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Message from U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Mr. Vladimir V Putin, President of the Russian Federation on the Occasion of the 65th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and Russia

On the auspicious occasion of the 65th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Russian Federation, on behalf of the government and people of Myanmar and myself, I have the honour to extend to Your Excellency and, through you, to the government and people of the Russian Federation our warmest congratulations and best wishes for the continued friendship and cooperation existing between our two countries and peoples.

(See page 9)

Message from Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, President of the Russian Federation to U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the Occasion of the 65th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and Russia

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations of the occasion of 65th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and Myanmar.

During the passed period our countries have obtained vast experience of constructive cooperation, I am confident that on this basis we will continue active cooperation work aimed at enhancing the whole complex of bilateral ties.

May I wish you health, happiness and success and send best wishes of prosperity and well-being to the friendly people of Myanmar.

President U Thein Sein meets Chin State government, departmental heads, townselders

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb—President U Thein Sein met Chin State government, officials and townselders at the state government office in Haka this morning.

The meeting was also attended by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and party, Union ministers, chief ministers of Sagaing Region and Chin State, deputy ministers, the State Hluttaw speaker and deputy speaker, MPs, the state chief justice, the state advocate-general, the state auditor-general and officials.

The President said his tour is aimed at fulfilling the needs of the local people in Chin State.

Union Ministers U Tin

Naing Thein, U Win Tun, U Ohn Myint, Dr Mya Aye, Dr Ko Ko Oo, Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Khin Yi and U Hla Tun, and Deputy Ministers Dr Win Myint, U Soe Tint and Maj-Gen Zaw Win elaborated on the government's reform measures and works in cooperation with Chin State government.

The President in his concluding remarks pointed out that the region and state governments are important because they take charge of development of their own regions.

The President said human resource development plays a key role in development of the country, calling for schooling every child in



Republic of the Union of Myanmar President U Thein Sein wearing traditional costumes being welcomed by local people in Mindat on his inspection tour of Chin State.—MNA



Chin State. He said he was heartened by the fact that half of students at Kalay University are Chin nationals.

He said Chin State has sound foundation for

the stability and the rule of law.

He cordially greeted townselders of Haka and Thantlang Townships.

The President presented K 10 million and 200 bags of rice provided by the Ministry of Border

Affairs for Chin State.

The President arrived at Mindat in the evening and briefed on reform processes in meeting with officials and townselders.

The President arrived back here via Pakokku in the evening.—MNA

President U Thein Sein holds discussion with Chin State government, officials and townselders at the state government office in Haka.—MNA

Weather outlook for subsequent two days

Continuation of likelihood of light rain or thundershowers in the Northern Myanmar areas.

NLM

Shuttle service to and from Shwesettaw Pagoda launched

MAGWAY, 17 Feb — As Buddha Pujaniya festival of Shwesettaw Pagoda in Minbu Township of Magway Region started from 15 February, a shuttle service between Magway and the Pagoda is being operated by Aung Gaba bus line.

Although pilgrims from

every corner of the country have to take Minbu buses for the Pagoda, they, will now be able to visit the Pagoda on the shuttle. As of 14 February, Aung Gaba bus line operated a shuttle service with mini buses that leave for Shwesettaw Pagoda from Magway city on 7.30 am

and for Magway City from Shwesettaw on 3.30 pm. Bus fare is K 2500 per head.

The bus line provides a private transport service for families and groups of pilgrims. A local said that newly-upgraded Magway-Shwesettaw road ensured smooth transport of pilgrims to and from the Pagoda. Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival will be held up to 1st Waning of Tagu. —

Kyemon



One-year-old child found abandoned in empty box in Bago Myoma market



BAGO, 17 Feb — Being informed of an abandoned child by Security Head of Myoma Market U Than Win in Bago on 11 February, Zay ward Administrator U Aung Soe together with U Chan Aye and the security head went to the market where a baby boy was found abandoned inside an empty box at a shop. The abandoned child is believed to be one-

year-old.

While the child was under the care of responsible persons at the ward administrator's office, a person who declined to be named took the deserted baby for adoption. Officials concerned scrutinized the person and the adoption process was made in the presence of witnesses.

Kyemon

Narcotic drug seized in Indaw

INDAW, 17 Feb — According to a tip-off, police officers led by Inspector Zaw Win of Mawlu Police Station seized about 2.5 gram of

white powder believed to be heroine from Ma Chaw Su of Myaypalin Village while making a body search near a bridge, west of the village with the help of two women

witnesses on 10 February.

Regarding the case, Ma Chaw Su was charged with the possession of narcotic drug and necessary measures are being made to bring the case to court.

Kyemon



Photo shows a herd of 94 Rucervus eldii deer called 'Shwe Thamin' in Myanmar on 4 February. Shwesettaw wildlife sanctuary and Tatmadaw cotton growing zone provide a natural habitat for them. It is learnt that four herbs of deer are under protection in the area. Such kind of deer are locally-bred species which are under the law of protection of the wildlife and natural plants and conservation of natural forest reserves. They can be seen in Chatthin wildlife sanctuary and Shwesettaw wildlife sanctuary.—KYEMON

First India-Myanmar domestic arts show on 20-24 February

MANDALAY, 17 Feb — Mandalay Region government and the Indian Consulate in Myanmar will jointly-conduct the First India-Myanmar domestic arts show at Mandalay National Theatre from 20 to 24 February from 10 am to 6 pm.

In his press meet with media persons in Mandalay, Indian Consul Dr. Madam Mohan Sethi said bamboo-based domestic art works and textiles of hand-woven textile and handicrafts development corporation

of trade department of Manipur under the Ministry of Textile Industry of India and paintings, sculptures, embroideries of Myanmar National Culture and Fine Arts University will be on display at the show.

The show is intended to promote friendship between the two countries and to ensure bilateral economic prospects. Moreover, Myanmar products will be allowed to be displayed in Manipur of India in April.

Kyemon

Dredging of well claims two lives in Taninthayi Township

YANGON, 17 Feb — Two villagers died while dredging a well in Thayet Village of Taninthayi Region on 12 February.

As Maung Toe Nge who was at the top of the well found U Aye Nge, 47, and Maung Linn Zaw, 22, unconscious in the well which is 10 feet in diameter and 50 feet in depth at about 5 pm on that day, he shouted for help. Villagers rushed there and tried to rescue them. Although they were taken back on the ground, they were pronounced dead at about 5.45 pm.

MNA

Development works of Mohnyin District inspected

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb — On his inspection tour of worksite of construction of two new school buildings for Mohnyin Degree College on 10 February, Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai called for timely completion of construction works, meeting set standards.

Next, the chief minister met with the executive

officer and staff of Mohnyin Township Development Affairs Department at the office in Sein Yadana Mon ward and left necessary instructions. He also oversaw construction of new school building for Basic Education High School No (1) in Ashesu ward and shops of Aung Thabye market which are under construction.—MNA



Photo shows children under aged five being given Vitamin A and iron tablets by a health staff of Mayin Gyi Village health centre at the office of News and Periodicals Enterprise on Khayaybin feeder road in Zeyathiri Township on 15 February.—KYEMON

Sagaing Township sees thriving wheat plantations

SAGAING, 17 Feb — Wheat cultivation thrives in Nyaungbinshe Village of Sagaing Township, Sagaing Region. "Wheat plants are used to be grown when the region had a high rainfall. Later, wheat growing has been successful with the help of water supply from the tube wells in the farmlands.

We are expecting a good harvest to be able to cover the agricultural costs. Wheat can be harvested after three and a half or four months. Some wheat growers who are not affordable to dig a tube well are to coordinate with other tube well owners for their plantations", a local said.

Kyemon

Three-hour electricity cut in wards of Mandalay

MANDALAY, 17 Feb — About 70 percent of national electricity production rests on hydropower plants of the country. Adequate electricity supply had been made by the Ministry of Electric Power in monsoon

and winter seasons so far. Arrangements have been made to avoid power blackouts ahead of the rainy season. A request had been made for avoidance of electric power use in industrial zones and cottage

industries in wards while public electricity consumption reaches its peak from 5 to 11 pm. Besides, a scheme of alternate three-hour electricity cut is set up daily in ward of Mandalay.

Kyemon

WORLD

UN says delayed Congo peace deal due to be signed 24 February



US Secretary of State John Kerry (R) gestures to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon as they make remarks to the media before their bilateral meeting at the State Department in Washington on 14 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

UNITED NATIONS, 17 Feb — A delayed UN-mediated peace deal aimed at ending two decades of conflict in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is due to be signed in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa on 24 February, the United Nations said on Saturday.

African leaders failed to sign the deal last month due to the concerns of some countries over who would command a new regional

force that would deploy in eastern Congo and take on armed groups operating in the conflict-torn region.

The so-called intervention brigade would be contained within the existing UN peacekeeping force in Congo, known as MONUSCO. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon sent out invitations on Friday for the 24 February signing ceremony and intended to travel to Ethiopia for the event, his spokesman,

Martin Nesirky, said. “All the invited presidents have committed to either be there or delegate power to sign,” Nesirky said.

Rwandan Deputy UN Ambassador Olivier Nduhungirehe posted on Twitter that the “African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Southern African Development Community Chairs, as well as 10 Heads of States of the region will attend the signing ceremony.”

Envoys have said that one of the main reasons the deal was not signed in January was that three countries in the 15-member Southern African Development Community regional bloc—South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique—felt they did not have enough information on the enforcement brigade.

The creation of an enforcement brigade within a UN peacekeeping mission is new for the United Nations, according to officials in the world body.—Reuters

UNOSAT, IGAD ink partnership on disaster reduction

NAIROBI, 17 Feb—The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)’s Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UN- SAT) have signed a partnership deal for disaster reduction and emergency preparedness in the region.

The deal will enable IGAD and UNITAR to work together to leverage the know-how of UNOSAT to develop the capacity of the organization and its members to use geospatial technologies and remote sensing to enhance planning, emergency preparedness, and prevention across the region.

“Our common goal is to do something concrete to improve disaster risk reduction in the region by mainstreaming the use of this technology in various thematic areas and to ensure that strategic decision making is done also on the basis of objective geographic information and analysis coming from the organization

and its member countries,” head of UNOSAT Einar Bjorgo said in a statement received on Saturday.

The partnership comes as the attention of the international community turns once again to the importance of building resilience through capacity development, UNOSAT and IGAD have launched into a project to do just that, with a practical focus on the use of geospatial technologies to improve disaster reduction in East Africa.

The activity uses a results-based management approach that allows

UNOSAT experts and the beneficiary to monitor progress and impact as activities are implemented.

UNOSAT has also hired one expert-based in Nairobi to help follow the implementation from within the region while also providing direct support to the IGAD Secretariat and its components, which will draw additional benefits from the project, like the Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) and the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC).—Xinhua

People look for career opportunities at a job fair in Yiwu, east China’s Zhejiang Province, on 16 Feb, 2013. China has begun to see a resurgence in the number of both employers and job seekers after the week-long Spring Festival holiday.

XINHUA



Bomb kills 64 in Pakistan’s Quetta

QUETTA, 17 Feb — Sixty-four people including school children died on Saturday in a bomb attack carried out by extremists from Pakistan’s Sunni Muslim majority, police said.

A spokesman for Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a Sunni group, claimed responsibility for the bomb in Quetta, which caused casualties in the town’s main bazaar, a school and a computer centre. Police said most of the victims were Shi’ites.

Burned school bags and books were strewn around.

“The explosion was caused by an improvised explosive device fitted to a motorcycle,” said Wazir Khan Nasir, deputy



Smoke rises after a bomb attack in a Shi’ite Muslim area of the Pakistani city of Quetta on 16 Feb, 2013.

REUTERS

inspector general of police in Quetta.

“This is a continuation of terrorism against Shi’ites.”

“I saw many bodies of women and children,” said an eyewitness at a hospital.

“At least a dozen people were burned to death by the blast.”

Most Western intelligence agencies have regarded the Pakistani Taliban and al-Qaeda as the gravest threat to nuclear-armed

Pakistan, a strategic US ally.

But Pakistani law enforcement officials say Lashkar-e-Jhangvi has become a formidable force.

Last month the group said it carried out a bombing in Quetta that killed nearly 100 people, one of Pakistan’s worst sectarian attacks. Thousands of Shi’ites protested in several cities after that attack.

Pakistani intelligence officials say extremist groups, led by Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, have escalated their bombings and shootings of Shi’ites to trigger violence that would pave the way for a Sunni theocracy in US-allied Pakistan.

Reuters

Afghan forces ready to secure country after 2014

KABUL, 17 Feb — Afghan President Hamid Karzai reiterated on Saturday that the Afghan security forces are entirely ready to ensure national security after NATO-led forces withdraw from the country by the end of 2014.

“Once the foreigners leave, Afghans will demonstrate to the world that they are able to secure the country and provide security for the nations,” Karzai said in his speech delivered at an army officers’s gathering at Afghan National Military Academy.

“Our national security forces are entirely ready to take security charge by the end of 2014,” Karzai said. “Afghans do not need foreign forces for the defence of their country.”

Transition of security responsibilities from NATO-led forces to Afghan army and police began in mid-2011 and lasts till 2014 when Afghanistan is due to take over its full security duties from US and NATO-led forces.

Currently there are about 100,000-strong foreign forces, with nearly

66,000 of them Americans in the country.

Under the US President Barack Obama’s withdrawal plan 33,000 US troops already pulled out of Afghanistan in September last year and another 34,000 will return home within one year.

The Afghan leader also called on Taliban and other insurgent groups to renounce violence and join the government-initiated peace and reconciliation process.

The Taliban, whose regime was ousted by a US-led invasion in late 2001, has renewed armed insurgency since then, staging roadside and suicide bomb attacks, killing combatants as well as civilians.

However, the Taliban has repeatedly turned down government’s offer for peace talks, saying there will be no dialogue with the government in the presence of foreign troops in the country.

According to Karzai, even if the NATO-led forces leave Afghanistan, international financial support for the war-ravaged country will stay.

Reuters

Obama touts building rising, thriving middle class

WASHINGTON, 17 Feb — US President Barack Obama on Saturday stressed the importance of building a rising and thriving middle class as the engine of US economic growth.

The United States should endeavor to bring more manufacturing jobs back from overseas and launch manufacturing hubs across the nation to transform some regions into global centers of high-tech

jobs and manufacturing, Obama said in his weekly address.

“We need to invest in the research and technology that will allow us to harness more of our own energy and put more people back to work repairing our crumbling roads and bridges,” Obama said after wrapping up a three-day road trip to sell initiatives in his State of the Union address on Tuesday night.

“We need to make our tax code more competitive, ending tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, and rewarding companies that create jobs here at home,” he reiterated the message unveiled in his first of State of the Union address in his second term.

“No one in America should work full-time and raise their children in poverty,” argued Obama, adding that the nation

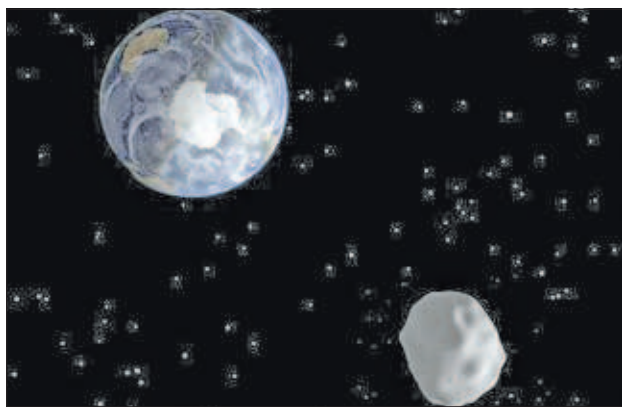
should raise federal minimum wage to 9 US dollars per hour by 2015 from the current 7.25 dollars.

However, the proposal to raise federal minimum wage appeared to have little chance to pass the Republican-led House of Representatives, as top GOP lawmakers including US House Speaker John Boehner opposed it.

Xinhua

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

In a rarity, a meteor hit and an asteroid near-miss on same day



The passage of asteroid 2012 DA14 through the Earth-moon system, is depicted in this handout image from NASA. On 15 Feb, 2013, an asteroid, 150 feet (45 meters) in diameter will pass close, but safely, by Earth. The flyby creates a unique opportunity for researchers to observe and learn more about asteroids.—REUTERS

BOSTON, 17 Feb—An asteroid half the size of a football field passed closer to Earth than any other known object of its size on Friday, the same day an unrelated and much smaller space rock blazed over central Russia, creating shock waves that shattered windows and injured 1,200 people. Asteroid 2012 DA14, discovered just last year, passed about 17,200 miles from Earth at 2:25 pm EST (1925 GMT), closer than the networks of television and weather satellites that ring the planet.

“It’s like a shooting gallery here. We have two rare events of near-Earth objects approaching the Earth on the same day,” NASA scientist Paul Chodas said during a webcast showing live images of the asteroid from a telescope in Australia. Scientists said the two events, both rare, are not related—the body that exploded over Chelyabinsk, Russia, at 10:20 pm EST on Thursday (0320 GMT Friday) came from a different direction and different speed than DA14. “It’s simply a coincidence,”

Chodas said.

NASA has been tasked by the US Congress to find and track all near-Earth objects that are 62 miles in diameter or larger. The effort is intended to give scientists and engineers as much time as possible to learn if an asteroid or comet is on a collision course with Earth, in hopes of sending up a spacecraft or taking other measures to avert catastrophe. About 66 million years ago, an object 6 miles in diameter smashed into what is now the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico, leading to the demise of the dinosaurs, as well as most plant and animal life on Earth.

Scientists estimate that only about 10 percent of smaller objects, such as DA14, have been found. “Things that are that tiny are very hard to see. Their orbits are very close to that of the Earth,” said Paul Dimotakis, a professor of aeronautics and applied physics at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. Asteroid DA14, for example, was discovered last year, and it was found serendipitously by a group of amateur astronomers.—Reuters

AT&T wins ruling in price-fixing suit against LCD makers

NEW YORK, 17 Feb—AT&T on Thursday won a ruling from a federal appeals court in a lawsuit against liquid crystal display panel makers alleging a price-fixing conspiracy. The 9th Circuit US Court of Appeals in San Francisco reinstated AT&T’s claims based on California law over panel purchases outside the state. The decision reversed a lower court partial dismissal of AT&T’s lawsuit.

The manufacturer defendants, including Taiwan-based AU Optonics Corporation and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, had argued that AT&T’s claims violated the due process clause of the US Constitution. The three-judge panel

for the 9th Circuit disagreed. It found that California’s antitrust statute, the Cartwright Act, can be applied to the defendants as long as some of the conspiratorial activity leading to sale of price-fixed goods took place in the state.

Richard Taffet, an attorney for the defendants, declined to comment. AT&T spokesman Marty Richter said the company was pleased with the ruling. AT&T’s lawsuit is one of several that have been filed against LCD makers for allegedly fixing prices. Those companies also have been the subject of a US criminal probe. Last year, a jury in California convicted AU and two of its executives.

Reuters

A view shows the AT&T store sign in Broomfield, Colorado on 20 April, 2011. REUTERS



News Corp, popular tech blog contemplate split

NEW YORK, 17 Feb — AllThingsD, the widely read technology blog run by Kara Swisher and Walt Mossberg, has begun discussions with owner News Corp about extending or ending their partnership, sources familiar with the situation told Reuters. According to these sources, AllThingsD’s contract with News Corp expires at the end of the year. One of the sources said Swisher and Mossberg have to deliver a business plan by next week to Robert Thomson, the former Wall Street Journal managing editor who will helm News Corp’s publishing unit as CEO after it is spun off.

The fact that AllThingsD’s contract is up this year is well known, and sources said the website is receiving a lot of “inbound interest” from potential buyers parallel to its talks with News Corp. Among the names mentioned as having reached out to AllThingsD were Conde Nast, where Swisher recently signed to work as a contributing writer for Vanity Fair, and Hearst. Sources also speculated that former Yahoo and

News Corp executive Ross Levinsohn might be looking at the website given his new role as Chief Executive of Guggenheim Digital Media, which comes complete with “significant capital to acquire and invest in new media companies.”

The private equity shop already owns Billboard,

emails to Ross Levinsohn were not returned. While AllThingsD is recognized as the brainchild of Swisher and Mossberg, News Corp actually owns the website and its name. However, according to provisions in their contract, Swisher and Mossberg have approval authority over any sale, the



A passer-by stands in front of the News Corporation building in New York on 28 June, 2012.—REUTERS

Hollywood Reporter, and Adweek. AllThingsD has reported that AOL expressed interest in acquiring it in the past, but said those talks “were preliminary at best.” Calls to AllThingsD were referred to a News Corp representative who declined comment. A Conde Nast representative declined comment. Calls to Hearst were not immediately returned. Calls and

first source said.

Technically, News Corp could retain the AllThingsD name in the event of a sale, forcing Swisher and Mossberg to start a new venture under a different brand name. But historically in these types of situations a deal is usually worked out to allow the founders to take the company name with them as part of a settlement.—Reuters

Aquarium fights to get disabled turtle swimming again

KOBE, 17 Feb—Life looked grim for Yu, a loggerhead turtle, when she washed up in a Japanese fishing net five years ago, her front flippers shredded after a brutal encounter with a shark. Now keepers at an aquarium in the western Japanese city of Kobe are looking for a high-tech solution that will allow the 25-year-old turtle to swim normally again after years of labour and 27 models of prosthetic fins behind them without achieving their goal.

Yu, weighing 103 kg (227 pounds) and 82 cm (32 inches) long, first came to the attention of keepers at the Suma Aqualife Park in Kobe after she was rushed there from a port on the southern island of Shikoku in 2008. “She was in a really bad way. More than half her fins were gone and

she was bleeding, her body covered with shark bites,” said Naoki Kamezaki, the park’s director general. After nursing

with money short, Kamezaki said he sometimes felt like packing it in. “There have been times I wanted to give up and just

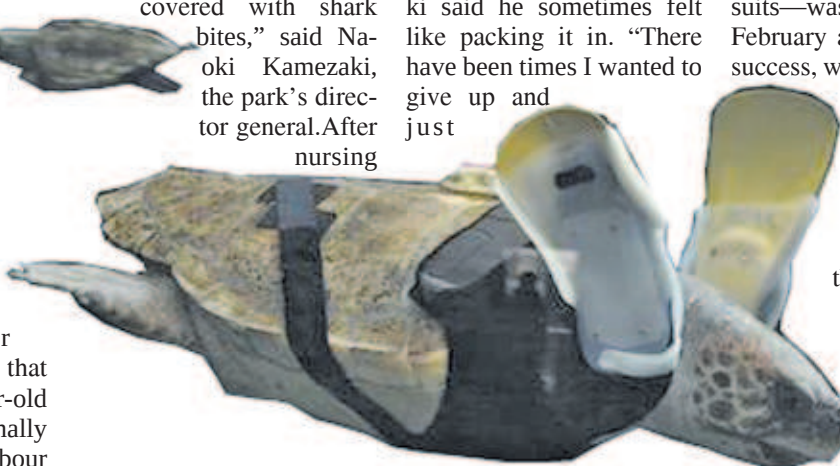
material used in diving wet-suits—was unveiled on 11 February and proclaimed a success, with Yu swimming smoothly around her tank.

But on Friday, one flipper slipped out as soon as she hit the water, forcing keepers back to the laboratory again.

Though Kamezaki admits that it’s unlikely Yu will ever live a normal turtle life, he still has hopes. “My dream for her is that one day she can use her prosthetic fins to swim to the surface, walk about, and dig a proper hole to lay her eggs in,” Kamezaki said. “When her children hatch, well, I just feel that would make all the trauma in her life worthwhile.”

Reuters

A 25-year-old female loggerhead turtle named Yu swims after receiving her 27th pair of prosthetic flippers at the Suma Aqualife Park in Kobe, western Japan on 11 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS



the loggerhead—an endangered species—back to health, keepers enlisted the help of researchers and a local prosthetics-maker to get her swimming again.

Early versions of prosthetic flippers caused her pain or fell off quickly, and

fix her up the best we can and throw her back in,” he told Reuters. “Then if luck’s on her side she’ll be fine, if not, she’ll get eaten and that’s just life. The way of nature, I suppose.” The latest version - made of rubber and fixed together with a

78 web pages including UGC’s blocked

NEW DELHI, 17 Feb—The web page of University Grants Commission (UGC) is among various other website links that have

been blocked on internet on the basis of a Gwalior court order after a business partner of Arindam Chaudhuri-led IIPM com-

plained about “defamatory material” about the institute published on them.

The Department of Electronics and Informa-

tion Technology (DEITY) blocked 78 web pages including that of UGC following the court order.

PTI

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Australian boys get world-first vaccinations to protect against HPV

CANBERRA, 17 Feb—Australian schoolboys have begun receiving the first of three vaccinations to protect them against cancers and disease caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), Health Minister Tanya Plibersek said on Friday. Plibersek said more than 280,000 boys will be eligible for the free Gardasil vaccine this year, which is estimated to prevent a quarter of new HPV infections. The vaccination will protect boys from cancer and genital warts,

and continue to reduce the rates of cervical cancer among women.

The Australian government, as the world's first country, announced in July that schoolboys will join more than 1 million Australian girls aged 12-16 years who have already been fully vaccinated against HPV under the school vaccination programme. "The HPV vaccine is the best protection against the HPV virus; a virus that infects four out of five sexually



active people at some point in their lives and is linked to cancer and other disease." "Because of our work in this area, Australia's HPV vaccine coverage rates are among the best in the world, resulting in a significant drop in HPV-related infections." Since the HPV

vaccination programme started in 2007 there has been a reduction in HPV-related infections in young women and a reduced incidence of genital warts in males and females. There has also been a reduction in pre-cancerous lesions in young women.—Xinhua

High-stakes cholesterol study could lift Merck cloud

NEW YORK, 17 Feb—Favourable results from a huge heart study could help redeem investors' faith in Merck & Co and its two biggest cholesterol drugs, Vytorin and Zetia, and potentially add billions of dollars in annual revenue.

Investors have soured on the No 2 US drugmaker since late December, following setbacks to a closely watched experimental drug for osteoporosis and a newer cholesterol medicine.



Those concerns come on top of investor anxiety over the outcome of the study of 18,000 heart patients called IMPROVE-IT that has contributed to Merck's shares lagging rival large drugmakers by about 10 percentage points in that short period.

An independent monitoring board is expected to complete an interim analysis of the study in March, and decide whether it should continue as planned until September 2014. Sales of Vytorin and Zetia have fallen since 2008 because of concerns about their effectiveness and safety." Reuters

GSK wins priority status for new HIV drug in US



A GlaxoSmithKline logo is seen outside one of its buildings in west London, on 6 Feb, 2008.

REUTERS

LONDON, 17 Feb—US regulators gave priority review status to an experimental GlaxoSmithKline drug for HIV/AIDS, which industry analysts view as a possible multibillion-dollar-a-year seller.

The US Food and Drug Administration awards certain drugs priority status when they have the potential to offer significant improvement over existing treatments.

The agency is due to give its verdict on whether to approve dolutegravir by August 17, Britain's biggest drugmaker said on Friday.

The once-daily drug, which belongs to a novel class known as integrase inhibitors that block the virus causing AIDS from entering cells, is owned by ViiV Healthcare, a joint venture focused on HIV in which GSK is the largest shareholder.

The new medicine

has already performed strongly in clinical trials, prompting GSK to raise its bet on the product last October by redrawing a deal with Japan's Shionogi. Under that agreement Shionogi agreed to take a 10 percent stake in ViiV—which was set up in 2009 between GSK and Pfizer—in exchange for its shared rights to dolutegravir.

The agreement left GSK holding 76.5 percent of ViiV, with Pfizer controlling 13.5 percent and Shionogi the remainder. Analysts see dolutegravir as a strong competitor to HIV treatments from market leader Gilead Sciences.

Reuters

SEC sues over Heinz option trading before buyout

NEW YORK, 17 Feb—Securities regulators filed suit on Friday against unknown traders in the options of ketchup maker HJ Heinz Co, alleging they traded on inside information before the company announced a deal to be acquired for \$23 billion by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc



The Securities and Exchange Commission logo adorns an office door at the SEC headquarters in Washington, on 24 June, 2011.—REUTERS

G20 agrees to curb competitive currency devaluation

MOSCOW, 17 Feb—Finance Ministers and central bankers of the Group of 20 (G20) on Saturday pledged not to target exchange rates or devalue currencies for the purpose of making them more competitive. G20 members would "refrain from competitive devaluation" and "resist all forms of protectionism and keep our markets open," said the communique after the G20 finance meeting here. It noted that monetary policy should be directed toward domestic price stability and support economic recovery. "We commit to monitor

General and chief economist of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), told Xinhua that he did not see "any implication for Japan to change its currency policy in the near future."

He suggested that efforts should be made to "mobilize long-term financing for investment as it is a key contributor to economic growth and job creation in all countries." Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov said G20 finance ministers agreed that "steps of the Japanese government were so far within the common



and minimize the negative spillovers on other countries of policies implemented for domestic purposes," said the six-page document. The communique also stressed the urgency to establish ambitious reforms and coordinated policies to achieve sustainable and balanced growth. Speaking of Japan's recent monetary policy, a hot topic in the discussions, Pier Carlo Padoan, deputy Secretary-

understanding of monetary policy," adding it was "an internal affair of the country." Meanwhile, he warned against "any competitive devaluation of currencies." "A change in the currency policy of one country will affect its trade partners. Then economic competition will be replaced with competition of currencies," Siluanov said.

Xinhua

Air Arabia net income soars despite fuel price hike

DUBAI, 17 Feb—Middle East's biggest budget carrier Air Arabia said on Saturday its net income in 2012 soared to 115.9 million US dollars, a 13 percent increase year on year, local media reported.

Sharjah-based Air Arabia achieved the profit increase despite a sharp rise in oil prices by expanding its global network, taking more aircraft deliveries as well as offering its customers

wider product offerings and services. Its seat load factor reached 82 percent last year.

Air Arabia, operates flights to 82 destinations and introduced nine new destinations in 2012, is expected to take delivery of another six new aircraft in 2013.

Its shares, listed at the Dubai Financial Market, gained 48 percent in value in the last 12 months.

Xinhua

and Brazil's 3G Capital. The suit marks the second time in six months that the SEC has taken legal action for alleged insider trading on a 3G deal. The suit, in federal court in Manhattan, cites "highly suspicious trading" in Heinz call options just prior to the 14 February announcement of the deal. The regulator has frequently in past filed suit against unnamed individuals where it has evidence of wrongdoing, but is still trying to uncover the identities of those involved.

That trading, the suit said, caused the price of the particular call option they bought to soar 1,700 percent and generated unrealized profits of more than \$1.7 million. The regulator claims the traders are either in, or trading through accounts in, Zurich, Switzerland. The account had no history

of trading in Heinz over the last six or so months. It has also obtained an emergency order to freeze assets in the Swiss account linked to the trading. In the suit, the SEC refers to the account as the "GS Account" and in a statement Goldman Sachs Group Inc said it was cooperating with the regulator's investigation.

"Irregular and highly suspicious options trading immediately in front of a merger or acquisition announcement is a serious red flag that traders may be improperly acting on confidential nonpublic information," Daniel Hawke, chief of the SEC's Division of Enforcement's Market Abuse Unit said in a statement. Representatives of Heinz and Berkshire Hathaway were unavailable for immediate comment. A 3G representative declined to comment.

Reuters

WORLD

Cyprus elects president tasked with sealing bailout



Cyprus Presidential candidate Nicos Anastasiades of the right wing Democratic Rally party arrives at a pre-election office in Nicosia on 15 Feb, 2013.

REUTERS

NICOSIA, 17 Feb — Cypriots vote on Sunday to elect a president tasked with negotiating a financial rescue to save the small island nation from a bankruptcy that would reignite the euro zone debt crisis.

Cyprus's worst economic crisis in four decades

has blown away the island's divided status as the main issue in this year's elections, which conservative leader Nicos Anastasiades is tipped to win.

Polls show Anastasiades, the most pro-bailout figure among the main presidential contenders, has a

15-point lead over his closest leftist rival, Stavros Malas, but may not secure the outright majority needed to avoid a run-off a week later.

He has promised a quick agreement with the European Union and International Monetary Fund on a bailout, a deal investors want thrashed out before the island's troubles derail progress made in shoring up the rest of the euro zone's periphery.

Nailing down a deal has proved tricky because almost any way of solving the crisis—from restructuring debt to slapping losses on banks—could set a precedent for other troubled states and hurt fragile confidence in financial markets.

Fears that the island will never be able to pay back its debt, German misgivings about its commit-

ment to fighting money laundering and strong links to Russia have further complicated talks on a rescue, which have dragged on for eight months.

"Everything is at stake, like it has never been before," said Kyriakos Iacovides, publisher of the *Cyprus Mail* newspaper.

"The country must be rebuilt, Cyprus must be rehabilitated in the EU. We need a strong leadership to rebuild the country."

Cyprus sought financial help last year after its banks suffered huge losses from Greece's sovereign debt restructuring. The island, which has been shut out of international financial markets since May 2011, needs about 17 billion euros in aid—a sum worth as much as its entire economy.—Reuters

Israel treats five Syrians wounded in civil war

JERUSALEM, 17 Feb — Israeli soldiers treated five Syrians who had been wounded in fighting between Syrian government forces and rebels near Israel's security fence on the Golan Heights, the Israeli military said on Saturday.

The victims were taken to a hospital in Israel. The military did not say if they were combatants or civilians, or in what circumstances they crossed over to the Israeli side of the fence, although Israeli media said the wounded had approached the area near the fence and soldiers let them in.

Syrian rebels earlier overran a military police checkpoint in Khan Arnabeh, a town in the Golan Heights near the ceasefire

line along the demilitarised zone with Israel, a British-based violence monitoring group said.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the rebels seized weapons and a tank and the Syrian army shelled villages inside the Israeli-Syrian ceasefire area.

It was not clear if the five Syrians being treated in Israel were wounded in that incident.

Israeli Vice Prime Minister Moshe Yaalon, in a television interview, referred to it as a "specific incident" and said the decision to let the Syrians in was humanitarian. Israel will evaluate each individual case if it happens again, he said.

Reuters

Photos of ailing Chavez stir emotions in Venezuela

CARACAS, 17 Feb — President Hugo Chavez's supporters joyfully brandished first photographs of him since cancer surgery two months ago while opposition activists said the images were worrying evidence of Venezuela's political vacuum.

In a first proof of life since his six-hour operation in Cuba on 11 December, authorities published four photos on Friday showing Chavez lying in a hospital bed smiling next to his daughters.

Underlining the gravity of his situation, however, an accompanying statement said the 58-year-old socialist leader was breathing through a tracheal tube and struggling to speak.

Within hours, the photos were on sale in Caracas streets, where some of Chavez's passionate supporters clutched them to their hearts as if they were a religious icon.

"It doesn't matter that he can't talk. We understood his message," said Aniluz Serrano, 57, selling prints in colonial Bolivar Square, named for Venezuela's independence hero and Chavez's idol, Simon Bolivar.

"When I saw this photo, I thought how beautiful, here he is calling on the people to keep fighting. When I see this smile, I can see Christ, I can see Simon Bolivar."

The photos and new medical details confirmed

what most Venezuelans already assumed - that Chavez is seriously ill and may not be able to return to the presidency.

He has ruled the South American OPEC nation since 1999, maintaining huge popularity among the poor thanks to oil-financed welfare policies and his common touch, while alienating private business with nationalizations and taking an authoritarian line on opponents.

Vice President Nicolas Maduro and other allies say Chavez remains the head of state, signing decrees and giving instructions — sometimes in writing — from Havana.

"President Chavez in full recovery," was the headline of various state media. "He's alive ... he will be back," said Idan Sotto, 24, buying one of the photos in downtown Caracas.



Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez holds a copy of the Cuban newspaper Granma as his daughters, Rosa Virginia (R) and Maria watch while recovering from cancer surgery in Havana in this photograph released by the Ministry of Information on 15 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

Opposition politicians believe such optimism is misplaced, given Chavez's obvious frailty, and are renewing demands for more detailed information on his condition and ability to rule.

Should he be formally declared unable to govern, an election would be called within 30 days, probably pitting Maduro against opposition leader and state governor Henrique Capriles.

Capriles lost an October presidential election, and the opposition coalition is struggling to remain united, with some pushing for a more militant approach to Chavez's absence.

"Venezuelan sovereignty is being given away to the Cuban government," one of the most strident opposition leaders, Maria Corina Machado, told Reuters in reaction to the photos.

Reuters

Firefighters try to put out a fire at Xiqing District of north China's Tianjin Municipality, on 15 Feb, 2013. An enterprise here caught fire on Friday. The cause and losses of the accident were not known immediately.

XINHUA



Mexico's Pemex evacuates hospital unit after short circuit

MEXICO CITY, 17 Feb — Mexico's state-owned Pemex oil monopoly evacuated a unit of its Cadereyta hospital in the eastern state of Nuevo Leon after a short circuit in ceiling wiring produced smoke, the company said on Saturday night, adding there were no injuries.

The incident "was controlled without major damage," Pemex said in a tweet. In a statement shortly afterward, the company said the short circuit occurred just before 7 pm local time and firefighters evacuated 10 patients and 36 hospital workers. Late last month, an explosion in Pemex's Mexico City headquarters killed at least 37 people. Authorities have said the blast was likely caused by a gas leak, but they are still investigating.—Reuters

Ohio teen's lawyers begin plea talks in fatal school shooting

CLEVELAND, 17 Feb — An attorney for the Ohio teen charged in the shooting deaths of three high school students in the town of Chardon said on Saturday he is negotiating with prosecutors to settle the case as the first anniversary of the attack approaches.

It was not immediately clear if accused shooter TJ Lane would plead guilty to the aggravated murder of three students in the 27 February, 2012, attack in the Chardon High School cafeteria, where three others were wounded.

"We're in the process of plea negotiations," said Lane's attorney, Ian Friedman, adding that his client will first undergo a court-ordered competency evaluation. "Assuming it is completed timely and finds TJ competent, a plea may be entered as soon as 26 February, which is our next court date," Friedman added.

Lane, who was 17 at

the time of the shooting, is being tried as an adult, and has pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity.

He is scheduled to go on trial later this year for three counts of aggravated murder in the deaths of Demetrius Hewlin, 16; Russell King Jr, 17; and Daniel Parmertor, 16. He is charged with the attempted murder of Nick Walczak, 18, who was paralyzed from the waist down, and felony assault for wounds to two other students.

Prosecutors said Lane brought a .22-caliber pistol to school and fired 10 rounds randomly at students in the cafeteria.

If a plea deal is reached and announced on 26 February, it would be on the eve of the one-year anniversary of the shooting rampage, which will be remembered with a candlelight vigil, a memorial walk and concert in downtown Chardon.

Reuters

LOCAL NEWS

Students enjoy IPRD wall magazine



DAWEI, 17 Feb—The wall magazine show and book donation was held at Basic Education Post-Primary School in Zalun Village of Dawei Township in Taninthayi Region on 7 February morning.

Deputy Head of Dawei District Information

and Public Relations Department Daw Mu Mu Aye raised questions on quiz and presented prizes to outstanding students.

Wellwishers donated books to the headmistress. Later, the students viewed the wall magazine.

Myanma Alinn

Umbrella hoisted atop pagoda in Ngaputaw Township

NGAPUTAW, 17 Feb—A ceremony to hoist umbrella atop Aungchantha Pagoda was held in conjunction with the consecration ceremony in Phayahla Village of Hainggyikyun Sub-Township of Ngaputaw Township in Ayeyawady Region on 3 February.

Missionary Sayadaw Bhaddanta Aloka and Thayay Sithu U Hsan Hsint hoisted the umbrella atop the pagoda. Chairman of Ayeyawady Region Sangha Nayaka Committee Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja

Bhaddanta Visuta delivered a sermon, followed by sharing merits gained. The pagoda was damaged in the storm Nargis.

Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of Myitta Gonyi Meditation Centre of Path of Australia and Zetawun Parahita Monastery of Myenigon in Sangyoung Township of Ayeyawady Region Bhaddanta Aloka renovated the pagoda with the assistance of wellwishers at home and abroad and hoisted the umbrella atop the pagoda.

Myanma Alinn

100 acres of farmlands reclaimed through mechanized farming system



YANGON, 17 Feb—Under the arrangement of Agricultural Mechanization Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Deputy Commissioner U Sai Thaw Win of Yangon South District General Administration Department and Head of Yangon Region AMD U Ko Ko explained

advantages of reclaiming farmlands with the use of agricultural equipment in meeting with local farmers at the hall of 100-acre farmland reclamation office in field No 665 of Phayagon Village-tract in Thanlyin Township on 6 February morning.

Staff Officer U Thein Zaw of Yangon South District

Basic military training course conducted at No 3 University Training Corps

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb—No 3 University Training Corps under the Directorate of People's Militia and Frontier Forces of the Ministry of Defence and Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education jointly conducted the basic military training course for students of Mawlamyine University at the main hall of the university on 5

Hsihseng gets newly-repaved asphalt road

HSIHSENG, 17 Feb—In commemoration of the 66th Anniversary Union Day, Bogadaw asphalt road was put into service in Aungchantha Ward of Hsihseng on 7 February morning.

It was repaved by Hsihseng Township Development Affairs Committee for 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Before opening the newly-repaved road, Member of Leading Body of Pa-O Self-Administered Zone U Khun Maung Pei and Executive Officer U Thein Win of Township Development Affairs Committee explained regional development and maintenance and construction of roads and bridges.—Myanma Alinn

February afternoon.

Chief Minister of Mon State U Ohn Myint, Commander of South-East Command Maj-Gen Tin Maung Win and Rector of the university Dr Htay Aung delivered addresses.

A total of 23 faculty members and 87 students are attending the four-month course.—MNA

Blood donated at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1000-bed)

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb—Kanlatmyar Parahita Organization established near staff quarters of Ministry of Construction in Nyana Theikdi Ward of Zabuthiri Township collectively donated blood for the first time at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1000-bed) on 10 February.

Among 300 members of the association, a total of 26 members donated blood at the ceremony.

The organization was formed on 25 March 2012 with the participation of workers and staff from Ministry of Construction.

The organization plans to conduct the computer course, English and spoken English

Kalay gets town hall

KALAY, 17 Feb—Chief Minister of Sagaing Region U Tha Aye opened the town hall of Kalay on 30 January morning.

The hall is 106 feet long

and 70 feet wide, with a 20 feet wide, 70 feet long and three feet high stage, general room, dressing room and recreation room.

Myanma Alinn

Forest fire blazes oil mill

MONGSHU, 17 Feb—A fire at an empty oil mill and a two-storey building of U Aik Ya started from forest fire near Tangyan Road in Ward 4 of Mongshu Township in Loilem District at 2.30 pm

on 5 February.

Members of fire brigade and local people put out the fire at 3.30 pm.

There was no loss and damage in fire.

Myanma Alinn



courses to the students who have completed the matriculation examination as of March 2013, according to Chairman of the organization U Kyaw.

“Our organization helps needy people for funeral

service free of charge and provides assistance for the injured in traffic accidents,” said the secretary. Anybody may dial 09-420721199 of the organization for assistance.

Myanma Alinn

Rural development tasks coordinated in Kachin State

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb—A coordination meeting on construction of roads, bridges, water supply and rural housings in rural areas of Kachin State by spending fund of Rural Region Development Department of the Ministry of Border Affairs in 2012-2013 fiscal year was held at the office of Kachin State

Government in Myitkyina on 23 January.

Responsible persons of KNEZ Co and Tawwin Soe Nyunt Co reported on plans to build asphalt roads, gravel roads, earthen roads and bridges in Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Shwegu, Mogaung, Mohnyin, Hopin and Tanai townships. The

Chief Minister of Kachin State gave instructions.

The meeting was attended by Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai and state ministers, the advocate-general of the state, the director of Kachin State Development Affairs Department and departmental officials.

Myanma Alinn

Milk, egg fed to students in Nyaunglebin

NYAUNGLEBIN, 17 Feb—Nyaunglebin Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department organized the ceremony to feed students with milk and egg for the third time at Basic Education Middle School in Nyaunglebin of Bago Region on 13 February afternoon.

Headmistress Daw Sein Sein Ohn made a speech.

Head of Township Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department Dr Hsan Wai Phyo explained the purpose of ceremony and fed 400 students with milk and egg.



Feeding milk and egg to students will raise their health and fitness and IQ, and more feeding would be

held at opportune time, said Dr Hsan Wai Phyo of the Township LBVD.

NLM

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 18 February, 2013

For rapid progress

Thanks to the reforms in progress, Myanmar is now back on the global stage, broadening the scope of its international relations more and more, while finding extra areas of common interest with many foreign countries and institutions in the interest of the entire country.

As Myanmar is still a developing country, it needs a great deal of strength and energy for rapid development and catching up with others within a short span of time. So, Myanmar has been seeking ways for acquiring technical knowhow, expertise in other areas, financial and material assistance and efficiency trainings through cooperation with many donor countries and organizations around the world. Accordingly, it is organizing business or development forums with the broader participation of international scholars and resource persons and reaching accords for rapid development.

As there are improving signs for international cooperation, Myanmar has committed itself to a wide array of programmes for rapid progress involving the task of strengthening public administration to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of government programmes and foreign assistance, which includes the work of supporting the legislative and oversight functions of the parliaments and new forms of public participation in policy making, clarifying and simplifying lines of authority and devolving decision making processes while strengthening cross-government linkages and the government coordination, strengthening government institutions to deliver core functions effectively, and establishing benchmarks and feedback systems on government performance to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

These programmes also cover plans to steadfastly increase the transparency of budget operations through the timely and reliable publication of budget information, strengthen fiduciary management and safeguard local resources and development cooperation from misuse through improvement of public procurement and implementation of the anti-corruption law, encourage domestic resource mobilization and increase reliance on national resources and strengthen social and environmental safeguards and compliance with their implementation.

Failed Attempts in 19th Century

With the invasion of British colonial power, last Kings of Konbaung dynasty paid attention to foreign relations and attempted to extend diplomatic relations with other major foreign countries of the world. In 1874, King Mindon tried in vain to establish diplomatic relation with Russia—geographically far apart country of Eurasia. He tried to send an emissary to Alexander Second, the Liberator, Tsar of Russian Empire with the assistance of Persia (Iran). The Special envoy was headed by Min Hla Kyaw Htin Yarzar and composed of Ah-way-yauk Shwe-taung Kyaw Thu Naw-ra-hita and scholar Maung Shwe Aye. They accompanied the visiting Iranian envoy on his return from Mandalay palace and tried to get the Saint Petersburg Palace, but they didn't reach the destination.

Myanmar Foreign Minister Kinwon Mingyi U Kaung also sent a note to Russian Foreign Minister Mr. Gorchakov, but the letter was stolen in the posting process of that time. In 1875, Mr. P. I. Pashino, a diplomat from Tsar, arrived Mandalay and was given an audience to King Mindon. It was noted that he made a report of his encounter with the King Mindon to Tsar.

Throughout Myanmar's endeavour for independence in 1930s onwards, many Myanmar youth learned the leftist literature and the words

such as Moscow, Red square, Gorki, Leo Tolstoy, Lenin, Stalin, Bolshevik, and proletarian were popular among the youth. In such way, the red relation was established between Myanmar and Russia.

The new era of diplomatic relations

After the independence on 4th January 1948, Myanmar established diplomatic relations with Russia (at that time the USSR) on 18 February 1948. Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary were appointed on both sides in 1951. Myanmar's first Ambassador to Russia was U Ohn who resided in London. On Russian side, the first Ambassador was Dr. Alexder I. Saveliev, followed by 16 ambassadors including the current ambassador Mr. Vasily B. Pospelov. On Myanmar side, there were eighteen ambassadors starting from U Ohn and followed by U Kyin, U Pe Khin, U Ba San, U Hpoe Kun, Thakin Kyaw Tun, U Myo Myint, U Kyaw Khaing, U Hla Shwe, U Kyaw Khin, U Kyi Myint, U Tin Aye, U Tin Tun, U Khin Maung Soe, U Khin Nyunt, U Tin Soe, U Min Thein and present Ambassador U Tin Yu.

High level mutual visits were realized from time to time. Myanmar Prime Minister U Nu paid a visit to Moscow in November 1955. Revolution Council Government Chairman General Ne Win visited Russia in 1965 from 14 to 24 September. After that, Vice Senior General Maung Aye, Vice-Chairman of the SPDC—State Peace and Development Council visited Russia in April 2006. On Russia's side, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR (Prime Minister) Mr. N. A. Bulganin and Member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Mr. N. S. Khrushchev visited Myanmar in December 1955. During the time of Myanmar's early Parliamentary Democratic era, bilateral relation was in progress since the Soviet Union extended its friendly embrace to all newly independent states.

BSPP – Burma Socialist Programme Party Era

Relation between a Socialist state and Soviet Union brought up many Myanmar civil servants to be educated in Russia. Dr. Ma Tin Win, renowned scholar in contemporary literature, gained her PhD from Russia. Many Myanmar people went to Russia to study in many fields including performing arts, sports and circus. Renowned dancer Nwe Nwe San and U Maung Maung who run the famous circus troop even took the title 'Soviet-pyan' (come back from Soviet) as a diploma. They also served as 'people's ambassadors' by building friendship between Russia and Myanmar. Thanks to translated novels, Myanmar people were familiar with vodka and Volga while TASS news agency assisted MNA – Myanmar News Agency and Aeroflot flew to and fro between Moscow and Yangon.

There was no high level visit through BSPP era, but there were many cooperation programmes in culture, education and sports. The tall and graceful building of RIT in Kyot-kone, Insein, the Inya Lake hotel and Sao San Tun hospital in Taunggyi were present from Russia and Myanmar also returned the gratitude in tons of rice as gift to Moscow.

The relations after 1988

After 1988, Myanmar's foreign relations were restricted and pressured by western countries led by US. At that time, Russia, together with China, stood together with Myanmar. Being a friendly country, Russia visible expressed its understanding with Myanmar throughout the western pressure at the United Nations. Military Technical Cooperation Joint Commission was formed in December 2009 and cooperation was enhanced by mutual visits of military delegations. Myanmar scholars from military service were sent to Russia for higher learning at 23 Russian universities including Moscow University and Saint Petersburg University. Agreements were

May Hnin Aye

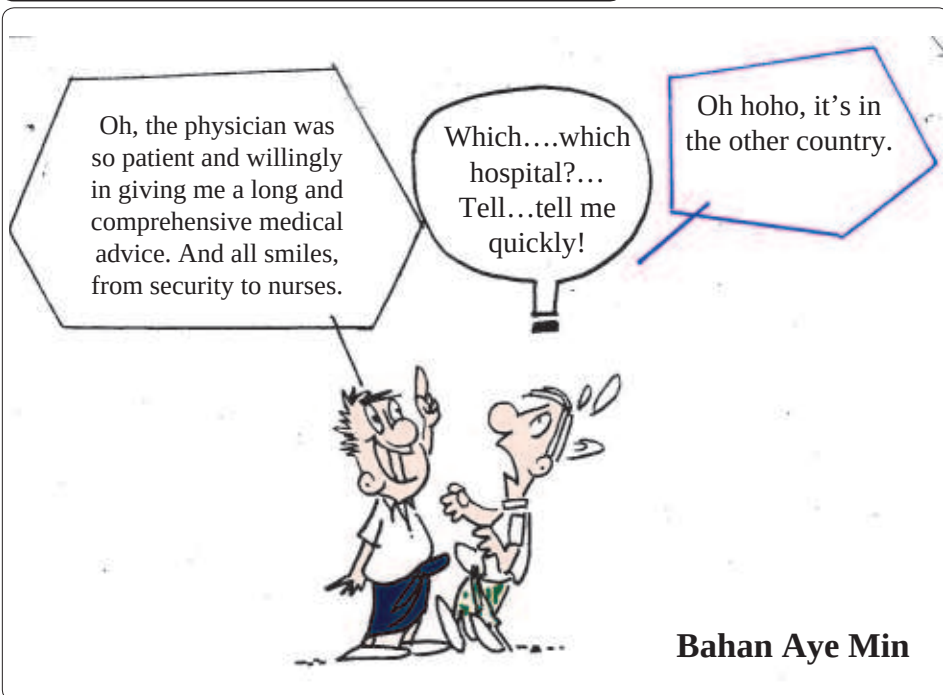
signed on cooperation against narcotic drugs, on cooperation between high courts etc. For economic relations, Russia is interested in energy and mining. Up till October 2012, two Russian companies made investment of 94,000 million US\$ ranking 15 in Myanmar's foreign direct investment. The three Russian companies registered at MIC—Myanmar Investment Commission are JSC Zarubezheft, ITERA Oil and Gas Company and Silver wave Sputnik Petroleum and Nobel Oil.

However, trade relations are not in progress as expected. Compared to other Asian nations, Myanmar's trade with Russia is very nominal. Bilateral trade volume for 2011-12 was 14.118 million US\$ (exporting 12.579 million and importing 1.539 million) and first nine months of year 2012-2013 was 15.126 million US\$ (exporting 14.854 million and importing 0.272 million). While Myanmar exports rice, broken rice, different kinds of beans and textile to Russia, Myanmar imports fertilizers, electricity distributor, textile chemicals, milk powder, machines and machinery. Since there is potential to progress, much needs to be done between the two chambers of commerce to promote trade.

There are also discussions for further exploration on cooperation of tourism, as well as culture, education and sports. Since many Russian tourists are now travelling to Thailand these days, if we can attract these Russian tourist to Myanmar, that could facilitate Myanmar for further contact with Russian people and more opportunity for economic engagement.

Between Myanmar and Russia, an agreement on visa exemption for less than (90) days of stay was signed on 3 July 2000 in Moscow for diplomatic and special passport holder. Bilateral Foreign Office consultation was also held annually at the alternate capitals to enhance cooperation and promote mutual understanding.

(See page 9)



NATIONAL

Message from U Thein Sein, ...

(from page 1)

In the past sixty five years, since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries, the ties of friendship based on mutually beneficial cooperation have been flourishing, and our cooperative relations in various fields have continued to develop.

To further enhance Myanmar-Russia relations is in the fundamental interests of the two peoples, and Myanmar set great store by the friendship between our two countries. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation for the Russian

people's consistent support to Myanmar. I am firmly convinced that this friendship and mutually advantageous cooperation between our two countries and peoples will be further developed through our joint efforts in the coming years.

Over the years, we have been pleased to witness the continued success that has been achieved in the Russian Federation. This success is a clear manifestation of the dynamic and resolute efforts of the government and people of the Russian Federation. I am deeply convinced that with the active efforts of the Russian people under their able leadership the Russian Federation will continue to attain further heights of achievement.

I would further like to take this occasion to convey my best wishes or prosperity and well-being to the Russian Federation and its people.

President U Thein Sein visits Haka, Chin State



NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb — President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein visited Thanthayar Aye Pagoda at Zetawun Meditation Centre in Haka today.

Accompanied by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the President also paid homage to Sayadaw

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein presents gifts to a local in Haka, Chin State.—MNA

Maha Ganthavaçaka Pandita Dr Bhaddanta Tejosara, Member of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha and missionary Sayadaw of hilly regions and Chairman Sayadaw of Myoma Monastery and Zetawun Monastery.

The President and party donated offertories to the Members of the Sangha led by Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Tejosara.

During the visit, he gave guidance to the local authorities to draw a plan for systematic water supply system to Haka by damming the valleys as part of efforts for improving the water supply system.

Afterwards, they went

to farms on Haka-Gangaw Road.

During his visit to the farms, the President stressed the need for expanding cow breeding and for establishment of pastures, pledging that the government would provide bio-gas tanks to farmers so that they can generate power from the bio-gas made from cow dung.

He also urged the farmers to manage their incomes so that they can send their children to the school, to teach their children to be able to conserve their traditional culture and to learn Myanmar language to be able to contact with the peoples across the Union.

MNA

Message from U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Mr Sergey V Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on the Occasion of the 65th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and Russia

On the occasion of the 65th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Russian Federation, I have the honour to extend to Your Excellency my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for further beneficial cooperation between Myanmar and Russia.

Through our mutual endeavours, I am confident that the traditional friendship, cooperation and understanding between our two countries will be consolidated further in the years ahead.

I also recall your recent visit to Nay Pyi Taw which was instrumental in enhancing our bilateral relations. I look forward to working closely with Your Excellency to intensify our interaction not only in bilateral relations but also in multilateral cooperation.

In this respect, I would like to underscore Myanmar's strong political commitment to strengthen our cooperation with Russia. Given our traditional friendship, I anticipate that we will be able to assist each other in both global and regional forums.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for the further development of our existing multi-faceted cooperation so as to move forward to a new height in the coming years, with the assurances of my highest consideration.

Message from Mr Sergey V. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation to U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the Occasion of the 65th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations between Myanmar and Russia

On the occasion of the 65th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar I would like to extend to you my warmest congratulations.

Our ties with friendly Myanmar are based on mutual understanding and trust, have constructive character and are not subjected to vacillation caused by political conjuncture. Rich experience of cooperation in political, trade and economic, military-technical and other spheres accumulated during passed decades creates a solid foundation for successful implementation of bilateral projects in the years ahead. We are satisfied with cooperative interaction of our countries on international and regional arenas, which is built on the consonance of positions on topical problems of contemporary world.

I recall with warm feeling our meetings in Moscow and Nay Pyi Taw, and count upon further regular contacts between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries.

May I wish you Mr. Minister, good health, well-being and all the success.

Parliaments was established and Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann visited Moscow in June 2011 as first foreign trip in his new capacity as Speaker.

Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin also paid a friendly visit to Moscow on 27 to 29 February 2012 and

discussion was made with his counterpart Russian Foreign Minister for further promotion of bilateral relations. He also had a chance to give a courtesy call to Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Russian Federation Council.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov

Myanmar ship sinks near Pangasinan

MANILA, 17 Feb—A Myanmar ship heading for China sank at sea near Bolinao in the province of Pangasinan, leaving a Malaysian crew dead and 14 others missing, the Philippine Coast Guard said today.

"Initial reports said that it encountered engine trouble and experienced rolling and eventually sank," Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) Spokesman Armand Balilo said.

PCG got the information of the accident from a Chinese vessel, which rescued nine crew members of the ill-fated ship, MV Arita Bauxite. Of the nine, two were injured while the rest were in "good condition", Balilo

said.

Balilo said the Chinese ship also reported that 14 other crew members of the Myanmar vessel are missing.

He could not know exactly when the incident occurred, surmising it could have occurred Saturday night or earlier Sunday.

Chito Castro, director of the Office of Civil Defense in Ilocos region, is still coordinating with the PCG for the other circumstances of the mishap. Castro said the victims were airlifted Sunday to PCG facility in San Fernando City in La Union. Medical teams from the Department of Health are on standby to provide prompt medical care to the victims.—Xinhua

paid a friendly visit to Myanmar on 16 January 2013 as the First Russian Foreign Minister visit. It is also the First Ministerial visit in decades. During his one day trip, Russian Foreign Minister had franc and thorough discussion with his counterpart Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin and paid a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The discussions

were made on formation of Joint Commission which would encourage trade and investment.

Myanmar's foreign policy is based on friendly relations with all countries of the world and Russia is Myanmar's traditional ally. While Russia gives particular attention to Asian countries and ASEAN, it is definitely sure that Myanmar-Russian Friendship would be in progress in the years to come.

65th Anniversary of Myanmar-Russia Diplomatic...

(from page 8)

Cooperation under the new Myanmar Government

With the emergence of new Hluttaw (Parliament), cooperation between two

Three killed in house fire in western Turkey

ANKARA, 17 Feb — At least three Turks were killed in a house fire in Turkey's western Bursa Province, the semi-official *Anatolia* news agency reported on Saturday.

The fire hit a family in Bursa, leaving three girls, aged four, seven, and 18, killed after being trapped in the house. The father was rescued by firefighters.

Firefighters extinguished the fire within 30 minutes, said the report, adding that the reason behind the fire could be the explosion of a LPG pipe due to leakage.

An investigation into the incident has been launched.—*Xinhua*

Cuba removes civil aeronautics institute to improve gov't efficiency

HAVANA, 17 Feb — The Cuban authorities have decided to merge the Civil Aeronautics Institute (IACC) into the Transportation Ministry in an effort to improve government efficiency, local media reported on Friday.

The move by the Council of State was part of a series of reform measures to "separate government and business functions" to improve Cuba's public institutions, the official *Granma* daily said.

The IACC, including 11 departments and three



People gather at the scene of car bomb blast that targeted a popular beachfront restaurant in Mogadishu, Somalia, on 16 Feb, 2013. Two people were confirmed dead and five others injured in the blast.—XINHUA

Quake rattles Rome, no damage or injuries reported

ROME, 17 Feb — An earthquake struck 90 km southeast of Rome on Saturday, Italy's National Institute of Geophysics and Vulcanology said. There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

The 4.8 magnitude

quake struck at 10:16 pm and was felt from Rome to Naples and in the neighbouring region of Abruzzo, according to *Reuters* witnesses.

The epicentre was near the towns of Sora and Isola del Liri.—*Reuters*

Farm theme boosts enrollment in rural Kansas school

WALTON, (Kansas), 17 Feb — The first clue is a sign "Fresh Eggs for Sale" in front of the school. There is a sheep pen on the baseball field and the sounds of farm animals greet pupils every morning.

This is not your ordinary elementary school. It is the Walton Rural Life Centre, a kindergarten-through-fourth grade charter school in rural Kansas that uses agriculture to teach students about math, science, economics—and responsibility.

The farm theme is so popular that the centre has a waiting list to enroll and has given the town of Walton, population 235, a boost, said Mayor Evan Johnson.

"It's been a priority for

us and a source of pride," Johnson said.

Students take turns each week feeding chickens, sheep, pigs and cattle. They wash and sell the eggs, make yarn from sheep wool and raise pigs for market—with pork coming back to the school for meals. They also raise vegetables for school snacks.

"The kids love it, and they are learning," said Principal Natise Vogt, pointing to better test scores as one example.

At a time when many small towns struggle to keep their schools open due to shrinking enrollment, Walton is turning students away for lack of space. In 2007, enrollment dipped

dragged on for nearly two years, with no signs of an end in sight. Its fallout is emerging and spreading.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported on Saturday a spate of sectarian kidnappings over the past two days.

Meanwhile, a power outage added to the woes in the capital of Damascus and the southern provinces of Daraa and Sweida on Saturday.

The residents in Damascus have grown used to frequent power cuts as the country's conflict has damaged infrastructure and sapped the government's finances.

In addition, the refugee crisis is weighing on the international community, especially neigh-

bouring countries. According to the United Nations refugee agency, 2.5 million Syrian people have fled their home, with 728,553 refugees in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres said last week that the number of people fleeing fighting in Syria could reach 1.1 million by June.

The humanitarian situation in Syria is "the most dramatic crisis we are facing today," he said, adding that developed nations, including those in Europe, need to accept more refugees as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon have done.

Xinhua



Third grade students Cody Eye and Elizabeth Harder feed the hogs at the Walton Rural Life Centre Elementary School, in Walton, Kansas, on 18 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

to around 100, putting the school at risk of closing, Vogt said. But the school has 168 students today.

About half the students come from outside the school's enrollment bound-

aries and some live outside the school district, which is based five miles away, in Newton, Kansas.

"The parents like the unique curriculum, the project-based learning," said Jennifer Sauerwein, co-president of the school's Parent-Teacher Association. "The kids get that real-life hands-on, day-to-day connection to learning."

Working with animals, for example, is a study in math because students count out eggs in dozens, add and subtract money earned and spent, measure animal food in fractions of each container and equate perimeter lengths with animal pens.

Feeding the animals is not just a chore, said Walton teacher Amanda Paulus.

"It gives them a lot of responsibility in that they are actually caring for something that depends on them," Paulus said.

Reuters

Cyprus company not to be held responsible for horsemeat scandal

NICOSIA, 17 Feb — A Cyprus registered company originally blamed for starting the horsemeat scandal across Europe cannot be held responsible in any way, authorities in Nicosia said on Saturday.

"We made a thorough examination of the company's documents and we have established that it had acted legally and properly all the way," said George Kyriakides, director of the Veterinary Services at the Ministry of Agriculture.

He said the Dutch company, Draap Trading Limited, had placed an order for horsemeat with a Romanian

horse slaughter house and a meat cutting establishment, which are registered as horsemeat facilities under EU rules.

Kyriakides said the meat purchased by Draap Trading, registered in Cyprus' southern port city of Limassol and operates from premises in Belgium, from the Romanian facilities was mislabeled on the way to its destination, but he could not say where.

"It is up to the authorities of other European countries involved to investigate the labelling of the meat," he added.

French authorities

have said that well-known Spanghero company based in the south of the country knowingly sold as beef what could have been horsemeat, something which the company strongly denied.

Meanwhile, a Cypriot public health official said 16.5 tonnes of hamburgers had been destroyed by a Cypriot importer after the scandal started in Ireland.

He added that further examinations were under way to establish whether the meat products of the company were in any way contaminated with harmful medication given to horses.

Xinhua



Passengers and vehicles detained by a heavy fog are seen on board a ro-ro ship at a port in Haikou, capital of south China's Hainan Province, on 16 Feb, 2013. A total of 46,000 passengers and 8,700 vehicles have left the Port of Haikou from 8:00 pm Friday to 8:00 am Saturday, after being detained by a heavy fog that disrupted the waterway traffic across the Qiongzhou Strait.

XINHUA

REGIONAL

Japanese FM visits Okinawa on US Futenma base relocation

TOKYO, 17 Feb—Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida on Saturday visited the country's southernmost prefecture of Okinawa to discuss the long-stalled issue of relocation of a key US air base, local media reported.

Kishida met with Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima and asked the

governor to support the plan agreed by Japan and the United States to relocate the base within Okinawa to a less populated area, according to Japan's *Kyodo News Agency*.

The visit came few days before a four-day US trip by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who will try to restore Japan-US

alliance scratched by the spiny issue.

However, the minister failed to reach an agreement with Nakaima as the governor, who also discussed the issue with Abe earlier this month, reiterated that Okinawa people want the base to move outside Okinawa as soon as possible, according to the report.—*Xinhua*



A missile destroyer "Harbin" sets sail at a port in Qingdao City, east China's Shandong Province, on 16 Feb, 2013, to depart for the Gulf of Aden and the sea off Somalia on escort missions. The flotilla, as the 14th batch of its kind to engage in escort missions, consists of a missile destroyer and a frigate as well as a supply ship which are all from the North Sea Fleet of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy. —XINHUA

France wants India to open up its markets

NEW DELHI, 17 Feb—France has urged India to open up its domestic markets by eliminating the existing hurdles, which will encourage French companies to invest up to one billion US dollars in this country.

"French companies are willing to invest up to one billion US dollars in India. There are always obstacles to opening markets. I am not here to interfere in the political decisions but these decisions (to open up markets) are nonetheless necessary. We are all convinced that India has a great future and we want to partake in that," French President Francois Hollande was quoted as saying in Mum-

bai on Friday as he wrapped up his two-day state visit to India.

The French President, who had earlier met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during which several pacts were inked between the two countries, also said that India "has the potential to grow at 10 percent" but faces "immense challenges commensurate with its size." "French businesses would like to invest more in an emerging economy like India. We pride ourselves on being one of the biggest investors here.

The stock of our assets here is \$17 billion and we wish to increase this investment flow by one billion US dollars. —*Xinhua*

Thai PM expresses concern over drought

BANGKOK, 17 Feb—Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra said Saturday that her government was worried about drought situation which could be intensified in the next three months, *Thai News Agency* reported.

The premier expressed concern in her weekly televised address "Yingluck government meets the peo-

ple", saying that the government has reviewed its strategies in tackling drought to avoid repeated problems, as 29 provinces, mostly in the north and northeast, have been declared disaster zones affected by drought.

She said the government wants the public to have sufficient water resources for consumption, while for agriculture, the

government will have to consider the water management situation in each area, such as suggesting farmers plant crops which consume less water and introducing alternative occupations.

In the long-term, Yingluck said a sustainable water management plan is needed under a single command operation with about 12 million US dollars of



The city is seen through the fog in Nanning, capital of south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, 17 Feb, 2013. Heavy fog engulfed Nanning here on Sunday. —XINHUA

Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew in hospital, but recovers

SINGAPORE, 17 Feb—Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew was hospitalized on Friday after an irregular heartbeat led to a brief stoppage of blood flow to the brain, the Prime Minister's Office said on Saturday.

Lee, 89, "has recovered but will remain hospitalized for a few days for the doctors to adjust his medications and for observation," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement.

It said Lee was admitted to the Singapore General Hospital after experiencing a suspected "Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) associated with a prolonged episode of atrial fibrillation (i.e. irregular heartbeat)."

A Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) is when blood flow to a part of the brain stops for a brief period of time. A person will have stroke-like symptoms which clear in less than 24 hours.

On Friday, Lee had to miss the Chinese New Year dinner in the Tanjong Pagar constituency, where Lee is a member of the parliament. It was the first time he has ever missed the dinner.

Indranee Rajah, a lawmaker from the same group representation constituency, told the 1,200 residents at the dinner that Lee was not feeling well.

"I would like, on his behalf, to extend his apologies for not being here,

and thank you for coming in any event— I'm sure you would all join me in wishing him a speedy recovery in the hope that he feels better soon," she said.

Lee has been active at dialogue sessions and making visits to other countries and regions in recent years despite his age. His physician daughter Lee Wei Ling, director of the National Neuroscience Institute of Singapore, wrote in 2011 that the founding prime minister of Singapore was fighting sensory peripheral neuropathy, a neurological disease that makes it difficult for him to walk steadily.

Xinhua

Soldier wounded as rebels strike army convoy in S Philippines

DAVAO CITY, (Philippines), 17 Feb—A Philippine Army soldier was wounded when leftist rebels detonated an improvised bomb and fired at an army truck on the way to help rebuild typhoon-hit areas in southern Philippines on Saturday, the military said.

The incident happened along the Pan-Philippine Highway in Tagum in southeastern Mindanao at around 10 am, said Lieutenant Colonel Lyndon

Paniza, spokesperson for the army's 10th Infantry Division. Paniza said soldiers from the army's 66th Infantry Battalion assigned to a humanitarian task force were aboard an army truck when they were ambushed by an improvised landmine believed planted by the New People's Army (NPA). "The soldiers were transporting construction material to (typhoon-struck) Compostela Valley Province when attacked," Paniza told *Xinhua* by

text message, adding that a soldier suffered shrapnel wounds and had to be transported back to an army hospital in Davao some 55 kilometres away. He said the army vehicle also sustained damage as a result of the blast.

The rebels also fired at the soldiers, sparking a brief firefight, before withdrawing to a forested area, said Paniza.

"Despite the incident,

the military would still continue helping rehabilitate typhoon-affected communities in the region," the military official said, condemning the NPA attack as "anti-people and anti-development."

The 4,000-strong NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has been fighting a leftist insurgency in 60 Philippine provinces since 1969.

Xinhua



People gather at the site after a car accident in Kota Kinabalu in Sabah, east Malaysia, on 17 Feb, 2013. A high-speed car rammed into a tree, killing two young men. —XINHUA

Two Afghan security members die in explosion in northern province

SHIBRGHAN, (Afghanistan), 17 Feb—Two members of Afghan security forces were killed and four others were wounded on Saturday when a bomb hit their mobile in the country's northern province of Jawzjan, the provincial police chief said.

"Two members of National Security Directorate (NDS) died and four others were wounded when their vehicle touched off a roadside planted bomb in Khwaja Buran, an area outside provincial capital at around 3:30 pm local time," Abdul Aziz Khirat told *Xinhua*, blaming Taleban insurgents for the attack.

He said the NDS or intelligence service unit was in a routine patrol with police forces when the blast took place in the province 390 km north of Afghan capital Kabul.

The Taleban has been waging an insurgency since its regime was toppled by a US-led invasion in late 2001.

Xinhua

**MYANMAR YANG TSE COPPER LIMITED
(OVERSEAS TENDER NOTICE)****TENDER NO. (Ref No. CCS-03-13)**

Sale of an estimated (600 metric tons) of Copper Cathode from MYTCL S&K Mine site in Monywa, Myanmar.

CLOSING DATE & TIME: 4th March 2013 at
12:00 noon

Tender document is available at the following address. Any queries can be done between 10 am to 4pm at MYTCL Yangon office before the Tender Closing Date.

Myanmar Yang Tse Copper Limited

70 (1) Bo Chein Street, Pyay Road, Hlaing Township
Yangon, Myanmar (Tel: (95) 1-514194 to 7/Fax: (95) 1 514208/
Email: yangtse@yangtse.com.mm)



Staff members of an enterprise set off firecrackers at Fengtian Yinzuo Square in Shenyang, capital of northeast China's Liaoning Province, on 16 Feb, 2013. Saturday marks the first working day after the one-week Spring Festival break which started on 9 February. Setting off firecrackers on this day is a traditional custom for businessmen to pray for a booming year.—XINHUA

Iran launches NGL plant in Persian Gulf

TEHERAN, 17 Feb — Iran inaugurated a natural gas liquids (NGL) plant on the Persian Gulf island of Siri, *Teheran Times* daily reported on Saturday.

The Siri NGL plant is projected to produce 1,400 barrels of gas condensates, 1,500 barrels of pentane, 4,000 barrels of butane, and 8,000 barrels of propane per day, the managing director of National Iranian Offshore Oilfields Company, Mahmoud Zirakchianzadeh, was quoted as saying.

The plant will also have about 500 million US dollars of sales annually,

said Zirakchianzadeh.

Some of the output of the new plant will be produced from associated gas, also known as flare gas or associated petroleum gas, which is burnt out and significantly contributes to the worldwide anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide, according to *Teheran Times*.

About 40 million cubic metres of associated gas is burnt every day at Iranian oil fields, causing around 3 billion US dollars of losses for the country annually, said the daily.

Xinhua

Six killed in attacks in northern Iraq

BAGHDAD, 17 Feb — At least six people were killed, including two would-be suicide bombers, in two attacks in the Iraqi Provinces of Nineveh and Salahudin on Saturday morning, police sources said.

The deadliest attack occurred in Nineveh when two men approached the house of a commander of the rapid reaction police force in the town of Tal Afar, some 70 km west of the provincial capital city of Mosul, a provincial police source told *Xinhua* on condition of anonymity.

The guards of the commander's house opened fire at the two, who apparently wearing explosive vests, killing one of them and blowing up the vest of the other, the source said.

The huge blast killed two policemen and an off-duty Iraqi army Colonel nearby, the source said, adding that the commander, who apparently was the target of the two attackers, escaped the attack unharmed.

Nineveh Province has long been a stronghold for insurgent groups, including al-Qaida militants. Its capital city of Mosul, some 400 km north of Baghdad, is one of the country's most restive cities.

In Salahudin Province, a judge named Ahmed al-Baiyati was killed and his son wounded when a sticky bomb attached to his car detonated in the city of Tuz-Khurmato, some 200 km north of Baghdad, a provincial police source anonymously told *Xinhua*.

The ethnically mixed city of Tuz-Khurmato is part of disputed areas claimed both by the autonomous region of Kurdistan and Baghdad central government.—*Xinhua*

UNICEF in desperate need of 7 mln USD for Mozambican flood victims

MAPUTO, 17 Feb — The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is seeking 6.8 million US dollars to fund its work among the tens of thousands of children and women hit by flooding in the Limpopo Valley, in the southern Mozambican province of Gaza, according to the *Mozambique News Agency (AIM)* on Saturday.

The National Disasters Management Institute (INGC) said that heavy rainfall in January displaced 173,000 people.

The INGC was forced to set up 26 accommodation centres in the southern Gaza Province, the worst

hit in the country.

In this region, Chokwe and Guija Districts had terrible displacements caused by the catastrophe, according to the agency.

Due to the scale of the displacement, funds are urgently needed to meet the needs of those left homeless.

AIM quoted UNICEF's Jesper Morch as saying "the magnitude of the flooding in the last few weeks has meant that emergency supplies and funding have been depleted." "It is clear that we urgently need additional funds if we are to help many children and families recover from their losses

and rebuild their lives," she said.

UNICEF points out that whilst the floodwaters are receding in the Limpopo Valley, a large clean-up operation is needed before these areas are fit for families to return.

Meanwhile, the UN organization warns that flooding in the centre and north of the country has displaced 45,000 people. So far, the Mozambican government has provided 10 million dollars in support, whilst another 5.3 million dollars has been released by the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund.

Xinhua

Russian residents begin selling meteorite pieces on-line

Photo taken on 16 Feb, 2013 shows a factory building damaged by the shockwave of the meteorite fall in Russia's Ural city of Chelyabinsk. Some 1,200 people have been injured and many houses damaged as a meteorite struck Russia's Urals region on Friday.—XINHUA

BEIJING, 17 Feb — Hours after the huge meteor explosion over Ural Mountains on Friday, residents of the Russian city of Chelyabinsk had already begun to list meteorite pieces for sale on Avito.Ru, Russia's leading website for classified ads.

As many residents of the city were still nursing injuries from the unexpected blast, others were already trying to make a profit, advertising meteorite

pieces for sale on auction sites.

In one post on Avito.Ru, a user named Andrew advertised 18 pieces for 500 rubles each (the equivalent of 16.61 dollars), which he promised would be arriving by plane to Moscow on Saturday from Chelyabinsk.

Another Chelyabinsk resident left an announcement on the site, writing, "Buy a fragment of a meteorite Chelyabinsk, found today at the crash site, photo

later. Questions by mail, the price is also negotiable."

A third user who identified himself as Sergey, asked for 300,000 rubles (roughly 10,000 dollars) for a piece of the space rock. "A piece of the meteor for sale, it's new," Sergey wrote, with a photo attached of himself holding a piece of stone.

The huge blast reportedly injured around 1,200 people, including more than 200 children, the majority hurt by shards of shattered glass, according to Russia's Interior Ministry.—*Xinhua*

**OSCE observers deployed in Armenia for presidential vote**

YEREVAN, 17 Feb — The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on Saturday started deploying its short-term and long-term observers across Armenia to monitor next Monday's presidential election of the country. The OSCE has some 270 observers led by OSCE ambassador to Yerevan Heidi Tagliavini and they come from a dozen of OSCE member states.

The OSCE observation mission is scheduled to give a press briefing on Tuesday next week on preliminary

findings of this year's election. A final report on the observation of the entire electoral process will be issued some eight weeks after the election day.

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan, who is of no relations to the country's incumbent president Serzh Sargsyan, has invited the OSCE to send its observers for the presidential vote. The OSCE has observed eight elections in Armenia since 1996, including the 2008 presidential and 2012 parliamentary elections.—*Xinhua*

A macedonian veteran parades at the 69th Anniversary of the February Campaign in Skopje, capital of Macedonia, on 16 Feb, 2013. February campaign was a month long series of battles in 1944 that were key in the fight against the Nazis and liberation of Macedonia.

XINHUA

ENTERTAINMENT

Jessica Alba feared she was suffering a stroke

LOS ANGELES, 17 Feb —Jessica Alba recently feared she was suffering a stroke. The Sin City actress - who has two daughters, Honor, four and Haven, 18 months, with her husband Cash Warren - had a major health scare in the middle of the night after her arm went numb.

The 31-year-old beauty told Jimmy Kimmel Live!: “My whole arm was numb, and then I got a cold sensation from the back of my neck up to the front. And then I was like,

‘I think I can’t move my face.’” Jessica rushed to the hospital to get a CAT scan and an MRI. After being fully checked out she was assured she did not have heart problems.

She said: “They all said, you had all the signs of a stroke if you were much older.” She later discovered that she has developed carpal tunnel syndrome, possibly from spending too much time on her computer. Jessica, who runs her own organic baby product business The Honest Company, previ-

ously revealed that she tries to stay fit and healthy but she hates working out.

She said: “I like doing dance classes. That’s fun. Like hip hop class, mixed with like core Pilates-type exercises. And sometimes I do sprint intervals just because I hate working out. Anything where I have to do something but I can get my mind off of doing it, that’s so much better for me than anything that’s repetitive. Or the music has to be loud and I have to be moving.”

PTI



Jessica Alba had a major health scare in the middle of the night after her arm went numb.

PTI

British actor Hugh Grant announces birth of second child

LOS ANGELES, 17 Feb —Hugh Grant announced on Saturday that he had become a father for the second time after Tinglan Hong gave birth to a baby boy. “In answer to some journo (journalists),” the British actor posted on the social media website Twitter, “am thrilled my daughter now has a brother. Adore them both to an uncool degree. They have a fab mum.”

“And to be crystal clear. I am the Daddy,” he added in a second tweet. Grant, 52, who is best known for such films as “Notting Hill” and “About a Boy,” did not reveal the child’s name on Twitter. The actor and Hong had their first child in 2011,

when his spokeswoman said in a statement that the baby girl was the result of a “fleeting affair” but Grant “could not be happier or more supportive.”

Days later, Hong won a court injunction in Britain “prohibiting harassment” of her and the child after she said paparazzi had made her life unbearable. Grant is a strident critic of Britain’s tabloid newspaper culture. On his Twitter message on Saturday, Grant mentioned that the press had obtained his baby boy’s birth certificate and were making inquiries. “Now I’ve confirmed ... hoping my family will be left in peace,” he wrote.

Reuters

Actor Hugh Grant arrives on the red carpet for the gala presentation of the film “Cloud Atlas” at the 37th Toronto International Film Festival, on 8 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS



Veteran actor Rishi Kapoor

Rishi Kapoor dons biker avatar in ‘Chashme Buddoor’

MUMBAI, 17 Feb—Veteran actor Rishi Kapoor will be donning a completely new avatar of a biker dude in the remake version of ‘Chashme Buddoor’.

The 60-year-old will

be riding Harley Davidson in the by-lanes of Goa and sporting innumerable tattoos—like those of a star, flower, other abstract designs, mermaid and bikini-clad girls — all over on his hands.—PTI

Designers old and new dazzle at London Fashion Week

LONDON, 17 Feb—Britain’s long-established designers brought classic elegance to the catwalks, while up-and-coming talent packed a punch with fun, youthful styles on the second day of London Fashion Week. One of Kate Middleton’s’ favoured designers, Daniella Helayel, showcased a collection of printed chiffon kaftans, woven jacquards and geometric patterns.

Models wore thick jackets with shearing and fur linings, accessorized with wide brimmed hats and eagle feathers in a collection inspired by the rugged landscape of the Navajo Indians. “There are lots of feathers, lots of feather prints, it was also inspired by rugs, different textures



Model Cara Delevingne presents a creation from the Issa Autumn/Winter 2013 collection during London Fashion Week, on 16 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

and body paints,” Helayel, designer for Issa London, told Reuters backstage after the show. With buyers from 39 different countries in attendance, the British Fashion Council estimates orders of more than 100 million pounds (\$155.23

million) are placed during London Fashion Week each season. The five-day event blends emerging talent with veteran designers such as Vivienne Westwood and is best known for its cutting-edge talent and avant garde trends.—Reuters

Rihanna brings high street to catwalks at London show

LONDON, 17 Feb —Pop singer Rihanna launched her first clothing line with British high-street retailer River Island on Saturday, adding A-list glitz to the British leg of the international fashion circuit. The fashion credentials of the British high street have flourished in recent years as more household clothing brands inch onto the catwalks of major fashion centres. Models strutted in

a line through a tiered catwalk of five square compartments at Rihanna’s show, pausing in each to showcase midriff-bearing mesh tops and yellow shift dresses.

Denim tops teamed with slouchy jeans and monochrome dresses with thigh-high slits mirrored the Barbados-born singer’s dressed-down but raunchy style.

Reuters



Singer Rihanna walks out onto the catwalk after the presentation of her Rihanna for River Island Autumn/Winter 2013 collection during London Fashion Week, on 16 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

Katy Perry fuels rumours of engagement

LONDON, 17 Feb—Pop star Katy Perry has fuelled rumours that she is engaged to boyfriend John Mayer after she was spotted wearing a heart-shaped ring on her engagement finger.

The 28-year-old ‘Wide Awake’ singer was seen wearing the sparkling ring as she went for a romantic Valentin’s dinner with her rocker boyfriend, reported Sun online.

Dressed in a bizarre floor length folk-style frock, Perry beamed as she happily exited the venue clutching a bag full of goodies.

PTI



Pop star Katy Perry

SPORTS

The 301st goal for Messi as Barca win in Granada

MADRID, 17 Feb—Leo Messi scored two more goals in his incredible season as FC Barcelona took a hard fought 2-1 win away to Granada to ensure they at least retain their lead at the top of Spain's B B V A



Leo Messi

Primera Liga over Atletico Madrid and third placed Real Madrid. Messi netted twice in the second half as his team had to battle back from a goal down against their hard-working rivals. Barca lead Atletico by 15 points and Real Madrid by 19, although both sides can make up ground if they win their respective matches on Sunday.

With a view on their Champions League tie away

to AC Milan next week, Barca rested midfielders Andres Iniesta and Xavi Hernandez, who is putting the finishing touches to his recovery from a hamstring injury.

Thiago Alcantara and Alexis Sanchez came into the starting 11, while Javier Mascherano also stepped into the team to allow Carles Puyol to rest. Alexis, who scored his first league goal of

the season in last weekend's 6-1 win over Getafe, had the first chance of the game, but his control allowed Granada

keeper, Tono to make a brave save. Granada had won their last two games, including a 1-0 home win against Real Madrid and their confidence was clear to see as they defended solidly and looked to play with pace with former Barca-B team striker, Nolito keen to impress against his former club and forcing an early save from Victor Valdes.

Thiago and Alexis had further shots on goal, but it was a miss from Alexis, who dwelt on the ball in the Granada penalty area, which led to the first goal of the game as Granada launched a counter attack which saw Nolito nod the ball down for Odion Ighalo to poke the ball home from close range, although he looked to be in an offside position.

Barca had the majority of the ball but, thanks to the hard work of the Granada midfield and defence, didn't find their rivals net until the 50th minute when Tono was unable to hold a low drive from Cesc Fabrigas and Messi was on hand to poke home from close range. Messi has now scored in his side's last 14 league matches and it was his 36th league goal of the campaign and his 300th for the club. —Xinhua

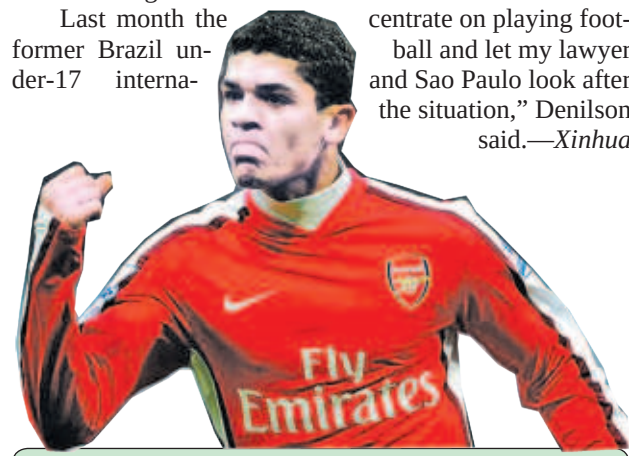
Arsenal defender Denilson unsure of future

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 Feb—Arsenal midfielder Denilson admits his future remains uncertain as Sao Paulo continues their bid to secure the 25-year-old on a permanent contract. Denilson has been on loan at the Brazilian club since 2011 after falling out of favour with Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger.

Last month the former Brazil under-17 interna-

tional expressed his desire to remain at Sao Paulo after his loan deal expires on 30 June. But he revealed on Saturday that he is no closer to cutting ties with the north London club, which he joined as an 18-year-old in 2006 for a fee of 3.4 million British pounds.

"I think a deal could be made but I want to concentrate on playing football and let my lawyer and Sao Paulo look after the situation," Denilson said.—Xinhua



Arsenal midfielder Denilson

Freestyle skiing: Uemura 3rd in Sochi Olympic test run



Aiko Uemura

SOCHI, (Russia), 17 Feb—Aiko Uemura finished third in the women's moguls on Friday in a World Cup Olympic test event at the venue for the 2014 Winter Games.

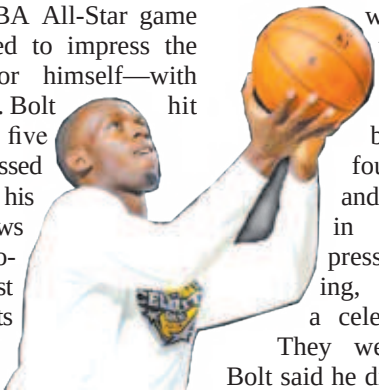
It was Uemura's second

podium finish of the campaign following the season-opening competition in the dual moguls in Ruka, Finland, and her first in the moguls since March 2010 at Inawashiro, Fukushima Prefecture.

Four-time Olympian Uemura scored 23.72 points, one full point behind American Hannah Kearney, who claimed her third straight victory to lead the overall standings. —Kyodo News

Now a basketball player? You must be Usain

HOUSTON, 17 Feb—Usain Bolt, do not quit your day job. The world's fastest man played in a celebrity basketball game on Friday in the run-up to Sunday's NBA All-Star game and failed to impress the crowd—or himself—with his skills. Bolt hit one of five shots, missed both of his free throws and totaled just two points



Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt warms up before the start of the NBA All-Star celebrity basketball game in Houston, Texas, on 15 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

in 29 minutes. The only shot the six-times Olympic champion made was a dunk. The Jamaican sprinter, whose East team was blitzed by the West 58-38, said he was surprised

that his opponents took the game so seriously.

"The West team really played hard," Bolt told Reuters. "I was just taking my time and these guys were running up and down hard. "They were up by 20 in the fourth quarter and they were in a full-court press. I'm thinking, 'This is not a celebrity game.' They were serious."

Bolt said he did not get the

ball enough. Perhaps that was because he missed an uncontested lay-in, had a three-footer clang off the rim, and failed to capitalize on his four offensive rebounds.—Reuters

PACIFIC PALISADES, (California), 17 Feb—Defending champion Bill Haas, lifted by a spectacular eagle at the par-four 10th, burst out into a three-shot lead in the third round of the Northern Trust Open on Saturday.

On a tricky day for scoring at a sun-baked Riviera Country Club, American Haas fired a sizzling seven-under-par 64 to take a firm grip on the tournament. Aiming to become the

eighth player to win back-to-back titles at the PGA Tour event, Haas produced flawless golf on a firm and fast-running layout to post a 12-under total of 201.

The 30-year-old narrowly missed an eight-foot birdie



Bill Haas of the US tees off on the 12th hole during the third round of the Northern Trust Open golf tournament at Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles on 16 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

Nadal defeats Alund to reach Brazil Open final

SAO PAULO, 17 Feb—Rafael Nadal advanced to the final of the Brazil Open on Saturday with a 6-3, 6-7 (2-7), 6-1 victory over Argentina's Martin Alund. Sunday's title decider against Argentina's David Nalbandian will be the Spaniard's second straight final since returning from a seven-month layoff with a knee problem. In his first tournament back from injury last week, the 11-time grand slam winner lost to world No 73 Horacio Zeballos in the Chile Open final.

Earlier, Nalbandian said he was confident of

clinching his first ATP title since 2010 against Nadal. The former world No 3 progressed to the final of the indoor clay-court event after defeating Italy's Simone Bolelli 6-3, 7-5. "I am feeling better as the week goes on, with each match and with that my confidence has grown," the current world No 93 said. "Physically I'm feeling very good. I have played two matches that have gone to three sets but the points have been short and for that reason I haven't felt any negative effects."

Sunday's duel will be Nalbandian's first final since being disqualified for

putt at the par-four last and had to settle for matching the week's best score, Matt Kuchar's 64 in the opening round. "I'm very pleased obviously," Haas told reporters after soaring to the top of the leaderboard with five birdies and one eagle, a chip-in from 58 feet at the driveable but treacherous 10th.

"I was just kind of plugging along out there and then all of a sudden I made a nice putt at nine, a chip-in at 10 and a good up-and-down at 11. I certainly would have liked to make that putt on 18 after a nice drive and a nice second shot but, overall, I'm very pleased."

Fellow American John Merrick recorded two eagles and trailed Haas by just two shots with one hole to play before bogeying the last for a 70 to slip back into a three-way tie for second. Also at

nine under were US Open champion Webb Simpson and in-form South African Charl Schwartzel who both returned 68s."

"Bill shooting seven under is incredible out there," American Simpson said after mixing four birdies with a lone bogey. "It was very tough. I felt like my three under was pretty good."

"It was firm and fast, and the back nine especially reminded me of a US Open, just the way the ball is releasing." "And the temperature got up, which made the ball go even further, so it was difficult to get the ball close to the pin, especially (to a) front pin." British world number three Luke Donald signed for a 70 to sit four strokes off the pace at eight under with Swede Fredrik Jacobson (72), who was one of two co-leaders overnight.—Reuters

kicking an advertising sign and injuring a line judge at Queen's Club in London last June, would have no impact on Sunday's final. "Rafa (Nadal) is a tough opponent on any sur-

face but here the conditions have been tough for everybody," Nalbandian said. "It's hard to know who will have the advantage with the balls that are being used."—Xinhua



Rafael Nadal

GENERAL

Thriving Sunflower field in Tada Sub-Township in Yangon South District



KYAUKTAN, 17 Feb—Thriving sunflower were seen at field of farmer U Aye Lwin at No. 3 ward Tada Sub-Township in Yangon South District.

He said farmer should plant the sunflower in the field which could not plant green gram.

Kyemon

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(18-2-13 09:30 am ~ 19-2-13 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * Book Fair & Literary Talk
- * News
- * Music
- * News
- * Yu Suk Dance of Chin National
- * Weather Condition in February and Notices for End of the Winter
- * News
- * A Way to revitalize Your Mind
- * The Most Amazing Yangon Exhibition & Car Show 2/2013
- * News
- * IMF's Intensifying Engagement with Myanmar
- * Provide Space for Parking
- * Culture Stage
- * "Youth and Language" YUFL (part-2)
- * Fresh-water Fish Breeding Industry
- * News
- * Planetary Posts! What do they serve
- * Myanmar Movies "Kamma"

Myanmar TV

(18-2-2013, Monday)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 7:00 am | 4:50 pm |
| 1. Paritta By Venerable MinGun Sayadaw | 13. Songs For Upholding National Spirit |
| 7:25 am | 5:15 pm |
| 2. Health Programme | 14. Musical Programme (The Radio Myanmar Modern Music Troupe) |
| 7:30 am | 5:30 pm |
| 3. Morning News | 15. Myanmar Language |
| 7:45 am | 5:45 pm |
| 4. Nice & Sweet Song | 16. Documentary |
| 7:45 am | 6:00 pm |
| 5. People talks | 17. Evening News |
| 7:55 am | 6:15 pm |
| 6. Nice and Sweet Song | 18. Weather Report |
| 8:05 am | 6:20 pm |
| 7. Pagoda programme | 19. Teleplay (Sea games) |
| 8:30 am | 6:50 pm |
| 8. Cute little dancer | 20. TV Drama Series |
| 8:40 am | 7:00 pm |
| 9. Documentary | 21. News |
| 9:00 am | 7:10 pm |
| 10. Myitta Pawana By MinGun Sayadaw | 22. TV Drama Series |
| 4:05 pm | 8:00 pm |
| 11. Dance Variety | 23. Cartoon Series |
| 4:35 pm | 24. Entertainment |
| 12. University Of Distance Education (TV Lectures) First Year (English) | 10:00 pm |
| | 25. News |
| | 26. India Drama Series |

Del Potro on fire as he sets up final with Benneteau

ROTTERDAM, 17 Feb—Argentine Juan Martin del Potro is favorite to add his name to the banner of champions wrapped around the Ahoy Arena after beating Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov 6-4, 6-4 at the World Indoor Tournament on Saturday. Runner-up last year, he will face Julien Benneteau, conqueror of champion Roger Federer, in Sunday's final after the Frenchman eliminated compatriot Gilles Simon 6-4, 7-6. Del Potro has been in devastating form and reached the title match without dropping his serve all week.

From the moment the lanky Argentine broke his Bulgarian opponent's service in the third game, when Dimitrov missed an easy volley, there seemed to be only one winner. "My serve is really going well and that gives a lot of confidence for the rest of my game plan," Del Potro told reporters. "I'm satisfied with this win against a

player with a great potential who can be top 10 of 20 in the near future." Despite his favorite status in the final, 2009 US Open champion Del Potro did not want to talk up his chances.

to stick with my game plan and play it hard." Benneteau has yet to lift a tour title in his 13-year career despite reaching seven previous finals. He retained his form from Friday when he



Juan Martin Del Potro of Argentina hits a forehand to Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria during their men's singles semi-final tennis match at the World Indoor Tournament in Rotterdam on 16 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

"It was a bit of surprise that Roger went out but it doesn't please me as I don't pay any attention to the other half of the draw before the final," he said. "It doesn't matter who I play tomorrow, I just have

ousted top seed Federer, although the 31-year-old had to wait for his chances against Simon. "I handled yesterday's win ok. I put it behind me after I woke up this morning," Benneteau said.—Reuters

Seventeen-year-old Shiffrin wins slalom gold

SCHLADMING, (Austria), 17 Feb—Mikaela Shiffrin became one of Alpine skiing's youngest world champions when she won the women's slalom on Sunday at the age of 17 to continue an impressive performance by the United States. Shiffrin, who has already won three slalom races on this season's World Cup circuit, was third fastest in the first run but then produced a typically aggressive performance in the second to take gold.

One month short of her 18th birthday, Shiffrin pipped Austria's Michaela Kirchgasser by 0.22 of a second to become the third youngest women's slalom

world champion and deny the hosts a first individual gold medal. The Austrians, who won four of the five individual women's golds in Garmisch-Partenkirchen two years, had to be content with Kirchgasser's silver and bronzes for Anne Fenninger in the giant slalom and Nicole Hosp in super combined. Olympic champion Maria Hoefl-Riesch, gold medal winner in the combined event last week, straddled a gate in the lower part of the course as she missed out, four years after her slalom gold at Val d'Isère.

Defending champion Marlies Schild, who badly injured her knee two

months ago at Are, Sweden, exceeded expectations by finishing ninth, only after three weeks after returning to the snow. Sweden's Frida Hansdotter, who

led after the first run, was third. "I can't believe what is happening to me here," Shiffrin told reporters at the finish line.

Reuters



First placed Mikaela Shiffrin of the US reacts on the podium during the flower ceremony after the women's Slalom race at the World Alpine Skiing Championships in Schladming on 16 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

All-Star game may get hostile, says West coach Popovich

HOUSTON, 17 Feb—Players and coaches concede that Sunday's NBA All-Star game is a show for the fans yet when the game is on the line, action on the basketball court could become a little hostile. "The main object is fun ... the players want to show their talents and they want to play with each other. Certain players are never going to play with somebody else on the same team," said West coach

Gregg Popovich of the San Antonio Spurs. "But when you get to the fourth quarter it gets serious they want to win. Things get

one venue," said Miami's LeBron James, who tied Durant's 36 points last season in a losing effort for the East. "We have a



(L-R) NBA All-Stars Kevin Durant (35) of Oklahoma City Thunder, Chris Paul of Los Angeles Clippers, LeBron James (6) of Miami Heat, Blake Griffin of the Clippers and Dwyane Wade of Miami Heat watch a young fan during a dance contest during practice for the NBA All-Star basketball game in Houston, Texas 16 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

a little chippy and very competitive."

The West has won the last two games, including 152-149 last season in Orlando behind 36 points by Most Valuable Player Kevin Durant of the Oklahoma City Thunder. "It's an unbelievable weekend for the fans to be able to put all of their favorite players together in

great time with it." James admitted the first half was a "feel out process."

"The second half, everyone's competitive nature kicks in," he added. "At that point, both teams want to win." West starting guard Chris Paul of the Los Angeles Clippers said the All-Star game "means everything."

Reuters

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker urges ward/village-tract administrators to carry out tasks with participation of local people



Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann holds talk with newly-elected ward/village-tract administrators.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb— Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe

Mann called on the newly-elected ward/village-tract administrators for taking

administrative measures with the participation of local people when they work

in the interests of the people in their administrative areas. During the ceremony to

assign duties to the new ward/village-tract administrators held at Zeyathiri Township General Administration Department in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area today, he urged them to be loyal to the people in their administrative areas, to make decisions while observing the existing law by themselves and mobilizing the people to follow the law as the administrators are playing a basic and important role in ruling the country in accordance with democratic principles.

The ward/village-tract administrators are the ones who can see the challenges and have listen to the voice of the local people, they have responsibilities to settle cases occurred in their administrative areas, and if they can't handle them, they should report the cases to higher-level authority and to seek advice from townsenders from representatives concerned,

noted the Speaker.

During the ceremony, U Thein Nyunt, Chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, clarified the tasks being carried out for development of the socio-economy and education and health sectors in Zeyathiri Township and future plans.

In his concluding remarks, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann stressed the need for participation of departmental officials including the township administrator in building the township to become a model one, calling for laying down plans systematically for the development of the township where the office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, University of Agriculture, University of Veterinary Science, University of Forestry, the National Landmarks Garden, the Zoological Garden, the Safari Park and Zeyathiri Stadium are located.

Daw Khin Lay Thet, wife of the Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw, Hluttaw representatives, deputy ministers, senior military officers, townsenders and members of social organizations were also present on the occasion.

MNA

Dope test to be carried out in 27th SEA Games

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Feb— The Leadership Doping Control Officer Training Course Jointly-organized by Myanmar Olympic Committee and Japan Anti-Doping Agency concluded at the training hall of Nay Pyi Taw Gold Camp here on 15

February with an address by Chairman of the Myanmar National Sports Committee Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan. In his speech, the Union Minister said that the purpose of opening the course is to test the use of dope by athletes in 27th SEA

Games and to cope with the possible problems in the process of testing.

Afterwards, Testing Group Senior Manager Ms. Chika HIRAI of Japan Anti-Doping Agency (JADA) gave necessary instructions. MNA

Significant night temperatures (17-2-2013)

Haka	9°C
Loilem	9°C

Rural region development calls for active participation of local people

Rural region is made up of 70 percent of total population of the country. National development rests on development of rural region where most of the people have been living. So the ministries concerned are making cooperation with local people in agricultural sector development that ensures rural region development and the task for generating incomes of farmers.

Rural Region Development Department of the Ministry of Border Affairs is among the departments carrying out the tasks. I had a chance to interview Director U Khin Maung Cho and Deputy Director Dr Tun Lwin of the department.

Q: May I know the role of the department in the tasks of ensuring agricultural sector development and generating incomes of farmers?

UKMC: Development Affairs Department was

reconstituted as Rural Region Development Department in June 2012 and it is making great strides in the task of socio-economic development of rural people and poverty alleviation scheme in accord with the work programmes set by the government.

Q: Let me know about the prime undertakings of the department?

UKMC: Construction and upgrading of village-to-village, village-to-town and district-to-district roads and bridges, availability of drinking water and sanitation tasks, setting up of villages, availability of electricity, development of rural economy, microfinance loans for rural people, human resources development in rural areas, maintaining rural culture, traditions and customs and formulation of strategic plans for narrowing the gap between rural and urban areas

are included in the tasks of the department.

Q: May I know the progress in construction of roads and bridges and water supply in rural region?

Dr Tun Lwin: Priority was given to rural region housing projects in Sagaing, Magway, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions. Arrangements have been made to implement the project in the remaining region and seven states.

Q: What is work progress?

Dr TL: So far 1008 houses have been built in Sagaing Region, 654 in Magway, 803 in Mandalay, 1826 in Bago, 339 in Yangon, 904 in Ayeyawady and 84 in remaining region and states totaling 5618.

Q: May I know the cooperation with international organizations?



Dr TL: Cooperating with UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, UN-HABITAT, JICA and BAJ is in progress.

Q: What are the future plans of the department?

Dr TL: Plans are underway to invite

international aid to be able to implement the rural region developments tasks. The department has planned to build 6446 miles of road and 1516 bridges. I would like to invite mass participation in the tasks so that rural

region development will be successful. The department is making great strides in the tasks of agricultural sector development and generating more incomes for farmers.

Kyemon (17-2-2013)

Trs: YM

Interviewer: Myint Wai Hlaing

Photo: Maung Maung Than (Kawhmu)