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Nippon Foundation provides humanitarian assistance to war-torn villages in Mon State

NAYPYI TAW, 23 Dec—Japan Nippon Foundation presented 1000 bags of rice as part of its humanitarian assistance programme for war victims at State Hall in Mawlamyine in Mon State yesterday, attended by Vice-Chairman of Union level Peace-making Work Committee Union Minister U Aung Min, committee members Union Ministers U Win Tun and U Zeyar

Aung, Mon State Chief Minister U Ohn Myint, Charge d' Affaires of Japanese Embassy Mr Ichiro Maruyama, Friendship Ambassador of Japan for Social Security of Myanmar National Races Chairman of Nippon Foundation Mr Yohei Sasakawa.

Speaking on the occasion, the Mon State Chief Minister said the Union government and New Mon State Party are

holding peace talks for lasting peace, expressing thanks for donation of 1000 bags of rice to the party by Nippon Foundation.

Union Minister U Aung Min said the government could reach ceasefire agreement with 10 out of 11 ethnic armed groups, except Kachin national race armed group. The President held talks with donor countries including Norway, Australia, Britain,

EU, World Bank and UN at the capital last June and donor countries affirmed their commitment to provide necessary assistance to Myanmar through two channels—directly from donor countries themselves and through NGOs and INGOs.

The Union Minister affirmed the government's commitment to fulfill the requirements of national races organizations in



Union Minister at the President Office U Aung Min.—MNA



Chief Minister of Mon State U Ohn Myint. MNA

cooperation with NGOs, INGOs and donor organizations.

The humanitarian assistance programme of Nippon Foundation will provide foodstuffs worth USD 3 million to national races people phase by phase. The donation was the first delivery worth 300,000 dollars.

The Nippon Foundation Chairman and the Japanese Charge d' Affaires explained Japan's assistance to Myanmar in anti-leprosy campaign, education, health, reaffirming Japan's support for Myanmar's democratization process and its commitment to

peace process of Myanmar.

The Nippon Foundation Chairman presented rice bags to Chairman of New Mon State Party U Nai Mon Htaw and the rice bags were handed over to personnel concerned.

The Nippon Foundation is the biggest NGO in Asia and would reportedly provide foodstuffs and emergency aids worth USD 3 million as humanitarian aid for war victims of over 1 million in October, 2012 in the regions of national races armed groups under the agreement of Myanmar government. As the first delivery of humanitarian assistance, 1000 bags of rice were donated to war-torn villages in Mon State and the contributions would be distributed to war-torn villages in Kachin State.

MNA



Photo shows trucks with loads of bags of rice to be sent to New Mon State Party.—MNA

Bayintnaung Flyover: Yangon's answer to traffic woes

Traffic congestions have worsened considerably recent days in Yangon, the commercial hub of Myanmar. Queues of cars are longer than ever at traffic lights. Bayintnaung junction is remarkable for traffic queues. Traffic delays seem fairly common in Yangon. With the aim of realizing the reduction of heavy traffic volumes, Yangon City Development Committee is building overhead bridges at intersections in cooperation with private companies.

Excerpts of the interview with Deputy Head of Road/Bridge

Department of YCDC and Project Manager Daw Soe Soe Tin made by *Myanma Alinn* News Team follow.

Q: What is the determining factor for construction of Bayintnaung Flyover?

A: Bayintnaung junction serves as an entrance to Yangon, the economic city, from Ayeyawady Region including other parts of southern Myanmar. Moreover, it is a major intersection not only for the buses used by locals in Hlinethaya and university students but also for containers and trucks carrying raw materials for and manufactured goods of Hlinethaya and

Shwepyitha Industrial Zones. So decision was made to build a flyover at the busy intersection clogged with heavy traffic.

Q: Could you tell me its type?

A: It will be a two-decked bridge. The flyover is an intersection of two bridges at which Bayintnaung street is carried over the West Thamaing railway station by a bridge. The type of the bridge is reinforced concrete one. The flyover construction project includes two bridges.

Q: May I know the length of the first bridge?

A: The first bridge will be built in Bayintnaung (See page 8)

Byline: Maung Maung Myint Swe
Photos: Tin Soe (Myanma Alinn)



Bayintnaung Flyover is under construction with the use of heavy machinery.

Mon State Government meets Thai delegation



MAWLAMYINE, 23 Dec — A 19-member Thai delegation led by Administrator Mr. Remgsak Majavinitchaimontri of Chacheoengsao Province of Thailand called on Mon State Chief Minister U Ohn Myint and State ministers at Aung San Hall of Mon State Government Office, here, on 19 December. They held talks on boosting trade and investment cooperation

matters. In the evening, the meeting between Mon State Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Thai delegation took place at Strand Hotel in Mawlamyine. They held comprehensive discussions on trade route and business matters. The Thai delegation arrived in Yangon on 18 December and held talks with entrepreneurs in Yangon. On 20 December, they met Kayin State Government, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, entrepreneurs and representatives from private sector.

Kyemon

Long-staple cotton purchasing centres being kept open in Tatkon, Yamethin, Pyawbwe Townships

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — Late monsoon long-staple cotton purchasing centres of the Ministry of Industry are being kept open at Tatkon Township for enabling cotton growers to have easy access to the market.

Director-General U Win Myint of Directorate of Industries, Managing Director Dr Aung Kyaw Soe of Myanma Textile Industry and directors visited Myaukmyike long-staple cotton purchasing centre in Tatkon Township on 21 December.

Long-staple cotton purchasing centres which



are being kept open are Myaukmyike and Nyaungluntwah centres in Tatkon Township, Yamethin Cotton Mill purchasing

centre in Yamethin District and Nyaungshwewah purchasing centre in Pyawbwe Township.

MNA

New Mya Yi Nanda labour room for Chanmyathazi Township

MANDALAY, 23 Dec — The opening of new Mya Yi Nanda labour room of Chanmyathazi Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association was held in conjunction with cash donation ceremony at the new building in Mya Yi Nanda ward of the township, here, on 21 December morning.

Chairperson of Mandalay District MCW Supervisory Committee Daw Thin Thin Khine and wellwishers U Kyaw Kyaw Win and Daw Than Than Aye (New Star Light Company) formally opened the new building.

Next, Mandalay Region MCWSC Patron

Daw Myat Ngwe spoke on the occasion, and the ceremony to hand over documents related to the new building and cash donation ceremony followed.

The Mandalay Region MCWSC Patron, the township MCWSC chairperson and responsible persons accepted cash donations of wellwishers and presented certificates of honour to them.

After the ceremony, those present viewed round the labour room which is a RC type one-storey building built with the contribution of K 34 million by New Star Light Company.

Kyemon

Say Taman Yangon-Mandalay coach bus-line put into service



YANGON, 23 Dec — Ceremonies to mark the launch of Say Taman Yangon-Mandalay Coach Bus-Line took place in Yangon and Mandalay on 21 December simultaneously.

Young Man coaches are equipped with facilities required for the fully convenience of passengers and a toilet. It is planned to reach Yangon

from Mandalay within 10-hour drive. Starting from 21 December, the departure times from Yangon to Mandalay are 9.30 am, 8 pm and 9 pm. The departure times from Mandalay to Yangon are 9 am, 8 pm and 9.30 pm.

Arrangements are being made to start Yangon-Pyin Oo Lwin and Yangon-Monywa coach routes soon.—Kyemon

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

Unidentified man found dead with serious injuries in Pathein

PATHEIN, 23 Dec — A man was found dead in front of Pathein Technical Training School on a road to Yangon-Pathein motorway in Ward-3 of Pathein at about 5 am on 11 December. He

was believed to have been knocked down by a car. According to a tip-off, Police Sub-inspector Aung Ko Myo and party of No (2) Police Station went to the scene where an unidentified man who

is believed to be 25 years old was found dead with serious injuries. No (2) Police Station opened a file against the case, and investigation into the case is being carried out.

Kyemon

Charity gala for quake victims on 5 January

MANDALAY, 23 Dec — Writers and journalists in Mandalay planned to organize a Variety Show at Mandalay National Theater on 5 January

to be able to raise the funds for quake victims. The show will include a varied programme of entertainment accompanied by Mandalay

Myoma Band. The money from the show will be donated to the victims of earthquake in Mandalay Region.

Kyemon

Donate Blood



Photo shows students flocking to see wall posters and books on display at Insein Township Information and Public Relations Department Office on 19 December.—KYEMON

Photo shows harvesting of Paletwe paddy farmland of farmer U Tun Aye at Dahatdan village of Kwatnge village-tract in Meiktila Township on 20 December. — KYEMON



WORLD

Death toll from China's building fire rises to three

YAN'AN, 23 Dec—The death toll from a commercial building fire in northwest China has risen to three after a security guard's body was found, a local fire-fighting officer said on Sunday.

The security guard went missing when he helped evacuate people in the the 14-story World Trade Building in downtown Yan'an in Shaanxi Province on Saturday. The identities of two others were yet to be identified, said Jia Xueqi, an officer of Yan'an fire department.

The fire broke out at about 4:30 am on Saturday, injuring 20 people aged from 7 to 51. Jia said that authorities will collect more evidence on Sunday to determine the cause of the accident.—Xinhua

Syrian civil war at stalemate, Assad won't go — Russia

BEIRUT, 23 Dec—Syria's civil war has reached stalemate and international efforts to persuade President Bashar al-Assad to quit will fail, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Saturday.

Mainly Sunni Muslim



Alistair Burt, British Minister for the Middle East and South Asia, speaks during a news conference in Algiers on 24 June, 2012.—REUTERS

BRUSSELS, 23 Dec—Rigorous new sanctions against Iran's banking, shipping and industrial sectors took effect on Saturday, as part of the European Union's effort to force Teheran to scale back its nuclear programme.

The sanctions, agreed in October, entered EU law with their publication in the *European Union's Official Journal* on Saturday.

The toughest EU measures yet, they

include bans on financial transactions, sales to Iran of shipping equipment and steel, and imports of Iranian natural gas, adding to earlier bans, including on the OPEC producer's oil.

They reflect heightened concern over Iran's nuclear goals and Israeli threats to attack Iranian atomic installations if diplomacy and other measures fail to deliver a solution.

Diplomats say they hope talks with Iran can resume

rebels seeking to overthrow Assad are fighting on the edge of the capital Damascus and expanding southwards from their northern strongholds in Aleppo and Idlib into the central province of Hama.

But Assad, from the Alawite minority linked to

Shi'ite Islam, has responded with artillery, air strikes and—according to the NATO military alliance which is stationing anti-missile defences in neighbouring Turkey—with Scud-type missiles.

The Kremlin's Middle East envoy was quoted as saying earlier this month that the rebels could defeat Assad's forces and that Moscow was preparing a possible evacuation of Russians, the strongest signs yet that it is preparing for a post-Assad Syria.

That followed concerted calls from Western powers and some Arab countries for Assad to step down before Syria's 21-month-old conflict, which has killed more than 44,000 people according to activists, wreaks more destruction.

Reuters



Free Syrian Army fighters inspect a tank after the fighters said they fought and defeated government troops in Al-Latamneh, near Hama on 22 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

Iranian lawmaker says NATO Patriot missiles to create insecurity in Turkey

TEHERAN, 23 Dec—A senior Iranian lawmaker said on Saturday the deployment of NATO's Patriot missiles along Turkey's border with Syria will create insecurity in Turkey, Press TV reported.

Head of Iran Majlis (parliament) National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Alaeddin Boroujerdi said "These missiles will not help provide security to Turkey because all the neighbors of

Turkey are discontent with the deployment of these missiles," according to the report.

Deployment of Patriot missiles will not serve the interests of Turkey either, he was quoted as saying.

NATO recently approved to send six Patriot missile batteries from the United States, Germany and the Netherlands to Turkey to be operational by the end of January 2013. The 21-month

protests against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad have turned increasingly bloody, with heavy fighting often erupting along Syria's border with Turkey.

On Saturday, Iranian defence minister said on Saturday that the installation of NATO's Patriot missiles in Syria-Turkey border is to the "disadvantage" of Turkey, semi-official *ISNA* news agency reported.

"The presence of foreign

Tougher EU sanctions against Iran come into force

in January, but are waiting for an answer from Teheran, which maintains its nuclear programme is for purely peaceful purposes.

In a statement, Britain's foreign office said there was a clear need "for an urgent solution". "Iran's leaders know that sanctions are having a significant impact," Britain's Minister for the Middle East and North Africa Alistair Burt said.

"They should be in no doubt that the international community will keep up the pressure until they are ready to negotiate in good faith and take the concrete steps needed to convince the international community

that they are not building a nuclear weapon."

The new sanctions mark a significant change of policy for the 27-member bloc, which previously sought mainly to target specific people and companies with economic restrictions.

It has lagged the United States in imposing blanket industry bans because it is anxious to avoid penalising ordinary Iranian citizens, while punishing the Teheran government.

Sanctions have increasingly inflicted severe pain on the Iranian economy, although the country has years of experience of circumventing them by using

front companies and tortuous shipping routes.

The new European measures make clear natural gas shipments are prohibited in any form and swapping, as opposed to simply buying, cargoes is also outlawed.

While imposing a general ban on financial transactions, they make exceptions for those involving humanitarian aid, food and medicine purchases and provisions for legitimate trade. In a statement, the European Commission said the new law brought the number of entities subject to sanctions to 490 and the total number of persons to 105.

Reuters

Beijing temperatures may plunge to 30-year low

BEIJING, 23 Dec—Temperatures in the Chinese capital Beijing could plunge to the lowest in almost three decades over the weekend, weather forecasters said on Saturday. Temperatures are expected to drop to minus 15 degrees Celsius in urban areas over the weekend.

Beijingers started to feel the freezing weather after a cold spell came in from Siberia on Friday night, Wang Hua, chief forecaster of Beijing Meteorological Observatory said.

Chen Dagang, a senior meteorological forecaster at the observatory, said the capital city's lowest temperature in recent decades was minus 15.2 degrees, recorded in 1985.

Wang said in Beijing's mountainous northern suburb, Sunday's temperatures could drop to minus 20 degrees Celsius. However, he said they would rise again on Monday.

On Saturday, fewer people were on Beijing's streets. Not many people were seen at Tiananmen Square, a tourist hot spot.

"Your hands go numb in just a few minutes. Cameras also work very slowly due to the cold," said a woman



People enjoy themselves on the frozen Shichahai lake in Beijing, capital of China, on 22 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

surnamed Zhou, who works on the square.

Most parts of the country, except the central and southwestern regions, will see temperatures fall by six to eight degrees Celsius in the next three days. Some parts of north and northeast China

will witness a drop of 10 to 14 degrees Celsius, according to the observatory.

The National Meteorological Centre on Saturday kept its blue alert for the cold weather that is sweeping many northern regions in China.—Xinhua

Local Taliban leader killed in eastern Afghan operation

KABUL, 23 Dec—A local Taliban leader was killed in an operation launched by Afghan forces and the NATO-led coalition troops in eastern Afghan province of Ghazni on Friday, the coalition forces confirmed on Saturday.

"Afghan and coalition officials confirmed today that the Taliban leader, Faruq, and one other insurgent were killed during a security operation in Andar district, Ghazni province, yesterday, " the coalition or International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) said in a Press release.

Faruq, also known as Nadim, was involved in anti-government activities including planning and executing Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks against Afghan

and coalition forces, the statement added.

The security force detained one suspected insurgent during the operation in the province with Ghazni city as its capital 100 km south of capital Kabul, it said.

The Taliban, who ruled the country before they were ousted by a US-led invasion in late 2001, renewed armed insurgency, staging ambush and suicide attacks, killing combatants as well as civilians.

The insurgent group has yet to make comments.

The Afghan forces and some 100,000 coalition troops have intensified cleanup operations against Taliban and other militants recently but the insurgents in retaliation responded by carrying out suicide and IED attacks.—Xinhua

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

International crew of three reaches orbiting space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, 23 Dec—A Russian Soyuz capsule carrying a multinational crew of three arrived at the International Space Station on Friday, setting the stage for a Canadian for the first time to take command of the orbital research base.

The spacecraft carrying Chris Hadfield from the Canadian Space Agency, NASA's Tom Marshburn and Russian cosmonaut Roman Romanenko blasted off from Kazakhstan's Baikonur Cosmodrome on Wednesday and parked at the station's Rassvet docking module at 9:09 am EST as the ships sailed 255 miles above northern Kazakhstan.

"The Soyuz sleigh has pulled into port at the International Space Station with a holiday gift of three new crewmembers," said NASA mission commentator Rob Navias.

The trio joined station commander Kevin Ford and Russian cosmonauts Oleg Novitskiy and Evgeni Tarrelkin, who are two months into a planned six-month mission.

Ford is due to turn over

command of the \$100 billion research complex, a project of 15 nations, in mid-March to Hadfield, who will become the first Canadian to lead a space expedition.

"This is a big event for me personally," Hadfield said in a preflight interview. "It takes a lot of work, a lot of focus. It's something that I can look back on as an accomplishment and a threshold of my life."

Command of the station, which has been continuously occupied since



The Soyuz TMA-07M spacecraft carrying the International Space Station (ISS) crew of US astronaut Thomas Marshburn, Russian cosmonaut Roman Romanenko and Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield blasts off from its launch pad at the Baikonur cosmodrome on 19 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

November 2000, typically rotates between an American and a Russian crewmember.

In 2009, Belgian astronaut Frank De Winne broke that cycle to become the first European Space Agency commander. Japan's Koichi Wakata is training to lead the Expedition 39 crew in March 2014.

All three of the station's new residents have made previous spaceflights. Hadfield, 53, is a veteran of two space shuttle missions. Marshburn, 52, has one pre-

vious shuttle mission and Roman Romanenko, 41, a second-generation cosmonaut, served as a flight engineer aboard the space station in 2009.

The station crew will have some time off to celebrate several winter holidays in orbit—Christmas, the New Year and then Orthodox Christmas—before tackling a list of about 150 science experiments and station maintenance, including two spacewalks.

Among the studies will be medical research into how the human cardiovascular system changes in microgravity. "When you live in an environment like that, the heart actually shrinks.

Your blood vessel response changes. It actually sets us up to cardiovascular problems," Hadfield said. "We have a sequence of experiments that's taking blood samples and monitoring our body while we're exercising and doing different things to try and understand what's going on with our cardiovascular system," he said.

Reuters

Google working on "X Phone", "X" tablet to take on rivals



A neon Google logo is seen as employees work at the new Google office in Toronto, on 13 Nov, 2012.

REUTERS

NEW YORK, 23 Dec—Google Inc is working with recently acquired Motorola on a handset codenamed "X-phone", aimed at grabbing market share from Apple Inc and Samsung Electronics Co Ltd, the Wall Street Journal said, citing people familiar with the matter.

Google acquired Motorola in May for \$12.5 billion to bolster its patent portfolio as its Android mobile operating system competes with rivals such as Apple and Samsung.

The Journal quoted the people saying that Motorola is working on two fronts: devices that will be sold by carrier partner Verizon Wireless, and on the X

phone.

Motorola plans to enhance the X Phone with its recent acquisition of Viewdle, an imaging and gesture-recognition software developer. The new handset is due out sometime next year, the business daily said, citing a person familiar with the plans.

Motorola is also expected to work on an "X" tablet after the phone. Google Chief Executive Larry Page is said to have promised a significant marketing budget for the unit, the newspaper said quoting the persons.

Google was not immediately reachable for comments outside regular US-business hours.—Reuters

EU charges Samsung with abusing vital telecoms patent



Samsung flags are set up at the main entrance to the Berlin fair ground before the IFA consumer electronics fair in Berlin, on 28 August, 2012.—REUTERS

BRUSSELS, 23 Dec—The European Commission charged Samsung Electronics on Friday with abusing its dominant position in seeking to bar rival Apple from using a patent deemed essential to mobile phone use. The Commission sent a "statement of objections" to the South Korean group, with its preliminary view that Samsung was not acting fairly.

"Intellectual property rights are an important cornerstone of the single market. However, such rights should not be misused when they are essential to implement industry standards, which bring huge benefits to businesses and consumers alike," Competition Commissioner Joaquin

Almunia said in statement.

Apple and Samsung, the world's top two smartphone makers, are locked in patent disputes in at least 10 countries as they vie to dominate the lucrative mobile market and win over customers with their latest gadgets.

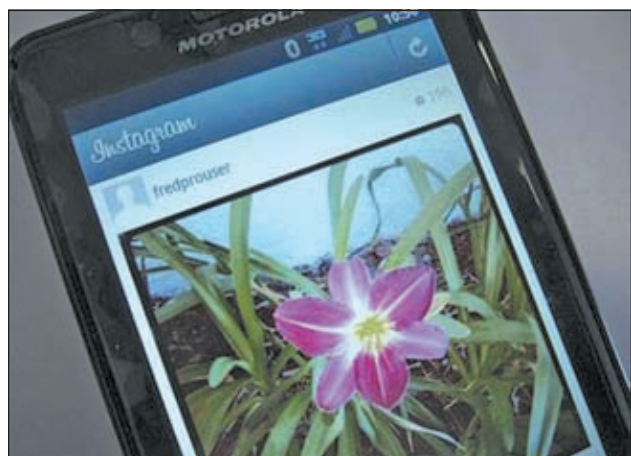
The filing of competition objections is the latest step in the Commission's investigation. After notifying Samsung in writing, the company will have a chance to reply and request a hearing before regulators.

If the Commission then concludes that the firm has violated the rules, it could impose a fine of up to 10 percent of the electronics firm's total annual turnover.

Reuters

Instagram retreats on some service terms after backlash

LOS ANGELES, 23 Dec—Instagram, the popular photo-sharing service, has retreated from some but not all of the controversial changes in its terms of service that prompted a fierce backlash from users earlier



A photo illustration shows a picture of a flower taken with the photo-sharing application Instagram on the screen of an Android mobile phone in Los Angeles on 9 April, 2012.—REUTERS

this week.

In a blog post on Thursday, Instagram founder and CEO Kevin Systrom apologized for a failure to "communicate our intentions clearly." The terms of service changes pertaining

to advertising have been reversed, Systrom said, and restored to what they had been before the changes announced on Monday.

Instagram, which allows people to add filters and effects to photos and share them easily on the Internet, was acquired by Facebook earlier this year for \$715 million.

Some top users of Instagram, including National Geographic magazine, said they would stop using the service after the new rules were announced on Monday. Language that had appeared to allow Instagram advertisers to display user photos without compensation have been removed from updated terms of service posted on Thursday.

The updated terms also do not appear to contain

a controversial provision which had stated that if a child under the age of 18 used the service, it implied his or her parent had tacitly agreed to Instagram's terms.

However, the new terms still contain a mandatory arbitration clause, which is not included in terms of service for other leading social media companies like Twitter, Google, YouTube or even Facebook itself. That immunizes Instagram from many forms of liability, according to legal experts.

Internet experts said Instagram had been very aggressive in asserting its rights to user information and inviting anyone who did not agree to delete their accounts within a few weeks.—Reuters

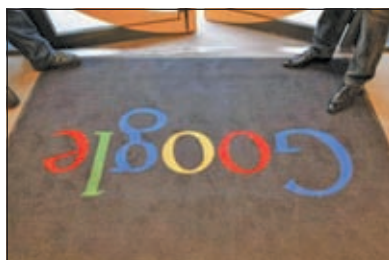
France extends deadline for publishers' talks with Google

PARIS, 23 Dec—The French government said it would extend to the end of January the deadline for talks between Google Inc and the French press to settle a dispute over the search engine's links to online news articles.

Press associations in France, and other European countries, want Google to

pay when it displays links to newspapers in Internet searches. In reply, Google has threatened to stop indexing articles from the French press.

Talks between the search engine and French publishers, which the government said are advancing, were expected to wrap up by the end of the year.



A Google carpet is seen at the entrance of the new headquarters of Google France before its official inauguration in Paris on 6 Dec, 2011.—REUTERS

If no deal were struck, France would Press ahead with a law that would force

Google to pay for the right to provide links to online news articles.—Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Mother loses UK legal fight to stop son's cancer radiotherapy

LONDON, 23 Dec—A mother in Britain, who was so desperate to stop her cancer-stricken son having to undergo conventional medical treatment that she went into hiding with him, lost a court battle on Friday to prevent him receiving radiotherapy.

The case of Sally Roberts, 37, a New Zealander living in Brighton, southern England, and the plight of her seven-year-old son has made headlines in Britain.

Roberts wants to try

alternative treatments first, including immunotherapy and photodynamic therapy for her son Neon. She has been told the boy needs treatment fast but fears the side-effects of conventional medicine. Doctors treating the boy had warned that without radiotherapy he could die within three months.

Judge David Bodey told the High Court in London the life-saving radiotherapy treatment could start against the mother's wishes, the *Press Association* reported.

"The mother has been through a terrible time. This sort of thing is every parent's nightmare," the judge said.

"But I am worried that her judgment has gone awry on the question of the seriousness of the threat which Neon faces." The story of the sick blue-eyed blonde boy came to public attention earlier this month when Roberts prompted a nationwide police hunt by going into hiding with Neon for four days to stop him from undergoing the treatment.

The mother's relentless battle in court also cast a light on the dilemmas parents can face when dealing with the illness of a loved one, considering the short-term and long-term risks of a treatment and handling conflicting medical information available at the click of a mouse. Roberts said in court she had researched on the Internet her son's condition—a fast-growing, high-grade brain tumor called medulloblastoma and sought advice from specialists around the world because she did not trust British experts.—*Reuters*



Sally Roberts, Mother of seven year old cancer sufferer Neon, arrives at The High Court in central London on 21 Dec, 2012.—*Reuters*

Obama tries to rescue fiscal talks for post-Christmas deal



US President Barack Obama speaks about the fiscal cliff at the White House in Washington on 21 Dec 2012.—*Reuters*

WASHINGTON, 23 Dec—The White House on Friday tried to rescue stalled talks on a fiscal crisis after a Republican plan imploded in Congress, but there was little headway as lawmakers and President Barack Obama abandoned Washington for Christmas.

In remarks before flying to Hawaii for a break, Obama suggested reaching a short-term deal on taxes and extending unemployment insurance to avoid the worst effects of the "fiscal cliff" on ordinary Americans at the start of the New Year.

"We've only got 10 days to do it. So I hope that every member of Congress is thinking about that. Nobody can get 100 percent of what they want," said Obama.

Obama said he wanted to sign legislation extending Bush-era tax cuts for 98 percent of Americans in the coming days. The Democrat appeared to be offering bickering lawmakers a way to fix the most pressing challenge tax cuts that expire soon while leaving thorny topics such as automatic spending cuts or extending the debt ceiling for later.

Obama called on lawmakers to use the holiday break to cool off frayed nerves, "drink some eggnog, have some Christmas cookies, sing some Christmas carols," and come back next week ready to make a deal. Negotiations were thrown into disarray on Thursday when House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner failed to convince his fellow Republicans to accept tax cuts for even the wealthiest of Americans as part of a possible agreement with Obama.

"How we get there, God only knows," Boehner told reporters on Friday when asked about a possible comprehensive fiscal cliff solution. If there is no agreement, taxes would go up on all Americans and hundreds of billions of dollars in automatic government spending cuts would kick in next month—actions that could plunge the US economy back into recession.

Obama spoke to Boehner on Friday and held a face-to-face White House meeting with the top Democrat in Congress, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid.—*Reuters*

Japan's Abe heaps pressure on BOJ to set 2 percent inflation target

TOKYO, 23 Dec—Japan's next premier, Shinzo Abe, renewed pressure on the central bank to adopt a 2 percent inflation target, saying that he will try to revise a law guaranteeing its independence if his demand is not met.

He also said he will pick someone who agrees with his views on the need for bolder monetary easing to succeed BOJ Governor Masaaki Shirakawa when his term expires in April next year.

"At this month's policy meeting, the BOJ said it would examine (setting an inflation target) at its next meeting" in January, Abe said on television on Sunday.

"If it doesn't, we'll revise the BOJ Law and set up a policy accord with the central bank to agree on an inflation target. We may also seek to have the BOJ held accountable for job growth."

The comments are the strongest warning to date on the possibility of revising the law guaranteeing the BOJ's independence from political interference. It is rare for a prime minister or a would-be premier to make explicit demands on what the BOJ should do at its policy-

setting meetings. Abe, who is set to become prime minister on Wednesday after his opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) won this month's lower house election, has put the BOJ at the centre of political debate, urging bolder monetary stimulus to beat deflation.

He wants the BOJ to share with the government a binding 2 percent inflation target, double the central bank's current goal, and ease policy "unlimitedly" to achieve it. There is no specific time frame. Under pressure, the central bank loosened policy on Thursday for the third time in four months by boosting asset purchases. It also said it would consider setting a higher inflation target at its next policy-setting meeting on 21-22 January. Some central bank policymakers, notably the conservative Shirakawa, have been reluctant to set a 2 percent inflation target in a country which has been mired in grinding deflation for more than a decade.

But they may have little choice but to meet Abe's demand given explicit threats to the BOJ's independence.

Abe's LDP and coalition



Japan's incoming Prime Minister and the leader of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Shinzo Abe and his wife Akie pay respects to a grave of his father and former Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe in Nagato, in this photo taken by Kyodo on 22 Dec 2012.—*Reuters*

partner hold a two-thirds majority in the powerful lower house that allows them to overrule bills turned down in the upper house including one to revise the BOJ Law. "Countries around the world are printing more money to boost their export competitiveness. Japan must do so too" to keep the yen from rising, Abe said. "It makes a big difference whether the yen is at 80 to the dollar, or at 90 to the dollar."

Abe's new government will have the power to nominate a new BOJ governor when Shirakawa's

term ends in April next year. The nomination, unlike other legislation, needs approval by both houses of parliament. That means Abe needs support from other parties to pass through the nomination in the upper house, where his coalition doesn't hold a majority. "I'd like to have someone who agrees with our view (on monetary policy)," Abe said on Shirakawa's successor. "There are parties that share my view" which should be willing to cooperate with the LDP in passing the nomination through the upper house, he said.—*Reuters*

FDA closer to approving biotech salmon, critics furious

WASHINGTON, 23 Dec—A controversial genetically engineered salmon has moved a step closer to the consumer's dining table after the US Food and Drug Administration said on Friday the fish didn't appear likely to pose a threat to the environment or to humans who eat it.

AquAdvantage salmon eggs would produce fish with the potential to grow to market size in half the time of conventional salmon. If it gets a final go-ahead, it would be the first food from a transgenic animal—one whose genome has been altered to be approved by the FDA.

The AquAdvantage Atlantic salmon egg was developed by AquaBounty Technology to speed up production to meet global seafood demand. In a draft environmental assessment, the FDA affirmed earlier findings that the biotech salmon was not likely to be harmful. It said it would take comments from the public on its report for 60 days before making a final decision on approval. "With respect to food safety,

FDA has concluded that food from AquAdvantage salmon is as safe as food from conventional Atlantic salmon, and that there is a reasonable certainty of no harm from consumption," the FDA assessment states.

AquaBounty officials said they were caught by surprise by the news that its product was a step closer to approval as years of controversy had followed the company's application for a go-ahead from the regulator.

They said they did not know the timing or details of the process the FDA will follow following the 60-day comment period.

"We are encouraged that the environmental assessment is being released and hope the government continues the science-based regulatory process," said AquaBounty Chief Executive Ronald Stotish. Critics say the new salmon is a "dangerous experiment" and have pressured the FDA to reject it. They say the FDA has relied on outdated science and substandard methods for assessing the new fish.

Reuters

Italy's president dissolves parliament, paves way for early vote

ROME, 23 Dec— Italy's President Giorgio Napolitano on Saturday dissolved parliament after a series of consultations with party leaders, which came following the resignation of Prime Minister Mario Monti.

"I have signed the decree of parliament dissolution, which was the obvious conclusion and already marked by facts," Napolitano told a Press conference after the round of meetings.

He recalled Monti's announcement of early resignation on 8 Dec after former premier Silvio Berlusconi's centre-right People of Freedom party

(PdL) withdrew support from the emergency cabinet.

In the lapse of time between Monti's step back and the vote, which was just set to be held on 24-25 Feb, the caretaker government is due to remain in place for acts of ordinary administration.

Napolitano wished that the upcoming electoral campaign will be held with "competitive but also constructive spirit" shared by all political forces.

"The phase of the Monti technocratic government is closed, we are going to the polls ... we are aware that Italy now deserves a second phase" made of "progressive

policies and reforms," the leader in the parliament lower chamber of the center-left Democratic Party (PD), Dario Franceschini, said after meeting Napolitano.

Franceschini thanked Monti, who handed in his formal resignation on Friday following the approval of the 2013 budget law, "for putting his international credibility to the service of the country."

The PD, which has a strong lead in the opinion polls, has promised to maintain the "agenda" of deficit reduction targets that the former European Commissioner has agreed with the EU while implementing more growth-

oriented policies to stimulate Italy's stagnant economy.

Over the past weeks, Monti has been under increasing pressure of business communities and European leaders to stand for a second mandate, but over the last hours most local observers have considered this probability as unlikely. The 69-year-old economist, who took the helm of the emergency unelected cabinet 13 months ago to save Italy from deepening crisis, has kept his intention a secret and is expected to speak about his future during a Press conference scheduled for Sunday.—Xinhua



A helicopter sprays water over a fire in a mattress factory, in the district of Vila Mariana, Ribeirao Preto, Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 22 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Brazil sees no problem in Venezuela's succession: FM

RIO DE JANEIRO, 23 Dec— The Brazilian government does not foresee any problems with Venezuela's upcoming succession which is complicated by President Hugo Chavez's poor health, Brazilian Foreign Minister Antonio Patriota said on Friday. Chavez, who was reelected for a third presidential term in October, is undergoing cancer treatment in Cuba and his failing health may hold him back from taking office as scheduled on 10th Jan.

The situation is unusual, calling for transparency and involvement of the Venezuelan people in the decision-making process, Patriota told reporters.

"There are some constitutional matters which are upto Venezuelans to solve in a consensual manner," he said. Chavez's allies intend to delay the inauguration while the opposition wants it to go as planned.

Under Venezuelan law, if a president-elect is unable to take office on the inauguration day, the president of the House of Representatives takes over and new elections must be held within a month.

Chavez has been battling cancer over the past two years. Venezuelan government officials said he is recovering and is stable and conscious after his fourth cancer-related operation in Cuba last week.—Xinhua

Egypt's constitution approved in vote, say rival camps



A policeman gestures as people queue outside a voting centre in the final stage of a referendum on Egypt's new constitution in Giza, south of Cairo, on 22 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

CAIRO, 23 Dec— A constitution drafted by a majority of Egyptians in a referendum, rival camps said on Sunday, after a vote the opposition said drove a wedge through the Arab world's most populous nation. The Muslim Brotherhood, which propelled President Mohamed Mursi to power in a June election, said 64

percent of voters backed the charter after two rounds of voting that ended with a final ballot on Saturday. It cited an unofficial tally.

An opposition official also told Reuters their unofficial count showed the result was a "yes" vote.

The referendum committee may not declare official results for the two rounds until Monday, after

hearing appeals. If the outcome is confirmed, a parliamentary election will follow in about two months.

Mursi's Islamist backers say the constitution is vital for the transition to democracy, nearly two years after the overthrow of autocrat Hosni Mubarak in an uprising. It will provide stability needed to help a fragile economy, they say.

"According to our calculations, the final result of the second round is 71 percent voting 'yes' and the overall result (of the two rounds) is 63.8 percent," a Brotherhood official, who was in an operations room monitoring the vote, told Reuters. His figures were confirmed by a statement issued shortly afterwards by the group and broadcast on its television channel.

The Brotherhood and its party, as well as members of the opposition, had representatives monitoring

polling stations and the vote count across the country.

The opposition said voting in both rounds was marred by abuses and had called for a re-run after the first stage. However, an official said the overall vote favoured the charter.

"They (Islamists) are ruling the country, running the vote and influencing the people, so what else could we expect," the senior official from the main opposition coalition, the National Salvation Front, told Reuters.—Reuters

No new vote in Venezuela if Chavez sworn in late

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez points at a map as he speaks during a Council of Ministers at Miraflores Palace in Caracas on 15 Nov, 2012. REUTERS



CARACAS, 23 Dec— Venezuela will not call fresh elections if Hugo Chavez's cancer prevents him from taking office by 10 January, the head of Congress said on Saturday, despite a constitutional mandate that the swearing-in take place on that date. Chavez is recovering in Cuba from a six-hour cancer operation that followed his October re-election. The socialist leader has not been heard from for nearly two weeks, raising doubts as to whether he will be fit to continue governing.

Opposition leaders may pounce on the issue of the swearing-in date to demand that authorities call fresh elections because of

Chavez's apparently critical state of health due to an undisclosed type of cancer in the pelvic region.

A constitutional dispute over succession could lead to a messy transition toward a post-Chavez era in the South American nation with the world's largest oil reserves.

"Since Chavez might not be here in on 10 January, (the opposition) hopes the National Assembly will call elections within 30 days. They're wrong. Dead wrong," said Diosdado Cabello, the National Assembly's president and one of Chavez's closest allies, during a ceremony to swear in a recently elected governor. "That's not going to happen because our president

is named Hugo Chavez, he was reelected and is in the hearts of all Venezuelans."

He suggested Chavez may need more time to recover from his surgery. Officials in recent weeks have recognized his condition was serious, and the garrulous leader's unusual silence has built up alarm even among supporters.

The constitution says "the elected candidate will assume the Presidency of the Republic on 10th January of the first year of their constitutional term, via swearing-in by the National Assembly." It says new elections are to be called if the National Assembly determines a "complete absence" of the president because of death, physical or mental impairment or abandoning the job. The opposition believes it would have a better shot against Chavez's anointed successor, Vice President Nicolas Maduro, than against the charismatic former soldier who for 14 years has been nearly invincible at the ballot box.—Reuters

Suicide bombers hit cellphone firms in north Nigeria

KANO, (Nigeria) 23 Dec—Two suicide car bombers attacked the offices of two mobile phone operators on Saturday in Nigeria's northern City of Kano, killing themselves but no civilians, police said.

India's Airtel and South Africa's MTN were the targets.

Islamist sect Boko Haram has previously blown up telephone masts and offices of phone companies, saying they help the security forces catch its members.

"The one who hit the Airtel office was shot by military men before the bomb exploded at the MTN office

the car rammed into the fence but no civilians were killed," Ibrahim Idris, the chief of police in Kano, told Reuters. Both bombs went off.

A military source said one security guard was injured and has been taken to hospital.

MTN and Airtel Nigeria's parent company

Bharti Airtel, India's top cellphone operator, gave no immediate comment.

The national emergency agency confirmed the bombings and said it was not aware of any civilian casualties. The security forces have played down the death toll in previous bombings.—Reuters



A view of a building damaged by a suicide bombing is seen in Nigeria's northern city of Kano on 22 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

WORLD

Italian marines held in India return home for Christmas

ROME, 23 Dec—Two Italian marines on anti-pirate duty charged in India with killing two fishermen in February arrived home on Saturday for a family Christmas after India gave them special leave.

“Finally we are breathing the air of home. We have to thank all the institutions which made all this possible,” said Massimiliano Latorre on arrival at Rome’s Ciampino Airport with his colleague, Salvatore Girone.

“Ten long months have

passed and we really didn’t expect to be coming back for Christmas.”

The two sailors, part of a military security team protecting the tanker *Enrica Lexie*, are accused of shooting the two fishermen they say they mistook for pirates off the southern Indian state of Kerala.

The two non-commissioned officers had been out of detention on bail but had not been permitted to leave India until the Kerala high court accepted a request

to allow them to return home for Christmas.

The Italian government has undertaken to ensure they return to India by 10 January.

The men were welcomed at the airport by Foreign Minister Giuliano Terzi and Defence Minister Giampaolo Di Paola. Prime Minister Mario Monti also called the two shortly after their arrival to reiterate the government’s determination to reach a final settlement of the case.

Reuters



Italian marines Salvatore Girone (2nd L from centre) and Massimiliano Latorre (centre L) alight from the plane with Italian Navy Chief of Staff Admiral Luigi Pinelli Mantelli (C) after landing at Ciampino Airport in Rome, on 22 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS



Yemeni soldiers guard a checkpoint in Sanaa, capital of Yemen, on 22 Dec, 2012. The Yemeni authority has enhanced security measures in Sanaa and ordered to search for three Westerners who were suspected of being kidnapped by Al-Qaeda gunmen in downtown Sanaa on Friday.

XINHUA

SANAA, 23 Dec—Suspected Al-Qaeda gunmen kidnapped three Westerners in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa on Friday, an interior

ministry official told *Xinhua*.

“Masked gunmen snatched a Finnish couple and their Austrian friend from the Tahrir Square in

central Sanaa earlier Friday evening,” the official told *Xinhua* on condition of anonymity.

“The gunmen intercepted the trio in front of the trading shops in Tahrir and crammed them into a car at gunpoint,” the official said, cited an initial security investigative report based on testimonies of several witnesses at the scene.

He said the intelligence report on the incident indicated that al-Qaeda wing is more likely to be behind the kidnapping. “The trio had been followed for several days by strange men who the

intelligence agency thought have links with Al-Qaeda,” he said.

The Westerners were studying Arabic language in a Yemeni school in the old city of Sanaa. The school’s manager told police that he lost contact with them since Friday morning.

The incident highlighted the fragile security situation in Yemen, despite reforms launched by Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to unify the army and security forces to end the militancy in the country. The kidnapping occurred two days after Hadi

announced major reforms in the military and security bodies in accordance to a UN-backed power transfer deal that eased former president Ali Abdullah Saleh out of power. In the military reforms, Hadi removed several of Saleh’s relatives from their posts in the army and security forces.

The impoverished Arab country has long been plagued by kidnapping of foreigners by powerful tribesmen and sometimes Al-Qaeda terrorists who seek ransoms or the release of their jailed fellows.

Xinhua

US condemns renewed violence in Kenya

WASHINGTON, 23 Dec—The US government on Saturday strongly condemned the renewed violence in Kenya’s Tana River region, which left at least 41 people dead.

In a written statement, the White House said that the new development represents “a disturbing escalation of the tragic violence witnessed by these communities in August and September.”

The US statement came after at least 41 people were reportedly killed in fresh inter-clan clashes between two rival ethnic groups on

Friday in the southeastern Tana River region of Kenya. Authorities in the African country said that a group of ethnic Pokomo, armed with spears and firearms, raided a village belonging to the Orma people.

The White House urged all relevant parties in the East African nation to “bring an end to this deadly cycle of conflict” and “hold to account the perpetrators of these heinous acts.”

“The United States urges the people of Kenya to assert their rights through peaceful means, as provided for in Kenya’s

constitution, so that all Kenyans may realize a secure, democratic, and prosperous future,” said the statement.

Kenya is grappling with sporadic conflicts in the Tana Delta area in the south, where clans often fight over water and pasture.

Tension and rivalry between the Pokomo and Orma communities have lasted for decades, and have led to the deaths of 120 people and over 5,000 displacements since August this year.

Xinhua



Rescuers work at the site of a blast in Peshawar, Pakistan, on 22 Dec, 2012. At least six people were killed and a dozen of others including a political leader were injured when a suicide bombing ripped through a political gathering in Pakistan’s northwest city of Peshawar on Saturday evening, local media reported.

XINHUA

Four peacekeepers killed, one injured in Sudan’s Darfur

KHARTOUM, 23 Dec—United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) announced on Saturday that four of its peacekeepers were killed and one injured in Sudan’s Darfur region.

“Four of the mission soldiers were killed on 20 Dec, and a fifth injured,” Aicha Elbasri, UNAMID

spokesperson, said in a Press release.

The available details indicated that a UNAMID soldier shot three of his colleagues dead and then killed himself, she said, noting that the incident took place at the mission base at Mukjar area in West Darfur State.

UNAMID took over

the peacekeeping mission in Darfur from the African Union Mission in Sudan on 31 Dec, 2007. The mission was planned to deploy 26,000 members of military and police to protect the civilians in the region, who have been suffering from a civil war since 2003.

Xinhua

Lebanon receives three more bodies of militants killed in Syria

BEIRUT, 23 Dec—Lebanon on Saturday received from the Syrian authorities three more bodies of militants killed in an ambush by Syrian government troops in Tall Kalakh last month, in the third and last round of transfer of corpses from Syria, *National News Agency*

(NNA) reported.

The bodies were transferred from Syria through the Arida border with northern Lebanon, the report said.

Last Sunday, the bodies of four fighters, including a Palestinian, were transferred to Lebanon.

Two weeks ago, the

Germany contribute to help Syrian refugees in Lebanon

BEIRUT, 23 Dec—Visiting German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Dirk Niebel said on Saturday that his country will provide 5.14 million US dollars to United Nations aid programmes to help Syrian refugee children, *National News Agency* (NNA) reported.

At a meeting with Lebanese Minister of Social Affairs Wael Abou Faour, Niebel said “The aid will be provided to the United Nations aid programme to help the Syrian refugees who are fleeing their war-torn country.”

The fund would be given to the UN Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA), the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).

German Ambassador to Lebanon, Birgitta Maria Siefker-Eberle, stressed the importance of “helping the Syrian refugees fleeing violence in their country,” hoping that they could return to their homeland to “rebuild a new Syria after the war.”

Xinhua

corpses of three Salafists were delivered to their relatives.

According to the spokesman of the victims’ families, the Syrian authorities only hand over the bodies of people who have been identified after DNA tests.

Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Monday, 24 December, 2012

The PSM goal

The Ministry of Information-MOI is on its way towards transforming the State-owned media into Public Service Media-PSM as per the democracy.

Normally, PSM reflects the diversity of human society and presents quality programmes, and has editorial independence, financial independence, qualified employees, and accountability.

To become PSM, the State-owned newspapers are changing their news presentation style, have formed their Governing Body, will run efficiency courses on news gathering, writing and editing, and will establish independent financial system.

Concerning the quality, they will present policy speeches of the leaders of the State and news on policy comprehensively together with expert analyses and public views, while news on normal activities will be edited for publication according to their value.

What's more they will change themselves from personal orientation to public interest orientation, issuing constructive criticism on the three pillars of the State power to win public trust as the genuine fourth estate, informing the public about the State policies in an attractive way, for example, through articles or interviews, and internationalizing their size and quality.

The PSM reform will be reinforced with the program of conducting staff efficiency courses in cooperation with international media organizations, assigning editors from international news agencies as on-job instructors in State-owned newspapers, seeking ways for in-house editors to attend on-job trainings in dailies abroad, introducing international level curriculum at the Education Ministry-run B.A Journalism Course in cooperation with UNESCO, conducting diploma courses and competency certificate courses for editors and reporters of the State-run dailies and private periodicals jointly by international media organizations and Myanmar Press Council.

In fact, the PSM goal is to regain public trust that can provide excellent competitive edge in the future media world and effective assistance for the State in serving the interest of the people.

Myanmar Ambassador presents Credentials to Maldivian President

NAY PYI TAW, 24 Dec—U Myo Lwin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Maldives, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Waheed, President of the Republic of Maldives, on 17 December 2012, in Male.—MNA

Union Minister Dr Pe Thet Khin speaking at the meeting with trainees of Central Midwifery Training Centre.

MNA



WFP clarifies Kachin work plan for next three years

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec—World Food Programme briefed Kachin State Government and Kachin State Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department on work plans to be implemented in 2013-2015 by World Food Programme (PRRO-2000299) at State Government Office in Myitkyina on 18 December morning. Deputy Director U Zaw Win Aung of the

department explained matters related to implementation of the task in cooperation with the department and World Food Programme, Mr Kai Alexander Roehm (Head of Programme, Unit, WFP Country Office) ongoing PRRO-2000299 Programmes to be carried out in 2013-2015 by WFP.

State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai raised questions for his knowledge

and Mr Kai Alexander Roehm made clarification.

The opening of Ayeyarwady Bank (Myitkyina Branch) was held at No 64 Bogyoke Aung San Street in Myoma Ward on 19 December morning. State Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Than Aung, State Finance and Revenue Minister U Nyunt Aung, Jade Land Company Chairman U Yup

The Union Minister urged them to cordially treat the patients.

Principal of the school Daw Khin Than Lei, Director-General Dr Than Zaw Myint of the Department of Medical Science and the Director-General Dr Min Than Nyunt of Health Department reported the minister on conditions of the school.

The Union Minister inspected Language lab, Midwifery Learning Resource Centre and Library of the school.—MNA

Zaw Khoung, Ayeyarwady Bank (Branch) Managing Directors U Than Zaw and U La Phaing Khun Hsa formally opened the new building and State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai pressed the button to launch the bank.

Ayeyarwady Bank has 30 branches including one in Myitkyina across the nation.

MNA

Bayintnaung Flyover: Yangon's answer...

(from page 1)
street. The reinforced concrete bridge with bored pile foundation will be 1427 feet and three inches long. It will have four motor lanes. Its motorway will be 97 feet and nine inches wide. Its clearance area from the ground will be 23 feet and 10 inches. It will withstand 75-ton load. The total length of its approach

roads will be 516 feet and two inches.

Q: The length of the second bridge?

A: The second bridge will be built in Thamaing railway station street. There will be two-lane motorway on the reinforced concrete bridge. The main structure will be 2424 feet and 10 inches long and the motorway will be 32 feet and ten inches wide. The bridge will withstand 60-ton load. Its clearance area from the ground will be 47 feet and four inches. The total length of its approach roads will be 393 feet and nine inches.

Q: May I know ongoing

construction work?

A: Ground works and bore piling are in progress. So far 30 per cent of the construction project has been completed.

Q: Is there any contribution of foreign experts and organizations?

A: Yes. The flyover is designed by Asian Engineering Consultant Co., Ltd of Thailand. First Myanmar Construction Co., Ltd of Myanmar is implementing the project in cooperation with YCDC and TPC Prestressed Concrete of Thailand.

Q: When did the construction work start? When will it be finished?

A: The construction works started on 5 June 2012 after stake-driving ceremony. It is set to

complete construction works in December 2014.

Q: Which benefit will we be enjoyed as it is the first-ever construction project of such facility in Myanmar?

A: Of course. Flyover construction is the very new to Myanmar. A workforce including engineers and workers totalling over 500 will gain experience in technology and so many others from the project. Upon completion, the flyover will help lessen traffic congestion significantly, thereby contributing towards better transport and swift flow of commodities from the southern part of Myanmar to brokerage firms in Bayintnaung.

Myanma Alinn: 16-12-2012

Trs: YM

Deputy Construction Minister oversees Bayintnaung Bridge-2 construction project

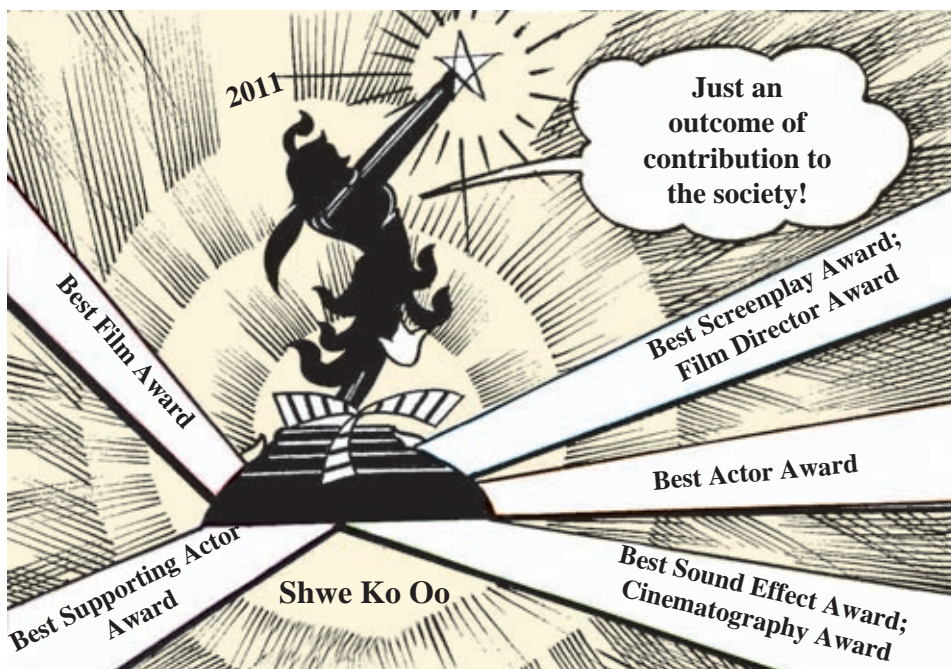
NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint visited construction project of Hline river crossing Bayintnaung Bridge-2 that will be built by Special Project Group

(5) in Mayangon Township, Yangon, yesterday.

In his instructions to officials concerned at the briefing hall, the deputy minister called for sooner implementation of the project, collaborative efforts

between the departments concerned, quality of construction materials, effective supervision for timely completion of construction works and worksite safety.

MNA



NATIONAL



Organized by Myanmar Medical Association (Women's Chapter), a ceremony to pay respects to 189 older surgeons of above 75 was held at the hall of MMA on Theinbyu Street in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 15 December.—MYANMA ALINN

Pyapon to get one more bridge soon

PYAPON, 23 Dec—Pyapon Bridge crossing Pyapon River lies on Pyapon-Dedaye Road. Thanks to the bridge, the local people have easy access to Yangon Region and other regions.

Chaungdwin Bridge passing Pyapon Chaungdwin Village is located on Pyapon-Kyaiklat Road facilitating the local people to be able

to travel to Pathein and other areas of Ayeyawady Region.

Hmawby Bridge is located on Pyapon-Ahmar Road. The bridge contributes to smooth flow of commodities and smooth transport of the local people.

Kyonku Bailey Bridge on Pyapon-Kyonku Village is now damaged. Therefore, Bridge Construction Special Group 5 of the Ministry of

Construction is building a concrete bridge as of 30 November.

The new bridge is 195 feet long. It will have 28 feet wide motor way flanked by three feet wide pedestrian way each. The construction period is designated 15 months roughly. Thus, the facility may be opened in March 2013.

Myanma Alinn

Chin State Chief Minister awards winners in football, tennis

HAKA, 23 Dec—The prize presentation of the Chin State Chief Minister's Cup Inter-Township Open Football and Tennis Tournaments was held at Vanmathumong Sports Ground in Haka on 13 December afternoon.

In the final match of the

football event, Haka beat Mindat 2-1.

Chief Minister U Hong Ngai and officials presented championship trophy and K 200,000 to Haka (A) team, trophy and K 100,000 to Falam in the tennis event.

Officials gave best player awards in respective

places to the winners in the football event.

The Chief Minister and Speaker of Chin State Hluttaw U Hauk Khim Kham awarded K 500,000 to champion Haka Township and K 400,000 to Mindat Township in the football event.—Myanma Alinn

Harvesting of monsoon paddy inspected on model plot

SINGAING, 23 Dec—Director-General U Myint Swe of Settlement and Land Records Department, Head of Mandalay Region Settlement and Land Records Department U Aye Ko and staff conducted survey of monsoon paddy production at the farmland of U Thaug Sein in Theinnigon field in Theinnigon Village-tract of Singaing Township,

Kyaukse District, on 16 December.

After the survey, 85.75 baskets of paddy per acre of Ayeya Min strain was put on record on the model plot.

They also inspected harvesting of monsoon paddy, correctness of statistics on farmlands, registration of farmlands in line with the farmland law and rules.—Myanma Alinn



SANITATION CARRIED OUT: Members of Auxiliary Fire Brigade led by Head of Pyay District Fire Services Department U Win Nyunt and Deputy Commanding Officer U Ohn Lwin of Township Auxiliary Fire Battalion carrying out sanitation and tasks for proper flow of drain in Hsandaw Ward in Pyay on 16 December.

MYANMA ALINN



Scene in Bagan

65th Anniversary Independence Day 2013

CASH DONATED: Sayagyi U Po Kyon-Sayamagyi Daw Khin Po of Shwe Pyi Tan Boarding of Ward 7 in Shwebo donated one Air 8Ap, one Air Mattress and K 100,000 to Shwebo District Hospital.

MYANMA ALINN



Gold entrepreneurs leave for India

YANGON, 23 Dec—At the invitation of Indian Gems, Diamond and Jewellery Trading Entrepreneurs Association, a 13-member delegation of Mandalay Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association left here by air on 16 December afternoon.

Executive of the

association leader of the delegation U Aung Hsan Win (Aung Thamadi Gold Ship) said, "We will visit Mumbai, Kolkata and Surat from 16 to 22 December. We will observe stock exchange and gold trading in Mumbai, gold refinery, gold wear designs and diamond trading in Mumbai and Kolkata.

Moreover, we have a plan to visit Diamond and Gold Training School of the State in Surat."

During the visits, the delegation members will have the opportunity to observe international gold market, international gold refinery technology and gold wear designs.—Myanma Alinn

Hsipaw celebrates Shan New Year

HSHIPAW, 23 Dec—The Shan New Year and new harvesting ceremony was held at Aungmingala Bodaw Monastery in Hsipaw on 14 December morning.

Local authorities and Chairman of Shan Literature and Culture Committee U Sai Ngoh Kwam formally opened the ceremony.

Shan national U Sai San Tint made a speech. The local authorities explained matters related to national races

provisions on Constitution, emergence of Shan New Year festival and new harvesting ceremony.

After that, they offered new harvested paddy to members of the Sangha and older persons and served meals to them.

Next, those present participated in the traditional sports of Shan nationals, extempore talks, martial arts and traditional dances.

Myanma Alinn





Audiences enjoy the traditional Chinese folk music during an open day at the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing, capital of China, on 22 Dec, 2012. The NCPA held an open day to mark its 5th anniversary on Saturday.

XINHUA

US judge approves BP's settlement over 2010 oil spill

HOUSTON, 23 Dec—A US judge on Friday granted final approval to British oil giant BP's multibillion-dollar settlement with businesses and individuals affected by the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill.

The ruling only addressed the settlement of economic and property damage claims, which covers people and businesses in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and some coastal counties in eastern Texas and western Florida.

Judge Carl Barbier, who initially approved the deal in May, said in his ruling that the settlement for economic and property damages was "fair, reasonable and adequate."

BP has estimated that it would pay 7.8 billion US dollars to resolve more than 100,000 claims by businesses and individuals for economic, property and health costs. But the settlement has no cap.

The judge has not ruled on the separate medical benefits settlement for cleanup workers and others who claim that the exposure to oil or dispersants made them sick.—Xinhua

Working-class neighbourhood in Madrid wins "El Gordo" lottery

MADRID, 23 Dec—Unemployed Spaniards in a highly indebted commuter town in the outskirts of Madrid celebrated with joy after sharing the top prize in "El Gordo", the world's biggest lottery.

The 200-year-old Christmas draw doled out more than 2.5 billion euros (\$3.3 billion) in prizes, with a top individual prize of 4 million euros. The smallest ticket, known as a "decimo" wins a tenth of the prize and costs 20 euros.

Millions of Spaniards living through tough economic times had hoped to pocket part of "The Fat One" although spending in the Christmas lottery dipped heavily this year.

Winning in 2012 was particularly sweet, not just

because Spain is suffering its second recession in three years and one in four of the workforce is jobless, but also because 2012 is the last year winners will pay no tax on their takings.

Spain's centre-right government, which has introduced austerity measures this year to shrink its public deficit, ruled that from next year those who win over 2,500 euros will pay 20 percent to the state.

Javier Hernando, a middle-aged owner of a bar in Alcala de Henares, 35 km (20 miles) northeast of Madrid, said the prize would allow him to look at life differently, as European authorities press countries on the periphery of the euro zone to raise the age of retirement.

Luis, a 28-year-old

unemployed electrician, said he would spend the money on buying a flat.

The lottery tickets are sold in thousands of official kiosks across Spain and local bars and shops often sell decimos. This year over 27 million individual prizes will be awarded.

The lottery, which dates back to 1812, is an important Christmas tradition in Spain, with many families, offices and bar regulars clubbing together to buy a full ticket for 200 euros.

Sales dipped 8 percent this year to 2.47 billion euros compared to a 0.5 percent drop in 2011.

"It is no wonder that sales have gone down taking into account the economic situation we are going through. We are in

Christmas season sales in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 23 Dec—On the Orchard Road—the bustling shopping destination in Singapore and also home to the top Christmas lights display of the world, people who have been attracted by beautiful decoration and big sales are most willingly to spend much on their desirable goods during the more than one month Christmas Season Sales that kicked off on 17 Nov.

The economic growth is expected to be reduced in 2012 with the Singapore government several retail statistics remain in the doldrums, but in stark contrast, the consumer

market is very hot during the season. Especially, foreign tourists are becoming the main force of the "tropical Christmas" consumption in Singapore.

In an exclusive interview with Xinhua, Steven Goh, executive director of Orchard Road Business Association, said, "Christmas season is the most significant season of the whole year. And based on our survey, 30 percent of the sales are done within the last two months of the year. And so you can see that we're focusing a lot of our marketing efforts towards the last two months of the Christmas season in Singapore, especially Orchard Road."

Goh said, "We decorate the Orchard Road with all the street lighting, and it's world's famous, as well as all the shopping malls and hotels. They also add together the festivity and to drum up the shopping mood. And this is very different from the rest of the year."

Retailers alongside the Orchard Road are very similar to that of the Fifth Avenue in New York and the Oxford Street in London. But as Goh says that every year people come to visit the Orchard Road, they have different experiences, especially the different designs at shopping malls and along the roadside.

Xinhua



Esther (R), employee of one of the lottery shops that sold the winning number of 'El Gordo', celebrates with women at her lottery shop in Alcala de Henares, near Madrid on 22 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

crisis, people are out of work and have no income," said a spokeswoman for the National Lottery.

Those who did not win big in El Gordo can look forward to the El Nino lottery on 6 January, or

Epiphany, when Spaniards traditionally give presents to children. That lottery will award 840 million euros, though winners will have to pay tax. (\$1 = 0.7555 euros)

Reuters

Gulf Arab countries forecast high returns for renewable energy

DUBAI, 23 Dec—The Abu Dhabi-based International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) said on Saturday the six GCC countries' returns through renewable energy integration could hit 200 billion US dollars by 2030.

IRENA said in a new report that the six countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), which are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Oman, continued to establish ambitious clean energy projects which are supported by innovative research and development as well as investment.

IRENA added that there are presently 30 such projects which are in planning stage, under construction or have been completed in the region. The GCC states, home of some 60 percent of the

world's known oil reserves, aim to reduce their reliance on oil and gas and to diversify their sources of energy for their own needs in order not to keep their oil and gas wealth for the lucrative energy export business.

IRENA cited Qatar as an example, which is currently working on a solar energy project which will account for 16 percent of the country's total electrical output by 2018, said IRENA. In a joint-venture with US oil giant Chevron, Qatar recently installed the first test phase of a solar park in the gas- and sun-rich Gulf state's desert.

"Saudi Arabia is seeking investors for a 109 billion dollars solar energy program which will provide a third of electricity needs by 2032," the UN-related agency added.—Xinhua



An invigilator checks identity certificate of a candidate before National College English Test at Jiangsu University in Zhenjiang, east China's Jiangsu Province, on 22 Dec, 2012. About 9.38 million people sit Saturday's examination, the biannual national English-as-a-Foreign-Language test in China.

REUTERS

China cancels one-year control on thermal coal prices

BEIJING, 23 Dec—China's price regulator will end its one-year control on thermal coal prices beginning 1 Jan, 2013. The decision was made because prices are stable based on balanced demand and supply. Prices of thermal coal will be decided by suppliers and consumers, according to a statement issued by the

National Development and Reform Commission.

"The move to cancel limits on thermal coal prices will not lead to sharp price hikes as demand is sluggish amid the global economic slowdown," said Zhang Yongjun, an analyst with China Center for International Economic Exchanges (CCIEE).

The NDRC on Nov 30 last year decided to control prices of thermal coal from 1 Jan, 2012 to put a stop to soaring coal prices.

It allowed the contract price of major thermal coal to float by no more than 5 percent this year from last year. The market price of 5,500-kilocalorie coal should be capped within 800 yuan

(126.98 US dollars) per metric ton at major shipping ports in north China. The country's power consumption, a key barometer of economic activities, rose 7.6 percent year on year to 413.9 billion kilowatt-hours (kwh) last month, higher than October's 6.1-percent rise, according to the National Energy Administration.—Xinhua

REGIONAL

Senior minister among nine killed in blast in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 23 Dec—At least nine people including senior provincial minister Bashir Ahmad Bilour were killed and over 18 others were injured in a suicide blast that hit a political gathering in Pakistan's northwest city of Peshawar on Saturday evening, senior government official said.

The 70-year-old minister was a leader of Awami National Party (ANP), the ruling party of the country's northwestern Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Mian Iftikhar Hussain, information minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said

that Bilour got seriously wounded when a suicide bomber targeted him after the conclusion of an ANP's political gathering in Dhaki Nalabandi area of Peshawar.

Bilour was shifted to the Lady Reading Hospital along with other injured people where he received three surgeries in one hour. Doctors said that Bilour could not survive as he received serious bomb injuries near his heart.

The other killed people included Bilour's personal secretary and a senior police officer who was guarding political leaders in the

gathering.

Following the blast, Taleban claimed responsibility for the attack.

Shafqat Mahmood, chief of bomb disposal squad of Peshawar, said that an estimated 4 to 5 kg of explosives were used in the attack.

Several nearby buildings and vehicles were destroyed in the blast.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf condemned the blast and expressed their grief over the death of the provincial minister.

Leaders of all political parties including Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz chief Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf's chief Imran Khan condemned the attack and expressed their condolence to the grieved families. ANP chief Haji Adeel expressed grief over the death of Bilour and said that the deceased was a man of valor and his death would be an irreparable loss for his party.

Xinhua



An injured man is wheeled to a hospital in northwest Pakistan's Peshawar on 22 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Rebel attacks foiled with arrest of 3 leftists in N Philippines

MANILA, 23 Dec—Philippine government troops arrested three suspected members of leftist New People's Army (NPA) who were allegedly on a "final reconnaissance" to stage attacks in three municipalities in northern Philippine Province of Quezon, military said on Saturday.

Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command Spokesman Colonel Generoso Bolina identified the suspects as Dennis Quidor, alias Anghel/Jabar who was the team leader, Rodrigo Guevarra, alias Joshua, and Eliseo Lopez.

The rebels, who were riding two hired motorcycles, were apprehended at around 11:00 pm on Friday after they evaded a joint police

and military checkpoint in San Francisco town.

"The three (rebels) were tasked to conduct final reconnaissance before staging attacks in the municipalities of Mulanay, San Francisco and San Narciso," Bolina said.

Confiscated from the suspects were three bags containing improvised explosive device, a caliber 22 pistol, a hand grenade, two M16 long magazines, a caliber 45 magazine, pieces of ammunition, seven pieces of blasting caps, four cellular phones, and subversive documents, he said.

Aside from the three insurgents, the drivers of the motorcycle were also held for questioning, the official added.

Xinhua

Abe vows to improve Sino-Japanese ties

OSAKA, 23 Dec — Shinzo Abe, leader of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), said in the western Japanese prefecture of Yamaguchi on Saturday that he would make efforts to improve Japan-China ties that have been under severe strain, local Press reported.

"Japan-China relations are one of the most important bilateral ties," Abe told Japanese reporters. Abe was in Yamaguchi to visit the cemetery of his father—late Japanese foreign minister Shintaro Abe.

"We want to make efforts to return to the starting point

of developing a mutually reciprocal relationship" with China, he added.

Abe is considering sending LDP Vice President Masahiko Komura, head of the Japanese association of lawmakers for friendship with China, to China as a special envoy, the report

Overseas Chinese and local residents see off the three visiting Chinese naval ships in Sydney, Australia, on 22 Dec, 2012. China's 12th navy fleet ended a five-day visit to Australia on Saturday.

XINHUA



Sri Lankan police arrest 100 Chinese nationals

COLOMBO, 23 Dec—Police in Sri Lanka arrested 100 Chinese nationals who were involved in telephone fraud in China following a complaint lodged by the Chinese police, a police spokesman said on Saturday.

Police Spokesman Priyashantha Jayakody told Xinhua that the arrests were made with the assistance of officials from the Chinese police in the country. "The Chinese police sought our help to arrest these people. We got a court order on Friday and arrested them after we identified where they were staying. They were arrested for crimes committed in China

and not in Sri Lanka," the police spokesman said.

He added that the Chinese nationals were arrested in the capital and its immediate suburbs after obtaining the court order.

In May this year, the police arrested 17 Chinese nationals in Rajagiriya, a suburb of Colombo, over similar charges and they were then deported back to China.

Those arrested were connected to a network of people from different countries who had been involved in telephone fraud.

The 17 arrested were part of over 400 Chinese arrested from several countries over a

transnational telephone fraud.

Telephone fraud has become a major social security problem in the Chinese mainland. Suspects often use overseas servers to make phone calls from overseas, making it more difficult for mainland police to trace them.

Chinese police said that the swindlers frequently change their crime methods and shift their fraud dens to avoid the police, and the fraud shelters have been spreading to countries in South Asia and Oceania rather than traditional destinations such as Chinese mainland, China's Taipei, Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia.—Xinhua

Residents carry the newly picked navel oranges in Shui-tianba Township of Zigui County, central China's Hubei Province, on 22 Dec, 2012. Navel orange in Zigui entered into the harvest time recently. The total output of navel oranges in Zigui County is estimated to reach 245,000 metric tons this year.—XINHUA



Traffic accident kills seven in Indonesia's West Java

JAKARTA, 23 Dec—Seven passengers of a tour bus were killed in a crash with a truck in Cipularang toll road, West Java Indonesia on early Saturday.

The Tri Star bus carrying people from Central Java's City of Puwokerto to spend holidays in the capital city of Jakarta. It hit the back of the truck with high speed,

police overseeing the crash location said.

"The bus driver said that he was sleepy at that time," head of traffic unit at Cimahi police station, Asep, said, adding that the bus rammed the truck at a speed of 70 kilometre per hour.

"Due to the crash, the front left part of the bus was totally torn apart," he added.

said, quoting people familiar with the matter.

LDP won a landslide victory in Japan's lower house election last week, enabling Abe to become Japan's next prime minister. Abe is expected to take post of prime minister on 26 December.—Xinhua

He said that the bus driver is now detained in police station for further investigation. The driver could face four years of imprisonment if he is proved of committing negligence that costs others' lives, the detik.com reported.

Most of the death victims were those sitting in that part, he said. Among the total of 36 people onboard the bus, including the driver and one crew, seven were instantly killed on the scene, two others badly injured.

All of the passengers were rushed to MH Thamrin and Efarina Etaham hospitals located near the toll road.

Xinhua

India to sign defence pacts with Russia

NEW DELHI, 23 Dec—India is likely to sign defence pacts with Russia worth 25,000 crores Indian rupees (5 billion US dollars) during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit in this country next week, local media reported on Saturday. The defence pacts will include two mega deals for the supply of 42 more Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jets and 59 additional Mi-17 V5 armed choppers, The Times of India newspaper reported.

The 42 new Sukhois, to be produced under license by state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics, will add to the 230 Sukhois earlier contracted from Russia, the report said, adding that the price tag of the total consignment stands at 12 billion US dollars.

The medium-lift Mi-17 V5 helicopters will add to the 80 such choppers already being inducted under a 1.34 billion US dollars deal inked in 2008 with Russia, the newspaper said. Russian President Vladimir Putin is to arrive in India on Monday.

India is Russia's number one arms importer and Russian defence equipment accounts for nearly 70 percent of Indian arms supplies.—Xinhua

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

NOTICE

This is inform the public that, we are looking for descendant (s) of Oh Khuan Sim Neoh who have been immigrated to Rangoon, Burmah (now known as Yangon, Myanmar) in year 1936. She used to have a sister by the name of Oh Khuan Ee in Penang, Malaysia.

If anyone has information regarding the descendant of Oh Khuan Sim Neoh, please contact M/s Shafiq Abdullah And Co., Advocates & Solicitors, No.87 C-2-19, 2nd Floor, University Height Shoplot, Jalan Sungai Dua, 11700 Gelugor, Penang, West Malaysia. Tel: 04-656 3312, Fax: 04-656 3296, Email: shafiqabdullah.co@gmail.com

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 25th December (Tuesday) Christmas day 2012, being public holiday Under the Negotiable Instruments Act. Central Bank of Myanmar

Drive Safely



Students get on a school bus in Gaolan county, Lanzhou city of northwest China's Gansu Province, on 21 Dec, 2012. According to local educational authorities, a total of 3,117 lines of school buses were put to use, providing service for more than 300,000 boarders of compulsory students. —XINHUA

Nigeria distributes 48 mln treated mosquito nets in 2012

LAGOS, 23 Dec—Up to 48 million Long Lasting Insecticide Nets (LLIN) have been distributed in 34 states this year in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country. Programme Assistant for the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) Festus Okoh released the figure on Friday in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial hub. The distribution is part of the targeted 64 million nets. "We will

start the distribution of the nets in the remaining states by January, 2013," Okoh said.

"Hopefully, by March, we would have finished the distribution of 64 million nets which is our target for 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT)," he said.

The official quoted the World Health Organization (WHO) as saying that the use of Insecticide Treated Net

(ITN) was one of the most cost-effective interventions against malaria. Okoh said 2010 Nigeria Malaria Indicator Survey Report showed that 42 percent of households in Nigeria owned at least one treated nets.

"In terms of usage, about 29 percent of children under five and 34 percent of pregnant women slept under LLIN in the night before the survey," he added.—Xinhua

Suspicious envelope mailed to elementary school in Texas

HOUSTON, 23 Dec—A suspicious envelope with a white powdery substance was mailed to an elementary school in the US city of Houston on Friday, a local TV station reported. The envelope was delivered to Franklin Elementary School in Houston, Texas, and arrived at the school at noon, according

to local TV channel KPRC.

Houston Fire Department officials who went to the scene did not find anything alarming about the envelope after initial testing, the report said.

However, the report said, the area where the envelope was received was quarantined until the all-clear was given.

A letter was sent by the

school's principal to parents to alert them of the incident.

"A letter containing a white powdery substance arrived on campus through the US mail. Testing on the envelope and the powdery substance revealed that the substance *did not* pose a threat to our students or staff," the letter reads.—Xinhua

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**

Netherlands to flood Hedwige Polder in 2019

THE HAGUE, 23 Dec—The Dutch government is planning to flood a patch of reclaimed land in Zeeland, the Hedwige Polder, in 2019, state secretary of Agriculture Sharon Dijksma said here on Friday.

The plan was part of a deal with the Flemish government in northern Belgium to compensate nature for planned work to deepen a river estuary route to the Belgian port of Antwerp.

Huge local resistance in Zeeland, however, has led the Dutch government to attempt to back out of deal, drawing anger from Belgium. The new Dutch government led by Rutte agreed to put the Hedwige Polder under water earlier this year.—Xinhua



Photo taken on 22 Dec, 2012 shows some of the 500 Santa Claus sand sculptures created by students of sand artist Sudarshan Pattnaik's sand art school for Christmas celebrations on the beach of Puri in eastern Indian state Orissa's Bhubaneswar.—XINHUA

Russia has not scrapped plan to order two more Mistral warships from France

MOSCOW, 23 Dec—Russia on Friday reconfirmed its intention to order two more Mistral-class warships from France.

The Defence Ministry denied a report of the *Vedomosti daily* that it has decided not to order a third and a fourth warship from France due to high costs of construction and maintenance.

Russia signed a contract with France in June 2011 to buy two Mistral-class warships from the latter. The deal raised eyebrows in the West because of the advanced nature of the vessels.

The contract for two more

vessels has not been signed yet, United Shipbuilding Corporation's spokesman Alexei Kravchenko has said.

According to the 1.2 billion-euro (about 1.5-billion-US dollar) deal in June 2011, the two ships would be completed in 2014 and 2015 respectively, which would then be put into service in the Russian Pacific Fleet.

The 21,300-ton highly automated Mistral-class warship is capable of transporting and deploying 16 helicopters, four landing barges, up to 70 armored vehicles, including 13 battle tanks, and around 450 troops.

Xinhua



People gather to the Western Wall of Jerusalem's Old City after a rain in early morning of 21 Dec, 2012. —XINHUA

Kenyan leader pardons 6,700 prisoners to ease congestion

NAIROBI, 23 Dec—Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki on Friday pardoned a total of 6,700 inmates to ease congestion in penal institutions across the East African nation.

In a statement issued in Nairobi, Kibaki said the inmates to be released are those that have been convicted of petty or minor offenses who are of good conduct and convicted to serve sentences not exceeding six months.

He said the prisoners should be first offenders who are of good conduct with

a balance sentence of nine months and should also be ordinary prisoners who are of good conduct and with a balance sentence of nine months.

"In this regard, those pardoned are 2,850 prisoners of good conduct convicted of petty or minor offenses serving a sentence not exceeding six months and 2,586 first offenders who are of good conduct with a balance sentence of nine months or less," the statement said. Others are 1,227 ordinary prisoners of good conduct

with a balance sentence of nine months or less and 37 prisoners aged 65 years and above who are confirmed to be terminally ill.

The release order was signed by President Kibaki in exercise of the powers conferred on him by Section 27 of the old Constitution read together with Article 133 of the new Constitution and the provisions relating to suspension of provisions of the new Constitution under the Sixth Schedule, clause 2 (1) (c).

Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

“Les Miserables” movie relies on close-ups for emotional punch

NEW YORK, 23 Dec— For British director Tom Hooper, the key to turning “Les Miserables” from the wildly popular stage musical to a cinematic experience both sweeping and intimate, was all in the close-up.

The stage musical has left audiences around the world wiping away tears with its themes of justice, redemption and romantic and familial love.

So bringing it to life on screen for fans and filmgoers was “hugely daunting,” Hooper says.

Still, the Oscar-winning director of “The King’s Speech,” was ambitious, wanting to offer even more

big screen take on the tale of French revolutionaries rising up against powerful forces.

Movie stars Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe and Anne Hathaway were all put through an intense audition and rehearsal process, to make sure they could sing take after take, live, with cameras positioned right in their face. It also features

a large ensemble including Amanda Seyfried and Eddie Redmayne, as well as Sacha Baron Cohen and Helena Bonham Carter who lead the comic relief song, “Master of the House.”

“I thought



Director Tom Hooper smiles as he attends the 64th annual Directors Guild of America Awards in Los Angeles on 28 Jan, 2012.—REUTERS

of the “intense emotional experience” that has kept fans returning to various stage productions since “Les Miserables” made its English language debut 27 years ago.

“I felt very aware of the fact that so many millions of people hold this close to their hearts and would probably sit in the cinemas in complete fear,” Hooper told reporters about his

the great weapon in my arsenal was the close up, because the one thing on stage that you can’t enjoy is the detail of what is going on in people’s faces as they are singing,” Hooper said. “I felt (that) having to do a meditation on the human face was by far the best way to bring out the emotion of the songs.”

Reuters

NBC television network will air director Frank Capra’s classic movie “It’s A Wonderful Life” starring Jimmy Stewart (C), shown with the film’s cast in an undated publicity photo, on 25 Dec, 2010.

REUTERS



Actor Hugh Grant wins large phone-hacking damages payout

LONDON, 23 Dec— British actor Hugh Grant has accepted a “substantial sum” after settling his phone-hacking damages action against the publishers of the now defunct *News of the World*, his lawyer said on Friday.

The actor, a strident critic of Britain’s tabloid newspaper culture, will donate the money to ‘Hacked Off’, a pressure group that helped bring about a public

inquiry into Press practices. “Hugh Grant has today settled his claims for damages and other legal remedies arising out of the unlawful activities of *News of the World* journalists and others over a number of years,” the actor’s lawyer said in a statement.

Grant, who gave evidence to the Leveson inquiry into British Press conduct in November

2011, was one of several high-profile figures who launched legal action against the British arm of Rupert

Murdoch’s News Corp.

“Settled hacking suit with NI (News International). 100 % of money plus more goes to

Actor Hugh Grant, a high profile campaigner on Press intrusion, arrives to attend the release of Lord Justice Brian Leveson report on media practices in central London on 29 Nov, 2012. REUTERS



#HackedOff coffers. Just in time for Christmas, Rupert,” Grant tweeted on Friday.

Reuters

South Korean actress Jeon Ji-hyun (C, back) takes a group photo with hosts during a TV programme to promote her movie “The Thieves” in Taipei, southeast China’s Taiwan, on 20 Dec, 2012. The movie will be released in Taipei on 21 Dec. XINHUA



“It’s a Wonderful Life” is top Christmas film with critics

LOS ANGELES, 23 Dec— When it comes to Christmas films, “It’s a Wonderful Life” can still melt critics’ hearts nearly 70 years after it was released, according to a survey of the best-reviewed Christmas films.

The survey, to be released on Friday by review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes, found that the 1946 redemption story starring Jimmy Stewart edged out the 1942 Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire musical “Holiday Inn” and Tim Burton’s 1993 stop-motion fantasy “The Nightmare Before Christmas.”

World War Two drama “Stalag 17,” released in 1953, and 1947’s “Miracle on 34th Street” round out the top five.

“It’s a Wonderful

Life” vaulted to the top spot from No 5 in 2009, when the list was last compiled, bumping “The Nightmare Before Christmas” from its best-reviewed status.

Films that use the holiday as a backdrop for the plot such as 1988’s “Die Hard,” which was No 6 on the list, and 1983’s “Trading Places” at No 9, were also eligible, the website said.

Rotten Tomatoes, which analyzes film reviews and assigns a score based on total critical reception, applied that same formula to Christmas films for the list, Matt Atchity, the website’s editor in chief, told Reuters.

“You look at the list and it’s all the classics ... the cream floats to the top,” Atchity said, adding that the rankings were weighted to reflect

the amount of reviews a film received, which could artificially boost or decline a score.

Films from the 1960s and 1970s were notably absent from the list. Atchity said studios were more focused at that time on work by big-name directors than on seasonal films.

Here are the 25 best-reviewed Christmas films of all time, according to website Rotten Tomatoes:

- * “It’s a Wonderful Life” (1946)
- * “Holiday Inn” (1942)
- * “The Nightmare Before Christmas” (1993)
- * “Stalag 17” (1953)
- * “Miracle on 34th Street” (1947)
- * “Die Hard” (1988)
- * “Arthur Christmas” (2011)
- * “A Christmas Story” (1983)
- * “Trading Places”

- (1983)
- * “Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale” (2010)
- * “Lethal Weapon” (1987)
- * “A Midnight Clear” (1992)
- * “A Christmas Tale” (2008)
- * “While You Were Sleeping” (1995)
- * “Scrooge (A Christmas Carol)” (1951)
- * “Elf” (2003)
- * “Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang” (2005)
- * “Gremlins” (1984)
- * “The Santa Clause” (1994)
- * “The Bishop’s Wife” (1947)
- * “Bad Santa” (2003)
- * “8 Women” (2002)
- * “Batman Returns” (1992)
- * “White Christmas” (1954)
- * “The Ref” (1994)

Reuters

Europe should recall a former Ryder Cup captain - Clarke

LONDON, 23 Dec—Europe may need to recall a former captain to compete with the United States in the 2014 Ryder Cup after the Americans “put down a

where we don't ask anybody to do it again, but we might have to look at that.”

Europe are expected to name their captain early in the New Year when the

There are few more iconic figures in golf, he's adored in Scotland and it sends out a statement that they are very serious about winning the trophy back.”

statement” by calling on Tom Watson, says 2011 British Open winner Darren Clarke.

A winner of eight majors, Watson's presence as captain for the match at Gleneagles shows how determined the US are to reclaim the trophy and Clarke said Europe should respond with a big-name appointment, while distancing himself from the role.

Europe never ask a former captain to return but Clarke says that stance

Darren Clarke of Northern Ireland watches his tee shot on the first hole during the first round of the British Open golf championship at Royal Lytham & St Annes, northern England on 19 July, 2012.—REUTERS

should change, offering the possibility of a return to the role for Colin Montgomerie who steered Europe to victory at Celtic Manor in 2010.

“We seriously need the right man for the job,” Clarke told the BBC. “We do have an (unwritten) rule

Barca coach Vilanova out of hospital after surgery

MADRID, 23 Dec—Barcelona coach Tito Vilanova was released from hospital on Saturday, two days after undergoing surgery on his saliva glands, the La Liga club said.

“Given his post-operation development, Tito Vilanova has been released from hospital this Saturday afternoon,” Barca said in a brief statement on their website (www.fcbarcelona.com).

“The Barca coach had surgery on Thursday according to plan,” the statement added.

Barca announced on Wednesday that Villanova needed a second round of surgery following an operation to remove a tumour from his saliva glands in

tournament committee meet in Abu Dhabi.

“I think it could well affect who is appointed,” said Clarke. “A lot of people, myself included, were surprised when Tom Watson was appointed.

“It's a big statement and brilliant for the event.

cedure would be followed by chemotherapy and radiotherapy over the next six weeks and assistant coach Jordi Roura would step in until Vilanova was well enough to return, the club said.

The 44-year-old was sidelined for around three weeks after the surgery last year before returning to his job as assistant to Pep Guardiola and then taking over from his close friend at the end of last season.

Under his leadership, Barca have made a record-breaking start to their La Liga campaign and top the standings with a six-point lead over second-placed Atletico Madrid ahead of their game at Real Valladolid on Saturday.

Reuters

Barcelona's coach Tito Vilanova speaks during a news conference at Joan Gamper training camp, near Barcelona, on 4 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS



Watson will captain his country for a second time having also led the team to victory in 1993, the last time the US won on foreign soil.

Reuters

City strike late as Arsenal go third

LONDON, 23 Dec—Manchester City endured 93 minutes of frustration before Gareth Barry's injury-time header gave the Premier League champions a 1-0 win over Reading on Saturday to increase the pressure on leaders Manchester United. Roberto Mancini's side, who

snatched the title in the dying seconds of last season, again displayed the knack of scoring late as Barry's controversial effort broke Reading's resistance and moved City to within three points of United, who play at Swansea on Sun-

Manchester City's Gareth Barry (R) challenges Reading's Mikele Leigertwood during their English Premier League soccer match at The Etihad stadium in Manchester, northern England, on 22 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS



QPR manager Redknapp criticises overpaid players

LONDON, 23 Dec—Queens Park Rangers manager Harry Redknapp has hit out at the pay received by some players at the club after watching his side lose 1-0 at Newcastle United on Saturday, leaving them second from bottom in the Premier League. “There are a lot of players at this club who earn far too much money for

what they are; far, far, far too much money for their ability and what they give to the club,” he told the BBC.

Redknapp, who joined the struggling west London club a month ago to replace the sacked Mark Hughes, said he was wary of spending more money in the January transfer window.

“I don't want to spend

NBA: Kings suspend top scorer Cousins indefinitely

SACRAMENTO, 23 Dec—The Sacramento Kings have suspended leading scorer and rebounder DeMarcus Cousins indefinitely for “unprofessional behavior and conduct detrimental to the team”, the Kings said on Saturday.

The suspension, his third this season, came after Cousins exchanged words with Kings coach Keith Smart during halftime of Friday's loss to the Los Angeles Clippers. The center did not play in the second half after being left in the locker by Smart.

Cousins, who is averaging 16.6 points and 9.5 rebounds, lashed out at Smart after the coach said something to him, the *Sacramento Bee* reported.

Cousins later apologized for his actions.

“I shouldn't have re-



Sacramento Kings' DeMarcus Cousins (L) and Toronto Raptors' Amir Johnson (R) tangle over the ball during the second half of their NBA basketball game in Sacramento, California on 5 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

sponded back,” he told reporters. “Should have accepted what was said and stayed quiet.” Cousins twice has been suspended by the National Basketball Association this year.

He was suspended for

two games in November for confronting a San Antonio Spurs announcer and was benched one game by the league earlier this month after striking the Dallas Mavericks' OJ Mayo in the groin.—Reuters

Soccer

north London rivals Tottenham Hotspur fell out of the top four after a 0-0 home draw with Stoke City.

Everton climbed to fourth, making light of Marouane Fellaini's absence through suspension to win 2-1 at West Ham United in a game in which both sides ended with 10 men.

West Bromwich Albion also reached the 30-point mark after ending Norwich City's 10-match unbeaten league run with Romelu Lukaku sealing a 2-1 victory 10 minutes from time after Norwich had taken the lead at the Hawthorns.

Chelsea, who have 29 points from 16 games, can jump back to third place if they beat Aston Villa on Sunday.

Liverpool were the day's biggest winners, crushing a woe-

ful Fulham side 4-0 at Anfield in

the evening kickoff. Martin Skrtel, Steven Gerrard, Stewart Downing and Luis Suarez hoisted Brendan Rodgers's side up to eighth with 25 points. There was no pre-Christmas cheer for the bottom four, with Reading, Wigan, Queens Park Rangers and Southampton all losing. QPR's revival under new manager Harry Redknapp came to a halt with a 1-0 defeat at Newcastle United while Sunderland edged clear of the bottom three after a 1-0 win at Southampton.

City, whose 37-match home unbeaten run in the league was ended by United this month, were expected to breeze past a Reading side whose defence went missing in a Monday night thrashing by Arsenal, but the visitors had not read the script. Reading were heading for a well-deserved point after restricting City to a handful of chances and even had a reasonable penalty shout waved away but they cracked three minutes into injury time.—Reuters

profile players such as Jose Bosingwa, Shaun Wright-Phillips, Bobby Zamora and Park Ji-Sung.—Reuters



Manager Harry Redknapp

GENERAL



Professor Dr Mathias Langer from Germany donates three Ultrasound Machine worth US\$ 15000 to President of JIVITADANA SANGHA Hospital Management Committee U Maung Maung and Committee member recently.
NLM

Barca end the year on a high as Real lose

MADRID, 23 Dec—Unbeaten La Liga leaders Barcelona ended 2012 on a high when Lionel Messi struck his 91st goal of the year in a 3-1 win at Real Valladolid while their arch-rivals Real Madrid slumped to a 3-2 defeat at Malaga.

It was the perfect tonic for Barca following the news that coach Tito Vilanova had to have throat surgery last Thursday.

The 44-year-old was released from hospital earlier on Saturday and was absent from Valladolid's Jose Zorrilla stadium as Barca racked up a record 16th win in 17 games this season.

Real's woes deepened after the stuttering champions suffered a second consecutive setback following last weekend's 2-2 draw at home to Espanyol.

Coach Jose Mourinho sprung a surprise by leaving

U Win Lwin (55 years old)

We express our deepest and sincere condolence.

Sony South East Asia Management and Nakanishi

captain and goalkeeper Iker Casillas on the bench and the defeat left Real 16 points adrift of Barca.

They are seven behind second-placed Atletico Madrid, who won 1-0 at home to Celta Vigo on Friday, and their lead over

Malaga in fourth was cut to two points.

Mourinho told a post-match news conference Real were "facing an insurmountable gap" but dismissed a question about whether he feared for his job.

Reuters



Barcelona's Daniel Alves (L) challenges Real Valladolid's Alberto Bueno during their Spanish First Division soccer match at Zorrilla Stadium in Valladolid on 22 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Lisandro on target as Lyon join PSG on top

PARIS, 23 Dec—Argentine striker Lisandro Lopez was on target on Saturday as Olympique Lyon recorded a 3-0 home victory over 10-man Nice to join Paris St Germain at the top of the Ligue 1 standings.

Lisandro opened the scoring in the 40th minute from a Bafetimbi Gomis pass following a quick counter-attack. He then set up Anthony Reveillere for the right back's first goal in five years, 16 minutes into the second half.

Gomis added the third from the penalty spot in the 77th minute after goalkeeper David Ospina had fouled him in the box and was sent

off. Lyon had centre back Dejan Lovren dismissed for a second yellow card in the 90th minute.

Lyon now trail leaders Paris St Germain on goal difference. Third-placed Olympique Marseille, who have 35 points, host St Etienne on Sunday.

"We wanted to reach the winter break with an average of two points per game. It's done," Gomis told French channel beIN Sport.

"Nice came here to try to upset us but we proved patient and have shown we have learned after Nancy," he added, referring to the last home game against the bottom-placed side which ended in a 1-1 draw.

Nice, who were unbeaten in Ligue 1 since late October, fell to eighth on 29 points.

Stade Rennes climbed to fourth on 32 points thanks

Olympique Lyon's Dejan Lovren (L) challenges Dario Cvitanich (R) of Nice during their French Ligue 1 soccer match at the Gerland stadium in Lyon on 22 Dec, 2012.
REUTERS



MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(24-12-12 09:30 am ~ 25-12-12 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * Modest appearance and colourful beauty of Myanma demsel
- * News
- * 10th Anniversary of Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association (MPHA)
- * News
- * A Glance At A Naga Family Life
- * News
- * Use Ytune & Ytalk
- * News
- * Broaden Your Horizon (Part-1)
- * News
- * A Way for Food Sufficiency
- * News
- * 85th Birthday Anniversary His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej
- * Let's savour Strawberry Milkshake
- * Shwe Gu Gyi Stupa, a unique of its kind with Cement inscription
- * Myanmar Movie "Kyar Phyu"

MYANMAR TV

(24-12-2012, Monday)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 7:00 am | Cultural Performing Arts Competitions |
| 1. Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw | 4:25 pm |
| 7:15 am | 15. Teleplay (Health) |
| 2. Dhama Puja Song | 4:40 pm |
| 7:25 am | 16. Musical Programme |
| 3. To Be Healthy Exercise | 4:45 pm |
| 7:30 am | 17. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Second Year (Oriental) |
| 4. Morning News | 5:10 pm |
| 7:40 am | 18. Songs For Upholding National Spirit |
| 5. Nice & Sweet Song | 5:15 pm |
| 7:50 am | 19. Musical Programme (The Radio Myanmar Modern Music Troupe) |
| 6. Health Programme | 5:25 pm |
| 8:00 am | 20. Myanmar Language |
| 7. Cute Little Dancers | 6:20 pm |
| 8:15 am | 21. Sing & Enjoy |
| 8. Documentary | 7:00 pm |
| 8:30 am | 22. TV Drama Series |
| 9. Dance Of National Races | 8:00 pm |
| 8:40 am | 23. News |
| 10. International News | 24. International News |
| 8:45 am | 25. Cartoon Series |
| 11. Musical Programme | 26. TV Drama Series |
| 4:00 pm | 27. India Drama Series |
| 12. Martial Song | |
| 4:05 pm | |
| 13. Dance Variety | |
| 4:15 pm | |
| 14. Myanmar Traditional | |

Real's Mourinho raises eyebrows by dropping Casillas

MADRID, 23 Dec—Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho appeared to be playing with fire on Saturday when he left influential captain and goalkeeper Iker Casillas out of his team who then slumped to a 3-2 La Liga defeat at Malaga.

A hero to Real fans and a fixture between the posts for more than a decade, Casillas was a nervous spectator on the bench as number two keeper Antonio Adan conceded three times and the champions slipped 16 points behind

Barcelona, 3-1 winners at Real Valladolid.

Mourinho told a post-match news conference the decision was "purely technical" and appeared to suggest that Adan had been picked because of Casillas's recent performances.

Asked whether he had relegated the Spain

the players available, chooses the team to play.

"You can invent all the stories you like but it's a purely technical decision and nothing more."

He later said Casillas was not the only aspect of Real's game that had needed fixing.

"No it was a general



Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho

international to the bench because he believed Adan was the better keeper, Mourinho said: "In my opinion? Of course.

"As it's the opinion that counts, as it's the coach who chooses and as I consider the opinions of my assistants valid we decided," added the Portuguese. "It seems to me...the work of the keeper who played had absolutely no bearing on the outcome of the game.

"The coach analyses the situation and analyses

problem. We haven't been playing well in different aspects of the game, one of which was our defensive work."

Sergio Ramos, another of Real's club captains, was asked in a television interview if he had been surprised by the decision to leave out his Spain team mate.

"Of course, he is usually the captain of this team and I think he will remain so as he is a great goalkeeper," Ramos said.

Reuters

Coord meeting on construction of Jade Pagoda, Jade Dhammayon held

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — A work coordination meeting on construction of Waiyawsana Jade Pagoda and Jade Dhammayon at Hsinywa Village in Amarapura Township of Mandalay Region was held at the Convocation Hall of State Pariyatti Sasana University in Aungmyethazan Township of Mandalay Region yesterday, with an address by Union Minister for Religious Affairs Thura U Myint Maung.

Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint invited suggestions of those present, and the secretary of the leading committee explained facts about construction works.

Then responsible persons of subcommittees reported on their respective sectors. After the meeting, the Union Minister and the Chief Minister observed the replica of Waiyawsana Jade Pagoda.

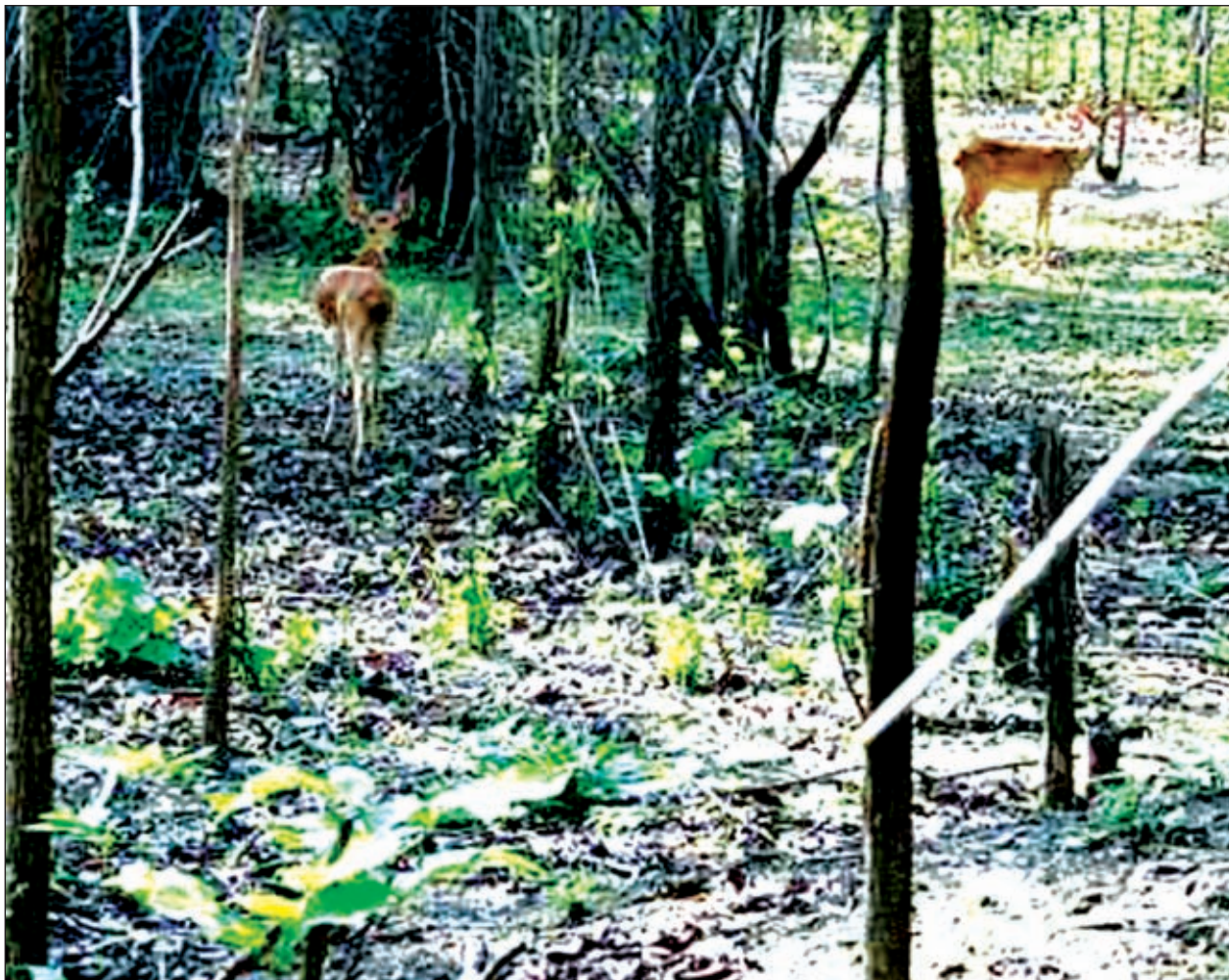
MNA



Union Minister for Religious Affairs Thura U Myint Maung making a speech at work coordination meeting on construction of Waiyawsana Jade Pagoda and Jade Dhammayon.—MNA

Chatthin Wildlife Sanctuary, habitat for muntjacs

Byline: Soe Soe Naing (Kyemon)
Photo: Zaw Win (Kyemon)



Chatthin Wildlife Sanctuary, with an area of 104 square miles, located in Kanbalu and Kawlin Townships of Sagaing Region has Indaing deciduous broadleaf forest dominated by *Dipterocarpus tuberculatus* and is

the habitat for endangered muntjac (*Muntiacus muntjac*). Established in 1941, it is 350 miles from Nay Pyi Taw, 657 miles from Yangon and 160 miles from Mandalay and is accessible by train and motor vehicle.

The sanctuary protects and conserves tropical forest eco-system and its biodiversity as well as flora and fauna. It is also a haven for rare muntjacs, one of the nearly-extinct wildlife of the world as it is aimed to conserve their population

to appropriate number. It has been planned to set up research centres there to make researches into muntjacs and different wildlife species and to establish as public recreation centre along with environmental conservation learning centre. In addition,

the sanctuary will be further improved to boost eco-tourism.

The sanctuary is an excellent place to observe the ecosystems of different kinds of deciduous broadleaf forest, dipterocarp forest and savanna grass. Besides muntjacs, boars, wild dogs, leopards, wild cats, bats, seabirds and amphibians make their home there. The sanctuary is protecting 158 species of birds, 69 kinds of herbs, 360 kinds of mammals, 360 species of reptiles and nearly 1530 muntjacs.

Though there were nearly 3000 muntjacs in 1995 in the sanctuary but the number was significantly reduced due to natural disasters and reckless hunting. Thirty per cent of the wildlife has fallen to victim of reckless hunting. The average lifespan of Myanmar muntjacs is 20 years and a muntjac can be as tall as 1.5 meters. It is a worthwhile place for those who love the nature as well as researchers of wildlife and herbal plants.

Kyemon: 20-12-2012

Trs: TKK

Moderate earthquake shakes northwest of Monywa

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — A moderate earthquake of magnitude 5.5 Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar about 35 miles northwest of Monywa, about 95 miles west-northwest of Mandalay seismological observatory was recorded at 23 hrs 11 min 46 sec M.S.T yesterday, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology announced.—MNA

Summary of observations at 9.30 hr MST Bay Inference

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Dec — Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

State of the Sea

Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong wind may reach 30-35 mph. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar water.

Outlook for subsequent two days

Continuation of decrease of night temperatures in the Upper Myanmar Areas.

NLM