisions at the very last moment — but markets and local media widely expect Matolcsy to swap his current government spot for the top job at the bank.

To replace Matolcsy as economy minister, Orban is expected to nominate Mihaly Varga, another close ally and a former finance minister whom investors see as a market-friendly.

With Matolcsy, a new, looser era could start at the central bank.

"A broad range of measures could enter the policy mix going forward," said Mujtaba Rahman, an analyst at Eurasia Group.

Reuters

Newly-elected Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiade (front) speaks during his sworn-in ceremony in Nicosia, capital of Cyprus, on 28 Feb, 2013. Newly-elected Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades was sworn in on Thursday for a five-year term and immediately issued a warning to prospective international lenders that forcing depositors in Cypriot banks to take losses was out of the question.
XINHUA

EU Energy Commissioner pledges support to Scotland with energy potential

EDINBURGH, 1 March — European Commissioner for Energy Gunther Oettinger on Thursday said that Europe can help Scotland harness its energy potential, through policies to promote renewables, to build the required North Sea networks, to develop an integrated internal energy market that provides a level playing field to market those resources. Oettinger made the remarks after his talks with Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond in Edinburgh, hailing Scotland as "an energy powerhouse in Europe", according to a Scottish government Press release.

For his part, Salmond welcomed Oettinger's visit to Scotland as the EU's most senior energy official, who meet with the Scottish government and key industry figures across various energy sectors.

"As home to a global centre for oil and gas, around a quarter of the EU's wind and tidal resource, world-leading renewables technologies and about half of Europe's offshore carbon storage capacity, Scotland is a key hub for Europe's energy industry," said the Scottish First Minister.

Salmond wrote to the Commissioner in April 2012 to invite him to Scotland to see the industry first-hand and meet key figures from the energy sectors and government. Oettinger was scheduled to visit Aberdeen in northeastern Scotland on Friday.—*Xinhua*

Donors step up ties with Somalia; praise rebuilding effort

WASHINGTON, 1 March — Major Western donors have stepped up efforts in recent weeks to reengage with Somalia, opening the way for increased development assistance to a country trying to shake off years of conflict. A senior British official said in Washington that London will host a conference with the new Somali government of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on 7 May. The meeting will focus on rebuilding the security forces, police, and justice system and discuss resuming relations with the World Bank.

Somalia has been mired in civil strife for more than two decades, leaving the African nation in grinding poverty, militancy and maritime piracy, without a functioning central government.

"Part of the challenge of mine is to communicate really the degree of opportunity and success that has happened so far in Somalia - mixed with a fairly hard-nosed realism about some of the old challenges that still exist there," said Nick Kay, Africa Director at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Kay said Somalia was the top priority in Africa for Britain, which planned to reopen its embassy in the capital, Mogadishu, in the coming months.

Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud arrives at the European Commission headquarters in Brussels on 30 Jan, 2013.
REUTERS

Rajiv Shah, the head of USAID, traveled to Mogadishu for talks with the government last week, the first visit by a senior US official in more than two decades. It was also the first since the 1993 "Black Hawk Down" incident in which militia fighters shot down two US military helicopters over the city.

Shah told reporters during a conference call that his talks with senior Somali officials focused on transparency of government finances, corruption and restoring basic services.

"As long as the government continues to emphasize and make the right choices to fight corruption and graft, to make its public finances extremely transparent, and to focus on providing the kinds of basic services that the people and economy will need to be effective over time, we think there is a very bright future and I saw some very real tangible signs of that," he said.—*Reuters*

UK deputy PM's party wins closely-watched election

EASTLEIGH, 1 March — The Liberal Democrat party, the junior partner in Britain's coalition government, won a closely-watched election in England on Friday, while the UK Independence party (UKIP) placed second, pushing the ruling Conservatives into an embarrassing third.

The parliamentary election in Eastleigh is an important symbolic victory for the Lib Dems and for Nick Clegg, the deputy prime minister and party leader, who has seen his leadership come under pressure in recent weeks.

But the result is a blow to Prime Minister David Cameron and his ruling Conservative party who had hoped to come second or even win, but were pushed into third place by UKIP, a party that advocates taking Britain out of the European Union and strongly opposes immigration.

The Lib Dems polled 13,342 votes, UKIP 11,571 votes, the Conservatives 10,559 votes and the Labour party 4,088 votes.

Reuters

Britain's Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg removes a sticker supporting Liberal Democrats Eastleigh by-election candidate Mike Thornton, during a visit to the Aston Martin production facility in Gaydon, central England on 28 Feb, 2013.
REUTERS

S African minister considers rhino poaching "national security risk"

CAPE TOWN, 1 March — The unchecked rhino poaching can be considered "a national security risk" given the fact criminal syndicates are behind the scourge, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa said on Thursday.

"The fact that the criminal syndicates involved in rhino poaching also undertake other crimes means that this current situation can be considered a national security risk," Molewa said at a post cabinet briefing in Cape Town.

This entails a comprehensive national response to the crisis which threatens not only the sustainable development path of the country but also the heritage of future generations, she said.

"All efforts to protect the country's rhino population are not just aimed at protecting a species from extinction, but also securing and conserving all South Africa's natural resources."

The minister said that by this week 128 rhino had been poached in South Africa since the beginning of the year, with the Kruger National Park (KNP) continuing to be the hardest hit, having lost 92 rhinos.

The North West, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal provinces are also significantly affected by the killing of rhinos, with North West and KwaZulu-Natal losing 12 rhinos each and Limpopo losing eight.

Law enforcement agencies have intensified the fight against rhino poaching, arresting 46 people in connection with rhino poaching this year, three of them couriers, Molewa said.

The National Joint Operations Centre (NATJOINTS), which is coordinated by the Directorate of Priority Crimes Investigations, has elevated rhino poaching to a priority crime, according to Molewa.

Xinhua

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Clearwire to tap Sprint money but continue Dish talks

NEW YORK, 1 March— Wireless service provider Clearwire Corp said on Wednesday it would draw on $80 million in financing from Sprint Nextel Corp, which is seeking to buy it, but vowed to continue talks with rival bidder Dish Network Corp.

Shares of Clearwire fell 3 cents to $3.17 after the decision, which could end Dish Chairman Charlie Ergen's effort to buy Clearwire. But the stock was still above Sprint's offer of $2.97 per share, showing that investors still held out hope for a higher valuation.

Analysts said Clearwire was likely trying to force Dish to firm up its proposal. Its decision appeared to contradict a previous assertion that it could not take financing from Sprint as long as it was considering a $3.30-per-share offer from Dish due to conditions set by the satellite TV provider.

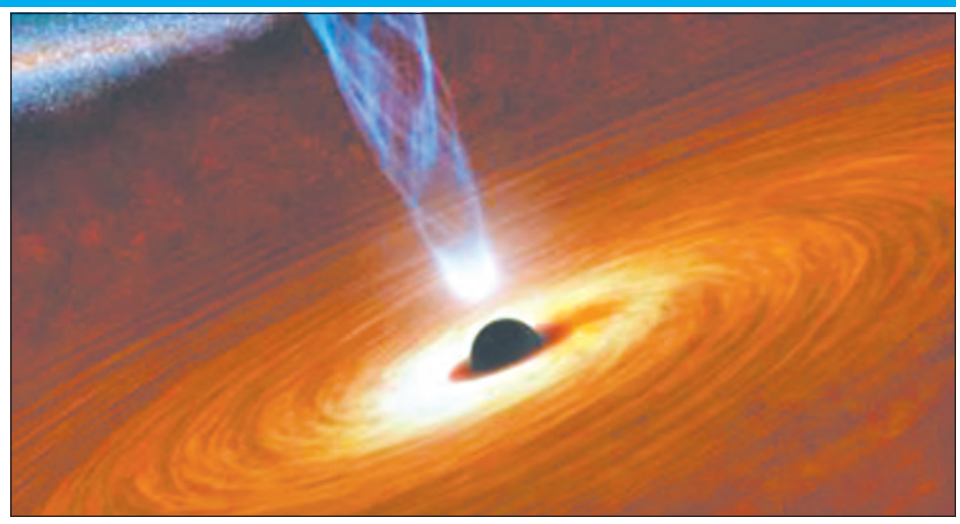
Dish declined to comment, while Sprint said it was pleased with Clearwire's decision. Sprint, already the majority owner of Clearwire, struck a deal in December to buy out the rest of the company. But many Clearwire shareholders said they were unhappy with the Sprint offer, which would need approval from the majority of Clearwire's minority investors.

While some analysts have questioned the seriousness of Dish's bid, BTIG analyst Walter Piecyk said it would not be a stretch to think that Ergen would modify his proposal to take away the condition after two months of talks with Clearwire.

"We suspect that Ergen is not done with the Clearwire process quite yet," Piecyk said. Chris Gleason, a managing partner at Clearwire shareholder Taran Asset Management, said that Dish's reaction to Clearwire's decision will show whether Ergen really wants to do a deal. "This pushes Charlie along," said Gleason. Another analyst, Jennifer Fritzsche of Wells Fargo, said Dish could "pursue litigation," given that its bid of $3.30 per share is higher than Sprint's offer.

Reuters

People walk past a Sprint store in New York on 17 Dec, 2012. Clearwire Corp agreed to sell roughly half of the company for $2.2 billion to majority shareholder Sprint Nextel Corp, which would have full ownership of spectrum that will help offer high-speed wireless services.—REUTERS



NASA space telescope helps solve riddle of black hole spin

WASHINGTON, 1 March — NASA's Nuclear Spectroscopic Telescope Array (NuSTAR) and the European Space Agency's XMM-Newton, have teamed up to measure definitively, for the first time, the spin rate of a black hole with a mass two million times that of our sun, US space agency NASA announced on Wednesday.

The supermassive black hole lies at the dust and gas-filled heart of a galaxy called NGC 1365, and it is spinning almost as fast as Einstein's theory of gravity will allow. The findings, which appeared on Wednesday in a new study in the journal *Nature*, resolve a long-standing debate about similar measurements in other black holes and will lead to a better understanding of how black holes and galaxies evolve. The observations also are a powerful test of Einstein's theory of general relativity, which says gravity can bend space-time, the fabric that shapes our universe, and the light that travels through it.

"We can trace matter as it swirls into a black hole using X-rays emitted from regions very close to the black hole," said coauthor of the study and NuSTAR principal investigator Fiona Harrison of the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

"The radiation we see is warped and distorted by the motions of particles and the black hole's incredibly strong gravity." NuSTAR, launched in June 2012, is designed to detect the highest-energy X-ray light in great detail. It complements telescopes that observe lower-energy X-ray light, such as XMM-Newton and NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory.—*Xinhua*

Pandora Media to cap free mobile listening as costs surge

NEW YORK, 1 March — US online streaming music company Pandora Media Inc said it would cap free mobile listening at 40 hours per month as it tries to overcome rising royalty costs.

Pandora, which relies mainly on advertising for revenue, is struggling to grow amid fierce competition from the likes of Sirius XM Radio Inc.

Pandora's per-track royalty rates have increased more than 25 percent over the last 3 years, including 9 percent in 2013 alone and are set to increase an additional 16 percent over the next two years, co-founder Tim Westergren wrote in a blog posted on the company's website.

"After a close look at our overall listening, a 40-hour-per-month mobile listening limit allows us to manage these escalating costs with minimal listener disruption," he said.

Pandora is currently lobbying lawmakers in US Congress to pass the Internet Radio Fairness Act, which would change regulations on how royalties are paid to artists.—*Reuters*

Tim Westergren (top center-left), founder and Chief Strategy Officer, and Joe Kennedy (top centre-right), president and CEO of Pandora internet radio, watch as their company begins trading on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on 15 June, 2011.—REUTERS

Networking creates devices buzz at mobile fair

A visitor looks at the new Sony Xperia Z phone and tablet through a glass window during the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona on 25 Feb, 2013. The GSMA Mobile World Congress, representing the interests of the worldwide mobile communications industry, takes place from 25 to 28 February in Barcelona.
REUTERS

BARCELONA, 1 March — Networks, whether superfast mobile broadband, wifi or a combination of both, are helping add pizzazz to new mobile products as the rapid evolution in smartphone and tablet design slows to a trickle.

The world's fastest smartphone, new "phablets" —sized between a phone and tablet—and small tablets optimized to watch video and run multiple applications on 4G mobile networks were making the biggest splash at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona.

Networks are also enabling millions of other devices, from coffee makers to bicycles and cars to homes, to become "smart". Chipmaker Qualcomm Inc for instance demonstrated a connected home in which a smartphonecoffee can be used to start a coffer maker and speakers burst into sound when you enter the room, thanks to the handset in your pocket. Such innovations are made possible by AllJoyn, an open-source software framework compatible with mobile operating systems Android, Windows and iOs, that allows devices to speak to each other directly without needing a separate server.

"We are making the Internet of everything a seamless blend of the physical and the digital world," said Brian Spencer, engineer at Qualcomm Innovation Centre.

US network operator AT&T Inc, meanwhile, is adding your home and your car to your smartphone contacts. Its Digital Life product allows a user to automate and monitor his or her home remotely, and it has replaced Verizon Communications Inc as mobile partner for General Motors Co's OnStar connected car service.

Glenn Lurie, AT&T president of emerging enterprises, said the next step would be joining the two products together, creating a smart ecosystem dedicated to an individual.—*Reuters*

Oracle CEO Ellison buys Hawaii's Island Air

SAN FRANCISCO, 1 March —Billionaire Larry Ellison can now afford to fly commercial —on his own commercial airline, that is.

The Oracle Corp chief executive on Wednesday added a small Hawaiian airline to his holdings, less than a year after he purchased the vast majority of land on the small Hawaiian island of Lana'i, off the coast of Maui.

Island Air, a Honolulu-based carrier with a handful of island-hopping planes and about 245 employees, will not make any staff changes as part of the sale and will continue normal operations, the company said.

"We are excited Mr Ellison has acquired Island Air. He has the vision and resources to literally take Island Air to new heights," said Les Murashige, Island Air president.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed, but it was unlikely to financially strain the software mogul, who has an estimated fortune of $36 billion. *Forbes Magazine* recently named Ellison the sixth-richest man in the world.

A spokesman for Ellison called the Island Air purchase "another major investment and commitment to Hawaii."

After Ellison bought 98 percent of Lana'i last year, he said he intended to turn the island into a "laboratory" for green living.—*Reuters*

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Aso wants new BOJ chief to work in line with joint statement

TOKYO, 1 March — Finance Minister Taro Aso on Thursday expressed hope that the new Bank of Japan chief will make efforts to conquer the country's chronic deflation, emphasizing the importance of adhering to a joint policy statement signed by the government and the central bank.

"Whoever becomes the BOJ governor, we hope that the person will work to pull the economy out of deflationary recession as soon as possible in line with the joint statement," Aso said at a news conference.

In the joint statement, which was released last month, the central bank pledged to implement "open-ended" easing to achieve a 2 percent inflation target at the earliest possible time.

The government is scheduled to propose to parliament its nominations on Thursday morning for the BOJ governor and two deputy governors, who will replace incumbent chief Masaaki Shirakawa and deputy governors Kiyohiko Nishimura and Hirohide Yamaguchi.

The three will step down on 19 March.—*Kyodo News*

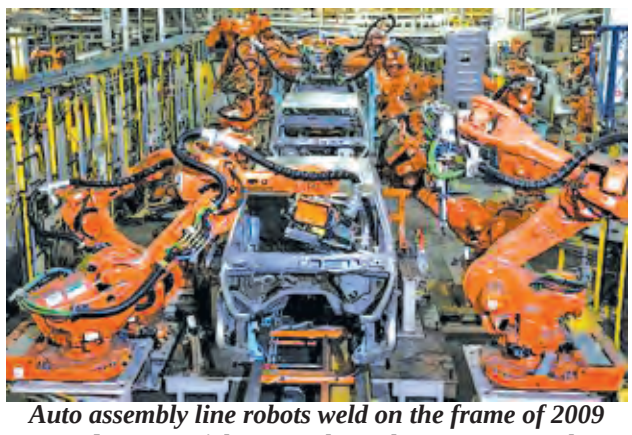
Business spending plans gauge hits 13-month high

WASHINGTON, 1 March —A gauge of planned US business spending recorded its largest increase in more than a year in January, suggesting growing confidence in the durability of the economic recovery.

The case for the economy's resilience was further bolstered by another report on Wednesday showing that contracts to buy previously owned homes approached a near three-year high last month. Housing is expected to underpin growth this year.

Non-defence capital goods orders excluding aircraft, a closely watched proxy for business spending plans, jumped 6.3 percent, the biggest gain since December 2011. These so-called core capital goods orders had slipped 0.3 percent in December.

"The encouraging tone of this report suggests that the business sector is beginning to feel sufficiently confident about the improving economic outlook to commit to investment activity," said Millan Mulraine, a senior economist at TD Securities in New York. In a separate report, the National Association of Realtors said its pending home sales index increased 4.5 percent to its highest since April 2010, just before a home-buyer tax credit expired. The rise in signed purchase contracts, which become sales after a month or two, added to data such as building permits and house prices that have suggested a decisive turnaround in the housing market.



Auto assembly line robots weld on the frame of 2009 Dodge Ram pick-up trucks at the Warren Truck Assembly Plant in Warren, Michigan on 12 Sept, 2008.
REUTERS

Home building added to growth last year for the first time since 2005 and economists expect another contribution this year.

Still, the reports are unlikely to change the Federal Reserve's very easy monetary policy stance. Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke, testifying before Congress for a second straight day, pointed to the pick-up in housing as a sign the US central bank's aggressive easing of monetary policy is gaining traction.

However, he signaled a willingness to press forward with efforts to spur an even stronger recovery and lower the jobless rate, which remains at a lofty 7.9 percent. Stocks on Wall Street ended more than 1 percent higher on the data and Bernanke's comments, with the Standard & Poor's 500 posting its best daily percentage gain since 2 January. The US dollar weakened against a basket of currencies, while prices for US government debt fell.

Reuters

254 died of swine flu

NEW DELHI, 1 March — As many as 254 lives have been lost in the country due to swine flu during the current year till 24 February, with Rajasthan reporting maximum of 105 deaths.

According to the Union Health Ministry, a total of 2,267 persons have tested positive for the Influenza A (H1N1) virus across the country, with the maximum of 759 reported from Delhi alone.

It is followed by Rajasthan with 556 confirmed cases of the virus and Haryana has 298 cases while Gujarat has reported 273 confirmed cases.

Gujarat reported the second highest deaths of 49 in the country, followed by 36 in Haryana and 29 in Punjab, according to figures compiled by the Health Ministry.

Despite the highest number of cases, Delhi has reported only 11 deaths, while Maharashtra has reported 13 deaths. There are also four deaths reported in Chandigarh, three in Madhya Pradesh and two from Andhra Pradesh, with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu reporting one death each due to the virus.—*PTI*

Groupon shares crumple after dismal outlook, take-rate cut

SAN FRANCISCO, 1 March —Groupon Inc lost a quarter of its market value on Wednesday after the company revealed it began to take a smaller cut of revenue on daily deals during the holidays, sacrificing revenue and profits to attract and keep merchants.

The cut in its "take rate", which some analysts had said was needed to revive flagging interest among merchants in its Internet offers, was a blow to fourth-quarter results.

And a sharper-than-expected post-holiday slowdown in its new e-commerce business contributed to a disa-ppointing first-quarter sales forecast.

The stream of bad numbers, which included a surprise loss in the fourth quarter, drove Groupon's stock down 26 percent to $4.43 in after hours trade. Overall, the company has shed more than three-quarters of its value since debuting at $20 in November of 2011.

"This raises questions about how these guys are going to be able to scale the business," said Tom White, an analyst at Macquarie.

"The forecast is underwhelming." Groupon is among a group of consumer-focused Internet startups that went public to much fanfare in 2011—before losing massive chunks of market value as investors realized they had over-rated their prospects.

Within a year, Groupon had run into problems dealing with European merchants and sustaining interest among users as deals fever receded.

In 2012, analysts speculated that Chief Executive Andrew Mason, known for a quirky sense of humor, may have fallen out of favor with the board.

A company spokesman said Mason remained in charge and the CEO addressed analysts on Wednesday's post-results call.

People enter and leave Groupon Inc corporate office and headquarters in Chicago, Illinois, on 4 Nov, 2011.
REUTERS

Groupon reported fourth-quarter revenue rose 30 percent to $638.3 million from $492.2 million in the year-ago period. But it slid into the red with a 1 cent per share loss excluding items, versus expectations for a slim profit of 3 cents a share.

Reuters

Canadian stock market rises on Fed's defence of monetary stimulus

TORONTO, 1 March— The Canadian stock market ended higher on Wednesday as Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke continued to defend the US central bank's monetary stimulus, easing global financial markets' worries over an early retreat from the economic stimulus programme.

Bernanke signaled to lawmakers that the central bank's easy money policies would remain in force.

He reiterated his argument on Wednesday that the Fed's bond-buying programme has helped the economy and the Federal Reserve will be keeping its alive for a while yet. The S&P/TSX Composite Index rose 71.95 points, or 0.57 percent, to 12,732.39, while the S&P/TSX Venture Composite Index decreased 0.79 points, or 0.07 percent, to 1,131.12.

Further indications of a strengthening US housing industry also helped to lift the market up. The US National Association of Realtors said a measure of the number of Americans who signed contracts to buy homes rose in January from December to the highest level in more than two and a half years, a sign that the housing market is sustaining its recovery and helping bolster the economy.

Traders also kept an eye on the turmoil over the election results in Italy, Europe's third largest economy. They looked to Italy on its inconclusive election where voters reject parties supporting austerity measures to deal with the country's huge debt levels.

Xinhua

Judge approves Dewey & LeBoeuf liquidation plan

A sign is seen at the offices of Dewey & LeBoeuf in Palo Alto, California on 5 June, 2012.
REUTERS

NEW YORK, 1 March —A federal bankruptcy judge approved the liquidation plan for Dewey & LeBoeuf on Wednesday, a milestone in the winding down of the collapsed law firm that paves the way for creditors to recover tens of millions of dollars.

US Bankruptcy Judge Martin Glenn said on Wednesday that the bankruptcy plan is in the best interests of the creditors and the estate.

"It is remarkable that only nine objectors filed (motions against the plan) as of today, and nearly all of them are resolved," said Glenn of the swift nature of the bankruptcy proceedings in New York. Dewey & LeBoeuf, which once employed more than 1,000 lawyers in 26 offices worldwide, last year became the largest US law firm to file for bankruptcy.

Reuters

WORLD

EU extends sanctions against Syria

BRUSSELS, 1 March — The European Union (EU) on Thursday decided to extend its sanctions against Syria for a further three months, said a EU statement.

"At the same time, arms embargo have been amended so as to allow for the provision of non-lethal equipment and technical assistance for the protection of civilians," the statement read.

It said the EU Foreign Affairs Council would continue its work of assessing and reviewing its sanctions against Syria.

Since the beginning of the Syria crisis, 21 sets of restrictive measures have been introduced by the EU to increase pressure on the Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad.

Xinhua

Deputies participate during the discussion on the "Memorandum of Understanding", which is the agreement signed between Argentina and Iran for the interrogation to the people accused of the attack on the headquarters of the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA, for its acronym in Spanish), in the Chamber of Deputies, in the city of Buenos Aires, capital of Argentina, in the early hours on 28 Feb, 2013.

XINHUA

US Army private at centre of WikiLeaks case pleads guilty

WASHINGTON, 1 March — A US Army judge on Thursday accepted the guilty plea of Private First Class Bradley Manning, the central figure in a controversy involving whistleblower website WikiLeaks and classified US government files.

Manning admitted to sending hundreds of thousands of Iraq and Afghanistan battlefield reports, State Department diplomatic cables and other files to WikiLeaks while working as an intelligence analyst in Baghdad. He said he did so to expose the US military's "bloodlust" in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was the first time Manning directly admitted leaking the material to WikiLeaks, according to a report by CBS.

Manning said that he didn't think the information would harm the United States, and that he decided to release it because he was disturbed by the conduct of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the seeming disregard by US troops for the lives of ordinary people.

An Army judge accepted the pleas to 10 charges at a hearing on Thursday in Fort Meade, Maryland. Manning could face up to 20 years in prison, and prosecutors said they plan to move forward with an additional 12 charges against him, including aiding the enemy, which could carry a life sentence.—*Xinhua*

Kerry says "confident" in Italy solving election stalemate

ROME, 1 March — US Secretary of State John Kerry said here on Thursday he was confident that Italy would be able to work out its political gridlock caused by the inclusive outcome of its parliamentary election earlier this week.

The election in Italy was "robust, interesting and challenging," Kerry said in a Press conference after an international meeting on Syria when asked whether he had concerns about the current political situation in Italy. "Almost everyone in Italy wants reform and change," Kerry said, adding that the US would stand ready for necessary support.

Italy's political parties have started negotiations after the centre-left coalition won the lower house but failed to win a majority alone in the Senate. It remains rather uncertain whether or how the new government will be formed.

Kerry arrived in Rome on Wednesday in the middle of an 11-day tour of Europe and the Middle East. The talk on Syria was the centerpiece of his first overseas mission since taking office on 1 February.—*Xinhua*

Chavez continuing battle for health and life

CARACAS, 1 March — Venezuela's Vice President Nicolas Maduro said on Thursday that President Hugo Chavez is continuing his battle for "health and life" following his recent cancer treatment.

The ailing president faces "delicate health condition" because he worked tirelessly without rest for the people, Maduro said during a public ceremonial event here.

The Venezuelan people cannot "stop giving thanks to God and ask him to permanently continue giving forces to Chavez to continue the battle for health and life," he said.

Maduro did not elaborate on the health of Chavez, who, as reported by the Venezuelan authorities, remains hospitalized in Dr Carlos Arvelo Military Hospital in Caracas 11 days after returning to Venezuela. Recent photos showed Chavez reclining in a bed flanked by his two daughters.

Chavez, 58, who has been battling cancer since 2011, was re- elected to another six-year term in October 2012, following a contentious campaign against a coalition of conservative parties.—*Xinhua*

Lebanon continues keeping borders open for Syrian refugees

BEIRUT, 1 March — Lebanon's Social Affairs Minister Wael Abou Faour stressed on Thursday that the Lebanese government still stands by its decision to keep its borders with Syria open for displaced Syrians and Palestinians.

Following a meeting with the United Nations Higher Refugees Council representative Ninette Kelly and the United Nations representative in Lebanon Robert Watkins, Abou Faour said that Lebanese government and society is facing the challenge of Syrian refugee issue.

Abou Faour expressed hope that "the international efforts would lead to a solution that will end the bloodshed in Syria and therefore put an end to the displacement issue."

Watkins acknowledged that Lebanon is "witnessing a high influx of Syrian refugees and is currently hosting more than 317,000 refugees." Kelly, for her part, praised Lebanon's role in accommodating the Syrian refugees.

Lebanon submitted last month a plan asking the international community for a financial aid of 370 million US dollars.

Xinhua

Opposition political leader Leopoldo Lopez (C) arrives at the headquarters of the Public Prosecutor, while his supporters demonstrate in his favour, in Caracas, Venezuela, on 28 Feb, 2013. Lopez appeared before Public Prosecutor, where he is being investigated for a complaint against him by the Venezuelan Government for an alleged case of corruption on the money management of Petroleos de Venezuala SA (PDVSA), according to local Press.

XINHUA

Syrian children get together to warm theselves by the fire due to fuel shortage in Biqa, Lebanon, on 28 Feb, 2013.

XINHUA

Casualties feared after Nigeria twin explosions

MAIDUGURI, 1 March — Casualties were feared after twin explosions on Thursday afternoon in Nigeria's northeastern state of Borno, according to military sources. A senior officer of the Joint Task Force (JTF) in the state, who declined to be identified, told *Xinhua* on phone that the explosions occurred in Maiduguri, capital of Borno State, where governors of the newly formed opposition All Progressives Congress (APC) party were holding a meeting.

"As the governors were meeting, the explosions were heard but we cannot confirm the casualty figures for now," the source said, adding that the opposition party governors from the states of Osun, Lagos, Ogun, Edo, Nasarawa, Imo and Yobe had left the city.

Another security source expressed fear that a number of military officers might have been hit by the explosions. "We have received information that some military officers were among the casualties, but we have not confirmed their identity or names yet," the source added.

Attacks are frequently reported in Maiduguri. Although it is unclear who is behind Thursday's explosions, the city is known as home of the Boko Haram insurgents, who began to launch attacks in Nigeria in 2009.—*Xinhua*

LOCAL NEWS

Knowledge shared for ICT development in Sagaing

SAGAING, 1 March—Sagaing Region Computer Industrialists Association and Computer Professionals Association jointly organized the talks on development of information technology at Mya Ayeya Hall of Sagaing Education College in Sagaing on 21 February.

It was attended by Sagaing Hill Buddhist Education Centre IBEC Patron Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sundara (MA-Mumbai), BA (Buddhism), MA (Philo), PhD (Thesis), Vice-Chairman of Sagaing Region Computer Professionals Association U Win Hlwan, Chairman of Region Computer In-dustrialists Association U Saw Zaw Oo and members, Vice-Chairman of Mandalay Region Computer Professionals Association U Hla Kaung, Patron of Computer Industrialists Association U Sai Kyaw Zaw and members, Principal of Sagaing Education College Daw Shwe Shwe Toe and faculty members, trainees and guests.

The principal made a speech. The Vice-Chairman of Sagaing Region Computer Professionals Association explained functions of the association.

The Sayadaw explained basic knowledge about computer science.

U Sai Kyaw Zaw of Mandalay Region Computer Industrialists Association gave lectures on information technology and the Vice-Chairman of Mandalay Region Computer Professionals Association explained introduction to ICT for education to centre.—*Myanma Alinn*

Jade Cooperative Society formed

MANDALAY, 1 March—A ceremony to form Sein Thukha Jade Production Cooperative Society was held at the hall of Township Cooperative Department in Mahaaungmye Township of Mandalay on 21 February morning.

Staff Officer U Kyon Lein of the department and officials, Chairman of Township Cooperative Syndicate U Tin Ngwe and guests attended the ceremonmy.

The Staff Officer and the chairman made speeches. Head of department U Win Htay explained formation of rules and laws. Next, the cooperative society was formed with U Nyo Win as Chairman together with four executives plus auditor Daw Thanda Soe.

Those who were elected took oaths. One share of the cooperative was worth K 100,000. The society was set up with K 8 million. It was located on 41st street between 89th and 89th streets. The society plans to sell jade products at fair prices.

Myanma Alinn

Vehicle blazed near Bago Toll Gate

BAGO, 1 March—A fire broke out near mile post 38/2 of Shwe Than Lwin Toll Gate of Bago at 3.45 am on 24 February.

The fire started from short circuit from BMW Hero vehicle driven from Yangon to Toungoo by Thein Myint, 39, son of U Kyaw Htoo from Ward 1 of Toungoo.

Policemen led by the Commander of Bago Township Police Force and members of Fire Brigade led by the Head of Bago District Fire Services Department put out the fire at 4.25 am. About K 1 million of property lost in the fire.

Bago Police Station No. 3 took action against driver Thein Myint under the law.—*Myanma Alinn*

Rural bridge put into service in Kawlin

KAWLIN, 1 March—A bridge was opened in Upper Thiaya Village of Kawlin Township of Sagaing Region on 24 February morning.

Wellwisher of the bridge U Ohn Maung and officials cut the ribbon to open the bridge which was 45 feet in length and 18 feet in width. The bridge was built at a cost of K 28 million. Thanks to the bridge, the local people can travel from one side to another conveniently.

Myanma Alinn

Buddha Pujaniya of Indawgyi Shwemyintzu Yayle Pagoda on 19 March

MOHNYIN, 1 March—The 144th Buddha Pujaniya of ancient Indawgyi Shwemyintzu Yayle Pagoda will be held from 8th Waning of Tabaung to Fullmoon Day. During the Buddha Pujaniya period, the 11th Pathana recitation ceremony will be taking place from 3rd to 8th Waning of Tabaung.

"Taking part in Shwemyintzu Buddha Pujaniya that is held once a year is an only chance for more than 57000 local people from 39 villages nearby Indawgyi," said U Mingala, member of the board of trustees of the pagoda.

NLM 001

Union Cup Games Dates and Venues for Sports Events

Nos	Sport categories	Event Period		Venue	Remark
		From	To		
Opening ceremony		28-2-2013	-	Wunna Theikdi Stadium (Zabuthiri Township)	
1.	Track and field	3-3-2013	7-3-2013	Wunna Theikdi Stadium (Zabuthiri Township)	
2.	Badminton	23-2-2013	27-2-2013	TC-1 Badminton Training Hall (Zabuthiri Township)	
3.	Basketball	1-3-2013	6-3-2013	TC-1, Basketball Training Ground (Zabuthiri Township)	
4.	Billiards and snooker	23-2-2013	2-3-2013	TC-2 Billiards Hall, Lewe Township	
5.	Physical fitness	12-2-2013	-	MCC (Yangon, Thingangyun Township	
6.	Boxing	24-2-2013	1-3-2013	TC-1 boxing training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
7.	Chess	26-2-2013	2-3-2013	Gold Camp (mess hall) (Zabuthiri Township)	
8.	Cycling (Cross Country)	1-3-2013	6-3-2013	Mount Pleasant cycling ground (Ottarathiri Township)	
	Cycling (Down Hill)	1-3-2013	6-3-2013	Mount Pleasant cycling ground (Ottarathiri Township)	
	Cycling (BMX)	1-3-2013	6-3-2013	Mount Pleasant cycling ground (Ottarathiri Township)	
	Cycling (Road Race)	1-3-2013	6-3-2013	TC-1 Cycling training gym (Zabuthiri Township) Pinlaung road/ Taungkya Village and Leinli bridge	
9.	Football (Men/women)	20-2-2013	7-3-2013	Wunna Theikdi Stadium (Zabuthiri Township)/ Paunglaung ground (Pyinmana Township) Training grounds (1) and (2) (Zabuthiri Township)	
10.	Fustal (Men/women)	23-2-2013	6-3-2013	TC-1 Fustal training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
11.	Judo	25-2-2013	27-2-2013	TC-2 Judo training gym (Lewe Township)	
12.	Karatedo	4-3-2013	6-3-2013	TC-2 Karatedo training gym (Lewe Township)	
13.	Sepak Takraw	25-2-2013	5-3-2013	TC-1 Sepak Takraw training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
14.	Table Tennis	23-2-2013	27-2-2013	TC-1 Table Tennis training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
15.	Taekwondo	1-3-2013	3-3-2013	TC-1 Taekwondo training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
16.	Tennis	23-2-2013	28-2-2013	TC-1 Tennis training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
17.	Pancek Silat	2-3-2013	6-2-2013	TC-2 Martial Arts training gym (Lewe Township)	
18.	Traditional Boxing (Muay)	3-3-2013	5-3-2013	TC-1 Boxing training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
19.	Volleyball	27-2-2013	7-3-2013	TC-1 Volleyball training gym (Zabuthiri Township)	
20.	Weightlifting	1-3-2013	3-3-2013	Paunglaung Gymnasium (Pyinmana)	
21.	Wushu	1-3-2013	3-3-2013	TC-2 Wushu training gym (Lewe Township)	
22.	Wrestling	4-3-2013	7-3-2013	Paunglaung gym (Pyinmana Township)	
Closing Ceremony		7-3-2013	-	Wunna Theikdi Stadium (Zabuthiri Township)	

The New Light of Myanmar

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 2 March, 2013

Birthday present

Sincerely, we accept the truth that we have more difficulties and challenges than any other country as we have to negotiate with about 15 armed groups at the same time. But we believe that enthusiasm and genuine willingness are the most important forces to overcome them. The government on its part is also creating the role of individual organizations and citizens in the peace process.

The government invited KIO/KIA leaders to the Union Day dinner, but they too were absent due to the remaining differences in various aspects and some reasons. Anyhow, we believe that they too would like to take part in the Union Day dinner together with all the brethren joyfully as KIO/KIA and the Union government have had more understanding and restored trust through Shweli peace talks held on 4 February.

We do believe a truce will come and a sustainable peace process can be created. We are very pleased to hear the attitude and stance of KIO/KIA toward genuine peace, equity and self-determination of national races, rights and negotiation stated in the press release about Shweli peace talks. Cordial greetings between military columns and KIA troops when they came across are a proof to the progress. With more positive signs in security situation, humanitarian aid is being delivered to conflict zones. Here we would like to inform the people that not only ceasefire but also political dialogue could be reached when peace talks with national races armed groups including KIO/KIA would be held in the not-too-distant future.

The President met with leaders of ethnic armed groups on internal peace making process on 13 February which was coincided with the birthday of our late national leader General Aung San. So, a firm step the country is making towards the national integration will be the best birthday present for the man who had sacrificed his life to national independence and integration.

We need to catch up with...

(from page 1)

The penetration into local and foreign markets is key to development of agricultural produce. Our government is encouraging the shift from export of raw agricultural produce to the export of quality product by establishing advanced rice mills, oil mills, refineries and packaging facilities.

Esteemed peasantry,

Among basic needs for all the human beings, food is the essential for daily life. Food security is the most challenging issue in the world with increasing population. The world population is currently 7000 million and will reach 9000 million by 2050 on the same planet. We need to double or triple our food production.

As our country is blessed with natural resources and favourable climate, we must set the target to feed the local population of 100 million in a few years and export surplus to the international market later.

We need to catch up with neighouring agro-based economies by enthusiasm, mindset change, land reform, mechanization, and high-yield strains. Only then, our country would succeed the goal of agro-based industrialized country.

To ensure sustainability of agricultural development, we give high priorities to profitability of crops, penetration of market, high-yield quality strains, scientific approach, agricultural inputs including fertilizers, minimizing wastage, and reducing pro-duction cost and transportation charges.

Esteemed peasantry,

I would like to call on all the citizens across the Union to make concerted efforts in the bid for new democratic nation of stability and development which citizens living the length and breadth of the nation long for.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives Chinese ambassador

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives Chinese Ambassador Mr. Li Junhua.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March— Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann received Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Li Junhua, who had completed his tour of duty, at Pyithu Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Complex, here, this evening.

Present at the call together with the Pyithu Hluttaw speaker were Committee Chairmen U Thein Swe, Thura U Aung Ko, U Hla Myint Oo and officials of the Hluttaw Office.—*MNA*

ASEAN Summit Training for Senior Level concluded

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March— The closing ceremony of ASEAN Summit Preparation Training for Senior Level, jointly conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was held at Zabuthiri Hotel, here, at 4 pm today.

At the ceremony, U Aung Lynn, Director-General of the Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered an opening speech. And Mrs Isabel Hubert, Associate Director of UNITAR spoke concluding remark.

Present at the ceremony were the Director-Generals and the senior officials from participating ministries including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNITAR resource persons and 30 trainees from 18 ministries.

U Aung Lynn, Director-General of the Department of ASEAN Affairs, Mr Jean-Marc Badgans's, a senior consultant of UNITAR and Mrs Isabel Hubert, Associate Director of UNITAR presented certificates to trainees.

The ASEAN Summit Preparation training for Junior Level conducted from 17th to 21st December, 2012 and for Senior Level from 25th February to 1st March, 2013 here.

MNA

Jordanian factory agrees to better food and more entitlements as Myanmar workers' protest continues

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March— Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security has reached some agreements with the Jordan's garment factory of which 1200 out of 1300 Myanmar workers has been in protest since 14 February.

The factory of Century Miracle Apparel Mfg Co Ltd in Ramtha of Jordan will offer Myanmar food, assign some Myanmar workers as supervisors and provide more entitlements despite no pay rise, according to the agreement. In-charge U Sai Tin Tun of New Covenant Agency, an unlicensed employment agency, visited Jordan and entered into negotiation with the employer. Myanmar embassy in Israel is convincing the workers to return to the workplace as it continues talks with the employer.—*MNA*

Historical photos show marks Russia-Myanmar diplomatic ties

YANGON, 1 March— Under the arrangement of Russian Embassy in Myanmar, opening ceremony of historical photos show to mark the 65th Anniversary of Russia-Myanmar diplomatic ties was held at the National Museum (Yangon) on Pyay Road in Dagon Township, here, this morning.

Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Vasily B. Pospelov and Rector U Kyaw Oo of National Culture and Fine Arts University (Yangon) gave speeches.

Documentaries on state visits of heads of the two countries, historical documents and photos are put on show which is jointly organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Culture. Anybody may visit the show free of charge from 10 am to 4 pm till 10 March.—*MNA*

Alternative development viewed in Shan State

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control is implementing alternative development to reduce production in Myanmar and elimination of drugs in cooperation with United Nations Office on Drug and Crime, international organizations and neighboring countries.

A delegation led by Mr. Jarge Eduardo Rios of UNODC in Vienna of Austria visited Shan State to observe the extension of alternative works from 13 to 22 February. They held talks with departmental officials, state Hluttaw MPs, members of RCSS/SSA and local people and asked them for social, economic, education and health difficulties and the purpose of growing opium.

Similarly, Director-General Mrs. Martine Schommer of Development Cooperation Ministry of Luxembourg and party visited Hopon Township to observe the alteranative works from 21 to 22 February. The Luxembourg is donor country from EU and observed enhancing alternative development tasks of CCDAC and UNODC.

MNA

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein and party enjoy entertainment of band at opera house in Oslo of Norway.
(News on page 1)—MNA

Rehabilitation tasks in Rakhine State coordinated

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March— Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win addressed coordination meeting for rehabilitation tasks in Rakhine State at the state government office in Sittway on 26 February.

The meeting was also attended by Rakhine State Chief Minister U Hla Maung Tin, Commander of Western Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko Naing, State ministers, UN Resident Coordinator Mr Ashok Nigam, reps of UN agencies, Turkish Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Murat Yavuz Ates, reps of donor countries, NGOs and officials.

The Union minister briefed on construction of housings and humanitarian aids and called for pragmatic ways for ensuring the rule of law and sustainable development.

The chief minister, the UN resident coordinator and those present participated in discussion.

The Union minister, the chief minister and officials visited relief camps and construction of housings, road and bridges in Sittway.

MNA

Preparatory Meeting of 17th ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters held in Bagan

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March— The Chairmanship of the ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) is rotated for every two years in alphabetical order of the name of ASEAN Member States. Malaysia handed over the Chairmanship of ACCSM, on 5 October 2012, to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the latter has to take this responsibility for the years 2013 and 2014. The Union Civil Service Board (UCSB), the sole responsible organization for the Myanmar civil service matters held the Preparatory Meeting of the 17th ACCSM, in the Aureum Palace Resort & Hotel, Bagan, on 27-28 February 2013, under the theme of "Promotion of Good Governance: Towards Fulfilling People's Aspirations and Welfare". The Senior Officials from the Civil Service Organization of the ASEAN Member States, delegates of ASEAN Secretariat and responsible officials of the UCSB attended the meeting. At the Opening Ceremony of the Preparatory Meeting, U Wai Myint, Director-General, Civil Service Selection and Training Department of UCSB, delivered the opening remarks and then presided over the meeting as the Chairman.

At the meeting, the ASEAN delegates cordially discussed matters related to the 17th ACCSM. Topics for the Country and Technical Papers in line with the theme of the Conference were selected, and provisional agenda of the Senior Officials Meeting, to be held in September 2013, at Yangon, was adopted. Matters related to the ASEAN Heads of Civil Service Meeting to be held in 2014, the 2nd ASEAN+3 Heads of Civil Service Meeting, Forum on Good Governance and 2nd ACCSM+3 Joint Technical Working Group Meeting were also discussed. Furthermore, civil service matters discussed during the ASEAN Summit held on 18 November 2012 at Phnom Penh, Cambodia were presented by the delegate of ASEAN Secretariat, Delegates of ASEAN member states presented activities of Human Resources Development Centers, established by the Civil Service Organizations of their respective countries. The ACCSM Work Plan (2008-2015) and ASEAN +3 Work Plan (2012-2015) were also discussed at the meeting.

NLM

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives Chinese businessmen

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham poses for documentary photo with Chinese business delegation led by Vice-Governor Mr Liu Huiyan of PRC.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham received a Chinese business delegation led by Vice-Governor Mr Liu Huiyan of Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, this afternoon.

Present at the call together with the Vice-President were Union Minister at the President Office U Soe Maung, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister U Zin Yaw, Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan and officials.

On the occasion, they cordially discussed bilateral cooperation in business, health, culture, information and electric power sectors between Myanmar and Yunnan province and future plans.

MNA

Eight private daily newspapers get green light

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—Publication of eight private daily newspapers are allowed at the meeting (2/2013) of Central Supervisory Committee for Registration and Distribution of Printers and Publishers held at the Ministry of Information, here, this morning.

The Ministry of Information has invited the applications for publications of private daily newspapers as of 1-4-2013 in the daily newspapers. Since then, a total of 17 applicants applied for it.

Among them, 14 applications have been scrutinized till now and the remaining three are under scrutiny. Among 14 applicants, the following eight applicants are allowed for temporary publications as of 14-4-2013 under the section 8 (i) of Printers and Publishers Registration Law (1962).

The list of applicants are (a) Khit Moe Daily (applicant U Khin Maung Lay), (b) ShweNaingNganThit Daily (applicant U Maung Maung Hla), (c) Union Daily (applicant U Tint Zaw), (d) Emperor Daily (applicant Daw Waing Ohn Chit), (e) The Messenger (applicant Daw Kay Thwe), (f) Up-date Daily (applicant U Aung Kyu Hein), (g) Myanmar News Week Daily (applicant Dr Tin Aung Khaing) and (h) Mizzima Daily (applicant U Thaw Zin Tun).

Six of 14 applicants have been informed to submit their applications with requirements again in time as their applications. The three remaining applicants which are under scrutiny and the new applications will be scrutinized at the coordination meeting of Central Supervisory Committee for Registration and Distribution of Printers and Publishers to be held in the last week of March.

MNA

The New Light of Myanmar

Hiroshi Takahashi, Japanese ambassador to Afghanistan, speaks at a signing ceremony in Kabul on on 28 Feb, 2013. The Japanese government the same day agreed with the United Nations to provide a $281 million grant to support the reconstruction of Afghanistan. KYODO NEWS

Obama to tap Caroline Kennedy as ambassador to Japan

WASHINGTON, 1 March — US President Barack Obama is very likely to appoint Caroline Kennedy as his country's ambassador to Japan, US media reported on Thursday.

The 55-year-old daughter of former President John F Kennedy is the leading candidate to replace incumbent John Roos, a lawyer and former Obama fundraiser, according to Bloomberg News.

Caroline served as a co-chairman of Obama's 2012 re-election bid, and was a key backer of his 2008 campaign.

It is common for US presidents to name leading fundraisers and backers to plum diplomatic posts, although the Politico web site quoted the American Foreign Service Association as saying that Obama has done so at a higher rate than average.

CNN, quoting Democratic sources, reported on Thursday that Obama is also considering ambassadorships for a number of other major donors, including Wall Street bigwig Marc Lasry as the leading candidate for ambassador to France.—*Xinhua*

Former S China mayor sentenced to life imprisonment for bribery

GUANGZHOU, 1 March—A former deputy mayor in south China's Guangdong Province has been sentenced to life in prison for taking bribes, a local court said late Thursday. The Guangzhou Intermediate People's Court on Thursday issued a verdict for Liu Rongzhao, former deputy mayor of the city of Zengcheng. It is not known whether Liu will appeal.

The court found that Liu had taken more than 10 million yuan (1.6 million US dollars) in bribes from January 2003 to March 2011, when he served as head of Xintang Township, secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Working Committee of Licheng Street, deputy director of the Standing Committee of People's Congress of Zengcheng and deputy mayor of Zengcheng.

Xinhua

Road accident in Peru kills 14

LIMA, 1 March—Two cars crashed in a highway in southeastern Peru, killing 14 people including a boy and injuring seven others, in the country's most serious accident this year, local police said on Thursday.

The accident occurred when a van swerved off the lane and crashed into another van coming in the opposite direction in the highway linking the provinces of Puno and Juliaca, 1,400 km southeast of Lima.

Both vehicles were so destroyed that the fire brigade had to cut the vans to recover the bodies. The injured were taken to a nearby hospital, said Manuel Fernandez, head of the fire brigade. Initial investigation identified speeding and reckless driving as the main causes of the incident.

Xinhua

The undated photo shows the Egyptian pilot, Momin Mourad Ali, one of the two survivors during the balloon explosion in Luxor of Egypt. A total of 19 tourists were killed and two others injured in a balloon explosion on Tuesday morning in Egypt's Luxor governorate.
XINHUA

Falling dairy prices drag down New Zealand terms of trade

WELLINGTON, 1 March — Falling dairy commodities prices drove down New Zealand's terms of trade by 1.3 percent in the last quarter of 2012, the government statistics agency announced on Friday.

This meant that in the December quarter, 1.3 percent less merchandise imports could be funded by a fixed quantity of merchandise exports than in the September 2012 quarter, according to Statistics New Zealand.

"The terms of trade have fallen 11 percent from their peak in the June 2011 quarter and are now at their lowest level for three years," prices manager Chris Pike said in a statement.

In the December quarter, export prices fell 1.9 percent, reflecting lower prices for dairy and for fish and fish preparations.

Dairy prices had fallen for six consecutive quarters by a total of 27 percent, while dairy exports by volume rose by 24 percent.

"The fall in dairy prices from their 2011 peak influenced the downward trend in the terms of trade," said the statement.

Prices for imported goods fell 0.6 percent in the December 2012 quarter, reflecting falls in capital goods (tangible assets used to produce goods or services), consumption goods, and intermediate goods (goods used up or transformed when producing other goods).

Excluding petroleum and petroleum product prices, total import values fell 1.5 percent. Export volumes fell just 0.5 percent, led by declines in exports of dairy products and fruit.

Import volumes fell 2.2 percent, reflecting lower volumes for motor spirit, consumption goods, and intermediate goods.—*Xinhua*

Residents attend an annual lantern parade in Nanshaxiang Village of Shantou, south China's Guangdong Province, on 28 Feb, 2013. Participants of the festivity hold lanterns bearing their family names as they proceed through the village. They believe the village's lantern parade, which has existed for centuries, could bring good harvest and fortune.—XINHUA

Israeli medical examiners not determined over Palestinian prisoner's cause of death

JERUSALEM, 1 March—Israeli forensic experts on Thursday tested the body of a Palestinian prisoner who died in the Megido prison in northern Israel last week, but could not conclusively determine the cause of the death.

The forensic team, headed by Forensic Medicine Director Prof Yehuda Hiss, determined the bruises on Arafat Jaradat's body marks are of resuscitation and not of abuse or torture.

This is the second test on Jaradat's body after an autopsy which came up with the same results on Sunday.

"(The examination) found that the hemorrhages and fractured ribs during the autopsy occurred close to death and are characteristic of the resuscitation attempts performed on the deceased by the Prison Service and medical staffs for 50 minutes in an attempt to save his life," the health ministry said in a statement.

"No signs of other contusions were found and the toxicology tests were also negative. There were no significant changes due to illness in other organs indicating the cause of death, therefore further tests are needed to determine the cause of death," the statement said. On Sunday, Jaradat collapsed at his cell after being locked up for a week in the Israeli prison for allegedly hurling stones at Israeli security forces. According to his lawyer, att. Kamil Sabbagh, his client complained about back pains and feeling ill.

Xinhua

Greece launches key railway network link to main port

ATHENS, 1 March—Greece inaugurated on Thursday the key connection of the Greek railway network to Piraeus port in a bid to turn the country's biggest port into a major transit hub for the Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Europe.

"After years of difficulties, it is now time to deliver the extremely significant technical project that connects Thriassio - Ikonio, a railway line of 17 km, with 10 tunnels and 10 bridges," Greek Development, Infrastructure, Transport and Networks Minister Kostis Hatzidakis said after the inauguration ceremony.

"This day is very important as Greek railways and the port of Piraeus enter a new era, the era of intermodal transports," said Hatzidakis.

Hatzidakis was among the first passengers who arrived at Piraeus Container Terminal (PCT) on Thursday by train after the completion of the cargo line between the container terminal site at Ikonio in western Piraeus and the rest of the national network.

The 17-km cargo line extends to the country's main logistics centre at Thriassio in western Attica.

"This development is the basis of the agreement between COSCO, Hewlett-Packard and Trainose. Tomorrow there will be the signing of the agreement and all these developments show that Greece doesn't quit during crisis, but is moving forward and will come back to growth," Hatzidakis stressed during a Press conference at Piraeus.

The opening of the railway network link paves the way for the signing of a deal between Chinese shipping giant COSCO, Greek rail service operator Trainose and US electronics giant Hewlett-Packard (HP) at Piraeus for the transfer of HP products to the Greek port for their distribution to Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East.

Furthermore, the inauguration of this commercial rail line will boost Greece's competitiveness and create more jobs, Greek Shipping Minister Kostas Moussouroulis said.—*Xinhua*

Thai PM visits Malaysia

BANGKOK, 1 March— Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra left Bangkok on Thursday to visit Malaysia to meet with her Malaysian counterpart Najib Tun Razak.

Yingluck is accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Surapong Tovichakchaikul and several other ministers.

The visit is the fifth Annual Consultation between Thai premier and Malaysian premier aims at cultivating friendly relations between the two countries, reaffirming the close partnership between Thailand and Malaysia, following up on the progress on various areas of cooperation since Yingluck's official visit to Malaysia on 20 Feb, 2012.

According to the Thai Foreign Ministry Press release, during the consultation, the parties are expected to discuss varied issues of common interest, including a comprehensive approach to resolve the insurgency in Thailand's southern border provinces, social and economic development and connectivity in border areas such as the proposed construction of two bridges crossing the Golok River linking Thailand's Narathiwat Province and Malaysia's Kelantan state.

Cooperation on trade and investment, such as the establishment of a Thailand-Malaysia Business Council and cooperation on tourism, particularly linking Thailand's Satun Province with Malaysia' Langkawi island, will also be on the agenda.—*Xinhua*

Visiting Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra shakes hands with her Malaysian counterpart Najib Tun Razak during their meeting in Putrajaya, Malaysia, on 8 Feb, 2013.—XINHUA

Philippine liquidity expands 10.8 pct in January

MANILA, 1 March— Demand for money in the Philippines expanded 10.8 percent on year to 5.2 trillion pesos (127.76 billion US dollars) in January, the local central bank said on Thursday. "The sustained expansion in domestic liquidity indicates that previous policy actions to help support non-inflationary economic growth continue to work their way through the economy," the central bank said in a statement. The central bank slashed policy rates by an aggregate of 100 basis points last year.

On a monthly basis, seasonally-adjusted domestic liquidity or M3 increased by 1.3 percent.

Money supply grew by 23.3 percent on year on back of growth in net domestic assets (NDA) following the sustained increase in credits to the private sector and robust bank lending activity.

Net foreign assets (NFA) decreased by 1.7 percent on year. While the central bank's NFA position increased by 4.5 percent, supported by steady foreign exchange inflows from overseas remittances, portfolio investments, and receipts from the outsourcing industry, the NFA of banks continued to contract.

Xinhua

Japanese singer Misia (L) visits the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo on 28 Feb, 2013, to receive an appointment letter as Japan's honourary ambassador to the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development to be held in June 2013. At right is Makoto Ito, Japan's ambassador for the international conference, known as TICAD.—KYODO NEWS

Cambodian PM greets large group of Chinese businesspeople

PHNOM PENH, 1 March — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Thursday met with a large group of Chinese business executives visiting Cambodia to explore investment opportunities.

The delegation, comprised of 100 people from 52 Chinese companies, is led by Xiao Gang Chang, President of China International Travel Services.

Speaking to those investors during a meeting at the Peace Palace in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, Hun Sen said Sino-Cambodian relationship was founded for a long time and it has been gradually strengthened and expanded.

To date, he said, the Sino-Cambodian relationship has reached the level of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of Cooperation.

The premier said China has helped Cambodia in all fields including road and bridge construction, irrigation system development, and human resources development.

In addition, Chinese investors have invested in various businesses in this Southeast Asian nation, especially the investment in the development of hydroelectric plants and coal-fueled power plants.

"Cambodia has a great honour to be a friend of China," the premier said. "China has helped Cambodia not only to develop the society, but also to strengthen Cambodia's independence."

He said currently, a lot of Chinese investors have been doing businesses in Cambodia; however, the country still needs more Chinese investors to promote stronger economic ties between the two countries.

According to a report of the Council for the Development of Cambodia, China is Cambodia's largest investor. From 1994 to 2012, Cambodia had received 9.17 billion US dollar investment from China.

Xinhua

Pakistan's tribal elders to begin talks with Taleban, forces for peace

ISLAMABAD, 1 March — Pakistani tribal elders will begin talks with the Taleban militants and the security forces to end violence in the militants-infested tribal regions and the country, local media reported on Thursday. A declaration was issued at the conclusion of a day-long grand "jirga" or council of tribal elders and top political and religious leaders.

The conference, which was organized by the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI-F) party and attended by major political parties and tribal leaders, agreed on using the platform of the grand tribal "jirga" for peace negotiations with the Pakistani Taleban, the JUI-F chief Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman told a news conference at the conclusion of the moot.

The Pakistani government should take immediate steps to initiate peace talks with Taleban militants, a declaration of the Jirga and the All Parties Conference (APC) said, and also called for discussing ways to restore peace in the country's restive tribal areas.

The five-point declaration also agreed on expanding the membership of the grand tribal jirga to include political and religious leaders of the country, who will approach the militants, the government, security forces and other stakeholders.

The declaration also emphasized on taking steps towards peace, keeping in consideration the law and the writ of the government.

The main ruling Pakistan People Party (PPP) and the leading opposition party, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N), assured their complete support for steps taken for the establishment of peace in the country.

The tribal elders will hold talks with governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province in the northwestern city of Peshawar on Friday to discuss with him his role in the proposed peace talks, Maulana Fazal said.

Earlier addressing the conference, main opposition leader Nawaz Sharif urged all political parties to play their due role in meeting challenges faced by the country.—*Xinhua*

Employees use a crane to unload a Chinese wagon in Buenos Aires, capital of Argentina, on 28 Feb, 2013. A total of 42 new wagons will be used on the railways of Sarmiento and Mitre as part of a replacement plan of the Argentine government.—XINHUA

Winter service vehicles remove snow in Harbin, capital of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, on 1 March, 2013. Harbin has deployed snow removal units to restore traffic on Friday after a snowstorm hit the city the previous day.—XINHUA

Cambodia gets first team of explosive ordnance disposal divers

PHNOM PENH, 1 March — Ten Cambodian deminers graduated on Thursday from the first diving training to find underwater unexploded ordnances (UXOs) after a four-week intensive course.

The course was supported by the US Department of State, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement.

Allen Tan, General Manager of the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation, which organized the training, said the course, instructed by a former US Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal diver, was attended by 35 deminers from Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), but only 10 graduated with the full rating of Second Class Diver. "This is the first time that CMAC deminers receive this honour," he said at the course closing ceremony, adding that three additional recruits are receiving certificates of completion.

"This graduation marks the beginning of a great new capacity for Cambodia. Over the next 1-2 years, these individuals will be further challenged by advanced training from the US Army Dive Salvage unit," he said.

After the training, the graduated divers will recover munitions spilled underwater during the 1960s and 70s, Heng Ratana, CMAC's Director General, said.

"With the US support, now our deminers have skills to search for underwater unexploded ordnances," he said.

Xinhua

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV HOANG ANH 05 VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV HOANG ANH 05 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S G LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD
Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV NOBLE CORAL VOY NO (55)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NOBLE CORAL VOY NO (55) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: EASTERN-CAR LINER S'PORE PTE LTD
Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV THINH COUNG VICTORY VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THINH COUNG VICTORY VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel arrived on 27.2.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: RK SHIPPING & TRADING PTE LTD
Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (118)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (118) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WONGSAMUT OCEAN SHIPPING CO LTD
Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TRUST STAR VOY NO (02)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TRUST STAR VOY NO (02) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S M & T STAR SHIPPING CO LTD
Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

Japanese conductor Seiji Ozawa directs a choir at Minami-Ikuta Elementary School in Kawasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, on 27 Feb, 2013. Ozawa conducted the choir of 340 primary school pupils the same day, his first public performance since ill health forced him to suspend musical activities in March 2012.—KYODO NEWS

Misao Okawa (R), aged 114, receives a certificate from an official of Guinness World Records recognizing her as the world's oldest woman, in Osaka, western Japan, on 27 Feb, 2013. Okawa was born on 5 March, 1898.
KYODO NEWS

UN peacekeeper injured amid heavy fighting in eastern DRC

UNITED NATIONS, 1 March —A heavy fighting between government forces and an armed group in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has left one civilian dead and a UN peacekeeper and nine others injured, a UN spokesman told reporters here on Wednesday.

"The UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) reports that, earlier today, near its base in Kitchanga, North Kivu, heavy fighting took place between Congolese armed forces soldiers and elements of the Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain (APCLS), an armed group," Eduardo del Buey, the deputy UN spokesman, said at a daily news briefing.

"One civilian was killed and nine others were injured," he said. "One MONUSCO peacekeeper was shot in the arm. He is in stable condition."

The spokesman did not disclose the nationality of the injured peacekeeper.

"The mission is currently sheltering around 400 civilians at its base in Kitchanga" following the armed clash, del Buey said. " MONUSCO reports that the situation remains tense in the area."

The eastern DRC has witnessed armed clashes over the past months after a newly-formed rebel group, the M23, launched an insurgency in North Kivu in early 2012.

The M23 rebels seized Goma, the capital of North Kivu Province, before pulling out under regional pressure to facilitate peace talks late last year.

The conflict has displaced more than 475,000 people and forced over 75,000 others to flee to neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda.

Xinhua

US Coast Guard responds to report of oil spill off Louisiana coast

HOUSTON, 1 March — The US Coast Guard said on Wednesday that it was responding to a report of a collision between a boat and an inactive oil wellhead, which is now discharging an oily-water mixture off the coast of the state of Louisiana.

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans watchstanders received a report that the 42-foot crewboat Sea Raider hit a wellhead owned by Swift Energy at around 8 pm on Tuesday, the Coast Guard said in a statement posted online.

"The platform is discharging an oily-water mixture, but the amount is unknown at this time," it noted.

Swift Energy, an energy company based in Houston, Texas, said that the wellhead was shut down and became inactive in December 2007. Nobody was injured on the crewboat, also owned by Swift, the company said.

"The Coast Guard is working with federal, state and local agencies as well as the responsible party, Swift Energy, in response to this incident to secure the well and contain and clean up any oil that is leaking," the Coast Guard said.

It added that it "is investigating the cause of the incident." The site is about 50 miles (80 km) away from the 2010 BP oil spill site, according to local media reports.

Xinhua

Bulgarian parliament confirms suspension of second nuclear power plant construction

SOFIA, 1 March — Bulgarian parliament on Wednesday confirmed suspension of the country's second nuclear power plant (NPP) construction.

The legislators had to take a decision on this issue, after 60.6 percent of the voters in a referendum held in January said "yes" to the question on whether the country should build a new nuclear power plant, with a voter turnout of only 20.2 percent.

Yanaki Stoilov, a member of the parliament from the opposition Bulgarian Socialist Party, said new parliamentary majority could abolish the decision after the coming elections.

The 2,000-megawatt Belene NPP was approved in 2005. The Russian company Atomstroyexport, an engineering branch of the state-owned Rosatom, won the bid to build this NPP in 2006, but the project was frozen after the GERB party came to power in July 2009.

The only Bulgarian Kozloduy NPP has six reactors in total but only two of them, 1,000 MW each, are in operation.

The other four 440-MW units were shut down in 2002 and 2006 as one of the conditions for Bulgaria to join the European Union.

Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

Anne Hathaway says sorry to Valentino for wearing Prada to the Oscars

New Delhi, 1 March — Anne Hathaway has apologized to Valentino for not wearing her original Oscars dress.

The 30-year-old actress—who won Best Supporting Actress at the ceremony on Sunday (24.02.13) - surprised onlookers when she arrived in a pale pink Prada gown just hours after Valentino released a statement saying they had dressed the Les Miserables star for the high profile event.

Anne explained that she "deeply regrets any disappointment caused" but decided to wear something different after she heard another actress, rumoured to be her co-star Amanda Seyfried, was wearing something very similar to her original choice.

In a statement to People.com, she said: "It came to my attention late Saturday night (23.02.13) that there would be a dress worn to the Oscars that is remarkably similar to the Valentino I had intended to wear, and so I decided it was best for all involved to change my plans.

PTI

Scottish singer Susan Boyle to make film debut

Los Angeles, 1 March — Scottish singer Susan Boyle will get her first turn on the big screen in the British holiday period film "The Christmas Candle," the movie's producers said on Thursday. Boyle, 51, will back up Samantha Barks, Hans Matheson and Lesley Manville in the Christmas film that began production this week on location in the United Kingdom and the Isle of Man.

The film, based on the novella by Max Lucado, tells the tale of an enchanted Christmas candle in Gladbury, a dull village that must confront the dawning of the 20th century and a new, skeptical minister. There was no information on what role the singer will play.

"Everyone on set is a delight to work with and it's a fantastic experience to be part of the team," Boyle said in a statement. "I'm really enjoying getting dressed in the period costumes and stepping back in time and although it's very cold filming on location, I'm wearing long johns under my bustle," she added.

Singer Susan Boyle smiles as poppy's fall over her at a photocall during the launch of the Poppy Scotland appeal in Glasgow, Scotland in this file photo taken on 24 Oct, 2012.—Reuters

The singer became an overnight international sensation in 2009 after appearing on variety show "Britain's Got Talent" and performing a flawless rendition of "I Dreamed a Dream" from the musical "Les Miserables." Her rendition has been viewed hundreds of millions of times on YouTube, and her life story from unknown Scot to multi-million-selling recording artist has itself been made into a musical.

Reuters

Filmmaker Eli Roth returns for another "Last Exorcism"

Producer Eli Roth poses at the premiere of ''The Last Exorcism'' at the Arclight theatre in Hollywood, California in this file photo taken on 24 Aug, 2010.—Reuters

Los Angeles, 1 March —Movie audiences have flocked to filmmaker Eli Roth's low-budget horror productions like "Cabin Fever" and "Hostel."

On Friday, "The Last Exorcism Part II," which Roth produced, will be released. It is the sequel to his 2010 movie about an evangelical minister who let a documentary crew film his last exorcism on a girl named Nell.

The 2010 film cost $1.8 million to make and grossed more than $67 million worldwide. The sequel follows Nell as she discovers that the evil force has returned.—*Reuters*

Jennifer Lawrence says photoshop makes me look beautiful

Los Angeles, 1 March — Actress Jennifer Lawrence, who has won the Oscar for best actress, loves photoshop and credits it for making her look so beautiful.

The 22-year-old says she looks nothing like the pictures of her in the new Miss Dior handbag campaign in real life.

When shown the pictures for the new campaign for the first time on the red carpet at the Academy Awards, she said: "Oh my god, I haven't seen this."

"That doesn't look like me at all. I love photoshop more than anything in the world. Of course it's photoshop, people don't look like that," femalefirst.co.uk quoted her as saying. —*PTI*

Jennifer Lawrence says she looks nothing like the pictures of her in a new handbag campaign. PTI

Director Peter Jackson arrives for the royal premiere of his film "The Hobbit - An Unexpected Journey'' in central London on 12 Dec, 2012. Reuters

Final movie in 'Hobbit' trilogy moves to December 2014

Los Angeles, 1 March — The final installment of "The Hobbit" film trilogy will be released on 17 Dec, 2014, five months later than planned, Warner Bros. said on Thursday. "The Hobbit: There and Back Again" had been set to debut in July 2014. It will follow "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey," which came out in December 2012, and "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug," which reached theatres in December 2013.

"We're excited to complete the trilogy the same way we started it, as a holiday treat for moviegoers everywhere," said Dan Fellman, president of distribution for Warner Bros, a unit of Time Warner Inc.

"The Hobbit" series is a prequel to JRR Tolkien's epic fantasy "The Lord of the Rings," which director Peter Jackson made into three Oscar-winning films about a decade ago.The first "Hobbit" film was a blockbuster with global sales of $981 million, according to the Box Office Mojo website. The trilogy is financed by Warner Bros New Line Cinema and MGM.

Reuters

SPORTS

Pato cautious about form after injury

Rio de Janeiro, 1 March—Corinthians striker Alexandre Pato admits he is still "a long way off" rediscovering the form that made him one of the world's most sought-after strikers. The 23-year-old scored his third goal in seven matches for the Brazilian club during a 2-0 Copa Libertadores group-stage victory over Colombia's Mil- lonarios on Wednesday.

"Physically I am feeling very good. I ran a lot and managed to score but I still have a long way to go," he said. Pato, who joined Corinthians in January from AC Milan for a reported fee of 15 million euros, has been restricted to just 32 matches in the past two years due to injury.

Corinthians coach Tite was cautiously optimistic when asked about the forward on Thursday.

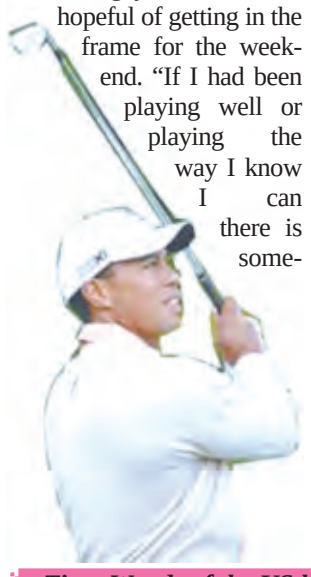
"Pato is gradually gaining match fitness. He is still looking for his best form but he is participating and that makes me happy," Tite said. Corinthians next Copa Libertadores assignment is an away trip to Mexico's Tijuana away on March. *Xinhua*

Corinthians striker Alexandre Pato

Woods gets wet, trails Honda leader Villegas by six shots

Palm Beach Gardens, (Florida), 1 March—Tiger Woods, who saved par with a barefoot shot in water, and Rory McIlroy fired even-par 70s at the Honda Classic on Thursday that left the world's top two golfers six shots back of first-round leader Camilo Villegas.

Colombian Villegas capped a flawless six-under-par 64 with an eagle at the par-five 18th that left him one stroke ahead of South Africa's Branden Grace, Canada's Graham DeLaet and Americans Rickie Fowler and Robert Streb. Villegas, who won here in 2010 but has struggled over the past 18 months, was one-under through 12 holes at PGA National but grabbed the outright lead with a scorching finish that saw him pick up five strokes over his final six holes. World number one McIlroy had a similar day to Woods with a pair of birdies and bogeys and remained hopeful of getting in the frame for the weekend. "If I had been playing well or playing the way I know I can there is something in the mid-sixties out there," said the 23-year-old Northern Irishman. Woods, who started on the back nine, had a rough start with bogeys on his first and fourth holes but recovered with two birdies on the back nine in unusually chilly and overcast conditions for Florida.



The 14-times major winner bogeyed the par-four 10th hole and added another at the par-four 13th before recovering with a birdie on the par-five third hole. On the par-four sixth, Woods hooked his tee shot into the water hazard but managed to save par after going barefoot, putting on his rain pants and playing out of the water. —*Reuters*

Tiger Woods of the US hits the ball at the 16th tee during first round play in the Honda Classic PGA golf tournament in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida on 28 Feb, 2013.—Reuters

Logo of French Anti-doping Agency (AFLD) in Paris on 7 Oct, 2009. Reuters

French doping agency will do Tour de France testing

Paris, 1 March—The French Anti-Doping Agency (AFLD) has agreed to carry out testing at the Tour de France in June.

The AFLD said in a statement on Thursday the UCI (International Cycling Union) had guaranteed "information on the whereabouts of the riders and their biological profile data in order to carry out random tests".

Two weeks ago the AFLD said it would not carry out tests on the Paris-Nice race that starts on Sunday, citing a disagreement with the UCI.

The two organizations have long been at loggerheads, with the AFLD saying the UCI had not followed correct procedures during testing in the 2009 Tour de France. The UCI denied the allegations.

The UCI came under heavy fire in last year's US Anti-Doping Agency report that led to the Lance Armstrong scandal.

The American was stripped of his seven Tour titles in October and admitted to doping in a televised interview last month. *Reuters*

Olympics: Inose confident as IOC arrives for Tokyo 2020 inspection

Tokyo, 1 March —The head of the International Olympic Committee's Evaluation Commission arrived on Friday for next week's on-site inspection of Tokyo's bid for the 2020 Games.

IOC Vice President Craig Reedie was welcomed by Tokyo Gov Naoki Inose and Japanese Olympic Committee President Tsunekazu Takeda. The commission will be in Tokyo from Monday to Thursday before heading to Madrid for its next inspection from 18 to 21 March, followed by a trip to Istanbul from 24 to 27 March.

The host of the 2020 Summer Olympics will be decided on 7 September at the IOC Session in Buenos Aires. Inose expressed confidence the commission will leave Tokyo impressed by the city's bid package. "I told (Reedie) what an enormous success the London Olympics was," Inose said. "We will provide them with the kind of hospitality only a city like Tokyo can give them."—*Kyodo News*

Galaxy chasing three in a row in MLS

New York, 1 March —The Los Angeles Galaxy kick off their campaign for a third straight Major League Soccer title without David Beckham but with the promise of a new star and rivals desperate to end their domination. The New York Red Bulls have overhauled their coaching and playing staff in the off-season as they seek to end their 18 year wait for a first MLS title and the Seattle Sounders large fanbase also crave a first championship. But the challenge to the Galaxy could well come from one of the more modestly assembled but astutely coached teams such as Sporting Kansas City, DC United or recent challengers Houston and Real Salt Lake.

The departure of Beckham is likely to impact the Galaxy box office more than their performance on the field with Robbie Keane taking on the leadership role. Landon Donovan, the US's all-time top scorer, will miss the first two months of the season while he takes a brief sabbatical from the game, but he and Irish international Keane will likely be joined by a well-known international player, according to team owner Tim Leiweke. "I promise that we're not done, the best one is coming, well, don't tell Robbie that the best one is coming, the second best one to Robbie is coming," Leiweke told the teams' website.

The Los Angeles Galaxy team poses before playing against the Houston Dynamo before the MLS Cup championship soccer game in Carson, California, in this file photo taken on 1 Dec, 2012.—Reuters

A new signing might not arrive until the end of the European season in May — Leiweke named Brazilian Kaka, currently with Real Madrid as his prime target when Beckham departed in December and the club has also been linked with Chelsea and England midfielder Frank Lampard. The Galaxy will have a new goalkeeper in Italian Carlo Cudicini, signed from Keane's old club Tottenham Hotspur, but the team, coached by ex-US national coach Bruce Arena are not shy about splashing the cash.

"As long as these guys stay committed to wanting to have that target on their back and wanting to create a legacy and wanting to step up to the pressure of being part of the LA Galaxy, I always tell Bruce, we've got your back and we'll get you the resources that we need," he said.

Reuters

Djokovic, Federer lead top seeds into Dubai semis

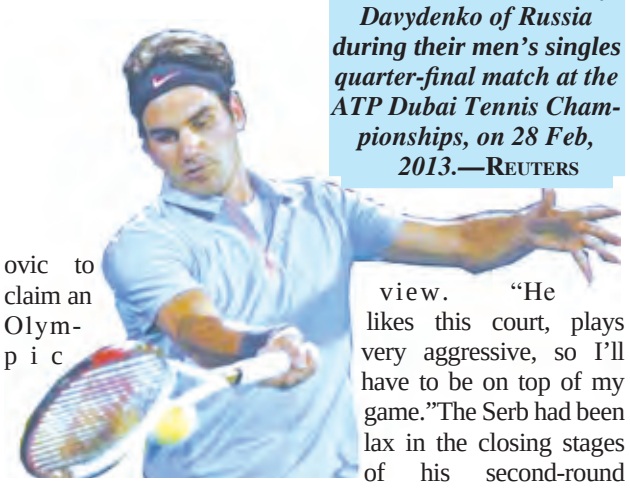
Dubai, 1 March—Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer stayed on course for a scorching desert showdown as they led the top four seeds into the semi-finals of the Dubai Championships on Thursday. The world's leading two players were joined in the last four by Czech Tomas Berdych and Juan Martin Del Potro of Argentina.

Djokovic extended his winning streak to 16 matches as he routed Andreas Seppi 6-0, 6-3 to set up a 10th meeting with Del Potro, whose thunderous serving helped him overwhelm German qualifier Daniel Brands 6-4, 6-2. Federer vanquished Russia's Nikolay Davydenko 6-2, 6-2 and world number six Berdych swatted aside wildcard Dmitry Tursunov 6-3, 6-2.

Federer and Djokovic, winners of eight of the past 10 Dubai finals between them, have topped the bill each night, while the lower seeds have played in the blistering afternoon heat and that could leave the top two in better condition for Friday's semi-finals.

Djokovic has a 7-2 winning record against Del Potro and has been victorious in their last three matches, but the Argentine did beat Djokovic to claim an Olympic bronze in London last year. "Del Potro is a fantastic player, he's very powerful and has a great serve," Djokovic said in a courtside interview. "He likes this court, plays very aggressive, so I'll have to be on top of my game."The Serb had been lax in the closing stages of his second-round match and he began Thursday in a similar fashion, perhaps complacent due to a 9-0 winning record against Italian Seppi.—*Reuters*

Novak Djokovic of Serbia celebrates after his men's singles quarter-final match against Andreas Seppi of Italy during the ATP Dubai Tennis Championships, on 28 Feb, 2013. Reuters



Roger Federer of Switzerland serves to Nikolay Davydenko of Russia during their men's singles quarter-final match at the ATP Dubai Tennis Championships, on 28 Feb, 2013.—Reuters

GENERAL

Fire destroys monastrey in Hlaingthaya Township

YANGON,1 March — Electric shock causes fire and destroys Shwechan Damayeikthar Monastrey at the top of Waiponla street in ward-20, ward Hlaingthaya Township. Four fire engines put out the fire and managed to control it at 2:40pm.

Township Administrator U Htein Soe of Hlaingthaya Township General Administration Department provided necessary assitance to Sayadaw U Guniya and monks.

Kyemon

Colombian Villegas offers reminder of his talent

PALM BEACH GARDENS, (Florida), 1 March— When he burst on to the PGA Tour as a rookie in 2006, Colombian Camilo Villegas was billed as the future Latin American star of golf, a marketing dream and a potential major championship challenger. But the 31-year-old is currently without a PGA Tour card after failing to finish in the top 125 in the money list last year and is relying on sponsor's exemptions to feature on tour. On Thursday, however, taking full advantage of benign conditions at the PGA National course and producing a classy eagle on the final hole, Villegas grabbed a one-shot lead at a tournament he won two years ago.

That victory was the last of three wins for Villegas and instead of cementing his place in the elite, it was followed by a slump in form. "I guess when you miss as many cuts and the results are the way they were last year, you have somehow got to be strong with the mind and keep grinding," Villegas told reporters. "You know you belong out here, you know you're good enough, and you also understand that the game of golf is a game of ups and downs. You've just got to be strong on those downs and keep working hard," he said.

But for a player who exuded confidence and was never afraid to play to the galleries, stretching out across the green as he sought his sight line for putts, Villegas cut a sorry figure during some of his struggles last year. "At times, it was tough. It was tough to enjoy it, at times," he said. "This game is great when you're playing good, and when you're out here missing cut and missing cut, I don't care what people say, yes, we're blessed to have this job, but it's not that much fun (then)."

Reuters

Camilo Villegas of Colombia tees off on the 5th tee during the second round of the Memorial Tournament at Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio in this file photo taken on 1 June, 2012.—REUTERS

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(2-3-13 09:30 am ~ 3-3-13 09:30 am) MST

* News
* A Trip to the City of Rakkhita, Rakhine
* Evergreen Classical Music Japan Festival 2013 Press Conference
* News
* Let's study the Words
* The Get-together Observation to "Pre-centenial Occasion" upon the Myanmar Copyright Act-1914
* News
* The Place where Your Dreams begin... "Delight" japanese Language Academy
* Culture Stage
* Launching of New Website in Myanmar
* Potent Noni, Organic Medicine
* Attracting FDI Experiences of East Asian Countries
* News
* Secret Places for Yummy Foods (Episode-2) (Shwe Taung Noodle)
* Myanma Lottery Market
* Nyanma Jewels In Style
* FIFA Soccer Ferver
* Myanmar Movies "Mischievous Destiny"

Myanmar TV

(2-3-2013, Saturday)

7:00 am
1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw

7:25 am
2. Health Programme

7:30 am
3. Morning News

7:40 am
4. International News

7:45 am
5. People Talks

8:00 am
6. Documentary

8:25 am
7. Poem Garden

8:35 am
8. Sea Game (Teleplay)

11:25 am
9. Game For Children

11:50 am
10. Round Up Of The Week's TV local News

1:30 pm
11. Dance of National Races

2:25 pm
12. Song Programme

4:15 pm
13. Culture Dances

4:35 pm
14. 2013 University Entrance Examination (English)

5:10 pm
15. Songs For Upholding National Spirit

5:20 pm
16. Beautiful ASEAN

5:25 pm
17. Game For Children

5:50 pm
18. People Talks

6:00 pm
19. Evening News

6:20 pm
20. Celebrity and Dinner

7:10 pm
21. TV Drama Series

8:00
22. News
23. International News
24. Weather Report
25. Myanmar Series
26. TV Drama Series

10:00 pm
27. News
28. Gitadagale Phwintbaohn

Scolari hints at Kaka recall

RIO DE JANEIRO, 1 March—Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari has hinted at an international recall for former FIFA world player of the year Kaka by promising changes to his squad for upcoming friendlies against Italy and Russia. Kaka was absent from the Selecao's 2-1 loss to England at Wembley Stadium on 6 February — Scolari's first match in charge since taking over from sacked predecessor Mano Menezes.

But Scolari, who guided Brazil to the 2002 World Cup with Kaka in his squad during his first spell as national coach, admitted to erring with his team selection against England. "I wasn't impressed with the positioning of the players and a series of details," Scolari said on Thursday. In an indication that Kaka will be recalled, Scolari said players not featuring regularly for their clubs would not be ruled out of consideration.

"I am going to choose a team that I think is best for Brazil," the 64-year-old said. "I cannot make my judgments on what journalists write." Kaka impressed in his return to the national team for the first time in two years in October last year, scoring in friendly victories against Japan and Iraq. But the 30-year-old has been used sparingly by Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho this season and was an unused substitute in the club's 3-1 Copa del Rey semifinal victory over Barcelona on Tuesday.

Brazil will meet Italy in Geneva on 31 March and Russia at Stamford Bridge in London four days later. Scolari will name his squad for the matches at a press conference in Rio de Janeiro next Tuesday.

In-form Manchester United right-back Rafael da Silva is also expected to be given his third international cap by Scolari after being overlooked for the England match. —*Xinhua*

Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari

Wizards' Wall needs to stay upbeat despite slump, says coach

WASHINGTON, 1 March —Frustrated, aggravated and searching for answers, Washington Wizards coach Randy Wittman says former first overall draft pick John Wall needs to remain upbeat during his puzzling slump.

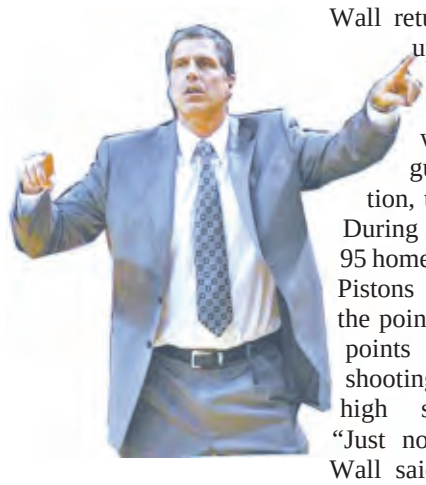
"He is going through a rough stretch," Wittman said. "Whether it's a game, a stretch, two weeks, a week, 10 days, you got to fight through it. You can't succumb to it. You can't feel sorry for yourself."

The National Basketball Association's Wizards were a dismal 5-28 before Wall returned to the lineup in January following off-season knee surgery. But with the third-year guard back in action, the team is 13-10. During the Wizards' 96-95 home loss to the Detroit Pistons on Wednesday, the point guard scored six points on three-of-nine shooting with a game-high seven turnovers. "Just not making shots," Wall said softly after the Wizards' three-game winning streak was snapped. "That's all I can say."

The puzzling part of Wall's collapse is that the Wizards are playing better just by having the 2010 number one draft pick on the court.

In his past five games, including a one-for-12 shooting stinker against Toronto, Wall is averaging just 10.2 points on 29.6 percent shooting with 7.6 assists and 4.6 turnovers. He has at least six turnovers in five of his last nine games.

Reuters



Washington Wizards' head coach Randy Wittman directs his team against the Miami Heat in the second half of their NBA basketball game in Miami, Florida in this file photo taken on 21 April, 2012.—REUTERS

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The New Light of Myanmar

Saturday, 2 March, 2013

National races languages to be introduced to children

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham views national races language books.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—A coordination meeting for teaching of national races languages took place at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Education, here, this morning, with an address by Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham.

He said that national races languages, literary, culture and customs and tradition is the cultural heritage of the country. And it needed to be handed down from one generation to generation. Efforts had been made for teaching of national race languages and literary in successive era. It stopped in 1981-1982 academic year as English language was added to Grade-I syllabus.

For the development of the country, the government had been making utmost efforts for promoting education standards as a basic need. People's lack of knowledge would lag far behind the other countries at the height of competition, he added.

Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye elaborated on compilation of teacher's manual books and lessons and training and appointment of teachers.

After that, the Vice-President visited national races language books on show. It was also attended by the Union ministers, deputy ministers, Region/State Social Affairs ministers, rectors, compilers and officials. It is known that national races languages for Grade-I, II and III syllabus are being complied.

MNA

Budget for purchase of five bulletproof vehicles sparks lively debate in Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—Today's Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session had seen a lively debate on the budget for purchase of vehicles including five armored cars to be used in upcoming World Economic Forum, XXVII SEA Games and ASEAN Summit and related meetings in Myanmar proposed by the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development in appendix 2 (a) of National Planning Bill for 2013-2014 fiscal year. Soon after NPED Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw gave an account of the ministry's proposal to the Hluttaw, DaikU Constituency Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Min Swe who submitted a motion to reduce the proposed budget for the purchase of vehicles by 50 per cent stood taking up his firm stance on his motion. He warned that it was too costly for a LDC and against a highly maintenance cost after the use of cars in international events and conferences, urging to hire them from businessmen and companies concerned. The Union minister replied that the proposed-budget for 2013-2014 fiscal year included the already-approved budget for the purchase of vehicles, except five bulletproof Mercedes-Benz V6s. In seeking the approval of the Hluttaw, the ministry's proposal was in favour of the majority.

U Min Swe, while giving an interview to NLM news crew, said quite frankly that he did not know the budget for purchase of these cars had already been given green light by the Hluttaw in the previous fiscal year. Knowing on paper made him difficult to know it in detail. He said that he was satisfied with the decision of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, accepting it was the right decision of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives.

With regard to the motion to reduce the proposed-budget of the Ministry of Defence submitted by U Steven Thabeik of Chin State Constituency No (4), Ministry of Defence Lt-Gen Wai Lwin said that it was impossible to further reduce the proposed-budget of the ministry for 2013-2014 fiscal year, saying that the difference between the amount of money deducted from the initial budget and the final budget submitted to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw had reached K 224.8 billion. When the motion was put to a vote in Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, it failed to win the majority vote.

Union NPED Minister Dr Kan Zaw submits a proposal.

MNA

In an interview with U Steven Thabeik, he submitted the failed-motion with the aim of ensuring an increase in the health and education budgets from my own point of view as the defence budget was larger than the budgets to other ministries. He continued that he would not submit the proposal if there had been a greater transparency. Now he realized the difficulties and nature of the Defence Ministry as the Union Defence Minister gave details about it. He said he thanked the Union Minister for his detailed clarification.

Next, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approved the whole National Planning bill when Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw submitted a proposal to approve it in accord with the decision made in the Hluttaw.

Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Wai Lwin makes clarifications.—MNA

Then he gave an account of "Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, 1958 (New York Convention) and made a proposal to joint the New York Convention with the membership of 146 countries until September 2012, stressing the need of being membership of the convention not only because all ASEAN member countries, except Myanmar, are members the Convention but also because membership of the convention would enable Myanmar to go to arbitration with other countries. Being membership was an essential prerequisite for invitation of foreign investments, he added.

U Steven Thabeik of Chin State Constituency No (4) seen at an interview.

NLM

Submission of the report part (1) of the commission to investigate farmland confiscation, reading out the President's messages on appointments of the member of Union Civil Service Board and the Deputy Minister for Construction, resignation of Ayeyawady Region minister for social welfare and appointment of new minister for the vacant seat to the Hluttaw were carried out at the 16th-day six regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

NLM

More electric power to supply during exam period

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—The Ministry of Electric Power is distributing electricity from 5 pm to 5 am daily as of 1 March till the end of the exam period for the convenience of tenth standard students learning lessons in the late evenings for their examination. The ministry will temporarily suspend electricity supply to some industries during the period. Arrangements are being made to run one turbine each from Shwetaung, Myanaung, Mawlamyine and Ywama Plants and two turbines from Kyunchaung Plant in addition to current running gas power plants to distribute more electricity in coordination with the Ministry of Energy.—*MNA*

USDP members observe 16th day session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

NAY PYI TAW, 1 March—A 19-member team of Union Solidarity and Development Party of DaikU Township in Bago Region observed 16th day sixth regular session of the first Pyidaungsu Hluttaw this morning. Later, they viewed around the Hluttaw buildings and left there.

MNA