

Development tasks can be implemented with greater success only after peace has been built

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—*The following is unofficial translation of the message sent by President Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein on the occasion of the 68th Anniversary Shan State Day.*

I am privileged to convey a message to all nationalities residing in Shan State on the auspicious occasion of the 68th anniversary of Shan State Day, which falls on 7 February.

The history of Myanmar reveals that all national people have long been going through their share of prosperity and adversity amid the international community. Our country is endowed with underground and aboveground resources

and our own culture and literature alongside glorious progress. However, it fell under colonial rule in 1885, with its natural resources lost; culture, literature and languages controlled; and national races segregated to disturb unity.

Shan nationals led by their community leaders raised their voices to win back independence, while General Aung San, a national leader in Myanmar's struggle for independence, was holding talks with the British government to re-

claim the country's sovereignty. That enabled General Aung San to discuss with leaders of national races in the hilly region and win their agreement in Panglong to recover independence together with the mainland. It was on 7 February 1947 that they reached an accord on "the reclamation of independence from colonial rule in tandem with the mainland". That day has since been commemorated as "Shan State Day". The celebration has now entered

its 68th anniversary.

Today, the government is carrying out democratic reform on all fronts while striving for internal peace as has been desired by successive generations of national races. It is our earnest belief that political dialogue is a sole solution to this mission. Only when political agreements reached at such talks are solid and trustworthy will they be able to guarantee a lasting peace in the Union. The ending of over 60 years of armed conflict is

an absolute prerequisite for political dialogues to start soonest. Negotiations are under way to bring fighting to an end. It is our responsibility to lay a solid foundation for any future government to continue with the peace processes which we have initiated. Stability and peace are entwined with development, which is why development tasks can be implemented with greater success only after peace has been built.

The government is striving to realize two pub-

lic desires: one is stability and peace and the other is socioeconomic development. It is therefore incumbent on all the national people across the country to join hands with the government by upholding Union Spirit, which is a genuine patriotism. In addition, it is necessary for all nationalities in Shan State to walk in unison in our march towards a modern, prosperous democracy by maintaining stability and progress in place in the region.

More foreign students enrolling in YUFL to study Myanmar language



Photo shows a group of foreign students walking out of Yangon University of Foreign Languages, which hosts 290 students from various countries studying the Myanmar language at regular and evening classes.

PHOTO PROVIDED/YUFL

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 6 Feb — Yangon University of Foreign Languages (YUFL), a

leading university for the study of foreign languages in Myanmar, has seen increased enrollments of foreign students seeking to learn the Myanmar language at its regular and evening classes.

"A total of 290 foreign students were enrolled this year, up from 200 in the previous year," Rector Dr Daw Lwin Lwin Soe told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Friday.

Nearly half, or 150, of all the foreign students majoring in the Myanmar language came from China, followed by around 70 from South Korea, with the remaining foreign students coming from Japan and

elsewhere, said the rector. About 50 are taking the evening class, the rector added.

With its economic boom following sweeping reforms in recent years, Myanmar has caught the attention of countries including regional economic giants like China, Japan and South Korea, which has resulted in a marked increase in foreign student enrollments at the university.

"I took an evening class at YUFL last year to get a better understanding of Myanmar, thereby facilitating greater business communication with my Myanmar counterparts,"

a Vietnamese banking officer who is assigned here for business purposes told The GNLM.

Besides providing a unique learning environment for international students who have a strong interest to learn the Myanmar language, the foreign languages facility is also enabling Myanmar students to learn other languages, numbering nine including Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Thai.

"Nowadays, it seems easier for graduates of YUFL to find employment as their language skills definitely make job hunting easier," said a Yangon resident who is also a father of three children studying in basic education.

"We have 12 native speakers helping us in teaching our students foreign languages," said Dr Daw Lwin Lwin Soe, recognizing the benefits of cooperative relations with foreign universities through memoranda of understanding.

According to university, 16 MoUs have been signed with universities, foundations and centres and work is underway to ink MoUs with 10 more universities with the aim of enabling students and teachers to win grants

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The EU reaffirms its humanitarian commitment to the conflict-affected populations of Myanmar

YANGON, 6 Feb— *The following is a press release issued on 6th February 2015 by European Commission on EU's humanitarian commitment.*—Ed

Taking the opportunity of a three-day visit to Myanmar, Jean-Louis De Brouwer, the global Director of Operations for the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), reaffirmed the EU's commitment to support humanitarian needs of conflict-affected populations in different parts of the country – namely Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan states. The initial humanitarian assistance provided in 2015 would amount to €15 million - including the support for refugee camps in Thailand, he confirmed.

"We welcome the ongoing transition and posi-

tive reforms that have been taking place in the country in the recent past, however the United Nation's Humanitarian Response Plan for 2015 confirms that humanitarian needs have increased in some regions due to civil and inter-communal violence, said Mr. De Brouwer after visiting Yangon, Sittway and Nay Pyi Taw.

We stand committed to contribute in addressing those needs in an impartial manner, by continued funding to our humanitarian partners who are providing life-saving aid to the most vulnerable populations in those areas. We will of course also follow the

(See page 3)



A philanthropist presents gifts to children from a refugee camp.—PHOTO: KHIN YADANA

Correction

Please read "Pivot irrigation uses about one third of the volume of water as opposed to flood irrigation." Instead of "30 gallons of water is enough for 100 acres of land." in the third paragraph of byline under the heading "Agricultural company demonstrates pivot irrigation system" appeared on the cover of this paper issued on 3-2-2015. Error is regretted.—Ed

Strategic EIA to be conducted at hydropower dams on Thanlwin River



Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb—Feasibility tests are being conducted at five project sites for dams on the Thanlwin River, Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Maw Tha Htway told the Pyithu Hluttaw session on Friday.

The deputy minister was responding to the question whether the min-

istry has a plan to conduct strategic environmental impact assessment and to use IWRM comprehensive water resource management system at six dam projects on the Thanlwin River.

The environmental impact assessment and social impact assessment for Kunlong Hydropower Project, which is located at the upper reach of the river, have been conducted and a central body of the ministry led by a deputy minister and regional level committees have been formed to monitor field inspection of the reports, according to the deputy minister.

Local people have been informed about the project and negotiations for compensations have been held, the deputy min-

ister added.

The deputy minister said that the ministry will cooperate with other ministries to conduct strategic environmental impact assessment for the other four projects and arrangements are under way to conduct such EIA with technicians from STUCKY AS consultant firm from Switzerland.

Then, Representative U Phyo Min Thein submitted the motion calling for the union government to take measures for freedom of news coverage for the media with accountability and responsibility in accordance with the law.

Concerning the motion, Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway said that the government has relaxed the restrictions on the media step by step

by allowing the media to publish without prior censorship since 20 August 2012 while private newspapers, which were never permitted in the past, are now publishing their dailies. He added as the other restrictions were also eased, a total of 396 journals, 324 magazines, 936 general publications, 27 private newspapers have been permitted until January 2015. Out of them, 220 journals, 128 magazines and 12 newspapers are still in circulation while some of them have been allowed to publish their periodicals in languages of ethnic national races

and some foreign languages including English and Japanese, according to the deputy minister.

The deputy minister also said the freedom of the media should come together with responsibility and accountability and it is natural for the media to wish for higher standards of media freedom in accordance with Article 19 of the Human Rights Declaration but the media is also required to abide by Article 29 of the declaration. Fairness is a prerequisite for a democracy and it is necessary for the media to be ethical and to abide by the law by exercising freedom in a responsible and accountable manner. The government has a plan

to cooperate with the press council for development of media, effectiveness of measures of the press council on ethical issues and effectiveness of news release of the government, the deputy minister added.

The Ministry of Information and the press council is now cooperating for rules of the media law, the deputy minister said.

The deputy minister said that the media has been permitted to cover news in accordance with the Media Law and legal action will not be taken against journalists if they abide by the law and ethic code of the press council.

The session voted against the motion.

MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

Development of energy policy in Myanmar discussed at symposium

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb—An international symposium on the development of energy policy in Myanmar was held at Grand Amara Hotel here, with an address by Chairman of National Energy Management Committee Union Minister for Energy U Zeyar Aung, a source reported.

The conference was organized by the NEMC-Myanmar, in partnership with three Japanese bodies—the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the Overseas Human Resources and Industry Development Organization (HIDA) and the University of Tokyo.

The symposium is a

part of Energy Policy Workshop series which was held from September, 2014 to February, 2015, an official said.

Those who attended the energy policy workshop series shared their knowledge on developing the energy policy at the conference.—MNA

Myanmar's tallest condominium to emerge in commercial hub Yangon next year

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 6 Feb — Myanmar's tallest condominium, "Diamond Inya Palace", will emerge in Mayangon Township in the commercial hub Yangon next year, according to the Mandalay Golden Wing Construction Ltd (MGW), a citizen-owned company.

The 35-storey condo building on a 2-acre plot near Inya Lake will become Myanmar's first five-star, hotel-grade condominium, a spokesperson of the com-

pany told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

Currently, the 9th floor of the building has been completed and the 10th floor is under construction. Construction began in early 2012 and is estimated to be finished at the end of 2016.

The L-shaped building will have 400 apartments, pricing out K330,000 each in minimum and K430,000 each maximum per square foot of floor space. Condo apartment prices will vary

by floor and view.

The condo includes car parking lots from the 1st to 5th floors where more than 500 cars can park. Under the payment system, buyers will have to pay 50 per cent of the condo apartment through four-time installments over seven months. The remaining 50 per cent is to be paid only after completion.

In addition to condo projects, the company is developing hotel complexes and business centers in Yangon, Bagan and Mandalay.—GNLM

More foreign students . . .

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and scholarships and take short-term overseas study tours for enhancement of their career prospects.

The rector revealed that it is expected to sign

a MoU with Mahidol University of Thailand soon and with China's Yunnan University of Nationalities next month.

With its popularity among matriculated stu-

dents who have become more interested in learning foreign languages, the YUFL now hosts a student population of 4,552, including foreign students majoring in the Myanmar language.

GNLM

Amyotha Hluttaw

Amyotha Hluttaw session goes on for twelfth day

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb — Amyotha Hluttaw session continued for twelfth day on Friday, with submission of a report and two proposals and five questions that were answered.

On a question whether a plan for establishment of pine forests to prevent deforestation in Chin State through cooperation between the Ministry of U Steven Tha Beik of Chin State Constituency No (4), Deputy Minister U Aye Myint Maung revealed a plan to commercially establish 100-acre pine plan-

tation funded by the Union budget and set up community forest plantations at 10 villages in Chin State with the use of the funds of the state government in 2015-2016 FY.

The ministry will cooperate with UN agencies and international organizations if it receives requests from them, the deputy minister added.

On a question raised by U Hla Swe of Magway Region Constituency No (12) asking how to realize the transformation of Red Cross Society, Deputy Minister Dr Win My-

int said that a directive to increase membership of region/state/district Red Cross Society supervisory committee with two more townsenders each until 31 December 2015 was released.

During the session, U Myo Myint of Mandalay Region Constituency No (6) submitted a motion calling for implementation of projects that can guarantee equality of having access to electricity in the country. Amyotha Hluttaw decided to discuss the proposal.

MNA

Philippines donates culture materials to Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb—The Philippines' National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) recently donated its culture materials to the National Library (Nay Pyi Taw), the Department of Historical Research and National Library, the Ministry of Culture.

Ambassador of the Re-

public of the Philippines Mr Alex G. Chum and his wife presented a total of thirty-one books, periodicals, newsletters and DVDs on cultural materials to the National Library through Daw Nanda Hmun, the Director-General of the Department of Historical Research and National Library.

After donation, they also looked round the stack rooms, Myanmar traditional manuscript and other rooms at the library.

According to their discussion during the event, there will have more collaboration between Myanmar and the Philippines, an official said.—MNA

Ais Asia to extend daily flights in 2015

By Khin Yadana

YANGON, 6 Feb—Officials of Thailand-based Air Asia airlines started market observation so as to raise daily flights this year for ensuring convenient travelling of international passengers in Myanmar, according to the press

release of Air Asia on 5 February.

Being a reliable airlines for middle class travelers, Air Asia plans to extend flights for convenience of passengers from Myanmar and Cambodia, the press release said.

"Number of passengers rises in developing

countries in the region. We will extend flights of airlines for Cambodia in March and then for Myanmar and Vietnam," chief executive officer Tassapon Bijleveld of the Thai Air Asia told media.

Airplanes of Aia Asia fly to six cities in Myanmar, Vietnam and Cambodia.

NATIONAL

Myanmar, Republic of Korea to promote bilateral relations

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb— Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham received Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Ri Kil Song and party of the Republic of Korea at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, on Friday.

They discussed promotion of bilateral relations, and cooperation in trade, economy and inter-

national community.

Also present at the meeting were deputy ministers Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun, U Thant Kyaw and Dr San Lwin and officials.—MNA

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Ri Kil Song and party of ROK.—MNA



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets ROK Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb— Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann held talks with Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Ri Kil Song and party of the Republic of Korea at Pyithu Hluttaw Hall, here, on Friday.

Also present at the call were Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee U Hla Myint Oo and ROK Ambassador Mr Kim Sok Chol.

MNA

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann cordially greets Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Ri Kil Song of Republic of Korea.

MNA



Amyotha Hluttaw speaker holds talks with New Zealand Ambassador

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb— Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint received New Zealand Ambassador Mr Bruce Shepherd at the hall of Amyotha Hluttaw, here, on Friday.

They discussed further strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries.

Also present at the call were Deputy Speaker U Mya Nyein, chairmen of Amyotha Hluttaw committees and officials of the Amyotha Hluttaw.

MNA

Speaker U Khin Aung Myint with New Zealander Ambassador Mr Bruce Shepherd.—MNA



The EU reaffirms...

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situation closely throughout 2015 in order to track potential new unmet needs that may arise from the evolving situation in this period of transition”.

During his stay, Mr. De Brouwer visited Rakhine state, in order to take stock of the situation faced by populations who were displaced by inter-communal violence in 2012. After exchanging with both communities, he expressed concern about the prevailing ethnic segregation, and the deterioration of living conditions in the camps. “These camps were meant to be temporary, but as we are now facing a protracted displacement, they urgently need to be refurbished”, he explained.

“The absence of freedom of movement for the Rohingya minority is also of

particular concern, as it has serious implications both on livelihood opportunities for members of the community, and on any potential for reconciliation”, he added.

While in Sittwe, the Director also joined the EU Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. Roland Kobia, in attending the launch of an EU-funded education initiative for the children of Rakhine. Implemented by the Lutheran World Federation, this project will continue and expand the work initiated last year through ECHO’s Children of Peace Initiative, dedicated to bringing education to children affected by conflicts around the world.

Through its Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), the European Commission has been funding relief programs in Myanmar for over 20 years, providing a total of

€191 million worth of humanitarian assistance to victims of man-made and natural disasters, including €12.9 million for the year 2015.

ECHO-funded operations presently focus on channelling relief to people displaced by the Kachin conflict, and those affected by the inter-communal violence which erupted in Rakhine State in 2012. Sectors of intervention include food and non-food items, health care, nutrition, water and sanitation, livelihoods, coordination, education and protection.

In order to build up the resilience of communities regularly affected by natural disasters, ECHO has also allocated €4.9 million since 2010 to support community disaster preparedness projects in coastal flood-prone areas and for urban earthquake risks measures.

Resumption of four-party talks coordinated

YANGON, 6 Feb—A coordination meeting on resumption of the four-party talks on amendment of National Education Law was held at the hall of Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) on Thaton Street, here, on Friday.

Deputy Minister for Education U Thant Shin and Dr Thein Lwin of National Network for Education Reform-NNER discussed participation for representatives of the government, Hluttaw, NNER and democracy education movement leading commit-

tee students in the meeting. On 9 February, the coordination meeting will focus on venue for the four-party talks and agenda.

It was also attended by Rector of Yangon University of Education Dr Aung Min and Daw Thu Thu Mar of NNER.—MNA



Deputy Minister for Education U Thant Shin meets Dr Thein Lwin of NNER at coordination meeting.—MNA

Large Buddha image emerges while renovating ancient pagoda

MOHNYIN, 6 Feb—A large Buddha image was found in a damaged pagoda in the precinct of monastery in Sahtar Village, Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, in the last week of January, members of the pagoda renovation committee told media.

The Buddha image is about 13 feet high. Even older persons of above 90 years old in the village cannot tell any story about the Buddha image. So, the committee supervises digging of image carefully to be able to seek any evidences from the images.—GNLM-001



MMA (Central) assigns duty to executive committee of Tatkon Township Music Association

TATKON, 6 Feb—The formation for executive committees of Tatkon Township Music Association was held at the hall of Township General Administration Department on 3 February.

Chairman of Myanmar Music Association (Central) U Tin Oo Lay, Joint Secretary U Thein Myint Hlaing of the association and Township Administrator U Kan Saw Hlaing presided over the formation of the association.

The chairman and officials explained future tasks of the association and improvement of Myanmar music to meet international standard.

Joint Secretary of the association U Thein Myint Hlaing assigned duty to the executive committee.

The ceremony was attended by U Myint Lwin,

U Thein Myint Hlaing, U Nyunt Hlaing Hlaing, Pianist Maung Hla Aye of the association (central) and officials.

Tin Soe Lwin (IPRD)



MOGE laying natural gas pipelines

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb—Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise under the Ministry of Energy is laying 35 miles long and 30 inches diameter natural gas pipeline from Ywama natural gas control station to Thakayta natural gas control station.

The pipeline will supply natural gas to gas turbines and power plants for generating electricity for the people.

The pipelines are laid in the three feet deep ground not to harm the environment and to ensure safety.

Technicians from private companies are conducting non destructive testing for pipeline connections, installation of cathodic protection system and nitrogen purging services.

Up to 1 February, they have completed 31.3 percent of testing works.—MOGE



INRD issues citizenship scrutiny cards to locals

DAWEI, 6 Feb — Staff Officer U Maung Maung and staff of Launglon Township Immigration and National Registration Department and staff together with staff of Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) issued citizenship scrutiny cards and household registration certificates to local people at the monastery in Maungmagan Village, Launglon Township, Taninthayi Region, on 2 and 3 February.

Taninthayi Region Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding Dr Win Aung and Head of Dawei District Immigration and National Registration Department Deputy Director U Yin Htwe supervised issuance of the CSC to the local people.

The minister and officials presented citizenship scrutiny cards to 277 local people from 24 households.

Po Shwe Thun (Dawei)



**TODAY'S
MYANMAR
NEWS SITES**

Mandalay Region government honours victorious athletes

MANDALAY, 6 Feb — A ceremony to honour victorious athletes in the 17th Asian Games, 7th ASEAN Paralympic Games, Asian Youth Chess Championship, SEA Vovinam (Bando) Championship and Inter-Region/State sports competitions was held at the National Theatre in Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay, on 4 February.

Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint said that the government places emphasis on improvement of sports standards of the nation. He urged victorious athletes and sports teams to maintain their achievements and beef up their efforts in taking training systematically.

Managers and coaches of victorious teams

handed over their championship trophies to the chief minister.

The speaker of the region Hluttaw, region ministers and officials presented cash awards to prize winning athletes who bagged 192 medals in the international and internal sports competitions.

The chief minister and party enjoyed skill demonstrations in respective sports events.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

ChaungU Township IPRD refreshes skills of village librarians

CHAUNGU, 6 Feb — The village librarian multiplier session concluded at the hall of Township General Administration Department in ChaungU Township, Sagaing Region, on 4 February.

Chairman of Township Management Committee U Hla Thein made a concluding remark.

The chairman presented first and second prizes to Ma Khaing Khaing Thwe Moe of Kotaunggan Village and U Aung Kyaw Kyaw Zaw of Thanbingan Village. Member of Sagaing Region Libraries Foundation member U Aye Myint awarded



third prizes to Daw San San Win of Myothit Ward and Ma Cherry Myint of Butar Village.

Head of Township In-

formation and Public Relations Department Daw Yu Yu Win presented certificates to trainees.

Township IPRD

LOCAL NEWS

Mandalay Mayor presents certificates of honour, cash assistance to senior citizens



MANDALAY, 6 Feb—Certificates of honour of the President and K200,000 as cash assistance were presented to senior citizens of above 100 years old.

On 5 February, Mandalay Mayor Mandalay Region Minister for De-

velopment Affairs U Aung Moun and deputy commissioner of Mandalay District U Win Zaw Naing presented certificates and K200,000 to Daw Aye Hla of 102 years old and Daw Thaug Thaug of 100 years old in Dawnabwa Ward, Aungmyathazan Township and Daw Phwa Toke of 104 years old in Thiri Marlar West ward.

The deputy commissioner and officials also presented certificates and cash assistance to other senior citizens in remaining townships.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Township authorities share Pyidaungsu Hluttaw fund to grassroots level

MANDALAY, 6 Feb—A ceremony to hand over K100 million allotted by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to supporting committees in 14 wards of Mahanaungmye Township was held at the hall of Township General Administration Department on 5 February.

Township Administrator U Myint Oo made

a speech. Chairman of the Township Development Affairs Supporting Committee U Thein Pe explained allotment of the fund.

The township authorities shared 40 percent of the fund to the ward administrators and ward supporting committee chairmen.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



Vice Mayor inspects cultivation of vegetables, sanitation at staff quarters

NAY PYI TAW, 6 Feb—Vice Mayor of Nay Pyi Taw U Than Kyaw Htoo and deputy director-general U Soe Win of Administration Department inspected sanitation tasks inside and outside staff quarters of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee and cultivation tasks on 4 February.

The vice mayor in-

structed officials to supervise sanitation of staff quarters, carry out proper flow of water at drains and cultivate perennial and seasonal crops.—Township IPRD



Launching solar power, water supply hails Union Day



KYAUNGCON, 6 Feb—As a gesture of hailing the 68th Anniversary Union Day, a ceremony to launch installation of solar lamps and a tube-well was held in Thayetchaung Village in Kyaunggon Village, Ayeyawady Region, on 4 February.

Deputy Speaker

of Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw Dr Htein Win, Township Administrator U Aung Kyaw Hsan and Chairman of Township Development Affairs Supporting Committee U Tin Maung formally launched the solar lamps and tube-well.

The deputy speaker

switched on the solar power supply for 83 houses.

Head of Township Rural Development Department U Myint Aung explained rural development tasks.

A total of 83 households are now enjoying electricity and water.

David (Kyaunggon)

World professionals to perform juggling skills for the first time

By Khin Yadana;
Photo: May Oo Moe

YANGON, 6 Feb—The world famous juggling festival will be held for the first time free of charge at parks and hotels in Yangon city from 9 to 15 February.

“We invited international professionals for showing their excellent juggling skills to the people. I think the show will be greater attractions for local circus professionals and en-

thusiasts,” Ko Myo Win of Smile Education, manager of the show, told media.

The professionals will give training to staff at Inya Lake Hotel on 9 February and at Sule Shangri-La Hotel on 10 February.

At 6.30 pm on 11 February, international professionals will show off their skills in juggling at Kandawgyi Karaweik Garden.

They have plans to perform their juggling

skills at the busy places in Yangon City on 12 February, Franch Culture Department on 13 February, and Kandawgyi and Maha Bandoola Park on 14 February.

“They are in a group formed with 25 professionals from Europe, North America, Asia and Pacific region. They will perform their skills together with some Myanmar Chinlone professionals, comedians Joker and Thura Thein.



E Timor Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao tenders resignation

JAKARTA, 6 Feb — East Timor's Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao has tendered his resignation, a government press statement said on Friday.

The statement issued by Gusmao's office confirmed that he "has sent his letter of resignation from the post of prime minister to the president," namely Taur Matan Ruak.

"It is now for the president of the republic to consider and respond to the letter of resignation," it added.

Kyodo News

Malaysian PM says Malaysia, Indonesia agree to solve maritime disputes

KUALA LUMPUR, 6 Feb — Malaysia and Indonesia will appoint special envoys to solve disputes between the two countries over maritime borders, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said here on Friday.

At a joint press briefing after the talks with visiting Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Najib said, "we are committed to establishing an additional mechanism to resolve the outstanding (territorial) issues."

He said the effort was necessary because years of negotiations had seen "no significant advancement."

Malaysian official sources said the disputes largely centered on the potentially energy-rich seabeds in the Celebes Sea.

Najib said the special envoys would hold exploratory discussions to find ways that could be accepted by both governments.—*Xinhua*



Sarah Casanova (C), president of McDonald's Holdings Co (Japan), bows in apology for a string of food safety incidents involving its products at a Press conference in Tokyo on 5 Feb, 2015, as she briefs reporters on the company's consolidated financial statements for 2014. McDonald's Japan logged a group net loss of 21.84 billion yen (\$190.1 million) in 2014, falling into the red for the first time in 11 years, due to a food safety scandal. —KYODO NEWS

Japan, China, S Korea eye foreign ministerial talks in March

TOKYO, 6 Feb — Japan, China and South Korea are planning to hold a foreign ministerial meeting in late March in Seoul, Japanese government sources said on Friday.

The meeting, which would be the first since April 2012, is expected to set the stage for a trilateral summit involving Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and South Korean President Park Geun-hye.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and South Korean Foreign



Combined photo shows (from L) Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se. Japanese government sources said on 6 Feb 2015, that the three countries are planning to hold a foreign ministerial meeting in late March.

KYODO NEWS

Minister Yun Byung Se are likely to discuss promoting cooperation on trade, energy and the environment,

and confirm the need for their leaders to meet at an early date, according to the sources.

S Korea offers to lift sanctions on DPRK if talks resume

SEOUL, 6 Feb — South Korea's top policymaker on inter-Korean affairs said on Friday that the country could lift sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) if inter-Korean talks are resumed.

"I think it could be an opportunity to lift the 24 May measures if south-north talks are held," Unification Minister Ryoo Kihl-jae told a lecture in Seoul.

"Economic cooperation between the two Koreas is not allowed due to the 24 May sanctions, and the government has already studied on (the lifting of) the sanctions," Ryoo said.

The 24 May sanctions, which banned all inter-Korean cooperation except for the Kaesong industrial complex, were imposed by South Korea in 2010 after a South Korean Navy corvette sank in waters off the disputed western sea border.

South Korea said it was caused by a DPRK torpedo attack, but Pyongyang denied its involvement.

The DPRK cited the lifting of the sanctions as one of preconditions for resuming inter-Korean dialogue.

Ryoo stressed that the two Koreas should meet for talks, saying South Korea should continue to persuade the DPRK to keep its promises.—*Xinhua*

The ministers are also expected to exchange views on North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes and anti-terrorism measures in the wake of the recent killing of two Japanese men taken hostage by the Islamic State militant group, they said.

Asked about the envisaged meeting, Kishida told reporters on Friday that a specific date "has yet to be decided," and that he expects South Korea, which currently chairs the trilateral framework, to arrange the gathering in collaboration with Japan and China.

The trilateral foreign ministerial session has been suspended due to deterioration in Japan-China relations over the Senkaku Islands, a group of uninhabited islets in the East China Sea administered by Japan but claimed by Beijing and Taipei.

But following a meeting between Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping in November in Beijing, Park proposed a trilateral summit as she, Abe and Li attended a regional summit later November in Myanmar.

Kyodo News

Philippines Aquino faces growing political storm over deadly raid

MAMASAPANO, (Philippines), 6 Feb — Philippine leader Benigno Aquino is facing his biggest political crisis over a botched operation to capture a wanted militant, amid revelations that a suspended police general who is a close friend of the president played a central role in the raid.

The risky mission to arrest Zulkifli bin Hir, an al-Qaeda-linked bombmaker with a \$5 million US bounty on his head, went disastrously wrong when commandos from the Philippine police's Special Action Force (SAF) were ambushed and 44 were killed.

A public outcry has heaped pressure on Aquino to abandon the peace deal signed in March with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the largest Muslim rebel group in the mainly Catholic country, and seek retribution for the troopers' deaths.

It has also raised un-

comfortable questions for Aquino over why he allowed Alan Purisima, suspended from his job as national police chief for six months in November over corruption allegations, to be involved in planning and executing the raid.

A police intelligence officer told *Reuters* the information on the location of the "high value target" came from Purisima, not from a US tip-off as had been reported in local media. "He packaged everything. It was his plan, he used his own alpha and the SAF units were there to execute the raid," he said. "Alpha" is intelligence jargon for an informant.

Two bishops, potentially powerful voices in a country where the Church wields great influence, and a handful of lawmakers have called on Aquino to resign.

On Monday, a civil society group plans to hold a protest rally at the gates of

the national police headquarters to urge the president to crack down on rebels in the Muslim majority south. "This is Aquino's biggest political crisis," said Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute of Political and Electoral Reform. "Anything can happen."

Bin Hir, a Malaysian on the US government's "most wanted terrorists" list also known by the alias Marwan, had taken refuge with MILF guerrillas in a marshy area on the southern island of Mindanao.

Operation "Exodus" was launched at 4 am on 25 January, when US-trained seaborne SAF commandos sneaked into the village where Marwan was sleeping, according to police accounts. Marwan was almost certainly killed in the raid — commandos cut off the right index finger of a dead suspect and sent it for analysis to the FBI, which this week said the DNA showed



Philippine President Benigno Aquino delivers a speech in front of the caskets of the slain members of the Special Action Force (SAF) who were killed in Sunday's clash with Muslim rebels, during a service inside a police headquarters in Taguig city, south of Manila on 30 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

a link to a known relative.

SAF commander Getulio Napanas, waiting at a tactical command post 3-4 km away, was jubilant when he received the SMS "Mike One, Bingo", meaning mission accomplished. But as the commandos withdrew, a fierce firefight erupted.

Napanas, who was sacked in the aftermath of

the raid, has since said that Purisima phoned him hours before the raid telling him to keep the national police leadership out of the loop until the plan had been carried out. "It was General Purisima's project," Napanas told a news conference. "He was the one who approved the operation plan last November."—*Reuters*

German, French leaders head for Moscow to press for Ukraine peace

MOSCOW/KIEV, 6 Feb — The leaders of Germany and France are expected to take peace proposals to Moscow on Friday on the second leg of a dramatic initiative to end a conflict in Ukraine that has killed more than 5,000 people and driven Russia-West relations to new lows.

The planned trip by Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Francois Hollande to see Russia's Vladimir Putin on Friday evening follows five hours of late-night talks with Ukrainian leader Petro Poroshenko in snow-bound Kiev on Thursday.

Back in their respective capitals in between, Hollande called the talks "the first step", while Merkel said it was unclear whether the meeting in Moscow would secure a ceasefire.

Their initiative follows fierce fighting and territorial gains in eastern Ukraine by Russian-backed separatists since a peace blueprint was agreed in Belarus in September.

The Ukrainian military reported that two more soldiers had



Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko (C) shakes hands with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande during their meeting in Kiev, on 5 Feb, 2015.
REUTERS

been killed in the past 24 hours in the east, with 26 wounded.

The growing military pressure has shaken the Ukrainian economy and driven a debate over the possibility of the United States providing Kiev's hard-pressed

army with arms.

Merkel said she and Hollande were not on the road as neutral mediators but were representing European interests. "These interests are peace, maintaining Europe's peaceful order."

A statement on Poroshenko's website said the sides had expressed the hope that "Russia had an interest in" a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

For Moscow's part, Russia's ambassador to France Alexander Orlov told Europe 1 radio there was an urgent need to avoid war. "I wouldn't say it's a last chance meeting, but it's not far off," he said. Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said there "was no sign whatsoever" of a breakthrough so far.

The Ukrainian presidential statement said he and the German, and French leaders had called for a quick ceasefire, the withdrawal of foreign forces from Ukraine, the pull-back of heavy weapons and equipment, the closure of the border and the release of all prisoners.

On the ground, the rebels are advancing on a railway hub held by Ukrainian troops, who are almost encircled.

A collapse in Ukraine's hryvnia currency further highlighted the importance of reach-

ing a deal. It lost nearly a third of its value on Thursday after the central bank halted daily auctions at which it sold hard currency to banks.

Though details of the peace deal were under wraps, much might depend on whether Ukraine is being pressed to acknowledge existing front lines as the new negotiating reality — and whether Kiev would accept this.

German government sources said on Thursday the key problem for resuming peace talks was that current front lines no longer tally with what was agreed at talks in Minsk, Belarus, last year.

One idea was that a new attempt at a ceasefire should take in the current front lines, which reflect rebel gains, without Kiev having to give up its claim to these areas as part of the Ukrainian state. German government sources continued to say however on Friday that the Minsk talks last September were still the basis for negotiations — the view also of Kiev, France and the United States.—Reuters

G-20 likely to discuss preventing funding of terrorism

TOKYO, 6 Feb — Finance chiefs of the Group of 20 economies are likely to discuss how to prevent the funding of terrorism at their two-day meeting starting on Monday in Istanbul, Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso said on Friday.

"Two Japanese people became victims. Terrorists cannot act without funds," Aso, who is also deputy prime minister, said at a Press conference, referring to the recent murder of two Japanese by the Islamic State militant group.

At the G-20 gathering, Japan will also thank countries in the Middle East and its vicinity such as Turkey, the host of the meeting, for their support in dealing with the hostage crisis, Aso said. As for macroeconomic issues, Aso said he will tell G-20 nations that Japan's economy has been recovering on the back of its "Abenomics" policy mix, centering on drastic monetary easing and massive fiscal spending.

He said he will also explain that Japan has been making efforts to restore its fiscal health, the worst among major industrialized economies.

Aso is to attend the G-20 gathering along with Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda.—Kyodo News

Taipei plane black boxes reveal attempts to regain thrust

TAIPEI, 6 Feb — A twin-engined TransAsia plane that crashed into a river in Taipei, killing 35 people, failed to produce enough thrust after take-off, authorities said on Friday, revealing that one apparently functioning engine was turned off and restarted.

The almost-new turboprop ATR 72-600 was unable to regain power in time after the engine was turned back on, Aviation Safety Council officials told a news briefing.

The plane, which can fly on one engine, was carrying 58 passengers and crew when it lurched nose-up between buildings, clipped an overpass and a taxi with one of its wings and then crashed upside down into a shallow river on Wednesday. Fifteen people survived.

The blackbox data and voice recorders showed that the plane warned five times of stalling before the crash in the centre of Taipei, according to preliminary findings by the Aviation Safety Council.

The right engine entered a state called "auto-feather", in which it reduced thrust to the propeller, Thomas Wang, managing director of the council, said.

The flight crew then reduced acceleration to the left engine, turned it off and then attempted to restart it, but it did not gain enough thrust. He did not suggest a reason for the restart and stressed that a fuller report would be released later.

"The first engine experienced a problem 37 seconds after take-off at 1,200 feet," Wang said. He said the pilot had an-

nounced a "flameout", which can occur when fuel supply to an engine is interrupted or when there is faulty combustion, but there had not been one according to the data. "The flight crew stepped on the accelerator of engine 2 (righthand side)... The engine was still operating, but neither engine produced power."

He said the aircraft could fly with one engine. The plane was powered by two Pratt & Whitney PW127M engines. Pratt & Whitney is part of United Technologies. A fuller report on the crash will be available in next 30 days, with a final report expected in the next three to six months.

The pilot, 42-year-old Liao Chien-tung, has been praised by Taipei's mayor for steering the

plane between apartment blocks and commercial buildings before ditching the stalled aircraft in a river.

The bodies of Liao and his co-pilot were retrieved from the cockpit, with their legs badly broken, investigators said.

"They were still trying to save this aircraft until the last minute," media quoted unidentified prosecutors involved in the crash investigation as saying.

Eight people are still missing. Aviation officials have said they have not given up hope of finding them.

The plane took off from Taipei's downtown Songshan airport and was bound for the Taipei island of Kinmen. Among those on board were 31 tourists from Chi-

na, mainly from the southwestern city of Xiamen.

Taipei's aviation regulator has ordered TransAsia and Uni Air, a subsidiary of EVA Airways Corp, to conduct engine and fuel system checks on the remaining 22 ATR aircraft they still operate.

The crash was the latest in a string of Asian air disasters.

Indonesia has expanded its search for bodies of AirAsia Flight QZ8501 that crashed into the Java Sea in December, killing all 162 people on board.

After a lull in search and recovery efforts, more bodies and wreckage were found in the past few days off the coast of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. A total of 96 bodies have been found.

Reuters



Rescuers look on as part of the wreckage of TransAsia Airways plane Flight GE235 is lifted after it crash landed into a river, in New Taipei City, on 5 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 7 February, 2015

The same old recurring problems hinder progress of society

By Myint Win Thein

Every society has its own problems, but some societies successfully overcome them while others still struggle with them. Those societies that successfully overcome their problems and have

to solve new ones, attain a higher degree of achievement whenever they deal with a new problem. Those societies that are struggling are found to be encountering the same old recurring problems they failed to solve in the past.

It is necessary for a society to solve one problem after another for its survival because they are always with the society whether they are new ones or old unsolved recurring ones. It is obvious that problems are troublesome as long as they have not been solved. That is why the society is challenged by the same problem again and again in its history and although it repeatedly claims it has left them behind forever, the problems are repeatedly returning.

A problem must be solved once and for all as soci-

ety cannot escape them. As history has shown, blaming others for problems will not help either as the same old problems will still recur again in the same way as before. It is important that a society should deal with problems as soon as they occur.

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Property is not for Investment*(The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author.)*

By San Shwe Aung

Since 2012 property prices in Myanmar has skyrocketed beyond the reaches of ordinary families. It has been known widely domestically as well as internationally that one square foot of prime land costs the same as or even more than that of in New York. It is very bad news for most of ordinary hardworking simple, peace loving Myanmar families. Cost of a plot in sub-urban area is now more than several hundred million Kyats and most families do not afford to buy. Their average in-

come is 1.2 to 2.4 million Kyats per year. Many earn even less than that salary or income bracket. Many families have to work very hard to make ends meet and to solve daily living, educational, health and other social responsibilities.

Why have the land, flats, and other residential property prices gone up months after months since 2012. There are many schools of thoughts and opinions regarding the causes and reason. However, it is apparent that there are several or many reasons. Whatever are the causes and/or the

reasons for the skyrocketing prices of properties in Myanmar, it is very crucial for the Government to cool down the prices by introducing various measures. Price increases does not confine only to the big cities residential areas but other commercial lands such as industrial estate, agriculture, livestock, plantation and land for the special economic zones.

Many potential foreign investors from many countries around the world have flocked into Myanmar since the promulgation of Foreign Investment Law in 2012. Many have left with disap-

pointment on the incredibly high land prices and confusion related to land disputes. As a result Myanmar has lost initial opportunities for floods of investment as well as technology transfer. One of the high profile examples is Samsung's thwarted plan for building modern mobile phone handsets arguably due to very expensive land and rental costs. They are said to have moved the investment to Vietnam instead.

One of the widely known causes of exponential price increase is speculation. In other words rich and well connected people have bought lands, flats, condominium and other properties to make quick profit in future selling. Some areas call it

"Investment". But it is very bad investment for the majority of the national people. While it is understandable that people have rights to make business investments to increase their wealth, there should be control measure by the Government since land speculation is hindering the economic progress, social development, employment and most importantly severely affecting the efforts for the reduction of poverty in our country. Due to high cost of residential properties, poor people cannot afford for a decent homes but to become illegal dwellers by trespassing private or public properties. We are almost daily witnessing in the media the clashes be-

tween the authorities and illegal dwellers.

The answers will of course lie in the authority of the Government. Several measure to size the fly away property prices have been introduced by the Government notably by taxation. However, it is very important to stop by introducing laws & regulations to discourage the rich people to invest in the property sector. On the other hand rich people will have alternate opportunities to invest their money in other productive sectors {beneficial to the people of Myanmar} including stock exchanges.

The author of this article is an engineer living in Yangon.

Hazards of smoking

The following is the reproduction of an article from *The Guardian Daily* issued on 20 December 1987.—Ed

By Kyaw Zan Hla

I am grateful to my parents simply because they brought me up in a big family of non-smokers. Now I am 53. However, I have never touched even a cheroot and I am proud of it.

That is why, whenever I see young school children smoke cigarettes, I can not help but scolding them or pointing out the serious consequences of smoking. Actually, smoking, the undesirable habit, can cause dire effects.

In this regards, medical experts tried to emphasize that smoking is probably the biggest single preventable cause of ill health in the world, according to a booklet issued by the Department of Health in South Africa.

The smoker breathes in a dangerous gas, carbon dioxide, reducing the oxygen taken to body cells. Cigarette smoker slows down and later stops the action of the tiny hairs, known as cilia, that line the bronchial tubes and act as brushes to

sweep dirt and mucous accumulate on the lungs, causing coughing.

Eventually, the bronchial tube may become swollen and the person develops chronic bronchitis. Moreover, air sacs become fragile and burst more easily in smokers and if a number of the air sacs burst, the smoker develops emphysema. Chronic breathless is a symptom of these diseases.

Nicotine, found in tobacco, makes the heart beat faster and the blood vessels constrict. It also causes a smoker to become addicted to tobacco.

It is also learned that cigarette smokers are nine times more likely to get lung cancer than non-smokers. The risk is less for pipe or cigar smokers. The more cigarettes that are smoked and the earlier a person starts smoking the more likely he is to suffer from the lung cancer and heart disease.

Medical experts maintain that a smoker is nearly twice as likely to have heart attack as a non-smoker.

Like people under 45 years of age, smokers are 16 times more likely to suffer from diseases of the heart and the blood vessels. Also other diseases more common in smokers are cancer of the bladder, cancer of the mouth and voice box. In addition, smoking dulls the senses of taste and smell and other disadvantages of smoking are:-

(a) Fire hazards, (b) Cost of cigarettes, (c) Air pollution.

Air pollution can cause other people to suffer from hay fever, asthma epidemic and sore eyes.

The medical experts also pointed out to children that smoking is not glamorous nor it is grown up to tough behavior. It is responsible for ill health, death and damage and is a habit that once started is difficult to stop or in other words it is easy to acquire, but hard to quit.

Now, some nations in the world spotted on smoking matters and marked as a centre of attraction. For example, countries like the People's Republic of China and Belgium. The doctors in Beijing in August this year have developed a perfume using Chinese herbal

medicine which they said that the perfume was tested on 100 people and found to be 98 percent effective in helping smokers kick the habit.

The "quit smoking perfume" also known as "magical quit smoking extract" was developed by the Beijing Modern Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinical Immunity Research Centre and is made from 36 Chinese herbal medicines. Chinese Doctors said, smokers who sniff the aforementioned perfume for 10 to 20 minutes every day will within three days feel decreased desire to smoke a cigarette and for heavy smokers continued sniffing for one to two minutes every day for another week will find themselves completely heal their strong desire for tobacco.

It has been approved by Beijing Public Health Bureau and has founded that it has no harmful. There came a surprise that a reporter of Beijing Daily was found his way at last to kick his 25 years' old smoking habit after using the perfume. A country like Japan has already purchased the perfume as first batch. Other countries like Malaysia

and New Zealand are reported negotiating a purchase from Beijing through businessmen and the cost of perfume is only 20 yuan (5.40 US dollars) per bottle.

The World Health Organization held its annual conference on 15th May this year and altogether delegates from 166 Nations attended it. In this conference, a resolution was promulgated to mark May 7, 1988 as "World No Smoking Day", urging all nations to prohibit it and to cease smoking and selling all forms of tobacco on that very date.

According to a recent report, smoking was banned in Belgium with a New Law introduced with effect from 1.9.87 for smokers who light up in public building will face stiff fines in future.

Under this legislation, anyone caught smoking in schools, hospitals, railway waiting rooms and cultural and sport centres owned by public bodies will be liable to a maximum fine of 18,000 francs (480 dollars).

In addition, restaurants were forced to reserve an area for non-smokers. The

majority of Belgians welcomed the New Law and according to the pool sponsored by the Belgian Consumer Union Research Centre, seven out of eight adults who smoked approved that ban.

In this regards, a statement was also issued by the Belgian Anti Cancer Association, welcoming the Law but as the smokers did damage to the society, the price of cigarettes should therefore be raised in order to reflect the said damage done.

To my opinion, youth is a golden season of life. Youths are quite inquisitive by nature. Besides, they are ones who will shoulder the responsibilities of the leaders of today. It is for this reason that our golden youths should be brought up in good environment which is clear of poisonous smoke.

That is why the teachers at schools and parents at home should collectively join hands to educate our little dear ones not to get into the bad habit of smoking.

The author was born in Shwebo on 26-11-1933. He is a member of Myanmar Writer's Association and a retiree from Myanmar Railways.

ARTICLE

Education in Singapore: Pre-school Playgroup to Junior College

By Sayar Mya

(Continued from yesterday)
Gifted Education Program in Singapore

The “**Gifted Education Program**” (GEP) was set up by the Ministry of Education in 1984 to cater to the intellectually gifted students. This program aims to develop gifted children to their top potential and it places a special emphasis on higher-order thinking and creative thought.

There are currently 9 “**primary schools**” offering the Gifted Education Program. (1) Anglo-Chinese School; (2) Catholic High School; (3) Henry Park Primary School; (4) Nan Hua Primary School; (5) Nanyang Primary School; (6) Rosyth School; (7) Tao Nan School; (8) St. Hilda’s Primary School; and (9) Raffles Girls’ Primary School.

The “**Secondary School Gifted Education Program (GEP)**” was discontinued at the end of 2008 as more students take the Integrated Program (IP). At that juncture, this has been replaced by a “**School-Based Gifted Education**” program.

Secondary Education in Singapore

Based on results of the PSLE, students are placed in different secondary education tracks or streams. They are “Special”, “Express”, “Normal (Academic)”, or “Normal (Technical)”. Singaporeans are forbidden to attend international schools on the island without MOE permission.

“Special” and “Express” are four-year courses leading up to the Singapore-Cambridge GCE “O” Level examination. The difference between these two courses is that in the “Special” stream, students take “**Higher Mother Tongue**” (available for Standard Mandarin, Malay and Tamil only) instead of “**Mother Tongue**”.

A pass in the Higher Mother Tongue ‘O’ Level Examination constitutes the fulfillment of the Mother Tongue requirement in Singapore, whereas “**Normal Mother Tongue**” Students will have to go through one more year of study in their Mother Tongue after their ‘O’ Levels to take the ‘A’ Level H1 Mother Tongue Examinations and fulfill the

MOE’s requirement.

A foreign language, either French, German, Japanese or Spanish can be taken in addition to the mother tongue or can replace it. This is especially popular with students who are struggling with their mother tongues, expatriates, or students returning from abroad.

Non-Chinese students may also study Standard Mandarin and non-Malay students Malay as a third language. This program is known as CSP (Chinese Special Program) and MSP (Malay Special Program). Mother Tongue teachers conduct these lessons in school after usual hours.

The Ministry of Education Language Centre (MO-ELC) provides free language education for most additional languages that other schools may not cover, and provides the bulk of such education, admitting several thousand students each year.

“**Normal**” is a four-year course leading up to a Normal-level (N-level) exam, with the possibility of a fifth year followed by an O-level. Normal is split into “**Normal (Academic)**” and “**Normal (Technical)**”.

Normal (Technical), students take subjects of a more technical nature, such as Design and Technology, while in Normal (Academic) students are prepared to take the O-level exam and normally take subjects such as Principles of Accounting.

Pre-university in Singapore

The pre-university centers of Singapore are designed for upper-stream students (roughly about 20%–25% of the cohort) who wish to pursue a university degree after two to three years of pre-university education, rather than stopping after polytechnic post-secondary education.

There are 18 Junior Colleges (JCs) and a Centralized Institute (CI), the Millennia Institute (MI, established 2004), with the National Junior College (NJC, established 1969) being the oldest and Innova Junior College (IJC, established 2005) the newest.

Junior college in Singapore

Junior colleges in Singapore were initially designed to offer an accel-

erated alternative to the traditional three-year program, but in recent years the two-year program has become the norm for students pursuing university education.

JCs accept students based on their GCE “O” Level results; an L1R5 score of 20 points or less must be attained for a student to gain admission. JCs provide a 2-year course leading up to the Singapore-Cambridge GCE Advanced Level (“A” level) examination. The CI accepts students based on their GCE “O” Level results; an L1R4 score of 20 points or less must be attained for a student to gain admission. The MI provides a 3-year course leading up to the Singapore-Cambridge GCE Advanced Level (“A” level) examination.

All students are required to participate in at least one CCA (Co-Curricular Activities) as CCA performance is considered for university admission.

Centralized Institute in Singapore

The Centralized Institutes accept students based on their GCE “O” level results and their L1R4 score (which must be 20 points or below). A Centralized Institute provides a three-year course leading up to a GCE “A” level examination. There were originally four Centralized Institutes: (1) Outram Institute, (2) Townsville Institute, (3) Jurong Institute and (4) Seletar Institute. Townsville Institute and Seletar Institute stopped accepting new students after the 1995 school year and closed down after the last batch of students graduated in 1997.

There currently remains only one Centralized Institute in Singapore, the Millennia Institute, which was formed following the merger of Jurong and Outram Institutes. Additionally, only Centralized Institutes offer the Commerce Stream offering subjects such as Principles of Accounting and Management of Business. The standard of teaching and curriculum is identical to that of the Junior Colleges.

Diploma and vocational education

The first polytechnic in Singapore is “Singapore Polytechnic”. It was established in 1954. Ngee Ann Polytechnic, has roots that

go back to 1963. Two other polytechnics, Temasek Polytechnic and Nanyang Polytechnic were set up in the 1990s. The most recent, Republic Polytechnic was set up in 2003.

Polytechnics in Singapore provide 3-year diploma courses. They accept students based on their GCE “O” level, GCE “A” level or Institute of Technical Education (ITE) results. Unlike polytechnics in some other countries, they do not offer degree courses.

Polytechnics offer a wide range of courses in various fields, including engineering, business studies, accountancy, tourism and hospitality management, mass communications, digital media and biotechnology. There are also specialized courses such as marine engineering, nautical studies, nursing, and optometry. They provide a more industry-oriented education as an alternative to junior colleges for post-secondary studies. About 40% of each Secondary 4 cohort would enroll in Polytechnics.

Graduates of polytechnics with good grades can continue to pursue further tertiary education at the universities, and many overseas universities, notably those in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, give exemptions for modules completed in Polytechnic.

Polytechnics have also been actively working with many foreign universities to provide their graduates a chance to study niche University Courses locally. For example, Ngee Ann Polytechnic has engaged with Chapman University in the US to provide a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Producing for graduates of the School’s Film and Media Studies department. Nanyang Polytechnic, likewise, has tied up with the University of Stirling in Scotland to provide a course in Retail Marketing.

Institute of Technical Education in Singapore

The Institute of Technical Education (ITE) accepts students based on their GCE “O” level or GCE “N” level results and they provide 2-year courses leading to a locally recognized “National ITE Certificate.” There are four ITE Colleges in Singapore. A few ITE grad-

uates continue their education at polytechnics and universities. ITE students are sometimes seen as being less capable and possibly less successful than JC, MI and Poly students. Recent speeches by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Minister of Education Tharman Shanmugaratnam have pointed out that there can be different definitions and types of success, in a bid to work towards a more inclusive society.

ITE provides four main levels of certification:

- Master National ITE Certificate (Master Nitec)
- Higher National ITE Certificate (Higher Nitec)
- National ITE Certificate (Nitec)
- Technical Engineer Diploma (TED) (from 2007)

There are also other skills certification through part-time apprenticeship courses conducted jointly by ITE and industrial companies.

Teacher and Principal Quality

Singapore recruits its teachers from the top third of high school graduates. Each year, Singapore calculates the number of teachers it will need, and opens only that many spots in the training programs.

On average, only one out of eight applicants for admission to their teacher education programs is accepted, and that only after a grueling application process. Those who are accepted have typically not only taken Singapore’s A-level exams (the most challenging of all the exams available to Singapore students) but will have scored at least in the middle of the score range, a very high level of accomplishment.

The many other steps in the application process include tough panel interviews that focus on the personal qualities that make for a good teacher, as well as intensive reviews of their academic record and their contributions to their school and community. Teaching is a highly-respected profession in Singapore, not simply because it is part of the Confucian culture to value teachers, but because everyone knows how hard it is to become a teacher

and everyone also knows that Singapore’s teachers have year in and year out produced students who are among the world’s highest achievers.

While teachers’ base salaries are not particularly high compared to many other top-performing countries, they are high enough to make compensation an unimportant consideration for students weighing teaching against other professions as they make their career choices.

Singapore also has a system of generous bonuses that boost teachers’ salaries by tens of thousands over the course of their careers. The bonuses are based on Singapore’s rather sophisticated teacher appraisal system in which teachers are evaluated annually in 16 areas, including in the contributions they make to the school and community.

This teaching competency model forms the bedrock of Singapore’s “**Enhanced Performance Management System (EPMS)**”. Recognizing that the quality of its teaching force is vital to its success, the Ministry of Education developed this system to promote increasingly high levels of performance, even from teachers who are already excellent.

Ministry officials responsible for hiring and school leaders responsible for leading teachers use the competency model in conjunction with the achievement of performance goals at each stage of employment to the followings.

- (1) Hire and train aspiring teachers;
- (2) Set annual competency achievement targets;
- (3) Evaluate competency levels throughout the year;
- (4) Match each teacher to a career path; and
- (5) Determine annual bonuses.

Conclusion

The writer of this article has the pleasure and honor to present “**Education in Singapore: Pre-school Playgroup to Junior College**” for the esteemed and valued readers of the Global New Light of Myanmar and also for the interested persons in the field of education in Myanmar.

(Concluded)

Jordan military jets pound IS as king comforts pilot's family

AMMAN, 6 Feb — Jordanian fighter jets pounded Islamic State targets in Syria on Thursday, before roaring over the hometown of the pilot killed by the militants while King Abdullah consoled the victim's family. A statement from the Jordanian armed forces said tens of jets were deployed in the attacks, which destroyed ammunition depots and training camps run by the Islamic State. Witnesses overheard the monarch telling the pilot's father the planes were returning from the militant-held city of Raqqa. A security source told *Reuters* the strikes hit targets in the eastern province of Deir al-Zor as well as near Raqqa.

The show of force came two days after the ultra-hardline Islamic State released a video showing captured Jordanian pilot Mouath al-Kasaesbeh being burned alive in a cage as masked militants in camouflage uni-

forms looked on.

"It's actually the beginning of our retaliation over this horrific and brutal murder of our brave young pilot, but it's not the beginning of our fight against terrorism and extremism," Jordan's Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh said in an interview with CNN later on Thursday.

State television aired footage of fighter jets taking off to carry out the raids. It later broadcast footage of the actual bombing before the jets returned safely to Jordan.

Several men and women were shown writing Koranic verses and anti-Islamic State slogans on what appeared to be the bombs used in the attacks.

"We're going after them with everything that we have," Judeh said.

US military aircraft joined the mission to provide intelligence, surveillance as well as reconnaissance and

targeting support, a US official told *Reuters*, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The official also said the strikes focussed on multiple targets around Raqqa. Military commanders briefed King Abdullah after the missions about the details of the strikes, state television said. The monarch has vowed to avenge Kasaesbeh's killing and ordered commanders to prepare for a stepped-up military role in the US-led coalition against the group.

But many Jordanians fear being dragged into a conflict that could trigger a backlash by hardline militants inside the kingdom.

Jordan is a major US ally in the fight against militant Islamist groups, and hosted US troops during operations that led to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The country is also home to hundreds of US military trainers bolstering defences at the Syrian and Iraqi



Jordan's King Abdullah (L) is welcomed by Safi al-Kasaesbeh, the father of Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kasaesbeh, as he arrives to offer his condolences at the headquarters of the family's clan in the city of Karak on 5 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

borders and is determined to keep the jihadists in Syria away from its frontiers.

State television showed a sombre King Abdullah sitting alongside the army chief and senior officials while visiting the Kasaesbeh tribal family in Aya, a village some 100 km (60 miles) south of the capital, Amman.

The king, wearing a traditional Arab headdress, was met by cheering crowds with cries of "Long live his majesty the king, long live the king," in traditional Bedouin chanting.

Thousands of Jordanians flocked to pay their respects. The region's influential tribes form an impor-

tant pillar of support for the Hashemite monarchy and supply the army and security forces with manpower.

"You are a wise monarch. These criminals violated the rules of war in Islam and they have no humanity. Even humanity disowns them," Safi Kasaesbeh, father of the pilot, told the king.

The Jordanian monarch has vowed that the pilot's death, which has stirred nationalist fervour across the country, will bring severe retaliation against Islamic State.

Hours after the release of the video showing the pilot burning to death, the authorities executed two al-Qaeda militants who had been imprisoned on death row, including a woman who had tried to blow herself up in a suicide bombing and whose release had been demanded by Islamic State.

Reuters

US pressing Cuba to restore diplomatic ties before April

WASHINGTON, 6 Feb — The United States is pressing Cuba to allow the opening of its embassy in Havana by April, US officials told *Reuters*, despite the Communist island's demand that it first be removed from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism.

A refusal by Cuba to allow the United States to quickly establish an official embassy for the first time in half a century could complicate talks between the Cold War foes, reflecting enduring mistrust as they move to end decades of confrontation. Striking Cuba from the terrorism list could take until June or longer, although the White House is pushing officials to move quickly, said two US officials with direct knowledge of the State Department's review to take Cuba off the list.

Washington is eager to re-establish diplomatic ties before a regional summit

in Panama in April, when President Barack Obama will meet Cuban leader Raul Castro for the first time since 2013, the officials said.

The two leaders announced a historic deal on 17 December to restore relations. US and Cuban diplomats will meet this month or in early March in Washington for a second round of talks.

While renewing diplomatic relations could happen quickly, the process to normalize, including removing the US trade embargo, will take far longer.

Cuba has not made removal from the list a condition for restoring ties, US officials said. But Havana made clear during the first round of talks last month that it first wants to be removed from the terrorism list.

For Cuba, which considers its designation an injustice, getting removed

from the list would be a long-coveted propaganda victory at home and abroad.

Washington placed Cuba on the list in 1982, citing then President Fidel Castro's training and arming of Communist rebels in Africa and Latin America. The list is short: just Iran, Sudan, Syria and Cuba.

But Cuba's presence on the list has been questioned in recent years. The State Department's latest annual "Country Reports on Terrorism" says Cuba has long provided a safe haven for members of the Basque separatist group ETA and Colombia's left-wing FARC guerrillas. But ETA, severely weakened by Spanish and French police, called a ceasefire in 2011 and has pledged to disarm. And the FARC has been in peace talks with the Colombian government for the past two years, with Cuba as host.

Reuters

India says 11 nurses rescued in Iraq

NEW DELHI, 6 Feb — India said on Friday that 11 Indian nurses trapped in the war-torn Iraq have been rescued and would return to their home country on Saturday.

The Indian External Affairs Ministry said the nurses, who came from the southern Indian state of Kerala and were working

in hospitals in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, have been handed over to Indian officials in the Kurdish city of Irbil. "Eleven Indian nurses from Kerala, evacuated from Kirkuk, to return home from Irbil on 7 February," ministry spokesperson Syed Akbaruddin tweeted.

In July, some 46 Indian nurses, who were

working at a hospital in the northern city of Tikrit and kidnapped by Islamist militants, were freed and returned to India.

However, 39 Indian construction workers, kidnapped in the northern city of Mosul, were reportedly being held hostage by the militants of the Islamic State in Iraq.—Xinhua

Abbott, Bishop to fight together to defeat leadership spill



Australia's Prime Minister Tony Abbott

CANBERRA, 6 Feb — Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott on Friday announced that deputy party leader Julie Bishop will run alongside him in defeating next week's leadership spill motion.

Earlier on Friday, Western Australian MP Luke Simpkins called for a vote on the federal government's leadership, to be held during next Tuesday's party room meeting.

It was a motion seconded by fellow Western Australian backbencher Don Randall.

The motion followed weeks of speculation regarding Abbott's future amid unrest within the government over poor polling results and Liberal's loss in recent Victorian and Queensland state elections.

Abbott's decision to award an Australian knight-

hood to 93-year-old Prince Philip, without consulting fellow party members, had also drawn criticism.

Although reports in the Australian media had claimed Bishop might challenge Abbott for his role as the country's leader, those suggestions were quashed on Friday when the prime minister revealed she would campaign alongside him to defeat the leadership spill motion.

"As you know, two of my colleagues have called for a leadership spill of the two senior positions in our party," Abbott said in a Press conference on Friday. "They've called for a spill of my position as leader and they've called for a spill of Julie Bishop's position as deputy."

"The first point to make is that they are perfectly entitled to call for this, but the next point to

make is that they are asking the party room to vote out the people that the electorate voted in in September 2013.

"I want to make this very simple point. We are not the Labour party and we are not going to repeat the chaos and the instability of the Labour years."

"So I have spoken to deputy leader Julie Bishop and we will stand together in urging the party room to defeat this particular motion and in doing so, in defeating this motion, to vote in favour of the stability and the team that the people voted for at the election."

"We have a strong plan. It's the strong plan that I enunciated at the Press Club this week and we are determined to get on with it and we will."

After three federal MPs insisted Abbott did not have their full backing earlier in the week, the prime minister's statement on Friday led to a flurry of support from Liberal party members.

Assistant treasurer Josh Frydenberg said "it doesn't make sense to go down this path," while Tasmanian MP Andrew Nikolic said a spill "repeats the sort of behaviors that the Australian people explicitly repudiated at the 2013 election."

Xinhua

WORLD

Syrian air strikes kill 82 after rebel rocket attack

BEIRUT, 6 Feb — Syrian air force strikes killed 82 people in an opposition district outside Damascus following rocket attacks by rebels that hit the government-controlled centre of the capital, a monitoring group said on Friday.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war in Syria, said the air force conducted 60 strikes on the Eastern Ghouta district on Thursday and into Friday. Eighteen children and 11 fighters were among the dead, it said.

High death tolls from air attacks are not rare but

the Observatory said the focussed barrage was a response to rocket attacks by Islam Army insurgents on Thursday, which killed 10 people in Damascus.

Syria's state news agency SANA said on Friday that the army had "eliminated scores of terrorists, the majority of them from the so-called 'Islam Army' organization in the villages of Eastern Ghouta in the Damascus countryside."

It said the army had also carried out a series of strikes in the district of Jobar, and special operations in Zamalka and Erbin.

The Observatory said 26 people were also killed in insurgent-held areas of Aleppo on Thursday.

A message on Thursday on a Twitter account thought to belong to Islam Army chief Zahran Alloush said Thursday's rocket attack was revenge for what the Syrian military had done to Eastern Ghouta. Alloush described Damascus as a "military zone" and said his group would respond to any air force strikes.

Islam Army was formed by a merger of rebel factions in 2013 and has received backing from Saudi Arabia.



A general view of the destruction after what activists said were at least 20 air strikes by forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad in the Douma neighbourhood of Damascus on 5 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

di Arabia.

The United Nations says 200,000 people have

been killed since 2011 in Syria's civil war, which started with peaceful protests against President Bashar al-Assad.

Reuters

Islamic State flags appear, then disappear, in Bosnian village



A house in the Bosnian village of Gornja Maoca decorated with Islamic State flags on 4 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

Baghdad's decade-old curfew to end on Saturday, Iraq's PM says

BAGHDAD, 6 Feb — Baghdad's decade-old curfew will end on Saturday and four neighbourhoods will be "demilitarised", Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said on Thursday, as he tries to normalize the capital.

Some form of curfew has been in place since the US-led invasion to topple Saddam Hussein in 2003, hindering commercial and civilian movement.

The midnight (2100 GMT) to 5 am curfew has been in place for more than seven years. Deadly attacks remain a regular occurrence in Baghdad. Four bombs went off in a central district on Tuesday, killing nine civilians and wounding 25 others. At least 12 people were killed on Friday by bombs at a busy market.

But Abadi's spokes-

man Rafid Jaboori told Reuters, "Baghdad was under real threat only a few months ago, but now Baghdad is secure enough ... to lift the night-time curfew."

"Life goes on although Iraq is at war and is aiming to liberate the rest of the country," he said.

Islamic State looked set to attack Baghdad in mid-2014 after sweeping towards the capital from the north and west but Kurdish fighters and Shi'ite militias pushed back the radical jihadist group, reducing but not eliminating the threat.—Reuters



A policeman stands guard at a checkpoint in Baghdad on 5 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

GORNJA MAOCA, (Bosnia), 6 Feb — Flags and emblems of Islamic State, pictured on Wednesday on houses in a Bosnian village, disappeared on Thursday under threat of action by police wary of the dangers posed by radical Islamists returning from Syria and Iraq.

The village of Gornja Maoca in northeastern Bosnia is home to followers of the strict Sunni Islam Wahhabi movement, and has been raided by police several times over the past decade due to suspected links with radical Islamist groups. Most Muslims in Bosnia are either secular or

practice a moderate form of Islam. But more hard-line versions have found a growing following among younger generations, particularly in rural areas, and police say up to 180 Bosnians, including women and children, have left for Syria over the past three years to join Islamic State.

On Wednesday, a Reuters photographer took pictures of Islamic State flags flying from several homes in the village, and symbols painted on a wood shed.

On Thursday, Bosnia's state prosecution said it had ordered security forces to search the village. They came away empty-handed.

"During the activities undertaken, ISIS flags were not found displayed," the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) said in a statement. It gave no further details.

Bosnian state radio cited villagers saying the flags had been erected by neighbours who had since left the community.

"I don't understand why such a fuss was made in the past 24 hours because of a simple piece of cloth," a man, who gave his name as Edis and who wore a long beard and short trousers typical for Wahhabi followers, told Reuters.

Reuters

Egypt, Norway urge donors to pay \$5.4 billion aid pledged for Gaza

OSLO, 6 Feb — Egypt and Norway urged donors on Thursday, including Gulf states squeezed by low oil prices, to keep promises of providing \$5.4 billion (3.52 billion pounds) in aid for the Palestinians after the devastating war in Gaza last year.

The two nations, who led a donors' conference in Cairo in October when the cash was pledged, wrote an open letter to donors and said people in Gaza were suffering with a slower-than-expected pace of reconstruction.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said the two felt it had become necessary to remind donors who had promised to help rebuild Gaza that they "should fulfil their obligations in this regard."

"No one has said to us that they're not committed



A Palestinian man carries his sister near tents erected by Palestinians whose houses were destroyed by what witnesses said was Israel shelling during a 50-day conflict last summer, east of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip on 27 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

to what they have pledged, but also due to oil price and other issues in the Gulf, there has been a bit of a lingering," Norwegian Foreign Minister Boerge Brende told a news conference.

The two ministers,

after a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Oslo, did not single out any nations for criticism nor say how much of the \$5.4 billion pledged had reached the Palestinians.—Reuters

Heavy fighting in Libya's Benghazi as army pushes to take port

BENGHAZI, (Libya), 6 Feb — Clashes erupted in the centre of Libya's main eastern city Benghazi on Thursday as pro-government forces pushed to take the port district from Islamist militants, and seven soldiers were killed, witnesses and military officials said.

The fighting mirrors a wider struggle in the oil-producing North African state where two governments and parliaments, allied to rival armed groups, are vying for control almost four years after Muammar Gaddafi fell to an armed uprising.

Backed by forces led by General Khalifa Haftar, army special forces in mid-October launched an offensive against Islamists in Benghazi, expelling them from the airport area and from several camps the army had lost during the summer.

Army forces have since been trying to retake the port area and two other districts



Members of Libyan pro-government forces, which is backed by the locals, look on in an army camp, in Benghazi on 1 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

where pro-government forces say fighters from the militant Islamist Ansar al-Sharia group are holed up.

The port, the main gateway for food imports into eastern Libya, has had to close.

On Thursday morning, army vehicles advanced on the Corniche road towards the port gate and a nearby court building. Soldiers took over several government

buildings such as a passport office, a state insurance and a state bank damaged in earlier fighting.

Around 25 soldiers were wounded, army sources said.

"The road to the port is under our control," said Faraj al-Barassi, a military commander.

Heavy gunfire continued until late at night. The court is famous as the place

where the 2011 uprising against Gaddafi started with peaceful protests against his jailing of many opponents.

Army forces in eastern Libya are loyal to internationally recognized Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni, who was forced to leave the capital Tripoli in the west in August for the eastern city of Bayda when a group called Libya Dawn seized the capital.

The new rulers in Tripoli set up their own government and parliament, but these have not been recognised by the United Nations. Both sides have fought each other on several fronts.

Libya has failed to build up a national army and efficient state institutions since the end of Gaddafi's one-man rule, and the country is now effectively dominated by former rebel brigades who have carved out competing fiefs.

Reuters

Climate change pushes India's poorest children into slavery — Satyarthi

NEW DELHI, 6 Feb — Disasters resulting from climate change are pushing poor Indian families into poverty so deep that they are lured by traffickers into selling their children into bonded labour or prostitution, Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi said on Thursday.

"I have witnessed many incidents where the children became the worst victims of environmental disasters caused by climate change and these kind of things," Satyarthi told Reuters TV on the sidelines of a conference on climate change. "It has resulted in displacement of the parents, and eventually the children are compelled to become child labourers or even child prostitutes or child slaves because they lose their traditional livelihood." The latest report from the UN Panel on Climate Change predicts a rise in global temperatures of between 0.3 and 4.8 degrees Celsius (0.5 to 8.6 Fahrenheit) and a rise of up to 82 cm (32 inches) in sea levels by the late 21st century.

Scientists say India is likely to be hit hard by global warming. It is already one of the most disaster-prone nations in the world and many of its 1.2 billion people live in areas vulnerable

to hazards such as floods, cyclones and droughts.

New weather patterns will not only affect agricultural output and food security, but also lead to water shortages and trigger outbreaks of water and mosquito-borne diseases such as diarrhoea and malaria in many developing nations.

Experts say post-disaster human trafficking has become common in South Asia as an increase in extreme events caused by global warming leave the already poor even more vulnerable.

The breakdown of social institutions in devastated areas creates difficulties in securing food and humanitarian supplies, leaving women and children vulnerable to kidnapping, sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Satyarthi said traffickers are increasingly preying on children after disasters such as the 2013 floods in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand and the yearly floods in eastern Bihar region.

"What has happened in Uttarakhand ... (and) also in case of Bihar in flood time, these situations become quite convenient for the traffickers to go and steal children from there," said the Indian child rights activist. —Reuters

UN chief names Bulgarian as new Mideast peace coordinator

UNITED NATIONS, 6 Feb — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed Nickolay Mladenov of Bulgaria to replace Robert Serry as his special coordinator for the Middle East peace process, a UN spokesman said on Thursday. Mladenov, currently the UN special representative to Iraq, has been Bulgaria's foreign minister and minister of defence and has worked at the World Bank,



Nickolay Mladenov

UN spokesman Farhan Haq told reporters.

It was not immediately clear who would replace Mladenov as the UN envoy

to Iraq, UN officials and diplomats say.

Longtime Dutch diplomat Serry has held the top UN post for Israel and the Palestinian territories for more than eight years.

Mladenov comes to the job as US-brokered peace talks have collapsed and amid increased tensions between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Last month, Ban said he is alarmed that Israelis

and Palestinians appear to be engaged in a downward spiral of actions and counter actions and called on both sides not to make divisions worse. Israel was withholding critical Palestinian tax revenue in retaliation for their moves to join the International Criminal Court (ICC) after a failed bid by the Palestinian Authority to secure statehood via a UN Security Council resolution.—Reuters

Americans OK with police drones — private ownership, not so much

NEW YORK, 6 Feb — New rules on privately owned drones can't come fast enough for most Americans.

Some 73 percent of respondents to a Reuters/Ipsos online poll released on Thursday said they want regulations for the lightweight, remote-control planes that reportedly have been involved in an increasing number of close calls with aircraft and crowds. People are also uneasy about potential invasions of privacy by drones carrying cameras or other devices.

Forty-two percent went as far as to oppose private ownership of drones, suggesting they prefer restricting them to officials or experts trained in safe operation.

Another 30 percent said private drone ownership was fine, and 28 percent were not sure, according to the survey of more than 2,000 respond-

ents, conducted 21-27 January.

Many respondents were surveyed before a small quad copter breached the White House security perimeter and crash-landed on the grounds on 26 January. The poll results show widespread unease about the devices, many of which can fly as high as 6,000 feet carrying video cameras or other payloads.

"In regular peoples' hands, it's easy for them to get misused," said poll respondent Sandy Gifford, a 58-year-old daycare worker in Portland, Oregon. She equated drone dangers with those posed by guns and drugs.

The US Federal Aviation Administration is months late in developing small drone regulations. A draft FAA rule, under review by the White House Office of Management and Budget, is expected to be



A man looks over a 360Heros drone at the Intel booth during the 2015 International Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada, in this file photo taken on 6 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

published soon, kicking off a year or two of comment and revisions before it takes effect.

The FAA rule will cover commercial drone uses, such as photography, surveying and crop inspection, which are now mostly banned. It will not apply to hobbyists operating model aircraft under a safety code of a community-based or-

ganization. Congress granted these users an exemption from rules in 2012.

It was unclear how the rule will deal with people who buy drones online or at a big box store, rather than joining the sport through a club or hobby shop.

These non-traditional users, "don't have the same safety mindset that a modeler does," said Rich Hudson,

government affairs director at the Academy of Model Aeronautics, world's largest community-based model aircraft group, with nearly 80 years of safe flying.

The AMA safety code says devices should stay below 400 feet near airports, not be flown carelessly or recklessly, and avoid all other aircraft, among other things.

Drones also have sparked fears of snooping by neighbours or law enforcement. The Reuters/Ipsos poll showed strong attitudes on both questions. Seventy-one percent said drones should not be allowed to operate over someone else's property, and 64 percent said they would not want their neighbour to have a drone.

But respondents widely supported drone use in law enforcement. Sixty-eight percent of respondents support police flying drones to solve crimes, and 62 percent

support using them to deter crime.

"Where there's suspicious activity, it would help the police," said Phillip Gimino, 75, a retired engineer in Edmond, Oklahoma, who flew gas-powered radio-controlled aircraft as a kid. "But it should be limited."

Gimino, a former gun dealer, opposes gun control laws, but said drones should be off limits to private owners until rules are in place.

The survey showed a split on other uses: 46 percent don't want news organizations using drones to gather news, while 41 percent support that use. And 49 percent think parents should be able to use drones to monitor their children, while 38 percent oppose that use.

The survey of 2,405 American adults has a credibility interval of plus or minus 2.3 percentage points.

Reuters

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MV KULSAMUT VOY NO (02/15)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULSAMUT VOY NO (02/15) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W (3) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

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

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 7th February, 2015: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Kachin State, weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Chin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough sea are likely at times off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong easterly wind may reach (30) m.p.h. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Slight decrease of night temperatures in Eastern Myanmar areas.

**Japan business leader asks
Philippines to improve
investment climate**

MANILA, 6 Feb — A Japanese business leader on Thursday called on Philippine President Benigno Aquino to improve the investment climate in the Southeast Asian country through such measures as enhancing infrastructure.

After the meeting in Manila, Akio Mimura, chairman of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told a Press conference that he asked the president to take steps to encourage smaller Japanese businesses to invest in the Philippines and pointed to the need to develop

infrastructure and reduce electricity and transportation costs to lure manufacturing companies.

Aquino was quoted as telling Mimura that the relationship with Japan is one of the most important strategic ties the Philippines has in the world.

Mimura is the first JCCI chairman to visit the Philippines since 1992. He also visited Indonesia and met President Joko Widodo before heading to the Philippines, a rapidly growing economy that could be an attractive investment destination.—Kyodo News

**9-year-old boy triggered
S China fire that
killed 17**

HUIZHOU, (Guangdong), 6 Feb — A warehouse fire that killed 17 people in south China's Guangdong Province was started by a 9-year-old boy playing with fire in the warehouse, local police department said on Friday.

The fire broke out at about 1:51 pm on Thursday in a warehouse on the fourth floor of a small wholesale market in Huidong County. The fire was under control by 7:35 pm the same day, the county government said in a statement.

Police discovered the fire was started by a boy surnamed Luo who was playing with a lighter set fire to inventory on the fourth floor of the market at 1:47 pm. It quickly spread to the whole floor.

The boy was taken back to the police station for further questioning.

Fire fighters rescued five people from the fire, but four fire fighters were injured during the rescue operation, including one who remains in serious condition.

Xinhua

**Indonesia to execute two Australians
for drug offences this month**

JAKARTA, 6 Feb — Two Australian members of the "Bali Nine" drug trafficking ring, arrested in Bali in 2005 for attempting to smuggle 8 kg (18 lb) of heroin to Australia, will be executed this month, a government official said on Friday, ignoring clemency pleas from their home country.

Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan are among eight prisoners due to be executed as President Joko Widodo pursues a hardline approach to drug offences, drawing criticism from rights activists at home and abroad.

"We received notification from Bali's attorney general yesterday that the two Australians whose clemency has been rejected by the president will be executed in February 2015," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Armanatha

Brintha Sukumaran (L), the sister of Australian death row inmate Myuran Sukumaran, arrives at Kerobokan Prison to visit her brother in Denpasar, Bali on 6 Feb, 2015

REUTERS



Nasir.

"We have informed the Australian embassy of this."

Last month, Indonesia executed six prisoners by firing squad for drug offences, including five foreigners from Brazil, Malawi, the Netherlands, Nigeria and Vietnam.

Brazil and the Netherlands recalled their ambassadors in Indonesia, while

Nigeria summoned Indonesia's ambassador in Abuja.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said last month she would not rule out recalling the country's envoy if the executions go ahead.

Nasir played down potential for a diplomatic fallout as a result of the executions.

"This is not a political or diplomatic issue," Nasir

said. "We are just upholding our law by addressing the crimes that these individuals committed. We are not against any particular nation."

Others in line for execution include citizens of Brazil, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria and the Philippines, a spokesman for the attorney general's office said last week.

Reuters

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Visitors pose with a chocolate man during a chocolate fair at Campo Pequeno Square in Lisbon, capital of Portugal on 5 Feb, 2015. Lisbon's chocolate fair kicked off Thursday at Campo Pequeno Square in Portuguese capital Lisbon, with dozens of local and international brands displaying tasty and unique cocoa products.

XINHUA

**Flu outbreak in HK not
particularly severe**

HONG KONG, 6 Feb — A Hong Kong infectious disease expert said on Friday that the current flu outbreak is not particularly severe if compared with others over the past decade.

Leung Chi-chiu, chairman of the Medical Association's Advisory Committee on Communicable Diseases, said Hong Kong may be in the peak of the flu season now, and the situation could improve in a couple of weeks.

Most of the deaths were among the elderly or those with underlying con-

ditions, he added.

There have been 126 flu-related deaths so far this year, according to official statistics.

On Thursday, Yuen Kwok-yung, an infectious diseases expert at the University of Hong Kong, warned that the death toll may further rise, but he insisted the situation was under control.

Yuen urged vulnerable groups, including the elderly, children and pregnant women, to wear masks when going out.

Xinhua

Katy Perry getting mobile game



Pop star Katy Perry

LOS ANGELES, 6 Feb — After Kim Kardashian, it is 'Roar' hitmaker Katy Perry's turn to get featured in a new mobile game. Glu, which was behind Kardashian's game, plans to bring Perry's mobile game by later this year.

"Katy is arguably the most recognized musician in America following her Super Bowl XLIX halftime performance this past Sunday," Glu CEO Niccolo de Masi said in a statement.

"She is a cultural icon and we expect to translate key elements of her success into an innovative, highly entertaining mobile experience."—PTI

Meryl Streep turns rocker for new film



Actress Meryl Streep

LOS ANGELES, 6 Feb — Oscar-winning actress Meryl Streep has turned rocker for her new movie 'Ricki and the Flash'. The first look of the film, which arrived online yesterday, shows the 65-year-old actress playing an electric guitar in a bright top, cool necklace and braids, reported Ace Showbiz.

In the comedy-drama, Streep plays a singer and guitarist named Ricki who abandons her rocker dream to make amends with her family. She and her ex-husband then rally around their daughter who is having rough time with her divorce. Kevin Kline plays Streep's ex-husband, while her real-life daughter Mamie Gummer also makes an appearance.

Other cast members include Rick Springfield, 'Captain America: The Winter Soldier' star Sebastian Stan and 'Private Practice' star Audra McDonald. The movie is directed by Jonathan Demme of 'Philadelphia' and 'Rachel Getting Married' fame.—PTI

Cate Blanchett, Matthew McConaughey to return as Oscar presenters

LOS ANGELES, 6 Feb — Cate Blanchett, Jared Leto, Matthew McConaughey and Lupita Nyong'o, last year's Oscar winners, will return to present at this year's show. The Academy awards, hosted by Neil Patrick Harris, will take place on 22 February.

"The great tradition of having the previous year's Oscar-winning best actors and actresses in all 4 categories happily continues this year with the amazing quartet of Cate, Jared, Matthew and Lupita. We're thrilled to have them back," said show producers Craig Zadan and Neil Meron in a statement.

Blanchett has been nominated for six Oscars



The Academy awards, hosted by Neil Patrick Harris, will take place on 22 February.—PTI

and has won two, including last year's best actress award for 'Blue Jasmine'. Her previous win was for best supporting role in 'The

Aviator'.

McConaughey and Leto won the best actor and best supporting actor Oscar for their roles in 'Dal-

las Buyer's Club' last year while Nyong'o was awarded in the supporting actress category for '12 Years a Slave'.—PTI

Natalie Portman turns runaway bride in new fragrance ad

LOS ANGELES, 6 Feb — Oscar-winning actress Natalie Portman is portraying a glamorous but confused bride in Dior's new Spring 2015 fragrance campaign ads. Titled, 'It's Miss, Actually', the film short directed by Dutch filmmaker and photographer Anton Corbijn follows a woman in serious doubt moments before her Parisian nuptials take place.

Portman, 33, contemplates her decision in her high-low pink and white floral embellished gown, and ultimately decides she would rather remain a miss over a madame.

"Sorry, Dad," Portman said after tossing her bouquet, kicking off her heels, and hitching a helicopter ride to make her escape to the empowering sounds of 'Piece of My Heart' by Janis Joplin.—PTI



Natalie Portman

Actor Johnny Depp marries fiancée Amber Heard

NEW YORK, 6 Feb — Johnny Depp, the star of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" film series, married his fiancée, Amber Heard, at their home in Los Angeles earlier this week, according to *People* magazine.

The 51-year-old actor, who met Heard, 28, when they appeared together in the 2011 film "The Rum Diary," tied the knot on Tuesday in a small ceremony.

People magazine said a bigger wedding is planned for this weekend on Depp's private island, Little Hall's Pond Cay, in the Bahamas.

The couple, who have been engaged since late 2012, began dating after Depp split from his longtime partner, French actress Vanessa Paradis. Depp and Paradis are the parents of two children, a boy and a girl. Depp gained fame in the late 1980s after appearing in the popular TV series "21 Jump Street" and later starred in "Edward Scissorhands" and "Alice in Wonderland."—Reuters



Johnny Depp & Amber Heard

David Beckham to present award at BAFTAs

LONDON, 6 Feb — Ace footballer David Beckham will present an award at the upcoming 2015 British Academy Film Award (BAFTA) ceremony.

BAFTAs will take place this Sunday, 8 February. It is yet to be known which award the 39-year-old star will be presenting, reported the *Daily Mirror*. The award ceremony will be attended by Hollywood stars, including Reese Witherspoon, Keira Knightley, Eddie Redmayne and Benedict Cumberbatch, among others.—PTI



GENERAL

Shilton doesn't want Rooney to break caps record

LONDON, 6 Feb — Peter Shilton is not overly keen on the prospect of Wayne Rooney breaking his England caps record even though he describes the Manchester United striker as “a little genius” and “a street fighter”.

The former Nottingham Forest, Southampton, Leicester City, Stoke City and Derby County goalkeeper made 125 appearances for his country between 1971-90 and Rooney is closing rapidly on his total, having already played 101 times by the age of 29.

“If he does beat my record I'll be the first to congratulate him,” Shilton told Reuters in an interview.

“I wouldn't say I want him to beat my record because I'm very proud of it but if he does it means he's going well and England are going well so from that re-



Benjamin Stambouli (R) challenges Wayne Rooney during their English Premier League soccer match at White Hart Lane in London on 28 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

spect I'll be pleased.

“He hasn't really done it in major tournaments for England for one reason or another, the last World Cup in Brazil and the one before in South Africa for example, but to me he's always been a little genius, a little street

fighter,” said Shilton.

“He's someone you want in your team and he does score goals at international level. He's playing well and anything could happen in the next couple of years.” Shilton, who ended his England career when

his side were knocked out in the semi-finals of the 1990 World Cup in Italy, does not think it is a foregone conclusion that the 46-goal Rooney will break his record.

“Wayne's at that stage when he could go on for another three or four years but I've also in the past seen people like Gary Lineker and Michael Owen finish their England careers very quickly,” said the 65-year-old. “Strikers tend to be a little bit like that. Sometimes it depends on the individual although Wayne I look upon as more of a midfield-style player than an out-and-out striker like Lineker or Owen.

“Those two were very much reliant on pace and when a little bit of that went and they picked up an injury or two, it wasn't easy for them to get back,” added Shilton.—Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(7-2-2015 07:00 am~ 8-2-2015 07:00 am) MST

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| * Local News | * Myanmar Masterclass: Impressionism |
| * Nine Wonders Around The Platform of Shwedagon Pagoda | * Local News |
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| * 19 Hours | * World News |
| * Local News | * Myanmar Invites You |
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Norway, one of world's richest nations, drops plan to ban begging

OSLO, 6 Feb — Norway's government dropped a plan to ban begging on Thursday after opposition parties and rights campaigners said it would criminalize anyone offering help to the poorest people in one of the world's richest nations.

The opposition Centre Party dropped its previous support of the proposed law, leaving the minority right-wing government — which has linked begging to rising crime rates — without a majority to get it through parliament.

The legislation would have banned both begging and “cooperation” with beggars, with fines or up to a year in jail, in an attempt to outlaw gangs suspected of organizing trips for homeless people from nations including Romania.

But the Centre Party said the clause outlawing coop-

eration could threaten simple acts of charity.

“It cannot be a crime to give clothes, food and shelter,” Marit Arnstad, head of the party's parliamentary group, told the NTB news agency. She said the party would now not support any national ban on begging, no matter how it was phrased.

Rights campaigners have also described the law as draconian and against Nordic traditions of tolerance.

Deputy Justice Minister Vidar Brein-Karlsen told Reuters the proposed law had now been dropped. “Everyone knows begging creates debate, and we can only note that the Centre Party has changed their standpoint,” he said in a statement. The Centre Party has often cooperated with the two-party coalition in cracking down on crime. —Reuters

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(7-2-2015, Saturday)

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 6:00 am | 6:40 am |
| • Honour Song For Alinka Kyaw Swar Myoma Nyein | • Teleplay |
| 6:20 am | 7:35 am |
| • Myanmar Series | • Teleplay |
| 6:35 am | 9:00 am |
| • Fashion Show | • Dramatic Arts |
| | 10:15 am |
| | • Myanmar Video |
| | 12:00 noon |
| | • Close Down |

Trip Tips: 50 years on, quirky guide to London still shows the way

LONDON, 6 Feb — Arguably the best guide to London published this season was written nearly 50 years ago.

“Nairn's London” by Ian Nairn first appeared in 1966 and has been reprinted after fans of the idiosyncratic architectural

enthusiast mounted a public campaign.

The author, a former Royal Air Force fighter pilot who badgered the editors of the Architectural Review into giving him a job and who went on to become the Observer's architecture critic, died of drink in

1983, aged 52. He made his name as an agitator against poor quality buildings being thrown up after the war, coining the derisive term “Subtopia” for the damage being inflicted on Britain's suburbs and starting a campaign against bad modern architecture called “Stop the

Architects Now”. Nairn's guide to the capital contains 450 entries describing churches, galleries, offices, houses, monuments, bridges, markets, pubs and just about everything else between Uxbridge to the west and Dagenham in the east.

Most of the buildings he writes about are still there, although inevitably some have since changed use or disappeared. He chose places the public could get into.

It's an extraordinary catalog, the product of an exhausting amount of legwork enlivened by a literary style that is waspish, informed and opinionated.

Nairn very much likes the Soane Museum, the former home of the architect Sir John Soane in Lincoln's Inn Fields now crammed with his collection of art and antiquities. Although unremarkable from the outside, what lies inside is “an experience to be had in London and nowhere else, worth travelling across a continent to see in the same

way as the Sistine Chapel or the Isenheim altarpiece”.

Further north, an early Victorian development in Islington, Milner Square, provokes an equally forthright reaction, this time negative.

“Not to be missed in the sense that you ought to try Fernet-Branca at least once,” Nairn says of the square's striking yellow brickwork and white pilasters. “It is as near to expressing evil as a design can be.”

Highgate cemetery, the north London necropolis where Karl Marx's body lies and a popular spot for Sunday strollers, also comes in for some criticism.

“This is the creepiest place in London,” writes Nairn. “Nothing seems real but death at its creepiest and clammiest. The cemetery closes well before dark, and a good job too.”

Not much escapes Nairn's notice. Of the Albert Memorial, Queen Victoria's elaborate Kensington tribute to her Prince Consort, Nairn says: “The elephant

on one of the corners has a backside just like a businessman scrambling under a restaurant table for his check-book.”

Nairn is surprisingly ambivalent about some modern places.

Heathrow Airport is “squalid, messy, cluttered, a sea of cars, a depressing introduction to London ... maybe”.

The former pilot cannot resist seeing the airfield as a showcase for its airliners, described as “those astonishing 600 mph packages, each one costing as much as Coventry Cathedral”.

According to an Afterword in the book by architectural historian Gavin Stamp, Nairn once described himself as “a person who drinks a lot and can't bear either pretensions or possessiveness”.

So of course he listed quite a few pubs. One to visit would be the Wellington, centrally located on the corner of the Strand and the Aldwych.

Reuters



A general view of Milner Square in Islington, north London in this 30 June, 2012. REUTERS

Ghana beat Equatorial Guinea 3-0 to reach African Cup final amid fans violence

MALABO, (Equatorial Guinea), 6 Feb — Four-time champions Ghana reached their ninth Africa Cup of Nations final by beating hosts Equatorial Guinea 3-0 on Thursday in a game disrupted by fans violence.

Ghana will play the final showdown against Cote d'Ivoire in port city Bata Sunday, which will be a repeat of the 1992 final won 11-10 on penalties by Cote d'Ivoire after 120 goalless minutes in Dakar.

The semifinal descended into chaos after the third goal, and Gabonese referee Eric Otogo-Castane soon halted the match in the 82nd minute. It resumed after about a 40-minute delay, and finished soon after.

With violent home supporters launching missiles and water bottles onto terrified Ghana fans as well as onto the pitch



Kwesi Appiah (C) of Ghana vies with Ivan Zarandona Esono (R) of Equatorial Guinea during the semi-final match of Africa Cup of Nations between Ghana and Equatorial Guinea in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea on 5 Feb, 2015. Ghana won 3-0.—XINHUA

at the 15,000-seater Estadio de Malabo, riot police had to use batons to protect

the players from incensed rival fans and use tear gas to disperse troublemakers

in the crowd. Ghana took control of the match with double-strike just before

the half as Jordan Ayew opened the scoring in the 42nd minute with a penal-

ty and Wakaso Mubarak made it 2-0 a minute into first-half stoppage time. Andre Ayew added a third goal in the 75th minute.

With about nine minutes left to play, the match was suspended for nearly 45 minutes after hundreds of spectators came out of the stands to start the chaos. A helicopter was brought in to help restore order and clear spectators from the stadium.

Ghana advanced to their first final since 2010. The Black Stars hope to end a 33-year title drought but face a tough battle in the final against Cote d'Ivoire, who are in their third title match since 2006 but looking for their first Africa Cup in 23 years.

The third-place game will take place Saturday in Malabo between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea.

Xinhua

Thompson tops Torrey as wounded Tiger quits again

LA JOLLA, (California), 6 Feb — Former world number one Tiger Woods withdrew after 11 holes of his opening round at the Farmers Insurance Open on Thursday because of a back complaint, with American compatriot Nicholas Thompson leading the way at Torrey Pines.

Woods, coming off his worst score as a professional at the Phoenix Open last week, had been favoring his back throughout his round after being forced to sit and wait out a lengthy fog delay.

The 14-times major winner, who continued to struggle with his swing and short game, was two-over-par on the North course when he decided to pull out, his third withdrawal in his last nine tournaments.

Thompson headed the field with an eight-under-par 64 on the North course, good enough for a one shot lead over Michael Thompson, who shot 65 on the same layout. Forty two players failed to finish their round before darkness fell.

Phoenix Open winner Brooks Koepka and Cameron Tringale shared third at six-under on the North, while Columbian Jhonatan Vegas had arguably the best round of the day as the only one of six players at

five-under who played the South course.

Woods was due on the tee after an already lengthy delay before more Thursday fog rolled over the coastal course, causing another suspension.

"When we had that break. It just never loosened back up again. And when we went back out, it just got progressively tighter," Woods told reporters.

"It's frustrating that it started shutting down like that. I was ready to go. I had a good warm-up session the first time around.

"Then we stood out here and I got cold, and everything started deactivating again. And it's frustrating that I just can't stay activated." FedEx Cup champion Billy Horschel, who was playing with

Woods, noticed something was wrong early in the round and even started picking up tees for him.

"If I didn't see it on 10 (their first hole), I saw it on 11," Horschel said.

"Then I asked him when I walked off 12 tee, I said: 'back hurting you again?' He said: 'Spasms'. It was unfortunate.

"He's a fighter. He wants to get the reps in, he wants to play well, and he kept trying to play through it, hoping that it would loosen up and I think it was getting there. "It was real tough to see him walk and even make swings." The 39-year-old Woods now has six withdrawals in 304 PGA tournament starts but all of them have come in the last five years.

Reuters



Tiger Woods hits his drive on the 12th during the first round of the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines Municipal Golf Course, La Jolla, CA, USA on 5 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

Everton will be glad to see the back of Gerrard — Rodgers

LONDON, 6 Feb — Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard will follow his 700th club appearance with his final outing in a Merseyside derby on Saturday and manager Brendan Rodgers says Everton will be glad to see the back of him.

Gerrard became the third player in the club's history to reach the 700-game mark, behind Ian Callaghan (857) and Jamie Carragher (737), in Liverpool's last gasp 2-1 win at Bolton Wanderers in an FA Cup fourth round replay on Wednesday.

It was another in a long line of remarkable achievements for the midfielder who joined the club as an eight-year-old schoolboy and went on to become the heartbeat of the team for more than a decade.

Though Gerrard has never won a league title, he has guaranteed his place in the Anfield club's folklore alongside the likes of Kenny Dalglish, Graeme Souness and Ian Rush by helping the side win a Champions League, two FA Cups and three League Cups.

The midfielder has always enjoyed making a big impact against fierce local rivals Everton, scoring in the 1-1 draw between the sides at Anfield in September and orchestrating many victories during frenetic derby battles since making his



Liverpool's Steven Gerrard celebrates the goal of teammate Lazar Markovic during their English Premier League soccer match against Sunderland at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, northern England on 10 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

debut in 1998.

Asked if the Everton fans will be happy to bid farewell to the 34-year-old on his final visit to Goodison Park on Saturday ahead of his move to LA Galaxy in July, Rodgers replied: "I'm sure they will.

"He has been incredible for the club and been outstanding in so many derby games. He'll want to win, like he does every time," the Northern Irish manager told a news conference on Thursday.

"How will he deal with the emotion of it being his last? Like he has all the others — by being focused on the team getting a result."

Liverpool go into the derby in fine form, unbeaten

in seven league matches and having won their previous three.

They are seventh in the table and four points adrift of the top four and a Champions League qualification place.

Rodgers says his side could welcome back Mario Balotelli and defender Dejan Lovren from injury, while fit-again Daniel Sturridge has a chance to make his first Liverpool start since August in what the manager expects to be a special game.

"Derby games are very exciting," Rodgers explained. "They are wonderful games to be involved in, full of emotion and they go so fast."

Reuters