

President U Thein Sein felicitates Cuban President

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Raul Castro Ruz, President of the Council of the State and the Government of the Republic of Cuba, on the anniversary of the Liberation Day of Cuba which falls on 1 January 2014.—MNA

President U Thein Sein's radio message on air

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—A radio message to be delivered by U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, will be broadcast through radio programmes from 2 to 4 January, 2014. Myanma Radio, Mandalay FM, Pyinsawady FM, Shwe FM, Cherry FM, Padamya FM, FM Bagan and Thazin Radio will broadcast the message at 7 am, 11 am, 6 pm and 8 pm.—MNA

Myanmar, ready to host 7th ASEAN Para Games



Vice-President U Nyan Tun delivers address at coordination meeting to host 7th ASEAN Para Games at Wunna Theikdi Stadium.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—The host country for the SEA Games has to organize the ASEAN Para Games in line with the rules of the ASEAN Para Sports Federation-APSF, said Vice-President U Nyan Tun at the coordination meeting to host the 7th ASEAN Para Games at Wunna Theikdi Stadium, here, this morning.

After successfully hosting the XXVII SEA Games, Myanmar will hold the 7th

ASEAN Para Games, he added. The work guideline for the XXVII SEA Games was adopted to make preparations of the stadiums and gymnasiums with full facilities not only for the SEA Games but for the ASEAN Para Games, realizing the equality, participation and sharing for the para sports athletes. Now the country is ready to host the games. In its chronicle, Myanmar will have the great opportunity to uplift the prestige

of the State by hosting the ASEAN Para Games.

In its fine tradition, Myanmar para sports athletes had secured a large number of medals in the Far East and South Pacific Region Para Games and ASEAN Para Games.

The leading committee and work committee are making strenuous efforts for successfully hosting the games and for enabling the Myanmar athletes to

achieve victory. The Ministry of Sports and respective sports federations are contributing to the Myanmar athletes. Likewise, the government fulfills the requirement of food, accommodation and training of the athletes.

Chairman of the Leading Committee Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan, Joint Secretary-1 President of Myanmar Para Sports Federation Maj-Gen Nay

Lin reported on organizing the games.

Officials of the respective subcommittees and Myanmar sports federations submitted the reports on respective sectors.

After hearing the reports, the Vice-President attended to the needs and urged officials to strive for successfully hosting the games and achieving the best results.

MNA

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Thai PM seeks reconciliation despite threat of more protests

BANGKOK, 31 Dec—Embattled Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra called for reconciliation on Tuesday as the streets of the capital, Bangkok, emptied ahead of New Year celebrations, a rare period of calm after weeks of unrest.

Anti-government protesters have vowed to disrupt a February 2 election called by Yingluck in

a bid to settle a crisis that has pitted her government against Bangkok's conservative elite and middle class.

The demonstrators have threatened to shut down Bangkok after the New Year, with plans to block roads in up to 20 places, although the scope of their protests has not always matched the promises made by their leader, Suthep Thaugsuban.

Yingluck has not been in Bangkok for more than a week, spending time among supporters in the north, but she used social media to send a message seeking peace and reconciliation.

“On the occasion of New Year 2014, may I ask all Thais to be united in mind, to seek a blessing for the Thai people to love and harmonize and for those who differ in views, be it

their political ideology or belief, to reconcile for a peaceful resolution for our nation,” she said in a Facebook post.

The demonstrators are determined to topple Yingluck, who they see as a puppet of her self-exiled brother and former premier, Thaksin Shinawatra.

Bangkok's normally gridlocked streets were mostly clear on Tuesday as people headed to the provinces for the holiday.

Reuters



Thailand's Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra leaves the Government Complex after a meeting with the Election Commission in Bangkok on 20 December, 2013. —REUTERS

LOCAL NEWS

National Sports

Chess Tournament hails
Independence Day in
PyinOoLwin

PyinOoLwin, 31 Dec—As a gesture of hailing the 66th Anniversary Independence Day, the chess tournament is held at YMBA Hall in Ward 4 of PyinOoLwin in Mandalay Region.

The tournament is categorized as novice singles event and open team event.

The tournament kicked off on 28 December and the final and prize presentation ceremony will be held on 4 January 2014.

It was attended by officials of the township and

chess enthusiasts.—*The Naing (PyinOoLwin)*

Hailing 7th ASEAN Para Games

Parasport racing athletes under training

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—Myanmar will host the 7th ASEAN Para Games on 14 January 2014.

The Myanmar athletes who will take part in the race were under training at the training group No 1 of Wunna Theikdi Stadium on 29 December morning.

They are under training of coaches U Min Aung and U Ye Win, close supervisor

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—Union Minister for Construction U Kyaw Lwin on 28 December inspected progress in maintenance of Nay Pyi Taw-Taungnyo-Chaungnet-Taungwingyi Road, conditions of Migyaungye-Pahtana-go-Malun road section and construction of Pandawbyin Bridge on Thayet-Minhla-Minbu Road in Minhla Township of Thayet District.

The Union minister also viewed placing asphalt and gravels on Thayet-Minhla-Minbu Road and construction of Gyongyongky Bridge at mile post 54/5.



He gave instructions on construction of the roads and bridges for better transport of the local people and minimizing loss and wastage.

The Union minister also looked into placing gravels and asphalt on Sitsanoe-Yenanma-Kyaukpon-Kantok Road, construction of the bridges and culverts with the use of heavy machinery.

He also inspected maintenance of Pathein-Monywa road section 2 and section 3.—*MNA*

Free health
care provided

MANDALAY, 31 Dec—Specialists from Mackay Memorial Hospital gave health care services to the older persons at the Home for the Aged at the foot of Mandalay Hill in Aungmyethazan Township of Mandalay on 26 December.

It was jointly organized by Mackay Memorial Hospital of China (Taipei) and China-Myanmar Economic and Cooperation Exchange Association.

On 27 December, they also gave free treatment to the patients and donated medicines at Myintmyat Phayusin Hospital at the corner of 37th and 74th Streets in Mahaangmye Township.

Kyemon-Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)

MPF launches emergency,
complaint-handling phone
lines

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—Myanmar Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs has put hot lines into place at Myanmar Police Force HQ and region/state police stations to enable the public to submit tip-offs and complaints over illegal acts, misappropriation and corruption.

The public may reach the numbers for their information and complaints but are requested to avoid manners causing disruptions to these phone lines. Myanmar Police Force HQ, Nay Pyi Taw Police Force, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine and Shan State Police Forces, Sagaing, Taninthayi, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Region Police Forces, Offices of Commanders of East, West, South and North District Police Forces in Yangon Region, No (1) Police Station in Taunggyi, Office of Deputy Commander of

State Police Force in Lashio, and Kengtung Police Station in Kengtung have emergency numbers of 199.

Phone numbers receiving complaints from the public are Myanmar Police Force HQ (067-412222 and 067-412444), Nay Pyi Taw Police Force (067-550333), Kachin State Police Force (074-21444), Kayin State Police Force (058-23355), Sagaing Region Police Force (071-24996), Taninthayi Region Police Force (059-23998), Bago Region Police Force (052-23999), Magway Region Police Force (063-28099), Mandalay Region Police Force (02-61444), Mon State Police Force (057-24987), Rakhine State Police Force (043-22833), Yangon Region Police Force (01-2302199), Shan State Police Force (081-2125455) and Ayeyawady Region Police Force (042-23844).—*MNA*

U Hsan Lwin of Myanmar Para Sports Federation.

“We hope to secure at least 15 gold, 15 silver and

15 bronze medals in the track and field event. We are pleased for donations for the para sport athletes

of Myanmar team,” said coach U Min Aung.—*Kyemon-Kyaw Thura (Nay Pyi Taw)*



PYAPON, 31 Dec—A ceremony to donate K 2.5 million to the fund for construction of the annexe of Saya Zawgyi Library was held at the library in Pyapon of Ayeyawady Region on 28 December.

It marked the opening ceremony of 132nd branch of Kanbawza Bank Ltd in Pyapon.

Secretary of the Library Committee U Myint Aung (Writer Po Aung Lay) spoke words of thanks.

Pyapon Bank Branch Manager Daw Aye Aye Aung, on behalf of the bank, presented K 2.5 million to Pyapon District Deputy Commissioner U Kyaw Soe Win, Township Administrator U Nyi Nyi Lin, Library Committee Chairman U Wai Myint and member U Thein Tun (a) U Pauk who returned a

KBZ Bank donates K 2.5 million to
Saya Zawgyi Library

certificate of honour.

The annexe to the library will be 80 feet long, 35 feet wide and 15 feet high. It will be the one-storey building. So far, the construction

task has been completed by 50 per cent.

The library stores over 20000 books in addition 30 magazines, 30 journals and newspapers for public

reading.

Over 2000 members join the library and about 200 readers visit the library daily.—*MMAL-Thuzar Nwe (Pyapon)*

Myanmar
para sports
athletes
under
intensive
training
at Wunna
Theikdi
Stadium in
Nay Pyi Taw.

WORLD

Iranian official reports progress in nuclear talks with powers

DUBAI, 31 Dec — Six world powers and Iran have made good progress in expert talks in Geneva on how to roll out last month's landmark nuclear deal which obliges Teheran to suspend its most sensitive atom work, a senior Iranian official said on Tuesday.

It was unclear how close the seven countries came to resolving all the numerous practical issues involved in putting the 24 November accord into practice or whether they had agreed on a date to

implement it after all-night talks. Abbas Araqchi, Iran's deputy negotiator, told Iran's state news agency only that some issues remained to be agreed at a more senior level. Western countries led by the United States fear that Iran's nuclear work has military goals and have imposed years of crippling sanctions on Iran in an effort to force Teheran to curb its nuclear programme.

Iran denies seeking to build an atomic bomb and says its nuclear work is aimed at power generation

and medical research.

The Geneva gathering was the third time since 24 November that nuclear experts and sanctions specialists from the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany had met their Iranian counterparts to work out the implementation of the breakthrough nuclear accord.

In the meeting, which lasted nearly 23 hours and ended at 7 am (0600 GMT), the sides again sought to agree how exactly Iran would meet its obligation to



A general view of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, some 1,200 km (746 miles) south of Teheran on 26 Oct, 2010.—REUTERS

suspend some uranium enrichment and how western governments would ease sanctions in return. "The last meeting ... resulted in good progress," Araqchi was quoted by IRNA as

saying. "The experts will present their reports to deputies and political directors because some of the remaining issues need to be resolved at the political level."—Reuters

Afghanistan rejects grim US intelligence forecast as baseless



Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai addresses media representatives during a press interaction in New Delhi on 14 Dec, 2013. Karzai is on a four-day visit to India.

REUTERS

KABUL, 31 Dec — Afghanistan on Monday rejected as baseless a US intelligence forecast that the gains the United States and allies have made in the past three years will be significantly rolled back by 2017.

The US National Intelligence Estimate also predicted that Afghanistan would fall into chaos if Washington and Kabul failed to sign a pact to keep an international military contingent there beyond 2014.

President Hamid Karzai's spokesman dismissed the US forecast, reported by the *Washington Post* on the weekend, and suggested there was an ulterior motive for it.

"We strongly reject that as baseless as they have in the past been proved inaccurate," Faizi told *Reuters*. Relations between Afghanistan and the United States have grown seriously strained recently by Karzai's refusal to sign the security pact that would permit some US forces to stay.

US officials have said

that unless a deal is reached to keep perhaps 8,000 US troops, the Taleban might stage a major comeback and al-Qaeda could regain safe havens.

The pact must also be signed for the United States and its allies to provide billions more dollars in aid.

Without a deal, the United States could pull out all troops, the so-called zero option, leaving Afghan forces to battle the Taleban on their own.

The United States has set a Tuesday deadline for Afghanistan to sign the pact but the White House has said it is prepared to let the deadline slip until early January. The US intelligence estimate predicted setbacks even if some US troops remained. But some US officials felt the forecast was overly pessimistic, the *Washington Post* said.

Faizi suggested the leaking of the gloomy US intelligence report was part of bid to press Karzai into granting the Taleban control of some areas as part of a peace moves.—Reuters

Integral operation of GSDF intelligence, special units being considered

TOKYO, 31 Dec — Japan's Ground Self-Defence Force has been considering integral operation of its intelligence and special units since around 2008 for overseas hostage rescue missions, infiltrations into enemy territory and target surveillance, former senior defence officials told *Kyodo News* on Monday.

The existence of the intelligence unit was reported by *Kyodo News* in November. It has secretly gathered intelligence abroad since the Cold War era without informing the prime minister, the commander-in-chief of the Self-Defence Forces, or defence minister, a practice considered as deviating from civilian control.

While the government denies its existence, a former senior official of the GSDF's special unit, which was established in 2004 to counter terrorist and guer-

rilla attacks, said, "We need a powerful intelligence unit to enable the special unit to sneak into enemy bases to attack them."

According to the former officials and other sources, it is envisioned that the intelligence unit would be introduced in special operations with an eye on overseas deployment of the SDF, following the example of the US Navy SEALs, known for storming and killing al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden in Pakistan in 2011.

While the special unit was created to tackle attacks that police forces cannot deal with, its overseas duties, including reconstruction support for war-ravaged Iraq, have expanded since then. On the other hand, the special unit has secretly engaged in drills for rescuing hostages overseas and infiltrating into enemy territory as well as

conducting reconnaissance for aerial bombardment targets, according to the sources.

Through such training, the special unit has found it does not have sufficient capabilities to gather information using local informants. The GSDF has already started linking the reshuffle of senior officials in the special unit with personnel changes in the intelligence unit. The intelligence unit has set up bases in countries such as Russia, China, South Korea and Poland, and several dozen GSDF members have engaged in intelligence activities overseas without legal basis and by assuming false identities, such as officials of Japanese government bodies other than the Defence Ministry and employees of Japanese trading companies, according to former officials.—*Kyodo News*

Thailand's army moves to allay coup fears

BANGKOK, 31 Dec — Thailand's powerful but politicized army sought to ease fears on Monday it might step in to resolve a festering political crisis, while anti-government protesters entrenched positions around Bangkok as they seek to disrupt a February election.

The latest round of an all-too-familiar political conflict in Thailand has dragged on for weeks. It flared last week into deadly clashes between police and protesters outside a stadium where registration for the 2 February poll was under way and at

other rally sites around the Thai capital.

The head of the military added to the growing sense of unease on Thursday when he refused to rule out a coup after those clashes. A policeman and a protester were killed when an unidentified gunman opened fire, and scores were wounded in the clashes.

The demonstrators are determined to topple Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who they accuse of being a puppet of her self-exiled brother and former premier, Thaksin Shinawatra.



Thai police officers gather at the Royal Plaza near the Government House in Bangkok on 30 Dec, 2013.

REUTERS

Thai army chief General Prayuth Chan-Ocha said after Thursday's clashes that "the door was neither open nor closed" on a coup, and social media across Thailand has buzzed with rumours of a coup ever

Cambodian PM, opposition leader to meet over political row

PHNOM PENH, 31 Dec — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and the country's opposition leader Sam Rainsy will meet on Thursday to discuss and find solutions to the current political dispute following the July's election, the government spokesman, Khieu Kanharith said on Monday.

"Today, Prime Minister Hun Sen agreed to hold a meeting with Sam Rainsy, president of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, on 2 January at the National Assembly," he told reporters. "The meeting will focus on the reform of the National Election Committee and elections."

Political dispute between Prime Minister Hun Sen's ruling party and Sam Rainsy's opposition party has persisted since the July election results showed that the ruling party won a majority of vote with 68 parliamentary seats against 55 seats for the opposition.

The opposition refused to accept the outcome, claiming serious irregularities and has boycotted parliament since then.

Despite the opposition's boycott, the ruling party-formed parliament voted on 24 September for the establishment of a new government under the leadership of Hun Sen.

Xinhua

since. Army spokesman Winthai Suwaree sought to play down those fears, telling reporters on Monday that the rumours were causing "confusion and speculation".

Reuters

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

US cracks open skies to testing, use of aerial drones



A small drone helicopter operated by a paparazzi records singer Beyonce Knowles-Carter (not seen) as she rides the Cyclone rollercoaster while filming a music video on Coney Island in New York on 29 Aug, 2013.

REUTERS

NEW YORK, 31 Dec — The US aviation regulator took a step toward opening the skies to aerial drones on Monday, authorizing six sites where unmanned aircraft can be tested for a variety of uses.

The Federal Aviation Administration already has approved limited use of drones in the US for law

enforcement, surveillance, atmospheric research and other applications.

But Monday's move will give companies, universities and other entities locations at which to test much broader use, such as crop spraying, catching exotic-animal poachers or delivering packages.

"It provides the platform

for this research to be carried out on a very large scale across the country," Federal Aviation Administration Administrator Michael Huerta told reporters.

The first test site is expected to be open in six months and the sites will operate at least until February 2017. The FAA said the test sites will be developed by the University of Alaska, the state of Nevada, Griffiss International Airport in New York state, the North Dakota Department of Commerce, Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, which includes locations in New Jersey.

The FAA is required to write initial rules governing commercial operation of drones by 2015. The test sites will operate longer, allowing rules to evolve with further testing, Huerta said.

Drones are smaller

and less costly alternatives to manned aircraft, and are a growing business for aerospace companies such as Boeing Co, Northrop Grumman Corp, Lockheed Martin Corp and AeroVironment Inc.

Beyond military capabilities, they also offer uses to businesses and researchers. Amazon.com Inc recently unveiled plans for drones to deliver small packages to homes.

Global spending on unmanned aircraft will almost double to \$11.6 billion a year by 2023, according to the latest estimate by aviation and aerospace industry research firm Teal Group. The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI), an industry group, estimates the industry could contribute more than \$80 billion to the US economy over a decade and create more than 100,000 jobs.—Reuters

Nokia Solutions chairman to step down after Microsoft deal

HELSINKI, 31 Dec — Nokia said the chairman of its networking equipment unit, Nokia Solutions and Networks (NSN), will step down following the sale of the Finnish company's mobile phone business to Microsoft.

Jesper Ovesen, who joined NSN in 2011 when it was still a joint venture between Nokia and Siemens,

will continue for a while as an advisor after the mobile phone business is transferred to Microsoft, Nokia said on Monday.

Markets expect more details on the new management structure at Nokia and its equipment business to be announced after the deal is closed, which is expected to happen in the first quarter of 2014.—Reuters



A Nokia mobile phone lies on a tablet computer showing logos of Microsoft, in this illustration picture taken in Frankfurt, on 18 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

Antarctic blizzard halts icebreaker's bid to rescue stranded ship

SYDNEY, 31 Dec — An Antarctic blizzard has halted an Australian icebreaker's attempt to reach a Russian ship trapped for a week with 74 people onboard, rescuers said on Monday.

The Akademik Shokalskiy left New Zealand on 28 November on a private expedition to commemorate the 100th anniversary of an Antarctic journey led by Australian explorer Douglas Mawson.

It became trapped in the ice on 24 December, 100 nautical miles east of the French Antarctic station Dumont D'Urville. The 74 people aboard include scientists and tourists, many of them Australian, and 22 Russian crew.

A first rescue attempt by a Chinese icebreaker, the Snow Dragon, had to be halted because the ice was



Barbara Tucker, a passenger aboard the trapped ship MV Akademik Shokalskiy looks at an Adelie penguin walking by on the ice off East Antarctica on 29 Dec, 2013, some 100 nautical miles (185 km) east of French Antarctic station Dumont D'Urville and about 1,500 nautical miles (2,800 km) south of Hobart, Tasmania.

REUTERS

so thick.

Now another attempt, by the Aurora Australis, has been hampered by the weather.

It has had to return to open waters about 18

nautical miles from the Akademik Shokalskiy because of poor visibility, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), which is co-ordinating the rescue, said.—Reuters

Orange to take legal action after report of spying via its cable

PARIS, 31 Dec — Orange (ORAN.PA) is preparing its legal response to a report alleging the US National Security Agency (NSA) accessed customers' data transmitted by a submarine cable partly used by the French telecoms operator. German website Spiegel Online said it had seen documents showing

the NSA had tapped telecoms data from the cable running from Marseille to North Africa and Asia.

Orange uses the submarine cable along with 13 other telecoms companies, which collectively operate the cable.

A steady drip of allegations from former NSA contractor Edward Snowden

about NSA snooping over the past months has raised widespread concern about the reach of the agency's operations and its ability to pry into the affairs of private individuals in the United States and abroad as well as the communications of foreign leaders.

"We will take legal action in the next few days because we want to know more about the eventuality that Orange data may have been intercepted," an Orange spokeswoman said on Monday, adding that Orange had had no role whatsoever in the spying.

Under the French legal system, a company or a person can file a complaint, not necessarily against a particular person or organisation, to trigger an investigation and kick-start a legal process.—Reuters



The logo of the Orange telecommunication and internet provider is seen on the facade of a store in Paris on 24 July, 2013.—REUTERS

LinkedIn, Pinterest more popular than Twitter

SAN FRANCISCO, 31 Dec — More US adults use LinkedIn (LNKD.N) and Pinterest than Twitter (TWTR.N), but that website attracts a greater proportion of blacks and young adults than do its social media peers, a Pew Research Centre study released on Monday showed.

Photo pin-up site

Pinterest spiked in popularity over the past year, according to the survey, a poll of 1,445 Internet users aged 18 and older. About 21 percent of respondents said they employ the service, up sharply from 15 percent in a similar survey conducted a year ago.

The figure was 22 percent for LinkedIn and 18

percent for Twitter, holding roughly steady from a year ago. About 29 percent of the blacks surveyed by Pew made use of Twitter, well above 16 percent for whites and Hispanics, the study showed. (r.reuters.com/fyc75v)

Twitter ranks higher than Pinterest in terms of engagement, however: 46

percent of users surveyed go onto the online messaging service daily, versus 23 percent for Pinterest and just 13 percent for LinkedIn. Industry experts have said Twitter is less intuitive than Facebook and thus can turn off users, curtailing its growth as a mainstream social media platform.

Reuters



A sign displays the Twitter logo on the front of the New York Stock Exchange ahead of the company's IPO in New York, on 7 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

ONGC, Shell buy rest of Brazil offshore block from Petrobras

RIO DE JANEIRO, 31 Dec — Royal Dutch Shell Plc (RDSA.L) and India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC.NS) (ONGC) purchased the remaining 35 percent of a Brazilian offshore oil block from their partner, Brazil's state-run Petroleo Brasileiro SA (PETR4.SA), Shell said in a statement on Monday.

Under the accord, which the companies began negotiating in September, Shell will get an additional 23 percent of BC-10, raising its stake to 73 percent. ONGC will get an additional 12 percent, boosting its stake to 27 percent, Shell said.

Petrobras had originally

agreed to sell its 35 percent stake to China's Sinochem for \$1.56 billion. Shell and ONGC, though, exercised their right of first refusal. ONGC agreed to \$529 million for the 12 percent stake in October, valuing the entire sale about the same as the amount Sinochem agreed to pay.

The additional share of oil coming to Shell from BC-10 could see the company jump past China's Sinochem to become Brazil's No 4 producer, behind Petrobras, Norway's Statoil ASA (STL.OL) and Britain's BG Group Plc (BG.L), based on October figures from Brazil's petroleum regulator, the ANP.

Petrobras, as the Brazilian company is known, has been selling off assets in Brazil and abroad in an attempt to raise cash to finance a \$237 billion five-year investment plan, the world's largest corporate spending programme.

Petrobras' need for cash has risen as production from older oil fields has stagnated and output from new areas comes on line behind schedule, forcing the company to boost debt to finance investment. The government has also forced the company to sell gasoline and diesel fuel at home at prices below those on the world market, causing its refining and supply



An engineer of Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) works inside the Kalol oil field in Gujarat on 12 Sept, 2009.—REUTERS

arm to lose money as fuel imports rise.

The BC-10 block is home to Shell and ONGC's Parque das Conchas, or "Shell Park" area. The block, at the north end of Brazil's Campos Basin,

northeast of Rio de Janeiro, is home to the Ostra, Abalone, and Argonaut oilfields. Shell is the operator of the area.

Parque das Conchas, which began operating in 2009, produces about

50,000 barrels a day of oil. The company approved a third phase of the project in July which could add as much as 28,000 barrels a day of oil output to the project, Shell said.

Reuters

China halts imports of Pfizer drug on paperwork glitch



The Pfizer logo is seen next to a US flag in a conference room at their world headquarters in New York on 5 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

SHANGHAI, 31 Dec — China suspended imports of US drugmaker Pfizer Inc's AIDS-related drug Diflucan on Tuesday, citing a problem with late paperwork, the country's food and drug

watchdog said in a statement on its website.

Pfizer, the largest drugmaker in the United States, contravened Chinese law when one of its France-based factories failed to

submit a supplementary application on time, the China Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said in the statement.

With the country's healthcare spending forecast to nearly triple to \$1 trillion by 2020 from \$357 billion in 2011, according to consulting firm McKinsey, China is a magnet for makers of medicines and medical equipment.

Pfizer has taken steps to resolve the issue and is working with China's FDA to ensure its products comply with Chinese law, it said in a statement on its Chinese-language website. The issue is not linked to quality or safety, it added.

Some analysts said the incident looked like a paperwork "glitch" and should be short-lived.

"It should not impact too much Pfizer's business in China and I am sure the imports will be resumed once the procedure is complete," said Simon Li, Shanghai-based general manager at Kantar Health China.

China has been cracking down this year on the healthcare sector, with investigations ranging from allegations of corporate bribery to how drugs are priced, as well as drives to increase quality and safety levels across the sector.

Reuters

Berkshire Hathaway to buy Phillips 66 unit for around \$1.4 billion



Berkshire Hathaway shareholders walk by a video screen at the company's annual meeting in Omaha on 4 May, 2013.—REUTERS

NEW YORK, 31 Dec — Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc (BRKa.N) struck a deal to buy a Phillips 66 (PSX.N) business that makes chemicals to improve the flow potential of pipelines for around \$1.4 billion of stock.

Phillips 66 said on Monday that Berkshire will pay for the unit, Phillips Specialty Products Inc, using about 19 million shares of Phillips 66 stock that it currently owns.

"I have long been impressed by the strength of the Phillips 66 business portfolio," Buffett said in a statement. "The flow improver business is a high-quality business with consistently strong financial performance."

The exact number of shares Berkshire will pay for the unit will be determined by their price on the closing date, the companies said.

James Hambrick, CEO of Berkshire's specialty chemicals unit Lubrizol

Corp, will oversee the business, Buffett said. Berkshire bought Lubrizol for about \$9 billion in 2011.

Phillips 66 CEO Greg Garland said the company decided to sell the business because Berkshire Hathaway made a strong offer. He said the company will now focus its growth on its oil and natural gas transportation and processing business, as well as its other chemicals businesses.

Phillips 66 said it expects the Phillips Specialty Products unit to have about \$450 million of cash and cash equivalents on its balance sheet at closing. It expects the deal to close in the first half of 2014.

Berkshire favors larger companies with consistent earnings power and easy-to-understand businesses.

In June, it paid \$12.3 billion for half of ketchup maker HJ Heinz Co, and in May said it paid \$2.05 billion for the 20 percent it did not already own of Israeli toolmaker Iscar.—Reuters

Some current, former smokers should get annual lung scans

CHICAGO, 31 Dec — Heavy smokers and former heavy smokers should get annual lung cancer screening tests, according to final guidelines issued on Monday by an influential US panel.

The final recommendations, issued by the US Preventive Services Task Force and published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, apply to people aged 55 to 80 whose smoking has put them at high risk of cancer. That includes former heavy smokers who have quit within the past 15 years. Heavy smokers are considered to be those who smoked a pack a day for 30 years, or two packs a day for 15 years. According to a comprehensive review

of medical evidence since 2004, the panel found the benefits of screening high-risk individuals with low-dose computed tomography, or CT scans, outweigh the potential harms of overdiagnosis and increased exposure to radiation, which also contribute to cancer risk.

The panel, which is comprised of independent



A man holds a cigarette in Tokyo on 3 Aug, 2009.

REUTERS

experts and advises US policymakers, gave the screening a "B" recommendation, meaning it is at least moder-

A man sends text messages on his mobile phone as he smokes a cigarette outside the court building in San Diego, California on 9 Dec, 2013.

REUTERS



Reuters

WORLD



Two homeless women sit on a bench in downtown Rome on 25 Nov, 2011.—REUTERS

Poverty in Italy hits record levels

ROME, 31 Dec—Poverty in Italy has reached its highest level in at least 16 years as the economic crisis has bitten, driving up unemployment and cutting wages, according to a report on social cohesion issued on Monday.

Relative poverty, defined as a family of two living on a monthly income of 991 euros (847.61 pounds) or less, affected 12.7 percent of families, the highest level recorded since the current series of data began in 1997, the report by statistics agency ISTAT said.

The report, a compendium of data on issues ranging from employment to demographics, said poverty had deepened in all areas

of Italy between 2011 and 2012. Relative poverty rose from 4.9 percent to 6.2 percent in the richer north and from 23.3 percent to 26.2 percent in the poorer south.

The report painted a grim picture of the impact of the country's worst post-war recession, with joblessness at record levels, incomes squeezed and permanent, full-time employment declining.

"As one of the countries most affected by the crisis, Italy registered a progressive decline in the main macroeconomic and social indicators in 2012," Labour Minister and former ISTAT chief Enrico Giovannini said in the introduction to the report.—Reuters

Officials could be punished in event of info leaks in cyberattacks

TOKYO, 31 Dec—Government officials in charge of information management could be punished under the newly enacted secrecy law if state secrets leak due to cyberattacks, an internal government document showed on Monday.

The document, compiled in November 2011, is a record of discussions between the Foreign Ministry and the Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office, an intelligence-collection agency that oversees the secrecy law, in the process of drafting the law. Responding to a question from the ministry regarding whether officials could still be held liable despite the implementation of safety control measures, the research office said they "could, in general terms, be responsible for intentional or negligent failure to act."

The ministry apparently had in mind the increasing number of cyberattacks targeted at diplomatic

establishments abroad, while the research office referred to cyberattacks against some defence-related companies, such as Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd and IHI Corp, according to the document. Under the secrecy law enacted on 7 December to prevent the leak of state secrets, officials who leak confidential information due to negligence will face up to two years in prison or fines of up to 500,000 yen. Meanwhile, those who wage cyberattacks will face up to 10 years in prison.

The government will set up a third-party panel in the Cabinet Office in January, which is expected to advise the prime minister about uniform criteria for designating and declassifying state secrets. The panel will also discuss fair administration of the law. The idea of punishing officials in connection with cyberattacks will also be debated by the panel.—Kyodo News

Fighting erupts as Iraq police break up Sunni protest camp

RAMADI, 31 Dec—Fighting erupted when Iraqi police broke up a Sunni Muslim protest camp in the western Anbar Province on Monday, leaving at least 13 people dead, police and medical sources said.

The camp has been an irritant to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's Shi'ite Muslim-led government since Sunni protesters set it up a year ago to demonstrate against what they see as marginalization of their sect.

The operation triggered an immediate political backlash as dozens of Sunni lawmakers offered their resignations.

Maliki, who is seeking a third term in April's elections, has repeatedly vowed to remove the camp and accused protesters of stirring strife and

sheltering al-Qaeda-linked militants.

Violence has spiked this year as al-Qaeda-linked militants target the government and anyone seen to be supporting it, raising fears of a return to the sectarian conflict of 2006-7 that killed tens of thousands. Another 11 people died in separate attacks across Iraq on Monday.

Police sources said Monday's clashes broke out when gunmen opened fire on police special forces trying to enter Ramadi, the western city where the protest camp is located.

The gunmen destroyed four police vehicles and killed at least three policemen in the north of Ramadi, one source said.

Reuters



Gunmen takeover a police vehicle in Ramadi on 30 Dec 2013.—REUTERS

South Korea may need five more nuclear plants for 2025-2035

SEOUL, 31 Dec—South Korea may have to build up to five nuclear power plants between 2025 and 2035 to meet a target of 43,000 MW of nuclear power under a plan to reduce the proportion of nuclear in the total

energy supply, government officials said on Monday.

Asia's fourth-largest economy has been under pressure to reduce its use of nuclear power after a scandal forced the closure of some reactors that had

received replacement parts using fake safety certificates.

The Energy Ministry said this month that the government was considering lowering reliance on nuclear power to 29 percent of total power by 2035, from 41 percent by 2030.

But it did not specify how many nuclear reactors would be needed for that plan.

The ministry set out its policy to parliament on Monday saying that to meet the target of 29 percent of power from nuclear in 2035, the country would need capacity for 43,000 MW of nuclear power by then, up from 36,000 MW by 2024.

Reuters



The Kori No 1 reactor (R) and No 2 reactor of state-run utility Korea Electric Power Corp (KEPCO) are seen in Ulsan, about 410 km (255 miles) southeast of Seoul, on 3 Sept, 2013.—REUTERS

Chinese, Russian Presidents exchange New Year greetings

BEIJING, 31 Dec—Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, exchanged New Year greetings on Tuesday, expressing their shared wish to further enhance bilateral ties in 2014.

In his message, Xi extended sincere greetings to Putin and the Russian people on behalf of the Chinese government, the Chinese people and himself.

During the past year, China and Russia focused on the overarching

objective of facilitating healthy and stable progress of the international situation and promoting the development and revitalization of both countries, Xi said.

With a strategic vision and a global perspective, he added, the two countries pushed forward their comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership and scored significant achievements in bilateral cooperation in various areas.

Expressing satisfaction with the development of

bilateral relations in 2013, Xi said he always believes that a high-level and strong China-Russia relationship is a blessing not only for the people of both countries but for the entire world.

In the new year, Xi said, he is ready to maintain close communication and contact with Putin and work together with him to further boost bilateral cooperation in various areas and steer the development of bilateral ties into a new phase.

Xinhua

Fiery oil train collision forces evacuation of North Dakota town

FARGO, (North Dakota) 31 Dec — Residents of a small town in North Dakota were urged to evacuate after a BNSF train carrying crude oil collided with another train on Monday, setting off a series of explosions and fires, the latest in a string of incidents that have raised alarms over growing oil-by-rail traffic.

Local residents heard five powerful explosions just a mile outside of the small town of Casselton after a westbound 112-car train carrying soybeans derailed. An eastbound 106-car train hauling crude oil ran into it just after 2 pm CST (2000 GMT), local officials said. There were no injuries in the collision that left 21 rail cars on fire, according to BNSF.

Residents within 5 miles (8 km) of Casselton were urged to evacuate to avoid contact with the smoke. Residents within 10 miles were asked to remain indoors. Casselton resident Jolie Fiedler and her husband dropped off their two dogs with relatives and headed to a shelter.

"It's better safe than sorry — just get out of town and dodge the smoke, I guess," she said. "I'm hoping that I can go home tomorrow, but who knows."

Casselton City Auditor Sheila Klevgard said crews are pushing snow to contain the oil before it reaches a nearby creek.—Reuters



A police officer checks the luggage of a passenger at a station in Sochi, Russia, on 30 Dec, 2013. An explosion occurred on a trolleybus the same day in the southern city of Volgograd, where a suicide bombing took place the previous day.

KYODO NEWS

LOCAL NEWS

1200 sets of uniforms provided to fire brigade members



HPA-AN, 31 Dec—A ceremony to present uniforms to members of Auxiliary Fire Brigade was held at the hall of Hpa-an Township Administrator of Kayin State on 29 December morning.

It was attended by the head of Kayin State Fire

Services Department, the head of Hpa-an Township FSD, the township administrator, the commander of Township Police Force, townselders, ward administrators and fire brigade members.

U Aung Aung, Hpa-an Township Administrator, made a speech on the occasion.

Township level officials presented 1200 sets of uniforms to members of Auxiliary Fire Brigade.

Kayin State FSD plans to issue uniforms to auxiliary fire brigades from Hlaingbwe, Kawkaeik, Myawady, Kya-in-Seikkyi, Thandaunggyi and Papun townships.—Kyemon-Kayin State Writers Association

Transport

Kyaukpadaung-Pwaykyit road extended to 12 miles long one

KYAUKPADAUNG, 31 Dec—For ensuring smooth and secure transportation and swift flow of commodity and rural development, Kyaukpadaung-Pwaykyit road in Kyaukpadaung Township, Mandalay Region

was upgraded with the use of Mandalay Region Government's funds.

The township development committee started the road repair work since 15 May.

The locals from

12 villages of Pwaykyit sub-township and five villages of Netmaw Township enjoy fruitful results of the 12-mile road and have easy access to flow their commodities.—Kyemon-Ko Nay (Kyaukpadaung)



Twidil native donates one set of computer to Twidil Post-Primary School

TIDDIM, 31 Dec—With the aim of promoting the education standard of village students and enabling them to have easy access to modern technology, Twidil native Maung Steven Shin from the USA donated one set of computer for the students at Basic Education Post Primary School in Twidil in Tiddim township on 27 December.

At the ceremony, Twi-

dil village administrator U Lal Dein Lyan made a speech. On behalf of the well-wisher, U Twal Swin Van explained the purpose of donation. Town elders U Zint Kat Paung gave one set of computer, printer and related items to Headmaster U En Kaw Thwin who spoke words of thanks.

Twidil village is home to 468 people from 64 houses. There are five

Basic veterinary and breeding workers course opened in Kalewa

KALEWA, 31 Dec—As part of efforts to step up the rural development, Kalewa Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department under the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development conducted the basic Veterinary and breeding workers course at the hall of Kalewa Township General Admin-

istrators and 90 students at Twidil Post Primary School.—Kyemon-Zo Hay Hsa (IPRD)

Toungoo Tsp Fire Preventive Measures Supportive Committee holds coord meeting

TOUNGGOO, 31 Dec—A coordination meeting on Fire Preventive Measure Supportive Committee of Toungoo Township, Bago Region was held at blood donation office on Kan Road, here, on 28 December.

At the meeting, Patron U Myint Nyo (A-mae-eain) and Chairman U Ye Win (Shwewah groundnut oil) made opening speeches.

Vice-Chairman U Ye Myint read out financial report. Head of District Fire Services Department U Tin Aung Lin explained losses in blazing four shops and



conditions on putting out fire.

They discussed the ways to carry out fire preventive measures by all

means and Patron U Kyaw Hla (Thamadi) made concluding remarks.

Kyemon-U Kyaw Hla-(Toungoo)

Library opened in Kaytumat



The opening ceremony of self-reliant library in progress in Kaytumat in Toungoo Township.

TOUNGGOO, 31 Dec—A Library was put into service in Kaytumat of Taungoo Township, Bago Region on 28 December. It was attended by district/township level departmental officials, media persons, NGOs, town's elders and well-wishers.

Toungoo Township administrator U Thein Zaw Win, Head of Toungoo District Information and Public Relations De-

partment Daw Khaing Khaing Thin, Chairman of the township writers association U Aye Shwe and Ward Administrator U Win Myint formally opened the library and made opening speeches.

Then, the township administrator, writer Kaytumat Maung Nyo Lin, BEHS Headmaster U Myo Nyunt Aung and guests

presented certificates of honour to the winners in essay contests and donors.

The opening ceremony came to an end with a concluding speech by writer Maung Swe (Toungoo). The newly-opened library was built with the donors' contribution K 4.6 million.

Kyemon-U Kyaw Hla (Toungoo)



As a gesture of hailing the 66th Anniversary Independence Day, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Aung Myint Thein, Region Hluttaw representative U Aung Naing Oo and Executive Officer U Aung Phyo of Paungde Township Development Affairs Committee formally open 2-inch tube-well in Kyanigan Village of Paungde Township on 27 December.—KYEMON-MYINT NAING (PYAY)

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 1 January, 2014

Make films worthy of praise

Academy Awards are a set of awards given annually for excellence of cinematic achievements. As one of the most prominent award ceremonies in the world, the Academy Award ceremony is televised live in more than 100 countries annually. Most recently, the Myanmar Motion Picture Academy Award ceremony for the year 2012 had successfully concluded. The academy awards were chosen from the films out of 17 that were shown in a year. This year saw only nine academy awards against 11 that are normally given.

Altogether nine statuettes were awarded, honoring artists, directors and other personalities of the filmmaking industry for their excellent works during the year 2012. It is encouraging to see this year that a child actor won the Academy Award as a special award. But we are deeply touched by the fact that there were no movies in 2012 that won the Academy Award. And it can be concluded that there were no movies that met the standard set by the award scrutiny and choosing committee.

In his address at the ceremony, Union Minister for Information U Aung Kyi said that motion picture is recognized worldwide as a high-value creative industry in knowledge economy. Creative industry is different from conventional one. Whereas the latter manufactures conventional products with substantial capital, machinery and labor, the former has its essence in individual creativity, skill and talent founded upon innovation and cultural knowledge, and urged those in the firm world to equip themselves with unlimited resources of intellectual creativity and skill, insight and inspiration.

Nowadays, with TV set, VCD, DVD and other communication devices, film production has been on the decrease alongside movies goes. This has resulted in a decrease in quality movies whose scripts are of lower quality. Most of directors are focusing on the producing of comedies usually with a happy ending that are normally economical. Therefore, it is compulsory to produce a number of quality films, of which the Academy Award winning films can be chosen. And only then, will the Academy Award be considered worthy of praise.

Six political prisoners released from Central Prison (Insein)

YANGON, 31 Dec — Six political prisoners were released from Central Prison (Insein) in accord with the Pardon issued by the President's Office at 12.30 pm today.

They were Maung Maung Than, son of U Ali,

Tin Htay, son of U Soe Myint, Win Myint, son of U Nyein Maung, Maung Maung (a) Sat Thar, son of U Shaku, Win Shwe, son of U Tha Hla and Tin Htut (a) Tin Htut Paing, son of U Htay Win.

MNA



Speaker of Pyidaungsu and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann visits extended patient ward of Kanutkwin People's Hospital.—MNA

Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw attends handover ceremony...

(from page 16)

He then donated K 5 million to the hospital.

Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win spoke words of thanks.

The Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw made an address on the occasion. He then looked round in the hospital and presented cash assistance to the patients.

Present on the occasion were Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Transport, Communication and Construction Committee U Thein Swe, the Region Ministers, Hluttaw representatives and departmental personnel.

The extended patient

ward is one-storey building type with the length of 40 feet and height of 27 feet. The six-room nurses hostel is also one-storey building type with the length of 72 feet and height of 40 feet.

MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Joint-committee for Reviewing the Constitution of Republic of the Union of Myanmar Press Release (4/ 2013)

14th Waning of Nadaw, 1375 ME

(31 December, 2013)

Press release on suggestions received from departments, associations, political parties and persons regarding the Constitution 2008

1. The Joint-committee for Reviewing the Constitution of Republic of the Union of Myanmar issued Press Release (2/2013) and invited legislative, executive and judicial pillars to send reviews and suggestions on the Constitution not later than 31 December, 2013.

2. According to the press release, the joint-committee received 28247 letters of suggestion till 4.30 pm on 31 December, 2013.

3. The following are letters of suggestion on respective chapters received from departments, associations, political parties and persons up to 31 December, 2013.

- (a) 140,624 suggested points for Chapter (1)
- (b) 100 suggested points for Chapter (2)
- (c) 3369 suggested points for Chapter (3)
- (d) 24398 suggested points for Chapter (4)
- (e) 10783 suggested points for Chapter (5)
- (f) 469 suggested points for Chapter (6)
- (g) 7242 suggested points for Chapter (7)

- (h) 2077 suggested points for Chapter (8)
- (i) 213 suggested points for Chapter (9)
- (j) 43 suggested points for Chapter (10)
- (k) 338 suggested points for Chapter (11)
- (l) 105,233 suggested points for Chapter (12)
- (m) 29 suggested points for Chapter (13)
- (n) 59 suggested points for Chapter (14)
- (o) 26 suggested points for Chapter (15)
- (p) 81 suggested points for Table (1)
- (q) 78 suggested points for Table (2)
- (r) 11 suggested points for Table (3)
- (s) Five suggested points for Chapter (4)
- (t) 26 suggested points for Table (5)
- (u) 27906 special suggested point/letter for amending the Constitution

4. A total of 323,110 suggested points have been received.

Joint committee for Reviewing the Constitution

New delivery room donated to Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association

YANGON, 31 Dec — In memory of late Yoshi Mayor Mr. Nishiyama Katsutoshi, Mr. Nishiyama Katashi donated a new delivery room to Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association yesterday.

On the occasion, Chairperson of Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association Prof Dr Nang Htawn Hla, Myanmar-Japan Cooperation Group Chairman Prof Shigeru Okada and Mr. Takemoto

Ichiro formally opened the new building.

They handed over documents related to a new delivery room and its related items to Vice-Chairperson II Prof Daw Yin Mya of Myanmar

Nurse and Midwife Association at the building in Nurses Ayenyeiknyein Compound on Industrial Zone (1) Road in Dagon Myothit (South) Township.

The RC type building is 40 feet long and 24 feet wide. Its related items cost USD 40,000.

MNA

LOCAL NEWS

66th Anniversary Independence Day, 2014



Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium, Nay Pyi Taw for XXVII SEA Games

Photo: Kyaw Swe Moe (IPRD)

Four objectives of 66th Anniversary Independence Day

- All the national people to live together in the Union forever in weal or woe;
- All the national people to strive together for non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty;
- All the national people to participate in efforts for ceasing armed conflicts and gaining genuine peace;
- All the national people to work hard in building a developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation

Cash assistance provided to war veterans



MAGWAY, 31 Dec—Cash assistance presentation ceremony took place at the hall of Magway Township War Veterans Organization of Magway Region on 28 December.

Major Myo Aung (Rtd) explained the purpose of providing cash assistance to

WVO members of over 75 years old.

Next, K 20000 each was given to six war veterans.

The ceremony was attended by members of Township VWO, organizers, guests and media persons.

Kyemon-Kaung Thuta (Minbu)

Pensioners Association holds meeting in Sagaing

SAGAING, 31 Dec—The annual general meeting of Pensioners Association of Sagaing Township was held at the city hall in Sagaing on 29 December.

Chairman of the association U Hla Myint

made a speech. Chairman of the Township Management Committee U Tun Win Aung and townselder U Zaw Win gave speeches.

Responsible persons of the association submitted executive committee report,

Employment Affairs

Office work course concludes

MYAWADY, 31 Dec—The office work refresher course No 2/2013 concluded at the hall of Myawady District Court in Myawady District in Kayin State on 29 December.

District Judge U Phyo Phyo made a concluding remarks and presented certificates to trainees.

It was attended by Deputy District Judge U Saw Kaw Nay Mu, District Law Officer U Than Soe, Township Judge U Myo Tint, Deputy Township Judge U Zaw Lin Maung and trainees.

The course was run during four weeks period.

Kyemon-570



final report and future tasks.

Wellwishers donated cash assistance to ailing members.

The association has organized about 3000 members.

The meeting elected U Win Maw (Judicial) as Chairman, U Kan Nyunt (Settlement and Land Records) as Secretary and 30 executives.—Kyemon-Nanda Min Lwin

Monghsat District organizes talks on census taking process



MONGHSAT, 31 Dec—An educative talk on 2014 census taking process and population was held at Thiri Yadana Hall of Monghsat District General Administration Department recently.

Chairman of Monghsat District Census Committee U Khin Maung Cho made a speech.

Head of District Immigration and National Registration Department U Win Myint explained the collection on data for census and population and Staff Officer of District

Information and Public Relations Department U Than Zaw Oo population, housings and census law.

The talk was also attended by State Hluttaw representative U Yaw Ba, Township Administrator U Aye Naing, District and Township departmental officials, the chairman of Township Development Affairs Supportive Committee, ward and village administrators, members of Township Maternal and Chil Welfare Association and Women's Affairs Organization and teachers.

Kyemon-Than Zaw (IPRD)

Tourism Industry

Globetrotters emphasize visits to Thanlyin

YANGON, 31 Dec—After the XXVII SEA Games, globetrotters pay visits to Thanlyin and Kyauktan townships of Yangon South District.

The globetrotters visited Thanlyin Myoma Market at 10 am on 29 December and they went shopping there.

Kyemon-Thet Khaing (IPRD)



A fire broke out at No 158 on 1st Minyekyawswa Street in Dala on 29 December. Fire fighters and local people put out the fire with two fire engines. A building was destroyed in the fire and it was valued at K 750,000.

KYEMON-BANYA MAUNG MAUNG

WORLD



A prisoner (C) released from an Israeli prison is welcomed by relatives in the West Bank city of Ramallah early on 31 Dec, 2013. REUTERS

Israel frees Palestinian prisoners, pushes settlement plan

JERUSALEM, 31 Dec— Israel set free 26 Palestinian prisoners on Tuesday as part of US-brokered peace efforts, after pledging to press ahead with plans to build more homes in Jewish settlements.

US Secretary of State John Kerry, whose shuttle diplomacy led to a resumption of the negotiations in July after a three-year break, was due to return on Thursday to seek a framework agreement in talks that have shown few signs of progress.

Israel agreed to release 104 long-serving Palestinian prisoners — the latest

group is the third of four to go free — as part of the US-led efforts that coaxed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas back to the negotiations after a three-year break.

In tandem with the prisoner releases in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israel has announced new construction in settlements in occupied territory Palestinians seek for a state.

Most of the 26 inmates going free were convicted of killing Israelis and almost all were jailed before the first Israeli-Palestinian interim peace deals were signed 20

years ago.

Palestinians have jubilantly welcomed the return home of brethren they regard as national heroes. The families of Israelis they killed or injured have voiced anger and mounted unsuccessful court challenges against their release.

Last week, an Israeli official said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government — which includes pro-settlement parties — would announce plans after the latest release to build 1,400 more homes for settlers in the West Bank.

Reuters

Congo's army repels attacks in Kinshasa, dozens killed

KINSHASA, 31 Dec— Congolese troops killed dozens of armed youths who attacked the airport, a military barracks and state television headquarters in the capital Kinshasa on Monday in incidents claimed by a disgruntled religious leader.

Before transmission was shut down at state television, the attackers shouted slogans in favour of pastor Paul Joseph Mukungubila and against President Joseph Kabila.

The pastor, who calls himself a prophet and once ran for president in 2006, later told the BBC that the attacks were in response to government harassment of his supporters. "It's the fifth time the brothers were attacked; they decided to show what they are capable of," he said late on Monday.

Several corpses lay on the rain-soaked ground outside the brightly painted gates of the state television center after the attack, a Reuters witness said. The broadcaster reported that

security forces had killed 46 of the attackers, while government officials said about 20 more had been arrested.

Shortly after the clashes, soldiers in the eastern mining province of Katanga attacked a church run by Mukungubila, who has railed against Kabila's decision to make peace with Tutsi rebels in eastern Congo, saying the president was under the

influence of Rwanda.

Witnesses said the fighting in the regional capital Lubumbashi quickly subsided. Security forces found arms and ammunition in the church, sources told Reuters.

"We have total control of the situation," said government spokesman Lambert Mende, saying there were no civilian or troop casualties.

Reuters



Congolese security forces secure the street near the state television headquarters in the capital Kinshasa, on 30 Dec, 2013. REUTERS

Dutch fireworks nuisance hotline receives over 42,000 complaints

THE HAGUE, 31 Dec— The Dutch fireworks nuisance hotline received over 42,000 complaints and several people were hurt in accidents with fireworks, Dutch media reported on Monday.

Regional fractions of the Dutch political party Groenlinks set out the initiative for the hotline. The party wants to map the size of fireworks nuisance and also pleads for a fireworks restriction, but a majority of the Dutch parliament is against a restriction.

In the Netherlands, it is legal to buy fireworks for four days prior to the New Year celebrations. Fireworks can be set off between 10 am (0900GMT) on 31 December and 2 am (0100 GMT) on 1 January, 2014, with those who break the rules facing a fine of 100 euros (1.379 US dollars).

"We would only like to see fireworks during professional fireworks shows. This is what happens in many other countries. It would give all the benefits of the fireworks, but with minimal disadvantages," the organizers stated on their website.—Xinhua

IOC says it has no doubt over security at Sochi Games

ZURICH, 31 Dec — The International Olympic Committee has no doubt Russian authorities will be able to provide security at the Winter Olympics, a spokeswoman said on Monday after two bomb blasts killed tens of people in the Russian city of Volgograd.

"At the Olympics, security is the responsibility of the local authorities, and we have



Russian police check a driver's documents in Sochi on 30 Dec, 2013.—REUTERS

no doubt that the Russian authorities will be up to the task," the spokeswoman said.

The attacks in

Volgograd come less than six weeks before Russia is due to host the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi.—Reuters

More earthquakes recorded in Groningen due to gas extraction

THE HAGUE, 31 Dec— Gas extraction in Groningen in 2013 caused a record number of earthquakes, Dutch national broadcaster NOS reported on Monday.

This year a total of 127 earthquakes were measured, compared to 80 quakes in 2012. This coincides with a significant increase in gas production. The Dutch Petroleum Company (NAM) collected 52 billion cubic metres of gas from the ground in 2013, 10 percent more than last year.

Experts expect a new earthquake record in 2014. In January this year the State Supervision of Mines (SSM) reported that increased gas production since 2000 of about 20 up to 50 billion cubic metres per year has not only led to a rise in the number of earthquakes but also to an increased risk of severe earthquakes.

The heaviest earthquake in recent years in Groningen was on 16 August, 2012, near Huizinge, with a magnitude of 3.6 on the scale of Richter.

The study of SSM showed that the number of earthquakes is not expected to decrease in the short term. Only with a very drastically reduction of the gas or even a stop, it is expected after several years virtually no perceptible earthquakes will occur in the Groningen gas field.

According to the NOS, the Dutch government may take a decision on a possible reduction of getting gas in Groningen next month.

Xinhua

Volgograd blasts prompt nationwide security measures, draw int'l condemnation

BEIJING, 31 Dec — Russia stepped up security nationwide on Monday after two blasts in the southern city of Volgograd left at least 32 people dead and score of others injured.

The United Nations, China, the United States and many other members of the international community have condemned the terrorist attacks and pledged joint efforts to fight terrorism.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the National Anti-Terrorism Committee to tighten security throughout the country. The committee said several presidential instructions were specially on Volgograd, some 900 km southeast of Moscow.

However, no extra security measures will be adopted for the upcoming Sochi Winter Olympic Games, Russian Olympic Committee President Alexander Zhukov told reporters.

"As for the Olympics, all necessary security measures have been taken. No additional security measures

will be taken in Sochi ... Everything necessary has been done," he said.

The 22nd Winter Olympic Games, the first to be held in Russia, are slated for 7-23 February with 98 sets of medals up for grabs. Volgograd is some 690 km northeast of Sochi. On Sunday, a suicide bomber ripped a railway station in Volgograd, killing 17 people and injuring 45 others. Another bomb went off Monday morning in a trolley bus on the same city, leaving at least 15 dead and 28 others wounded.

The two explosions have drawn immediate international condemnation.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was appalled by the twin bombings, a UN spokesperson said on Monday. In a telephone conversation with Putin, Ban stressed the importance of strong international cooperation to the fight against terrorism and noted that perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Xinhua

REGIONAL



A ceremony is held to mark the opening of the newly-built Guangya Bridge in Liuzhou, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, on 30 Dec, 2013. The 30-metre-width bridge runs 1,410 metres and officially opened on Monday. It is the 19th bridge spanning over the Liujiang River in the city. —XINHUA

Japan to support road network expansion in Asia

MUMBAI, 31 Dec — The Japanese government is planning to help improve transport connectivity in South and Southeast Asia by renovating existing roads and building new ones, sources familiar with the matter said on Monday.

The infrastructure support, aimed at strengthening economic ties within the regions including India and Myanmar, comes in response to Chinese-led projects to link southern China and South Asia by road and rail.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency will

be responsible for drawing up plans for financing and construction. It will invite officials from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand to New Delhi in mid-January to brief them on site surveys, the sources said.

Japan expects to confirm with India the plan to proceed with road-building projects in January when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visits the country, they said.

The Japanese projects are expected to improve road connectivity between Bangladesh, India, Myanmar and Thailand while

giving Bhutan and Nepal better access to coastal areas. Aging road infrastructure and constraints on network capacity and efficiency have become barriers to trade between the countries.

The economies of Bangladesh, India and Myanmar, for instance, would benefit from new roads in areas where land transport infrastructure is underdeveloped or inefficient.

Japanese companies operating in the regions are also likely to profit from better land transport connectivity, which would im-

prove their supply chains.

But such infrastructure development may not immediately lead to improved trade between countries where diplomatic issues need to be resolved first.

Bangladesh, for instance, has limited cross-border trade with India and Myanmar due to diplomatic constraints.—Kyodo News

Volcano erupts in Indonesia

JAKARTA, 31 Dec — Mount Sinabung, one of the most active volcanoes in Indonesia, erupted again midnight on Tuesday, the strongest since September, spewing hot ash up to 7,000 metres high along with lava and forcing more evacuation, an official said.

Hot lava burst forth with flames from the crater and slid off the southeast slope of the volcano, leading the authorities to warn all residents nearby to evacuate, Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman

of disaster management and mitigation agency, told *Xinhua* by phone.

“The people are asked to evacuate, especially those living on the southeast side of the mountain as hot lava and ash keep bursting to the direction,” said Sutopo.

The rumbling volcano started minor eruption on Monday afternoon and erupted intermittently for seven times, according to the spokesman. He added that there were no casualties.

The 2,457-metre Mount

Sinabung in Karo district of North Sumatra has rumbled to life since September after being quiet for 400 years, but it went into overdrive in November, forcing the authorities to extend evacuation zone to within a radius of 5 km from 3 km.

The Mount Sinabung is among the 129 active volcanoes in the vast archipelago country, which is prone to seismic upheaval as it lays on the Pacific “Ring of Fire” encircling the Pacific Ocean.

Xinhua

Bangladesh opposition's top leader arrested for instigating violence

DHAKA, 31 Dec —The Detective Branch of Bangladesh Police on Monday night arrested a top leader of the country's main opposition party. Vice-Chairman of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Shamsher Mobin Chowdhury, also a former foreign secretary, was arrested shortly after he came out of the residence of ex-Prime Minister Khaleda Zia who virtually remained confined to her house since the opposition alliance launched “March for

Democracy” programme on 24 December.

Chowdhury and Khaleda's two advisers — Reaz Rahman and Sabihuddin Ahmed — entered the opposition chief's residence around 5:00 pm to help her with a meeting with British High Commissioner in Dhaka Robert Gibson.

Soon after Gibson's departure, Chowdhury came out and was arrested by the detectives at about 7:30 pm local time. “Reaz Rahman managed to leave the house

safely but Chowdhury was arrested,” Sabihuddin Ahmed told *Xinhua* over phone.

“I'm staying inside the opposition chief's house to avoid arrest,” he said but refrained from giving any details about the agenda of the meeting.

Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Masudur Rahman told *Xinhua* that Chowdhury was detained for “instigating political violence.”—*Xinhua*



Security guards hold their firearms after being sealed by policemen in Quezon City, the Philippines, on 30 Dec, 2013, to show their campaign against indiscriminate firing of firearms during the New Year's celebration. XINHUA

Western Australia prepares for cyclone overnight

CANBERRA, 31 Dec — A red alert has been issued for people in some areas of Western Australia's Kimberley and Pilbara region as Tropical Cyclone Christine is expected to hit the coast around midnight on Monday. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) said Cyclone Christine will continue to intensify and is expected to cross the coast between Karratha and Port Hedland, about 1,200 km north of Western Australian capital city of Perth on Monday night or early on Tuesday morning.

“There is a threat to lives and homes. You are in danger and need to act immediately,” the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) of Western Australia warned on its website. The DFES also informed that a relocation point has been set up in

south Hedland where about 85 people have taken shelter. An emergency welfare centre has also been opened in Karratha.

The DFES State Emergency Service (SES) and Volunteer Emergency Service (VES) advised people

to get ready to move to the strongest, safest part of their house, keep the emergency kit at hand, stay away from doors and windows, and keep them closed, stay indoors until the authorities give the All Clear notice.

Xinhua

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV THAI BINH-28 VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH-28 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31.12.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S G LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD
Phone No: 256924/256914

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (567)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (567) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER
LINES
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV NASKO LION VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NASKO LION VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P.L where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S NAM TRIEU SHIPPING
Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (031)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (031) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MVMALACCAHIGHWAY1695VOYNO(-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MALACCA HIGHWAY 1695 VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S K LINE SHIPPING
Phone No: 256924/256914



People donate blood for the injured at a hospital in Volgograd, Russia, on 30 Dec, 2013. At least 10 people were killed and 10 others injured early on Monday when an explosion hit a trolley bus in Russia's Volgograd, the second fatal blast within two days.

XINHUA

Austrian unemployment expected to increase further in 2014

VIENNA, 31 Dec—Unemployment in Austria is expected to continue to rise in 2014 on the back of a 1 percent increase this year, the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) said on Monday.

The statement confirms previous forecasts by other Austrian research institutes throughout 2013.

Member of the AMS Board Johannes Kopf said in the January edition of the

AMS magazine "Gewinn" he expected an increase to over five percent unemployment, and over the course of 2014 an increase in the number of unemployed of between 10,000 and 15,000.

The Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO) reported that the number of unemployed rose by over 30,000 in 2013, and said private consumption and real earnings had stagnated. In

addition GDP growth of only 0.3 percent put it at the lowest since the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009.

However, WIFO expects private consumption to increase by about one percent in 2014 due to improved income developments and an easing of inflation, added that improvements in the economy are not expected to be enough to brighten the unemployment outlook.—Xinhua

Photo taken on 29 Dec, 2013, shows an ice-cream vendor pushing his cart on Clifton beach in southern Pakistani port city of Karachi. XINHUA



China to strengthen cooperation with Vietnam

BEIJING, 31 Dec—Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Monday that China is willing to strengthen cooperation with Vietnam.

The development of China-Vietnam relations maintains momentum and China attaches great importance to its ties with Vietnam, Wang told Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh in a telephone conversation.

Wang said that leaders of the two countries have reached consensus on

comprehensively carrying forward the strategic partnership between the two countries with pledges to promote maritime, land and financial cooperation.

He said China is willing to work with Vietnam to implement the leaders' consensus and enhance high-level exchanges.

China is also willing to work with Vietnam to prepare for the seventh meeting of the China-Vietnam steering committee on cooperation, to make the first round of talks of the working

group for joint maritime development successful, and to push for the early start of joint investigation in sea waters out of the mouth of Beibu Bay in a bid to make substantial progress in joint maritime development.

Minh said that he agreed with Wang. Vietnam is willing to work with China to further promote bilateral relations in the coming year, he said.

The two officials also exchanged views on regional issues including Japan.

Xinhua

Eight Afghan militants killed in fresh military operations

KABUL, 31 Dec—Eight Taliban militants were killed in separate military operations in Afghanistan, the country's Interior Ministry said on Monday.

"In past 24 hours, Afghan National Police (ANP) conducted several anti-terrorism joint operations with

army and the intelligence service in Kabul, Kandahar, Zabul, Paktiya and Helmand provinces. As a result eight armed Taliban members were killed and one was wounded," the ministry said in a statement.

The ANP also discovered and seized light and

heavy rounds ammunition and improvised explosive devices, the statement noted.

The statement did not disclose if there were any casualties on the side of security forces.

The Taliban insurgent group has not made comments so far.—Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

Zeena Aman stars in a bilingual movie Strings of Passion



The yesteryear actress is 62-years-old.

MUMBAI, 31 Dec — Veteran actress Zeena Aman has starred in a bilingual movie Strings of Passion dealing with the unexplored subject of sexual torture of male models and extras.

Zeena Aman, who acknowledged ignorance about such a practice, told the director of the movie, Sanghamitra Chowdhury, “Frankly, I did not know that it exists in our industry.”

The yesteryear star plays the role of the mother of one of the three protagonists in the movie, which is a Hindi-English production.

“I had scripted Strings of Passion based on my research and interviews of directors, producers, cast and wannabe actors in Hindi films, who had confided me on sexual

exploitation of some male model-extras. These models are desperately in need to be in reckoning. Usually they are abused as gigos,” Sanghamitra said.

Sanghamitra said the title of the movie does not reflect the subject she is exploring in the movie.

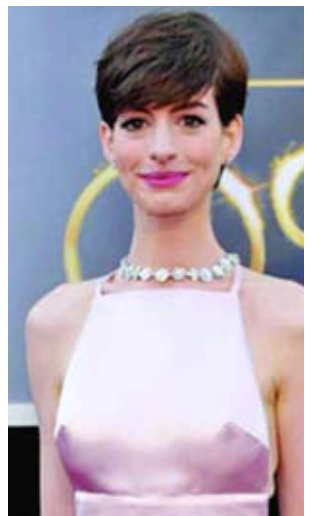
“I had actually thought about Strings of Passion as the story of three buddies Amit, Manu and Neel played by Trishan, Girish and Shubh respectively whose music band Strings Of Passion was the cementing factor,” she said.

“As one key lyricist-member commits suicide,

the friends meet after three years and relive their past. But from this story emerged a different tale as I could not keep the issue on the back-burner again,” she said.

Zeena, playing Manu’s mother and a close friend of her son’s group, is turning up in a Bengali director’s work for the first time while No One Killed Jessica actor Rajesh Sharma plays the father of one of the children.

The film will be released in January with Zeena scheduled to come to the city to attend the premiere.—PTI



Anne was captured on camera wearing a grey sweater, jeans and sneakers.

PTI

Anne Hathaway shooed paparazzi away with dog’s poop

LOS ANGELES, 31 Dec — Actress Anne Hathaway dealt with a photographer following her by placing a plastic bag with her dog’s excrement in it on his car’s windshield.

The 31-year old was followed by the photographer when she took her dog, Esmeralda, out for a walk. She was captured on camera wearing a grey sweater, jeans and sneakers.

But it seems that she didn’t like the photographer’s gesture and dealt with it by placing the plastic bag containing the excrete on the windshield of the cameraman’s car.

PTI

Justin Timberlake hangs himself ‘upside down’ before concerts

LOS ANGELES, 31 Dec — Singer-rapper Justin Timberlake hangs ‘upside down’ to prepare himself for his concerts.

The 32-year old singer is said to have a set routine backstage before his gigs, which includes two hours meditation and a ban on talking.



Justin has his unique set routine backstage.

A source said, “Justin is really strict about routine before his gigs. He believes keeping talking to a minimum and meditating gets

him ‘in the zone’.” “The hanging upside down bit gets his heart rate going as last-minute preparation,” the source added.—PTI

Sussanne Roshan denies reports about Rs 100 crore divorce settlement

MUMBAI, 31 Dec — Sussanne Roshan denied media reports saying her divorce from Hindi movie star Hrithik Roshan is a Rs 100 crore settlement and said that its unethical to publish such false news.

“I was deeply disappointed when I read today’s (December 28) article titled Sussanne and Hrithik Roshan divorce: Rs 100 crore settlement? There is no element of truth in the news and it is entirely speculative,” she said in a

statement on 28 December.

“It is unethical to publish false news and speculate on the private relationships of individuals,” she added.

Hrithik announced Sussanne’s decision to end their marriage via an official statement on December 13. Both dated for four years before finally getting married on 20 December, 2000.

The couple has two sons — Hrehaan and Hridhaan. Sussanne says that they still have respect for each other and their focus remains the kids.

“Hrithik and I have always had the deepest respect for one and another. Our primary focus has and will continue to be our two children. I would yet again like to appeal that we are granted our privacy at this critical juncture in our lives,” she said.

PTI

The couple, Hindi movie star hrithik Roshan and Sussanne Roshan, announced their separation via an official statement on 13 Dec.

PTI



Sholay 3D made on a budget of Rs 20 crores, says producer

MUMBAI, 31 Dec — The much-awaited 3D version of epic film Sholay, set to release on 3 January 2014, has been made on a budget of approximately Rs 20 crores, which includes restoration and conversion costs,” Sascha added. The original Sholay was reportedly made on a

Rs 4 crores budget. “We had this idea for a very long time as there is a great respect for the movie and we wanted the new generation to watch it. We started working on it 3 years back. We thought converting it in 3D was a phenomenal idea.” Sascha added.—PTI

As far as the budget is concerned, it is close to Rs 20 crores to Rs 22 crores, which also includes the marketing and publicity of the film besides restoration and conversion costs.” Sascha added. The original Sholay was reportedly made on a Rs 4 crores budget. “We had this idea for a very long time as there is a great respect for the movie and we wanted the new generation to watch it. We started working on it 3 years back. We thought converting it in 3D was a phenomenal idea.” Sascha added.—PTI



It took three years to restore and convert Sholay into 3D.

Beyonce Secretly Recorded HOW Many Songs?

LONDON, 31 Dec — In the time that Beyoncé took to create 14 songs and 17 videos for her surprise visual album, anything could have happened. For at least a year, the singer went under the radar, shooting videos in New York City and Houston and working with producers like Timbaland and Detail without a peep.

Given that she and her crew could keep the massive secret for so long, it should come as no surprise that the Queen Bey actually recorded 80 songs for Beyoncé. At least, that’s what she claims in a new

behind-the-scenes promo for the album, which dropped earlier this month.

“When I started picking the songs that I gravitated towards — because I recorded about 80 songs — it was the songs that were more effortless for me that stuck around, that I still love as much as I loved them when I recorded them a year ago,” Bey said in the featurette.

Beyoncé is then seen recording “Drunk in Love” with Jay Z. “We just kind of had a party,” she said in the interview. “We weren’t trying to make a hit record.



Beyonce

We were just trying to have fun, and I think you can hear that in the record.”

In the rest of the clip, fans can see the shooting of “Drunk,” “No Angel,” “Blue,” “Rockets,” “Yonce” and “XO” with

directors like Terry Richardson, Lil Internet and Ricky Saiz. Some of the videos feature a “run ‘n gun” type of filming — Bey and the directors admit that they didn’t plan that much. She admits, “I’m trying to rebel against perfection ... It’s fun because you never know what’s going to happen.”

As for when we’ll hear that bevy of unreleased tracks, we have a feeling they’ll come out of nowhere. But as Beyoncé taught us, we don’t really need to be prepared. We’ll just let it happen.—Reuters

SPORTS

Coaching greats good for the game, says Federer



Roger Federer of Switzerland serves to Rafael Nadal of Spain during their men's singles semi-final tennis match at the ATP World Tour Finals at the O2 Arena in London on 10 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

LONDON, 31 Dec — Roger Federer, who has taken on childhood hero Stefan Edberg as part of his team, thinks the recruitment of former great players as coaches will be good for tennis in the long term.

The 17-times major champion said bringing the likes of Edberg, Ivan Lendl, who coaches Andy Murray, and Boris Becker, who is now working with Novak Djokovic, back into the

sport was a positive move.

The 32-year-old, who earlier this week said Edberg had taken some coaxing to get involved, had been surprised at Becker's involvement, though.

"I didn't think he wanted to become a coach, I didn't expect to see him back on tour, that was a bit of a surprise," Federer told reporters at the Brisbane International on Monday.

"But then again, I'm

happy to see former greats and legends excited to be doing such a job and wanting to help the next generation and it brings them back into the game.

"I think it's a good thing, I think in tennis we have tendency to, I won't say drive out, our legends and former greats (but) I think we should integrate them more.

"I don't think it's the best way to integrate them as a coach," he chuckled. "But at least you see them again.

"And maybe they actually get a taste of it and other greats see that they are welcome and that we are so happy to see them.

"I think it sends out a good message."

Despite the plethora of big name coaching recruits for the teams of the top players in men's tennis, Federer sees little change in the pecking order for the Australian Open, which starts on 13 January.

Reuters

Serena rivalry making me a better player, says Azarenka

BRISBANE, 31 Dec—Victoria Azarenka thinks her rivalry with Serena Williams is making her a better player and is looking forward to renewing it over the next four weeks at the Brisbane International and the Australian Open.

World number two behind the 17-times major champion, Azarenka will only meet Williams if both players make the final at the Pat Rafter arena next weekend and Melbourne Park on 25 January.

The Belarussian, who has won the Australian Open for the last two years, has a 3-13 record against Williams but split last year's four matches and beat the American 7-5, 6-3 in an exhibition match in Thailand at the weekend.

"I think it's great, first of all, to be a part of that rivalry because it really helps you to grow as a player, as a person," the 24-year-old told reporters in Brisbane on Monday.

"You learn things about

yourself and what you need to improve, because when somebody is taking you to the limit you really have a good look at what you have to do better to rise up.

"I definitely enjoy that and love tough competition. To take that challenge for me every time is very exciting. That's what I wake up for and train hard for."

Azarenka avoided Williams altogether in Australia last year, firstly in bizarre circumstances in Brisbane when she was forced to withdraw from their semi-final meeting after a pedicure went wrong. They were again scheduled to meet in the last four in Melbourne before an injury-hampered Williams lost her quarter-final to compatriot Sloane Stephens.

Azarenka's subsequent victory over Stephens in the semi-finals, when she took a controversial 10-minute medical time out, means she has a lot of goodwill to win back in Australia over the next month.—Reuters



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus hits a return to Li Na of China during their WTA tennis championships match at Sinan Erdem Dome in Istanbul, on 25 Oct, 2013.

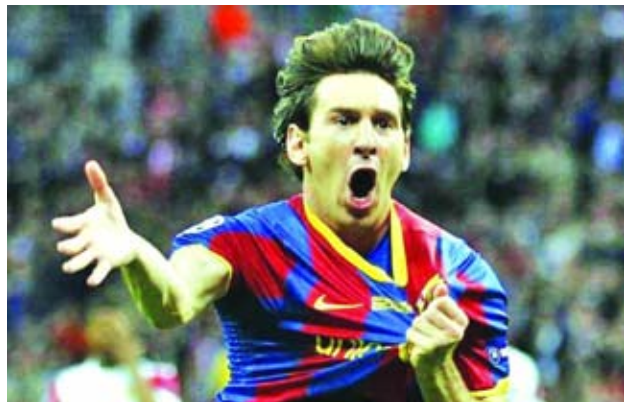
REUTERS

Injury-free 2014 top of Messi's wish list

BARCELONA, 31 Dec — Barcelona forward Lionel Messi is hoping for an injury free 2014 as his recovery from a thigh injury nears completion, the World Player of the Year said on Monday.

Messi has been in his native Argentina recuperating from a thigh strain sustained on 10 November, the latest in a series of muscle injuries that plagued him throughout 2013.

Barca stumbled during his most recent absence, losing consecutive games to Ajax Amsterdam in the Champions League and Athletic Bilbao in La Liga, and are keen to have him back in the side as soon as possible after the end of the



Barcelona's Lionel Messi celebrates after scoring against Manchester United during their Champions League final soccer match at Wembley Stadium in London on 28 May, 2011.—REUTERS

winter break.

"After celebrating the end of the year with my family and friends, I will fly to Barcelona on Wednesday and after my return we

will see when I am ready to play again," Messi said on Barca's website (www.fcbarcelona.es).

"The objective now is to get myself back to full

fitness and the idea is to have a few practice sessions with my team mates before returning to action," he added. Coach Gerardo Martino's squad have New Year's Day free and return to training with a double session on Thursday.

Barca host Elche in La Liga on Sunday before playing at home to Getafe in their King's Cup last 16, first leg the following Wednesday.

Messi may get some playing time in those two matches but Martino will be wary of rushing him back and, if possible, will want him at peak fitness for the La Liga clash at Atletico Madrid on 11 January.

Reuters

Wenger banking on Arsenal solidarity and spirit

Arsenal's manager Arsene Wenger gestures during their English Premier League soccer match against Chelsea at The Emirates in London on 23 Dec, 2013.

REUTERS



LONDON, 31 Dec — Arsenal can complete a quick double over managerless Cardiff City and consolidate their position at the top of the table when the relentless Premier League holiday schedule continues on New Year's Day.

While players and fans in other countries have a rest from football over the Christmas holiday, Wednesday's matches will be the fourth in little over 10 days in England.

With the campaign at the halfway mark after 19 matches, Arsenal, with 42 points, lead the table at the start of the new year for the first time since the 2007-08 season. They are followed by Manchester City (41), Chel-

sea (40) and Everton (37).

The race is so close that Liverpool, who were top at Christmas, are now fifth on 36 points after two defeats in four days at Manchester City and Chelsea.

Brendan Rodgers's side, who are at home to Hull City, are only two points clear of both champions Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur, who meet at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

The situation is even tighter at the other end with only seven points separating 11th-placed Swansea City (21) and table-propping Sunderland, who gained a point at Cardiff on Saturday in a 2-2 draw after scoring twice in the last eight minutes.

Reuters

Hart fit to play for City after cut, says Pellegrini

LONDON, 31 Dec — Manchester City goalkeeper Joe Hart, who needed five stitches to a cut under

his eye after being injured against Crystal Palace on Saturday, is fit for the visit to Swansea City on New

Years Day, coach Manuel Pellegrini said on Monday.

The England goalkeeper, who has returned to the side in excellent form after being rested by Pellegrini for six weeks, was man of the match in the tight 1-0 win over Palace at the Etihad Stadium as City made it 10 home league wins out of 10 this season.

He suffered the wound just under his left eye in an early collision with Palace's Cameron Jerome but stayed



Manchester City goalkeeper Joe Hart is seen with a cut under his eye as he salutes fans after winning their English Premier League soccer match against Crystal Palace at the Etihad stadium in Manchester, northern England on 28 Dec, 2013.—REUTERS

GENERAL

Stupid not to think Atletico can win La Liga

MADRID, 31 Dec — It would be “stupid” not to think Atletico Madrid can end Real Madrid and Barcelona’s decade-long stranglehold on the La Liga title this season, coach Diego Simeone was quoted as saying on Monday.

Atletico are level at the top with champions Barca on 46 points with just under half the season played, with Real five further back in third.

With La Liga’s leading marksman Diego Costa in scintillating form, the capital’s second club are in a strong position to match Valencia’s feat from 2004 of denying Spain’s wealthy big two the domestic title.

Argentine Simeone, who has transformed the club since taking over at the end of 2011 and led them to a King’s Cup triumph against Real last season, told Italy’s *Il Giornale* daily that one of his wishes for 2014 was the La Liga crown.

“It would be stupid not to think about it, above all looking at the standings,”



Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone attends a news conference before a training session at Petrovsky stadium in St Petersburg on 25 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

he told the newspaper.

However, the health of his three sons was the most important thing, added the 43-year-old, who spent part of his playing career at Serie A sides Inter Milan and Lazio.

He also had two stints at Atletico and was part of the side that won a league and cup double in 1996.

As well as riding high in La Liga, Atletico are through to the last 16 of the

Champions League, where they will play AC Milan. They will meet Valencia over two legs in the last 16 of the King’s Cup, with the first leg at the Mestalla on 7 January. and the return at the Calderon a week later.

Atletico have yet to play Barca in La Liga but beat Real 1-0 at the Bernabeu in September, their first league victory against their bitter city rivals in more than a decade.—Reuters

MYANMAR TV

(1-1-2014, Wednesday)

6:00 am	3:15 pm
1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw	19. India Drama Series
6:25 am	4:00 pm
2. Physical Exercises	20. News
6:30 am	4:30 pm
3. Musical Programme	21. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - First Year (Myanmar)
6:40 am	4:50 pm
4. Documentary	22. Documentary
6:50 am	5:00 pm
5. (66)rd Anniversary Independence Day Programme	23. News
7:00 am	5:15 pm
6. News/Weather Report	24. (66)rd Anniversary Independence Day Programme
7:40 am	5:30 pm
7. Myanmar Language	25. India Drama Series
8:00 am	6:00 pm
8. News/ International News	26. News/Weather Report
8:25 am	6:20 pm
9. India Drama Series	27. Documentary
9:00 am	6:40 pm
10. News/ International News	28. Shwe Yin Khone Than
9:25 am	7:00 pm
11. Sing A Song	29. News
10:00 am	7:40 pm
12. News	30. Pyi Thu Ni Ti
10:15 am	8:00 pm
13. Pyi Thu Ni Ti	31. News/ International News/ Weather Report
11:00 am	8:35 pm
14. Approaching Science Discovery World	32. People Talks
12:00 pm	8:50 pm
15. News/International News/Weather Report	33. Hit Songs of Stars
12:25 pm	9:00 pm
16. Myanmar Movies	34. News
2:00 pm	35. Fine Arts-Bosom of Dramatic Performance
17. Musical Programme	36. India Drama Series
3:00 pm	
18. News	

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

1-1-14 07:00 am ~ 2-1-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * A Visit To San-Taw-Shin Kyike-Hti-Yoe Pagoda
- * World News
- * Mogok: The Colourful Land of Rubies
- * Local News
- * A Visit of Htam Hsan Cave: A Miraculous Place
- * World News
- * Porcelain and Glass
- * Local News
- * A Lucky Boy
- * World News
- * A Monk’s Robe
- * Local News
- * Trend of Kachin Dress
- * World News
- * Maha Muni Pagoda
- * Local News
- * Shwe U Min Natural Cave In Kalaw
- * World News
- * Myanmar Traditional Identity (Episode-4) Tumbling Doll, Pyit Tine Htaung
- * Local News
- * A Short Trip With Wayne (Cambodia)
- * World News
- * Myanmar Movie Review “Kya-sin-maw-kun”
- * Local News
- * Hand Down Arts Heritage
- * World News
- * Graffiti: Character Art
- * Local News
- * City Night Your Night
- * World News
- * Welcome to the Southern most part of Myanmar

Cross-Strait judicial cooperation handles 40,000 cases

TAIPEI, 31 DEC— The Chinese mainland and Taiwan have cooperated on more than 40,000 criminal cases since a 2009 cross-strait pact on crime,

Taiwan’s judicial authorities announced on Monday.

Police from both sides have captured 230 suspects, and seized over 3,000 kg of narcotics including heroin

and ketamine, in that time.

Taiwan’s judicial authorities said the cooperation has been successful in clamping down on drugs.

Xinhua

Merkel extremely dismayed over Schumacher’s fall

BERLIN, 31 Dec— German Chancellor Angela Merkel was “extremely dismayed” when hearing about the skiing accident of German racing legend Michael Schumacher, her spokesman Stefan Seibert said on Monday.

“Like millions of Germans, the chancellor and government members were extremely dismayed when they heard about Michael Schumacher’s serious skiing accident,” Seibert said. “We hope that he can overcome the injuries and recover.”

The seven-time Formula One world champion, who had fallen and hit his head on a rock on Sunday while skiing in the French Alps, was still in a medically induced coma and remained in a critical condition following an immediate brain surgery, a French hospital where Schumacher is being treated said on Monday morning.—Xinhua

LatAm development bank offers Bolivia 200 mln USD credit for sports venues

LA PAZ, 31 Dec—The Latin American Development Bank (known by its Spanish acronym CAF) has offered Bolivia 200 million US dollars in credit to build sports venues in the lead-up to the 2018 South American Games in Bolivia, Bolivian President Evo Morales said on Monday.

Following a meeting with the governor of central Cochabamba department, Edmundo Novillo, and other officials, Morales told reporters at a Press conference that the “CAF has no problem in supporting us in building sports infrastructure in the department of Cochabamba, which will be needed for the South American Games.”

According to media reports, Morales said he spoke by phone with CAF President Enrique

Garcia several days ago, and sought his agency’s cooperation, in view of CAF’s financial aid to Brazil for the same purpose.

The president added that he would prefer the sports venues to be state owned, “but if we cannot cover the expenses then we will have to call on the private sector.”

Officials want to “provide a good image of all Bolivia from Cochabamba, through the organization and mobilization to receive our visitors with a lot of hospitality,” said Morales.

The South American Games, organized by the South American Sports Organization (Odesur), will be held in Bolivia in 2018, 40 years after the nation hosted the first edition in 1978 in La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.—Xinhua



Croatian fans perform longest fan wave during the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) ice hockey match between Medvescak Zagreb and Russian team Vityaz Podolsk at Arena Zagreb in Zagreb, capital of Croatia, on 29 Dec, 2013. More than 15,000 Medvescak Zagreb fans set a new Guinness world record in longest so called “Mexican fan wave” with 15 minutes and 3 seconds breaking current record of 6:54 seconds that stood from 1986 during the Mexico vs Brazil match in Cowboy Stadium, Texas.

XINHUA

Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw attends handover ceremony of patient's ward & nurses hostel at Kanyutkwin People's Hospital

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann attended the handover of extended patient's ward and six-room nurses hostel under the Ministry of Health

held at People's Hospital in Kanyutkwin of Pyu Township in Bago Region this morning.

The officials and donors cut the ribbon to open the ceremony. The Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw then

pressed the bottom to open it.

Donor Executive Director U Tun Myint of Aroma Rose Co. Ltd handed over related documents to the Ministry of Health.

(See page 8)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Committee for Scrutinizing the Remaining Political Prisoners
Press Release (1/2013)
14th Waning of Nadaw, 1375 ME
31 December, 2013

Press release on work progress report of Committee for Scrutinizing the Remaining Political Prisoners

1. Committee for Scrutinizing the Remaining Political Prisoners comprising 16 members from government organizations, civil society organizations and political parties was formed on 19 February, 2013.
2. Aiming at contributing towards stability of the State and the lasting peace, national reconsolidation, all-inclusiveness in the political process, nation-building endeavours by encouraging the prisoners to take part in it as citizens realizing the magnanimity of the State, the committee was reconstituted with 19 members— six from government organizations, seven from civil society organizations and six from political parties— in accord with Order No (43/2013) of the President's Office issued on 8 May, 2013.
3. The committee met for the first time at Myanmar Peace Centre on 23 February, 2013. Its second meeting took place at the same venue on 16 March, 2013, and a list of 87 inmates was submitted in accord with recommendation of the committee members on 23 April, 2013, and an amnesty was granted for them.
4. The third meeting of the committee was held on 11 May, 2013. A list of 23 inmates was submitted in accord with recommendations of the committee members on 17 May, 2013, and an amnesty was granted for them.
5. The fourth meeting was held on 16 June, 2013. A list of 73 inmates was submitted in accord with recommendations of the committee members on 23 July, 2013, and an amnesty was granted for them.
6. The fifth meeting was held on 27 July, 2013 and the sixth meeting on 30 August, 2013. A list of 56 inmates was submitted in accord with recommendations of the committee members on 7 October, 2013, and an amnesty was granted for them.
7. The seventh meeting was held on 12 October, 2013, the eighth meeting on 27 October, 2013 and the ninth meeting on 9 November, 2013. A list of 69 inmates was submitted in accord with recommendations of the committee members on 15 November, 2013, and an amnesty was granted for them.
8. The tenth meeting was held on 23 November, 2013 and the eleventh meeting on 7 December, 2013. A list of 41 inmates was submitted in accord with recommendations of the committee members on 11 December, 2013, and an amnesty was granted for them.
9. The twelfth meeting was held on 21 December, 2013. A list of five inmates was submitted in accord with recommendations of the committee members on 30 December, 2013 and an amnesty was granted for them.
10. While scrutinizing the remaining political prisoners after reconstituting the committee with 19 members, the committee held a total of 12 meetings during the period from 23 February to 21 December, 2013 at MPC and submitted the list of political prisoners to the President for granting amnesty for 354 inmates.
11. Moreover, President's Office had already issued a pardon under Order No (51/2013) on 30 December, 2013 in order to delete the offenses that are thought to be tied with politics for those being convicted and prosecuted in connection with other offenses.

Committee for Scrutinizing the Remaining Political Prisoners



Union FM felicitates Cuban counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan—U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla, Minister of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Cuba, on the anniversary of the Liberation Day of Cuba which falls on 1 January 2014.—MNA

Environmental Conservation and Forestry Ministry, KOICA discuss arid zone greening



Union Minister U Win Tun receives KOICA Chief Resident Representative Mr. NAM Kwon Hyoung.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun received Chief Resi-

dent Representative Mr. NAM Kwon Hyoung from Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and party at his office, here, this noon.

They discussed arid

zone greening projects and follow-up tasks, human resources development and capacity building programs, environmental conservation and development of forestry sector.—MNA

Meeting on Establishment of Continuous Health Sector Review System

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—An opening of Multi-stakeholder Meeting on Establishment of Continuous Sector Review System, jointly-organized by the Ministry of Health and World Health Organization, took place at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Health, here, yesterday morning.

In her address, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Daw Thein Thein Htay called on private sector and social organizations dealing with health care services to ensure accuracy in gathering facts.

Those present took part in discussions on strengths and weaknesses of ongoing tasks for the establishment of continuous health sector review system needed for health care system in Myanmar.—MNA

New stamps sold at post offices to mark 66th Anniversary Independence Day



NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec—Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) under the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology will issue one kind of postage stamp worth 200 kyats and two kinds of postage stamp worth 100 kyats on Saturday (4th January, 2014) to mark the 66th Anniversary Independence Day.

The new stamps will be sold at post offices across states, regions, districts and townships starting from office hours at 9:30 am on that day.

As a special program, special seals will be printed on the postage stamps bought at Nay Pyi Taw General Post Office, Yangon Post Office and Mandalay Post Office on that day.

NLM