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Exaggerating Rakhine conflict as a “genocide” is totally contrary to the truth Diplomats supports efforts of government for restoring peace and stability in Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, accompanied by General Hla Htay Win of the office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thein Htay, Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Khin Yi, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin, deputy ministers and departmental heads, left here for Yangon with the Tatmadaw aircraft yesterday morning.

The Vice-President then proceeded to Sittway with the special flight of Myanma Airways, together with ambassadors of Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan and Turkey, diplomats and officials of UN agencies.

On arrival at Sittway

airport, they were welcomed by the Rakhine State chief minister, the commander and state ministers.

The Vice-President held a meeting with ambassadors, diplomats, members of UN agencies, the state ministers, personnel working for restoring stability in the state, the supervisory committee for restoring peace and stability, relief and rehabilitation in Rakhine State and departmental heads.

At the meeting, Vice-President said that despite the government’s efforts, which were witnessed by diplomats and officials from UN agencies during their trips to Rakhine State, to restore peace and stability in Rakhine State since the conflict out broke, some accused the government of using



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham gives encouragements to villagers at Taungbway Village in Kyauktaw Township.—MNA



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham providing relief aid to locals at Sambalay Village Relief Camp in Minbya Township.—MNA

Water level forecast for second (10) days of December 2012

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— The water levels of the Ayeyawady river are forecast to fall below the present water levels by (15) cm (about ½-foot) at Myitkyina, Bhamo and Katha, (30) cm (about 1-foot) at Mandalay and Sagaing, and (45) cm (about 1½-feet) at Pakokku, NyaungU, Chauk, Minbu,

Magway, Aunglan, Pyay, Seiktha, Hinthada and Zalun.

The water levels of the Chindwin river are forecast to fall below the present water levels by (15) cm (about ½-foot) at Hkamti and Homalin, and (30) cm (about 1-foot) at Mawlaik, Kalewa and Monywa.

NLM

over force to control the situation, and some media had portrayed the conflict as a “genocide” and that were totally contrary to the truth.

The vice-president

also reaffirmed that there was no racial or religious discrimination by local authorities in Rakhine State when they made efforts for restoring peace and the rule of law. The fabricated

reportage and information can arise misunderstanding among the international community over the actual situation in Rakhine State, he added.

(See page 9)

Egyptian military urges dialogue to avert “catastrophe”

CAIRO, 8 Dec—Egypt’s military said on Saturday only dialogue could avert “catastrophe”, stepping into a crisis pitting an Islamist president against opponents of his drive to reshape a nation in turmoil since Hosni Mubarak’s overthrow.

An army statement, which state radio and

television interrupted their programmes to read out, told feuding factions that a solution to the upheaval in the most populous Arab nation should not contradict “legitimacy and the rules of democracy”.

That sounded like a swipe at protesters who have besieged the palace of freely elected President Mohamed Mursi and who have called for his removal, going beyond mainstream opposition demands for him to retract a decree that expanded his powers.

The statement also called for a “serious” national dialogue - perhaps one more credible than talks convened by Mursi on Saturday in the absence of opposition leaders. They insist he must first scrap his

22 November decree, defer next week’s popular vote on a new constitution and allow the text to be revised.

Deep rifts have emerged over the destiny of a country of 83 million where Mubarak’s ouster after 30 years of autocratic rule led to a messy army-led transition, with the Muslim Brotherhood and its allies winning two elections. Many Egyptians crave a return to stability and economic recovery. The army, which ran Egypt for months after Mubarak fell in February 2011, again cast itself primarily as the neutral guarantor of the nation and a military source said there was no plan to retake control of the country or its turbulent streets.

Reuters



A member of the Republican Guard stands behind a barbed wire barricade, as the Guard blocks a road leading to the presidential palace in Cairo on 7 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Myanmar delegation on study tour of Malaysia

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security U Maung Myint paid a study visit to Malaysia from 4 to 7 December, at the invitation of Ministry of Home Affairs of Malaysia.

The Union Minister and party went to INOX Engineering Factory in Shah Alam of Malaysia. There, they met with Myanmar workers and explained the Government's undertakings and coordinated workers' reports with officials from the factory. On 5 December, they held discussions with Deputy

Home Affairs Minister Mr Dato Lee Chee Leong of Malaysia and discussed that according to 6P programme, more than 110,000 of over 140,000 registered Myanmar workers had taken out passport and C of I. After the 6P programme that expired in August 2012, Myanmar wanted to make cooperation with Malaysia on suitable programme for the over 30,000 remaining Myanmar workers. There were about 100,000 Myanmar workers who lost contact with 6P programme. Cooperation programme for them would be made. He expressed

special thanks for Malaysia's arrangement to take more than 8,000 Myanmar citizens from Malaysian prisons from 2010 to 2012 under Amnesty programme. Arrangements would be made to bring back about 1750 Myanmar citizens were in nine jails of Malaysia to Myanmar if they wished.

At Grand Hyatt Hotel, the Myanmar delegation held discussion with a team led by the Malaysian Deputy Home Affairs Minister on Myanmar workers with no legal documents and mutual cooperation between two countries.—MNA

Thriving strawberries ready for harvest in PyinOoLwin

PYIN O O L W I N, 8 Dec — Major crops — paddy, cotton, sugarcane, groundnut, sunflower, beans and pulses and maize— of the nation are annually grown in PyinOoLwin on a wider scale. Furthermore, locals planted strawberry, pineapple, tea, damson, avocado, orange, kitchen crops and flowers in the region.

While growing

strawberry plants, there are three kinds of species. One species belongs to Japanese species and another species belongs to Singaporean species. The third one is a native species. Japanese and local species are popular in the region. Japanese species can produce 6000 pound of strawberry per acre and its size is larger than the local species that can be harvested one month

earlier than the Japanese one although it is small in size.

Strawberry plants are annually grown in PyinOoLwin starting from September and they can be harvested during the period from January to May. Strawberry growers said they were expecting a bumper harvest of strawberry this year.—Kyemon



Myanmar U-19 women football team vows to win play-off match against Thailand

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec — To qualify for 2013 AFCU-19 Women's Championship Qualification, Myanmar U-19 women football team was under intensive training yesterday for a play-off match with Thailand which will be held at Thong Nhat stadium at 7 pm local time tomorrow.

Yesterday morning, Myanmar women team was given training in goal-kick, teamwork and other light training at Thong Nhat

stadium. "This is a game we have to win. All of you have to place emphasis on



the match with the winning spirit. These training would qualify you for a race. Try

Two book corners being kept open in Hinthada

HINTHADA, 8 Dec — As a public service initiative of Hinthada District Information and Public Relations Department of Ayeyawady Region, the opening of a book corner took place at Hinthada railway station on 3 December, attended by district/township level service personnel and locals totaling 200. Firstly, Head of Hinthada District Information and Public Relations Department U Win Shein explained purpose of

opening the book corner.

Next, Hinthada District Deputy Commissioner U Mya Aye, the district IPRD head and Head of Hinthada Railway Station U Aye Ngwe formally opened the book corner. A similar ceremony was held at Hinthada bus terminal on that day. Officials formally opened the book corner donated by U Myat Zaw and Daw Wah Wah of Hinthada Nyinaung family. So far two book corners have been opened in Hinthada.

Kyemon

your best to be given a hero's welcome on your return home," Head Coach Kumada said to boost the morale of players.

Striker May Thu Kyaw who suffered from thigh injury was taking a light training, and she might play the tomorrow's match. Myanmar team was taking two training sessions a day. At the national team level, Myanmar beat Thailand at the semi-final of ASEAN Championship Women Football Tournament-2012 1-0.

Kyemon

Sarsodaw Day marked



Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa presents cash and kinds to a doyen literati.—MNA

YANGON, 8 Dec— Sarsodaw Day was marked along with respect-paying ceremony to doyen literati at Yangon City Hall here this morning. Since 1306 ME, the 1st Waxing of Nadaw was designated as Sarsodaw Day and today's celebration is its 68 anniversary.

The government annually organizes literary awards presentation

and Myanmar Writers Association respect-paying to doyen literati.

Present on the occasion were Deputy Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Chairperson of Fundamental Rights of Citizens, Democracy Affairs and Human Rights Committee of Pyithu Hluttaw U Htay Oo, Union Minister for Information U

Aung Kyi, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Chairman of MWA U Tin Hlaing (Ledwintha Saw Chit).

U Win Maung (Min Yu Wai) spoke words of thanks on behalf of doyen literati who were presented with K 0.2 million, offertories and one Sky Net receiver each.

MNA

Flower growers see tight profit margins in Yamethin

YAMETHIN, 8 Dec — Locals in Nyaunglebin, Zaykon, and Hseto and Kokobin villages of Yamethin Township in Mandalay Region earn their livings as flower growers. A mass of

fetches only K 1000 while the price of a bunch of flowers with 40 stalks was K 1500 last year.

This region is suitable for four species of Chrysanthemum— Nwe



Chrysanthemum, a garden flower, is commercially grown there.

According to a local, flower price is dropped as the region had a low annual rainfall, thereby contributing to the increased number of growers. Moreover, unfavorable weather caused a reduction in flower yield.

This year, a bunch of flowers with 50 stalks

Win Shwe Seinn, Chat Seinn, Shwe Wah Win and Kywe Phyu. Flower growers delivered their produce to Toungoo, Kanyoe, Nay Pyi Taw, Meiktila and Pyawbwe by car. A flower grower said that although they did not suffer losses this year, they are running their business at tight profit margins.

Kyemon

WORLD

Kazakh president, Chinese vice premier meet on relations



Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev (R) shakes hands with Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan during their meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan, on 7 Dec, 2012.

XINHUA

ASTANA, 8 Dec—Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan met here on Friday to discuss the development of

relations between their two countries, with emphasis on cooperation in energy, communication and trade.

Since China and Kazakhstan established diplomatic ties 20 years ago, their relations have maintained a good momentum of development, Wang said.

Political mutual trust between the two countries has been constantly enhanced and bilateral cooperation in various fields has moved forward smoothly, he said.

The two sides have supported each other on major issues concerning their core interests and closely cooperate in both regional and global affairs,

Wang said. The effort has promoted regional stability and contributed to the development of both countries, Wang said.

Nazarbayev's successful visit to China in June injected new impetus into the development of the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries, he said.

China appreciates Kazakhstan's strong support on issues including cracking down on the "Eastern Turkistan" terrorist force and will firmly support Kazakhstan's choice of a development path that fits its national conditions, Wang said.—Xinhua

Second bomb this week kills three in Nairobi suburb

NAIROBI, 8 Dec—A bomb blast in a predominantly Somali district of the Kenyan capital of Nairobi on Friday killed three people and wounded at least eight, the Kenyan Red Cross said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack in the run-down Eastleigh suburb, the second explosion there since Wednesday night. Local lawmaker Yusuf Hassan was among the injured, Nairobi's police chief Moses Ombati said.

One Eastleigh resident, Said Abdullahi, said he heard two gunshots followed by an explosion outside a mosque. "Some of those injured were worshippers leaving

the mosque," Abdullahi told Reuters.

Ombati said it was too early to tell whether a grenade or a bomb caused the explosion and it was possible

the casualty toll would rise.

Kenyan authorities have blamed Somali militants and their sympathizers for a wave of grenade and gun attacks in Kenya after Nairobi sent

soldiers into neighboring Somalia last year to drive out Islamist rebel fighters with links to al-Qaeda.

Kenya's government accuses al-Shabaab rebels of making cross-border attacks and blamed the group for the kidnapping of Western tourists and aid workers.

Abdirashid Hashi, a Somalia analyst at the International Crisis Group, said lawmaker Hassan was an open critic of the al-Shabaab rebel group's almost six-year campaign against Somalia's Western-backed government.

Tensions have risen in the past two months in Eastleigh, a part of Nairobi commonly dubbed "Little Mogadishu" because of its large Somali population.

"It's too early to say who was behind this ... but I don't think mosques are off-limits to al-Shabaab," Hashi told Reuters. It was not clear if Hassan, a former journalist at the BBC, was the target of the attack.—Reuters



Policemen inspect the secured section at the scene of the blast in Eastleigh suburb of Kenya's capital Nairobi on 7 Dec 2012.—REUTERS

Rebels circle Damascus Airport; Russia, US downbeat

DAMASCUS, 8 Dec—Rebels fighting to topple Syrian President Bashar al-Assad declared Damascus International Airport a battle zone on Friday, while Moscow and Washington both sounded downbeat about the prospects of a diplomatic push to end the conflict.

Fighting around the capital city has intensified over the past week, and Western officials have begun speaking about faster change on the ground in a 20-month-old conflict that has killed 40,000 people.

But Russia and the United States, the superpowers that have backed the opposing sides in the conflict, both played down the chance of a diplomatic breakthrough after talks aimed at resolving their differences.

"I don't think anyone believes that there was some great breakthrough," US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said of a meeting

with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and international mediator Lakhdar Brahimi.

"No one should have any illusions about how hard this remains. But all of us, with any influence, need to be engaged with Brahimi for a concerted, sincere push."

"The rebel brigades who have been putting the airport under siege decided yesterday that the airport is a military zone," said Nabil al-Amir, a spokesman for the rebels' Damascus Military Council.

"Civilians who approach it now do so at their own risk," he said. Fighters had "waited two weeks for the airport to be emptied of most civilians and airlines" before declaring it a target, he added. He did not say what they would do if aircraft tried to land. Foreign airlines have suspended all flights to Damascus since fighting has approached the airport in the past week, although some Syrian Air flights have used

the airport in recent days.

The meeting of rebels in Antalya, Turkey, was aimed at forming a structure to run the conflict in conjunction with a new opposition National Coalition, which some European and Arab states have recognized as Syria's legitimate representatives.

One delegate at the meeting, who asked not to be identified, said two-thirds of the 30 members of the newly named command had ties with the Muslim Brotherhood or were its political allies.

"We are witnessing the result of the Qatari and Turkish creations," said the delegate, referring to leading anti-Assad countries that are seen as backing the Brotherhood.

Colonel Riad Asaad, founder of the Syrian Free Army rebel force, and General Hussein Haj Ali, the highest-ranking officer to defect from Assad's military, were among those excluded.

Reuters

UNSG's message on International Anti-Corruption Day

9 December 2012

As the international community strives to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and forge an agenda for economic and social progress in the years beyond, addressing the problem of corruption becomes all the more urgent.

The cost of corruption is measured not just in the billions of dollars of squandered or stolen Government resources, but most poignantly in the absence of the hospitals, schools, clean water, roads and bridges that might have been built with that money and would have certainly changed the fortunes of families and communities.

Corruption destroys opportunities and creates rampant inequalities. It undermines human rights and good governance, stifles economic growth and distorts markets.

Corruption also aggravates environmental problems through the illegal dumping of hazardous waste and the illegal trade in animal and plant life facilitated by bribery and under-the-table incentives that determine who is awarded contracts, especially for highly lucrative, large-scale infrastructure projects.

Preventing corruption is critical to securing the rule of law. The United Nations Convention against Corruption has 164 States parties, but we need universal adherence. The General Assembly's historic high-level meeting on the rule of law, held in September, stressed the importance of addressing and preventing corruption. Governments must play their part and citizens must raise their voices.

Corruption is not inevitable. It flows from greed and the triumph of the undemocratic few over the expectations of the many.

On International Anti-Corruption Day, I call on everyone to work towards a sustainable future where corruption is exposed and rejected, where integrity prevails, and where the hopes and dreams of millions are realized.

UNIC/Yangon

France's Hollande to attend Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony in Oslo

PARIS, 8 Dec—French President Francois Hollande will attend award ceremony for the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union (EU) in Oslo next on Monday, a statement from French Presidency said on Friday.

The European Union was awarded on 12 Oct the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize for advancing "peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe" for over six decades.

Xinhua

Clinton to testify on Benghazi attack report

WASHINGTON, 8 Dec—US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will testify on a report expected to be released next week on the deadly attack on the US diplomatic

post in Benghazi, Libya, a top Republican lawmaker said on Friday.

"I have just received confirmation from Secretary Clinton's office that the

secretary of state will appear before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs to discuss, in an open hearing, the findings and the recommendations in the report," Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen said in a statement.

Ros-Lehtinen is chair of the House of Representatives Foreign Relations Committee, which has already held several hearings and classified briefings on the attack.

The attack killed US Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans, and raised questions about the adequacy of security in far-flung posts.

Reuters



US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton listens to a question during a joint news conference with Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny at the government building in Dublin on 6 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

China's mini Apple takes slice of smartphone pie

Tech

Lei Jun, founder and CEO of China's mobile company Xiaomi, speaks at a launch ceremony of Xiaomi Phone 2 in Beijing in this on 16 August, 2012 file photo. REUTERS



BEIJING, 8 Dec—China's Xiaomi Technology is a fairy tale for nerdy entrepreneurs.

Less than three years after its founding, the smartphone maker is valued at \$4 billion and evokes Apple-like adoration from its fans, some of whom are desperate enough to skip work for a shot at buying the latest product the day it goes on sale.

Founder Lei Jun dresses like the late Steve Jobs, in jeans and a black top. He has created a fer-

vent fan base for Xiaomi's moderately priced high-end smartphones by mimicking Apple Inc's marketing tactic of attaching an aura of exclusivity around its products.

Before Xiaomi, the 42-year-old Lei was a key investor in China's early Internet scene, co-founding startups including Joyo.cn, which was eventually sold to Amazon.com Inc, and the recently listed YY Inc.

Born in Xiantao, a small city in China's central Hubei Province bet-

ter known for breeding Olympic gymnasts than billionaire technocrats, Lei brushes off comparisons to Jobs but concedes that the Apple visionary was an inspiration.

"China's media say I am China's Steve Jobs," Lei told Reuters in an interview.

"I will take this as a compliment but such kind of comparison brings us huge pressure," said Lei, who grew up assembling radios as a hobby. "Xiaomi and Apple are two totally

different companies. Xiaomi's based on the Internet. We are not doing the same thing as Apple."

Xiaomi has already sold 300,000 of its latest phone model, launched in October.

The Xiaomi phone 2 has specifications similar to those of Samsung Electronics' Galaxy S3 and Apple's iPhone5 but a top-of-the-line model sells for about \$370, half the price of an iPhone5.

Unlike the big domestic smartphone players, such as Lenovo Group, ZTE Corp and Huawei Technologies, which work with telecom carriers to sell a large volume of smartphones, Xiaomi sells most of its phones online and in small batches.

This small volume strategy creates pent-up demand that gives Xiaomi free marketing buzz.

The first batch of 50,000 phones released on 30 October sold out in less than two minutes. Subsequent larger batches have also sold out in minutes.

Reuters

Google to charge small businesses for Web-based Apps software

SAN FRANCISCO, 8 Dec—Google Inc will no longer offer its Web-based office productivity software free to small businesses, the Internet company's latest move to expand revenue beyond its core advertising services.

Google said on Thursday that businesses with 10 or fewer people will now need to pay \$50 per user per year—the same rate that larger businesses pay—to use its Google Apps software which includes email, word processing, spreadsheet and presentation tools.

The change will let Google offer a more consistent service to business customers, the company said in a post on its company blog.

"Businesses quickly outgrow the basic version and want things like 24/7 customer support and larger inboxes," Google said.

Individual consumers will still be able to get a

free version of many of the products, such as Gmail, Google said. And existing business customers who use the free version will continue to get it for free, though they will not receive the additional services included in the premium version.

More than 5 million businesses use Google's Apps, Google said earlier this year, though it did not distinguish between customers who use the free or paid versions.

The move marks the latest change to Google Apps, which until 2011 was available for free to businesses with 50 or fewer people.

In June, Google launched the Google Compute Engine, which provides online computing services to a limited set of customers.

Google, the world's No1 Web search engine, generates the bulk of its revenue from online advertising.—Reuters

Private firm plans "affordable" lunar mission for \$1.5 billion

Science

SAN FRANCISCO, 8 Dec—A Colorado startup run by former NASA managers plans to conduct missions to the moon for about \$1.5 billion per expedition, a fraction of what a similar government-run operation would cost, company officials said on Thursday.

"Our vision is to create a reliable and affordable US-based commercial human lunar transportation system," said former Apollo flight director Gerry Griffin, who serves as chairman of the firm, named Golden Spike.

The expeditions would use existing rockets and spacecraft now under development to fly NASA astronauts to the International Space Station.

Depending on how

many customers sign up, the company said it could be ready to fly its first mission by 2020. It did not elaborate on any existing or pending contracts with customers or suppliers.

The first mission would require an investment of \$7 billion to \$8 billion, said Golden Spike President Alan Stern, NASA's former associate administrator for science. Once established, mission costs would drop to about \$1.5 billion to fly two people to the moon for up to two days.

"This is a game-changer," Stern told reporters in Washington and on a conference call. "We can fly human lunar missions for the cost of a robotic mission." Stern declined to specify how many missions the company would need to

sell to turn a profit.

"If we only sell three or four expeditions, it's completely upside down. We need to sell a bunch. But we do not need to sell ridiculous numbers," he said.

A market study shows 15 to 25 nations can afford lunar exploration and may want to do so, he added.

Potential customers include civilian space agencies, corporations, research institutes and some extremely wealthy individuals.

"We can make it affordable for mid-sized countries like a Korea, an Indonesia, or a South Africa to be in the business of lunar exploration, which would cost them a great deal more to invent that capability," Stern said.

In addition to advance ticket sales, the company is counting on advertising and marketing campaigns to raise funds.

Golden Spike is not the first company proposing privately funded missions to the moon. Other firms include Moon Express, a mining outfit, and companies participating in a Google-sponsored competition to land a robotic probe on the satellite.—Reuters

Italian tax police visit Facebook's Milan offices

MILAN, 8 Dec—Italian police have been carrying out checks at the Milan offices of Facebook to assess whether it regularly declared its income in Italy, an investigative source and the US company said on Friday.

Italian officials have

stepped up their efforts to collect taxes in recent months and have already targeted other big corporate names such as Google to check whether they are paying their dues.

The investigative source said tax officials first went to the offices of Facebook

in Milan nearly a month ago to collect documents.

"Facebook pays taxes in Italy as part of its business activity in the country and strictly complies with Italy's fiscal rules," Facebook said in an emailed statement.

"Facebook has fully cooperated with tax police during the investigation and intends to continue to do that." Italian police opened a new tax probe into Google Italy last week, five years after an earlier investigation into transfer pricing.

Google has said it complies with the tax laws in every country in which it operates.

Reuters



In this photo illustration, a Facebook logo on a computer screen is seen through a magnifying glass held by a woman in Bern on 19 May, 2012.—REUTERS

Japan's Hitachi to cease production of chips by 2014

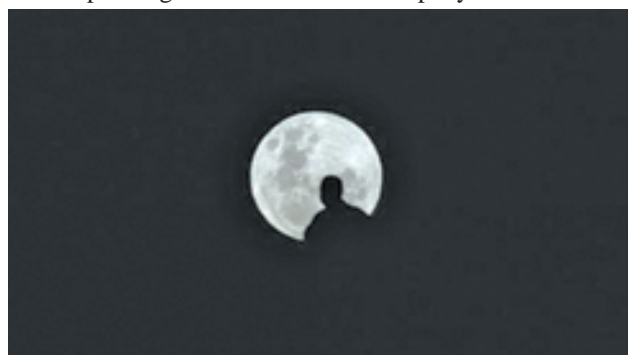
TOKYO, 8 Dec—Japan's Hitachi Ltd said on Friday it would cease production of chips used in information and telecoms hardware at the end of March 2014.

"The semiconductor industry has seen an increasingly horizontal division of labour in terms of development, design and manufacturing in recent years," said Hitachi in a statement.

Hitachi, an industrial manufacturer that makes goods ranging from nuclear reactors to washing machines, said efforts to boost cost efficiency and competitiveness drove the decision.—Reuters



A Hitachi logo is seen at an electronics shop in Tokyo on 27 Oct, 2012. REUTERS



A man looks at the full moon atop a hill in Sydney on 14 June, 2003.—REUTERS

BUSINESS & HEALTH

US Air makes merger offer, AMR pilots approve labour deal



A US Airways plane passes American Airlines planes at Ronald Reagan National Airport in Washington on 13 April, 2012.—REUTERS

NEW YORK, 8 Dec—US Airways Group Inc has made a formal merger proposal to American Airlines parent AMR Corp and its creditors that could value the combined airline at around \$8.5 billion, two people familiar with the matter said on Friday.

Details of the proposal emerged as American Airlines pilots voted to ratify a new union contract on Friday, ending a years-long labor dispute and stabilizing the carrier as it tries to emerge from bankruptcy. Under an all-stock merger that US Airways proposed in mid-November at a meeting with AMR's unsecured creditors committee, AMR creditors would own 70 percent of

the merged company and US Airways shareholders 30 percent, the people said.

US Airways and AMR are negotiating toward a potential merger agreement that the smaller rival hopes could come as soon as January, one of the people added, asking not to be named because the matter is not public.

The combined AMR and US Airways could have a value similar to Delta Air Lines Inc, which has a market capitalization of around \$8.5 billion, the person said.

At the same time, AMR is still pursuing a plan to emerge from bankruptcy proceedings as an independent airline, which will be compared against the merits of a merger with

US Airways, the people said. "The companies have yet to narrow differences on a number of significant issues before any deal could be agreed, including how much of the combined carrier each side should own, the people said.

AMR creditors think they should get an equity stake of closer to 80 percent in a merged entity, rather than the 70 percent proposed by US Airways, the people said. AMR and US Airways also disagree on potential cost and revenue benefits from a merger as well as labor integration challenges, they added.

In a note to American Airlines workers, AMR CEO Tom Horton said the company is weighing whether a merger could "create value for our owners and a positive outcome for our people and our customers. We expect to have a conclusion on this soon."

Representatives of US Airways and the creditors committee declined to comment. *The Wall Street Journal* reported details of US Airways' proposal earlier on Friday.—Reuters

Goldman Sachs fined \$1.5 million for trading glitch

WASHINGTON, 8 Dec—Goldman Sachs Group Inc was fined \$1.5 million to settle charges it failed to supervise its traders and allowing one futures dealer to hide billions in dollars from sight and causing a \$118 million loss.

Ex-Goldman trader Matthew Marshall Taylor in 2007 camouflaged an \$8.3 billion position, manually entering fake trades, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) said on Friday.

"Goldman failed to have policies or procedures reasonably designed to detect and prevent the manual entry of fabricated futures trades into its front office systems," the top US derivatives regulator said. "As a result, on seven trading days in November and December 2007, Taylor circumvented Goldman's risk management, compliance, and supervision systems," the CFTC said.

In a lawsuit in New York in November, the CFTC sought a \$130,000 civil penalty against Taylor, who at the time was a vice president at the bank's Capital Structure Franchise



Traders work in the Goldman Sachs stall on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on 16 July, 2010.

REUTERS

Trading desk, and later went to work for Morgan Stanley.

Goldman Sachs took a \$118 million loss in unwinding the position in e-mini S&P 500 futures contracts.

"Taylor's activity was flagged by our controls on 14 December, with no impact to customer funds," Goldman Sachs said in an emailed statement. "Since these events, we have enhanced our controls. We're pleased to have settled this matter."

Taylor had established the position on December 13, 2007. Bart Chilton, a Democrat and one of the CFTC's commissioners, thought the penalty was too low.

"I believe that the monetary penalty should be significantly higher in order to represent a sufficient punishment, as well as to denote a meaningful deterrent to future illegal activity," Chilton said in a statement.—Reuters

Knee replacement linked to weight gain

NEW YORK, 8 Dec—Being overweight is known to increase the risk of needing a knee replacement, but a new study finds that knee replacement surgery may also raise a person's risk of gaining weight.

Analyzing the medical records of nearly 1,000 knee-replacement surgery patients, researchers found that 30 percent of them gained five percent or more of their body weight in the five years following surgery.

One possible explanation for the counterintuitive results, experts said, is that if people have spent years adapting to knee pain by taking it easy, they don't automatically change their habits when the pain is reduced.

"After knee replacement we get them stronger and moving better, but they don't seem to take advantage of the functional gains" and become more active, said Joseph Zeni, a physical therapy professor at the University of Delaware, who was not part of the study. "I think that has to do with the fact that we don't address the behavioral modifications that have happened during the course of

arthritis before the surgery," he added. Hundreds of thousands of people in the US undergo knee replacement surgery each year.

The goal of putting in a new knee is to alleviate pain and get people moving around more, but Daniel Riddle, lead author of the new study and a professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, said his team had noticed that patients tended to gain weight after surgery.

To see whether this was common, Riddle's group used a patient registry from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, which collected information on 917 knee replacement patients before and after their procedures.

The researchers found that five years after surgery, 30 percent of patients had gained at least five percent of their weight at the time of the surgery. That's 10 pounds or more on a 200-pound person, for example. In contrast, less than 20 percent of those in a comparison group of similar people who had not had surgery gained equivalent amounts of weight in the same period.

Reuters

Business

Mittal to ramp up investment at French site from the first-quarter



General view of the ArcelorMittal Florange-Hayange blast furnace in Hayange, Eastern France, on 3 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

PARIS, 8 Dec—Steel-maker ArcelorMittal vowed on Friday to kick-start a 180-million-euro (145 million pounds), five-year investment programme at its Florange site in eastern France in the first quarter of 2013, seeking to allay union concerns over job cuts.

The fate of Florange's two idled blast furnaces, which employ just over a quarter of the 2,000 metalworkers at Florange,

has become a headache for France's Socialist government, which struck a deal last week with the company to avoid job cuts amid union pressure.

While ArcelorMittal said it would keep the two blast-furnaces shuttered, it pledged to work with unions to reach a labour deal involving transfers to other jobs at the site, retirement packages and voluntary redundancies.

"The group's management calls on workers to construct with it a new phase in the history of Florange, which is destined to remain an important site for steelmaking in Europe," the firm, 40 percent owned by the Mittal family, said in a statement.

France's firebrand Minister for Industrial Revival Arnaud Montebourg raised the stakes in the dispute with ArcelorMittal

last week by threatening to nationalise the Florange plant, raising workers' hopes that were dashed by last Friday's deal.

Unions angrily denounced a trick on Thursday when the company announced it was ditching its bid to run an EU-funded "green steel" project at Florange due to technical difficulties. The ULCOS project was regarded as crucial to reviving the furnaces.

ArcelorMittal, however, said on Friday it would plough 13 million euros into its nearby research centre of Maizières-les-Metz in a bid to overcome the technical problems.

A successful bid for EU-funding would allow one of blast furnaces to be used in a pilot project, it said.

The investment calendar for the Florange site will be detailed at a 13 December meeting with unions, ArcelorMittal said, promising to meet all its commitments to the French government.

Reuters

Cuba dismantles 2 illegal telecom networks

HAVANA, 8 Dec—Cuban authorities have crushed two underground telecommunications networks operating from abroad to provide fixed and mobile phone services, official media reported Friday.

The clandestine networks were run by two companies owned by Cubans living abroad, respectively in Canada and in Spain. Both countries have seen a growing number of Cuban expatriates.

triaties.

According to official daily *Granma*, the two firms illegally used channels owned by state-run telephone company Etecsa “purely to make a profit,” having robbed Etecsa of estimated revenues of 3 million US dollars.

One of the two networks, starting operation in 2009, offered Cuban expatriates long-distance call services for 50 cents a minute

and text message services for 5 cents a piece.

Nine Cuban citizens have been charged, four of whom are in custody, since the investigation began in September.

The suspects, including two Etecsa employees, face charges of fraud, which can land them in prison for up to 10 years, and illegal economic activity, which carries a maximum jail term of three years.—*Xinhua*

Police probing jewelry theft at home of congressman



Congressman Darrell Issa (R-CA), chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, speaks during “The Security Failures of Benghazi” hearing on Capitol Hill, Washington DC on 10 Oct, 2012.—REUTERS

SAN DIEGO, 8 Dec—The San Diego-area home of Representative Darrell Issa was broken into last week by a burglar who stole jewelry, and police were investigating several leads into the crime, the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department said on Friday.

A spokesman for Issa, the Republican chairman of the House of Representatives Oversight and Government Reform Committee, confirmed the burglary but directed further inquiries to local authorities.

The *San Diego Union-Tribune* reported that thieves took \$100,000 worth of jewelry, numbering more than 50 pieces including watches, earrings, rings and bracelets.

“The items that were taken were irreplaceable family heirlooms that were inherited by the Issa family,” Issa’s spokesman, Frederick Hill, told the paper, adding that the family considered the pieces “priceless.”

Hill confirmed the remark to *Reuters*, and San Diego County Sheriff’s Department spokeswoman Jan Caldwell confirmed that jewelry was stolen in the burglary, which took place on the evening of 29 November.

“This is an ongoing investigation and there’s very little we can say,” Caldwell said. “Detectives are investigating several leads.”

Reuters

Motorcycle gang members convicted of racketeering, murder

KANSAS CITY, 8 DEC—A federal jury in Missouri convicted motorcycle gang members on Friday of racketeering, murder and other crimes as part of a broad crackdown on motorcycle gang activity.

The convictions in St Louis, following a month-long trial, come on the heels of indictments and arrests of members of other motorcycle gangs in Indiana, Michigan and California earlier this year.

An indictment unsealed in June said some members of the Wheels of Soul Outlaw Motorcycle Club murdered a rival in St Louis in 2009, committed murders in Illinois and Ohio and were involved in drug dealing or other crimes in multiple states.

The indictment said gang members also took part in a drive-by shooting in Colorado and a stabbing during a gang fight in Chicago. Gang members used

explosives, committed arson and were ordered to carry guns, hammers and knives, the indictment said.

In all, 21 Wheels of Soul members were indicted in what FBI Special Agent Dennis Baker called a “nationwide takedown” that disrupted and dismantled the group by targeting its senior leaders.

Seven of eight defendants tried in St Louis were found guilty of conspiracy to commit racketeering,



Visitors watch at Shanghai Civil Administration Museum in east China’s Shanghai Municipality, on 7 Dec, 2012. The museum, displaying some 1,300 items, opened to the public for free Friday. It is the first civil administration museum in China.—XINHUA

Sudanese army acknowledges attacking LJM forces

KHARTOUM, 8 Dec—The Sudanese army on Friday acknowledged attacking forces of the Darfur Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), a signatory to a peace deal with the Sudanese government, holding the movement responsible of being present at an area it does not belong to, Sudan’s Ashrouq Net reported.

“The army’s attacking of an armed group at El-Sheikh area in North Darfur State comes within the context of performing its duty,” Ashrouq quoted Al-Sawarmy Khalid Saad, spokesman for the Sudanese army, as saying.

The LJM forces made a big mistake as they positioned themselves at an area which, according to a ceasefire committee, does not belong to them, said Saad.

“We have performed our duty by responding to an armed group reported about by the citizens of El-Sheikh village, west of El Fasher,” he said.

Saad reiterated that what has happened would not affect the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), a ceasefire committee signed between the government and the LJM in the Qatari capital last year, affirming the gov-

ernment’s determination to implement the deal. On Thursday, the LJM accused the Sudanese army of attacking its military units and threatened to withdraw from the agreement.

“The Sudanese army deliberately attacked the movement’s forces on Wednesday near El Fasher, capital city of North Darfur State which resulted in the killing of two members of the movement,” said Al-Tigani Sessei, LJM chairman, at a Press conference Thursday. “Our movements were known for the army, but we were surprised by this deliberate attack,” he added.

Sessei criticized what he termed as “misleading campaign” by the Sudanese government to show that the Sudanese army’s attack was against the forces of the Revolutionary Front, an alliance that brings together major Darfur armed movements which are rejecting the DDPD.

On Wednesday, Local Sudanese media reported that the Sudanese army clashed with a group belonging to the Revolutionary Front as they were trying to bombard El Fasher, and killed three of the

group.

Violence escalated in the Darfur region during the past two months, which pushed the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UN-AMID) to express concerns over the mounting violence in the region and urge the conflicting parties to avoid whatever might threaten the fragile peace in the restive region.

Xinhua

Government heading for political blow from debt downgrade

LONDON, 8 Dec—Britain is lurching closer to an embarrassing loss of its prized triple-A credit rating as the economic outlook darkens, and the political pain for Prime Minister David Cameron’s government from a once-unthinkable move may exceed the economic damage. Chancellor George Osborne warned of weaker growth and more austerity in a budget update on Wednesday. Although he avoided the political

said his admission that he will miss a key debt-cutting goal weakened his fiscal credibility. That fuelled fears Britain may be stripped of a top credit rating that has arguably helped keep borrowing costs at record lows. Losing that crown would be a blow to Osborne and Cameron, who have staked their reputations on rebuilding an economy that suffered its biggest shock since World War Two during the financial crisis.

Their Conservative



Chancellor George Osborne speaks at the Global Investment Conference 2012 in London on 26 July, 2012.—REUTERS

mis-steps for which the media lambasted him after March’s budget, there now looms the more menacing spectre of a downgrade before an election due in 2015.

Ratings agency Fitch

Party was forced to share power with Liberal Democrat rivals after the election in 2010, and the party’s leaders had hoped to win a full mandate from voters by proving their economic credentials.—*Reuters*

Lithuanian President approves new cabinet

RIGA, 8 Dec—Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė on Friday approved 12 members of cabinet as proposed by the Prime Minister-designate Algirdas Butkevicius, though the post of two ministers remained vacant, according to news reaching here.

Grybauskaitė stressed that the government must start working immediately, saying in a statement that “important work and decisions are waiting ... that’s why I signed the decree to approve the government whose composition is incomplete.”

The heads of the Ministry of Social Security and Labor and the Ministry of Science and Education were still undecided, as Grybauskaitė rejected two of the Labour Party’s candidates.—*Xinhua*

LOCAL NEWS

Myanmar archery team aims for gold in coming SEA Games

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— Archery sport which had brought honour to the State secured three gold medals each in 2009 and 2011.

At present, Myanmar archery team is under training for achieving victory in the XXVII SEA Games to be hosted in Myanmar. Altogether 24 tentatively selected archers are taking vigorous exercises in Nay Pyi Taw.

General Secretary of the Myanmar Archery Federation U Kyaw Oo (Deputy Head of Office of the Ministry of Sports) said that Myanmar archery team started its training in Yangon as of 1 January for the coming SEA Games. On 11 October, the training camp moved to Nay Pyi Taw. At present, six men and six women in compound and six men and six women in recurve event are taking exercises.

He said he satisfies their training. Aung Hngein

and women's compound team who secured gold medals in the Indonesian SEA Games secured better points than that of the previous SEA Games. Records of Aung Hngein are better than that of Asia.

The coming SEA Games will award 10 gold medals in the archery event. Myanmar team is making preparations for securing all 10 medals and expects to win five of ten. Athletes are under training at the Gold Camp in Nay Pyi Taw. The athletes are facilitated with hotel services at the camp. They have the opportunity to take exercises at fitness centre to have better styles.

As part of preparations, Myanmar Archery Federation plans to host an international archery competition before the SEA Games. The Pre-SEA Games Archery Contest will take place at Archery Range in Nay Pyi Taw on 8 to 12 January 2013.

“Our federation had hosted SEA Archery Championships for three times. First, second and fourth times were hosted in Myanmar, and the third time in the Philippines. Except Timor and Brunei, we invited the remaining ASEAN member countries to take part in the contest. We plans to award 18 gold medals to the winners. Myanmar will participate in the contest with 24 players.

Six men and women each will take part in the compound and recurve events. As the players secured gold, silver and bronze medals in the previous four SEA Archery Championships, we hope for them to win medals so as to uplift prestige to the State,” said U Kyaw Oo.

Myanmar archery team for the coming SEA Games is led by General Secretary of the federation U Kyaw Oo together with co-leader

Outstanding students honoured at Latha BEHS No. 2

YANGON, 8 Dec—A ceremony to honour outstanding students who secured distinctions in the 2011-2012 academic year matriculation examination was held at Mya Nyila Hall of No. 2 Basic Education High School in Latha Township on 4 December.

A total of 257 students of 278 passed the matriculation examination for 2011-2012 academic year, accounting for 92.45 per cent. Thus, the school stood second in the best pass rate in the nation. In addition, the school produced four students who stood the best positions from first to 10th in the examination.

With regard to the

efforts made for securing best pass rate of the school, Headmistress Dr Daw Theingi Kyaw explained, “The root cause of securing the best pass rate of the school is concerted efforts of parents, teachers and students.”

Ma Pyone Le Wai Lwin, who stood third in the entire nation and secured Latha Yadana award, expressed her aim that she tried hard to win the distinctions in all subjects. She studied old questions and followed the teachings of teachers. She wants to be a doctor. She wishes to uplift prestige of the State and the school, she said.—Myanma Alinn



General Secretary of the Myanmar Archery Federation U Kyaw Oo (Deputy Head of Office of the Ministry of Sports)

Dr Mya Thura Soe, manager and field manager U Than Kyaing, Assistant managers U Tin Aung Ko and Daw Thida Win, leader of the organizing the contest Daw Kathy, deputy leader Daw Aye Thida, member Daw Tin Zin Ei, Chief Coach Mr Lee Sang Bong (South Korea), coaches U Aung Thura, U Aung Naing Oo, U Ye Min Swe, U Zaw Win Htaik, Daw Myat Thuza Myint, Daw Kathy Win, new generation coach Mr Kim Sung Jin (South Korea), archers Zaw Win Htaik, Nay Myo Aung, Aung Myo Thu, Wai Lin Tun, Nyein Sithu, Maung Aye, Thin Thin Khaing, San Yu Htwe, Thazin Aung, Zargyi Win, Thanda Soe and Nan Kyi Kyi Shwe in recurve event, Lin Naing, Myat Zaw Tun, Aung Cheint Baw, Sai Zin Min Htet, Shein Htet Kyaw, Moe Kyaw Naing, Aung Hngein, Hla Hla San, Yaw Sein Ya, Poe Ei Ton, Marlar Khin Nyunt and Aye Aye Thin in compound event.—Myanma Alinn

Speedy car on traffic landscaping block



LASHIO, 8 Dec—A vehicle driven by Myo Min Htut on Pyidaungsu Road near 2500 Sasana Pagoda Road Junction in Ward 1 of Lashio bumped the traffic landscaping block due to out

of control with high speed at 11.30 am on 3 December.

In the incident, the car stopped on the block. Although it was traffic busy time, there was no casualty not only on the road but also abroad.

The traffic police force opened a file of lawsuit against driver Myo Min Htut, 22 of Chanmyathazi Township of Mandalay under the law.

Myanma Alinn

Reading habit raised

LASHIO, 8 Dec—With the aim of developing libraries and raising reading habit of the local people, Falam District Information and Public Relations Department held roundtable discussion and literary talks at its hall on 3 December morning.

The staff officer of the District IPRD explained purpose of discussions. Commander of Township Police Force Police Major Mya Htay discussed literary affairs. Those present focused on development libraries and literary affairs.

Myanma Alinn



Development tasks of Yangon City supervised

YANGON, 8 Dec—To be able to easing traffic jams due to growing number of cars in Yangon City as a commercial hub, an overpass is under construction at Bayintnaung Junction in Mayangon Township of Yangon Region.

At 6 am on 4 December, Yangon Region Minister for Development Affairs Mayor of Yangon U Hla Myint inspected progress of construction tasks.

After that, the mayor looked into nine feet each expansion of both sides on road shoulders along the section from Danyingon Junction to Bogyoke Road in Shwepyitha Township, functions of Concrete Pipe Factory in Insein Township and works of Leingon Bridge in Shwepyitha Township.

At Yangon City Water

Supply Project (Ngamoeyeik) as second phase, the mayor inspected laying of HDPE pipes along Khayebin Road, laying of 56-inch diameter DI underground pipelines along No. 3 Highways and HDPE pipes along No. 3 Highway in Kontalabaung Village of Mingaladon Township and repaving of Khayebin Road with asphalt concrete.

Later, the mayor viewed progress of building Hledan Overpass in Kamayut Township.

Myanma Alinn

Tailoring, domestic science courses conclude

YANGON, 8 Dec—Myaing Township Information and Public Relations Department reported that the Women's Vocational Training School (Myaing) of Education and Training Department under

GANGAW, 8 Dec—As cold season crops have harvested in Gangaw Township, price of vegetables remarkably fall. Before harvesting the vegetables, cauliflower, tomato and bean were



the Ministry of Border Affairs concluded the advanced tailoring course No. 17 and the basic domestic science course No. 21 at its hall in Myaing Township of Magway Region at 8 am on 30 November.

Price of cold season crops falls

transported from Monywa by car and Kalay by train to Gangaw.

Therefore, the prices of vegetables were added with transport charge.

At present, price of cabbage declined to K400 per

viss from K 800, cauliflower K 400, tomato K 500 and bean K 500.

When the production of crops increases, price of vegetables and crops will be cheaper.

Myanma Alinn

On the occasion, Acting Administrator U Hla Shwe of Myaing Township made a speech.

Deputy Principal of the school Daw Yi Yi Aung explained matters related to the training courses.

Myanma Alinn

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 9 December, 2012

Corruption kills development

Corruption is a global issue that afflicts all countries around the world. Corruption weakens democracy, destabilizes governments, and sets countries back economically and politically. Although corruption comes in various forms, there are no significant differences among them in its devastation blow to democracy and development. Today is the International Anti-Corruption Day which is observed on 9 December each year in order to heighten the public awareness of corruption and ways to fight it.

All of us have a responsibility in the battle against corruption which is like cancer. Because corruption is one of the serious impediments to the nation's bold moves taken towards building a peaceful, prosperous and harmonious democratic society. Corruption can be detrimental to reform processes, killing development, breeding inequality and undermining the rule of law. When public money is stolen for personal gain or foreign aid desperately needed for development funds diverted from the State budget toward private bank accounts, poor and vulnerable people who are marginalized by corruption suffer first and worst.

Tax evasion is a kind of corruption and it can distort development. A shortfall in tax revenue has a tremendous negative effect on the nation's financial resources needed to be invested in bolstering national economy and addressing urgent social problems. If a developing country successfully collected all the taxes, it will then not have to depend on foreign aid in the long-term. When tax evasion is larger than the spending on education and health sectors or almost as large as the country's export earnings, it is sure that such kind of country will never break the cycle of poverty.

On this International Anti-Corruption Day, schools are to serve as a good basis for good governance. Being an auspicious ground where the best chance is flourished to instill good morals that stay with people through to adulthood, students, from early childhood, are to be taught to be deeply ashamed of committing corruption and they are to be equipped with a culture that values ethical behavior.

It is imperative to put commitment, consistence, capacity and constancy together while cracking down on the corruption problems which are complex and difficult to address within the short period of time. Transparency must go hand-in-hand with all the steps we are taking in both private and public sectors. Corruption will always be with us if we lack transparency in every step we take, no matter how many different ways we try to fight it.

Second week of December mass walk held

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— As December mass walk is held nationwide annually in December the second week of December mass walk was held this morning.

Among the participants were Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye, Union ministers U Tint Hsan and U Aye Myint Kyu, deputy ministers, departmental heads, staff

personnel and their families. Around 8000 participants walked from Myoma Market to Gems Museum on Yaza Thingaha Street through Thabyaegon Roundabout along Taungnyo-Pyinmana Road.

Wellwishers served the walkers with refreshments and snacks and the walkers took exercise in front of the gems museum.—MNA

LOCAL NEWS

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham inspects regional development and rehabilitation tasks in Rakhine State



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham cordially greeting locals at Kyeinnipyin Village in Pauktaw Township.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham who is on tour of Sittway of Rakhine State and party, accompanied by ambassadors from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan and Turkey embassies based in Myanmar, diplomats, members from UN agencies and departmental heads, arrived at Kyeinnipyin

village of Pauktaw Township by helicopters this morning.

The Vice-President and party cordially greeted local people at relief camp in Kyeinnipyin village. After that, the Vice-President and party, the ambassadors, the diplomats and members from UN agencies, asked for local people's daily needs, running of agricultural and

livestock businesses and health, and then provided them with relief aids.

Afterwards, the Union Minister, the diplomats and members from UN agencies met with local people and visited the old Kyeinnipyin village. There, the Vice-President held discussion on drinking water supply of the village with the State Chief Minister and officials

from UNICEF, and Deputy Minister for Health gave a supplementary report.

With respect to the reports, the Vice-President coordinated. Upon arrival at Ohntawgyi rescue camp via Sittway, the Vice-President and party encouraged the local people there and provided them with relief aids. On arrival at Bawduba relief camp, they asked for local people's daily needs, education and health and presented personal goods and foodstuff to them.

Then, they proceeded to Mangan relief camp and encouraged local people there. The Vice-President and party asked for local people's health, economy, education, social and daily needs and presented relief aids to them. In the afternoon, the Vice-President and party left Sittway by Myanmar Airways Special Flight and arrived back in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham presents relief aid to local people at Ohntawgyi Relief Camp in Sittway Township.—MNA

X' mas service held at MCC

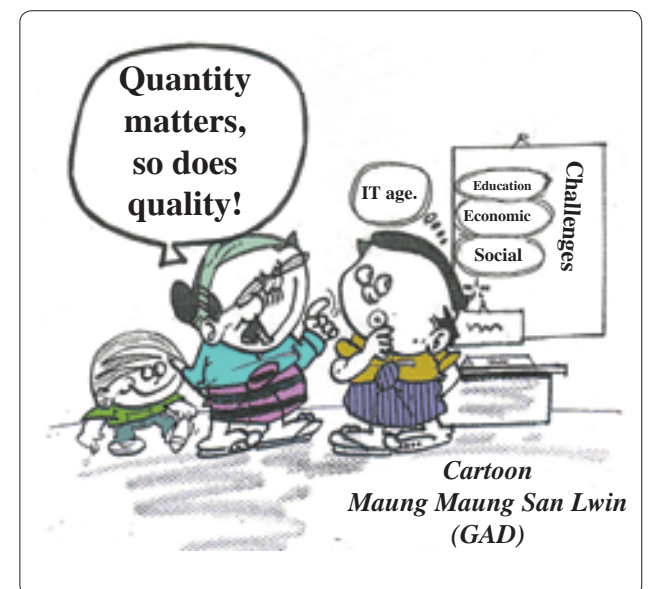
NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— Myanmar Ecumenical Central Committee marked Christmas by holding a Service at Myanmar Convention Centre on Mindhamma Road in Mayangon Township yesterday evening.

Union Minister for Religious Affairs Thura U Myint Maung and officials from the ministry, Myanmar Ecumenical

Central Committee members and Christians attended the Service. Rev K D Tulum of Yangon Kachin Baptist Church gave blessings and the Central Committee Patron Col Aung Din (Retd) extended greetings at the ceremony. Then, the union minister expressed words of honour.

Dinner was hosted to those present.

MNA



NATIONAL

Exaggerating Rakhine...

(from page 1)

To dispel the suspicion, the Government would provide correct facts and information and the diplomats and UN agencies can witness the actual situation.

The Ministry of Information also issued a press release strongly opposing the fabricated news and reportages.

With the aim of building a society which can live in peaceful coexistence in Rakhine State, the government has been making efforts at most to settle the issue, he said, and he also stressed the need for assisting in social and economic development of the local people in Rakhine State as part of efforts for settling out the issue.

For the social and economic development of the state, necessary arrangements have been made and the government itself has been providing humanitarian aids to the needy people in Rakhine State in a non-discriminatory manner, he added.

The government has been working together with UN agencies UNHCR, WFP,

OCHA, NGOs, INGOs, other governments of the countries which are interested in implementing the socio-economic development, and such way of cooperation is a meaningful and positive approach to help the people in Rakhine State.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham also expressed his belief that the diplomats and members of the UN agencies would witness the actual situation in Rakhine State, saying that he expected that the UN agencies would submit the reports which reflect the actual situation in Rakhine State to their respective headquarters.

Union Minister Lt-Gen Thein Htay briefed on June and October incidents, rehabilitation and humanitarian aids.

UN Resident Coordinator Nigam thanked the government for arranging the trip. He pointed out the formation of the commission as one of the government measures. He called for immediate response to the humanitarian issues. He called for providing shelter to displaced persons,

allotment of land, ending hostilities of the local people towards the aids groups, social harmony between two societies, and granting citizenships to the eligible persons in accord with 1982 citizenship law which he said is key to address the issue. He also thanked donor countries and urged them to donate more.

The ambassadors of Indonesia, Bangladesh, Turkey and Cambodia said they would continue to support of the government's efforts regarding the Rakhine State incident, acknowledging it is very subtle issue. They said their support was echoed at 21st ASEAN Summit, calling for addressing root issues.

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham in his concluding remarks thanked those present for their discussions and reiterated it was a fragile issue. He said the understanding of the history of the Rakhine State is required to resolve the issue. The Rakhine State incident is an obstacle while the government is initiating political, economic and social reforms. The June and October incidents were



Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham gives encouragement to villagers at Taungbway Village in Kyauktaw Township.—MNA

based on deep hostilities between the two societies. It would take time to resolve the issue, he said. He vowed the most possible effort of the government to overcome the challenge.

On arrival at Sambalay village in Minbya Township, the Vice-President and party met the local people and presented aids.

They comforted and interviewed the local people of Taunbwe village

in Kyauktaw Township and presented them with aids.

The Vice-President met local people at the briefing hall of Shwe Yin Aye village in Maungta Township and the diplomats interviewed the villagers. U Tha Sein of Shwe Yin Aye Village said he thanked the government for taking relief and rehabilitation measures.

The Vice-President and party viewed construction of make-shift tents for local

people in Thayaykonbaung village in Maungta Township and cordially greeted the local people.

They left Thayaykonbaung village for Sittway with helicopters. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the Rakhine State government provided rice bags, oil, salt, pulses and beans, instant food and blankets to the local people of the villages.—MNA

Union Border Affairs Minister and UN delegation look round relief camps in Myitkyina



Union Border Affairs Minister and party at Janmancong ward relief camp in Myitkyina.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— Accompanied by Ms. Baroness Valerie Amos, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Emergency Relief Coordinator and party, United Nations Coordinator in Myanmar Mr. Ashok Nigam and officials of Border Area and National Races Development Department, Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thein Htay arrived Myitkyina Airport by special flight on 6 December morning.

The talk between Union

Minister Lt-Gen Thein Htay, Ms. Baroness Amos and members and Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsaing, state ministers and department officials was held at Myitkyina Airport. At the talk, Kachin State chief minister said that armed conflicts had occurred in the state since June 2011. Local people had to flee to nearby region due to the conflicts. Those families were provided with food, shelter, healthcare, education under the supervision of Kachin

State government, joining hands by UN agencies, departments, INGOs, social organizations and wellwishers.

The union minister and party together with Kachin State chief minister visited relief camp in Janmancong ward in Myitkyina where they cordially greeted to families sheltering at the camp.

The Union minister and party left Myitkyina for Nay Pyi Taw by special flight in the evening.

MNA

National Day celebrated in townships of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec— 92nd Anniversary National Day Ceremony for 2012 took place at Yadanamon Hall of No 1 Basic Education High School in Nay Pyi Taw Pyinmana this morning, attended by Central Committee Chairman for holding 92nd National Day Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye, Central Committee Members Deputy Minister for Education Dr Ba Shwe, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint, Deputy Minister for Culture Daw Sanda Khin, Nay Pyi Taw Council

Member U Than Aung and department heads, officials concerned, members of social organization, teachers and students.

First, students from No.2 BEHS opened the ceremony by singing Pyimyanmar song.

Then, Pyinmana Township Administrator U Kyaw Tint read out the 92nd Anniversary National Day message sent by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Union ministers, deputy ministers and department heads presented prizes to

students who got awards at 92nd Anniversary National Day Commemorative essay and poem contests.

The Union ministers and party also attended 92nd Anniversary National Day at No.6 BEHS in Zabuthiri. At the ceremony, Zabuthiri Township Acting Administrator U Thein Zaw Win read out the 92nd Anniversary National Day message sent by the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Union minister and Deputy Ministers Dr Ba Shwe and Daw Sanda Khin gave awards to students who secured prizes at 92nd Anniversary National Day Commemorative essay and poem contests.

Similar ceremony held at Myoma Golden Jubilee Hall in No 1 BEHS in Lewe, attended by Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint, Nay Pyi Taw Council Member U Than Aung, director-general of Myanmar Examination Board and officials. 92nd Anniversary National Day Ceremonies were celebrated across the nation on grand scale this morning.—MNA



Union Minister for Education Dr Mya Aye gives prize to a student at 92nd Anniversary National Day commemorative essay and poem contests.—MNA



UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon arrives at the refugee camp in the border town of Islahiye of Gaziantep, Turkey, on 7 Dec, 2012. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, during his visit to Turkey on Friday, urged all sides in Syria to stop violence immediately.
XINHUA

Int'l community urged to address corruption problem

UNITED NATIONS, 8 Dec—The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday called on the international community to deal with the problem of corruption, which he said has become “all the more urgent”.

“As the international community strives to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and forge an agenda for economic and social progress in the years beyond, addressing the problem of corruption becomes all the more urgent,” Ban said in a message

marking the International Anti-Corruption Day, which falls on 9 December.

“The cost of corruption is measured not just in the billions of dollars of squandered or stolen government resources, but most poignantly in the absence of the hospitals, schools, clean water, roads and bridges that might have been built with that money and would have certainly changed the fortunes of families and communities,” he said.

The UN chief noted that corruption destroys

opportunities and creates rampant inequalities, which undermines human rights and good governance, stifles economic growth and distorts markets.

“Corruption also aggravates environmental problems, through the illegal dumping of hazardous waste and the illegal trade in animal and plant life facilitated by bribery and under-the-table incentives that determine who is awarded contracts, especially for highly lucrative, large-scale infrastructure projects,” Ban said.—Xinhua

Cablevision to raise Internet prices by \$5 a month

NEW YORK, 8 Dec—Cablevision Systems Corp, the New York-based cable operator, said on Thursday it would raise its Internet prices by \$5 in January, representing an average hike of 3.2 percent for customers' total monthly bills. The company said in a statement that prices for its video and phone services will not be affected and that prices for promotional packages, which generally last one year, will not rise.

But all customers who have Internet service as part of their video or phone package will see prices rise.

Cablevision said it had not raised Internet prices in a decade. It raised video prices in 2011, which saw customer bills rise by 2.88

percent on average.

The company said it has invested \$140 million in improving its Internet network, deployed more than 50,000 WiFi “hotspots,” and puts no usage caps on its service, unlike some cable competitors. Canaccord Genuity analyst Tom Eagan downgraded his Cablevision rating from “buy” to “hold” on 27 November and said that Cablevision would lose customers if it were to decide to raise prices not long after Superstorm Sandy. “Given the massive service outages among its subscribers (after Sandy), we don't believe the company can raise rates ... without incurring material customer churn,” Eagan said.

The cable provider,

which is controlled by the Dolan family, said in early November that costs from Sandy, which knocked out service for as many as half its customers, would be substantially higher than its \$16 million bill from Hurricane Irene in 2011.

Like bigger operators Comcast and Time Warner Cable, Cablevision has been losing customers to rivals such as satellite television provider DirecTV and telephone operator Verizon Communications.

Reuters

Montenegro to rebuild trade fleet with Chinese help

PODGORICA, 8 Dec—Montenegro plans to rebuild its trade fleet with Chinese help, Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic told Xinhua in an interview a day after beginning his seventh term.

“These ships will not be only able to pay off costs of their building, but also to

World Bank says youth employment to drive economic growth in Kenya

NAIROBI, 8 Dec—Expanding income generating opportunities for the youth is critical to enhancing economic progress, social cohesion and political stability in Kenya, a World Bank report launched in Nairobi on Wednesday said.

The report, “Kenya at Work, Energizing the economy and creating jobs”, stresses that youth employment will accelerate economic growth and attainment of Kenya's Vision 2030.

“Kenya is in the midst of a critical transition evidenced by a dramatic shift from agriculture based to wage and service sector employment where the skills and expertise of the youth are in huge demand,” the World Bank Country

Director for Kenya, Johannes Zutt told journalists in Nairobi.

Zutt noted that Kenya has a dynamic youth population which should be tapped to propel economic, social and economic transformation in the east African nation.

He challenged the government to prioritize youth employment in the national development agenda.

“Kenya needs to create more jobs to cater for the large number of people entering the workforce. The country is on the verge of a significant demographic opportunity, as the working age population is increasing faster than the number of dependants, both young and old,” Zutt said.

He added that Ken-

ya's demographic dividend presents an opportunity for growth of modern and knowledge based economy. An estimated 800,000 Kenyans enter the working age annually yet only 56,000 are absorbed in the formal job market.

Zutt regretted that nepotism, corruption, sexual harassment and skills mismatch prevent the youth from securing well paid jobs.

The country director pointed out that upgrading skills alongside fighting graft and discriminatory practices will expand employment opportunities for the youth. Kenya must maintain macroeconomic stability to create jobs for the burgeoning youthful population.—Xinhua



Rescuers carry a rescued miner to an ambulance at the flooded Furuixiang Coal Mine in Qitaihe, northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, on 7 Dec, 2012. Four miners who have been trapped in the flooded Furuixiang Coal Mine for more than five days were rescued early Friday morning. Rescuers are still searching for seven others who have been missing after the mine was flooded on Saturday. A total of 22 miners were working underground when the accident occurred. Six miners escaped, with another two escorted out of the mine at noon Sunday. Three miners have been confirmed dead.
XINHUA



Residents watch a fireworks show during the celebration called “Day of the Little Candles”, which mark the beginning of the Christmas in the city of Bogota, capital of Colombia, on 7 Dec, 2012.
XINHUA

BP to build new supercomputing facility for oil, gas search

HOUSTON, 8 Dec—British oil giant BP said Thursday it is building a new facility in Houston that will house what it says will be the world's largest complex of supercomputers for farther and faster search for oil and gas.

BP officials said con-

tribute and create means for new ships to be built in order to completely renew the Montenegrin trade fleet,” Djukanovic said.

While Montenegro has had a strong tradition in shipping dating back several centuries, its trade fleet was practically non-existent until

recently.

Due to UN sanctions on former Yugoslavia during the 1990s, of which Montenegro was a part, its fleet slowly decayed trapped in foreign ports until it was reduced to a ghost fleet of ships usable only for scrap metal.—Xinhua

struction has already begun on the three-storey, 110,000 square foot (about 9,900 square metre) facility, part of the company's five-year, 100-million-US dollar investment in high-performance computing, according to The Houston Chronicle website.

The new high-performance computing center, scheduled to open in 2013, will enable scientists to produce clear images of rock structures deep underground that can be used to identify potential drilling targets for oil and natural gas.—Xinhua

Insurgent leader killed in eastern Afghan operation

KABUL, 8 Dec—An insurgent leader was killed on Tuesday in an operation in eastern Afghan province of Kunar, the NATO-led coalition forces confirmed on Saturday.

“Afghan and coalition security forces confirmed today that the insurgent leader, Numan, and several other insurgents were killed during a security operation in Nari District, Kunar province, on Tuesday,” the coalition or International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said in a statement.

Numan facilitated the movement of weapons and money in Kunar and provided direct support to senior insurgent leaders in the province, some 180 km east of Kabul.

In addition, the Afghan and ISAF forces arrested a Taliban leader in Nahr-e Saraj District, Helmand province 555 km south of Kabul earlier Saturday, according to the statement.

The captured Taliban leader distributes improvised explosive device (IED) materials, the statement said, adding “during the operation, the security force also detained one suspected insurgent and seized IED-making materials,”

Xinhua

REGIONAL

Typhoon death toll in S Philippines hits 456

MANILA, 8 Dec—The death toll of Typhoon Bopha (local name Pablo) has climbed to 456 as more bodies were dug out from disaster-affected areas in southern Philippines, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) announced on Friday. The NDRRMC also reported that 445 people are injured and 533 others remain missing.

Some local media have put the death toll above 500.

As typhoon Bopha toppled down 28,000 houses, 5.3 million disaster victims in 27 provinces in southern and central Philippines fled their homes while 210,000 people

were huddling in temporary shelters.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino III led a high-level government delegation to visit areas hardest hit by Typhoon Bopha on Friday and ordered acceleration of disaster response operations to find and rescue the missing residents in typhoon-affected areas in Mindanao.

At a news briefing after inspecting areas in Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental, Aquino said he would declare a state of national calamity soon.

Under the national state of calamity, the government could freeze the prices of

basic commodities.

Aquino also ordered the interior minister, Mar Roxas, to lead a multi-agency investigation team to probe into the cause of high casualties brought about by Typhoon Bopha. The team will look into allegations that massive logging and mining activities contributed to the occurrence of deadly mudflows that killed over 120 people in the New Bataan town alone. The international community including China, Canada, the United States, Australia, Canada, Malaysia has either rendered or promised to donate relief funds for the victims.—Xinhua



Photo taken on 7 Dec, 2012 shows the typhoon-affected area in southern Province of Compostela Valley, the Philippines. The death toll of Typhoon Bopha, locally known as Pablo, has climbed to 456 as more bodies were dug out from disaster-affected areas in southern Philippines, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) announced on Friday.—XINHUA

Six gunned down in Pakistan's Karachi

ISLAMABAD, 8 Dec—At least six people were killed and several others injured in separate incidents of firing in Pakistan's southern port city of Karachi on Friday, local media and Police said.

The incidents of violence broke out early in the morning where two people were gunned down in Haji Camp area of the city, stirring tension in the area. Later, two bodies with eminent marks of torture were found from the Nazimabad area.

Two men were killed and several others injured in separate incidents of firing by unknown motor-cyclists in Abul Hassan Isphahani Road and New Mianwali areas of the city.

Commercial and educational activities halted in the affected areas and residents demanded deployment of more police force in the area.

The history of violence in Karachi dates back to early 1990's but the situation became uncontrollable since

the last two years, mainly because of the increasing sectarian, ethnic and political clashes in the city that is home to over 21 million people.

According to Karachi police, over 2,000 people have been shot down in the city since the beginning of 2012. Police is conducting search operations in various areas of the city to apprehend the people involved in deteriorating law and order situation of Karachi.

Earlier last week, the



Chinese State Councilor Liu Yandong (L) shakes hands with Cambodian Permanent Deputy Prime Minister Men Sam An in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 7 Dec, 2012. Chinese State Councilor Liu Yandong arrived here on Friday for a two-day official visit aiming to further enhance bilateral ties.—XINHUA

Thailand plans to run Chinese high-speed railway system

BANGKOK, 8 Dec—Thailand has planned to run Chinese-made high-speed railway systems designed to have time-saving, inexpensive trains for long-distance commuters shuttling between Bangkok and the northern city of Chiang Mai and between the capital and the northeastern province of Nong Khai, a senior official said here on Friday.

Thai Transport Minister Chatchat Sithiphan disclosed

that the Thai government has decided to go ahead with the multi-billion-US dollar railway projects under which the so-called Hexie Hao or China Railway Highspeed train system will be used. Construction of the initial stage of the railway project for the Bangkok-Chiang Mai route is scheduled to begin by the middle or second half of next year. The railway project for both routes will be completed until 2015, he said.—Xinhua

7.3-magnitude quake jolts off east coast of Honshu, Japan

TOKYO, 8 Dec—A 7.3-magnitude earthquake jolted off the east coast of Honshu, Japan, resulting in a tsunami warning for the country's northeastern coastal areas, according to Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA).

The quake occurred at 5:18 pm local time on Friday (08:18:24 GMT). The epicentre was initially determined at 37.8 degrees north latitude, 144.2 degrees east longitude, with a depth of 10 km, the JMA reported. The

tremor was followed by a 6.2-magnitude aftershock off the east coast of Honshu, at 08:31:14 GMT, the US Geological Survey said.

The epicentre, with a depth of 29.20 km, was initially determined to be at 37.9387 degrees north latitude and 143.7626 degrees east longitude. A warning for a two-metre tsunami was issued for the coast of Japan's northeastern Miyagi Prefecture. Injuries and damages are not immediately known.

Xinhua

Eight died, two injured in blaze in Cambodia's Siem Reap city

PHNOM PENH, 8 Dec—Eight persons died and two others injured in a strong fire early on Saturday in a night market in Cambodia's tourism hub Siem Reap city, Siem Reap provincial police chief Sath Nady said.

"Four adults and four children were killed in the blaze, and other two men

were seriously injured," he told Xinhua over telephone on Saturday morning. "The victims are vendors and their children who slept in their houses in the market when the accident occurred."

The accident happened at 2:00 am local time and was completely extinguished at around 5:00 am, he said.

Besides the human casualties, the fire destroyed hundreds of stalls in the market, which sold souvenir things to tourists.

"Electric fault was blamed for the accident," he said.

Siem Reap Province houses the world heritage Angkor Wat temple, which is

the country's largest cultural tourism destination. It is located some 315 kilometers northwest of Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia.

The cultural province attracted 1.64 million foreign visitors in the first ten months of this year, up 28 percent compared with the same period last year.—Xinhua



Local residents in a restaurant react after a strong earthquake hit the area in Iwaki, Fukushima prefecture, in this photo taken by Kyodo on 7 Dec, 2012.

KYODO NEWS

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MV HANNA MARIE VOY NO (1250)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV HANNA MARIE VOY NO (1250) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.12.2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T 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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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING (MALAY-
SIA) AGENCY SDN BHD

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA TABAH VOY NO (523)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TABAH VOY NO (523) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.12.2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T 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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Firefighters work at the site of a fire in the Paraesopolis slum, south of Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 5 Dec, 2012. The fire that lasted about 45 minutes caused damages at least to eight homes. So far no deaths or injuries reported.—XINHUA

Germany, Israel stress friendship despite differences over settlement plans

BERLIN, 8 Dec—Germany and Israel said on Thursday that their special and strategic relations could hardly be affected by their differences over the new Jewish settlement plans.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel told reporters that Germany hope that

Israel would give up its recent decision to build some 3,000 settler homes in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. "On the settlement issue, we agree to disagree. I expressed my views. It's an Israeli decision," Merkel said after meeting her Israeli counterpart Benjamin Ne-

tanyahu. The German government warned earlier that such a move was undermining confidence in "Israel's readiness to negotiate."

Most European nations were also displeased with Israel's new settlement plans, as the European Union, France, Britain, Spain,

Italy, Denmark, Sweden, as well as Australia, summoned their Israeli ambassadors as a gesture of protest. However, Netanyahu said he would not change the policy, adding that the root of the disputes is not about the settlements.

Xinhua

Buenos Aires covered in toxic cloud from chemical fire

Buenos Aires, 8 Dec—A pesticide container that caught fire in the port area of Argentina's capital Buenos Aires blanketed the city in a toxic cloud of smoke on Thursday, local Civil Defence Chief Daniel Russo said.

Authorities warned residents to stay indoors to

avoid breathing the fumes from the container, which may have contained trash as well as chemical compounds.

Russo said until the strong smell dissipated, officials recommended people remain "inside their houses and apartments, with the doors and windows

closed."

The smoke could cause "larger problems, such as eye irritations," Russo added. Due to the thickness of the cloud, subway lines and rail services in Buenos Aires were suspended to keep people away from the neighbourhoods of Retiro, Recoleta, Constitucion and

the financial square, where the fumes were strongest.

Authorities also canceled water transportation services between Buenos Aires and Uruguay's capital Montevideo, and flights from the local Metropolitan Airport, as a preventive measure.

Xinhua

Blast rocks district of Syrian capital, killing one

DAMASCUS, 8 Dec—At least one person was killed and 29 others injured when "terrorist" blast rocked the Syrian District of al-Mazzeah 86 on Thursday evening, the state-run SANA news agency said.

The blast rocked the area between a bakery and a school bus stop in al-Mazzeah 86, the report said, adding that children were among the injured.

The blast is the latest in a series of explosions that have become daily routines recently.

Earlier on Thursday, one person was killed when a roadside bomb went off near a branch of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in Damascus. Syria accuses al-Qaeda of carrying out such blasts.—Xinhua

Bomber posing as peace envoy wounds Afghan spy chief

KABUL, 8 Dec—A Taliban suicide bomber posing as a peace messenger wounded Afghanistan's intelligence chief in Kabul on Thursday, another sign that the government is struggling to improve security ahead of a NATO pullout in 2014. Asadullah Khalid was wounded when the bomber struck in a meeting at a guesthouse used by the National Directorate of Security (NDS).

"The bomber was a peace messenger sent by the Taliban to the Afghan government, around 3 pm in a

meeting with the head of NDS, detonated his explosives," said NDS spokesman Shafiqullah Tahiri.

"Right now the head of the NDS is in good condition. The surgery was a success." The Afghan Taliban claimed responsibility for the bombing, which highlighted Afghanistan's ongoing instability as US-led NATO troops prepare to withdraw by the end of 2014. After more than 10 years of war against Western forces as well as Afghan troops, militants are capable of striking in the

heart of the capital.

The attack was almost a carbon copy of last year's assassination of Afghanistan's chief peace negotiator, Burhanuddin Rabbani.

He died at his Kabul home when an insurgent posing as a peace envoy detonated explosives concealed in a turban.

The Afghan government has failed to draw the Taliban into face-to-face talks. In a video message released by his office, President Hamid Karzai said:

"The head of the NDS is now undergoing surgery ... the chief of the hospital has told me he is in a good condition and now we hope he will recover and he will be sent for further treatment elsewhere."—Reuters

Afghan policemen stand guard near the site of a suicide attack that wounded Afghanistan's Intelligence Chief Asadullah Khalid in Kabul on 6 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS



Fatal North Sea collision said to be human error

AMSTERDAM, 8 Dec—Human error was probably to blame for a collision that killed five crew and sank the Baltic Ace car carrier, its Greek manager said on Thursday, and Dutch rescuers said it was unlikely six missing seamen would be found alive.

The Dutch Defence Ministry said conditions were treacherous when the Corvus J container ship and the Baltic Ace collided, sending 1,400 new cars, mostly Mitsubishi from Japan and Thailand, to the seabed on Wednesday evening. But Panagiotis Kakoliris, operations manager at Stamco Ship Management Co, Ltd which managed the Baltic Ace, told Reuters

sea conditions were normal when the 23,500-tonne ship was lost. The cause of the crash, which killed two Poles, two Filipinos and a Ukrainian, was unclear. Kakoliris said technical failure was extremely unlikely because the ship was just five years old, in very good condition and had passed a safety inspection in August.

"We had a very violent

collision which was the reason for the quick sinking of the vessel," Kakoliris said. "It was most probably hit in the side and that's why water entered in huge quantities with this result.

"You cannot control some things. This happened in good weather, normal visibility, so I feel most probably there was a human error," Kakoliris said. He did not say who he thought was responsible for the collision. It was not known if the Polish captain, who was released from a hospital, had spoken to authorities about the collision 50 nautical miles from Rotterdam, Europe's largest port.

The owners of the Corvus J, German shipping firm Juengerhans, did not discuss responsibility for the collision in a statement published on its website. It said it would "offer its full cooperation into the investigation." "The only thing we know from the crew is that there was a wind force of 6-7 out on sea," a company spokesman said, adding that was not unusual for the time of year.—Reuters



Dutch fishing boat OUDDORP 6 (front) and a Dutch navy ship take part in rescue efforts after a collision between the Baltic Ace, a car carrier sailing under a Bahamas flag, and the Corvus J, a container ship from Cyprus, in the North Sea on 5 Dec, 2012 in this handout photo released to Reuters by the Dutch Defence Ministry on 6 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

ENTERTAINMENT

“Gangnam Style” singer Psy apologizes for past anti-US songs

LOS ANGELES, 8 Dec—The South Korean pop singer behind the viral smash hit “Gangnam Style” apologized on Friday for past concerts featuring anti-American lyrics, ahead of a holiday performance to be attended by US President Barack Obama and his family.

Psy issued the apology after reports surfaced in the United States on Friday about his participation in two performances critical of the US military in 2004. Psy’s “Gangnam Style”



South Korean rapper Psy performs at KIIS FM’s Jingle Ball concert in Los Angeles, California on 3 Dec, 2012. REUTERS



Korean pop and dance video is now the most-watched video ever on YouTube, with more than 900 million views since it was first uploaded in July. “While I’m grateful for the freedom to express one’s self, I’ve learned there are

limits to what language is appropriate and I’m deeply sorry for how these lyrics could be interpreted,” the rapper said in a statement.

“I will forever be sorry for any pain I have caused by those words,” he added.

Reuters

Top theatre director targets young with \$16 seats

LONDON, 8 Dec—One of Britain’s top directors Michael Grandage is targeting the next generation of theatre-goers by offering one quarter of all tickets to his upcoming, star-studded season for 10 pounds (\$16) each, a fraction of what they would normally cost.

The award-winning 50-year-old has just set up the Michael Grandage Company after a successful 10-year tenure at the Donmar Warehouse in London, and has announced a five-play season that opens on Monday with wartime drama “Privates on Parade”.

Other theatres have introduced similar schemes to fill seats and draw in new audiences, but Grandage’s is on a large scale and aims to ensure that the ageing population of regular theatre-

goers is replaced over time. “The centre of what we’re addressing is changing the demographic of a normal West End audience,” Grandage said.

“We need to focus on core audiences because they are the people at the moment keeping the West End open,” he told Reuters. “They will eventually die, and what we are doing is to make sure there is a group of people who replace that audience.”

“If we don’t find them early and get them excited about coming to the theatre early, it’s not something you tend to stumble across in middle age,” he added.

Over the 15-month season, the company is reserving 100,000 seats at 10 pounds each out of a total of around 400,000. The top price of 57.50 pounds will partly “subsidise” the cheaper tickets, he said.

Reuters



Theatre director Michael Grandage accepts his award for Best Direction of a Play for works in “Red” at the American Theatre Wing’s 64th annual Tony Awards ceremony in New York on 13 June, 2010.—REUTERS

Singer James Taylor suggested for lead role in “Lincoln”

WASHINGTON, 8 Dec—Singer-songwriter James Taylor says he doesn’t see the resemblance, but he was pitched - without success— to play the role of US President Abraham Lincoln in the new film.

Taylor told a packed audience at the National Press Club on Friday that Oscar-winning musician John Williams—who composed the soundtrack for “Lincoln”—had pushed for Taylor to play the lead role in Steven Spielberg’s new film.

The role of Lincoln in the historical drama ultimately

went to Oscar winner Daniel Day-Lewis.

“John wanted me to play that part. He actually stood up for me there and suggested me at one point,” said Taylor, 64, adding, “It was never going to happen.”

The “Fire and Rain” singer, who has no professional acting experience, said he was flattered that some people thought Day-Lewis’ portrayal of Lincoln reminded them of him. But he did not see much resemblance aside from the fact that they were “tall and somewhat skinny.”

“He doesn’t look like me



Musician James Taylor performs at a talk titled “Beyond Religion: Ethics, Values and Wellbeing” in Boston, Massachusetts on 14 October, 2012.—REUTERS

to me, but I live in here, so I’m apt to notice the difference,” Taylor said.

British-born actor Day-Lewis, who already has two Oscars, is seen as a front runner to take home another golden statuette

at the Academy Awards in February. Taylor said he had no ambitions to go into acting after what he called “an interesting ride” of a performance career in which he essentially played himself.—Reuters

Springsteen, Alabama Shakes top Rolling Stone’s 2012 best music



Bruce Springsteen performs with the E Street Band during a concert in East Rutherford, New Jersey, on 19 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 8 Dec—Veteran rocker Bruce Springsteen and newcomer blues-rock band Alabama Shakes landed the top awards in Rolling Stone magazine’s

annual list of the year’s best music on Friday, which featured many of next year’s leading Grammy nominees.

Springsteen’s 17th studio album “Wrecking

Ball” topped the magazine’s list of best albums, with the magazine calling it “rock’s most pointed response to the Great Recession.”

Springsteen, 63, came in ahead of hip hop artist Frank Ocean’s debut “Channel Orange” at No 2 and former White Stripes front man Jack White’s debut solo effort, “Blunderbuss” at No 3, in the annual list selected and compiled by Rolling Stone editors.

Springsteen, Ocean and White all landed Grammy nods, which were announced earlier this week.

The rest of the top ten albums included Bob Dylan’s “Tempest,” Green Day’s “¡Uno!,” Neil Young and

Crazy Horse’s “Psychedelic Pill,” Kendrick Lamar’s “good kid, m.A.A.d city” and Fiona Apple’s “The Idler Wheel is Wiser...”

“Hold On” by newcomer blues-rockers Alabama Shakes was named the top song of the year, beating off popular tracks by Ocean, White, Springsteen, Dylan and Kanye West in the top 10.

While both the albums and songs lists were dominated by rock and rap artists both old and new, country-pop star Taylor Swift was a surprising entry at No 2 on the best songs list with her infectious chart-topping hit song “We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together.”—Reuters

Rolling Stones, DiCaprio to join NY Sandy benefit concert

NEW YORK, 8 Dec—Legendary rock band The Rolling Stones, “Twilight” star Kristen Stewart and actor Leonardo DiCaprio have joined the line-up for a fundraising concert in New York next week for victims of Hurricane Sandy, organizers said on Friday.

The Stones, who last week launched a five-concert celebration of their 50th anniversary as a band, will take the stage with previously announced stars Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen, Kanye West, Bon Jovi, Billy Joel, The Who and others at the 12 December concert in New York City’s Madison Square Garden.

Another 18 celebrities, including Billy Crystal, Chelsea Clinton, Quentin Tarantino, and Jon Stewart will take part either on stage or in a live telethon, the organizers said in a statement.

The concert, which is already sold out, is shaping up to be one of the biggest US fundraisers since the October 2001 “Concert for New York City” organized by

McCartney in response to the 11 September, 2001 attacks on the United States.

That show—featuring more than 60 musicians, actors, and comedians—honoured fire fighters, police and emergency workers and raised more than \$30 million for 9/11 charities.

Organizers said some two billion people worldwide will have access to the “12-12-12” benefit on television, radio, in movie theatres and online. It will also be streamlined on digital billboards in New York’s Times Square, and in Paris and London.

“12-12-12” will be the largest concert event to ever hit the stage at Madison Square Garden, featuring the biggest names in music and the world’s leading entertainers,” event producers



Mick Jagger performs with the Rolling Stones at the O2 Arena in London on 25 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

Clear Channel Entertainment, The Weinstein Company and the Madison Square Gardens Company said in a joint statement. Reuters

Unbeaten City cannot afford to lose derby says Mancini

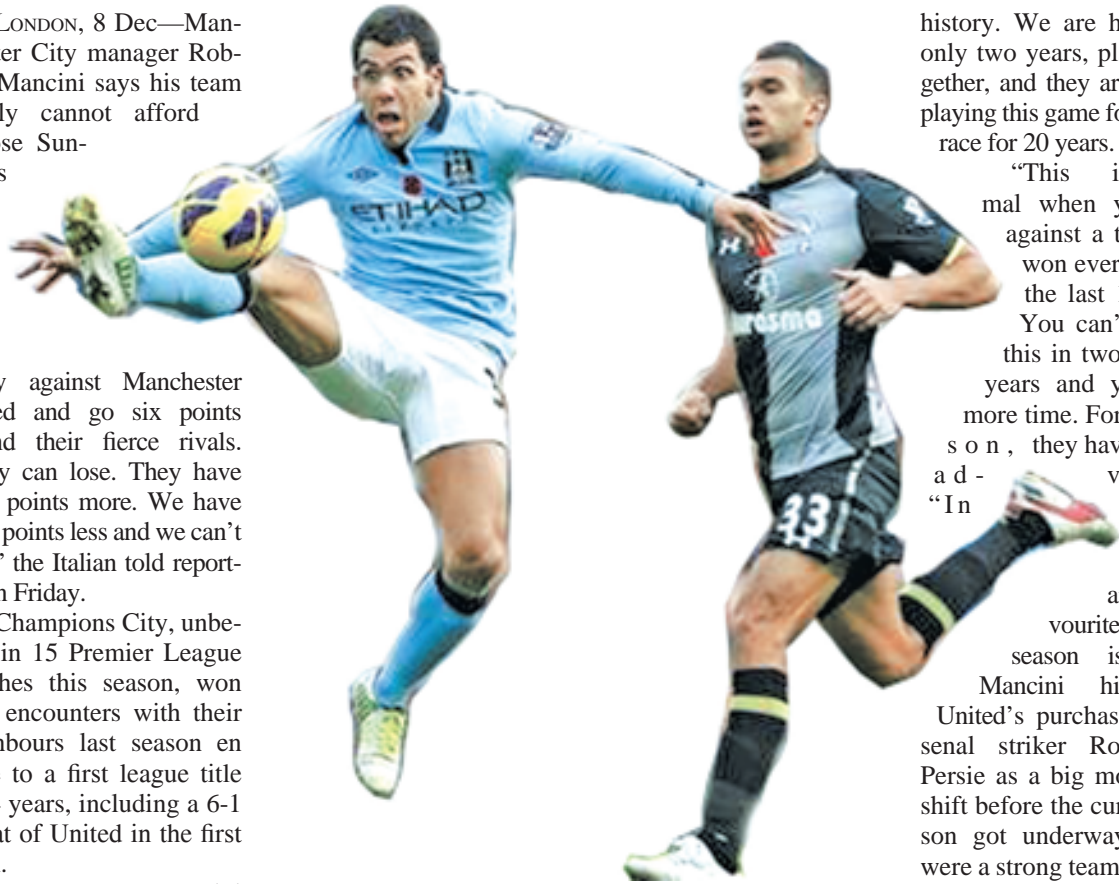
LONDON, 8 Dec—Manchester City manager Roberto Mancini says his team simply cannot afford to lose Sunday's

derby against Manchester United and go six points behind their fierce rivals. "They can lose. They have three points more. We have three points less and we can't lose," the Italian told reporters on Friday.

Champions City, unbeaten in 15 Premier League matches this season, won both encounters with their neighbours last season en route to a first league title in 44 years, including a 6-1 defeat of United in the first clash.

However, Mancini said United were always favourites because of their pedigree over the past two decades.

"We can't change the



Manchester City's Carlos Tevez (L) jumps for the ball ahead of Tottenham Hotspur's Steven Caulker during their English Premier League soccer match at The Etihad Stadium in Manchester, northern England, on 11 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

Soccer

history. We are here (for) only two years, playing together, and they are used to playing this game for the title race for 20 years.

"This is normal when you play against a team that won everything in the last 15 years. You can't change this in two or three years and you need more time. For this reason, they have a small advantage.

"In this moment United are favourites but the season is long."

Mancini highlighted United's purchase of Arsenal striker Robin van Persie as a big momentum shift before the current season got underway. "They were a strong team and then they bought Van Persie and (Shinji) Kagawa. They put another player that scores 25 goals into the squad," he said.

Reuters



Manchester United's manager Alex Ferguson and his wife Catherine attend the unveiling of a sculpture commemorating his career at the club, at Old Trafford stadium in Manchester, northern England on 23 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

Title race between United and City says Ferguson

LONDON, 8 Dec—Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson predicted on Friday the Premier League title will be won by either his team or their fierce rivals Manchester City.

The teams clash at the Etihad Stadium on Sunday (1330 GMT) with United three points clear of champions City. They have already opened up a gap on third-placed Chelsea who are a further seven points adrift.

"I think the two sides have that gap over Chelsea, Arsenal and Tottenham. It

will be difficult to think the two of us will collapse. I think it will be between the two of us," Ferguson told reporters. Even if United end City's unbeaten start to the season on Sunday, Ferguson said a six-point advantage at this stage of the season would not be that significant.

"It won't mean a great deal because there's such a long way to go until the end of the season," he said. "You can never be sure and you can lose to anyone. That's the kind of league we're in. It's a tough league."—Reuters

Schwartzel races to Thailand lead before darkness falls

BANKOKO, 8 Dec—Charl Schwartzel's second successive round of seven-under-par 65 gave him a four-shot clubhouse lead at the Thailand Golf Championship on Friday.

The 2011 Masters winner appeared to have recovered from the rib injury that has affected his swing for much of the season and was on 14-under-par 130 after 36 bogey-free holes in the \$1-million Asian Tour event.

Indian-born Swede Daniel Chopra had his second successive 67 to lie four shots behind Schwartzel before second-round play was suspended due to darkness.

Twenty-five players will return early on Saturday to finish their rounds. After a 90-minute delay due to a lightning storm, last year's runner-up Schwartzel rushed to the 18th tee box to complete his round in semi-darkness to earn a few precious extra hours in bed on Saturday.

"We were running to finish. I didn't want to come back at 5 am to play one hole - (I'm) happy to have a bit of a sleep," the 28-year-



Charl Schwartzel of South Africa.

old South African said. "It has been really solid. I've put two great rounds together. I hit the ball nicely and gave myself a lot of chances.

"It is still a long way to go. It's half the job done. From my side, I just have to keep playing." Asian Tour rookie Masanori Kobayashi of Japan briefly held the lead before signing for a five-under-par 67 to drop five shots off the lead.

Sergio Garcia was three shots further back

with big-hitting Scott Hend of Australia after the Spaniard carded his second straight 69.

Garcia turned in 36 but bounced back with three birdies in the closing five holes.

"I'm in a decent position. I would like to do better for the weekend but hopefully if I get a good weekend then I might have a chance," said Garcia.

Joining him on 138 was Masters champion Bubba Watson who sank three birdies in his opening eight holes but could not keep the momentum going and settled for a two-under-par 70.

Defending champion Lee Westwood was left to lament his poor putting after carding a three-under-par 69 to fall nine shots off the lead. "Just okay, played alright. I wasn't making anything," the world number six said. "I've made nothing the first two days and left too many out there - missed too many short ones which is the main difference really," said the Englishman.

Reuters

Terry out of Japan trip, Lampard back in squad

LONDON, 8 Dec—Chelsea skipper John Terry has been ruled out of next week's Club World Cup in Japan although vice-captain Frank Lampard will return to the squad for Saturday's Premier League game at Sunderland (1500 GMT).

Terry hurt his knee in his comeback game against Liverpool last month, having served a four-match domestic ban for racially abusing Queens Park Rangers defender Anton Ferdinand.

The European champions play a Club World Cup semi-final against Mexicans Monterrey or Ulsan Hyundai of South Korea on Thursday. "Terry



Chelsea's captain John Terry.

will not go to Japan because the doctor has warned of inflammation and said that

flying is not the best idea so he will stay here and obviously miss the Sunderland game as well," interim manager Rafael Benitez told reporters on Friday.

"The first conversation I had with him, he was quite excited because it's a new competition and a great opportunity, but after we spoke with the doctor it was decided that he would stay here." Chelsea's third-highest all-time scorer Lampard has struggled with a calf injury all season and the midfielder has not played since 23 October. "Lampard has

been training today, he's in the squad for Sunderland and if everything is fine he will go to Japan," added Benitez.—Reuters

Espanyol concede late in draw at home to 10-man Sevilla

BARCELONA, 8 Dec—Struggling Espanyol squandered a chance to climb out of the relegation places when they conceded a goal in added time to draw 2-2 at home to 10-man Sevilla in La Liga on Friday.

The match at Espan-

yol's Cornellà El Prat stadium in Barcelona was an unappealing spectacle littered with fouls and was a reminder how far the two clubs have fallen since they met in the final of the UEFA Cup in 2007.

Joan Verdu put the

home side ahead from the penalty spot in the 13th minute before Sevilla midfielder Ivan Rakitic netted a 24th-minute penalty of his own after a Cristian Stuani foul on Geoffrey Kondogbia.

Reuters

GENERAL

Focus Myanmar TV Programme

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(9-12-12 09:30 am ~ 10-12-12 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * The difference between Samatha meditation and Vipassana meditation (Part-3)
- * News
- * Snow Wonderland
- * News
- * "Face of Myanmar" Asia New Star Model 2013
- * News
- * A Famous Festival & Its Fantastic Fair
- * News
- * Changing Trend of

- Weaving Industry
- * News
- * Eternal Rays
- * News
- * Enforce the Green
- * News
- * Myanmar Movie "Entangled In Attachment"

MYANMAR TV

(9-12-2012, Sunday)

- 7:00 am
- 1. Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw
- 7:10 am
- 2. Dhama Puja Song
- 7:25 am
- 3. To Be Healthy Exercise
- 7:40 am
- 4. Nice & Sweet Song
- 7:50 am
- 5. Health Programme

- 8:00 am
- 6. (38) Phyar Mingalars
- 8:15 am
- 7. Teleplay (Health)
- 11:00 am
- 8. Martial Song
- 11:05 am
- 9. Musical Programme
- 11:20 am
- 10. Round Up Of The Week's International News
- 12:30 pm
- 11. How It's Works
- 12:50 pm
- 12. Myanmar Movies
- 2:25 pm
- 13. "World AIDS Day Documentary" (2012)
- 4:25 pm
- 14. Song of National Races

- 4:30 pm
- 15. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Second Year (Geography)
- 4:45 pm
- 16. Songs For Upholding National Spirit
- 4:55 pm
- 17. Documentary
- 5:15 pm
- 18. Sing & Enjoy
- 6:20 pm
- 19. Cartoon Series
- 6:40 pm
- 20. Tamyethnar Takwetsar
- 7:00 pm
- 21. TV Drama Series
- 8:00 pm
- 22. News
- 23. TV Drama Series
- 22. New Melody

NLM

Word! Learning English

You would feel we're a bit stuck in hospitals this week. Don't worry! There will be the social networking as well even though it is facing some data protection legal challenges. Bleeding healthcare and royal nausea: which got more media attention?

"We have reached one minute to midnight in this battle."

Marc Sprenger

Director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

The director told to Reuters how far the hygiene issue at debt-hit Greek hospitals has reached. According to the Greek government, the healthcare system is about 2 billion Euros in debt, forcing it to face drastic spending cut. Doctors complained about the cut in a placard that hung up in a Greek hospital in October that reads, "The health system is bleeding."

"She has been sleeping on and off."

A nurse

King Edward VII hospital

The royal pregnancy stirred the media worldwide. Duchess of the Cambridge Kate has come under the spotlight of the world media again after the topless photo scandal, but now as a mother-to-be of the prince who will be in line to the throne of the United Kingdom. Two presenters of Australian 2Day radio station made headlines for themselves while covering the hospitalization of the pregnant wife of Prince William by putting through to the ward of the Duchess in disguise of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles. In her answer to the two presenters, the nurse said Kate is sleeping now and again which she said is good for the Duchess.

"Facebook also gave the authority the runaround." europe-v-facebook

Ireland privacy campaign group

The group is planning to sue the famous social network company which has its international headquarters in Ireland. The group blamed Irish authorities for being "miles away" from other European counterparts in "understanding of the law" and expressed that the social network giant is wheeling and dealing.

NLM



Visitors take photos of orchids presented during an exhibition in Jinan, capital of east China's Shandong Province. Over 50 species of orchids from southeast China's Taiwan were on display. XINHUA

Schumacher wrong to return, says Ecclestone



Mercedes Formula One driver Michael Schumacher of Germany gestures during a photo call before the Brazilian F1 Grand Prix at Interlagos circuit in Sao Paulo on 25 Nov, 2012. —REUTERS

LONDON, 8 Dec—Michael Schumacher should have stayed in retirement rather than risked his reputation in a disappointing Formula One comeback with Mercedes, Bernie Ecclestone said on Friday.

"I would rather he had stopped as a seven-time world champion than stopping now," the commercial supremo told the official formula1.com website.

"People new to the sport — people who have joined the F1 fan fraternity just recently — will remember Michael now, not as he was. They don't see the hero that he was but the human that can

fail," added the 82-year-old. Schumacher retired for the second time after finishing seventh in last month's season-ending Brazilian Grand Prix. In three years with Mercedes, he had only one podium finish and no wins to add to his record tally of 91.

The 43-year-old German had first retired in 2006, when he was with Ferrari and had won five titles in a row with them to add to the two championships he won with Benetton in the 1990s.

Ecclestone, whose own future at the helm of the sport has been increasingly questioned as legal problems mount up and he gets older, drew a parallel with his own situation although he made clear he had no plans to retire.

"I think the important thing is...to know when you can't do what you used to do anymore and then hand it over to somebody else. I hope that's what I can do: when I feel I can't deliver, I will certainly say goodbye," he said.—Reuters

Mon State Education Department recites Dhammacakka and Pathana recitation



NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec—The prize presentation for the second Dhammacakka and Pathana recitation contest, organized by Mon State Education Department

family, was held at the Dhammayon in Zaygyo Ward in Mawlamyine on 4 December.

Mon State Minister for Social Affairs Dr Hla

Oo, Bamar National Race Minister U Thet Win, wellwisher U Khin Win and officials presented prizes to the respective winners.

Altogether 41 teams from Basic Education High and Middle Schools from 10 townships of Mon State participated in the recitation contest from 20 November to 4 December.—MNA

Alpine skiing-Versatile Maze wins super combined

ST MORITZ, (Switzerland), 8 Dec—Tina Maze showed off her vastly improved all-round skills to win a super-combined event for her third victory of the Alpine ski World Cup season on Friday.

The Slovenian giant slalom world champion was fastest in both legs of the event with a combined time of two minutes 1.76 seconds.

Maze, who leads the

five World Cup specialties.

"I came to St Moritz to win all three races and I don't care if the others think I'm arrogant," said Maze, who will also race a giant slalom in the Swiss resort on Sunday.

"It's true that I have not yet won a super-G but I work so hard that I have my chances. To have won both the super-G leg and the slalom today makes it feel like a double victory," added Maze, who won the



Tina Maze of Slovenia reacts in the finish area after the Super-G run of the women's Alpine skiing World Cup Super Combined race at the Corviglia in the Swiss mountain resort of St Moritz on 7 Dec, 2012—REUTERS

overall standings, kissed her skis after the morning super-G leg, the only discipline in which she has yet to win a World Cup race.

If she repeats the feat in Saturday's super-G on the same course, Maze would become only the sixth woman to have won in all

only downhill of her career in St Moritz.

After also winning the two giant slaloms held so far, Maze leads Germany's Maria Hoefl-Riesch, who was fourth on Friday, by 128 points in the overall standings.

Reuters

Press conference on crisis in Rakhine State held

YANGON, 8 Dec—A press conference on crisis in Rakhine State was held at Wunzin Minyaza Hall in Foreign Affairs Ministry on Pyay Road here this evening.

Present on the occasion were Union ministers Lt-Gen Thein Htay, U Khin Yi, Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin, deputy ministers, Dean of Diplomatic Corps in Myanmar Singaporean Ambassador Mr Robert Chua, foreign ambassadors,



A press conference was held on crisis in Rakhine State at Wunzin Minyaza Hall in Foreign Affairs Ministry on Pyay Road.—MNA



charge d' affaires, personnel from UN agencies, member correspondents of Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club, journalists for local media, and invited guests.

Union Minister U Khin Yi answers questions during the press conference.—MNA

Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thein Htay elaborated on current condition of Rakhine State, cooperation with international organizations and NGOs, rehabilitation works, provision of foodstuffs, accommodations, medicines and aids by the government, the visit of

UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Assistance and party to Rakhine State, safety of humanitarian aid staff, creation of harmonious environment as a result of mutual respect and tolerance between two communities.

The ambassadors and officials, UN Coordinator Mr Ashok Nigam, reporters

and Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Shwe Maung of Buthidaung Township Constituency raised questions. Union ministers Lt-Gen Thein Htay, U Khin Yi, Deputy Minister Police Maj-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun replied to questions.

MNA

Apple and Samsung: A defining rivalry in a changed mobile market

JAKARTA/SEOUL, 8 Dec—What a difference three months can make.

At the end of August, Apple Inc seemed on top of the world. Fresh off a resounding \$1.05 billion US legal victory over arch-foe Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, the company was gearing up to launch the fifth iteration of its iconic iPhone. Just a week prior, its market value had surpassed Microsoft Corp's and it became the most valuable technology company in history.

That was then. Since winning a landmark U.S. patent infringement case in August, its stock has dived 18 percent, wiping \$108 billion from its value. But the shares of defeated party Samsung have surged, rising 16 percent.

The dramatic reversal has sparked raging market speculation. Some pundits say concerns are growing about the seemingly inexorable advance of Google Inc's Android, the rival software championed by Samsung. Others say fears about higher capital gains taxes have prompted investors made rich by Apple's stock-price growth to sell.

But it is the Apple-Samsung rivalry that defines a global mobile device industry with a growing list of struggling players.

Together, the two mobile juggernauts account for more

than 1 in 2 smartphones sold globally.

Analysts say Samsung is beginning to shed its aura as a "fast follower" and becoming a serious innovator, while Apple has failed to deliver on a truly seminal product in years - the oft-rumored Apple TV remains a well-honed rumor.

"Apple's actions have started to appear as if innovation is slowing and they're defending turf with a zero-sum market view rather than continuing to innovate as a world-beating leader," said Tony Nash, managing director at IHS, a business information provider.

Reuters



Russian discus Olympic medalist suspended for doping

MOSCOW, 8 Dec—Russia's Olympic women's discus silver medalist Darya Pishchalnikova was suspended on Saturday for testing positive for anabolic steroid, Russia's anti-doping agency RUSADA reported on its official site.

The 27-year-old was suspended - backdated to October 31 - by the sport's ruling body the International Association of Athletics Federations

(IAAF) after she failed a doping test on May 20 this year.

It is her second offence as she received a two year ban for manipulating doping samples along with six other Russian athletes in 2008.

Pishchalnikova took silver behind Croatia's Sandra Perkovic, who also served a six month ban for doping in 2011, in London.

Xinhua

Weather Forecast for Second Dekad of December, 2012 (Issued on 8-12-2012)

Bay of Bengal Condition

A Low Pressure Area may form over the south Bay of Bengal. Weather will be partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and partly cloudy elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

Rainy Days

Rainy days are expected about (3 to 4) days in Taninthayi Region, Kachin and Mon States and about (1) to (2) days in the remaining Regions and States.

Night Temperature

Night Temperature will be below normal in Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin and Kayah States and about normal in the remaining Regions and States.

Fog Condition

Fog days are expected about (5) to (6) days in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Chin, Shan and Kayah States and (3) to (4) days in the remaining Regions and States.

Department of Meteorology and Hydrology

Sneijder left out of Inter squad to face Napoli

ROME, 8 Dec—Wesley Sneijder has been left out of the Inter Milan squad that will take on second-placed Napoli at the San Siro on Sunday (1945 GMT).

Inter, who are third, listed coach Andrea Stramaccioni's selection on the club website (www.inter.it) on Saturday.

Sneijder, who is involved in a contract dispute with Inter, did not train with the squad on Friday and the reason given was because he had a leg muscle problem, however, his wife, Yolande Cabau wrote on Twitter: "He's not injured! Wesley is just fine."

Stramaccioni was visibly angered during Saturday's news conference when reporters asked him why the club said the Dutch international was injured.

"The only thing that matters to me, is what the player says to my face,



Inter Milan's Wesley Sneijder

and as for everything else, including Twitter, I really couldn't give a damn," he said.

"Sneijder is fine, yesterday he only had a muscle strain and like many others took the decision to have a day of physiotherapy, but today he took part in training," added Stramaccioni.

Inter have 31 points, two behind Napoli with Juventus top of the table on 35.

Reuters

Red Cross marks World HIV Day

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Dec—Myanmar Red Cross Society marked World HIV Day 2012 at its headquarters here yesterday. Messages from the Union Health Minister and United Nations Secretary General were read on the occasion.

The attendees prayed for the AIDS victims in silence, lightning candles. Between 2011 and 2015,

World HIV Day has the theme of "Getting to zero: zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths". Myanmar is making all-out efforts to meet the MDGs of the UN by 2015, cooperating with 11 national NGOs like MCWAA and MAAF, seven UN agencies and 21 INGOs.

MNA