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New Media Law signed by President: Investigative journalism and critical reporting backed by gov't

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March — Details of a long-awaited Media Law, approved by the Union Parliament earlier this week and signed by the President, have been revealed in a copy obtained by the New Light of Myanmar, with the law clearly stipulating press freedom and the right of journalists to openly criticize and pinpoint the shortcomings of the legislative, executive and judicial powers, among other rights.

The right to conduct investigative journalism has now been formulated, with journalists allowed to report on "facts and information that citizens need to know." "News reflecting the opinion and voices of the people" are also allowed to be disseminated by the media without fear of consequence, as long as journalistic ethics in accordance with the rules and regulations are upheld.

Journalists will be given permission to research, write and publish reports revealing violations of the rights of citizens, and will have access to the relevant departments and organizations in order to obtain information, according to the new law.

It states that all publications will be free from censorship and every journalist will be granted permission to request documents, facts and figures of public interest from ministries and organizations with the exception of classified material.

The new law guarantees the protection of journalists from arbitrary arrests, and states that offices, equipment, recordings, transcripts, photographs and other research material cannot be confiscated as long as they conduct their works in accordance with rules and regulations.

Regarding news coverage in places of armed conflict, and coverage of unrest, violence and demonstrations, journalists may request security personnel present for their protection.

Regarding the establishment of media companies, the law mentions that those interested in venturing into the media sector are allowed to form a private or public company as well as joint ventures.

Chapter 6 of the media law approves the formation of a Myanmar Media

(See page 8)

INSIDE

President U Thein Sein calls on national people to cooperate for peace

PAGE-2

Myanmar, Israel hold talks over strengthening bilateral relations

PAGE-2

U Khin Maung Kyaw Din, chief editor of Kyemon Daily.—PHOTO BY AYE MIN SOE

Powerful Backing
Myanmar's state-run media thrives as private sector dailies struggle

Written by Aye Min Soe

(This Article first appeared in the March 13, 2014 edition of Mizzima Business Weekly.)

Myanmar now has a wealth of daily newspapers, but also stiff competition.—PHOTO BY AYE MIN SOE

Myanmar's state-run daily newspapers appear to be dinosaurs from the past, a voice of government, parroting the words of government ministers, meticulously keeping up on obituaries and generating advertising revenues that private sector dailies can only dream about.

Three years after the reform process began, Myanmar's state-run daily newspapers are yet to enjoy complete editorial freedom and face challenges over the proficiency of their newsroom employees.

In an increasingly open and competitive environment, with the private sector press expanding but hungry for circulation growth and more advertising revenue, some are wondering how long state media will remain viable in a less restrictive media market. But, argue the editors of state-run papers, with continued government backing, the country's best newspaper distribution networks and by publishing what they say their readers and advertisers want, it may be too early to count them out as the government's papers of record.

"Before the country opened up, to write an editorial we just had to follow what leaders said in their speeches. But, today, I can point out the weaknesses of the health sector in my editorial," said U Khin Maung Kyaw Din, 54, chief editor of Myanmar-language daily Kyemon (The Mirror). "But, not directly, indirectly," he added, referring to the editorial he was writing about health care reforms.

U Khin Maung Kyaw Din rose through the ranks of the state press, beginning work as a paper boy delivering Kyemon door to door in about 1974, before joining state-run Myanma Alinn Daily in 1977 as a clerk in the advertising department. He was appointed chief editor of Kyemon in 2008.

U Khin Maung Kyaw Din has found that while control over the state-run press was relaxed after the Thein Sein government came to power nearly three years ago, it is yet to celebrate complete editorial freedom.

"We have no right to edit news stories (from the Myanmar News Agency) related to top leaders," he said, adding that editors did not know how to edit long and stereotyped stories written according to inflexible bureaucratic rules.

"Some have not yet changed their mind-set," U Khin Maung Kyaw Din said, referring to the control mentality of a few of the officials in charge of the state-run media.

Those who had changed their mind-set were reluctant to take the initiative to implement

(See page 9)

President U Thein Sein calls on national people to cooperate for peace

PUTAO, 18 March — To be able to grasp every opportunity for development, all national people are to cooperate with the government in making peace, said President U Thein Sein at meeting with ethnic people in Putao.

During the meeting, the president pledged to continue to work for the rights of all national people after the country has reached the nation-wide ceasefire agreement.

Community peace is the first requirement for the development of a region and the government is committed to a nation-wide ceasefire agreement, he said.

Regarding the efforts for development of Kachin State in terms of improving transportation, the government will inject US$ 120 million in aid from India into upgrading the Myitkyina-Sumprabum-Putao Road to be an all-weather road and will spend 140 billion kyat on upgrading roads in Kachin State, President U Thein Sein added.

Speaking on another infrastructure project, officials said the runway of Putao Airport is under construction, with the runway to be expanded to a length of 8,500 ft.

During the president's visit to Putao, ministers donated rice and edible oil to churches and gave aid to internally displaced people.

As a private donor, U Teza, a businessman who survived a chopper crash in the Majwe Ice-capped mountain, contributed 1,000 million kyat as a first batch donation of K 5,000 million kyat, to implementing power supply and regional development tasks.

MNA

U Thein Sein meets ethnic people in Putao in Kahin State.—MNA

Myanmar, Israel hold talks over strengthening bilateral relations

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and Israeli Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hagay Moshe Behar held talks on strengthening good relations between the two countries and upgrading Myanmar's education sector. Also present at the meeting at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday were Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Tin Oo Lwin and officials.—*MNA*

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham shakes hands with Israeli Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Hagay Moshe Behar.—MNA

Vegetables and fruit driers, cold storage facilities operating in Pyinmana

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Vice-President U Nyan Tun visited Ahlinlo Village in Pyinmana Township in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on Tuesday, inspecting vegetable and fruit driers and cold storage facilities.

The Vice-President listened to Buddha's teachings by several monks, offering meals there after.

The Vice-President also attended a ceremony which showed the cultivation of Palethwe hybrid paddies at a 440-acre farmland in Ahlinlo Village, where Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing elaborated on the purpose of the ceremony and reported the current reform processes of agriculture sectors.

During his visit, several donations were made. Shwe Than Lwin Co., Chairman U Kyaw Win donated 31 sets of SKY Net receivers to 31 monasteries in Pyinmana Township and another 31 receivers to 13 villages in Dekkhinathiri Township-during the ceremony.

Officials from Myanmar Agribusiness Public-Corporation (MAPCO)Ltd-donated 220 packages of urea fertilizers to the farmers and K 10 million for electrification in Mezaligon Village through the ward administrator.—*MNA*

Vice-President U Nyan Tun inspects power-tillers in Ahlinlo Village in Pyinmana Township.—MNA

Families of servicemen should do cultivation: Commander-in-Chief

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents gift to a serviceman.—MYAWADY

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—The families of servicemen should get engaged in the development oftheir areas, by starting cultivation, of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said at a staff meeting at Bandoola Station in Putao Township of Kachin State.

He also thanked the servicemen for their endeavours to build peace and stability in far-flung areas and urged them to do their bests to uphold main duties—fighting, training and public services.

The government is improving education for servicemen and their families, with the Commander-in-Chief urging them to do their bit by getting involved in regional development.—*Myawady*

Navy to conduct drills from 19 to 27 March

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March — Myanmar's Navy has issued warning notices that all ships should not be anchored or not pass through the area where they will conduct drills from 19 to 27 March.

Myanmar's navy is planning to conduct drills at the area east of the Coco Island in Myanmar's Water from 19 to 27 March.

The notice has also urged fishing ships not to do fishing in the area during that period and helicopters and planes should not fly under an altitude of 15,000.—*Myawady*

President sends congratulatory message as Mon State marks 40th anniversary

NAY PYI TAW, 19 March— *The following is a translation of the president's message sent on the occasion of 40th Anniversary of Mon State Day which falls on 19 March 2014. —Ed*

It is great pleasure for me to send a message of felicitations for the 40th anniversary of Mon State which falls on 19 March. After independence was regained in 1948, Mon and Kayin States became part of Taninthayi Region. During the era of the Myanmar Socialist Programme Party, they were restructured as Mon State and Kayin State in 1973 at the request of Mon and Kayin nationals. The Mon State day marks the inclusion of Mon State in the Constitution (Draft) after negotiations between Mon national leaders from administrative bodies and Mon national leaders on 19 March, 1973. Mon State Day has been held annually for 40 years.

We have come across political dilemmas and bitter experiences in our society after regaining independence. Now is time to spell an end to conflicts and bring about a peaceful coexistence among diverse ethnic groups, taking bitter lessons from the past.

The 1947 constitution did not grant autonomy to ethnic groups, but the 2008 constitution gives legislative powers to region and state Hluttaws. Genuine federalism could be developed by gradually giving more legislative power to region and state Hluttaws as we obtain more democratic practices and experiences.

It is necessary that the government, Hluttaws, political parties, political forces, economic associations, civil societies, defence forces, ethnic armed groups, ethnic organizations join hands to help turn political, economic, administrative, and private sector reforms and the peace processes into reality. All ethnic armed groups in Mon State have signed the ceasefire deal and a political dialogue with all stakeholders will start soon. I would like to urge all national people in Mon State to actively participate in the political dialogue in Mon State.

I would like to express my appreciation about the cooperation of ethnic armed forces in Mon State and the Mon State government. Due to roundtable dialogues, the state is now enjoying development in road transportation, education, business and stability. I would hereby like to call for active participation of all national people in Mon State in building the peaceful and developed multi-party democratic nation, building on the prevailing sound foundation.

Pyithu Hluttaw gives green light to bill which allows recall of parliamentarians

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March— The Pyithu Hluttaw, People's Parliament, approved Tuesday the bill to recall hluttaw representatives. The bill stipulates the recall of parliamentarians should one percent of voters of their constituency file complaints.

Regarding a question about tissue culture teak plantations in Rakhine State at today's session, Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun reassured those in attendance that the plantation would have no negative impact on the local people.

Responding to another question by Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan, he gave an account of Myanmar's palm oil imports and edible crop exports during the period from 2011-2014, saying that the trade balance showed a deficit of USD 5.115 million in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Deputy Minister for Mines U Than Tun Aung at the Amyotha Hluttaw session on Tuesday gave an account of the cyanide ban in gold mining, saying that punitive actions will be taken against illegal cyanide users as gold miners in Myanmar are weak in cyanide use. Under effective security plans, cyanide use and storage have been allowed to major gold miners, within limits, but use of cyanide is prohibited in gold mining on a manageable scale as it is hard to monitor the small companies whether they adhere the rules and regulations on cyanide use, he added.

The deputy minister responded to the question calling for the systematic use of cyanide that it is required to make amendments to existing rules and regulations and directives before cyanide mining, which is highly dangerous, is allowed for small companies. Responding to a question about the construction a new bridge across the Ngawun river in Ayeyawady Region, Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint pledged to assist the Ayeyawady Region government if the latter wants to implement the project.—*MNA*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker receives Swiss Ambassador, WHO Director-General

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Man separately met with Switzerland's Ambassador Mr Christoph Burgener and Director-General of the World Health Organization Dr Margaret Chan at the Pyithu Hluttaw Building in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee Chairman U Hla Myint Oo, Commission member Day Aye Aye Mu, Chaiman of Health Promotion Committee Dr Kyaw Myint and officials.—*MNA*

***Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann receives Switzerland's Ambassador Mr Christoph Burgener.*—MNA**

Cruiseliner carrying hundreds of tourists arrive in Myanmar

YANGON, 18 March— The M.V. Crystal Symphony cruiseliner carrying more than 640 passengers from 30 countries and coming from Thailand docked at the Myanmar International Terminal Thilawa in Yangon on Tuesday morning, with the M.V. Le Soleal cruiseliner arriving at Bo Aung Kyaw Port in downtown Yangon in the afternoon, with 110 tourists on board. The tourists will be given a tour of Yangon, Bago, Thanlyin, Bagan and Mandalay.

"Today's arrival of two liners is the second time of its kind in Myanmar. Our first experience of arranging trips for cruiseship passengers was on 27 December 2013, when around 1000 people arrived at Yangon Port," said Managing Director U Thet Lwin Toe of Myanmar Voyages International Co., Ltd.

Khin Cho Win

***M.V. Crystal Symphony cruiseliner at Myanmar International Terminal Thilawa in Yangon.*—MNA**

Vice-Senior General Soe Win pays a visit to Bangkok

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—A Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and wife arrived at Bangkok of Thailand on Tuesday. They were welcomed at Don Muang Airport of Thailand by General Suravach Butrwong, Director of Neighbouring Countries Coordination Center of Royal Thai Armed Forces, and his wife and officials from the Embassy.

The Vice-Senior General visited Grand Palace and Wat Pho Temple in the afternoon. Later, the Vice-Senior General enjoyed Thailand traditional drama at Siam Niramit Theater after meeting with the families of Myanmar Embassy to Thailand.—*Myawady*

Closer cooperation with National Democratic Institute discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—U Nyunt Tin, Amyotha Hluttaw International Relations Committee Chairman, discussed further cooperation with the National Democratic Institute Special Representative to Myanmar Dr Richard A.Nuccio on Tuesday.

They held a discussion on activities of the National Democratic Institute, further cementing cooperation between Amyotha Hluttaw International Relations Committee and National Democratic Institute and assistance of NDI in the works of committee.

Committee members U Shu Maung, U Soe Aung and U Tin Maung Myint and officials from the Hluttaw Office also attended the meeting.—*MNA*

UEC Chairman calls for preparations of 2015 general elections

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye has called for the upcoming general elections in 2015 to be prepared well in order for them to be free and fair.

At a meeting between the Union Election Commission and Region/State election sub-commissions on Tuesday, the UEC chairman said that a strategic plan has been drawn in order for free and fair general elections to be successfully held next year. The general elections are slated for late 2015. He said the commission has asked political parties for suggestions and stressed that the commission is striving for laying down rules for election campaigns.

The International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) in collaboration with the UEC and the election sub-commissions will conduct a pilot-project on ballot collection in urban and rural areas, and "unsafe" places in May.

Experts from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) will give more information on the election management system at a forum slated for19-21 March.

MNA

***UEC Chairman U Tin Aye delivers address at the meeting between UEC and region/state election sub-commissions.*—MNA**

Opening Ceremony of Seminar on Green Productivity Improvement held in Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar), PyinOoLwin on 17th March 2014

NAY PYI TAW, 18 March—Under the supervision of the Union Civil Services Board and with the assistance of UNDP (Myanmar), UN-ESCAP/APCICT, World Bank and Hanns Seidel Foundation the opening ceremony of the Seminar on Green Productivity Improvement was held at 9:00 am, on 17th March 2014 at the Central Institute of Civil Service (Upper Myanmar), PyinOoLwin, U Kyaw Thu, Chairman of the Union Civil Services Board delivered the Opening Speech. Dr. Daw Thet Thet Zin, Deputy Minister for Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, Mr. Toily Kurbanov, Country Director, UNDP Myanmar, U Nay Htun, GEGG Myanmar Association also delivered speeches on the subject.

The opening ceremony was attended by U Htay Aung, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism, Directors-General of the Union Civil Services Board, representatives of ASEAN Secretariat, representatives of ASEAN +3 Countries, representatives of the UNDP (Myanmar) office, representatives of the GEGG Myanmar Association, representative of Public Sector Initiatives-Field Programs of World Wildlife Fund based in United States (WWFUS), representative of George Washington University, representative of Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institution, representative of Consortia for a Biodiverse Planet and representative of Office of International Relations of Smithsonian Institution, representatives of UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, representative of Department of Wildlife and National Parks of Malaysia, representative of UNCCD and Asia Pacific Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and representative of Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics Management of Cornell University (USA).

The Union Civil Services Board which is mainly responsible for the civil service matters of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has been taking the Chairmanship of 17th ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters for the year 2013 and 2014. The Seminar on Green Productivity Improvement is one of the activities of ACCSM +3 Work Plan that was adopted at the meeting of Head of Civil Service Organizations of the 16th ACCSM Member States. The theme of the seminar is "Developing Green Economy and Improving Green Productivity".

To the said seminar, participants from ASEAN, China, Japan, Korea, ASEAN Secretariat (Jakarta) has attended and it will last for five days. It is learned that academic papers titled Transition to an Inclusive Green Economy in ASEAN, Environmental Legislation related to Green Productivity Improvements in Myanmar, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness in Asia, Government Institutions and System for Managing Environments, Climate and Natural Resources in ASEAN +3, Green Fiscal Policy, Strengthening Sustainable Forest Management for Green Productivity Improvement in Myanmar, Environmental Health Issues: Water and Sanitation, Indoor Air Pollution and Vector Borne Diseases, Dry Zone Greening Movements Towards Sustainable Green Productivity Improvement in Myanmar, Green Productivity through Green Purchasing and Procurement, Promoting Sustainable Utilization of Wood Products, Integrated Water Resource Management of Shwe Hlan Bo Pump Irrigation Project in Dry Zone, Natural Resources issues in ASEAN +3, Green Growth Investment Roadmap, Integrating Green Productivity into Sectors – Example of Eco Tourism in Myanmar" will be presented by local and foreign experts, and will be followed by discussions.

UCSB

***Union Minister U Htay Aung, UCSB Chairman U Kyaw Thu and officials in documentary photo of Seminar on Green Productivity Improvement.*—MNA**

DVB-T2 Set Top boxes contributed to social organizations in Pathein

PATHEIN, 18 March—The Ministry of Information donated DVB-T2 Set Top boxes to social organizations and poor households in Pathein, Ayeyawady Region on Tuesday.

On the occasion, Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway handed over a total of 35355 DVB-T2 Set Top boxes to Ayeyawady Region Minister U Kyaw Win Naing.

He also donated a TV and a Set Top Box to Ngaputaw Township through the township administrator.

The deputy minister said that the ministry is to distribute 327,863 Set Top boxes countrywide. The contribution fosters rural development tasks and poverty alleviation tasks.

TV channels such as MRTV, MITV, MRTV-4, Channel-7, Hluttaw channel, Farmers' channel, National Races channel and Myawady channels are free-to-air through the Set Top boxes.

MNA

Prices of gold, fuel and foreign currencies

YANGON, 18 March

Yangon Gold Price	1 tical	K 686,700-K 687,700
Mandalay Gold Price	1 tical	K 686,300-K 687,300

Fuel

(A) Diesel	One Litre	K 950
(B) Octane 95	One Litre	K 1100
(C) Octane 92	One Litre	K 930
(D) Petrol	One Litre	K 814

Foreign Exchange Rate

(A) US	1 US$	K 965.00
(B) Europe	1 Euro	K 1344.50
(C) China	1 Yuan	K 156.20
(D) Thailand	1 Baht	K 29.960
(E) Malaysia	1 Ringgit	K 295.33
(F) India	1 Rupee	K 15.796
(G) Japan	100 Yen	K 947.66
(H) South Korea	100 Won	K 90.453
(I) Australia	1 AUD	K 876.99
(J) Singapore	1 S$	K 763.90

Broadening horizon of public relations staff

Monywa, 18 March—The public service media course No. 1/2014 kicked off at the hall of Sagaing Region Information and Public Relations Department in Monywa, the city of Sagaing Region, on Monday.

Head of Region IPRD Daw Khin San, Assistant Director U Tin Maung Aye, journalist U Ye Naing Moe and a member of Myanmar Photographic Society gave lectures on subjects of democratic reform and public service media, processes of public relations, use of social media, speech writing, news and feature compilation, nature of public relations, holding of press conference, news editing, Internet media service, video editing and interview.

It was attended by 61 trainees from IPRDs from eight districts of Sagaing Region up to 23 March.

The training course is aimed at enabling the trainees to have a wider range of knowledge in democratic reforms and public service media.

Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

Bago Region Government, social organizations hold workshop

Bago, 19 March—A workshop on understanding and coordination for people who participate in the regional development works was held at the Hall of Thirihantha in Bago on Tuesday at 9 am.

A total of 50 people from Bago Region Government, region level departmental officials and social organizations discussed improving public education, health and cooperation between UNDP and the government.

Thant Zin (Bago)

Hotel Service Course conducted in Meiktila

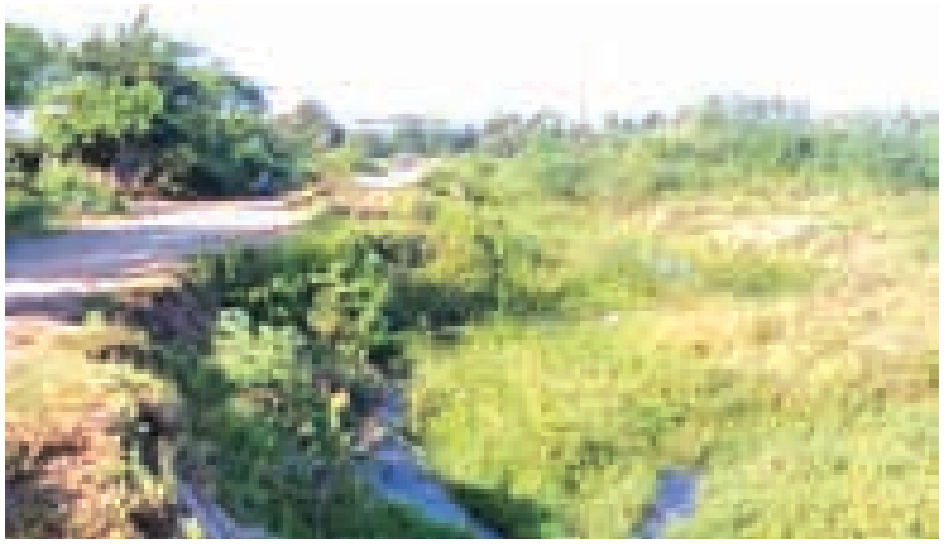
Meiktila, 18 March—First ever Hotel Service Course in Meiktila will be conducted by Hospitality Operation Specialist Team from 27 March to 10 April.

The skilled instructors will give lectures on hotel service subjects. English for hotel staff will be taught as an extra subject in the course. The certificates will be issued by Hospitality Operation Specialist Team and seats are limited to some certain subjects.

Those who want to do the course will visit Grand Cosmos Special Guest House near Yangon-Mandalay Highway in Wuntawpyae Ward bringing K 60,000 to the course and dial 064-35251 and 35256.

Chan Tha (Meiktila)

Myingyan road needs urgent reconstruction



Meiktila, 18 March—Myingyanroad situated in Pyithaya Ward in Meiktila is in urgent need of reconstruction, according to locals.

People from nearby villages rely on the road to be able to have accesto Pyithaya Market. The road was damaged due to long-time erosion. As the lack of reconstruction led toits ruin, local people are hoping for reconstruction of the road before the begin of rainy season.

Chan Tha (Meiktila)

Fire engines handed over in Monywa Township

Monywa, 18 March—Handover of fire engines and demonstration of putting out fire took place at Town Hall of Monywa today, said Assistant Director U Min San of Sagaing Region Fire Services Department.

The state budget of 2013/2014 fiscal year was allotted to the region to buy fire engines which are in urgent need for 25 townships in Sagaing Region, according to Director-General U Tin Moe of Fire Services Department. The fire engines are made in Dongfan Motor Co. Ltd in China. They are of good type engines to put out the fire. Each fire engines costs K 22 million. Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye and party attended the ceremony and presented honour of certificates to the Director-General of Fire Services Department.

During a year starting from 1 January to 31 December 2013, outbreaks of 163 fire destroyed larger amount of people's property. One of the big fire outbreaks was poultry farm near Kyaungsitpon village of Monywa Township.

Toe Toe Win

Electricians try better supply of electricity

Thayawady, 18 March—Electricians led by Township Electrical Engineer Daw Cho Cho Tint of Thayawady Township Electricity Supply Enterprise carried out safety of electricity by cutting branches of trees near the power lines and maintenance of transformers, earthing system, electric meters and loose connection of power lines as of 26 December 2013.

They plan to complete the maintenance tasks by March 2014 at 16 units of the township enterprise, said the township electrical engineer.

Kyemon

Loikaw-Nay Pyi Taw express lines promote services

Loikaw, 18 March—Shwe Lunn Pyan bus line is providing a meal service to passengers.

"Among Loikaw-Nay Pyi Taw Highway Express lines, the Shwe Lunn Pyan bus line is the first to serve meals," said an official of the bus line. In the past, locals in Loikaw did not have access to public services due to a shortage of buses.

Kyi Myint Naing (Loikaw)

Vietnam, US discuss ways to boost air force ties

Hanoi, 18 March — Representatives of Vietnam People's Air Force and the United States (US) Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) discussed here on Monday ways to boost air force ties between the two countries during the latter's working visit to Vietnam.

The cooperation fields include humanitarian assistance, search and rescue, military medicine, and pilot training, among others, Vietnamese government e-Portal reported.

Chief of General Staff of Vietnam People's Army cum Deputy Minister of Defence Do Ba Ty said at the meeting that the establishment of Vietnam-US comprehensive partnership lays the foundation for bringing the two countries' bilateral defence cooperation to a new height.

Ty urges the two air forces to further exchange high-ranking delegations, and boost ties in areas of information sharing, experience on maritime rescue, air force medical research, English language training for Vietnamese soldiers, post-war remediation, finding missing Americans in war, among others.

Xinhua

*Thailand's Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra (C) arrives on a wheelchair at the Royal Police Cadet Academy in Nakorn Pathom Province, on 18 March, 2014.—*Reuters

Thai government lifts Bangkok emergency, crisis far from over

Bangkok, 18 March — Thailand is lifting a state of emergency in Bangkok, taking a step to restore some confidence as anti-government protests subside, though the crisis has entered a new phase with Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra besieged by legal challenges.

The protesters, mainly from Bangkok and the south, have been trying since November to oust Yingluck and rid the country of the influence of her brother, self-exiled former premier Thaksin Shinawatra who was toppled by the army in 2006. The government imposed a state of emergency two months ago, but largely resisted taking heavy-handed action, though 23 people have been killed during the unrest, most in shootings and grenade blasts.

The protests have waned in recent weeks and are now mostly confined to Lumpini Park in Bangkok's central business district and a few other sites. But the threat of further violence remains real, especially after changes at the top of the pro-Thaksin "red shirt" movement at the weekend, with a new, more militant leader promising "to fight tooth and nail" to defend Yingluck. The emergency will be lifted from Wednesday after a decision taken at a cabinet meeting held on Tuesday in Nakhon Pathom province, about 80 km (50 miles) from Bangkok.

Yingluck arrived for the meeting in a wheelchair after slipping as she stepped out of a car on Saturday in the northern city of Chiang Mai, her stronghold.

"The cabinet lifted the state of emergency to instil more confidence in the private sector and tourist industry," she told reporters.

In its place, the government will use the Internal Security Act, a less harsh law that still allows the authorities to impose curfews, operate security checkpoints and restrict the movement of protesters as needed. "Lifting the emergency law should have a positive impact on businesses. Many really felt the pinch and lost customers because the state of emergency was in place, including tour operators who saw huge cancellations," said political analyst Kan Yuenyong at Siam Intelligence Unit.—*Reuters*

Japan announces steps to punish Russia over Ukraine crisis

Tokyo, 18 March — Japan announced a set of measures on Tuesday to punish Russia for intervening in Ukraine to support the independence of its Crimea region, including suspension of talks for easing visa issuance conditions. The sanctions, which are in line with moves by the United States and European nations, also include freezing the planned launch of talks for an investment accord as well as for bilateral agreements on ensuring the peaceful use of space and preventing dangerous military activities.

But the relatively moderate steps could underpin the widespread view that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is reluctant to bring Japan into a serious conflict with Russia as he has repeatedly met with President Vladimir Putin to address bilateral concerns, including a territorial row, while enhancing economic cooperation. Japan has urged Russia not to annex Crimea and to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, saying the region's weekend referendum was illegal despite an overwhelming majority voting in favour of joining Russia.

Kyodo News

Defiant Putin says Crimea will become Russian

Moscow, 18 March — Russian President Vladimir Putin, defying Ukrainian protests and Western sanctions, told parliament on Tuesday that Russia will move forward with procedures to annex Ukraine's Crimean region.

Putin signed an order "to approve the draft treaty between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Crimea on adopting the Republic of Crimea into the Russian Federation". The order indicated the president would sign the treaty with Crimea's Russian-installed leader, who is in Moscow to request incorporation into Russia, but it gave no date.

The move followed a disputed referendum in Crimea on Sunday, staged under Russian military occupation, in which a Soviet-style 97 percent of voters were declared to have voted to return to Russian rule, after 60 years as part of Ukraine.

By pressing ahead with steps to dismember Ukraine against its will, Putin raised the stakes in the most serious East-West crisis since the end of the Cold War.

But Ukraine's interim prime minister, Arseniy Yatseniuk, sought to reassure Moscow on two key areas of concern, saying in a televised address delivered in Russian that Kiev was not seeking to join NATO, the US-led military alliance, and would act to disarm Ukrainian nationalist militias.

On Monday, the United States and the European Union imposed personal sanctions on a handful of officials from Russia and Ukraine accused of involvement in Moscow's military seizure of the Black Sea peninsula, most of whose 2 million residents are ethnic Russians.

*Ukrainian servicemen guard a checkpoint near the village of Strelkovo in Kherson region adjacent to Crimea, on 17 March, 2014.—*Reuters

Russian politicians dismissed the sanctions as insignificant and a badge of honor. The State Duma, or lower house, adopted a statement urging Washington and Brussels to extend the visa ban and asset freeze to all its members.

Leonid Slutsky, one of the lawmakers on the sanctions list, hailed Crimea's decision as historic. "Today we see justice and truth reborn," he said. Japan joined the mild Western sanctions on Tuesday, announcing the suspension of talks with Russia on investment promotion and visa liberalization.—*Reuters*

British FM Says EU mulls need to reduce dependence on Russian energy

London, 18 March — British Foreign Secretary William Hague on Monday said the foreign ministers of the European Union (EU) have started discussing longer term measures over the Ukraine crisis, including "the need to reduce EU dependence on Russian energy over many years to come."

Hague made the remarks via his personal twitter account on Monday afternoon, while the EU foreign ministers meeting on Ukraine was being convened in Brussels. "I'm pleased EU have agreed on asset freezes and travel bans on individuals not just in Crimea but Russia as well," he tweeted.

He added that EU sanctions agreement is important statement of EU "unity and resolve" on Ukraine, coinciding with measures taken by the United States.

On Sunday, people in Crimea voted overwhelmingly for the mostly Russian-speaking peninsula's reunification with Russia. Following the vote, the Crimean parliament declared independence from Ukraine and applied for integration into Russia.

Russian President Vladimir Putin insisted on Sunday in a telephone conversation with German Chancellor Angela Merkel that the Crimea referendum breach no international law and Moscow will respect the choice of local residents. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told a local newspaper Sunday it would not adjust foreign policies over the recent tough statements by some Group of Eight (G8) countries, reiterating its firm position on Ukraine.—*Xinhua*

Syria expects reconciliation as army defeats rebels in battles

DAMASCUS, 18 March —The atmosphere in Syria is suitable for a real reconciliation process, Syria's Reconciliation Minister Ali Haidar said following successive rebel defeats in battles that have led them to a "dead end."

"The atmosphere for launching a real reconciliation process has been attained over the past few months because of the dead end the armed militant groups have reached, after failing to achieve victories on ground and that's why a lot of them have resorted to surrendering themselves to resolve their situation and to reach an agreement with the state," Haidar told *Xinhua* in a recent interview.

The Syrian army has been making strides in its battle against the armed rebel groups across the country, mainly in areas around the capital Damascus and the central province of Homs, while the Syrian administration says it's ready for reconciliation.

On Sunday, Syrian troops seized control of a main rebel stronghold in the city of Yabroud in northern Damascus, a city which rebels dubbed the "shield of the revolution."

The army's capture of Yabroud is the latest in a series of other successful offensives against the rebels.

*Syria's Reconciliation Minister Ali Haidar speaks during an interview with Xinhua on 17 March, 2014. The atmosphere in Syria is suitable for a real reconciliation process, Syria's Reconciliation Minister Ali Haidar said following successive rebel defeats in battles that have led them to a "dead end."—*XINHUA

In his interview with *Xinhua*, Haidar noted that a major factor that contributes in making national reconciliation successful is the advancement of the Syrian troops on the ground.

The Syrian government has recently become more open to national reconciliation, after becoming discouraged by the slow-pace of international efforts to bring about a political solution to the three-year conflict plaguing the country.

Haidar said that there are challenges facing the implementation of national reconciliation in some areas, adding that the "biggest threat" is those areas with "foreign jihadist fighters" and " outside influence."

Xinhua

Security Council extends mandate of UN mission in Afghanistan

UNITED NATIONS, 18 March—The UN Security Council on Monday renewed the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for another year to provide support to the country's upcoming presidential and provincial elections.

In a resolution unanimously adopted on Monday morning, the 15- member Council "decides to extend until 17 March 2015 the mandate of UNAMA."

The Security Council also decided that UNAMA will continue to " support, at the request of the Afghan authorities, the organization of future Afghan elections, including the 2014 presidential and provincial council elections and the 2015 parliamentary elections, as well as to strengthen, in support of the government of Afghanistan's efforts, the sustainability, integrity and inclusiveness of the electoral process," said the resolution.

UNAMA was established by the Council in 2002 in order to help Afghanistan achieve peace and development.

In the Monday resolution, the Security Council also reiterated "its concern about the security situation in Afghanistan, in particular the ongoing violent and terrorist activities by the Taliban, al-Qaeda and other violent and extremist groups."

Xinhua

Venezuela unrest toll rises as soldier is shot in head

CARACAS, 18 March —A Venezuela National Guard captain died on Monday after being shot in the head during a demonstration, the military said, the 29th fatality in six weeks of clashes between protesters and security forces.

General Padrino Lopez, head of the armed forces' strategic operational command, said the captain was shot late on Sunday at a street barricade set up by demonstrators in the central city of Maracay, in Aragua state.

"He was another victim of terrorist violence," Lopez said on Twitter, calling for an end to the confrontations. "Our armed forces don't repress peaceful protests, they protect them."

Since early February, students and hardline opposition leaders have been calling supporters onto the streets to protest against President Nicolas Maduro and his socialist government.

The demonstrators are demanding political change and an end to high inflation, shortages of basic foods and one of the worst rates of violent crime in the world.

The protests, however, show no signs of toppling Maduro, a 51-year-old former bus driver who narrowly won an election in April 2013 to replace his late friend and mentor, Hugo Chavez.—*Reuters*

*Chinese research vessel and icebreaker Xuelong arrives at the anchorage of Fremantle, Australia, on 17 March, 2014. After 11 days of sailing, Xuelong anchored at Fremantle on Monday for replenishment.—*XINHUA

One dies, eight other crew missing in cargo ship collision

YOKOHAMA, 18 March —A Panama-registered cargo ship collided with another cargo vessel early Tuesday in the sea off Kanagawa Prefecture, leaving one crew member dead and eight others missing, the Japan Coast Guard said.

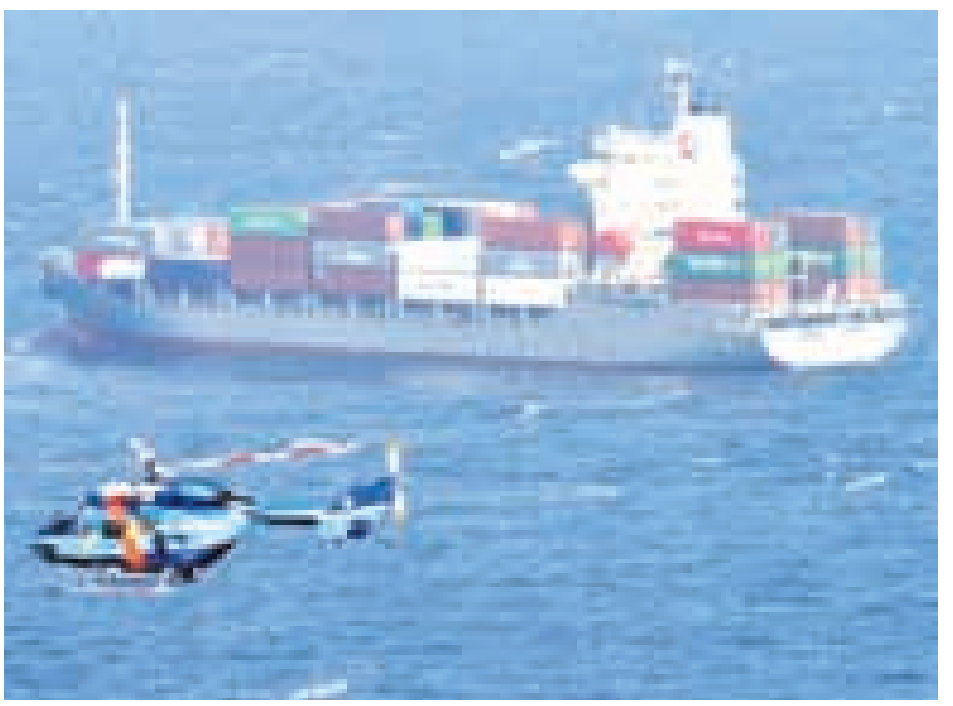
The 12,630-ton *Beagle III* carrying 20 Chinese crew sank after colliding with the South Korean-registered 7,406-ton *Pegasus Prime* in the Uraga channel about 6 kilometres off Miura in Kanagawa, at around 3:20 am, according to the 3rd Regional Coast Guard Headquarters.

Eleven of the Chinese crew members on board *Beagle III* — which had been carrying steel from Yokohama to Kobe — have been rescued, while one has been confirmed dead.

A total of 14 crew members from South Korea and Myanmar of Pegasus Prime, which left Pusan port on Sunday for Japan, were confirmed safe.

The Uraga channel serves an entrance to major ports including Tokyo port and Yokohama port from the Pacific Ocean.

Kyodo News



*A Japanese police helicopter searches for missing crew members of the Panama-registered cargo ship Beagle III that sank after a collision with the South Korean-registered Pegasus Prime (back) in the sea off Miura, Kanagawa Prefecture, near Tokyo on 18 March, 2014.—*KYODO NEWS

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 19 March, 2014

Resists corruption temptation

We currently see competition so tough in every sector that there are enough reasons for dishonest people to apply unjust or corrupted means to gain advantage. We must fight dishonesty and injustice and the best way is through virtuous principles or teachings. In fact, we can overcome every bad deed or intention with these principles.

Anti-bribery is one among the four main righteous principles. Staying away from bribery is an auspicious way and honesty is the base for prosperity.

Expecting bribes and allowing a corrupt mind are against virtuous principles. Taking bribes or having a corrupt mind actually deviates one from prosperity. It is an act of total self-destruction.

All kinds of corruption and bribery in order to become famous, rich and privileged, even the act of buying friendship through dishonest means is harmful to society.

Currently we have an Anti-Corruption Commission that has already started its job. The aim of this commission is to ensure proper progress in every sector. In fact "Honesty is the best policy". Unjust or corrupt means bring only short-term success, so there cannot be sustainable development.

Everyone who wants long-term progress and prosperity should abide by the virtuous principles to have the right mind and take right action.

The country will achieve rapid progress and prosperity if every individual in the whole nation is free from bribery and corruption.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.tun@gmail.com with your name and title.

New Media Law signed...

(from page 1)

Council that can act as an independent organization in accord with the provisions mentioned in the Media Law. The council will be formed with a minimum of 15 members and a maximum of 30. Among the members will be a representative of the President's Office, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker, journalists, representatives from news agencies, printers and publishers, writers, poets and cartoonists, as well as representatives from civil society organizations.

The duties and function of the council is to monitor and develop the media, facilitate the import of media devices and equipment, organize workshops and talks, present awards to outstanding media persons, lay down plans for the development of the media industry, coordinate matters related to designation of contact persons from government and civil society organizations, report work progress and follow-up tasks to the President and making rules and regulations for the respective committees of the council.

The council has to set up a fund with the use of cash donations from the Union Government and assistance from local and foreign donors, INGOs and NGOs and contributions made by media companies.

Complaints against a journalist who is suspected of infringing one of the conditions in Section 9 can be made by any organization or anyone to the council first. If the dispute is not settled, it can be brought to the court.

According to sub-section (a) of Section 6, officials concerned are responsible to make necessary arrangements for journalists in form of permission and accreditation, to ensure journalists are not burdened with refusal, delay and hindrance while obtaining information of public interest.

Orders, directives and announcements under the 1962 Printing and Publishing Registration Law that banned free press shall be declared invalid as long as they are contrary to the provisions mentioned in the new law.—*NLM*

The Meaning of the Word "Rakhine"

Dr.Saw Mra Aung

The Rakhines are one of the earliest immigrants into Myanmar. Due to scanty scientific research, their entry into Myanmar cannot be dated definitely. However, Rakhine traditional chronicles assert that the Rakhines had entered Myanmar from Majjhimadesa before the enlightenment of the Buddha, established their earliest city called "Dvaravati" in the area which is today known as Thandwe in the southern part of Rakhine State, then proceeded north to the Valley of the Gacchapanadi (Kaladan) River, founded the First Vesali City, Dhannavati Cities and the Second Vesali City, again moved on to the Valley of the Laymyo River and founded Panca City, Parin Cities and Laungkrat Cities and finally shifted back to the Valley of the Gacchapanadi River and established MraukU City in the 15th century A.D. This article is not to be devoted to the history of the Rakhines nor to that of their origin but just to the etymological and lexical elaboration on the word "Rakhine".

It is found that the word "Rakhine" is derived from various sources. The most widely accepted opinion on its sources among the Rakhines is that the word "Rakhine" is a corrupted from of the Pali word "Rakkha" meaning "guarding or to be guarded". According to the Pali-English Dictionary compiled by Rhys Davids, the word "Rakkha" has its verb "Rakkhakati" meaning "to protect, to guard and to observe" and its noun "Rakkhana" meaning "protection or keeping". However, scholars think that the word "Rakhine" was evolved from "Rakkha" through the intermediate terms "Rakhait", "Rakkhi" and "Rakkhaing" in course of time. It is said that the transition from Rakkha to Rakkhaing took place at the time of the establishment of Dhannavati City. The Rakhines, staunch Theravada Buddhists, gladly accept this Pali derivation, for they consider themselves to be protectors of the race and religion and the strict observers of morality. Ancient Rakhine region is called "Rakkhapura" in Pali and Arakkhadesha in Sanskrit. This suggests that the word "Rakhines" originates from the Pali word "Rakkha" and the Sanskrit word "Arakkha". In praise of the protection of the race and observance of morality of the Rakhine people, Hermit Naginda, who was the preceptor of King Marayu, founder of Dhannavati, in his epic composed thus

အမျိုးသီလ၊ နှစ်ဌာနကို
ပြည့်ဝမဏ္ဍိုင်၊ စောင့်စွမ်းနိုင်သည်၊
ရက္ခိုင်နာမ၊ ဘွဲ့မည်လှဖြင့်၊ အန္တတ္တ
သညာ၊ ခေါ် အပ်ရာတည်း....

Two pillars, race and morality they can protect and observe safely and strictly; by the beautiful appellation should they be so called Rakhine justifiably…".

The second source of the word "Rakhine" is the Pali word "Rakkhasa (also Yakkha)" or the Sanskrit word "Raksasa" meaning "demon or ogre". Regarding this source, it is explained that when the ancient people from Majjhimadesa reached Rakhine region, they met there a ferocious aboriginal people who were cannibals. So they called them demons or ogres which are in juxtaposition to Bilu in Myanmar and Rakkhasa in Pali. Later, they subdued them and established cities. As they found demon-like people in the new land, they termed it as Rakkhasapura (Yakkhapura) or Rakshpura (Land of demons).

The third source of the word "Rakhine" is the Ye-kyi Taw (Forest of Clear Water). Relating to it, some scholars explain it on the basis of the Utinna Epic thus: In ancient Rakhine region, creeks and rivers, rising in gray, murky high mountain ranges, meandered through the flat plains with their countless tributaries, big and small, and their both banks covered with thick forests. Ancient people cleared away the Re-kyi Taw (Forest of clear water) on the bank of the Gacchapanadi River and founded a city. It is possible that the word "Re-kyi" was changed to "Rakhine" with the passage of times (Late Rakhine historian U Shwe Zan said that, at the word "Re-kyi", he was reminded of the migration of the Aryans along the fertile alluvial river valleys in search of clear water and tender grass).

The Rakhines are called "Arakan" by the Indians in their accent. The westerners, who knew of the Rakhines through the Indians followed their accent and called Rakhine "Arakan". But Pamela Gutman in her Ph.D dissertation entitled "Ancient Arakan" says that "Arakan" has some connections with a Tamil word "Arrakam" meaning "shellac", for during the 1st century A.D, lac was a major local product of Rakhine region. Ptolemy in his book written during the 2nd century A.D mention Rakhine region as Argyre (Silver Land). Gerini in his work "Research of Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia" connects the word "Arakan" with the Vedic word "Palaksa or Plaksa" meaning "silver" and continues that it was transformed into Praksa, Paraksa, Araka and Arakkha".

The Rakhines are also called "Magh", on the grounds that they are descendants of the people who migrated into Rakhine from Magadha Kingdom in Majjhimadesa. The Portuguese and other Europeans call Rakhine "Rakwan, Rakkhan, Aracan, Arakeo, Orakan, etc".

In conclusion, apart from the above-mentioned sources, there may be some other sources and variants for the word "Rakhine". But the sources explained so far are just the ones which are the most common among the Rakhines. Although the writer on his part cannot say exactly from which source the word "Rakhine" is actually derived, he as a Rakhine national is assured that the Rakhines, devoted Theravada Buddhists, will put the unanimous vote proudly to the source "Rakkha" a Pali word, in whose language the Teaching of the Buddha (Tipitaka) is enshrined.

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Powerful Backing

(from page 1)

newsroom reforms because of the possibility of negative consequences. "And some don't know how to change or reform the workplaces or systems," U Khin Maung Kyaw Din said.

"We should at least get editorial freedom like in Singapore and in China," he said, somewhat ironically, referring to countries with limited press freedom. During a visit to China, he discovered that the state-run press there has more freedom than its Myanmar counterparts – as long as it obeys the rule of not criticizing the policies of the Chinese Communist Party.

Official figures put the circulation of Kyemon at between 150,000 and 180,000, ahead of Myanma Alinn Daily's circulation of 130,000 to 160,000.

After Ne Win seized power in a military coup in 1962, private sector newspapers were nationalized and Kyemon and Myanma Alinn Daily became state-run dailies.

Successive military governments have for decades forced state-run dailies to rely on stereotyped news – written according to inflexible bureaucratic rules – from the Myanma News Agency, which has had the effect of inhibiting career development opportunities for journalists at the newspapers. The general perception of stories produced by the state-owned Myanma News Agency is that they are reports about speeches given by leaders or ministers and the activities of ministries.

"Editors can't rewrite the reports, which do not include facts and figures," said U Win Naing, editor of Kyemon.

Editors of state-run dailies do not have the right to edit Myanma News Agency reports about the country's six top leaders: the president, two vice-presidents, the two speakers of parliament and the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

"We have worked stereotypically here for many years. So, we lost our rationalization and creative thinking," said U Win Naing.

"Even if we get editorial freedom today, we are not ready to improve the quality of our dailies immediately, because our human resources have been destroyed," he said.

State-run dailies have also suffered from a loss of editorial staff to competitors since April 2013 when the government allowed the private sector to launch daily newspapers and they recruited heavily for their expanded newsrooms.

U Soe Soe Naing, an editor at Kyemon, said there was a mismatch between competence and roles in the state-run media.

"Editors are working as foremen and reporters are working as proof readers," said U Soe Soe Naing.

"This is the difference between the state-run press and private sector media: the latter publishes news stories gathered by their reporters; the state-run press covers reports from ministries," he said.

One year after taking office, President U Thein Sein's government declared that it planned to transform the state-run press into a public service media which will give voice to ethnic minorities. U Soe Soe Naing said it was difficult to envisage reports expressing the opinions of the people and human interest stories being covered by the state-run press.

The editors of state-run dailies often cite, as an example of government sensitivity over criticism of ministries, a report about the cost of an apartment in what the relevant ministry had described as a low-cost housing project in Yangon.

The article, contributed by a retired public servant, had complained that at more than K20 million (about US$20,000), the price set for an apartment in what was described as a low-cost housing project was out of the financial reach of people in his situation. This was regarded as criticism of the ministry and the article was rejected for publication.

"If the government wants its state-run dailies to function as a people-centred press, there should be the voices of the people in our newspapers," U Soe Soe Naing said.

U Khin Maung Kyaw Din says the future of state-run dailies will depend partly on their ability to attract more young journalists.

"Today is the time to consider the new generation," he said, adding that if younger journalists at state-run dailies were not given more opportunities "we will fall someday".

Media monopolization?

The private sector dailies have complained recently that they are running at a loss because they cannot compete against the state-run press, which is accused of monopolizing the media market.

The private sector media was incensed when the Ministry of Information sought an allocation for its News and Periodicals Enterprise of K36.566 billion (about US$37.2 million) for the 2014-2015 financial year to publish Kyemon, Myanma Alinn Daily and the English-language New Light of Myanmar. The private sector media said the papers were running at a loss.

News and Periodicals Enterprise director U Win Zaw Htay described the reports in the private sector media that the three dailies were operating at a loss as being contrary to the ethics of journalism.

Speaking recently at a news conference in Nay Pyi Taw, he said Information Minister U Aung Kyi sought the budget allocation of K36.566 billion for six departments under the ministry.

U Win Zaw Htay said that in the 2012-2013 fiscal year, of K3.337 billion allocated to News and Periodicals Enterprise, it recorded spending of K11.75 billion, and generated revenues of K14.19 billion, realizing a profit of K2.44 billion.

Figures released by the Information Ministry at the press conference also showed that in the first nine months of the 2013-2014 fiscal year, News and Periodicals Enterprise generated revenues of K13.92 billion and recorded spending of K10.04 billion.

"In reality, they (private media) have 100 percent media freedom,' said Kyemon chief editor U Khin Maung Kyaw Din. "They are running at a loss not because of us [the state-run media], but because they do not know how to run a daily."

Without elaborating on what factors were taken into account in his estimate, U Khin Maung Kyaw Din said it costs about K1 million to publish a 24-page tabloid each day.

"If there are no ads or income from it, a boss is throwing away 1 million kyat a day," he said.

The government last year granted 30 daily newspaper publishing licences to the private sector. Of the 30, 18 met the condition to launch by last December and the 12 which failed to meet the deadline would have their licences revoked, said U Aung Kyaw Oo, the director of the Ministry of Information's Copyright and Registration Department.

U Khin Maung Kyaw Din believes he knows what the people of Myanmar want from their newspapers.

He says that because 70 percent of the population lives in rural areas or are what he calls ordinary people, the presentation of news stories needs to be clear and simple. The mass reading market does not want complicated stories that include difficult words.

"The private sector media is presenting today what it wants to see and what it wants to be, it is not thinking about what the people need and want," U Khin Maung Kyaw Din said.

He said the latest trend among private sector newspapers was a "competition for thickness" and the result was an emphasis on long reports and articles to make papers fatter, rather than short, simple reports that readers preferred.

"What they are doing wrong today is putting so many long articles and long stories in their papers, which is what they did when they published weekly journals," said U Khin Maung Kyaw Din.

The opening-up of the country since early 2011 has coincided with an increase in advertising in state-run dailies.

U Khin Maung Kyaw Din quoted businesspeople as saying they liked to advertise in Kyemon because they knew it was an effective advertising medium.

"Advertising in state-run dailies is very effective," he said.

"They have high circulations, they reach people throughout most of the country and their subscribers range from ward administrators to the president."

The high circulations, national distribution and number of pages devoted to advertising (in a recent 28-page edition of Myanma Alinn Daily, 12 pages were devoted to display or classified advertising, including advertisements from government ministries and obituaries), give the state-run dailies are clear market advantage over private sector newspapers.

U Khin Maung Kyaw Din said Kyemon has a circulation of more than 185,000 and he is optimistic it can reach 200,000. When it was founded in 1957 by U Thaung, the Burmese author and journalist, Kyemon's circulation was only about 3,000 copies per day. The paper's circulation rose to 55,000 over the next seven years, before it was nationalized on September 1, 1964. During the socialist period from 1974 to 1988, Kyemon's went from around 75,000 to 110,000 a day.

He said the reason for its rise in circulation included publishing fresh news from throughout the country and its clear, simple style of presentation. An affordable price also meant that many people at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder could afford monthly subscriptions.

"If the private sector media wants to achieve success, it should learn from how Kyemon struggled during the socialist period to increase its circulation," U Khin Maung Kyaw Din said.

Staff of Kyemon Daily working in the news room.

PHOTO BY AYE MIN SOE

Multiplier course shared to monastic education teachers

PAKOKKU, 18 March—As part of efforts to propagate Buddhism across the nation, the multiplier course on Dhamma school teachership course is being conducted at the prayer hall of Tilawkayama monastic education school in Ward 3 of Pakokku from 16 to 21 March.

A total of 50 teachers from the monastic education schools in Pakokku Township in 2014-15 academic year.

Instructors monk U Manita and laypersons U Aung Kyaw Thu, Daw Khin Saw Oo and Daw Le Le Win from Yangon Dhamma School Foundation Centre gave lectures to the trainees.

The teachers who completed the multiplier course will train over 1000 students, said the monk of the monastic education school from Ward 3.

Aung (Mann Tekkatho)

Yangon Region needs about 600 more traffic police for efficient enforcement

YANGON, 18 March—Traffic police play a key role in enforcing traffic rules along the motor roads in Yangon Region.

A traffic police in hand postures for enforcement of traffic rules at a junction.

At present, Yangon Region Traffic Police Force has been constituted with over 800 members, and it needs 600 more members for the regular organizational setup, according to the Yangon Region Traffic Police Force Office.

"As number of vehicles is growing in Yangon Region day by day, the region is to be added with more traffic police members. The newly-trained police members are deployed in other sections. In fact, the strength of Yangon Region is the largest amount among the regions and states," said an official of Yangon Region Traffic Police Force.

The region's traffic police force must have 1422 members. Due to inadequate number of traffic police, enforcement of traffic rules cannot be conducted efficiently.—*K Thein Swe*

Judicial staff urged to be free from bribery and corruption

SINGU, 18 March—Chief Justice U Soe Thein of Mandalay Region High Court gave instructions on judicial and management affairs to judges of Thabeikkyin, Singu and Madaya townships at a meeting held at Singu Township Court, Mandalay Region, on 14 March.

In his instructions, the region chief justice stressed the need to draw a plan to decline number of remaining criminal cases at the courts.

He urged the judges to performed their tasks to be free from bribery and corruption to win the trust of the people in the judicial sector.In meeting with staff of Singu Township Court, the Chief Justice of the region called for abiding by the civil service codes.

Win Maung

Offertories donated to title recipient monks, nuns in Bago

Offering of religious titles to monks in progress in Bago.

BAGO, 18 March—A ceremony to pay homage to the monks and nuns who received religious titles took place at the Buddha Athan building on Shwemawdaw Pagoda Road in Bago, Bago Region, on Sunday.

Speaker of Bago Region Hluttaw U Win Tin, Region Ministers and officials offered alms to title recipient monks and nuns.

Later, they donated offertories worth K 4.18 million to the monks and nuns.

Thant Sin (Bago)

Chick pea, reliable for farmers in Kyaukpadaung

KYAUKPADAUNG, 18 March—Chick pea plantations are thriving at irrigated areas of Kyetmauktaung Dam in Kyaukpadaung Township, Mandalay Region.

Of them, some parts of the plantations are started to harvest. In 2012-13 cultivation season, the chick pea produced 10.86 baskets per acre and the whole township produced 45308 baskets.

"I think production of chick pea may be produced higher than that of previous year. Last year, some farmers could not grow chick pea due to shortage of time after monsoon paddy had been harvested. This year, farmers are difficult to utilize the irrigated water from Kyetmauktaung Dam. Fortunately, they could grow chick pea in the places of monsoon paddy. In addition, the monsoon showers cover larger area. That is why I think production of chick pea may be higher," said the staff officer of Township Agriculture Department.

In 2013-14, Kyaukpadaung Township grew 4311 acres of chick pea, exceeding the target of 4200 acres, accounting for 102.64 per cent.

At the harvest time, merchants buy chick pea at the price of K 14000 per basket.

Ko Nay (Kyaukpadaung)

Efforts made for deflection of erosion at Zalun

ZALUN, 18 March—Zalun, one of deltaic townships in Ayeyawady Region, is suffering from bank erosion.

Ayeyawady River erodes the town daily. As such, the government is taking preventive measures by building the embankment from the sandbank near Daunggyi Village to Kyeebin Village so as to deflect the erosion.

Wooden posts, 80 feet in length, were driven into the water for construction of the embankment.

Local youth actively took part in the construction tasks. Local people wish to dredge the route of flowing water in the river near the bank 1.5 miles upstream of Kyeebin Village.—*Zalun Aye Khaing*

Local authorities and people building retaining walls for prevention against erosion in Zalun Township.

Four injured after lighting structure collapses in Malta

VALLETTA, 18 March — Four workers were injured, with one in critical situation, when a structure supporting the Malta Fairs and Conventions Centre's tent's lighting collapsed on Monday morning.

The lighting structure, which was in Ta' Qali, some 11.7 km from Valletta, Capital of Malta, was being set up to power the Gensna rock musical, according to local report.

Xinhua

India fishermen are freed in northern Sri Lanka Kankesanthurai harbour of Jaffna on 17 March, 2014. A total of 116 Indian fishermen were freed by a local court in northern Sri Lanka Kankesanthurai harbour of Jaffna. —XINHUA

US industrial production improves amid warmer weather

WASHINGTON, 18 March — After the severe weather forced an abrupt decline in January, US industrial production picked up in February as the temperature climbed, a Federal Reserve showed on Monday.

Industrial production, an indicator of the output of mines, factories and utilities, increased by a seasonally adjusted 0.6 percent in February, according to the Fed report. It followed a revised 0.2 percent decline in January.

Manufacturing output, the largest component of the overall industrial production, rose 0.8 percent after having decreased 0.9 percent in January.

"Much of the swing in the rates of change for production in January and February reflected the depressing effects on output of the severe weather in January and the subsequent return to more normal levels of production in February," the report noted.

Capacity utilization for manufacturing moved up 0.5 percentage point in February to 76.4 percent, 2.3 percentage points below its long-run average. The overall industrial capacity utilization, a key measure of efficiency, increased to 78.8 percent, 1.3 percentage points below its long-run average.—*Xinhua*

Cheers and criticism mark Abbas's visit to Washington

A Palestinian Fatah supporter shouts during a rally in support of President Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank village of Tubas near Jenin on 16 March, 2014. REUTERS

RAMALLAH, 18 March — Thousands of Palestinians took to the streets on Monday to show their support for President Mahmoud Abbas, who is under heavy pressure as he prepares to meet US President Barack Obama.

Abbas, scheduled to see Obama later in the day in Washington, complained last week that he had come under great duress during US-brokered peace talks with the Israelis, which are due to expire next month in the absence of any accord.

Adding to his diplomatic concerns, Abbas has also got entangled in a fierce slanging match with an exiled rival, Mohammed Dahlan, who lambasted his ally-turned-foe in a two-hour interview with Egyptian television on Sunday.

The interview sent shockwaves through the Palestinian Territories, which is not used to seeing such political acrimony played out on their televisions screens, and Abbas's supporters rallied in a number of towns across the occupied West Bank.

"We support you, we are with you," demonstrators chanted. "Our choice is our leadership, the protector of our national project."

Some burnt pictures of Dahlan, a former senior official in Abbas's Fatah movement, who was forced into exile in 2011 following accusations of corruption that he has denied.

The primary focus of Monday's protests were efforts by the United States to secure a framework deal between the Israelis and Palestinians that will extend negotiations beyond the initial end-of-April deadline.

The talks are aimed at creating an independent Palestinian state and end decades of conflict, but despite almost nine months of meetings, there has been no sign of progress.

Abbas has said he will not agree to demands being made by the Israelis, including that he should recognize Israel as a Jewish state. "I am 79 years old and am not ready to end my life with treason," he said last week.

Waving Palestinian flags, supporters in Jenin, Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron and Jericho said they backed Abbas's stance. "These rallies send clear messages that the Palestinian people are committed to their constant rights and will never concede them," said Fatah Central Committee member Mahmoud Al-Aloul during the rally in Ramallah.—*Reuters*

Car bombs kill at least eight at Libya army academy in Benghazi

BENGHAZI, (Libya), 18 March — A powerful car bomb attack targeted a military academy in Libya's eastern of city of Benghazi on Monday, killing at least eight people and wounding more than a dozen, hospital and security officials said.

Instability in the eastern city is part of the struggle a weak central government faces in controlling armed groups, militias and brigades of former rebels who once battled Muammar Gaddafi and now refuse to disarm.

A first bomb exploded at the front gate of the academy as soldiers were leaving a graduation ceremony, security officials said. Several cars parked outside exploded. One or two other bombs exploded around the same time, wounding 18, security and hospital officials said.

In a separate explosion hours later in Benghazi, one person was killed when another car bomb went off near the state oil firm Brega Petroleum Marketing Co, which sells fuel products inside Libya, a security source said.

No group claimed responsibility for the bombings in Benghazi, where Libyan armed forces have been battling militants from hardline Islamist groups such as Ansar al Sharia, listed as a foreign terrorist organization by Washington.

Xinhua

Chinese companies earn locomotive contracts in S Africa

JOHANNESBURG, 18 March — South Africa's state-owned freight transport and logistics company Transnet on Monday signed a 50-billion-rand (4.7 billion US dollars) contract for manufacturing 1,064 locomotives, in which more than half go to Chinese companies. Chinese locomotive firm CSR Zhuzhou Electric Locomotive and CNR Rolling Stock South Africa won 359 electric locomotives and 232 diesel locomotives contracts respectively, while GE South Africa and Bombardier Transportation South Africa had the rest.

Announcing the bidders on the press release, Transnet Group Chief Executive, Brain Molefe said "This marks a significant milestone in the company's history together with substantial socio- economic benefits for South Africa."

When facing the question about why CSR cut the biggest piece of the deal, Molefe said that according to the cooperation experience with CSR before, CSR provided high above average quality product, had the ability to follow tight deliver schedule, and Transnet is happy with the first patch of 10 electric locomotives from CSR. In line with South Africa's commitment to boost its maunufacturing capacity and to empower black economy, most of the locomotive will be produced at Transnet Engineering's plants in Koedoespoort, Pretoria and Durban, driving South Africa's regional integration objectives.—*Xinhua*

Merkel says impressed by reforms in Italy

BERLIN, 18 March — German Chancellor Angela Merkel voiced strong support on Monday for economic reforms unveiled by new Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, saying his course struck the right balance between growth and stability.

"I have been very impressed. We are seeing a structural change in Italy," Merkel told reporters in Berlin at a joint news conference with Renzi.

"For me it is also clear that Italy is adhering to the Stability and Growth Pact, with both of its components: growth and employment, and on the other hand stability and a recognition of the fiscal compact."—*Reuters*

German Chancellor Angela Merkel (R) chats with Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi (C) during a group picture with their ministers before German-Italian government consultations, in Berlin on 17 March, 2014.— REUTERS

Vietnam president seeks more investment from Japan to spark growth

TOKYO, 18 March — Visiting Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang on Tuesday called for more Japanese investment in Vietnam to stimulate economic growth in the Southeast Asian country.

Apparently expressing his concerns about China's increasingly assertive stance beyond its borders, Sang also said territorial disputes in the region must be solved through peaceful means rather than with force.

"I'm expecting support for us to achieve our goals of industrialization and modernization," Sang said in a speech delivered at the Japanese parliament, calling for more investment by Japanese manufacturers and other companies.

The president said Vietnam will remain an "important destination for foreign investments with a competitive edge" over other developing countries, citing its "stable politics and society, as well as reasonable labour costs" among other factors.

He asked continued support from the Japanese government through official development assistance to finance building infrastructure and developing human resources.

Kyodo News

An official from Pollution Control Department checks the pollution level during a massive fire at a garbage disposal site in Samut Prakan Province, Thailand, on 17 March, 2014. A fire started at about noon in Samut Prakan Province of Thailand on Sunday. —XINHUA

Cambodian defence minister urges opposition to join parliament

KAMPONG SPEU, (Cambodia), 18 March — Cambodian deputy prime minister and defence minister Gen. Tea Banh on Tuesday urged the country's main opposition party to join the National Assembly in order to discuss and resolve post-election issues through legal means.

"For the interest of the nation, the opposition should join the National Assembly to discuss its proposed electoral reforms, not illegally marching on streets to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Hun Sen," he said in a speech to some 500 military personnel at the Institute for Peacekeeping Forces, Mine and Explosive Remnants of War Clearance.

The minister said the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces fully supported the Hun Sen-led government and vowed to maintain peace and stability for the people of Cambodia.

"We will not allow anyone to destroy peace and stability in Cambodia," he said.

Post-election dispute between the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) has persisted for almost eight months after the results of polls in July last year showed that the CPP won 68 parliamentary seats and the CNRP got 55 seats. Claiming serious irregularities, the CNRP refused to accept the outcome and has boycotted parliament since then with many protests to demand the resignation of Hun Sen and a revote.

Hun Sen has said that he would neither step down nor call a revote. CNRP chief whip Son Chhay told reporters Monday that the opposition will continue boycotting parliament unless there is a guarantee of an early election.—*Xinhua*

Pakistan summons Indian diplomat over fishermen arrest

ISLAMABAD, 18 March — Pakistan on Monday summoned a senior Indian diplomat and a formal protest was lodged over the recent arrest of its fishermen who were within Pakistani waters.

Pakistan and India routinely arrest fishermen on charges of entering each other's waters as the two nuclear rivals have not yet determined their maritime boundary despite a series of talks on the issue.

Pakistan, however, said the Indian authorities detained a group of 13 fishermen from Pakistani waters.

"The Indian Deputy High Commissioner in Islamabad was called in to the Foreign Office today and a protest was lodged over the capturing of 13 Pakistani fishermen by Indian authorities on 15 March," the Foreign Ministry said.

According to Pakistan's Fishermen Cooperative Society, the fishermen along with their boat were well within Pakistan territorial waters, at Khajar Creek, when they were captured, a Foreign Ministry statement said.

Xinhua

Japan to grant 11.7 m USD to Cambodia for health development

PHNOM PENH, 18 March — The Japanese government will sign up to provide 11.7 million US dollars to Cambodia next week to help the country in its health sector development, according to a news statement from the Cambodian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday.

Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hor Namhong and Japanese Ambassador to Cambodia Yuji Kumamaru will ink the grant aid agreement on 26 March, the statement said.

The aid would be used for the expansion of the National Maternal and Child Health Centre, it said.

Xinhua

Plane search spans Asia, but investigation shows little progress

KUALA LUMPUR / BEIJING, 18 March — China deployed 21 satellites to scour its territory for a missing Malaysian jetliner, while Australia said it had drastically narrowed its sector of the search area but was still looking in an expanse of ocean the size of Spain and Portugal.

Malaysia said on Tuesday it had conferred with the US and Chinese ministers on the search for Malaysian Airlines Flight MH370, an unprecedented 26-nation operation that now spans Asia from the Caspian Sea to the southern Indian Ocean.

Investigators are convinced that someone with deep knowledge of the *Boeing 777-200ER* and commercial navigation diverted the jet, carrying 12 crew and 227 mainly Chinese passengers, perhaps thousands of miles off its scheduled course from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing.

But intensive background checks of everyone aboard have so far failed to find anyone with a known political or criminal motive to crash or hijack the plane, Western security sources and Chinese authorities said.

China has begun to search for MH370 in Chinese territory, which falls within the northern search corridor, said state news agency *Xinhua*, and Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told a daily news conference that 21 satellites were involved.

Reuters

Malaysia's acting Transport Minister Hishammuddin Hussein (C) takes questions during a news conference about the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370, at Kuala Lumpur International Airport on 18 March, 2014.—REUTERS

New N Korean ambassador meets UN General Assembly president

NEW YORK, 18 March — North Korea's recently appointed ambassador to the United Nations Ja Song Nam met General Assembly President John Ashe on Monday, according to a statement from Ashe's spokesperson.

Ja told Ashe about steps his country is taking to improve bilateral ties with South Korea, according to the statement, which did not detail the specific measures.

They also discussed Pyongyang's "priorities for improving the economic and living standards."

Ja met Secretary General Ban Ki-moon last month when he presented diplomatic credentials to the UN chief to formally begin the post.

Kyodo News

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Sun Jianguo (back L), deputy chief of general staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army and chairman of the China Institute for International Strategic Studies meets with Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF)'s commander-in-chief Gen Pol Saroeun (back R) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 17 March, 2014. Cambodian and Chinese senior military officials on Monday vowed to deepen bilateral ties and cooperation for mutual benefits.—XINHUA

4,000 steroid tablets from Thailand seized in Sydney mail centre

SYDNEY, 18 March — The Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) confirmed on Tuesday that it had seized 4,000 steroid tablets in a package that arrived in a Sydney mail centre a week ago from Thailand.

ACBPS officers at the New South Wales International Mail Centre intercepted a suspicious looking package on 12 March and x-rayed it, the Australian Customs said.

Inside they found 4,000 blue heart-shaped tablets concealed in mislabeled supplement bottles.

Initial testing of the tablets returned a positive result for steroids, the ACBPS said.

ACBPS National Manager Cargo Operations Jagtej Singh on Tuesday warned Australians not to be fooled by false online advertising.

"Despite the claims of some websites, the importation of performance and image enhancing drugs is prohibited without a permit," he said in a statement.

"To avoid heavy penalties, or even gaol time, take a look at the Customs and Border Protection website to learn the appropriate import requirements for such drugs."

The Australian Customs reminds Australians to check out their legal requirements when importing goods by international mail.

Xinhua

EU confirms 6.5 bln-euro support for trade in West Africa

BRUSSELS, 18 March — The Foreign Affairs Council of European Union (EU) on Monday decided to provide 6.5 billion euros (about 9 billion US dollars) in supporting for trade in West Africa.

An EU conclusion agreed by the 28-member bloc's foreign ministers said that the funds will greatly enhance trade and investment flows to West African countries from 2015 to 2020, thus contributing to their development, sustainable growth and poverty reduction.

According to the EU conclusion, the funds will be carried out under the Economic Partnership Agreement Development Program (PAPED), which is an essential element of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiated with West Africa, and will provide funding for projects linked to trade, industry, transport and energy infrastructure in the region, as well as through support to civil society.

In 2010, the EU already pledged to provide 6.5 billion euros to support the PAPED for the period 2010-2014. This pledge was eventually increased and the EU has funded projects worth 8.2 billion euros.

Xinhua

Mine collapse in Russia's Siberia kills two

MOSCOW, 18 March — Two miners died in a cave-in at a mine in Russia's south Siberian region of Kemerovo, local emergency service said. "Rescuers have found the bodies of two miners," the *Itar-Tass* news agency quoted local authorities as saying.

Fifty-eight people were working in the mine when a rock slide occurred, 56 of them have been rescued, said the authorities.

Earlier reports said there were 57 miners inside the mine and 17 in the stricken area.

The mine started operation in 1949 and was set to be closed before the end of the year.—*Xinhua*

Sao Paulo threatened with water rationing

RIO DE JANEIRO, 18 March — The metropolitan area of Sao Paulo faces water rationing as the reservoirs are drying up, *O Estado de Sao Paulo* newspaper reported on Monday.

The Cantareira system, which provides water to some 9 million of the 20 million people living in the world's most densely-populated area, is now at a record low of 15 percent of its capacity, said the newspaper.

In order to avoid water rationing in the state capital, the Sao Paulo state government has decided to channel water from other dams. But fears for rationing remain as water diverted might not be enough to make up losses in the system.

A crisis committee estimated that the Cantareira system might dry up by June, when Sao Paulo will host the FIFA World Cup. In order to prevent such a situation, water distribution company Sabesp has started to pump water from deep underground. Some 400 million liters of water are expected to pump into the Cantareira system by May.—*Xinhua*

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Nadal, Federer bring box-office boost to Miami

MIAMI, 18 March — After missing last year's Sony Open, both world number one Rafa Nadal and 17-times grand slam winner Roger Federer return to South Beach this week along with their box office punch.

There will be no shortage of tennis glitterati around Miami for the next fortnight with 19 of the top 20 men's and women's players in action at Crandon Park but perhaps none more welcome than Federer and Nadal as their absence last year left a hole that could not be filled.

Nadal and Federer are box office gold for any tournament and with the Spaniard missing due to a knee injury and the Swiss maestro on an extended break last year's attendance dropped 5.5 percent to 308,000.

"Anytime you have two stars the size of Roger and Rafa, guys who are bigger than the sport, bigger than tennis, missing it hurts," tournament director Adam Barrett told *Reuters* on Monday.

"These guys are superstars, they draw crowds whether they are at the airport, a hotel or walking through a mall.

"Anywhere they go they are going to bring additional crowds both tennis and non-tennis folks."

With a promising weather forecast and lineup that includes world number one Serena Williams, Maria Sharapova, defending men's champion Andy Murray and three-time winner Novak Djokovic the Sony Open could set record ticket sales this year.

"A lot of it has to do with how the draw unfolds," Barrett said about a possible attendance record. "A lot of years when you set record attendance you get intriguing matches.

Nadal of Spain hits a return to Djokovic of Serbia during the men's final at the US Open tennis tournament in New York on 13 Sept, 2010.—REUTERS

"Every year you wait, you let it unfold, we will be close to records every year. The only thing that really takes records out of the equation is rain."

The women's main draw gets underway with first-round matches on Tuesday while the men's main draw begins Wednesday.

After a first-round bye, Nadal will open action against the winner of Dutchman Robin Haase and Australian Lleyton Hewitt, who will be chasing his 600th career win.

Reuters

S Korea opens casino market to foreign firms

SEOUL, 18 March — South Korea's tourism ministry said on Tuesday that it has given its first nod for a foreign casino operator to do business in the country, opening the casino market to foreign firms.

LOCZ Korea, a joint venture between Las Vegas-based Caesars Entertainment and Indonesian conglomerate Lippo Group, got a preliminary permission to open a foreigner-exclusive casino in Yeongjongdo, part of a free economic zone in Incheon, the country' s northwestern port city, according to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. The joint venture failed last June to get an approval for doing casino business due to low credit rating and lack of investing money, which were improved this time.

The casino operator will invest 746.7 billion won (700 million US dollars) by 2018 in building a casino exclusively for foreigners as well as a hotel, shopping mall and convention centre. In the long run, the LOCZ Korea planned to set up a resort complex in Yeongjongdo by investing 2.3 trillion won until 2023. The company had yet to receive an official license for the casino business, which will be given in January 2018 if it fulfills its investment as planned.

Xinhua

Israel, UK sign digital pact to boost economic growth

JERUSALEM, 18 March — Israel and the UK signed a digital cooperation deal which aims to boost economic growth and provide better digital services to citizens, Israeli Prime Minister's Office said in a statement on Monday.

Israel and the UK "will cooperate on the exchange of information and experiences concerning the development of digital government services," according to the statement. The agreement was signed by the Director General of the Israeli Prime Minister's Office Harel Locker and the UK Government Chief Technology Officer Liam Maxwell as the British Prime Minister David Cameron was visiting Israel last week.

In the framework of the pact, Israel will join the D8 (Digital- 8) group of advanced digital countries currently being established at the initiative of the British government, which constitutes a platform for the exchange of knowledge and for cooperation in digital programs. South Korea, New Zealand, Estonia and Singapore are among the members of the group.

The UK is considered one of the world's leading nations in providing digital government services to citizens. Israel has flourishing hi-tech industry, but many of its citizens in rural towns and villages, mainly Arabs and Bedouins, have very limited access to the internet.

Under the new deal, Israel and the UK will share knowledge on security of public information systems and initiate joint pilot project in this realm. The countries will also work on enhancing the digital capabilities of citizens and mechanisms to allow more people to benefit from digital services.—*Xinhua*

The "South China Sea Rescue 101" heads towards the rally point in Singapore, on 18 March, 2014. Chinese rescue vessels which were on standby at the gulf of Thailand have set sail towards the rally point in Singapore for further rescue.
XINHUA

MYANMAR TV

(19-3-2014, Wednesday)

6:00 am
1. Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
6:20 am
2. Physical Exercise
7:00 am
3. News/Weather Report
8:30 am
4. India Drama Series
9:00 am
5. News/International News
9:30 am
6. Teleplay
10:00 am
7. News
11:20 am
8. Documentary
12:00 pm
9. News/International News/Weather Report
12:25 pm
10. Myanmar Movie
3:00 pm
11. News
3:40 pm
12. Instrumental Music
4:00 pm
13. News
4:15 pm
14. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - Second Year (English)
5:00 pm
15. News
5:30 pm
16. India Drama Series
6:00 pm
17. News/Weather Reoprt
6:40 pm
18. TV Drama Series
7:00 pm
19. News
8:00 pm
20. News/International News/Weather Report
8:35 pm
21. People Talks
9:00 pm
22. News
23. Fine Arts-Bosom of Dramatic Performance
24. Teleplay

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(19-3-14 07:00am~ 20-3-14 07:00am) MST

* Local News
* A Trip to Mon State
* World News
* The Storytellers
* Local News
* Those Who Never Give Up (Ep-5) Shwe Min Thar Foundation
* World News
* Kyaikhteeyoe: My Father The Porter
* Local News
* Director: Kyi Phyu Shin
* World News
* Myanmar Masterclass: Fantastic Art
* Local News
* Lucrative Businesses of Tanintharyi Region
* World News
* Guiding Star of Song Birds
* Local News
* Travelling In Shan Mountain Ranges (Inle Phaungdaw Oo Pagoda Festival) (Part-2)
* World News
* Talented Musicians
* Local News
* The Man and The Elephant (Part-II)
* World News
* Dhamma School
* Local News
* In the Studio : JA SOM (THE MYTH)
* World News
* A Person with Faith
* Local News
* Myanmar Performing Arts- Puppet
* World News
* Tea Leaves

Premier League Table

Pos	Club	P	W	D	L	PTS
1	Chelsea	30	20	6	4	66
2	Liverpool	29	19	5	5	62
3	Arsenal	29	19	5	5	62
4	Manchester City	27	19	3	5	60
5	Tottenham Hotspur	30	16	5	9	53
6	Everton	28	14	9	5	51
7	Manchester United	29	14	6	9	48
8	Southampton	30	12	9	9	45
9	Newcastle United	29	13	4	12	43
10	Aston Villa	29	9	7	13	34
11	Stoke City	30	8	10	12	34
12	West Ham United	29	8	7	14	31
13	Hull City	29	8	6	15	30
14	Swansea City	29	7	8	14	29
15	Norwich City	30	7	8	15	29
16	West Bromwich Albion	29	5	13	11	28
17	Crystal Palace	29	8	4	17	28
18	Sunderland	27	6	7	14	25
19	Cardiff City	30	6	7	17	25
20	Fulham	30	7	3	20	24

The New Light of Myanmar

Yangon United FC secures three points in AFC Cup after beating Hong Kong 2-0

The Asian Football Confederation Cup continued for the third fixture in which Yangon United FC edged out Hong Kong with a 2-0 result in the group (G) at the Youth Training Centre in Thuwunna in Yangon at 4 pm today.

Yangon United FC secured a win in the AFC Cup without any mistake with goals by two foreigner players. Yangon United deployed its most reliable players namely Cesar Augusto, Emerson, Khin Maung Lwin, Yazar Win Thein and Kyaw Ko Ko.

The South China FC has been struggling as it already lost the last two matches.

With the Yangon players showing much drive and energy, Emerson managed to score the opening goal through a header in the 36th minute. The Hong Kongers did not wait long to get into attacking position but were blocked off by the stronger Yangon side.

In the 77th minute, Emerson scored one more goal for Yangon United.

Yangon United FC has secured six points in two wins and one loss while South China (Hong Kong), suffered three defeats.—By Nyi Myat Thawza

Kyaw Ko Ko of Yangon United FC trying to pass player of Hong Kong in AFC Cup match.
Photo: Soe Nyunt

Liverpool call for scarves to mark Hillsborough anniversary

London, 18 March — Liverpool are calling on football fans from around the world to show their support for the 25th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster by sending in club scarves.

A memorial service at Anfield on 15 April will commemorate the 96 fans who died as a result of a crush at the FA Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest in Sheffield in 1989.

The club said Kenny Dalglish, manager of Liverpool at the time of the disaster, had written to all 92 English League clubs asking them to donate a scarf which will be laid out with those from members of the public on the pitch to form a 96.

"The annual Memorial Service in memory of the 96 is always a moving occasion for the families and survivors," Margaret Aspinall, chair of the Hillsborough Family Support Group which is organising the memorial, said.

"We already receive so much support from people worldwide, but if we could create what would be a fantastic symbol of unity on the pitch from donated scarves from across the world, this would be a truly moving way of bringing the world together for the 25th Anniversary of Hillsborough."

Former Liverpool greats, including Dalglish, Ian Rush, John Barnes, Jan Molby and Robbie Fowler will also be involved in a charity match at Anfield to celebrate the lives of the 96 victims on April 21.—*Reuters*

Totti makes instant impact on Roma return

Rome, 18 March — Francesco Totti made an instant impact on his return from a buttock injury when he scored one goal and helped set up another in AS Roma's 3-2 Serie A win over Udinese on Monday.

Second-placed Roma were also helped by an outstanding display from goalkeeper Morgan De Sanctis as they stayed three points clear of third-placed Napoli, who rode their luck to beat Torino 1-0 with a controversial late goal by Gonzalo Higuain.

Roma made only a small dent in Juventus' lead as the champions stayed 14 clear points clear at the top and on course for a third successive title following their 1-0 win at Genoa on Sunday.

But it was an important win in the battle for a Champions League place, with only the top two going directly into the group stage. A third place finish earns a place in the two-leg final qualifying round.

One club-man Totti, in remarkable 22nd season at Roma, is still hugely influential and his side had failed to score in their last two games without him.

The 37-year-old put them ahead in the 22nd minute when he fired in a rebound from 12 metres for his sixth goal of the campaign after Udinese's teenage goalkeeper Simone Scuffet parried Gervinho's shot.Roma went further ahead after half an hour with a lethal counter-attack. —*Reuters*

Garcia and Schwartzel back Final Series changes

London, 18 March — Sergio Garcia and Charl Schwartzel, two critics of the inaugural Final Series last year, have backed changes made to the US FedExCup-style event that brings the curtain down on the European Tour season.

The bonus pool for the four-tournament Final Series has soared from $3.75 million to $5 million, to be shared by the leading 15 players on the money-list competing at the season-ending DP World Tour Championship in Dubai.

The tour has also decided that members will no longer have to participate in two of the first three tournaments in order to qualify for the Dubai showpiece.

Reuters

Sergio Garcia

History no help now as United try to salvage season

Manchester, (England), 18 March — If history was the only deciding factor then Manchester United would be highly fancied to overturn their 2-0 first leg defeat against Olympiakos and reach the quarter-finals of the Champions League on Wednesday.

But the reality for manager David Moyes and his stuttering team is that present form, rather than past successes, will have a far bigger influence at Old Trafford.

United's unimpressive season reached a new low on Sunday when they were crushed 3-0 at home by bitter rivals Liverpool, a result that left last season's champions seventh in the Premier League with just a remote possibility of a top-four finish.

Manchester United's Nemanja Vidic (L) fouls Liverpool's Daniel Sturridge to concede a penalty and be sent off during their English Premier League soccer match at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England, on 16 March, 2014—Reuters

Their only realistic hope of competing alongside Europe's elite next season would now appear to be by somehow winning the competition for a fourth time in May, starting by knocking Olympiakos out on Wednesday.

"The players are well aware of what it means on Wednesday and what we have got to do," Moyes said.

"We've got something to go for so hopefully we can do that."

Misfiring United, who last failed to qualify for the Champions League 18 years ago, have no guarantees at all of achieving their aim against the Greeks who have just won their domestic title for the fourth successive season, the 16th time in 18 campaigns they have ended as champions and the 41st in all.

Their head-to-head record, and the Greek side's woeful record on the road against English clubs, does offer hope.

Until Olympiakos triumphed in Athens on 25 February, United had won all four of the previous matches between the clubs.

They have also won all five matches they have played against Greek clubs at home while Olympiakos have lost all 11 of the matches they have played in England.

Reuters

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