

President U Thein Sein arrives in Australia

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March —President U Thein Sein left Auckland of New Zealand at 12.45 pm local time today and arrived in Sydney of Australia at 2.15 pm local time. Officials of the Governor Office of New South Wales, Prime Minister Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed the President at the airport.

Next, the President and party flew to Canberra from Sydney by the aircraft of Australian Armed Forces and arrived at a military airfield in Canberra where they were welcomed by officials of the Prime Minister Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Then the President

and party proceeded to Hyatt Hotel in Canberra in a motorcade.

In the evening, the President and party met with the Myanmar ambassador, families of embassy staff and Myanmar citizens in Australia, and presented gifts to them.

Next, the President and party attended a dinner hosted by the Myanmar Ambassador to Australia.

MNA

President U Thein Sein being welcomed by officials of the Governor Office of New South Wales, Prime Minister Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the airport in Canberra.

MNA



Belgian Dy PM and party conclude visit



YANGON, 17 March—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs Mr Didier Reynders of Belgium and party left here by air this afternoon.

They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Yangon Region Minister for Electric and Industry U Nyan Tun Oo and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

Deputy Prime Minister Mr Didier Reynders of Belgium being seen off by officials.

MNA

UniNet launched

YANGON, 17 March—UniNet was launched this morning at Yangon Technological University in Insein Township here, attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Deputy Minister for Science and Technology Dr Zaw Min Aung and Deputy Minister for Communications and Information Technology U Thang Tin.

Deputy Minister Dr Zaw Min Aung extended greetings, followed by the speech of Chairman of Technological Universities

Administration Committee U Nyi Hla Nge.

Next, Professor Carl V Thompson from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) gave talks on materials for micro and nano-systems.

Online courses and video conferencing are available with the use of UniNet between Yangon Technological University and Yangon University of Computer Studies (Bahan Region) through wireless network.

MNA

Muse to be upgraded to a modern town



YANGON, 17 March—To upgrade Muse, a town located on Myanmar-China border, a modern town development project would be implemented, said an official of the Ministry of Commerce.

“We are planning to upgrade Muse with the aim

of boosting border trade and supporting the regional development,” he added.

Muse is the major town for the border trade between China and Myanmar as a major check-point for importing products by road from China is located at the town.

Meanwhile, the check point also plays a major role in exporting Myanmar products to China.

Shan State government will supervise and take a leading role in implementing



Photo shows Muse which is on the track to modernization.

**By:
Wai Yan Oo**

the project of upgrading the town.

The project includes building condos though there were single buildings in the town. Besides, to upgrade the town, ring roads in the town would be upgraded, an airport would be added and high-rise buildings would be constructed in the town.

Myanma Alinn:
11-3-2013
(Trans: AMS)

LOCAL NEWS



Cambodian pilgrims come in flocks to visit pagodas in Myanmar

MAGWAY, 17 March — Cambodian pilgrims visited Myathalun Pagoda in Magway on their way back from Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival in Minbu Township of Magway Region on 13 March morning.

A group of 138 Cambodian pilgrims led by two Myanmar monks and one Cambodian travel agent offered light, joss-sticks, fruit, flower, water and alms to the pagoda and made recitation of *Parittas*. Then they had photos taken in the precinct of the pagoda.

“We started our pilgrimage from Yangon on 6 March. Our journey took us Kyaithtiyoe, Mandalay, PyinOoLwin, Monywa, Bagan-NyaungU and Shwesettaw. We will proceed

to Nay Pyi Taw when our visit to Magway Myathalun Pagoda concludes. Then we will return to Yangon. There were Cambodian pilgrims who have been to Myanmar before. This time sees the most. There are 138 pilgrims in the group. We make the pilgrimage on a coach tour. It is a journey of 10 days,” says Ashin Uttara of Tipitaka Maha Gannnayon monastery in Kaba-Aye Pagoda who led the pilgrimage with another monk.

“I see more foreign visitors recent days. We are doing a brisk trade. I am happy to see more foreign tourists here. Business is good,” says a vendor in the precinct of Pagoda.

Kyemon

Installation of water pipeline in progress



YANGON, 17 March — Aimed at supplying more drinking water to dwellers of Dagon Myothit (North) and (East) townships, installation of water pipelines is being carried out under the arrangement of Engineering Department (water and sanitation) of

Yangon City Development Committee.

The water pipeline is 40 inches in diameter. Works are underway in the canal on Bohmu Tun Sein street between Mingaladon Township and North Okkalapa Township.

Kyemon

Young man dies of drowning after falling into Bago River

BAGO, 17 March—A young man drowned as falling into Bago River at Htonkalay village of Hmawlon village-tract in Bago Township at about 5 am on 11 March.

Hla Soe, 38, of Kyartat village in Kawa Township fell into the water as his left ankle got hopelessly tangled in the anchor rope while dropping anchor from a motorized boat and died of drowning in the

Farm machinery training course opened in Waw Township

WAW, 17 March — The opening of Farm Machinery Training Course (1/2013) was held at mechanized farming No (50) of Agriculture Mechanization Department in Waw Township of Bago Region on 11 March.

The head of Bago District Agriculture Mechanization Department spoke on the occasion. A total of 30 trainees are taking the course.

Kyemon

Self-reliant gravel road emerges in DaikU Township

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win together with wellwishers formally opened a self-reliant gravel road that links Taungboh Koelone village and Wargamani village

river. The fatal accident happened to the victim while he was waiting for high tide together with his colleagues, Myo Naing and Kyaw Aung before their departure for Kyartat village.

His dead body was taken out of the water and sent to Bago Hospital for further investigation into his drowning death whether there is foul play and other suspicious. Investigating into the case is ongoing by Inndakaw police station.

Kyemon

Upgradation of each road section on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway in progress

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March — According to the Ministry of Construction, each road section of Yangon-Mandalay Expressway is being upgraded paving it with asphalt. Tarmacking of each road section is being carried out mainly at accident-prone road sections with turns and weak foundation. “It is found that car accidents are frequent at the road sections with turns and weak foundation on the expressway. That’s why the expressway is being

upgraded to be equipped with standard characteristics of a road with the aim of winding down road accident and ensuring road safety along the expressway”, an official of Yangon-Mandalay Expressway Police Commander Office said.

The Yangon-Mandalay Expressway was put into service in March 2009 and an average number of vehicles running on the expressway are 10000 a day.

Kyemon



Photo shows students who were going to designated exam centres to sit for matriculation examinations in Pakokku Township on 13 March. A total of 5911 students—1416 school boys and 1766 school girls—are taking their examinations happily.—KYEMON

in Doedan village-tract of DaikU Township on 14 March morning. The village-to-village gravel road is 7059 feet long. Next, the chief minister attended the cash donation for construction of labour room, x-ray room and brick walls of the station hospital where he made an address. — MNA



Photo shows students, who were about to sit for their examination, waiting outside before the school bell rang at Basic Education High School No (1) exam centre in Yezagyo Township on 13 March. A total of 3599 students are taking their examinations peacefully at designated exam centres in the township. —KYEMON

Fuel shop fire in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 17 March — An outbreak of fire at a private fuel shop on 19th Street between 86th and 87th in Mandalay caused a public panic as a haul of fuel containers which are being kept stored were found at the shop after the flame flickered and went out.

A fire broke out at That-tant-yaung fuel shop at about 2.50 pm on 12 March. According to the responsible persons of fire services department, the outbreak of fire was due to static electricity while filling fuel from a plastic container to a metal jar. Although the fire did not spread to nearby houses, the it gutted the whole

shop, destroying furniture, 50 gallons of petrol and 25 gallons of diesel. As soon as the fire started, the crowds of local people fought the fire with the use of fire extinguishers and they were joined by about 100 fire fighters accompanied by 11 fire trucks. They struggled to control the fire and put out it at about 3.15 pm. Soon after the flame went out, the news of finding out the fuel storage came as a shock to local people. But the fire did not lick the fuel containers. Two women and one fire officer were wounded in the fire. Shop assistant Hein Thiha, 24, was charged with the cause of fire by police.

Kyemon

Medical staff of Workers’ Hospital make field trip in Yangon

YANGON, 17 March — A 30-member medical team comprising specialists, surgeons and nurses led by Medical Superintendent Dr Daw Khin Pyu Win of Workers’ Hospital (Yangon) provided staff with health care at the assembly Hall of Printing and Publishing

Enterprise on Theinbyu Street in Botahtaung Township, here, on 14 March morning.

Next, the medical superintendent gave talks on rights of staff under social security and activities of Workers’ Hospital (Yangon).

Kyemon

WORLD

Italy parliament elects speakers as tensions continue

ROME, 17 March—Italy's centre-left alliance scraped a narrow victory in a vote to appoint the new speakers of parliament on Saturday but the fragile margin of success underlined how hard it will be to form a stable government after last month's deadlocked election.

The appointment of the speakers was parliament's first act since the February election, in which the centre-left formation of Pier Luigi Bersani won a lower house majority but not enough to control the Senate and form a government.

The result has left Italy stuck in a political

quagmire, arousing fears that bond markets could take fright, reigniting the euro zone crisis and endangering the government's ability to manage Italy's 2-trillion-euro public debt.

After a tense day in parliament, the centre-left candidates Laura Boldrini and Piero Grasso, a former anti-mafia magistrate, were elected as speakers of the lower house and Senate after other parties ruled out accepting the posts in exchange for supporting a Bersani-led government. With no clear majority in the Senate, Democratic Party (PD) leader Bersani had to rely on abstentions and a handful of votes



Laura Boldrini from the centre-left claps after the vote electing her as the new lower house president at the Chamber of Deputies in Rome on 16 March, 2013.

REUTERS

from other groups, including Beppe Grillo's anti-establishment 5-Star Movement and centrists led by Prime Minister Mario Monti. Grasso still did not get an absolute majority in the upper house. Although the centre-left now has the influential

speakers' chairs, the result highlighted Bersani's failure to secure a wider accord that might have allowed him to form a government. It did little to quell speculation that Italy may have to return to the polls within months.

Reuters

Zimbabwe votes on curbs to president's power

CHITUNGWIZA, (Zimbabwe), 17 March—Zimbabweans voted on Saturday in a referendum expected to endorse a new constitution that would trim presidential powers and pave the way for an election to decide whether Robert Mugabe extends his three-decade rule.

Mugabe, Africa's oldest president at 89, has

ruled the former British colony since independence in 1980 and has been accused of waging violent crackdowns on the opposition and weakening state institutions like the cabinet and parliament.

The new constitution would set a maximum two five-year terms for the president, starting with the next election, expected

in the second half of this year. But the limit will not apply retroactively, so Mugabe could rule for another two terms.

Presidential decrees will also require majority backing in the cabinet, and declarations of emergency rule or dissolutions of parliament will need the approval of two-thirds of lawmakers, changes that will take effect after the next election.

Mugabe's ZANU-PF and the rival Movement for Democratic Change of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai are backing the charter, making Saturday's vote almost a rubber stamp exercise.

Voting ended at 1700 GMT at the nearly 10,000 polling stations across the southern African nation, with results to be announced within five days, said Rita Makarau, head of the Zimbabwe

Electoral Commission.

Turnout at the poll was generally low across the country but both Mugabe and Tsvangirai have been optimistic the constitution would be approved before presidential and parliamentary elections later in the year.

"We want peace in the country. Peace, peace, peace. It must begin with Robert Mugabe and go on to you and everyone else," said Mugabe as he voted in the Highfield township near downtown Harare, accompanied by his wife and daughter. After a violent and disputed vote in 2008, Mugabe was pushed into a power-sharing agreement with Tsvangirai. Tsvangirai made the referendum on the new constitution a condition of the power-sharing deal and said there would be no point in holding new elections without it.—Reuters



A woman is helped by officials as she votes in a referendum at a polling station in Harare on 16 March, 2013.—REUTERS

Bulgarian centre-right hold lead in March, poll shows

SOFIA, 17 March—Support for Bulgaria's centre-right GERB led by ex-Prime Minister Boiko Borisov fell in March after protests about living standards but it held a lead over the Socialists ahead of May elections, a poll showed on Saturday.

Support for GERB was 19.7 percent in March, down from 22 percent in February while backing for the Socialists fell to 18.6 percent from 22 percent in the previous month, according to the Gallup International poll.

Backing for the far-right Attack party led jumped to 5.0 percent from 1.2 percent

in February, according to the poll of 1,013 people carried out between 7 and 12 March.

Tens of thousands of people have protested for more than a month in the European Union's poorest country against rising unemployment and low living standards. The demonstrations led

to Borisov's government resigning last month, and the Balkan country will hold parliamentary elections on 12 May.

Support for the ethnic Turkish MRF party fell to 5.2 percent in March from 7.3 percent a month earlier, the poll showed.

Parties need to win at

Outgoing Bulgarian Prime Minister Boiko Borisov speaks during a debate at the parliament in Sofia on 21 Feb, 2013.

REUTERS



Obama pledges cooperation with new Israeli government

WASHINGTON, 17 March —US President Barack Obama on Saturday congratulated Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the formation of a new government and pledged cooperation on shared challenges.

"President Obama looks forward to working closely with the prime minister and the new government to address the many challenges we face and advance our shared interest in peace and security," the White House said in a statement.

"The United States places a high value on its deep and enduring bonds with Israel and the Israeli people," the statement said. "The president looks forward to further strengthening those bonds when he travels to Israel next week to meet with Israeli officials and to

speak directly with the Israeli people."

A new coalition government was formed in Israel on Friday, two months after the Israelis voted in the country's on 22 Jan elections, after Netanyahu's Likud Party signed agreements with Yesh Atid and the Jewish Home on Friday. The new coalition will be inaugurated on Monday.

Obama will leave Washington on Tuesday night for his first three-day overseas trip after he took office in January for his second term, which will take him to Israel, the West Bank and Jordan.

The Israeli-Palestinian peace process, the two-year-old conflict in Syria and Iran's controversial nuclear programme are expected to dominate his agenda.—Xinhua

US aims to clinch Afghan deal on prisoner transfer



US Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel speaks at his news conference at the Pentagon in Washington on 15 March, 2013.—REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 17 March —US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel and Afghan President Hamid Karzai spoke in a call on Saturday about efforts to quickly resolve one of the most vexing issues in the two countries' relations, the delayed transfer to Afghan control of a key detention centre. The Pentagon said the two men "agreed to use the next week to conduct intensive work with a view to concluding an agreement," spokesman George Little said in a statement.

The transfer of the detention centre at Bagram air base is a persistent source of tension, with Karzai's office warning in a statement on Wednesday that "any more delays could harm the bilateral relations."

US commanders want to ensure that dangerous prisoners will not be released back to the battlefield. But Karzai has raised alarms by

warning that any "innocent" prisoners being held at the facility will be released.

Little's statement said an agreement on the detention facility would be one that both "fully recognizes Afghan sovereignty and our mutual interests in security of the Afghan people and our respective forces."

During Hagel's visit to Afghanistan last weekend, Karzai accused the United States of colluding with the Taliban and of holding unilateral negotiations with the insurgents—allegations the United States sharply denied and which exposed deep tensions after 11 years of war. The United States plans to pull out just over half of its 66,000 troops from Afghanistan by early next year and leave a relatively small force after 2014, focusing on training Afghan forces and conducting limited counterterrorism operations.—Reuters

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Radio frequency chip makers tune in to smartphone race



A working staff looks over a new launched solar-powered recycling compactor at Time Square in New York, the United States, on 15 March, 2013. A total number of 30 new solar-powered recycling waste and recycling stations were launched at Time Square on Friday, which will encourage public space recycling among more than 500,000 daily visitors to the crossroads of the world. By year's end, the City will have put 1,000 new recycling containers on streets in all five boroughs.—XINHUA

NEW YORK, 17 March—Radio frequency chip makers are set to gain as Samsung Electronics Co Ltd and Apple Inc unveil ever more sophisticated smartphones and tablets to battle for the No 1 spot in the global mobile devices market.

Investors and analysts say they like shares of RF Micro Devices Inc, Skyworks Solutions Inc and Avago Technologies Ltd—companies that make the chips that enable gadgets to send and receive data wirelessly.

Samsung unveiled its latest flagship phone, the Galaxy S4, in New York on Thursday. The S4 can stop and start videos when

someone looks at the screen, flip between songs at the wave of a hand and record sound to accompany pictures.

As manufacturers improve and add new features to phones, which are increasingly used to stream music, video and games, they are boosting the RF chip technology used in the devices.

“The RF content in handsets continues to go up,” said Stewart Stecker, a portfolio manager at AlphaOne Capital. “That’s good from an immediate to longer-term perspective for the entire RF supply chain.”

The importance of RF chips will increase as network operators deploy high-speed

wireless technology known as 4G LTE (long-term evolution), analysts said.

LTE requires a much higher number of frequency bands, which increases the number of RF chips in a phone.

The global LTE market is expected to almost double this year, surpassing the

said Northland Securities analyst Tom Sepenzis.

A Verizon customer, for example, using a Samsung Galaxy S4 while travelling the world, would need to be able to use the LTE network in the United States and other countries, said Sepenzis.

“That requires more complex amplifiers that

Samsung Electronics Co's latest Galaxy S4 phone is seen during its launch at the Radio City Music Hall in New York on 14 March, 2013. REUTERS



Space trio lands in Kazakhstan after bad weather delay

ALMATY, 17 March—A Russian Soyuz capsule made a “bull’s eye” landing in the steppes of Kazakhstan on Saturday, delivering a Russian-American trio from the International Space Station, a day after its originally scheduled touchdown was delayed by foul weather.

NASA’s Kevin Ford and Russian cosmonauts Oleg Novitskiy and Evgeny Tarelkin, who had manned the \$100 billion orbital outpost since October as Expedition 34, landed in cloudy weather at 7:06 am Moscow time (0306 GMT) northeast of the town of Arkalyk.

They had spent 144 days aboard the multinational ISS on their space journey of almost 61 million miles (98 million km). “The landing was energetic and exciting,” Russian TV showed Novitskiy as saying. NASA television



International Space Station (ISS) crew members Russian cosmonauts Evgeny Tarelkin (L) and Oleg Novitskiy (C) and US astronaut Kevin Ford sit together at Kustanay Airport after they landed near the town of Arkalyk in Kazakhstan, on 16 March, 2013, in this handout photo courtesy of NASA.—REUTERS

said the deorbit burn and other events during the descent had gone flawlessly. It said the capsule had landed upright, almost hitting its bull’s eye target in thick fog. “Oleg Novitskiy reported to search and recovery teams that the crew is feeling good,” NASA television said. “Everything

seems to be in order.” Due to hampered visibility, it took a few minutes before helicopters with Russian search and recovery teams could locate the Soyuz capsule after its landing.

The first images shown by Russia’s Vesti-24 television featured rescue

workers standing in a snow-covered steppe opening the hatch of the capsule.

The three smiling astronauts were seated on semi-reclined chairs and covered with blue thermal blankets. They were then carried to a nearby inflatable medical tent. On Friday, fog and freezing rain at the landing site in Kazakhstan prevented helicopters from setting up for the crew’s return to Earth. In preparation for their departure, Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield took the helm of the space station on Wednesday, becoming the first Canadian to take command of the outpost. It is only the second time in the 12-year history of the station, a project of 15 nations that has been permanently staffed since November 2000, that command has been turned over to someone who is not American or Russian.

Reuters

SEC says funds need not report all social media postings

BRUSSELS, 17 March—Mutual funds regulators are suffering from Twitter overload.

Many funds companies, which are required to file advertising and promotional materials for regulatory review, have also been sending over all of their posts on Facebook, Twitter and other social media networks. But on Friday, the Securities and Exchange Commission moved to end the deluge, issuing guidelines that almost all social media posts did not need to be filed with Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, which conducts the reviews.

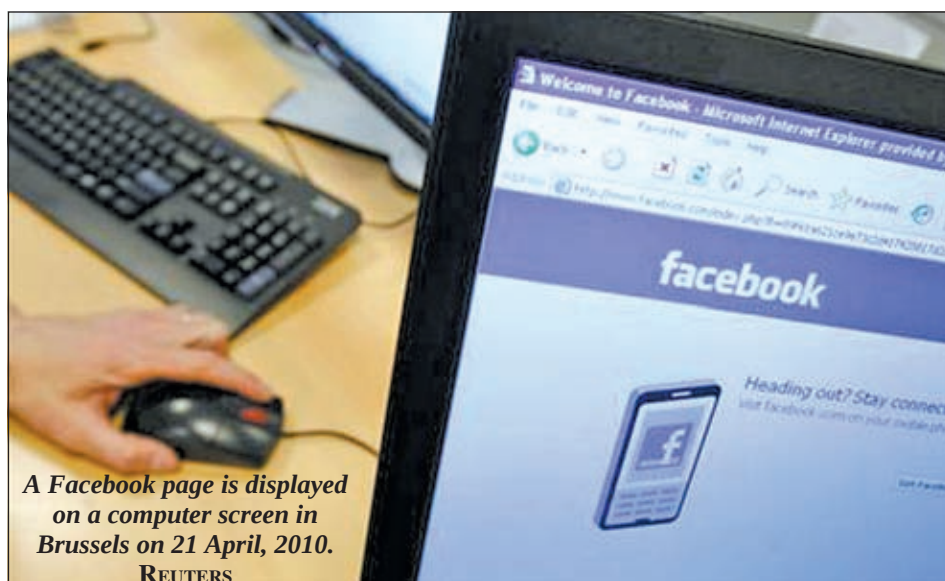
Only posts specifically making claims about fund performance or pitching a fund’s investment merits

should be filed for review, the agency said. For example, a tweet simply announcing that a new fund was launched, marking a portfolio manager change or making other

factual statements need not be filed, the SEC said.

However, a tweet which said “fund performance rebounded strongly during the third quarter of 2012”

or “Looking for dividends? Think global and consider our new Global Equity Fund,” were the types of communications that should be filed for review.—Reuters



A Facebook page is displayed on a computer screen in Brussels on 21 April, 2010. REUTERS

Silver Lake’s bid for Dell started at \$11.22 per share

NEW YORK, 17 March—Private equity firm Silver Lake Partners bid as low as \$11.22 per share for Dell Inc in mid 2012, when it

said repeatedly that the bid comes only after extensive review and negotiations, and has deemed it fair to shareholders and that view



A company logo of Dell is seen on the cover of its laptop at a Dell outlet in Hong Kong on 21 Oct, 2009.—REUTERS

first discussed a buyout with founder and CEO Michael Dell, according to a person familiar with the situation.

Since then, on 5 February this year, Silver Lake and Michael Dell raised their bid to take the world’s No 3 personal computer maker private to \$13.65 a share.

At \$24.4 billion, it would be the largest private equity-led buyout since the 2008 financial crisis.

When the bid was first announced, the price represented a 25 per cent premium over the stock price before news of the bid, but Dell’s share price closed at \$14.31 on Friday.

The computer maker has

will likely be emphasized again in an upcoming proxy filing with the SEC.

But some analysts say Michael Dell and Silver Lake may eventually raise their bid to try to appease investors in Dell like Southeastern who complain it undervalues the company.

Michael Dell is trying to complete his company’s transition from a low-margin PC maker into a provider of computing services.

The makeover has become more urgent as the PC market shrinks. Analysts say it might best be carried out if the company were taken private, away from public shareholder pressure and scrutiny.—Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

New device keeps human liver alive outside body

LONDON, 17 March—Donated human liver could be “kept alive” outside a human being with a newly invented device, and then successfully transplant into patients, the British researchers reported on Friday.

The Oxford University researchers, together with surgeons at King’s College Hospital, announced here, that the procedure had been performed on two patients and both are making “excellent recoveries.” Currently transplantation depends on preserving donor organs by putting them “on ice”—cooling them to slow their metabolism. But this often leads to organs becoming damaged.

The technology, developed at Oxford University and now being trialled at the liver transplant centre at King’s College

Hospital, could preserve a functioning liver outside the body for 24 hours by stimulating the natural environment-providing body

temperature and oxygenated red blood cells, etc. Once on the machine, a liver functions normally, regaining its colour and producing bile.

The results from the first two transplants, carried out at King’s College Hospital last month, suggest that the device could be useful for all patients needing liver transplants.

“The device is the very first completely automated liver perfusion device of its kind,” said Professor Constantin Coussios of Oxford University’s Department of Engineering Science, one of the machine’s inventors, “what was even more amazing was to see the same liver transplanted into a patient who is now walking around.”—Xinhua



The King’s College Hospital, Oxford University and OrganOx team pose for a photograph following the successful connection of the first human liver for transplant onto the OrganOx Metra device, in this undated picture provided by the University of Oxford in southern England on 15 March, 2013.

REUTERS



Toyota FJ Cruiser car

Toyota to recall defective cars in China

BEIJING, 17 March—The Japanese automaker Toyota will recall some 4,400 units of FJ Cruiser cars in China over seat belt flaws, China’s consumer quality watchdog said on Saturday. The General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) said on its website that Toyota China will recall these imported cars produced between December 2007 and March 2013. Toyota is busy working on the solution to the flaw and will release improvement methods before 15 April, according to the administration.

This marks Toyota’s second recalling this year after the auto giant announced in January that it would recall 22,869 units of Lexus IS cars

in China due to wiper arm problem.

China’s private auto ownership reached 93.09 million units by the end of 2012, up 18.3 percent year on year. Along with the fast expanding auto market, Chinese drivers grow more concerned about the quality of their cars.

Also on Saturday, the AQSIQ urged German automaker Volkswagen to recall defective cars after China Central Television (CCTV) exposed Volkswagen’s gearbox defect on Friday. To better protect the interests of Chinese consumers, the AQSIQ announced late last year that it would formulate a guideline to regulate a recall system for faulty cars.—Xinhua

Britain to close offshore payroll tax loophole

LONDON, 17 March—Britain will close a loophole that has allowed some employers to avoid paying payroll taxes by routing wages through overseas intermediaries, the Treasury said on Saturday.

It said over 100,000 people working for British

firms were employed through payroll agents based in offshore tax havens such as Jersey, costing the government almost 100 million pounds (\$150 million) a year in lost revenue.

In many cases the workers—mainly temporary agency staff such as teachers,

nurses, and oil and gas crews—were unaware the taxes were not being paid or that as a result they could lose their entitlement to state sickness or maternity benefits.

Treasury minister Danny Alexander said measures to end the practice would be introduced in the government’s budget statement on 20 March.

“British firms employing British workers must pay British taxes. This is just one part of a bigger package we will introduce at the budget next week,” he said. The new measures would come into force from April 2014, the Treasury said.

Payment of taxes has become a hot political issue in Britain as the government squeezes spending to reduce its budget deficit.

Multinationals such as Starbucks, Amazon and Google have come under fire for using legal maneuvers to cut their tax bills, although there was no suggestion they were using the payroll loophole.—Reuters

China demands Volkswagen to recall defective cars



BEIJING, 17 March—China’s consumer quality watchdog on Saturday urged German car maker Volkswagen to recall defective cars after China Central Television (CCTV) exposed the defect in a Friday report. The General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) said in a statement on its website that its research has confirmed that some of the company’s direct shift gearbox (DSG) transmissions have defects that may cause engine power failures. AQSIQ spokesman Zhang Yuanping said that if Volkswagen refuses to fulfill its legal obligations, AQSIQ will force it to recall the

defective cars.

On Friday, a CCTV programme on consumer rights stated that malfunctions in the DSG transmissions could cause a sudden loss or gain in engine power, which can pose safety hazards.

Volkswagen China wrote on its official microblog late Friday that it has taken the report seriously and will contact consumers as soon as possible to resolve the problem. According to Zhang, AQSIQ has been investigating the company’s DSG transmissions since last March. In May, Volkswagen extended its DSG quality guarantee period in China to ten years under pressure from the administration,

Zhang said.

Volkswagen is not the only foreign company being accused of improper practices by CCTV. Electronics Giant Apple Inc has been accused of adopting differentiating repair and return policies in China.

The company offers shorter warranty periods in China compared with other countries and uses refurbished parts when repairing broken devices, according to CCTV. CCTV’s “3.15” investigatory journalism programme has been on the air for 23 years, during which time it has revealed scandals at multiple companies, such as McDonalds and Carrefour.

Xinhua



Britain’s Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander leaves after attending a Cabinet meeting at Number 10 Downing Street in London on 12 March, 2013.—REUTERS

North Dakota Senate approves “heartbeat” abortion ban

BISMARCK, 17 March—The North Dakota Senate approved what would be the most restrictive abortion law in the United States on Friday, a measure banning the procedure in most cases once a fetal heartbeat can be detected, as early as six weeks.

Senators also approved a second bill on Friday that bans abortions based solely on genetic abnormalities, the first state ban of its kind if signed into law. The bill would also ban abortions based on the gender of the fetus, which would make North Dakota the fourth state to ban sex-selection based abortions.

The bills, which passed the state House of Representatives last month, now head to Republican Governor Jack Dalrymple, who has not indicated whether he would sign them

into law. He is expected to receive the bills on Monday.

The “heartbeat” bill provides exceptions if an abortion would prevent the death or irreversible impairment of a pregnant woman but no exceptions for rape. It sets up a direct challenge to the Supreme Court’s decision in Roe v. Wade that legalized abortion in 1973.

Several states ban most abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Arkansas lawmakers earlier in March approved a ban on most abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy that could take effect in August if it survives expected legal challenges.

Republican state Senator Spencer Berry, a bill sponsor, said 40 years of medical advancements should not be ignored.

“The images and

heartbeat from the womb provide strong and overwhelming evidence of—at the very least—potential life,” Berry said. “And we have been instructed by the Supreme Court to protect that very potential.”

At six weeks, the ban would take effect before many women would know they were pregnant, said the Centre for Reproductive Rights, which represents North Dakota’s only clinic that provides abortions, the Red River Women’s Clinic in Fargo.

Statehouses across the nation approved a record 92 restrictions on abortion in 2011 and another 43 in 2012, which was the second-highest figure on record, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research group that supports abortion rights.

Reuters

WORLD

One killed, five injured in fuel tank blast in SE Turkey

ANKARA, 17 March—One person was killed and five others injured on Saturday evening when a fuel tank exploded in southeastern Turkey, private *Dogan news agency* reported.

The explosion took place in the electrical section of the fuel tank in a garden in Sanliurfa, leaving one person killed and five

others injured, including two children, according to the report.

Reasons behind the blast remained unknown. The wounded were taken to a private hospital for medical treatment, said the report, adding that an investigation into this incident was underway.

Xinhua

Congolese rebels surrender, flee after defeat by rivals

KINSHASA, 17 March—Hundreds of Congolese rebels loyal to warlord Bosco Ntaganda have fled into neighbouring Rwanda or surrendered to United Nations peacekeepers after being routed by a rival faction, rebel and UN sources said on Saturday.

Ntaganda's apparent defeat comes after weeks of infighting within the

M23 insurgency and could open the way for rival rebel leader Sultani Makenga to sign a peace deal with Kinshasa, bringing an end to a year-long rebellion in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Rebel spokesman Vianney Kazarama said Makenga seized control of the town of Kibumba, 30 km (19 miles) north of Goma, capital of mineral-



Yemeni police troops inspect vehicles at a checkpoint in Sanaa, Yemen, on 16 March, 2013. More than 60,000 soldiers are to be deployed in Sanaa to secure the long-awaited national dialogue slated for Monday, the Yemeni government said on Saturday.—XINHUA

rich North Kivu Province, early on Saturday. Ntaganda and an estimated 200 fighters fled into the forest while hundreds of others crossed the border into Rwanda, Kazarama said. At least seven were killed.

"We're sweeping the area and placing our soldiers at strategic points," Kazarama said. "It is finished."

Ntaganda is wanted by the International Criminal Court on charges of killing civilians during a previous rebellion. His links to M23 have been a stumbling block to peace talks with Kinshasa, which says it wants him brought to justice. "We're following the situation very closely. The only thing we want is for Ntaganda to be arrested," government spokesman Lambert Mende said.

Ntaganda's whereabouts could not be con-

firmed independently and members of his faction were not reachable by telephone.

About 300 uniformed M23 rebels loyal to Ntaganda sat in a clearing littered with empty beer bottles in a small village in Rwanda's Rubavu District near the frontier, as locals in tattered clothes looked on.

Rwandan soldiers, who walked around nearby, had collected heaps of the rebels' weapons—AK-47 rifles, 60 mm mortar rounds and grenades — and laid them out in the front yard of a house.

"They were fighting us on all sides so we were forced to come to Rwanda. We know we have international rights here," said Prince Andema Makamo, who told *Reuters* he was a member of the M23 faction's political unit.

Reuters

Syrian general, 20 soldiers defect

BEIRUT, 17 March—A brigadier general and about 20 soldiers defected from the Syrian army in two separate incidents on Saturday, activists said, in another sign that the strength of President Bashar al-Assad's armed forces is diminishing.

Brigadier General Mohammed Khalouf appeared dressed in a camouflage military uniform in a video on *Al Arabiya* news channel and said he had planned his escape with the opposition movement for some time.

"It is not possible for anyone to accept any of the ideas of this regime unless they have achieved special interests," he said in the video. There was no comment about the defection on Syrian state news outlets.

Defection of high-ranking military and political figures has slowed in past months.

But a study by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) published

this week estimated that Assad's forces, thought to be more than 300,000-strong at the start of the uprising two years ago, were now at a much lower effective strength and were likely to diminish further.

The IISS said that perhaps 50,000 of the Syrian army's elite troops could be depended on for loyalty. Most of them were likely to be from Assad's minority Alawite sect, which has dominated the country for more than four decades.

Many deserters report that their units were held inside bases to prevent their escape.

Syria's civil war began as a popular street movement but has evolved into an increasingly sectarian conflict. The opposition has been mostly led by the Sunni Muslim population, with Alawites and other minorities mostly throwing their weight behind Assad.

Reuters

Evacuation orders lifted as Colorado wildfire eases

DENVER, 17 March—Evacuation orders were lifted on Saturday for hundreds of Colorado residents forced to flee their homes due to a wind-driven wildfire in a canyon northwest of Denver, as firefighters made progress in containing the blaze, officials said.

Calmer winds, higher humidity levels and cooler temperatures allowed firefighters to cut containment lines around 45 percent of the so-called Galena Fire, said Nick Christensen, spokesman for the Larimer County Sheriff's Office.

The blaze signaled an early start to the wildfire season in the drought-stricken state, which last year had its worst fire year on record.

In 2012, forest and brush fires scorched 384,803 acres in the state, destroyed 650 homes and killed six people, according to the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control. The latest wildfire erupted on Friday about 75

miles northwest of Denver near the city of Fort Collins and Lory State Park and has charred between 750 and 1,000 acres. But no injuries were reported and no structures were lost, Christensen said.

He added that all evacuees would be permitted to return to their homes by Saturday evening. Hundreds of residents were ordered out of their homes on Friday afternoon after erratic winds quickly spread the flames near populated areas. Poudre Valley Fire Authority chief Tom DeMint told reporters investigators had pinpointed the origin of the fire and determined that it was human-caused, but he gave no further details.

DeMint said residents allowed back in their homes should be prepared for further evacuations if the high winds forecast for Sunday materialize and cause a flare-up. "If we have another ignition source, it's game on," he said.—Reuters

French oppose pension changes, diesel tax

PARIS, 17 March—Most French people oppose ending inflation-linked rises for private-sector pensions, a poll showed on Saturday, highlighting the challenge facing the government as it prepares broader changes to the pension system.

Some 75 percent of respondents reject a deal on Wednesday in which unions and employers agreed on adjusting private sector pensions by less than the rate of inflation, the *Ifop* poll for the *Journal du Dimanche* newspaper showed. The agreement was seen as a test of the government's chances of making similar changes to the broader system when

it unveils a reform in July to rein in an overall annual pension deficit set to hit 20 billion euros (17.3 billion pounds) by 2020.

The poll, carried out among 1005 people on 14-15 March, also showed that nearly three quarters of respondents would oppose increasing taxes on diesel, another possible step for plugging fiscal shortfalls proposed by the government's auditor.

Any tax rise would be a controversial move in a country where diesel accounts for 80 percent of road fuel consumption, and ministers have insisted that it will not happen this year.

Reuters



Congolese government soldiers prepare to drive from a military outpost between Kachiru village and Mbuzi hill, in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 25 May, 2012.—REUTERS

Rebels fight Sudanese government troops in south Darfur

KHARTOUM, 17 March—Sudanese rebels said on Saturday they had killed more than 200 soldiers in South Darfur, but the government said its troops had suffered only a "number" of casualties and repulsed an ambush. War broke out in the western region of Darfur over a decade ago and has raged ever since despite two peace accords and the pre-sence of the world's largest peace-keeping mission.

The main insurgent groups, who accuse the government of marginalising the region's ethnic minorities, have refused to join a Qatar-backed peace process that led to a deal between Khartoum and an umbrella of smaller rebel factions in 2011. While violence is down from its peak in 2003 and 2004, new fighting has forced more than 130,000 people to flee their homes since the start of the year, according to the United

Nations. On Saturday, rebels of the Sudan Liberation Army faction loyal to veteran fighter Minni Minnawi said they attacked a government convoy near Nyala, the capital of South Darfur state.

"Nothing of note survived of the convoy," they said in a statement. They said they killed 260 government troops and militia fighters—an unusually high number to claim. The army contradicted this account, saying it had repulsed the ambush and had killed and wounded around 100 rebels. The armed forces only suffered "a number" of casualties, the army's spokesman said in a report by state news agency *SUNA*.

Both sides frequently give conflicting reports of fighting, each claiming victory over the other. Events in Darfur are hard to independently verify because of restrictions on media access to the region.—Reuters



A customer fills-up his car with diesel at a gas station in Nice on 4 March, 2013.—REUTERS

WORLD

Jordan to select technology for first nuclear reactor in May

AMMAN, 17 March—Jordan said on Saturday it will select the technology for its first planned nuclear reactor in mid-May, the state-run *Petra* news agency reported.

Khaled Toukan, chairman of the Jordan Atomic Energy Commission, said there is a “strong competition” between two offers that Jordan has preselected recently to provide the technology for the reactor.

Russia’s Atomstroyexport and a consortium of France’s Areva and Japan’s Mitsubishi were prequalified, Toukan said, adding that the winning offer will be announced in mid-May.

Regarding the location of the reactor, Toukan said studies will be completed by the end of this month on three possible sites, and the final site will be jointly determined by the cabinet,

the Lower House and the local communities. Also in May, Jordan will select the strategic partner of the project, Toukan said, adding that the final agreement to build the nuclear reactor will be signed in the second half of 2013. Jordan, which imports about 96 percent of its energy needs annually, plans to build several nuclear reactors for power generation.

Xinhua



People gather by the wrecked vehicles on a highway to the Dead Sea, about 25 km southwest of Amman, capital of Jordan, on 16 March, 2013. A bus carrying Palestinian pilgrims overturned after colliding with a car and a trailer on the Dead Sea highway. About 16 people were killed, 42 others injured, and some in critical conditions.—XINHUA

3rd Chinese-Lebanese seminar begins in Beirut

BEIRUT, 17 March—Experts from China and Lebanon met here on Saturday for the third Chinese-Lebanese academic seminar, exchanging views on issues of politics, economy and culture.

Yang Fuchang, former Chinese vice foreign minister, said at the seminar that both China and the Arab world face various kinds of opportunities and challenges, adding that the relations between the two sides have not changed despite the ongoing developments in the Arab region. Yang underlined the close cooperation between China and Lebanon in the fields of culture, academy and tourism among others.

For his part, Massoud Daher, president of the Chinese-Lebanese friendship and cooperation committee, expressed hope that the Lebanese University and Chinese institutions of higher education, such as the Peking University, would further strengthen exchanges and cooperation.—Xinhua



Afghan Army Commando take part in their training during a military rehearsal in Kabul, Afghanistan on 16 March, 2013. Several hundreds of Afghan National Army (ANA) commandos on Saturday were involved in a one-day military exercise in southern edge of capital city of Kabul, as the ANA is taking the lead of nearly 80 percent of operations in providing security for the war-hit country.—XINHUA

Khartoum, Juba’s joint political, security committee to resume meetings on Sunday

KHARTOUM, 17 March—The joint political and security committee between Sudan and South Sudan is to resume its meetings on Sunday in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, Khartoum’s *Al Ray Al Am* daily reported on Saturday.

The preparatory panel of the joint committee has started arrangements for resuming the committee’s meetings with the participation of the two countries’ defence ministers, the paper said.

It added that the two

sides would discuss topics related to the security arrangements and get acquainted with progress in the withdrawal of the two countries’ armies from the demilitarized zone together with the issue of breaking the link between South Sudan’s army and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM)/northern sector.

Last week Khartoum and Juba signed in Addis Ababa a matrix deal of modality to implement the security arrangement deal as well as the coop-

eration agreement signed between them in Ethiopia in September last year.

Two days later, the two sides started withdrawing their forces from the joint border prior to establish a safe demilitarized zone as a practical step toward the implementation of the signed agreements.

The two sides further agreed to resume South Sudan’s oil exportation through Sudan’s pipeline in two weeks’ time.

Xinhua

EU’s Ashton urges caution on lifting arms ban for Syria rebels

BRUSSELS, 17 March—The European Union’s foreign policy chief urged caution on Saturday about a Franco-British drive to lift an EU arms embargo to help rebels in Syria, questioning the impact such a step might have on attempts to reach a political settlement there.

Other EU governments rebuffed efforts by Paris and London at an EU summit on Friday to lift the Syrian arms embargo to help opponents of President Bashar al-Assad, although they asked foreign ministers to discuss it again next week.

EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said the EU needed to think “very carefully” about French and British arguments that lifting the embargo would encourage Assad to negotiate.

The EU should also consult UN mediator Lakhdar Brahimi and Moaz al-Khatib, head of the opposition Syrian National Coalition, about what impact lifting the

embargo might have on their efforts to start talks to end the Syria crisis, she said. “What we’ve got to make sure of is anything we do does not make that (work) harder,” she said, speaking at a conference organized by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, a group committed to strengthening transatlantic cooperation.

Germany led opposition to the Franco-British move to lift the embargo to help the rebels after two years of civil war that have killed 70,000 people, according to UN estimates.

Opponents argue that arming the rebels could encourage Assad’s backers, Russia and Iran, to step up weapons deliveries to the government, fueling an arms race, and they also fear that weapons could fall into the wrong hands, such as militants in the rebel ranks.

Ashton said she had told EU leaders at Friday’s summit that they must think through very carefully the implications of

lifting the arms embargo.

“Would putting weapons into the field make it more or less likely that others will do the same? What would be the response of Assad based on what we know about his response so far? Would it stop people being killed or would it kill people faster?” she said.

Although Ashton did not mention it, Western governments are concerned about chemical weapons the Syrian government is believed to hold.

US President Barack Obama has warned Assad he would be held accountable if such weapons were used. EU diplomats think it is unlikely France and Britain will be able to persuade its EU partners to back lifting the arms embargo to help the rebels, a decision that needs unanimity. But a compromise allowing some increased aid to Assad’s opponents might be possible before current sanctions expire on 1 June.

Reuters



EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton holds a news conference at the end of a European Union foreign ministers meeting in Brussels on 23 Jan, 2012.

REUTERS



Newly-wed couples are seen in a traditional wedding of Yugu ethnic group in Lanzhou, northwest China’s Gansu Province, on 16 March, 2013. Many of Yugu ethnic group, living primarily in Sunan Yugu Autonomous County in Gansu Province, still prefer to follow their traditional wedding form in modern days.

XINHUA

IMF chief welcomes joint loan programme for Cyprus

WASHINGTON, 17 March—Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the Washington-based International Monetary Fund (IMF), on Saturday said she welcomed the joint loan programme with the eurozone for Cyprus to help the nation tackle its economic challenges.

After about 10 hours of negotiations, the eurozone and the IMF early Saturday morning agreed on a 10-billion-euro (about 13 billion US dollar) bailout package for Cyprus.

“The IMF has always said that we would support

a solution that is sustainable, that is fully financed, and that appropriately allocates the burden sharing. I believe that the agreed package meets these three objectives,” Lagarde said in a statement. “On this basis, I intend to make a recommendation to our Executive Board for the IMF to contribute to the financing of the package,” she noted.

The deal was announced by Eurogroup head Jeroen Dijsselbloem after a meeting of eurozone finance ministers, which is also attended by Lagarde.—Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 18 March, 2013

Democracy culture

In a period of less than two years the incumbent government has been in office it has been striving to strengthen democracy in every aspect as aspired by the people. This means not only ending repression and creating the legal framework that can guarantee political freedom, but also enabling the development of civil society organizations, and nurturing a new democratic culture. During this transition period, it has been able to lay a foundation for democratic institutions such as constitution, governance system with check and balance, national and local legislatures, judiciary, political parties and independent press.

Proper implementation is required to give these democratic institutions life. Here it is important to change the mindset of the people so that people can take root in the democracy culture. In solving problems arising from armed conflicts to industrial relations, the most honourable and valuable achievement is the start of a culture of solving all problems through dialogues and discussions.

In fact, recent political progress can be attributed to four crucial factors: building confidence and mutual understanding among political forces that were previously hostile and confrontational to each other; re-embracing political tolerance; creating mechanism for peaceful participation of citizens in political process; and regaining trust and support from international community for the reform process.

But we are one of the poorest countries in the world. So, we still have shortage of the institutions that are necessary to manage our transition. In consequence, a lot of challenges and set-backs lie ahead. But the government has already committed itself to continuing the path to democracy until we all can understand, value and embrace democracy culture. The government in office will do everything in its powers to see Myanmar become the democratic, prosperous, and peaceful nation which we all know that the entire country deeply desires, and deserves.

Pathein University, NITE of Japan sign MoU on research cooperation

YANGON, 17 March—An MoU on cooperation in doing research for conservation and sustainability of biodiversity was signed between Pathein University and National Institute of Technology and Evaluation of Japan today.

At the signing ceremony held at the Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar), Director-General of the HED (Lower

Myanmar) U Zaw Htay and Dr Itaru Yasui, President of NITE of Japan signed the MoU.

Dr Nyunt Pe, Rector of Pathein University, and Mr Junichi Nakagawa, Director-General of the NITE signed the agreement for the project.

The MoU has renewed the 2004-MoU signed between the university and NITE.

MNA

ARTICLE

Fine traditions in successive eras

My son Kyaw Thura,

I drop you a line. I always pray for mental and physical wellbeing of you and your friends soldiers in Kachin mountain ranges as well as for people in Kachin State. I deeply wish Kachin State sees olive branch soon.

My son, it has turned 25 years your father Sergeant Ba Hein had fallen in the Mongyan battle with insurgent Burma Communist Party. On that day, I offered alms to Sanghas and shared merits gained for your father and all fallen soldiers. My son, you also share these merits.

My son Kyaw Thura,

You have joined Tatmadaw since one-decade and got the rank of the Company Commander. I myself have allowed you to join Tatmadaw although I want you to stay under my eyes. I really take pride for you as you have become a good soldier. And your father will take pride for you as you could follow in the step of him.

My son Kyaw Thura,

Myanmar Tatmadaw formed with all national races is Union's Tatmadaw. Its prime duty is to safeguard our mother land. At present, Tatmadaw's duty is to safeguard the country in addition to safeguarding the Constitution. And Tamadaw also has to safeguard Our three main national causes which is a backbone of the country.

Myanmar Tatmadaw has the fine tradition of safeguarding the country along the course of history whenever the country faces any hurdle. Myanmar Tatmadaw led by our national hero General Aung San joined hands with the people in the independence struggle and could try to regain independence.

And Tatmadaw always safeguards the country whenever the country is on the verge of losing independence and sovereignty. For instance, Tatmadaw could save the country from the outbreak of the internal multi-coloured armed insurgency in 1948 only with ten battalions. In 1950, Tatmadaw could

fight against the invading KMT troops with many military operations, risking many lives of soldiers. Myanmar sovereignty and independence could be safeguarded.

Tatmadaw took control of the State, formed caretaker government. That was to prevent bloodshed from government split-up. Tatmadaw could safeguard the country as the country faced the disintegration of the Union due to Federal policy in 1962. The Tatmadaw was compelled to assume the duties of the State in the 1988 Uprising. Then, Tatmadaw held the multiparty general election as promised and handed over State's duties to the democratic government on

Kyaw Min Khaung

30 March, 2011. It is the fine tradition of Tatmadaw.

My son Kyaw Thura,

All Tatmadaw men equipped with 12 fine traditions join the army to safeguard the country with their own volition. They all have to follow 60 codes of conduct and military and civilian laws. And they are safeguarding the country, risking their lives and bodies. The fallen soldiers in the battles are said to be incomparable ones.

My son Kyaw Thura,

All the world countries are building modern armies with the use of sophisticated technologies for their sovereignty and security. My son, we all need to build a modern Tatmadaw. Only when Tatmadaw has skills and strength, could the nation and our three main national causes be safeguarded. Myanmar had fallen under British colonial reign due to the lack of a modern Tatmadaw. And losing independence is the best example for Myanmar.

My son Kyaw Thura,

Every nation has its own armed forces. What makes Myanmar Tatmadaw different from others is it is a Union Armed Forces made of national brethren who love their mother land with strong Union spirit. Strict adherence to military disciplines, the lifeblood of the armed forces, and

willingness to obey the orders of superiors are also the distinct features of Myanmar Tatmadaw. Taking a look at the history of Myanmar Tatmadaw, it is clear that Tatmadaw with those strengths have thwarted the threats inside and outside the nation.

My son Kyaw Thura,

Why do Tatmadawmen get on with tough tasks in remote places, without caring about money? What makes them to choose a path of thorns, leaving their parents, wives, sons and daughters and relatives? The answer is much simple. The Tatmadawmen of Myanmar Tatmadaw are blood brethren of the nation. Therefore, they choose to sacrifice leading a hard life to protect their motherland which they share.

My son Kyaw Thura,

Unavoidably, the Tatmadaw have had to engage with ethnic armed groups. Whenever it did so, it always held the attitude of "brotherhood" towards them. Except necessary military response, it never tried to annihilate them with grudge nor used chemical weapons against them. It also welcomed back in warmth those returned to legal fold like the parents welcoming their children coming back home. It had arranged not only for their livelihood but also for their future. While the death of a soldier in an unavoidable confrontation means a loss of good citizen to the nation, the death of a member from the opposing sides is also a loss of a member to the Union. The Tatmadaw truly do not want to fight with own brothers except to protect the motherland from inside and outside threats. Moreover, stability is essential in building a new, modern, developed nation. So, it is doing its fair share with genuine goodwill for building peace at present. The Tatmadaw which have devoted to national security at the risk of life and limb want to see lasting peace and development of the nation more. With true Union Spirit, it would join hands with the government until the internal peace is established.

My son Kyaw Thura,

I felt glad and took pride in when I read the letter you

sent me from somewhere in Kachin's bluish mountains. In your letter, you said: I with my company reached a small Kachin mountain village called Mayan last month just to come across Manaw Festival there. We took a rest there and donated some of our savings to the village head to spend for the festival. It was a cold winter night and we joined the villagers for Manaw dances in happiness. It was wonderful time, but then we saw blaze from the south of the village followed by cries of "fire".

I rushed to southern part of the village where the fire broke out. A traditional two-storey frame house was in the roaring fire. "I'm here. Help me! Help!" There was an old woman aged over 70 on the ground floor of the house. The house caught fire from the fallen oil lamp of that old lady. No villager dared to save the old lady in the raging fire. Wasting no time, I made up my mind to save that helpless lady, gave my equipment and gun to company warrant officer Shwe Htay and run into the burning house. I found the grandma losing consciousness with burns and brought her out of fire. I came very close to escape from fire before I was hit by the fallen wooden truss at the chest and made unconscious. When I regained consciousness, I found myself in my camp with caring eyes of paramedic Captain Arkar and fellow soldiers and a pair of weeping eyes of an old lady with burns. It was Daw Ma Htu Luan I had saved. She said with a local accent, "You have given me a new lease of life, my son. May god bless you. May you be able to serve our Kachin region more and more!" Thanks to care of the paramedic and the soldiers, I recovered from the burns in a few days. But the burn left my chest right upon my heart a scar forever. Though, I'm proud of it, mom. I will regard it as a life-long present of Kachin land. For me, I was also swollen with pride that tears welled up in my eyes. It serves as a boost for the dignity of the Tatmadaw and an example of

(See page 9)

LOCAL NEWS

Objectives of the 68th Anniversary Armed Forces Day 2013

1. To uphold the national policy namely non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity, and perpetuation of sovereignty
2. To play the leading role in the national politics by the Tatmadaw joining hands with all national races with Union Spirit and the true patriotism in line with the Constitution
3. To crush all destructive elements at home and abroad through the strength of State, People and Tatmadaw
4. To build up a strong, competent, modern, patriotic Tatmadaw to safeguard the security and sovereignty of the nation

Fine traditions in successive...

(from page 8)

Tatmadaw's goodwill towards the national brethren. You strictly followed one of 10 codes of conduct towards the public that goes, "Safeguard life and property of the people." Your late dad Sergeant Ba Hein will surely take pride of you as well, son. The land of Kachin has rich natural resources and scenic natural beauties. It is also the origin of Ayeyawady River from Maykha-Malikka confluence. I would like to urge you to continue

obeying the codes of conduct, learn and respect the religious and cultural customs of ethnic Kachin people and even sacrifice your life while discharging duties in Kachin State.

"I hereby salute Tatmadawmen who sacrificed their lives for the State along the course of the history on 68th anniversary Armed Forces Day."

May you and your fellow soldiers be healthy and happy.

Yours lovingly,
Mom

Trs: MT+TKK+HKA

Relief aid reached out to Yedashe fire victims



YEDASHE, 17 March—Relief aid was distributed to fire victims of the Village of Tatsoe in Dauk-inn-gon village-tract in Yedashe Township in Toungoo District on 11 March.

It started from the forest fire that destroyed 19 houses, leaving 76 people from 19 households homeless on 10 March.

Households were provided with K 30,000 each, 57 bags of rice, 38 viss of edible oil, instant noodles,

clothes and foodstuff worth at K 1.95 million donated by departments in the township, officials, local people and NGOs.

Region Hluttaw Representative U Maung Maung Thet, Head of Yedashe Township General Administration Department U Htay Kyaw, Commander of Yedashe Township Police Force Police Major Nyan Win and officials concerned handed over the relief aids to the victims.—NLM

Belgian Dy PM meets MNHKC Chairman

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs Mr Didier Reynders of Belgium and party met with Chairman of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission U Win Mya at the office of the commission at 61/2-mile on Pyay Road, here, at 2.30 pm yesterday.

They discussed progress of human rights in Myanmar.

Also present at the meeting were Secretary of the Commission U Sit Myaing and members U Hla Myint, Dr Daw Than Nwe, Daw Saw Khin Gyi, U Zaw Gun, U Khin Maung Lay and U Tin Nyo.—MNA



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs of Belgium Mr Didier Reynders and party meet with Chairman of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission U Win Mya and members.—MNA

Dinner parties allowed in Bagan at places separated from precincts of ancient buildings

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—Some recommendations made at Systematic Management and Conservation of Ancient Heritage Workshop held at Ministry of Culture on 31-11-2012 as regards tourism suggested that dinner should be allowed at the request of package tours

without affecting pagoda precincts and pagodas and stupas.

Taking in consideration of such recommendations, hoteliers and tour operators in Bagan on condition that they take full responsibility will be allowed to organize dinner parties in such places separated from the precinct

of the ancient buildings in Bagan Ancient Cultural Region as the farmland in northwest of Dhammayangyi Pagoda, Mt. Ohhtein and the southern part of Shwenan Yintaw Pagoda.

It is required to inform and seek approval from Archaeology, National Museum and Library

Department in Bagan. No rent and service charges will be taken for holding party but sanitation must be carried out within the next day.

The Ministry of Culture says the service is just intended for tourists' satisfaction.

MNA

Job opportunities created for dwellers in Sagaing

SAGAING, 17 March—Sagaing Industrial Zone Management Committee held the press conference on tasks of the zone at its office in Padamya Ward on 9 March.

Chairman of the supervisory committee U Ko Ko Myint explained establishment of the industrial zone and progress of production and conducted the media persons round the factories and workshops.

Sagaing Industrial Zone is located on 888.52 acres of land with 194 plots in Padamya Ward and Nilar Ward, west of Minwun Hill and north of Sagaing. A total of 43 workshops and factories



are going into operation on the industrial zone. Eighteen

personal goods factories, five foodstuff factories, nine foundry plants and two automobile assembling factories are manufacturing their respective products.

The 10 MVA power station from Monywa Industrial Zone Branch (Sagaing) is supplying electricity to Sagaing Industrial Zone. The factories and workshops are also installed with twenty-seven 500 KVA transformers and eighteen 315 KVA transformers.

Social Security Board is providing health care services

of workers from the industrial zone.

Workers' families are facilitated with day care centre, clinic and purified water tanks in addition to the fire station.

Sagaing Industrial Zone branch of Sagaing-Monywa Industrial Zone is being upgraded to a full fledged industrial zone.

At present, the newly-emerged industrial zone is creating job opportunities for the local people.

Myanma Alinn

Illegal commodities confiscated

NAWNGKHIO, 17 March—The mobile team based near the toll gate on Mandalay-Lashio Road, east of Nawngkhio, discharges duties of checking commodities.

The team recently exposed 72 cases and confiscated various kinds of commodities worth K 342.1 million without custom duties so as to

control import of illegal commodities.

At present, the smugglers transport their illegal commodities by van, express bus and Hilus.

Therefore, passengers faced delay of their trips due to the fact that the authorities of the mobile teams check unscrupulous person's illegal goods onboard the vehicles.

Myanma Alinn

Budget deadlock squeezes military members seeking education

SAN ANTONIO, 17 March—For Airman First Class Stephen Sinatra, the budget cuts prompted by deadlock in Washington have turned his plans upside down.

Sinatra, who is in the US Air Force stationed in Washington, DC, is taking online college classes thanks to a tuition assistance programme for members of the military that has been halted as a money-saving move. “I don’t make much money,” Sinatra said. “To be able to utilize this money to go to school and better myself, it helps a lot. That’s almost what keeps me to be motivated to keep going in the military.”

The tuition assistance programme, which provides up to \$4,500 per year per student, is one victim of across-the-board cuts known as sequestration that are forcing government

agencies to reduce spending. The \$85 billion in cuts began on 1 March after a gridlocked US Congress was unable to resolve fiscal fights and find a solution to replace the sequestration.

Comments left on military message boards and Facebook show a widespread disappointment with the sudden termination of the tuition assistance programme, which is not a part of the military contract, like the GI Bill for veterans benefits, but is considered an incentive to enlist.

“I have seen a lot of people who have lost their motivation to be in the military when they take away the one perk that people seem to enjoy,” Sinatra said.

Several colleges have moved to defer tuition charges for the coming term to help military members who are already enrolled, and two senators, one Dem-



United States Marines salute from the stands during the American National Anthem prior to the start of the San Diego Padres vs the New York Mets baseball Major League Baseball game in San Diego, California on 9 Aug, 2009.—REUTERS

ocrat, one Republican, have introduced legislation to bring back the tuition assistance.

Students who have already enrolled in classes using the tuition assistance programme will be allowed to complete those classes, according to a memo from the Army announcing the cancellation of the programme.

“This suspension is necessary given the significant budget execution challenges caused by the

combined effects of a possible year-long continuing resolution and sequestration,” the Army memo said. “The Army understands the impacts of this action and will re-evaluate should the budgetary situation improve.” The Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard have also suspended their tuition assistance programmes.—Reuters

Russia military helicopter crash kills three

MOSCOW, 17 March—A military helicopter crashed Saturday morning in Russia’s North Caucasus republic of Chechnya, killing three of the four people on board, local authorities said. The Mi-8 chopper of the Russian Border Service hit the ground and was burnt into pieces in the Khankala military airfield as it attempted to land despite poor visibility, a spokesperson at the Southern Military District prosecutor’s office told reporters.

The only survivor was being treated for injuries in hospital, the spokesperson added. Investigators were working at the scene to determine whether the crash was caused by violations of flight safety rules, according to the spokesperson.

Xinhua

Syrian troops advance to Damascus’ rebellious suburb

DAMASCUS, 17 March—The Syrian troops have advanced to the rebel-held Jobar suburb of the capital Damascus, the state-news agency SANA reported on Saturday.

Troops have eliminated numbers of “armed terrorists” and restored stability and security to the Barlaman Roundabout, the Cultural Center, and the municipal building, SANA said.

Jobar is part of the sprawling al-Gouta countryside outlining the east-

Three killed, nine wounded in attacks in Iraq

BAGHDAD, 17 March—Two soldiers and a civilian were killed, and nine people wounded in separate bombings and shootings in Iraq on Saturday, the police said.

Two soldiers were killed and another wounded when gunmen attacked their checkpoint in northern the city of Mosul, some 400 km north of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, a local police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

One of the attackers was also wounded by the exchange of fire between the soldiers and the gunmen, the source said.

In a separate incident, gunmen broke into the house of Ali Abdullah, a local leading figure in Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki’s Shiite party of al-Dawa, in a village located some 15 km south of Mosul, wounding four of his family members before they fled the scene, the source added.

Abdullah was not at home when the gunmen at-

tacked his house, he said.

Separately, a taxi driver was wounded when a roadside bomb detonated near his car in western Mosul, he said, adding that the blast apparently missed a police patrol which had just past and hit the taxi car instead.

Elsewhere, unidentified gunmen using silenced weapons shot dead a young man in front of his house in central the city of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, a police source in the city anonymously told Xinhua.

Meanwhile, a roadside bomb struck an Iraqi army vehicle in Tarmiyah area, some 40 km north of Baghdad, damaging the vehicle and wounding two soldiers aboard, a local police source said.

Violence is still common in the Iraqi cities despite the dramatic decrease since its peak in 2006 and 2007, when the country was engulfed in sectarian killings.—Xinhua

Ghana, Lebanon presidents meet over Middle East

ACCRA, 17 March—Ghanaian President John Dramani Mahama met with visiting Lebanese President Michel Suleiman here on Saturday to discuss peace and security in the Middle East, according to local media reports.

During the meeting, the Ghanaian president pledged efforts to help create a new initiative to resolve the is-

suces between Palestine and Israel.

Mahama stressed the importance of a peaceful Middle East to the rest of the world, saying that was why Ghanaian troops had been working under the United Nations’ peacekeeping mission in southern Lebanon for over 30 years.

The Lebanese president said his country was

grateful to Ghana for its troops deployed in southern Lebanon under UN Security Council Resolution 1701. Suleiman said his country was seeking cooperation with Ghana in areas of industry, banking, culture, tourism and agriculture, among others. Suleiman arrived here Saturday morning for a two-day official visit.—Xinhua



Passengers aboard the cruise ship GTS Millennium watch a lion dance performance at the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in south China’s Hong Kong, on 16 March, 2013. GTS Millennium arrived at Hong Kong’s Kai Tak Cruise Terminal on Saturday and became the first cruise ship to berth at the terminal prior to its official opening in June 2013.—XINHUA

Bus crash kills two in Pennsylvania, US

WASHINGTON, 17 March—Two people died on Saturday after a bus went off a highway and crashed into a tree in the US state of Pennsylvania, US media said.

The 61-year-old bus driver was dead at the scene and a pregnant woman died

later from injuries after being flown to Penn State Hershey Medical Centre, according to local media reports. The bus was carrying 23 people, who were players or coaches of Seton Hill University women’s lacrosse team, when it went

off the Pennsylvania Turnpike and crashed at around 9 am local time in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.

All passengers with minor injuries were also sent to hospitals for treatment. It remains unknown what caused the crash.—Xinhua



A stamp collector presents the “peach blossom” stamps at the Beijing Botanical Garden in Beijing, capital of China, on 16 March, 2013. China Post published a set of “peach blossom” stamps on Saturday.

XINHUA

REGIONAL

Chinese, Pakistani presidents discuss relations, cooperation

BEIJING, 17 March—Newly-elected Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Pakistani counterpart Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday discussed over phone topics concerning the development of bilateral relations and cooperation.

While congratulating Xi on his election to the presidency, Zardari said Pakistan and China are all-weather friends and that the Pakistani people love China.

Pakistan would like to maintain its high-level exchanges with China and to strengthen communication and cooperation between

the two countries in bilateral and international affairs, Zardari said.

Pakistan will continue to firmly support China when needed, said the president. Xi thanked Zardari for his congratulations, and said that China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperation partners.

Since the establishment of diplomatic ties 62 years ago, the two countries have been respecting and supporting each other and have carried out comprehensive cooperation, Xi said.

The China-Pakistan relations have withstood the

test of time and the fluctuations of international situation, and have achieved healthy and steady development over past decades, Xi said.

He stressed that China attaches great importance to the China-Pakistan relations, and that it is an established policy of the Chinese government to develop the friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries.

China will continue to support Pakistan's efforts to safeguard its national sovereignty and independence, and to realize national stability and development,

Xi said. He hoped that the two countries could cooperate closely to maintain and develop their sound relations so that the traditional friendship between the two sides could be passed on from generation to generation.

Xi, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), was elected Chinese president and chairman of China's Central Military Commission on Thursday at the plenary meeting of the first session of the 12th National People's Congress (NPC).

Xinhua

Government to increase care for most needed



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang speaks at a Press conference after the closing meeting of the first session of the 12th National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, on 17 March, 2013. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Vice Premiers Zhang Gaoli, Liu Yandong, Wang Yang and Ma Kai met the Press and answered questions here on Sunday.—XINHUA

BEIJING, 17 March—Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said on Sunday that the Chinese government needs to increase care for the most needed to prevent them from challenging the

society.

The government has to ensure the people's rights to existence and their human dignity, Li said at a Press conference.

Xinhua

Chinese research vessel on 4th Indian Ocean journey

GUANGZHOU, 17 March—The *Shiyan 1* scientific research vessel has set sail for its fourth journey to the Indian Ocean, where it will conduct a two-month expedition.

The South China Sea Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Sciences said on Saturday that more than 40 researchers from a dozen Chinese research institutes will carry out research pertaining to marine hydrology, ocean currents, meteorology and biological studies in the Indian Ocean. The *Shiyan 1* is China's best-equipped scientific research vessel and went into operation in 2010.—Xinhua

Thailand, Vietnam mull strategic partnership

BANGKOK, 17 March—Vietnamese Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh has visited Thailand to work on details of upgrading relationship between the two countries, *Thai News Agency* reported on Saturday.

Thai Foreign Minister Surapong Tovichakchaikul said the visit by his Vietnamese counterpart on Friday came on the heels of Thursday's meeting in the Laotian capital of Vientiane between Vietnamese Prime

Minister Nguyen Tan Dung and his Thai counterpart Yingluck Shinawatra on the issue.

In an unofficial joint cabinet meeting in October last year, the prime ministers of both countries agreed in principle to foster bilateral relationship to the level of "strategic partners." The issue was reiterated during Thursday's meeting of the two leaders.

Surapong said Thailand looked forward to

wrapping up the issue before the Vietnamese prime minister's visit to Thailand later this year.

He stressed Thailand's readiness to host the first Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation (JCBC) meeting between top officials of the two countries, which is the major mechanism of cooperation between Bangkok and Hanoi. The JCBC meeting should be held in September, he said.—Xinhua



Local fishers arrange fishing net in Huanghua, north China's Hebei Province, on 16 March, 2013. Fishers by China's Bohai Sea are busy preparing for a new fishing season which comes around the corner in the second Lunar month. XINHUA

Helicopter crash kills one ISAF service member in S Afghanistan

KABUL, 17 March—One NATO-led ISAF soldier was killed on Saturday when a helicopter went down in southern Afghanistan, the coalition forces confirmed on Sunday.

"An International Secu-

rity Assistance Force (ISAF) service member died following a helicopter crash in southern Afghanistan yesterday," the ISAF said in a statement.

"The cause of the incident is under investigation,

but initial reports indicate there was no enemy activity in the area at the time of the crash," it added.

Afghan officials said that the chopper had gone down in Daman District of

southern Kandahar Province. On 11 March, five US soldiers were killed when an ISAF Black Hawk helicopter crashed in Daman in the province 450 km south of Kabul.—Xinhua

Thai Airways aircraft tyre burst at Bangkok Airport

BANGKOK, 17 March—A front tyre of a Thai Airways International plane burst on Saturday morning as it landed at Bangkok's international Airport, causing no casualties, *Thai News Agency* reported.

The accident occurred at around 6.20 am with the Airbus A-330 flight TG341 from Kolkata, India to Bangkok. The plane, however, landed

at Babgijj Suvarnabhumi International Airport safely with no casualties among passengers or crew.

The THAI staff rushed to repair the front tyre of the aircraft which was parked on the airport runway before relocating it for further investigation and maintenance. An initial investigation found no irregularities and the plane is ready to resume service.—Xinhua

24 soldiers killed as van falls into ravine in Northern Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 17 March—At least 24 soldiers were killed and four others injured when a van fell into a ravine in Pakistan's north-west Kohistan District on early Saturday morning, police said.

Akbar Ali, District Police Officer of Kohistan said that the van carrying 29 soldiers fell into a ravine while negotiating a sharp turn at Karakorum Highway in Kohistan area, an administrative district in the country's north-west Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

The soldiers' van was on its way to Gilgit Bal-

tistan from northern Rawalpindi city when it met the accident, he said.

Rescue workers together with local people recovered the injured people and bodies from the ravine and shifted them to a nearby rural health center from where they would be airlifted to army hospital Rawalpindi via Army helicopter, said the DPO.

Pakistan is among the countries having worst record of fatal traffic accidents, mainly due to poor roads, lack of driving skills, badly maintained vehicles and violation of road safety rules.—Xinhua



Indian fire fighters work at a slum in Santoshpur area on the outskirts of Calcutta, India, on 16 March, 2013. A fire engulfed around 700 shanties here on Saturday, leaving more than a thousand people homeless. XINHUA



Fire fighters try to extinguish fire as a huge fire erupts in a cotton warehouse in southern Pakistani port city of Karachi, on 16 March, 2013. Cotton worth millions of rupees was burnt to ashes due to a fire in a cotton warehouse here on Saturday, local media reported. XINHUA

GENERAL

Kerry voices conditional US support for UN arms treaty

UNITED NATIONS, 17 March—US Secretary of State John Kerry voiced support on Friday for an international treaty to regulate the \$70 billion global arms trade, but restated Washington's "red line," affirming that it would not accept limits on US domestic gun ownership.

The UN General Assembly voted in December to hold a final round of negotiations from 18 to 28 March on what could become the first international treaty to regulate international weapons transfers after a drafting conference in July 2012 collapsed because the United States and others wanted more time.

Arms control campaigners say one person every minute dies worldwide as a result of armed violence and that a con-

vention is needed to prevent the unregulated and illicit flow of weapons into conflict zones fuelling wars and atrocities.

"The United States is steadfast in its commitment to achieve a strong and effective Arms Trade Treaty that helps address the adverse effects of the international arms trade on global peace and stability," Kerry said in a statement.

"An effective treaty that recognizes that each nation must tailor and enforce its own national export and import control mechanisms can generate the participation of a broad majority of states, help stem the illicit flow of conventional arms across international borders and have important humanitarian benefits."

But he repeated that



US Secretary of State John Kerry.
REUTERS

the United States — the world's No1 arms manufacturer—would not accept any treaty that imposed new limits on US citizens' right to bear arms, a sensitive political issue in the United States. "We will not support any treaty that would be inconsistent with US law and the rights of American citizens

under our Constitution, including the Second Amendment," he said.—Reuters

Fire forces evacuation of Jamaican hotel

KINGSTON, 17 March—A fire broke out at an international chain hotel in Kingston's main business district on Thursday, forcing evacuation but causing no casualties. The blaze,

COPENHAGEN, 17 March —A passenger plane caught fire on Friday morning at Denmark's Aalborg Airport before.

A total of 67 passengers were on board and had to be evacuated from the Dutch airline KLM's Fokker 70 jet airliner, which was scheduled to depart for Amsterdam at 6.20 am local time (0520 GMT).

According to the airport, a ground staff discovered smoke from one of the plane's engines before it caught on fire.

The fire department quickly extinguished the fire, and passengers were evacuated with no casualties, said Rikke Moelgaard, sales and marketing director at Aalborg Airport.

"The plane is now grounded and must be examined by engineers and KLM has rebooked the passengers on other flights," Moelgaard added.

Aalborg Airport is Denmark's third largest airport with approximately 1.4 million travellers per year.

Xinhua

Swiss tourist gang-raped while camping in India

BHOPAL, 17 March—Four men raped a 39-year-old Swiss woman camping with her husband in an Indian forest, police said on Saturday, turning the spotlight anew on the security of women in the world's largest democracy.

The attack on Friday

night in the central state of Madhya Pradesh comes three months after a 23-year-old physiotherapy student was gang-raped and beaten in a moving bus and thrown bleeding on to the street in a case that sparked outrage in the country. She died later in hospital in

Singapore.

One woman is raped every 20 minutes in India, according to the National Crime Records Bureau. But police estimate only four out of 10 rapes are reported, largely due to victims' fear of being shamed by their families and communities.

The Swiss woman and her husband were touring the state by bicycle and were camping overnight in the forest.

Seven men attacked the couple in their tent and four of them raped the woman, Dilip Arya, deputy inspector general of police, told Reuters. They also stole their valuables.

The woman has since been discharged from hospital, he added. No arrests have been made.

Xinhua

Man who set fire in US nuclear sub gets 17-year sentence

PORTLAND, (Maine) 17 March—A civilian painter who twice set fires on a US Navy nuclear submarine last year so that he could get out of work early was sentenced to 17 years in prison on Friday.

Casey James Fury, 25, set two fires nearly a month apart that caused as much as \$500 million in damages to the USS Miami attack submarine that was in the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for maintenance.

Prosecutors had requested a 20-year sentence after Fury pleaded guilty in November. Fury's lawyer had argued for a 15-year sentence, reflecting his client's extreme anxiety, for which he was taking medication at the time.

Fury, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, started the first fire on 23 May with a plastic bag filled with rags, igniting a blaze that burned for 12 hours, and caused between \$400 million and \$500 million in damages and injured five people, prosecutors said.

"The fire easily could have been fatal," Assistant US Attorney Darcie McElwee said at the sentencing hearing at US District Court in Portland, Maine.

Reuters

Airliner catches fire at Aalborg Airport

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Aalborg Airport is Denmark's third largest airport with approximately 1.4 million travellers per year.

Xinhua

Heavy rainfalls lead to flooding across Albania

TIRANA, 17 March — Heavy rains which started in Albania on Thursday morning have caused serious flooding in the country, forcing residents to leave their houses. In the worst-hit region of Shkodra hundreds of hectares of land were inundated, dealing serious damages to the sown

fields and houses.

Sources from Shkodra local authorities said so far no deaths have been reported. Heavy rains have also caused damage in the areas of Vlora and Fier District, particularly in Novosela commune with the Vjosa river bursting its banks.

Xinhua

Heavy snow causes power outages, traffic jams in Belarus

MINSK, 17 March — Heavy snow and strong winds plagued Belarus on Friday, causing power outages in 500 villages and traffic jams on major highways.

Meteorologists said the winds reached a speed of up to 30 metres per second in some regions. Poor visibility, snowdrifts and icy roads added to the troubles.

Thousands of cars were stuck or moving slowly on the roads. Tens of thousands of homes remained without electricity, with temperatures below zero across the country, said authorities.

Rail transport was also disturbed throughout the day, and Minsk Airport was closed because of the snowfall.—Xinhua



Farmers of the Tibetan ethnic group attend a ceremony to celebrate the starting of spring plowing at Deqing Village of Dazi County, southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, on 16 March, 2013.—XINHUA

Don't come to Rome, give money to poor, pope tells Argentines

VATICAN CITY, 17 March — Pope Francis has attempted to dissuade Argentines from making costly trips to Rome for his inaugural Mass next week, suggesting they make a contribution to the poor instead, the Vatican said on Friday.

Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi said the pope had called the Vatican ambassador in Buenos Aires on the night he was elected and told him of his wishes.

The new pope had made a similar request to his fellow countrymen when he was made a cardinal in 2001 and Argentina was suffering from the effects of a financial crisis.

"He called the ambassador and asked him to tell the bishops that there is no need for them and the faithful to make a long, expensive trip to come to see him but that they could instead offer the money to the poor instead," Lombardi said.

Francis' pontificate

starts officially on 19 March with a solemn Mass in St Peter's Basilica.

The pope has a long-standing reputation for frugality. He used public transportation as a cardinal in Argentina. The night of his election, Francis rode in a bus with cardinals instead of using the papal limousine that was waiting for him. The next morning he insisted on paying his bill at the Church-owned hotel where he had stayed before the conclave.—Reuters



Palestinian jockeys take part in a traditional camel race during Rafah Camel Festival, held in the southern Gaza Strip city of Rafah on 15 March, 2013.—XINHUA

ENTERTAINMENT

Singer and songwriter Carole King is interviewed on the arrivals line at "A Celebration of Carole King And Her Music"

concert to benefit Paul Newman's The Painted Turtle Camp in Hollywood on 4 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS



New musical on songstress Carole King Broadway-bound

NEW YORK, 17 March—A musical about the life of legendary singer-songwriter Carole King will open on Broadway next year, producers said on Friday.

"Beautiful: The Carole King Musical," will chart the journey of Carol Klein from Brooklyn to the top of the pop music world, producers Paul Blake and Sony/ATV Music Publishing said.

Featuring songs written by Carole King and her first husband and collaborator, Gerry Goffin, as well as Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil, the musical was set to open in the spring of 2014.

King "fought her way into the record business as a teenager and, by the time she reached her twenties had the husband of her dreams and a hot career writing hits for the biggest acts in rock'n'roll," the producers said in a statement.

King, 71, said musicals

had been a major influence on her. "When Gerry and I first met, we made a bargain that I would write music for the Broadway show he wanted to write if he wrote lyrics for my rock'n'roll songs."

"The songs took off, and the show idea never came to fruition. Now that our songs have merged with a Broadway show, we've come full circle," she said in a statement.

King shot to fame in the early 1970s when her second album, "Tapestry," swept the

Grammy awards, winning best album, song of the year ("You've Got a Friend," later covered by James Taylor) and record of the year ("It's Too Late").

Other hits included "I Feel the Earth Move," "(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman," and "Sweet Seasons." More recently, King appeared in a recurring role on the US television series "Gilmore Girls."

No casting decisions were announced.

Reuters

Rapper Lil Wayne says he is fine after health scare

LOS ANGELES, 17 March—US rapper Lil Wayne said on Friday he was fine and thanked fans for their concern after a reported seizure that led celebrity website TMZ.com to claim he was in a medically induced coma and near death.

"I'm good everybody. Thx for the prayers and love," Wayne said in a Twitter message on his official account.

The 30-year-old rapper's spokeswoman Sarah

Cunningham said in an email that "Lil Wayne is recovering," but did not specify what he was suffering from.

She was responding to a TMZ.com report citing unnamed sources which said Wayne was in critical condition, and near death, at Cedars-Sinai hospital in Los Angeles.

Rapper Mack Maine said in a Twitter posting earlier that Wayne was "alive and well. We watching the Syracuse (basketball) game...thanks for the prayers and concern."

Maine said fans should not "believe the nonsense about comas and tubes to breathe."

TMZ said the rapper was admitted to Cedars-Sinai for seizures and released on Wednesday. But the website said he was readmitted a few hours later after his bodyguard found him unconscious on the floor of his room. It said his mother was flying to Los Angeles on Friday to be at his bedside.

Wayne, whose real name is Dwayne Michael Carter Jr, has suffered several unexplained seizures in the past few months, including two in January while on a plane flight.

Reuters



Rapper Lil Wayne sings "Take Me Out To The Ball Game" during the seventh inning stretch in Game 6 of the MLB NLCS playoff baseball series between the St Louis Cardinals and the San Francisco Giants in San Francisco, on 21 Oct, 2012.

REUTERS

"Burt Wonderstone" writers tap rivalries of Vegas magicians

LOS ANGELES, 17 March—The screenwriting duo behind raunchy workplace comedy "Horrible Bosses" have tapped the competitive world of Las Vegas magicians to bring the absurd antics of "The Incredible Burt Wonderstone," to the screen.

tion in the cutthroat industry of Las Vegas magicians for their latest film, which stars Steve Carell and Jim Carrey.

"It's a fascinating world,

Anton Marvelton (Steve Buscemi) and Steve Gray (Carrey) was drawn from the real world of Las Vegas illusionists, after Daley and Goldstein talked to magicians such as Lance Burton, Penn Jillette and David Cop-

outrageous comedic roots that rocketed him to fame in films such as 1994's "Ace Ventura: Pet Detective" and "The Mask," bringing an unpredictable edge to street illusionists Gray's absurd stunts, such as slicing his face



Cast members Jim Carrey (L), Olivia Wilde and Steve Carell pose at the premiere of "The Incredible Burt Wonderstone" in Hollywood, California on 11 March, 2013.

REUTERS

"Burt Wonderstone," it's one that you don't really have to heighten or exaggerate all that much to get to comedy because it's already a crazy world of Vegas magicians," Goldstein said.

The rivalry among Burt Wonderstone (Carell),

perfield, who makes a cameo in the film.

"Like rock stars or movie stars, these guys are very competitive with one another, and there's not a lot of love lost between them," Goldstein said.

Carrey channeled his

open for a trick.

"(Jim's) role in this is a throwback to the stuff he did in the '90s, where it's very big and physical, and that is my favorite kind of Jim Carrey character," Daley said.

Reuters

Steven Spielberg ropes in another director for Jurassic Park 4

LOS ANGELES, 17 March—Steven Spielberg has roped in director Colin Trevorrow to helm the next installment of blockbuster dinosaurs series Jurassic Park 4.

Spielberg, who directed the first two films in the series, will serve as an executive producer on the film. Trevorrow, behind in-

die drama Safety Not Guaranteed, will direct from a script by Rick Jaffa and Amanda Silver, the Hollywood Reporter said.

The first three films in the series, which was launched in 1993, have earned USD 1.9 billion at the box office. Jurassic Park 4 is slated to hit theatres in June 2014.—PTI



A still from the movie Jurassic Park 3.

SPORTS

Manchester United 15 points clear after City fall at Everton

LONDON, 17 March—Manchester City's fingertip hold on their Premier League title was further loosened when a 2-0 loss at Everton followed by runaway leaders Manchester United's 1-0 win over Reading left them praying for a football miracle.

Leon Osman's swerving 32nd-minute shot put Everton in front at a raucous Goodison Park and, although the home side were reduced to 10 men when Steven Pienaar was red-carded for a rash tackle after 61 minutes, City could not reply.

Substitute Nikica Jelavic sealed victory deep in stoppage time after being set up by a rampaging Marouane Fellaini.

United needed no second invitation to open a 15-point lead in the title race although only Wayne Rooney's deflected early shot sep-



Manchester United's Chris Smalling (R) challenges Reading's Hal Robson-Kanu during their English Premier League soccer match at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England on 16 March, 2013.

REUTERS

arated them and second-bottom Reading at Old Trafford.

Alex Ferguson's side never required top gear as they rolled on towards a 20th English title with their 24th victory in 29 league games this season, although the Scot refused to accept that

the race was won.

"We have got Sunderland away in our next game, which is always a tough place to go, and then we face Manchester City at home," he told ESPN.

"You don't get points and medals for being com-

placent," added Ferguson whose side have 74 points ahead of City on 59.

Everton briefly rose above Arsenal into fifth spot with 48 points in the battle for a top-four position but the Gunners responded with a 2-0 victory at Swansea City.

That took Arsene Wenger's side to 50 points within two of fourth-placed Chelsea, who host West Ham United on Sunday, and four behind local rivals Tottenham Hotspur, who are third ahead of their home game with Fulham also on Sunday.

Boosted by a surprise, if ultimately fruitless, Champions League win in their last 16, second leg tie at Bayern Munich on Wednesday, Arsenal struck late through Nacho Monreal and Gervinho.

REUTERS

US pro footballer Stallworth hurt in balloon accident

MIAMI, 17 March—National Football League wide receiver Donte' Stallworth suffered serious burns when a hot air balloon carrying him and his girlfriend hit power lines near Miami on Saturday, but is expected to recover fully, his agent said.

"He has suffered some burns to his body. However he is expected to make a full recovery in the near future," agent Drew Rosenhaus told Reuters.

"We expect him to be able to resume his football activities in a few weeks, most likely," he said.

Stallworth and

the unidentified woman were taken to a hospital in the Kendall area south of Miami, where both were being treated for burns. The woman also was expected to recover, Rosenhaus said.

The balloon operator was not hurt, the newspaper said.

Stallworth, who was signed by the New England Patriots as a free agent in December, has a home in South Florida.

REUTERS



New England Patriots' wide receiver Donte Stallworth advances with the ball during second half pre-season NFL action in Charlotte, North Carolina, on 24 Aug, 2007.—REUTERS

Athletics: Bleasdale proving she has a head for heights

LONDON, 17 March—Yelena Isinbayeva took women's pole-vaulting to new heights and now American Jenn Suhr is threatening to soar higher still. Waiting in the wings,



Holly Bleasdale of Britain reacts after competing in the Pole Vault Women Final at the European Athletics Indoor Championships in Gothenburg on 2 March, 2013.—REUTERS

knowing her time will come, is Briton Holly Bleasdale.

Compared to the Rus-

sian, twice an Olympic and world champion and also world record holder outdoors and Suhr, the current Olympic champion who set a new indoor world record this

month, rivals in years and experience. But such has been the newly-crowned European indoor champion's rapid rise to prominence, many including Bleasdale herself are predicting a final to savor at the world championships in Moscow in August.

"Yelena will have a point to prove after the Olympics in front of her home crowd and Jen's in great shape... it could be one of the best finals in history," she told Reuters.

A jump of 4.87 meters indoors in January 2012—only Isinbayeva, Suhr and Svetlana Feofanova have gone higher—marked Bleasdale out as a future champion and led to former

men's Olympic and world champion Sergei Bubka tipping her as a medal hope in her first Olympic final in London last year.

With hindsight, Bleasdale said expectations were too high, too soon.

Bleasdale cut a disconsolate figure in the Olympic Stadium, fighting back the tears after failing to clear 4.55 in windy conditions—only good enough for sixth place.

"Expectations were a bit too high. My target was to finish top six and I did. I was happy about the position I came—but winning a medal was probably too soon," she said.

REUTERS

Vettel on pole for Red Bull in Melbourne

MELBOURNE, 17 March—World champion Sebastian Vettel will start the Formula One season-opener from pole position on an all-Red Bull front row later on Sunday after posting the fastest time in the rain-delayed qualifying for the Australian Grand Prix.

The German, chasing a fourth successive world title this year, swept across the line in one minute 27.407 seconds to clinch his 37th pole as the flag dropped on the session, which was postponed from Saturday because of torrential rain.

"Definitely not easy in these conditions," Vettel said. "I had two good runs and on the drys I got into the groove."

"I am happy... but in a couple of hours the race is coming up, so it's head

down again to get on with that." Australian Mark Webber, still looking for his first home victory at the 12th attempt, also put in a blistering final lap on dry weather tires to finish second fastest in 1.27.827.

"It's going to be just another grand prix when the helmet's on," he said. "I've got to focus very hard on getting the most out of the

strategy. A podium would still be good but the middle step would be sensational."

Lewis Hamilton (1.28.087) confirmed the pace of his car in his first qualifying session for new team Mercedes and was third fastest to take a place on the second row of the grid with Ferrari's Felipe Massa.

"What an incredible

job the team has done to come from last year where they were struggling a lot," 2008 world champion Hamilton said. "I said yesterday it was a blessing that they had moved (qualifying) to today, and it really was."

"It's going to be massively challenging with the tires, I've already had graining," he added.

REUTERS

(From L-R) Mercedes Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain, Red Bull Formula One driver Sebastian Vettel of Germany and Red Bull Formula One driver Mark Webber of Australia look on after the qualifying session of the Australian F1 Grand Prix at the Albert Park circuit in Melbourne on 17 March, 2013.—REUTERS



Davis and White reclaim ice dance crown

LONDON, 17 March—Ontario - Americans Meryl Davis and Charlie White capped a perfect season by reclaiming the ice dance title from Canadians Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir at the figure skating world championships on Saturday.

While the title will change hands, it will not go far with the good friends and training partners sharing a coach and practise rink in Detroit.

are going to take and go home and work for next year," Moir told reporters. "We are obviously looking forward to a big season and coming out on top."

"This rivalry between the two of us seems to have heated up a little bit now and should be fun going into the Olympics."

Davis and White and Virtue and Moir

Meryl Davis and Charlie White of the US perform their ice dance free dance at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships in London, Ontario, on 16 March, 2013. REUTERS

It marked the fourth consecutive year the two couples have swapped gold and silver medals, Virtue and Moir winning the title in 2010 and 2012 and White and Davis taking home the big prize in 2011 and again on Saturday.

The win added to a friendly rivalry that will now continue on to the Sochi Winter Games where the Americans will try to relieve the Canadians of their Olympic crown.

"These are performances to build off of; we

have utterly dominated the ice dance scene the last four years providing a massive roadblock for anyone trying to scratch their way to the top of the podium.

While the Americans had to settle for silver behind the Canadians at the 2010 Winter Games and again at last year's world championships, Davis and White have had the better of their good friends this season finishing in first place at the Grand Prix finals, Four Continents and now the worlds.—Reuters



GENERAL



Malaysian and Chinese painters and guests pose for a group photo during the opening ceremony of 2013 Malaysia-China Friendship Arts Exchange Exhibition in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 16 March, 2013. Fifty-seven painting works by 24 Malaysian and Chinese artists will be on show during the 16-day exhibition.—XINHUA

Over 357,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon

BEIRUT, 17 March—The number of Syrian refugees receiving aid from the Lebanese government, the UN and NGOs has reached 357,000, the UN Higher Refugees Council (UNHRC) said on Saturday in its weekly report.

The UNHRC said that 225,000 refugees have been registered with its offices and over 131,000 others

are still waiting to complete their registration process.

It pointed out that it has registered over 12,000 refugees during the past week alone. There are currently 102,527 refugees registered in north Lebanon, 85,998 in the Bekaa region, 19,785 in Beirut and south Lebanon, and 17,399 in Mount Lebanon, the report said.

On Thursday, UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres called on the international community to show commitment and to support Lebanon which is hosting a large number of Syrian refugees. Lebanon has submitted to the UN a plan which calls for a financial aid of 370 million US dollars to help it host the refugees.—Xinhua

Colombian army seizes 3.9 tons of cocaine

BOGOTA, 17 March—The Colombian army has seized 3.9 tons of cocaine from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) in the country's southwestern Cauca department, the military said on Saturday.

The drugs were stashed in a drug production laboratory located in a rural area of Cauca, it said.

According to a military report, the lab was hidden in a place known as Timbiqui (Cauca), where soldiers of the Special Anti-Narcotics Brigade, in coordination with the Attorney General's Office, "were able to locate this complex which had the capacity to produce more than one ton of cocaine per day." The lab had a floor space of 500

square metres, enough to accommodate up to 70 people. It was also equipped with a power generator, extractor fans, industrial blenders and seven water pumps.

"Soldiers found 3.9 tons of cocaine, two tons of ground coca leaf, more than half ton of solid chemicals, more than 3,000 gallons of liquid supplies and plenty of material used for cocaine processing," the army report said.

The collection centre served as a funding source for FARC segments "who commit crimes in the departments of Valle del Cauca, Cauca and Narino (southwest)," the report said, adding the seizure delivered "one of the most severe blows to the FARC's finances."—Xinhua

Moderate quake hits New Britain region, Papua New Guinea

HONG KONG, 17 March—An earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale jolted New Britain region, Papua New Guinea at 12:36:39 GMT on Saturday, the US

Geological Survey said.

The epicentre, with a depth of 161.00 km, was initially determined to be at 4.5992 degrees south latitude and 151.9254 degrees east longitude.—Xinhua

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(18-3-13 09:30 am ~ 19-3-13 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * A Souvenir of Patheine
- * Electronic City (Solo Art Exhibition)
- * News
- * Myanmar Movies Impact "If you had old stories (Part-2)"
- * Wonderful Tofu
- * News
- * Realising partnership Opportunities for Myanmar and Hong Kong
- * Myanmar's Gold Market
- * News
- * "Great Shwedagon" (Episode-7) Architectural Heritage on the Platform of Shwedagon Pagoda
- * News
- * Orchestra Concert Myanmar 2013
- * Beautiful Myanma Silver Bowl
- * News
- * Culture Stage
- * News
- * Myanmar's Gold Market
- * Tattoo Fashion
- * News
- * Unique Biodiversity of Indawgyi Lake (Part-III)
- * Beikthano Archaeological Museum
- * Myanmar Movies "Life As Parents"

Myanmar TV

(18-3-2013, Monday)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 7:00 am | 4:50 pm |
| 1. Paritta By Venerable Min Gun Sayadaw | 15. Musical Programme (The Radio Myanmar Modern Music Trouo) |
| 7:25 am | 5:00 pm |
| 2. Health Programme | 16. Gitadagale Phwintbaohn |
| 7:30 am | 6:00 pm |
| 3. Morning News | 17. Evening News |
| 7:40 am | 6:15 pm |
| 4. International News | 18. Weather Report |
| 7:50 am | 6:20 pm |
| 5. Nice & Aweet Song | 19. Teleplay (Sea Games) |
| 8:00 am | 6:50 pm |
| 6. Dance of National Races | 20. TV Drama Series |
| 8:10 am | 7:00 pm |
| 7. Teleplay (Health) | 21. News |
| 8:20 am | 7:10 pm |
| 8. Cute little Dancers | 22. TV Drama Series |
| 8:30 am | 8:00 |
| 9. Musical Programme | 23. News |
| 4:00 pm | 24. People Talks |
| 10. Opening Song | 25. International News |
| 4:05 am | 26. Weather Report |
| 11. Songs For Upholding National Spirit | 27. Documentary (Interview) |
| 4:10 pm | 28. Cartoon Series |
| 12. Dance Variety | 29. 27 th SEA Games |
| 4:15 pm | 30. Documentary (National channel) |
| 13. Teleplay (Industry) | 10:00 pm |
| 4:35 pm | 31. News |
| 14. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Fourth Year (Law) | 32. India Drama Series |

Sharapova ready for Wozniacki variety in final

Maria Sharapova of Russia celebrates defeating compatriot Maria Kirilenko in their women's singles semifinal match at the BNP Paribas Open WTA tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California, on 15 March, 2013. REUTERS



INDIAN WELLS, 17 March—Plenty of lobs, subtle changes of pace, marathon baseline rallies - Maria Sharapova is preparing for all of that and more when she faces Caroline Wozniacki in Sunday's final at the BNP Paribas Open.

Denmark's Wozniacki, like Sharapova a former world number one and an ex-champion at Indian Wells, is known for her baseline grit and the variety she draws upon, ingredients which make her a tough opponent.

"She's a grinder," second-seeded Russian Sharapova told reporters about the 22-year-old Dane. "She makes you work really hard on the court and gets a lot of balls back and has a

lot of different variety.

"I certainly don't want to give her that time or those opportunities, because she's a really good player. She's dangerous when she has the opportunities to open up court and she wants you running side to side."

Asked how much it could help having played several 'grinders' so far at this year's tournament, Sharapova replied: "I have had to work for all the points here, that's for sure.

"I also feel like, in a way, in a couple of those matches I made my life a little more difficult than I should have been. I was forcing a few of my errors."

Sharapova, champion here in 2006, booked her place in the final with a 6-4 6-3 victory over

fellow Russian Maria Kirilenko while eighth seed Wozniacki advanced with a battling 2-6 6-4 7-5 win over fourth-seeded German Angelique Kerber.

Wozniacki effectively turned the tide against Kerber with a barrage of accurate lobs, or moonballs, on the slow-paced hardcourt surface at Indian Wells and Sharapova took note.

"I saw some of those points," the 25-year-old Russian smiled. "That was quite interesting."

"They looked like they were really high and they all kept going in. I was like, 'That's a really good effort.' I don't think I can

do that."

Asked what adjustments were needed to cope with the "moonball strategy", Sharapova replied: "Usually when your opponent has time to hit higher balls or a little bit of spin, that means you're giving them a bit more time to do that."

Wozniacki, who won the 2011 Indian Wells title with a 6-1 2-6 6-3 victory over Frenchwoman Marion Bartoli in the final, trails Sharapova 2-4 in career meetings and knows she will have to contend with the Russian's powerful ground strokes.

Reuters



Parade participants march along the 5th Ave during the 252nd annual St Patrick's Day Parade in New York City on 16 March, 2013.—XINHUA

Shwedagon Pagoda gets new escalator

YANGON, 17 March—Shwedagon Pagoda this morning commissioned the new western escalator to mark its 26th centenary.

Union Religious Affairs Minister U Hsan Hsint, Yangon region ministers, members of Pagoda Board of Trustees, donors and members of

religious associations were present on the occasion.

The Union minister and Yangon Region Social Affairs Minister Dr Myint Thein and alternate patron of the Pagoda BOT Dr Tin Thein Lwin formally opened the new escalator at the western archway.

The Union minister

then sprinkled scented water on the commemorative stone inscription before opening the newly installed escalator.

The Pagoda festival marking 2601 anniversary of the pagoda was also opened on the same day and will be held through 26 March.—MNA

Committee for implementing Latpadaungtaung copper mine report meets farmers in project area

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March —Chairman of the committee for implementing the investigation commission's report on Latpadaungtaung copper

there.

At the meeting with local farmers of the villages, they cordially discussed needs of the people and pledged to provide assistance for socio-economy development of

Department where officials were giving compensation for land confiscation to farmers.

So far, 69 farmers from the Phaungkatar Village-tract had received a total of over



Committee Chairman Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun and members meet local farmers.—MNA

mine Union Minister U Hla Tun and members of the committee yesterday visited the new villages for the local people who moved from the copper mine project.

During the visit, they inspected houses, roads, water and power supply

the local people.

Member of the committee Union Minister Lt-Gen Ko Ko handed over a fire engine and made arrangements for assigning firemen at the fire station.

They also visited Salingyi Township General Administration

K 224.6 million for compensation for land confiscation. Bank branches of Myanma Economic Bank, Yoma Bank and Myawady Bank have been set up so that the farmers can save their money.

They also visited Moegyo Sulphuric

Acid Plant of Myanma Economic Holdings Ltd and inspected health care services for employees, trainings for human resource development, production process of the factory and measures for environmental conservation.

MNA

Union ministers hold talks on relevant sectors



Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin holds talks with New Zealand Foreign Minister Hon Murray McCully.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 17 March—Union Ministers who accompanied President U Thein Sein on

his New Zealand tour held discussions with authorities concerned for cooperation in respective sectors.

Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin met New Zealand Foreign Minister Hon Murray McCully on 15 March to hold talks on promotion of bilateral ties and cooperation in international arena.

Union Minister at the President Office U Tin Naing Thein, Union Minister for Livestock and Fisheries U Ohn Myint and Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw in Auckland yesterday held detailed discussions with CEO of Fonterra Co Mr Theo Spiering on

conducting feasibility study for breeding milch cow and producing milk and dairy products on commercial scale in Myanmar. The Union ministers also visited the milk and dairy products factory of the company.

Union Minister for Mines Dr Myint Aung met Policy Advisor Mr Andrew Annakin of Department of the Prime Minister and Professor Mr Basil Sharp of the Department of Economics of the University of Auckland on 15 March and held talks on foreign investment law, mining law and bylaws, matters related to investment, human resources development and technical help for Myanmar.

MNA

Yangon mayor leaves for Japan

YANGON, 17 March—Yangon Region Development Affairs Minister Yangon Mayor U Hla Myint left for Tokyo of Japan yesterday evening to attend a seminar on Yangon regeneration project on 16-23 March.

It was the final seminar in a series of meetings

between Yangon Region government and Japan International Cooperation Agency which had signed an MoU on the development project on 1 May, 2012.

Yangon Region Transport Minister U Aung Khin and other municipal officers will also attend the seminar.—MNA

Belgian Dy PM meets UMFCCI President

YANGON, 17 March—Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs Mr Didier Reynders of Belgium and party met President of the Republic of the Union of

Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Win Aung, Vice-Presidents U Zaw Min Win, U Mya Han and U Tun Aung at the office of the federation on Minye Kyawswa Road

in Lanmadaw Township yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, they focused on cooperation in economic and investment sectors between Myanmar and Belgium.

MNA

Passport applicants no longer required submitting compensation certificate

It is hereby announced that applicants are no longer required to submit certificate detailing that they have compensated to the seat of education where they have learnt higher education, in applying for passport to passport issuance board of the Home Affairs Ministry as of 18, March 2013.

**Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar),
Ministry of Education**