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President U Thein Sein arrives in Phnom Penh to attend ASEAN Summit

NAY PYI TAW 17 Nov—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein, at the invitation of Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen, left here for Phnom Penh of Cambodia by special aircraft of Myanmar Airways to attend the 21st ASEAN Summit there, this morning.

On arrival at 12.50 pm, the President and party were welcomed at Phnom Penh International Airport by Cambodian Information Minister Mr Khieu Kanharith and officials, Ambassador of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Cambodia U Cho Tun Aung, Military Attaché Brig-Gen Ye Naing Myo and staff families of the embassy and the military attaché's office.

The President and party then proceeded to the Hotel Cambodiana in Phnom Penh in a motorcade.—MNA

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein being welcomed by officials at Phnom Penh International Airport.

MNA



Prime Minister of New Zealand to pay official visit to Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 18 Nov—At the invitation of His Excellency U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, The Right Honourable John Key, Prime Minister of New Zealand, will pay an official visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in the near future.—MNA

Glory of Yangon, Trader Square Commercial Complex

Traders Hotel opened in 1996 on Sule Pagoda Road and Sarkura Tower which are located at the heart of Yangon, is a symbol of the development in Yangon City.

As part of future Yangon Project, Shangri-La Asia Co., Ltd is going to implement Trader Square Commercial Complex on 58,000 metres area space beside Traders

Hotel.

The complex will include 14 storey for offices, two for shopping malls and restaurants and car parking that can hold about 600 cars. It will also link with Traders Hotel.

Groundbreaking ceremony of Traders Square Commercial Complex was held at the project on 14 November. Yangon Region

Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Yangon Mayor U Hla Myint, Mdm Kay Goom and officials from Shangri-La Asia Co., Ltd attended and opened it.

“Now, Yangon sees an influx of foreigners. The foreign investment is likely to flow into the country. One difficulty we are facing is that we have no enough hotels and rooms at present. I would like to thank for construction of Traders Square Commercial Complex. It will help fulfill

*Byline:
Maung Maung
Htwe (MNA) and
Tha Nyan
(MNA)*

the room needs of hotels to a certain extent. Being a grand one, the complex would become a glory for Yangon Region,” said Chief Minister U Myint Swe.

“We welcome it. Shangri-La group has been running Traders Hotel since the past ten years. Shangri-La groups' investment here could invite new investors. We welcome foreign investments. I want it to complete the project as quickly as possible,” said CEO of Shwe Taung Development Co., Ltd U Aung Zaw Naing. It will be implemented at a cost of 100 million USD and completed in the mid-2015.

Translation: MT

Early child development course concludes

MAWLAMYINE, 17 Nov—At the Vocational Training School in Mawlamyine of Mon State, the Early Child Development Course, jointly organized by Mon State Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee and Mon State Social Welfare Department,

concluded on 7 November.

Mon State Minister for Development Affairs Dr Toe Toe Aung presented completion certificates to the trainees.

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee Daw San San Lwin gave awards to three outstanding trainees.—*Myanma Alinn*

Depression not moving toward Myanmar coast

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Nov—According to the observations at 18.30 hrs MST today, the depression over South Bay and adjoining Central Bay of Bengal has moved over West-Central Bay and is centred at about 390 miles West of Patheingyi (380 miles southwest of Kyaukpyu). It's forecast to move North-Northwest slowly.

Current stage of the

depression is coded as yellow stage which means is not moving towards Myanmar Coast.

Under the influence of depression, occasional squalls with rough sea will be experienced off and along Rakhine Coast.

Surface wind speed in squalls may reach 40 to 50 mph, the Meteorology and Hydrology Department announced.—MNA



Photo shows scale model of Traders Square commercial complex to be built by Shangri-La Asia Co., Ltd.

Quake-hit villages receive influx of cash and kind

SHWEBO, 17 Nov — Due to the severe earthquake that jolted at the epicenter of 32-mile northeast of Shwebo in Sagaing Region on 11 November, a diamond orb and an umbrella of ShwetaungU pagoda at Makhauk Village in Kyaukmyaungsub-township fell to the ground. The 6.8 magnitude earthquake

destroyed some religious buildings of Seikta Thuka monastery.

The Shweyinma Sayadaw and wellwishers donated K 500,000 and three bags of rice to the pagoda and monastery, 33 bags of rice and 810 boxes of instant noodle to quake victims in Malar Village and K 300,000 and offertories to

Thiri Mingalarsan monastery in the village.

According to the locals, the area suffered a series of aftershocks until 13 November in the aftermath of the strong earthquake. A total of 670 local people who did not dare to stay at their homes sought shelter in the playground near Malar Village. — *Kyemon*



Health care service for quake victims

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Nov — On their field trips to quake-hit townships in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, specialists teams are providing local people with health care services.

On 15 November, a special disease control team

together with medical teams from Mandalay General Hospital, Mandalay Region Health Department, 300-bed Hospital in Mandalay, Shwebo District People's Hospital, Monywa People's Hospital, Kyaukmyaung Station Hospital, Sagaing

People's Hospital and Sagaing Region Health Department performed medical treatment to local people at Mauktapin Village of Thabeikkyin Township, Kyitaukpauk Station Hospital and Khattin Village, Kabuk and Malar Villages in KhinU Township, Thitseint Village in Wetlet Township, Male health care centre and Kyaukmyaung Station Hospital in Shwebo Township.

MNA



Strong wind fanned-fire engulfs 47 houses in Namhsam

KYAUKME, 17 Nov — A fire broke out at a house in an urban ward of Namhsam in Palaung Administered Area in Shan State (North) at 10 am on 2 November. The electric shock-triggered fire started at the house of U Myo Lwin in the urban ward engulfed 47 houses, leaving 263 men, women and children of 59 households homeless.

Thanks to collective efforts of firemen, auxiliary fire brigade members and local people, the fire was under control at 2 pm. As strong wind fanned the fire, many houses on the only main road of the hilly town were burnt down. Authorities concerned are providing necessary assistant to fire victims. — *Kyemon*



Photo shows a workplace of Thattahtana Pagoda Construction Project which is underway at Ottarathiri Hillock in Pobbathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area recently. The project started on 22 September 2011 and 80 per cent of the whole project has been completed so far.

KYEMON

Sandstone Buddha Image to be kept at Shwedagon Pagoda

YANGON, 17 Nov — According to a responsible person of the office of the board of trustees of the Shwedagon Pagoda, a Sandstone Buddha Image donated by Indian

Government to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will arrive here soon.

The Sandstone Buddha Image is 16 feet in height and seven and a half tone in weight. The Buddha Image

will be kept at the lower reliquary of the western archway of the Pagoda and the opening ceremony will take place there on 15 December.

Kyemon

US scholars visit MANA

YANGON, 17 Nov — A seven-member delegation of John Hopkins University of the United States visited

Myanmar Anti-Narcotics Association on 13 November. Chairman of the association U Khin Maung Thun, Vice-

Chairman Dr Khin Maung Gyi, Secretary U Saw Ngwe and project in-charges held discussions with the visiting scholars.

During their visit to Myanmar, the US delegation led by Dr. Michael Klog and Dr. Catherine De Angeles of John Hopkins University also participated in workshops on academic matters held at Public Health University and University of Medicine-1.

Kyemon



Vocational training courses for uneducated workforce

YANGON, 17 Nov — With the growing market potentials, there will be an increase in number of garment factories, creating more job opportunities for uneducated workforce.

According to a press briefing at Human Resources Development Centre on Lower Mingalardon Road in Insein Township, Myanmar Garment Entrepreneurs Association will organize

free vocational training courses with the aim of enabling Myanmar young people to earn their livings as skilled workers.

With the assistance of JETRO of Japan, the training centre was established in 2009. Japan provided the training centre with 80 sewing machines worth US\$ 100,000 in October 2011. A responsible person of the association said that, starting from the 29th course, anyone could take the 10-day training courses free of charge which are being conducted twice a month.

Those with primary level education are eligible to attend the sewing course. Health education and talks on human trafficking are being given at the courses.

Kyemon



Knowledge on computer technology disseminated

SITTWAY, 17 Nov — Organized by Rakhine State Computer Association, the first talks on basic education level computer knowledge was held at Waythali Hall of Basic Education High School No. 1 in Sittway on 14 November.

Responsible persons who are highly computer-literate explained the use of computer system to students and held talks on computer technology with them.

Next, members of Rakhine State Computer Association presented vinyl describing computer technology to the school head.—*Kyemon*

WORLD

Senior CPC leader meets Laos president's representative



Liu Yunshan (R), a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, who is also a member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee and head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, shakes hands with Laos Deputy Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith, representative of Choummaly Sayasone, Laos president and general secretary of Laos' ruling Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP), in Beijing, capital of China, on 16 Nov, 2012.—XINHUA

BEIJING, 17 Nov—Senior Communist Party of China leader (CPC) Liu Yunshan met here on Friday with Laos Deputy Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith, representative of Choummaly Sayasone, Laos president and secretary general of Laos' ruling Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP).

Liu, a member of the

Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, conveyed CPC Central Committee General Secretary Xi Jinping's greeting to Choummaly during the meeting.

He expressed gratitude for the LPRP central committee and Choummaly's move to send a representative to China to pass on a

congratulatory message to the new central leadership of the CPC following the just-concluded 18th CPC National Congress. He said this fully demonstrated the importance they have attached to the development of China-Laos ties and intra-party relations.

Also a member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee and head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, Liu briefed Thongloun on the congress, which concluded on Wednesday.

The event, which was held from 8-14 Nov, was an extremely important meeting convened at a decisive stage in completing building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, according to Liu. It opened up broader prospects for the development of the CPC and China, he told Thongloun.

China's party and government, he added, always placed great value in ties with Laos, and the CPC's new central collective leadership will continue to push forward the relationship.

Xinhua

UN welcomes Myanmar's moves to address violence in Rakhine state

UNITED NATIONS, 17 Nov—UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday welcomed moves by Myanmar's leadership to address the violence in the country's Rakhine state as "steps in the right direction."

The UN chief received a letter Friday from President of Myanmar U Thein Sein, in which the president condemned the "criminal acts" of elements inside his country that caused the "senseless violence" resulting in widespread loss of life, destruction of property and displacement of families in Rakhine state, said a statement released here by Ban's spokesperson.

In the letter, U Thein Sein "promised to deal with the perpetrators in accordance with the rule of law," said the statement.

In his letter, according to the statement, the Myanmar president also noted that "once emotions subside on all sides," his government was prepared to "address contentious political dimensions, ranging from resettlement of displaced populations to granting of

citizenship," as well as to look at other long-term issues.

In addition, the president underlined the commitment of the Myanmar government to meeting the humanitarian needs of individuals and communities in the affected areas of Rakhine state and seeking wider international assistance and cooperation in this regard.

"The secretary-general welcomes both President U Thein Sein's letter as well as his recent meeting as positive steps in the right direction," the statement said.

"He further welcomes

the assurances conveyed on behalf of the government of Myanmar, in respect of the immediate and longer-term issues connected with the troubles in Rakhine that would be carefully noted by the international community," it said.

The statement added that the United Nations will work closely with the government and people of Myanmar to help the affected people in Rakhine state, "as well as support the measures that will need to be taken to comprehensively address the issues at the heart of the situation there."

MNA/Xinhua

Train ploughs into school bus in Egypt, 50 killed

CAIRO, 17 Nov—Fifty people, mostly children, were killed when a train slammed into a school bus as it crossed tracks in a city south of Cairo on Saturday, state media and officials said.

All but two of the dead were children, aged around four to eight, said a senior security official in Assiut, near the site. One woman and the bus driver also died, he added.

The bus was broken in half by the force of the crash.

Blood was spattered on the front of the engine and school bags and text books, some bloodstained, were strewn around.

Witnesses said barriers at the rail crossing were open when the train hit the bus. Transport Minister Mohamed Rashad and the head of the railways authority resigned, and President Mohamed Mursi said those responsible would be held to account.

Egypt's roads and rail-

way safeguards, leading to a string of deadly crashes.

State media reported that as well as 50 dead, 15 or more people were injured.

A medical source said as many as 28 were injured, 27 of them children.

"They told us the barriers were open when the bus crossed the tracks and the train collided with it," said Mohamed Samir, a doctor at Assiut hospital where the injured were taken, citing witness accounts.

Assiut Governor Yahya Keshk also said the crossing was open.

"The crossing worker was asleep. He has been detained," he told state television.

Egypt's worst train disaster was in 2002 when a fire ripped through seven carriages of an overcrowded passenger train, killing at least 360 people.

Many more have been killed in rail accidents since then despite pledges from successive governments to

Israel hits Hamas government buildings as reservists mobilized

GAZA CITY, 17 Nov—Israeli aircraft pounded Hamas government buildings in Gaza on Saturday, including the prime minister's office, after Israel's cabinet authorized the mobilization of up to 75,000 reservists, preparing for a possible ground invasion.

Hamas, the Islamist group that runs the Gaza Strip, said Israeli planes bombed the office building of Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh—where he had met on Friday with the Egyptian prime minister—and struck a police headquarters.

Despite the violence, Tunisia's foreign minister arrived in the coastal enclave early on Saturday in a show of Arab solidarity, heading to a hospital to visit the wounded.

Officials in Gaza said 38 Palestinians, half of them



An explosion and smoke are seen after Israeli strikes in Gaza City on 17 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

civilians including eight children and a pregnant woman, had been killed in Gaza since Israel began its air strikes. Three Israeli civilians were killed by a rocket on Thursday.

Rocket fire by militants into Israel resumed after dawn following a relative lull overnight, but the number was still lower than on the previous three days since

the start of the offensive, an Israeli military spokesman said.

A three-storey house belonging to Hamas official Abu Hassan Salah was also hit and completely destroyed early on Saturday.

Rescuers said at least 30 people were pulled from the rubble.

The Israeli army said it had targeted a number

Israel

of government buildings during the night, including Haniyeh's office, the Hamas Interior Ministry and a police compound.

The Israeli military said some 150 rockets fired from Gaza had hit Israel since Friday and at least 83 more were intercepted by its Iron Dome anti-missile system.

In a further sign Netanyahu might be clearing the way for a ground operation, Israel's armed forces decreed a highway leading to the territory and two roads bordering the enclave of 1.7 million Palestinians off-limits to civilian traffic.

Tanks and self-propelled guns were seen near the border area on Friday, and the military said it had already called 16,000 reservists to active duty.

Reuters

Rockets fired from Gaza explode in Jerusalem area

JERUSALEM, 17 Nov—Rockets fired from Gaza exploded in Gush Etzion, a settlement bloc south of Jerusalem, state TV reported.

There are no immediate reports of injury or damage, the state TV said.

The police has not yet confirmed the rocket attack

in the Jerusalem area.

This is the first time that rockets launched from Gaza have come so close to Jerusalem since the start of Israel's large-scale military operation against armed groups in the Palestinian coastal enclave.

The state TV said Ha-

mas claimed responsibility for the surprise attack, and *The Jerusalem Post* said Hamas declared to have shot "an improved Kassam" toward Jerusalem, which it called an M-75.

When sirens rang out over Jerusalem Friday afternoon, residents were

seen running out of homes to bomb shelters.

The attack came hours after two Gaza rockets in the direction of the greater Tel Aviv area and prompted a red alert air raid siren to be sounded in the city for a second day.

Xinhua



People gather near a train, with bloodstains, after it crashed into a school bus at Manflot in the southern city of Assiut, 500 km (310 miles) south of Cairo, 17 Nov, 2012.—Reuters

ways have a poor safety record and Egyptians have long complained that successive governments have failed to enforce even ba-

improve safety. Accidents involving multiple deaths are also common on Egypt's poor road network.—Reuters

Facebook offering e-retailers sales

Technology tracking tool

SAN FRANCISCO, 17 Nov—Facebook Inc wants more credit for making online cash registers ring.

Facebook will begin rolling out on Friday a new tool which will allow online retailers to track purchases by members of the social network who have viewed their ads. The tool is the latest of the new advertising features Facebook is offering to convince marketers that steering advertising dollars to the company will deliver a payoff.

Facebook, with roughly 1 billion users, has faced a tough reception on Wall Street amid concerns about its slowing revenue growth.

“Measuring ad effectiveness and outcomes is absolutely crucial to all types of businesses and marketers,” said David Baser, a product manager for Facebook’s ads business



The loading screen of the Facebook application on a mobile phone is seen in this photo illustration taken in Lavigny on 16 May, 2012. —REUTERS

who said the “conversion measurement” tool has been a top customer request for a long time.

The sales information that advertisers receive is anonymous, said Baser. “You would see the number of people who bought shoes,” he said, using the example of an online shoe retailer. But marketers would not be able

to get information that could identify the people, he added.

The conversion tool is specifically designed for so-called direct response marketers, such as online retailers and travel websites that advertise with the goal of drumming up immediate sales rather than for longer-term brand-building.

Reuters

Lockheed’s F-35 logistics system revolutionary but risky

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov—When computer “hackers” working for the US Navy succeeded in breaking into the computer logistics system that controls the Lockheed Martin Corp F-35 Joint Strike Fighter earlier this year, they did the company a favour: allowing it to fix a critical vulnerability in the \$396 billion programme.

Now, as the Marine Corps prepares to set up its first operational squadron of F-35s next week, some experts say other security risks may lurk within such a large and highly networked weapons support system.

One concern: Lockheed shored up political backing for the F-35 by choosing suppliers in nearly every US state. But having such a large

and widely dispersed group increases exposure to cyber attacks, said Ben Freeman, national security investigator with the non-profit Project on Government Oversight. “Even if Lockheed has top-notch cyber security, it’s still vulnerable if its subcontractors are vulnerable,” he said.

The military’s move toward greater use of so-called autonomic weapons systems, which rely heavily on computers, promises to revolutionize the way weapons are maintained and operated, but also carries a new level of cyber risk.

And the weapons designers are having difficulty keeping up with the hackers. While it often takes years to field new weapons



A F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter is seen at the Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River, Maryland on 20 Jan, 2012. —REUTERS

systems, cyber threats are evolving and changing on a daily basis, said Raphael Mudge, a former Air Force engineer and independent cyber expert. “You have to be continually assessing the risk,” he said.

ISS prepared for orbit change to avoid collision

Space

MOSCOW, 17 Nov—The International Space Station (ISS) would adjust its orbit to avoid collision with space debris, Russian federal space agency Roscosmos said on Friday. “The operation will be held at 19:16 Moscow Time (1316 GMT),” Roscosmos spokesman Alexei Kuznetsov told reporters. He described it as a routine operation the Russian Mission Control Centre (MCC) had conducted many times. “The operation to avoid ISS collision with the

space garbage is nothing new. It has been worked out several times,” Kuznetsov said.

Earlier Friday, NASA discovered an unidentified piece of metal which could approach dangerously close to the ISS at about 22:00 Moscow time (1800 GMT).

The ISS orbit was lifted one kilometer on 1 Nov to avoid collision with the defunct US satellite Iridium-33 in the previous such case.

Xinhua

Technology

SEATTLE/SAN FRANCISCO, 17 Nov—The sudden departure of powerful Windows boss Steven Sinofsky this week is the first step in a plan by CEO Steve Ballmer to remodel Microsoft Corp as a much more integrated operation in an attempt to take on Apple Inc and Google Inc at their own game.

After nearly 13 years at the helm of the world’s largest software maker, which just launched its first own-brand computer, sources inside the company say Sinofsky’s departure signals Ballmer’s new-found focus on co-operation

Particle change hailed as major find by CERN

GENEVA, 17 Nov—CERN researchers said on Monday they have spotted a particle reshaping into two others in their Large Hadron Collider, a breakthrough that could be crucial in exploring physics frontiers once the realm of science fiction.

The mutation — in a process known as decay — was predicted under the so-called Standard Model (SM) of physics which describes how the universe works at the most fundamental level, but until now scientists had never seen it. The discovery, announced at a conference in Japan, will sharpen efforts to find evidence for super symmetry, dubbed SUSY, a theory explaining some cosmic mysteries, and for other “New Physics” ideas beyond the SM’s confines, CERN experts said.

The LHC, which went into operation at the research

centre near Geneva in early 2010, had confirmed the model as its initial target, but its longer-term goal is to push beyond that into new realms envisaged by theorists.

“The detailed implications of this latest result will take a while to work through, but one thing is easy to state: the Standard Model has survived another test,” US physicist and CERN-watcher Matt Strassler said in a blog post. A decay of the type recorded by CERN’s LHCb experiment, in which a Bs meson particle was transformed after a collision in the LHC into a muon and an anti-muon, was foreseen under the model, developed in the second half of the 20th century.

Scientists had been trying to spot the decay — which in the arithmetically-intense world of particle physics had been correctly predicted to happen to one Bs meson in every 300

million — for well over a decade. Oliver Buchmueller, of the Geneva research centre’s CMS experiment, told Reuters that although the nature of the decay narrowed the energy range where SUSY traces might be found, it also left plenty of room for these to turn up later.

“This is another piece in the puzzle and with it the world appears even more SM (Standard Model)-like,” he said. “It supports SUSY, because that is the only theory that can include the Standard Model in a wider concept of New Physics.”

SUSY, which provides for the existence of unseen heavy “super-partners” to all known particles, is controversial, with some physicists expressing doubts about it as an explanation of cosmic oddities like the strange speed of rotation of galaxies.

The doubters have more than once pronounced the theory dead.—Reuters

Vietnam conducts project on rice gene resource management

Science

HANOI, 17 Nov—The Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) has recently approved a project on managing dry-land rice’s genetic resources in Vietnam, reported Vietnam’s state-run news agency on Tuesday. Quoting the source with MARD, the report said the project will receive funding from the Asian Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (AFACI) and be conducted by the Vietnam Academy of Agricultural Sciences until 2014, with cooperation from related agencies and localities.

It aims to preserve the

genetic resources of dry-land rice and encourage farmers to use those resources in a sustainable way, contributing to ensure food security in Vietnam.

It also helps limit the loss of genetic resources due to the narrowing of the cultivation area and improve the quality and quantity of dry-land rice genes stored in the national plant gene bank.

The project expects to collect genetic materials of about 200 additional dry-land rice varieties, increasing the total number of rice varieties stored by the bank to 800, said the ministry.

Xinhua

New Microsoft mantra after Sinofsky

between its self-sufficient—and sometimes warring—units. “What I’m hearing over and over is collaboration and horizontal integration is the new mantra,” said one Microsoft insider, who asked not to be named.

“They (top management) understand that, if they don’t move to a model where devices and software are more integrated across the entire Microsoft system, they are in a weak position.”

After floundering for most of the last decade, Microsoft is trying emulate the way Apple’s software and hardware — such as iTunes and the iPhone — work

perfectly together; or how Google’s online suite from Web search to YouTube and Gmail are seamlessly joined.

Microsoft — which Ballmer rechristened as a “devices and services

company” last month — has all the parts, analysts say, but has failed to put them together. Now Ballmer looks set to reshape the company to try to make that a reality.

Reuters



Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer speaks during the launch of Windows Phone 8 in San Francisco, California on 29 Oct, 2012. —REUTERS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

US will need 52,000 more family docs by 2025

60 percent of US biggest cities smoke-free

NEW YORK, 17 Nov—A growing and aging population, along with increased access to health insurance, will create the need for 52,000 more primary care doctors within the US by the year 2025, according to a new study. The researchers wanted to estimate how many such doctors the US healthcare system would need after the passage of 2010's Affordable Care Act, which will give an estimated



A doctor checks the blood pressure of a patient in downtown Los Angeles on 30 July, 2007.—REUTERS

Health

3 percent increase in the current primary doctor workforce, or an additional 52,000 doctors.

"That number is an expectation of how many we'll need in addition to how many we have today," said Liaw, now at Virginia Commonwealth University in Fairfax. Of those, 33,000 doctors are needed to account for population growth, 10,000 for the aging population and more than 8,000 for increased insurance access.

The Association of American Medical Colleges estimates that the U.S. will face a shortage of 90,000 doctors by 2020, which will grow to a shortage of more than 130,000 by 2025.

Reuters

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov—Thirty of America's 50 largest cities are now covered by laws that prohibit smoking in all indoor areas of private workplaces, restaurants, and bars, according to a study released on Thursday from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

By late 2000, only one of the 50 largest US cities — San Jose, California — was covered by such a law.

As of 5 Oct, 2012, 16 of the 50 largest cities were covered by local comprehensive smoke-free laws, and 14 more were covered by state comprehensive smoke-free laws.

According to the study, almost half Americans are protected by state or local laws of this kind, compared

to less than three percent in 2000.

Scientific studies have found that smoke-free laws reduce exposure to second-hand smoke, reduce smoking, and improve health, including reducing heart attacks. "Communities have made tremendous progress eliminating smoking from worksites and public places in 60 percent of big cities in the United States. Smoke-free laws save lives and don't hurt business," said CDC Director Thomas Frieden in a statement. "If we can protect workers and the public in the remaining 20 largest cities, 16 million people would be better protected from cancer and heart disease caused by secondhand smoke."

Xinhua

Myanmar Launches UNFPA Report on The State of World Population 2012

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Nov—UNFPA and the Ministry of Health jointly launched the 2012 State of World Population Report, which highlights access to family planning as an essential human right that can unlock unprecedented rewards for socio-economic development.

A wide range of stakeholders from government, national and international non-governmental organizations, the United Nations and the diplomatic community attended the event.

In her opening address, Dr. Nilar Tin, Deputy Director General of the Department of Health, indicated that the Ministry of Health has attached priority to maternal and child health care in its National Health Plan for Myanmar. She also stated that the Ministry of Health established a national budget line to cover part of the needs for birth spacing commodities in Myanmar. Dr. Nilar Tin emphasized the importance of cooperation among ministries, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations in meeting the goals set out in the National Health Plan. She welcomed the call by the State of World Population report 2012 for better financial and political commitments for family planning services.

Mr. Mohamed Abdel-Ahad, Representative of UNFPA highlighted family planning as a human right which enables individuals and couples to decide on the number, timing and spacing of their children. He elaborated on the health and socio-economic benefits of family planning and explained that family planning can save the lives of women and infants since it enables women to avoid unintended and unwanted pregnancies and abortion. Mr. Abdel-Ahad said; "Nearly one quarter of Myanmar women of reproductive age have expressed desire to practice birth spacing but do not have access to contraceptives." He commended the political commitment of the Government towards reproductive health and family planning, and mentioned that meeting the country's needs for contraceptives, estimated at \$5.8 million in 2012, is crucial to reducing maternal and infant mortality. He quoted Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of UNFPA saying "Family Planning must be fully integrated into all current and future development initiatives, including the global sustainable development framework that will build on the MDGs after 2015".

Dr. Theingi Myint, Deputy Director (MCH) of the Department of Health presented an overview of the national birth spacing program in Myanmar while Dr. Sid Naing, Director of Marie Stopes International emphasized the need for service providers to target families in rural areas, with low income and education, and to provide them with accessible, user-friendly family planning services.

This year's report calls for a multipronged approach to ensure access to family planning by all women, men and young people. It suggests that countries seek to simultaneously strengthen health systems, introduce or enforce laws that protect individuals' rights, reduce poverty, challenge harmful traditional practices, eliminate child marriage, end discrimination, remove logistical impediments and ensure a broad range of contraceptive supplies.

UNFPA

34 million more Americans access to health insurance.

But Dr Winston Liaw, one of the study's authors, said the biggest need will not come from more people having health insurance.

"A lot of the increase in utilization is going to be from population growth. That's going to be the largest driver. Then, a smaller percentage is actually going to be from insurance expansion," said Liaw, who was a fellow at Washington's Robert Graham Centre when the study was written.

Liaw and his colleagues, who published their findings in *the Annals of Family Medicine*, used several databases to estimate how many primary care doctors there are in the US, and how many people visit them. They then used that information with additional data from the US Census Bureau to predict how many doctors would be needed as the population grew, aged and gained access to health insurance. In 2008, the researchers estimated that people made 462 million office visits to primary care doctors. They estimate that number to grow to 565 million office visits by 2025.

That additional use, they say, will require a

JP Morgan, Credit Suisse to pay 417 million dollars to settle SEC charges

Business

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov—JP Morgan and Credit Suisse will together pay over 417 million US dollars to settle fraud charges related to residential mortgage-backed securities (RMBS).

JP Morgan has agreed to pay 296.9 million dollars while Credit Suisse will pay 120 million dollars, the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) said on Friday.

The SEC, in coordination with the federal-state Residential Mortgage-Backed Securities Working Group, charged that JP Morgan misstated information about the delinquency

Spain says bad bank attracting interest from foreign investors

Business

MADRID, 17 Nov—Spain's bad bank is generating a lot of interest among foreign investors, an economy ministry source said, and the government will meet with five investment banks on Monday to start the search for private capital.

The bad bank could go ahead with just domestic participation but non-resident investors would give the vehicle credibility, the source said on Friday.

Talks with domestic investors were ongoing, and the government hopes to meet five investment banks as of Monday in the search for private interest, the source added.

Spain has set up a bad bank to siphon off toxic real estate assets dating from a 2008 property crash from



A seagull flies past the Spanish flag in front of the congress hall, venue of the Ibero-American Summit, in Cadiz, southern Spain on 15 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

balance sheets as a condition of receiving up to 100 billion euros (80.2 billion pounds) of aid in a European bail-out of the sector.

The Spanish government expects to apply for between 35 billion and 40 billion euros of that aid.

The reduced final bill takes into account the transfer of assets to the bad bank, capital raising operations, such as Popular's 2.5 billion euros capital increase, and the forced losses on holders of hybrid and junior debtholders.—Reuters



A man walks past JP Morgan Chase's international headquarters on Park Avenue in New York in this on 13 July, 2012 file photo.

REUTERS

status of mortgage loans that provided collateral for an RMBS offering in December 2006 in which it was the underwriter.

This resulted in losses of at least 37 million US dollars to JP Morgan's investors.

With respect to the

charges against Credit Suisse, during the period from 2005 to 2010, the company also failed to accurately disclose its practice of retaining cash for itself from the settlement of claims against mortgage loan originators for problems with loans that Credit Suisse had sold into RMBS trusts and no longer owned.

Credit Suisse made 55.7 million dollars in earnings, but its investors lost more than 10 million dollars due to Credit Suisse's practices concerning first payment defaults.

It is the latest legal action by US regulators regarding housing mortgage crisis.

Reuters

Air capacity crunch costs UK 14 billion pounds a year



A British Airways jets arrives over the top of houses to land at Heathrow Airport in west London on 28 Aug, 2012.—REUTERS

LONDON, 17 Nov—A lack of spare runway capacity at Heathrow costs Britain \$22 billion (14 billion pounds) a year in lost trade and means the country is losing out to European rivals in the race for lucrative emerging markets routes, a study found. The report, commissioned by Spanish group Ferrovial's Heathrow Ltd, said the

problem could only be solved by having a single hub airport — meaning either Heathrow should be expanded or a new international hub should be built. Heathrow, which has two runways, is operating at 99 percent of capacity. The government blocked plans for a third runway when it came to power in 2010 — further expansion of the west

London site would mean a huge increase in the number of flights over the capital.

The report, written by the consultancy Frontier Economics, said the government needed to act to better compete with the likes of Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Paris in the battle for routes to emerging markets.

“There is no room to fit in new trade routes to the emerging economies,” it said. “There are 1,532 more flights to the three largest cities in mainland China from Paris and Frankfurt than there are from Heathrow, while the gap with China has also widened in terms of destinations”. It noted there were no direct flights from London to seven destinations in mainland China—Chengdu, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Qingdao, Shenyang, Wuhan and Xiamen — now served by other European hubs.—Reuters

Spain agrees aid for poor homeowners in eviction row

Spain

MADRID, 17 Nov—Spain passed a decree on Thursday to help the most needy families facing eviction during the nation's economic crisis, responding to an outcry over a homeowner who killed herself when bailiffs arrived to throw her out. The government said it would suspend evictions for two years for homeowners including those with small children, the disabled and long-term unemployed who can no longer keep up their mortgage repayments.

“This is an emergency response to mitigate the effects of the worst of the economic crisis,” Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria said. The government would increase the amount of social housing available at low rents for people who have lost their homes, she told a Press conference. Mortgage relief would be available only to

people earning less than 19,200 euros (15,393.35 pounds) a year.

Banks, many of which are about to receive the first funds from a European bailout of up to 100 billion euros, have repossessed almost 400,000 properties since the real estate market crashed in

2008, including commercial buildings. But the suicide last Friday of 53-year-old Amaia Egana, who jumped from her fourth-floor flat in the northern Basque Country as she was about to be evicted, has pushed the issue to the top of the political agenda.

Reuters



Gisela Bajo (L) is comforted by neighbours as she sits crying, waiting for the judicial commission to evict her from her home in Valencia on 15 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

Philippine gov't seeks INTERPOL help in arresting trading firm executive

Philippines

MANILA, 17 Nov—The Philippine government said on Thursday that it is seeking the assistance of the International Police (INTERPOL) in Malaysia to locate Manuel Amalilio, who was charged for a pyramid scam perpetrated by firm Aman Futures Group Phils, Inc.

The Philippine National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) said the 32-year-old Amalilio is believed to have

fled to Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia.

NBI director Nonnatus Rojas said his agency is now coordinating with the Justice Department for the immediate issuance of an arrest warrant based on the instructions of Philippine President Benigno Aquino III.

“As soon as the warrant is issued, we can immediately coordinate with INTERPOL and the Malaysian authorities so that the suspect can

be deported,” Rojas told reporters in a Press briefing.

Initial reports indicated that Amalilio is a Malaysian national but Rojas said he will be treated as a Filipino after they received information that the executive is a Filipino citizen but of Malaysian descent.

The Justice Department said that while there is no existing extradition treaty between the Philippines and Malaysia, Amalilio may be

brought back to the country to face charges through the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

Meanwhile, Secretary of the Interior and Local Government Manuel Roxas on Thursday relieved Senior Superintendent William T Manzan, police director of southern Philippine province of Zamboanga del Sur; and Superintendent Kenneth H. Mission, Pagadian City police chief.—Xinhua

Power cut hits southern Germany after substation glitch

Germany

MUNICH, 17 Nov—A power blackout caused by a technical problem at a substation in Bavaria paralysed large parts of the southern German city of Munich on Thursday, an unusual occurrence in Europe's biggest economy.

The power cut, which lasted less than two hours, caused chaos during morning rush hour in Germany's third-largest city. Commuters were stranded on trains, trams and the underground and drivers got stuck in traffic jams as traffic lights failed.

Munich's Stadtwerke utility said in a statement about 450,000 customers had been hit. The reason was a small fire which had broken out at a substation, said a

police spokesman.

However, officials stressed that the power cut was not due to supply shortages linked to Chancellor Angela Merkel's decision to make a speedy switch to renewable power and turn off nuclear plants earlier than planned.

Her vision of a “green revolution” has hit practical obstacles and raised worries of power gaps. Utilities and grid operators warned Merkel earlier this year that her policy could create a gap of up to 10 gigawatts by 2020 — equivalent to the output of up to 15 power plants.

The ambitious energy switch is probably the biggest domestic policy initiative of Merkel's second term.

Reuters

Shock drop in October retail sales hits recovery hopes

LONDON, 17 Nov—Retail sales fell in October as shoppers bought less food and clothing, puncturing a consumer spending revival that policymakers hoped would kick-start the economy heading into 2013.

Sales volumes fell 0.8 percent on the month for an annual rise of just 0.6 percent, the Office for National Statistics said on Thursday. Both numbers were the weakest since April and much worse than forecast, and sent sterling lower against the dollar and the euro.

Food shops reported the biggest monthly decline in sales since November 2011.

“I think a contraction in GDP is on the cards for the fourth quarter,” said Rob Wood, economist at Berenberg Bank.

Britons have suffered



Women walk past offers advertised in the windows of a supermarket near Manchester, northern England on 25 April, 2012.

REUTERS

the biggest drop in disposable incomes for more than 30 years as soaring food and fuel prices and higher taxes have eaten away at pay packets that have risen little or not at all.

The government and central bank had vested high hopes for the economy

on consumer spending, and retail sales had risen 0.5 percent month on month in September.

But a rise in inflation to a five-month high of 2.7 percent in October put that in doubt because wages are rising at a much slower pace.

“Retail sales had

improved through 2012 as the fall in inflation eased the squeeze on households, but as inflation goes up that puts the brakes on retail sales for now,” Berenberg Bank's Wood said.

Reuters

Train crash kills four during Texas veterans parade

US

HOUSTON, 17 Nov—Four people were killed and 17 others injured after a freight train crashed into a float carrying wounded veterans and their spouses during a parade in the US state of Texas on Thursday, local media reported.

The crash happened at a Union Pacific railroad crossing in the west Texas city of Midland, when the eastbound train was sounding its horn before it hit the float at round 4:40 pm, CBS News quoted Union Pacific

spokesman Tom Lange as saying. A preliminary investigation indicates that the crossing gate and lights were working at the time, said Lange, who said he didn't know if the train crew saw the float approaching.

Two people died at the scene, while two others died at hospital, City of Midland Spokesman Ryan Stout was quoted as saying.

Ten of the injured were in critical conditions, while seven others were in stable conditions, according to

media reports. Photos of the float taken during the parade show about two dozen people were seated in chairs set up on the back of a flatbed tractor-trailer decorated with American flags and signs identifying each veteran, according to CBS News.

The float was one of the two flat-bed vehicles carrying veterans and their spouses, police said. The first safely crossed the railroad tracks, but the second was hit by the train, according to the report.—Xinhua

LOCAL NEWS

Ancient buildings, religious edifices inspected



NAY PYI TAW, 17 Nov—Deputy Minister for Culture Daw Sanda Khin made an inspection tour of damaged ancient buildings and pagodas hit by strong earthquake on 11 November in Inwa and Mingun regions on 13

November. She instructed the officials to designate Laydatgyi Monastery in Inwa region and Pahtodawgyi in Mingun region as dangerous buildings not to be climbed for visitors, to cooperate experts from

Engineering Departments, Myanmar Engineering Society and Myanmar Architects Association so as to renovate the buildings on priority and submit the plans on renovations and maintenance.

Myanma Alinn

Blood donated to No. 2 Military Hospital (500-bed)

YANGON, 17 Nov—A total of 60 members from Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Pagoda Pathana Yaungdaw-phwint Association in Mayangon Township donated blood for 13th time for the patients at No. 2 Military Hospital (500-bed).

The chairman of the association spoke on the

occasion. The head of the pathology department of the hospital explained matters related to the blood.

Later, the head of the department of the hospital presented certificates of honour to the chairman of the association for their blood donation.

Myanma Alinn

WIPO, UMFCFI sign MoU



YANGON, 17 Nov—While the globalization is in the rapid process day by day, the innovative measures of Myanmar are securing greater achievement gradually.

With the aim of letting the Myanmar entrepreneurs know the rights of intellectual property and develop Myanmar economy, the World Intellectual Property Organization-WIPO and

the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry signed an MoU at the federation tower in Lanmadaw Township on 14 November.

WIPO based in Geneva of Switzerland is constituted with 185 countries.

The director-general of the WIPO said that entrepreneurs, song composers, designers and

other creators from various fields are to get registration for their intellectual property so as to prevent illegal copying their works and to produce the works in competitiveness.

The workshops and trainings will be arranged for the entrepreneurs to know rights of intellectual property, said the president of UMFCFI.

Myanma Alinn

Diamond orb systematically kept at Tooth Relic Pagoda

MANDALAY, 17 Nov—The diamond orb of Sacred Tooth Relic Pagoda (Mandalay) fell down in the earthquake that jolted at 7.42 am on 11 November.

The pagoda board of trustees and officials systematically kept the diamond and its related accessories.

The secretary of the pagoda board of trustees said

that he knew crackdown of diamond orb at 8 am on that day. The authorities and the pagoda board of trustees took the advice of the Ovadaçariya Sayadaws to start searching the diamond orb. They all searched the materials around the pagoda and the terraces. At 10.30 am, they found the diamond orb and jewellery on the fifth terrace of the pagoda.

Under the auspices of the Sayadaws, they put the found materials on record and arrangements will be made for showing them to the public.

Meanwhile, some precious jewellery lost in the shakes of earthquake at the pagoda. Officials continue searching the materials around the pagoda.

Myanma Alinn

Health knowledge shared in Gangaw

GANGAW, 17 Nov—Magway Region Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee jointly organized the talks on health knowledge at the Gangaw People's Hospital on 12 November, with an

address by Chairperson of the Committee Daw Thin Thin Htwe.

Member of Gangaw District MCWSC Dr Myo Thant gave talks on efforts for meeting the millennium development goals, OG

specialist Dr Sanda Saw of Gangaw Hospital on taking care of expectant mothers and Assistant Surgeon Dr Khaing Zaw Win on dengue hemorrhagic fever.

Myanma Alinn

Hninzigon Home for the Aged to launch funfair on 1 Dec

YANGON, 17 Nov—The funfair and Neikban market festival of Hninzigon Home for the Aged will be held

for the 51st time there on 1 December morning.

In the entertainment programmes, Pan Ei Mon

(Bo Ma) and Moe Hayman Thein of Gita Myinmo troupe will present entertainment to the people together with comedians Zaw Naing, Aung Ban, Awba and Arbwa who secured the gold medal in the comedian cup entertainment at the TV.

People may enjoy other festivities such as roller coaster, football throwing and archery events and visit canteens, personal goods shops, traditional medicine shops, toys shops.

The shops will be opened at 3 pm. The opening ceremony will be held at 5 pm. The entrance fee is K 200 per head.

Hninzigon Home for the Aged was established on 1-1-1933 by Grandma Daw Oo Zun in Hninsigon Village of Thingangyun Township.

After the World War, Myanma Alinn U Tin reconstituted the Hninzigon Home for the Aged Management Committee on 30-4-1956 and accommodates 12 grandpas and grandmas. At present, the home accommodates 100 grandpas and 140 grandmas.

Myanma Alinn



Myaungmya. Delta region transports the largest amount of duck eggs to Yangon in

rainy and cold seasons but least number in summer.

Myanma Alinn

Players for special olympic under training before Mekong 5 a Side Male Football Tourney

YANGON, 17 Nov—Players of Myanmar team are in training for the First Special Olympics Mekong 5 a Side Male Football Tournament 2012 at Youth Training Centre (Thuwunna). The football team was led by manager

U Than Zaw with coaches U Myo Zaw Win and U Win Zaw Thein.

The players selected for the Myanmar team are Thet Paing, Kyaw Aung, Min Thet Paing, Min Swe Htet, Chan Myae Win, Win Yazar Paiung, Tun Taryar, Aung

Naing Tun, Hein Htet Zaw, Aung Aung, Kyaw Zin Latt, Sar Ferri Jonny and Kaung Htet Naing.—*Myanma Alinn*



PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 18 November, 2012

Disasters cause poverty and poverty causes disasters

The situation of encountering more natural hazards than ever before proves Myanmar is one of Asian countries which are paying a huge price for extreme weather events. Economic losses resulting from disasters have continued to rise in the countries with greater economic potentials. Asia-Pacific Disaster Report-2012 finds that Myanmar suffers the most from disasters, losing about 0.9 per cent of its GDP annually, in the list of Southeast Asian countries with economic vulnerability to disasters. It is a shattering blow to the government's focus on poverty reduction strategy.

Most of economic losses caused by catastrophes have occurred in developing countries. This confirms that the poor suffer the most from disasters because a storm or a drought or flood or an earthquake can destroy their livelihoods on which their survival depends in the blink of an eye. At the same time, poverty has reared its ugly head again in the disaster-stricken areas and increased people's exposure to disasters due to limited resources and lack of access to education and health service there. When a disaster hits a certain developing country, it can reverse the hard-won development gains of the country, locking the people into poverty cycle again. That's why, disasters cause poverty and poverty causes disasters. A country trapped in a grinding poverty cycle will not be able to respond to or reduce the impact of natural disasters.

Although disasters are portrayed as acts of a natural order, some man contributing factors like population increase, unplanned and unmanaged settlement plan, climate change, environmental degradation and deforestation caused by excessive exploitation of natural resources, overgrazing and a lack of sense of taking care of environment and rivers while making great strides in the search for wealth are drivers of future hazard risks. So making endeavors to break the poverty cycle has become a major factor which is contributing to expanding vulnerability to natural hazards. So risks are growing in the regions of the poor people and there has been an increase in both the number and impact of natural hazards.

How to effectively and measurably reduce disaster risks and break poverty cycle is a huge challenge for developing countries including Myanmar. Some highlight an approach to reduce disaster risk exposure first and improving vulnerabilities next. But more investments in risk reduction will be a burden for a country with high poverty rate. To overcome this challenge, a strong commitment from communities, government, donors and NGOs is required to tackle both poverty alleviation and disaster risk reduction at the same time. Emphasis should be placed on development strategies for the poor such as job creation and livelihoods protection that can achieve greater resilience against disasters and strengthen capabilities to cope with recurring disasters.

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.

NATIONAL

Cash contributed for doyen literati

YANGON, 17 Nov— Myanmar Writers Association received contribution of cash to organize the respect-paying ceremony to doyen literati, this evening at Central Press of Printing and Publishing Enterprise on Theinbyu Street in Botahtaung Township.

Present on the occasion were Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Union Minister for Information U Aung Kyi, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Fundamental Rights, Democratic and Human Rights Affairs Committee Vice-Chairperson of Union Solidarity and Development Party U Htay Oo, Deputy Information Minister U Paik Htwe, Chairman of MWA U Tin Hlaing (Ledwintha Saw Chit), invited guests and donors.

President Office, Information Ministry, USDP,



Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa accepts cash donations for doyen literati from wellwishers.

MNA

government and social institutions, companies and individuals contributed cash amounting to K 32,360,500 and items worth K 1.7 million.

MWA Vice-Chair-

person-3 U Ohn Maung Moe) spoke words of thanks.—MNA

MTU to be upgraded to Center of Science

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Nov —Mandalay Technological University will be upgraded to the Centre of Science as part of efforts for promoting technology sector and producing qualified human

resources, said Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Ko Ko Oo.

Speaking at the coordination meeting for upgrading MTU held at the university today, the

Union minister stressed the need for upgrading curriculums and teaching methods, examination systems, lecture rooms and workshops and for giving priority to doing research benefiting the country.

He also called on rectors, professors and faculty

members to make efforts for achieving the aims of turning the centres of science to the research universities. After the meeting, the Union minister met with professors, heads of department and faculty members of MTU and visited the work site of the expansion of the Main Building of the university. MNA

Donations invited for doyen musicians

YANGON, 17 Nov—The Myanmar Music Association (Central) will organize the third ceremony to pay respects to doyen musicians of above 80 years at Maha Santisukha Monastery in Tamway

Township at 9 am on 10 January 2013. Those wishing to donate cash and kind may contact 01-545863 of the association in Natchaung Ward of Tamway Township.

Myanma Alinn

News in Brief

Trade promotion course opened

The Basic Trade Promotion Course No. 1/2012 commenced at the hall of Myanma Agricultural Produce Trading of Ministry of Commerce on

14 November afternoon, with an address by Union Minister U Win Myint. Altogether 25 trainees are attending four-week course.

Victorious volleyball team honoured

Union Minister for Industry U Aye Myint attended the ceremony to honour the Industry Ministry men's volleyball team at the ministry on

14 November. The team which has bagged the two-successive-year championship trophy secured four best player wards in the tournament.

School upgraded in Seikpyu Township

A ceremony to open Basic Education High School was held in West Panbyu Village of Seikpyu Township on 1 November.

The upgraded BEHS will admit students from four villages in Pakokku Township and 11 villages from Seikpyu Township.

Opening ceremony of 1st Mekong Regional 5-a-Side Football Tournament – 2012 (Myanmar) kicks off

YANGON, 17 Nov— Myanmar hosted 1st Mekong Regional 5-a-Side Football Tournament – 2012.

The opening of 1st Mekong Regional 5-a-Side Football Tournament – 2012 was held at Aung San Gymnasium this morning, with an address

by President of Myanmar Paraspports Federation and Vice-President of Myanmar Special Sports Federation U Myo Myint.

Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar (A) and Myanmar (B) took part in the football tournament.

MNA

I can't take my eyes off these models!



Hla Htut Oo

ARTICLE

PAGODA BAZAARS

BY BA THAN

Pagodas are common landmarks of our country of a million pagodas, fertile lands and majority of people engaged in agriculture. Pagodas are revered places of veneration and worship for millions of devout Theravada Buddhists, following the Path of the Elders since it was purified 2500 years ago after the *Maha Parinibbana of Lord Buddha, the Omniscient Self-Enlightened One*. Buddhist Tipitaka Canonical teachings, learning and practice migrated from Nepal (Mijjima Desa) to Lankidipa (Ceylon), thence to Suvanna Bhumi after the completion of the Third Grand Buddhist Council sponsored by Mighty King Asoka, known here as Siri Dhamma Soka, a missionary king converted to Buddhism who helped spread Theravada Buddhism to the nine provinces outside the place of origination and Enlightenment. Mighty Myanmar King Anuruddha, King of the first unified Bagan Empire sponsored the propagation of Theravada Buddhism from Suvanna Bhumi (Thaton) to Bagan with the missionary initiative of Ashin Arahan Maha Thera, circa 11th Century AD.

Since then up to this century, succeeding Myanmar kings built, enshrined and consecrated pagodas, temples etc as vestiges of worship up to end of the Myanmar sovereign rule in 1886 AD. During the British Colonial rule (1886 to 1942 and 1945 to 1948) many famous and enduring pagodas were declared as Gazetted

Pagodas pro-pagated by the British Government and celebration of pagoda festivals were officially notified. The celebration of gazette pagoda festivals is continued to this day.

The focus of my article: "Pagoda Bazaars" is to describe the pagodas, the pagoda festivals, and the pagoda bazaars to highlight the many activities which encompass the pagodas around the country. As said before, many times, pagodas are revered places of worship. Many Buddhists from around the country visit these popular pagodas to worship, to donate what they can afford, to look around the places of interests, and do shopping, the main part of their pilgrimage. Indeed famous pagodas are thronged all year round with pilgrims and tourists, local and foreign. But the open season in Myanmar beginning from the end of monsoon from around November till May of the ensuing year, harbinger of the new monsoon, is an ideal season for pilgrimage and tourism. Hundreds of them travel for vacation and pilgrimage. Overseas tourists professing different faiths, visit to marvel at the ancient heritage architecture, culture, paintings, frescos, mosaic with lingering natural colours on the walls and ceilings, and explore the national and traditional souvenirs, mementos and savour food of the locality.

There are two kinds of bazaars as viewed by the author, namely: permanent bazaar stalls allocated, supervised and controlled by respective pagoda trustees such as: Shwedagon of Yangon, Mahamuni of Mandalay, Kaung Hmu Taw of

Sagaing, Shwezigon of Bagan, Kyaik Hti Yoe of Kyaikto, Mohnyin of Monywa, Shwe Settawyar of Minbu, Hpaung Taw Oo of Inlay and much more to count. Most of the pagodas are notified by the State Gazette and are entitled to the facilities and privileges granted by the Government. The celebration of the pagoda festivals are also notified in Myanmar Gazette. Recently the famous Shwedagon Pagoda celebrated the 2600 years ministry and teachings on the full moon day of Tabaung in the year 1373 of Myanmar era, 7th March 2012. The permanent bazaar stalls are opened daily all year round for the pilgrims, tourists and shoppers to window-shop or to buy at will.

There is a second category of bazaars which assume a temporary nature open for the duration of the notified pagoda festivals. Such temporary pagoda bazaar stalls are auctioned or otherwise allocated by the pagoda trustees to be open for seasonal trade and festivities where thousands of pilgrim swarm to the pagoda sites to buy and to sell. There are large varieties of local produce and manufacture including many toys made from traditional paper pulp (*papier mache*) and exquisitely painted in many colours. There are also many toys made of heated clay and also glazed. There are hundreds of stalls displaying vast varieties of food to taste including fried gourds and fritters, the famous mohingar, fried noodles, glutinous rice put in bamboo stalks and roasted in fire, rice pastries sweetened with jaggery and cane sugar, and highly localized snacks to the bargain. There are also

ethnic food from the hills such as the Kachins, Shan glutinous rice Khawpok, Rakhine Monti, and the lephet with different regional taste and flavor.

The local people and guests also have a rare chance to enjoy the free or paid stage shows and classical dramas from late nights to dawn, with classical dancers, dramatists and artistes and vocalists performing themes from the many Jataka Chronicles of Boddhisatta during his many rebirths before Enlightenment. In the olden days the villagers travel by covered caravans drawn by oxen or bullocks. When they reached the pagoda festival premises the bullocks were taken out from their yolks and tied under the trees to rest and be fed. The caravans are assembled in a circle and villagers old and young, including tots have an enjoyable time to roam about the pagoda bazaar as the caravans are put under security watch in turn by young villagers. After the whole night of revelry the villagers returned to their caravans by dawn and rest for the whole day.

The pagoda festivals followed a regular agenda since the reign of Myanmar kings in Upper Myanmar kingdoms. Most noteworthy were the revered Pagodas of enduring fame enshrined and consecrated for the perpetuation of Buddha Sasana. As the weather of Upper Myanmar region was comparatively fair with less rainfall, the notified Pagoda festivals were held consecutively every Sabbath day beginning from the full moon day of Wazo for 13 Sabbath days. The festival was held with grandeur, pomp, and pageantry with dresses, perquisites and regalia commensurate with the sacred ceremony

prescribed since the days of the Myanmar kings. To easily memorize the days of the 13 festivals held during the Sabbath days of full moon and dark moon during 3 months of Lent in Sagaing Hills and environs in Upper Myanmar acronyms were conveniently coined as follows:

Pon, Taung, Zay, Chan, Oo, Nan, Nan, Lay, Pa, Htu, Shin, Aung, Ngar, Kaung.

Decoding the acronyms of the pagoda festivals held in succession are:

- (1) Soon Oo Ponnya-shin;
 - (2) Taung Hpilar;
 - (3) Zaytawun;
 - (4) Chantha Gyi;
 - (5) Oo-min Thonze;
 - (6) Shinpin Nan Oo;
 - (7) Shinpin Nankaing;
 - (8) Laykyun Man Aung;
 - (9) Pattamya;
 - (10) Htuparyone;
 - (11) Shinpyu Shin-hla;
 - (12) Aungmyay Lawka;
 - (13) Kaung Hmutaw.
- Some include Ngar Htatkyi to make 14.

It is a real endearing festival where all villagers participated in zest and revelry up to this day. Taking advantage of the pagoda festivals, periodic open bazaars are also organized on a large scale, more on wholesale nature and scale than on retail. The author once casually viewed the video script and running commentary on display of many sizes of glazed pots. In the olden days such large pots are extensively used to store edible oil. It has also other uses such as flower pots decorating the entrance of hotels, lending an aesthetic touch to the cosmopolitan environment.

It can be compared to a *bourse*, where locally produced or manufactured commodities are spread in designated open spaces and exchanged, on barter or in cash. And there are cattle bazaars too in brisk trade as Myanmar is an agricultural country, and the fields are

still worked by draft cattle which is still valuable draft animal, agricultural implements, together with bullock carts and caravans moving on unpaved or road-less tracks of open land for transport of paddy and what not.

Speaking of bazaars or markets there is also a highly ethnic practice in the Shan State where the bazaars are held on a five day rotation. On specified bazaar day in a designated place, all types of sellers converge to the bazaar bringing all wares for sale, purchase or barter from wholesale to retail, and everybody get satisfaction for a bazaar day's venture as they check the bazaar schedule to display their wares for tomorrow where the next bazaar will be held. They are so careful and methodical that never a day was missed or skipped due to negligence. Amazingly traders from faraway places travel, now by cars to be present for the heartwarming meeting. The famous Nanpan floating bazaar held once in five days is also an endearing sight, a never to be forgotten experience local, or foreign whoever he may be.

This is the endearing anthology of pagodas, pagoda festivals, and pagoda bazaars as the author has recollected decades ago, rather hazy as old age has crept on his doddering lean frame but still active brain. The mission here is to relive the memories of the past decades and to draw strength to perpetuate our intrinsic heritage of the bygone dynasties with renewed vigour and ambience so that we may leave a fitting legacy for the generations yet to come.

6th Korean Ambassador's Cup Taekwondo Championship (2012) wraps up

YANGON, 17 Nov—The prize awarding ceremonies and the final matches of the 6th Korean Ambassador's Cup Taekwondo Championship (2012) under the aegis of Myanmar Taekwondo Federation were held at Thuwunna Stadium,

on 13 November, with the attendance of President of Myanmar Taekwondo Federation President U Mya Han and executive members, Korean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Kim Hae-Yong presented shield to first prize winner YCDC Team in senior ministries level and to the second prize winner Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry

Team and to third prize winner the Ministry of Defence Team.

In junior event, Nay Pyi Taw Gold Cup secured the first prize and Shwekeinnari (Kayah) the second and Mandalay SPED the third.

In young junior event, YCDC Taekwondo Team earned the first prize, Shwekeinnari (Kayah) the second and Yangon SPED the third.—MNA

Team and to third prize winner the Ministry of Defence Team.

In junior event, Nay Pyi Taw Gold Cup secured the first prize and Shwekeinnari (Kayah) the second and Mandalay SPED the third.

Tazaungdaing Festival to be held in Taunggyi

TAUNGGYI, 17 Nov— Buddha Pujaniya of Çulamuni Lawka Chantha Pagoda and Tazaungdaing hot-air balloon festival will be held in conjunction with the Maha Kathina festival in Taunggyi of Shan State from 21 to 29 November. Buddha Pujaniya of Çulamuni Lawka Chantha Pagoda will begin at

21 November. The weaving of robes will be held at 6 pm on 27 November. Hot-air balloon festival will be held from 21 to 29 November with the prizes presentation ceremony.

Moreover, the whole Taunggyi will participate in the Maha Kathina festival. Myanmar Alinn

Tornado causes mayhem, dozens wounded in Portugal's Algarve

Portugal

LISBON, 17 Nov — Strong winds fuelled by a tornado tore through the town of Lagoa on Friday afternoon causing at least 12 injuries, two of whom are thought to be in a serious condition, according to Portugal's Civil Protection Authority.

Extensive damage to trees and cars was also reported in Lagoa and the popular tourist towns of Silves and Carvoeiro were also affected following a tornado that hit the Algarve region.

The commander of Silves firefighters told *Lusa* news agency that, "half the town was destroyed" following the bad weather.

The passage of the tornado, with strong gusts of wind caused a trail of destruction, with reports of windows and roofs ripped off homes, schools damaged and fallen trees and traffic signs.

Cars and camper vans were flipped over, trees were uprooted and extensive damage was reported to homes in Lagoa where

hundreds of people have been left homeless by the freak incident, according to local media reports.

Civil Protection officer Joao Verde confirmed that there were "some serious injuries, including cases of people who had to be freed from their vehicles."

No fatalities have been confirmed to date, although among the dozen or so wounded two people were rushed to hospitals in Portimao and Faro in a critical condition.

Xinhua

Close Sierra Leone vote carries high hopes for growth

FREETOWN, 17 Nov — Sierra Leoneans vote on Saturday in elections they hope can propel the small West African state into an era of prosperity based on mining and oil after a decade of difficult recovery from civil war. The presidential and parliamentary polls, the third held since

the end of the 1991-2002 conflict, pit President Ernest Bai Koroma and his ruling All People's Congress (APC) against challenger Julius Maada Bio, a former leader who represents the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP).

The elections are being held amid rising expecta-

tions that large foreign-run iron ore mining projects and promising oil discoveries can help lift Sierra Leone's 5.5 million people out of still widespread poverty.

"If they get through this successfully, I think it will mark the tipping point from a post-conflict country to a democratically devel-

oping one," John Stremlau of the Atlanta-based Carter Center's election observer mission told *Reuters*.

More than 2.6 million people are registered to vote in some 9,000 polling stations across the country, from the scruffy, humid coastal capital Freetown to bush-ringed upcountry hamlets.

In the electoral propaganda battle waged in Freetown's pot-holed streets, APC billboards have sought to emphasize Koroma's performance over the last five years in building new roads, improving the power supply and bringing in foreign investors. "You are seeing a lot more political awareness, people want to know what you can do for them, for the country," said Kelvin Lewis, editor of the independent *Awoko* daily.—*Reuters*

US House approves bill to normalize trade relations with Russia

US

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov — The US House of Representatives on Friday approved a bill that would normalize trade relations with Russia for the first time since the end of the Soviet Union, aiming to seize growing export opportunities from Russia's market.

With the measure passed in a vote of 365-43, the United States made an important step toward removing Cold War trade restrictions and establishing permanent normal trade relations with Russia. Russia is one of very few countries that still do not have normal trade status with the United States.

While Russia had joined the World Trade

Organization (WTO), only countries that have permanent normal trade relations with it can take advantage of the lower trade barriers that come with WTO membership.

Recently, American businesses have been lobbying for the passage of the bill, which can prevent discrimination against American companies which want to enter Russian market, and lead to a doubling of US exports to Russia.

The bill currently has been sent to the Senate, and the Democratic leadership has said it would consider it promptly despite differences between the House and the Senate.

Xinhua

A child street vendor stands in front of a poster for Sierra Leone's ruling party presidential candidate Ernest Bai Koroma in Freetown, on 16 Nov, 2012. *Reuters*



World leaders congratulate Xi on election as CPC chief

China

BEIJING, 17 Nov — Leaders of foreign countries and political parties have sent messages to congratulate Xi Jinping on his election as general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee.

Ilham Aliyev, leader of the New Azerbaijan Party and Azerbaijani president, said, under the leadership of Xi, the CPC would make new contributions to China's development, the improvement of people's livelihoods and the enhancement of world peace and security.

The CPC, led by Xi, would carry out closer cooperation with foreign parties, including those of Azerbaijan, Aliyev said, adding he believed the mutual trust between his party and the CPC would

boost communication between the two countries in economic, political and social fields.

Uzbek President Islam Karimov sent heartfelt congratulations to Xi and recalled meeting Xi during his recent visit to China, which he said bore significance to developing effective cooperation between Uzbekistan and China.

The president believed that, with the consistent support of Xi, Uzbekistan and China would coordinate efforts in implementing their joint declaration on the establishment of a strategic partnership, benefiting the two peoples.

Kyrgyzstan's President Almazbek Atambayev, in a message, conveyed sincere congratulations to Xi on his election as CPC chief and

said, under the leadership of CPC, China had scored eye-catching achievements in opening up and pushing forward social and economic reforms.

The president said the strategic decisions made at the 18th CPC National Congress would further enhance the neighborly friendship and mutual-benefit cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and China.

Goodluck Jonathan, president of the People's Democratic Party of Nigeria and Nigerian president, said Xi's election expressed his huge contribution to China's fast development, and showed the people were convinced under Xi's leadership, China would score greater achievements and make contributions to world peace.

Xinhua

Outbreak of violence in DRC puts UN mission on "high alert"

UN

UNITED NATIONS, 17 Nov — The UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), known as MONUSCO, is on high alert after fighting broke out between the M23 rebel group

and the Congolese army on Thursday, UN spokesman Martin Nesirky said here on Friday.

"Clashes erupted between the M23 and the FARDC, the Congolese

army, in the Kibumba area, 25 kilometres north east of Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," Nesirky said at a daily Press briefing here, adding that MONUSCO has called it "the most serious incident since July."

The UN mission "is on high alert and has deployed quick reaction teams in Goma and at the airport, as well as in Kibati, on the main road between Kibumba and Goma," he said.

"The UN has reports that the Congolese army repulsed the attack and that the situation in Kibumba today is calm but very tense," Nesirky said.

"Unconfirmed reports indicate that the M23 sustained a high number of casualties in the clash."

Xinhua



Photo shows a plenary session of the House of Councillors in Tokyo on 16 Nov, 2012, at which a bill on electoral system reform was passed. Another key bill on government debt issuance was also passed. —KYODO NEWS



Photo taken on 16 Nov, 2012 shows the wreckage of a vehicle of security forces at the suicide blast site in Zhob, Pakistan's southwest province of Balochistan, on 16 Nov, 2012. At least four people including two troops were killed in a suicide blast here on Friday morning, said an officer. —XINHUA

REGIONAL

Thai PM to attend ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh

BANGKOK, 17 Nov— Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra is set to attend the 21st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit and related meetings in Phnom Penh on 18-20 November, Thai News Agency reported on Saturday.

The ASEAN Summit in the Cambodian capital will also allow ASEAN leaders to meet with key dialogue partners including China, Japan, India and the United States.

In addition, ASEAN Leaders will also attend the ASEAN Plus Three Summit and the East Asia Summit.

The 21st summit under the theme "One Community, One Destiny" is aimed to follow up the framework earlier agreed upon by member countries as well as exchange view on various issues, including ASEAN Community building, which encompasses implementing the blueprints of the three pillars and the

Master Plan on ASEAN connectivity, ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, and appointment of a new Secretary-General, who will succeed Surin Pitsuwan whose term will be completed by the end of this year.

Yingluck said that Thailand will raise the issues of transportation linkage and related laws, as well as safety for children and women at the ASEAN Summit.

Xinhua

Informal ASEAN defence ministers meeting kicks off in Cambodia



Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Tea Banh (L front) chairs the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers' Meeting Retreat in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 16 Nov, 2012. Defence ministers from the ten-country ASEAN met here on Friday to exchange views and to raise practical actions and measures for cooperation in order to maintain peace and security in the region.

XINHUA

SIEMREAP, (Cambodia), 17 Nov— Defence ministers from the ten-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) met here on Friday to exchange views and to raise practical actions and measures for cooperation in order to maintain peace and security in the region.

Speaking at the opening of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Retreat, Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Tea Banh said that the bloc needed to strengthen cooperation and partnership to react to current challenges such as maritime security, environment issues, water security, food security and energy issues.

Air Mauritius to add one weekly flight to China's Shanghai

China

PORT-LOUIS, 17 Nov — Air Mauritius will add one more weekly flight to China's business hub Shanghai from 24 Jan, 2013, the national airline of Mauritius said in a statement on Friday, bringing to two weekly flights due to increased demand.

Both routes will carry connections to and from Reunion, Madagascar and South Africa, according to the statement.

Air Mauritius said the first flight to Shanghai, starting



Airbus A340 south of Mauritius, with Le Morne on the left.—REUTERS

in July, 2011, has substantially stimulated demand from the Chinese market with a growth of 38.3 percent in the number of arrivals from China registered for the period from

January to September 2012.

According to Tourism Minister Michael Sik Yuen, the number of Chinese tourists visited Mauritius between January and September of this year reached 15,430.

Air Mauritius added it will increase its capacity by 300 percent on this line using the A340. Maurice departures are scheduled on Thursdays at and Sundays while Shanghai departures are scheduled on Fridays and Mondays, respectively.

Xinhua

Woman missing, two rescued as boat sinks in S Philippine river

Philippines

DAVAO CITY, (Philippines), 17 Nov — One person was missing and presumed dead while two others rescued after a boat capsized in a swollen river in southern Philippines on Friday, disaster officials said on Saturday.

Olivia Malacambong, 50, was swept away by strong currents following the accident in Pandapan village, Tagum city in Mindanao's Davao del Norte Province around 5 am on Friday, Abet Angco, city disaster officer police said.

According to Angco, the victim and her 8-year old grand child were crossing the Hijo River to get to a village in nearby Maco town when strong currents buffeted the

boat's outrigger, causing it to overturn and sink. "People on the banks responded immediately, and rescued the boatman and the child. The woman was carried away by the raging river and disappeared," Angco told Xinhua by mobile phone, adding rescue volunteers were still conducting search and retrieval operations.

Torrential rains have been lashing the southern Philippines since early last week due to a low pressure area over the island's southeastern seaboard, with disaster and weather officials warning residents on rain-induced landslides and flash floods to affected areas.

Xinhua

Clinton arrives in Singapore for visit ahead of East Asia Summit



Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew (R) shakes hands with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Singapore's Istana, on 16 Nov, 2012.

XINHUA

SINGAPORE, 17 Nov— The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in Singapore on Friday for consultations with Singapore's leaders ahead of the upcoming East Asia Summit in Cambodia.

Clinton met with former Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew at the Istana in the afternoon, local broadcaster Channel

NewsAsia said.

A photo released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs showed Clinton at dinner hosted by Singapore's Foreign Affairs and Law Minister K Shanmugam.

She is expected to meet Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and deliver a speech on the US economic strategy on Saturday before joining US President Barack Obama in Cambodia for the summit.—Xinhua

Six dead, 18 injured in SW China pileup

GUIYANAG, 17 Nov— Six people were killed and another 18 injured in a 25-vehicle pileup Saturday morning in southwest China's Guizhou Province, local police said.

The accident occurred at about 9 am on the Hukun (Shanghai - Kunming) expressway in Anshun City. More than 25 vehicles involved in the accident, and seven of them burst into flames.

The 18 injured, with seven in critical condition have been sent to hospital for treatment.

Firefighters, traffic police and medical team have been dispatched to the site.

Relevant departments are investigating the cause of the accident.—Xinhua

Japan's Osaka to restart Saturday classes for schools

Japan

OSAKA, 17 Nov— The western Japanese city of Osaka will restart "Saturday classes" in some of its elementary classes on Saturday this week as the city's trial scheme to decide whether it can widely introduce the additional classes in the city, local media reported on Friday.

The trial starts in five schools this weekend, and the city plans to restart the classes in all of its elementary and junior high schools as early as the next school year which starts from April.

The city abolished Saturday classes in March 2001 in public schools, but critics and some politicians have claimed the abolition would be responsible for poor standard of education which Japan faces today.

Among them is Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto, who proposed reintroducing

the additional classes to the curricula as part of his policy pledges.

Hashimoto has claimed that while the city's children are performing poorly, their delinquent activities are rising and, therefore, teachers should try their best to support the children

at any time.

The Saturday classes, which will be open to the public, or local residents, are expected to cover a variety of subjects and activities, such as education for disaster prevention, sports and exercise.

Xinhua



People ride in the rain on Daoqian Street in Suzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province, on 16 Nov, 2012. Suzhou witnessed a rainfall on Friday.

XINHUA

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE MV MOROTAI VOY NO (193)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (193) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.11.2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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BBC pay out 185,000 pounds over false abuse claim UK



A man enters BBC New Broadcasting House in London on 11 Nov, 2012. —REUTERS

LONDON, 17 Nov —The BBC agreed to pay 185,000 pounds on Thursday to a former treasurer of Britain's Conservative Party wrongly accused of child sex abuse as a result of one of its reports.

The settlement came as media reports said one of the BBC's former stars had been arrested as part of an ongoing police investigation into sex crimes centred on the publicly funded broadcaster. Lord Alistair McAlpine, an ally of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, was widely named on the internet as being the unidentified senior politician accused in a report by the BBC's flagship Newsnight programme of abusing boys in social care.

The flawed film sparked one of the worst crises in

the broadcaster's 90-year history and claimed the scalp of Director General George Entwistle, after the abuse victim central to the BBC investigation said McAlpine was not one of his attackers.

"I am delighted to have reached a quick and early settlement with the BBC," McAlpine said in a statement.

"I have been conscious that any settlement will be paid by the licence fee payers, and have taken that into account in reaching agreement with the BBC."

His lawyer warned others who had sullied his client's reputation to get in touch before they too faced litigation, a threat which could ensnare hundreds of Twitter users and bloggers who wrongly named McAlpine.—Reuters

Fresh Israeli airstrike on central Gaza Strip kills four Palestinians

GAZA, 17 Nov—Four Palestinians were killed including a top Islamic Hamas militant on Friday in an Israeli airstrike on central Gaza Strip refugee camp of al-Mughazi, medics and witnesses said.

A medical source in the Gaza emergency and ambulance services told Xinhua that Palestinian ambulances

took bodies of the four dead to al-Aqsa Hospital in central Gaza Strip after an Israeli air-to-ground missile directly hit them.

Earlier on Friday, the medical source said that a 22-year-old woman died of her wounds she sustained from an earlier Israeli airstrike on Gaza city.

Xinhua

Obama tours New York storm damage, consoles victims US

NEW YORK, 17 Nov — President Barack Obama consoled grieving victims of Superstorm Sandy on the ground and surveyed disaster zones from the air on Thursday, visiting parts of New York City still struggling to recover 17 days after the storm devastated the US Northeast.

Wearing a wind breaker and sturdy shoes, the president walked through destroyed sections of the borough of Staten Island, hugging and chatting with people whose lives were shattered when Sandy slammed ashore on October 29, bringing a record storm surge and killing more than 120 people. Among those he consoled were Glenda and Damien Moore, the Staten Island parents of 4-year-old Connor and 2-year-old Brandon, two boys who died after being torn from their mother's arms by raging floodwaters.

At the request of the Moores, Obama also praised New York police Lieutenant



US President Barack Obama (C) walks to Marine One upon his arrival in New York City to view recovery efforts from Hurricane Sandy, on 15 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

Kevin Gallagher, who stayed with the Moore family to help them through that tragic night.

"That's not in the job description of Lieutenant Gallagher. He did that because that's what so many of our first responders do. They go above and beyond the call of duty to respond to people in need," Obama told reporters.

"That spirit and sense of togetherness and looking out for one another is what is going to carry us through

this tragedy. It's not going to be easy," he said before returning to Washington aboard Air Force One.

It was Obama's first trip to New York since the storm and his 6 November re-election. The trip came as he confronted other pressing issues such as the "fiscal cliff" of looming automatic tax hikes and spending cuts that could stunt economic growth, unrest in the Middle East, and the fallout from the resignation of his CIA director. The gigantic storm

caused an estimated \$50 billion in damage as it inundated lower Manhattan with seawater, rearranged the New Jersey shore and Long Island, and tore up neighbourhoods in far-flung areas of New York City's outer boroughs.

At least 22 people died in Staten Island, a Republican-leaning enclave that nonetheless voted for Obama 50 percent to 49 percent over challenger Mitt Romney.

Obama announced he was appointing Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, a New Yorker, as the federal government's "point person" to oversee storm recovery.

He left unanswered exactly how to pay for the damage. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo estimated the storm caused \$50 billion in damage and economic losses, more than \$30 billion of that in New York state alone.

Reuters

Evidence points to no security risk in Petraeus affair

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov— Classified material kept by the woman who conducted an affair with former CIA Director David Petraeus predates their liaison and does not come from the spy agency, sources briefed on the investigation told Reuters on Thursday.

The finding appears to bolster assertions by both Petraeus and his biographer, Paula Broadwell, that their affair did not put national security secrets at risk — a central question hovering over the scandal that brought down one of the United States' most respected public figures last week.

The CIA said on Thursday it had opened an "exploratory" investigation into Petraeus' conduct, building on the FBI's probe. Law enforcement officials have said they believe the

FBI investigation is likely to end without criminal charges.

The scandal has cast a spotlight on the private lives of some of the nation's top national security officials.

The commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, Marine General John Allen, now faces a Pentagon inspector general's review of what sources describe as "flirtatious" emails with a Tampa socialite.

Defence Secretary Leon Panetta ordered the military's top brass to look for any gaps in ethics amid concerns officers' lapses in judgment could erode public confidence in the military. Travelling in Bangkok, Panetta said he knew of no other military officials who have been drawn into the investigation.

Petraeus and Broadwell have separately told investigators they did not share security secrets, and Petraeus has repeated that assertion to associates and a television reporter.

In his first public comments on the matter, Attorney General Eric

Holder said on Thursday the FBI did not see any possible threats over the course of the investigation that were urgent enough to notify President Barack Obama or lawmakers until shortly before Petraeus stepped down.

Reuters



Director of the Central Intelligence Agency General David Petraeus attends the Allen & Co Media Conference in Sun Valley, Idaho on 12 July, 2012.

REUTERS

Iran may step up underground nuclear work soon

VIENNA, 17 Nov —Iran could soon increase uranium enrichment in an underground nuclear plant, diplomats say, a development that may further complicate efforts to resolve peacefully a dispute over Teheran's atomic ambitions.

Iran has nearly finished installing centrifuges at the Fordow enrichment plant buried deep inside a mountain and is believed to be in a position in the near future to significantly step up

production there of material that could be used for bombs if processed further, they said.

"They should be able to (increase production) within a few weeks," one diplomat accredited to the Vienna-based UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on Thursday. Fordow is of particular concern for the West as Iran uses the facility to refine uranium to a fissile concentration of 20 percent, a short

technical step from bomb-grade material. The fact that it is buried deep underground also makes it less vulnerable to any air strikes, which Israel has threatened if diplomacy fails to stop Iran getting nuclear weapons capability.

Teheran denies it is seeking such a thing, saying its programme is entirely peaceful. But UN inspectors suspect past, and possibly ongoing, military-related nuclear work.

The IAEA is likely to

submit its next quarterly Iran report to member states on Friday, 10 days after President Barack Obama's re-election raised hope of a revival of diplomacy on the issue.

It is expected to show a defiant Iran pressing ahead with expanding its nuclear programme, despite harsh Western sanctions targeting its vital oil sector, and continuing to sanitize a military site the IAEA wants to visit.—Reuters

ENTERTAINMENT



Elena Angjelovska of Macedonia (C), Aleksandra Tasic of Serbia (2nd R) and Anna Kirillina of Belarus (2nd L) pose for photos during the International Yachting Model 2012 Final, in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, on 16 Nov, 2012. The International Yachting Model 2012 Final was held in the city Friday. Elena Angjelovska of Macedonia won the title of the event, and Aleksandra Tasic of Serbia claimed the second place and Anna Kirillina of Belarus claimed the third place.—XINHUA

Jacqueline Fernandez's look in Race 2 inspired by Angelina Jolie?

MUMBAI, 17 NOV — Actress Jacqueline Fernandez's look in director-duo Abbas Mustan's upcoming action thriller Race 2 is reportedly inspired by the one Hollywood star Angelina Jolie sported in Salt.

Angelina Jolie's role in Phillip Noyce's 2010 thriller was action oriented and 27-year-old Jacqueline's character in the film, also has high octane action sequences.

"Jacqueline will be sporting jet black, poker straight hair with a fringe just like Angelina Jolie. The makers were keen on giving Jacqueline a very international look and she mentioned the film Salt and the makers seemed very keen on her suggestion," a source

from the set said. Jacqueline trained extensively to attain the desired Race 2 look. She worked with a Vietnamese trainer and also practised sword fighting to fit in the character.



Angelina Jolie's role in Phillip Noyce's 2010 thriller was action oriented and 27-year-old Jacqueline's character in the film, also has high octane action sequences.— PTI

Race 2, which is the sequel to 2008 hit film Race, also stars Saif Ali Khan, John Abraham, Deepika Padukone, Anil Kapoor and Ameesha Patel. The film is all set to hit theatres on 25 Jan, 2013.— PTI

Robert Pattinson looks for danger after "Twilight"

LOS ANGELES, 17 NOV — Robert Pattinson has set young hearts aflutter as the teen vampire Edward Cullen in the "Twilight Saga" films, but as the sun sets on the franchise that launched his career, the actor is looking for more grown-up and "dangerous" roles.

"Breaking Dawn - Part 2," released this week, is the fifth and final in the series, and Edward's character shifts from brooding, tormented lover to a contented husband and father who must protect his family from an ancient vampire clan.

But Pattinson, 26, still has those rakish good looks that drew a screaming fan base and made him a tabloid fixture. While the avid fan excitement around the "Twilight" series

overwhelms him, the British actor hopes his audience will follow him as he moves on.

"It's all about control. Now, I don't feel like I have any control whatsoever," he told Reuters with a laugh.

"They're a very ardent fan base, so to figure out a way to harness that vehement audience, it's definitely an important thing."

Pattinson became a pinup as the angst-ridden Edward, but said he wasn't worried he might be typecast as the perpetual brooding hero. "I'm not particularly brooding in my real life," he said.

The actor has already been laying the ground for a career beyond "Twilight." He played a 19th century French gigolo in "Bel Ami" and a billionaire with an existential

crisis in David Cronenberg's "Cosmopolis," although both films fared poorly at the box office earlier this year.

Next up is a drama, "Map to the Stars," again with Cronenberg, and "The Rover," a Western-style action movie set in the



Cast member Robert Pattinson poses for pictures before the German premiere of The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 in Berlin, on 16 Nov, 2012. — REUTERS

Australian desert.

"Everything I've signed up for now is very physical, because I feel like I've done quite a few things where I'm quite still. I'm trying to find people that are doing things that feel dangerous," Pattinson said.— Reuters

Demi Moore, Ashton Kutcher will continue to run joint charity

LONDON, 17 Nov — Former couple Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher have announced plans to continue working on their DNA Foundation charity together.

The duo, who split last year amidst claims that Kutcher cheated on Moore on their sixth wedding anniversary, released a statement confirming their commitment to towards DNA Foundation which will now be known as THORN: Digital Defenders of Children, reported Daily Star.

"For the past three years we have focused our work broadly on combating child sex trafficking. It has become

crystal clear in our efforts that technology plays an increasingly large role in this crime and in the sexual exploitation of children overall.

We believe that the

technology-driven aspect of these crimes demands its own attention and investment," the couple said in a statement. Kutcher and Moore started their foundation together in 2010.— PTI



Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher split last year amidst claims that Kutcher cheated on Moore on their sixth wedding anniversary— PTI

Lady Gaga asks Versace for new tour wardrobe

NEW DELHI, 17 NOV — Lady Gaga has asked Donatella Versace to reinvigorate her tour outfits.

The Judas hitmaker has revealed the Italian fashion designer will be giving her stage outfits a "face-lift" when her Born This Way Ball world tour reaches North America in January.

Lady Gaga tweeted: "THE BORN THIS WAY BALL is getting a face-lift for America. I heard rumors @Versace IS CUSTOM DESIGNING ALL THE CLOTHES AND NEW LOOKS. (sic)"

The 26-year-old eccentric pop star is a huge fan of Versace's striking designs, and she recently stepped out in the iconic safety-pin dress first worn by Elizabeth Hurley in 1994. Donatella is known for

giving garments a feminine and risque flair, so Gaga—who has memorably worn a meat dress and worn a Kermit the Frog outfit—can expect some revealing new stage outfits to show off her curvier figure.

The musician has put on 25lbs this autumn and despite some criticism from commentators, she insists she

feels healthier and happier than ever before.

Lady Gaga—who is in a relationship with Chicago Fire actor Taylor Kinney—said: "When I eat and am healthy and not so worried about my looks then I'm happy. I'm happier than I've ever been. This is who I am. And I am proud at any size."— PTI



The 26-year-old eccentric pop star is a huge fan of Versace's striking designs, and she recently stepped out in the iconic safety-pin dress first worn by Elizabeth Hurley in 1994.— PTI

"Life of Pi" movie lifeboat for sale at \$40,000

LOS ANGELES, 17 NOV — "Life of Pi" is yet to hit movie theaters, but fans can already buy the film's trusty lifeboat that becomes home to a young Indian boy shipwrecked with a tiger.

US online retailer Gilt Groupe said on Friday that the lifeboat, replicated from real rafts used between the 1920s and 1950s, is among props from the movie up for sale next week.

The lifeboat is priced at \$40,000 in the sale starting on 19 November. Proceeds will go towards the Orangutan

Foundation International, in recognition of one of the other animals who initially survives with title character Pi in the film.

"Life of Pi" is based on the best-selling novel by Yann Martel, directed by Ang Lee and stars newcomer Suraj Sharma. It opens in US movie theaters on 21 November.

Other items up for sale include movie posters signed by Lee, a collection of vibrant saris, and other props valued between \$140 and more than \$6,000.— Reuters

Soccer

Aussies not giving up on Becks



David Beckham of the LA Galaxy warms up before his team faces the Vancouver Whitecaps during their MLS soccer match in Vancouver, British Columbia on 18 July, 2012. — REUTERS

SYDNEY, 17 Nov — Australia soccer chief David Gallop was not surprised David Beckham's management denied he had any interest in playing in the A-League but said that did not mean there was no possibility of it happening.

Football Federation Australia (FFA) said on Friday they had been approached by the former England captain's management only for Beckham's representatives to respond by saying the 37-year-old had "absolutely

no plans to play in Australia".

Gallop, who only recently took over as FFA chief executive, said such counter-statements were common when it came to negotiations concerning big players, as Sydney FC had discovered during their wooing of Juventus great Alessandro Del Piero.

"A similar thing happened with Del Piero in terms of the contact and, as we all know, that came to be. So let's just see how this one plays out. It's certainly

an exciting proposition - no one would deny that," he told local radio on Saturday.

"We're not counting our chickens in relation to this ... but obviously people would prefer negotiations to happen behind closed doors.

"At the mere mention of Beckham's name, it did leak out and there's been a mushroom of interest.

"There would have to be a fair few hoops that would have to be jumped through and getting a deal with one of the clubs is the first step.

"There's definitely been some contact made and let's just see where it gets to."

According to FFA officials, the approach was made in relation to Beckham playing in the A-League during the current 2012-13 season.

Beckham could fulfill his obligations with the LA Galaxy in Major League Soccer in the United States and then play 10 games as a guest player in Australia.

Melbourne Victory have said they are not interested in the former Manchester

United and Real Madrid midfielder, leaving the Melbourne Heart and league-owned Western Sydney Wanderers as the most likely bidders for his services.

"I think the connection points now are going to be between the A-League clubs that are interested and Beckham's management, so we'll just have to let that dialogue happen," Gallop added.

"But the timing is pretty good in terms of him being able to come in on a guest stint from the middle of January for 10 games.

"I think it's a bit of a wait-and-see situation. Of course, it would be fantastic but let's not get ahead of ourselves at this point."

Beckham, on the west coast of the United States preparing for the Western Conference Championship against Seattle, flatly denied any interest in heading Down Under.

"That's the first I've heard of that this morning," he said. "But no, definitely not true." — Reuters



Two-time Olympic gold medalist Sun Yang

Olympic champ Sun Yang triumphs with meet record at Asian Championships **Swimming**

DUBAI, 17 Nov — Two-time Olympic gold medalist Sun Yang shined at the Asian Championships here on Thursday as he claimed the title of men's 200 freestyle event with a new championship record.

The 21-year-old Sun, who settled with a silver in this very event in London Games this summer, clocked one minute, 45.49 seconds to clinch the gold, leading with a 4.18-second margin ahead of his teammate Hao Yun, who finished with the silver.

Sun's record-breaking feat marked a triumphant night for China in which eight out of the 10 swimming golds went to China while the other two continental swimming giants Japan and South Korea did not send their top swimmers to Dubai.

Sun won the 400m and 1,500m freestyle gold medals at London Olympics to become the first ever Chinese male swimmer to win an Olympics gold and he also set a new world record in the 1500m event. — Xinhua

Czechs level with holders Spain in Davis Cup

Tennis

final

PRAGUE, 17 Nov — The Czech Republic's Tomas Berdych brought the hosts level at 1-1 with holders Spain in the Davis Cup final with a battling five-set victory over Nicolas Almagro on Friday.

The first day split leaves everything to play for in the reverse singles on Sunday.

Spain, without the injured Rafa Nadal, are bidding for a fourth Davis Cup crown in five years, while the Czechs are aiming to become the first country in 22 years to win men's and women's team titles in the same season.

"We opened the chance for Sunday. That's a good step for us," Berdych said.

The top Czech player, ranked sixth in the world, used his booming serve to good effect and drew inspiration from the vocal



The Czech Republic's Tomas Berdych reacts after he defeated Spain's Nicolas Almagro in the singles at the Davis Cup tennis tournament final match in Prague on 16 Nov, 2012. — REUTERS

home support to win 6-3, 3-6 6-3, 6-7, 6-3. Earlier, Spain's top player David Ferrer beat Radek Stepanek 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 in an equally hard-fought opening match.

Berdych and Stepanek are expected to team up for Saturday's doubles match against the Spanish duo of Marcel Granollers and Marc Lopez, who are just coming off a doubles victory at the

ATP Tour Finals.

World number 11 Almagro pushed Berdych all the way and won the fourth set tiebreak with one of his 21 aces but the Spaniard's brave resistance was finally broken by the 6ft 5in Czech.

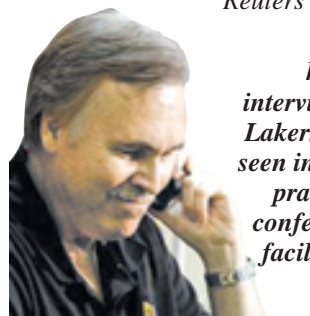
"I messed it up a bit," Berdych said of the fourth set. "I gave him too much of an advantage in the tiebreak. — Reuters

Lakers players excited by D'Antoni's up-tempo style

LOS ANGELES, 17 Nov — The Los Angeles Lakers will not have their new coach on the sidelines for Friday's home game against the Phoenix Suns but Mike D'Antoni's players have enthusiastically embraced the up-tempo style he has promised.

Renowned for the offense-minded approach

he adopted while in charge of the Phoenix Suns and New York Knicks, D'Antoni has pledged more of the same in Los Angeles after being signed to a three-year deal. "I'm genuinely excited about it," said five-time NBA champion Kobe Bryant, a huge fan as a child of D'Antoni's basketball play in Italy, where Bryant grew



New Los Angeles Lakers head coach Mike D'Antoni is interviewed over a mobile phone as Lakers' championship trophies are seen in a window above the Lakers' practice court following a media conference at the Lakers' training facility in El Segundo, California on 15 Nov, 2012. — REUTERS

Lakers honour Hall of Famer Abdul-Jabbar

with statue

Basketball

LOS ANGELES, 17 Nov — Six-time NBA champion Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was honoured by the Los Angeles Lakers in a moving and often emotional ceremony on Friday when a bronze statue of the Hall of Famer was unveiled outside the Staples Centre.

Jabbar, the NBA's all-time leading scorer with 38,387 points, joins fellow sports greats Wayne Gretzky, Earvin 'Magic' Johnson, Jerry West and Oscar De La Hoya in a group of iconic sculptures in the Star Plaza at the home of the Lakers.

Loud cheers rang out from the fans when the imposing statue was revealed, an almost 16-foot-tall image of Jabbar with his right arm pulled back, basketball in hand, poised for his trademark skyhook shot. Confetti in the Lakers

colours of purple and gold enveloped a stage where, moments earlier, Abdul-Jabbar had listened to fellow NBA greats Johnson, West, Pat Riley and James Worthy pay him homage with glowing tributes.



(L - R) Former Los Angeles Lakers basketball player and NBA Hall of Famer Kareem Abdul-Jabbar looks at a bronze statue of himself as it is unveiled, while others including Earvin "Magic" Johnson, James Worthy, Richard Lapchick, Eddie Doucette and Pat Riley stand with him, in Star Plaza, outside Staples Centre in Los Angeles on 16 Nov, 2012. — REUTERS

Jaguars' Knighton fined \$25,000 for roughing Luck

LOS ANGELES, 17 Nov — Jacksonville Jaguars defensive tackle Terrance Knighton has been fined \$25,000 by the National Football League for a severe hit on Indianapolis Colts quarterback Andrew Luck, the league said on Friday.

Knighton was penalized for unnecessary roughness after making helmet-to-

helmet contact with Luck, who was defenceless on the play during the Colts' 27-10 win on 8 November, a league spokesman said.

Colts linebacker Jerry Hughes was fined \$21,000 for roughing the passer, having struck Jaguars quarterback Blaine Gabbert in the same game.

Reuters

Reuters

GENERAL

Focus Myanmar TV Programme

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(18-11-12 09:30 am ~ 19-11-12 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * Lord Buddha's Sermon: Buddha's Ways of Peace and Happiness (Part3)
- * News
- * Beauty of Indigenous Hilly Region
- * 2012 China-ASEAN Economic Community
- * News
- * Short Trip with Steve (Mon State)
- * News
- * Singapore - UK - Myanmar Education Seminar
- * News
- * Myanmar Movies Impact "Let's gather around to be happy"
- * News

- * Equitable Educational Opportunities (Parts-1)
- * News
- * Equitable Educational Opportunities (Parts-2)
- * News
- * Introduction of New Vaccines into Routine Immunization Programme
- * Myanmar Movie "Selfless Kyi Pyar"

MYANMAR TV

(18-11-2012, Sunday)

7:00 am

1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw

7:25 am

2. To Be Healthy Exercise

7:50 am

3. Nice & Sweet Song

7:50 am

4. Health Programme

8:10 am

5. (38) Phyar Mingalars

8:25 am

6. Documentary

8:30 am

7. Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competitionas

8:45 am

8. Musical Programme

11:20 am

9. Round Up Of The Week's International News

11:30 am

10. TV Drama Series

12:30 pm

11. How It's Works

12:50 pm

12. Myanmar Video

2:35 pm

13. International Science News

4:10 pm

14. Musical Programme

4:40 pm

15. Dance of national Race

4:45 pm

16. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Firt Year (English)

5:00 pm

17. Songs For Upholding National Spirit

6:20 pm

18. cartoon Series

6:45 pm

19. Tamyethna Takwetsar

7:45 pm

20. An Outward Looking ASEAN

8:00 pm

21. News

22. TV Drama Series

23. New Melody

Myanmar Mobile Fair attracts telephone users



Yangon, 17 Nov— Thanks to extended installation of telephones, use of mobile phone becomes wider and wider. At present, handsets of Nokia, Sony Ericsson, Samsung, Apple, Huawei, HTC and son on are flowing into the market. In consequence, the telephone users have the opportunity to buy the various types of handsets of their choice. With the aim of enabling the telephone users to choose cheap handsets at single place, the Myanmar Mobile Fair was held at UMFCFI in Lanmadaw Township from 16 to 18 November. Latest models of handsets and hi-tech accessories are available at the fair. From 4 pm, to 5.30 pm, the one line card and 20 handsets are given as presents through lucky draw programme. The companies sell their products at cheaper prices as part of sales promotion.

Myanma Alinn

NLM

Word!

Learning English

The world today is mainly driven by politics and business, fruits or proofs of civilization. But we've forgotten the foremost and the most humane engine of civilization that endured from the times immemorial to date. Sure thing, it is 'romance'. This week, we've quite different tastes to offer ranging from business and politics to romance.

"Sunset industry"

Analysts

Windows 8, released recently, has understandably tuned to mobile devices. Replaced by mobile gadgets, desktop PCs have become endangered species. That's why market analysts dubbed the PC manufacturing 'sunset industry'.

"(p)olitical and regional equations are changing."

Ali Larijani

Iran's Marjlis (parliament) speaker

The speaker said there are changes in regional political configurations as he Sunday underscored the need of closer ties with member countries of Economic Cooperation Organization. The ECO is a regional organization established since 1985.

"It (Romance) is not about chemistry, it's about comfort."

Shah Ruhk Khan

Bollywood star

The 'king of romance' of Bollywood believed the making of romantic scenes is not just the matter of chemistry but the comfort. He admitted that it is not such easy to propose a girl and even harder to do the same with another girl. But, the 'comfort' comes when anyone has a chance to explore everything dwelling in a beautiful girl's eyes, he said.

6.1-magnitude quake hits Tonga region

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov—A 6.1-magnitude earthquake jolted Tonga region at 0512 GMT Saturday, the US Geological Survey said.—Xinhua

5.7-magnitude quake hits Vanuatu

HONG KONG, 17 Nov—An earthquake measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale jolted Vanuatu at 02:51:24 GMT on Saturday, the US Geological Survey said. The epicentre, with a depth of 128.40 km, was initially determined to be at 15. degrees south latitude and 167.4260 degrees east longitude.—Xinhua

Obama, Turkish PM discuss escalating violence in Gaza, Israel

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov— US President Barack Obama and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan had a telephone discussion on Friday about the escalating violence in Gaza and Israel, the White House said.

Voicing their concerns on the safety of civilians on both sides, the two leaders called for an end to the violence, according to a statement issued by the White House.

Obama and Erdogan agreed that "the continued spiral of violence jeopardizes prospects for a durable, lasting peace in the region," said the statement, adding that Obama had underscored his commitment to advancing the goal of peace in the Middle East.

Prior to Friday's conversation with Erdogan, Obama talked on the phone with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

and Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi respectively on Wednesday about the escalating violence in Gaza. US State Department spokesman Mark Toner said on Thursday that Washington has asked Cairo to use its influence with the Palestinians to help calm the violence.

Fighting has escalated between Palestinian militant groups and Israel. Over the past three days, more than

550 rockets launched from Gaza have landed on Israeli territories, most of them targeting communities in southern Israel.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces have been carrying out air strikes on targets in Gaza. Palestinian hospital officials said 23 Palestinians have been killed and more than 250 injured in more than 400 Israeli air strikes all over the Gaza Strip since Wednesday.

Xinhua

Int'l Confucian knowledge competition ends in E China

JINAN, 17 Nov— The first international knowledge competition for Lunyu, or the Analects of Confucius, ended Saturday in east China's Shandong Province. Confucius (551-479 BC) was a famous educator and thinker in ancient times. He also founded Confucianism, a mainstream school of thought that deeply influenced later generations. Kung Chuei-chang, the 79th generation

grandson in the Confucian lineal descent, attended the awards ceremony and shared his views about the value of Confucianism in modern society.

More than 500 people, including elderly people, children from home and abroad and foreign students in China, participated in the competition. All the contestants showcased their knowledge about the life story of Confucius and his Analects.—Xinhua



A float parades during a carnival held in Wuyi Mountain, east China's Fujian Province, Nov. 17, 2012. The carnival is aimed at further boosting the tourism industry of Wuyi Mountain. The area attracted 4.27 million visitors during the first half of 2012, with a year-on-year growth rate of 17.9 percent.—XINHUA

Belarus lifts restrictions on privatization: PM

MINSK, 17 Nov—Belarus has lifted all restrictions concerning privatization, Belarusian Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikovich said on Friday. "Belarusian government removed all the restrictions on privatization of state-run companies,

and any company can be transferred into private ownership," Myasnikovich said at the plenary session of Belarusian Investment Forum 2012 in Minsk.

The prime minister also stressed that money

raised from privatization of public assets is not the most important thing. "What matters most is the further development of a privatized company using new technologies and investments, and integration into the global

economy," he added.

Myasnikovich also admitted that the authorities will not manage to perform in 2012 the plan of the privatization of state enterprises estimated at 2.5 billion US dollars.

Xinhua



Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and officials see off President U Thein Sein at Nay Pyi Taw Airport.—MNA

MoA on 120 megawatt gas fired and waste-heat power station (Ahlon) signed

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Nov— The signing ceremony of Memorandum of Agreement between Electric Power Department under the Ministry of Electric Power and Toyo-Thai Corporation Public Co Ltd of Thailand, Toyo-Thai Power Corporation Pte Ltd of Singapore took place at the Ministry here yesterday evening, attended by Union Minister for Electric Power U Khin Maung Soe, Union Minister for Industry U Aye Myint, Union Minister for Energy U Than Htay, Union Attorney-General Dr Tun Shin, deputy ministers, departmental heads and officials from Toyo-Thai Corporation Public Co Ltd of Thailand, Toyo-Thai Power Corporation Pte Ltd from Singapore.

Union Minister U Khin Maung Soe said that the project is to be implemented as quickly as possible as the main purpose of the project is to supply power in the coming summer. Power supply is to follow the non-environmental degradation policies. The Ministry will make cooperation with local and foreign investors for fully supply of the State's power demand. President & CEO of Toyo-Thai Corporation Public Co

Ltd of Thailand Mr Hironobu Iriya spoke words of thanks.

Director-General U Khin Maung Zaw of Electric Power Department and President & CEO of Toyo-Thai Corporation Public Co Ltd of Thailand Mr Hironobu Iriya signed the Memorandum of Agreement on construction of 120 megawatt gas fired and waste-heat power station (Ahlon) and exchanged the notes.

MNA

US eases import limits on Myanmar goods

WASHINGTON, 17 Nov— The United States on Friday eased decade-old import restrictions on Myanmar goods just days before President Barack Obama sets foot on the Southeast Asian nation.

The Departments of State and Treasury said that move was taken to support

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Nov— President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received Dr Noleen Heyzer, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at the Hotel Cambodiana in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, at 4.30 pm local time today.

the ongoing reform efforts in the nation, encourage "further change" and offer new opportunities for businesses in both countries. As a result, the United States will open up to most products from Myanmar under a waiver and general license with the exception of jadeite and



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

rubies mined or extracted from the country as well as articles of jewelry containing them.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced on September 26 that Washington would begin the process of easing the import ban put in place since 2003,

Also present at the call were Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Tin Naing Thein and Dr Kan Zaw and Deputy Minister Dr Daw Thein Thein Htay and officials.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to political and economic reforms in Myanmar and invitation to a Myanmar delegation led by a Union Minister to observe economic reforms and attracting investments in Singapore, plans for providing IT training to about 100 youth entrepreneurs, providing necessary assistance to Myanmar when it hosts ASEAN meetings as the chairman of ASEAN and inviting the President to deliver a speech at the conference of ESCAP in early May in 2013.

MNA

President U Thein Sein leaves for Cambodia to attend 21st ASEAN Summit and related meetings

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Nov— U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and party left here for Cambodia by special flight of Myanma Airways this morning to attend the 21st ASEAN Summit and its related meetings to be held in Phnom Penh of Cambodia.

The Myanmar delegation led by President U Thein Sein was seen off at the Nay Pyi Taw Airport by Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Thein Nyunt, U Kyaw Hsan, U Nyan Tun Aung, U Than Htay, U Aye

Myint, U Win Shein and U Zeyar Aung, departmental heads and Charge d' Affaires of Cambodian Embassy to Myanmar Mrs Tuot Kunthea. The delegation members are Union Minister at President Office U Tin Naing Thein, Deputy Ministers U Zin Yaw, Daw Sanda Khin, Dr Daw Thein Thein Htay and departmental officials.

The delegation members Union Foreign Affairs Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin and Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw left here for Cambodia in advance to attend the ASEAN Ministerial-Level meetings in Phnom Penh of Cambodia.—MNA

President U Thein Sein receives ESCAP's Executive Secretary



President U Thein Sein shakes hands with UN Under-Secretary-General and ESCAP Executive Secretary Dr Noleen Heyzer.

MNA

in response to the advances made in the country's reform efforts over the past year.

Ending the US import ban would provide a badly needed economic boost in Myanmar, where the unemployment rate is about 25 percent.

US companies are

allowed to export to Myanmar and last year shipments increased about fivefold to 48 million US dollars. By comparison, to two-way US trade with Myanmar's neighbour Thailand was nearly 36 billion US dollars in 2011.

MNA/Xinhua