The New Light of Myanmar
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# In coming financial year, staff salaries will be increased to K 20,000 and pensions and other allowances on a proportional basis

*President U Thein Sein speaking at the meeting of Financial Commission at the Presidential Palace.*—MNA

Nay Pyi Taw, 7 Jan— The government will submit a Taxation Bill to Parliament in the upcoming ninth session, President U Thein Sein said in his address to the first meeting of the Financial Commission in 2014 at the Presidential Palace today.

The Union Budget for 2014-2015 FY and 2014 Union Budget Bill was also tabled at the meeting.

The president underscored the need for harmony between the National Plan and the Union Budget, both drafted by the government.

He also said his government is managing to balance the budget more conveniently year after year, adding more funds could be allocated to local governments.

Myanmar had revenue of more than K 16 trillion last fiscal year and spent K 19 trillion, leaving a deficit of nearly K 3 trillion, the president noted.

He added the Union government shared about K 1.5 trillion with local governments and loaned more than K 25 billion to them.

The estimated GDP for 2014 is K 66,197.109 billion.

The president said the revenue acquired by the Union government is 86.32 per cent and shared to the local governments is 13.68 per cent while expenditures by the Union government is 88.13 per cent and that of the local governments 11.97 per cent.

In the coming budget, President U Thein Sein said the health and education sectors would see increased budget allocations and he stressed the need to crack down on tax evasion and provide incentives to taxpayers if the government is to collect more tax revenue next fiscal year.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, Union level organizations and Union ministries reported on budget for 2014-15 fiscal year.

Vice-President U Nyan Tun submitted reports on scrutiny on the budget for 2014-15 FY in line with the Constitution.

Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein presented reports on 2014 Union Budget Bill and the 2014 Taxation Bill.

After attending to the needs, the President made a concluding speech. He said that middle-level students are to have access to free education in the coming academic year according to the resolutions passed at Financial Commission Meeting (1/2014), the Union Budget (2014-2015 FY), the Union Budget Law (2014) and the Taxation Bill (2014) to be submitted by the Union government to the upcoming Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session.

The Ministry of Construction and the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development carried out systematic scrutiny of the State-owned sector's investment expenditures while the Ministry of Finance examined the revenue expenditures.

The President called for the effective use of foreign aid and loans for the interests of the country and for efforts to reach a budget surplus and reducing country's debt burden. Only then, can more emphasis can be placed on the development tasks, he indicated.

The Union Budget approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is to be systematically used in accord with the law and the president called for the repayment of budget surpluses by ministries so as to reallocate these funds to other departments.

*(See page 8)*

*UEC Chairman U Tin Aye shaking hands with Chairman of Japan-Myanmar Parliamentarian Friendship League Ichiro Aisawa.*—MNA

# UEC assures 2015 elections will be free and fair

Nay Pyi Taw, 7 Jan— The chairman of the Union Election Commission assured Japanese parliamentarians on 7 January that Myanmar's 2015 will be free and fair.

U Tin Aye met with Japanese House of Representatives member and Chairman of the Japan-Myanmar Parliamentarian Friendship League Ichiro Aisawa at the UEC's Office.

They discussed undertakings of the UEC for ensuring electoral process development, preparations for successfully holding free and fair elections in 2015, cooperation between the people, political parties, social organizations, media personnel and international organizations in carrying out democratic reforms and election process in Myanmar.

They also discussed strategic plans for systematically implementing the election process, voting, collection of votes, voting rights for Myanmar people working abroad, Constitutional matters and having election observers at home and abroad.

As well, they covered sending official abroad to observe elections overseas and exchanged views on international experience in election observation.

The meeting was attended by UEC members and officials concerned.

*MNA*
*(Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

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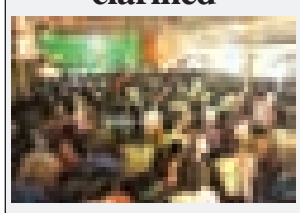

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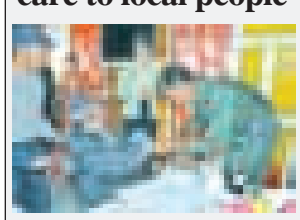

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# Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Thein Sein

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan—*The following are messages of felicitations from foreign Heads of State sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein, on the occasion of the 66th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.*

**From Vladimir Putin**
**President of Russia**
**Excellency,**

Please accept my sincere congratulations on the auspicious occasion of the National Holiday of Your country— the Independence Day.

I am confident that the Russia-Myanmar relations, which are based on deep-rooted traditions of friendship and mutual respect, will actively develop further. This corresponds to the interests of our Peoples and facilitates strengthening of stability and security in the Asia Pacific Region.

I wish Your Excellency sound health, happiness and every success as well as well-being and prosperity to all citizens of Myanmar.

**From Dr Ram Baran Yadav**
**President of Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal**
**Excellency,**

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I extend to your Excellency cordial felicitations and best wishes for your Excellency's personal health and happiness and for the progress and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

**From Truong Tan Sang**
**President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam**
**Excellency,**

On the occasion of the 66th anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the State, the Government and the people of Viet Nam and in our own names, we have the great honour to extend to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Myanmar our warmest congratulations.

We would like to congratulate the people of Myanmar on their important achievements recorded in recent years and it is our strong conviction that under Your Excellency's clear-sighted leadership, the people of Myanmar will continue to achieve greater successes in the cause of national construction and prosperous development. It is also our firm belief that the successful hosting of 27th SEA Games and the assumption of ASEAN Chairmanship in 2014 will further enhance Myanmar's role and position in the region and the world over.

We are very delighted to see that the relations of traditional friendship and multi-faceted cooperation between our two countries have been increasingly consolidated and developed in recent years and firmly believe that, with the determination and concerted efforts of our Leaders and peoples, this close relationship will enjoy a faster development in the coming time, in the interests of our two peoples and for the sake of peace, stability, cooperation and prosperous development in the region and the world over.

On this occasion, we wish Your Excellency good health, happiness and successes in your noble position.

**From Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah**
**King of Brunei**
**Excellency,**

I take great pleasure in sending my warmest congratulations to you and to the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on your Independence Day.

I very much appreciate the strong support of your Government during our ASEAN YEAR and wish you every success for Myanmar's chairmanship this year.

I also congratulate you on your people's remarkable achievement in hosting the Southeast Asian Games last December and look forward to working closely with you to further strengthen our important regional cooperation and much valued bilateral ties.

With my kindest regards and very best wishes.

**From Mr Didier Burkhalter**
**President of the Swiss Confederation**
**Excellency,**

On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, it is a most welcome opportunity for me to extend to Your Excellency, on behalf of the Swiss Federal Council and in my own name, my sincere congratulations and my best wishes for your personal health as well as for the wellbeing and the prosperity of your country.

The year that has just begun will symbolize the important role of your country in the international community with your presidency of ASEAN. Let me wish you success in this very significant and intensive endeavor. Notwithstanding I sincerely hope that I will have the honor in 2014 to welcome you to Switzerland for an official visit, which will be the first one by a president of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

This official visit will allow us to further develop the fulfill collaboration between our two countries. I am therefore convinced that the confidence and friendship which so happily exist between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Switzerland will continue to deepen in the coming year.

**From Embassy of Portugal, Bangkok**
**On behalf of Aníbal António Cavaco Silva, the President of the Portuguese**
**Excellency,**

The Embassy of Portugal presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and has the honour to kindly request on behalf of the President of the Portuguese Republic the conveyance to His Excellency President U Thein Sein of the congratulations and sincere wishes for His personal well-being and for the progress and prosperity of the people of Myanmar. The Embassy of Portugal avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar the assurances of its highest consideration.

## Plans for caustic soda plant clarified

THATON, 7 Jan—Deputy Minister for Industry U Thein Aung made a clarification on implementation of a caustic soda plant to local people of villages from Thaton Township at the hall in Hsu-in Village on 6 January.

In the meeting, he explained that at a time when the plant has emerged, the local people would have job opportunities and they would enjoy fruits of electrifications, transport, health, education and social sectors, adding the local authorities must emphasize the impact of pollution and environmental conservation.

Salt and limestone are main raw materials for the plant. Upon completion of the plant, the local salt producers could sell their products to the plant, said Mon State Minister for Forestry and Mining U Win Maung Oo. The deputy minister presented gifts worth K 2 million to local people through officials.

*Kyemon-Thet Oo (Thaton)*
*(Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

## Storm News

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan—According to the observations at 5:30 hrs MST today, the depression over Southwest Bay of Bengal lies Gulf of Mannar, Sri Lanka and would weaken into a low pressure area.—*NLM*

## Greening and beautifying of Kalay railway station inspected

KALAY, 7 Jan—Kalay railway station is crowded with travelers every day. Kalay-Gangaw train runs daily at reasonable price for ensuring better transportation of passengers and swift flow of commodity.

Kalay District management committee Chairman U Maung Htoo met with officials of the station on 6 January and instructed them to keep the railway station neat and tidy and maintain necessary parts for convenience of travelers.

Kalay railway station is a rail transportation hub for residents of Kalay Township and Chin State.

*Kyemon-Ju Nine*
*(Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

## Correction

Please read "From Shimon Peres, President of Israel" instead of "From Simon Peres, Prime Minister of Israel" on 15th line of second paragraph on page 2 under the title of "Foreign Heads of Government send felicitations to President U Thein Sein" in this daily issued on 7-1-2014. Error is regretted.—*NLM*

# US wants Afghanistan to sign security deal in 'weeks not months'

WASHINGTON, 7 Jan — The United States wants the Afghanistan government to sign a bilateral security agreement in matter of weeks if a contingent of US troops is to remain there after 2014, the White House said on Monday.

The Afghan government had ignored US demands for it to sign a framework security agreement by the end of 2013, after protracted negotiations that have strained relations between the two countries.

US officials say unless a deal is reached to keep upwards of 8,000 US troops inside the country after 2014, the United States might instead completely withdraw from the country.

Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai has expressed skepticism at the US threat for a complete withdrawal.

"Our position continues to be that if we cannot conclude a bilateral security agreement promptly, then we will be forced to initiate planning for a post-2014 future in which there would be no US or NATO troop presence in Afghanistan," White House spokesman Jay Carney told reporters.

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.

Carney said the longer the issue drags into 2014, "the more likely that outcome will come to pass" in which the United States would leave no troops behind for the training of Afghan forces or counter-terrorism purposes.

"Look, I don't have specific deadlines or other policy decisions to announce today. But I can tell you that we are talking about weeks, and not months. And, you know, the clock is ticking," Carney said.—*Reuters*

***Locals check a blast site in Benghazi, Libya, on 6 Jan, 2014. A judiciary policeman was killed and another was injured by a bomb planted in front of a local court in Benghazi on Monday.* —XINHUA**

# Iran, EU to meet on Thursday on nuclear deal

***(L-R) British Foreign Secretary William Hague, Germany's Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle, EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, US Secretary of State John Kerry, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius gather at the United Nations Palais in Geneva on 24 Nov, 2013.***
**REUTERS**

ANKARA, 7 Jan — Iran and the European Union will hold a two-day meeting in Geneva on Thursday to discuss implementing a landmark nuclear deal between the Islamic state and major powers, Iranian state news agency *IRNA* reported on Tuesday.

"We will meet (EU negotiator) Mrs Helga Schmid in Geneva on Thursday and Friday," Iran's deputy foreign minister, Abbas Araqchi, told *IRNA*. Schmid is a deputy of EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, who has overseen contacts between six world powers and Iran on the nuclear standoff.

Iran and the P5+1 — the United States, France, Britain, Germany, Russia and China — reached a deal on 24 November in Geneva aimed at curbing the country's most sensitive nuclear work in return for easing some economic sanctions.

Nuclear experts from Iran and the six powers have since held several rounds of talks to resolve various technical issues before the accord can be put into place. The experts have to work out when the deal will be implemented. An Iranian negotiator earlier said the six powers and Iran had agreed to start implementing the deal on 20 January. Western countries fear that Iran's nuclear work has military goals and have imposed years of crippling sanctions on Iran. Teheran denies seeking to build an atomic bomb and says its nuclear work is aimed at power generation and medical research.—*Reuters*

# Japan, US eye talks in Jan for environmental survey at US bases

TOKYO, 7 Jan — The Japanese and US governments plan to start talks in January on a new accord allowing local authorities in Japan to make on-site inspections of US military bases when environmental problems occur, Japanese government sources said on Monday. The talks were agreed on last month between Tokyo and Washington to meet Okinawa Gov Hirokazu Nakaima's requests as conditions for his approval of landfill work for the relocation of a US Marine Corps base in the southern island prefecture.

The upcoming talks are expected to focus on the duration and method of on-site inspections. The Japanese side will seek to ensure sufficient time for such inspections, but the US side is concerned that long inspections could hamper training and other activities at the bases, according to bilateral diplomatic sources.

The envisioned agreement will complement the existing status-of-forces agreement governing the use of US military bases in Japan without actually revising the pact. With no clause on environmental protection in the SOFA, Nakaima and other local officials have called for the inclusion of such a clause in the bilateral agreement to allow local authorities to conduct environmental surveys on bases.

Under the bilateral agreement reached last month, the new accord would create "uniform procedures" for Japanese officials to access US military facilities and areas in case of an "environmental incident" and to conduct environmental surveys before land used by the US military is returned to Japanese control.

*Kyodo News*

# Thai anti-government protesters march to support Bangkok "shutdown"

BANGKOK, 7 Jan — Protesters trying to topple Thailand's prime minister marched in Bangkok on Tuesday to drum up support for their plans to bring the capital to a halt next week by blockading major roads and preventing the government from functioning.

Caretaker Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra has called an election for 2 February but the protesters, aware she would probably win on the back of support in the rural north and northeast, want her to step down and be replaced by an appointed "people's council" to push through electoral reforms.

A *Reuters* reporter said at least 5,000 demonstrators set off from the main protest camp at Democracy Monument in the historic quarter to march over the river to the Thonburi side of the city and back, avoiding the centre of the city. Police had no early estimate of crowd size. The protesters accuse Yingluck of being a puppet of her self-exiled brother and former premier, Thaksin Shinawatra, a man they say is a corrupt crony capitalist who used taxpayers' money to buy electoral support with populist giveaways.

The protests have been mostly peaceful, although clashes between police and demonstrators outside an election registration venue on 26 December saw scores of people wounded and several shot by mystery gunmen. Four people, including two police, have died as a result of the shootings.

The authorities say 20,000 police, backed up by troops, will be deployed in the streets on Monday, the first day of the planned "shutdown". "We're expecting large crowds on Monday and are concerned about the likelihood of violence ... especially third parties trying to instigate violence," National Security Council Chief Paradorn Pattanathabutr told *Reuters*.

*Reuters*

***An anti-government protester blows a whistle and uses a clapper at a rally on Silom road in central Bangkok on 6 Jan, 2014.*—REUTERS**

# Egypt's army chief Sisi seen edging closer to presidential bid

CAIRO, 7 Jan — In Egypt, it no longer appears to be a question of if, but when army chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi will declare his candidacy for president.

For the second time in three days, local media reported on Monday that Sisi had finally made up his mind. With no other obvious candidates for the post, the general who deposed Islamist President Mohamed Mursi in July has kept Egyptians guessing about his intentions as the clock ticks down to the presidential vote that could happen as soon as April.

Sisi's candidacy would further deepen divisions between the many Egyptians who believe a firm hand is needed to steer the country through crisis and Islamists bearing the brunt of a state crackdown on dissent.

Speaking to *Reuters* on condition of anonymity, an official in the security services said Sisi was "most likely going to announce that he will run for the presidency", adding: "The army in a recent meeting expressed its support for him to run."—*Reuters*

WORLD

# China urges South Sudan ceasefire as peace talks stutter

*Members of South Sudan rebel delegation attend the opening ceremony of South Sudan's negotiation in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa, on 4 Jan, 2014.*—Reuters

Addis Ababa/Khartoum, 7 Jan — China, the biggest investor in South Sudan's oil industry, called on Monday for an immediate ceasefire in the world's newest state, as rebel and government negotiators haggled over the scope of peace talks meant to end three weeks of fighting.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Beijing was deeply concerned by the unrest in South Sudan, which has killed more than a thousand people and forced the government to cut oil production by about a fifth.

Sudan, which also has an economic interest in its southern neighbour's oil output, said the Juba government discussed the deployment of a joint force to secure its oilfields during a visit by Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir.

"China's position with regard to the current situation in South Sudan is very clear," Wang told reporters in Addis Ababa, where the peace talks are taking place. "First, we call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and violence."

An Ethiopian delegate said Wang had met both rebel and government delegations.

Three weeks of fighting, which began in the capital but spread beyond, often along ethnic faultlines, have pitted President Salva Kiir's SPLA government forces against rebels loyal to former vice president Riek Machar.

The peace talks opened formally on Saturday in Ethiopia but delegates have yet to sit down for face-to-face negotiations.

The fighting is the worst in South Sudan since it won independence from Sudan in 2011 in a peace deal that ended one of Africa's longest civil wars.

China is the biggest investor in oilfields in South Sudan, through state-owned Chinese oil giants China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC) and Sinopec. The fighting forced CNPC to evacuate workers.—*Reuters*

# Suspect arrested over Chinese consulate arson in San Francisco

San Francisco, 7 Jan — A man suspected of carrying out the arson attack on the Chinese consulate in San Francisco, California, has been arrested, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced on Monday.

The 39-year-old man suspect has permanent resident status of the United States, special Agent David Johnson, chief of the FBI's San Francisco office, said at a Press conference.

The suspect was arrested on Friday after he turned himself in by calling police in Daly City, some 16 km south of San Francisco, according to Johnson.

The suspect is currently held on two criminal charges, including causing damage to property of a foreign government and arson, said the special agent.

The investigators have so far been looking at the incident as a purely criminal matter, and do not believe politics or other organizations was involved.

Last Wednesday, a person got out of a minivan parked in front of the main entrance of the Chinese consulate-general in San Francisco, poured two buckets of gasoline onto the front door and set it alight,

*Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan (2nd from L in front) and his wife Emine (L) attend a welcoming ceremony in Tokyo on 7 Jan, 2014. 2nd from R in front is Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and R in front is Abe's wife Akie.*
Kyodo News

*David Johnson (2nd R), chief of the San Francisco office of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), speaks during a press conference in San Francisco on 6 Jan, 2014.*—Xinhua

according to a statement posted on the website of the consulate-general.

Fortunately, no one was hurt in the New Year's Day blaze that charred a doorway and damaged the lobby of the building.

After the Press conference, the Chinese consulate-general in San Francisco urged the United States to punish the culprit, take effective measures to protect its diplomatic institutions and staff, and prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.—*Xinhua*

# Pipeline explosion reported in Oklahoma

Houston, 7 Jan — A natural gas pipeline exploded and burned in the US state of Oklahoma on Monday, though no one was injured, local media reported.

The explosion occurred on Monday morning in a transmission line near Milfay in central Oklahoma, local media NEWSOK reported. The pipeline is operated by ONEOK, Inc, a Fortune 200 corporation based in Oklahoma.

Authorities said gas flow was quickly turned off by ONEOK crew and the fire was out within an hour. No injuries were reported as the explosion happened in the middle of a field and no structures were damaged.

It's not immediately known if the explosion has anything to do with the freezing weather. ONEOK officials were waiting for the pipeline to cool before investigating the cause.

On Sunday, an explosion rattled a manufacturing plant in east Oklahoma and ignited a fire. Officials blamed a frozen valve for the blast. No one was injured either.

*Xinhua*

# Japan, France to discuss trade of goods with potential military use

Tokyo, 7 Jan — Japan and France are expected to agree on bilateral consultations concerning the export of equipment with military potential at their first meeting of foreign and defence ministers later this week in Paris, Japanese officials said on Tuesday.

The so-called "two-plus-two" security talks on Thursday come as Japan is concerned about a French defence company's recent exports to China of helicopter-landing devices for ships, which the firm says are for "civilian use."

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida departed on Tuesday for Spain, where he is scheduled for talks with his Spanish counterpart Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo before traveling to France on Wednesday and return to Japan on Friday.

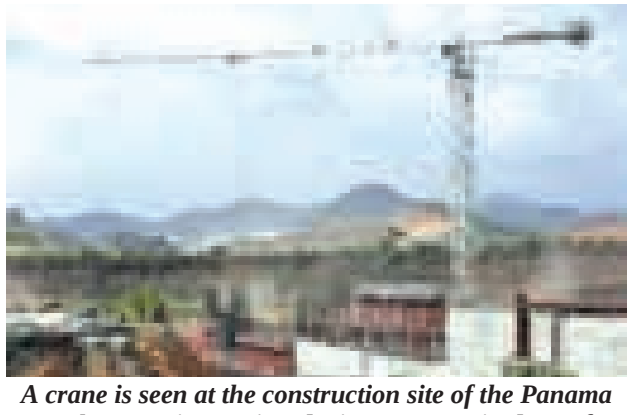
Tokyo fears the export of equipment such as the helicopter-landing devices could enhance the capability of Chinese government ships that often intrude into territorial waters in the East China Sea around the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands, which China also claims as the Diaoyu.

Japan hopes that establishing a relevant working-level consultative framework with France would curb such exports in the future, according to the officials. The Japanese and French ministers are also expected to confirm the establishment of another working-level consultative framework that is aimed at joint development of defence equipment between the two countries.

They will also discuss which pieces of equipment can be developed jointly and rules for exporting such equipment to third countries, the officials said.

*Kyodo News*

# Spanish officials to start talks with Panama over canal cost row



*A crane is seen at the construction site of the Panama Canal Expansion project during an organized tour for the media on the Pacific side at the outskirts of Panama City on 4 Jan, 2014.*—Reuters

Panama City, 7 Jan — A Spanish government team will meet officials in Panama on Monday to try and end a cost dispute between a Spanish-led consortium expanding the Panama Canal and the waterway's operator that threatens to stall the huge infrastructure project.

Spain's public works minister, Ana Pastor, begins a day full of meetings by holding discussions with officials for the building consortium fronted by Spanish construction firm Sacyr known as Grupo Unidos por el Canal (GUPC).

Later in the morning she is due to meet Panama's President Ricardo Martinelli, who last week accused the GUPC of "great irresponsibility" when it threatened to suspend work on 20 January if the canal operator did not pay for big cost overruns. The GUPC also includes Italy's Salini Impregilo, Belgium's Jan De Nul and Panama's Constructora Urbana.

Arguing that the project to build a third set of locks for one of the world's main maritime cargo routes had suffered unforeseen setbacks, the GUPC said $1.6 billion in added costs had been incurred, blaming the Panama Canal Authority (PCA) for carrying out flawed studies of the geological terrain.—*Reuters*

WORLD

*Tribal fighters who have been deployed onto the streets, patrol in the city of Falluja, 50 km (31 miles) west of Baghdad on 5 Jan, 2014.*
REUTERS

# Fuelled by Syria war, al-Qaeda bursts back to life in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 7 Jan — Al-Qaeda gunmen seeking to form a radical Islamic state out of the chaos of Syria's civil war are fighting hard to reconquer the province they once controlled in neighbouring Iraq, stirring fears the conflict is exporting ever more instability.

Exploiting local grievances against Baghdad's rule and buoyed by al-Qaeda gains in Syria, the fighters have taken effective control of Anbar's two main cities for the first time since US occupation troops defeated them in 2006-07.

Their advance is ringing alarm bells in Washington: The United States has pledged to help Baghdad quell the militant surge in Anbar — although not with troops — to stabilize a province that saw the heaviest fighting of the US occupation.

Washington announced it was speeding up deliveries of military equipment to help Baghdad fight the gunmen. This would include missiles, surveillance drones and helicopters.

Al-Qaeda's Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has a tough potential foe in Anbar's well-armed tribes, fellow Sunnis ill-disposed to ceding power to al-Qaeda even if they share ISIL's hostility to the Shi'ite-led central government. And the group's goal of creating a hardline Islamic state reaching into Syria is still seen by many as far-fetched.—*Reuters*

# Iran rejects US suggestion of Syrian peace talks role

ANKARA/BRUSSELS, 7 Jan — Iran on Monday appeared to rule out participation in Syrian peace talks later this month, dismissing a US suggestion that it could be involved "from the sidelines" as not respecting its dignity.

US Secretary of State John Kerry suggested on Sunday there might be ways Iran could "contribute from the sidelines" in a so-called Geneva 2 peace conference in Montreux, Switzerland, on 22 January, and on Monday US officials said Teheran might still be able to play a helpful role.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was sending out invitations on Monday to potential participants the talks, but while he wants Iran to attend there was no agreement yet on whether to invite it.

The key players in the talks are President Bashar al-Assad's government and opposition rebels who have been fighting for nearly three years to oust him.

Syrian opposition groups and Washington, which accuse Teheran of supporting Assad with manpower and arms during the uprising against him, have long had reservations about the participation of Iran, although the United Nations special envoy on Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, has backed Teheran's involvement.

*Reuters*

*US Secretary of State John Kerry waves as he boards his plane at Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv on 6 Jan, 2014.*
REUTERS

*Palestinians wait to fill containers with fuel from a petrol station in Gaza city, on 6 Jan, 2014. Fuel stations suffering from acute fuel shortage due to Israel closure of Karem Shalom crossing for several days.*—XINHUA

# Authorities searching for clues to deadly plane crash in Colorado ski resort

ASPEN, 7 Jan — Authorities were still searching on Monday for clues to a fiery plane crash that left the pilot dead and two others injured on Sunday in this remote, ultra- wealthy ski-resort town nested in the Rocky Mountains three hours west of Denver.

Two Hollywood celebrities were eyewitnesses to the horrific crash that initially was blamed on high winds and excessive landing speed, according to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which has closed the airport until future notice.

"Exploded into flames as it was landing," comedian Kevin Nealon of Saturday Night Live Tweeted.

Singer LeAnn Rimes Cibrian added, "So sad! Horrible plane crash we just saw happen." According to the Pitkin County Sheriff's office, co-pilot Sergio Carranza Brabata, 54, of Mexico, was killed instantly in the crash.—*Xinhua*

# Washington subway operator unveils new train from Japan maker

WASHINGTON, 7 Jan — The operator of the Washington subway system on Monday unveiled a new train provided by a Japanese manufacturer for the first major makeover of vehicles since the train system began service nearly 40 years ago.

The operator said it will start replacing aging trouble-prone cars of its fleet with the new cars produced by Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd later this year, with more than half of the fleet to be Kawasaki cars by the end of 2018.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority said it has ordered 528 units of Kawasaki's 7000-series silver cars, equipped with high-tech digital information boards inside, under a $1.06 billion deal and is looking to procure an additional 220 units.

Richard Sarles, chief executive officer of the authority, told a ceremony at a station that the introduction of the Kawasaki car marked "a new generation of railcars that will provide safer and better service" for passengers.

The Kobe-based company manufactured the model at a plant in Nebraska. Hiroji Iwasaki, executive officer in charge of Kawasaki's rolling stock business, told the ceremony, "We are so proud" to be a part of transportation integration in the United States.

Kawasaki said it has a 25 percent share of the US train car market and has already provided units for train systems including the New York subway.

*Kyodo News*

*The operator of the Washington subway system unveils a new train in Greenbelt, Maryland, near Washington, on 6 Jan, 2014. The train was supplied by Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd, a Japanese manufacturer.*
KYODO NEWS

# *Musharraf misses another court appearance, remains in hospital*

ISLAMABAD, 7 Jan — Pakistan's former military ruler Pervez Musharraf on Monday failed to appear before a special court set up to try him for high treason, remaining inside a military hospital where he was admitted on Friday with a suspected heart problem.

Meanwhile, the special court in Islamabad effectively demanded proof that the 70-year-old former army chief, who ruled Pakistan from 1999 to 2008, is indeed too ill to make a court appearance, in the form of a medical certificate to be submitted by noon Tuesday.

Local media are speculating that he is likely to leave the country soon for medical treatment abroad.

Special Prosecutor Akram Sheikh told reporters that Musharraf was exempted from appearing before the court Monday after his lawyers said he remains unwell and hospitalized at the Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology in the neighbouring garrison town of Rawalpindi.

He was diverted there on Friday while on the way to the court from his farmhouse, where he has been held under house arrest since April last year. The hospital has given out no information about his health condition.

Local media has reported that a medical board that examined Musharraf has sought second opinion from two prominent Pakistani heart specialists abroad.

*Kyodo News*

BUSINESS & HEALTH

# US business bankruptcies dropped 24 percent in 2013

WILMINGTON, 7 Jan — Business bankruptcy filings in the United States dropped 24 percent in 2013 to their lowest level since at least 2006, according to a report on Monday.

Overall, bankruptcies by businesses and individuals combined fell 13 percent, said the report, released by the American Bankruptcy Institute.

Bankruptcy filings by businesses and individuals spiked as the United States entered recession in 2007. The numbers have fallen steadily in recent years as the US Federal Reserve has kept borrowing costs low.

Monday's report, which was compiled for the ABI by bankruptcy claims processor Epiq Systems Inc, said 44,111 businesses filed for bankruptcy in 2013, down from 57,964 in 2012. Epiq's data goes back to 2007.

Total filings by businesses and individuals fell to 1.03 million, the report said, from 1.19 million in 2012. The number of filings fell in every state but rose by 7 percent in Puerto Rico, which has been hit by a prolonged recession.

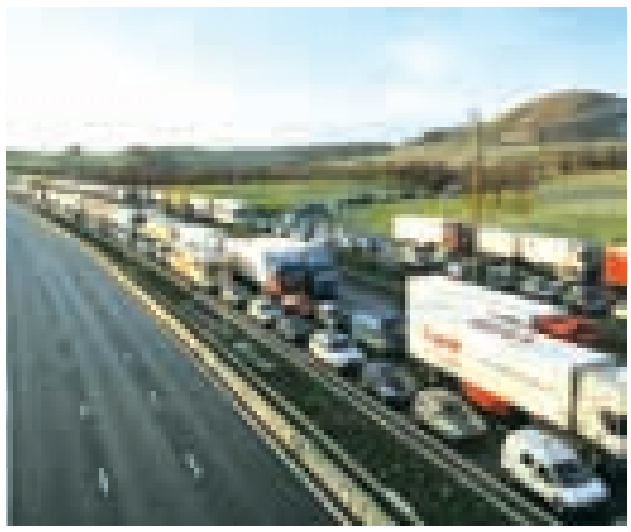
The average number of filings by businesses and individuals over the past five years was 1.32 million per year. That historically low level is partly the result of a 2005 law that made it harder for individuals to declare bankruptcy. In the 10 years leading up to enactment of the law, filing averaged 1.5 million per year, according to the ABI.

Teresa Kohl, a bankruptcy expert at SSG Capital Advisors, an investment bank that specializes in corporate restructuring, said she expected businesses to continue to avoid filing for bankruptcy, even if it might be in their interests to do so.

"Bankruptcy is still viewed as expensive proposition and it's something that people tend to avoid at all costs," Kohl said. "I don't think in 2014 there is going to be any dramatic change."

*Reuters*

*The Fisker automotive electric Atlantic sedan logo is seen during its unveiling ahead of the 2012 International Auto Show in New York in this 3 April, 2012 file photo.*—REUTERS



*Traffic queues on the M20 motorway and the slip road leading to the Channel Tunnel Terminal, near Folkestone in Kent, southern England in this 19 Dec, 2009 file photo.*—REUTERS

# UK new car sales rise more than 10 percent to 5-year high in 2013 — SMMT

LONDON, 7 Jan— British new car sales grew by more than 10 percent last year to hit a five-year high, bucking a gloomy trend in most of the rest of Europe, industry figures are expected to show later on Tuesday.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders releases 2013 car sales figures at 0900 GMT. But in a briefing late on Monday, it said it expected them to exceed its forecast of 2.25 million and be up by more than 10.5 percent on the year.

British car sales have grown strongly in recent years, in a trend that predated last year's rapid economic recovery, and in 2012 Britain overtook France as Europe's second-biggest new car market after Germany.

However the SMMT expects sales growth to be slower in 2014, with total sales close to 2013 levels.

Ford (F.N) was Britain's top-selling manufacturer for most of 2013, enjoying success with its Fiesta supermini and mid-sized Focus models, followed by General Motors' (GM.N) rival Vauxhall Corsa and Astra.

Volkswagen (VOWG_p.DE), Nissan (7201.T) and BMW (BMWG.DE) also enjoyed strong sales.—*Reuters*

# Flu virus strains resistant to Tamiflu found in six people in Sapporo

TOKYO, 7 Jan — Flu virus strains resistant to antiviral drugs such as Tamiflu and Rapiacta were detected in six people in Sapporo, Hokkaido Prefecture, in November and December, the National Institute of Infectious Diseases said on Monday.

The strains share roughly identical gene sequences and are believed to be spreading in the city, it said. Relenza and Inavir, antiviral medicines with different action mechanisms, are effective in fighting the detected varieties, it said.

"In cases when (viruses) are suspected to be resistant to drugs, it's necessary to consider using different types of antiviral drugs," an official with the institute said.

The six infected patients are four children aged 10 or younger and two adults, according to the national institute and the Sapporo City Institute of Public Health.

The strains all belong to the H1N1 type and are marked by genetic mutations indicating that they are resistant to Tamiflu and Rapiacta. Tests confirmed that the potency of these two drugs was limited to 1/500th on these strains compared with others.

There is no possibility that the viruses mutated to become resistant to the drugs inside the patients' bodies as the six people have not been treated with any antiviral drugs, it said.

*Kyodo News*

# Fidelity funds buy 2.4 million Twitter shares, showing cautious bet

BOSTON, 7 Jan — Mutual funds run by Fidelity Investments bought a modest 2.4 million shares of Twitter Inc in the days after its public debut, revealing that they were not willing to take any early, big bets on the microblogging site.

Fidelity's Contrafund led the way, holding 1.1 million shares at the end of November, according to the latest available fund disclosures.

*The Twitter symbol is displayed at the post where the stock is traded on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, in this 15 Nov, 2013 file photo.* REUTERS

That stake was worth $73 million on Monday, a small bet for a fund with net assets of $109 billion.

In contrast, Contrafund's stake in Facebook Inc was worth $1.6 billion at the end of November. Some analysts say Twitter may lose out to Facebook and Google Inc in the battle for online ad revenue.

In all, nearly 30 Fidelity funds bought Twitter shares, according to data from Fidelity and Lipper Inc, a Thomson Reuters company. Fidelity declined to comment.

Twitter stock is up 155 percent over its 7 November initial public offering price of $26 per share. But investors are debating whether it will become just a social media niche or achieve the giant status of Facebook.

The stock fell 4 percent on Monday to a close of $66.29 after analysts at Morgan Stanley downgraded Twitter to "under weight" from "equal weight" and questioned how much online ad revenue it would collect in relation to Facebook and Google.

Nevertheless, Twitter's stock market value is a frothy $37 billion, despite being a money-losing operation. And US mutual funds are sitting on some handsome gains since the IPO.

T Rowe Price Group Inc's New Horizons Fund bought 4.6 million Twitter shares for $2.66 apiece before the IPO. Assuming that position hasn't changed, those shares were worth $305 million on Monday, reflecting a 25-fold gain. Year-end holdings for the fund should be available within two weeks, according to T Rowe Price spokeswoman Heather McDonold. Fidelity funds also appear to be in good position. Twitter's stock is up 59 percent since 29 November, the effective date for Fidelity's latest reports for mutual fund holdings.

*Reuters*

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

# Intel shows off wearable gadgets as chipmaker expands beyond PCs

LAS VEGAS, 7 Jan — Intel CEO Brian Krzanich showed off wearable computing devices on Monday including earbuds that monitor your heart rate and a smart headset as the world's largest chipmaker tries to get back on track after missing out on smartphones. With PC sales falling and smartphone growth tapering off, Intel and other technology companies are betting that movement-sensing bracelets, biometric patches and other wearable electronic devices may catch on with consumers and become major markets.

The evolving category is a major theme at this week's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, with several companies expected to unveil their own versions of intelligent and connected clothing. Intel dominates the PC industry, but it has been slow to adapt its processors for smartphones and tablets, markets now dominated by rivals like Qualcomm and Samsung Electronics.

The company has struggled in past attempts to expand beyond the PC arena. A years-long project to provide consumer TV services was shelved last year with its technology put up for sale and the company's mobile processors have barely made a dent in the global smartphone market even after major improvements to them.

*Intel CEO Brian Krzanich introduces Intel's Edison, a new personal computer in the size of an SD card, during the annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada on 6 Jan, 2014.* — REUTERS

After replacing former CEO Paul Otellini in May, Krzanich, a chip manufacturing and operations guru, created a new division focused on identifying future technology trends and making sure Intel is not caught off-guard again.—*Reuters*

# Xbox One sales top three million, no new Sony data

SEATTLE, 7 Jan — Microsoft Corp said on Monday that sales of its new Xbox One game console topped three million at the end of last year after launching in November.

The third generation of the Xbox is competing head-to-head with Sony Corp's PlayStation 4, also launched in November. Sony said it had sold 2.1 million PS4s by the first week of December.

It will not be clear which company is leading the console battle until Sony updates that figure.

The sales of the new Xbox are in line with expectations, said Michael Pachter, an analyst at Wedbush Securities, who also estimates PlayStation sales around the 3 million mark. Hot sales of both consoles have been a boon for Advance Micro Devices Inc, which developed or supplied chips for both devices.—*Reuters*

*An XBox One which will be discounted at 6 pm local time on Thanksgiving day is seen on display at the Wal-Mart Supercenter in the Porter Ranch section of Los Angeles in this 26 Nov, 2013 file photo.*—REUTERS

# AT&T promises sponsored data services in coming months

*An AT&T logo is seen atop a store in Beverly Hills, California.* — REUTERS

NEW YORK, 7 Jan — AT&T Inc plans to give consumers options to save money on mobile data fees as soon as this quarter while offering sponsors a new way to entice consumers to use their services.

The company announced details on Monday at AT&T's developer conference at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The offering will let sponsors subsidize consumer data fees, which have gradually become more expensive in recent years as phone companies charge for mobile web-surfing based on how much data their customers download.

AT&T, the No 2 US mobile operator, compared the offering to 1-800 telephone services where businesses such as florists pay for inbound calls with a view to attracting more consumers.

It will start with deals from companies including a health insurer, an advertiser and a software firm but may expand to businesses ranging from media companies to retailers.

AT&T and its leading rival Verizon Wireless have both talked about the idea of offering sponsored data for two years, but the plans have been slow to materialize as the operators sought partners and worked out how best to offer the service. AT&T's first partners include insurer UnitedHealth Group Inc, Boston-based advertising start-up Aquto and Orlando-based mobile software developer Kony Solutions.

It said the offering could also work well for retail, media, entertainment and financial services customers or could be used by employers aiming to sponsor their own workers' data usage for certain corporate applications.

Under the new service, AT&T said data charges from use of sponsored content would be billed directly to the sponsor and will appear on the consumer's invoice as sponsored data.

For example, AT&T said that UnitedHealth customers could view healthcare information or videos from their insurer without incurring data or customers using Aquto's service could watch ads without incurring data fees.

Kony customers, which include hoteliers, could potentially use its reservation systems to let customers book hotel rooms while on the go without having to pay AT&T for the airtime.

Mark Collins, AT&T senior vice president for voice and data products, said the service would complement existing data services for cost-conscious customers.

Collins declined to disclose financial arrangements for the service but said that agreements would differ between sponsors depending on their agreements and that some companies will engage in revenue-sharing deals with the operator. ReconAnalytics analyst Roger Entner said UnitedHealth was a good launch partner for AT&T because it could provide an important service by giving lower-income consumers easier access to key health information.

"Consumers will like it. Americans always like 'free'," Entner said.

*Reuters*

# Amazon teams with Samsung, studios on ultra high-definition TV

LAS VEGAS, 7 Jan — Amazon.com Inc is teaming up with Samsung Electronics Co Ltd and major media corporations including Warner Bros and Lionsgate to popularize "4K" ultra high-definition television.

Amazon, whose Instant Video service serves up thousands of movies and TV programmes in direct competition with Neflix Inc, did not outline specifics on their collaboration in a Monday announcement.

*A box from Amazon.com is pictured on the porch of a house in Golden, Colorado in this 23 July, 2008 file photo.* REUTERS

But Samsung and other consumer electronics makers are hoping that 4K TV — so-called because they are said to offer four times the resolution of conventional high-definition images — will take off as a format and recharge sales.

At the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, the South Korean tech giant said in a separate statement it also will work with other content distributors, including Netflix and cable operators Comcast and DirecTV, on promoting 4K TV.

*Reuters*

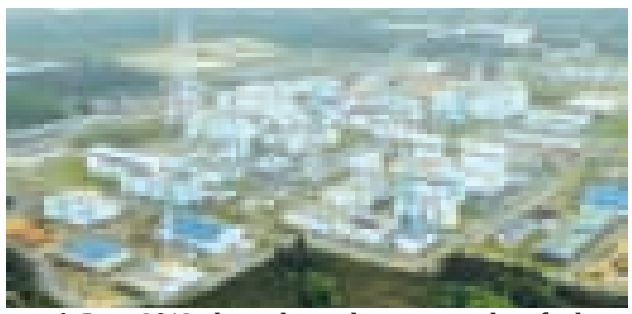
# Japan Nuclear Fuel files for safety checks of fuel reprocessing plant

TOKYO, 7 Jan — Japan Nuclear Fuel Ltd on Tuesday applied for a state safety assessment on its spent fuel reprocessing plant in Rokkasho in northeastern Japan to put it onstream.

Although it is not clear how long the safety assessment process will take, the company said it hopes to secure the permission of authorities to use the plant in Aomori Prefecture by October and start its actual operation after securing local consent.

The plant was designed for a key role in Japan's fuel recycling policy that aims to reprocess spent uranium fuel and reuse the extracted plutonium and uranium as reactor fuel.

After submitting the application, Japan Nuclear Fuel Senior Executive Vice President Kazuhiro Matsumura told reporters that he expects the Nuclear Regulation Authority to implement the safety review "efficiently" and that the company is making preparations so that it will not see a delay in completing the plant in October.



*A June 2012 photo shows the spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant of Japan Nuclear Fuel Ltd. in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, in northeastern Japan.* KYODO NEWS

Japan Nuclear Fuel started building the plant in 1993 and a trial operation began in March 2006. But its completion has been repeatedly postponed following a series of problems, including leakage of high-level radioactive waste liquid.

For the NRA, an entity launched after the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster, it will be the first safety checkup of a spent fuel reprocessing plant. The NRA put in place related regulations in December.—*Kyodo News*

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 8 January, 2014

## Green and clean must be more than a slogan

*(By Darryl Gibson)*

**It is admirable for governments at all levels to declare Myanmar is to become "Green and Clean" but even the loftiest of goals will be unreachable if every citizen does not embrace this plan.**

**During the SEA Games, many venues were tidied up and swept daily, but the efforts were often in vain.**

**At Ngalaik Dam, for example, the environment looked pristine before the first traditional dragon boat races began.**

**But after the competition ended, much of the area was in shambles.**

**Spectators who cheered loudly and proudly as Myanmar's men and women dominated the racing, almost immediately forgot that lasting impressions are just as important as gold, silver and bronze medals.**

**As the crowds left the venue, they tossed soda cans down the slope behind the lake, left plastic lunch bags strewn across the levee and discarded uneaten food and drink on the ground even though plenty of refuse receptacles were all along the levee.**

**Unfortunately, this was not an isolated case.**

**In the back streets and alleys in Yangon refuse piles up seemingly everywhere because no one takes the responsibility to dispose of it properly.**

**In Mandalay, used tissues, empty bags, discarded take-away cartons and other refuse mars both the city streets and the banks of Ayeyawady River.**

**In Bagan, people throw plastic bags away with no thought for the assault on the eyes or the dangers to animals and birds who can ingest the refuse and bits of plastic and end up dead from blocked intestines and disease.**

**None of this thoughtless behaviour helps reach the goal of a Clean and Green Myanmar, in fact, it sabotages that goal every time someone tosses a half-eaten papaya, a cob of corn or market-waste on the ground.**

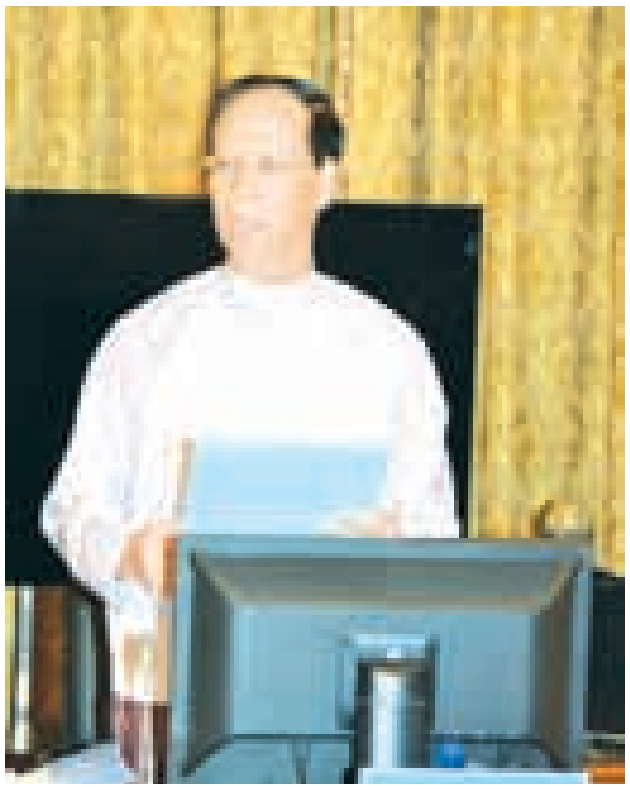
**Most insidious is the complete disregard for the environment by the use of millions of plastic bags that were used once and tossed away to blow from street corner to street corner in the wind.**

**It is time everyone resolves to think of the environment, think of Clean and Green Myanmar and refuse to accept plastic for every tiny purchase.**

**Carry your own reusable shopping bag and tell your neighbours to do the same.**

**When you see someone tossing refuse, stop them and remind them of the damage they are causing to our country.**

*Vice-President U Nyan Tun presenting reports.*
MNA



*Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham presents reports.*—MNA

## In coming financial year, staff ...

*Union Finance Minister U Win Shein presenting reports.*—MNA

*(from page 1)*

He urged those involved to have a greater transparency, accountability and responsibility in the use of allotted funds.

The government is drawing the Union Budget based on current policies and the capabilities of the departments in addition to the past year's budget. These budgets should help facilitate the swift implementation of people-centered development projects in a short space of time. As in other countries, government expenditures should be based on the taxes collected.

The president pointed out the emergence of a better taxation system and efforts for increased year-on-year receipts and expenditures.

Middle level students will have access to free education as of the coming academic year and this year's reserve fund is K 100 billion. The education budget has increased to 5.92 per cent from 5.43 per cent and this year's health budget is 3.38 per cent, up from 3.15 per cent.

The budget deficits for region/state are allotted from the Union Funds and the funds are budgeted for rural development and poverty alleviation. More funds will be allotted to the regions that are in urgent need. K 33 billion will be budged for the development of townships and the government is making the reforms for public financial management that meets international standards.

In that regard, efforts are being made for the systematic drawing of the budget.

Through collaborative efforts of the Union government, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the Auditor-General of the Union, it sees progress to a certain degree.

Increases in staff salaries and assistance are to be calculated based on State funds, rate, economic development prospects and other possible impacts.

In 2013-2014 FY, the Union government increased salary, allowances and pensions and in the coming financial year, staff salaries will be increased to K 20,000 and pensions and other allowances, on a proportional basis.

In conclusion, the president urged those involved to systematically use allotted funds in accord with financial rules and regulations and follow audit codes of conduct for emergence of a people-centered mechanism, internal peace, socio-economic development of people, rural development, poverty alleviation and higher individual incomes.

The meeting was attended by Vice-Chairmen of the Commission Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Union Ministers, the Union Attorney-General, the Union Auditor-General, the Union Civil Service Board Chairman, the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, Region/State Chief Ministers and officials.

*MNA (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

## Myanmar-China Friendship Association meets Tianjin delegation

YANGON, 7 Jan—Myanmar-China Friendship Association Chairman U Sein Win Aung met a Tianjin delegation at Sedona Hotel in Yangon and discussed plans for a sister-city relationship, among others, yesterday.

In the meeting, the chairman said Myanmar believes the friendship between Myanmar and the People's Republic of China will never change and Myanmar will do its utmost to cement amity with China.

In addition to sister-city plans, he added that the Association will also seek cooperation with Tianjin and China in the education and health sectors.

Xiao Huaiyuan, chairman of the Standing Committee of Tianjin Municipal People's Congress, outlined his group's plans during its tour in Myanmar.

Later, gifts were exchanged.

The Myanmar-China Friendship Association was reorganized in May 2013.—*MNA (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

## Open tender invited for THS

DAWEI, 7 Jan—The Education and Training Department under the Ministry of Border Affairs has opened tenders for construction of the Border Regions National Youth Technical School at Dawei City Hall, Dawei, Taninthayi Region in the south today.

Region Minister of Security and Border Affairs and Secretary of the Committee Col Zaw Lwin and chairman of the open tender assessment committee Dr Kyaw Hsan delivered addresses.

Joint Secretary of Regional Development Committee U Aung Kyaw Myint explained open tenders and announced tender winners.

There were four-log open tenders and 34 entrepreneurs from companies and organizations competed in the tendering process.

*Kyemon-Dawei (IPRD) (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

## Establishment of...

*(from page 16)*

Myanmar and Japan for further strengthening their bilateral relations and cooperation. It was also attended by committee chairmen U Htay Oo, Dr Khin Shwe and U Htay Myint, secretaries U Saw Hla Tun and U Kyi Tha and commission member Daw Aye Aye Mu and officials from the Hluttaw Office.—*MNA(Edited by Darryl Gibsm)*

***Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann and party pose for documentary photo with MPs of Japanese House of Representatives.*—MNA**

# Joint committee to review Constitution meets

***Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa speaking at Constitution Review Joint Committee Meeting 1/2014.*—MNA**

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan— Secretary of the Constitution Review Joint Committee Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa recounted the accomplished tasks on the minutes of the CRJC's meeting (4/2013) at the meeting (1/2014) of the CRJC at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building (D) in the Hluttaw Complex here this morning.

He also clarified the matters related to holding meetings, releasing information about the committee, receiving suggestions to the committee and plans to form five constitution review committees with Hluttaw representatives and defence services personnel Hluttaw representatives.

Next, the committee chairman and vice-chairman of CRJC attended to the needs on reports presented by committee members on reviewing the Constitution.

The meeting came to an end with concluding remarks by the Chairman.

*MNA (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

# Passport issuance centres set up in 15 regions, states

HPA-AN, 7 Jan — A passport issuing centre opens in Hpa-an, Kayin State, on 2 January to issue passports to eligible citizens.

The centre is at the office of the Special Branch of the Myanmar Police Force in Hpa-an.

Passport issuing centres have been set up as from 2 January in 15 regions and states, except in Yangon and Mandalay, said the head of Kayin State Special Branch of the Myanmar Police Force.

Seven staff from the Special Branch and two staff from the Immigration and National Registration Department of the Ministry of Immigration and Population are posted at each passport issuing centre.

An eligible citizen can get a passport within two weeks at the cost of K 25,000.

There were only two passport issuing centres, in Yangon and Mandalay, in the past.—*Kyemon-Tun Tun Htway (Hpa-an) (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

# Letpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project needs local cooperation: Union minister

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan— The Committee for Implementation of the report of the Investigation Commission on Letpadaungtaung Copper Mining Project was top on the agenda at today's coordination meeting at the Presidential Palace, with Union Minister U Hla Tun, Chairman of the Committee Union, saying local cooperation was a key factor to attract foreign investment.

He said that the project should be as transparent as possible and that developments will be reported by the media to inform people about the progress made.

The Union minister added that other vital factors taken into consideration are environmental conservation and an environmental management plan. Farmland disputes among local people will also be solved after systematic scrutinizing, he said.

Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Adjutant-General Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo, elaborated on the implementation tasks for the copper mine project.

Member of the committee, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko, discussed security and administrative matters, while the Union Minister for Mines talked about the conditions of environmental conservation.—*MNA (Edited by Kerstin Winter)*

***Union Minister U Hla Tun delivers address at coordination meeitng on Committee for Implementation of the report of the Investigation Commission on Letpadaungtaung Copper Mining Project.*—MNA**

LOCAL NEWS

# Sagaing Region Interfaith Friendship Group to elect patron

MONYWA, 7 Jan—The Sagaing Region Interfaith Friendship Group held a third meeting at Hindu Temple in Sulegon Ward of Monywa on 6 January to learn about electing a patron from the group.

Sagaing Region Minister for Finance and Religious Affairs U Tin Win and Chairman of the group U Tin Aung explained the future plans of the interfaith group. Members of the group from four major religions participated in the discussion on electing a patron for the group and a plan to offer rice to Buddhist monks in February.

Sagaing Region Interfaith Friendship Group was formed on 7 September 2013. Its first meeting was held in the precinct of a pagoda in Monywa on 9 September 2013 and the second at Baptist Church in Dawnachan Ward of Monywa on 3 October.

*MMAL-Myo Win Tun (Monywa) (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

# Chinese Buddhist Picture Display opens at Shwedagon

YANGON, 7 Jan—Chinese Buddhist Pictures under the title Home to Lord Buddha was opened at Chanthagyi Prayer Hall on the platform of Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon on 6 January.

Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Yong Houlan said that the photo gallery was aimed at strengthening friendly ties in the field of Buddhism and the peoples between the two countries. He donated K 5 million to the fund of the pagoda through alternate member of the pagoda board of trustees U Sein Win Aung.

The picture display showcases 65 documentary photos of Chinese Buddhists on their activities up to 19 January.

*MNA (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

***Chinese Ambassador Yong Houlan and member of Shwedagon pagoda board of trustees U Sein Win Aung enjoy documentary photos.*—MNA**

# CCTVs installed in traffic lights in Mawlamyine

MAWLAMYINE, 7 Jan—Traffic policemen led by Police Major Nyunt Wai of No 9 Traffic Police Squad have installed CCTVs at traffic lights with the aim of catching drivers who break traffic rules and the road users who do observe the traffic rules.

The CCTVs were installed at the digital traffic lights Daingwunkwin on 2 January and Zaykyo junctions in Mupun region on 5 January. Both sites are in the downtown area of Mawlamyine, city in Mon State.

The CCTVs and traffic lights are being operated to control vehicles large and small on the route leading to Kayin State and the Taninthayi Region.

*MMAL-Kyaw Than (Mawlamyine) (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

## Health Care Services

# Mobile medical team brings health care to local people

PHAKANT, 7 Jan—A mobile medical team of the No 101 Light Infantry Division provided health care services to local people at the residence of the administrator of Sapaw Village in Seikmu Village-tract in Phakant Township, Kachin State, on 3 January afternoon. An eight-member team led by Captain Ye Naung of the medical company of the division, together with a team led by Health Assistant U Kyaw Myint, gave health advice and treatment to 201 people in Sapaw Village.—*MMAL-Soe Naing Oo (Phakant) (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

***A military medical officer gives health care to a 105 years old grandpa in Phakant Township.***

# Mon State honours medallists in SEA Games

MAWLAMYINE, 7 Jan—A ceremony to honour victorious athletes who won medals in the XXVII SEA Games was held at Yamanya Hall in Mawlamyine in Mon State on 4 January, with an address by Mon State Minister for Development Affairs Dr Toe Toe Aung who is also chairman of Mon State Sports and Physical Education Committee.

Officials presented K 700,000 each to three gold medallists, K 500,000 each to three silver medallists and K 300,000 each to 12 bronze medallists.

Chairman of Football Subcommittee U Kyaw Min Aung gave K 100,000 each to three players of the Myanmar Women's Football Team and Sepak Takraw Subcommittee U Nay Win and K 100,000 each to two Myanmar women footballers.—*Kyemon-694 (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

# Daka market fire destroys five shopping stalls

KANGYIDAUNT, 7 Jan—A fire in Daka Market Ward in Kangyidaunt Township in the Ayeyawady Region in the delta area at 7.16 pm on 5 January destroyed five shopping stalls.

Authorities said the blaze started at a shop of Daw Win Nwe (a) Daw Mi Pont at Daka Railways shopping mall and the fire engulfed five shop apartments worth K 5.5 million in total.

Fire fighters and local residents put out the fire using six fire engines. It took more than an hour to extinguish the blaze.

Police Captain Zaw Win Kyaw and officials of Ayeyawady Region supervised the response to the fire. It later reported the Daka Police Station has opened a lawsuit against Daw Win Nwe (a) Daw Mi Pont.—*MMAL-Township IPRD (Edited by Darryl Gibson)*

# India, Japan defence chiefs agree to enhance bilateral defence ties

New Delhi, 7 Jan — India's Defence Minister A.K. Antony and Japanese Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera agreed on Monday to enhance defence exchanges between Japan's Self-Defence Forces and the Indian armed forces, Japanese officials said.

Antony and Onodera held talks in New Delhi ahead of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's trip to India in late January.

Onodera and Antony agreed to hold joint training exercises between Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Force and the Indian Navy on a regular basis, the officials said.

The first such joint exercise was held in Sagami Bay off Kanagawa Prefecture near Tokyo in June 2012, followed by another in the Indian Ocean last month.

The two ministers also agreed to promote exchanges between anti-terrorism experts of Japan's Ground Self-Defence Force and the Indian Army. Regarding working-level discussions about exporting Japanese amphibious rescue US2 aircraft to India, Onodera proposed the next round of talks be held in Japan. The inaugural meeting of the talks was held in December in India.

Onodera also proposed a test ride by Indian officials.

Meanwhile, Onodera told reporters that US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel urged Japan in telephone talks on Saturday to take account of the importance of the alliance in East Asia among Japan, the United States and South Korea.

*Indian Defence Minister AK Antony (far R) and Japanese Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera (far L) hold talks in New Delhi on 6 Jan, 2014.*
**Kyodo News**

A US Defence Department press secretary said earlier that Hagel urged Japan to improve relations with its neighbouring countries in the telephone talks.

Hagel made the remarks after Abe's visit to a war-linked shrine in Tokyo late last month fueled anger in China and South Korea.

*Kyodo News*

*A worker sorts confiscated ivory products to be destroyed in Dongguan City, south China's Guangdong Province, on 6 Jan, 2014. The Chinese government destroyed 6.1 tonnes of confiscated ivory on Monday in Dongguan, to demonstrate the country's determination to discourage illegal ivory trade, protect wildlife and raise public awareness.*
**Xinhua**

# Vietnam's southern HCM City pays heavy price for industrial gains

Ho Chi Minh City, 7 Jan — The excessive number of industrial parks (IPs) and export processing zones (EPZs) have caused serious environmental pollution in Vietnam in general, and southern Ho Chi Minh (HCM) City in particular, said experts.

At a seminar recently held in the city, Dr Vo Thanh Thu, member of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI)'s International Trade Policy Advisory Committee, said that rapid industrialization in the past 20 years had led to a boom in IPs and EPZs, local daily *Saigon Giai Phong* reported on Monday.

As the end of 2013, the country had 289 IPs, EPZs and hi-tech parks and 878 industrial clusters, of which, HCM City alone hosts three EPZs and 13 IPs.

Statistics from the city's IP and EPZ Management Board revealed that at the end of 2013, there are 1,263 valid projects operating at IPs and EPZs in HCM City, with total registered capital of nearly 7.5 billion US dollars.

The development of IPs and EPZs had contributed to the country' s economic development, but those without master zoning plans had low occupancy rates and caused pollution, said the VCCI expert.

Specifically, in the southern Mekong Delta, 74 IPs are idle, representing a total area of 14,394 hectares, accounting for 60.2 percent of the region's total IP area.—*Xinhua*

# *Laos encourages industrial parks to protect environment*

Vientiane, 7 Jan —The Lao government is encouraging businesses to establish factories in specialized industrial parks in a bid to better protect the environment according to state-run daily *Vientiane Times*, on Monday.

Director General of the Industry Department Manohak Rasachack told local media that the government had amended laws regarding industrial processing to encourage businesses to move their production bases to dedicated industrial park areas.

"The revised law will give a major boost to the development of industrial parks," Manohak said. Each province has their own individual industrial zones to encourage factories to be built at those locations he added.

The National Assembly approved the legal revision last month and it is expected to take effect within the next quarter. The revisions are expected to greatly encourage the relocation of factories into industrial parks. Businesses located within the industrial parks will receive a number of tax incentives including reductions and exemptions. It's expected that infrastructure development within the parks will provide additional incentives to companies that operate there.

*Xinhua*

# Thousands of Queensland homes remain without power after wild storms

Brisbane, (Australia), 7 Jan—Thousands of homes are still without power after Monday's wild storms hit Australia's southeast Queensland, local media reported on Tuesday.

The storm rolled into the southeast on Monday afternoon, bringing heavy rain and wind gusts of up to 100 kilometers an hour. Brisbane-based electric power distribution company Energex said the storms brought down power lines in 120 locations and repair crews have restored power to more than 85,000 properties.

Energex said it is working to restore power to another 4,100 homes still without electricity.

About 40,000 lightning strikes have been recorded since Monday afternoon, and a woman in Logan was taken to hospital after being struck by lightning.

The Bureau of Meteorology said 80 millimetres of rain fell in half an hour at Slacks Creek, south of Brisbane, in Queensland.

However, the heaviest rain was at West Bellthorpe, inland of the Sunshine Coast, where 100 mm of rain was dumped.

*Xinhua*

# New Zealand minister calls whaling pointless, offensive

Sydney, 7 Jan — New Zealand Foreign Affairs Minister Murray McCully said on Monday that whaling in the southern Antarctic waters is "pointless and offensive" to many New Zealanders and reiterated a call to end the practice.

McCully made the remarks in a statement issued after recent images of the carcasses of three minke whales on the deck of a Japanese whaling factory ship were circulated by anti-whaling group Sea Shepherd earlier in the day.

"Today's information suggests the Japanese fleet has commenced whaling for the current season," McCully said in the statement.

"The practice of whaling in the oceans south of New Zealand is pointless and offensive to a great many New Zealanders," he added. He said New Zealand has repeatedly called for an end to Japan's whaling programme. "We reiterate this message today," he said.

Images of the three dead minke whales on the *Nisshin Maru* were circulated in Australian media earlier in the day, and a fourth whale, also believed to be a minke, was being butchered on the vessel's deck, according to Sea Shepherd.

The Japanese government confirmed to *Kyodo News* that the vessel on which the three minke whales appeared was the Nisshin Maru.

The organization, on its 10th campaign to protect whales in southern waters, claims its three vessels — the *Bob Barker*, the *Simon Sam*, and the *Steve Irwin* — are currently in pursuit of the whaling fleet, with the intent to drive the fleet of five vessels away from their intended poaching grounds.

Bob Brown, Sea Shepherd's director and a former Australia Greens leader, described the images of the carcasses on the *Nisshin Maru* deck as "just a gruesome, bloody, medieval scene which has no place in this modern world."

He again called on intervention from the Australian and New Zealand governments to protect the whales. The Australian government revealed at the end of last year that it would be sending an *A319* aircraft to monitor the situation in the southern waters. The aircraft, staffed by Australian customs personnel, is expected in the area from January to March.

*Kyodo News*

*An injured person receives medical treatment in Pucheng County, northwest China's Shaanxi Province, on 6 Jan, 2014. The death toll from an explosion on a coach in Shaanxi Province on Sunday has risen to five after a critically injured passenger was confirmed dead. It occurred when the vehicle was running on a road near a coach station in Pucheng County of Weinan City, leaving 24 injured in addition to those killed. The cause of the explosion is under investigation. —Xinhua*

## ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV GIANG HAI II VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GIANG HAI II VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2014 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 RK SHIPPING & TRADING PTE LTD**

Phone No: 256924/256914

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV SEA ZENITH VOY NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SEA ZENITH VOY NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2014 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 SANG THAI SHIPPING CO LTD**

Phone No: 256924/256914

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV HAN FENG VOY NO (13135E)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV HAN FENG VOY NO (13135E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2014 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 SHANG HAI HENGXIN SHIPPING CO LTD**

Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (004)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (004) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2014 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 WAN HAI LINES PTE LTD**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV SINGAPORE BRIDGE VOY NO (058)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINGAPORE BRIDGE VOY NO (058) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2014 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

# CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV MOROTAI VOY NO (225)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (225) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 CMA CGM**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

***Contestants make ice sculptures during the 28th China Harbin International Ice Sculpture Contest, in Harbin, capital of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, on 6 Jan, 2014. The three-day contest was a major event of Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival, attracting 22 teams from 11 countries and regions to participate in.—XINHUA***

# Explosion in French amusement park kills one

PARIS, 7 Jan — An explosion occurred on Monday in an amusement park near Rouen of north France, leaving one dead and one seriously wounded, local media reported.

Citing firefighters, the local broadcaster Europe 1 said the park which had been closed for public, was hit by the explosion in the afternoon during a maintenance operation.

No more details were given as to the identities of the victims or the cause of the blast.—*Xinhua*

# Senegal's seizure of Russian boat could affect bilateral ties

MOSCOW, 7 Jan— The seizure of a Russian fishing boat by Senegalese authorities could affect bilateral ties, Russian Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

The Russian trawler *Oleg Naydyonov* was detained by Senegalese naval forces in the exclusive economic zone of Guinea-Bissau on Sunday without the knowledge of the government of Guinea-Bissau, said the ministry.

"Russia expresses serious concern over the incident occurred, which could have negative influence of the Russian-Senegalese cooperation and asks to release the Russian vessel immediately," the ministry said in a note received by the Federal Fisheries Agency Rosrybolovstvo.

"Rude and aggressive actions of Senegalese servicemen in the waters under the jurisdiction of Guinea-Bissau created a real threat to life and health of the crew and also inflicted considerable financial damage to the vessel owner," said the ministry.

Rosrybolovstvo said the incident is most likely related to the competition for fishing resources between Senegal and Guinea- Bissau. Russian diplomats and representatives of Rosrybolovstvo are expected to meet with Senegalese authorities on Tuesday to discuss the issue. *The Oleg Naidenov,* carrying 82 crew onboard, was suspected of illegal fishing within Senegalese waters. It has about 900 tons of cargo worth 540,000 US dollars on board.

*Xinhua*

# Ireland warns of further high winds, heavy rain

DUBLIN, 7 Jan — Ireland on Monday warned of further stormy weather, with flooding reported in some southern and western counties.

State broadcaster RTE reported that Met Eireann, the Irish national meteorological service, has upgraded its weather alert from its lowest level of yellow to orange, as severe gusts of up to 120km/h sweep across the country.

In south Ireland's Cork county, there was flooding in Cork city Monday morning as the River Lee burst its banks once again. There are still pockets of surface flooding in Cork city, but with no major reports of flood damage.

In west Ireland's Galway county, flood waters have started to recede in Galway city after high tides and strong winds caused road closures earlier Monday morning.

RTE said there was also some flooding in Mayo county, according to RTE.

It added Irish ferries service has cancelled fast ferry sailings due to the stormy weather. People are being advised not to go out on exposed coasts, cliffs, piers, harbor walls and promenades.—*Xinhua*

ENTERTAINMENT

# Atkinson's "Life After Life" wins British literary award

LONDON, 7 Jan — Kate Atkinson, author of award-winning "Behind the Scenes at the Museum", won the best novel of the year in the Costa Book Awards on Monday with her new book "Life After Life", about a woman who gets a second chance to live.

Lucy Hallett-Hughes's "The Pike", about Italian poet, serial seducer and proto-fascist warmonger Gabriele D'Annunzio, got the nod for best biography while Michael Symmons Roberts' latest collection of poems, "Drysalter", won the poetry award.

Writer, lecturer and mental health nurse Nathan Filer won the Costa First Novel Award for "The Shock of the Fall", about a man's descent into madness as he becomes aware of his role in the boyhood death of his older brother.

Political cartoonist Chris Riddell took the children's book award for "Goth Girl and the Ghost of a Mouse", in which the girl of the title and a mouse named Ishmael team up to investigate the surprising secrets of the spooky mansion where she lives.

The Costa awards go to writers based in Britain or Ireland for a work published in the last year. They were established in 1971 by Whitbread but were renamed after Costa Coffee took over the sponsorship.

Each of the winners receives a prize of 5,000 pounds and is eligible for the Costa Book of the Year Award, which will be announced later this month.

Since the introduction of the Book of the Year Award in 1985, it has been won 11 times by a novel, four times by a first novel, five times by a biography, seven times by a collection of poetry and once by a children's book.—*Reuters*

***Kate Atkinson, author of ''Life After Life'', poses for photographers before the announcement of the 2013 Women's Prize for Fiction at the Royal Festival Hall in London in this 5 June, 2013 file photo.*—REUTERS**

# Lady Gaga says I did not matter unless I could perform

LONDON, 7 Jan — Pop star Lady Gaga says her hip injury last year made her realise that she had many fake friends, who used her for personal gain. The 27-year-old singer was forced to cancel most of her North American dates for the Born This Way Ball tour in order to undergo surgery to repair her hip last year, reported Contactmusic.

"My heart breaks from the people I have trusted and loved who I've worked so closely with, who have used me, lied to me, worked me into the ground for personal gain," Gaga posted to fans on a website.

"When I woke up in the hospital after my surgery there were many people that were not there. My health did not matter. I did not matter unless I could perform. This is a very hard lesson," she added.

*PTI*

***British singer Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart (R), former members of the Eurythmics, embrace after performing at the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Pop Music Awards in Beverly Hills, California in this 22 May, 2006 file photo.*—REUTERS**

# Eurythmics to reunite for Beatles tribute concert

LOS ANGELES, 7 Jan — British pop duo Eurythmics will reunite in Los Angeles later this month for a performance celebrating the 50th anniversary of The Beatles' appearance on the "Ed Sullivan Show", organizers said on Monday.

The duo consisting of singer Annie Lennox and musician Dave Stewart, who last toured together in 2000, will play songs by The Beatles in the 27 January concert organized by the Recording Academy, which hands out the annual Grammy Awards.

They will also share the stage with R&B singers Alicia Keys and John Legend and pop-rock group Maroon 5 in the concert that will be broadcast on CBS television on 9 February.

"The Night that Changed America: A Grammy Salute to The Beatles" pays homage to the Fab Four's February 1964 performances on the "Ed Sullivan Show," which is credited with launching rock music's so-called British Invasion.

Pop singer John Mayer and country singer Keith Urban will also perform at the tribute.

Grammy-winning Eurythmics released their first album in 1981 and have sold more than 75 million records. They broke up in 1990 but briefly re-formed to release a new album and tour in 1999. Best known for the 1983 hit "Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)" and "Here Comes the Rain Again" a year later, Eurythmics have performed sporadically together in the past decade.

*Reuters*

# Rihanna back in recording studio for eighth album

*R&B star Rihanna*

LOS ANGELES, 7 Jan — R&B star Rihanna is back in the recording studio working with producer DJ Mustard on her eighth album.

The 25-year-old We Found Love star is planning a duet with Katy Perry and has been working on her next, as-yet-untitled record, reported MTV online.

DJ Mustard said, "I'm finally going in the studio with Rihanna. I'm just doing what I think she would like, and if she does not like it we'll just figure out something else in the studio, and I'll just keep making beats till she figures it out. But she's going to get one".

DJ Mustard, real name Dijon McFarlane, has previously worked with the likes of Young Jeezy, BOB, Meek Mill and Bow Wow and has hinted at a more urban sound for Rihanna's next album.

In November last year, it was announced that the producer had signed with the singer's label, Jay Z's Roc Nation. Contributors on her last record, Unapologetic which was released in November 2012, included David Guetta, Sia and ex-boyfriend Chris Brown.

Fellow US superstar Katy Perry recently revealed that she was planning a duet with Rihanna in the near future, after years of speculation.—*PTI*

***Lady Gaga***

# Filmfare Awards to offer funny look at Bollywood's future

***Priyanka Chopra will be co-hosting this year's Filmfare Awards.***

MUMBAI, 7 Jan— The 59th Filmfare Awards this year will offer a glimpse into the future of Bollywood in a humorous way.

"Every year we try to do better. This year we will take a light-hearted peek into the future of Bollywood, may be of 10-20 years. The Awards this year are also about commemorating and paying tribute to unforgettable stars, films, songs, dialogue and celluloid memories," said Tarun Rai, CEO, Worldwide Media, publishers of *Filmfare* magazine.

In tune with the futuristic theme, the Award trophy has been digitally sculpted in 3D.

The trophy was unveiled today by actress Priyanka Chopra who, along with Ranbir Kapoor, will be hosting the ceremony to be held on 24 January at Yash Raj Studios.—*PTI*

SPORTS

# Honda perfect fit for struggling AC Milan

MILAN, 7 Jan — Japan playmaker Keisuke Honda will be the perfect medicine for struggling Italian Serie A giant AC Milan, the club's coach said on Sunday. A day before his team takes on Atalanta, manager Massimiliano Allegri told a Press conference that Honda can play behind explosive striker Mario Balotelli and be the spark his club needs to catch fire.

*AC Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri*

"First of all he is technically skilled. His game will broaden our offensive repertoire," Allegri said. "Even with three men up front, he will be the trigger for our attack (from midfield)."

"We have been lacking a player who can fill that position. I've seen what he's done for CSKA Moscow at the European level." Milan, who are 13th in the league, play Atalanta on Monday, and Honda, who underwent his physical on Sunday, is expected to make his Italy debut on 12 Jan at Sassuolo.—*Kyodo News*

*Keisuke Honda*

# West Ham sign defender Johnson on loan

LONDON, 7 Jan — West Ham United have signed defender Roger Johnson on loan from Wolverhampton Wanderers for the rest of the season, the Premier League club said on their website on Monday.

West Ham have slipped to second bottom of the table after a poor run of results that has coincided with injuries to several of their most experienced defenders.

The 30-year-old Johnson won the League Cup with Birmingham City in 2011 and helped Cardiff City reach the FA Cup final in 2008.

He joined Wolves in 2011 for a reported fee of 7 million pounds ($11.5 million) and made 42 Championship (second-tier) appearances for them last season before moving to Sheffield on Wednesday on loan. Johnson could go straight into the West Ham squad for Wednesday's League Cup semi-final first leg at Manchester City.

*Reuters*

*West Ham defender Roger Johnson*

# Woods to launch 2014 campaign at Torrey Pines

NEW YORK, 7 Jan— World number one Tiger Woods will launch his 2014 campaign at one of his favourite venues, having committed on Monday to play in this month's Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines, tournament organizers said. Woods won the event there for a record seventh time last year, ending a week of mainly dominant golf by clinching his 75th PGA Tour title by four shots.

It was the third different PGA Tour event where he has achieved the feat, having previously piled up seven wins apiece at the WGC-Bridgestone Invitational and the Arnold Palmer Invitational. Woods had been widely expected to officially commit to his title defence at the 23-26 January Farmers Insurance Open after being asked by reporters last month whether he expected to start the new season with more or less confidence than before.

"Well, I've done well at Torrey Pines," he replied, after losing a playoff to fellow American Zach Johnson for the Northwestern Mutual World Challenge which he hosts. "I've done pretty good. That's my first tournament back." Pressed on whether he ever experienced doubts heading into a fresh campaign, Woods replied: "Of course. I mean I've come off of long breaks.

"I've come off of surgeries, you know, whatever it may be. I've had my share of off-seasons, and I can tell you one thing, I'm looking forward to this one." Woods comes off a highly successful 2013 campaign, having won a season-high five times on the PGA Tour and earning the circuit Player of the Year accolade, as voted upon by his peers.

The only blemish on an otherwise impressive resume was his failure to add another major title to his career tally of 14, which has stalled since his remarkable playoff victory for the 2008 US Open at Torrey Pines.

"Pretty damn good year," Woods said of his 2013 season. "Five wins, and you know, on some pretty good venues, so very pleased with the year. I'm really excited about the major championships (in 2014).

"I've won at three of the four venues - Augusta National, Valhalla Golf Club (PGA Championship) and Royal Liverpool (British Open) - and on Pinehurst No 2 (US Open), I'm trending the right way, having finished third and second.

"But I still need to practise, work, grind and prepare, and have my game come together those four times a year. And I hope that will happen."

*Reuters*

*Tiger Woods of the US*

# Kaka brace breathes new life into Milan

MILAN, 7 Jan — Playmaker Kaka breathed new life into struggling AC Milan by scoring twice and 18-year-old Bryan Cristante claimed his first professional goal as they beat Atalanta 3-0 on Monday for only their fifth league win of the season.

Lazio beat Inter Milan 1-0 with a superb Miroslav Klose volley to give to give Edoardo Reja a winning start to his second stint as their coach and third-placed Napoli beat Sampdoria 2-0 thanks to a brace from Dries Mertens.

Hellas Verona won 3-1 at Udinese helped by two goals from Luca Toni, the first courtesy of a blunder from home goalkeeper Zeljko Brkic who allowed an apparently harmless shot to slip between his legs in the eighth minute.

The win took the promoted side into fifth place, above Inter. Parma defender Alessandro Lucarelli scored with a cheeky backheel following a corner as Roberto Donadoni's team came from behind to beat Torino 3-1 and striker Amauri scored his first goal of the season to complete the scoreline.

Bottom club Catania beat Bologna 2-0 in a relegation scrap and improving Genoa overcame lowly Sassuolo by the same score.

Napoli's win lifted them to 39 points from 18 games, two behind Roma who lost 3-0 at leaders Juventus on Sunday. Juventus have 49 points, a massive eight clear at the top.

Monday's games were played amid concern about Serie A leading goalscorer Giuseppe Rossi after he suffered a third injury to his troubled right knee in Fiorentina's 1-0 win over Livorno on Sunday.

Fourth-placed Fiorentina said that Rossi had sustained a second degree sprain to the medial collateral ligament. Although worrying, there was relief that he avoided damage to the anterior cruciate ligament, which has been operated on twice and cost him two years of his career.

*Reuters*

*AC Milan's Kaka shows a jersey celebrating his 100th goal for AC Milan during their Italian Serie A soccer match against Atalanta at the San Siro stadium in Milan on 6 Jan, 2014.*—REUTERS

# Serena should surpass 20 grand slam titles

SYDNEY, 7 Jan — World number one Serena Williams shows no sign of slowing down with age and should win more than 20 grand slam singles titles, former great Martina Navratilova has said.

The 57-year-old Navratilova who won 18 grand slam singles titles, and 41 in women's and mixed doubles, is also confident the 32-year-old Williams will equal her singles haul at the Australian Open, which begins next week in Melbourne.

"If she can stay healthy there is no doubt she can go into the 20s, the sky is the limit," Navratilova told reporters in Adelaide where she will play in the World Tennis Challenge exhibition later on Tuesday.

"I know how hard it is once you get to 30, all those little niggling injuries get worse and it's much easier to have an off day.

"But still, she is in her 30s ... she is eager and winning is very contagious — once you get really used to it, you don't want to let go of it." Australia's Margaret Court holds the overall record of 24 grand slam singles titles, while Germany's Steffi Graf won 22 titles in the Open era.

Williams is widely considered the best player of her generation and has been virtually unchallenged in the modern era, with her powerful game proving difficult to defuse for many counterparts on the WTA tour. The American, however, has also been hampered by a number of serious injuries, including a knee injury in 2010 and cut foot that forced her to miss almost a year on the tennis circuit in 2010-2011.

*Serena Williams*

Paradoxically it was those injury-enforced layoffs that could be helpful in prolonging her career, Navratilova suggested. "At age 30, she had played about half the tournaments than I had played at 30, so she is fresh in tennis terms," she said.

"She seems to be playing her best tennis right now." Former world number one Tracy Austin echoed Navratilova's sentiments and said she felt Williams, who beat rivals Maria Sharapova and Victoria Azarenka to win last week's Brisbane International, was being motivated by the record books.

*Reuters*

GENERAL

# Late double from Ronaldo seals flattering Real win

*Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo (C) celebrates his goal against Celta Vigo during their Spanish First Division soccer match at Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on 6 Jan, 2014. —*Reuters

Barcelona, 7 Jan — A late double from Cristiano Ronaldo put some gloss on a stuttering performance from Real Madrid as they beat Celta Vigo 3-0 to cut the gap at the top of La Liga to five points.

The pressure was on Real with leaders Barcelona and Atletico Madrid having won their first matches of the year.

However, with Ronaldo unusually quiet and record signing Gareth Bale only fit enough for the bench Real were frustrated by a Celta side who had several chances to score before Karim Benzema broke the deadlock midway through the second half.

Ronaldo poked in Real's second after 82 minutes and then thumped in his second of the night from substitute Bale's cross for his 400th career goal.

"It was not a good performance and we need to learn how to be tighter at the back," Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told a news conference. "We lacked balance as we had a lot of players going forward and were open to the counter-attack."

"Celta defended deeply and it wasn't easy but we should have been more balanced when we pressed."

Victory kept Real in pursuit of Barcelona and Atletico Madrid who are on 49 points after beating Elche and Malaga respectively.

*Reuters*

# Egg supply shortage continues in Australia amid bird flu outbreak

Hobart, (Australia), 7 Jan — The shortage in egg supplies continues to be felt across Australia on Monday as bird flu forced the shutdown of several chicken farms since before Christmas. In Hobart, capital of Tasmania, there are no egg of any kind for sale at about 5 pm on Monday in either of the two major supermarkets of Woolworths and Coles.

A sales staff from Coles in Newtown Shopping Center said the shortage is Australian-wide and is the result of a bird flu outbreak before Christmas.

In Canberra, the varieties of eggs in Aldi supermarket has been reduced, with 700g caged eggs disappearing from shelf for at least two weeks. Sydney Morning Herald reported earlier that about 450,000 chickens have been destroyed at a free range and caged egg farm in Young, New South Wales (NSW), creating a national shortfall, which will cause prices to rise and take six to 12 months to abate.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries said the virus is not the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain, which has killed humans, nor is it closely related. But it has significantly dented supply and put pressure on prices.—*Xinhua*

# India-Maldives ties strong after president visit

Colombo, 7 Jan — Maldives president Abdulla Yameen has affirmed strong ties with India during his visit last week, which resulted in a string of agreements between the two countries, according to local media. Yameen returned to the Maldives after an official trip to India, where the two countries made multiple mutual agreements of cooperation for the development of various sectors.

Speaking to media upon his return, both Vice President Mohamed Jameel Ahmed and Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) leader and former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom have claimed that ties with India have become "as strong as they were during Gayoom's time in power."

It was claimed that rifts between the countries had risen as a result of the failure of former presidents Mohammad Nasheed and Mohammad Waheed administrations to raise intercountry discussion as a key strategy, reported local media outlet *Minivan News*.

Upon returning from his trip, President Yameen briefed the media on the various deliberations that had taken place between the Maldivian government's high-level delegation and their counterparts in India during the trip from 1-4 January. He stated that the delegation was able to find solutions for "a large part of the major difficulties" the country is facing at the moment, predicting ease in the obtainment of visa and the availability of basic food staples, fuel and construction material. He added that long deliberations had also been held regarding regional maritime security.

Yameen revealed that talks had been held with representatives from the State Bank of India (SBI) regarding the granting of an increase in the amount of loans released by the bank's branch in the Maldives — titled "portfolio landing." The president stated that this would benefit customers of SBI and businesses investing in the country.

"Indian leaders pledged to provide approximately 1 billion dollars needed for development of the Maldives to SBI, and that this will facilitate businesses in the country in the near future, " member of the visiting delegation and government coalition partner Maldives Development Alliance (MDA) leader Ahmed Shiyam stated.

Shiyam went on to describe the trip as "the most successful trip a Maldivian leader has ever made to India." President Yameen stated on Saturday that GMR — the Indian infrastructure giant whose contract for development of a Male airport was scrapped by the former administration — would not be given back the project as compensation for canceling the agreement, but rather would be given monetary compensation.—*Xinhua*

## MYANMAR TV

(8-1-2014, Wednesday)

**6:00 am**
1. Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

**6:10 am**
2. Mytta Pawana By Min gun Sayaw Phayagyi

**6:30 am**
3. Physical Exercise

**6:40 am**
4. Documentary

**7:00 am**
5. News/Weather Report

**7:20 am**
6. Teleplay

**7:40 am**
7. Documentary

**8:00 am**
8. News/ International News

**8:30 am**
9. India Drama Series

**9:00 am**
10. News/ International News

**9:25 am**
11. Sing A Song

**10:00 am**
12. News

**10:15 am**
13. Sing A Song

**10:25 am**
14. Pyi Thu Ni Ti

**10:50 am**
15. Approaching Science Discovery World

**11:10 am**
16. Famous Songs of Sandaya Hla Htut

**12:00 am**
17. News/ International News/ Weather Report

**12:30 pm**
18. Myanmar Movies

**3:00 pm**
19. News

**3:15 pm**
20. India Drama Series

**4:00 pm**
21. News

**4:15 pm**
22. India Drama Series

**4:30 pm**
23. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Second Year (Chemistry)

**5:00 pm**
24. News

**5:15 pm**
25. Documentary

**5:30 pm**
26. India Drama Series

**6:00 pm**
27. News/Weather Report

**6:20 pm**
28. Shwe Yin Chone Than

**6:50 pm**
29. Kyae Pwint Myaye Yin Khone Than

**7:00 pm**
30. News

**7:30 pm**
31. Teleplay

**8:00 pm**
32. News/ International News/ Weather Report

**8:35 pm**
33. People Talks

**8:50 pm**
34. Hit Song of Stars

**9:00 pm**
35. News
36. Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competitions
37. India Drama Series

## MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

8-1-14 07:00 am ~ 9-1-14 07:00 am) MST

* Local News
* Bagan: The Land of Pagoda
* World News
* School for the Blind
* Local News
* Welcome to the Southern most part of Myanmar
* World News
* Myanmar Movie Review "Superb"
* Local News
* A Day in the life of the Pa-O Family
* World News
* Wholesale Fish
* Local News
* Unique Pattern of Myanma... A Trend of Chin Traditional Dress
* World News
* Myanmar Masterclass: Still Life (Glass)
* Local News
* Paper Products... Plain but Pretty
* World News
* A Traditional Doctor
* Local News
* Sittway, Evergreen Seaside Town
* World News
* Myanmar Masterclass: Impressionism
* Local News
* Archery Session (from Ramayana Play)
* World News
* In The Studio: LCO
* Local News
* Lannakha Waterfall
* World News
* Green Grocer

*Bulgarian men perform the traditional Bulgarian "Horo" dance in the icy water to celebrate the Epiphany Day and the Iordanoff day, in Kalofer, Bulgaria, on 6 Jan, 2014. —*Xinhua

# 5.0-magnitude quake hits South Indian Ocean — USGS

Hong Kong, 7 Jan — An earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale jolted South Indian Ocean at 01:00:58 Hong Kong Time on Tuesday (17:00:58 GMT on Monday), the US Geological Survey said.

The epicentre, with a depth of 10.0 km, was initially determined to be at 37.2866 degrees south latitude and 52.2075 degrees east longtitude.—*Xinhua*

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The New Light of Myanmar

Wednesday, 8 January, 2014

# Establishment of parliamentarian friendship associations discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan— Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann received Mr. Ichiro Aisawa, MP of Japanese House of Representatives and Chairman of the Committee on Rules and Administration, and MPs from Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Democratic Party and Japan Restoration Party at the Hluttaw building, here, today morning.

During the discussions, they focused on formation of parliamentarian friendship associations between the two parliaments of

*(See page 9)*

# Forum held on rural development, poverty eradication in ASEAN countries

***Forum on rural development and poverty alleviation in ASEAN countries in progress.*—MNA**

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan— A forum on rural development and poverty alleviation in ASEAN countries was held at the Myanmar Peace Center in Yangon this morning, while a meeting on selecting development partnership organizations also took place.

Union Minister at the President Office U Soe Thane said that efforts are being made to ensure rural development and poverty reduction are tackled through a socioeconomic framework that calls for the active participation of the public in carrying out the tasks.

Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint said that in line with the millennium development goals aiming at rural development, improvement of the socioeconomic status of rural people and narrowing the gap between rural-urban inequality in the country was a priority.

The Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development said it has been striving for rural sustainable development, laying down policies on food sufficiency and food safety, construction works for roads and bridges in rural areas, access to safe, clean drinking water, sanitation, electricity supply in rural areas, vocational development, meat sector development and private production of meat, fish and prawn.

Following the forum and the meeting, the Union Ministers listened to reports on a variety of issues that were discussed, including the establishment of development partnership organizations and the selection of NGOs/CSOs.

*MNA (Edited by Kerstin Winter)*

## Summary of observations at 9:30 hrs M.S.T on 7 Jan

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan— During the past 24 hours, light rain has been isolated in Taninthayi Region, weather has been partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Night temperatures were about January average temperatures in the whole country, announced by Meteorology and Hydrology Department.—*NLM*

# Myanmar Gems Emporium in Nay Pyi Taw sparks great interest

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan— The second day of the Myanma Gems Emporium in Nay Pyi Taw's Maniyadana Jade Hall sparked great interest among experts as over 2,800 jade lots and more than 150 gem lots will be auctioned off.

The sale, which coincides with the fifth anniversary get-together ceremony of the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association, will run until January 10.

As part of the agenda, Union Minister for Mines Dr Myint Aung, a Patron of the Association, made a speech with Chairman of the Association U Teza and President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Win Aung expressing their best wishes to organizers.

The event included a report by a senior auditor about the financial situation of the Association, followed by a question-and-answer session.

*MNA (Edited by Kerstin Winter)*

# Myanmar, India to solve demarcation issue amicably

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan — Myanmar and India have vowed to amicably sort out their differences over a border area which has not yet been demarcated, after India halted construction of an Integrated Check Post there on 2 January.

Teams from both countries carried out a joint land survey, inspecting the area on 6 January.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two countries will solve the issue amicably and cooperate on all levels.

In December and May last year Myanmar voiced its objections about the so-called Integrated Check

Post-ICP construction work by India near the border pillar No.78.

Myanmar signed a demarcation agreement with India on 10 March, 1967.

However, due to differences over the location of border pillars in Bamaw valley, several border marks have not yet been established.

*MNA (Edited by Kerstin Winter)*

# Syria rebels kill 34 foreign fighters in northwest: monitor

BEIRUT, 7 Jan—Syrian rebels have killed 34 foreign fighters from al Qaeda-linked groups in the northwest of the country over the last three days, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said on Tuesday.The killings in the Jabal al-Zawiya region appeared to be part of the wider confrontation by an alliance of rebels against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), across rebel-held territories of northern and eastern Syria.

Observatory director Rami Abdulrahman said most of the 34 dead were ISIL fighters, along with some others from an allied group called Jund al-Aqsa. They were captured, separated from Syrian fighters, and killed, he said.

It was not possible to verify the report independently due to reporting restrictions in Syria, where President Bashar al-Assad's forces have been battling rebels in a nearly three-year conflict which has killed more than 100,000 people.

The latest infighting between Assad's foes erupted four days ago in the northern provinces of Aleppo and Idlib, fuelled by resentment against ISIL's radical Islamist agenda and a turf war near the Turkish border for strongholds which control supply routes into northern Syria.The fighting has also spread to the eastern city of Raqqa, the only Syrian city under full rebel control.

The Syrian Network for Human Rights, another opposition monitoring group, said on Monday 71 ISIL fighters, 20 rival rebels and 26 civilians had been killed in the fighting to oust ISIL in Raqqa and other parts of Syria since Friday.—*Reuters*

***People inspect a site hit by what activists said was an airstrike by forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in the Duma neighbourhood of Damascus 7 January 2014.*—REUTERS**