

President U Thein Sein sends felicitations to Bhutani King, Bhutani PM

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Dec—On the occasion of the National Day of Bhutan which falls on 17 December 2012, U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan and His Excellency Lyonchen Jigmi Y. Thinley, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan.—MNA

Political stability, cessation of armed conflicts, socio-economic development a must: President

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein arrived in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, this morning.

He was welcomed there by Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region U Myat Ko, Speaker of Taninthayi Region Hluttaw U Htin Aung Kyaw, Commander of Coastal Region Command Maj-Gen Khin Maung Htay, regional ministers, members of the social organizations, teachers, students and local ethnic people at the Dawei Airport.

The President met with departmental officials, members of the social organizations and townsenders at the City Hall.

During the meeting, Chief Minister of Taninthayi Region U Myat Ko reported on plans for building human resources development training school, for building shopping malls, private banks and hotels, power supply to Dawei and towns in Dawei District, a 150-bed private hospital,

transportation, industrial zones and border trade camps and maintaining the water course of the Dawei River.

Aftwards, Union Ministers at the President Office U Tin Naing Thein and U Soe Thein reported on opportunities for foreign investment and prospects for economic development in Taninthayi Region.

Speaking on the occasion, President U Thein Sein expressed his hope that Taninthayi Region would achieve development though per capita income of the Dawei is currently lower than those of Kawthoung and Myeik. The nation was transformed into democracy beginning 1 April 2011 and the Constitution came into force together with the convening of the First Hluttaw session. Burgeoning of democratic practices is in good shape supported by three powers—legislation, executive and judiciary.

The two-year-old new government



President U Thein Sein views reference books and equipment displayed at Dawei University.—MNA

was introducing reform processes for ensuring rule of law reinforced by peace and stability and socio-economic development inspired by 60 million people in the country. So we were moving towards to the

emergence of democratic nation in accord with aspiration of the people, he said.

In translating the nation into peace and prosperity, there are two parts—political stability and cessation of armed conflicts. We had taken necessary measures for ensuring all-inclusiveness in the political configuration, setting aside the differences and building a common ground. Union spirit played a pivotal role in non-disintegration of the Union. In spite of being different, peace was witnessed in eastern part and southeast of the country through preliminary peace agreements with national races armed groups. The President said he would like to see political stability and cessation of armed conflicts and socio-economic development of the 60 million people in the country.

He underscored the need of qualified human resources who could harness rich natural resources and the duty lies

with the education sector. Foreign investments with substantial capitals and technologies were invited, he said. Lack of regulations in allowing foreign investments could beset more adverse consequences than favourable outcomes, he said. The Foreign Investment Law, which is one of the integral parts of legislation, has been enacted, he said.

He recalled the experiences of 20 years of economic sanctions and said the country is now establishing amicable relations with all world countries through its unbiased foreign policies. Myanmar's reforms earned support not only of ASEAN but of the wider international community, he said. He said that the best example is the visit of US President Mr Obama. US eased sanctions and EU rewarded generalized system of preference for products from Myanmar.

He said the officials have town plans and city plans ahead of entry of

foreign investors. He said that the nation sees good prospects. He urged all to do work on a self-reliant basis. He pointed out that not only departmental personnel but also local people are to take responsibilities for regional development. Seven regions, seven states and Nay Pyi Taw Council Area are to show off their excellent performances in competitiveness. The authorities of regions and states are to join hands with the local people in their works.

According to the UN Millennium Development Goals, he stressed the need to reduce poverty rate from 26 per cent to 16 per cent by 2015. Eight points of rural development and poverty alleviation are being undertaken. There are over 1200 villages in Taninthayi Region and over 60000 across the nation. The government and the people are to harmoniously carry out rural development tasks.

After the meeting, the President cordially greeted the attendees.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec—The following is the reproduction of the "Thein Sein is ST's Asian of the Year" appeared on The Straits Times newspaper on 15 December.—NLM

Thein Sein is ST's Asian of the Year

PRESIDENT Thein Sein of Myanmar is The Straits Times' inaugural Asian of the Year.

Mr Thein Sein, 67, was chosen by top editors of this newspaper for his role in loosening political and economic controls in Myanmar. This has led to democracy icon and Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi taking a seat in Parliament, the lifting of Western sanctions and a surge of investor interest in the once-reclusive nation.

By his actions, he has also opened new strategic opportunities for his country and set in motion forces that could have a

positive impact on not just South-east Asia, but also the wider Asian continent.

Properly harnessed, these hold the potential to lift millions of people from poverty in a nation rich in natural resources, but held back because of a closed economy and decades of suspicion towards foreigners.

"There was a time when Myanmar's generals were known for holding lavish weddings for their children," said Mr Warren Fernandez, editor of The Straits Times. "The steps taken by Thein Sein have put Myanmar back in the news, but this time, for better reasons. His bold

and brave efforts will give his people hope of joining their Asian neighbours in their march to modernity."

The Asian of the Year award, to be announced every December, will recognise a person or organisation from the region that has contributed significantly to changing lives for the better, whether in his own country or the wider region.

The Straits Times, established in 1845, is uniquely placed to confer the award as few other news organisations devote as many resources to covering the Asian region, said Mr Fernandez.

Tourists flood Shwedagon Pagoda



YANGON, 16 Dec— According to the press meet organized by the board of trustees of Shwedagon Pagoda on 13 December, more than 18000 tourists visited Shwedagon Pagoda during the first period of the month of December. The number of globetrotters thronging Shwedagon Pagoda has reached 18243 during the period from 1 to 12

December, helping the board of trustees earn US\$ and FEC 91215 as admission fee. Thai, French, German and Chinese and Japanese visitors are the greatest in number visiting the Shwedagon. The number of Iranian, South African, Dutch, Israeli and Filipino visitors was low. The board of trustees earned US\$ 11155 and FEC 10 as donations.

A responsible person of the board of trustees said that an average number of tourists were 1500 a day. During the previous month, a total of 47589 tourists arrived there and the board received an entrance fee of 226973 US dollars and 10972 FECs.

On an average day 1586 tourists thronged the Pagoda in the month of November.

According to the records, the number of globetrotters who visited Shwedagon Pagoda from January to the end of November in 2012 was 296486, more than the whole year arrival of tourist in 2011.—Kyemon

Office fire in industrial ward of Thakayta Township

YANGON, 16 Dec — A fire broke out at the office of a company that deals with piling work on Mya Nanda street in industrial ward of Thakayta Township of Yangon Region at 1.50 am on 14 December.

The fire started from an overheated voltage regular at the office.

Two administrative vehicles, 10 fire engines, two water tankers rushed there and firefighters managed to bring the fire under control at 2.40 am.

The fire claimed property loss of K 6.1 million of company owner U Kyar Shwe. When the office building was on fire, Thakayta Township Administrator U Hsan Min,

Township Development Affairs Committee Executive Officer U Aung Thuang and Head of Township Fire Services Department U Ko Ko Oo and officials concerned supervised and assisted in controlling the fire by firefighters by providing them with adequate supply of water to put out the fire.

Kyemon

Safety measures for Yangon-Mandalay up and down trains

PYU, 16 Dec — For ensuring Yangon-Mandalay up and down trains full safeguard and convenience of train users without delays, automatic track circuits that enable trains to overtake each other safely through a control panel have been fixed at Pyu and Kanyutkwin railway stations.

Moreover, replacement of concrete sleepers in the places of old ones and other railroad works were being carried out at Kanyutkwin station and Pyu railway yard under the supervision of the senior engineer (civil) of Division (6), Yangon, on 12 December.

Kyemon



Philanthropic works see more youth participation

YANGON, 16 Dec — According to a man who led a philanthropic organization, the youth participation in philanthropic organizations has increased significantly more than ever before. He said that those who want to perform philanthropic works had to urge the youth for their contributions in the past. Now the youth of today were leading the organization and philanthropic works of their own accord.

It was very pleased to see they are interested in community services while

their peers were in quest of pleasure going to the movies and concerts. He added that more than half of the total membership of his team was the youth who are making a substantial contribution to the society.

“We started the philanthropic work on a managerial scale in cooperation with other friends while we are at school. We collect K 2000 from each member every month, and donate them to the schools for the blind or orphanages,” a youth shared his experience.

Kyemon

Election of new ward administrators in Pyu Township

PYU, 16 Dec — Election of new administrators for 11 wards in Pyu Township of Bago Region took place at Myoma East Ward and

Myoma West Ward in Pyu on 11 and 12 December under the supervision of departmental officials and townsenders.

Talks on economics on 20 December

YANGON, 16 Dec — An educative talks will be organized on the fifth floor of International Business Centre which is being kept open at No. (228/240) Yangon Region Office of the Ministry

of Commerce in Pabedan Township, here, at 9.30 am on 20 December (Thursday).

Professor U Maw Than, retired rector of the Yangon University of Economics, will give a talk entitled “Capital

Market, Public Company and Corporate Governance”. Those interested may take part in the talks and for further information, contact Ph: 01 250871.

Kyemon

Pale drinking water lake under facing contamination

YANGON, 16 Dec — A public drinking water lake at ward-63 in Dagon Myothit (South), was named after Pale Sein drama troupe that performed entertainment to raise the funds for construction of the drinking water lake of 300 square feet on the four-acre farmland donated by villagers U Kyaw Khaing and wife Daw Win Kyi in

1975. Locals named the lake Pale lake.

The lake offers drinking water for local people in nearby villages up to date. During the recent days, the lake has been polluted with household waste of houses and shops which are settled illegally around the lake. So locals relying on the lake for their drinking water are being annoyed by an undisciplined

group of people who are dumping waste in the lake.

As the summer comes, the lake is urgently needed to do cleaning up a rubbish dump in the lake for availability of safe water for local people, and clearance of the lakeside calls for measures to be taken for removal of illegal houses and shops around the lake.

Kyemon



Girl pronounced dead in road accident

PANTANAW, 16 Dec — A girl was pronounced dead after she was knocked down by a trailer on the village road in Asugyi village of Pantanaw

Township. A trailer driven by Sa Ai Say (25 years) of Thalakkhwat village of the township hit Ma Pyae Pyae Phyo (3 years) who was

crossing over Mayan-Asugyi village road near Asugyi village at about 1.30 pm on 11 December. The girl was killed in the accident.—Kyemon

Motorbike, bicycle collide head-on on Yangon-Pathein Road

PATHEIN, 16 Dec — A head-on collision between a bicycle and a motorbike occurred on Pathein-Yangon road. An old man on the bicycle was killed while his bicycle was in collision with a motorbike driven on the opposite direction at about 3 pm on 11 December.

The motorbike driven by Tun Tun Naing (27 years) of Aye village in Nyaungdon collided a head-on with the bicycle of U Kyo (78 years) of Chaungwa village at a place between mile post Nos (36/3) and (36/4) on Yangon-Pathein Road near Chaungwa village. The road accident left U Kyo dead with serious injuries.—Kyemon

“I cannot earn by myself as I am a college student. I make donation only through my pocket money. So I put my labour contribution to the community services aimed to be more effective than my small amount of cash donation. I got a lot of knowledge and experience through philanthropic works and enlarge my social cycle making friends with other peers. I am very happy to have an experience of team work”, a 20-year-old university student said.

Kyemon

New administrators for 11 wards and 61 village-tracts will be elected before the end of December.

Kyemon

WORLD

10 killed, over 40 injured in airport attack in NW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 16 Dec—At least ten people were killed and over 40 others injured when an airport in Pakistan's northwest city of Peshawar came under attack on Saturday night, according to hospital and army sources.

The killed include five attackers, local media quoted army sources as saying. Pakistan Taliban later claimed responsibility for the attack.

Both Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Ashraf condemned the attack while expressed grief over the loss of lives in the attack.

The attack took place at about 8:30 pm local time when militants coming in an explosive-laden vehicle launched an attack at Bacha Khan Airport in Peshawar.

The attackers rammed the vehicle into the wall surrounding the airport and then tried to enter inside the airport, said Mian Iftikhar Hussain, Information Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province with Peshawar as its capital. Four of the attackers were killed during the attack, said the minister.

Another attacker

retreated into a building nearby the airport and was later killed by the security forces in the search operation, according to army sources.

All the international and domestic flights were canceled during the attack. Airport officials said the airport will be reopened soon.

Some local media said that five rockets were fired at the airport during the attack and two of them fell on the runway of the airport. But airport authorities said all airport assets remained safe in the attack.—Xinhua



Policemen gather near the site of a rocket attack at Peshawar's Airport on 15 Dec, 2012. Four people were killed when militants attacked the airport in the northwestern city of Peshawar on Saturday and traded gunfire with soldiers for more than 30 minutes before being repulsed, military and health officials said.

REUTERS

NATO-led forces combat mission to end in 2013

KABUL, 16 Dec—The combat mission of NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) will over in 2013 and the Afghan security forces will take the security charge of the entire country, President Hamid Karzai said on Saturday.

Addressing at the conference of Afghan ambassadors and diplomats in his fortified Palace, the Afghan president stated that the NATO-led force leaves Afghanistan in 2014 and there will be change in Afghanistan's relations with the world.

"There is no need to worry over the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. You speak with confidence to any country," President Karzai told the conference, saying the pull out of foreign troops from Afghanistan would not affect the security situation in the country; rather would contribute in stabilizing the security.

He also asked the NATO-led troops to leave Afghan villages for their bases on the way to their respective countries.

Xinhua

Clinton sustains concussion; Benghazi testimony postponed

Secretary Clinton became dehydrated and fainted, sustaining a concussion," State Department spokesman Philippe Reines said in a statement.

"She has been recovering at home and will continue to be monitored regularly by her doctors. At their recommendation, she will continue to work from home next week, staying in regular contact with department and other officials. She is looking forward to being back in the office soon," Reines added.

Clinton fell ill with a stomach virus last weekend and was forced to cancel a

planned trip to the Middle East and North Africa. The virus also hit other members of her staff, who were returning with her from a European trip, and was described as uncomfortable, but not medically serious.

Clinton, 65, has often been cited as a potential candidate for the US presidency in 2016 and frequently refers to her general good health, saying in an interview with ABC broadcast that she has "incredible stamina and energy."

She has maintained a punishing schedule in her

final weeks as the top US diplomat, a position she intends to leave toward the end of January when US President Barack Obama is sworn in for a second term.

Clinton had been expected to testify on 20 December before the House of Representatives and Senate foreign affairs committees on a report on the deadly attack on the US diplomatic post in Benghazi, Libya, that killed the US Ambassador and three other Americans and raised questions about security at far-flung posts.

Reuters



US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addresses a news conference in Brussels in this 5 Dec, 2012 file photo.

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who canceled an overseas trip last weekend because of illness, suffered a concussion after fainting due to dehydration, prompting

the postponement of her scheduled congressional testimony on the attack on a US mission in Libya, officials said on Saturday.

"While suffering from a stomach virus,

Egyptians narrowly back Islamist-shaped constitution, say rival camps

CAIRO, 16 Dec—Egyptians voted narrowly in favor of a constitution shaped by Islamists and which opponents said was a recipe for deepening divisions in the nation, officials in rival camps said on Sunday after the first round of a two-stage referendum.

The result based on unofficial tallies, if confirmed for this round and repeated in Saturday's second stage, may give Islamist President Mohamed Mursi limited cause for celebration as it shows the wide rift in Egypt at a time when he needs to build consensus on tough measures to heal a fragile economy.

Official results are not expected till after the next round.

Mursi and his backers say the constitution is vital to move Egypt's democratic transition forward. Opponents say the basic law is too Islamist and tramples on minority rights, including those of Christians who

make up 10 percent of the population.

The build-up to Saturday's vote was marred by deadly protests. Demonstrations erupted last month when Mursi awarded himself sweeping powers and then fast-tracked the constitution through an assembly dominated by his Islamist allies. The vote passed off peacefully with long queues forming in Cairo and other cities and towns where this round of voting was held.



An elderly woman (C) sits as she queues outside a polling centre to vote during a referendum on Egypt's new constitution in Cairo on 15 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

The vote was staggered because many judges needed to oversee polling staged a boycott to voice their opposition.

But late on Saturday, as polls were closing, Islamists attacked the offices of the liberal opposition Wafd party newspaper, a party that was part of the National Salvation Front coalition that pushed for a "no" vote. "The referendum was 56.5 percent for the 'yes' vote," a senior official in the Broth-

erhood's Freedom and Justice Party operations room set up to monitor voting told Reuters.

The Brotherhood and its party, which propelled Mursi to power in a June election, had representatives at almost all polling stations across the 10 areas, including Cairo, where this round of voting was held.

The official, who asked not to be identified, said the tally was based on counts from more than 99 percent of polling stations in this round. One opposition official also said the vote appeared to have gone in favor of Islamists who backed the constitution, after the opposition had previously said late on Saturday when voting ended that their exit polls indicated the "no" camp would win.

Another opposition official had suggested as counting proceeded through the night that the vote would be "very close".

Reuters



US Senator John Kerry speaks to the media before Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney and President Barack Obama meet in the final US presidential debate in Boca Raton, Florida on 22 Oct, 2012.—REUTERS

Obama to nominate Senator Kerry for secretary of state

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—President Barack Obama has decided to nominate Massachusetts Senator John Kerry to be the next secretary of state, CNN and ABC News reported on Saturday, citing unnamed sources.

Kerry's nomination will not be announced for a variety of reasons, including the need to finalize the process and out of respect for the national mourning over Friday's school massacre in Newtown, Connecticut,

ABC said. CNN, citing an unnamed Democrat, said the nomination could be made public as early as next week.

Kerry, the Democratic presidential candidate in the 2004 election and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, would replace Secretary of State Hillary Clinton if confirmed by the Senate.

Clinton has decided to step down from her job in the Obama administration.

Reuters

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Banks fend off attacks designed to disrupt online banking access



A man works at his computer in Virginia Beach, Virginia, on 7 Feb, 2012.—REUTERS

BOSTON/CHARLOTTE, 16 Dec—Bank of America Corp, JPMorgan Chase & Co and US Bancorp and other major US banks seem to have stopped a group of hacker activists from seriously disrupting their online banking operations.

A financial services industry organization and several cyber security companies said a group of “hacker activists” that impeded access to some major US online banking sites in September had so far failed to gain traction in a second cam-

paign that began this week.

“There has been no impact to critical financial systems,” the Financial Services Information Sharing and Analysis Centre, or FS-ISAC, said in a statement.

Tom Kellermann, vice president of cyber security at security software maker Trend Micro Inc, said the banks had been “very successful.”

“I wouldn’t see any prolonged outages for the major financial institutions in the coming year.”

Arbor Networks,

which sells equipment that companies can use to protect their websites against attack, said banks had bolstered their defences since the last round of attacks in September. “Everyone has been through this once or twice,” said Dan Holden, an Arbor director. “There is just a better level of preparedness.”

On Monday, a group that calls itself the Qassam Cyber Fighters said on a website called Pastebin.com that it was planning attacks against a group of five banks that also included PNC Financial Services Group Inc and SunTrust Banks Inc. The same group took credit for the disruptions in September.

US Bancorp spokesman Tom Joyce said the regional bank’s website was performing well, but some customers might be experiencing intermittent delays. “We can assure customers that their data and funds are secure,” he said.—Reuters

Scientists find new use for cells in human urine

Science

GUANGZHOU, 16 Dec—Chinese scientists have found a new, innovative way to use cells found in human urine that could aid in the treatment of a range of neurodegenerative disorders.

The scientists have discovered a new technique for reprogramming cells shed in human urine into neural progenitor cells (NPCs) that can grow into multi-functional neuronal subtypes and glial cells.

The technique is expected to be used in the study and treatment of neural disorders such as Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease and other neurodegenerative disorders.

Their findings were published online on 9 Dec in a research report in the journal *Nature Methods*, a monthly publication covering novel findings in life sciences.

Pei Duanqing, a professor at the Chinese Academy

of Sciences’ Guangzhou Institutes of Biomedicine and Health, said his research team has combined an episomal system to deliver reprogramming factors with a chemically defined culture medium to reprogramme kidney epithelial cells naturally shed in urine into NPCs. These NPCs, normally only found in the human brain, were later proven to be transgene-free and self-renewing, he said.

“These neurons and glial cells can survive for up to one month when transplanted into the brain of a newborn rat,” said Pei.

He said his team is working hard to understand why their experimental condition allowed the urine cells to become NPCs so as to improve the technique and make it more efficient.

Scientists have long sought to treat and study neural disorders by obtaining and transplanting neural stem cells. However, the

previous method of isolating and using cells from either fetal or adult human tissue remain challenging due to ethical concerns and immune system rejections, he said.

Pei hopes the discovery will be used to generate NPCs from patients with neurological disorders such as Parkinson’s disease. “These NPCs from patients may help us discover new drugs for these diseases.”

“It is a remarkable advance in the stem cell field,” said Fred Gage, professor with the Salk Institute for Biological Studies.

They reprogrammed somatic cells with a non-integrating virus and epithelial-like cells from human urine, a novel, safe and abundant source of cells, he said.

The results and methods derived from this study will be of great value and significance to the field, he said.—Xinhua

Microsoft, Motorola file to keep patent case details private

SEATTLE, 16 Dec—Microsoft Corp and Google Inc’s Motorola Mobility unit have requested a federal judge in Seattle to keep secret from the public various details from their recent trial concerning the value of technology patents and the two companies’ attempts at a settlement. Microsoft and Motorola, acquired by Google earlier this year, are preparing post-trial briefs to present to a judge as he decides the outcome of a week-long trial last month to establish what rates Microsoft should pay Motorola for use of standard, essential wireless technology used in its Xbox game console and other products.

The case is just one strand of litigation in an industry-wide dispute over ownership of the underlying technology and the design of smartphones, which has

drawn in Apple Inc, Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, Nokia and others. In a filing with the Western District of Washington federal court in Seattle on Friday, Microsoft and Motorola asked the judge to allow them to file certain parts of their post-trial submissions under seal and redact those details in the public record.

The details concern terms of Motorola’s licenses with third parties and Microsoft’s business and marketing plans for future products. During the trial, which ran from 13-20 November, US District Judge James Robart cleared the court when such sensitive or trade secret details were discussed.

“For the same compelling reasons that the court sealed this evidence for purposes of trial, it would be consistent and appropriate

to take the same approach in connection with the parties’ post-trial submissions,” the two companies argued in the court filing. The judge has so far been understanding of the companies’ desire to keep private details of their patent royalties and future plans, although that has perplexed some spectators who believe trials in public courts should be fully open to the public.

Reuters

Tech

AMSTERDAM, 16 Dec—The Dutch state raised much more than expected in its auction of fourth generation (4G) wireless frequencies, with prices so high market leader KPN said it would have to cut dividends to afford its licences.

The auction raised a much higher-than-expected 3.8 billion euros (\$5 billion) and the result will lead to fierce competition in one of Europe’s most lucrative mobile phone markets as the winners roll out faster, fourth-generation services which allow consumers to watch video and surf the Internet on the move.

The Dutch market is currently dominated by KPN, Vodafone and Deutsche Telekom, all three of which won licences, as did new entrant Tele2



Two saleswomen show white and black Apple’s iPhone 5 mobile phones in Kota Kinabalu, capital of Sabah State, Malaysia, on 14 Dec, 2012. Apple’s iPhone 5 was released in Malaysia on Friday. XINHUA

Dutch 4G frequency auction raises more than expected

of Sweden.

Two cable companies — Ziggo and UPC, owned by Liberty Global, which already have strong shares in broadband and pay-TV — said they made a joint bid but later pulled out of the auction later because the bidding went too high.

KPN, which is 28 per cent owned by Mexican telecoms tycoon Carlos Slim, said the cost of the licences meant it would no longer be paying a final dividend for 2012 and would pay out only 0.03 euros per share for 2013, far lower than already revised dividend forecasts.

It had already cut its dividend forecast for this year to 0.35 euros from an initial planned payout of 0.90 euros. It has paid an interim dividend of 0.12

euros.

KPN had been planning a payout for 2013 of ‘at least’ 0.35 euros.

Traders and analysts have previously expressed concern about the ability of KPN to pay dividends given it has a debt to core profit ratio exceeding its own targets. KPN shares hit a 10-year low of 3.90 euros in November.

Eelco Blok, KPN’s chief executive, later acknowledged on a conference call that KPN was paying a “considerable price” for the licence, but said that as the market leader, it could not afford to miss out on the auction. He also said it would produce a good return over its 17-year duration.

KPN, which expects to roll out its new 4G services

from February, did retain its outlook for 2012 core profit, cashflow and capital expenditure.

It said it would draw on existing cash and its 2 billion euro revolving credit facility to finance the purchase. The dividend cut will save it 800 million euros.

Asked about the impact on debt and its financial health, Blok said investors would have to wait until the company reported fourth-quarter results on Feb 5.

The Dutch government had counted on raising about 480 million euros from the auction, and the better-than-expected result provides a welcome windfall at a time of austerity measures and budget cuts amounting to 46 billion euros by 2017.

Reuters



People attend the iPhone5 launch event in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 13 Dec, 2012. Apple’s iPhone5 launched in Indonesia on Friday.—XINHUA

BUSINESS & HEALTH

IVF twins pregnancies riskier than two singletons **Health**

NEW YORK, 16 Dec—Having twins as a result of in vitro fertilization (IVF) carries higher risks of complications for both mother and babies than having two single babies from separate IVF procedures, according to a new Swedish study.

The extra concerns that come with multiple births are nothing new. But even as many fertility clinics have stopped regularly implanting more than one embryo, debate has continued over whether having twins through IVF is really a bad thing for couples desperate for children.

“A lot of patients, when they’ve had infertility for a long time, think that it’s a bonus to get two,” said Dr Lynn Westphal, a women’s health and fertility specialist at Stanford University Medical Centre in Palo Alto, California.

But, “We know it’s always safest to have one child at a time,” said Westphal, who wasn’t

involved in the new study.

Researchers led by Dr Antonina Sazonova of Sahlgrenska University Hospital in Gothenburg analyzed data from fresh and frozen embryo transfers done at Swedish IVF clinics between 2002 and 2006. Those records included 991 women who ultimately gave birth to twins after a double embryo transfer and 921 mothers with two kids born through separate rounds of IVF.

Almost 47 percent of twin babies were born prematurely and 39 percent were considered low birth weight, Sazonova’s team reported in the journal *Fertility and Sterility*. That compared to the seven percent of singleton babies that were preemies and less than five percent born small.

Twins were also more likely to have breathing complications, sepsis or jaundice.

Reuters

WTO sees more trade disputes ahead after vintage year **Business**

GENEVA, 16 Dec—A surge in trade disputes has forced the World Trade Organization to reallocate staff to cope with a flood of litigation in the pipeline for 2013, according to diplomats and documents at the global trade body in Geneva.

The WTO’s 157 members have launched 26 trade disputes so far in 2012, the most since 2003 and three times more than the eight new complaints filed in 2011.

According to an internal WTO document seen by Reuters, the WTO decided to reallocate staff to the disputes team to deal with the increasing number and complexity of legal cases. “We are seeking to reallocate resources from other divisions. It’s happening already,” said one WTO source.

As well as moving staff, the trade body also advertised for a senior dispute settlement lawyer, at a starting salary of around 161,900 Swiss francs (108,377 pounds), and is seeking short term



World Trade Organization (WTO) Director General Pascal Lamy speaks during an interview with Reuters on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank Group in Tokyo on 13 Oct, 2012.—REUTERS

candidates to help deal with the caseload.

The boom in litigation comes as the WTO struggles to get back on the path to reforming its rules, after the failure of the decade-old Doha round of trade negotiations last year. “The less you negotiate the more you litigate, and vice versa,” said one trade diplomat.

The resort to the dispute settlement system signifies both trust in the global trade

rules and distrust among its members, as they fight for a share of a pie that is not quite shrinking, but expected to grow by a mere 2.5 percent this year. Although the WTO expects global trade growth to quicken to 4.5 percent in 2013, that would remain below the annual average of 5.4 percent over the past two decades.

WTO Director General Pascal Lamy will report to WTO members on the global

trading environment on Monday, armed with a report showing they had brought in 308 new trade-restricting policies, covering 1.3 percent of traded goods, over the past 12 months.

“The difficulties and concerns generated by the persistence of the global economic crisis, with its many facets, are fuelling the political and economic pressures put on governments to raise trade barriers,” Lamy’s report says. “This is not the time to succumb to these pressures.”

The countries attracting most complaints in 2012 were China and the United States, each the target of six disputes. The United States also initiated the most disputes — three against China and one apiece against Argentina and India.

This year’s new disputes included many that were either apparent tit-for-tat actions or counter-challenges, ensuring that the heat was concentrated in certain areas.—Reuters

Banking supervisors say Basel accord won’t be derailed **Business**



A man walks past the headquarters of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) in Basel on 14 Sept, 2010.—REUTERS

LONDON, 16 Dec—The failure of Europe and the United States to meet next month’s deadline on tougher bank capital rules won’t derail the global accord, regulators said after they themselves were unable to agree changes to one of the new rules.

The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision concluded a two-day meeting on Friday saying 11 countries were ready to start phasing in its Basel III bank capital and liquidity rules.

The committee is made up of nearly 30 countries but major financial centres like the European Union and United States are delaying the start of the world’s main regulatory response to the 2007-09 financial crisis.

The accord requires banks to triple their basic capital buffers in set stages

over six years, with new mandatory liquidity reserves and a cap on balance sheets added from 2015.

“It is expected that as remaining jurisdictions finalise their domestic regulations during 2013, they will incorporate all the remaining transitional deadlines in line with the original global agreement, committee chairman Stefan Ingves said in a statement.

He said this would be the case even when they have not been able to meet the January 1 2013 start date.

“Hence, by the end of 2013, almost all Basel Committee jurisdictions will be implementing Basel III in accordance with the agreed timetable,” added Ingves, who is also governor of Sweden’s central bank.

“This is an absolutely

critical step towards strengthening the resilience of the global banking system.” Talks to introduce Basel III into European Union law reached a tentative conclusion on Friday in a deal to delay the start of formal implementation until January 2014.

The United States is also delaying introduction and Brazilian financial newspaper *Valor* said there were talks at the country’s central bank to delay Basel III there as well.

Reuters

Bayer seeks FDA approval for cancer drug radium-223 **Health**

FRANKFURT, 16 Dec—German drugmaker Bayer said on Friday it requested approval from US regulators for an experimental prostate cancer drug that could eventually generate more than 1 billion euros (\$1.31 billion) in annual sales.

Radium-223 dichloride, which Bayer used to call Alpharadin, is designed to target bone metastases from prostate cancer that cannot be treated by standard hormone therapy. Bayer licensed radium-223 from Algeta in 2009, and if approved in the United States, radium-223 will be co-promoted by Bayer and Algeta, the Oslo-

based company said on Friday. Brussels, 16 Dec—The European Commission is considering whether to hand out more free pollution allowances for the steel sector next year to counter the risk the industry could be driven out of Europe, EU sources said.

The cost of carbon on the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) has collapsed to record low levels under the burden of excess supply. Earlier this month, it hit a new low of 5.61 euros a tonne.

The fall in price has

reduced any additional costs for major polluters.

It is, however, expected to rise. Some in heavy industry complain that, in any case, it does not lead to emissions cuts but only to relocation of industry to pollute other nations, where it does not have to buy the permits. “The Commission is planning to draw up a list of sectors most affected by the ETS regulations and that are, therefore, at risk of relocating their activities outside the EU,” a senior Commission official told Reuters on Friday.

“Sectors included in this list should benefit from temporary free emission permits as from 2013,” said the source, who asked not to be named. Steel is the

sector most likely to get free allowances, another source added. The Commission has already approved state aid grants in the form of free carbon allowances, specifying the money should be used to modernise energy installations and infrastructure.

For the next phase of the carbon market, beginning next year, the system of handing out free allowances changes markedly, and auctioning becomes the rule for the power sector.

The Commission is still collating “wish lists” — officially referred to as National Implementation Measures—of the installations that could be eligible for free allowances, depending on EU criteria.—Reuters



A worker controls a tapping of a blast furnace at Europe’s largest steel factory of Germany’s industrial conglomerate ThyssenKrupp AG in the western German city of Duisburg on 6 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Reuters

WORLD

Obama to join mourning Connecticut families in search for answers



US President Barack Obama

NEWTOWN, 16 Dec—President Barack Obama arrives in Connecticut on Sunday to join in the mourning for 20 children, all 6 and 7 years old, who were slaughtered by a gunman who forced his way into their school and shot them with a rifle at close range.

Obama's appearance at an interfaith vigil in the once-tranquil town of Newtown will be watched closely for clues as to what he meant when he called for "meaningful action" to prevent such tragedies in the wake of the massacre on Friday.

But politics will take a back seat to grieving, as

more details emerge about the 12 girls, eight boys and six adult women that gunman Adam Lanza killed at the Sandy Hook Elementary School before killing himself.

Olivia Engel had a part in a nativity play at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church. "She was supposed to be an angel in the play. Now she's an angel up in heaven," Monsignor Robert Weiss told a standing-room-only crowd at the church before the play on Saturday.

Emilie Parker, another of the child victims, was studying Portuguese with her father. A Facebook memorial page for her already had nearly 147,000 "likes" as of Saturday night. Vicki Leigh Soto, 27, saved her first-grade students' lives by putting herself between the kids and the gunman. Britain's Independent on Sunday newspaper splashed her photo on its front page with the caption "The Heroine of Sandy Hook."—Reuters

Iran warns against Patriot deployment on Syria frontier

BEIRUT, 16 Dec—Iran's army chief of staff warned NATO on Saturday that stationing Patriot anti-missile batteries on Turkey's border with Syria was setting the stage for world war.

General Hassan Firouzabadi, whose country has been a staunch supporter of President Bashar al-Assad throughout the 21-month uprising against his rule, called on the Western military alliance to reverse its decision to deploy the defence system.

"Each one of these Patriots is a black mark on the world map, and is meant to cause a world war," Firouzabadi said, according to the *Iranian Students' News Agency*. "They are making plans for a world war and this is very dangerous for the future of humanity and for the future of Europe itself." NATO's US commander said on Friday the alliance was deploying the anti-missile system along Syria's northern frontier because Assad's forces had fired Scud missiles that landed near Turkish territo-

ry. Damascus denies firing the long-range, Soviet-built rockets. But, forced on the defensive by mainly Sunni Muslim rebels, Syria's 47-year-old Alawite president has resorted increasingly to air strikes and artillery to stem their advances.

Warplanes bombed insurgents on the airport road in southeast Damascus on Saturday and government forces pounded a town to the southwest, activists said, in a month-long and

so far fruitless campaign to dislodge rebels around the capital.

Activists also reported heavy fighting in the Palestinian district of Yarmouk in southern Damascus between rebels and fighters from a pro-Assad Palestinian faction.

"Syria is clearly a chaotic and dangerous situation, but we have an absolute obligation to defend the borders of the alliance from any threat emanating

from that troubled state," Stavridis wrote in a blog on Friday.

Batteries of US-made Patriot missiles, designed to shoot down the likes of the Scuds popularly associated with Iraq's 1991 Gulf War under Saddam Hussein, are about to be deployed by the US, German and Dutch armies, each of which is sending up to 400 troops to operate and protect the rocket systems.

Damascus has accused Western powers of backing what it portrays as a Sunni Islamist "terrorist" campaign against it and says Washington and Europe have publicly voiced concerns of late that Assad's forces might resort to chemical weapons solely as a pretext for preparing a possible military intervention. Foreign Minister Walid al-Moualeem told UN humanitarian chief Valerie Amos on Saturday that US and EU sanctions on Syria were to blame for hardship in his country and urged the United Nations to call for them to be lifted.

Reuters



Syria's Foreign Minister Walid al-Moualeem (R) meets UN-Arab League peace envoy for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi in Damascus on 20 Oct, 2012. A portrait of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad hangs on the wall.

REUTERS

S African police on high alert ahead of ruling ANC national congress

BLOEMFONTEIN, (South Africa), 16 Dec—The South African government on Saturday intensified its security here before the ruling African National Congress (ANC)'s national congress. The ANC will start the 53rd National Congress on Sunday in Bloemfontein to elect new leadership. "Security has been beefed up for the conference with about 1,000 police being now on duty," said a police official.

Bloemfontein is the

capital city of the central Province of the Free State and the judicial capital of the nation, with a population of about 400,000.

Many police cars were patrolling with siren ringing on the main streets, and some police units were carrying out tasks at the check points around the conference centre. "We have been on alert around the clock in recent days," a police officer told *Xinhua*. A high-ranking police official of the Free State told media

on Saturday that "safety and security are a priority amid the prevailing political environment", and that "police are striving to make Bloemfontein a safer place, even preventive measures are now in place to tackle potential troubles." It was reported that about 4,500 delegates across the country will participate in the congress to elect the new leadership for all important positions, including the president. The contest for the new party presi-

dency will be possibly held between President Jacob Zuma and Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe.

The ANC is currently in an alliance with the South African Communist Party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions in ruling the country.

Given the ANC's electoral dominance in the country, the new ANC president will be possible to become the next president of the country in the elections in 2014.—*Xinhua*

Philippine police kills Malaysian trying to detonate bomb

DAVAO, 16 Dec—Philippine security forces have killed a suspected Malaysian bomber of the regional terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) who reportedly attempted to blow a bomb at a public park in the southern Philippine city of Davao on Friday night, police said on Saturday.

The Malaysian suspect, Mohammad Noor Fikrie Bin Abd Kahar, attempted to detonate a homemade bomb inside his bag when he was trapped at the park not far

from his hotel, and police shot the suspect, said local police commander Ronald dela Rosa. Davao city police also arrested Kahar's Filipina wife Annabel Lee, who was with the Malaysian on Friday night, when they were about to check out at the Sampaguita Hotel. Police said the couple ran but were cornered and a sniper shot Kahar.

"We shot him immediately because he was trying to detonate his bomb at the park where we cornered them," Dela Rosa said.—*Xinhua*



Students of Beijing Dance Academy perform a traditional Chinese dance during the "Youthful Vigor" art show in Tsinghua University in Beijing, capital of China, on 14 Dec, 2012. —XINHUA

Tunisia arrests seven men belonging to al-Qaeda recruitment ring

TUNIS, 16 Dec—Tunisian security units have arrested 7 members of al-Qaeda Maghreb terrorist network, which aimed at recruiting extremist militants to conduct operations in the area, a spokesman for the interior ministry said on Saturday.

He said the seven men had been arrested near the border with Algeria on Thursday and that a search operation was currently underway to apprehend others still at loose.

The interior ministry spokesman said that two

men arrested last week near the town of Jendouba had admitted being part of a local Salafist Jihadist network. Explosives, weapons and electric stun guns were found onboard a rented car they were driving.

On Thursday, security patrols also arrested 5 members of the same network, including a man in possession of a pistol and 25 cartridges, the spokesman said, adding that combat and camouflage gear and maps were also found at the home of one of the fugitives.—*Xinhua*



Farmers walk their sheep at a sheep competition in Lushan Village of Changxing County, east China's Zhejiang Province, on 15 Dec, 2012. The sheep competition including sheep show, mutton feast, sheep racing was held here on Saturday.

XINHUA

WORLD

Sudan's DM heads to Addis Ababa for talks with South Sudan

KHARTOUM, 16 Dec—Sudan's Defence Minister Abdul-Rahim Mohamed Hussein on Saturday headed for Addis Ababa of Ethiopia, to review implementation of the joint cooperation deal signed between Sudan and South Sudan, official *SUNA* news agency reported.

"A delegation of the Sudanese side in the joint political and security committee between Sudan and South Sudan, headed by Sudan's Minister of Defence Abdul-Rahim Mohamed Hussein, left here today for the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa to take part in meetings of the committee there to review implementation of cooperation deal signed by the two countries," the report said. Priorities of the Sudanese side to the

meetings include immediate and unconditioned withdrawal of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) from four disputed border areas and stoppage of the support and shelter being provided by South Sudan to the rebel groups in Sudan, according to the report.

Al-Sawarmy Khalid Saad, Sudanese army spokesman, was quoted as saying that the members of the joint political and security committee would continue negotiations for three days on what they have started in Khartoum and Juba regarding the outstanding issues between the two countries.

He added that the talks would also discuss how to implement what the two sides have recently agreed on with regard to the joint

defense agreement in the presence of the African Union (AU) mediator Thabo Mbeki who would receive the two sides' proposals in Addis Ababa.

Khartoum insists on implementing items of the security agreement first and demands Juba to demobilize all the northern troops within the SPLA in South Sudan, including those from South Kordofan and Blue Nile areas.

On 27 Sept, Sudan and South Sudan signed a package of agreements on various issues during a presidential summit in Ethiopia.

Witnessed by members of the AU High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan, the two sides inked three deals on cooperation, security and post-secession matters.—*Xinhua*

EU leaders shocked by US elementary school shooting

BRUSSELS, 16 Dec—Leaders of the European Union (EU) on Friday expressed their deep shock on the shooting incident in the US state of Connecticut killing at least 28.

"It is with deep shock and horror that I learned this evening of the tragic

fatalities in the shooting in Connecticut. Young lives full of hope have been destroyed," said European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso in a statement. "On behalf of the European Commission and on my own behalf, I want to express my sincere

condolences to the families of the victims of this terrible tragedy," Barroso said.

EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said in her statement "I would like to express my shock at the tragic shooting at the school in Connecticut today."

"My thoughts go out to



Chinese Vice Premier Hui Liangyu (C) attends a symposium in celebration of the 20th anniversary of China's accession to the Convention on Wetlands in Beijing, capital of China, on 14 Dec, 2012.

XINHUA

China to continue wetlands protection

BEIJING, 16 Dec—China will continue efforts to protect wetlands, Vice Premier Hui Liangyu said at a symposium marking the country's 20th anniversary of joining the

Convention on Wetlands. This agreement, also known as the Ramsar Convention, was adopted on 2 Feb, 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar alongside the Caspian Sea, highlighting international efforts to protect wetlands around the world.

China has greatly improved the ecological condition of its key wetlands over the past two decades due to timely protection, according to its vice premier.

The country will further increase investment, promote legitimation and strengthen

people's awareness on wetland protection, Hui vowed, noting that there is a relatively low coverage of wetlands on Chinese territory. China is willing to deepen international cooperation with all parties under the framework of the Ramsar Convention and make contributions to wetlands protection, according to Hui. By 2015, China will ensure that 55 percent of Chinese wetlands are under protection, according to the Chinese authorities.

Xinhua



Students from Itami High School in Japan and Baruch College Campus High School in the United States pose for a photo session on 13 Dec, 2012, at the Japanese Consulate General in New York. The two schools are planning to start an exchange programme.

KYODO NEWS

Gunman killed in US hospital after wounding three

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—A gunman was shot and killed by police after opening fire in a hospital on Saturday in US state of Alabama, local newspaper reported.

Birmingham News said the shooting took place at St Vincent's Hospital in Birmingham at about 4 am. The gunman wounded two hospital staffers and a Birmingham police officer before he was killed by another Birmingham police officer.

The shooting came one day after a deadly shooting in Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut which

left 28 people dead.

The hospital is affiliated with the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). The university released a statement saying it "does everything it can to keep its patients, visitors and employees safe, including 24-hour security at all entrances to the emergency department and throughout the area provided by UAB's accredited and armed police department, and having all persons entering the emergency department through the walk-in entrance pass through a metal detector."

Xinhua

US to send troops to Turkey for missile deployment

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec—US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta has signed an order to deploy two Patriot missile batteries to Turkey along with 400 troops to operate them, Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said on Friday.

"The purpose of this deployment is to signal very strongly that the United States, working closely with our NATO allies, is going to support the defence of Turkey, especially with potential threats emanating from Syria," said Little.

Little said the troops would be deployed in the coming weeks once the two Patriot missile batteries are in place but declined to reveal the location.

Panetta issued the order en route to Turkey from Afghanistan, according to the Pentagon.

Panetta told reporters during the trip that the United States and Turkey "share common concerns about the violence in Syria and the threat that it poses to regional stability".

Xinhua

Oil tanker set on fire in northern Afghan town

PUL-E-KHUMRI, 16 Dec—Unknown armed men opened fire and set ablaze an oil tanker in Baghlan Province 160 km north of Kabul on Saturday, police said.

"Unidentified armed men targeted an oil tanker with assault rifle in Dushi district today morning burning the oil tanker," Deputy to provincial police

chief Sayed Zaman Hussaini told *Xinhua*.

Without giving more details, he said that investigation is underway.

Meantime, locals at the site of incident claimed that the tanker was supplying fuel to NATO-led troops when Taliban militants attacked and set on fire the vehicle.

Taliban militants have yet to comment.—*Xinhua*



A citizen walks past snow-covered vehicles in Beijing, capital of China, on 13 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Crewman killed as ship wracked in North Sea tide

EDINBURGH, 16 Dec—A crew member has died and 11 others were rescued after a vessel in the North Sea was battered by huge waves, as storms and unusually high tides caused significant damage across north and east Scotland, the local media reported on Saturday.

The vessel named *Vos Sailor* was stranded 120 miles (about 192 km) off Aberdeen and taking on water, while six other vessels and three helicopters were sent to the scene and non-essential staff have been evacuated from a nearby

rig, the online Scotsman newspaper reported.

The body of the man has not yet been recovered due to severe weather but it is believed he was dead when the rest of the crew were rescued, said the report.

The *Vos Sailor* had suffered "significant damage," said a local police spokesman, adding that it appeared that one crew member suffered fatal injuries.

Part of the harbour wall in Balintore, Ross-shire collapsed under the repeated force of the waves on Friday, showed dramatic pictures.

Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 17 December, 2012

Nothing but the Noble Truth

Buddhism or the Buddha Dhamma is the noble and timeless teachings of Buddha, initially propagated in India, and later spread throughout many parts of the world.

In fact, Buddhism or Buddha Dhamma is an invaluable gem of many facets, attracting people of diverse personalities. Every facet of this gem has tested methods and approaches that can benefit the Truth seekers with their various levels of understanding and spiritual maturity.

The Buddha Dhamma has the power to heal the mental wounds and fulfill the spiritual needs of all human beings, while science has no capacity to do so.

Truthfully, the Buddha Dhamma is the fruit resulting from a most intensive search conducted over a long period of time by a compassionate noble prince whose mission was to help suffering humanity.

So, what actually is Buddhism or the Buddha Dhamma? The simple answer is that Buddhism or the Buddha Dhamma is too vast and too profound to be neatly placed in any single category. Of course, it includes philosophy and religion and a way of life. But Buddhism goes beyond these categories.

It has also prevented the decline of moral values and contributed to peace, coherence with the embellishing of patience, loving-kindness, compassion and selflessness.

The source of all Buddhism is the experience which is called 'Enlightenment'. With this experience of Enlightenment, the Buddha began His Teaching not with any dogmatic beliefs or mysteries, but with a valid, universal experience, which He gave to the world as universal truth.

Consequently, the real definition of Buddhism is Noble Truth. Remember that the Buddha did not teach from theories. He always taught from a practical standpoint based on His understanding, His Enlightenment, and His realization of the Truth.

So, on the whole, Buddhism or the Buddha Dhamma is nothing but the Noble Truth.



NATIONAL

President U Thein Sein meets townselders, politicians

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec — President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein met with townselders and members of political parties in Mawlamyine yesterday.

During the meeting, the President stressed the importance of the human resource development for the development of the country and called for making efforts reducing the poverty rate to 16 % in accordance with the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015 as the country's current poverty rate is 26 %.

Armed conflicts had broken out since 60 years ago and any fallen from both sides during the armed conflicts are Myanmar citizens, he said.

It was not an easy work to reduce the poverty rate in Myanmar within a short time though the government had been undertaking the eight tasks to bring the easy livelihood to the rural population which makes up the 70 percent of the total population, he added.

He also expressed his hope for more foreign investment in Myanmar as about 3 million of Myanmar citizens were currently working in foreign countries causing the loss of labour

force in the country.

He also stressed the need for producing value-added products to benefit the country which was mainly producing the raw materials due to lack of technology and human resources.

Myanmar has invited small and medium enterprises to invest in Myanmar with the aim of producing value added materials.

Myanmar enacted the FDI Law and the rules of the law would be completed in the near future with the aim of attracting foreign investment which would help Myanmar build large industries due to its richness in natural resources, he said.

He also called for giving IT training to young generations as the country lagged behind in development of IT and Telecom sector.

He stressed the need for getting the GSP system in the trade sector as the economic sanction could hinder the economic development.

Due to the changing international relations policy, US President Obama visited Myanmar and relaxed most sanctions imposed on Myanmar, he added. Though, the sanctions could

not be eased easily by the administration as the sanctions were imposed through laws prescribed by the Senate, he said. EU also relaxed sanctions, the President said. Social and economic status of the country indicates progress thanks to political stability, he said. The modernity could not be achieved by the government alone, he said, calling for concerted efforts as the government has committed to making the reforms irreversible.

He asked for advices from the townselders for development of Mon State, saying the the opening of border gate after improving Phayathonesu-Thanbyuza-yat road could bring about the hustle and bustle to Mawlamyine.

He said he felt encouraged by agricultural development of the state. He said the electricity is key to urbanization and socio-economic development. He continued to say that the government has plan to install two gas turbines which could

generate 50 Megawatts of electricity.

He said the education sector must turn out high-quality human resources and underscored the human resource development of the region.

Those present frankly discussed current concerns.

Union Ministers at the President Office U Soe Thein and U Tin Naing Thein discussed matters related to investment, marketing, housing projects, job opportunities and cooperation with international community.

The President highlighted competitiveness after establishment of ASEAN Free Trade Area in his concluding remarks.

He also called for manufacturing products of high quality and marketing abroad in cooperation with officials of the state and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.—MNA

Union FM felicitates Bhutan Foreign Affairs Minister

NAY PYI TAW, 17 Dec—On the occasion of the National Day of Bhutan which falls on 17 December 2012, U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to H.E. Lyonpo Ugyen Tshering, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bhutan.—MNA

British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs visits relief camps in Rakhine State

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec—British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Rt Hon Mr Hugo George William Swire and Ambassador of Britain to Myanmar Mr Andrew Richard Heyn, together with Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Win and Chief Minister of Rakhine State U Hla Maung Tin visited relief camps in Rakhine State on 14 and 15 December.

On 14 December, they flew to the relief camp of Rakhine victims at Kantha Htwa-ta Ward and the relief camp of Bangali victims at Taungpaw Ward in Myebon by helicopter.

During the visit, the Rakhine State chief minister and the deputy minister conducted them around the relief camps and the British delegation observed the accommodation, cause of the conflict, duration at the camps and relief aids.

They met with local



people in Zaypaing Ward in Myebon.

In Mingan Ward in Sittway, they observed the resettlement of the victims at their homes and asked how the conflict broke out Bangalis in Aungmingala Ward in Sittway.

They also visited the garage of the WFP and viewed the arrangements for shipping

foods to the victims.

On 15 December, the delegation visited the Kyeinibyin relief camp of Bangalis in Pauktaw Township and observed the sheltering of the victims at the temporary tents, food and water supply and aids provided by the UK Aid.

During the meeting, the British Minister discussed

matters related to security, humanitarian aids, rule of law and seeking solutions for the issues between the two communities.

Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Win discussed the relief efforts, cooperation with INGOs and needs for further aids and for rehabilitation of the victims.—MNA

NATIONAL

President U Thein Sein pays homage to Historic Kyaikthanlan Pagoda in Mawlamyine



President U Thein Sein pays homage to the Buddha image at Kyaikthanlan Pagoda in Mawlamyine.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec — President U Thein Sein paid homage to Historic Kyaikthanlan Pagoda in Mawlamyine this morning. The President and

party offered flowers, water and lights to the Buddha Image which is kept at the Prayer Hall, and made cash donations. Next, the President, the

Vice-President and Union ministers signed the visitors' book. Then the President gave necessary instructions on development of Maw-

lamyine, viewing from the precinct of the Pagoda. Afterwards, the President and party left there for Dawei by air. MNA



LOCAL NEWS

Mobile clinic opened in Hmawby Township

YANGON, 16 Dec—Jointly organized by Yangon North District Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee and Health Department, the mobile clinic was launched in Thebyu Village of Hmawby

Township on 10 December morning.

At the opening ceremony, the clinic provided healthcare services to 205 patients from the village and gave medicines and refreshments to 20 older

Drug users, traffickers arrested

BHAMO, 16 Dec—According to the information that motorcyclists in group abused narcotic drugs in the toddy plantation near Kachin mound of Manyut Village of Bhamo Township in Bhamo District, a squad led by IP Maung Maung Lwin of Bhamo District Special Anti-Drug Squad and SIP Kyaw Thiha of Bhamo Police Station together with local authorities and witnesses seized the drug users recently.

The authorities seized drug traffickers Hla Ngwe and Tun Tin and 26 drug users together with 28 syringes, and 13 China-made motorcycles. The police station opened files of lawsuits against them under Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Myanma Alinn

Knowledge of sugarcane plants for growers

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec—As it is time to harvest sugarcane plantation in farmer educative sugarcane farm in Nyaungbingyisu village of Pobbathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, K 95/84 sugarcane plants are being harvested as quality strain and distributed to other sugarcane growers on 10 December morning.

The farmer educative sugarcane farm has been grown for 10 months. The strain of such sugarcane is to be grown again for 11 months to be milled as sugar.

In-charge of the farm U Moe Kyaw Hlaing said, “The educative sugarcane farm is cultivated on 10 acres of farmland. Small grafts of sugarcane are to be nurtured for 10 months, thence will be

Vietnamese delegation visits Shwedagon Pagoda, Chaukhtatgyi Shwethalyaung reclining Buddha Image

YANGON, 16 Dec—A delegation led by Vice-President of Ethnic Council of the National Assembly of Vietnam Mr. Giang A Chu visited Shwedagon Pagoda and donated cash at 8 am today. They were

accompanied by members of Amyotha Hluttaw National Races Affairs Committee U Saw Tun Mya Aung and officials.

The delegation also visited Chaukhtatgyi Shwethalyaung reclining Buddha Image. MNA

Gymnastics referee course No. 1 on 17-20 Dec

YANGON, 16 Dec—The International Gymnastics Referee Course No 1 will be conducted at the Myanmar Gymnastics Federation at Kyaikkasan Sports Grounds, here, from 17 to 20 December for Myanmar gymnastic referees to be able to discharge duties in the XXVII SEA Games and international competitions and turning out outstanding gymnastic referees from the nation.

Mr Anuchit of Thailand will discharge duty as course instructor who will provide training to the trainees in English.

Any enthusiasts of

gymnastics may attend the course. Outstanding trainees from the course No 1 are allowed to attend the course No 2.

After that, the FIG referee course will be opened in 2013. Those who passed the second course may attend the FIG referee course together with those of Southeast Asian, Asian and European countries. They will be presented the certificates recognized by FIG. Those who have the certificates of FIG can take out the duties of referees in the international and world gymnastics championships. Myanma Alinn

Book show marks National Day

DAWEI, 16 Dec—Basic Education High Kaleinaung Sub-Township Information and Public Relations Department and Education Department jointly held the literary talks on National Day and book show at Kaleinaung

School on 7 December. After Headmistress Daw Than Than Htay had made a speech, Head of Sub-Township IPRD Daw Nanda Hlaing explained the purpose of book show. Myanma Alinn



Gunmen kill lawmaker in northern Nigeria

KANO, 16 Dec—A member of the northwest Nigeria's Kano state House of Assembly, Danladi Isa Kademi was on Friday shot dead by unknown gunmen.

The lawmaker, who was said to have been shot dead by unknown gunmen at Ring road in Hotoro quarters at about 5:55 pm, local time at the time when motorcycle riders are trying to meet their time of

movement of 6:00 pm, local time in the state. Security sources told *Xinhua* that the Late Kademi was trailed to his guest House at Hotoro Maradun by eastern bye pass in Kano metropolis by two gunmen riding on a motorbike.

The source said the gunmen open fire on the late lawmaker, killing him instantly and escaped from the scene. State

Commissioner of Police, Ibrahim Idris confirmed the incident and said he had earlier warned lawmakers in the state to desist from relaxing at popular spots.

The commissioner pointing out that a lawmaker in the state was recently shot dead by unknown gunmen in a similar circumstance. He disclosed that investigations into the incident have begun. *Xinhua*



A research team of Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority examines a fault in a trench at the premises of the Higashidori nuclear power plant site in Aomori Prefecture on 14 Dec, 2012.

KYODO NEWS

High-level int'l conference on nuclear safety starts in Fukushima

KORIYAMA, (Japan), 16 Dec—A high-level international conference on nuclear safety started Saturday in Japan's northeastern Prefecture of Fukushima, with participants expected to affirm that safety is a prerequisite for using nuclear power and assisting human resources development for countries seeking the energy option is vital.

The three-day event, organized by the Japanese government and the Inter-

national Atomic Energy Agency, is meant to share the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi plant disaster last year and to discuss the progress in global efforts to strengthen nuclear safety.

The conference, held in the city of Koriyama, brings together officials of IAEA member states, many of whom are represented at the ministerial level, and relevant international organizations.—*Kyodo News*

Nigerian governor, ex-security head die in air crash

LAGOS, 16 Dec—The governor of Nigeria's volatile Kaduna state and a former national security adviser were among six killed when a helicopter crashed in the southerly oil-producing Bayelsa state on Saturday, officials said.

The helicopter wobbled in the sky before nose-diving into a forest in Ogbia Creek at around 3:30 pm (0930 ET), a local resident who witnessed the crash told *Reuters*.

"By the time we got to the scene it was in flames,"

said Hitler Adunion, a local community leader. "We tried to put them out but it was difficult. We saw the roasted bodies of those inside."

The Nigerian Navy confirmed that its Agusta helicopter had crashed while carrying VIPs to Port Harcourt but it didn't give a reason and civilian authorities declined to speculate on the cause. President Goodluck Jonathan ordered an investigation.

Kaduna was quiet on Saturday evening but some residents said they were nervous.

"I just had to rush down to my house because this is Kaduna state and anything can happen, we can't forget the election crisis when a lot of lives and properties were lost," local resident Maxell Danjuma told *Reuters*.

Islamist sect Boko Haram has bombed several churches in Kaduna since an uprising in 2009. The sect has killed hundreds this year in its effort to carve out an Islamic state in a country of 160 million split between Christians and Muslims.

The 36 state governors



Chinese and Israeli youngsters visit the graves of Israel's first prime minister David Ben-Gurion and his wife Paula at Sde Boker Kibutz in South Israel, on 14 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Vienna Policy Dialogue calls for integration of gender equality into development agenda

VIENNA, 16 Dec—Gender equality is vital to progress in development and must be at the heart of the development agenda, Vienna Policy Dialogue concluded on Friday.

The two-day dialogue, organized by the United Nations, highlighted the gender equality and empowerment of women.

Despite the progress made on gender equality through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the 2015 deadline for MDGs approaching, gen-

der inequality persists and women continue to face discrimination in access to education, work and economic assets, and participation in government, according to participants of the meeting.

Delegates, including experts and representatives of local governments, civil society, parliaments and women's organizations, reached a consensus that putting gender equality at the core of the post-2015 development agenda is both

a moral and developmental imperative.

"We should therefore aim for a standalone gender goal coupled with the effort to integrate gender equality into all aspects of a future development agenda," Wu Hongbo, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said in the closing session of the meeting.

Over 100 countries have put in place national gender action plans.

Xinhua



Winner of the 2012 Nobel Prize for Literature, Chinese writer Mo Yan (L, front), is welcomed at the Beijing Capital International Airport in Beijing, capital of China, on 14 Dec, 2012. Mo Yan returned to Beijing on Friday after receiving Nobel Prize in Literature at the 2012 Nobel Prize ceremony in Stockholm, Sweden.—XINHUA

Family of slain border agent sues federal officials

PHOENIX, 16 Dec—The parents of a slain US Border Patrol agent have filed a wrongful death lawsuit in connection with the botched "Fast and Furious" federal sting operation that saw guns purchased in the United States slip to suspected criminals in Mexico.

The lawsuit, which names federal officials and a federal prosecutor as defendants, was filed in federal court in Arizona and seeks unspecified damages for Brian Terry's 2010 death in a shootout with suspected border bandits in southern Arizona.

Terry's slaying set off a political firestorm when it brought to light the botched

probe by the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives into gun trafficking that let more than 2,000 weapons slip across the border into Mexico.

The operation had been envisioned as a way to track guns from buyers to senior Mexican drug cartel members. Federal agents who ran "Fast and Furious" focused on building cases against the leaders of a trafficking ring, and did not pursue low-level buyers of those firearms.

Two firearms found at the scene of Terry's death were traced to the operation, although it was not clear if the bullets that killed him came from either weapon.—*Reuters*

Czech military to resume flying L-159 planes after crash

PRAGUE, 16 Dec—The Czech military will on Monday resume flying the L-159 subsonic aircraft after one of the planes crashed in November, killing the pilot, a military spokeswoman said on Friday.

Jana Ruzickova said the investigation of the fatal crash ruled out any technical defect. But the cause of the accident has not been announced yet.

The pilot crashed into the ground when routinely training night piloting

in Radovesnice, central Bohemia.

The L-159 ALCA is a one-seat, one-engine subsonic combat aircraft manufactured in the Czech Republic.

The Czech military has armed its air force with this model since 2003.

In that same year, one of the planes crashed in the Jince military training ground in the central Bohemian region caused by a pilot mistake.

Xinhua



Supporters of gun control legislation hold candles and placards during a rally to pay respect for the shooting victims in front of the White House in Washington, capital of the United States, on 14 Dec, 2012, following a deadly shooting spree in an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, which took place earlier in the day.—XINHUA

REGIONAL

Police arrest five Taleban militants in northern Afghan province

SARIPUL, (Afghanistan), 16 Dec—Afghan Police during cleanup operations against Taleban militants in Saripul Province 350 km north of Kabul on Saturday, captured five armed Taleban militants including a group commander, a local police officer said.

“The operation conducted against Taleban in Sayad District early today morning during which five armed Taleban rebels including a group commander Mullah Qamar were captured,” Sediq Khan the police chief of Sayad district told *Xinhua*.

There were no casualties on police personnel during the operations which lasted for a while.

Taleban militants fighting the government are yet to make comment.

Xinhua



Xie Xinye, a primary school student injured in a knife attack, receives medical treatment in hospital in Guangshan County, central China's Henan Province, on 14 Dec, 2012. Twenty-two school children and a villager were injured in the knife attack which happened at the entrance of Chenpeng Village Primary School in Wenshu Township of Guangshan County on Friday morning, according to local authorities. Local police said they had seized the suspect, a 36-year-old villager named Min Yingjun. The case is under investigation.—XINHUA

Philippine death toll from typhoon Bopha exceeds 1000

MANILA, 16 Dec—The official death toll from super typhoon Bopha (local name Pablo) has already reached 1020 people as the number of missing also rose to 844, a government agency announced on Sunday.

The Philippine National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council

(NDRRMC) said a regional response coordination center was built in Davao city for searching more survivors and bodies. The Philippine Navy and the Coast Guard have also mobilized sea and aircraft to assist the rescue operation.

Typhoon Bopha, believed to be the most

severe typhoon in the Philippines over the past two decades, made its landfall in Baganga of Davao Oriental on 4 Dec. The typhoon brought strong winds and flooding, heavily affecting Compostela Valley and Davao Oriental provinces in southern Philippines' Mindanao region.—*Xinhua*

Japan's lower house election begins



Voters register at a polling station in Osaka, Japan, on 16 Dec, 2012. Japan on Sunday held the election of the 46th House of Representatives, with a total of 1,504 candidates running for the 480 seats in the lower house.

XINHUA

TOKYO, 16 Dec—The 46th Japan's House of Representatives election began at 7:00 am local time Sunday. A total of 1,504 candidates will run for the 480 seats in lower house election.

The ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) registered 267 candidates while the main opposition party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) registered 338 runners. The Japan Restoration Party and the Tomorrow Party of Japan, known as the third forces, registered 172 and 121 respectively.

About 49,000 polling stations across the country are

open to voters and vote boxes will be sealed at 8:00 pm local time. The result is expected on early on Monday at earliest.

Japan's lower house was dissolved by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda on 16 Nov.

According to the latest polls, the LDP is expected to grab a big win as the party and its ally, the New Komeito Party will together secure more than 300 seats in the election. However, the ruling party, headed by Noda, is likely to get around 60 seats, compared with its current 230 seats.

The LDP pledged to boost Japan's economy by

setting a 3 percent inflation target to combat the country's continuous deflation. It will also exert more pressure on the Bank of Japan to adopt currency easing policies.

The LDP also aims at revising the country's pacifist constitution so as to upgrade the Self-Defence Forces into a national army and allow the country to use collective self-defence rights.

The DPJ vowed to phase out nuclear energy in the 2030s and will not construct new nuclear power facilities.

It also promised to create more than 4 million jobs in the fields such as new energy and health care and to achieve a two-percent GDP growth rate by the year of 2020.

UN chief urges Nepali parties to form broad-based gov't

KATHMANDU, 16 Dec—United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has expressed his deep concern about continuing political deadlock and has urged the political parties to form a broad-based government without further delay.

Issuing a Press statement on late Friday evening, Ban Ki-moon urged the political parties to set aside differences in the interest of the nation.

Ban's statement comes at a time when the leaders have failed to nominate a prime ministerial candidate for the last three weeks.

He has also encouraged the main stakeholders to create a conducive environment for

the next elections.

“The Secretary-General urges all actors in Nepal to reaffirm their commitment to the Comprehensive Peace Agreements and to safeguard the achievements of the past several years in line with the aspirations of the Nepali people,” the statement reads.

Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai on Saturday morning called President Ram Baran Yadav in Shital Niwas and briefed about the attempts being made to forge consensus on major issues. President Yadav has urged Bhattarai to resolve all the issues as soon as possible. Likewise, Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists Chairman Pushpa

Kamal Dahal and Nepali Congress President Sushil Koirala on Saturday decided to move ahead by building understanding.

Leaders of four major political parties on Thursday had met President Yadav and requested for more time. President Yadav has extended the deadline for another five days which will end on 17 Dec.

The ruling parties have been asking the opposition to come to a package deal on issues including new election date and electoral laws and appointments at the constitutional bodies, but the opposition wants the new government to be formed first.

Xinhua



India's ruling Congress party President Sonia Gandhi (up) interacts with the supporters during an election campaign rally for the upcoming Gujarat state assembly elections at Kalol near Ahmadabad, India, on 14 Dec, 2012. The second phase of polling for the elections is scheduled to be held on 17 Dec.

XINHUA

28 kids die of measles in S Pakistan over last two weeks

ISLAMABAD, 16 Dec—A six-year-old girl died of measles in Pakistan's southern Province of Sindh on Saturday, bringing the death toll to 28 over the last two weeks, local media reported.

Local Urdu TV channel Dunya quoted hospital sources as saying that the disease broke out in the children of one to seven years of age during the last week of October in the Upper Sindh areas which were affected by floods earlier in August and September this year.

District Health Officer (DHO), Dr Abdul Fatah Bughio said that he could not verify the number of deaths, however, over one hundred cases of measles have been reported from Upper Sindh. He said that insanitation, unhygienic food and poverty topped the causes of measles in the affected areas.

Measles is highly contagious and it spreads by a virus that is preventable by

proper immunization but the disease became fatal in the province due to negligence of the health authorities.

Talking to media, families of the affected kids said that the concerned authorities did not provide any relief to them, and the stagnant rain water is still surrounding their houses even after the passage of three months which is causing diseases among the children.

Professor Dr Saifullah Jamro, a senior medician at the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Medical University, said that 2,143 cases of measles have been confirmed across the country since 2012.

This is the second major outbreak of the disease in Sindh since the beginning of this year. Earlier in June, World Health Organization (WHO) said that an estimated of 27 children under five years old died due to measles in the province.

Xinhua



Photo taken on 14 Dec, 2012 shows sunset view at Tamsui District of Xinbei City, southeast China's Taipei.—XINHUA



Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation (MTI) Limited Submission to People as incorporated

Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation (MTI) Limited has being granted as a Public Company by Department of Investment and Companies Administration, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Republic of the Union of Myanmar under Company Incorporation Certificate No.(3493/2012-2013) according with existing laws.

Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation (MTI) Limited, a public company founded with the prominent professional and expatriates of Myanmar ICT industrial and will stand as a qualitative business group keeping abreast to international level in order to provide telecommunication services, investments and technologies for peoples of Myanmar. Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation (MTI) Limited will keep giving information about detailed facts concerning shares for those who are interested.

Myanmar Technologies and Investment Corporation (MTI) Limited
Address: Compound (615/F), Marlar Lane, Pyay Road, Kamayut Township, Yangon
Tel: + 95-1-535133, Fax: + 95-1-535133
Email - office@mti.com.mm / info@mti.com.mm

INVITATION FOR QUOTATION (IFQ)

THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT has received the Grant from the International Development Association for National Community Driven Development Project and wishes to purchase: **Lot 1-(4x4) vehicles (2 units) and Lot 2 - Pick-up vehicles (6 units) from local and international authorized dealer.** The goods must be brand new and required to be supplied with 3 months after contract signing. Interested qualified eligible suppliers are invited to obtain a copy of the Invitation For Quotation (IFQ) free-of-charge from the address given below:

U Ko Ko Naing

Director, Department of Rural Development,
Ministry of Border Affairs, Office Number 14,
Nay Pyi Taw,

Myanmar Fax:+95-67-409215

E-mail to all these email addresses:

naing.7.koko@gmail.com, [kzaw.dda\(a\).gmail.com](mailto:kzaw.dda(a).gmail.com),

Quotations must be delivered to the address mentioned above before December 31, 2012,12:00AM.

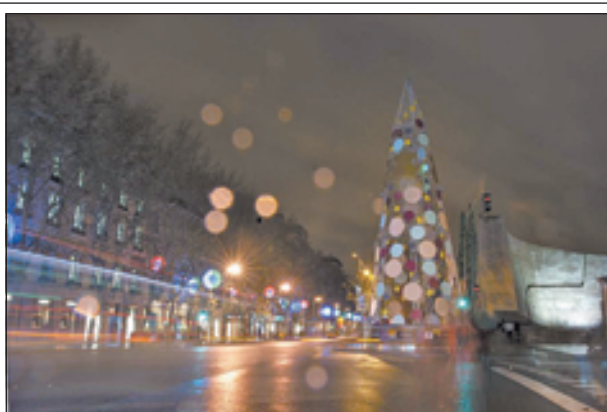


Photo taken on 14 Dec, 2012 shows the Christmas decorations in Madrid, Spain. To save money, the government of Madrid decided to use some old lights from 2011 and 2010 in this year's Christmas illuminating decoration.

XINHUA

China National Democratic Construction Association to hold national congress

BEIJING, 16 Dec—The 10th National Congress of the China National Democratic Construction Association (CNDCA), one of the country's eight non-Communist political parties, will be held from 16 to 20 December. The congress was announced at the sixth plenary session of the ninth Central Committee of the CNDCA held on Saturday.

Chen Changzhi, chairman of the CNDCA's central

committee, said congress delegates will review the recently concluded national congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), map out plans for the future development of the CNDCA, revise the association's constitution and elect a new central leadership. The CNDCA was founded by patriotic industrialists, businessmen and intellectuals in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality on 16 Dec, 1945.—Xinhua

Death toll from sunken boat with illegal migrants off Greek island rises to 20

ATHENS, 16 Dec—The death toll from a sunken boat carrying illegal migrants from Turkey to Greece has risen to 20, local authorities at Lesbos island in the eastern Aegean Sea said on Saturday afternoon. Bodies of the victims have been retrieved across the eastern coast of Lesbos, as a rescue operation for survivors in cooperation with Frontex forces continued, according to a Greek coast guard spokesperson.

A total of 28 people of unidentified nationalities, including an unclear number of children and a Turkish

smuggler, are believed to have been on board the rubber boat which sank on Friday morning, according to the statement of the only survivor so far. The 20-year old man was rescued from Greek coast guard officers on Friday afternoon and is hospitalized at Lesbos, according to an official Press release.

Greek Coast Guard officials verified reports of local media in which the man described the capsizing of the overloaded vessel amid strong winds at halfway between Turkey's coast and the Greek island.—Xinhua

BEIJING, 16 Dec—China's meteorological authorities on Saturday issued a blue-coded alert for fog in most parts of the country's central and northern provinces from Saturday night to Sunday morning.

Most parts of north China, southwest China's Sichuan Basin and areas along the Yangtze, Yellow, Huaihe and Han rivers will be covered in light fog during the period, the National Meteorological Centre (NMC) warned.

The fog will reduce visibility to less than 1,000 meters in Tianjin Municipality and parts of Hebei, Shanxi, Shandong,

Henan, Hubei, Jiangsu, Shaanxi and Sichuan Provinces, with visibility as low as 200 metres in some areas, according to the centre.

The alert represents the lowest level in China's four-tier colour-coded weather warning system.

The NMC has advised residents to protect themselves against possible air pollution. It also told drivers to be aware of road conditions and to slow down to guarantee safety.

The centre also forecast light snow in north China and parts of northeast China from Saturday night to daytime on Sunday. South China, along with the Jiangnan Plain and areas

south of the Yangtze River, can expect to see rainy weather from Monday to Tuesday, it added.—Xinhua



Photo taken on 15 Dec, 2012 shows a scenic spot enveloped in a fog in Suzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province. A heavy fog hit Suzhou on Saturday.

XINHUA

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THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION

Announcement of Prequalified Firms for Mandalay International Airport Project

1. The Prequalification Evaluation Committee formed by the Ministry of Transport has evaluated the prequalification documents submitted by sixteen applicants for the Mandalay International Airport Project and has selected the best qualified seven firms based on (a) financial strength (b) experience record (c) qualified personnel and (d) equipment resources.

2. Accordingly, the Department of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Transport hereby announce the following list of firms which are prequalified to submit tenders for the Mandalay International Airport Project.

No.	Reg No.	Main Company	Consortium	Country
1	001	Mitsubishi-Jalux in association with SPA (Japan)	Mitsubishi Corporation	Japan
			JALUX Inc.	Japan
			SPA Project Management Ltd.	Myanmar
2	002	Munich Urban Forntier Aung Myanmar Essar (Germany)	FLUGHAFEN MUNCHEN GMBH	Germany
			Urban Strategic Pte., Ltd.	Singapore
			Frontier Investment and Development Advisors Pte., Ltd.	Singapore
			Aung Myanmar Technology Company Limited.	Myanmar
			Essar Projects (India) Ltd.	India
3	004	ITNL International Pte., Ltd. (Singapore)	ITNL International Pte., Ltd.	Singapore
			IL&FS Transportation Networks Limited.	India
			Dublin Airport Authority	Ireland
			Htoo Construction Group Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
4	005	China Harbour Engineering Co., Ltd. (China)	China Harbour Engineering Co., Ltd.	China
			Asia World Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
5	009	AVIC International Holdings Corporation (China)	AVIC International Holdings Corporation	China
			YUNNAN Airport Group Co., Ltd.	China
			Shwe Than Lwin Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
6	011	VINCI Airport (France)	VINCI	France
			Muhibbah Engineering(M) BHD	Malaysia
			Shwe Taung Development Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
7	020	Bouygues Batiment International (France)	Bouygues Batiment International	France
			First Pacific Company Ltd.	Hong Kong
			First Myanmar Investment Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
			Yoma Strategic Holdings Ltd.	Singapore

Note: The list is in order of the registration number of the firms at the time of purchase of prequalification documents from the Department of Civil Aviation.

3. The Department of Civil Aviation will inform in writing to each of the firms in the above list the date and terms and conditions for purchase of the tender documents.

Singer-songwriter Carole King to receive US Gershwin prize

NEW YORK, 16 Dec— American singer-songwriter Carole King will be awarded the Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song, the US national library said on Thursday.

The multiple Grammy Award winner co-wrote her first No 1 hit at age 17 with then-husband Gerry Goffin and was the first female solo artist to sell more than 10 million copies of a single album, with her 1971 release "Tapestry."

The prize honours individuals for lifetime achievement in popular music, the library said. It is named after songwriting brothers George and Ira Gershwin. King, now 70, topped the charts with the song "It's Too Late" in 1971, but is best known for her work performed by others, including "You've Got a Friend" by James Taylor and "(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman" by Aretha Franklin.

"I was so pleased when the venerable Library of Congress began honouring popular songs with the Gershwin Prize," King

said in a statement. "I'm proud to be the fifth such honouree and the first woman among such distinguished company."

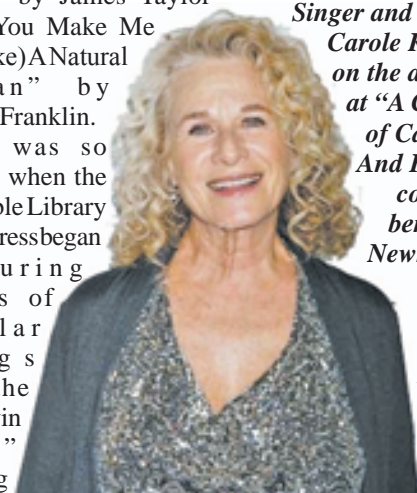
King and Goffin wrote some the biggest hits of the 1960s before their nine-year marriage ended in 1968. They rose to prominence in 1960 writing "Will You Love Me Tomorrow" for the Shirelles. The duo also scored hits with "Take Good Care of My Baby," performed by Bobby Vee in 1961, "The Loco-Motion," performed by Little Eva in 1962 and "Pleasant Valley Sunday," performed by The Monkees in 1967, among others.

New York-born King did not hit it big as a singer until 1971, when "Tapestry" topped the US album charts for 15 weeks, then a record for a female solo artist.

Reuters

Singer and songwriter Carole King poses on the arrivals line at "A Celebration of Carole King And Her Music" concert to benefit Paul Newman's The Painted Turtle Camp in Hollywood on 4 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS



The cast of "Homeland" L-R: David Harewood, Mandy Patinkin, Claire Danes, Damian Lewis, Jackson Pace, Morena Baccarin, Morgan Saylor and Diego Klattenhoff, pose after the series won the Emmy award for outstanding drama series at the 64th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles on 23 Sept, 2012.— Reuters



"Homeland" leads old favourites in Golden Globes TV race

LOS ANGELES, 16 Dec— Cable shows got more Golden Globe nominations for television than traditional network programmes on Thursday as HBO's political movie "Game Change" and Showtime's psychological thriller series "Homeland," — one of last year's big winners — led the race. "Homeland" led the TV drama category with four nominations including best drama, best actor for Damian Lewis and best actress for Claire Danes in her role as a bipolar CIA agent tracking down a home-grown extremist.

The show faces stiff competition from British aristocratic drama "Downton Abbey," which also won an acting nod for Michelle Dockery, along with "Breaking Bad," "Boardwalk Empire," and newcomer "The Newsroom." "Homeland" fans seemed to be a little more split on whether creatively

the second season was as successful as the first season so it'll be curious if that ends up impacting the show's chances in terms of taking home the awards," James Hibberd, senior staff writer at Entertainment Weekly, told Reuters. "Downtown Abbey" creator Julian Fellowes told Reuters: "We're up against the big boys now, but the whole thing is very flattering and exciting."

He added: "The themes of the show are pretty international, they're about adjusting to change and being caught out by what life does to you...all of that is common to every country." HBO movie "Game Change," about the surprise selection of Sarah Palin as John McCain's running mate in the 2008 presidential campaign, landed five nods in the miniseries/movie category, including for actors Julianne Moore and Woody Harrelson.—Reuters

Leverkusen close gap at top, Schalke lose again

BERLIN, 16 Dec—Stefan Kiessling scored twice to lead Bayer Leverkusen to a 3-0 win over Hamburg that cut Bayern Munich's Bundesliga lead on Saturday while troubled Schalke 04 slumped to a 3-1 home defeat to Freiburg.

Jan Rosenthal scored twice, but later became one of five players sent off in Saturday's six games, as Freiburg came from behind to extend Schalke's winless run to six league games.

The only consolation for their fiery coach,



Andre Schuerrle (L) of Bayer Leverkusen is challenged by Hamburg SV's Michael Mancienne during their German first division Bundesliga soccer match in Leverkusen on 15 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Huub Stevens, was sports director Horst Heldt's promise on Thursday that the Dutchman's job is safe for the time being.

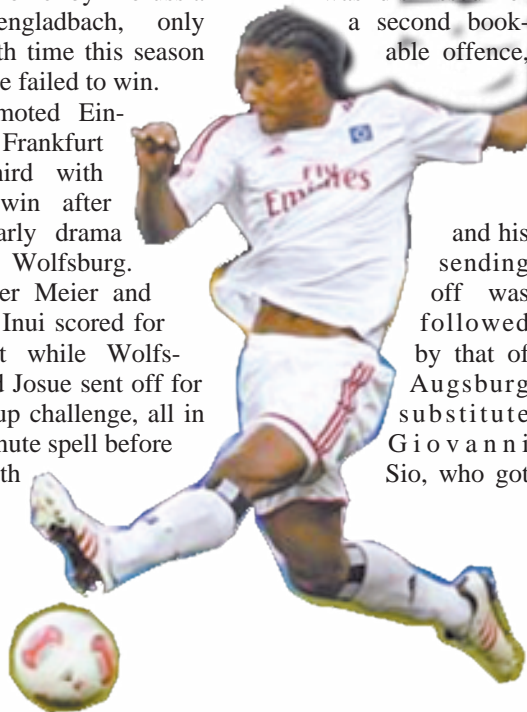
Kiessling's brace made the unsung striker the Bundesliga top scorer with 12 goals. Andre Schuerrle was also on target as second-placed Leverkusen cut Bayern Munich's lead at the top to nine points at the Bundesliga's halfway mark.

Bayern slipped up on Friday when they were held 1-1 at home by Borussia Moenchengladbach, only the fourth time this season they have failed to win.

Promoted Eintracht Frankfurt went third with a 2-0 win after some early drama at VfL Wolfsburg. Alexander Meier and Takashi Inui scored for Eintracht while Wolfsburg had Josue sent off for a studs-up challenge, all in a six-minute spell before the 20th

minute.

Greuther Fuerth and Augsburg both finished with 10 men as they drew 1-1 in a meeting of the bottom two, leaving them level on nine points from 17 games at the foot of the 18-team table. Sascha Molders gave Augsburg an early lead and Lasse Solbich levelled after the break for Fuerth, who are in the Bundesliga for the first time and have yet to win at home. Fuerth's Mergim Mavraj was dismissed for a second bookable offence,



and his sending off was followed by that of Augsburg substitute Giovanni Sio, who got

a straight red after only four minutes on the field.

Two goals from Nicolai Mueller helped Mainz 05 to a 3-1 win over VfB Stuttgart and promoted Fortuna Dusseldorf beat Hanover 96 2-1.

Kiessling has been among the Bundesliga's leading scorers over the past few seasons but has won only six caps for Germany, finding himself overshadowed by Miroslav Klose and Mario Gomez. Leverkusen reached the halfway mark with 33 points, compared to Bayern's 42, with Frankfurt a further three points behind.

Leverkusen's progress has gone almost unnoticed with Bayern hogging the limelight, and Schuerrle said they did not expect to mount a challenge, despite the Bavarians' recent tendency to cave in at crucial moments of a campaign.

"Bayern are simply too good this year, we have to accept that," Schuerrle told reporters. "But we want to cut their lead as much as possible and, naturally, we won't want to give up on second place." Leverkusen went ahead when Kiessling side-footed past Rene Adler from an unmarked position in the 26th minute after Gonzalo Castro deflected the ball into his path.

Reuters

Golf

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 16 Dec—Bandar Seri Begawan - Asia stormed back into contention at the Royal Trophy on Saturday by taking three points from the four fourball matches against Europe to close the deficit



Ryo Ishikawa of Japan watches his tee on the 17th hole during the Royal Trophy golf tournament between Asia and Europe in Bandar Seri Begawan on 15 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

Alpine skiing-American Nyman wins Val Gardena downhill

VAL GARDENA, 16 Dec—American Steven Nyman won a men's World Cup downhill in Val Gardena on Saturday.

Slovenia's Rok Perko was second and Canadian Erik Guay was third.

Reuters

Klose fires Lazio to late win over Inter

Soccer

ROME, 16 Dec—Lazio moved to within five points of Serie A leaders Juventus on Saturday after Miroslav Klose fired them to a late 1-0 win over title rivals Inter Milan.

The Germany international's 82nd-minute winner, his 10th goal of the season, lifts Lazio into fourth place on 33 points, level with Napoli, while second-placed Inter missed the chance to close the gap between them



SS Lazio's goalkeeper Federico Marchetti (L) goes to save against Inter Milan's Diego Milito during their Italian Serie A soccer match at the Olympic stadium in Rome on 15 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

and Antonio Conte's champions to one point.

In Saturday's other game, Antonio Di Natale rescued a point for 10-man Udinese when he scored an 89th-minute equaliser against Palermo, leaving the Sicilians a point above the relegation zone.

Defenders dominated the first hour in Rome, and the first clear scoring opportunity did not arrive un-

til the 63rd minute, when Freddy Guarin, the best of Inter's disappointing attacking players, struck the inside of the post with a long-range daisy cutter of a shot.

After that the match burst into life, with Antonio Cassano following up Guarin's effort four minutes later by having his shot from nearly the same position pushed on to the same post by Lazio keeper Federico Marchetti, before Yuto Nagatomo failed to score from the rebound. Inter had their tails up, and Rodrigo Palacio curled another shot just wide.—Reuters

Asia fight back against Europe in Royal Trophy

to just one ahead of the final day singles.

Europe have a slender 4 1/2-3 1/2 lead ahead of Sunday's eight singles matches at the Empire Country Club in Brunei with Jose Maria Olazabal's side needing four more points to win the annual contest loosely based on the Ryder Cup model.

Asia have won the Royal Trophy only once, in 2009, with Europe winning the four other editions. A fifth win looked odds on after Olazabal's side had taken three-

point lead from the opening foursomes but Asia had other ideas on the second day.

India's Jeev Milkha Singh rolled in a four-foot putt on the 18th as he and Kiradech Aphibarnrat of Thailand scored a fighting half in their match against Olazabal and Spanish compatriot Miguel Angel Jimenez in the opening game of the day.

Singh's putt also drew a welcome response from the crowd on his 41st birthday. "It was nice to hear the crowd singing happy birthday. They might not have bothered if I had missed on 18," the Indian said in a television interview.—Reuters

Nuggets tame Grizzlies on return to Denver

DENVER, 16 Dec—The Denver Nuggets took full advantage of a Memphis Grizzlies team lacking in confidence by grinding out a 99-94 home win to get back to .500 for the season on Friday.

The Nuggets, who have spent an NBA-high 17 of 24 games on the road this season, improved to 12-12 on their return to Denver, while condemning the Grizzlies to a third consecutive loss.

Andre Iguodala had a big night for the Nuggets

with 20 points and seven assists, while benchman Andre Miller contributed 18 points.

"He is amazing with some of the stuff he does and how he gets it done," Nuggets coach George Karl told reporters of the 36-year-old Miller.

"We don't win this game without Andre Miller, without a question.

"It was a slow-down, drag, pull teeth, punch, grab, hold, kind of an old-

school basketball game.

"I think it is a really classy win for us. It is a tough-minded win against a team that I think is going to be very, very successful this year."

Memphis (14-6) had a chance to tie the contest in the closing seconds but top scorer Rudy Gay's (21 points) three-point attempt failed to drop as the Grizzlies slipped two games behind San Antonio in the Southwest Division.

"Honestly it shouldn't have gotten to that point," Gay said of the late shot that went agonisingly close.

"I feel like we could have won this game. But whether that shot went down or not I think it was a couple of crucial plays that happened before, earlier in the fourth quarter.

"But now this is where we show who we are. We're going to find a way to get out of this." The win was Denver's 29th home triumph over Memphis in 33 contests, continuing an impressive dominance in Colorado.—Reuters



Memphis Grizzlies forward Rudy Gay (22) tries to get the ball from Denver Nuggets guard Ty Lawson (3) in the third quarter of their NBA basketball game in Denver on 14 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

GENERAL



Photo shows a damaged vehicle as a result of reckless driving after crashing into the blocks in the middle of a main road in Mawlamyine on 12 December. KYEMON

Balotelli must work harder if he wants to play - Mancini

LONDON, 16 Dec— Mario Balotelli has a future at Manchester City but he must work harder, manager Roberto Mancini said on Saturday after dropping the Italian for the Premier League champions' 3-1 win at Newcastle United.

"Yes. Why not? He needs to work and if he deserves to play because he worked well then he will do, but if not he will

be in the stands or on the bench like all of the other players," Mancini told BBC television.

"He needs to train and when he starts to play like his quality he will play again. We won the championship last year because all four of the strikers were scoring goals and we want that again."

Balotelli was hauled off just after half-time in

last weekend's 3-2 defeat to leaders Manchester United, with the striker making a moody departure down the tunnel after a misfiring afternoon.

The 22-year-old has scored just once this season in the Premier League and was not even on the bench at St James' Park on Saturday.

Mancini, who had his bust-ups with Balotelli but has generally been a staunch defender of the player he signed in 2010, told reporters after last weekend's derby that his compatriot need to think more about what he was doing.

"He can't continue to play like today, we wanted more from him," he said then. "When you have a player with the quality that Mario has, you can't understand that (he) continues to throw (it) out of the window."

Reuters



Manchester City's Mario Balotelli sits on the pitch during their Champions League group D soccer match against Borussia Dortmund in Dortmund on 4 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Leaders Manchester United stay six points clear

LONDON, 16 Dec— Robin van Persie was back on target for Manchester United as the Premier League leaders swept aside Sunderland 3-1 at Old Trafford on Saturday to stay six points clear at the top.

United were 2-0 up after 19 minutes, Van Persie opening the scoring with a left-foot finish from close range for his 12th league goal of the season and Tom Cleverley adding a quickfire second three minutes later.

England striker Wayne Rooney, who had been doubtful due to midweek sickness, made it 3-0 in the 59th minute before substitute Fraizer Campbell pulled one back with a header four minutes after

coming on. Champions Manchester City, beaten 3-2 by United in last weekend's derby after an agonising Van Persie stoppage-time winner, had earlier narrowed the gap to three points after defeating Newcastle United 3-1 at St James' Park.

Elsewhere, Queens Park Rangers celebrated their first win of the season after beating west London rivals Fulham 2-1 thanks to two-goal Adel Taarabt to end a record run of 16 matches without a victory and move off the foot of the table.

The win stopped QPR becoming the first top-flight team since Bolton Wanderers in 1902-03 to fail to win any of their opening 17 games.

Aston Villa fans had plenty to cheer after a fighting 3-1 win at Liverpool moved them three points clear of the relegation zone. Christian Benteke scored in each half



Manchester United's Robin van Persie celebrates his goal against Sunderland during their English Premier League soccer match at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England, on 15 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

MYANMAR TV (17-12-2012, Monday)	
7:00 am	Education (TV Lectures)
1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw	-First Year (Philosophy)
7:15 am	5:05 pm
2. Dhamma Puja Song	13. Songs For Upholding National Spirit
7:25 am	5:10 pm
3. To Be Healthy Exercise	14. Musical Programme (The Radio Myanmar Modern Music Troupe)
7:40 am	5:20 pm
4. Nice & Sweet Song	15. Teleplay (Health)
7:50 am	5:35 pm
5. Health Programme	16. Myanmar Language
8:00 am	5:50 pm
6. Song Of National Races	17. Documentary
8:05 am	6:20 pm
7. Cute Little Dancers	18. Sing & Enjoy
4:00 pm	7:00 pm
8. Martial Song	19. TV Drama Series
4:05 pm	8:00 pm
9. Dance Variety	20. News
4:15 pm	21. International News
10. Musical Programme	22. Cartoon Series
4:30 pm	23. TV Drama Series
11. Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions	24. India Drama Series
4:50 pm	
12. University of Distance	

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL (17-12-12 09:30 am ~ 18-12-12 09:30 am) MST
* News
* "Adorable Three Seasons Fashion Show of May Myanmar" Winter Fashion
* News
* Culture Stage
* News
* Broaden Your Horizon
* News
* Strategic Planning for Business Success Seminar
* News
* Getaway for Beautiful Nature
* News
* Thailand Trade Exhibition (2012)
* News
* "Youth and Language" YUFL (Part-1)
* News
* World AIDS Day; Getting to Zero
* Myanmar Movie "On the shelf"

Malaga tighten grip on fourth with Sevilla win

MADRID, 16 Dec— Malaga strengthened their hold on fourth place with a 2-0 win at Sevilla on Saturday, and recorded their first road win in La Liga since the beginning of September.

Martin Demichelis and Eliseu, with a penalty, earned Malaga the points as they were helped by a red card for Sevilla defender Federico Fazio in the 69th minute.



Sevilla's Alvaro Negredo (L) tries to save a goal after Malaga's Martin Gaston Demichelis (2nd R) heads the ball during their Spanish First Division soccer match at Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan stadium in Seville on 15 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Malaga, who have qualified for the last-16 of the Champions League in their debut campaign, moved on to 28 points from 16 games, four behind third-placed Real Madrid.

Unbeaten leaders Barcelona, with 43 points, host second-placed Atletico Madrid on Sunday, when Real are at home to struggling Espanyol.

Sevilla paid dearly for failing to convert early pressure into goals, in particular striker Alvaro Negredo who rounded the Malaga keeper only to fire against the post in the third minute.

Malaga scored with almost their first attempt just after halftime when Argentina defender

Demichelis looped a header back under the bar at a corner, and Sevilla struggled to react.

Fazio brought down Joaquin as he raced into the area and was shown a straight red card, and Portugal's Eliseu sent Diego Lopez the wrong way from the ensuing penalty.

Sevilla lie 12th with 19 points, two behind Athletic Bilbao in 11th.

Bilbao were 1-0 winners at Real Mallorca, Getafe drew 1-1 at home to Osasuna, and Granada drew 0-0 at home to Real Sociedad. Bilbao recovered from their midweek King's Cup humiliation to increase the pressure on Mallorca coach Joaquin Caparros.

Reuters



Chancellor of Sitagu International Buddhist Academy Agga Maha Pandita Dr. Bhaddanta Ñānissara, members of the Sangha, Union Minister Thura U Myint Maung, Indian External Affairs Minister Mr. Salman Khurshid and Indian Ambassador Dr. Villur Sundararajan Seshadri and party consecrate Dhammaçakka Mudra sand stone Buddha Image.—MNA

YANGON, 16 Dec — A consecration ceremony of Dhammaçakka Mudra sand stone Buddha Image donated by the Republic of India to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was held at Shwedagon Pagoda yesterday evening.

Union Minister for Religious Affairs Thura U Myint Maung, Indian External Affairs Minister

Mr. Salman Khurshid and Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr. Villur Sundararajan Seshadri and alternate member of the Board of Trustees of the Pagoda U Thein Lin unveiled the Buddha Image.

Chancellor of Sitagu International Buddhist Academy Agga Maha Pandita Dr. Bhaddanta Ñānissara and Tipi-

Dhammaçakka Mudra sand stone Buddha Image consecrated



takadhara title recipient Sayadaws and international Buddhist scholar monks took part in the consecration ceremony.

Next, the Union Minister, the Indian External Affairs minister, the Indian ambassador and the member of the board of trustees formally opened the Photo Show on Buddhist Heritages at Chanthagyi Prayer Hall, and viewed round the photos on display at the show.

The Dhammaçakka Mudra Buddha Image with the posture of delivering a

sermon on the lotus throne is the replica of Buddha Image built in Sarnet of India in 5 AD.

The Buddha Image was handed over to the Union Religious Affairs Minister

by the Indian Prime Minister during his visit to Myanmar on 29 May 2012.

Also present at the consecration ceremony were Mrs. Louise Khurshid, wife of the Indian External Affairs

Minister, Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs U Soe Win, Yangon Region Social Affairs Minister Dr Myint Thein and officials, members of religious associations and guests.—MNA

ASEAN-India Car Rally starts India Leg

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Dec— After a stopover for the night in Kalay, Sagaing Region, the ASEAN-India Car Rally made their way into the Kalay-Tamu Road to start the India leg yesterday.

After driving across the bridge on Myanmar-India border, the convoy entered into India.

The car rally will be flagged down in Guwahati of India. The convoy started Myanmar leg on Dec 11 and stopped over in Hpa-an, Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Kalay and travelled about 1405 km journey in Myanmar.

To start the last Myanmar leg, Sagaing

Region Social Affairs Minister Dr Myint Thein flagged off the convoy yesterday morning.

The second edition of the car rally (the first was held in 2004) will end in India after passing through eight ASEAN states covering 7610 km in 22 days.—MNA

Shwegondaing Overpass project launched

YANGON, 16 Dec— Almost all the roads in economic hub Yangon are busy with traffic jams daily. Increasing traffic congestion is harmful to smooth transportation and flow of commodities. Accordingly, Yangon City Development Committee is building overpasses one after another so as to reduce traffic jams at the significant points. Of them, Shwegondaing Junction Overpass is being built.

On 12 December, a ceremony to drive stake for launching the construction of Shwegondaing Overpass in Bahan Township was held at the Shwegondaing Junction. The project will be jointly implemented by Yangon City Development

Committee and Capital Development Co Ltd.

The overpass was designed by JFE Co of Japan in order to meet

the international overpass standard.

After driving the stake, the road shoulders are being expanded and underground

water pipelines, power lines and communication cables moved. The tasks above ground and underground are being carried out for

timely completion.

Shwegondaing Overpass will be of reinforced concrete. It will be built under the close supervision of experts and technicians. The overpass

will have four-way two-lane motor road.

The overpass will be 45.59 feet in width for convenient drives of vehicles. The length of the overpass will be 20059.55 feet. The facility will withstand 60-ton loads. The construction tasks will start from the northern part of the overpass. A plan has been set to complete the overpass for about 11 months.

Nowadays, Hledan Overpass, Bayintnaung Overpass and Shwegondaing Overpass are under construction in commercial hub Yangon for reduction traffic jam to some extent. The YCDC plans to build more and more overpasses at the junctions of the city.

Myanma Alinn



Photo shows an aerial view of Shwegondaing overpass project in Bahan Township.