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President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to Emperor of Japan, Japanese PM

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec— On the occasion of the birthday of His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan, which falls on 23 December 2012, U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan and His Excellency Mr. Yoshihiko Noda, Prime Minister of Japan.

MNA

President U Thein Sein visits the last king's tomb in India



President U Thein Sein and party pose for documentary photo in front of Royal Residence of King Thibaw in Ratnagiri of India.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec— President U Thein Sein flew to Ratnagiri of India this morning to visit and lay a wreath at Tomb of King Thibaw, the last monarch of Myanmar, on his visit to the neighbouring country.

The President and party left Mumbai for Ratnagiri at 9.30 am.

Indian officials welcomed the President and party at the Ratnagiri Airport.

The President then proceeded to the tomb in a motorcade.

The President visited the Royal Residence of the King where the portrait and furniture of the King and traditional appliances were displayed as well and signed

in the visitors' book.

President U Thein Sein met five descendents of King Thibaw at the administrator office of Ratnagiri district and provided cash assistance.

In meeting with officials of the Indian district, the President requested them to conserve the tombs of King Thibaw and the royal family.

The colonialist British kept the last king of Myanmar in exile in India in 1886 and Zafar Shah, the last king of India, in Yangon of Myanmar.

The President viewed round the compound of the residence.

Then, the President and party returned to Mumbai in

the afternoon.

King Thibaw, the last king of Myanmar, excelled in Buddhist literature and was a religious king but not a superstitious one. It was made clear by his encouragement of religious reform and printing of legal publications. He was known to be a kind and generous king who released slaves.

The British government dethroned him on 28 November, 1885, and the king alongside with his royal family arrived at Ratnagiri where they lived for 24 years in exile on 10 April, 1886.

He passed away on 15 December, 1916, due to diabetes and kidney failure.

The remains of King Thibaw and of his wives were kept at a tomb in the compound of the royal residence since 29 December, 1916.

The queen and daughters requested the colonialist British government to convey the remains back to Mandalay Palace for many times.

(See page 8)



President U Thein Sein lays a wreath at Tomb of King Thibaw in Ratnagiri of India.—MNA



New Ngamoeyeik Bridge (Parami) put into public service

YANGON, 22 Dec—For enabling the public to use it as soon as possible, the opening of new Ngamoeyeik Bridge (Parami) took place on 19 December and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe formally opened the bridge.

Yangon City Development Committee started construction of the bridge on 8 October 2011 and put the finishing touches to it on 30 June 2012, taking eight months and 23 days to complete all bridge works.

Of nine bridges linking with Dagon Myothit (North)

Township, the newly-built Ngamoeyeik bridge (Parami) was constructed next to the old one on which more than 20000 vehicles were passing daily, aiming at ensuring better transport in the region.

For overcoming the various kinds of challenges that are born together with developmental momentum, the bridge will serve the locals in Dagon Myothit (North) Township with speedy public transportation.

The main structure of the newly-inaugurated

bridge that links Dagon Myothit Townships and South Okkalapa Township is 600 feet in length and 40 feet in width. Its motorway is 28 feet in width and it is flanked by 6-foot wide pedestrian lanes on both sides. The RC type facility can withstand 75-ton loads.

Thanks to emergence of one more Ngamoeyeik (Parami) bridge, it can help reduce traffic congestions on roads in South Okkalapa Township and Pinlaung junction in Dagon Myothit (North).

Kyemon

Cold season crop cultivation needs more efforts to meet targeted acreage in Thongwa, Kayan Townships



YANGON, 22 Dec—With the technical assistance of Yangon Region Agriculture Department, efforts are being made to meet the targeted acreage of previous year in putting winter crops and edible oil crops into farmlands of Thongwa and Kayan Townships of

Yangon Region. There had been untimely rainfalls in the region till November, with the result that paddies were destroyed and rain water remained in the farmlands, making the farmers late for winter crop cultivation. So they are very busy with their farming works to be

able to meet the targeted acreage. A team led by the head of Yangon Region Agriculture Department is providing them with scientific agricultural methods for timely completion of winter crop cultivation works and per acre high yield.

Kyemon

Padaukbin oil field sees 20th fire



THAYET, 22 Dec — A fire broke out at the block of Shwe Season Company that is dealing with oil drilling in Padaukbin oil field in Thayet District of Magway Region at about 5 pm on 19 December. It was the 20th time for the oil field.

The fire started at Oil Well No. GS 55 in the block of the company while drawing oil from the

National Objectives of 65th Anniversary Independence Day for 2013

1. All the national people to live together in the Union through thick and thin
2. All the national people to constantly safeguard non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty
3. All the national people to participate in the tasks for bringing about genuine, eternal peace putting an end to the armed conflicts
4. To make relentless efforts, in building a modern, developed and democratic nation, in order to better serve public interest, to ensure poverty reduction and bring about righteous legislative, administrative and judicial pillars



Photo shows Tatmadawmen providing health care services to local people in quake-stricken regions recently. — KYEMON

Writers, poets and journalists in Mandalay go on excursion tour to Kunming

MANDALAY, 22 Dec — At the invitation of Oversea Chinese Association, a 12-member delegation comprising writers, poets and journalists in Mandalay led by National Literary

Award winner Writer Natmauk U Tun Shein and writer Nyi Say Min left here for Kunming in Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China by air on 20 December.

During their visit to China from 20 to 25 December, they will observe the development of Kunming, sister city of Mandalay.

Kyemon

Ayeyawady Region Traffic Rule Enforcement Supervisory Committee meets



PATHEIN, 22 Dec — A work coordination meeting of Ayeyawady Region Traffic Rule Enforcement Supervisory Committee was held at the briefing hall of the office of Senior Engineer of Ayeyawady Region Public Works on 4 December. In his address, Ayeyawady Region Minister for Road Transportation U Than Tun pointed out parallel

trends of infrastructural development, a sharp rise in number of vehicles and road accidents, calling for more educative talks on traffic rules. Next, those present held discussions and presented their respective tasks.

Enforcement Supervisory Committee was held at the briefing hall of the office of Senior Engineer of Ayeyawady Region Public Works on 4 December. In his address, Ayeyawady Region Minister for Road Transportation U Than Tun pointed out parallel trends of infrastructural development, a sharp rise in number of vehicles and road accidents, calling for more educative talks on traffic rules. Next, those present held discussions and presented their respective tasks.

Kyemon

WORLD

Ten killed in firing at passenger vehicle in SW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 22 Dec—Some unknown gunmen killed at least 10 people on Friday evening as they attacked a passenger vehicle in Pakistan's southwestern Province of Baluchistan, local media reported. According to the reports, the incident took place in Makran District of Baluchistan Province near Pak-Iran border.

The bus was coming from Sindh Province and was heading towards Iran. Local sources told media that the people on board were going to Iran illegally.

When the passenger vehicle reached the Dasht Bishuli area of Makran, the unknown militants stopped it and opened fire at it, killing at least 10 people on the spot and leaving many others injured. Security forces and rescue teams have been sent to the spot and no further detail are available yet.

On Thursday night, at least five people were killed and six others were injured in an attack on two passenger buses in the Machh area of the Bolan District in the same province.—Xinhua



Pipes are seen at a gas compressor station in the village of Boyarka, outside Kiev, on 19 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

MINSK/MOSCOW, 22 Dec—Russia plunged back into the disputes over energy with Ukraine and Belarus that have repeatedly disrupted oil

and gas supplies to European Union countries, and it also termed EU energy policy as “uncivilised”.

Russia on Friday denied

Russia clashes over energy with Belarus, Ukraine, EU

remarks by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko that it had agreed to increase its crude oil supplies to Minsk, vital for the Belarus economy, and said that it still intended to cut them next year.

On Thursday, Russian President Vladimir Putin criticised Ukraine for failing to agree on a deal, in return for cheaper gas, under which it would lease its pipeline network to Moscow and the European Union.

Russia, the world's top energy producer, supplies

over a quarter of Europe's gas and oil needs. Ukraine ships around two thirds of Europe's imports of Siberian gas through pipelines across its territory, while Belarus is mainly responsible for oil deliveries.

Clashes over energy pricing and pipeline transit with Ukraine and Belarus have led over the past decade to cuts or halts in Russian oil and gas supplies to Central and Western Europe. These have most often happened over the New Year, when Russia failed to agree on

energy supply terms with the two countries.

The European Union has accused the Kremlin of using its energy might as a political tool, while Moscow has argued it wants its neighbours to pay fair prices promptly for energy.

On Friday, Belarusian state news agency BelTA quoted Lukashenko as saying Russia had agreed to increase oil supplies next year to 23 million tonnes (460,000 barrels per day) from 21.5 million this year.

Reuters

US gun lobby calls for armed guards for every school

WASHINGTON, 22 Dec—National Rifle Association (NRA), a powerful US gun lobby, on Friday called for armed guards for every school in the country, as the response of the gun industry to the mass shooting in Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the NRA, told a Washington Press conference that “the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun,” and called on Congress to appropriate enough funds to post an

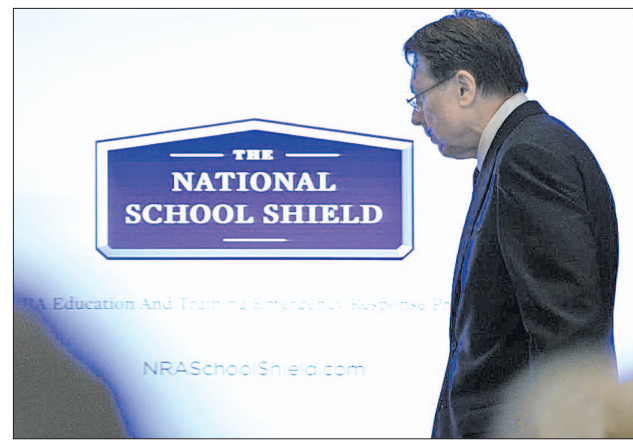
armed guard at every school in the nation.

In the first official response of NRA after the Sandy Hook tragedy, LaPierre put the blame on Hollywood, video games industry and the media, saying they were purveying images of violence.

At the conference, LaPierre put forward a programme called National School Shield, which would essentially put armed guards at schools, relying mostly on local police forces. He called on Congress to appropriate money to fund

the programme, and said the NRA would put forward a model of the programme for others to use. The conference was interrupted twice by protesters.

The Sandy Hook Elementary Massacre, which took place a week ago, saw 20 school kids killed by one shooter. Six adults were also killed by the shooter at the school before he committed suicide. The shooter killed his mother before the shooting rampage. The massacre renewed calls for gun control.—Xinhua



Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the National Rifle Association (NRA), attends a news conference in Washington DC on 21 Dec, 2012. NRA, a powerful US gun lobby, on Friday called for armed guards for every school in the country, as the response of the gun industry to the mass shooting in Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

XINHUA



Russian President Vladimir Putin (5th L), Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (4th L) and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy (2nd R), European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso (3rd R) and European Union's Foreign Policy chief Catherine Ashton (1st R) attend EU-Russia Summit at the EU headquarters in Brussels, capital of Belgium, on 21 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Syrian rebels say will target Aleppo Airport

BEIRUT, 22 Dec—Syrian rebels warned on Friday they will target the international airport of the northern City of Aleppo after firing at an airliner preparing to take off, the first direct attack on civilian a flight in the 21-month-old revolt.

Thursday's attack was another sign of the growing confidence of rebels who are also fighting an offensive in the central province of Hama, pursuing a string of territorial gains to try to cut army supply lines and pressure the capital Damascus to the south.

A rebel commander who gave his name as Khaldoun told Reuters by Skype that snipers from the Intelligence Armed Struggle Battalion, part of the Islamist Jundallah brigade, had hit the wheels of Syrian Airways flight RB201 on Thursday.

“Those were warning shots,” he said, adding that the plane had been unable to take off. “We wanted to send a message to the regime that all their planes — military and civilian — are within our reach.”

There was no immediate mention of the incident on

Syrian state media.

Rebels accuse the government of using civilian aircraft to transport weapons and Iranian fighters who they say are helping President Bashar al-Assad's forces. Insurgents have cut off many of the road links to Aleppo, Syria's biggest city.

Fighting around Damascus has made the road to the capital's international airport unsafe for traffic. Foreign airlines have stopped flying there. According to flight schedules, the Cairo-bound RB201 usually flies from Damascus rather than Aleppo.

“What happened with Damascus airport will happen to Aleppo, even if the price is higher,” Khaldoun said.

Another rebel urged civilians not to use Aleppo airport or Syrian Air flights “as they will be targets from now on”.

The rebels have scored advances across the country, announcing on Friday they had taken over Rayhaneya town in rural Damascus and several other towns in Hama.

Reuters



Free Syrian Army fighters are seen at a front line during fighting with Syrian forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad at Bustan al-Qasr District in Aleppo on 21 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Hollande says France's combat mission in Afghanistan “completed”

PARIS, 22 Dec—French President Francois Hollande announced on Friday that the mission of French fighting forces in Afghanistan was achieved, and only non-combat troops are to stay in the country by mid 2013.

Addressing combat troops that already quit Afghan territory, Hollande said “France has fought for the right cause” in Afghanistan to crack down terrorist cells. “Today

the mission is completed. Al-Qaeda has been driven out of Afghanistan, its leader was killed and those who supported this organization have been permanently weakened and disorganized,” the president added.

By mid 2013, 500 French soldiers will remain in Afghanistan to support local authorities in civilian fields including health, education, culture, agriculture and also

assist Afghan defence and interior ministries in training.

About 2,000 French soldiers have returned home so far and 1,500 others were still in the restless country to bring back military materials, according to the president who kept his promise to withdraw French combat troops from Afghanistan by the end of this year, two years ahead of the alliance's plan.

Xinhua

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NASA posts YouTube video debunking Maya "Armageddon"



A family of Osprey are seen outside the NASA Kennedy Space Centre Vehicle Assembly Building (VAB) in Cape Canaveral, Florida on 13 May, 2010. REUTERS

CAPE CANAVERAL, 22 Dec—NASA is so sure there will be a 22 December, 2012, it has already posted a YouTube video titled "Why the World Didn't End Yesterday."

Scientists say rumours on social media and the Internet of Earth's premature demise have been prompted by a misunderstanding of the ancient Maya calendar, which runs through 21 December, 2012.

"It's just the end of the cycle and the beginning of

the new one. It's just like on 31 December, our calendar comes to an end, but a new calendar for the next year begins on 1 January," Don Yeomans, head of NASA's Near-Earth Object programme at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif, said in a separate YouTube video.

According to the story circulating on the Internet, an enormous rogue planet called Nibiru is on a collision course with Earth.

"If it were, we would

have seen it long ago and it if were invisible somehow, we would have seen its effects on the neighbouring planets. Thousands of astronomers who scan the night skies on a daily basis have not seen this," Yeomans said.

Still, thousands of mystics and New Age dreamers have descended on ancient Maya temples across Mexico and Central America hoping to witness the birth of a new era when the day dubbed "end of the world"

dawns on Friday.

So is NASA covering up to prevent panic?

"Can you imagine thousands of astronomers keeping the same secret from the public for several years?" Yeomans said.

Initially, Nibiru, also known as Planet X, was to impact in May 2003, but when that didn't happen the doomsday date was moved to coincide with the end of one of the cycles of the ancient calendar at winter solstice — 21 December, 2012.

Other celestial events that will not be happening: a planetary alignment causing a massive tidal surge or a total blackout of Earth; a reversal in Earth's rotation; an impact by a giant asteroid; a giant solar storm.

"Since the beginning of recorded time, there have been literally hundreds of thousands of predictions for the end of the world," Yeomans said. "We're still here."—Reuters

Panasonic to appeal EU ruling on cathode-ray tube cartel

TOKYO, 22 Dec—Japan's Panasonic Corp said on Friday that it would appeal a decision by the European Commission to fine it 252 million euros (\$327 million) on charges of fixing prices for TV and computer monitor cathode-ray tubes along with five other companies.

The European Commission fined six firms,

in history. The Commission on 5 Dec said executives from the European and Asian companies had met until six years ago to fix prices and divide up markets for TV and computer monitor cathode-ray tubes, a business that has since been replaced by flat panel displays.

Panasonic in a statement said it "will seek a fair



Panasonic Corp logos are seen at an electronics store in Tokyo on 15 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

including Philips, LG Electronics Toshiba Corp Samsung SDI and French company Technicolor a total of 1.47 billion euros, its biggest antitrust penalty

judgment". Until now, the Commission's biggest antitrust penalty had been a 1.38 billion euro fine imposed on participants in a car glass cartel in 2008.—Reuters

Facebook tests charging users to send certain messages



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

SAN FRANCISCO, 22 Dec—Facebook Inc unveiled a test on Thursday that charges users to send certain types of messages through the social network, the latest example of the company looking for new sources of revenue and profit. Until now, Facebook's messaging system sends the most-relevant messages, including those from users' Facebook friends, into an Inbox and siphons off less-relevant messages, such as potential spam, in an "Other" folder.

"Today we're starting a small experiment to test the usefulness of economic signals to determine relevance," Facebook said. "This test will give a small number of people the option to pay to have a message routed to the 'Inbox' rather

than the 'Other' folder of a recipient that they are not connected with." A Facebook spokesman said the charge for the test is \$1 per message, but added that the company is still looking for the "optimum" price. Users can only receive one of these paid, re-routed messages per week, he noted.

The company said its test service may be useful in certain situations, such as allowing users to send a message to someone they heard speak at an event but are not friends with, or contacting someone about a job opportunity.

Facebook, which went public earlier this year, is under pressure from Wall Street to find new sources of revenue and profit. The company has responded with a series of new ser-

vices and tests in recent months. In September, the company said it would start charging merchants to run offers on its social network.

The test messaging service is similar to the In-Mail service from LinkedIn Corp, the professional networking rival to Facebook, which lets users with high-end subscriptions send messages to other LinkedIn members outside their networks. "For the receiver, this test allows them to hear from people who have an important message to send them," Facebook added.

Reuters

Nokia to get payments in patent deal with RIM

HELSINKI, 22 Dec—Struggling Finnish mobile phone maker Nokia has settled its patent dispute with BlackBerry maker Research in Motion in return for payments, as it tries to exploit its trove of technology patents to boost its finances.

Terms of the agreement were confidential, but Nokia said on Friday it included a one-time payment to be booked in the fourth quarter, as well as ongoing fees, all to be paid by RIM.

Nokia is one of the industry's top patent holders, having invested 45 billion euros (\$60 billion) in mobile research and development over the past two decades.

WASHINGTON, 22 Dec —Red Hat Inc, the world's largest distributor of Linux operating software, posted third-quarter revenue above analysts' estimates on strong growth in its subscription business, sending its shares up 6 percent in after-market trading.

The company also said it would buy privately held ManageIQ, which provides management and automation programs for cloud computing, for \$104 million in cash.

The acquisition, its fourth since October last

year, is not expected to have any material impact to Red Hat's revenue for the fiscal year ending February 28.

Red Hat expects to earn between 29 cents and 30 cents per share in the fourth quarter, on revenue of \$347 million to \$351 million, it said on a conference call with analysts.

Analysts were expecting earnings of 30 cents on revenue of \$350.9 million, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

Third-quarter net income fell to \$34.8 million, or 18 cents per share, from

\$38.2 million, or 19 cents per share, a year earlier.

On an adjusted basis, the company earned 29 cents per share, in line with expectations. Revenue rose 18 percent to \$344 million, beating estimates of \$338 million.

Red Hat's subscription revenue rose 19 percent to \$294.2 million in the quarter ended 30 November. Shares of the Raleigh, North Carolina-based company were trading at \$55.60 after the bell. The stock closed at \$52.61 on the New York Stock Exchange on Thursday.—Reuters



A woman walks past a Nokia advertisement board at a home appliances store in Shenyang, Liaoning Province on 6 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

ket to the likes of Apple and Samsung. The agreement with RIM settles all existing patent litigation between the two companies, Nokia said, adding similar disputes with HTC Corp and ViewSonic

still stood. "This agreement demonstrates Nokia's industry leading patent portfolio and enables us to focus on further licensing opportunities in the mobile communications market," said Paul Melin, Nokia's chief intellectual property officer.

Nokia has earned around 500 million euros a year from patent royalties in key areas of mobile telephony. Some analysts have said it could earn hundreds of millions more if it can negotiate with more companies successfully. Analysts estimated its June 2011 settlement with Apple was worth hundreds of millions of euros. (\$1 = 0.7555 euros)—Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

US budget setback hits shares, euro

Business



A cameraman films rises in share prices at the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo on 17 Dec 2012.

REUTERS

LONDON, 22 Dec— European and Asian shares weakened on Friday and both the euro and gold slipped, as a new setback in talks to avert a US fiscal crisis stoked investor nerves.

A proposal from Republican leader John Boehner to avoid the so-called fiscal cliff failed to get support from his party on Thursday, casting fresh uncertainty over talks to avoid across-the-board tax hikes and spending cuts that could push the US economy into recession in 2013.

The worries prompted selling in European shares as trading resumed, with the FTSEurofirst 300 .FTEU3 index of the top European stocks down 0.4, albeit still on course for a fifth straight week of gains. “The market is still too complacent and the odds are increasing that a (US budget) deal will not get done in the immediate future,” Saxo Bank Chief Economist Steen Jakobsen said. “That leaves European equities (in terms of earnings multiples) vulnerable to the negative exposure of

the fiscal drag and even a compromised deal is going to do very little to structurally reform anything,” he added.

London’s FTSE 100 .FTSE, Paris’s CAC-40 .FCHI and Frankfurt’s DAX .GDAXI were down 0.3-0.5 percent following a 0.7 percent tumble in Asian stocks .MIAPJ0000PUS, and futures prices pointed to sharp falls Wall Street later. Anxiety was exacerbated by weaker-than-expected German data which showed consumer morale dropped for the fourth month running to its lowest level in more than a year. The combined worries helped push up German government bonds and the dollar .DXY, both traditionally favoured by risk adverse investors. The euro eased back to just over \$1.32, trimming some of the gains it has seen this week as euro zone sentiment continued to improve. Gold was also caught up in the US disappointment, slipping \$1.38 to \$1,645.76 an ounce, putting it near a four-month low and on track for its steepest weekly drop since June.—Reuters

Credit Suisse tops US IPO tables for first time

NEW YORK, 22 Dec— Credit Suisse Group AG (CSGN.VX) was the top underwriter for U.S. initial public offerings this year for the first time, bolstered by its role in helping large private equity backed companies go public. The Swiss bank generated \$4.7 billion in IPO proceeds during 2012 from 41 issues, vaulting it in front of JP Morgan Chase & Co (JPM.N) with \$4.6 billion, according to Thomson Reuters data.

Goldman Sachs Group Inc (GS.N) placed third with \$4.5 billion, while the previously top-ranked Morgan Stanley (MS.N) came in fourth. Credit Suisse was ranked eighth last year in the US IPO league tables with \$2.8 billion in

proceeds. “2012 was a challenging year for IPO issuances,” said Joe Reece, global head of Credit Suisse’s equity capital markets group. “This fact makes it even more critical to be acutely focused on clients.” Large deals the bank helped underwrite include private equity firm Carlyle Group’s (CG.O) \$671 million offering, payment processor Vantiv Inc’s (VNTV.N) \$575 million offering and

industrial company Rexnord Corp’s (RXN.N) \$426 million offering. It also made a number of changes internally which may have contributed to its climb, Reece said.

In May, former syndicate head David Hermer was named head of equity capital markets of the Americas. The group also integrated its origination and syndicate units under one structure.

Reuters



A logo is seen in front of a Credit Suisse building in Zurich, on 4 May, 2012.

REUTERS

Health

Whole grains linked to lower prediabetes risk

NEW YORK, 22 Dec— Eating whole grains is associated with a decreased risk of prediabetes, a blood sugar elevation that can precede diabetes in adults, according to new research.

Swedish residents who ate food containing more than 59 grams—roughly two ounces—of whole grains per day were 27 percent less likely to become prediabetic compared with residents who ate 30 grams or less, according to the research.

“This is of great importance because prediabetes is increasing,” lead author Tina Wirstrom, a postdoctoral fellow at the Karolinska University Hospital in Sweden, told Reuters Health.

The American Diabetes Association estimates that one in four Americans older than 20 have prediabetes.

Nearly a quarter of people with prediabetes eventually develop full-blown diabetes.

Previous research has linked whole grain rich diets with a decreased risk of diabetes, but the new study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition makes the connection to the disease precursor.

Whole grains range from oatmeal to popcorn, from brown rice to whole wheat - as long as the entire kernel is consumed.

The study included 5,477 Stockholm residents from 35 to 56 years old without diabetes who kept food diaries of how much whole and refined grains they ate. Researchers measured blood glucose in study participants and followed up 10 years later.

Overall, one in 13 participants became

prediabetic, while one in 33 became diabetic, the study found. When researchers took into account the daily amount of whole grains eaten, they found that eating more than 59 grams versus 30 grams of whole grain was associated with a 27 percent decreased risk of becoming prediabetic.

The association was stronger for men, and those with an increased genetic risk for developing diabetes did not see a difference, researchers found.

Nutrition experts noted that the study had little relevance to the US since most Swedes get their grains from whole grain sources such as rye crisps. In contrast, Americans get most grains from refined wheat such as flour that contains fewer nutrients and fiber compared to rye. “To say it has any

relevance to the U.S. is really a stretch,” said Joanne Slavin, nutrition professor at the University of Minnesota, who was not involved in the current study. US food manufacturers can label food that contains eight grams per serving as whole grain, whereas Sweden requires that a food product contain at least half whole grains to receive the label.

Many foods with claims of whole grain goodness have extra calories, fats and carbohydrates in addition to the grains, which can be risk factors for diabetes, Slavin said.

Further, fewer than three percent of Americans get the recommended 48 grams per day of whole grains. The average American eats 15 grams of whole grain daily.

Reuters

Former Singapore banker arrested in US over Olympus fraud

Business



A man sits near a logo of Japan’s Olympus Corp at the company headquarters in Tokyo on 19 June 2012.

REUTERS

NEW YORK, 22 Dec— A former Singapore banker was arrested in Los Angeles on Thursday and accused of

helping “liquidate” hundreds of millions of dollars in an accounting fraud at Olympus Corp (7733.T), one of the

biggest corporate scandals in Japan’s history.

Chan Ming Fon, a one-time bank vice president, is the latest former executive and the first from outside of Japan to become ensnared in the \$1.7 billion accounting cover-up at the camera and medical equipment maker. The company has admitted it used improper accounting to conceal massive investment losses under a scheme that began in the 1990s. Court papers in the United States said Chan was paid \$10 million by Olympus or entities controlled by Olympus for his role in the fraud. The case against Chan was filed in a federal court in New York.

“The defendant had a direct role in the secret liquidation of hundreds of millions of dollars of Olympus investments. He then waged a six-year campaign to conceal that misdeed by lying, certifying to auditors that the investments still existed years after liquidation,” said FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge George Venizelos. Olympus declined to comment. Chan’s arrest comes after three former Olympus executives pleaded guilty in September to charges related to the fraud.

Chan, was interviewed by the Federal Bureau of Investigations this week, US authorities said.

Reuters

ECB’s Weidmann sees no “big leap” toward EU fiscal union

Business

FRANKFURT, 22 Dec— European Central Bank Governing Council member Jens Weidmann expects little progress toward a European fiscal union because there is little political will to relinquish national sovereignty, he was quoted as saying in an interview.

“I do not see the big leap toward fiscal union,” Weidmann said in an interview with German magazine Wirtschaftswoche published online.

Weidmann, who also heads Germany’s Bundesbank, warned against pooling risks without addressing the issue of sovereignty that a fiscal

union would entail.

“If responsibility and control are not aligned, it would undermine the currency union,” he said.

Weidmann repeated previous objections to the ECB’s bond-buying programme for crisis-struck euro zone states, saying, “We have embarked on a slippery slope.” Once a country slips into crisis and requires ECB

support through the program, it would be difficult for the ECB to then withdraw its support should the country depart from reforms agreed to as a condition for the support, he was quoted as saying. “We should interpret our mandate narrowly and not even put ourselves in such a predicament in the first place,” he said.

Reuters

President of German Bundesbank Jens Weidmann reacts on the podium during the Frankfurt Euro Finance Week in Frankfurt on 19 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS



WORLD

Argentina rejects British decision to name disputed Antarctica territory

BUENOS AIRES, 22 Dec— Argentina on Friday condemned Britain's decision to name a controversial part of the Antarctica as "Queen Elizabeth Land" to honour Queen Elizabeth II.

Argentina expressed its "strongest rejection of Britain's decision to give a name to an area in the Argentine Antarctic sector," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. It said London, in naming the territory, has violated the spirit of the

Antarctic Treaty System, signed half a century ago by dozens of countries including Britain and Argentina to avert territorial disputes in the Antarctic. The Argentine government summoned Britain's Ambassador to express its rejection of "any British territorial claim in Antarctica" and reaffirm its sovereignty over the Argentine Antarctic sector, the statement said.

Britain on Tuesday named the southern portion

of the so-called British Antarctic Territory as "Queen Elizabeth Land" in tribute to the throne of the reigning monarch. The British Antarctic Territory was the first official claim in Antarctica, made in 1908.

With no official name before, the portion is located on the west side of the continent and has an area of about 169,000 square miles (437,000 square kilometres). Argentina and Chile made overlapping claims to the

area in the 1940s, though all claims were suspended by the Antarctic Treaty System.

"To be able to recognize the UK's commitment to Antarctica with a permanent association with Her Majesty is a great honour," British Foreign Minister William Hague said in a statement.

The dispute has stoked tensions between the two countries which went into war in 1982 over the disputed Malvinas Islands, known as Falkland in Britain.—Xinhua



People visit New York City's Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum on 21 Dec, 2012. After six week closure to repair major damage to the electrical systems caused by Hurricane Sandy, Intrepid's doors are reopened on Friday.

XINHUA



Soldiers march during a celebration of the 77th founding anniversary of the Armed Forces of the Philippines at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City, the Philippines, on 21 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Venezuela's Chavez muses politics while recovering from cancer surgery

CARACAS, 22 Dec — While recovering from a cancer surgery on bed, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was studying the results of the latest local elections, Vice President Nicolas Maduro said on Thursday.

Chavez's "general state of health continues to progressively stabilize," Maduro said of Chavez's recovery following his fourth surgery in Cuba.

The president was informed of the election results, in which the ruling

party won 20 of 23 state governorships, Maduro said.

"I have been informed that the report of Sunday's victory was given to the president and that he has expressed his deep recognition for all the men and women of the country. He is evaluating the figures," Maduro said.

He said "the respiratory infection that was diagnosed is still being treated and controlled by the medical team through rigorous and constant monitoring."

Earlier this week, the

Venezuelan government reported Chavez had suffered a respiratory infection that was brought under control. The infection was a common occurrence among "patients who undergo complicated surgeries," they later said.

Chavez was ordered to bed rest and had his family and friends by his side, Maduro said. Chavez was first diagnosed with cancer in 2011 and has since undergone four operations, as well as radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatments in Havana.—Xinhua

Cuba slams US fines against firms for violating trade embargo

HAVANA, 22 Dec—Cuba on Thursday denounced the US government for imposing hefty fines on banks and firms that do business with the island nation over alleged violations of the US trade embargo.

In a statement published by the official daily *Granma*, the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that British bank HSBC was fined 375 million US dollars on 11 December by the US Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

A day later, OFAC announced a fine of some 8.6

million US dollars against the Japanese bank Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ for the same reason.

"The implementation of these unjust and illegal penalties demonstrates that the policy of vicious persecution by the United States of Cuban financial and commercial transactions and of those countries which have legitimate relations with our country, protected by international law, not only remains unchanged, but has intensified," the ministry said. The ministry also condemned the extension of the blockade to third

countries and stressed that merely a month ago "the United Nations General Assembly once again demanded, virtually unanimously, an end" to the long-running blockade. In 1962, Washington imposed an economic, financial and trade embargo against Cuba. The policy has been voted against 21 times by nearly all UN member states, except the US its political ally Israel and several small countries dependent on US aid.

According to Cuban authorities, the embargo has cost Cuba more than 100 billion dollars.—Xinhua

More non-Mexican illegal migrants apprehended in Texas

HOUSTON, 22 Dec— Illegal migrants from Central American countries account for a slight majority of the US Border Patrol's recent apprehension in South Texas, US media reported on Friday.

Usually, about 35 percent of the Border Patrol's apprehensions are illegal immigrants from Central American countries, but now,

the apprehensions of illegal immigrants from Mexico and Central America are about 50/50, an online report by the *Houston Chronicle* quoted a Border Patrol official as reporting. From October 2011 to 31 July, Border Patrol agents apprehended more than 40,000 non-Mexican migrants from Central American countries including El Salvador,

Guatemala and Honduras, compared to about 39,000 individuals from Mexico, according to the report.

The number of non-Mexican immigrants apprehended during the same 10-month period a year earlier was about 16,000.

Rising violence as well as economic conditions in various Central American countries may be fueling the

increase in illegal migrants, the report said.

Meanwhile, the number of illegal immigrant deaths and rescues of migrants also saw an increase, officials said. In 2011, the Rio Grande Valley sector had 66 deaths and 238 rescues. In 2012, there were 140 deaths and more than 300 rescues, according to the report.

Xinhua

Two killed as looters raid supermarkets in Argentina



An employee sits amidst a ransacked gas station after looters stole goods from it in San Fernando, on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, on 21 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

BUENOS AIRES, 22 Dec—Two people were killed in Argentina on Friday as looters broke into supermarkets in several cities, stirring memories of the country's devastating economic crisis 11 years ago.

Police fired teargas and rubber bullets to stop dozens of stone-throwing youths from looting a supermarket owned by French retailer Carrefour near the capital, a day after the unrest erupted in the Patagonian ski resort of Bariloche.

Government officials condemned the violence and sent 400 military police to the southern city, where raiders stormed a supermarket owned by the local unit of Wal-Mart and made off with flat-screen televisions and other goods.

The violence spread to the central city of Rosario, where two people were killed, and to the northern Province of Chaco. About 250 people were arrested in total in four different provinces and police battled to avert fresh incidents

in the urban sprawl that encircles Buenos Aires.

"When you see that they're taking flat-screens, you know it's not hunger," said Daniel Scioli, governor of Buenos Aires province and an ally of President Cristina Fernandez.

Fernandez often contrasts the country's current economic stability with the 2001/02 crisis that plunged millions of Argentines into poverty and unleashed a wave of looting for food in supermarkets.

She was re-elected by a landslide just over a year ago, but her approval ratings have since plunged due to sluggish economic growth, surging prices, and middle-class anger over currency controls and her combative style.

Fernandez's administration blamed the violence on opposition trade union leaders, who rallied in the capital this week to demand wage rises and lower taxes due to double-digit inflation.

"There are elements in Argentina that want to provoke havoc and violence and stain our holiday season with blood," national security secretary Sergio Berni said. "Argentina is not the same as it was in 2001."—Xinhua

LOCAL NEWS

Tatkon high school hosts literary talks

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec—In commemoration of the Literary Day, talks on literary affairs took place at Basic Education Middle School No. 3 in Kintha of Tatkon Township on 14 December afternoon.

At first, Headmaster U Kyar Nyo of the school made a speech.

Writer Soe Myint Nge (Law) read the message sent by Myanmar Writers Association.

After that, writers Myat Phone (Tatkon), Myakyauk Aye Chan (Tein U Nannwe) and Nyan Lin (Tatkon) shared knowledge about literary affairs.

Myanma Alinn

Roads upgraded in Katha

KATHA, 22 Dec—Local people of Katha Township join hands with Development Affairs Committee of the township in repaving and upgrading roads. They emphasize expansion of road width and placing of asphalt concrete on the roads for better and smooth transport on a self-reliant basis.

Myanma Alinn

Anti-human trafficking entertainment draws large audience

YANGON, 22 Dec—Under the arrangements of MTV Exit, Grammy award winner Jason Mraz and

Even Jason Mraz arrived here to entertain, we must cheer the entertainment. Wonderfully, there was

Anti-Human Trafficking Representatives star singer Phyu Phyu Kyaw Thein and R Zami and Lin Lin, Phyo



artists recently presented entertainment for combating human trafficking, crowded with audiences from Mandalay, Taunggyi and Patheingyi in addition to those of Yangon, exceeding the estimated numbers.

“The show was packed with a large number of enthusiasts due to entertainment of Jason Mraz.

no one problem. All the audiences happily enjoyed the entertainment. It was beneficial to combating human trafficking. The drama program gave message to the youths. It was excellent,” said Ko Sai Naung (Taunggyi).

Jason Mraz and Slot Machine Band of Thailand joined hands with Myanmar

Gyi, Chit Thu Wai and Chan Chan participated in the entertainment.

Grammy Award winner Jason Mraz who is focusing on anti-human trafficking tasks in developing countries said, “I am pleased for sharing knowledge of anti-human trafficking and showing off my entertainment in Myanmar. The entertainment



Scene of Mandalay Moat

65th Anniversary Independence Day 2013

Cauliflower of cold season crops in regular trading

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec—In cold season, farmers of male and female are actively carrying out farming works at cauliflowers.

In an interview, a farmer said, “I live in Nweyt Village. I grow cauliflower and cabbage. Now, I am nurturing 10000 cauliflower plants. Although I have spent money on pesticide,

of trafficking in persons. Human trafficking occur in some townships for many times. The authorities concerned announce emergency telephone numbers for prevention against trafficking in persons. Myanmar is now joining hands with the international organizations for combating human trafficking.

Myanma Alinn

fertilizers and labour, I think I might have much benefit from the plantations due to raising price of cauliflowers.”

He continued, “Last week, the price of cauliflower was lower. It was sold at K 80-100 per cauliflower. With regard to many reasons that cauliflowers were wet in untimely rain and Shan State produced same products to the market, we could not get good price. Now, we have access to good price but not much. Last year, we sold cauliflower at K 200.”

Thahtaygon-Nweyt bus stop is bustling with vegetable trading. It is a place for grading of maize, cauliflower and carrot.

A broker loading cauliflowers onto the truck said, “This season every year, I buy cauliflowers and cabbage. Trucks from Yangon, Mawlamyine, Hpa-an, Kyaikto and Thaton carry vegetables from Nweyt. Brokers from Meiktila, Yamethin, Pyawbwe and Pyinmana arrive here to check and buy vegetables. At present each cauliflower is sold for K 140-150. About 10 trucks carry the vegetables daily. Local farmers from Kyathayaing, Thahtaygon, Nweyt and other villages in Tatkon Township gather here to sell vegetables.”

Now, local farmers wear sweet smiles on their faces due to good price of vegetables that can exceed cultivation costs.

Myanma Alinn

Illegal timber, saw mills seized in Falam, Bhamo Districts

SHWEGU, 22 Dec—The Forest Department under the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry is making management for fully applying economic benefits from forest resources in social and environmental conservation while exposing and seizing illegal timber extraction.

Forest workers from Tiddim Township of Falam District seized 15.0420 tons of teak timber, 2.1500 tons of hardwood and 1.9400 tons of other wood totalling 19.1320 tons and two saw mills from four places in Naychinsara protected public forests on 2 December. The staff members are conducting investigation for arresting the related persons.

Likewise, forest workers

of Momauk, Bhamo and Shwegu townships of Bhamo District, Tatmadawmen of No. 21 Operations Control Command and local battalions, staff of Bhamo Township General Administration Department and members of Myanmar Police Force participated in searching and seizing the illegal timber extraction in Momauk, Bhamo and Shwegu townships of the district on 30 November.

They seized 1182 pieces of illegal teak sawn timber weighing 36.7296 tons, four vehicles, four motorcycles and one person. The department opened a file of lawsuit against the person under section 6 (1) of the Public Property Protection Law.—*Myanma Alinn*



Administrative law, rules course opened

MYINMU, 22 Dec—A ceremony to open the administrative law and rules course for townsenders and clerks of ward/village-tract was held at the hall in Myinmu Township General Administration Department

is a plan to organize a large number of people at the same time and educative works to be handed to new generations.”

The show was attended by over 50,000 people from all walks of life who flooded the whole People’s Square in addition to streets.

Myanmar is one of the countries with problems

law and rules.

Township Judge Daw Margret Tharmi and Head of Township Immigration and National Registration Department lectured 11 significant points. The elections of 10-house group and administrators will be held from 17 to 23 December.

Myanma Alinn



PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 23 December, 2012

Public transit efficiency

Is that such strange that Yangonites are frustrated with traffic woes daily, especially in rush hours? The answer is “No”. It now seems fairly common. Sounds of a collective sigh of annoyance came from the crowded bus stops and a weary sigh given by those seated behind the wheel in Yangon are recently revealed to be famed as the commercial hub of gridlock within an upcoming decade. Precious time of common people has been stolen on the buses stranded in the traffic jams and at the bus stops, waiting in spending several minutes for an already-crowded bus. For taxi drivers, they have to spend much of their time sitting in the traffic moving at a snail’s pace, with the result that their daily earnings have been reduced.

Some analysts put a blame for breach of traffic disciplines on all road users, calling for mass participation in obedience to laws. Some argued that traffic rule enforcement measures need to be inculcated in all road users as well as cops. Traffic delays and public frustrations in Yangon have flooded media reports. The blame, moreover, was laid on relaxation of vehicle import restrictions that leads to more luxurious cars to take to the roads instead of improvement in bus services. Some experts envision reduction in the volume of traffic by 60 per cent when ongoing construction of three flyovers at Hledan, Bayintnaung and Shwegondine junctions where traffic is brought to a grinding halt frequently.

Traffic congestion is common to a certain developing country with full of potentials to become a gem of Asia. When a population threshold of more than one million is reached, cities start to encounter a vicious headache for congestion problems. It is a bit of a modernization shock when the doors began to open up. If short-term and long-term plans of public transportation are employed effectively and efficiently, they can help lessen the recent problems on the roads.

Options in long-term solutions for overcoming congestion include establishment of an excellent public transportation system like sky trains and subways that can carry a large number of people at one time and at low cost and building of more overhead bridges at all intersections of railroads with motorways and flyovers at the places clogged with traffic. Investing in speedy services with the help of foreign investments is a must for possible occurrence of unbelievable traffic jams in Yangon. Options in short-term solutions include increasing fines for traffic violations and more deployment of traffic inspectors with the incentive of the percentage of fines collected as bonus to make them more vigilant and improve the law enforcement. All aforesaid solutions are within our reach.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.



President U Thein Sein and party visit King Thibaw Museum in Ratnagiri of India.—MNA

President U Thein Sein visits the last king’s....

(from page 1) moved and buried by the British government in the outskirts of Ratnagiri on 5 February, 1917.

The tomb is now under management of Maharashtra state government.

President U Thein Sein is the first-ever Myanmar leader visiting the residence and tomb of the king in Ratnagiri.

MNA



President U Thein Sein views portrait of King Thibaw and spouse at King Thibaw Museum.

MNA

Second talent show of National Culture and Fine Arts University (Yangon) performed

YANGON, 22 Dec— The second talent show of Fine Arts Department under the Ministry of Culture and National Culture and Fine Arts University (Yangon) took place at National Theatre on Myomakyaung Street yesterday evening with the participation of Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and region ministers, enthusiasts and students.

The doyen Thabin

artistes above 65 years were paid respect by students from National Culture and Fine Arts University (Yangon).

The students from various departments of the university and staff from Fine Arts Department entertained their performances at the talent show.

Before the show, paintings and sculptures of students from paintings and sculptures departments were displayed.—MNA

Biomedical Engineering Training Course concludes

YANGON, 22 Dec—“The course is an important step towards the emergence of Biomedical Engineering Department that can help the staff carry out the maintenances and handling of modern equipment installed at hospitals and health departments,” said Union Minister for Health Dr Pe Thet Khin, at the concluding ceremony of Biomedical Engineering Training Course, at National Blood Centre, here, this morning.

Next, Senior Lecture Mr. Chua Tji Leng of Ngee Ann Polytechnic of School

of Engineering Singapore shared experiences to those present and Chief Marketing Officer Mr. Moez Attia spoke words of thanks.

The Union Minister and Vice President Prof Toh Siew Lak of Singaporean Biomedical Engineering Society presented the certificates. A total of 40 trainees from departments under the Ministry of Health and Hospitals, attended the two-semester course, jointly conducted by Ministry of Health and Biomedical Engineering Society of Singapore.

MNA



Whom or what does the zebra crossing stop?

I've found only pedestrians stop for vehicles.

Thein Tun

NATIONAL

Myanmar invites Indian...

(from page 16)

tax reforms and changes in the banking system which has become more customers friendly. Thanks to easing of economic and financial restrictions by the United States and the European Union and return of the World Bank and other international financial institutions to Myanmar, he said he hoped for the increase of commerce, trade and investment in Myanmar. While introducing the recently enacted Foreign Investment Law, the President said the new Foreign Investment Law will provide various degrees of privileges to the potential investors in respect of taxes and duties and guarantees protection of property and profits and rights of the investors.

He said the Myanmar government put huge emphasis on infrastructural development projects as it saw the connectivity as one of the main factors in promoting trade. He said India-Myanmar-Thailand Tripartite Highway project which would be extended to Laos and Cambodia with the assistance of the Indian government would enhance regional connectivity and



President U Thein Sein being seen off at Mumbai Airport by officials.—MNA

trade.

He said that the new Foreign Investment Law allows 100 percent foreign ownership while it also allows joint ventures. It also allows foreign investors to sell, exchange and transfer shares with the approval

of the Investment Commission.

He said the investment commission could also reward investors for their quality enhancement and environmental friendly initiatives while introducing tax exemption and tax relief

granted to the investors for investments in less-developed areas.

He invited investments in Dawei, Thilawa, Kyaukpyu deep sea ports projects and other special economic zones.

The President said there are still many untapped oil and gas deposits for Indian companies to invest.

Director-General of the Confederation of Indian Industry Mr Chandrajit

Banerjee spoke words of thanks.

The President and the confederation president exchanged gifts before they enjoyed dinner.

MNA

Investment opportunities in agricultural sector



Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing observes farm machinery.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec—“There are still lots of investment opportunities in agricultural sector,” said Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing, at the implementation of 3000-acre farmlands in Nay Pyi Taw Dekkhinathiri Township, here, this morning.

It was also attended

by Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Economic and Trade Development Committee U Maung Maung Thein, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Development Committee U Soe Naing, officials and farmers.

The Union Minister and party visited sunflower and

maze plantations and land reclamation there.

Afterwards, they also visited farmer educative farms, seeds sales room of Shwethanlwin Co and CETC Co in Chaing village of Dekkhinathiri Township and Agricultural Research Farm in Tatkon Township.

MNA

Seminar on ICT for e-Government held

YANGON, 22 Dec — An opening of a Seminar on ICT for e-Government, sponsored by Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), was held at Myanma Science and Technology Research Department, here, on 17 December, attended by 40 trainees from the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Experts from the Republic of Korea gave lectures on procedures required for e-Government based on advancements in information and communication technology and provided trainees with suggestions and made suggestions for ongoing e-Government procedures at the seminar. Directors-general, rectors, pro rectors, the KOICA resident representative and officials attended the opening and closing ceremonies of the five-day seminar.—MNA

Union Foreign Affairs Minister felicitates Japanese FM

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec— On the occasion of the birthday of His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan, which falls on 23 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 His Excellency Mr. Koichiro GEMBA, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.—MNA

Union C & IT Minister meets Thai ICT Minister and party

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec— Union Minister for Communication and Information Technology U Thein Tun met Information and Communication Technology Minister of Thailand Mr Anudith Nakornthap and party at the ministry yesterday morning. They discussed measures for construction of communication network in Dawei SEZ with the effectively use of GMS Superhighway and Myanmar-Thai Trans-border Fiber Network, opportunities for offering communication and IT services in cooperation with

Thailand, linking direct underwater fiber cables from Myanmar to Thailand in fulfilling communication need for Thai Petrol company and extension of roaming between Myanmar and Thailand.

The Union minister also discussed factors being undertaken in Myanmar for use of internet access rapidly, communication bill to be discussed with a group led by the deputy minister in detail and implementation of roaming between Myanmar and Thailand before ASEAN sport festival.—MNA



Abdul'ahat Abdulrixit (C), vice chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), attends the ceremony for "the 4th China-Africa Friendship Award" in Beijing, capital of China, on 21 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Italy PM Monti resigns, elections likely in February

ROME, 22 Dec—Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti tendered his resignation to the president on Friday after 13 months in office, opening the way to a highly uncertain national election in February.

The former European commissioner, appointed to lead an unelected government to save Italy from financial crisis a year ago, has kept his own political plans a closely guarded secret but he has faced growing pressure to seek a second term.

President Giorgio Napolitano is expected to dissolve parliament in the next few days and has already indicated that the most likely date for the election is 24 February.

In an unexpected move, Napolitano said he would hold consultations with political leaders from all the main parties on Saturday to discuss the next steps. In the meantime Monti will continue in a caretaker capacity.

European leaders including German Chancellor Angela Merkel

and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso have called for Monti's economic reform agenda to continue but Italy's two main parties have said he should stay out of the race.

Monti, who handed in his resignation during a brief meeting at the presidential palace shortly after parliament approved his government's 2013 budget, will hold a news conference on Sunday at which he is expected to clarify his intentions.



Italy's Prime Minister Mario Monti (C) looks as he makes his speech during a visit to the Fiat car factory in the southern city of Melfi on 20 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Ordinary Italians are weary of repeated tax hikes and spending cuts and opinion polls offer little evidence that they are ready to give Monti a second term. A survey this week showed 61 percent saying he should not stand.

Whether he runs or not, his legacy will loom over an election which will be fought out over the painful measures he has introduced to try to rein in Italy's huge public debt and revive its stagnant economy.

Reuters

UN Security Council strongly deplores shooting down of UN helicopter in South Sudan

UNITED NATIONS, 22 Dec—The UN Security Council on Friday strongly deplored the shooting down of a UN helicopter in South Sudan and "strongly urged" the UN mission in the country, known as the UNMISS, and the South Sudanese government "to conduct a swift and thorough investigation" into the incident.

The members of the Security Council strongly deplored the shooting down in Jonglei, the largest state

in the eastern part of South Sudan, a UNMISS MI8 helicopter performing reconnaissance flights to the area, by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), with all four Russian flight members killed, said a UN statement.

"The members of the security council extended their heartfelt condolences to the families of the crew, members and to the government of the Russian Federation," the statement said.—Xinhua

Raiders armed with machetes burn Kenya village, kill 30

MOMBASA, 22 Dec—Raiders armed with guns, machetes and spears killed 30 people, including several children, and torched their houses in Kenya's coastal region on Friday, police said, heightening security concerns ahead of next year's election.

Nine of the raiders were also killed in what appeared to have been a revenge attack by settled Pokomo farmers against the semi-nomadic Orma pastoralists after a series of clashes in August in which more than 100 people were killed.

The two groups have

fought for years over access to grazing, farmland and water, but human rights groups have blamed the latest violence on politicians seeking to drive away parts of the local population they believe will vote for their rivals in presidential and parliamentary elections in March.

If those charges are true, it further raises fears of a repeat of the ethnic violence that rocked Kenya after the disputed 2007 presidential election, in which more than 1,200 people were killed nationwide and many more thousands driven from their homes.—Reuters

WTO race wide open as NZ, Kenya, Jordan, Mexico join

WELLINGTON/GENEVA, 22 Dec—The field of candidates to succeed Pascal Lamy as head of the World Trade Organization burst open on Friday, as New Zealand, Mexico, Jordan and Kenya threw names into the ring with 10 days left for nominations.

Whoever wins, faces the challenge of being the face of an institution that has been stuck for years in stalled global trade negotiations, with little real power to force a deal beyond cajoling, encouraging and occasionally blaming members.

Kenya's Amina Mohamed, deputy head of the United Nations Environment Programme, became the third woman and second African contender, while Jordan nominated former minister of trade and industry Ahmad Hindawi, the first Middle Eastern nominee so far.

Mexico put forward its

former trade minister Herminio Blanco, who negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Earlier on Friday New Zealand nominated its trade minister Tim Groser, who joins Ghana's Alan Kyerematen, Costa Rica's Anabel Gonzalez and Indonesia's Mari Pangestu in the race to take over after Lamy's second term expires on 31 August.

Many trade diplomats think the job should go to an African, Latin American or Caribbean candidate, since all but one head of the 17-year-

old WTO has been from developed countries. The exception was Thailand's Supachai Panitchpakdi.

As well as seeking trade agreements, the body is also the global trade policeman, facing a surge of litigation as members fight for a share of a pie that is not quite shrinking, but expected to grow by a mere 2.5 percent this year.

The boom in disputes is forcing the WTO to reallocate staff, according to diplomats and documents at the global trade body in Geneva that in August had 157 members.

Reuters



New Zealand's Trade Minister Tim Groser speaks at the Asia-Pacific Business Symposium in Honolulu, Hawaii on 10 Nov, 2011. REUTERS

Colombia peace talks said advancing, many challenges ahead

HAVANA, 22 Dec—Talks to end Colombia's bloody, half-century-long conflict with Marxist-led FARC rebels have made progress, but many challenges lie ahead, the government's top negotiator said on Friday.

Former vice president Humberto de la Calle, speaking after the two sides finished their second round of meetings and broke until 14 January, said they had agreed on some "unprecedented mechanisms" for civic input into the peace process.

"Since 19 November when we formally began, we've had 21 sessions and more than 100 hours of intense work, and concrete advances,

all as expected," said de la Calle, who read a statement but did not take questions.

"The challenge is great. We have five more points (on the agenda), all sensitive and vital," he said. "We hope to be able to advance with greater celerity and in an expedited way."

The two sides are trying to end a war that dates back to 1964 when the FARC, or Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, was formed as a communist agrarian movement to fight

decade-long, US-backed offensive has weakened the rebels enough that they will want to end the fighting on the best possible terms.

If peace is not achieved, the FARC still has 9,000 troops that can keep inflicting damage on the continent's fourth-largest economy.

The negotiations, which are being held in a Havana convention centre in the ritziest part of the Cuban capital, have begun with the topic of rural development, the first of six points to be



Colombia's lead government negotiator Humberto de la Calle arrives to talks in Havana on 6 Dec, 2012. REUTERS

the country's long history of social inequality.

Tens of thousands of people have died and millions have been displaced in South America's last Marxist-led armed rebellion, a vestige of the Cold War.

Three previous peace attempts have failed, but Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos hopes a

addressed. Others range from the rebels' involvement in the illicit drug trade to their future political participation.

De la Calle said so far Colombians, whose opinions are being sought online and in public forums, had provided nearly 3,000 suggestions to aid the peace process, some of which were being closely studied.—Reuters

REGIONAL

Abe to seek relocating US Futenma bases within Okinawa

TOKYO, 22 Dec—Shinzo Abe, Japan's premier-in-waiting, said on Friday that he will seek to relocate the US Futenma base to a less populated place within Okinawa Prefecture, according to Japan's *Kyodo News Agency*.

Abe said at a press conference held in Yamaguchi Prefecture that he will try to gain supports from local community so as to move the air base to

Okinawa's coastal Henoko area in Nago city, where is less populated than its current location.

The plan was existed for years under the rule of the Liberal Democratic Party, but it was interrupted when the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) swept to power in 2009.

However, the DPJ complicated the thorny issue and made then DPJ Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama

resigned for the very issue as he failed to realize his words that to remove the base.

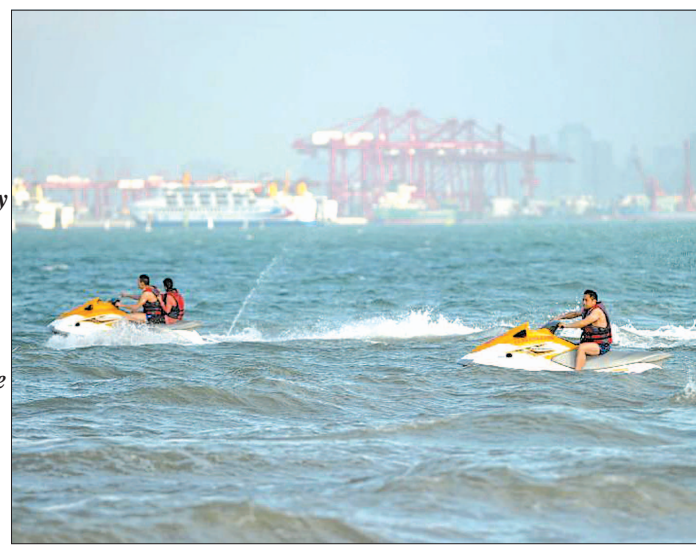
Abe also said he will try to ask for supports from various communities to ease Okinawa's burden while maintaining deterrence.

The issue of relocating the Futenma base has been an obstacle between Japan's central government and local residents, who want the US base moved out of Okinawa.

Xinhua

People play motorboats on the sea in Haikou, capital of south China's Hainan Province, on 21 Dec, 2012. Thursday marks the Dongzhi Festival, or Winter Solstice. Contrary to people in north China who are expected to welcome the coldest winter days, people in Hainan still enjoy the warm climate.

XINHUA



Cambodia opens rescue centre for endangered pangolins

PHNOM PENH, 22 Dec—Cambodia opened a new Pangolin Rehabilitation Centre (PRC) on Friday to provide special care to the kingdom's endangered pangolins rescued from the growing wildlife trade.

"The facility is established to rehabilitate injured pangolins (scaly ant-eaters) rescued from hunters throughout Cambodia," according to a joint Press release from the Conservation International (CI) and Cambodian Forestry Administration (FA) on Friday. "The center aims to bolster conservation efforts for this species."

The facility is located at the Phnom Tamao Zoological Park and Wildlife Rescue Centre in Takeo Province and staffed by a well-trained and dedicated team who care for the pangolins until they are ready for release back into the wild, the Press release said.

"The centre also aims to raise awareness of the plight of the pangolin and to do so have been fitted with information signs about the species, the wildlife trade and how the public can help," it said. There are already six pangolins under its care, which are all victims of the wildlife trade and are

receiving treatment for a range of injuries. Annette Olsson, Scientific Technical Advisor of CI's Greater Mekong programme said that the launch of the facility gave rescued pangolins hope.

"Pangolins are often transported in very cruel ways by traffickers to avoid detection by authorities. Sometimes they are kept for days in plastic bags, without food or water, hidden in small spaces. It's common for the animals to die in transit, or after rescue, due to these terrible practices," Olsson said in the statement.

Xinhua

US unmanned aircraft crashes in NW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 22 Dec—A US unmanned aircraft, which was reportedly being used to target militants' hideouts, crashed in Pakistan's northwestern tribal region of South Waziristan, local media reported on Friday.

According to the reports, the pilotless plane crashed on Thursday night in the Wana District of South Waziristan, a restive tribal region bordering Afghanistan.

Local media quoting official sources reported that the US drone crashed apparently due to some technical fault. US-led NATO forces fighting in Afghanistan believed that Pakistan's bordering areas especially North Waziristan and South Waziristan are the safe haven for the militants who allegedly attack NATO forces in Afghanistan.

In 2012, US-led NATO forces conducted around 38 drone attacks (counted on daily basis) in Pakistan, killing at least 269 people.

On 9 Dec, at least four people were killed when a US drone fired four missiles at a house in Pakistan's northwest tribal area of North Waziristan.—Xinhua



A supporter of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) wears the mask of Narendra Modi to celebrate BJP's victory in the Gujarat assembly elections in Varanasi, India, on 20 Dec, 2012. India's main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government in the western state of Gujarat scored a political hat-trick by winning the state assembly elections by a huge margin under the leadership of controversial Hindu nationalist Chief Minister Narendra Modi.—XINHUA

ADB provides 251 mln USD loans for sustainable development in Vietnam

HANOI, 22 Dec—The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Vietnamese government signed on Friday three loan agreements totaling 251 million US dollars to help Vietnam improve education quality, enhance capacity of the power transmission network and improve flood and drought risk management and mitigation.

At the signing ceremony, ADB Country Director for Vietnam Tomoyuki Kimura said although Vietnam has experienced rapid growth over the past two decades,

future growth will depend on a labour force skilled enough to meet the needs of the job market, a reliable electricity supply to meet rapidly growing energy demands, and the country's capacity to mitigate risks and vulnerabilities posed by flood and drought.

According to ADB, a 90 million US dollars concessional loan from the ADB's Asian Development Fund (ADF) for the Second Upper Secondary Education Development Project will focus on improving readiness of upper secondary school graduates

for tertiary and vocational career development through enhancing upper secondary education quality to meet the international standards, increasing access and retention of disadvantaged groups with a special focus on girl and ethnic minority students coming from poor and near-poor households.

The second 110.19 million US dollars loan agreement represents the second tranche of the 730 million US dollars power transmission investment programme to Vietnam that ADB approved in Dec 2011.

Xinhua



Stewardesses provide service for passengers during a trial trip for journalists from Beijing, capital of China, on 22 Dec, 2012. China is set to open the world's longest high-speed railway on 26 Dec, linking Beijing and the southern economic centre of Guangzhou. Running at an average speed of 300 km per hour, the 2,298-km Beijing-Guangzhou high-speed railway will cut travel time between the two cities to about 8 hours.—XINHUA

Cambodia removes about 3 million mines, unexploded ordnances in 2 decades

PHNOM PENH, 22 Dec—Cambodia has removed and destroyed some 3 million mines and unexploded ordnances in the last two decades and the country will completely eliminate landmines in the next 10 years, a senior official said on Friday.

Heng Ratana, Director General of Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), said that since 1992 to

date, the center has cleared some 2.5 million mines and unexploded ordnances and the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and non-governmental organizations have removed about 500,000 mines.

"We set the target to clear all types of landmines from Cambodia in the next 10 years," he said, adding that to realize this goal, the country needs an estimated

30 million US dollars a year.

The Southeast Asian nation is one of the world's worst countries affected by mines as the result of almost three decades of war and internal conflicts from the mid-1960s until the end of 1998.

The five most mine-laid Provinces are Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Oddar Meanchey, Pailin and Preah Vihear.—Xinhua



Soldiers try to get through a brook during a military training in central China's Henan Province, on 19 Dec, 2012. Thousands of soldiers went through harsh environment as they participated in the military training here.

XINHUA

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BLPL BLESSING VOY NO (1204)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BLPL BLESSING VOY NO (1204) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.12.2012 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORIENT EXPRESS LINE
PTE LTD.**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797



Passengers wait bus in snow in Beijing, capital of China, on 20 Dec, 2012. A strong cold front sent temperatures down across China and brought heavy snow to some regions from Wednesday and Thursday, according to the National Meteorological Centre of China.—XINHUA

**33 killed, 24 injured
Sudan's traffic accident**

KHARTOUM, 22 Dec—A bus collided with a mini-bus at Sudan's Al-Kamlin area, some 90 km south of the capital Khartoum, leaving 33 people killed and 24 others injured, Khartoum's *Al-Sahafa daily* reported on Thursday.

"The accident was due to wrong crossing by the mini-bus. All 25 passengers on the mini-bus, along with eight passengers from the bus, were killed," said Col Mahir Mahjoub, director of the Traffic Police at Al-Kamlin area.

Yousif Al-Zubair, commissioner of Al-Kamlin locality, described the accident as "shocking and regrettable."

Citing the poor condition of the road, Al-Zubair called for implementing a previous proposal for transforming it into a one-way road.

Sudan's traffic accident rates are among the highest in the world, mainly due to careless driving and poor infrastructure. A recent report by Sudan's Interior Ministry showed that 283 people were killed and

17,970 others injured in traffic accidents in 2012.

The report noted that "wrong crossing of the road" has caused more deaths in traffic accidents than other factors. Sudan's interior ministry was working to reduce traffic accidents by installing radars to monitor highways, according to the report.—Xinhua

**Five dead, 27 injured as China bus fall
off ravine**

CHENGDU, 22 Dec—Five people were killed and 27 injured after a bus fell into a ravine in southwest China's Sichuan Province on Thursday, authorities said.

The accident occurred at about 9:30 am when a bus broke through a guardrail and overturned off a 47-metre-deep ravine in the Daxian County of Dazhou City, the provincial administration of work safety said in a statement.

Two of the 32 people aboard the 35-seat bus were killed at the scene, two died en route to hospital and one died at hospital after

**Invitation to open tender for purchase
of related parts of Chiller Units for
maintenance of air-conditioners at
Myanma Radio and Television
(Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon) of
Ministry of Information**

1. Open tenders are invited to purchase following spare parts to be used in maintenance of air-conditioners at Myanma Radio and Television (Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon) of Ministry of Information-

- Spare parts and 14 related parts for Chiller Unit (Model No. 30 GTN 210-933 and 30 GTN-100)

2. Open tender forms may be drawn from Ministry of Information, Office No (7), Nay Pyi Taw, from 09:30 hr to (6:30) hr during the office days from (21-12-2012) to (1-1-2013).

3. Open tender forms are to be submitted in the presence of the Tender Board at Ministry of Information, Office No. 7, from 09:30 hr to 16:30 hr on 2-1-2013. The overdue tenders will not be accepted.

4. The open tender forms and detailed information are available at the following address-

**Procurement Committee
Ministry of Information
Office No (7), Nay Pyi Taw
Tel: 067-412327, 067-79474**

China opens second railway to Kazakhstan

KORGAS, 22 Dec—A second cross-border railway between China and Kazakhstan opened on Saturday.

The railway is composed of a 292-km section in China and the remaining 293-km section in Kazakhstan. They were joined at the Korgas Pass in Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region.

Construction of the Chinese side of the railway cost 6 billion yuan (962 million US dollars), railway officials said. The rail line is expected to ease the burden of the Alataw trade pass, where the first China-central Asia railway traverses. It handles 15.6 million tonnes of train-laden cargo a year.

Industry observers expect the Korgas pass, which now connects China and Kazakhstan by a railway, a highway, and an oil pipeline,

to handle 20 million tonnes of cargo a year by 2020 and 35 million tonnes a year by 2030.

The railway launch followed the meet of Chinese Vice Premier Wang Qishan and his Kazakh counterpart Kairat Kelimbetov in Astana earlier this month, vowing to enhance bilateral cooperation in energy, trade, communication and other fields.

Wang suggested enhancing the China-Kazakhstan interconnection by the rails and a trans-continental highway that links China with Europe.

China and five central Asian countries have been deepening trade and economic cooperations in recent years. The total trade volume between China and central, west, and south Asian countries increased from 25.4 bil-

US charges drugmaker Eli Lilly with overseas bribery

WASHINGTON, 22 Dec— The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on Thursday charged Eli Lilly and Company with violations of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA). The SEC alleged the pharmaceutical company's subsidiaries in Russia, Brazil, China and Poland gave cash and gifts to government officials in order to win millions of dollars of business. Specifically, employees at Lilly's subsidiary in China falsified expense reports in order to provide spa treatments, jewelry, and other improper gifts and cash payments to government-employed physicians.

The Indianapolis-based company agreed to pay 29.4 million US dollars to settle the SEC's charges, without

admitting or denying the allegations.

Eli Lilly, the maker of the antidepressant Cymbalta, said in a statement that the settlement related to the SEC investigation from 1994 to 2009. The company was first notified of the investigation in August 2003.

"When a parent company learns tell-tale signs of a bribery scheme involving a subsidiary, it must take immediate action to assure that the FCPA is not being violated," said Antonia Chion, Associate Director in the SEC Enforcement Division. The FCPA enforcement is a high priority area for the SEC. This year it has charged 10 entities for violating the FCPA including multinationals like Pfizer, Oracle and Allianz SE.

Xinhua



Trans Linking Korgas Pass of China and Sary-Ozek railway of Kazakhstan to move during the ceremony to celebrate the opening of the second crossborder rail line that links China's Xinjiang region and Kazakhstan in Korgas on 22 Dec 2012.—XINHUA

lion US dollars to more than 370 billion, up about 30 percent annually.

In particular, trade between Xinjiang and five central Asian countries reached a historical high of 16.98 billion US dollars last year,

according to the customs figures.

Observers said the railway will also help the border city of Korgas become a key logistics hub with a network of highways, railways and pipelines.—Xinhua

**At least one dead, dozens
injured in US highway
accident**

NEW YORK, 22 Dec—A major New York highway remained closed several hours after a multi-car crash on Wednesday afternoon that left at least one person dead and 32 others injured, local police said.

An unidentified 68-year-old woman was killed in the crash, while the injured people were sent to local hospitals for treatment, Suffolk County police said.

The accident occurred when a tractor trailer crashed into several vehicles, setting

off a chain reaction of fiery crashes on the Long Island Expressway, which was shut down between exits 66 and 69 in Suffolk County as of late Wednesday night.

According to the police, the eastbound lanes of the expressway, which connects suburban Long Island neighbourhoods with New York City, were expected to remain closed all night, while the westbound lanes were expected to be able to reopen for the morning commute.—Xinhua



Firefighters conduct a rescue operation at the site of an accident during which a bus fell into a ravine in the Daxian County of Dazhou City, southwest China's Sichuan Province, on 20 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

emergency treatment failed. The rest 27, all injured, are being treated at three local hospitals. An investigation into the cause of the accident is under way.—Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

Jenny McCarthy has a crush on Bradley Cooper

Jenny McCarthy thinks is Bradley Cooper a hunk.



LOS ANGELES, 22 Dec—The 40-year-old blonde beauty thinks the Silver Linings Playbook star—who was named People magazine’s Sexiest Man Alive in 2011—is a hunk and she wants

to invite him onto her upcoming VH1 chat show so she can meet him. She said: “He’s (Bradley) my number-one crush. I’m hoping he’ll be a guest on my show.”

Unlike Bradley who is dating Zoe Saldana, Jenny is currently single and is planning on being on her own for a little while because she thinks she wasted too much time and energy on ex-lovers when she could have been focusing on her own needs.

The 40-year-old star—who has a 10-year-old son Evan from her marriage to actor-and-director John Mallory Asher and was in a five-year relationship with Jim Carrey—knows she is the “best damn girlfriend” a guy could have and she

wants to wait for a man who deserves her.

Speaking in the January 2013 issue of *Shape* magazine, she said: “I’ve gone on some dates, but I’m really taking a time—out for me at the moment.

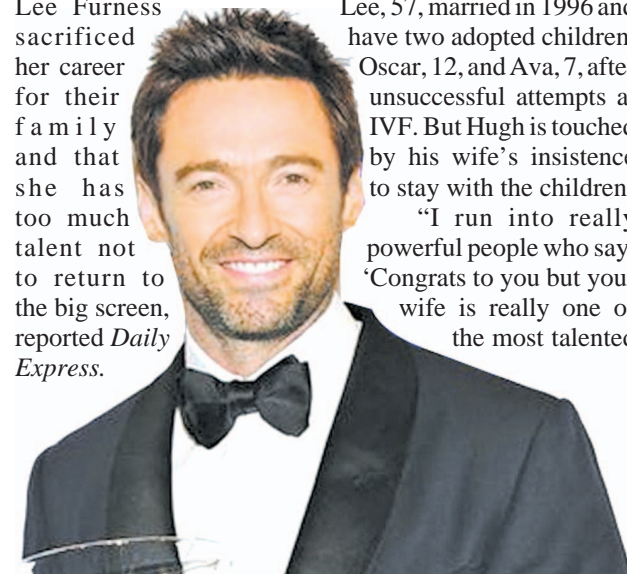
One thing I realised in my past relationships is that I’m the best damn girlfriend ever. I put so much energy into my boyfriends and their needs. If I gave myself that same kind of attention, who knows where I’d be at my life at this point? So for now, I’m putting everything I’ve got into my talk show and being a great mom.”

Her new series *The Jenny McCarthy Show*—which is aimed at adults and on which she has promised to be her “true, dirty self” - will air in 2013.—PTI

My wife sacrificed her career for our family: Hugh Jackman

LOS ANGELES, 22 Dec— Actor Hugh Jackman thinks his hugely successful career has stifled his wife’s chances of becoming an A-list actress.

The 44-year-old actor says that his wife, Deborah-Lee Furness sacrificed her career for their family and that she has too much talent not to return to the big screen, reported *Daily Express*.



Hugh Jackman says his wife has too much talent not to return to the big screen.

when it comes to sacrifices Deb has shouldered most of those. I told her, ‘You’re just too good to waste that talent’. Everyone needs to see it,” he said.

Jackman and Deborah-Lee, 57, married in 1996 and have two adopted children, Oscar, 12, and Ava, 7, after unsuccessful attempts at IVF. But Hugh is touched by his wife’s insistence to stay with the children.

“I run into really powerful people who say, ‘Congrats to you but your wife is really one of the most talented

actresses.’ It reminds me of the sacrifice she’s made and what she’s done for our kids,” he added.—PTI

Zac Efron joins JFK assassination movie Parkland

LOS ANGELES, 22 Dec— After starring in Lee Daniels’ thriller *The Paperboy*, former Disney heartthrob Zac Efron is set to tackle another gritty role in Peter Landesman’s *Parkland*, which is inspired by the notorious assassination of President John F Kennedy.

Details of the 25-year-old actor’s role are still scarce, but he is set to star opposite a host of acclaimed actors, including Oscar winners Marcia Gay Harden and Billy Bob Thornton, and Oscar nominees Paul Giamatti and Jacki Weaver, reported *Ace Showbiz*.

Serving as the producers are Playtone’s Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman.

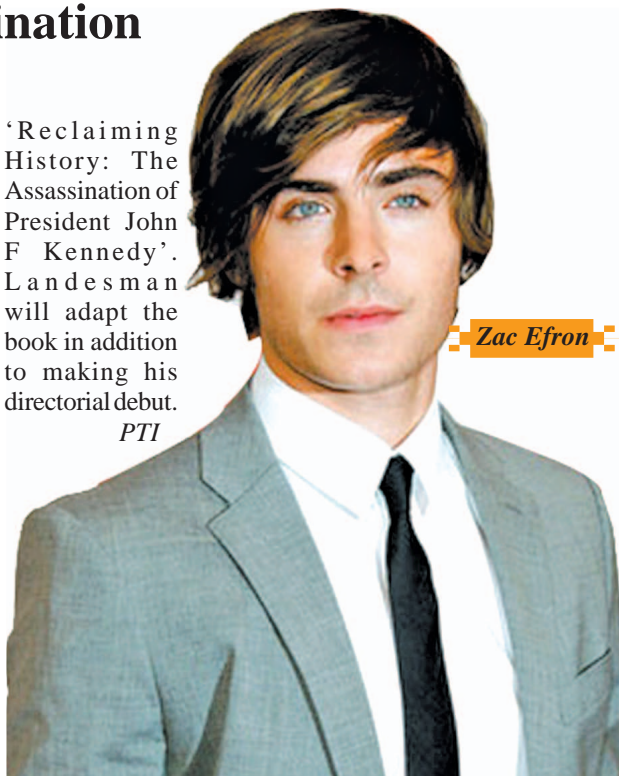
Exclusive Media will support the financial. “Zac Efron continues to impress us with his recent shift into more dramatic roles which showcase his exceptional acting skills and Marcia Gay Harden is an unparalleled actress who gives tour de force performances in every film she appears.

“We look forward to seeing their combined talent in Peter Landesman’s powerful and mesmerizing story alongside the excellent cast already attached to this film,” said Exclusive’s co-charimen Nigel Sinclair and Guy East.

Parkland is based on Vincent Buhliosi’s epic book,

‘Reclaiming History: The Assassination of President John F Kennedy’. Landesman will adapt the book in addition to making his directorial debut.

PTI



Zac Efron

Hundreds pay tribute to legendary Indian sitarist Ravi Shankar

ENCINITAS, 22 Dec— Ravi Shankar’s daughters, Norah Jones and Anoushka Shankar, along with the wife of late Beatle George Harrison said their final goodbyes to the Indian sitar virtuoso on Thursday at a public memorial service in Encinitas, California.

The legendary musician and composer, who helped introduce the sitar to the Western world through his collaboration with The Beatles, died on 11 December in Southern California. He was 92.

About 700 people joined Shankar’s wife, Sukanya, and family at the service held at a spiritual centre in the coastal town about 25 miles (40 km) north of San Diego.

Olivia Harrison, the

widow of Beatles guitarist George Harrison, told *Reuters* the three-time Grammy winner who formed a musical and spiritual bond with The Beatle “expressed music at its deepest level.”

“As a person he was just sweet and seemed to know everything,” she added. “He was a true citizen of the world.”

Shankar is credited with popularizing Indian music through his work with violinist Yehudi Menuhin and The Beatles beginning in the mid-1960s, inspiring George Harrison to learn the sitar and the British band to record songs like “Norwegian Wood” (1965) and “Within You, Without You” (1967).

Reuters



Daughter Anoushka Shankar speaks at memorial services for sitar legend Ravi Shankar in Encinitas, California on 20 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Lohan not worried she’ll be sent to jail

Lindsay Lohan



LOS ANGELES, 22 Dec— Lindsay Lohan isn’t worried about possibly being sent

to jail. The Liz & Dick star—who recently had her probation revoked after it

was claimed she lied to police over a car accident in June and police and prosecutors are hoping she will be sent to prison—allegedly isn’t concerned about her looming court hearing next month because she believes she hasn’t done anything wrong.

A source close to the troubled starlet told the *Huffington Post*: “We are not sure if Lindsay knows how serious this is. She has been in front of judges so many times at this point that she’s not particularly worried. Lindsay has total faith in her lawyer and the criminal justice system. As far as she’s concerned she did nothing wrong.” Lindsay could be sentenced to up to eight months behind bars next month for violating

her probation, according to reports. Another insider suggested that the 26-year-old actress is so confident she will be vindicated that she isn’t planning to change her behaviour before the hearing on 25 January. The source said: “Lindsay has no intention of changing her behaviour leading up to the hearing. She plans to enjoy the holidays going out to clubs and parties with friends. She thinks she’s the victim and is confident the judge will see that too.”

Lindsay was previously said to have recently agreed she had hit rock bottom and needed professional help but claimed she doesn’t have the money to hire a psychiatrist as she is currently in debt.

PTI

Robson, Watson to warm up for Australian Open in Hobart



Tennis player Laura Robson waves during a parade of British Olympic and Paralympic athletes through London on 10 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

MELBOURNE, 22 Dec—British Olympic silver medallist Laura Robson and compatriot Heather Watson will warm up for the Australian Open at the 4-12 January Hobart International, organisers said on Saturday.

The 18-year-old Rob-

son, who won mixed doubles silver with men's singles champion Andy Murray at the London Olympics, will make her first appearance at the Tasmanian tournament headlined by former French Open champion Francesca Schiavone of Italy.

Watson, 20, who became Britain's first WTA champion in 24 years with her win at the Japan Open in October, returns for her second appearance after playing this year's tournament as a qualifier.

The Australian Open starts 14 January.—Reuters

Ibrahimovic sets up leaders PSG for easy win

PARIS, 22 Dec—Zlatan Ibrahimovic

scored his 18th goal of the season to inspire Ligue 1 leaders Paris St Germain to a comprehensive 3-0 victory at 10-man Stade Brest which lifted them three points clear at the top on Friday.

Goalkeeper Alex-



Paris Saint-Germain's Zlatan Ibrahimovic

is Thebaux produced a sterling performance for the home team but could not stop Swede Ibrahimovic scoring from Christophe Jallet's cross in the 55th minute. Substitute Kevin Gameiro make it 2-0 on 73 minutes and left back Bernard Mendy's own goal sealed P S G 's

comfortable win. PSG have 38 points, three ahead of Olympique Lyon who host fifth-placed Nice on Saturday, and Olympique Marseille, who

take on St Etienne on Sunday. "It's an ideal night. But last year we were ahead (before the winter break) and we finished second.

Hopefully we'll make things turn round this time," Gameiro told beIN Sport television after scoring his fifth goal in 11 appearances.

Brest, who had midfielder Abdoulwhaid Sissoko sent off for a dangerous tackle on Ezequiel Lavezzi in the 33rd minute, are 13th on 21 points. PSG overpowered their hosts but came across an inspired Thebaux, who made his first spectacular



Matri hits late double to salvage win for Juve

ROME, 22 Dec—Substitute Alessandro Matri struck twice, including a stoppage-time winner against his former club, as Serie A leaders Juventus hit back to beat 10-man Cagliari 3-1 on Friday and extend their lead to 10 points.

Cagliari went ahead in Parma when Chile's Arturo Vidal fouled Marco Sau in the area and Chilean striker Mauricio Pinilla dispatched the 16th-minute penalty.

Juve, whose lead can be cut back by the likes of Inter Milan on Saturday, appealed for their own spot-kick late in the first half after Davide Astori tangled with Fabio Quagliarella but the referee waved away the protests.

The champions went close again after the break when Leonardo Bonucci hit the post and they had another penalty turned down before Cagliari defender Astori was dismissed 20 minutes into the

second half for two bookings.

Cagliari coach Ivo Pulga was sent from the dugout for protesting but the Sardinians smiled



when the off-colour Vidal blasted a penalty into the stands, only for substitute Mirko Vucinic to set up Matri for Juve's equaliser on 75 minutes.—Reuters

Juventus' Alessandro Matri (L) celebrates next to team mate Andrea Pirlo after scoring against Cagliari during their Italian Serie A match at Tardini stadium in Parma, on 21 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

Adrian maintains Atletico's perfect home record

MADRID, 22 dec—Adrian came off the bench to fire second-placed Atletico Madrid to a 1-0 La Liga home win over Celta Vigo on Friday and secure a ninth victory in nine matches this season at their Calderon stadium.

Atletico struggled to create chances in their final match of a year in which they won the Europa League and continued their resurgence under coach Diego Simeone.

Adrian finally found a way through Celta's defence in the 77th minute when the Spain under-21 striker sent a snap shot arrowing into the top corner from just outside the area.

Defender Miranda earned a second yellow card for handling the ball and was sent off four minutes from time but Atletico held on to close to within six points of unbeaten leaders Barcelona who play at Real Valladolid on Saturday (5:00 pm British time). The victory also stretched their advantage over third-placed Real Madrid to seven points ahead of Real's game at Malaga, also on Saturday (1900).

Atletico's tally of 40 points from 17 matches is a club record, overhauling the previous best of 39 set in the 1995-96 season when they last won the title.

They are through to the last 16 of the King's Cup and have a 3-0 lead over Getafe

and it's always tough when a game turns out that way," Adrian said in an interview with Spanish television.

"We want to carry on in the same way or even better," he added. "Everything is going well in the three competitions."



Atletico Madrid's Radamel Falcao (L) shoots past Celta Vigo's Gustavo Cabral during their Spanish first division match at Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid on 21 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

from last week's first leg and will play Russian side Rubin Kazan in the last 32 of the Europa League when the competition resumes in February.

"They (Celta) were clear about how (defensively) they were going to play

Valencia continued their tentative revival under new coach Ernesto Valverde when captain Roberto Soldado struck in the opening minute to set them on their way to a 4-2 home win over Getafe in the earlier kickoff.

Reuters

Soccer

Ferguson scoffs at talk of Scholes retirement

LONDON, 22 Dec—Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson has dismissed media reports that his long-serving trio of Paul Scholes, Ryan Giggs and Rio Ferdinand will leave the Premier League leaders at the end of the season.

After newspaper headlines had declared the end of an era, with reports that 38-year-old Scholes had told friends he planned to retire for the second time, Ferguson put the record straight ahead of United's trip to Swansea City on Sunday.

"I would be surprised if Paul had spoken to someone without speaking to me — and he hasn't — so we can dismiss that," said the Scot.

"Ryan could play for another year or two. Rio has been terrific," he added.

Ferguson said the speculation stemmed from United's policy of giving the club's older players only one-year contracts.

Scholes turned profes-



Manchester United's manager Alex Ferguson seen at a training session at the club's Carrington training complex in Manchester, northern England, on 19 Nov, 2012.

REUTERS

sional at Old Trafford in 1993 and retired in May 2011 before having a re-think last January when United were suffering an injury crisis.—Reuters

GENERAL



Director U Aung Kyaw Moe of Social Welfare Department presents prize to kids at Nan Htaik Yadana Pre-Primary School in Wunnatheikdi Ward of Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area who won the prize in physical capability contest 2012-2013.—KYEMON

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(23-12-12 09:30 am ~ 24-12-12 09:30 am) MST

- * News
* How to Practice Vipassana Meditation (Part-II)
* British Foreign & Commonwealth Office Minister RT Hon Hogo Swire MP's Cordial visit to Myanmar
* Adventurous Journey to Bontalar Waterfall
* A Heart Filled with Nobel Volunteerism
* A Buddha Statue Depicting India Myanmar Friendship
* MI People's Celebrities "Nay Toe & His Family how they relax"
* Strategic Planning for Business Success Seminar
* News
* Vietnam-Myanmar Business Forum
* Lovely Homes for Beautiful Pet Fishes
* A Helping and to Enlighten for the Blind
* Myanmar Movie "Tears of Silence"

MYANMAR TV

(23-12-2012, Sunday)

- 7:00 am 13. Songs Programme
1. Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw 2:50 pm
7:15 am 14. International News 4:25 pm
2. Dhama Puja Song 4:35 pm
7:25 am 15. Song of National Races 4:35 pm
3. To Be Healthy Exercise 16. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -First Year (English) 4:50 pm
7:40 am 17. Songs For Upholding National Spirit 4:55 pm
7:50 am 18. Documentary 5:20 pm
8:00 am 19. Sing & Enjoy 6:20 pm
8:15 am 20. Cartoon Series 6:40 pm
8:20 am 21. Tamyethnar Takwetsar 7:00 pm
11:00 am 22. TV Drama Series 8:00 pm
11:05 am 23. News 24. International News 25. Teleplay 26. TV Drama Series 27. New Melody

NLM

Word!

Learning English

Words are sometimes more than words, but sometimes they bear nothing. As time flies, some words are left in our minds and others discarded. They then become parts of the contemporary history.

"Global interdependence"

Ban Ki-moon
United Nations Secretary-General

The UNSG in his message on International Human Solidarity Day on 20 December said the world has become a close-knit family in various "dimensions" while calling on all global citizens to shape "more secure, sustainable and prosperous future."

"Youthful ambition and success"

Michael Noer
Forbes Executive Editor

The editor said in his comment on the selection of "30 under 30" by the prestigious US magazine that those earned mention as top under-30 achievers are all but "youthful ambition and success."

"A box-ticking exercise"

James Nixey
Expert on Russia of Chatham House Think Tank

Ahead of the scheduled meeting between European Union leaders and Russian President Vladimir Putin, the scholar on Russian said the meeting would expectably bear less fruits as the last few talks did and predicted it would no more than a real chore for the re-elected Russian president.

NLM

Sterling signs long-term Liverpool deal

LONDON, 22 Dec— Teenage Liverpool winger Raheem Sterling, one of the shining talents in a lacklustre season for the former European giants, committed his long-term future to the Premier League club on Friday.

director Ian Ayre said Liverpool, currently 12th in the league, had secured one of the "country's brightest young talents". "Since the summer, Luis Suarez, Daniel Agger,

leadership of Brendan Rodgers and everyone at this football club." Reuters



Liverpool's Raheem Sterling runs with the ball during a training session at the club's Melwood training complex in Liverpool, northern England on 21 Nov, 2012. REUTERS

The 18-year-old, who became England's fifth youngest player of all time when he made his senior debut last month in a friendly against Sweden, told the club website (www.liverpoolfc.com) that it was a dream come true.

"There's a lot more to be done. I haven't begun yet, as the manager has said. Hopefully I can kick on after the New Year and try to do my best for the team and the football club," said the Jamaican-born player.

The club's managing

Martin Skrtel, Jonjo Shelvey and Suso have all signed new long-term contracts and it's a clear indication of our intent to keep the players we believe are crucial to bringing success on the pitch," he added.

"It also shows the belief the players have in the vision and

Terry still sidelined by knee injury

LONDON, 22 Dec— Chelsea captain John Terry is doubtful for the club's busy holiday schedule after being ruled out of the Premier League trip to Aston Villa on Sunday. Terry injured his knee against Liverpool last month in his first game back after serving a four-game ban and is still to feature under new manager Rafa Benitez.



John Terry of Chelsea celebrates scoring against Liverpool during their English Premier League football match at Stamford Bridge in London on 11 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

is proving more complicated than first thought, Benitez told a news conference on Friday.

"The knee is quite complicated," Benitez said. "At least he's now on the pitch—that is positive news—but we cannot say, we cannot predict how long it will take."

Reuters

Brazil opens second stadium as World Cup fever grows



Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff (in pink) and Minas Gerais Governor Antonio Anastasia wave during the inauguration of the Mineirao stadium in Belo Horizonte on 21 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

BELO HORIZONTE, 22 Dec—Brazil's preparations to host the 2014 World Cup have gathered speed with the opening on Friday of the second of the 12 stadiums destined to hold matches during the tournament.

President Dilma Rousseff formally inaugurated the rebuilt Mineirao stadium in Belo Horizonte, less than a week after cutting the ribbon at the Castelao stadium in Fortaleza.

Tens of thousands of

fans are expected to visit the Mineirao in the coming days to see a stadium that took almost three years to refurbish at a cost of 695 million Brazilian reais.

The Mineirao is one of Brazil's best-known stadiums and in being delivered on time and on budget is a benchmark for the other 10 stadiums under construction.

"This is as good as Wembley, as good as (the Allianz Arena in) Munich, it's

up there with the best stadiums in the world," Carlos Alberto Parreira, assistant to Brazil manager Luiz Felipe Scolari, told reporters.

"A stadium like this is great news for both players and fans."

The 62,160 capacity Mineirao will host three games during the 2013 Confederations Cup and six during the 2014 World Cup, including one of the semi-finals.

The stadium, which is situated alongside a complex featuring works by renowned Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, is nevertheless already causing controversy in Belo Horizonte - home to clubs Atletico-MG and Cruzeiro.

Cruzeiro are Brazil's seventh biggest club in terms of number of fans, and Atletico are 11th, sports consultancy Pluri says. The two teams are due to play the inaugural match at the stadium in February.

Reuters

Myanmar invites Indian investments

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec—President U Thein Sein left Taj Mahal Hotel where he stayed yesterday evening for Palam Air Base near Indira Gandhi International Airport of New Delhi.

Deputy Minister of Human Resource Development of India Mr Jitendra Prusada and officials of the Myanmar embassy and the military attaché office of Myanmar seen off the President and party at Palam Air Base as they left for Mumbai.

They were welcomed at Chattrapati Shivali International Airport by officials from Maharashtra State Government.

They stayed at Leela Palace Hotel in Mumbai. The President attended the dinner hosted by Confederation of Indian Industry.

Also present at the dinner were Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Than Htay and U Aye Myint, Deputy Ministers Dr Win Myint and U Than Swe,



President U Thein Sein presents gift to President of Confederation of Indian Industry Mr Adi Godrej.—MNA

“The new Foreign Investment Law will provide various degrees of privileges to the potential investors in respect of taxes and duties and guarantees protection of property and profits and rights of the investors.”

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry U Win Aung, departmental heads, the Indian ambassador to Myanmar and officials.

President of the confederation Mr Adi Godrej extended greetings.

The President said in his speech that Myanmar endorsed India's Look East Policy. He said Myanmar and India can work closely in many economic sectors to achieve Economic goals,

with Myanmar serving as a bridge between India and ASEAN and India and China to promote trade in the region.

He continued to say that Myanmar-India bilateral trade is increasing steadily in recent years and India is the fourth largest trading partner of Myanmar.

He recalled the trade relations of 2011-2012 fiscal year that Myanmar's export to India was US\$ 1,046 million, a 20 percent increase from the previous year. India exported US\$ 324.5 million

worth of goods to Myanmar which is an increase of 66.5 percent from the previous year, he said. The total trade volume in 2011-2012 fiscal year was US\$ 1,371.4 million, he said. Myanmar's imports from India are metal ores and products, medicines, transport equipment, machines and machinery parts and electric appliances, the President said.

He continued to say six Indian companies have invested in the country, referring to the statistics of Myanmar Investment

Commission, with the total volume US\$ 262 million.

He went on to say that the mainstay of Myanmar's economy is agriculture. He invited Indian companies to do business in Myanmar's agriculture sectors.

He said his initiatives to bring about political and socio-economic developments include creating favourable conditions for businessmen and investors. He also introduced financial and commercial

(See page 9)

President U Thein Sein arrives back from India



President U Thein Sein being welcomed by Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win and Union ministers at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Dec—President U Thein Sein of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and party arrived at Chattrapati Shivali International Airport in Mumbai this afternoon after attending the 20th ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit held in New Delhi and visiting Tomb and Royal Residence of King Thibaw in Ratnagiri.

At 1 pm, the President and party were seen off at Chattrapati Shivali International Airport in Mumbai by Diplomatic head Mr Sumit Malik of Maharashtra State Government and officials and officials from Myanmar Embassy and Military Attaché Office.

After that, the President and party left Mumbai for Myanmar by Myanma Airways Special Flight and arrived back here this evening.

They were welcomed back at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Vice-Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win, Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Thein Nyunt, U Soe Maung, U Thein Tun, U Aye Myint Kyu and U Htay Aung, the Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander and Deputy Head of Mission of Indian Embassy in Myanmar Mr Silas Thangal.

MNA