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President U Thein Sein receives Indian LOK SABHA Speaker and party

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb — President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received an Indian delegation led by LOK SABHA Speaker Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar at Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, this morning.

They held discussions on implementation of Kaladan Project, sooner completion of India-Myanmar-Thai highway construction, gearing up of repair works of Moreh-Tamu-Kalay-Kalewa-Mandalay route, reemergence of Lido Road built in WWII that will be of benefit to India, Myanmar and China in trade, effective cooperation for ensuring peace and stability in border region, further cooperation in ICT sector with the Ministry of Science and Technology and boosting cooperation

between the two countries and cementing bilateral friendship.

Also present together with the President were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Soe Maung and U Win Myint, Deputy Minister U Thant Kyaw, Secretary of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee U Ko Ko Tun and departmental heads. The Indian delegation led by the LOK SABHA Speaker was accompanied by Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr. Villur Sundararajan Seshadri.

MNA

President U Thein Sein shaking hands with LOK SABHA Speaker Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar.

MNA



Let's go to Nay Pyi Taw Hot Spring to refresh our mind and body

In the time of the new government, Myanmar has been recognized as an attractive tourist destination by international community thanks to its move to greater transparency and more globetrotters have thronged into the country than before. Nay Pyi Taw Hot Spring has become popular as a resort where tourists will be able to have a relaxing effect on their mind and body, gaining great satisfaction.

Moreover, the hot spring serves as a facility for leisure and recreation of service personnel who are discharging duties in Nay Pyi Taw and their

families to be able to refresh their mind and body at the energizing hot spring.

The hot spring is a natural one and lies on Pysinmana-Pinlaung motorway near Taungkya village. Nay Pyi Taw hot spring situated at an altitude of 1500 feet produces heated water around the year, ranging from 8000 to 10000 gallons an hour. As the water temperature of the spring is about 98 degree centigrade, it is ready to have an egg and a potato after boiling them for three or five minutes in the water.

There are 15 turns between mile post Nos (34/4) and (36/4). The hot

spring is nestled in the serene and lush and green forest with view points to enjoy scenic views of the natural environment. At mile post No (41/6), Leinli suspension bridge is situated at the crossroads of Kayah State, Shan State and Nay Pyi Taw, Union territory.

Villages at the vicinity of the hot spring are home to Shan, Kayan, Kayin and Kayah national races who depend on traditional farming for their livelihood. Visitors will be able to not only study culture and traditions of hilly people but also buy their agricultural

produce and locally-grown fruit and vegetables.

As Myanmar is going to host the 27th SEA Games soon, athletes from other countries will be able to enjoy the natural beauty of favourable Myanmar topography.

Under the supervision of Parks and Playgrounds Department of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee, Nay Pyi Taw Hot Spring is providing services to visitors for their relaxation and recreation.

Kyemon (8-2-2013)

Trs: YM

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
President Office
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3rd Waxing of Tabodwe, 1374 ME
(13th February, 2013)

Appointment of Union Ministers

Under the Section 232 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 12 of the Union Government Law, the following persons have been appointed as the Union Ministers of the ministries shown against them.

(1) U Myat Hein

Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

(2) Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win

Ministry of Border Affairs

Sd/ Thein Sein
President

Republic of the Union of Myanmar



Photo shows a flock of visitors refreshing their mind and body at Nay Pyi Taw Hot Spring situated at an altitude of 1500 ft near Taungkya village on Pysinmana-Pinlaung motorway.

LOCAL NEWS

Thai club to play friendlies with MNL teams



YANGON, 13 Feb — BEC Tero Sasana Football Club of Thailand that will play MNL football clubs in friendly matches arrived at Mandalay International Airport by air on 10 February.

A 39-member football team including 24 players started their training for friendly matches in Myanmar

at Bahtoo Sports Ground on 10 February evening before facing Yadanarbon F.C on 12 February. The BEC Tero Sasana F.C. will play against Ayeyawady United F.C. on 14 February and Yangon United F.C. on 16 February at Thuwunna Stadium.

Players of the MNL Clubs who were chosen as selected players for AFC

Challenge Cup are not allowed to partake in friendly matches against the Thai football club.

The BEC Tero Sasana Football Club beat three MNL Clubs— Ayeyawady, Yadanarbon and Yangon United F.C.— in the friendly matches held in the early of 2012.

Kyemon

New tarred road emerges in Katha Township

KATHA, 13 Feb — Hailing the 66th Anniversary Union Day, Padauk Shwe Wah tarred road was put into service at ward-7 in Katha on 8 February.

Region Hluttaw representative U Sein Tun and townsenders formally opened the new tarred road. The 1000-foot and 12-foot tarred road was built by

the township Development Affairs Committee with the contribution of K 6.550 million in cooperation with local people.

Kyemon

Hostel fire in PyinOoLwin

PYINOOLOWIN, 13 Feb — A fire broke out at a six-roomed one-storey hostel in ward-1 of PyinOoLwin Township of Mandalay Region on 3 February morning.

The fire started from the wire shock circuit while charging the laptop's

battery at the fourth room of the hostel. As fire crews accompanied by two fire engines managed to bring the fire under control in time, the fire did not spread to other houses.

A laptop and belongings in two rooms were burnt in the fire. — Kyemon

Seizures of illegal hardwood, wood-cutting machines in Toungoo, Yedashe Township

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb — Forest staff led by the assistant director of Toungoo District Forest Department seized 4.676 tons of hardwood, two wood-cutting machines, two discs of chainsaw, related items and a mobile phone while combing three places in the forest in

Toungoo Township on 3 and 4 February.

Likewise, forest staff of Yedashe Township seized 16.384 tons of hardwood in the west Swa forest reserve on 3 February. Actions are being taken to expose owners of seized hardwood and related items.

MNA

Winners of reading skill, essay contest awarded in Paung

PAUNG, 13 Feb — With the aim of cultivating local people with reading habit at the age of knowledge, the prize-giving ceremony of reading skill and essay contests was held at Mindan middle school in Thabyu-chaung village of Paung Township on 8 February.

Paung Township Administrator U Myint Naing and District Information and Public Relations Department Head Daw Khin Saw Linn spoke on the occasion.

Paung Township Health Officer Dr Maung Maung Lwin and U Soe Aung (Lin Latt-Paung) of

Paung Township Writers Association gave talks on qualified health care service and reading habit.

Next, Paung Township IPRD Head Daw Cho Myat Myat Htwe and officials presented prizes to winners of the reading skill and essay contests. — Kyemon

Inspection of electricity consumption carried out

THAYET, 13 Feb — A team led by district and township electrical engineers went on a tour of inspection of wards in Thayet on 5 February.

They carried out inspection of meter boxes for minimizing power loss, ensuring correct electricity bill to be able to generate more income and curbing illegal use of electricity.

Kyemon



Pwayhla market ring road put into service in Pindaya

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb — Hailing the 66th Anniversary Union Day, the opening of new Pwayhla market ring road built by Pindaya Township Development Affairs Committee was held in Pwayhla of Danu self-administered zone on 9 February.

Chairman of the leading body of Danu self-administered zone U Htoo Ko Ko, Director of Shan State DAD U Sai Tun Tun

and a townselder formally opened the new road, and Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat and party strolled along the road.

Next, the chief minister attended the ceremony to hand over documents related to a new school building for Basic Education Primary School No (83) at Innge village to the Ministry of Education by Nippon Foundation of Japan. The chairman of the foundation,

the Japanese ambassador to Myanmar, the director-general of Department for Border Regions and National Races Development and officials concerned formally opened the new school building.

The newly-opened school building was the 200th facility the foundation that signed MoU with the department to build primary schools in Shan State.

MNA

Light truck overturns while overtaking trailer in Pakokku

PAKOKKU, 13 Feb — A light truck carrying passengers turned over near Pannaingchon village, seven-mile east of Pakokku Township Police Station, on Pakokku-Yezagyo motorway in Pakokku Township of Magway Region on 9 February.

The light truck driven by Phyo Wai Kyi, 33,

overturned while trying to overtake a trailer from the left side at high speed at a place between mile post Nos (6/4) and (6/5) on the road. The road accident left 16 passengers who were on board the light truck wounded. The injured are being given medical treatment at Pakokku Hospital. — Kyemon

Hnawkon village sees newly-upgraded BEMS

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb — Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint unveiled the signboard of the school which was upgraded into Basic Education Middle School at Hnawkon village in YeU Township of Sagaing Region on 10 February.

In his address at the ceremony, the Union

minister called on students to put a lot of efforts into learning as development of the country in future rests on hard-working youths of today.

Next, the Union minister presented K 1.5 million and local wellwishers school furniture worth K 9.8 million for the school. — MNA



WORLD

Obama proposes raising minimum wage, investing in infrastructure jobs



US Vice President Joe Biden (L) applauds and House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) looks on as President Barack Obama waves prior to delivering his State of the Union Speech on Capitol Hill in Washington, on 12 Feb, 2013.

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb — US President Barack Obama proposed on Tuesday to hike the minimum wage by more than 20 percent, invest \$50 billion on crumbling roads and bridges and spend \$15 billion on a construction jobs programme in a bid to boost economic growth.

In his annual State of the Union address, Obama urged Congress to support his plan, which would include tax and education reforms that the administration believes would help attract manufacturers back to the

United States.

The complete cost of the programme would be offset by spending cuts and tax reforms that will be laid out in Obama's budget proposal in the weeks ahead, senior administration officials told reporters.

The minimum wage increase would lift incomes for 15 million Americans and be done in stages, the officials said, noting that an increasing number of corporate chief executives support such a move.

The officials said economic studies show increasing the minimum wage is effective at reducing poverty while reducing turnover costs for businesses.

Obama is also proposing to raise the tipped minimum wage — the wage for jobs whose compensation includes gratuities — and have it indexed for inflation, a move, the officials noted, that was supported by Obama's 2012 Republican presidential opponent, Mitt Romney.

Reuters

UNESCO DG sends message on World Radio Day

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb—On the occasion of World Radio Day which falls on 13th February 2013, Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO sent a message. In her message she said that *World Radio Day* celebrates a medium that has transformed the way of communication and that remains at the forefront of the 21st century. On 18 December, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the 2011 resolution adopted by the UNESCO General Conference, proclaiming 13 February as World Radio Day, the day United Nations Radio was established in 1946.

The birth of radio in the 19th century ushered in the era of modern communication. The world has changed dramatically since then, but radio remains widely accessible, relatively cheap and very simple to use. In situations of conflict and natural disaster, shortwave radio provides a lifeline of information that can save lives.

The DG also pointed

out that across the world, the cost of broadcasting is decreasing and the number of radio stations is increasing. Citizen journalists and community media are using online radio stations to give voices to those who are rarely heard.

More than ever, radio remains a force for social change, by sharing knowledge and providing a platform for inclusive debate. In a world changing quickly, UNESCO is committed to harnessing the full power of radio to build bridges of understanding between peoples, to share information as widely as possible and to deepen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially freedom of expression.

This is essential for good governance, open societies and sustainable development. This is why UNESCO works to protect the safety of radio journalists across the world and to support free, independent and pluralistic media, along with the necessary legal frameworks and



Irina Bokova

democratic institutions. UNESCO is also determined to make full use of community radio to address poverty and social exclusion at the local level and to empower marginalized rural groups, young people and women. Radio is a key platform for education and for protecting local cultures and languages.

It is also a powerful way to amplify the voices of young people around the world on issues that affect their lives. "We must bolster their skills and give them opportunities to engage fully with radio. Radio has transformed our past — it remains a powerful force for shaping a more peaceful, more sustainable and more inclusive future for all." She said. —NLM

ANDRITZ HYDRO opens representative office in Myanmar



YANGON, 13 Feb—ANDRITZ HYDRO, part of international technology Group ANDRITZ, has opened a representative office here on 1 February, 2013, and is thus further strengthening ANDRITZ HYDRO's strong presence in Southeast Asia, together with its subsidiaries established in Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Southeast Asia has been an important hydropower market for ANDRITZ HYDRO for decades. "We have followed the dynamic opening and transition process in Myanmar over the past few years and are happy to announce that we now have a representative

office in this dynamic market. This will enable us to better analyze the market, its needs, and opportunities," said Josef Ullmer, President of ANDRITZ HYDRO South East Asia at the opening ceremony.

Both the economic growth and the increasing energy demand have substantially increased the energy needs of this country, which has a population of 60 million. A recent study by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) shows that while per capita energy consumption of electricity in Myanmar remains one of the lowest in Asia (electrification rate is only around 26%), the

overall energy consumption in Myanmar increased by an average of 2.4% annually between 2000 and 2009. Two-thirds of the electrical energy in Myanmar is based on hydropower. The four main river basins (Ayeyarwaddy, Chindwin, Thanlwin and Sittaung) are seen as the major sources for development of the huge hydropower potential in Myanmar, estimated at more than 100,000 MW. For comparison: As of the end of 2011, only 753 MW of hydropower power was commissioned (Source: ADB study).

Since the 1980s, ANDRITZ HYDRO has successfully realized several projects in Myanmar, all of them to the complete satisfaction

Lebanon signs parliamentary protocol with Belgium

BEIRUT, 13 Feb—Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berry on Tuesday signed with his visiting Belgium counterpart Andre Flahaut a protocol on parliamentary partnership between the two countries.

of the customer: 1983 — Kon Nyaung, 1984 — Tatkyi Falls, 2004 — Mone, Paung Laung. ANDRITZ HYDRO has been invited by local partners and the Ministry of Electric Power to work more intensively in Myanmar in the future. "This is a huge opportunity. We are working closely with our local partners on these projects, which will help us to combine our international expertise and local knowledge. ", said ANDRITZ HYDRO's Regional Director for Indochina, Martin Koubek. The goal is to work closely with government agencies to identify effective short-term modernization projects that will meet the increasing energy needs of Myanmar.—NLM

Berry was quoted by the state-run *National News Agency* as saying that "the relations with Belgium were always strong," referring to the "nine bilateral cooperation agreements between the two countries."—Xinhua

UN Security Council to back Mali peacekeepers in weeks

DUBLIN, 13 Feb — The UN Security Council is expected to reach an agreement in two to three weeks to deploy up to 6,000 peacekeepers in Mali to help stabilize the country after a rebel incursion, a senior UN official said on Tuesday.

The 15-nation council initially appeared reluctant to send its own blue-helmeted peacekeepers to the West African nation, and instead backed an African-led force that was due to deploy later this year.

But France's decision to send its own soldiers in to fight Islamist rebels in northern Mali in January rendered that plan moot, diplomats told *Reuters* in January.

UN peacekeeping chief Herve Ladsous told *Reuters* on Tuesday a consensus was now emerging in Security Council discussions to deploy a peacekeeping force "at the appropriate time". "I think the Security Council will be looking at a resolution in the next two

or three weeks and then we can move ahead for full deployment," Ladsous said in Dublin.

About 4,500 French troops have pushed back advances made by Islamists rebels who seized the northern two thirds of the country last year. France said it moved into stop the militants turning the country into a base for militant attacks across the region and beyond.

It added it wanted the mission to be replaced gradually by a force with a UN peacekeeping mandate by April. Ladsous said he was confident the force would be in place before then, ahead of elections on 31 July, as Mali takes step toward restoring democratic government after a coup in March.

He added it still had to be decided how the peacekeepers would relate to the UN-backed African military force (AFISMA) which already has 3,800 troops on the ground in Mali.

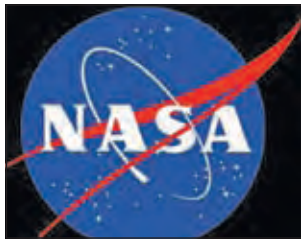
Reuters

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NASA satellites find freshwater losses in Middle East

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb—A new study using data from a pair of gravity-measuring NASA satellites finds that large parts of the arid Middle East region lost freshwater reserves rapidly during the past decade, US space agency NASA announced on Tuesday. Scientists at the University of California, Irvine; NASA's Goddard Space Flight Centre; and the National Centre for Atmospheric Research, found during a seven-year period beginning in 2003 that parts of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran along the Tigris and Euphrates river basins lost 117 million acre feet (144 cubic kilometres) of total stored freshwater. That is almost the amount of water in the Dead Sea.

The findings, to be published on Friday in the journal *Water Resources Research*, are the result of one of the first comprehen-



sive hydrological assessments of the entire Tigris-Euphrates-Western Iran region. Because obtaining ground-based data in the area is difficult, satellite data, such as those from NASA's twin Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) satellites, are essential. GRACE is providing a global picture of water storage trends and is invaluable when hydrologic observations are not routinely collected or shared beyond political boundaries.

The team calculated about one-fifth of the observed water losses resulted from soil drying up and snowpack shrinking, partly

in response to the 2007 drought. Loss of surface water from lakes and reservoirs accounted for about another fifth of the losses. The majority of the water lost — approximately 73 million acre feet (90 cubic kilometers) — was due to reductions in groundwater.

"GRACE data show an alarming rate of decrease in total water storage in the Tigris and Euphrates river basins, which currently have the second fastest rate of groundwater storage loss on Earth, after India," said Jay Famiglietti, principle investigator of the study and a hydrologist and professor at UC Irvine. "The rate was especially striking after the 2007 drought. Meanwhile, demand for freshwater continues to rise, and the region does not coordinate its water management because of different interpretations of international laws."—Xinhua

Pentagon stands by use of lithium-ion batteries on F-35 fighters

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb — The Pentagon said it plans to continue using lithium-ion batteries on the new F-35 fighter jet despite problems with similar batteries that have grounded Boeing Co's new 787 airliner and are causing Airbus to rethink their use on its A350 jet. Joe DellaVedova, spokesman for the Pentagon's \$396 billion F-35 programme office, said on Tuesday that the

lithium-ion batteries used on the new radar-evading fighter were made by different manufacturers than those used on the 787, and the jet's battery systems had been rigorously tested.

"The bottom line is the lithium-ion batteries used on the F-35s have been through extensive tests and have redundant systems to protect the aircraft and battery compartments; they are considered safe," DellaVe-

dova said. DellaVedova said there had been some irregularities with the lithium-ion batteries not starting properly in cold temperatures that were being addressed, but no issues affecting flight safety had come up during years of testing.

All 50 Boeing Dreamliners in commercial service were grounded worldwide on 16 January after a series of battery-related incidents, including a fire on board a parked 787 at Boston's Logan International Airport and an in-flight problem on another airplane in Japan. The groundings have cost airlines tens of millions of dollars, with no solution yet in sight, and have sparked growing concerns among aerospace industry executives about whether the powerful but delicate backup energy systems are technically "mature", or predictable.—Reuters



Yahoo Inc Chief Executive Marissa Mayer attends the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos on 25 Jan, 2013.
REUTERS

Yahoo CEO says Microsoft search deal underperforms

SAN FRANCISCO, 13 Feb — Yahoo Inc Chief Executive Marissa Mayer said the company's search partnership with Microsoft Corp was not delivering the market share gains or the revenue boost that it should. "One of the points of the alliance is that we collectively want to grow share rather than just trading share with each oth-

er," Mayer said at the Goldman Sachs Technology and Internet Conference in San Francisco on Tuesday.

In her first appearance at an investor conference since taking the reins of the struggling Web portal in July, Mayer said she planned to prune a sprawling lineup of mobile apps and she reiterated her focus on enticing con-

sumers to spend more time on Yahoo's online properties, in order to display more money-making ads. "I'm not confused. Our biggest business problem right now is impressions. Basically can we grow impressions, can we get growth happening here," Mayer said. Yahoo shares finished Tuesday's regular trading session up 31 cents at

\$21.21.

Mayer, 37, took over after a tumultuous period at Yahoo in which former CEO Scott Thompson resigned after less than 6 months on the job over a controversy about his academic credentials and in which Yahoo co-founder Jerry Yang resigned from the board and cut his ties with the company.—Reuters

Worthless credits dumped in New Zealand's "irrational" emissions trading scheme: expert

WELLINGTON, 13 Feb —New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme (ETS) is "more or less dead," a forestry expert said on Tuesday in the latest attack on the country's environmental credentials. University of Canterbury Associate Professor Euan Mason said New Zealand had allowed unrestricted imports of credits, including many hot air credits from eastern Europe, becoming "a dumping ground for worthless credits."

"No other country with a carbon trading scheme behaves in this way. They

recognize that some credits are doing nothing for the environment and they restrict them," Mason said in a statement. The country's agricultural sector was given "a free ride," despite contributing about half the total national emissions, and the cap and trade scheme was "irrational," he said. "Under our scheme when a firm falls below its allocation of free units, it can use the remaining units to offset its remaining emissions and claim that its operations were greenhouse gas neutral, when in fact it has only reduced emissions

to the level of the cap."

New Zealand's ETS provided no incentives and the country had failed to plan for the future, which would result in a huge rise in emissions in the 2020s, when forest plantations planted in the 1990s would be harvested. "We have progressively weakened our ETS so that New Zealand has not changed much in the face of climate change and now, when it is clear that the consequences of our failure are approaching, we have withdrawn from Kyoto," he said.

Xinhua

Russian cargo spacecraft docks with ISS

MOSCOW, 13 Feb—The Russian Progress M-18M unmanned supply ship docked on Tuesday with the International Space Station, the Mission Control Centre said. "The docking was carried out in automatic regime at 00:35 Moscow Time Tuesday (2035 GMT Monday),"

the control centre said in a statement. The Progress M-18M was launched from the Baikonur space centre in Kazakhstan and fast-tracked to the ISS Pirs module. It is the third time for the Mission Control Centre to use the fast-track docking instead of the traditional two-day

trip. The Progress spaceship carried more than 2,500 kg of supplies, including fuel, food, water, oxygen and various scientific and sports equipment for the space station crew. The current space station crew includes three Russians, two Americans and a Canadian. —Xinhua

Intel plans online TV service as PC chip sales wane

DANA POINT, 13 Feb—Top chipmaker Intel Corp plans to launch an Internet television service this year with live and on-demand content, entering a hotly competitive race as its core PC business erodes. Shifting into an unfamiliar and potentially costly market in which Intel lacks experience and relationships, Erik Huggers, vice president and general manager of Intel Media, said he is negotiating with content providers.

He said hundreds of Intel employees and their families are already testing a set-top box the company will sell as part of the service. Intel's move puts it into competition with heavyweights like Apple, Amazon and Google that believe the \$100 billion cable television ecosystem is ripe for change. The chipmaker plans to offer consumers smaller bundles of content than those currently offered by cable operators, Erik

Huggers, vice president and general manager of Intel Media, told the AllThings-Digital "Dive into Media" conference on Tuesday.

Asked if Intel has inked any content deals, Huggers said he is working with providers and is confident Intel will have a compelling product to launch this year. "We have been working for (the past) year to set up Intel media, a new group focused on developing an Internet platform," Huggers said.

"It's not a value play, it's a quality play where we'll create a superior experience for the end user."

Intel has struggled to get its virtual television service off the ground due to unwillingness on the part of major media content providers to let the company unbundle and license specific networks and shows at a discount to what cable and satellite partners pay, according to sources.

Reuters



Showgoers visit the Intel booth on the first day of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas on 8 Jan, 2013. —REUTERS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

CNOOC-Nexen deal approved by US regulators

BEIJING, 13 Feb—US regulators have approved China National Offshore Oil Corporation's (CNOOC's) 15.1-billion-USD bid to buy Nexen Inc, a deal that will be the biggest overseas takeover made by a Chinese company.

The approval from the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) means the last major hurdle

was cleared, CNOOC, China's largest offshore oil producer, said in a statement issued on Tuesday.

Before this, the deal has won approvals from Nexen shareholders, local courts in Canada, the Canadian government, and the National Development and Reform Commission, China's economic planner.

Progresses of the deal will be publicized at a



proper time, the statement said. CNOOC said on 28 January that the closing date for the takeover would be postponed from 31 January to 2 March,

2013. The deal needed US approvals because Nexen, based in Calgary, Alberta, controlled assets in the Gulf of Mexico.

Xinhua

Folic acid in pregnancy tied to lower autism risk

NEW YORK, 13 Feb—Women who took extra folic acid in the weeks before and just after becoming pregnant were less likely to have a child with autism, in a new study from Norway. Because lack of folic acid has been tied to brain and spinal cord birth defects, groups including the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) already call for women who may become pregnant to take daily supplements containing the B vitamin.

The new study "provides an additional reason to take folic acid, in addition to the preventive effect that we already know it has against neural tube defects," said Dr Pal Suren from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health in Oslo, who led the research. "It underlines the importance

autism.

The new study, which appears in *the Journal of the American Medical Association*, doesn't prove low folic acid in pregnant women causes their babies to develop autism, or that high doses can prevent it. And Suren and his colleagues didn't see an effect of folic acid on other autism spectrum disorders, such as Asperger's. They followed just over 85,000 women and their children, born between 2002 and 2008. When women were about halfway through their pregnancies, they reported on any supplements or vitamins they'd taken in the few weeks before becoming pregnant and the two months afterward — the time when folic acid is thought to have the strongest effect on development. By the time



of starting early, preferably before the pregnancy," he told *Reuters Health*. One in 88 children in the US has an autism spectrum disorder, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That number has risen in recent years, but it's unclear whether that's due to more kids with symptoms or doctors who are more likely to recognize and diagnose

their kids were between three and 10 years old, 270 had been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, including 114 with autism itself. Suren's team found one in 1,000 babies born to women who reported taking folic acid early in pregnancy had autism, compared to about two in 1,000 of those whose moms didn't take folic acid.—*Reuters*

Drugmakers eye Africa's middle classes as next growth market

PARIS, 13 Feb—For pharmaceutical companies, Africa is changing. Not only is the continent's economic growth grabbing attention in boardrooms but the shifting nature of its disease burden is luring Big Pharma, as new opportunities open up for treating chronic diseases afflicting the middle classes, rather than just fire-fighting infection.

European companies, in particular, hope to reap

rewards by investing early in a region where many of them already have historic commercial ties. Violence in Mali and Algeria have put Africa in the headlines in recent weeks but Sanofi of France — the international drug company with the biggest sales in Africa — is still pushing ahead with a third factory in Algeria. "Africa is becoming an extremely interesting market and

we'll continue to expand our commercial presence there," Chief Executive Chris Viehbach told *Reuters*.

According to IMS data, by 2016 pharmaceutical spending in Africa is expected to reach \$30 billion, driven by a 10.6 percent annual growth rate that is second only to Asia and in line with Latin America. By 2020 the market will have more than doubled from current levels to \$45 billion. Although it is likely to remain a niche market, the promise of Africa is that it will continue to grow in the next decade as Asia and Latin America start to reach maturity. It is that potential for the continent to act as a hedge against slowing long-term growth in established emerging markets that appeals to Novartis Chief Executive Joe Jimenez.

Reuters



A customer buys medication at a pharmacy in Khartoum on 13 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

Australia banks lift Asian shares, yen firmer

TOKYO, 13 Feb—Asian shares inched higher on Wednesday while the yen was firmer amid conflicting interpretations of G7 comments about the yen's recent weakness. The MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan, MIAPJ0000PUS rose 0.7 percent, pulled higher by Australian shares AXJO, which jumped 1 percent led by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, which posted record first half earnings. China, Taipei and Hong Kong markets remain closed for the Lunar New Year holiday. US stocks closed modestly higher on Tuesday, putting the Dow within striking distance of an all-time high. Investors were likely to continue taking cues from currency markets before the meeting in Moscow of the Group of 20 finance ministers and central bankers on Friday

and Saturday, with growing international tensions over exchange rates.

At centre is Japan, where Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's government has made it clear that it will push for aggressive policies to beat stubborn deflation through drastic monetary expansion. Anticipation of much bolder Bank of Japan monetary policy has sent the yen into a steady decline, helping boost Japanese stocks to 33-month highs. The Japanese stock market may have rallied too strongly on expectations alone. "I don't believe the Japanese government is manipulating currency

rates, but it is maybe time that an equilibrium point may be sought for the yen's level given that some other countries may see weaker currencies as beneficial to their economies," said Yuuki Sakurai, CEO at Fukoku Capital Management in Tokyo.

The Nikkei stock average, N225 eased 0.2 percent. The yen rallied on Tuesday, reversing the previous day's late selloff against the dollar and euro after an official with the Group of Seven said it is worried about excess moves in the Japanese currency.

Reuters



A woman looks at an electronic board showing Japan's stock price index at the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo on 6 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

S Korea's import prices fall on stronger won

SEOUL, 13 Feb—South Korea's import prices fell the most by more than three years in January as the local currency appreciated against the US dollar, central bank data showed on Wednesday.

In local currency terms, import prices tumbled 10.6 percent in January from a year before, the lowest since October 2009 when the prices sank 15.3 percent, according to the Bank of Korea (BOK). From a month earlier, the prices declined 0.8 percent. The stronger won accelerated the fall in import prices from a 6.4 percent decline in October, a 7.9 percent fall in November and a 9 percent drop in December. The South Korean won rose 1.1 percent versus the dollar last month. Prices in raw material imported from overseas gained 0.1 percent in January from the prior month as Dubai crude, South Korea's benchmark, averaged 107.93 US dollars a barrel last month, up 1.5 percent from a month before.

Xinhua

Hospital deaths and readmissions not linked

NEW YORK, 13 Feb—A measure used by Medicare to penalize hospitals for poor performance is not linked to how many patients die after being admitted, suggests a new study. The study, published in *the Journal of the American Medical Association* on Tuesday, suggests that hospitals can keep the number of patients who come back for more treatment low without having more of them die. "The concern was that their performance in one area is going to compromise their performance in another," said Dr Harlan Krumholz, the study's lead author from the Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut.

Currently, the US Centres for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which oversees the federal government's insurance programmes for the elderly, disabled and poor, uses those measures to judge a hospital's quality. CMS also punishes hospitals with high readmission rates by reducing their payments. In 2013, CMS estimates hospitals will lose—on average—0.3 percent of their funding, about \$270 million overall. For the new study, Krumholz and his colleagues looked at whether there was a link between the number of people who died within 30 days of being admitted to hospitals and the number

of people who came back for more treatment within 30 days after they were discharged.

They analyzed data on older Americans on Medicare who were admitted to US hospitals between July 2005 and June 2008 with a heart attack, heart failure and pneumonia—the conditions CMS tracks. They found about 20 percent of heart attack patients, 24 percent of heart failure patients and 18 percent of pneumonia patients came back to the hospital for more care. That compared to about 17 percent of heart attack patients and 11 percent of heart failure and pneumonia patients who died.—*Xinhua*

WORLD

Obama's Israel trip to include visiting Iron Dome

JERUSALEM, 13 Feb—US President Barack Obama's trip to Israel in March, his first since he entered the White House in 2009, will include a meeting with soldiers operating the Iron Dome anti-rocket defence system, Israeli media reported on Tuesday.

Obama is scheduled to land in Ben-Gurion International Airport on board Air Force One at noon on 20 March, where he will be

received by an honour guard and make a televised speech alongside speeches by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres, according to preliminary details of the itinerary obtained by the *Yediot Aharonot* newspaper.

The US president's three-day visit will commence with laying a wreath at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum. He will then lay wreaths on the graves of

Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism and visionary of the Jewish state, and Yitzhak Rabin, the prime minister who was gunned down by a Jewish assassin in 1995 at the height of a controversial peace process with the Palestinians, *Yediot Aharonot* said.

Later in the day, Obama and Netanyahu will convene with small delegations of advisers for closed-door discussions that are slated

to feature Iran, Syria and kick-starting the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. *Yediot Aharonot* reported Monday that the visit is primarily intended to stop any intention by Netanyahu to launch an independent attack on Iran in the spring, with Obama expected to reiterate his administration's support for continued international diplomacy and sanctions on Teheran.—Xinhua



Citizens view artworks at the Shanxi Museum in Taiyuan, capital of north China's Shanxi Province, on 12 Feb, 2013. Some citizens spent their Spring Festival holiday by viewing exhibitions in museums.—XINHUA

US Senate panel approves Hagel's nomination as Defence Secretary

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb—US Senate panel on Tuesday afternoon approved the nomination of former Senator Chuck Hagel, US President Barack Obama's pick as next Defence Secretary, sending it to the full Senate vote.

The Senate Armed Services Committee voted 14 to 11 after a lengthy meeting to approve Hagel's nomination to succeed retiring Defence Secretary Leon Panetta. The panel's Democrats backed Obama's choice of next Pentagon Chief while Republicans remained opposed to the two-term

Republican Senator from Nebraska.

The panel's approval will send Hagel's nomination to a vote by the entire Senate this week.

Republican lawmakers have stood in line to voice their opposition to Hagel's nomination, raising questions over whether the former senator would be a strong ally of Israel and be tough enough on Iran. Some Republicans, including members of the Armed Services Committee, threw harsh questions over Hagel during the eight-hour nomination hearing on 31 January.

Responding to the criticism at the hearing, Hagel said he backed the US policy of preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and that all options including the use of military force are on the table.

Hagel, 66, a decorated Vietnam War veteran and a moderate Republican, is expected to be a trusted ally of Obama on many issues including the US military exit from Afghanistan. He served two terms from 1997 to 2009 as US senator for Nebraska, and was a leading Republican critic of the Iraq War.

Xinhua

Chile's high court ratifies preventive detention of Bolivian soldiers

SANTIAGO, 13 Feb—Chile's Supreme Court on Tuesday ratified preventive detention of three Bolivian soldiers who were charged with illegally entering Chilean territory, an incident further straining ties between the two South American neighbours.

Chile's Supreme Court voted four to one to uphold the detention of the Bolivian soldiers arrested on 25 January in border town of Tulapampa.

Bolivia has said the soldiers, who were also accused of illegally carrying weapons, were chasing a gang of car smugglers and there were no signs indicating a border crossing.

Hugo Gutierrez, a lawmaker from Chile's Communist Party, has visited the soldiers being held in Alto Hospicio prison in northern Chile and argued on their behalf, calling for a political solution to the incident.

"The Chilean government knows that these soldiers are not criminals, and that they were chasing smugglers," he said.

The Bolivian government, meanwhile, said Chile is using the soldiers for "political" reasons, and vowed to pursue all legal and diplomatic means available to free them.

Bolivian Defence Minister Ruben Saavedra said the issue "should have been resolved through diplomatic means," but it has not happened despite Chilean authorities acknowledging it as an "isolated incident" in a note sent to Bolivia when they were arrested. Saavedra said "our defence is working in Chile to seek their release. If our legal actions make no progress, we will resort to international laws."—Xinhua



Major General Anto Jelec from Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) speaks at a military base in Sarajevo, BiH, on 12 Feb, 2013. BiH is hosting the International Logistic Exercise 2013 (LOGEX 13) from 4 Feb to 15 Feb in Sarajevo. About 200 soldiers from NATO and member states of Partnership for Peace (PfP) took part in the exercise.—XINHUA

French charity workers jailed two years on children-smuggling charges

PARIS, 13 Feb—A French court on Tuesday sentenced workers of the charity Zoe's Ark to two years of imprisonment on attempts to smuggle 103 children from Chad to France six years ago.

Eric Breteau, the president of the charity, and his girlfriend Emilie Lellouch were found guilty of trying to smuggle the children presented as orphans from Darfur to France.

Each of the two defendants will also pay 50,000 euros (67,188 US

dollars) fine and will be prevented from practicing any activities related to hospitality, accommodation or minors's placing, according to the court.

Four other volunteers were given between six months and one year suspended jail terms.

In October, 2007, Chadian officials arrested Zoe's Ark staff for attempting to fly illegally children who were mostly Chadian and had at least one living parent. (1 euro = 1.34 US dollar)—Xinhua

Yemen's elite counter-terrorism special operation forces conduct training exercises on the outskirts of Sanaa, Yemen, on 12 Feb, 2013, as part of efforts to improve security in the country. XINHUA



Kenya's electoral body races against time ahead of March elections

NAIROBI, 13 Feb—Kenya's electoral body, the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), is conducting a flurry of activities in a race against time to win the citizen's confidence ahead of the 4 March general election.

The commission on Tuesday met with presidential aspirants and their running mates in Nairobi to sensitize them on the election voting process and the system that will be used in announcing the results.

"The results IEBC will announce initially will be provisional ones before Form 16A which will be

duly signed at the polling stations by the presiding officers and agents are physically received at the tallying centre in Nairobi," IEBC Chairperson Ahmed Issack Hassan said.

Hassan said Kenyans will start to form a clear picture on the outcome of the general elections 48 hours after voting on 4 March, though the law allows them seven days to announce the results of the vote.

Hassan guaranteed Kenyans and the entire world of a credible and transparent election, saying the electoral body has already played its part and that it was now the turn of

the contestant and the voters to do their part.

"We held fruitful discussions and the contestants promised to conduct peaceful campaigns devoid of violence, intimidation and bribery and that any dispute will be settled in court; all towards which they have signed a code of conduct."

He said to ensure the speedy transportation of Form 16A to the tallying centre in Nairobi, all the presiding officers who will be more than six hours from travel Nairobi will be airlifted, whereas those less than six hours away will travel by road.

Xinhua



An Iranian woman chooses gifts for the upcoming Valentine's Day at a store in Teheran, on 12 Feb, 2012.—XINHUA

NATIONAL

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham stresses eternal peace

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb— Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham hosted a dinner this evening at the Royal Kumudra Hotel in honour of responsible persons from peace groups of the national races who attended the 66th Anniversary Union Day celebration.

It was also attended by vice-chairmen of the Union level peace making committee, Union ministers, MPs, deputy ministers and responsible persons of Myanmar Peace Centre.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-President

Dr Sai Mauk Kham called on the responsible persons from the peace groups to meet with the peace making work committee occasionally as part of efforts for achieving eternal peace in the country.

In his speech, the Vice-President also urged all national races to take part in peace making process because the country lagged behind in development due to lack of peace in the country. Afterwards, Vice-Chairman of the committee U Thein Zaw and Union ministers presented gifts to the responsible persons of the peace groups of the national races.—MNA



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham cordially greets responsible persons from the peace groups at the dinner.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives Indian parliamentary delegation

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb— Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann met a delegation led by Speaker of LOKSABHA of the Republic of India Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar at Zabuthiri Hall in Hluttaw Complex, here, this evening. At the call, they exchanged views on parliamentary affairs between the two countries.

The Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann poses for documentary photo with Speaker of LOK SABHA of the Republic of India Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar.—MNA



Speaker said that he would like to extend a welcome to the Indian Speaker and parliamentarians and express thanks for the visit of Indian delegation. He believed that amity and cooperation between the two countries would be promoted through that tour.

The Indian Speaker said that she would like to take pride for paying a goodwill visit to Myanmar. He was very pleased as it was her first-ever visit to Myanmar.

She had chance to visit the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session that morning. She believed that Myanmar would be on the world map as Myanmar's reform processes had been assessed since two years ago.

After the meeting, the Indian Speaker presented Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker's India tour documentary photos to the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and they posed for documentary photo.

It was also attended by Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy

Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Committee Chairmen U Maung Maung Thein, U Hla Myint Oo, U Win Sein, U Soe Naing, U Thurein Zaw, U T Khun Myat and U Htay Myint, Secretaries Dr Soe Yin and Daw Dwe Bu, committee chairmen Daw Zatalan and Daw Khin Saw Wai and officials from Hluttaw Office, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr Villur Sundararajan Seshadri and officials.

MNA

Deputy Finance and Revenue Minister observes financial system of Japan

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb— At the invitation of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), a Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Finance and Revenue Dr Maung Maung Thein visited Tokyo of Japan from 5 to 9 February.

The Myanmar delegation observed Japan's financial system and banking services, stock exchange, printing of currency notes, making

coins and the systems of Deposit insurance, Credit rating and Credit guarantee.

On 8 February, the Myanmar delegation met with Deputy Finance Minister of Japan Ms. Obuchi and openly discussed financial cooperation between the two countries, development of Daewi Special Economic Zone and SMEs and hosting of SEA Games in Myanmar.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb — Vice-Chairmen of Union level Peace-making Committee Union Minister U Aung Min and U Thein Zaw met responsible persons of Peace Groups who attended the 66th Anniversary Union Day ceremony, here, this morning.

It was also attended by Union ministers, parliamentarians, deputy ministers, members of Myanmar Peace Centre and responsible persons of Karen National Union (KNU), Karen National Liberation Army, Peace Council (KNU/KNLA), Democratic Karen

Union level Peace-making Committee Vice-Chairmen meet responsible persons of Peace Groups



Vice-Chairmen of Union level Peace-making Committee Union Minister U Aung Min and U Thein Zaw meet responsible persons of Peace Groups.

MNA

Buddhist Army (DKBA), Chin National Front (CNF), National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-K), PaO National Liberation Organization (PNLO), New Mon State Party (NMSP), Restoration Council of

Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA) and Shan State Progress Party/ Shan State Army (SSPP/SSA).

Vice-Chairman U Aung Min made clarifications on ongoing peace-making process, prospects of

making peace with KIO and follow-up programmes for holding political dialogue.

Those present also took part in discussions on implementation of peace-making process.

MNA

PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 14 February, 2013

Democratic nation for people

It's so encouraging for us that our country Myanmar is now seeing signs of progress in her mission towards promoting relations with the international community, and her aims are: gaining knowledge, experience and resources in facilitating her development programs. At the same time the country recognizes her responsibility towards her citizens and development partners for producing the finest results from international cooperation.

Accordingly, Myanmar is committed herself to concentrating on implementing development priorities and plans involving the task of developing systems for dialogue and knowledge sharing across all levels of government at national, state, regional and local levels, engaging strongly with civil societies through participatory approaches, including providing greater voice to women, minorities and marginalized people, and seeking and considering the views of development partners.

In so doing the country is focusing on developing a culture of democratic practices that recognizes human rights and empowers citizens through participatory processes, strengthening the rule of law and improving access to justice and to information, creating a firm environment for civil societies to contribute to policy formulation, budgetary processes and delivery of services at the grass-roots level, pursuing market based, inclusive growth, equitable and sustainable development with a pro-poor focus to accelerate achievement of the MDGs, including by securing property rights, accelerating peace-building, political reforms and development initiatives to promote reconciliation and national harmony in recent conflict and cease fire areas. Moreover, Myanmar has high aspirations for people-centred development while staying focused on achievable results.

With all these national priorities the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has embarked on a far reaching reform programme to transform the country into a modern, developed and democratic nation that improves the livelihood of its people.

Quintana visits Central Jail (Insein)



Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana meets officials and prisoners at Insein Central Jail.—MNA

NATIONAL

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker receives Indian parliamentary delegation



Speaker of Pyidaungsu and Amyotha Hluttaws U Khin Aung Myint holds talks with Speaker of LOK SABHA Smt Meira Kumar.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb—Indian parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of LOK SABHA of the Republic of India Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar arrived at Amyotha

Hluttaw, here, this afternoon.

Speaker of Pyidaungsu and Amyotha Hluttaws U Khin Aung Myint received the Indian delegation, at Amyotha Hluttaw Hall in

Hluttaw Complex. It was also attended by Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu and Amyotha Hluttaws U Mya Nyein, chairmen of Amyotha Hluttaw Committees, secretaries and

representatives, officials from Hluttaw Office and the Indian Ambassador to Myanmar.

The Speaker explained the formation of two Hluttaws with multiparty, all religions and all national races, holdings of Hluttaw meetings, Hluttaw's undertakings and Myanmar's political and economic reforms.

They had a cordial discussion on IT development, cooperation in agricultural and human resources development, parliamentary affairs between the two countries, study of India's parliamentary experience and promoting amity and relations between the two countries.

After the meeting, they posed for documentary photo. Speaker of LOK SABHA Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar signed the visitors' book.

MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw's Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee Chairperson meets Indian parliamentary delegation

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb—Chairperson of Pyithu Hluttaw's Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met an Indian parliamentary delegation led by Speaker LOK SABHA Honourable Smt Meira Kumar at Pyithu Hluttaw Hall of Hluttaw Complex, here, today.

Present at the call together with Chairperson Daw Aung San Suu Kyi were officials of Hluttaw Office. The LOK SABHA Speaker was accompanied

by the Indian Ambassador to Myanmar.

At the call, they had a cordial discussion on India's parliamentary experience, the exchange of experiences between the two parliaments, conducting parliamentary training courses, cooperation in flourishing developing a culture of democratic practices and providing necessary stationery for Myanmar's parliament.

MNA

Chairperson of Pyithu Hluttaw's Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Speaker of LOK SABHA Honourable Smt Meira Kumar pose for documentary photo.

MNA



YANGON, 13 Feb—Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana, accompanied by UN Resident Coordinator Mr Ashok Nigam and officials, arrived at Insein Central Jail, here this morning and met Head of Yangon Region

Myanmar Correctional Department Director U Maung Maung Aye and officials there.

After that, Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana met prisoners freely and looked around the prison.

In the afternoon, Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana met

Chairman of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission U Win Mya, Secretary U Sit Myaing, members U Tin Nyo, U Hla Myint, Dr Daw Than Nwe, U La Phaing Zaw Gon and U Khin Maung Lay at the Commission Office, on Pyay Road.—MNA

ARTICLE

Sacred Hpo U Taung Hill

Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja
Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

On the west bank of the Ayeyawaddy River, opposite to the sprawling town “Pyay” in Bago Region, stands a majestic hill of over 900 feet high above sea level, well known as Hpo U Taung. It is situated in latitude 18° 50' N and longitude 90° 12' E, slightly to the north of Pyay town. On the summit there stands a not very large nor very small solid stupa, commanding a captivating panoramic view of the surrounding sceneries, most prominently the River Ayeyawaddy, lazily moving to the south with the busy town Pyay on its east bank.

Though quite sunny warm and humid is the weather of Pyay district, the breeze, coming in along the River and the emerald green vegetation on the hill ranges and the undulating terrains around sufficiently compensate for the heat of daytime which gradually subsides after sunset. A chill is often experienced up on the Hpo U Taung Hill at night and dawn.

No pilgrim nor tourist to Pyay would afford to miss the change of ascending this sacred hill behind which the Solar Discs daily goes down leaving a silhouetted landscape behind. With the twilight, comes a train of nocturnal sounds and sights—the tinklings of little bellets on the crowns of stupas, the religious music of gongs after evening prayers and the twinkling lights on religious monuments on the summit and their reflections on the shimmering waves of the River down below.

V.C.Scott O’ Connor, a wide traveller and a great travelogue writer who toured Myanmar at the turn of the 20th century had produced a fat fully illustrated volume entitled “Mandalay and other cities of the Past in Burma (Myanmar), London 1907. On reaching Pyay, he ascended Hpo U Taung Hill and on pages 309-313 of his book he writes what he saw, experienced and how he felt as follows: -

“Highest of seven hills that overlook the city Prome [Pyay] from across the Irrawaddy [Ayeyawaddy] Po U Taung (Hpo U Taung hill) is where the Buddha

stood to utter his famous prophecy...”

“In the north, there is the river making a pear-shaped oval beyond a wooded promontory. One can follow its windings far, as it bears grandly down from outlying space. In the east towards Prome it lies in a long direct line bounded on its farther side by a green and undulating country which ends in the blue outlines of the Pegu hills.”

“The visitors to the south is barred by the wooded continuation of the hill, but here and there the great river is disclosedly winding its way in silver coils. And away to the setting sun there is a great space of hill country, richly wooded, without trace of human habitation which stretches out to the mountains of Aracan [Rakhine].”

“Over all this, the clouds trail in long streamers and masses and the air is laden with the swish of rain. The sun gleams and pales as the clouds wander, and the landscape reflects on its beautiful face every phase of the music of light and shadow played on the heavens. The thickets are resonant with the voices of birds, congregational murmur of the turtle-dove, the soft song of the warblers, the hammer-note of the woodpecker.”

... ..

“The base of the Pagoda is encircled by a low wall in the form of a doubled coiled dragon and there is on the platform a white marble footprint of the Buddha. Sheer precipices descend on every side. The view is far-reaching, splendid and it filled with pride the king who looked down from this height on the kingdom at his feet.”

... ..

“In a big enclosure, open towards the river, is a large stone engraved with the tale of his titles and dominions, with the fame of the Emperor Hsin-byu-Shin. It is in square lettering that explains the origin “of the Burmese [Myanmar] circular alphabet. Quick green ferns, the growth of a day cluster about its base. It has been here a hundred years...”

Scott O’ Connor was talking us about the ancient Pagoda of the Buddha’s Divine Prophecy and the stone inscription pitlar set up by Hsinbyu Shin, King

of Early Konbaung dynasty [1752-1819 A.D.] which he studied with interest.

The legends of this sacred hill and the pagoda on its summit are so deeply intertwined with pre-Buddhist fables and Buddhist history that it is not so easy to analyze them scientifically. However, since fables and folk tales are the indispensable elements of pre-history they could not be ruled out totally as fictitious. They might contain some grains of historic clues leading to facts. Besides, their make-believe stories are artistically entertaining. Mythical creatures of terrestrial, aquatic and avian worlds dominate humans of all cultures and civilizations.

In the lifetime of Gotama Buddha, Hpo U Taung hill was known as “Siha Pabbata” and the present town Pyay was called “Nawavathi”. After his first lent [rain retreat] in Baranasi, Gotama Buddha began his Dhamma duty journey [preaching mission]. He foresaw Lankadipa [Sri Lanka], Sre Kestia [the entire Pyay area], Thaton [Suvanna Bhumi] and Bagan [Tampadipa] as future places for the spread and flourish of his Sasana [Buddhism].

When Gotama Buddha arrived and sojourned on the summit of Siha Pabbata [Hpo U Taung Hill] he was seated on a ruby-studded couch in the Beikman [Pavilion] created by an ogre king Sambula. After hearing the Dhamma teachings of the Buddha he and his wife ogress “Abhi mukha” became Thotapan [Buddhist saint (ariya) of the first stage]. Remaining ogres and ogresses vowed to keep Pancha Sila [Five moral precepts] and embraced Buddha Dhamma.

Sambula the ogre king informed his three ogre friends who lived on the eastern bank of Hpo U Taung hill, of the arrival of the Buddha on the Hpo U Taung hill and invited them to hear his Dhamma teachings. The three ogre friends were (1) Visamitta of the Vithaka hill (2) Visagiri of the Maheinda hill and (3) Eidimanta of the Eidava hill. Each of these three hills was surrounded with three hills with ogre inhabitants and so altogether there were twelve ogre hills around Hpo U Taung hill.

The three ogres invited their friend naga serpent

King Erapatta to join them to go and listen to the Dhamma teachings of the Buddha. After hearing and understanding the teachings of the Buddha, all ogres and naga serpent King became Buddhist. They entreated the Buddha to give them his representations to worship. The Buddha gave Erapatta the Naga Serpent King four strands of hair from his head. To each of the four ogres, the Buddha gave a hair from the frontlet between the two eye brows, a hair from the breast, a hair from the back of hand and a hair from instep. Happily the recipients intended to enshrine the sacred relics in the monuments to be built in their respective kingdoms. But the Buddha knowing their intention told them that the sacred relics should be enshrined in human domain as Buddha Sasana could spread and flourish among humans. He told Erapatta the naga Serpent king and three ogre friends of Sambula to enshrine their relics in a monument to be built on a hillock called Sudhasana which is the present hillock of Pyay Shwe Sandaw Pagoda, because it was on that hill that the relics of the previous Buddhas were interned. Besides, Gotama Buddha himself has inhabited that hill in his previous existences as (1) Sakawut bird (2) Ziawazo [Swiftlet] bird, (3) Hamsa [Brahminy] bird (4) Water fowl (5) hare (6) Jguana (monitor lizard) and (7) Duck. So it would be very auspicious to enshrine their sacred relics on that hillock. When the two merchant brothers Azika and Balika came to the summit of Sudhasana hill, they would request them to build a stupa there and enshrine their relics in it. To-day this stupa is well known as Pyay Shwe Sandaw Pagoda.

Regarding Sambula the ogre King of Siha Pabbata Hpo U Taung hill, the Buddha told him to enshrine his share of the sacred relics in a stupa built on his hill—Siha Pabbata Hpo U Taung.

The hill’s original name Siha Pabbata means lion king’s hill. Gotama Buddha, in one of his previous existences was a lion king living on that hill. After his enlightenment and he attained 5 years of Buddhahood, he came to

reside at a big sandal wood monastery in Vannica garma [Ley kine] in Sunapranta country. After preaching Dhamma for a week there, the Buddha revisited Siha Pabbata Hpo U Taung hill. The two mole couple “Dayuttas”, in habitting the hill, overheard the eulogies sung by the Naga serpent and ogre king who were expecting the arrival of the Buddha. The moles were very delighted at this happy tidings. They promised to tell each other when the Buddha arrived on the hill. It was the male mole which first saw the Buddha on the hill. So enraptured was the male mole that it picked up with its mouth some soft earth to offer to the Buddha as a gesture of welcome and honour. The Buddha gave the male mole a divine prophesey—that it would become King Duttabaung of Sre Kestra and female mole would become queen Beithano and that Buddha Sasana would flourish there. Because the male mole first met the Buddha, the hill came to be called “Hpo U Taung which in course of time corrupted to Hpo O Taung.”

The hill with all its legends and ancient monuments fell into oblivion for a long stretch of time. It was only after the downfall of Bagan in the mid 13th century A.D. that “Hpo U Taung revived in the history and literature of Myanmar. The stone inscription found on the hill dates, “the full moon day, Saturday, Myanmar Era 1136 set up by Hsinbyu Thakhin.” So it is obvious from this inscription that King Hsinbyu Shin of late Konbaung Period repaired and renovated the Hpo U Taung Pagoda and put a new hti on it in 1774, A.D. Since then the hill has become one of the sacred hills for Buddhist pilgrims.

Annual festival of the Hpo U Taung Pagoda takes place on the full moon day of Tabodwe [February]. The traditional monthly festival held in Tabodwe is that of bonfire offering to give warmth to the Buddha, the Sangha and the aged and the elders as Tabodwe is the coldest month of Myanmar winter. This traditional festival of the month February takes place

on the full moon day of the month. On that day, the bonfire festival is held at Pyay Shwe Sandaw Pagoda on the Sudhasana hillock in the centre of the town. This festival is locally called “Nyan yoe Pujas” because “nyan”, a kind of weeds about the size of sugarcane [sesbania cannabina] grows wild profusely in marshy places and fields around Pyay. They are cut, dried and burnt to get warmth. Bundles of dried Nyan branches are piled up in the precinct of the Pagoda and burnt to offer warmth to the Buddha on the extremely chilly morning and night of the full moon day of Tabodwe.

After participating in the Nyan yoe burning Pujas at Pyay Shwe Sandaw Pagoda, pilgrims proceed to the Hpo U Taung either by land or water. To-day thanks to the Nawade Bridge spanning both banks of the Ayeyawaddy River, pilgrims can easily drive on the bridge to get to Shwebontha Muni Pagoda on the western bank and from there drive on to nearly half the up-journey and then ascend on foot to reach the Pagoda. But most visitors prefer enjoying riverine journey using all available watercrafts.

On the hill, there are some natural caverns in which some holymen, ecolytes and forest monks used to meditate. It is a miracle that though the Pagoda precinct on the summit is not so spacious, it can accommodate any number of pilgrims and visitors. Of course, February cold chills you to the bones, discouraging you to stay long on the hill. Local people call this hill by four names (1) Hpawa U Taung (2) Hpo U Taung (3) Pwey U Taung and (4) Siha Pabbata Taung.

On the summit, the panoramic view of all directions is breathtaking—the hillocks dotted with white washed pagodas, Shwebontha Muni Pagoda and the Nawade Bridge down below, the sprawling town of Pyay on the east bank, the meandering Ayeyawaddy River and its 4th defile behind the curtain of mist, create a vista-vision painting of Nature’s landscape.

NATIONAL

All stakeholders have to assume responsibility...

(from page 16)
Public desires were being realized by the democratically-elected government. Public aspiration was to end the armed conflicts and to make the country to stand tall among the world nations. Participatory approach

was needed to be able to fulfill the public will. Great strides were being made for ensuring internal peace. It took ages to achieve mutual understanding. Ceasefire agreements had reached at the negotiating table for cessation of more than 60-year-old armed conflicts.

Both sides saw unfruitful results, suffering casualties and causing public panic. Those losses were losses to the nation, he said.

Thanks to roundtable negotiations, the nation had seen the rays of peace. People were glad to see good outcomes of the meeting with KIA group in Ruili on 4 February. The onus was on all of us to shape

the future of the nation. It was necessary for ensuring a lasting peace through cooperation, he said.

Efforts are to be made for reconstruction of damaged roads, bridges, buildings and houses while talks on eternal peace are being held. Livelihoods and job creation for those who returned to the legal fold, are a must. It also needs to

deal with the clearance of land mines. Rehabilitation tasks are to be carried out with the assistances from home and abroad.

After that, officials from Peace Groups held discussions on follow-up programme for regional development and eternal peace and requirements.

Then, the President discussed agriculture and

breeding for region-wise development and food security and presented gifts to those from Peace Groups.

Afterwards, the President conducted them round good agricultural breeding pattern at 500-acre famer educative farm of Mechanized Farming Model Plantation and replied to the queries raised by them.

MNA

C-in-C invites KIA to peace table



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets senior military officers from National Defence College, officers and other ranks from Nay Pyi Taw Command.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb—Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing has invited KIA to hold peace talks with the Tatmadaw.

In his speech at the meeting with senior military officers from the National

Defence College, officers and other ranks from Nay Pyi Taw command at the college today, he says, "If KIA wants really peace, they can come to the negotiation table any time."

The Tatmadaw has been making efforts to achieve peace with the

armed groups on peace track, stressing the need for taking a remaining step that it (the Tatmadaw) to be taken to achieve the eternal peace with armed groups as the current achievement is the ceasefire and temporary peace with them, he said.

Out of 11 armed groups,

10, except KIA, have already reached the Union level peace agreement with the government as the second step, he added. The Tatmadaw fought the armed insurgents during the armed conflicts which had aroused due to diversity of isms since the country's independence,

not the national races, in the past, and today is the time for working together with armed groups with the framework of law and in accordance with the democratic principles as the country is on track to a

democracy, he said.

He also called on the officers and other ranks and their families to have farsighted view in making efforts for bringing eternal peace and development to the country.—MNA

Refresher course No (5) for district level judges commences

YANGON, 13 Feb — Organized by the Union Supreme Court, the opening of refresher course No (5) for district level judges was held at the training school in Hlinethaya Township, here, this morning.

The Chief Justice of

Yangon Region High Court elaborated the purpose of the refresher course, calling on the judges to perform their duties in judicature with dignity and a sense of duty.

A total of 42 trainees are taking the eight-week course. — MNA

Ambassador U Soe Nwe presents his credentials to Czech President

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—U Soe Nwe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Czech Republic,

presented his Credentials to His Excellency Mr. Vaclav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, on 5 February 2013 in Prague. MNA

Ambassador U Kyaw Tin concurrently accredited as Ambassador to United Mexican States

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Kyaw Tin, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the

United Nations, New York, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Mexican States. MNA

Workshop on transformation of SOE into Corporatization, Privatization and PPP held

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb—"Transport sector development and better

Workshop on Corporatization, Privatization and Public Private Partnership in progress at Ministry of Transport.
MNA

services are crucial for social needs and the expansion of economy", said Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung at workshop on the Corporatization, Privatization and Public Private Partnership (PPP), at the ministry today.

Managing Director Mr Ong Chao Choonm of Assurance and Advisory Services (Price Water

House Co. Ltd) shared experience on successful transformation of SOE into Privatization and Associate Director Mr Rosemary ONG, private sector development.

The workshop was jointly conducted by the Ministry of Transport and Singapore-based Price Water House Coopers Myanmar Co., Ltd.

MNA



REGIONAL

Five arrested over alleged drug import through Australian Customs

CANBERRA, 13 Feb—Five people were arrested on Wednesday by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) on offences relating to an alleged conspiracy to import drugs through Sydney Airport, Minister for Justice Jason Clare announced in a statement on Wednesday.

According to the statement, two of these people

are employees of the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service. These further arrests are the result of a two year investigation by the AFP, Customs and Border Protection Service and the Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity (ACLEI).

Clare confirmed that those arrested are part of

the same drug importation ring. "Two Customs officers have also been suspended for potential breaches of Australian Public Service Code of Conduct," He said.

"In December I said there would be more stings, more arrests and more reform. This is what is happening," Clare said.

Xinhua



Dou Fengling, a folk artist, makes dough figurines of a couple in Liaocheng City, east China's Shandong Province, on 12 Feb, 2013. The figurines, as miniatures of couples in love, are popular these days as the Valentine's Day approaches.—XINHUA

Cambodia reports 7th bird flu case so far this year

PHNOM PENH, 13 Feb—Cambodia reported on Wednesday that another 4-year-old girl has contracted Avian Influenza H5N1, becoming the seventh person who infected the virus in 2013.

Dr Denis Laurent, deputy director of Kantha Bopha Children's Hospital, which is the kingdom's largest pediatric hospital, said the victim is from Angkor Phnom Touch commune, Angkor Chey District of Southwestern Kampot Province.

She has received medical treatment at the hospital in Phnom Penh since last Wednesday. "Now, her condition is stable," he told Xinhua over telephone on Wednesday. So far this year, five of seven confirmed human H5N1 cases have been fatal. The country sees the worst outbreak of the virus this year since the disease was first identified in Jan. 2004. To date, the country has recorded 28 human cases of the virus, killing 24 people.—Xinhua

Indonesian FM appeals nuclear powers to back regional nuke-free zone

JAKARTA, 13 Feb—Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa called on nuclear-weapon states to formally accede to the Protocol of the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty as a concrete step to maintain Southeast Asia free of nuclear arsenals here on Tuesday.

The SEANWFZ treaty signed in 1995 in Bangkok commits the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)'s 10 member states "not to develop, man-

ufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or have control over atomic weapons," and it prohibits the storage and transfer of such armaments in ASEAN states.

The SEANWFZ treaty includes a protocol under which the five declared nuclear-weapon states, namely China, the United States, France, Russia and the United Kingdom undertake to respect the Treaty and rule out the use of nuclear weapons to attack or pressure treaty member nations.

"Since the signing of

the Treaty, ASEAN has engaged nuclear-weapon states in negotiations toward their accession to the Treaty's Protocol," Minister Marty said when delivering his opening address at a regional seminar on maintaining a Southeast Asia region free of nuclear weapons.

Marty said after a 10-year impasse, the negotiations of the revised Protocol were concluded in 2011 during Indonesia's tenure as chair of ASEAN.

The negotiations be-

tween the ASEAN and the nuclear-weapon states on the protocol have been ongoing since May 2001. However, none of the nuclear-weapon states have formally signed this protocol.

"The reservations or declarations to the Protocol of the SEANWFZ Treaty should not become a constraint that would hamper the achievement of the signing of the Protocol of SEANWFZ Treaty by all nuclear-weapon states," Marty said.—Xinhua

New Zealand air force helicopters cleared for limited use one year after delivery

WELLINGTON, 13 Feb—The New Zealand air force announced on Tuesday that its controversial new NH90 helicopters had been cleared for "non-tactical" operations within the country a full year after the force began flying them.

The European-made medium utility helicopter had completed the first phase of its operational testing and evaluation, allowing it to "undertake some operational tasking,"

Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) Chief, Air Vice-Marshal Peter Stockwell, said. "It's a significant milestone for the RNZAF," Stockwell said in a statement. "The NH90 is now cleared to undertake New Zealand-based passenger and cargo tasks that will enable non-tactical support to government agencies and the other services," he said.

The NH90 incorporated new technologies and capabilities that represented

a substantial improvement over the RNZAF's fleet of aging Iroquois helicopters.

"We still have plenty of work to do before the NH90 is cleared for full operational tasks and deployed situations, but good progress is being made," Stockwell said.

So far four of the eight NH90 helicopters had been delivered, with the remaining four expected over the next year.

Xinhua



NATO supply trucks carrying NATO equipment park at a checkpoint in Quetta, southwest Pakistan on 12 Feb, 2013. United States says it has started using the land route through Pakistan to pull US military equipment out of Afghanistan.—XINHUA

Singapore sends delegation to attend conference on Palestine in Japan

SINGAPORE, 13 Feb—Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs Masagos Zulkifli, together with some officials from the foreign ministry, are going to attend the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development from 13-14 February, the city-state's foreign ministry said on Tuesday.

During the conference, Masagos will be delivering an update of Singapore's technical assistance to the Palestinian National Au-

thority's capacity-building efforts. He is also scheduled to call on Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority Salam Fayyad, who will be co-chairing the conference with the government of Japan.

Ministers from South Korea and several other countries including Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam will also attend the conference. They get together to discuss effective ways of cooperation to help build peace in the Middle East.—Xinhua

16 injured in train-truck collision in Hyogo, western Japan

OSAKA, 13 Feb—At least 16 people were injured on Tuesday after a passenger train derailed following a crash between the train and a truck near a station in the western Japanese City of Takasago, Hyogo Prefecture, local press reported.

The accident happened at around 4:00 pm local time after the passenger train and the truck collided at a level crossing near the Arai Station in the city on Sanyo Electric Railway Line, and two carriages of the train derailed, according to the country's public broadcaster Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK).

The report said 16 people, one with critical injuries, were carried to local hospitals adding that those carried were including passengers and both drivers of the train and the truck.

Television images also showed the first and second carriages of the train severely hitting the platform at the station, located some 100 metres southeast from the crossing, as well as electric poles nearby struck down.

The report cited transport officials as saying that the railway's alarm signaling system to detect obstacle around the level crossing has worked normally while local police are investigating the cause of the accident.

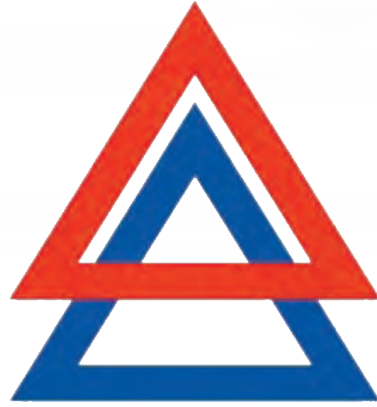
The train was heading to Osaka-Umeda Station from Himeji Station in western Hyogo. Since the accident, the railway operator has been suspending the passenger service in some sections on the line.

Xinhua



Performers on stilts participates in the Spring Festival parade in Macao, south China, on 12 Feb, 2013.

XINHUA



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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.

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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.

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AGENT FOR: M/S SEANET SHIPPING
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The Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr crowned NME Genius



Guitarist and songwriter Johnny Marr

LONDON, 13 Feb —Guitarist and songwriter Johnny Marr who made his name with cult British rock band The Smiths in the 1980s was named on Tuesday as the winner of this year's NME Godlike Genius Award. Marr, 49, founded The Smiths with Morrissey in 1983 and the two musicians co-wrote the band's songs for four albums before going their separate ways in 1987.

The guitarist has also played with Billy Bragg, The Pretenders, The The, Modest House and The Cribs, and has led his own band, Johnny Marr and The Healers, for over a decade. Marr will collect the award on 27 February when the music magazine holds its annual prize ceremony in London — two days after

he releases his debut solo album "The Messenger".

"The NME seems to be good at giving this award to people I like so I'm in good company. I guess it means that some things are alright with the world," Marr said in a statement. NME editor Mike Williams said Marr had played a role in rewriting the history of music with The Smiths. "He's continued to push boundaries and evolve throughout his career, working with some of the best and most exciting artists on the planet," said Williams.

Previous winners of the NME Godlike Genius Award include The Clash, Paul Weller, The Cure, Manic Street Preachers, New Order & Joy Division, and Dave Grohl.—Reuters

Ministry of Information News and Periodicals Enterprise Invitation to Open Tender for Purchase of Nikon Camera

1. Open tenders are invited to purchase five items of Nikon Camera D-7000 for News and Periodicals Enterprise.
2. Open tender forms may be drawn from the following address from 9:30 hr to 16:30 hr daily during the period from 14-2-2013 to 25-2-2013.
3. Open tender forms are to be submitted in the presence of members of the Tender Board at Office No.7, Ministry of Information, Nay Pyi Taw from 9:30 hr to 16:30 hr on 26-2-2013. The overdue forms will not be considered.
4. For further information, may dial 067-412123 and 067-412128 during the office hours.

News and Periodicals Enterprise
Ministry of Information
Office No.7, Nay Pyi Taw
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Vivienne Jolie-Pitt gets USD 3000 weekly for acting job



LOS ANGELES, 13 Feb — Hollywood star couple Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt's youngest daughter, Vivienne, is said to be earning USD 3,000-a-week on her first acting job.

The little one stars opposite her mother in Disney film "Maleficent", reported TMZ Online. The four-year-old, who has a twin brother, Knox, is being given USD 60-a-day in expenses.

PTI

"30 Rock" star Alec Baldwin expecting child with new wife

LOS ANGELES, 13 Feb — Actor Alec Baldwin and his new wife Hilaria Thomas Baldwin are expecting their first child together, a representative for the "30 Rock" star said on Tuesday. "If I really shared



Actor Alec Baldwin

with you how I felt, I would probably burst out crying," Baldwin told US television programme "Extra."

Baldwin, 54, married the yoga teacher, who is 26 years his junior, in a July 2012 wedding in New York. The child is expected in the summer, the spokesman said, but gave no other details.—Reuters

Priyamani to do item song in Chennai Express

MUMBAI, 13 Feb — National Award-winning southern actress Priyamani has worked in Hindi films earlier but in Rohit Shetty's Chennai Express she is doing her first ever item number.

The actress can't wait to shoot for it as it would allow her to meet Bollywood superstar and the film's lead actor Shah Rukh Khan. "I am very excited. I am just waiting for the shoot to happen so that I get to meet Shah

Rukh Khan and to shoot with him," Priyamani told IANS.

The actress, who won the National Award for 2006 Tamil film Paruthi Veeran, is doing an item song for the first time and said: "I have never done an item number.

It is the first time and there is always a first time for everything." With item numbers becoming a staple in Hindi movies and actresses like Katrina Kaif and Malaika Arora setting

the benchmark, Priyamani, 28, is unperturbed about the competition. "I am not scared. That is a completely different league. They are excellent in what they do, which is fantastic. I am not going to be scared to be branded," she confessed.

When it comes to playing lead roles in Hindi films, the actress, seen in Raavan and Rakht Charitra, is very clear about what she wants. "You need to see what kind of offers come your way. Just because it is Bol-

lywood, doesn't mean that you have to take it. If something nice comes my way, I will take it up," she said. "It has to be something substantial. I am not saying that I have to do films like The Dirty Picture or Kahaani.—PTI



SPORTS

Napoli eyes Brazil striker Damiao

RIO DE JANEIRO, 13 Feb—Napoli is reportedly preparing a bid to sign Brazil international striker Leandro Damiao in the European summer transfer window.

The Italian Serie A club is looking for a possible replacement for Uruguayan forward Edinson Cavani,



Brazil international striker Leandro Damiao

who is on the radar of Manchester City, Real Madrid and Bayern Munich, Brazil's Uol reported on Tuesday. Damiao, 23, is consid-

ered one of Brazil's most promising centre-forwards and was the country's leading scorer during last year's London Olympic tournament with six goals.

He has also attracted the interest of England's Tottenham Hotspur, who have had several offers for the forward rejected by Damiao's club Internacional. Napoli's interest in signing Damiao could depend on the out-

come of the club's pursuit of Sampdoria's Argentine striker Mauro Icardi, the report added.

Xinhua

Shorthanded Spurs still too much for Bulls

LOS ANGELES, 13 Feb—The San Antonio Spurs took to the court without three of their top scorers to face Chicago on Monday but still had too much fire power for the Bulls, pulling out a 103-89 victory to pick up their 13th win in 14 games. Tony Parker (knee), Tim Duncan (knee) and Manu Ginobili (hamstring) all sat out for San Antonio, who own the best record in the NBA at 41-12, but a career-best 26 points from Kawhi Leonard and 18 from Danny Green kept the Spurs machine rolling.

"All of us are basketball players here, we're competitive," Leonard told reporters of the Spurs, who were also without Stephen Jackson for personal

reasons. "That's why we play the game. If we go in doubting ourselves, we're already beat." San Antonio clung to a 76-75 lead in the fourth quarter before a 19-5 run closed the door on Chicago. "One would hope you could play with anybody in our system, but it was a tough challenge tonight," said San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich. "I couldn't be more proud of them."

Nate Robinson scored 20 points to pace the Bulls while Joakim Noah added seven and 15 rebounds for the home team, who faded down the stretch. The Bulls had dominated inside and outbounded the visitors 49-26 but it did not seem to matter.—Reuters



Chicago Bulls' Carlos Boozer (R) and teammate Luol Deng (L) battle San Antonio Spurs' Matt Bonner for a rebound during the first half of their NBA basketball game in Chicago, on 11 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

Williams, Sharapova cruise into third round in Qatar

DOHA, 13 Feb—Serena Williams began her campaign to return to world number one at the Qatar Open by beating Russian Daria Gavrilova while Maria Sharapova, among the American's rivals for top spot, also progressed on Tuesday. Second-seed Williams, who will reclaim the number one position if she reaches the semi-finals, enjoyed a 6-2, 6-1 second-round win against the 160th-ranked Gavrilova.

The 15-times grand slam winner has not topped the rankings since October 2010, but is close to returning to the pinnacle having claimed last year's Wimbledon and US Open titles. Williams, who has now won 57 of her last 60 matches, broke Gavrilova in the sixth game of the first set and then raced away with the match in 54 minutes. Question marks hung over the world number two's fitness heading into the event after she lost in the Australian Open quarter-final last month while suffering with back and ankle injuries. "Mostly I've just been



Serena Williams of US reacts after defeating Daria Gavrilova of Russia during their women's match at the Qatar Open tennis tournament in Doha on 12 Feb, 2013. REUTERS

trying to play smoothly and avoid problems, and just do the things I've been working on," Williams said on the WTA website (www.wtatennis.com).

"Physically I'm feeling better, and hopefully I can stay on that level. Let's go onto the next round

now." Third-ranked Sharapova broke serve in the first game against France's Caroline Garcia before cruising to a 6-3, 6-2 win in one hour and 16 minutes. It was a rematch of their tussle at the French Open two years ago when the Russian found herself 6-3, 4-1 down before rallying for a three-set victory. "I had a really tough match against her in our previous encounter, so I really wanted to start better this time, as opposed to the way I started against her last time," Sharapova said.

"I think she's an up-and-comer who is still making that transition from the juniors to the pros. It's one of the toughest things getting your feet on the ground with the game itself but I think we will be seeing her for many more years." French Open champion Sharapova also has a slim chance of returning to the top spot but needs to win the tournament and hope Williams falls short of the last four and current

world number one Victoria Azarenka fails to reach the final. Belarussian Azarenka gets her campaign underway with a second round match against Romina Oprandi on Wednesday.—Reuters



Maria Sharapova of Russia reacts as she celebrates a point against Caroline Garcia of France during their women's match at the Qatar Open tennis tournament in Doha on 12 Feb, 2013. REUTERS

Snedeker withdraws from Match Play due to sore ribs

PACIFIC PALISADES, (California), 13 Feb—American world number four Brandt Snedeker, the hottest player on the 2013 PGA Tour, has pulled out of next week's WGC-Accenture Match Play Championship in Arizona because of sore ribs, organizers said on Tuesday. Snedeker, who clinched his second victory in his last six starts on the US circuit with a win at the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am on Sunday, has been receiving treatment on his ribs since last month's Humana



US golfer Brandt Snedeker

Challenge. "I certainly will miss competing in the Accenture Match Play Championship, and I really do appreciate what Accenture does to make that one of

the premier events on our schedule," FedExCup champion Snedeker said in a statement. The 32-year-old, who is on holiday this week with his family in Hawaii, hopes to return to PGA Tour action for the March 7-10 WGC-Cadillac Championship at Doral. Snedeker, whose sizzling run of form dates back to the Tour Championship in

September when he also landed FedExCup honors, first experienced soreness in his left rib cage during the 17-20 January Humana Challenge.—Reuters

Barbosa sidelined for season due to knee injury

WASHINGTON, 13 Feb—Boston Celtics guard Leandro Barbosa will be out for the rest of the National Basketball Association season due to a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his knee.

The 30-year-old suffered the left knee injury during Monday's game against the Charlotte Bob-



Boston Celtics guard Leandro Barbosa

cats.

He is the third Celtics player lost for the season due to injury. Rajon Rondo also suffered a torn ACL last month and back surgery has put out Jared Sullinger.

Xinhua

Wheelchair great Vergeer retires after 10 years unbeaten

LONDON, 13 Feb -- One of the most dominant records in sport came to an unblemished conclusion when Dutch wheelchair tennis player Esther Vergeer hung up her racket after an unbeaten decade on Tuesday. The 31-year-old, who claimed four Paralympic singles gold medals



Esther Vergeer of the Netherlands

and three in doubles, won 470 consecutive matches and 120 successive tournaments, dropping only 18 sets during that time.

Her career record stands at 700 wins and 25 defeats. She won every grand slam singles event she ever entered, racking up 21 singles and 23 doubles titles.

Reuters

GENERAL

District electric engineer of Pakouku District MEPE, staff and local work together for the reducing of power loss at villages in Pakouku District Magway Region recently. KYEMON



S Korea's jobless rate rises to 3.4 pct in January

SEOUL, 13 Feb—South Korea's jobless rate rose above 3 percent for the first time in five months due to a seasonal factor, but job growth accelerated on the back of strong job creation in the manufacturing sector, a government report showed Wednesday. The unemployment rate was 3.4 percent in January, topping the 3 percent mark for the first time since August last year, according to Statistics Korea. The reading was up from 2.9 percent in the prior month.

The rise was attributed to a seasonal factor.—Xinhua

South Korean Park to get London Games soccer medal

LUASSANE, 13 Feb—South Korean footballer Park Jong-woo will receive his bronze medal from the 2012 London Olympics despite triggering a diplomatic row in a match against Japan, the International Olympic

Committee said on Tuesday. The midfielder had held up a sign referring to a territorial dispute between South Korea and Japan while celebrating a 2-0 win over their fierce rivals in the bronze medal game in London in August.



South Korea's Park Jong-woo (bottom L) tackles New Zealand's Marco Rojas (C) during their Olympics national teams friendly soccer match in Seoul on 14 July, 2012. REUTERS

“He should receive his medal without fanfare or

publicity of any kind,” IOC spokesman Mark Adams told reporters after an executive board meeting ruled that the player should be awarded the bronze medal. The IOC also issued a warning to the footballer and the Korean

his action in London had not been premeditated.

“It was decided that this was spontaneous and not pre-planned. He also showed sportmanlike behavior to Japanese players after the match,” Adams said. Park

Committee said on Tuesday. The midfielder had held up a sign referring to a territorial dispute between South Korea and Japan while celebrating a 2-0 win over their fierce rivals in the bronze medal game in London in August.

Olympic Committee over the incident and said the KOC must draw up a program to educate athletes to ensure there are no repeat incidents in the future. Asked why the footballer would receive his medal despite the IOC's clear ban on political protests at the Games, Adams said

was handed a sign, which read “Dokdo is our territory”, by a fan and was then forced to skip the medal ceremony. He was also banned by soccer's governing body FIFA for two games and fined 3,500 Swiss francs (\$3,800) in December. (\$1 = 0.9157 Swiss francs)—Reuters

Nadal targets 2016 Rio Olympics

SAO PAULO, 13 Feb—Former world No 1 Rafael Nadal has revealed the Rio 2016 Olympic Games has provided him with motivation to continue his career beyond the age of 30. The 11-time grand slam winner is competing in both the singles and doubles tournaments at the Brazil Open in Sao Paulo, his second tournament since returning from a seven-month layoff due to a knee injury.

“The long-term objective in my mind is to play in Rio in 2016,” the 26-year-old said during



Former world No 1 Rafael Nadal

a Press conference on Tuesday. “I know it's a long way from now but it is also a real objective for me.” Nadal will be aged 30 years and two months

when the Olympics begin on 5 August in 2016. This week's event marks the Spaniard's first appearance in Brazil since winning the same tournament as an 18-year-old in 2005.

It follows his defeat in Sunday's Chile Open final to 73rd-ranked Horacio Zeballos 6-7 (2/7) 7-6 (8/6) and 6-4, his first competitive event since Wimbledon last June. Nadal is partnering Argentine David Nalbandian in the doubles, which began on Tuesday

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(14-2-13 09:30 am ~ 15-2-13 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * International Holocaust Commemoration Day 2013
- * Relax...at Pet Fishes Farm
- * Music Programme
- * 2nd Anniversary of Taw Win Center & Award Giving Ceremony
- * News
- * Youth and Career
- * Implications for FDI Laws, Revised?
- * News
- * A Mirror reflecting Rakhine Architecture (Shitthaung Stupa)
- * Another Chapter for Myanmar, A Renewal of Austria's Investment
- * News
- * Culture Stage
- * Seminar on Women's Right and Protection
- * News
- * Chin Traditional “Shield” Dance
- * Let's Seek Knowledge & Pleasure at Planetarium (Nay Pyi Taw)
- * Myanmar Movies “Dutiful But Thoughtless Son”

Myanmar TV

(14-2-2013, Thursday)

- | | | | |
|----------------|--|-----------------|---|
| 7:00 am | 1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw | 4:50 pm | -Third Year (Physics) |
| 7:25 am | 2. Health Programme | 4:55 pm | 13. Songs For Upholding National Spirit |
| 7:30 am | 3. Morning News | 5:05 pm | 14. Documentary |
| 7:40 am | 4. International News | 5:20 pm | 15. Science and Environment |
| 7:50 am | 5. Nice & Sweet Song | 6:20 pm | 16. India Drama Series |
| 8:05 am | 6. Dance Variety | 6:50 pm | 17. Approaching Science Discovery World |
| 8:20 am | 7. Musical Programme | 7:00 pm | 18. TV Drama Series |
| 8:15 am | 8. Road to SEA Games (Basketball) | 7:10 pm | 19. News |
| 4:00 pm | 9. Opening Song | 7:10 pm | 20. TV Drama Series |
| 4:15 pm | 10. Cute Little Dancers | 8:00 pm | 21. News |
| 4:25 pm | 11. 66 th Anniversary Union Day Programme | 8:00 pm | 22. Weather Report |
| 4:35 pm | 12. University Of Distance Education (TV Lectures) | 10:00 pm | 23. CLEVER |
| | | | 24. Documentary |
| | | | 25. Teleplay |
| | | | 26. TV Drama Series |

Deal should make “King Felix” richest pitcher

NEW YORK, 13 Feb—Felix Hernandez and the Seattle Mariners have agreed on a new deal for the Venezuelan All-Star that is expected to make ‘King Felix’ Major League Baseball's highest paid pitcher ever. General manager Jack Zduriencik told reporters at the Mariners' spring training camp in Arizona on Tuesday that Hernandez, the 2010 American League Cy Young winner, would hold a news conference in Seattle on Wednesday and that contract details would be revealed then.

Hernandez, 26, has two years and \$40.5 million remaining on his current contract, but it was believed that the old deal would be replaced by a new agreement worth a reported \$175 million over seven years, or \$25 million a year. “I think

Greinke signed the highest average-annual-value deal at \$24.5 million with his six-year, \$147 million contract in December. Three-time All-Star Hernandez pitched a perfect game last season while posting a 13-9 record with a 3.06 earned run



Seattle Mariners pitcher Felix Hernandez throws against the Toronto Blue Jays during the first inning of their MLB American League baseball game in Toronto on 13 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

night, while he will start his singles campaign on Thursday against the winner of the Ruben Ramirez Hidalgo-Joao Souza match.

Despite an encouraging return in Chile, Nadal talked down his chances of lifting the singles trophy in Brazil. “After so many months away it's difficult and illogical to think about winning titles,” the 26-year-old said. “Even though my knee continues to hurt me, the doctors say everything is fine and that my recuperation is going to plan.”

Xinhua

it's a great thing for the Seattle Mariners, it's a great thing for Felix Hernandez and we're looking forward to this guy being here for a long time,” Zduriencik said. CC Sabathia of the New York Yankees currently has the largest overall contract for a pitcher, with a seven-year, \$161 million deal he signed before the 2010 season.

The Dodgers' Zack

average. He has pitched 200 or more innings in each of the past five seasons and has a career record of 98-76 with a 3.22 ERA.

The extension was first reported last week, but finalizing the deal was delayed when an elbow issue was found when the right-hander took a physical on last Thursday, the Seattle Times reported.—Reuters

All stakeholders have to assume responsibility for ensuring long-term benefit by translating the temporary peace into a lasting peace



President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with responsible persons of peace groups who attended the 66th Anniversary Union Day celebration.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb — President U Thein Sein received responsible persons of peace groups who attended the 66th Anniversary Union Day celebration at the meeting hall of 500-acre farmer

educative mechanized farming model plantation here this evening.

Union ministers and guests, deputy ministers, Pado Mahn Nyein Maung and Pado Thamein Tun of Karen National Union

(KNU), Col Sai Hla and Col Sai Ngae of the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA), U Sai Khun Sai and U Sai Naw Leik of Shan State Progress Party/ Shan State Army (SSPP/SSA), Maj-Gen

Saw Yin Nu and Captain Saw Lah Do of Karen National Liberation Army, Peace Council (KNU/KNLA), U Khun Ti Hsaung and U Khun Zwe Hto of PaO National Liberation Organization (PNLO), U

Naing Ta La Nyi and U Naing Kyi Hsan of New Mon State Party (NMSP), Dr Shwe Khar and U Pu Htan Zun of Chin National Front (CNF), Brig-Gen Saw Kyaw Thet and Col Saw Maung Lay of Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), and U An Kann and Captain Aung Sai of National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-K) attended the meeting.

In his address, President U Thein Sein expressed thanks for attendance of responsible persons of Peace Groups at Union Day celebration. He said he was very glad to see a reunion of brothers who have not met each other since many years ago. He said that only roundtable negotiation was the best way, calling for ensuring forgiveness of conflicts, tolerance, sympathy and mutual respects as the entire national

forces have been living under the same roof. Now people started to enjoy the better outcomes of negotiation, he added. Peace aspired by the people could be realized when all stakeholders have to assume responsibility for ensuring long-term benefit by translating the temporary peace into a lasting peace. The entire people belonged to the country. The good and the bad of the country rested on each and every citizen who loves their motherland. It was not possible to desist from regionalism and racism. But priority should be placed on Union spirit compared with regionalism and racism. It was needed to safeguard the country till posterity. National unity was the national strength. It was required to pass better inheritance to next generation after cessation of armed conflict at present.

(See page 10)

Role of cooperatives, tool to fight poverty

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb—MPs underlined the importance of primary education as they discussed 2013-2014 FY National Planning Bill at the 8th day Pyidaungsu Hluttaw regular session today, calling for improving student-teacher ratio nationwide, especially in rural regions.

Daw Tin Nwe Oo of Dagon Myothit (North) Constituency blamed illiteracy for poverty against the official literacy rate of 95 per cent at national level.

She was in her appraisal of the bill warned against the stagnant economy where purchasing power is

declining amidst the high inflation rate.

U Soe Aung of Thegon Constituency voiced doubt about ongoing efforts for mechanized farming, saying “Mechanized farming. It sounds like great. But, some farmers do not even have their own cows or buffalos. They can buy power-tillers and farming equipment from the Agriculture and Irrigation Ministry. But, the amount is just too high from them.

“What’s the point is reclaiming the farmland into mechanized one is simply not enough. We need to adopt a master plan



The 8th day Pyidaungsu Hluttaw regular session in progress.—MNA

ICH conducts course to provide hydropower technology

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Feb—Engineers of the Ministry of Electric Power have received a training, jointly conducted by International Centre for Hydropower (ICH) of Norway and Ministry of Electric Power, at the ministry here today.

The course on Hydropower Development-Joint Public Private Development of Hydropower was opened at the ministry here today.

In his key-note address at the opening ceremony,

Union Minister for Electric Power U Khin Maung Soe said the trainees would learn hydropower production technology for development of hydropower sector, cooperation of the peoples and private sector, initiative and selling electric power to neighbouring countries.

The course is aimed at providing hydropower production technology and assistance for the development of the hydropower sector to Myanmar.—MNA

that encompasses building production routes, selling farming equipment through hire purchase system and giving training to farmers on equipment operation.”

U Mahn Maung Maung Nyan of Pantanaw Constituency called for redefining the role of cooperatives as a tool to fight poverty, expressing his concern for its perceived failure.

Healthcare service was another hot topic at the session. A parliamentarian from Union Solidarity

and Development Party who spoke on condition of anonymity said “I worked for Health Ministry. Frankly speaking, hospitals are like hollow trees. No medicines.”

U Thein Swe of An Constituency called for regular maintenance of vessels and planes and tightening safety regulations.

Daw Tin Nwe Oo tried to solve a mathematics problem of rice production, consumption and exports, leaving us a question about low export volume of rice.

U Soe Aung called

for repairing irrigation channels that have never been in service since their construction.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approved the appointment of General Myat Hein to the post of Union Minister for Communications and Information Technology and Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win to the post of Union Minister for Border Affairs as nominated by the President.

U Khun Thein Pe of Hopong Constituency says, “2013-2014 FY national planning bill seems good.

But, for ethic people, I think it isn’t enough because we’ve suffered the consequences of armed conflicts. It needs to focus more on border regions to make sure inclusive growth and equitable development.”

The visiting Indian parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of LOK SABAH Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar observed the session at the invitation of the Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw.

NLM