

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker attends opening ceremonies

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb — Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint attended the opening ceremony of Thilawa Hall

and the anniversary of Cetanamon Free Clinic and Lumhuhtuchun Library Education Foundation in Yamethein on Sunday.

The Amyotha Hluttaw speaker, Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Bo Ni, region development affairs minister U Aung Moun

and region Hluttaw representative U Zaw Win formally opened the hall. In his speech at the ceremony, the speaker

urged the local people to discuss local development at the hall and make best use of it for the township. (See page 3)

By KhinYadana;
Photo: Tin Soe
(Myanma Alinn)

Local environmentalists welcome suspension of construction projects in Yangon

An order has been issued for the one-month suspension of some construction projects at government land plots under the BOT system in Yangon Region in order to review the environmental impacts of the projects, according to an official at the Yangon Region Government Office.

To modernize Yangon and to construct buildings of international standards in the Yangon City Development Committee Area, some companies were permitted to construct buildings on land plots owned by the government in 2013 and 2014.

However, the authorities had to plan inspection tours at the project sites as



Construction projects in Yangon City suspend work processes to review environmental impacts.

local environmentalists, architects and engineers later pointed out that those projects might have an impact on the environment.

Suspended projects

include those of Shwe Taung Hyday Development Company, Thukha Yadana Company, Megra Landmark Development Company, Shwe Taung

Development Company and Adventure Myanmar Tour and Incentive Company on 49.6 acres of land near Yangon's landmark Shwedagon

Pagoda and construction projects at No 61-63 Kaba Aye Pagoda Road. "We welcome foreign investment in the (See page 2)

Myanmar lion dance team wows crowd in Singapore

YANGON, 8 Feb — Myanmar lion dance team could attract the fans in the 8th International Lion Dance competition in Singapore Saturday, according to the reports.

The contest took place in the city-state's Chinatown with the 14 teams from 10 nations across Asia, includ-

ing Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, China, Thailand and Myanmar, bringing their lions to life.

With high-valued in tradition and culture, the lion dance has gained popularity across the globe over the years and is now an inter-

nationally recognized sport. The participants performed with rhythmic beat of the drums to the jaw-dropping stunts.

Myanmar teams could win a great cheer from the crowd, but did not score with the judges.

(See page 2)



A lion dance troupe participates in a lion dance competition held in Singapore's Chinatown, 7 Feb, 2015. Singapore on Saturday held the 8th International Lion Dance Competition to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year in Singapore's Chinatown. —XINHUA/ THEN CHIH WEY

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Volunteers ready to release yellow tortoises into water-shed area in Yebyu Township.—PHOTO: WCS (MYANMAR)

Tortoises from pagoda's lake released into community forest in southern Myanmar for 2nd time

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 8 Feb — Local people in Dawei Township released 42 yellow tortoises (Indotestudo elongate) from a pagoda's lake into a watershed area in Yebyu Township on 2 Feb-

ruary as part of efforts for conservation of the species endemic to Myanmar.

This is the second time to release tortoises from a lake into a natural sanctuary area, according the Wildlife Conservation Society (Myanmar).

In December 2014, local people in Dawei and the WCS released 82 tortoises, 80 Sauk Leik (Morenia ocellata) and two soft-shell turtles, from a pagoda's lake into a natural sanctuary area.

(See page 2)

Mass peace movement demands prompt ceasefire from both sides

YANGON, 8 Feb — A mass peace movement on Saturday has called for the armed forces of both sides to sign a prompt ceasefire, local media has reported.

The movement attracted over 3,000 activists of national political forces and ethnic groups, with an activist noting that a ceasefire is an essential prerequisite to political dialogue.

“Our country has not tasted peace yet as a result of internal armed conflict that has entered its 65 years,” he said.

Other peace groups sent their messages to the

event, urging both sides to end fighting and conclude a peace treaty.

A message stated that security, development and peace are three essential factors for a nation, and urged both parties to armed conflict to put the interests of the people before theirs.

“Armed conflict burns public revenues,” it stressed.

The mass peace movement witnessed the participation of Buddhist monks and retired army veterans who lost limbs in fighting.

MNA

DMBE issues announcement for matriculation students to draw IDs for examination

YANGON, 8 Feb — Department of Myanmar Boards of Examination released an announcement for the students who applied for the matriculation examination to be held from 11 to 20 March 2015.

Students from Basic Education High Schools, branches and affiliated BEHSs in regions and states except Yangon Region are to draw identity cards for examination from school heads as of 23 February, Monday, before examination day. The students in Yangon Region are to take out the ID cards as of 25 February, Wednesday.

The external students are to draw the cards at respective exam supervisors.

The students who face difficulties in taking out the ID cards may directly enquire respective exam supervisors, township education officers and Department of Myanmar Boards of Examination.

MNA

Myanmar, Thailand sign joint drug control agreement

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb — A Myanmar police delegation left here on 5 February for Bangkok to sign an agreement on bilateral cooperation in drug control, officials said.

The agreement was signed at Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) in Thailand's capital on 6 February by Secretary of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Maj-Gen Zaw Win and ONCB's Secretary-General Mr Permpong Chaovalit.

According to the agreement, Thailand will provide Myanmar with a US\$596,698 aid to be used

in curbing narcotic drugs.

The two countries will conduct a one-year programme designed to gear up for joint drug control and transnational crackdown as well as honing laboratory analysis skills, the agreement stated.

Currently, Myanmar and Thailand have been working in tandem in the districts of Tachilek and Monghsat on a six-year plan worth THB350 million since 2012. The plan involves cooperation in drug control and opium-substitute cultivation programmes.

The Myanmar delegation arrived back in Yangon on Saturday afternoon.

MNA

Myanmar celebrates first International Epilepsy Day in Yangon

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 8 Feb — The Ministry of Health in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) organized the celebration of International Epilepsy Day on Sunday, the first-time event in Myanmar, with the aim of promoting public awareness about epilepsy.

“The event is also aimed at improving the participatory role of government as well as other organizations in reducing the treatment gap among people with epilepsy and correcting public misunderstandings about the disease,” said Yangon Region

Chief Minister U Myint Swe at the ceremony.

To promote awareness of epilepsy rights around the world, the day created by the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) and the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE), is a global event celebrated annually on the 2nd Monday of February.

Events are taking place around the world to mark the first International Epilepsy Day.

The WHO said more than 50 million people around the world are suffering from epilepsy, estimating Myanmar has over

500,000 epilepsy patients.

In a speech, Dr Win Myint, deputy health minister, said, only 25 percent of people with epilepsy from developing countries, including Myanmar, have easy access to medical treatment.

Patients from four sub-urban townships in Yangon and one in Nay Pyi Taw have received free medical services under the four-year epilepsy project that has been conducted by the health ministry and the WHO since 2013 in order to reduce treatment gap in the country.

GNLM



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe views equipment used in treatment of epilepsy at the ceremony to mark International Epilepsy Day.

PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

Tortoises from pagoda's lake released into...

(from page 1)

There may be thousands of tortoises that are breeding in dense populations in lakes at some pagodas across the country, said U Win Ko Ko, a technical coordinator (Reptiles), of the Wildlife Conservation Society (Myanmar).

According to Myanmar culture, people set tortoises free that they find into lakes at pagodas for the safety of the tortoises.

However, the population of tortoises at pagoda lakes has grown high,

causing impact on their reproduction, said the tortoise expert.

There are more than 10 species of tortoises in pagoda lakes, he added.

A local community society in Dawei has also proposed to the WCS (Myanmar) to find a suitable natural sanctuary for the tortoises in another pagoda's lake, he added.

The WCS (Myanmar) can arrange to release turtles from lakes into natural sanctuaries, according to the group.

GNLM

Local environmentalists welcome...

(from page 1)

construction sector because it will help raise our living standards while job opportunities are created for workers. Young Myanmar engineers will also gain valuable work experience,” an official of the team said. “However, these projects should be properly implemented in a transparent manner. Suspension does not mean that these

projects were shut down. Suspension is just for field inspection of their impacts on the environment. As the companies are international entities, they will also be open to inspection. After inspection works by a team, one member of which is the chairman of the Myanmar Engineering Society, they will be allowed to continue their work. Necessary advice will also be given to

them,” the official added.

Heritage conservationists including National Literary Award Winner Architect Dr Kyaw Latt pointed out that construction projects at the former compound of the Ministry of Defence near Shwedagon Pagoda may hurt the ecosystem of downtown Yangon.

“While efforts are being made to encourage foreign investment on the one

hand, the projects should be developed in a transparent manner on the other hand. It will be the best way for all. We welcome the field inspection to review the environmental impact of the projects. As these companies are of international standards, they will be able to find the best solution. Cooperation of all is important for a green city,” said environmentalist Dr Myat Thura.

Myanmar lion dance...

(from page 1)

“I am a fan of lion dance, so every year I make my way over here to watch it. But I think the results are not up to my expectations. I was hoping the Myanmar

team would win, but too bad. Although I'm Singaporean, but I thought one of the Myanmar teams really did very well,” said David, a Singaporean lion dance fan. In the contest, the two

Singaporean teams emerged as the first and third places, while China (Taipei) stood in the second place. Lion dance is a traditional dance in Chinese culture and other Asian countries in which two performers make movements in a lion costume. The dance is performed during

Chinese New Year and other Chinese traditional, cultural and religious festivals, as well as in important events such as business opening events, special celebrations or wedding ceremonies, or may be used to honour special guests by the Chinese communities.

NATIONAL

General Hla Htay Win meets UN humanitarian coordinator

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb — Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Hla Htay Win on Saturday met UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Ms Renata Lok-Dessallien, here to discuss issues on providing humanitarian aids to the victims.

They also discussed matters relating to ex-

change of information between the two sides and progress of preventing the recruitment of child soldiers.

Also present on the occasion were Lt-Gen Myint Soe of the office of the commander-in-chief (Army), senior military officers and officials from the both sides.—*Myawady*

General Hla Htay Win receives UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Ms Renata Lok-Dessallien.—MYAWADY



Matric student recalled from student protest march

YANGON, 8 Feb — A matric student has been recalled in Ayeyawady Region on Saturday evening, following an announcement and a request to parents by the Ministry of Education, officials said.

Ma Chaw Su San, a student at No.1 Basic Education High School in Pathein, was taking part in the recent student protest march against the National

Education Law.

Her parents, together with officials of the local education department, brought Chaw Su San back home to Pathein on Sunday morning after a meeting with the Ayeyawady student protest team.

The local education department has arranged to help the young student sit the matric examination.

MNA



Ma Chaw Su San seen together with her parents, teachers and officials.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker . . .

(from page 1)

U Myat Thinn Aung, Chairman of Hlinethaya Industrial Zone, donated K 10 million for the education foundation.

After the ceremony, the speaker attended the opening ceremony of a middle school in Kyaukpyu Village. At the school opening ceremony, the speaker said that the government has been increasing the budgets for education and health sectors as the two sectors are important for regional development. In conclusion,



the speaker urged parents and teachers to take care of the education and health of children.

At the ceremony, the speaker presented certificates of honour to Taungthone Sayadaw and well-wisher who donated K

Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint opens Thilawa Hall in Yamethin Township.—MNA

9.1 million and K 2 million for the school to the school headmistress and a member of the school board of trustees.

The schoolmistress explained the brief history of the school and expressed thanks.

MNA

Mass demonstration for union peace held in Yangon

YANGON, 8 Feb — Mass movement for peace of the union took place from 3.20 pm to 3.35 pm at Bo Sein Hman Sport Grounds on Shwegondine Road in Bahan Township on Saturday.

Present at the movement were about 3,000 people including U Zeyar Win Myint (Secretary of National Promotion Party) and members, Chairman U Win Ko Ko Latt, Vice Chairman U Chit Ko Ko, and members Ma Hnin Nay Chi Oo, Ma Thi Thi Oo and Saw Thar Maung of Myanma National Network, U Myint Zaw (Patriotic Buddhist Association), U

Zaw Win (Patriotic Youths Network), Secretary (2) U Nay Min Kyaw and CEC U Toe Toe of National Democratic Force Party, people who wish for peace and veterans including retired Captains Tin Ko Win and Ye Moe, 20 monks from Patriotic Monk Union led by U Thu Seikta and U Tin Soe (MNTV) of the media. The demonstrators marched three people in a roll along Bo Teza Street, Bo Sein Hman Street, U Chit Maung Street, West Race Court Street to Hit-tai Grounds (Kyaikkasan Grounds).

During the demonstration, veterans on wheel-

chairs carried flags and photographs of Bogyoke Aung San, Thakin Ko Taw Hmine, President U Thein Sein and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, 4-foot x 2-foot blue banners that say "Stop civil war immediately" and "Take public interests into account", 5-foot x 3-foot banners that say "We hate wars", "Cease-fire, reduce prejudice" and "We want peace" and chanting slogans "Union Peace, Our cause", "Signing Ceasefire Agreement, Our cause" and "Peace Building must be successful".

MNA



Veterans on wheel-chairs carrying photographs of Bogyoke Aung San, Thakin Ko Taw Hmine, President U Thein Sein and Senior General Min Aung Hlaing take part in mass demonstration for union peace.—MNA

Chinese container vessel arrives in Myanmar

YANGON, 8 Feb — A container vessel of China Shipping, Asiatic Wave, sailed directly from China without cargo transshipment, berthed at Myanmar Industrial Port in Yangon Sunday.

The container ship, which is the first ever in history sailed directly from China, set off from Chinese port cities of Ningbo and Shanghai, arrived Yangon via Ho Chi Minh City and Singapore within 13 days, covering a distance of about 6,300 nautical km.

U Aung Kyaw Htoo, an official of the Myanmar Port Authority, welcomed the Chinese container ship, expressing wishes that increased capacity of freight handling would benefit Myanmar.—*Xinhua*

Madaya people to keep marble statue of General Aung San at park

MADAYA, 8 Feb—In commemoration of the centennial birthday of General Aung San, his marble statue will be kept at Bo Taza Park in Madaya, 21 miles of Mandalay, a member of Madaya Chitthumyar Group told media.

Arrangements have been made for keeping the statue at a park. As of 29 December, coordination meetings were held in the town every Sunday for the statue. The group collected donations from the people in Madaya so as to set up a fund for the statue.

“Responsible persons of political parties, Madaya Chithumyar Group and funeral service association in Madaya work together for arrangements of the General’s statue. At present, stone sculptor U Maung Gyi is carving the statue,” Ko Say Ti Shin of the General Aung San’s birthday commemorative ceremony holding committee told media.

It may cost about K8 million for carving the



statue. The committee has received K6 million from collection of cash donations, he added.

“We collect cash donations in Madaya only. Our work process is smooth in selection of a venue for General’s statue with the assistance of local authorities,” said a responsible person of Madaya Chitthumyar.

Under the permission of the Township Education

Officer, the group organized the Bogyoke’s centennial birthday’s commemorative essay contest at Basic Education High School in Madaya. A plan is underway to hold the festivities for children as the centennial birthday is coincided with the Myanmar children’s day. As commemorative activities, the youth will offer rice to 500 members of the Sangha in Madaya, serve boiled pea and

Indian flag bread as breakfast to the people and give brooches to the attendees.

The statue will be seven feet high and two feet and nine inches wide. It will be kept on the 30 feet wide platform.

The marble statue of General Aung San will be inaugurated at Bo Teza Park in Madaya, Mandalay Region, on 12 February.

Maung Pyi Thu
(Mandalay)



Rural area gets well in Nyaunglebin Tsp



NYAUNGLEBIN, 8 Feb—As a gesture of hailing the 68th Anniversary Union Day, the Department of Rural Development in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Region, put a well into service in Yehlakon Village on 7 February. The well was sunk by Golden House Co Ltd with the fund of Department of

Rural Development in 2014-15 fiscal year.

Township Administrator U Thein Zaw Kan and officials opened the well.

Head of Township Department of Rural Development U Than Lwin explained supply of water from the well.

Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)

Price of tamarind falls in Myanaung’s market



MYANAUNG, 8 Feb—Although demand is high, price of ripened tamarind falls in the market, said a broker of tamarind in Myanaung, Ayeyawady Region, told media.

“Brokers bought K900 per viss (1.6 kilos) of tamarind in early January. Now, it is bought at K450 per viss,” he said.

Rural people sell tamarind produced from their villages in Myanaung to four brokers in urban area daily. “Now we not need to seek cargo to Yangon. Bags of ripened tamarind are piled at the bus terminal. We transport it at K1,000 per bag weighing 30 viss,” said an owner of truck running along the route from Myanaung to Yangon.

Rural people sell about 160 kilos of tamarind to the brokerages daily in Myanaung. The brokers send the products to Yangon, Pyay and Rakhine state.—Nay Win Zaw (Myanaung)

University students enjoy 68th Anniversary Shan State Day in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 8 Feb—Shan National Literature and Culture Committee of Universities (Mandalay) organized a ceremony to mark the 68th Anniversary Shan State Day at Inwa Room No 27 of Mandalay University on 7 February.

Mandalay Region Minister U Sai Maung Hla and Rector of Mandalay University Dr Maung Thin

opened the market festival and cultural dance in commemoration of the Shan State Day.

After an official read the message sent by Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann, the minister and the rector delivered speeches.

Patron of the Shan National Literature and Culture Committee of Uni-

versities (Mandalay) Daw Nang Shwe May extended greetings and the secretary spoke words of thanks.

Students from universities in Mandalay and cultural troupes performed Shan traditional dances. Restaurants sold Shan traditional foods around Inwa Hall.

Maung Pyi Thu
(Mandalay)



LOCAL NEWS

Indawgyi Shwe Myinzu Pagoda to hold Buddha Pujaniya



MOHNYIN, 8 Feb — A Buddha Pujaniya festival will be held at Shwe Myinzu Pagoda in Indawgyi Lake in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, from 25

February to 4 March.

The pagoda's board of trustees auctioned licences for shops, lodging, electricity supply, fuel sales, open air market, runs of boat and

photo shop during the festival on 5 February.

"In the past, district and township authorities managed auction of businesses in the festival. This year, new

Agriculture Department opens plant clinic in Pyinmana Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb — A plant clinic was opened at the 440-acre model farm in Alyinlo Village, Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on 7 February. Agriculture Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has opened plant clinics with the assistance of the Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International-CABI of European countries since 2013-14 fiscal year. Deputy Director of the department Dr Kyin Kyin Win explained the clinic will give advices on use of pesticides, best ways to produce organic fruits and vegetables, symptoms of pests and infections.

The department assigns two agriculturists as plant doctors at the clinics from 7 am to 11 am every



Tuesday to give service to the farmers.

The department has opened the plant clinics in Pathein, Kyaunggon and Pyapon in Ayeyawady Region, Nyaunglebin, Toungoo and Thayawady in Bago Region, Taikkyi,

Hlegu, Kungyangon and Kawhmu in Yangon Region and Koeywa Thabyegon Village in Ottarathiri Township, Alyinlo Village in Pyinmana Township and Kyuntetpe Village in Dekkhinathiri Township.

Plans are underway to

members of the pagoda's board of trustees managed auction tasks in a transparent manner," a member of the pagoda's board of trustees.

Buddha Pujaniya festival of Indawgyi Shwe Myinzu Pagoda attracts pilgrims, tourists and local travelers in addition to environmentalists in the region.

GNLM-001

Departmental officials share knowledge about consumer rights protection

PYINOOLOWIN, 8 Feb — Mandalay Region Commercial and Consumer Department, consumer dispute committee and Agro-based Consumer Producers Association and the fruit and flowers association jointly organized the talks on consumer rights protection at the city hall in PyinOoL-

win, Mandalay Region, on 5 February.

It was attended by secretary U Swe Tint Kyu and member director-general (Rtd) Professor Dr Aung Myint, departmental officials, teachers, departmental staff, entrepreneurs, shopkeepers and media totalling about 350.

A combined team comprising officials of consumer dispute committee, Food and Drug Administration, District Development Affairs Committee and Health Department made surprised checks of foodstuffs at Myoma market in PyinOoLwin in the afternoon.

Officials of the team inspected sales of foodstuffs whether shopkeepers sell inappropriate foods. They gave advices to shopkeepers not to sell inappropriate foods.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)



Inter-village road under construction in Nyaunglebin Tsp

NYAUNGLEBIN, 8 Feb — Gravel is being placed on two miles and four furlongs long inter-village road in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Region.

Metal Dragon Co Ltd constructs the rural road linking Zigongyi, Kyachaung and Kyaban villages, funded K13 million by Department of Rural Development in 2014-15 fiscal year.

Head of Bago District

Department of Rural Development U Aung Kyaw Moe and Senior Engineer U Thein Kyaw inspected progress of road construction.

Head of Department of Rural Development U Than Lwin reported on road construction progress.

On completion, people from rural areas where the road passes will enjoy smooth transport.

Nay Lin
(Nyaunglebin)

open more clinics in Sagaing Region and Mon State.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

Under supervision of engineers of Township Development Affairs Committee, workers participate in construction of inter-village gravel road.



Taungtha Tsp to hold ceremony to mark Myanmar Children's Day

TAUNGTHA, 8 Feb — A coordination meeting to observe the Myanmar Children's Day was held at the hall of Township General Administration Department in Taungtha, Mandalay Region, on 6 February.

Township Administrator U Aung Kyaw Nyunt

explained purpose of holding the commemorative day and admiration to General Aung San.

Township authorities will organize the extempore talks contest, essay, article, poem and other contests and funfair in commemoration of the Myanmar Chil-

dren's Day.

The meeting was attended by township administrator, departmental officials, local authorities and members of Township Development Affairs Committee.

Kyaw Myo Naing
(Taungtha)

PM Abe's approval ratings rise in Japan after hostage crisis



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe walks to the Lower House of the parliament in Tokyo on 5 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

TOKYO, 8 Feb — The Japanese government scored higher public approval ratings for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's handling of the hostage crisis involving two Japanese captured in Syria and killed by Islamic State militants, polls published this week showed.

Japan's biggest daily *Yomiuri* found that support for Abe's government had risen to 58 percent from 53 percent in January. The paper surveyed 1,054 people by telephone on Friday and Saturday for the poll, which was the first since the hostages were killed.

A separate poll re-

leased by *Kyodo* on Saturday also showed an increase in support for Abe. More than 60 percent of respondents said they approved of the government's response to the hostage crisis.

Islamic State militants beheaded journalist Kenji Goto last month, a week after the group released footage appearing to show the beheaded body of another Japanese hostage, Haruna Yukawa.

Abe has vowed to step up humanitarian aid to the militant group's opponents in the Middle East and bring the killers to justice. The gruesome executions and the recordings of Goto released by the militant group captured the attention of the pacifist nation.

A majority of the Japanese surveyed by both

Yomiuri and *Kyodo* agreed with Japan's plan to continue humanitarian aid to regions affected by the Islamic State.

In terms of how Japan should respond to the Islamic State threat, 57 percent of people polled by *Kyodo* said any response should be non-military.

Abe's popularity had slipped in more recent polls after the resignations of key cabinet ministers and due to Japan's floundering economy, though his party won a landslide snap election in December.

The killings of the hostages have fanned calls to allow Japan's long-constrained military to conduct overseas rescue missions as part of Abe's push for a more muscular security posture.

Reuters

Thai's military government denies former PM Yingluck permission to travel

BANGKOK, 8 Feb — Thailand's military government has denied former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra permission to travel overseas to ensure she is in the country to face criminal charges later this month, a government spokesman said on Sunday.

The military toppled the remnants of Yingluck's government in a coup last May, ending months of demonstrations on the streets of Bangkok that had paralysed her administration.

Yingluck was last week



Ousted former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra

banned from politics for five years and indicted on criminal charges over her involvement in a state rice buying scheme that cost Thailand billions of dollars.

The attorney general will submit a subpoena to the Supreme Court on 19 February, and wants Yingluck to be present for that, government spokesman Sunsem Kaewkummerd said on Sunday.

Yingluck had asked for permission to leave from Sunday until 22 February, he said. "The suspect must be present for the first process of the case otherwise the case cannot proceed," Sunsem said. Yingluck's lawyer, Norawit Laleng, said it was not necessary for her to appear in court for at least two months while prosecutors consider the case and

chose judges to oversee it.

"If the Thai's military government denies her permission to travel using her court case as an excuse, then it is a violation of her basic rights," Norawit told *Reuters*.

Thailand has been tense since Yingluck's impeachment in January. Two bombs rattled a luxury shopping mall a week ago, and Thai media reported on Saturday that the government had confiscated banners from students ahead of an annual university football match.

Yingluck's supporters say the charges against her are an attempt to limit the political influence of her brother, ousted former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The charges are the latest twist in 10 years of turbulent politics that have pitted Yingluck and her brother against the royalist military establishment that sees the Shinawatras as a threat and reviles their populist policies. Yingluck's fortunes have been similar to those of her billionaire brother.

Both led populist governments toppled in coups, despite being elected in landslides, and both were subjected to legal action and street protests by pro-establishment activists.

Thaksin was ousted in 2006 and fled Thailand to avoid a 2008 jail term for corruption. He has lived abroad since, but retains a strong influence over Thai politics. Yingluck could face up to 10 years in prison if found guilty by the Supreme Court. She has pledged to fight the charges and her advisers say she has no intention of fleeing.

"Yingluck is ready to fight. She will not run because we have facts and evidence to fight the case," Norawit, her attorney, said.—*Reuters*

Iran's Zarif denies warning US of possible Rouhani demise

MUNICH, 8 Feb — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif denied on Sunday a media report that he had told the United States during nuclear talks that President Hassan Rouhani's political clout would be heavily damaged if negotiations failed.

A Reuters report on Saturday, quoting three senior Iranian officials who asked not to be identified, said Zarif had warned the United States and other Western powers during ongoing nuclear talks that a failure to reach a deal would likely hasten the political demise of Rouhani.

"I want to correct a very wrong report by Reuters," Zarif told a security conference in Munich. "Those that talked to me in the past three days know that was not a subject of

our negotiation," he said, adding: "I did not."

Zarif said that if Iran and major world powers, including the United States, Germany, France, Britain,

would not be Iran's fault.

He said the negotiations had Rouhani's support.

"I believe the entire Iranian population under-

his administration, and the government in its entirety, supported our efforts in the negotiations," said Zarif.

"Everybody has taken every necessary measure to make sure we succeed. All Iranians know this. If we fail, and I hope we won't, they (Iranians) will not consider us responsible for that failure. They will consider attempts (to ask) too much from Iran as a reason for failure."

The Reuters report quoted the three senior Iranian officials as saying a breakdown in talks would empower Iran's conservative hardliners. The 12-year-old stand-off has reached a crucial phase, with a March deadline to reach a political agreement ahead of a final settlement by 30 June.

Reuters



Iran's foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif gestures during an open debate at the 51st Munich Security Conference at the 'Bayerischer Hof' hotel in Munich on 8 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

Russia and China, failed to reach an agreement it

stands that this government, that Dr Rouhani,

North Korea fires short-range missiles off coast

SEOUL, 8 Feb — North Korea fired five short-range missiles off its east coast on Sunday, in a demonstration of military muscle by the secretive state amid escalating rhetoric against the United States and South Korea. The missiles hit the sea after about 200 km (120 miles), a South Korean defence ministry official said.

North Korea frequently fires short-range mis-

siles off its coast as part of military drills. The United Nations imposed sanctions banning North Korea from launching longer-range ballistic missiles, but not short-range missiles.

Sunday's show of firepower marked the 67th anniversary of the formation of North Korea's armed forces by state founder Kim Il Sung, when the Korean peninsula was divided

into the North and South.

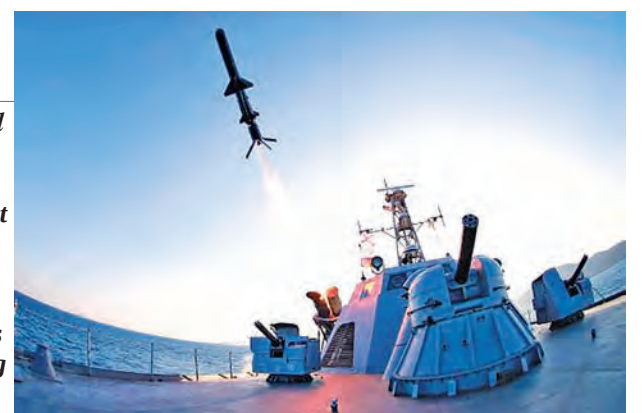
North Korea in recent days also test-fired a new anti-ship cruise missile.

North Korea has increased the scale of air and naval military drills in recent weeks ahead of the annual US-South Korean military exercises on the Korean peninsula, with its leader Kim Jong Un commanding his troops.

Pyongyang regular-

ly protests over the drills, which it says are a rehearsal for war.—*Reuters*

A missile is fired from a naval vessel during the test-firing of a new type of anti-ship cruise missile to be equipped at Korean People's Army (KPA) naval units in this undated photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) in Pyongyang on 7 Feb, 2015. — REUTERS



Australian PM brings forward vote on leadership to Monday

SYDNEY, 8 Feb — Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott, fighting for his political life, said he would bring forward to Monday a meeting of his ruling party to consider a challenge to his leadership in an effort to halt a destabilising internal revolt.

A member of Abbott's conservative Liberal Party called on Friday for a secret ballot to decide whether to declare the leadership and deputy leadership positions vacant, to be held at a scheduled meeting on Tuesday.

However, Abbott said the meeting would be brought forward by a day.

"It is important to end the uncertainty at the very beginning of the parliamentary sitting week,"



Tony Abbott, Prime Minister of Australia

Abbott said in a brief statement on Sunday.

Abbott has faced a torrent of criticism in recent weeks over policy decisions ranging from his handling of the economy to awarding an Australian knighthood to Queen Elizabeth's husband, Prince Philip.

No member of the government has so far indicated a direct challenge to Abbott, although most attention has focused on Communications Minister Malcolm Turnbull, a former party leader toppled by Abbott.

Turnbull, a millionaire lawyer and former investment banker, has not yet said he will challenge Abbott directly but on Sunday he gave the strongest indication yet he would run.

"If for whatever reason, the leadership of a political party is vacant, then any member of the party can stand ... without any disloyalty to the person whose leadership has been declared vacant," Turnbull told reporters outside a function in Sydney.

Abbott has admitted mistakes as pressure intensified on his leadership in recent weeks, and vowed to be more "collegial" and "consultative" in his approach after several of his so-called captain's calls backfired on his administration.

Political analysts said Abbott's move to bring forward the vote on his leadership would give any challenger less time to accumulate support from colleagues, who will return to the nation's capital, Canberra, for parliament on Monday.

"My reading of this is that there is very strong support behind the prime minister (and) that it has strengthened," said Nick Cater, a conservative col-

umnist and commentator.

However, the move appeared to backfire with at least some of Abbott's colleagues. Influential lawmaker Arthur Sinodinos — chief of staff for Abbott's mentor, long-serving former prime minister John Howard — and former minister Teresa Gambaro were both scathing in their criticism of the decision.

If Abbott is ousted, Australia is faced with having its sixth prime minister in eight years.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, deputy leader of Abbott's party, has also been touted as either a potential successor to Abbott or party deputy under Turnbull.

Bishop, seen as one of the best-performing min-

isters in Abbott's Cabinet, has said she will vote against the motion but has not ruled out standing if the positions are declared vacant.

She was met by Turnbull at the function in Sydney, a party fund-raising event.

Opinion polls have consistently shown voters prefer Turnbull to lead the party but his views on a carbon trading scheme, marriage equality and support for an Australian republic have made him unpopular with the right wing of his party.

Removing Abbott would need support from more than 51 of the 102 members of the federal Liberal Party at the party-room vote.—Reuters

Gov't stops photographer from going to Syria, confiscates passport

TOKYO, 8 Feb — The Foreign Ministry on Saturday stopped Japanese freelance photographer Yuichi Sugimoto from travelling to Syria by confiscating his passport, the first time it has taken such a step.

Sugimoto, a 58-year-old resident of Niigata city in Niigata Prefecture, has criticized the government move, saying it infringes on freedom of speech.

The ministry said it took the action in accordance with a provision in the passport law that allows it to confiscate a person's passport to stop them from travelling in order to protect their life.

The passport confiscation, coming in the wake of the release of a video purportedly showing the killing of Japanese journalist Kenji Goto by Islamic State militants, could spur discussions about the constitutional guarantee of freedom to travel to foreign countries.

Sugimoto told *Kyodo News* late Saturday and early Sunday that he was to leave Japan for Istanbul, Turkey, on 27 February, and then head to Syria after meeting up with a former soldier who he said had previously served as a guide for the slain journalist.

Sugimoto said he did not have plans to enter areas controlled by Islamic

State, but rather intended to cover refugee camps inside Syria. He was to return to Japan on 12 March.

"I've been taking safety measures all along. I would definitely retreat if I felt my life was in danger. It is my job to come back alive and tell (my story)," Sugimoto said by phone.

Passport confiscation "robs us of our rights and shows that (Prime Minister Shinzo) Abe's government has turned its fangs against the public," he said. "It is outrageous."

Given the hostage crisis, the ministry and police had asked Sugimoto to refrain from travelling to Syria, but he remained firm in his decision to go to the war-torn country, prompting officials at the prime minister's office to contemplate action, according to a ministry source.

According to Sugimoto, ministry officials and police officers told him in front of his home on Saturday night that unless he returned his passport, he would be arrested. He subsequently complied with the ministry order.

Sugimoto says he has covered conflict zones over the years, visiting Iraq in 2003 and traveling to Syria in 2012 and 2013 in connection with his work.

Kyodo News

TransAsia says to cancel more flights following crash

TAIPEI, (China), 8 Feb — Taiwan's TransAsia Airlines said on Sunday it would cancel 52 flights early next week, in addition to the 90 already cancelled after one of its aircraft crashed into a river in Taipei last week, killing at least 40 of the 58 people on board.

On Friday, Taiwan's Aviation Safety Council said the preliminary findings of the black box showed the almost-new turboprop ATR 72-600 failed to produce enough thrust after take-off, revealing one engine was turned off

and restarted. "We've cancelled 90 flights in the last three days. We'll cancel another 52 on Monday and Tuesday combined," said Amy Chen, a vice president of the Taipei-based airline.

Rescuers have recovered to 40 bodies, with three still missing following the crash on 4 February. Fifteen people survived.

In the wake of flight GE235's crash, Taiwan's aviation authorities ordered TransAsia pilots to take proficiency tests, according to the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA).

Reuters



Wreckage of TransAsia Airways plane Flight GE235 is transported on the back of a truck after it crash landed into a river, in New Taipei City, on 5 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

Israeli PM urged to cancel planned speech on Iran in US congress

JERUSALEM, 8 Feb — Israeli centre-left politicians urged the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday to cancel his planned speech to the US congress on Iran, saying it would jeopardize Israel's interests.

Yitzhak Herzog, leader of the opposition Labour Party, was quoted by local media as saying that Netanyahu's planned speech would damage Israel's relations with the US and harm Israel's security interests.

"The time has come when Bibi (Netanyahu's nickname) must announce the cancellation of his speech in the Con-

gress," Yitzhak Herzog was quoted as addressing an international security conference in Germany.

He said that the planned speech, which would present a hardline approach toward a nuclear Iran amid the ongoing attempts by the world powers and Iran to reach a final agreement on its nuclear program, will raise antagonism among US and European officials.

"In conversations I've held with many European and US leaders, it's clear there's great anger over Netanyahu diverting the discussion on Iran's nuclear programme for political gain, and turning it into a confrontation with the pres-

ident of the United States," Herzog said.

Herzog was not the only political figures from the Israeli centre-left camp who have voiced criticism of Netanyahu's intention to speak at a joint meeting of the US Congress on 3 March, just two weeks ahead of Israel's parliamentary elections.

Former Justice Minister Tzipi Livni said at an event in Tel Aviv on Saturday morning that Netanyahu's plan to address the US Congress shows that he is "thinking of his personal interests instead of those of the state of Israel."

Chairman of the centre Yesh Atid party Yair Lapid said that Netanyahu is "leading to a major damage in Israel's strategic affairs with the US, as part of a political act aiming to get more votes in the upcoming elections."

Netanyahu was invit-

ed to speak in front of the US Congress on Iran by the US Republican House Majority Leader John Boehner. The invitation and its acceptance by Netanyahu caused uproar among White House officials.

Netanyahu is expected to talk in favour of bill proposals calling for imposing further sanctions on Iran, despite the ongoing negotiations.

President Barack Obama has expressed objections to those bills and declared he would veto them if passed.

Netanyahu, a hardliner on Iran, has warned repeatedly that a nuclear Iran will be a danger to Israel, and demanded that Iran forego its entire nuclear enrichment capabilities. Iran, on its part, has insisted that its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes.—Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 9 February, 2015

Shall we have another significant day like Union Day?

By Kyaw Thura

There can be little doubt that Union Day has been the most significant event in Myanmar throughout history. It is safe to assume that the great day paved the way for the reclamation of independence from colonial rule.

It was on 12 February 1947 that the mainland and the hilly region came together to reclaim national sovereignty from imperialists by speaking with one voice on that issue. Given its

great symbolic significance of binding all people from different ethnic groups together under the leadership of General Aung San, that day has since then been commemorated as Union Day without missing a single year.

Despite independence regained in 1948, ethnic armed conflicts have arisen as a direct consequence of colonial legacies. It is however encouraging to witness that the government has been holding out an olive branch to ethnic armed groups, a few of whom still remain to exchange arms for peace.

President U Thein Sein has hinted at every opportunity that the whole country longs for another significant day like Union Day, which is why he expects a nationwide ceasefire accord to be signed on 12 February. Now is an opportune time for parties to armed conflict to bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to keep up

the irresistible momentum for ongoing peace process. We have had enough of grave violence in armed conflict that human conscience will not accept.

It is really quite impossible to express anything with absolute exactitude unless that thing is so abstracted from the real world as to not represent any real thing, American physicist Richard Feynman once stated. In no sense can peace be said to be intangible.

Write for us

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

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Education in Singapore: Universities and International Schools

By Sayar Mya

Since my arrival in Singapore on 12 January, I have written four English articles entitled (1) [Significant features of "Singapore Expo" and "John Little Mega Expo Sale" in Singapore: January 2015]; (2) [National University of Singapore: A University stands and shines top in Asia] and (3) [ICT in brief and pragmatic application of E-Governance in Singapore]; and (4) [Education in Singapore: Pre-school Playgroup to Junior College] in the Global New Light of Myanmar in January and February 2015.

I and my better half are on a visit to Singapore for about one month to have fun with our grandchildren from Campbelltown of New South Wales in Australia, during the kids' school holidays. We are staying at the condominium of our daughter near world famous Singapore Botanical Gardens. She is working in that country.

We have had a nice time in Singapore with the grand children for two weeks, and they left for Sydney on 31 January.

As I have already written an article entitled "Education in Singapore: Preschool Playgroup to Junior College", I need to supplement with the information about the functioning of Universities and International Schools in Singapore.

Singapore has six national universities, namely (1) National University of Singapore; (2) Nanyang Technological University;

(3) Singapore Management University; (4) Singapore University of Technology & Design; (5) Singapore Institute of Technology and (6) SIM University.

The National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University each have more than 30,000 students and provide a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs including doctoral degrees. Both are also established as research universities with thousands of research staff and graduate students. As of 2012, both universities are ranked among the "Top 50 in the World".

A third university, Singapore Management University (SMU), opened in 2000, is home to more than 7,000 students and comprises six schools offering undergraduate, graduate, and PhD programs in Business Management, Accountancy, Economics, Information Systems Management, Law and the Social Sciences. The University has an Office of Research, a number of institutes and centers of excellence, and provides public and customized programs for working professionals through its Office of Executive and Professional Education.

The fourth university, privately run SIM University (UniSIM), was opened in 2005. The university currently admits only part-time students and offers part-time degree programs to working adults. In 2012, the government granted UniSIM a national univer-

sity status and plans are ongoing to expand the university with offering of new full-time degree programs.

Two other public institutions are also sponsored by the government. They are the Singapore University of Technology and Design and the Singapore Institute of Technology. Many private universities exist, including foreign universities which have established campuses in Singapore such as the "Chicago Business School" and "Technische Universität München".

The James Cook University Singapore, University of Adelaide, Southern Cross University, University of New Brunswick, Queen Margaret University, Temple University, The City University of New York, Baruch College, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Aventis School of Management, Curtin University of Technology & University of Wales Institute, Cardiff of UK have established "offshore campuses" in Singapore.

[Note: An "offshore campus", or overseas branch campus, is a franchised operation that a tertiary or higher education institution creates in order to expand its operations beyond the borders where it is mainly based. They are operating with the bidding of the host country's government. The theory behind this idea is the provision of a tertiary institution's programs to potential students, through direct contact with the tertiary institution's own faculty and with its own facilities, rather than surrendering the respon-



National University of Singapore (PHOTO FROM GOOGLE)

sibility to private offshore course providers who may offer courses approved by rival institutions].

Setting up an "offshore campus" also allows potential students to study for an institution's program at a much lesser cost than studying in the country where the institution is located. Many American, Australian, British and Canadian tertiary institutions have used this model to expand their operations overseas, particularly in Asia and the Middle East. Additionally, the majority of programs offered are "Business-Related" courses.

Singapore government has planned the fourth public university, namely Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), to meet the rising demand for university education. The university opened its doors at its Dover Road interim campus in April 2012. Its permanent campus at Changi opened in January 2015.

A fifth public institution Singapore Institute of Technology was announced in 2009. The institution starts in 2010 and is intended to provide an upgrading pathway for polytechnic graduates.

International Schools and Private Schools

Due to the residing large expatriate community, Singapore is a host to many international schools. International and private schools in Singapore generally do not admit Singapore students without the permission from the Ministry of Education.

However, on 29 April 2004 the Ministry of Education permitted three new international schools to be set up without permission being needed to admit Singapore students. These schools must follow the compulsory policies set by the Ministry such as (a) playing the national anthem; (b) taking the pledge every morning, and (c) following the nation's policies on bi-

lingualism. These schools are (1) Anglo-Chinese School (International), (2) Hwa Chong International School and (3) SJI International School. These private schools run by the boards of other locally renowned institutions. The school fees are 15 to 20 percent lower than those of foreign international schools. Their intake includes students from countries such as Malaysia, India, Indonesia, People's Republic of China, Taiwan, South Korea, Philippines, Vietnam, Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Established under the "Private Education Act", the Council for Private Education is a statutory board empowered with the legislative power to regulate the private education sector. In addition to its role as the sectoral regulator of private education institutions, the Council facilitates capability development efforts to uplift standards in the local private education industry.

(To be continued)

ARTICLE

People of Myanmar and Astrology : Days of the Week

By Nyi Sae Min

No sooner has it uttered the first words in life, “U-We, U-We”, than a newborn child of Myanmar inevitably comes to correspond with astrology. “After the questions ‘male or female’, the question ‘what-day-born’ used to follow. Although it had nothing to do with the teaching of Lord Buddha, astrology takes prominent part in Myanmar way of life. It is believed that the names of the week are directly related with planets in the solar system and called after the respective planet. The planet in ascendancy at the time of the birth influences a person’s whole life.

After finding out on what day the baby was born, an elderly person who has fairly sufficient knowledge in astrology will give it name in accordance with the respective day. In this aspect, different letters of the alphabet have direct connections with the planets. For example, the first five letters of Myanmar Alphabet Ka (က), Kha (ခ), Ga (ဂ), Gha (ဃ), Nga (င) represents Monday planet (Lunar). Therefore, the name of the Monday-born must start with the above-mentioned letters in spelling, Kyaw, Khin, Ngwe and so on. Most of the names that follow the prefix are chosen in line with astrological calculation. As

Monday and Wednesday are friendly pairs, the prefix is usually followed the letters ‘Ya(ယ), Ra(ရ), La(လ), Wa(ဝ)’ belonging to the Wednesday. However, other letters can follow it in accordance with particular astrological calculation for the baby. In spite of becoming less popular among people of these days. People in the country still adhere to this way of giving names.

It is also believed that the day on which the baby was born has somewhat influence on its character and behaviour. For example, a Friday-born is supposed to be talkative and Saturday-born has strong and forceful mind and so on.

Moreover, most of the fortune-telling for the baby is usually done in accordance with the day on which it was born.

Days of the week are divided into two sets of the pair; the friendly and the hostile. The friendly and the hostile pairs are further divided into four groups respectively: inner friendly, outer friendly and inner hostile, outer hostiles.

They are all noted in pieces of rhymes the inner friendly pairs of days are

- Aung-Pa, Ku-lar, Swe-Thar, Taw-Yin (အောင်ပ ကုလား ဆွေသား တော်ရင်း) Sun and Thurs, Mon and Wed, Tue

and Fri, Sat and Wed,

The outer friendly pair of days are

- Ut-Thar, Sein-Pan, Dhan-Hla, Ko-Sha (ဥသာစိန်ပန်း ဒန်းလှကိုရှာ) Sun and Fri, Tue and Thurs, Sat and Wed, Mon and Wed.

There are sets of rhymes that predict on the baby’s future. For example,

“Thar U Thauk-kyar Padesar” (သားဦးသောကြာပဒေသာ) Friday-born first son will bring plenty of wealth. “Thar U Sa Ne, Mee Lo Hmwe” (သားဦးစနေ မီးလှိုရွှေ) means that Saturday-born first son will bring a lot of trouble to his parents. So, the father of Saturday-born first son has to make a leap over it, carrying a sword on his shoulder to evade the evils. On the other hands, it is believed that Saturday-born latest son will make his parents more prosperous “Sa ne Thar Hnaung Miba Kaung” (စနေသားနောင် မိဘကောင်း) Furthermore, days of the birth has greater influence on choosing the partner of life. Most of Myanmar girls in olden days did not make their decisions in choosing their life-partners recklessly without knowing his day of birth. A girl used to choose a youngman who was born on one of her friendly days. Rarely did she choose a youth born on any of her hostile day because if she did so, it was believed her life will be in short duration or she will be in trouble for the rest of life. She

would be in poverty. Only the combination of friendly days could bring the couple happiness, long life and prosperity.

Months	Tan-gu (April)	Ka-Son (May)	Na-Yon (June)	Wa-So (July)
	Wa-Khaung (August)	Taw-Tha-Lin (September)	Tha-Dingyut (October)	Tan-Saung-Mon (November)
	Nat-Taw (December)	Pyatho (January)	Ta-bo-dwe (February)	Ta-baung (March)
Yet-yar-zar Lucky days	Thi-la (Fri-Wed)	Dham-ma (Sat-Thurs)	Min-Soe (Thurs-Tue)	Hsu-ohn (Wed-Sun)
Pyatsada Unlucky days	Ta-mar (Sat-Thurs)	Thet-yin (Fri-Wed)	In-yyin (Sun-Mon)	Su-Rit (Tue-Wed)

Now-a-days, some of Myanmar still keep the custom of doing usual bathing or shampooing in accordance with rhymes of astrological concepts such as,

“Thar Hla Shwe-taung Ye Ko Shaung” (သားလှရွှေတောင် ရေကိုရှောင်) meaning “No son shall do bathing on Friday, Wednesday and Saturday”. On the other hand, the days on which usual bathing should be done as also appointed as “Aung San Phyo Ye Choe Yet” (အောင်စံဖြိုး ရေချိုးရက်) meaning “Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday are the most suitable for bathing”.

There are another two kinds of days, viz, lucky days or kingly days (Yetyazar) and unluckdays (Pyatsada) on which whether something should be done or not depends. These days are not constant but alternate in each month.

The following table shows Yetyazar (Kingly

days or Luck days) and Pyatsadar (Unlucky days) in each month of Myanmar calendar;

journey on one of the unlucky days without paying heed to any suggestion not to go. But the second monk chose the

The Friendly pairs of days are Ut-Tha (Sun, Fri), Sein-Pan (Tue-Thurs), Dhan Hla (Sat-Wed), Ko-Sha (Mon-Wed). (ဥသာစိန်ပန်း ဒန်းလှကိုရှာ)

The hostile pairs of days are Dham-mar (Sat-Thurs), Thaw-Ka (Fir-Mon), Inn-Wa (Sun-Wed), Yar-zar (Wed-Tue). (ဓမ္မသောက အင်းဝရာဇာ)

Most of Myanmar people have profound belief that something which has been done on unlucky days would certainly meet with hardships or obstacles or even failure and only those which have been done on Lucky days would be successful.

The following is a story used to be told by Upper Myanmar People humorously connecting with Lucky days and Unlucky days.

Once upon a time, two monks had an assignment to travel a long journey by boat. One of the monks together with his disciples started his

next day being a lucky day to start his journey. As the boatmen of the first monk rowed so slowly that the boat conveying the second monk and his disciple caught up with them in a short time. While the two boats were travelling along side by side in the river, a storm broke out and huge waves arose. Due to the storm and the waves both of the boats turned up-side-down and so the two monk and their disciples had to swim across the river.

Then one disciple of the monks who had started on Unlucky day reproached his master for travelling on Unlucky day. Then the monk replied, “Well, if I met the mishap as I travelled on unlucky day, then why did the monk travelling on lucky day face with the same mishap?” Then his disciple fell dumb as he had found no answer to give.

Sabbe Sattā Kamma Sa Kā

3rd Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum

“Building upon Foundations — Focusing towards Future Inclusive Development”

7 – 8 February 2015

Nay Pyi Taw

2015 MYANMAR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FORUM JOINT STATEMENT

- On the 7th and 8th of February 2015, Myanmar’s development stakeholders participated in the 3rd Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum under the theme of **“Building Upon Foundations – Focusing Towards Future Inclusive Development”**. Stakeholders included the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Members of Parliament, and representatives from political parties, international development partners, representatives of international and local civil society, the private sector and academia.
- On this occasion we came together to discuss our joint progress ensuring effective, efficient and inclusive development cooperation is able to bring about the most benefit for the country and for the people of Myanmar. In doing so, we recall and reaffirm our joint commitments expressed within the Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation, the localization of global development effectiveness principles in Myanmar.
- We also recall the Joint Statement issued at the conclusion of the 2014 Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum calling for a renewed commitment to ensuring development cooperation in Myanmar works effectively to benefit all communities, including those most vulnerable, and to ensure they can benefit from, and be involved in shaping, Myanmar’s transition toward inclusive development.
- As increasing numbers of development partner proj-

ects and programmes come online, managing them effectively has become a shared priority. In accordance with the 2014 Nay Pyi Taw Accord Action Plan we have set up an online Aid information Management System. This will help us better direct support to where it is needed most, and to determine what is working and what areas require additional attention. While development partners have committed to publish details of their work and achievements to this system, the Government is also increasing its commitment to transparency including through membership of the International Aid Transparency Initiative, and a commitment to joining the Open Government Partnership and the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

- Those present at this Forum recommit themselves to working through open, inclusive and innovative partnerships with Myanmar to support the realization of its development potential through the observance of the Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation. We also look toward the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and seek to remain a committed partner, both sharing and receiving lessons learned as we progress upon our development effectiveness journey.

This Joint Statement was approved by acclamation on 8 February 2015 at the 3rd Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum.

3rd MDCF concludes in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb — The 3rd Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum held under the theme “Building upon foundation — Focusing towards Future Inclusive Development” concluded successfully at the Myanmar International Convention Centre (2) in Nay Pyi Taw on Sunday.

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw delivered a speech at the forum, team leaders including Dr Daw Yin Yin Nwe, U Tin Htut Oo, Dr Zaw Oo, Daw Nwe Nwe Win, Dr Daw San San Aye, U Min Zarni Lin, U Khant Zaw, U Kyaw Zeya and Daw Khine Khine Nwe read out reports on human resources development, strategic routes to development of Myanmar, land resource management, public finance management, social protection,

institutional changes and public administration, regional integration, promotion of cooperation and interconnectedness, rural development and poverty reduction, innovative partnership-private sector and development cooperation.

Then, participants engaged in discussions on the reports, and the forum concluded in the afternoon.

At the press conference after the forum, Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw explained the outcomes and declaration of the forum.

Present at the forum were union ministers, deputy ministers, representatives of the Hluttaw and political parties, economic ministers from state/region governments, representatives of donor countries, international organizations, the UN, INGOs and officials.—MNA

Merkel defends Ukraine arms stance in face of US criticism

MUNICH, 8 Feb — Germany's Angela Merkel said on Saturday that sending arms to help Ukraine fight pro-Russian separatists would not solve the crisis there, drawing sharp rebukes from US politicians who accused Berlin of turning its back on an ally in distress.

The heated exchanges at a security conference in Munich pointed to cracks in the transatlantic consensus on how to confront Russian President Vladimir Putin over a deepening conflict in eastern Ukraine that has killed more than 5,000.

Ukraine's military said on Saturday that pro-Russian separatists had stepped up shelling of government forces and appeared to be amassing troops for new offensives



Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and US Vice President Joe Biden (L-R) arrive for a meeting during the 51st Munich Security Conference at the 'Bayerischer Hof' hotel in Munich on 7 Feb, 2015. — REUTERS

on the key railway town of Debaltseve and the coastal city of Mariupol.

The rebel offensive has triggered a flurry of shuttle diplomacy, with Merkel and French President Francois Hollande jetting to Moscow on Friday to try to convince Putin to do a peace deal.

But European officials acknowledge that the Russian leader may have little incentive to negotiate now, preferring to sit back and watch as separatists seize more territory, undermining a ceasefire agreement clinched last September in the Belarus capital Minsk.

The German leader conceded in Munich that it was uncertain whether a Franco-German peace plan presented to Kiev and Moscow this week would succeed.

But she rejected the notion that sending weapons to Kiev, an idea being considered by US President Barack Obama, would help resolve the conflict.

"I understand the debate but I believe that more weapons will not lead to the progress Ukraine needs. I really doubt that," said the conservative German leader, who has led western efforts to try to resolve the crisis through negotiations and will travel to Washington on Sunday for talks with Obama.

US senators Lindsey Graham and John McCain, two Republican hawks who attended the conference, were withering in their criticism of the German stance, which is supported by other big European countries like France.—Reuters

Mexican cartel 'Queen of the Pacific' to be released from prison

MEXICO CITY, 8 Feb — A jailed Mexican drug smuggler known as the "Queen of the Pacific" is to be released after partially completing a five-year sentence on money-laundering charges, the attorney general's office said on Saturday.

A federal judge in Mexico's western Jalisco state accepted the appeal of Sandra Avila Beltran and ordered her immediate release, saying her five-year sentence was based on the same crime that triggered previous stints behind bars.

Avila Beltran, the highest-profile woman linked to Mexico's drug trade, was expected to be set free later on Saturday,

a federal security official said on condition of anonymity. Avila Beltran was sentenced to a nearly six-year prison term in the United States before being extradited to Mexico in 2013 to face money-laundering charges.

Her incarceration in both Mexico and the United States stemmed from charges that she provided money to former Colombian drug lord Juan Diego Espinosa to help him avoid arrest. In 2014, she was sentenced to the five-year prison term in Mexico.

The attorney general's office said in a statement on Saturday that it was not permitted by law to appeal

the judge's order.

Avila Beltran was first detained in Mexico in 2007. She allegedly helped build the Sinaloa cartel in the 1990s with Joaquin "Shorty" Guzman, Mexico's most-wanted drug boss until he was captured early last year.

Avila Beltran, niece of Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo, known as the godfather of the Mexican drug trade, was extradited to the United States in August 2012.

She is known as "Queen of the Pacific" because of her success developing smuggling routes along Mexico's Pacific Coast into California.

Reuters



Sandra Avila Beltran, known as the "Queen of the Pacific" is surrounded by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials before being deported to Mexico at El Paso International airport, in this handout photo released to Reuters on 20 Aug, 2013. — REUTERS

Colombia's FARC rebels invite Miss Universe to attend peace talks

BOGOTA, 8 Feb — Colombia's Marxist FARC rebels have invited the newly-crowned Miss Universe Paulina Vega, a native of the country's Caribbean coast, to attend their peace negotiations with the government, a bid to end 50 years of fighting.

The 22-year-old Vega, a business student and model from the northern city of Barranquilla, was named Miss Universe in late January and has said in interviews that she would be willing to travel to the talks.

"We have read with interest your desire to contribute with your good works to reaching peace," the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, said in a statement on their website late on Friday.

"We salute your willingness to travel to Havana, at this time we invite you to make a visit," added the FARC, which has been holding negotiations with the government in Cuba since late 2012.—Reuters



Miss Colombia Paulina Vega poses after being named a top 5 finalist, on her way to be crowned as Miss Universe, at the 63rd Annual Miss Universe Pageant in Miami, Florida on 25 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

Venezuelan president condemns new US "conspiracy" against his country

CARACAS, 8 Feb — Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro rejected on Saturday a new "conspiracy" by the US government to use the Inter-American Democratic Charter (IDC) of the Organization of American States (OAS) to justify foreign intervention in his country.

In a televised broadcast, Maduro urged US President Barack Obama to rectify this attitude against his administration and demanded respect to Venezuela's sovereignty.

"I reject a document of the National Security Strategy of the United

States government because it's an interventionist text," he said. Maduro explained that the report publicly presented on Saturday by Obama indicated that Washington would support "citizens of countries where the full exercise of democracy is at risk, as in Venezuela."

"I make an urgent call to the governments of Latin America to support Venezuela and reject the new conspiracy organized by the United States against our democracy," said Maduro. According to Maduro, the IDC is an instrument adopted in 2001 by a majority of right-wing

OAS leaders to support an intervention in Caracas.

He added that in the next few days he will send a letter to the US president expressing his government's "independent" position and addressing "disturbing statements" made recently by Obama.

"I demand respect to our nation and government from President Obama," he said. He urged the Venezuelan people to "continue overcoming conspiracies" and warned the local opposition that his government won't allow any form of violence in the South American nation.—Xinhua

WORLD

African nations pledge 8,700 for anti-Boko Haram force



Militia hunters helping the army to fight the Boko Haram insurgency hold a meeting in Yola, Adamawa State on 14 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

YAOUNDE, 8 Feb — African nations pulling together a regional force to fight Nigeria's Boko Haram militants on Saturday pledged 8,700 soldiers, policemen and civilians, an increase from earlier estimates for the mission. The African Union had previously authorized a force of 7,500 troops from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Benin to take on the Islamists, who

have seized large swathes of northeastern Nigeria and mounted attacks on neighbouring nations. Nigeria's military is struggling against the five-year insurgency, which has killed thousands of Nigerians and displaced some 1.5 million people. With Nigeria also trying to organize elections and the militant threat turning increasingly regional, diplomats have said neighbouring

nations must bury mutual mistrust and join the fight to defeat the militants.

The new troop pledges came after three days of talks in Cameroon between experts from the nations of the Lake Chad basin, the region where Boko Haram is seeking to create an Islamist enclave. No budget for the regional mission was given. Nor were any details provided on when troops would be deployed. Further talks are to take place before the African Union seeks support for the mission from the United Nations Security Council.

Chad has already dispatched 2,500 soldiers to Cameroon and Niger and its troops have engaged the militants in a series of battles that have killed hundreds along the border zone.

US intelligence officials estimated on Friday that Boko Haram has about 4,000-6,000 "hardcore" fighters.—Reuters

Jordan army planes bomb IS targets for third day

AMMAN, 8 Feb — Jordan carried out a third straight day of air strikes on Islamic State targets on Saturday, it said, in response to the group's killing of a captive Jordanian pilot.

"Sorties of air force fighters today bombed bases of the Daesh terror gang," state television said in a bulletin, using a derogatory Arabic name for the militants. It said some of the

targets were in the Syrian city of Raqqa but gave no other details.

Jordan began on Thursday what it called an "earth-shaking" response to the death of the pilot.—Reuters

Gulf countries, opposition say Houthi takeover in Yemen a 'coup'

SANAA, 8 Feb — The Gulf Cooperation Council has accused Shi'ite Houthi rebels of staging a coup in Yemen after they announced they were dissolving parliament and forming a new government, Kuwait's official news agency said on Saturday.

The opposition of the GCC, a six-nation bloc comprising energy-rich Gulf states, may signal growing isolation for the impoverished Yemen and reflects the hostility of its majority Sunni Muslim neighbours towards the Iranian-backed Houthis.

"This Houthi coup is a dangerous escalation which we reject and is unacceptable. It totally contradicts the spirit of pluralism and coexistence which Yemen has known," the GCC was quoted as saying by KUNA news agency.

The GCC called the takeover a "threat...to the security and stability of the region and the interests of its people."

Yemen has been in

political limbo since the president and prime minister resigned last month after the Houthis seized the presidential palace. On Friday, the movement dissolved parliament and said it would set up a new interim government.

Abdel Malik al-Houthi, the group's leader, said on Saturday he was open to all parties playing a role in Yemen's future.

"Our hand is extended to every political force in this country ... the space is open for partnership, cooperation and brotherhood and now everybody bears their responsibility for building, not destruction," he said in a televised speech.

But he warned: "Any move which targets this people, its economy, security or stability is unacceptable, and the great Yemeni people will confront any such conspiracies."

Parties from across Yemen's political spectrum declined to support the Houthis' moves.



Houthi militiamen and soldiers stand behind a roadblock at the scene of a blast near the republican palace in Sanaa on 7 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

Islah, Sunni Islamists and major tribal leaders making up the country's main opposition party, said the measures amounted to a unilateral "coup" and called for them to be canceled.

The former ruling party of Yemen's ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh expressed its "regret" in an official statement, saying it violated an international plan for a move to democracy after Saleh's exit amid Arab Spring protests in

2011.

Several governors from Yemen's restive southern provinces said they rejected the takeover, they said in a joint statement.

Yemen's instability has drawn international concern as it shares a long border with top world oil exporter Saudi Arabia, and the country is also fighting one of the most formidable branches of al-Qaeda with the help of US drone strikes.—Reuters

Libyan factions to resume talks on Tuesday; Benghazi death toll hits 700

TRIPOLI / BENGHAZI, 8 Feb — Libya's warring factions will resume UN-sponsored talks on Tuesday inside the country to try to resolve a struggle between two governments and parliaments, officials from both sides said on Saturday.

The news came as new clashes between pro-government forces and Islamists in the eastern Benghazi city killed seven soldiers, bringing the death toll of four months of fighting there to almost 700, medics said.

Libya has been in chaos since a NATO-backed revolt ousted Muammar Gaddafi nearly four years ago. Two rival governments allied to armed groups are fighting for legitimacy in a conflict that Western powers fear might lead to full-scale civil war in the oil-producing nation.

Libya's internationally recognized government under Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni and its elected House of Representatives are based in the east of the country after a group called Libya Dawn seized Tripoli last summer, set up its own administration and reinstated the old parliament.

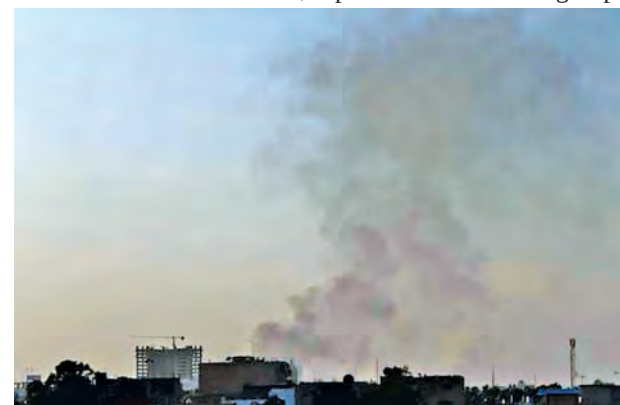
Last month, the UN managed to bring some members of the factions to talks in Geneva but the

Tripoli-based parliament known as General National Congress (GNC) wanted the dialogue to take place inside Libya.

"The UN-sponsored peace talks will take place in Libya on Tuesday unless anything unforeseeable happens," Emhemed Shoaib, deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, told Reuters. GNC member Abdul-Qader Hwaili confirmed the date,

The UN is hoping to get both sides to agree on a national unity government. It plans to arrange local ceasefires and prisoner exchanges as a first step to defuse the conflict.

The conflict has been complicated by a separate battle in Benghazi, the country's second-largest city, where forces allied to Thinni launched an offensive in mid-October to expel Islamist armed groups



Black smoke raises into the air near Benghazi port, where there are violent clashes, in Benghazi on 7 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

and like Shoaib he declined to disclose the venue.

Last week, UN Special Envoy Bernardino Leon said during a visit to Tripoli that the talks would restart within days. A first UN-sponsored round of talks in the southern city of Ghadames was held in September but made no progress.

such as Ansar al-Sharia.

Army forces fought for the third day with Islamists holed up in the port area, residents said. Seven soldiers were killed and 41 wounded, medics said.

"The port is under the control of the army," said Farraj al-Barassi, a military commander.—Reuters

Jordan says UAE sending jets to support raids on IS

AMMAN, 8 Feb — The United Arab Emirates is sending a squadron of F16 jet fighters to Jordan to conduct air strikes against Islamic State alongside Jordanian planes, an army source in Amman said.

Jordan launched bombing raids against the jihadist group's positions in Syria and Iraq on Thursday in response to its brutal killing of a captured Jordanian pilot, military action that it continued on Saturday.

The UAE, meanwhile, has suspended flights as part of the US-led coalition conducting air strikes against Islamic State in view of concerns about search and rescue capabilities after the pilot was downed.

UAE fighters would now join raids from inside Jordan, the source said.

"This is a big boost and will be helping our (Gulf) brothers shorten their flying distances and intensify strikes against the militants," the source told

Reuters on condition of anonymity.

UAE state news agency WAM said the Gulf country had ordered a squadron of F16s to support the Jordanian armed forces in what it said was its "effective participation" in the military campaign against IS.

But it did not specify whether the aircraft would be carrying out air strikes from Jordan.

A US official, speaking to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said the UAE would resume missions in the coalition air campaign in the next few days. The official did not provide further details.

The US military declined comment, referring queries to the UAE.

Jordan's King Abdullah has vowed to avenge pilot Mouath al-Kasasbeh's killing and ordered his commanders to prepare for a stepped-up military role in the US-led coalition against Islamic State.—Reuters

Brazil's Rousseff popularity plunges amid scandal, bad economy

SAO PAULO, 8 Feb — Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff's popularity has plunged by nearly half since her recent re-election as a severe government corruption scandal, an economic slowdown and surging prices for electricity, gasoline and bus fares left voters feeling misled.

The Datafolha poll of 4,000 people published on Saturday showed those interviewed who rated Rousseff's performance as "excellent or good" fell to 23 percent from 42 percent in December, just after she won her second term in a tight race.

Over the same period the percentage of people who rated her as a "bad or terrible" president rose to 44 from 24 percent. It was the first time since Rousseff took office in 2011 that she received more negative marks than positive ones.

The remainder of respondents, 33 percent, rated Rousseff's government as average, which was unchanged since December.

Rousseff promised during last year's campaign that she would not have to dramatically raise utility prices or slash government spending, but since her October reelection she has done both to try to regain



Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff

investor confidence and revive an economy that has sputtered since she took office.

The economy is expected to shrink in the first months of the year, annualized inflation is above 7 percent and rising, and many Brazilians are facing the possibility of water and energy shortages due to a prolonged drought.

Sixty percent of respondents said they believed Rousseff had lied more than she told the truth during the campaign.

Meanwhile, 77 percent of respondents said they believed Rousseff knew about corruption in the state-run oil company Petrobras, which she has controlled for several years as president and previously during the administration of Luiz Inacio Lula da Sil-

va, when she was chairwoman of the board.

Rousseff has denied any knowledge of the graft scheme, which investigators say siphoned billions of dollars.

The worsening of Rousseff's image was consistent across age groups, but the poorest socioeconomic groups, who benefited most from the policies of Rousseff and her mentor Lula, showed less disapproval than higher income earners. The rich showed the highest disapproval.

Reuters



The 203rd anniversary of the 1812 Russian Patriotic War was marked in the village of Afineyevo, 30km southwest of Moscow, Russia on 7 Feb, 2015.—XINHUA

Islamic State 'sentenced' US hostage to death last year

WASHINGTON, 8 Feb — The young American hostage who Islamic State says was killed in a Jordanian air strike was condemned to death by the militant group last year, according to an American Muslim activist.

Islamic State seized aid worker Kayla Mueller in 2013 in northern Syria and initially gave her a "life sentence" in retaliation for the jailing in Texas of a Pakistani woman whose case is a well-known cause among Islamist militants, said activist Mauri Saalakhani, who leads a US campaign to free the Pakistani. The

militant group said on Friday that Mueller, a 26-year-old from Prescott, Arizona, was killed when Jordanian fighter jets bombed a building where she was being held. Jordan expressed doubt about the claim and US authorities said they could not confirm it. Mueller's family had long asked US officials, aid groups and media outlets, including *Reuters*, not to use her name for fear the publicity could induce Islamic State to harm her. After Islamic State's claim on Friday, Mueller's parents issued a public statement on Friday night, identifying their daughter by

name and saying they remained hopeful she was still alive. Mueller's family has not given details of any communication with the militant group and Saalakhani's information could not be verified by *Reuters*.

Saalakhani said that last summer, as Islamic State extended its control over parts of Iraq and Syria, the group threatened to kill Mueller. Saalakhani first mentioned the "sentencing" of Mueller in an open letter to the group he released last year. On 12 July, militants told Mueller's family she would be executed in 30 days if Pakistani

neuroscientist Aafia Siddiqui were not released or the American's family did not pay a ransom of 5 million euros (\$6.6 million), he said. The information about the threats came from a representative of Mueller's family, Saalakhani said.

Islamic State apparently did not carry out its death sentence after Saalakhani and an Arizona pastor wrote open letters to the group. Siddiqui's family rejected Islamic State's attempt to link the two cases and said it did not want Mueller to suffer.

Reuters

Union says US refinery strike widened; cites unfair labour practices

HOUSTON, 8 Feb — The United Steelworkers union said on Saturday the strike by US refinery workers is expanding to two more plants early on Sunday due to unfair labour practices by oil companies.

Walk-outs at BP Plc's Whiting, Indiana, refinery and the company's joint-venture refinery with Husky Energy in Toledo, Ohio, shortly after 12 am local time on Sunday would bring the number of plants with striking hourly workers to 11, including nine refineries accounting for 13 percent of US refining capacity.

BP said on Friday it had received notice of the walk-outs at the two refineries, but the Steelworkers had said little about them until Saturday.

The union said in a statement that US refinery owners led by Royal Dutch Shell Plc have failed to dis-

cuss health and safety issues and engaged in "bad-faith bargaining, including the refusal to bargain over mandatory subjects; undue delays in providing information; impeded bargaining; and threats issued to workers if they joined the strike."

A Shell spokesman said the company was unaware of any unfair labor practice charge filed against it with the US Department of Labour.

"We regret that we have been unable to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement with the USW prior to contract expiration," said Shell spokesman Ray Fisher. "We remain committed to resolving the remaining issues through collective bargaining at the bargaining table."

Saturday was the seventh day of the strike, which the USW called on 31 January after it said

Shell had walked away from the negotiating table.

About 4,000 workers at refineries in California, Kentucky, Texas and Washington initially left their jobs when the strike began shortly after midnight on 1 February.

Another 1,440 workers will join the picket lines when employees of the BP-operated refineries in Indiana and Ohio leave their jobs early on Sunday.

Oil companies are continuing to operate all but one of the plants with temporary replacement workers. BP said replacement workers would take over operations at the Whiting and Toledo refineries.

Tesoro Corp elected to shut down production at its Martinez, California, refinery by the end of this week because half the plant's production was already shut due to a planned

overhaul.

The USW began negotiations on 21 January with Shell initially seeking wage increases, a tighter policy to prevent worker fatigue and reductions in non-union contractors working in refineries.

Since the start of the strike, the union has stressed the safety and health aspects of its proposals to prevent accidents in refineries.

"Management cannot continue to resist allowing workers a stronger voice

on issues that could very well make the difference between life and death for too many of them," said USW International President Leo Gerard, according to the statement issued on Saturday.

Reuters



Members of the United Steel Workers union picket the Tesoro refinery in Carson, California on 2 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**Ministry of Construction
Public Works
(Invitation for Open Tender)**

1. Open tender only for local companies in invited by Public Works, Ministry of Construction, Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for upgrading projects with the part of proceeds of the Regional Development Project for Poverty Reduction under JICA ODA Loan, Japan.

Sr.	Name of Work	Type of Work
1.	Taunggoo-Mawchi-Loikaw Road (7 miles 2 furlongs) + Medium and Small Bridges (17nos) (Kayah State)	Bituminous Road
2.	Hanmyintmo-Myogyi-Ywam gan Road (34 miles 1 furlong) (Mandalay Region & Shan State)	Bituminous Road
3.	Kalay-Phalan-Harkhar Road (7 miles 1 furlong) (Chin State)	Bituminous Road
4.	Harkha-Gangaw Road (19 miles 2 furlongs) (Chin State)	Bituminous Road
5.	Thinengin-Teetain Road (16 miles 4 furlongs) (Chin State)	Bituminous Road

2. Distribution period of Tender Documents
- (11.2.2015) to (18.2.2015)
- 13:00 hours on 24.3.2015
3. Pre-Bid Meeting
- 14:00 hours on 25.2.2015
4. Submission Date of Tender Documents
- (9:30 to 12:00) hours on 11.3.2015
- 13:00 hours on 24.3.2015
5. Opening Date of Tender
- 13:00 hours on 24.3.2015
6. Tender Documents can be purchased with fifty thousand kyats (50000Ks.) at the following address and for the detail information, please contact the office within office hours.

Tender Selection Committee, Public Works
Road Department, Office No.(11), Nay Pyi Taw
Tel: 067-407468, 407578, 407603, 407583, 407380

20 militants lay down arms in E Afghanistan

JALALABAD, (Afghanistan), 8 Feb — A total of 20 armed militants laid down arms and gave up fighting in the eastern Nangarhar province with Jalalabad as its capital, 120 km east of Kabul on Sunday.

“With joining these people to the peace process, the security situation will be further improved in Shinwar and adjoining districts,” deputy to provincial governor, Hanif Gardiwal said in a ceremony to welcome the former anti-government fighters.

The former militants

who also handed over their weapons to police on Sunday were active in the mountainous Shinwar district over the past couple of years, the official added. Taleban militants fighting the government have yet to make comment.

According to Afghan officials, more than 4,000 anti-government militants have laid down arms and joined the government-backed peace process over the past one year, a claim spurned by Taleban militants as groundless.

Xinhua

5.1-magnitude quake hits 13km SE of Nabire, Indonesia —USGS

HONG KONG, 8 Feb — An earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale jolted 13km SE of Nabire, Indonesia at 18:53:23 GMT on Saturday, the US Geological Survey said.

The epicenter, with a depth of 29.02 km, was initially determined to be at 3.4455 degrees south latitude and 135.5751 degrees east longitude.

Xinhua



An Israeli border policeman stands guard on the site of a large fire in Wadi Joz, an Arab neighbourhood in East Jerusalem on 7 Feb, 2015. A large fire broke out in the shop here on Saturday, causing two residents minor injuries due to smoke inhalation. The cause of fire is still under investigation.

XINHUA

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (2/2015)

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-143(14-15)	Spares for Kenworth Oil Field Truck (14) Items	US\$
(2)	IFB-144(14-15)	1500 Series Well Head Equipment & Accessories (2) Sets	US\$
(3)	IFB-145(14-15)	Spares for Down Hole Equipments (8) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-146(14-15)	273 KW Gas Engine Driven Generating Set (1) Set	US\$
(5)	DMP/L-030(14-15)	Portable Fire Pump with Engine and Fire Assembly (3) Lots	Ks
(6)	DMP/L-031(14-15)	33KV GCB Complete Set and 33 KV Current Transformer (2) Items	Ks
(7)	DMP/L-032(14-15)	Motor for SAFE and Intermech Compressor (2) Nos	Ks
(8)	DMP/L-033(14-15)	185mm ² , 4 Core, XLPE Cable (50) Meter	Ks
(9)	DMP/L-034(14-15)	SAE 15 W 40 Diesel Engine Oil (API-CF4) (1) Lot	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 9-3-2015, 16:30 Hr
Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 9th February, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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



Sufi artists dance in the annual three-day music festival “Sufi Sutra” in Calcutta, capital of eastern Indian state West Bengal on 7 Feb, 2015. More than 100 Sufi singers, dancers and musicians from India, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Spain celebrated the festival.—XINHUA

Three wounded in shooting at Pittsburgh area shopping mall

PHILADELPHIA, 8 Feb — A gunman wounded three people at a Macy’s department store in a shopping centre outside Pittsburgh on Saturday in what police said was a shooting that targeted one of the victims.

“We believe that one of those three people shot was a targeted individual,” said Monroeville Police Chief Doug Cole of the incident at the Monroeville Mall outside Pittsburgh.

The other two victims were described as bystanders and the suspect was still at large. Police from several departments as well as FBI agents responded to the shootings, evacuating the mall where shoppers hid in stores after shots were fired. Andy Sherman, head of the

Allegheny County Detective Division, said surveillance videos could help identify the gunman. The victims were taken to Forbes Hospital in Monroeville, about 12 miles (20 km) east of Pittsburgh, where two were in critical condition and one was in fair condition, according to Dan Laurent, a hospital spokesman.

Police ordered the hospital’s emergency department locked down until the gunman was apprehended, said Jesse Miller, another spokesman for the medical facility. The mall was the scene of a massive, hours-long brawl in December involving hundreds of teenagers that forced the mall to close early.—Reuters

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE:

Weather is generally fair in the Andaman Sea and partly cloudy in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 9th February, 2015: Weather will be generally fair in Taninthayi Region, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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.

Plane with human remains of MH17 tragedy returns to Netherlands

THE HAGUE, 8 Feb — A Dutch military transport aircraft carrying a coffin for another victim in the MH17 flight disaster arrived at Eindhoven Air Base in the Netherlands on Saturday.

The plane from the airport of the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv was received by Dutch Defence Minister Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Interior Minister Ronald Plasterk and around 150 relatives.

The Malaysia Airlines MH17 crashed on 17 July, 2014, killing 298 people on board, including 196 Dutch citizens. The Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice announced on 13 January, 2015 that one more victim was identified. Forensics teams in the Netherlands have so far identified 295 victims with DNA testing.

There have been a total of eight flights that escorted the remains of MH17 victims from Ukraine to the Netherlands since the crash.

Xinhua

Not too fussed about winning a Grammy: Ed Sheeran



Ed Sheeran

LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb — Singer Ed Sheeran is not expecting to win a Grammy Award. The 23-year-old singer-songwriter said he is not too fussed about the 57th annual ceremony, reported the *Digital Spy*. “Just being nominated for a Grammy — all the artists say this I know — but honestly I’m not too fussed about winning,

just because I probably won’t! I never win anything,” Sheeran said.

“I won the year of the Brits because I was a male and not Adele — she won everything else! And I got the VMA because Pharrell didn’t turn up [and] I did. They said, ‘He’s not here, do you want it?’,” he added.

The ‘Don’t’ singer is nominated for three Grammy Awards this year: Best Pop Vocal Album, Album of the Year and Best Song Written For Visual Media. Sheeran also tipped Sam Smith as his favourite.

“I think Sam will win a large amount of them. I don’t think he’s gonna walk away with nothing.”

PTI

I did a lot which I am not proud of: Justin Bieber

LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb — Pop star Justin Bieber has admitted he had been putting on a front that made him seem “arrogant or conceited”. The 20-year-old singer, who appeared on ‘The Ellen DeGeneres Show’, said he has just been pretending to be that way as he tries to navigate becoming an adult.

“It was the first time I was on television for a long time and I just was worried about what people were thinking about me. “I did a lot of things over the past few years that I’m not proud of... I was just nervous to be in front of people again and talk in front of them... I thought I just



Justin Bieber

looked really extra nervous and I kinda just wanted to explain myself,” he told DeGeneres.

Bieber’s explanation on the show was largely well-received and so far picked up close to five million views. “I am a human, right?” Bieber continued.

Inarritu wins top Directors Guild Award for ‘Birdman’

LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb — Mexican filmmaker Alejandro G Inarritu won the top Directors Guild Award on Saturday for “Birdman,” his satirical take on show business, raising his and his film’s chances for Oscars in two weeks.

The Directors Guild of America’s award for feature film director has correctly predicted the best director Academy Award for 10 of the past 11 years.

“I never expected to be here tonight talking to you, never in my life,” Inarritu, 51, said alongside last year’s DGA winner, fellow Mexican Alfonso Cuarón.

The other nominees for

the DGA award were two-time winner Clint Eastwood for Iraq war drama “American Sniper,” Richard Linklater for coming-of-age tale “Boyhood,” Morten Tyldum for British World War Two story “The Imitation Game” and Wes Anderson for colorful caper “The Grand Budapest Hotel.”

The Academy Awards will be held on 22 February and voting concludes on 17 February.

Since 1948, there have been only seven occasions when the DGA award winner has not gone on to win the corresponding Academy Award. “Argo” director



Mexican film director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu poses for a portrait while promoting his upcoming movie “Birdman” in Los Angeles, California in this on 16 Dec, 2014 file photo.—REUTERS

Ben Affleck won the DGA in 2013 but was not nominated for the best director

Oscar award, which was given to Ang Lee for “Life of Pi.”—Reuters

Ryan Gosling in ‘Beauty and the Beast’ movie?

LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb — Ryan Gosling has reportedly been offered the role of beast in the new ‘Beauty and the Beast’ movie.

The ‘Notebook’ star, who made his directing debut with the upcoming ‘Lost River’, has been offered the role opposite



Ryan Gosling has been offered the role opposite Emma Watson.—REUTERS

Emma Watson, reported Ace Showbiz quoting Tracking Board.

Watson has already confirmed her role as beauty in the Disney movie. “I will be playing Belle in Disney’s new live-action Beauty and the Beast!” she told her fans on Facebook

in January. “It almost feels surreal that I’ll get to dance to ‘Be Our Guest’ and sing ‘Something There’,” she continued, “Time to start some singing lessons. I can’t wait for you to see it.” Bill Condon is directing the film.

PTI

More women directors needed in Hollywood: Jodie Foster

LOS ANGELES, 8 Feb — Actress director Jodie Foster feels more women are needed behind the camera in Hollywood to change things.

The actress, who started acting when she was just three, has seen a lot of positive changes in the industry but feels more needs to be done for equality, reported *People* magazine.

“When I was growing up in the film business, I never saw a woman’s face,” Foster said during a film festival.

“Sometimes it was the lady who played my mom. Or occasionally it would be a makeup artist. But most often it would really just be

me and the script supervisor.

“And little by little, as time went on, a few female faces started coming onto crews. And it changed everything.”

The 52-year-old star

still thinks that there is a long way to go.

“There aren’t enough women directors. And hopefully that will change. And perhaps that will change with this next generation.”—PTI



Actress director Jodie Foster feels more women are needed behind the camera in Hollywood to change things.—PTI

Hollywood’s movie tech wizards honoured by Oscars organizers

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif, 8 Feb — From the team who made it possible to digitally curl and trim outrageous hair in “The Hobbit” trilogy to the inventors of a high-speed car chase camera used in James Bond film “Casino Royale”, some of the most ingenious behind-the-scenes innovators were celebrated at a pre-Oscars ceremony on Saturday night.

Two weeks before the Oscars, the Academy of Mo-

tion Picture Arts and Sciences handed out its Scientific and Technical Achievement Awards to the visual effects, sound and technical wizards whose work behind the camera is a vital but often unheralded part of making movies. While the Academy Awards on 22 February will present Oscars to actors, directors and others who worked on films released in 2014, the yearly scientific and technical awards honour

those who have contributed to the process of film making over a longer period of time, sometimes decades.

Presenting the awards were a pair who have had recent breakthrough roles in front of the camera: Margot Robbie, in “The Wolf of Wolf Street”, and Miles Teller, the star of “Whiplash”, a current best picture nominee. Robbie thanked the audience for making movies “stunning”.

The Beverly Hills event gave awards to 58 individuals for 21 scientific and technical achievements. These usually consist of plaques or certificates but on Saturday two Oscar statuettes were presented, one to veteran sound engineer and Dolby Laboratories executive David W Gray for his groundbreaking work on movie sound. Gray, whose statuette came with the Gordon E Sawyer lifetime technical

achievement award, has dozens of film credits, including sound work on the 1983 hit “Flashdance” and the 1988 action blockbuster “Die Hard” starring Bruce Willis.

He thanked his children “for understanding that dad’s a geek and a complete workaholic.” Also receiving an award was a team that developed SpeedTree, a software that creates virtual vegetation and has been used in the movies “Avatar” and

“The Great Gatsby”.

Other honourees were the inventors of the MOVA Facial Performance Capture system that records every movement of an actor’s face, enabling facial movements to be reproduced or altered. It has been used in movies including “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button” in 2008 for Brad Pitt’s aging facial effects. That film won the visual effects Oscar.

Reuters

GENERAL

Juve continue title charge by easily beating Milan

MILAN, 7 Feb — Juventus continued their charge towards a fourth successive Serie A title as they predictably swept aside AC Milan 3-1 on Saturday to complete a league double over their old rivals.

Carlos Tevez, Leonardo Bonucci and Alvaro Morata shared the Juventus goals while Luca Antonelli briefly equalised for Milan, who were comprehensively outplayed despite occasional moments of promise.

After Morata added the third in the 65th minute, it became a case of whether increasingly ragged Milan could keep the score respectable.

Juventus, in danger of turning Serie A into a one-horse race, moved 10 points clear of second-placed AS Roma, who visit Cagliari on Sunday (2:00 pm).

Milan, beaten 1-0 by Juventus at San Siro earlier in the season, are stuck in joint ninth alongside Genoa after losing four of their six league games since the mid-season break.

"We played a good game but, unfortunately,



Juventus' Paul Pogba (L) and Andrea Pirlo fight for the ball with AC Milan's Keisuke Honda during their Italian Serie A soccer match at Juventus Stadium in Turin, on 7 Feb, 2015. — REUTERS

we gave away too many chances and set pieces because we weren't concentrated enough," said Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri, who was fired by Milan just over a year ago.

Tevez opened the scoring with his 14th league goal of the season, running from the halfway line and slotting the ball past Diego Lopez after Morata's lobbed pass

sent him clear in the 14th minute. Gabriel Paletta gave chase but it was always a lost cause.

Antonelli, making his debut following his move from Genoa, headed Milan level from a corner in the 28th minute but that only shook Juventus back into action and Bonucci flicked in Tevez's header to put them back in front three

minutes later. The defender tripped over the advertising hoardings as he celebrated the goal. "We reacted like a great team after the Milan goal," he said. "That's Juventus, we know how to react at the right moment."

Morata completed the job when he fired in the rebound after a long-range Claudio Marchisio shot cannoned off the post.—Reuters

Gerrard's Everton rivalry ends in tame stalemate



Steven Gerrard of Liverpool has a shot at the Everton goal during their English Premier League soccer match at Goodison Park, Liverpool, on 7 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

LONDON, 8 Feb — In the Steven Gerrard scrapbook of Merseyside Derby memories, he is unlikely to reserve a page for what is probably his last local hurrah. A 0-0 Premier League draw against old foes Everton at Goodison Park is not how the Liverpool captain would have dreamt about signing off from the rivals' habitual battle for superiority.

Having terrorised Everton for the best part of 16 years, Saturday's clash was a rare occasion when Gerrard, fresh from making his 700th club appearance, had little or no impact.

An overhead kick that was deflected over the bar

was as near as he came to making a mark in a game that will be swiftly forgotten by all who watched it.

If anything, the Liverpool skipper was upstaged by 19-year-old wide player Jordan Ibe. He was making his first start since returning from a loan spell at second tier Derby County and came as close as anyone to making an impact when he rattled the post with a 25-metre effort in the first half of a man-of-the-match performance. "He did fantastic," Gerrard told Sky Sports.

"He only found out he was playing yesterday so to have 24 hours to prepare for a big game like this. He was man of the match.—Reuters

Toure absence leaves City title hopes in the balance

LONDON, 8 Feb — When Manchester City boss Manuel Pellegrini carries out his post-season analysis, he will quickly be able to pinpoint that the wheels came off their campaign when Yaya Toure left for the African Nations Cup.

City are without a victory since Toure departed at the start of January and their 1-1 draw at home to Hull City on Saturday was their fourth consecutive winless Premier League game, leaving them seven points adrift

of Chelsea at the top.

It is not an irretrievable margin, but they look incapable of making inroads into that deficit at present, although Ivorian Toure is back



Yaya Toure is challenged by Guinea's Kevin Constant during Group D soccer match of the 2015 African Cup of Nations in Malabo on 20 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

from the Nations Cup soon. "It is frustrating because I think the team worked a lot in the game and had good possession.

We did all we could to win but we are not in high performance in the attacking zone," Pellegrini told the BBC.

"Maybe players coming back from injury -- important players will help. We need to try and find other ways to play. It is difficult to know what the reason is for the spark going.—Reuters

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Myanmar International

(9-2-2015 07:00 am~ 10-2-2015 07:00 am) MST

- | | |
|--|---|
| * Local News | * Local News |
| * A Myanmar Tapestry | * Today Myanmar |
| * World News | * "Ratten Export" |
| * The Strokes of Myanmar | * World News |
| * Local News | * Beach Food Delivery |
| * Sai Htee Hseng or an Exceptional Music Star From Shan Plateaus (I) | * Local News |
| * World News | * The Man and The Elephant |
| * School for the Blind | * World News |
| * Local News | * Goldsmith |
| * Lashio Noodle | * Local News |
| * World News | * Strolling Along A Memory Link — U Pein Bridge |
| * The Hills of Phowintaung and Shwebataung | * World News |
| * Local News | * Pyin Oo Lwin Sweater |
| * Kayah | * Local News |
| * World News | * Lisu: Their Life and Customs |
| * Photographer: Kyaw Win Hlaing | * World News |
| | * In the Studio : Ja Som (The Myth) |

MRTV

Entertainment Channel

(9-2-2015, Monday)

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| 6:00 am | 9:20 am |
| • Wut Home Music Troupe | • Pyi Thu Ni Ti |
| 6:15 am | 9:35 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • 40 th Years of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Corporation (Malaysia) |
| 6:40 am | 9:40 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • Colours of ASEAN (Malaysia) |
| 7:05 am | 9:50 am |
| • Fashion Show | • ASEAN Cultural Fair 2014 (Malaysia) |
| 7:25 am | 10:00 am |
| • Teleplay | • Musical Programme |
| 7:45 am | 10:15 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • Myanmar Video |
| 8:25 am | |
| • TV Drama Series | |
| 9:05 am | |
| • Musical Programme | |

MRTV

News Channel in Brief

(9-2-2015, Monday)

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| 6:00 am | 4:35 pm |
| • Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw | • University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Second Year (Maths) |
| 7:00 am | 5:00 pm |
| • News/ Weather Report | • News / Weather Report |
| 7:35 am | 5:35 pm |
| • Weekly Entertainment | • Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society) |
| 8:30 am | 6:00 pm |
| • Head Line News | • News / Weather Report |
| 9:35 am | 6:35 pm |
| • Documentary (ASEAN) | • Socio Economic Scenes |
| 10:35 am | 7:00 pm |
| • Business News | • News |
| 11:35 am | 7:35 pm |
| • MRTV's Youth Programme | • People Talks |
| 12:00 noon | 7:50 pm |
| • News / International News / Weather Report | • (100) Birthday Anniversary Boygoke Aung San |
| 12:35 pm | 8:00 pm |
| • Game For Children | • News / International News / Weather Report |
| 1:05 pm | 9:00 pm |
| • Tasty Trip | • News / International News / Weather Report |
| 2:20 pm | • Hluttaw Image |
| • 68 th Anniversary Union Day Programme | • TV Drama Series |
| 3:35 pm | |
| • Documentary | |

Chelsea power seven points clear as City are held

LONDON, 8 Feb — Chelsea landed a potentially decisive blow in the title race with a 2-1 win at Aston Villa on Saturday that put them seven points clear of Manchester City who hit the self-destruct button in a 1-1 draw at home to Hull City.

It briefly looked like both the top two may drop points when Villa ended a near 11-hour goal drought to level the scores at Villa Park but a thunderous finish from Branislav Ivanovic maximised the embarrassment for Chelsea's main title rivals.

City needed a stoppage-time free kick from James Milner to rescue a point against relegation-threatened Hull but it still left them winless since the start of the month when midfielder Yaya Toure packed his bags for the African Nations Cup.

Prolific Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane marked his first north London derby against Arsenal with a double strike that hauled his side back from a goal down to win 2-1, moving them above their neighbours into fifth place in the Premier League.

Southampton scored deep into stoppage time to beat Queens Park Rangers 1-0 and climb back into third place in an increasingly congested scrap for a



Loic Remy (L) of Chelsea is challenged by Aly Cissokho of Aston Villa during their English Premier League soccer match at Villa Park, Birmingham on 7 Feb, 2015.

REUTERS

top-four finish.

Liverpool, in seventh spot, dropped further off the pace with a soporific goalless stalemate against Everton at Goodison Park.

Manchester City manager Manuel Pellegrini thought last week's draw at Chelsea might prove a turning point after a dismal January but their recent failings were again in evidence against Hull.

Their defence was again exposed by Hull's gentle probing and when the visitors hit the wood-

work early on, it was not a wake-up call but a warning and David Meyler gobbled up a rebound to give them the lead after 35 minutes.

When City waved goodbye to Toure they could not have imagined they would not win a league game in his absence.

Again they struggled for inspiration in midfield and looked likely to drop all three points until Milner curled home from 25 metres.

If they wanted a les-

son in how to manage the relentless pursuit of points that you need to win the league, it was provided by Chelsea.

Jose Mourinho's side took the lead when their terrific triumvirate of Oscar, Willian and Eden Hazard all linked up, with the latter sliding in to finish after eight minutes.

One goal has usually been enough to beat Villa in recent weeks but they found the net, after drawing a blank in their last six games, when centre back

Jores Okore headed in from six metres but parity lasted only until Ivanovic drilled home.

It was a maiden victory for Mourinho at Villa Park and took his team to 56 points from 24 games — not that complacency is part of the Portuguese's vocabulary.

"It is one more hurdle in the title race but there are many more," Mourinho told the BBC.

"Every game is difficult. It is possibly the only league in Europe where teams from the bottom can play against the top ones and not just make things difficult but win points."

A Tottenham win against an Arsene Wenger Arsenal side is a relatively rare occurrence, which made Kane's double strike

all the sweeter for the home fans.

The derby looked like following a familiar pattern when Mesut Ozil put Arsenal ahead but Kane levelled with a tap-in from close range before producing a superb header to give Spurs 43 points, one ahead of Arsenal.

Sadio Mane lashed the ball home to lift Southampton up to third with 45 points, six clear of Liverpool who drew with Everton in a lifeless clash that was probably Steven Gerrard's last involvement in a Merseyside derby.

Crystal Palace's resurgence under Alan Pardew continued with a 1-0 win at Leicester City while Swansea City and Sunderland drew 1-1.

Reuters



Harry Kane of Tottenham Hotspur celebrates scoring his second goal against Arsenal during their English Premier League soccer match at White Hart Lane, London on 7 Feb, 2015. —REUTERS

Atletico rout Real 4-0 in derby

BARCELONA, 8 Feb — Atletico Madrid tore apart city rivals Real Madrid 4-0 at home to open up the La Liga title race on Saturday in a triumph crowned by a spectacular overhead kick goal by Saul Niguez.

The champions are now four points behind Real at the top and sit level with Barcelona, who visit Athletic Bilbao on Sunday, but coach Diego Simeone remains pragmatic about their chances of retaining the title.



Atletico Madrid's Arda Turan (L) challenges Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo during their Spanish first division soccer match at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid, on 7 Feb, 2015. —REUTERS

"We still need to keep going match by match and see what happens," he told a news conference.

"A coach can interpret the game in many different ways but it is the players that need to execute the ideas and they were brilliant. I have to thank the players for the way they played. They were solid and serious and we need to keep going this way."

Real, who were missing key players defensively but had Cristiano Ronaldo back from suspension, began sluggishly and goalkeeper Iker Casillas was at fault when he allowed a Tiago Cardoso shot to slip under his right hand after 13 minutes.

The goal still did not wake up Real and they quickly conceded another through Saul, who netted in exquisite fashion having come on for the injured Koke.

Guilherme Siqueira sped down the left wing, Saul met his cross with a bicycle kick and the ball flew in off the post.

Atletico continued to create chances and Antoine Griezmann

went close several times before bundling in a Saul header from close range after 66 minutes with Raphael Varane slow to react.

Mario Mandzukic further punished the Real defence with a header from a Fernando Torres cross late on.

Atletico have now beaten Real in the domestic Super Cup, twice in the league and knocked them out of the King's Cup since losing the last Champions League final to their neighbours.

A defiant Cristiano Ronaldo said Real are still the stronger side and will finish first in the title race.

"I don't know why we haven't won the recent games against Atletico," Ronaldo told reporters.

"Before it was Atletico that found it difficult to win and now it is us. These things go in cycles and we need to be more positive. "They have a strong team but we are better and we need to show it. We will win the league again."

Real went into the game without injured centre backs Pepe and Sergio Ramos, as well as left back Marcelo who was suspended, and they never looked com-

fortable defensively.

Atletico consistently surged forward and in particular the in-form Griezmann found plenty of space.

They lost a key creative player in Koke early on but it failed to interrupt Atletico's impetus while Real were strangely subdued.

Atletico continued to threaten and they ran away with the game in the second half.

"First we have to say sorry to the fans. We were not good enough and we have to congratulate the opposition because they were better," Real full back Dani Carvajal told reporters.

"Maybe the first 30 minutes were the worst we have played at Real Madrid as we were open at the back and we didn't create chances."

Elsewhere, Mateo Musacchio and Gerard Moreno scored for sixth-placed Villarreal, who beat Granada 2-0.

David Barral scored a hat-trick in Levante's 4-1 win over Malaga and a late goal from Nolito gave Celta Vigo a 1-1 draw at Real Sociedad.

Reuters