

Bago-Sittoung Canal upgraded to benefit 150,000 people in the vicinity of canal and Waw, Thanatpin Tsps



President U Thein Sein greets local people at the ceremony to mark the start of upgrade works for Bago-Sittoung canal.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb — President U Thein Sein attended a launching ceremony to mark the start of upgrade works for Bago-Sittoung canal held near Lay-ein-su village in Waw Township of Bago Region Sunday morning.

First, Union Minister

for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing and the Bago Region Chief Minister reported on plans to upgrade the canal and benefits from the canal upgrade.

In his address, the President said the canal benefiting local people by preventing floods in farmlands will

be upgraded with the use of State's budget in response to the public request, vowing to complete the upgrading works before upcoming rainy season.

He called for participation of local people in the upgrading works. Upon completion, there would be

improvement in socio-economic status of local people, thereby bringing achievements to the government's rural development and poverty reduction scheme, he added.

Next, the President and Union Ministers U Soe Thane and U Ohn Myint

presented foodstuff to staff, construction workers and locals.

After the launching ceremony, the President observed sluice gates and heard reports at the briefing hall. The 37-mile and seven-furlong Bago-Sittoung (See page 8)

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Bago-Sittoung Canal expansion to bring benefits to local people

Byline: Sein Hlaing Bo

Adequate crop protection against floods in the rainy season is of paramount importance to an agro-based country like Myanmar. So, the government is carrying out construction of dams and sluice gates, watercourse conservation and silt dredging along the waterway as prioritized flood preventive measures.

Preparation for the upgrade of Bago-Sittoung canal started on 23 February. I had a chance to interview Deputy Director U Nyunt Htay, in-charge of construction work. Let me tell readers about the upgrading tasks.

Construction of Ba-

go-Sittoung canal linking Bago River near Tarwa village in Thanatpin Township with Sittoung River near Myitkyo village in Waw Township in Bago Region was completed in 1878 and it was 37 miles and seven furlongs long, 150 feet wide and 10 feet in depth at that time. Today, 136 years after its completion, the canal needs to be upgraded as only a length of 20 feet along the canal stands in its original position when it was opened. Its water storage capacity has decreased, causing floods in the nearby paddy fields due to the silty bottom of the canal. That's why, plans are underway to upgrade its sluice gates and

spillway and to built dykes and water structures along the passage by the government.

Dredging for up-grade of Bago-Sittoung canal in progress with the use of heavy machinery.

Its prioritized tasks that are scheduled to complete within four months are silt dredging, building dykes

and channels and upgrading water structures.

Its original aim in colonial era was to accommo-

date timber rafts. No major repairs were made during the successive periods.

(See page 8)



LOCAL NEWS

More drug related cases exposed in Shan State (North) in 2013 in comparison with previous years

LASHIO, 23 Feb—Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control is striving with utmost efforts for eliminating narcotic drugs across the nation including border regions.

In Shan State (North), Special Anti-Drug Squads are operating their tasks in time to carry out drug elimination.

In 2011, a total of 719 men and 167 women totalling 886 suspects were arrested in 636 drug related cases in Shan State (North).

In 2012, the state exposed 952 drug related cases arresting 1024 men and 179 women totalling 1203 suspects.

In 2013, a total of 1350 men and 1014 women in 1228 drug related cases were arrested.

The police exposed a larger number of drug-related cases and arrested larger number of women in the cases. Most of the cases exposed in Shan State (North) were related to heroin, opium, stimulant tablets and pseudo-

ephedrine cases.

In 2013, the authorities concerned and police force captured three opium refineries in Manlin Village of Hsenwi Township, Shaukhaw Village in Kutkai Township and Monesi Village of Kutkai Township in Shan State (North), according to the Shan State (North) Anti-Drug Police Corps.

MMAL-Han Htay (IPRD)

NATOGYI, 23 Feb—Dragon fruits grown on a commercial scale in Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines are now cultivated in Pyinsi, Kanna villages and Natogyi successfully.

Therefore, the local people expand cultivable lands for dragon fruits from the manageable to commercial scale.

The local people sell dragon fruit at a price of ranging from K 500 to K 1000.

Due to marketable demands, the people grow dragon fruits. In deed, the plants are thriving in Popa region, Shan, Mon and Kayin States.

Eating dragon fruits may prevent colon cancer, diabetes, cholesterol and others.

It has effectiveness on so beauty for skin of women.

Among three kinds of fruits white, red and yellow, white species is the most delicious.

Each sapling of dragon

Dragon fruits to occupy market in Natogyi Township



fruit is sold at K 1500 to K 2000, said U Myint Thein engaged in cultivation

and production of dragon fruits.—MMAL-Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)

Photo shows thriving dragon fruit plants in Natogyi.

Population, housing, census taking process explained

KARATHURI, 23 Feb—A ceremony to explain population, housing and taking census process was held at the hall of Basic Education High School branch in Karathuri Sub-Township in Taninthayi Region on 16 February morning. Secretary of District Census Taking Committee U Win Bo, Assistant Director of District Immigration and National Population Department, explained census taking process in the entire nation. The secretary replied to queries.

MMAL-Karathuri IPRD

Cash donated to social associations in Meiktila

MEIKTILA, 23 Feb—In memory of late retired headmaster U Tun Oo, his wife Daw Khin Yi and family of Ye Manhon family of Nandawgon ward in Meiktila donated cash and laptops and printers to social associations on 22 February at Wunzin Hotel of Meiktila Township. U Chit Min Tun explained the purpose of donations. The wellwisher presented laptop computers and printers to Meiktila District General Administration Department, Office of Meiktila District Police Force and Meiktila District Special Crime Combating Squad. The wellwisher gave K 500,000 each to

Home for the aged, Myitta Yekyi Clinic, Parahita Orphanage, East School for the Blind, Township Development Affairs Committee, No 35 Police Battalion, Basic Education High School No 1, K 200,000 to Zeyathiri Social Association (Pyithaya), U Myint Htwe and U Khin Nan and 88 Old Students Group, K 500,000 to Shwe Thinkha Education Organization, Karuna Hands Clinic K 100,000, totalling K 6.3 million including laptops and printers. On behalf of the social organizations, U Ba Htein, Chairman of Myitta Yekyi clinic spoke words of thanks.

NLM-018

Vehicle overturns out of control in Magway Region

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb—Acting on tip-off, police of Kanma police station inspected the overturned vehicle near Magyi Thonbin Village of Pauk-Pakokku Road on 21

February morning.

A Canter driven by Zin Ko Win of Mongon Village in Pauk Township, Magway Region heading for Pakokku from Pauk, hit the signboard bearing Magyi Thonbin

Dam due to out of control.

In the incident, Daw Than Kyi, 55 of Mongon Village, U Kyi Win of Mingaung Village and U Myint Maung of Kyudaw Village were injures at

various parts of the body.

Kanma Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against driver Zin Ko Win under the law.

MMAL-Police Information

Directives of Chief Justice of the Union clarified in Hpa-an

HPA-AN, 23 Feb—A ceremony to recount experiences obtained from the 6th work coordination meeting between the Supreme Court of the Union and region/state courts from 6 to 8 February at the hall of Kayin State High Court in Hpa-an of Yangon Region recently.

Chief Justice of Kayin State High Court U Saw San Lin shared experiences and explained the directives on judicial affairs by the Chief Justice of the Union. He heard reports on judicial affairs and office works by the district and township judges.

Later, the judges of the state high court and the judicial officer court



affairs.—MMAL-Tun Tun Htwe (Hpa-an)

Chief Justice of Kayin State High Court U Saw San Lin explains experiences of the meeting.

WORLD

TPP countries continue talks to clinch deal in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 23 Feb — The 12 nations involved in Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade negotiations continued efforts on Sunday to clinch a deal at a ministerial meeting in Singapore, with each country engaging in bilateral talks on the margin of a plenary session.

Japan is expected to hold bilateral meetings with Canada, Mexico and New Zealand on the second day of the four-day gathering, said Akira Amari, the country's minister in charge of the TPP.

As for talks with the United States, which have been deadlocked due to dif-

ferences over tariff removal and automotive issues, Amari said the two sides will continue working-level discussions on Sunday, after he and US Trade Representative Michael Froman failed to make any progress over the thorny issues the day before.

At a plenary session, the 12 Pacific Rim countries are slated to discuss investment and financial services.

"Things are going relatively well" with countries other than the United States, Amari told reporters Sunday morning.

Kyodo News



Akira Amari (L), Japan's minister in charge of the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade talks, and trade ministers from 11 countries sit for the first day session of their four-day meeting in Singapore on 22 Feb, 2014.

KYODO NEWS

UN Security Council adopts Syria aid resolution out of "grave alarm"



United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (C) speaks after the UN Security Council voted on a draft resolution regarding the situation in Syria, at the UN headquarters in New York, on 22 Feb, 2014. The UN Security Council on Saturday unanimously adopted a resolution which calls for an immediate and unhindered access of humanitarian aid in war-torn Syria, where armed conflict has been going on for nearly three years. —XINHUA

UNITED NATIONS, 23 Feb — The UN Security Council in an unusual Saturday session unanimously approved a resolution,

which "demands rapid, safe and unhindered access" of humanitarian aid in war-torn Syria, out of the 15-nation UN body's

"grave alarm" at the worsening humanitarian situation in the Middle East country.

The resolution expressed "grave alarm at the significant and rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria, in particular the dire situation of hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in besieged areas, most of whom are besieged by the Syrian armed forces and some by opposition groups, as well as the dire situation of over 3 million people in hard-to-reach areas."

It asked UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to report back in 30 days and every 30 days thereafter, "on the implementation of this resolution by all parties in Syria ... (and) expresses its intent to take further steps in the case of

non-compliance."

Recent humanitarian truces were broken by attacks on those delivering aid.

The new resolution, sponsored by Australia, Jordan and Luxembourg, appeared more even-handed and rather than condemn Syria demanding "that all parties, in particular the Syrian Authorities" open humanitarian access to all victims.

Nearly half the country's population of more than 22 million people is in need of aid and there are more than 2.5 million refugees in neighboring countries.

More than 100,000 people have died in the Syrian conflict, which followed a political crisis that broke out in March 2011.

Xinhua

Out-of-service train hits maintenance car, derails in Kawasaki

YOKOHAMA, 23 Feb — An out-of-service train derailed near Kawasaki Station, south of Tokyo, on the JR Keihin Tohoku Line early Sunday after colliding with a maintenance car, slightly injuring the motorman and conductor on the train.

The train hit the maintenance car standing on the same track at around 1:10 am, with the first two cars of the train derailing and overturning.

According to East Japan Railway Co, the driver of the maintenance car was safe after jumping out just before the collision.

The derailed train had been running at a speed of about 60 kilometers per hour at the time of the accident. The motorman applied the brake in vain after noticing the maintenance car about 100 to 200 meters ahead. The maintenance car entered the track without confirming safety, according to JR East.

Kyodo News

Iraq announces 72-hour ceasefire in Fallujah

BAGHDAD, 23 Feb — The Iraqi government on Saturday declared a 72-hour ceasefire in the city of Fallujah to give a chance for the peaceful efforts to clear the city from al-Qaeda militants, according to a government statement.

"The military operations against selected targets of terrorist groups in Fallujah have been halted for 72 hours starting from Friday night until 6:00 pm local time (1500 GMT) on 24 February," the defense ministry said in a statement.

The statement warned al-Qaeda militants of using mortar rounds to bomb troops, civilians, government institutions and hospitals.

The decision came in response to the request from the people of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, and as a gesture of goodwill by the armed forces which came to protect the people of the city from the terrorist organization, the statement added.

It also called on the people of Fallujah, its clerics and tribal leaders to isolate the terrorist groups and expel them from their city to allow residents to return to their homes and normal life.

Anbar Province, which includes Fallujah and the provincial capital city of Ramadi, has been the scene of fierce clashes that flared up after Iraqi police dismantled an anti-government protest site outside Ramadi in late December last year.

Iraq is witnessing its worst violence in recent years. According to the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, a total of 8,868 Iraqis, including 7,818 civilians and civilian police personnel, were killed in 2013, the highest annual death toll in years. —Xinhua



G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors pose for group photo after a closed-door conference in Sydney, Australia, on 22 Feb, 2014. The G20 meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors was held here on Saturday. —XINHUA

Crown Prince turns 54, sees Constitution as basis of Japan's peace

TOKYO, 23 Feb — Crown Prince Naruhito said prior to turning 54 on Sunday that the postwar Constitution has played a vital role to ensure peace in Japan and make the country prosperous.

"Today's Japan was built with the Japanese Constitution as the cornerstone, and our country is now enjoying peace and prosperity," the crown prince said at a press conference prior to his birthday.

Vowing to continue "respecting the Constitution" and act in compliance with it, the crown prince, who is first in line to the throne, echoed the remarks of his father, Emperor Akihito, who also underlined the importance of the current pacifist Constitution in a press conference marking his 80th birthday late last year.

Under the Constitution, the emperor serves as a symbol of the state and has no authority over national political affairs.

As for Princess Aiko, his only child with Crown Princess Masako, he expressed hope his daughter will grow while being thankful and sensitive to other people, and become someone who can make her own decisions. The 12-year-old princess will graduate from Gakushuin Primary School in Tokyo in spring.

Kyodo News



An overpass is seen through smog in Shijiazhuang, capital of north China's Hebei Province, on 23 Feb, 2014. China's top meteorological authority, National Meteorological Center (NMC), on Sunday continued to warn of smoggy weather that has battered parts of China for days. Smog will persist from Sunday morning till Monday morning in Beijing and Tianjin municipalities, as well as parts of Hebei, Shandong, Henan, Shanxi and Shaanxi Provinces, the NMC said.—XINHUA

Militants shoot down Iraqi helicopter and occupy northern town

BAGHDAD, 23 Feb — Militants shot down a helicopter on Saturday and briefly occupied a town, in an escalating turf war with Iraq's government that has killed at least 25 people in two days, police said.

All four crew members were killed when their helicopter was downed during a reconnaissance flight over the town of Karma in Iraq's western Province of Anbar, where the army is engaged in a standoff with anti-government fighters.

Sunni Islamist insurgents have been gaining ground in Iraq over the past year and in recent weeks overran several towns, raising the stakes in a conflict against the Shi'ite-led government that made last year the deadliest since



A member of the Iraqi security forces patrols with his weapon in Sulaiman Pek, 160 km (99 miles) north of Baghdad, on 21 Feb, 2014.

REUTERS

sectarian civil strife began to abate in 2008.

Late on Friday, dozens of militants in SUVs drove into the small town of al-Sainiyah, near Baiji, some 180 km (110 miles)

north of Baghdad, after bombing the local police headquarters, and fought troops for several hours overnight, witnesses said.

At least four policemen and two Sunni

government-backed militia members were killed in the fighting, officials said.

The militants raised the black flag of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) over government buildings in the town, recording their victory on video, before withdrawing on Saturday morning.

"The attack started at 7:30 pm (Friday) when we heard intense gunfire and successive mortar explosions near the police department. This situation lasted for around three hours," a resident called Yasser told Reuters by telephone.

He said the militants drove around the town all night, blasting religious anthems glorifying ISIL from their cars.

Reuters

Mexico captures No 1 drug kingpin 'Shorty' Guzman

MAZATLAN, 23 Feb — Mexico's most wanted man, drug cartel kingpin Joaquin "Shorty" Guzman, was captured on Saturday with help from US agencies in a major victory for the government in a long, grisly war.

Guzman, known as "El Chapo" (Shorty) in Spanish, has long run Mexico's infamous Sinaloa Cartel and over the past decade he emerged as one of the world's most powerful organized crime bosses, even making it onto Forbes' list of billionaires.

He was caught in his native northwestern state of Sinaloa in an early morning

operation without a shot being fired, Attorney General Jesus Murillo Karam said.

It is a political triumph for President Enrique Pena Nieto, who took office in late 2012. Pena Nieto confirmed the capture via Twitter earlier on Saturday and congratulated his security forces. The US government also applauded the arrest.

Guzman's cartel has smuggled billions of dollars worth of cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamines into the United States, and fought vicious turf wars with other Mexican gangs.

He pioneered the use of sophisticated underground

Blast in Russia kills three, authorities suspect gas

MOSCOW, 23 Feb — An explosion that investigators said may have been caused by gas killed three people at a shopping complex in Russia's remote Altai region in southern Siberia on Sunday, law enforcement authorities said.

Russian authorities are on alert for any attacks during the 2014 Winter Olympics, which end on Sunday in the Black Sea resort city of Sochi. Initial reports gave no information about the cause of the blast, raising fears it could have been a bombing.—Reuters

253 mln holiday trips on China's trains

BEIJING, 23 Feb — China's railways have sped passengers to their destinations 253 million times since this year's "chunyun" began 38 days ago, China Railway Corporation (CRC) said Sunday. On Saturday, 7.73 million journeys were made on Chinese railways, and 7.5 million are expected for Sunday. The corporation said it would run 487 extra trains on Sunday to cope.

China's transport system is put to the test during chunyun, the 40-day travel period around the Spring Festival which started on 16 Jan this year. Although chunyun is nearing its end, the number of daily trips will remain high until 24 Feb as students and workers get back to their daily toil. Migrant workers usually go to their hometowns for family reunions at New Year and return to the cities following the festivities.—Xinhua



Joaquin "Shorty" Guzman (C) is escorted by soldiers during a presentation at the Navy's airstrip in Mexico City on 22 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

tunnels to smuggle drug shipments across the border and also became a major narcotics exporter to Europe and Asia in recent years.

Nearly 80,000 people have been killed in the last seven years with much of the violence in western and northern regions that have long been key smuggling routes.

Many of the victims are tortured and beheaded and their bodies dumped in a public place or in mass graves. The violence has ravaged border cities and even beach resorts such as Acapulco.

Reuters

WORLD

Child killed, 35 people wounded in attack on Thai protesters

BANGKOK, 23 Feb — A 5-year-old child was killed and around 35 people were wounded in a shooting and grenade attack Saturday night at an antigovernment rally site in the eastern Thailand province of Trat, authorities said on Sunday.

The attack occurred around 9:30 pm as antigovernment protesters were gathered at a night market

in Khao Saming District.

The Public Health Ministry said the child was shot in the neck and died on Sunday morning. Five of the injured were in serious condition.

According to media reports, a group of gunmen on two pickup trucks opened fire and lobbed grenades as they passed by the rally site and sped away. No arrests

were reported.

Meanwhile, government supporters held a rally in Nakhon Ratchasima Province in northeastern Thailand on Sunday in a show of support for the caretaker government led by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Representatives of the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship

(UDD), the so-called Red-shirts, denounced antigovernment protesters led by former Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban for blocking government agencies in a bid to paralyze the Yingluck government.

Speaking at the rally, UDD President Thida Thawornseth vowed the UDD will not use violence to pursue its political goals.

Yingluck continued to stay out of the public view on Sunday, using her official Facebook account over the past several days to keep in touch with the Thai people.

The attack in Trat was one of the most violent since the antigovernment protests began in late November.

Previous attacks on

protesters primarily occurred at the main rally sites in Bangkok, with a grenade attack in the center of the capital on Friday night wounding six people.

Since the political violence started at the end of November, 16 people have been killed and 695 injured, according to the Bangkok Emergency Medical Service.—Kyodo News

Approval rating for Abe's Cabinet stands at 53.9%

Tokyo, 23 Feb — The approval rating for the Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stands at 53.9 percent, down 2.0 percentage points from the previous poll in late January, a Kyodo News survey showed Sunday. In the nationwide telephone survey conducted over the weekend, 66.8 percent opposed relaxing Japan's arms export controls, while 25.7 percent expressed support.

Japan has adopted "three principles" on arms exports blocking the transfer of weapons to communist states, countries subject to embargoes under UN resolutions, and those involved in international conflicts. Meanwhile, 65.6 percent said it is inevitable for Japan to agree to tariff cuts in the ongoing talks for the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade pact, while 26.2 percent said Japan should not agree to such cuts.—Kyodo News



Chinese writer and Nobel laureate Mo Yan (R) speaks at a Press conference in Istanbul, Turkey, on 22 Feb. Mo Yan, who is taking a week-long tour to Turkey, called on the Chinese and Turkish governments Saturday to make further efforts in translating more works in a bid to increase better understanding and friendship between the people of the two countries.

XINHUA

Mo Yan calls in Turkey for more literature translation

ISTANBUL, 23 Feb — Chinese Nobel laureate Mo Yan on Saturday called on the Chinese and Turkish governments to make further efforts in translating more works in a bid to increase better understanding and friendship between the people of the two countries.

The Chinese writer made the statement at a press conference in Istanbul where he has spent five days in a week tour as the

last guest of "100 Chinese Intellectuals" invited by the Turkish government.

"Reading books is a kind of in-depth understanding by the people of different countries," he said, noting "the main problem between the two countries in the field of literature is the lack of the translated books."

"I could have chance to read only the books of Orhan Pamuk as he was the

only Turkish writer whose books have been translated into Chinese and Turkish readers most probably only read my book," he said.

Mo Yan visited Orhan Pamuk, the Turkish 2006 Nobel prize winner in literature, in his private library on Friday evening. The two Nobel laureates agreed to contribute more to accelerate the translations of the both countries' literature works. "I am sure

that Orhan Pamuk would support the translation projects. I want my visit to Turkey to be a breaking point in that context," he said. Mo Yan said that he gathered memories and materials during his Turkey's visit to be used in his future book. "I would most probably use the ancient cultural touch of Hagia Sofia as the main venue in my future book."

Xinhua

Voting under way in Yamaguchi gubernatorial election

YAMAGUCHI, (Japan), 23 Feb — Voting in the Yamaguchi gubernatorial election started on Sunday morning, with three newcomers vying to succeed Shigetaro Yamamoto as governor following his resignation due to illness.

The three candidates are Tsugumasa Muraoka, 41, a former bureaucrat of the Internal Affairs and Communications Ministry; Naoko Fujii, 61, a former member of the Shunan city assembly in the western Japan prefecture; and Tsutomu Takamura, 39, a former House of Representatives member.

Kyodo News

Six die in house fire in northern Spain

MADRID, 23 Feb — At least 6 people were confirmed dead in Spain on Saturday following a fire in a house in the village of Tordomar in the province of Burgos in northern Spain.

The six victims, who all come from the same family were staying in the rural holiday home when the fire, which was thought to have been caused by a spark from a chimney falling on a sofa in which all of the victims are thought to have fallen victim to smoke inhalation.

The victims were three women aged 59, 36 and 35-year-old and three children aged between four and six. Meanwhile five people were injured in the fire, including a seven month old baby and two adults.

Xinhua

Bikini Atoll radiation survivor continues antinuclear fight

Tokyo, 23 Feb — An 80-year-old former crew member of a tuna fishing boat exposed to radiation from a US atomic test 60 years ago has vowed to continue his personal crusade against nuclear energy for the rest of his life, despite a series of illnesses including liver cancer.

Matashichi Oishi was aboard the Fukuryu Maru No 5 when it was exposed to nuclear fallout from a US hydrogen bomb test on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands in the northern Pacific Ocean on 1 March, 1954, while fishing about 160 kilometers east of the atoll.

He has written articles on the experience and fears

of the so-called "death ash," including a book titled "The Day the Sun Rose in the West," and given more than 700 speeches.

Oishi was hospitalized in the spring of 2012 after a stroke. "It's over," he said to his daughter, Yoshiko Tanaka, when she visited him at the hospital.

"My father is strong-willed but was shocked" by the disease, Tanaka, 53, recalled. Oishi became unapproachable after the exposure incident, but his outlook softened after he met various people through his activities against nuclear energy, she said.

Though Oishi was shocked by the stroke that left him unable to walk or

speak, he devoted himself to physical therapy thanks to encouragement from visitors at the hospital. Seven months later, he walked, with a cane, out of the hospital.

"Nuclear disasters, such as the Fukushima Daiichi plant accident, may continue to occur," Oishi said. "As authorities will try to hide them, I will have to pass on (fears of nuclear energy). I will do so until the end."

In January, Oishi delivered a speech at a junior high school in Tokyo on the effects of exposure to radiation, such as serious blisters, dizziness, nausea and loss of hair.

Kyodo News



Photo taken on 19 Jan, 2014 shows Matashichi Oishi (L), a former crew member of the Fukuryu Maru No 5, and his daughter, Yoshiko Tanaka, standing in front of the trawler preserved and displayed at the Daigo Fukuryu Maru Exhibition Hall run by the Tokyo metropolitan government in Tokyo's Koto Ward. The tuna fishing boat was exposed to nuclear fallout from a US hydrogen bomb test on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands on 1 March, 1954, while fishing about 160 kilometers east of the atoll. —KYODO NEWS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Thirteen billboards, one paint-shop worker helped defeat union at VW plant in Chattanooga



A general view of the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee on 14 Feb, 2014. — REUTERS

WASHINGTON / CHATTANOOGA, 23 Feb — In the aftermath of the United Auto Workers' crushing defeat in a vote to represent workers at Volkswagen's sole US factory, a key question remains unanswered: did conservative politicians and anti-union groups work together to stymie the union?

In an appeal to the National Labor Relations Board on Friday, the UAW said there was a

"coordinated effort" by state politicians, anti-union groups and Tennessee's US Senator Bob Corker to coerce a no vote in the 12-14 February election.

The union's NLRB filing offered scant detail to support the allegation, and Reuters interviews with more than a dozen players over the past week also provide no evidence of close contacts either between the politicians and the groups or among the

groups themselves.

However, through the interviews a more complete picture emerges of how at least five national organizations and one grassroots group — all apparently operating independently — mounted a formidable threat to the UAW and helped thwart what many initially viewed as the favorite to win the election.

How that loose coalition was able to help defeat

the UAW could provide a blueprint for conservative groups to oppose the union as it presses on with its campaign for representation in its first foreign-owned auto plant in the US South.

Central to the anti-union effort in Chattanooga, Tennessee was an attempt to win not just the hearts and minds of auto workers but also those of their friends and families.

Reuters

E-cig industry on tenterhooks ahead of US regulation

WASHINGTON, 23 Feb — Lobbyists for electronic cigarette companies have been beating a path to the White House, hoping to prevent the administration from imposing strict, and possibly costly, rules on the burgeoning \$2 billion industry.

In November and December, more than 35 organizations including e-cigarette companies, cigar and tobacco makers, trade associations, physician groups, lawyers, lobbyists and public health

advocates trooped through the doors of the White House's Office of Management and Budget.

OMB has been reviewing a rule proposed by the Food and Drug Administration that would bring e-cigarettes under its jurisdiction and could potentially require companies to register and pay fees, list the ingredients in their products, obtain prior approval for new products and restrict online sales and marketing to children.

The OMB, which

reviews proposed regulations to assess, among other things, their economic impact, has not given a date for when it will be finished with its review, but officials have not had a meeting with outsiders since 17 January according to public records, suggesting they have heard all they need, or are willing, to hear.

At stake is the future of an industry that some analysts believe will eventually overtake the \$80 billion-a-year tobacco business.

Reuters



Various e-cigarette products for sale are seen at the Henley Vaporium in New York City on 18 Dec, 2013. — REUTERS

US government seeks to cut Medicare payments to insurers

WASHINGTON, 23 Feb — The US government on Friday proposed a cut in payments to private health insurers for 2015 Medicare Advantage plans, a move Republican lawmakers said would hurt benefits for the elderly and disabled.

The proposal, released in a document by a division of the US Department of Health and Human Services, appeared to cut payments by more than the 6 to 7 percent the insurance industry had expected, one Wall Street analyst said.

"Now the lobbying begins: can the plans get Congress to help make the cut less severe?" CRT Capital analyst Sheryl Skolnick said, adding that her assessment of the hundreds of pages of information was preliminary.

Friday's notice of proposed rates opens a window for negotiations on the final ruling, due on 7 April. Insurers and lawmakers have said cuts will mean smaller networks of doctors and hospitals and higher out-of-pocket costs. Insurers have said they could only maintain benefits if there was no change in pay-



A pharmacy employee looks for medication as she works to fill a prescription while working at a pharmacy in New York on 23 Dec, 2009.

REUTERS

ments for 2015 from 2014.

Many factors go into determining the government's total reimbursement to insurers. These payments are based in part on the assumption that Medicare Advantage spending per person will fall 3.55 percent in 2015. Total reimbursement to insurers, however, is influenced by factors such as payments for patients who are sicker than average.

An executive at one company that manages Medicare Advantage plans said that insurers are facing cuts in the 8 percent to 10 percent range when factoring in the per capita

spending decline and other planned reductions. These include a new health insurance tax under President Barack Obama's healthcare law as well as other risk adjustments.

Other industry officials said they were still reviewing the Medicare notice to determine its full impact. Republican lawmakers said any additional cuts to the programme were unacceptable. "These Medicare Advantage cuts are misguided, threaten a successful programme for seniors, and must be overturned," Republican Senator Orrin Hatch said in a statement. —Reuters

HSBC to announce bonuses totaling \$4 billion

LONDON, 23 Feb — HSBC will announce staff bonuses totaling just under 2.4 billion pounds (\$4 billion) globally for 2013 and is expected to report a significant rise in pretax profit, Sky News reported on its website on Saturday without citing its sources. Referring to an unnamed source close to the bank, Sky also said Chief Executive Stuart Gulliver will receive a 1.8 million pound bonus as part of an overall pay deal worth more than 7 million pounds, though this would be less than his previous year pay deal of 7.4 million.

Europe's biggest bank is expected to announce the size of its bonus pool on Monday along with its yearly results. Bonus payments remain a sensitive issue as many Britons still blame banks for the 2008 financial crisis, after which the state was forced to bail out RBS and Lloyds.

Earlier this month Barclays prompted an angry reaction from politicians and labor unions after it increased its bonuses by 13 percent to 2.4 billion pounds, even as it

announced plans to axe 12,000 jobs. Sky quoted an unnamed source saying the rise in variable pay or bonuses at HSBC would be smaller than its likely increase in earnings.

The broadcaster also reported Gulliver's bonus was just over half the maximum he could have received under the terms of his contract and that he would be paid a deferred share award of 3.7 million pounds under the bank's long-term incentive plan. He would also take a cash payment in lieu of pension contributions alongside his basic salary of 1.25 million,

giving the total of more than 7 million, according to an unnamed source. A spokesman at HSBC declined comment.

The bank's overall bonus payments would be marginally higher than its 2012 bonus pool of 2.2 billion pounds and would come only a year before a new EU bonus cap which Britain is resisting through the courts.

The new rules would mean from 2015 bonuses cannot be more than fixed salary, or double this amount if a bank obtains shareholder approval.

Reuters



The logo of HSBC is seen on a building in Hong Kong on 9 Jan, 2013. — REUTERS

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Samsung to unveil first smartwatches with own Tizen platform

SEOUL, 23 Feb — Samsung Electronics Co is to unveil on Sunday its first wearable smartwatch powered by its Tizen platform in its latest attempt to distance itself from Google Inc and enhance its software and services.

Samsung has been jointly developing its mobile platform with Intel Corp, as the dominance of Google's free Android software, which Samsung uses for its Galaxy line of products, continues to grow and is now used in almost 80 percent of the global smartphone market.

The South Korean

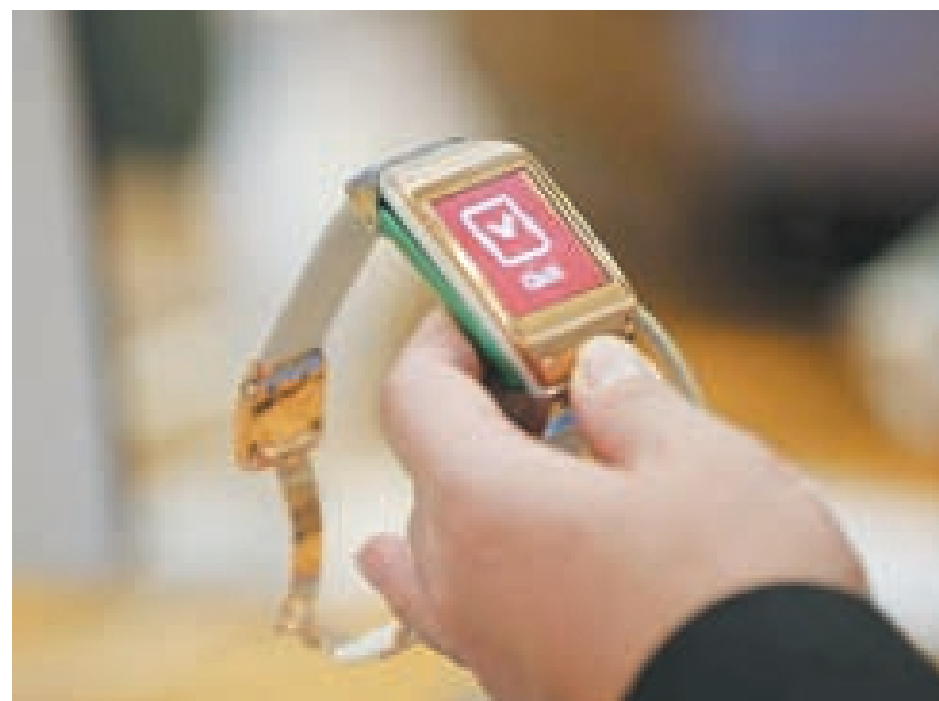
company is due to unveil two new smartwatches on Sunday, less than six months after it introduced the Galaxy Gear wristwatch, then running on Android, to prove that it is more than just a fast follower in innovation behind rival Apple Inc. The Galaxy Gear wristwatch has been criticized for its clunky design and difficult-to-use features.

The launch also underscores Samsung's desire to come up with new products to revive slowing momentum in its mobile business, the tech giant's biggest earnings driver, as sales of

high-end smartphones have eased in many advanced markets. For the new Galaxy Gear 2 and Neo 2, to be unveiled at an annual trade fair in Barcelona on Sunday, Samsung has not significantly upgraded the hardware on offer.

Instead, it has moved a camera to the watch's main body from the strap and added a couple of enhanced software offerings such as remote TV controlling, a fitness features like heart rate monitoring, and a standalone music player function, Samsung said in a statement.

Reuters



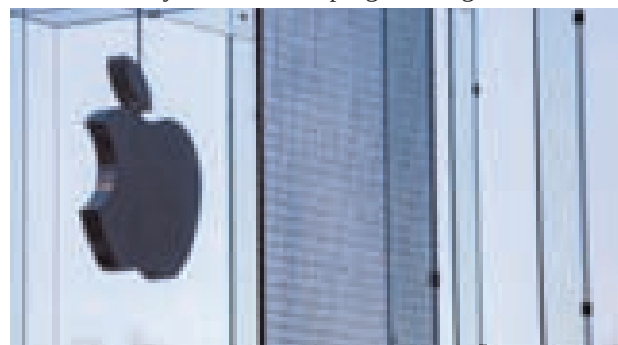
A man tries out a Samsung Electronics' Galaxy Gear smartwatch at the company's headquarters in Seoul on 21 Oct, 2013. —REUTERS

Apple promises fix 'very soon' for Macs with failed encryption

SAN FRANCISCO, 23 Feb — Apple Inc said on Saturday it would issue a software update "very soon" to cut off the ability of spies and hackers to grab email, financial information and other sensitive data from Mac computers. Confirming researchers' findings late Friday that a major security flaw in iPhones and iPads also appears in notebook and desktop machines running Mac OS X, Apple spokeswoman Trudy Muller told Reuters: "We are aware of this issue and already have a software fix that will be released very soon."

is so odd in retrospect that researchers faulted Apple for inadequate testing and some speculated that it had been introduced deliberately, either by a rogue engineer or a spy.

Former intelligence operatives said that the best "back doors" often look like mistakes. Muller declined to address the theories. "It's as bad as you could imagine, that's all I can say," said Johns Hopkins University cryptography professor Matthew Green. Adam Langley, who deals with similar programming issues as a



A shattered large glass panel, part of Apple's cube store on Fifth Avenue, damaged from the results of the snowstorm on Tuesday is seen in New York, on 22 Jan, 2014. —REUTERS

Apple released a fix Friday afternoon for the mobile devices running iOS, and most will update automatically. Once that fix came out, experts dissected it and saw the same fundamental issue in the operating system for Apple's mainstream computers. That started a race, as intelligence agencies and criminals will try to write programs that take advantage of the flaw on Macs before Apple pushes out the fix for them. The flaw

Google engineer, wrote on his personal blog that the flaw might not have shown up without elaborate testing.

I believe that it's just a mistake and I feel very bad for whomever might have slipped," he wrote. The problem lies in the way the software recognizes the digital certificates used by banking sites, Google's Gmail service, Facebook and others to establish encrypted connections.

Reuters

Microsoft to cut manufacturer price for Windows by 70 percent



A Microsoft Surface tablet PC is displayed on a stand during its launch event with Microsoft Windows 8 in New York on 25 Oct, 2012. —REUTERS

CHICAGO, 23 Feb — Microsoft Corp is reducing the price of Windows 8.1 for manufacturers of low-cost computers and tablets by 70 percent to compete with cheaper products like Google Inc's Chromebooks,

Bloomberg News reported on Saturday, citing sources familiar with the program.

Computer makers will be charged \$15 to license Windows 8.1 and pre-install it on devices retailing for under \$250, compared

with the standard fee of \$50, Bloomberg reported. Any product that meets the price limit will be eligible for the discount, with no restrictions on the type or size of the device.

Sales of Microsoft's

Windows 8 system, including its latest Windows 8.1 version, have been relatively slow since its launch 15 months ago. More than 200 million Windows 8 licenses were sold, lagging Windows 7, which sold 240 million within its first year, according to Tami Reller, head of marketing for Microsoft.

The pace reflects a steady two-year decline in personal computer sales, as smartphones and tablet sales explode. Sales of tablets are set to overtake PCs worldwide next year. Windows 8 was designed as a flexible new system that would work equally well on desktop PCs and touchscreen tablets, but it ended up alienating many traditional users, while the company's Surface tablet has not won over many Apple Inc iPad users. A spokesperson for the company was unavailable for comment.

Reuters

Facebook's big buy, WhatsApp messaging app, back up after outage

WASHINGTON, 23 Feb — WhatsApp, the rapidly expanding mobile messaging app, suffered an outage



A WhatsApp App logo is seen behind a Samsung Galaxy S4 phone that is logged on to Facebook in the central Bosnian town of Zenica, on 20 Feb, 2014. —REUTERS

for more than three hours on Saturday, frustrating users just days after its acquisition by Facebook for \$19 billion. "WhatsApp service has been restored. We are so sorry for the downtime..." WhatsApp tweeted to its more than 1 million Twitter followers on Saturday around 5:48 pm EST (2248 GMT).

Earlier, the service had said it was "experiencing server issues" without providing further details.

Facebook referred questions on the outage to WhatsApp representatives, who did not immediately respond.

Five-year-old WhatsApp currently has about 450 million users globally and has been adding a million users daily.

On Saturday, some of those users took to other forms of social media, including blogs and Twitter to report the outage and vent their frustration.

WhatsApp is the leader among a wave of smartphone-based messaging apps that are now sweeping across North America, Asia and Europe, and is known to appeal to teens and others who avoid mainstream social networks.

Reuters

OPINION

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 24 February, 2014

Economic forum

In economy of a democratic country centralization is always on the wane and privatization or private sector participation is ever on the rise. Generally, SMEs or small and medium industries grow with greater acceleration alongside the democratization process, because, democracy needs rapidly developing private industries with high productive and competitive power.

The important thing in the economic trans-

formation in democracy is the good connection between the private sector development and the government support. There must be mutual coordination and cooperation between the private business sector and the government for rapid progress of the former.

The President met with members of the business community and representatives of business associations at Mingala Hall of Yangon Region Government the other day. At the meeting he stressed the need to establish a mechanism for constant cooperation between the government and private organizations, saying, Myanmar Economic Forum will serve as the mechanism. He also explained the formation of working groups and delivery units for ensuring continuous and

smooth engagement between the private sector and the government.

Neighboring countries such as Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos now have economic forums that are drafting laws and bylaws, collectively solving problems and other issues. So, Myanmar also needs this mechanism for her emerging private sector.

In fact, economic forum is a link between the government and the private sector. This kind of link will help overcome the challenges and uncertainties of newly formed and existing businesses helping them in sharing views and making collective decisions. In this way the private economy will grow systematically together with democracy.

President U Thein Sein views rehabilitation of Toungoo Myoma Market

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb—President U Thein Sein looked into Toungoo Myoma Market recently reduced into ashes and progress of rehabilitation on Sunday afternoon.

At the hall of local station, the President heard reports on outbreak of fire, before and after incident of outbreak of fire, loss of property, rehabilitation and construction of temporary shops at the market by Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win.

In his address, the President said that it is necessary to rebuild the market in line with desires of shopkeepers. He stressed the need to facilitate the market with fire preventive measures and fire extinguishers. He urged officials to systematically allot shops to the sellers. The government will provide assistance to construction of

Bago-Sittoung ...

(from page 1)

canal linking Bago River with Sittoung River was built in the period from 1873 to 1878 with the aim of saving time and money by allowing timber rafts to pass through the canal. The canal turned 136 years.



President U Thein Sein hears reports on progress of rehabilitation of Toungoo Myoma market by Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win.—MNA

temporary market and it is necessary to invite tender for construction of new building in a transparent manner.

The President viewed round the burnt market and construction of temporary

Due to bank erosion and sedimentation in the rainy season, the canal needs dredging and expansion in order to prevent floods in the nearby farmlands. Floods cause damage to farmlands on which livelihoods of local farmers rely.

Arrangements for up-

market in Maida Ground.

The Myoma market was built in Ward 16 in 1921. A fire broke out at the market in 1981, destroying 20 complexes. In 1983, the market with 2298 shops of

grading the canal started after the President visited flood victims in Bago Region in November, 2013. It is set to complete the canal upgrade that will be of great benefit to nearly 150,000 people living in the vicinity of the canal and in Waw and Thanatpin Townships this May.—MNA

38 complexes was built on 4.99 acres of land.

While repairing power lines, a fire broke out at complex-2 of the market at 6.20 pm on 13 February. The fire

engulfed 1227 shops of 19 complexes worth K 6499.2 million. On 15 February, the Bago Region Chief Minister, officials and shop owners coordinated construction

of temporary market in Maida Ground. The temporary market will have 672 shops of 56 complexes and it will be completed in March 2014.—MNA



Photo shows seized vehicles with loads of illegal timber. (News on page 16)—MYAWADY

Bago-Sittoung Canal expansion ...

(from page 1)

Upon completion of canal expansion it, flooding in monsoon and summer paddy fields can be prevented, thereby contributing towards more paddy output growth and better motorized boats traffic.

With smooth and speedy flow of commodi-

ties, there will be improvement in socio-economic life of local people. Canal expansion could help develop eco-tourism, allowing tourists to cruise down the canal for sightseeing. It is expected to see establishment of modern agriculture development zones and special industrial zones along the canal. Moreover, it can help the project for year-round greening of 30-mile

radius of Yangon as the canal stores water for all seasons.

So, I would like to welcome the government's plan to upgrade the Bago-Sittoung canal as it will be of great benefit to local people, thereby boosting the government's rural development and poverty alleviation scheme.

Kyemon: 20-2-2014

Trs: YM

"Myanmar is amazing" is on everyone's lip.

It is because the news about Myanmar's sweeping reforms spread among foreign investors and the country's economic prospects shine brighter.



Cartoon Tha Byay

LOCAL NEWS

Yezagyo dwellers enjoy results of electrification



Photo shows illumination of Yezagyo at its entrance.

YEZAGYO, 23 Feb—Electrical Engineer Office of Yezagyo Township had supplied electricity with the use of 64 kilowatts diesel generator since and has been supplying electricity through power grid since 1983.

At present, electricity from Kyunchaung-Pakokku 66 KV national grid is being supplied to Pakhangyi Village sub-power station in Yezagyo Township and fed to Yezagyo through 11 KV power line.

Out of 245 villages in

the township, 43 villages are enjoying electricity from power line. A total of 135 villages are trying to get electricity through paddy husk fired generators, solar and diesel engine generators and 52 villages, battery and solar panels.

Some villages in the area between Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers are still lack of electricity.

U Aung Than-Thiri Thudhamma Theingi Daw Khin Than Oo (Kan Pwint Joss Stick) family of Yezagyo Township donated transformers to the

villages that can install power lines for supply of electricity.

From 8 September 2013 to 26 January 2014, they have donated one 315 KVA transformer each to Nyaungdaw and Zeegyung villages and Kanthit Village, one 160 KVA transformer each to Htanngedaw Village and Kyaukhlekar Village, one 100 KVA transformer to Kyeekan Village, one 200 KVA transformer to Okkan Village, one 160 KVA to Gwaygyo Village and one 50 KVA to Hsingyo Shwegu Tharakkhan Pagoda.

Eight transformers supply electricity to 832 households and one pagoda.

OK Pawhsanhmway Family donated four miles

FALAM, 23 Feb—The poster bearing national census taking process and households was erected on Bogyoke Street in Falam of Chin State on 19 February morning.

Chairman of Falam District Census Committee Deputy Commissioner of Falam District U Soe Tint, Secretary Head of Falam District Immigration and National Registration Department Assistant Director U Ko Ko and towns elder U Lal Tin Mann formally unveiled the poster.

Later, pamphlets were distributed to those present and local people.—MMAL-District IPRD

Brief News in Crime

Suspects arrested in Wundwin Township

WUNDWIN, 23 Feb—Police of Meiktila District Crime Combating Branch and local authorities, acting on tip-off, raided the house of U Bo Than in Ward 1 in Wundwin on 20 February.

They arrested Ma Aye Mi San, Ma Yu Yu Maw and Ma Win Lwin believed to be prostitutes together with money as evidence. Brothel head Ange Lay (a) Aung Hlaing Win escaped from the scene.

Wundwin Police Station opened files of lawsuit against Ange Lay (a) Aung Hlaing Win, Ma Win Lwin, Ma Aye Mi San and Ma Yu Yu Maw under the law.—NLM-018

Three suspects arrested in loss of motorbike

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb—No 3 police station of Zabuthiri Township could exposed loss of motorbike in Danatheikdi Ward on 22 February.

U Khin Maung Htay of No 1338 in Danatheikdi Ward in Zabuthiri Township stopped his motorcycle in front of his building on 21 February night. In early morning, he prepared to take the motorcycle for pick up the guest from the highway bus terminal but the motorcycle lost.

He informed the No 3 police station of Zabuthiri Township of loss of motorbike at 2 pm on 22 February.

Thanks to concerted efforts, police and witnesses arrested Min Min, 32 of Thudhamma 19 Ward in Hlinethaya Township, Kyaw Thura, 23 of Part 1 in U Ba Cho Street in Ward 20 in Hlinethaya Township, Kyaw Kyaw Win, 25 of Part 1 of U Ba Cho Street in Ward 20 in Hlinethaya Township along with the lost motorcycle and K 200,000.

Preparations are being made to take action against those suspects.—Khin Zaw (Mingala)

Crime reduction activities

Crime reduction talks given to people

BOKPYIN, 23 Feb—A talk on crime reduction was given at the administrative office in Kyeinnitaung Village of Nongwah Village-tract in Bokpyin Township, Taninthayi

Region recently.

Deputy Commander of Bokpyin Township Police Force Police Captain Zin Naing and SIP Maung Maung Hla of the local police outpost gave talks

on utmost participation of the local people and responsible persons of social organizations in crime reduction programme.

MMAL-Bokpyin IPRD

Census taking activities

Poster erected in Falam for national census taking process 2014



Brief News in Accident

Land Cruiser plunges off Yangon-Mandalay Expressway

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb—A Land cruiser plunged into the Hsegui Creek from a bridge due to wheel failure on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway on 22 February. In the incident Ma Ohnmar Lwin, 25 of Shweset Ward in Myitkyina died on the spot due to injuries at various parts of the body and head and driver Kyaw Naing Oo, with injuries in critical conditions.

The injured was rushed to Meiktila Hospital by police of Theegon Police Station.

The police lifted the vehicle from the creek on the road. Theegon police station opened a file of lawsuit against driver Kyaw Naing Oo under the law.—Min Min Latt (Mann Tekkatho)

Three injured in overturned car

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb—Officials of Kanma police station inspected the overturn of a vehicle at mile post 23/5 on Pauk-Pakokku Road in Magway Region on 21 February.

Mitsubishi Canter hit the signboard bearing to Magyithonbin dam and overturned itself to the right side. Three passengers on board were injured in the incident. Kanma Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against driver Zin Ko Win under the law.

MMAL-Police Information

WORLD

UN says 6 mln people in South Sudan face humanitarian crisis

NAIROBI, 23 Feb — An estimated 6 million people in South Sudan are now facing humanitarian crisis as food storage in the world's youngest nation reached a five-year minimum, two UN agencies said on Saturday in a joint assessments. The assessment by UN World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organization said about 6 million people are in stress, crisis and emergency phases, a sharp increase from the previous 2 million people estimate.

"Of this total, 3.2 million are in emergency or crisis phases. These numbers exclude the 740,000 IDPs within South Sudan," said the UN agencies.

Early this month, FAO had appealed for 77 million US dollars for critical food security and livelihood support for the 3.7 million crisis-affected populations in South Sudan. The UN food agency also warned of a major food security and nutrition crisis in South Sudan, as prices of staple crops have soared and basic commodities have run out due to collapsed markets.—Xinhua



Members of Tai Chi Society of Canada promote healthy living at the 6th annual ZoomerShow 2014, Canada's largest consumer show and lifestyle expo for men and women 45+, in Vancouver, Canada, on 22 Feb, 2014. Hundreds of exhibitors introduced the latest trends, the newest products and services that can benefit this age category during the exhibition.

XINHUA

19 soldiers killed in checkpoint attack in E Afghanistan

ASADABAD, (Afghanistan), 23 Feb — About 19 Afghan army soldiers were killed when Taliban militants launched an attack on an army checkpoint in eastern Province of Kunar overnight, sources said on Sunday. "The militants raided an army security outpost at around midnight, leaving 19 soldiers killed and two others wounded," the provincial government spokesman Abdul Ghani Ghani told Xinhua, adding seven soldiers were kidnapped following the attack by the militants.

Several militants were killed and wounded as a result of the exchange of fire in the province, 180 km east of the national capital Kabul, the spokesman said without giving an exact number. The army had sent enforcement troops to the area and a search operation was launched to locate and rescue the kidnapped army personnel, the source noted. The mountainous province bordering Pakistan is a known Taliban hotbed.

Xinhua

Terror attack on police in Bangladesh leaves one dead, two injured

DHAKA, 23 Feb — A policeman was killed and two others were injured as militants of a banned militant group — Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) — launched attack on the law enforcers to snatch away three top radicals in the country's Mymensingh District, 122 km north of capital Dhaka.

Firoz Talukder, officer-in-charge of a police station in Mymensingh, told Xinhua that "Constable Atiqul Islam died on the spot."

He said a van, which was carrying the convicts from a prison in central Gazipur district, some 37 km away of capital Dhaka, to a court in Mymensingh, was bombed.

"Two injured policemen were rushed to hospital."

According to the police, two of the dangerous JMB men who were freed during the daring attack were on death row while another was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Six leaders of the Islamic militant group were

hanged early Friday by the Bangladeshi government for killing two judges in 2005. Among them were JMB chief Shaikh Abdur Rahman, an Afghan war veteran, and his second-in-command Siddiqui Islam Bangla Bhai.

The JMB militants killed two judges in southern Jhalkathi town in November 2005. The group made the headlines after they exploded nearly 500 bombs almost simultaneously on 17 Aug, 2005 across Bangladesh including capital Dhaka.

After the series of blasts, the militants carried out suicide attacks on different courts killing judges, lawyers and policemen. They had targeted courts as they considered the current judiciary as the stumbling block to their mission of establishing Islamic laws in this Muslim majority country.

In 2005, the JMB killed at least 28 people through bombings and suicide attacks in Bangladesh and wounded hundreds of others.

Xinhua

Car bomb kills nine people in Syrian town of Atmeh

BEIRUT, 23 Feb — At least nine people were killed in a car bomb attack on Sunday near a field hospital in the Syrian town of Atmeh near the border with Turkey, activists said.

The hospital is owned by Ghassan Aboud, a Gulf-based businessman who runs Orient Television, which said at least 10 people were killed.

It was not immediately clear who carried out the attack. Syria is in the throes

of civil war and Atmeh is in territory held by rebels fighting to overthrow President Bashar al-Assad.

"There are 50 casualties and they are being transported to Bab al-Hawa (crossing) and to another hospital in Atmeh," said witness Abdallah Saleh. The hospital was damaged, he said.

The revolt against Assad erupted in March 2011 with protesters calling for more rights. It turned to a

militarized uprising under the heavy crackdown of Assad's security forces.

Now, Islamist fighters, including jihadists from across the world, have eclipsed secular groups and are also at war with each other in much of Syria, with the Nusra Front and other Islamists fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL)—a group disavowed by al-Qaeda.

Reuters



Relatives mourn during the commemoration ceremony for those who were killed in the train crash two years ago, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 22 Feb, 2014. 51 people were killed and more than 700 were injured when a packed commuter train slammed onto station buffers at morning rush hour on 22 Feb, 2012 while travelling on the railway line linking capital city Buenos Aires to its western suburbs.—XINHUA

Eight killed, 10 injured as blast hits vehicle in NW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 23 Feb — At least eight people were killed and 10 others injured as a bomb blast hit a vehicle near a police building in Pakistan's northwestern district of Kohat on Sunday afternoon, police said. Identities of the victims were not known yet but police said the incident took place near the police office.

Inspector General Police of northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province Nasir Durrani said that the incident took place when a roadside bomb blast targeted a passenger Suzuki vehicle

near the Peshawar Chowk area on the Hangu Road of the district. Police and rescue teams rushed to the site and shifted the bodies and injured to the Liaquat Memorial Hospital of Kohat. "The blast killed eight people besides injuring 10 others," Durrani said.

Hospital officials said that the death toll might further rise as some of the injured were reportedly in critical condition. Police said around 5 kg of explosives was used in the blast that was detonated with a remote controlled device.

The explosion destroyed the vehicle completely besides damaging a passerby rickshaw.

This could be the retaliation of the series of operations by the Pakistan army against the Pakistani Taliban that killed dozens of the militants in the northwestern region of the country during last week after the failure of the peace talks between the Pakistan government and Taliban. No group or militant organization has claimed responsibility for the attack yet.—Xinhua



A notice shows a car ban due to thick smog in Shijiazhuang, capital of north China's Hebei Province, on 23 Feb, 2014. XINHUA

REGIONAL

S Korea, Australia sign currency swap agreement to promote trade

SEOUL, 23 Feb — South Korea and Australia have signed a currency swap agreement to help promote bilateral trade and trade settlement in local currencies even in times of financial stress, Seoul's central bank said on Sunday.

Bank of Korea (BOK) Governor Kim Choong-soo and his Australian counterpart Glenn Stevens signed the currency swap deal Sunday in Sydney, the BOK said in a statement. The two central bank chiefs were staying in Sydney to attend the meeting of G20.

The deal will allow for the exchange of local currencies between the two central banks of up to 5 trillion won (4.5 billion US dollars) or 5 billion Australian dollars for three years. The period could be extended by mutual consent of both sides. "This agreement is designed to promote bilateral trade for the economic development

of the two countries," the joint statement said. "In particular, the agreement will ensure that trade between the two countries can continue to be settled in local currency even in times of financial stress."

Australia is South Korea's seventh-largest trade partner, with bilateral trade reaching around 30 billion US dollars in 2013. South Korea is Australia's fourth-largest trading partner. Among 20.8 billion US dollars, the value South Korea imported from Australia in 2013, natural resources such as iron ore and soft coal accounted for more than 80 percent.

The currency swap deal will allow South Korea to import commodities from Australia in a stable way amid rising volatilities in the global financial market after the US Federal Reserve's tapering of its quantitative easing.—Xinhua

Two Cambodian children killed in mortar shell explosion

PHNOM PENH, 23 Feb — A mortar round, left-over from wartime, exploded on Friday, killing a boy and a girl both aged 7 in northwestern Cambodian province of Battambang, a military police officer confirmed on Saturday.

"The victims scratched the ground near their village and found the shell, then they used rock to smash it, triggering the explosion," said Bun Roeun, deputy military police chief of Bovel district, where the accident happened. "They

died on the spot".

Landmines and unexploded ordnances killed 22 people and injured 89 others last year, according to a government report.

An estimated 4 million to 6 million landmines and unexploded ordnances left over from three decades of war and internal conflicts that ended in 1998.

The country has been seeking about 50 million US dollars a year until 2020 to entirely get rid of all types of anti-personnel mines.—Xinhua



The cages of giant pandas Xing Hui and Hao Hao who are bound for a research programme in Belgium, are loaded on a chartered DHL aircraft at Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport in Chengdu, southwest China's Sichuan Province, on 22 Feb. A pair of giant pandas, Hao Hao, the female, and Xing Hui, the male, left on lease for Belgium on Saturday from their breeding centre in Sichuan. The two pandas are both four years old and will stay in Belgium for the next 15 years.—XINHUA

Cambodia seeks Australia's assistance in electoral reform

PHNOM PENH, 23 Feb — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen asked Australia on Saturday to help the country with electoral reform.

The premier made the request when he met with visiting Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop at the Peace Palace in Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, Foreign Minister Hor Namhong told a joint Press conference after meeting with Bishop.

"The Prime Minister requested Australia to send experts to help electoral reform in Cambodia," he said.

Bishop accepted the proposal, saying that Australia stood ready to consider assisting Cambodia in this task.

Hun Sen's ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and Sam Rainsy's opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) have been locked in a dispute over the July 2013 election results which showed that the CPP won

68 parliamentary seats and the CNRP got the rest 55 seats

Claiming serious irregularities in the poll, the CNRP has refused to accept the outcome, boycotted parliament and staged violent protest to push for step-down of Hun Sen and reelection.

On 18 Feb, the CPP and the CNRP reached an agreement to form a joint committee for an electoral reform aimed at free and fair elections in the future.

Bishop said the agreement was a positive step towards resolving political dispute in Cambodia and encouraged the two parties to continue dialogue for a peaceful solution.

Hor Namhong said there is no political impasse in Cambodia despite ongoing post-election dispute between the ruling and opposition parties.

"I would like to stress that there is no political deadlock in Cambodia," he said. "All the state's institutions are functioning nor-

mally."

He said all actions taken by the government of Cambodia in the past, at the present and in the future would be in accordance with the constitution and laws of Cambodia.

He added that the CNRP should join the

National Assembly to discuss their demand for an electoral reform instead of taking to the street.

Bishop arrived here on Friday for a three-day visit to further promote bilateral ties and cooperation between Australia and Cambodia.—Xinhua



Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hor Namhong (R) shakes hands with visiting Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 22 Feb, 2014.

XINHUA

China ready to play constructive role in Afghanistan's transition, development

KABUL, 23 Feb — China hopes to see Afghanistan complete political and economic transition and achieve political reconciliation and economic revival and is ready to play a constructive role in the process, visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said here on Saturday. To consolidate their bilateral strategic cooperative ties, the two sides should boost the cooperation and exchanges in five fields, Wang said while meeting his Afghan counterpart Zarar Ahmad Osmani, according to a press release obtained by Xinhua on Sunday.

Firstly, the two sides

should maintain the momentum of high-level exchanges, work closely together to prepare for the meeting of their leadership within the year and make a success the Fourth Foreign Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan slated for August in China's Tianjin.

Secondly, the two sides will hold a series of cultural events to enhance educational cooperation and exchanges between their young people on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of bilateral ties, which falls on next year. Thirdly, China will provide more assistance to Afghani-

stan in its efforts to develop economy and improve the livelihood of its people. China will help with infrastructure projects, including the construction of school building in Kabul University, offering farm machinery and training classes to Afghan technicians.

Fourthly, the two sides will further broaden trade cooperation for mutual benefits. The Chinese government encourages and supports capable Chinese enterprises to invest in Afghanistan to strengthen cooperation with the Afghanistan side in trade, energy and other fields.—Xinhua



Job seekers are seen at a job fair in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on 22 Feb, 2014. The job fair opened here on Saturday, with 14,675 job vacancies offered by 400 enterprises.—XINHUA

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF
MYANMAR
YANGON REGION GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO SUBMIT THE
PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPING
THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE**

Yangon Region Government plans to develop industrial estates at various places around Yangon up to the international standard. These industrial estates need to be developed and managed by experienced developers/operators which would lead to a situation where international standard facilities and infrastructures could be assured and better quality services could be rendered to the investors or tenants who establish and operate manufacturing units either for exports or domestic consumption.

As the development sites of planned industrial estates are near the vicinity of Yangon area, it is intended that labor-intensive industries that have lower electricity consumption and have the least possible environmental consequences could be given more priority. It is also intended that the land in the industrial estates after development could be sub-leased to the genuine investors or tenants at affordable prices.

The Yangon Region Government would like to invite potential foreign or local developers for developing a industrial estate on the Build, Own, and Operate (BOO) basis under the ambit of the Foreign Investment Law or the Myanmar Citizens Investment Law.

Details term and condition shall be available during office hours commencing from 24th February, 2014 at the admin department, Yangon Region Government.



A new-born baby lies in the arms of its mother at a ward in el-Galaa Maternity Teaching Hospital in Cairo, capital of Egypt, on 22 Feb, 2014. Egypt's population has reached 94 million, according to the latest statement released on 20 Feb from the country's Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics.

XINHUA

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY**

MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE

Subject : Extension of the Tender Closing Date
Reference : MOGE's Tender No - IFB - 184 (2013 -2014) for supply of Assorted Sizes of Seamless Casings (10) Items

Due to change of our work programme, we would like to extend the above tender closing date up to 26th March, 2014 (16:30) Hrs.

New Tender Documents shall be available during office hours commencing from 26th February, 2014 at the Finance Department; Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise, No (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw.

Old Tender Documents which already purchased shall be changed with New Tender Documents commencing from 26th February, 2014.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph , +95 67 - 411097 /411206



Former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko arrives at the Independence Square to speak to her supporters in Kiev, Ukraine, on 22 Feb, 2014.—XINHUA

Ukraine's Tymoshenko urges protestors to stay

KIEV, 23 Feb — Former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko late Saturday urged protestors to continue their encampment in Kiev's Independence Square after her release from prison.

"You are heroes, you are the best thing in Ukraine!" the opposition icon said in a touching speech to a 50,000-strong crowd in the square, known in Ukrainian as the Maidan.

"In no case do you have the right to leave the

Maidan until you have concluded everything that you planned to do," she said, sitting in a wheelchair due to a back problem.

The Independence Square, where a sprawling protest tent camp was set up in December, has been the center stage for the past three months of anti-government demonstration in Ukraine, whose latest escalation has claimed dozens of lives.

In a dramatic turnabout in Ukraine's political chaos,

the parliament voted on Saturday to dismiss President Viktor Yanukovich from his office and set early elections, a day after he made concessions to his pro-European opponents in a European-mediated peace deal.

The parliament also ordered the release of Yanukovich's arch-rival Tymoshenko, who walked free from a prison facility Saturday night to join supporters in Kiev.

Tymoshenko, a key opposition leader, was

convicted in October 2011 of abuse of power over a 2009 gas deal with Russia.

She was also charged with embezzling an estimated 405 million U.S. dollars and evading tax worth more than 87,000 dollars in the 1990s.

The 53-year-old opposition leader, who is receiving medical treatment in a state hospital in Kharkov city in eastern Ukraine, has denied all the charges, saying they are politically motivated.—Xinhua

Taleban says suspend prisoner-swap talks due to Afghan "complexity"

KABUL, 23 Feb— The Taleban have suspended talks over a possible exchange of Taleban and US prisoners due to the "complexity" of the situation in Afghanistan, the militant group said on Sunday.

"Due to the political complexity of the current situation in the country, the leadership of the Islamic Emirate has decided to suspend the issue for some time," Taleban spokesman

Zabihullah Mujahid said in an email to media organizations, using the name the Taleban gave their 1996-2001 government.

"Therefore, the prisoner exchange process has been delayed until further notice," Mujahid said. He provided no further detail on why that decision had been made.

In an effort to foster peace talks to end the Afghan war, US officials

recently took steps they hoped might revive US discussions with Taliban representatives about the proposed swap of five Taleban detainees held at Guantanamo Bay in exchange for the return of Bowe Bergdahl, a US soldier who went missing in Afghanistan in 2009 and is believed to be held by Taleban-linked militants in northwest Pakistan.

Reuters

Syndicates behind illegal mining in S Africa

JOHANNESBURG, 23 Feb — Well-organized and armed syndicates are behind thriving illegal mining in South Africa, the National Union of Mine-workers (NUM) said on Saturday. There is a really big network running illegal mining which, if uncurbed, would lead to big disaster one day, NUM general secretary Frans Baleni said at a Press briefing in Johannesburg.

He said the syndicates have become brazen, well organized and armed, with a number of players from the region.

"It's a well organized syndicate. People like geologists are recruited and they operate in a particular command structure; when

one crosses them they give a death sentence," Baleni said.

He was speaking as an unknown number of illegal miners were still trapped in an abandoned gold mine outside Johannesburg since last Saturday. Rescuers have brought a total of 25 miners to the surface, but the remaining miners refused to come out, reportedly fearing arrest.

No one knows the exact number of miners still trapped underground. Some reports put it at more than 200.

Authorities have given an ultimatum that the mine would be closed on 3 March.

Baleni urged the government to take immediate

action to eliminate the top people in the networks.

"We have been urging the ministers of police and mines to improve on their intelligence side," he said.

Baleni revealed that thriving illegal mining had led to prostitution underground.

Sex underground is very expensive — about 3,000 rand (about 270 US dollars) for a session, he said, adding that police cannot go underground because their insurance does not cover them there.

Illegal mining not only costs South Africa about 66 billion rand (about 600 million dollars) in economic losses every year, but also leads to deaths.

Xinhua

Colombian authorities capture 26 rebels, gang members

BOGOTA, 23 Feb — Twenty-six members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and "Los Urabenos" criminal gang were captured in the last 24 hours in different operations, Colombia's Ministry of Defence said on Saturday.

According to the ministry, the captured were eleven members of FARC's support network, twelve members of "Los Urabenos" and three kidnappers who had been at large since early February, Colombia's Caracol radio network reported.

The Colombian Ministry of Defence also said that a total of 80 members of "Los Urabenos" were captured during the last eight days thanks to the work of different units of the national police.

The eleven FARC members who were captured in the Colombian southwestern Cauca department were responsible for the plan and execution of local terrorist attacks, civilians intimidation and ambushes against police force.

Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

Fox's ratings hopes pinned on ex-CNBC anchor Bartiromo

NEW YORK, 23 Feb — Maria Bartiromo, whose high-profile Wall Street coverage earned her the nickname "Money Honey" during two decades on business channel CNBC, now takes aim at her former employer as host of a new morning show on the rival Fox Business Network. "Opening Bell with Maria Bartiromo" will air from 9-11 am ET (1400-1600 GMT), replacing "Varney & Co" anchored by Stuart Varney, who moves to the following two-hour period.

Luring Bartiromo away from CNBC was a high-stakes gamble by Fox and Roger Ailes, chairman and CEO of Fox News, to boost the ratings of the six-year-old business channel. Fox Business increased its ratings and added homes to which it is telecast but still trails CNBC. Over the last year, it averaged 54,000 for its 9 am to 5 pm schedule, according to Nielsen ratings data, compared with the 200,000 that CNBC averages. CNBC is seen in 95 million homes com-

pared with 77 million for Fox Business. "I was at the top of my game at CNBC, but they made me a great offer," Bartiromo said in an interview, referring to Fox. "They were terrific at CNBC, but I am happiest when I am helping to build a brand."

Bartiromo's show stands a good chance of becoming the network's top-ranked show, and should lift its ratings and encourage other cable operators to carry Fox Business, said Brad Adgate, senior vice-president and research director for Horizon Media. "Only a handful of business news reporters have as high a profile," Adgate said. Bartiromo, who would not discuss her contract, says Fox influenced her decision to bolt by also offering her a Sunday morning business-oriented show on the Fox News Channel. That show, which has not yet been given a name, is expected to begin later in the first quarter, Fox said.—Reuters



Business television presenter Maria Bartiromo works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, on 21 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

Madhuri Dixit: I am a baby of commercial cinema

KOLKATA, 23 Feb — Branding herself a "baby of commercial cinema", actress Madhuri Dixit, who will be seen playing a crusading activist in the forthcoming Gulaab Gang, on Friday said she would "love" to do an out and out comedy film, if the script is to her liking.

"I am a baby of commercial cinema, I did films like 'Raja', which was a mad, funny comedy and I am not averse to that and if I am offered a film like that and if I like the script, then I am open to do that. I would love to do a completely off-the-roof kind

of comedy," she told the media here while promoting Gulaab Gang. Gulaab Gang has been directed by Soumik Sen and produced by Anubhav Sinha. The film also features Huma Qureshi and Juhi Chawla. It releases on 7 March.

The actress, who has given power-packed performances in films like Lajja and Mrityudand, believes in the feminism that stems from within. "I do believe women should have their own voice, they should be independent, they should stand on their own. I do believe in feminism but I don't believe in

naare-baazi (slogan-shouting) and all, it should come from within and it should be there for everyone," she said.—PTI



Madhuri plays a crusading activist in Gulaab Gang. PTI

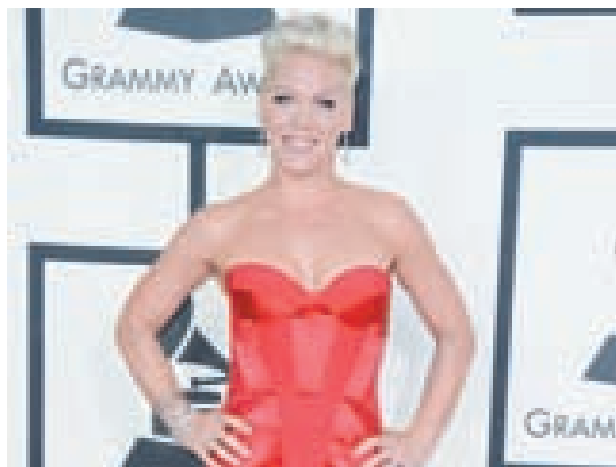
Singer Pink set for special appearance at Oscars

LOS ANGELES, 23 Feb — Grammy Award-winning singer and actress Pink will make a special appearance at the Oscars, to be hosted by Ellen DeGeneres, on 2 March.

"We are very excited to welcome Pink to the Oscar stage for the very first time," show producers Craig Zadan and Neil Meron said in a statement.

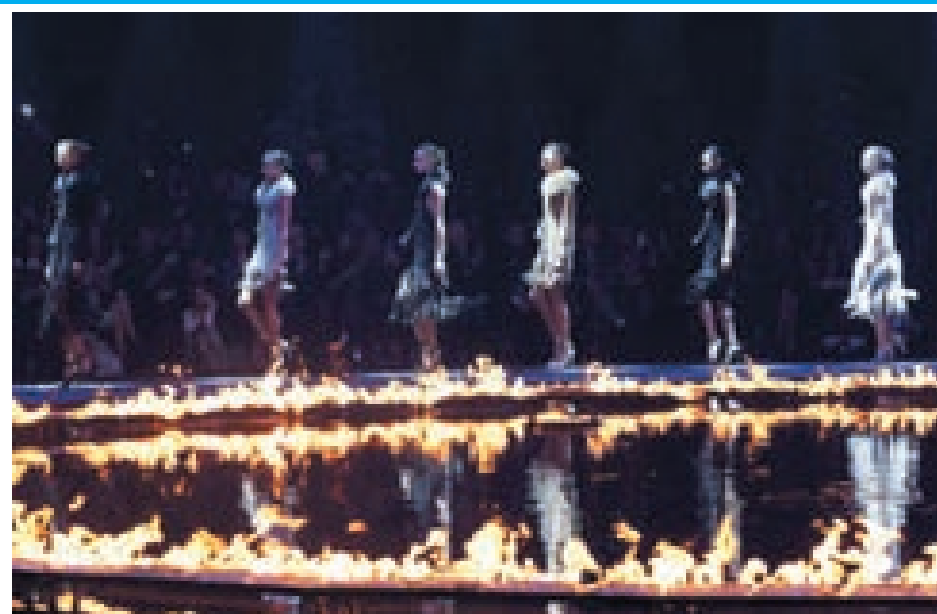
"She is regarded as one of the greatest voices in pop music and one of the best performers of her

generation, and we are thrilled to have her join us for a highly anticipated moment on the broadcast."



Pink has won three Grammy Awards and six MTV Video Music Awards, including Best Collaboration for the single Just Give Me A Reason from her 2012 album The Truth About Love. She has also starred in ensemble drama Thanks for Sharing. PTI

Pink has won three Grammy Awards and six MTV Video Music Awards PTI



Models present creations from the Roberto Cavalli Autumn/Winter 2014 collection during Milan Fashion Week on 22 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

Lake of fire and luxurious lambskin at Milan fashion week

MILAN, 23 Feb — Models stalked around a fiery lake at Roberto Cavalli and were swathed in luxurious lambskin at Bottega Veneta in Milan on Saturday for the city's biannual women's fashion week. A pattern of scarlet flames licked around the hem of a black evening gown and beaded flapper dresses reflected blue spotlights and the glow of real fire at Cavalli's show.

Bottega Veneta chose powdery pink, grey and beige for shearling coats, linear crepe dresses and pleated skirts, adding the occasional flash of purple, emerald green and red. Italy's national chamber of fashion

(CNMI) expects the industry to make 62.5 billion euros (\$85.91 billion) in revenue in 2014, returning to sales growth after two years in decline. The trade body has set up billboards at Milan's airports reading "Welcome to Milan Fashion Week" and is streaming catwalk footage to screens around the town.

So far, high-profile attendees have included Salma Hayek, who watched a Gucci show with her husband Francois-Henry Pinault, chief executive of the label's owner Kering. British pop star Cheryl Cole sat in the front row at Saturday's show for Roberto Cavalli, who said on Wednesday fash-

ion should be less linked to celebrities, but admitted he was pleased when famous people wore his clothes.

"I loved the concept with the fire. He did such a great job," Cole said after the show. Asked what she was wearing, the singer replied, "Cavalli, of course." Italian brand Ermanno Scervino showed roll-neck sweaters and cozy camel-colored coats, with full length embroidered dresses and tailored monochrome outfits for evening. "You should not be too influenced by fashion, but by what looks good on you," designer Ermanno Scervino said before the show.—Reuters

Leonardo DiCaprio: Titanic helped me take control of my career

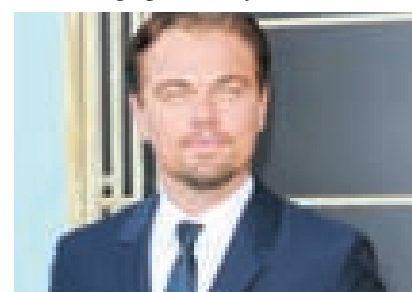
LOS ANGELES, 23 Feb — Leonardo DiCaprio's choices have been different from the romantic hero role that made him famous in Titanic but the actor is very proud of his breakout role in the James Cameron directed movie.

DiCaprio, who is up for an Oscar in the best actor category for playing a reckless and immoral stock broker in The Wolf of Wall Street, believes the film's popularity helped him have a greater control on his career. "You know, it's been such a long time, but it was such a huge part of my life.

And people maybe think I have a reaction to that, to that film, but the truth is, I'm incredibly proud of it. And not only that, the movie has really made me be in control of my career," DiCaprio told Gayle Kin on CBS' This Morning.

The 39-year-old actor has been nominated at the Oscars for five times and is a strong favourite this year for his fifth collaboration with director Martin Scorsese. They have previously worked together in The Gangs of New York, The Aviator, The Departed and Shutter Island.—PTI

Leonardo DiCaprio is a strong contender for the Best Actor award at the Oscars this year. PTI



SPORTS

Medalists at the Sochi Olympics on Saturday

SOCHI, (Russia), 23 Feb — Medalists at the Sochi Olympics after Saturday's events:

ALPINE SKIING

Men's slalom

Gold - Mario Matt (Austria) 1 minute, 41.84 seconds

Silver - Marcel Hirscher (Austria) 1:42.12

Bronze - Henrik Kristoffersen (Norway) 1:42.67

BIATHLON

Men's 4x7.5-kilometre relay

Gold - Russia (Dmitry Malyshko/Anton Shipulin/Evgeny Ustyugov/Alexey Volkov) 1 hour, 12 minutes, 15.9 seconds (8 penalties)

Silver - Germany (Daniel Boehm/Erik Lesser/Arnd Peiffer/Simon Schempp) 1:12:19.4 (2)

Bronze - Austria (Simon Eder/Dominik Landertinger/Daniel Mesotitsch/Christoph Summann) 1:12:45.7 (7)

SPEED SKATING

Men's team pursuit

Gold - Netherlands

Silver - South Korea

Bronze - Poland



Adelina Sotnikova (R) of Russia attends a Press conference in Sochi, Russia on 21 Feb, 2014, the day after winning gold in the women's figure skating competition at the Winter Olympics. At left is Julia Lipnitskaia of Russia.—KYODO NEWS

Women's team pursuit

Gold - Netherlands

Silver - Poland

Bronze - Russia

Also, 4. Japan

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Women's 30-kilometre mass start free

Gold - Marit Bjørgen (Norway) 1 hour, 11 minutes, 5.2 seconds

Silver - Therese Johaug (Norway) 1:11:07.8

Bronze - Kristin Størmer Steira (Norway) 1:11:28.8

Also, 23. Masako Ishida (Japan) 1:14:09.0

SNOWBOARD

Men's parallel slalom

Gold - Vic Wild (Russia)

Silver - Zan Kosir (Slovenia)

Bronze - Benjamin Karl (Austria)

Women's parallel slalom

Gold - Julia Dujmovits (Austria)

Silver - Anke Karstens (Germany)

Bronze - Amelie Kober (Germany)

Kyodo News

Murata scores 4th-round KO in nontitle fight in Macao

MACAO, 23 Feb — London Olympic middleweight gold medalist Ryota Murata scored a fourth-round technical knockout of Brazilian Carlos Nascimento in his third professional boxing nontitle bout on Saturday. The referee stepped in to stop the bout 43 seconds into the

fourth round at Cotai Arena at the Venetian Resort, giving Murata his third consecutive KO since making his debut last August.

The 28-year-old Japanese fighter, who fought overseas for the first time since turning pro last year, floored Nascimento with a flurry of punches in the

third round and had the Brazilian on the ropes in the fourth when the referee waved the bout over.

Murata became the first Japanese boxer to win an Olympic gold in 48 years. He is being promoted by renowned American promoter Top Rank.

Kyodo News



London Olympic gold medalist Ryota Murata of Japan (L) delivers a punch to Carlos Nascimento of Brazil during the third round of their eight-round middleweight bout in Macao on 22 Feb, 2014. Murata scored a fourth round technical knockout over Nascimento in his third professional fight.

KYODO NEWS

Russia says Games 'broke the ice', hosts lead medals table

SOCHI, (Russia), 23 Feb — Russia leapt to the top of the medals table on Saturday with two more golds as the Sochi Olympics entered the final stretch, and the host nation said its first Winter Games had helped "break the ice" of skepticism towards it. Organizers were confident they had achieved what they, and President Vladimir Putin, had set out to do — project Russia as a modern, tolerant country that had thrown off the shackles of its Soviet past.

The icing on the cake was home gold in the men's snowboard parallel slalom and men's biathlon relay, lifting Russia above Norway in the rankings with just three more titles to be decided on Sunday, the final day. "The friendly faces, the warm Sochi sun and the glare of the Olympic gold have broken the

ice of skepticism towards the new Russia," said Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak, also Putin's Olympics organizer.

"The Games have turned our country, its culture and the people into something that is a lot closer and more appealing and understandable for the rest of

the world." The jury is still out over whether the world agrees, but Putin is likely to be generally pleased that the Games went smoothly, without security scares despite Islamist militant threats and only isolated expressions of dissent to his rule. There have been problems, however.



The winning Russian team celebrates on the podium during the flower ceremony for the men's 5,000 metres short track speed skating final relay race at the Iceberg Skating Palace in the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympic Games on 21 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

Kenya's Chumba wins Tokyo Marathon in race record

TOKYO, 23 Feb — Kenya's Dickson Chumba won the men's race of the Tokyo Marathon in a race record of 2 hours, 5 minutes, 42 seconds on Sunday.

Kohei Matsumura was the first local runner across the line, finishing eighth in 2:08:09.

Ethiopia's Tirfi Tsegaye won the women's race in a record 2:22:23. Japan's Mai Ito came in seventh with a 2:28:36, finishing first among her countrywomen.

Some 36,000 runners took part in the eighth staging of the event.—Kyodo News

Real Madrid leapfrog Barca in Primera Liga

MADRID, 23 Feb — Real Madrid opened up a three point lead at the top of the BBVA Primera Liga after a dramatic day of football on Saturday in Spain. Real Madrid's 3-0 win at home to Elche, coupled with Barca's 3-1 defeat away to Real Sociedad sees Real Madrid leapfrog Barca and open up a three point lead over the reigning champions and Atletico Madrid, who play in Pamplona on Sunday. Real Madrid had few problems in what was a routine win over Elche, although the points were not secured until 18 minutes from time when Gareth Bale scored a stunning 30 yard shot to make the score 2-0.

A deflected shot from Asier Illaramendi had given Madrid the lead after 34 minutes and after Bale had secured the points in a game in which Madrid keeper, Diego Lopez was hardly called into action, Isco rounded off the win with a solo goal 10 minutes from time. Barca kicked off knowing they needed a win in order to retain their leadership, but they were always second best to a magnificently organized

Real Sociedad, who played intelligent football and used the pace of Carlos Vela and Antoine Griezmann to win the game.

The Basques opened the scoring after Alex Song turned a Sergio Canales cross into his own net under pressure from Gorka Elustondo, before Leo Messi scored a smart goal from the edge of the penalty area to take the sides in level at the break. If Barca thought they would go on to win the second half they were mistaken as first Griezmann and then David Zurutuza punished some slack defending with excellent finishes on the break. Barca had half an hour to try and get back on level terms after Zurutuza made it 3-1, but the fact is Real Sociedad goalkeeper Claudio Bravo did not have to make a difficult save between the final goal and the end of the game. Saturday also saw Celta and Getafe draw 1-1 with Rafinha cancelling out Angel Lafita's opening goal for Getafe, who have not won a game since the end of November, while Almeria and Malaga drew 0-0.—Xinhua

GENERAL

Passengers evacuated after boat mishap near Auckland

WELLINGTON, 23 Feb — Thirty-six people, including a number of children, have been evacuated from a charter vessel near New Zealand's largest city of Auckland on Sunday after it began taking on water.

Emergency services were told the *MV Dream Weaver* was in trouble in the Tiri Channel, near the Whangaparaoa Peninsula north of Auckland, just before 2 pm, NZ Newswire reported. Several vessels responded and the police launch *Deodar* loaded all 36 passengers a short time later.—*Xinhua*

China sends inspection teams to smog-hit areas

BEIJING, 23 Feb — China has sent 12 inspection teams to regions worst hit by air pollution, as some 15 percent of the country will remain cloaked in smog until Thursday.

According to the Ministry of Environmental Protection on Sunday, the inspection teams have headed to Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei Province and their surrounding areas, to review the local government response to the pollution and their implementation of September's central government action plan.

—*Xinhua*



Sanitation workers clean withered lotuses on the West Lake in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province, on 22 Feb, 2014. As a winter scenery of the West Lake, withered lotuses will be completely removed for the new round of plantation in the upcoming spring.—*XINHUA*

Nepal gov't to set up contact office at Mt Qomolangma base camp

KATHMANDU, 23 Feb — In a bid to make Nepal's mountaineering more safe and organized, the Nepal government has decided to set up a contact office at Mount Qomolangma (Everest) base camp for the first time from the coming spring season, officials told *Xinhua* on Saturday.

Nepal's Tourism Ministry said as Qomolangma has been the first choice of submitters, the contact office will be established at the base of this peak and will be gradually expanded to other peaks in the future.

"Due to the growing pressure, chaos and incidents of colossal at the Everest, we felt the contact office should be set up at

the highest peak instantly," Madhusudan Burlakoti, a joint secretary at the ministry told *Xinhua* by phone, adding similar offices will be established gradually at mountains of Manasalu, Amadublam and Annapurna within the next year.

The office will inform about the mountaineering activities, incidents and accidents, records and others directly to the Ministry.

He said the office with all technological facility, including satellite phone, email, internet and mobile phones, will facilitate the submitters while it will also ensure the safety measures.

The two offices already in place, Sagarmatha Pollution Control

Committee and Himalayan Rescue Association, will be merged with the contact office.

With the rising number of safety concerns, both mountaineers and entrepreneurs have been long demanding with the government for the establishment of such office through which they could contact directly about their problems to the concerned authorities.

Even though the government has asked a Tourism Ministry official to accompany each team of officers as liaison person, stakeholders complain that such officers do not go to the base camp at the 5,350 metre.—*Xinhua*

MYANMAR TV

(24-2-2014, Monday)

6:00 am

1. Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw

7:35 am

2. Documentary

8:00 am

3. News/ International News

9:30 am

4. Cartoon Series

10:15 am

5. Weekly

Entertainment

11:15 am

6. New Melody

12:00 pm

7. News / International News/ Weather Report

12:25 pm

8. Myanmar Movies

3:00 pm

9. News

4:15 pm

10. Cute Little Dancer

4:30 pm

11. 2014 University

Entrance

Examination

(Myanmar)

5:25 pm

12. India Drama Series

6:20 pm

13. Documentary

7:25 pm

14. TV Drama Series

8:00 pm

15. News/ International

News/ Weather

Repot

8:50 pm

16. Hit Songs of Stars

9:00 pm

17. News

18. Documentary

19. TV Drama Series

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

24-2-14 07:00 am ~
25-2-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * Htan Taw Drums (Part-II) "Dobat"
- * World News
- * In the Studio: Sunee
- * Local News
- * Food Trip (EP-2)
- * World News
- * Art Students: Theatrical Art
- * Local News
- * Rakhine Tourist Area
- * World News
- * [Doctor] [Painter]
- * Local News
- * Lawka Nandar Wildlife Sanctuary And Its Rare Star Tortoises
- * World News
- * A Monk's Robe
- * Local News
- * Journey To Unimaginable Spots (Ep-4)
- * World News
- * Myanmar Traditional Art Bronze Casting
- * Local News
- * Myanmar National Poet and Literary Icon "Min Thu Wun" (Part-III) (His Public service & Literary world)
- * World News
- * Colonial Buildings and a New Yangon
- * Local News
- * Gold: King of All Metals
- * World News
- * Myanmar - Bridges to change
- * Local News
- * Shwe Maw Daw: The Glory of Bago City
- * World News
- * Kyeikhteeyoe: Welcome All

Chelsea snatch late victory, Arsenal and City win

LONDON, 23 Feb — John Terry grabbed a stoppage-time winner as leaders Chelsea showed their Premier League title mettle by snatching a 1-0 victory over Everton on Saturday having looked set to suffer another damaging blow. The Chelsea captain strained every sinew to get a faint touch to a Frank Lampard free kick in the 93rd minute and keep his team a point clear of Arsenal, who thrashed Sunderland 4-1, and three ahead of Manchester City who beat Stoke City 1-0.

Olivier Giroud netted twice for Arsenal while Yaya Toure was the match-winner for Manchester City who have a game in hand on their two rivals. Champions Manchester United, in sixth spot, are no longer

challenging for the title but manager David Moyes celebrated wildly as Robin van Persie's penalty and a

goal from Wayne Rooney secured a 2-0 win at Crystal Palace. After drawing their last league match

against West Bromwich Albion and suffering a chastening FA Cup defeat to rivals Manchester City,

Jose Mourinho's side were looking for a morale-boosting return to form.

Yet they looked sluggish for most of the match and after finally sparking into life they came up against a stubborn Everton rearguard that only crumbled deep into added time. "The feeling when you lose points in the last minute, like we did at West Brom, is obviously a bad feeling. When you win in the last minute it's the opposite so this is basically compensation for the points we lost at West Brom," Chelsea boss Mourinho told reporters.

It came as a surprise to see Everton make all the running in the first half but Chelsea changed things up at the break, summoning the energetic Ramires from the bench to replace an injured Oscar. The switch

had an immediate impact on the flow of the game and the pressure built on the Everton goal. But Chelsea's attacking waves broke down at the final hurdle until the third minute of stoppage time.

At the final whistle Everton's feeling of injustice was heightened as it looked like Brazilian Ramires had gone down easily under a challenge from Phil Jagielka to bring about the free kick that led to the only goal. "It was one of those situations where players were trying to buy too many free kicks," said Everton boss Martinez. "You need a strong referee ... you can see they are trying to get a dead-ball situation because they couldn't get any joy from open play."

—*Reuters*



Arsenal's Tomas Rosicky (top) scores past Sunderland's Vito Mannone during their English Premier League soccer match at the Emirates Stadium in London, on 22 Feb, 2014.—*REUTERS*

Union Cup Golf Tournament-2014 concludes



NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb — Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham presented prizes to winners of Union Cup Golf Tournament -2014 at City Golf Course on Sunday evening.

First, Union Minister U Tint Hsan gave an account of the tournament.

Next, officials awarded players who won Most Eagle, Most Birdie, Most Par, Longest Drive and Nearest Pin and winners of men's and women's individual and team events.

Then, Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham presented cash awards and trophies to first-prize winning Nay Pyi Taw team in women's individual event and Mandalay team and Yangon team that stood first respectively in men's above 25 and under 25 team events.

After the ceremony, the Vice-President posed for documentary photos together with prize-winning teams. — MNA

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham poses for documentary photo with prize winning teams in Union Cup Golf Tournament.—MNA

Illegal timber logs seized near Jarinyan Village in Kachin State

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb—After fighting with an armed group near Jarinyan Village on 10-11 February, a military column seized timber logs and machinery that have been prepared to be smuggled to other country.

During a combing operation, the military columns seized 52 tons of teak, 12 tons of Tamalan, 500 tons of various timber logs, one Prado, three motorcycles, 20 huts, 120

empty plastic barrels, 30 plastic fuel barrels, one empty fuel bowser and three percussion lock fire-arms on 12 February.

They then raid that area and captured vouchers and documents related to exported money of the armed group, one chain saw, twelve fuel tins one-gallon-capacity and Tianchen-brand digital crane scales

on 16 February.

Similarly, the military column seized 500 tons of illegal timber logs on 13 February, each three-crown vehicle and motorcycle on 14 February and 1000 tons of various timber logs on 15 February.

The military columns captured 3750 tons of timber logs, 47 vehicles, six motorcycles, mines and related items from 10 to 16 February.

Myawady

Blood on the streets as bomb kills two, wounds 22 in Thai capital



A Thai soldier photographs the crime scene following a bomb blast in Bangkok on 23 February, 2014.—REUTERS

BANGKOK, 23 Feb—A bomb killed two people and wounded at least 22 in a busy shopping district in the Thai capital on Sunday, hours after supporters of Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra promised to get tough with demonstrators paralysing parts of the city. But it was not immediately clear who was responsible.

The bomb went off near one of the few large protest sites remaining, leaving a trail of blood and sandals on the streets near the huge Central World shopping mall, much of it in front of a shop selling tee-shirts em-

blazoned "Land of Smile".

Three children suffered serious head injuries, Erawan Medical Centre, which monitors Bangkok hospitals, said. One died.

"One boy who we understand was 12 years old has died from injuries sustained in the blast. Another child is undergoing an operation and a third child is still in the emergency room with us," an emergency room nurse at Ramathibodi Hospital in central Bangkok, who declined to be identified, told Reuters.

Erawan said a 40-year-old woman was also killed.

Reuters

33-storey high-rise buildings to emerge through Golden City Project

In Yangon City, the commercial hub of the nation, new buildings are under construction in various part of the city. Of them, some buildings are funded with foreign investments.

Singapore-based Golden Land Company is constructing a high-rise building which is one of the Golden City Project on Yankin Road in Yankin Township.

"The project will consist of hotel, shopping centre, modern meeting hall, entertainment stage and advanced apartments, playgrounds for children in addition to sports facilities such as gyms, golf course, table tennis court and swimming pool. It will facilitate the city dwellers with international level lifestyle," said CEO Alex Zhu of Golden City Project at the press meet held at the Golden City building on Yankin Road in Yankin Township on 22 February.

The project is being

implemented to construct nine 33-storey buildings on nine acres of land on Yankin Road. One five star hotel will be placed at the centre of the buildings. It is expected to be completed in late 2016.

The project site is two kilometers to Shwedagon Pagoda and three minutes drive to Inya Lake Hotel.

The design of build-

ings of the project was created by famous professional designers.

The construction tasks will focus on power and water supply systems, security measures and information systems on its own as part of efforts to con-

serve environments. Upon completion, the 33-storey buildings will give about 500 apartments to the city dwellers for uplifting living standards of the people.

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