



Everybody needs to work

Currently, the poverty rate of the country stood at 26 per cent and it has set the target to reduce it to 16 per cent in 2015. And thus, everybody needs to work hard. There will be work providing that there are land and water. Only with work, one could earn income for living. Saving the part of income would help improve living standard, enabling children to go to school with no anxiety. Consequently, the GDP of the nation and human resources would develop.

President U Thein Sein

(From the address delivered at the opening ceremony of Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon) on 27-11-2011)

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham receives officials from CTGC, IGOEC

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan— Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Dr Sai Mauk Kham met officials from China Three Gorges Corporation (CTGC) and International Group of Entrepreneur Company (IGOEC) which are implementing Mongton Hydro Power Project, at the

hall of Presidential Palace, here, this afternoon.

Also present at the call together with the Vice-President were Union Minister U Khin Maung Soe, Deputy Ministers U Zin Yaw, U Aye Myint Maung and Dr Daw Khin San Yi and officials.

At the meeting, they

had a cordial discussion on feasibility study for wind power and hydro power generation

projects, environmental conservation and local people's participations in the project.—MNA

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham cordially shakes hands with an official of China Three Gorges Corporation (CTGC) and International Group of Entrepreneur Company (IGOEC).

MNA



New democracy nation and ongoing reforms

Editorial Board

(Continued from 31-12-2012)

Fifth bridge opened

Nagapauk Bridge on DaikU-Sittoung Road with the length of 240 ft and the width of 24 ft and can withstand 60 tons of load was opened on 27 August as the fifth bridge in the time of the new government.

Diplomatic relations established

Myanmar and Bosnia and Herzegovinian

established diplomatic relations on 1 September. Bosnia and Herzegovinian is the 104th country with which Myanmar established diplomatic ties as the country is improving its relations with world nations.

Formation of Human Rights Commission

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission was formed on 5 September to promote and protect

fundamental rights of citizens in accord with the constitution.

Revising, revoking and prescribing laws

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session started on 29 September revised, revoked and prescribed laws.

Suspension of Myitsone Dam project

President U Thein Sein announced on 31 September the government would suspend Myitsone

dam project on confluence of Ayeyawady River during its term in response to public concerns.

First peace talks

Union level Peace-Making Committee and "Wa" Special Region (2) Peace-Making Group entered into peace talks for the first time on 3 October.

Thai PM's visit

Ms Yingluck Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand, visited Myanmar on 5 October and discussed with President U Thein Sein on mutual cooperation.

Second Amnesty

Totally 6359 prisoners were pardoned on 11 October in the second amnesty granted under President U Thein Sein's Order No. 49/2011.

Opening of Shwegyin hydropower plant

On 22 October, the opening ceremony of Shwegyin hydropower project was held near Kyauknagar village about six miles north east of Shwegyin, Bago Region.

The plant generates 262 million kwh per year.

(See page 8)



Photo shows opening ceremony of Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon).

Kayin State Chief Minister attends openings of new school building, libraries in Hpa-an

NAY PYI TAW, 31 Dec— The opening of new school building for Magyigyun Basic Education Middle School in Hpa-an Township in Kayin State took place at the school on 22 December. Kayin State Chief Minister U Zaw Min, State Social Affairs Minister U Chit Hlaing and the village administrator formally opened the school.

The chief minister made a speech and presented cash assistance for teachers. The newly-opened school building was constructed with the contribution of the State. Kayin State government, state/district/ township WAOs and MCWSC donated one set of Sky Net, solar, one set of TV, publications and furniture for library.—MNA

TV, publications and cash assistance for Linyaungchi Phyo library of the village.

He inspected thriving plantations and BEPS. On 23 December, the chief minister attended the opening of Pyinnya Bank library in Gyaing village. The State Hluttaw Speaker U Saw Aung Kyaw Min, the wellwisher and the village administrator cut the ribbon to launch the library and looked round it.

The chief minister delivered an address and the State government, wellwisher and State IPRD donated one set of Sky Net, solar, one set of TV, publications and furniture for library.—MNA

Thaunggyi village BEMS (Branch) organizes respect-paying ceremony



NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan — The first respect-paying ceremony of Basic Education Middle School (Branch) was held in conjunction with prize-giving ceremony at the

school in Thaunggyi village of Nyaunglebin Township of Bago Region on 9 December. Responsible persons spoke on the occasion, and old students paid respects to retired teachers.

Next, prize presentation ceremony followed. School Head U Than Htaik and responsible persons presented prizes to outstanding students.

NLM

Over 100-year-old tiered building in urgent need of maintenance

MAGWAY, 1 Jan — Kinn village lies on the Ayeyawady bank, two-mile north of Magway. According to the records, the village was named Kinn village as sentries were deployed there in the time of King Sawlu. During Konbaung era, the Kinn village was made up of about 100 houses. Okpho is situated to the south of Kinn

village. The village was called Okpho as the brick were made for construction of pagodas there. There is a more than 100-year-old monastery between Kinn and Okpho villages. It is called *Pyathard* monastery (tiered building). The compound of the monastery is about 5-acre in area where there are shad perennial trees. Of four rooms with

106 pillars of the monastery, two rooms were destroyed.

Impressive architectural skills of late Konbaung era can be seen at the monastery. Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw U Visuta said the monastery was built by Pahtama Sayadaw U Visuddha in the time of King Thibaw. There is an ancient Bronze Buddha Image there and a stone Buddha Image is being kept in the ordination hall.

The monastery was used to be a basic education primary school during the period from 1950 to 1985. The first-ever head master of the school was U Hla Gyi.

Now the weather-beaten monastery and its architecture of ancient civilization are in urgent need of maintenance works.

Kyemon



Pakokku to organize first-ever extempore speaking contest on 6 January

PAKOKKU, 1 Jan — Jointly-organized by Pakokku U Ohn Pe Library committee and readers, the first-ever extempore talk contest in 50 years in Pakokku region will be held on 6 January 2013.

Dr Hlaing Moe (medical superintendent of Chanmyae Hospital), Poet Pakokku Maung Maung, U Kyi Win (Principal of Amae Ein free education) will defend the statement why education

is more important than business. Writer Athwin Hsan, Daw Htay Yi (SAT) and U Thet Kyu will reassure the statement why business is more important than education. The contest will be held at the hall of Basic Education Middle School on Myoma street. Before the extempore speaking contest, entertainment programme will be presented with Myanmar traditional songs.

Kyemon

Domino-effect car crash leaves three men, one woman wounded

KAMAYUT, 1 JAN — Four people were injured in a domino-effect car accident involving nine vehicles at about 7 am on 31 December.

A passenger bus of No. 226 Bus Line driving from Danyinkon to Sule went out of control and caused a domino-effect crash to other eight vehicles near Sanpya Traffic Lights in Lanmadaw Township. The incident left three men and one woman wounded. The injured were admitted to the hospital.

Kyemon



Yezagyo sees benefit of mix-cropping

YEZAGYO, 1 Jan — Thanks to impressive reform processes and liberalization in the time of the new government, the livelihood of local people is getting better and better, thereby generating more income through double and mix cropping of marketable

seasonal crops.

A farmer of a village in Yezagyo Township said farmers could grow crops as they want.

“I planted onion and chick pea under mix-cropping system. I started onion growing in the month of Tawthalin. When onion plants were one and a half month old, I grew

groundnut as mix cropping. Some planted chick pea as mix cropping. This year’s opening price of onion had reached K 1100 per viss. After a harvest of onions, the farmland would turn to groundnut plantation. Locals are enjoying the benefit of mix-cropping”, he said.

Kyemon

School-level scouting course concludes



SITWAY, 1 Jan — A school-level scouting course concluded at Basic Education High School No (4) in Sittway on 29 December.

The ceremony was attended by member of Rakhine State government, Rakhine State Education Officer U Han Sein, teachers, course instructors and trainees.

Rakhine State Social Affairs Minister Dr Aung Kyaw Min spoke

on the occasion. Then he presented awards to outstanding trainees and thanked course instructors from Rakhine State naval base and Red Cross Society for their contributions to the scouting course beginning 21 December. Scout methods including culture and customs, innovation, camping, hiking, first aid knowledge, child rights and risk response and rescue measures were given at the course.— Kyemon

WORLD

Bombs kill 23 across Iraq as sectarian strife grows

BAGHDAD, 1 Jan—At least 23 people were killed and 87 wounded in attacks across Iraq on Monday, police said, underlining sectarian and ethnic divisions that threaten to further destabilise the country a year after US troops left. Tensions between Shi'ite, Kurdish and Sunni factions in Iraq's power-sharing government have been on the rise this year. Militants strike almost daily and have staged at least one big attack a month.

No group claimed responsibility for any of Monday's attacks, which targeted government officials, police patrols and members of both the Sunni and Shi'ite communities. Seven people from the same Sunni family were killed by a bomb planted near their home in the town of Mussayab, south of Baghdad.

In the Shi'ite majority City of Hilla, also in the south, a parked car bomb went off near the convoy of the governor of Babil Province, missing him but killing two other people, police said.



A destroyed vehicle is towed from the site of a bomb attack in Baghdad's Karrada District, on 31 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Egypt detains former Israeli sergeant for border infiltration

CAIRO, 1 Jan— Egypt detained a former Israeli military sergeant after he tried to infiltrate the Israeli-Egyptian borders, near Taba in South Sinai Peninsular, security sources told *Xinhua*.

"The Israeli man said that he intended to get into Gaza," security sources told *Xinhua*, adding that the man

"We heard the sound of a big explosion and the windows of our office shattered. We immediately lay on the ground," said 28-year-old Mohammed Ahmed, who works at a hospital near the site of the explosion.

"After a few minutes I stood up and went to the windows to see what happened. I saw flames and people lying on the ground."

In the capital Baghdad, five people were killed by a parked car bomb targeting pilgrims before a Shi'ite religious rite this week, police and hospital sources said.

Although violence is far lower than during the sectarian slaughter of 2006-2007, about 2,000 people have been killed in Iraq this year following the withdrawal last December of US troops, who led an invasion in 2003 to overthrow Sunni dictator Saddam Hussein.

Violence also hit Iraq's disputed territories, over which both the central government and the autonomous Kurdish region claim jurisdiction.—*Reuters*

Abe committed to improving ties with S Korea

TOKYO, 1 Jan—Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has expressed his commitment to improving relations between his country and South Korea.

Abe met on Tuesday with his special envoy to South Korea, Fukushima Nukaga. The former finance minister heads to Seoul later this week to deliver a letter from Abe to South Korean President-elect, Park Geun-hye.

The Prime Minister



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

told Nukaga South Korea is one of Japan's most important neighbours, and that the two countries share the values of upholding democracy and market economics.

Abe said he hopes Japan and South Korea will make a fresh start through the launch of their new governments. The Prime Minister took power last month and Park becomes president in February.

Abe asked Nukaga to convey his message to South Korea's new leaders. Nukaga said he hopes to create a better environment between the two nations so they can repair relations.

NHK

Hong Kong greets 2013 with fireworks, countdown celebrations

HONG KONG, 1 Jan—A splendid firework show and countdown celebration was held in Hong Kong on the eve of 2013 new year.

The eight-minute show, the largest ever in the event's history, was launched from both land and sea surrounding the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center (HKCEC).

Highlighting Hong Kong's night vistas, the show was dubbed as the first of the world's top 10 destinations for new year countdown celebrations.

An estimated 400,000 Hong Kong residents and tourists watched the show on both sides of the Victoria Harbor, despite it was the coldest new year eve in 29 years.

Starting from 11 pm on the new year eve, fireworks were launched from the rooftops of participating buildings in Wan Chai every 15 minutes, lighting up the sky



Fireworks light up the Victoria Harbor during the New Year celebrations in Hong Kong, south China, on 1 Jan, 2013.

XINHUA

with "shooting stars" in four different colors to symbolise good wishes in career, health, fortune and love.

In the final 10 seconds of 2012, fireworks in the shape of the numbers 10 to one shot from five buildings in Wan Chai. As the clock strikes midnight, fireworks were fired in three layers first from Victoria Harbor, then from the rooftop of HKCEC, and finally from five other

buildings in Wan Chai.

The fireworks were accompanied by special firecrackers and whistle-like sound effects. Search lights and lasers were also beamed from both sides of Victoria Harbor. "The combination of lights and firework was awesome. It's good. I wish happiness and health in the forthcoming year," said Robert, a tourist from Germany.—*Xinhua*

Xinhua

Assad's forces battle to retake Damascus suburb

AMMAN, 1 Jan— Elite Syrian government troops backed by tanks battled on Monday to recapture a strategic Damascus suburb from rebels who have advanced within striking distance of the centre of Syria's capital.

Five people, including a child, died from army rocket fire that hit the Daraya suburb during the fighting, opposition activists said. Daraya is part of a semi-circle of Sunni Muslim suburbs south of the capital that have been at the forefront of the 21-month-old revolt against President



A view of buildings damaged by what activists said were missiles fired by a Syrian Air Force fighter jet loyal to President Bashar al-Assad in Daraya, near Damascus, on 29 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

Bashar al-Assad.

"This is the biggest attack on Daraya in two months. An armoured column is trying to advance but it is being held (back) by the Free Syrian Army," said Abu Kinan, an opposition activist in the area, referring to a rebel group.

Clashes were also reported near the airport in Aleppo, Syria's largest city, which is in the north.

Insurgents have made that airport a target in the hope of limiting government access to Aleppo, which is largely under rebel control.

Rebels have taken much of the north and east of Syria over the past six months, but government forces still hold most of the densely populated southwest around the capital, the main north-south highway and the Mediterranean coast.

Government forces scored a victory on Saturday, pushing rebels out of Deir Baalbeh, a district in Homs, an important central city that straddles the highway linking Damascus with the north and the Mediterranean. Some opposition activists have said scores or even hundreds of people were executed in Deir Baalbeh by troops that seized it after several days of fighting.—*Reuters*

Five dead in Shanghai construction accident

SHANGHAI, 1 Jan— Five workers were killed and 18 others injured after a concrete platform under construction collapsed in Shanghai, a municipal government source said on Tuesday.

The accident occurred at around 9 pm Monday in a building in the Pudong New Area for examination and repair, which was part of the Jinqiao parking lot for Shanghai's No 12 subway

line, the source said.

One was killed at the scene. The four others died in hospital.

The cause of the incident was under investigation.

Xinhua

Huawei partner offered embargoed HP gear to Iran

BEIJING, 1 Jan—A major Iranian partner of Huawei Technologies offered to sell at least 1.3 million euros worth of embargoed Hewlett-Packard computer equipment to Iran's largest mobile-phone operator in late 2010, documents show.

China's Huawei, the world's second largest telecommunications equipment maker, says neither it nor its partner, a private company registered in Hong Kong, ultimately provided the HP products to the telecom, Mobile Telecommunication Co of Iran, known as MCI. Nevertheless, the incident provides new evidence of how Chinese companies have been willing to help

Iran evade trade sanctions.

The proposed deal also raises new questions about Shenzhen-based Huawei, which recently was criticized by the US House Intelligence Committee for failing to "provide evidence to support its claims that it complies with all international sanctions or US export laws."

At least 13 pages of the proposal to MCI, which involved expanding its subscriber billing system, were marked "Huawei confidential" and carried the company's logo, according to documents seen by *Reuters*. In a statement to *Reuters*, Huawei called it a "bidding document" and said one of its "major local partners," Skycom Tech

Co Ltd, had submitted it to MCI. The statement went on to say, "Huawei's business in Iran is in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations including those of the UN, US and EU. This commitment has been carried out and followed strictly by our company. Further, we also require our partners to follow the same commitment and strictly abide by the relevant laws and regulations."

In October, *Reuters* reported that another Iranian partner of Huawei last year tried to sell embargoed American antenna equipment to Iran's second largest mobile operator, MTN Irancell, in a deal the buyer ultimately rejected. The

US antenna manufacturer, CommScope Inc, has an agreement with Huawei in which the Chinese firm can use its products in Huawei systems, according to a CommScope spokesman. He added that his company strives to comply fully with all US laws and sanctions.

Huawei has a similar partnership with HP. In a statement, the Palo Alto, Calif., company said, "HP has an extensive control system in place to ensure our partners and resellers comply with all legal and regulatory requirements involving system security, global trade and customer privacy and the company's relationship with Huawei is no different."



A sales assistant looks at her mobile phone as she waits for customers behind a counter at a Huawei booth in Wuhan, Hubei province, in this 10 Oct, 2012 file photo.—REUTERS

The statement added, "HP's distribution contract terms prohibit the sale of HP products into Iran and require compliance with US and other applicable export laws."

Washington has banned

the export of computer equipment to Iran for years. The sanctions are designed to deter Iran from developing nuclear weapons; Iran says its nuclear program is aimed purely at producing domestic energy.—*Reuters*



Photo shows Russia's T-90S (Modernized) or T-90SM main battle tank was a star attraction at the DefExpo 2012. The T-90SM is an upgraded version of the T-90S.—XINHUA

Web China: TV show provides new way for public supervision

WUHAN, 1 Jan—A new TV programme in central China's Hubei Province is forcing government officials to respond to public complaints under the glare of studio lighting and the unblinking eye of the camera.

During a 17 Dec broadcast, Yang Zefa, director of the food and drug administration of the provincial capital of Wuhan, apologized to the audience after a video clip depicting an illegal food production facility was played before them. Yang then demanded that more than 50 law enforcement officers were dispatched to inspect and close the facility that very evening.

The programme was created by the Wuhan municipal government in order to improve local officials' work and create a new way for the public to supervise the government.

"We collect stories regarding the public's top concerns, secretly film the stories and broadcast them

live," said programme staffer Liu Zhiming. "The directors of relevant government departments are invited to come on the show to take questions and be assessed by representatives of the public, as well as our commentators. None of them know what will be played on the show before it airs," Liu said.

The programme, like the microblog accounts that many officials have opened in recent months, allows the public to interact and participate in government affairs. "These officials show another side to the public when they're on the show. They get embarrassed and sweat when they encounter unexpected questions,"

wrote a netizen using the screenname "Guo Wenjing." Television and the Internet have brought government officials and the general public closer by providing new ways to communicate, said Shen Yang, a professor at Wuhan University's school of information management.

Xinhua

Facebook Instagram use dived after photo fiasco

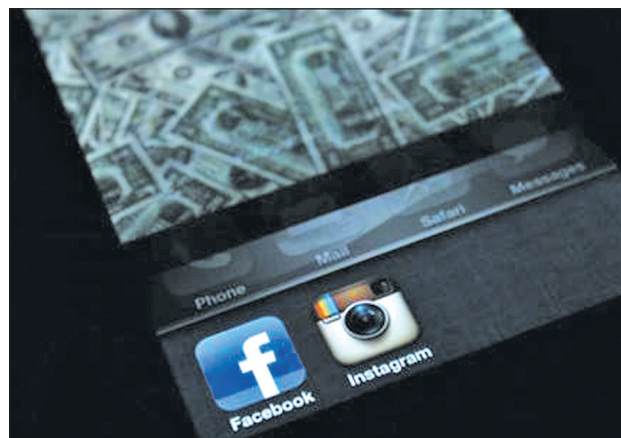
SAN FRANCISCO, 1 Jan—Facebook Inc's Instagram lost almost a quarter of its daily users a week after it rolled out and then withdrew policy changes that incensed users who feared the photo-sharing service would use their pictures without compensation.

Instagram, which Facebook bought for \$715 million this year, saw the number of daily active users who accessed the service via Facebook bottom out at 12.4 million as of Friday, versus a peak of 16.4 million last week, according to data compiled by online tracker AppData.

The popular app, which allows people to add filters and effects to photos and share them over the Internet or smartphones, experienced the drop over the brief, often-volatile holiday period.

Other popular apps also saw slippage in usage, and some were more pronounced. Yelp, for instance, saw daily active users — again via Facebook — slide to a weekly low of half a million on Thursday, from a high of 820,000 one week ago.

Instagram disputed the



A photo illustration shows the applications Facebook and Instagram on the screen of an iPhone in Zagreb on 9 April, 2012.—REUTERS

AppData survey, which was compiled from users that have linked the photo service to their own Facebook accounts, historically between 20 and 30 percent of Instagram members.

"This data is inaccurate. We continue to see strong and steady growth in both registered and active users of Instagram," a spokeswoman said in an emailed statement on Friday.

Looking out over a broader timeframe, Instagram's monthly active users edged up to 43.6 million as of Friday, an increase of 1.7 million over the past

seven days, according to AppData.

"We'll have to monitor the data over the coming weeks to gain perspective on trends in Instagram's performance," AppData marketing manager Ashley Taylor Anderson said in an email.

The sharp slide in activity highlighted by AppData was bound to draw attention on the heels of the controversial revision to Instagram's terms of service that, among other things, allowed an advertiser to pay Instagram "to display your username, likeness, photos (along with

any associated metadata)" without compensation.

The subsequent public outrage prompted an apology from Instagram founder Kevin Systrom. Last week, a California Instagram user sued the company for breach of contract and other claims, in what may have been the first civil lawsuit to stem from the controversial change.

Instagram subsequently reverted to some of its original language.

The move renewed debate about how much control over personal data users must give up to live and participate in a world steeped in social media.

Analysts say Facebook, the world's largest social network, was laying the groundwork to begin generating advertising revenue, by giving marketers the right to display profile pictures and other personal information, such as who users follow in advertisements.

Its shares closed down 13 cents or 0.5 percent at \$25.91 on the Nasdaq, in line with the broader market.

Reuters

New search engine for 11 March archives



TOKYO, 1 Jan—The Japanese government will set up an Internet search engine

to provide easier access to the digital archives for the 11th March earthquake and

tsunami.

The internal affairs and communications ministry and the National Diet Library will begin operating the search engine in March next year.

The ministry is responding to criticism that information on the 11th March disasters is difficult to find because it is stored on the websites of a wide range of research institutions and private companies.

The search engine will help users to locate photos, movies and other related documents.

The municipal governments of Fukushima, Miyagi, Iwate and Aomori prefectures are logging key words for online searches.

A symposium will be held in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, on 11th January to discuss how to effectively use the digital archives.—NHK

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Senate approves 'fiscal cliff' deal, crisis eased

WASHINGTON, 1 Jan—The Senate moved the US economy back from the edge of a "fiscal cliff" on Tuesday, voting to avoid imminent tax hikes and spending cuts in a bipartisan deal that could still face stiff challenges in the House of Representatives.

In a rare New Year's session at around 2 am EST (0700 GMT), senators voted 89-8 to raise some taxes on the wealthy while making permanent low tax rates on the middle class that have been in place for a decade.

But the measure did little to rein in huge annual budget deficits that have helped push the US debt to \$16.4 trillion.

The agreement came too late for Congress to meet its

own deadline of New Year's Eve for passing laws to halt \$600 billion in tax hikes and spending cuts which strictly speaking came into force on Tuesday.

But with the New Year's Day holiday, there was no real world impact and Congress still had time to draw up legislation, approve it and backdate it to avoid the harsh fiscal measures.

That will need the backing of the House where many of the Republicans who control the chamber complain that President Barack Obama has shown little interest in cutting government spending and is too concerned with raising taxes.

All eyes are now on the

House which is to hold a session on Tuesday starting at noon (1700 GMT).

Obama called for the House to act quickly and follow the Senate's lead.

"While neither Democrats nor Republicans got everything they wanted, this agreement is the right thing to do for our country and the House should pass it without delay," he said in a statement.

"There's more work to do to reduce our deficits, and I'm willing to do it. But tonight's agreement ensures that, going forward, we will



US Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) (center) departs with an aide, after a senate vote in the early morning hours, from the US Capitol in Washington on 1 January, 2013.—REUTERS

continue to reduce the deficit through a combination of new spending cuts and new revenues from the wealthiest Americans," Obama said.

Members were thankful that financial markets were closed, giving them a second chance to return to try to head off the fiscal cliff.—Reuters

Egypt to finalize talks on IMF loan in January

Business

CAIRO, 1 Jan—Egyptian Prime Minister Hisham Qandil said Egypt will finalize talks on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan in January, local TV reported on Sunday.

"We hope that there will not be any fundamental changes in our plan with the IMF which covers 4.8 billion US dollars," said Qandil. "Egypt will never be bankrupt," said Qandil, stressing that it is only some Egyptian companies, not the country, that are exposed to bankruptcy. The Prime Minister added that economic problems are the

top priorities of the Egyptian government, and it requires swift procedures to get speedy solutions.

The budget deficit is the most serious economic problem due to the gap between income and expenditure, added Qandil, noting that political problems which caused investors to flee are the main reason behind the economic problems.

Qandil, who made the remarks at a Press Conference, asserted that the purpose of the conference is to announce a national initiative for economic reform. "There are big challenges in all

sectors, which is the nature of any transition period," said Qandil, noting that the solution is to improve the services, provide more job opportunities, and encourage investment.

He added that the government has adopted some measures to solve the economic problems, including raising the prices of some commodities, but the increases would not affect the basic commodities like food and fuel. Qandil affirmed that the poor people would not be influenced by the price hike since subsidies would reach the poor.—Reuters

Business Vinyl record sales in Japan double in 2012

TOKYO, 1 Jan—Sales of vinyl records have almost doubled this year in Japan.

The Recording Industry Association of Japan says 418,000 vinyl records, worth more than 7 million dollars, were shipped between January and November.

The figure includes imported discs and is about double the total for the whole of last year.

Imports of vinyl records by rock and jazz musicians sold 242,000 copies, or roughly triple last year's figure. This was mainly due to reissues of albums by the Beatles and other famous groups.

Most people in Japan buy music in the form of downloads and CDs. Sales have fallen to about half of the peak of 7 billion dollars marked in 1998.

Vinyl records only account for a small portion of total sales, but remain popular with some music fans. An industry expert says people may be buying vinyl records again because they prefer their warm sound.

NHK



Bonita Robbins (L), a patient suffering with arachnoiditis due to a contaminated steroid injection, sits on her hospital bed as she and her husband Ed (C) listen to Infectious Diseases Doctor Anurag Malani at St Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor hospital in Ypsilanti, Michigan on 21 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Cuba patents new lung cancer vaccine

Health

HAVANA, 1 Jan—Cuba's Centre for Molecular Immunology (CIM) has patented a new lung cancer vaccine, CIM researcher Ana Maria Vazquez said on Monday.

Vazquez said the antibody, called Racotumomab, was proven in clinical trials this year to increase survival rates among cancer patients, and has shown good safety and tolerance levels.

The vaccine combats

lung carcinoma by promoting the death of cancer cells and minimizing the presence of tumours, Vazquez explained.

Racotumomab is the second vaccine developed by CIM against lung cancer, after CIMavax EGF, which has proven effective in helping Cuban patients. Lung cancer is the second-most common type of cancer in Cuba with an estimated 5,000 patients in advanced stages of the disease.—Xinhua

Most Britons cut spending on this Christmas

Business

LONDON, 1 Jan—Over half Britons spent less on Christmas this year than last year, British consumers' association said on Sunday based on a survey.

56 percent of the 2,100 adults questioned said they have cut spending this Christmas, with 43 percent having a "significant cut," the survey conducted between 19 and 21 December showed.

48 percent of these

people didn't buy as much food and 45 percent bought less high quality food than last year because of increasing food prices.

Nearly half of these people used credit cards, overdrafts and other borrowing to help fund their purchases, with 22 percent saying they could only afford to pay for Christmas by using credit cards and overdrafts, according to the survey.—Xinhua

Euro shares dip as fiscal cliff deadline nears

Business

LONDON, 1 Jan—World stocks were set to end the year up 15 percent but dipped on Monday as US politicians prepared for last-minute talks to avoid a fiscal crunch of spending cuts and tax hikes that could drag down the world economy.

In Washington, the two political parties are set to hold further talks to try and find a way to avoid the \$600 billion "fiscal cliff" due to kick in from the start of January.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said the Senate would resume sitting at 11 am Washington time on Monday (1600 GMT), to continue discussions, but there were still significant differences between the two sides.

After a subdued day in Asia, where Japan's Nikkei as well as a number of other indexes had already shut for the year, European stock markets opened fractionally lower.

The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 .FTEU3, which has risen roughly 16 percent this year, was down

0.1 percent as London's FTSE .FTSE and the Paris CAC 40. FCHI both started a shortened trading day in negative territory. German markets were closed.

"Volumes are very depressed and we're going to see a lot of cash off the table and investors are probably going to take profit on cyclical shares," Ishaq Siddiqi, a market strategist at ETX Capital, said.

Siddiqi said a failure to avert the "fiscal cliff" may push the FTSE back to a late November low of 5,800 in the coming sessions.

Midnight on Monday marks the deadline for a US budget deal, though the government can pass legislation in 2013 that retroactively prevents going over the cliff, an option that is viewed as politically easier.

In currency markets, the US dollar last stood at 85.78 yen, having retreated from Friday's high of 86.64 yen, which was the greenback's strongest level versus the Japanese currency since August 2010.

As the year draws to a



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, on 14 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

close, the dollar is up about 11.9 percent against the yen, putting it on track for its biggest percentage gain versus the Japanese currency since 2005.

The euro was down 0.16 percent to \$1.3192 on Monday. An agreement on the US budget would be viewed as positive for riskier currencies such as the euro and Australian dollar, while a deadlock is deemed positive for the haven and highly liquid dollar.

Gold was \$1,664.10 an ounce by 0810 GMT, up around 6 percent for the year and is on track for a 12th

consecutive year of gains on rock-bottom interest rates, concerns over the financial stability of the euro zone, and diversification into bullion by central banks.

Oil prices slipped on Monday for a third consecutive session on the US budget crisis, with failure to reach a solution seen likely to cause a large drop in fuel consumption.

Brent crude slipped 23 cents to \$110.39 a barrel, but is set to post a 2.8 percent year-on-year increase in 2012, up for a fourth consecutive year.

Reuters

Pakistan frees four senior Afghan Taliban leaders

ISLAMABAD, 1 Jan—Pakistan on Monday released four senior Afghan Taliban leaders including their former Justice Minister Mullah Nuroddin Turabi, a senior official said. Pakistan has freed 21 Afghan Taliban figures in less than two months at the request of the Afghan government.

Pakistan released 13 Taliban detainees last month during the visit of Afghan peace envoy, Salahuddin Rabbani, to push the peace process forward.

“Pakistan released four Taliban leaders on Monday,” a senior foreign ministry official said. He requested not to be identified.

Afghan embassy sources also confirmed the release of their prisoners by Pakistan.

Apart from Mullah Turabi, Pakistan also freed former Taliban Minister of Communications Allah Dad, Mullah Abdul Bari, the governor of southern Helmand Province during the Taliban regime, and Muhammad Azeem, a former guard of Taliban chief Mullah Mohammad Omar Mujahid, said sources.—Xinhua

Two quakes strike New Zealand's North Island

WELLINGTON, 1 Jan—Two earthquakes hit the Taranaki region, in the western part of New Zealand's North Island, in the early hours of New Year's Day, causing little damage.

The first was a magnitude 5.0, which hit at 3.11 am local time on Tuesday, at a depth of five km. New Zealand governmental geological agency GNS Science reported that it occurred 30 km north-west of Opunake.

The second struck half an hour later, with a 4.3-magnitude shake hitting at 3.42 am.

The second quake was centred 25 km north-west of Opunake at a depth of six km.

Local residents were woken by the shakes, which lasted about 20 seconds.

There have been a number of smaller aftershocks throughout the morning in the area.—Xinhua



Customers wait in line for gas at a Hess fuelling station in Brooklyn, New York, on 9 Nov, 2012.

REUTERS

2012 most expensive year for motorists

NEW YORK, 1 Jan—The average gasoline price in 2012 was a record-high \$3.60 a gallon, topping the previous high of \$3.51 in 2011, travel group AAA said on Monday.

AAA blamed refinery outages, major hurricanes and unrest in the Middle East

for the rise.

Drivers in states like Hawaii, Alaska, California and New York paid the highest prices. However, the price fell to \$3.30 a gallon in December, the lowest monthly average for the year, AAA said.—Reuters

Premier extends New Year greetings to quake-hit residents

BEIJING, 1 Jan—Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has extended New Year greetings to people in a quake-hit area in Qinghai Province and urged the local government to finish the reconstruction programme “without regret.”

Wen made the remarks during his visit on New Year's Eve to the Gyegu township of Qinghai's Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture where a 7.1-magnitude earthquake killed more than 2,000 people living on the mountainous plateau on 14 April, 2010.

It was the third trip by Premier Wen to Yushu after the disaster. His previous two visits were soon after the quake in 2010.

“I could hardly believe my eyes when I came to Yushu again,” Premier Wen said. “A new and

promising Yushu is rising up. The reconstruction programme will soon be complete and we must carry out the last-minute work well and finish it without regret.”

Most of the residents who lost their homes after the quake have moved into newly built residential buildings. Public facilities, including a square to commemorate Tibetan King Gesar, have been renovated, and education and health-care services have been restored.

The more than 800-year-old Damkar Monastery was severely damaged in the earthquake. Premier Wen visited the monastery's newly built scripture hall and clergy's residence.

Wen told the clergy that he had been concerned about people in the quake-

Huge crowds revel to usher in new year in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 1 Jan—Hundreds of thousands thronged the downtown Marina Bay area and elsewhere in Singapore on New Year's Eve, with concerts, light shows as well as fireworks across the island. The famous skyline of Marina Bay area, lit in the evening by dancing beams of light produced by laser machines, drew a huge crowd including both local residents and international visitors. The heavy rain stopped hours before mid-night, making it comfortably cool in the tropical state.

Many people took out their cameras and cell phones to record the best moments as the party ended in eight minutes of firework display against the background of an original music score composed by Cultural Medallion winner Iskandar Ismail.

Floating in the bay were

thousands of white spheres bearing the new year wishes penned by local residents. The spheres glowed pink, blue, purple and yellow, reflect colors of the light beams.

“The fireworks are beautiful. I think it is good to see so many people coming out of their houses to usher in the new year,” said Zhou Zhi, a tourist from China.

A foam party on the beach and a countdown at Universal Studios Singapore on Sentosa island drew many people, too.

At the Jurong Central Park in west Singapore, some 30,000 people ushered in the new year in one of the biggest countdown parties in the heartland. The celebrations included a family carnival and a band competition. Acting Minister for Culture, Community and Youth Lawrence Wong played the electric guitar with youth band

Fancy This Progression in the opening act for the song Wake Me Up When December Ends.

In the towns like Woodlands and Tampines, people exchanged their best wishes as it came to the year 2013. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said in his New Year message earlier on Monday that it is necessary to seek consensus on the issue of population, which is “fundamentally about maintaining a strong Singaporean core.”

“We have to find effective ways to encourage Singaporeans to have more babies, and consider how many new immigrants to take in. We must keep our economy competitive and create good jobs for Singaporeans, and understand the mix and size of our labour force to support such an economy,” he said.

Xinhua



People stand at the site of an explosion in Libya's western city of Misrata, on 31 Dec, 2012. At least two people were killed and two others injured, all of them Egyptians, on Sunday in a bomb attack targeting an Egyptian Coptic church in Misrata, local security official and Egypt's MENA news agency said.—XINHUA

Iran test-fires missiles, torpedoes in naval drill

TEHERAN, 1 Jan—Iranian Navy forces test-fired short-range and medium-range missiles as well as torpedoes “successfully” in ongoing naval drill on Monday.

On the fourth day of a six-day massive naval drill dubbed Velayat 91, or Guardianship 91, which started on Friday in Iran's southern waters, Iranian Navy “successfully” test-fired the latest version of the home-made surface-to-air Ra'd (Thunder) missile, Press TV on Monday cited an official as saying.

The spokesman for the drill, Rear Admiral Amir Rastegari, said the earlier version of Ra'd missile had been modified by Iranian Navy experts and installed on warships.

The new Ra'd missile could strike medium-range aerial targets, Rastegari said

Friday.

The Iranian Navy also “successfully” launched its indigenous short-range cruise missile dubbed Nasr (Victory) on the fourth day of the major military exercises, according to Press TV.

Nasr cruise missile, which can destroy vessels of up to 3,000 tons, can be launched from both inland bases and offshore military vessels, Iranian Defense Minister Ahmad Vahidi was quoted as saying.

Vahidi reiterated that new features will be added to the missile in the near future so that it can also be launched from helicopters and submarines.

Besides, Iran's Navy test-fired state-of-the-art torpedoes by hitting and destroying targets during the fourth day of its naval drill,

Press TV reported.

Rastegari said “following successful coastal defense and the retreat of the (hypothetical) enemy's vessels,” Iranian sub-surface vessels ambushed the mock enemy forces and destroyed them with advanced torpedoes.

He said that Iran's surface units chased the enemy's vessels while launching heavy missile attacks against the hostile forces, according to the report.

Meanwhile, Iran's naval units on Monday exercised shooting down hypothetical enemy aircrafts, specially Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), during the drill underway in the country's southern waters, semi-official Fars news agency reported.

Xinhua



Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao (front R) talks with monks while visiting a monastery in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in northwest China's Qinghai Province, on 31 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

LOCAL NEWS

Yamethin Township facilitated with three GSM towers

YAMETHIN, 1 Jan—Myanma Posts and Telecommunications has erected three GSM towers in Theingon Model Village, Ywadan Village and Yamethin for enabling the local people to have

easy access to telecommunications facilities in Yamethin Township of Mandalay Region.

As part of poverty alleviation, the government allowed sales of GSM mobile phones to the people

through installment system.

In Yamethin Township, a total of 4000 GSM mobile phones have been rented to the local people from 68 wards and villages of the township up to 20 December.

Myanma Alinn

Free medical treatment given in Shwepyitha Township



SHWEPYITHA, 1 Jan—The free medical team of Yangon Region Sasana Nuggaha Association provided

medical treatments to monks, novices and people at Maha Wiseiktayon Monastery in Ward 19 of Shwepyitha

Township, Yangon Region, on 28 December morning.

A 22-member medical team included paediatrician Dr Yuzana Saw Myint, GP Dr Khin Than Nwe, eight surgeons and Secretary of the Region Association U Aung Thin gave free medical treatment to members of the Sangha and local people.

Townsenders, ward administrator U Aung Moe and NGOs provided necessary assistance to the medical team.

Myanma Alinn

Evidences of illegal lottery seized

PYAPON, 1 Jan—The authorities concerned searched the house of Their Zaw on Yadana Street in Ward 7 of Pyapon on 15 December and seized 22 ledger books for illegal two-digit lottery, eight sheets of illegal lottery ledger, 378 sheets of illegal lottery vouchers and K 509450.

Aung Tun Oo and party of Pyapon Police Station together with witnesses searched the house of Their Zaw on Yadana Street which harboured gambling.

The authorities seized the locked house. Their Zaw kept evidences of gambling in the back of house and escaped there. The authorities listed the evidences and handed them over to 100-house leader U Kyaw Shwe of Ward 7.

Pyapon Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against Their Zaw.

Myanma Alinn

Renovated rural health centre handed over

PAKOKKU, 1 Jan—As a gesture of hailing the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, a ceremony to hand over the renovated rural health centre was held in Ywathitgon Village in Pakokku Township on 29 December.

5.5 million contributions of Magway Region government and K 1,198,187 by the local people. Therefore, the centre can provide health care services to 4903 people from 693 houses of the village-tract.—Myanma Alinn

Renovation committee member U Myint Tun Latt reported on financial report and handed over the documents related to the rural health centre to Head of the centre U Soe Than.

The rural health centre is 68 feet long and 40 feet wide, built in 1956-67. Due to erosion in floods of Ayeyawady River, the rural health centre was damaged gradually.

At present, the building has been renovated with K



Rural library put into service in Kengtung



KENGTUNG, 1 Jan—According to a news item of Myanma Alin, Nawnghsa Library was opened in Nawnghsa Village of Kengtung Township on 27

December with the aim of broadening horizons of the local people and raising their reading habit.

Wellwishers donated books, publications, radios,

furniture and cash to the library.

A local people spoke words of thanks for opening the library.

Myanma Alinn

UMFCCI to conduct Master of Business Administration 10 Feb

YANGON, 1 Jan—Jointly organized by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and University of Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC) of Thailand, the Master of Business Administration (Global MBA Offshore Program-Batch-2) will be opened on 10 February for enabling Myanmar young staff members to have higher capability of human resources and to keep abreast of others.

Those wishing to attend the course may register at UMFCCI training school on Minye Kyawswa Road

in Lanmadaw Township, not later than 15 January 2013.

Myanma Alinn

Talks on Independence Day held in Dawei

DAWEI, 1 Jan—An educative talk on Independence Day was given at Nursing Training School in Dawei of Taninthayi Region on 26 December.

Assistant Director Daw Ni Ni Cho, Head of Region Information and Public Relations Department, gave lectures on independence

struggles and raising of reading habit.

After that, the assistant director of the department donated books and publications to an official.

The educative talk was also attended by trainees of the school and enthusiast local people.

Myanma Alinn

65th Anniversary Independence Day 2013



Night scene in Yangon

Transport charge for rice bags falls from Pathein to Yangon

YANGON, 1 Jan—As transport of rice and broken rice is lesser from Delta to Yangon due to declining prices of rice and broken rice in the market, the bus fares for rice bags fall to K 600 from K 650 and then to K 500,

said highway bus owners in Pathein of Ayeyawady Region recently.

However, the charge of transport for rice still reaches K 700 per bag from Hinthada to Yangon by car and K 70 per bag from downtown Hinthada

to Ayeyawady Jetty.

Sarpotaung, Pankyaso and other strains of rice cultivated in wetland of Hinthada Region are marketable due to its price at K 10000 per bag.

Myanma Alinn

Sanitation carried out in Lanmadaw Township

YANGON, 1 Jan—Under the supervisions of Yangon West District and Lanmadaw Township Development Affairs Committees, sanitation tasks were carried on 11th street in Ward 5 of Lanmadaw Township of Yangon Region on 29 December.

Chairman of Yangon City Development Committee Yangon Region Minister for Development Affairs Mayor of Yangon U Hla Myint and YCDC members together with heads of department inspected the sanitation tasks for cleaning of the street and proper flow of drains.

About 100 workers of the committee together with local people participated in sanitation tasks with the use of garbage vans.

Myanma Alinn

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 2 January, 2013

Pursue holistic approach in democracy transition

Myanmar has become a social phenomena in the international community through its bold initiatives in the move to democracy. There is high expectation of change in all sectors of the economic and social spectrum. Mutual trust and understanding between the government and the people is instrumental factor for success of Myanmar's democracy transition.

By nature, people aspire to the best. They have the right to express their desires or hopes. But the most important thing for the entire society is to shape the promising future through ongoing reform process. Towards this end, all the people are to exercise due diligence in fostering the free and transparent situation.

Meanwhile, we are to strive for flourishing of realistic positive attitude and negotiated political culture without taking an extreme view in facing possible challenges ahead.

In democracy transition, necessary institutions such as finance, education and health would be introduced and further down the line will by and large be put in place in the country. Myanmar would do everything in its power to try to achieve this end within a fair short of time frame.

As the country is facing the risk of lacking a skilled workforce, having a skilled and socially responsible labour is essential.

Introduction of democratic practices in the country which is still in initial stage of democracy is an intricate, complex and involved process. But none of the setbacks could dampen it from moving towards democracy if each and every citizen makes concerted efforts like we once made during the time of independence struggles.

Taking stock of what has been achieved in the first and second waves of reforms being extensively processed we would pursue a holistic approach capable of helping us achieve our common goal.

Solar panels light up Payataung Village in Ottarathiri Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan—As Payataung Village in Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area yesterday held a ceremony to launch distribution of

electricity with the use of solar panels, Deputy Minister for Cooperatives U Than Tun, Nay Pyi Taw Council Member Dr Than Aung and Amyotha

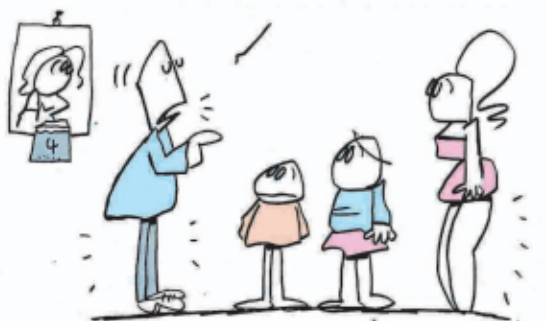
Hluttaw Representative U Khin Maung Htay formally opened it, and Union Minister at President Office Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman U Thein Nyunt launched the supply.

A total of 11 solar panels (250 Watt/220 Watt) and 22 batteries (250 Ah/100 Ah 12 V) generate electricity for 282 houses, 76 lamp-posts, five monasteries, village administrator's office and library.

The amount of electricity supply costs over K 39 million.

The received electricity from 6 pm to 10 pm and 4 am to 5.30 am, totally about five hours daily.—MNA

Why we celebrate Independence Day every year is to cherish and safeguard independence!



Myay Zar

New democracy nation...

(from page 1)

Cooperation with IMF

A delegation from IMF visited Myanmar from 19 October to 1 November. IMF stated in a press release released that it would make cooperation in adopting the policies for foreign currency exchange system.

Signing of preliminary peace agreement

On 3 November, Kayin State Peace-Making group signed five-point preliminary agreement with Kalohtoobaw group (former DKBA) in Hpa-an.

Conveyance of Sacred Buddhist Tooth Relic

On 6 November, the sacred Buddhist Tooth Relic from China was conveyed to Myanmar.



ASEAN Chairmanship in 2014.

Obama recognizes the new Myanmar government

US President Obama recognized the new Myanmar government and Hluttaws' democratization process, at 19th Summit held in Bali of Indonesia on 18 November.

Opening of Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon)

Hillary Clinton's first-ever visit to Myanmar

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton paid a high-profile visit to Myanmar on 1 December. It is the first US Secretary of State's visit to Myanmar in 50 years. She said that US wants to be partnership with Myanmar.

Discussion with the Bangladeshi Prime Minister

International Airport was put into service on 19 December. It can handle a total of from 50,000 to 65,000 flights per year.

Hosting of Greater Mekong Sub-region Summit

The 4th Greater Mekong Sub-region Summit was hosted in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 December.

Opening of Ayeyawady Bridge (Pakokku)

Myanmar's longest Ayeyawady Bridge (Pakokku) was commissioned into service on 31 December. Its main structure is 11431 feet long, its motor road, 13,537 feet long and railroad, 20597 feet long. It links eastern bank of Ayeyawady River in Mandalay Region and western bank of Ayeyawady River in Magway Region. It is located on India-Myanmar-Thailand Tripartite Highway.

Grant of amnesty for third time

Under the President's Office Order No.1/2012, amnesty was granted to prisoners for third time on 2 January.

Amendment to Political Parties Registration Law

On 5 January, the rules amending the Political Parties Registration Law were announced.

Myanma Alinn: 1-1-2013
Trs: HKA+MT

Approval for taking alternate ASEAN Chairmanship

ASEAN Summit held on 17 November approved Myanmar's bid for alternate

President U Thein Sein attended the opening of Ayeyawady River crossing Ayeyawady Bridge (Nyaungdon) on 27 November. Thanks to the bridge, Patheingyi and Yangon (Hlaingthaya) are now easily accessible by train via Hinthada and Zalun.

On 6 December, President U Thein Sein held a discussion with Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on mutual cooperation between the two countries in Nay Pyi Taw.

Opening of Nay Pyi Taw International Airport

Rural water supply tasks put out to tender

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan—“A total of 420 kinds of rural water supply tasks are put out to tender for implementation of rural development tasks,” said Chairman of Central

Committee for Tender Scrutiny Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Zaw Win, at the tender scrutiny meeting of Rural Region Development Department, at the Ministry

here this morning. Member of Tender Scrutiny Central Committee the director-general of Rural Development Department explained the future tasks.—MNA

YCDC accepts donation of two platform

YANGON, 1 Jan—A ceremony to donate two Platform Trucks by Myanmar Pipes & Accessories Co Ltd to Yangon City Development Committee was held at City Hall here this morning. The managing director of the company donated the

facilities to Yangon Region Minister for Development Affairs Chairman of YCDC Yangon Mayor U Hla

Myint. A platform truck manufactured by Japan is worth K 41 million.—MNA

Action speaks louder than words.

ARTICLE

Yesterday, today and tomorrow

Tin Maung Than

Some were even predicting the arrival of the final chapter of human civilization referring to Mayan calendar that ended on the day which was exactly the 21st of December 2012. But nothing even big or extraordinary occurred on that day let alone the destruction of the whole world by something like a large meteorite, mega volcanic explosions, the Sun's evil twin brother "Nemesis", a planetarium head-on collision or an all-out nuclear war.

The day was just like other ordinary days in which certain parts of the world saw ongoing civil wars, unexpected natural disasters, strikes, joys, sorrows, economic progress or economic decline. It was nothing more extraordinary than any other days of the year, which had just said goodbye to us all.

They are just prophecies or beliefs of some quarters of the world. We agree peoples of the world may have the right to present or announce their predictions or ideas if they are not

really harmful to others. We haven't any wish to criticize them. We agree that every thing has its own beginning and end. In this world, every second or minute, babies are born, while others, especially the aged die. It's a natural phenomenon. And in history, great empires emerged and then fell. Celebrities or personalities appear. We love them, and we admire them. But they never last forever. They have their own night and final days. So, nothing is permanent. Everything really is impermanent. The world itself is changing since from the very start of its birth.

Most of us accept that the Earth will end one day. But we do not know how or when it will end. That's why some are foretelling the end of the world. But no ordinary person on Earth knows when or how the world will end. But most people believe that the world has its own final chapter. Scientists have found firm and realistic evidences that the mother Earth even though not met with her final moment faced large-scale destructions in which many species were totally or almost wiped out

and ecosystems vanished at certain times all along her history. The world saw mass extinctions of species in Ordovician-Silurian extinction event (roundabout 450-440 million years ago); Late Devonian extinction (about 374 million years ago); Permian-Triassic extinction event (around 252.28 million years ago); Triassic-Jurassic extinction event (roughly 200 million years ago); and Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction event (approximately 65.5 million years ago). But these events could not end the world. Anyhow, mother Earth survived, and continues her existence till now despite the dreadful blows it suffered.

Here doomsday theory is another matter. It may be caused by miles high tsunamis or extraordinary earthquakes or mammoth volcanic eruptions or unimagined cyclones or the disappearance of Earth's magnetic field which is protecting dreadful solar flares that wiped out life on Mars or the return of the Nemesis or meteorite impact. In fact, we concern more about our future as we

have already ushered into another very recently, which according to the colander is 2013. And it is not our end, just another beginning. We will continue to usher in many more new years in the future.

Actually, these unforeseen external and internal forces may come or may not come. No one can ascertain. What is sure is that we have the past, the present, and the future. The past is over, but it really happened once. In fact, it's like a dream. When we dream we feel as it is really happening. And when we wake up, we come to realize that it's nothing, but a just a dream. Yes, it all happened yesterday. But it leaves behind emotions and repercussions that have much impact on us.

In point of fact, the present is where we are, and the future is where we are expecting or want to be. We know our past, but not the future. No one exactly knows what will happen tomorrow. What we are doing at present concerns with our past and



future. If we are doing our best at present, and just see the past as the lesson we should learn we can see a brighter future. And if we fail to do so, our future will be dim, and the past will be more painful.

Accordingly, we can say the past or yesterday is just dreams and the future or tomorrow is a vision. As the present is where we are, we actually are living between dreams and visions. As a result, we must make our vision

brighter and dreams more beautiful. The only and best way is we all try with our finest performances so that we can have the most optimistic future and sweetest dreams ever as a Sanskrit saying, which goes, "Yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is only a vision. But today well-lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day."

Dy C&IT Minister visits GSM/UMTS mobile stations in Bago Region (West)

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan — Deputy Minister for Communications and Information Technology U Thaung Tin inspected functions of Thayawady Post Office, GSM/UMTS

mobile station in Nawinn satellite ward in Pyay and Ywabe Taungbaw GSM/UMTS mobile station, Pyay Auto-Exchange and Region Manager Office in Bago Region (West) yesterday.

Next, the Deputy Minister also visited GSM/UMTS mobile stations in Kyitha Ayemya in Pyay, Innma and Wetpoke villages in Thegon Township.

MNA

Courses conducted at UMFCCI conclude

YANGON, 1 Jan — Organized by Human Resources Work Committee of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Certificate Course for Office Management No. 10, Certificate Course for Practical Approach to International Trade No. 8, Certificate Course for

Systematic Distribution and Management No. 6, Basic Certificate Course for Sales and Marketing No. 4, Certificate Course for Business English No. 8, Certificate Course for Human Resource Management No. 4, Certificate Course for Financial Management No. 4 and Certificate Course for Japanese Language No. 7

concluded at the federation on 29 December.

UMFCCI President U Win Aung spoke on the occasion. Chairman of Work Committee Dr Myo Thet explained the purposes of opening the courses. The outstanding trainees' awards and completion certificates were presented to trainees.

MNA

New primary school building handed over in Thegon

THEGON, 1 Jan — A ceremony to donate the new school building of Tatywa Basic Education Primary School was held at the school in Tatywa Village of Thegon Township, Pyay District,

on 27 December. Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Ashin Nanissara gave Ovadakatha on donations and handed over the documents related to the new school building to Deputy Director

U Win Myint of Bago Region Education Director (Pyay)'s Office.

The new school building was donated by Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Ashin Nanissara. —Myanma Alinn

KIA attacks food convoy with small arms

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan — As KIA has been attacking the routes linking Putao District where the population is dominated by Rawan people, local people are facing high commodity prices and food scarcity. The Tatmadaw and Kachin State government thus in cooperation are transporting foodstuffs to the region.

At the fifth regular session of First Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, U Thein Zaw of Myitkyina Constituency and U Yaw D Dwe of Putao Constituency submitted proposals urging the Union government to take a leading role in ensuring food security and development of Putao District. The Hluttaw in response to the proposals decided to put the proposals

on record and the President attaching considerable importance to facts in the proposals instructed the Tatmadaw to assist in transporting foodstuffs for local people and civil servants in Putao.

The Tatmadaw offered air lift and provided security with the state government in transporting foodstuffs and consumer goods to Putao District and Public Works in repairing damaged roads and bridges due to the mine attacks of KIA.

About KIA members attacked the food convoy with small arms moving from Kayawun Village of Sumprabum Township to Putao on 28 December afternoon and retreated following the counterattack

of security forces. In the incident, a staff member from the convoy was wounded.

KIA has so far committed 101 mine attacks in Kachin State and from 18 May, 2011 to 21 December 2012, the loss from mine blasts at railroads amounted to K 22020250.43. In addition, 22 units of State-owned machinery like loaders, graders, rollers, dozers, excavators and tippers at such construction sites on Myitkyina-Sumprabum-Putao Road as Inkawma Station, Sutka Station, Kawa Station, Nankhamka Village Station and Kagayan Station were destroyed by the bomb attacks of KIA, leaving K 663.350 million loss.

MNA

KIA attacks crew to repair power grid

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan — KIA group attacked 66 KV power grid between Mali hydropower plant in Waingmaw Township to

Myitkyina on 24 December, causing electricity outage in Myitkyina. KIA also attacked maintenance crew with three vehicles bound

for destruction sites on 29 December near Maliyan Village with artillery, damaging the vehicles and tools. The crew withdrew to Myitkyina and could not still repair the power grid. The power supply cannot still be resumed. —MNA



People release balloons into the air to celebrate the upcoming new year on a street in Shanghai, east China, on 31 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

Chinese, Antigua and Barbuda leaders mark 30 years of ties

BEIJING, 1 Jan—Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao exchanged congratulatory messages on Tuesday with Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

In his message, Wen said relations between China and Antigua and Barbuda have been increasingly consolidated in the past 30 years.

The two countries have witnessed enhanced political mutual trust, fruitful cooperation in economy and trade, infrastructure and culture, and sound coordination on international affairs, he said.

Facts proved that amity between China and Antigua and Barbuda conforms to the fundamental interests of both countries and peoples, Wen said.

China pays close attention to the friendly cooperative relations with Antigua and Barbuda, and is ready to work with the Caribbean country to further enhance cooperation and push forward bilateral ties, Wen said.

In his message, Spencer said the Antigua and Barbuda government and people highly value the relations with China.

He said he would like to join hands with China to deepen the pragmatic cooperation in all areas in the principle of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit, seize opportunities and tackle challenges to push bilateral relations to a higher level.

Also on Tuesday, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi exchanged congratulatory messages with Spencer, who is also Antigua and Barbuda's Foreign Minister.—Xinhua

Greece welcomes New Year with wishes for exit from debt crisis

ATHENS, 1 Jan—Greece welcomed the New Year with wishes for a swift exit from the severe debt crisis which has brought hardship to Greek people over the past three years.

Amid painful austerity and recession political leaders and citizens on the streets of Athens and across the country exchanged wishes for an imminent return to growth in the coming months and a better future for suffering Greek peoples.

Despite gloomy forecasts by experts that 2013 will be also difficult for Greece, Athenians and foreign visitors sent their messages for brighter days

to come from the pedestrian road under the illuminated Acropolis hill. As the City's Philharmonic Band and local music groups performed traditional songs, spectators embraced each other wishing the entire world all the best during the New Year.

Celebrations in Athens ran on a limited budget due to the crisis for a third year in a row. However, Greeks faced 2013 with plenty of decisiveness to continue the struggle to tackle problems and rebuild the ailing economy, despite wide-spread pessimism.

"I am absolutely certain that we can reverse the current

New York City breaks tourism record for third straight year

NEW YORK, 1 Jan—Some 52 million visitors travelled to New York City in 2012 in a third straight record-breaking year for tourism, the mayor's office and the city's tourism organization said on Monday.

More than a million additional tourists visited to New York in 2012 than in 2011, a 2.1 percent increase, Mayor Michael Bloomberg's office and NYC & Company, New York's tourism and marketing organization, said in a news release.

New York received 41 million visitors from elsewhere in the United States, and 11 million travelled from a foreign country. The tourists spent \$36.9 billion directly and generated an estimated economic impact of \$55.3 billion.

The city set a goal of welcoming 55 million visitors by 2015, Bloomberg said on Monday in a news release. The old goal of attracting 50 million visitors by 2012 was surpassed a year

early, according to Chris Heywood of NYC & Co, the city's tourism and marketing organization.

New York has seen a record number of tourists each year since 2002 with the exception of 2009, Heywood said.

The record-breaking figures were announced on a day when more than 1 million revelers were expected to ring in the New Year by packing Times Square to watch the famous ball drop, according to cable television news station NY1.

The growing number of visitors to New York also reflected the current boom in tourism across the globe. A record 1 billion travellers visited a foreign country in 2012, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council.

Zambia's wildlife management chief fired over hunting safaris

LUSAKA, 1 Jan—The head of a government institution that manages Zambia's wildlife has been fired after irregularities were identified in the awarding of safari hunting licenses to some companies, *the Post of Zambia* reported on Monday.

Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) Director-General Edwin Matokwani

damage."

Clinton is making "excellent progress" in her recovery, said the doctors, adding that "they are confident she will make a full recovery." Clinton's spokesman Philippe Reines said on Sunday night that she was hospitalized with blood clot, and is being treated with anti-coagulant.

Reines said Clinton is being treated at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital and she will be staying there for some 48 hours in order to allow her doctor to determine if any further

action is needed.

Clinton has encountered a number of health problems recently. On 15 Dec, she fainted and hit her head, consequently sustaining a concussion.

Prior to that, she canceled her scheduled trip to North Africa and the Middle East due to a stomach virus.

Clinton, 65, has said she will step down as secretary of state when President Barack Obama finishes his first term. Obama has tapped Democratic Senator John Kerry as her successor.

Xinhua



Tourists gather in Times Square in New York on 6 Aug, 2012.—REUTERS

has been fired together with four other senior officials for irregularities in the awarding of the 10-year safari hunting licenses while the licenses have since been revoked.

Minister of Tourism and Arts Sylvia Masebo said there were several irregularities in the awarding of the safari hunting concession in 19 hunting blocs in various game management areas, which would not be tolerated.

"Contrary to the tender rules, there was a leakage of information during evaluation process to prospective bidders long before the process was completed. This in itself rendered the whole evaluation process not credible in the eyes of stakeholders and the general public," she was quoted as saying by the paper. According to her, some companies which submitted

bids in the tender process and were subsequently approved should have been considered as associate firms with cross shareholding and had directors related to one another, contrary to tender rules.

Out of the 19 advertised licenses, 13 were awarded to Zambians with foreign origins while only one was given to an indigenous Zambian, she added.

The irregularities in the awarding of the safari hunting licenses causes some stakeholders to petition Zambian President Michael Sata so that he could intervene and reverse the move.

Following the petition, the wildlife body re-advertised the tender for the granting of 19 safari hunting licenses in various game management areas.

Xinhua



Flamingos stand in the Laguna Brava Provisional Conservation Zone in La Rioja Province, Argentina, on 30 Dec, 2012.—XINHUA

REGIONAL

Beijing air quality improves for 14th consecutive year

BEIJING, 1 Jan— Beijing's air quality has improved for 14 straight years, with major pollutants down in the city, a municipal government spokesman said on Monday.

The annual average concentration of major pollutants PM10 (particulate matter under 10 micrometres in diameter), sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide dropped

by 4 percent year on year in 2012, said Fang Li, spokesman for the municipal environmental protection bureau.

"The biggest challenge for air quality control in Beijing is the increase of pollutants," said Fang. "We can only improve air quality by making sure that pollution reduction outpaces increases in pollutants." Fang cited the

city's growing population, as well as an increasing number of cars and construction projects, as problems for improving air quality.

Replacing coal with natural gas as a fuel source reduced the consumption of coal by 700,000 tonnes last year, Fang said, adding that 122 heavily polluting companies were closed as well.—Xinhua

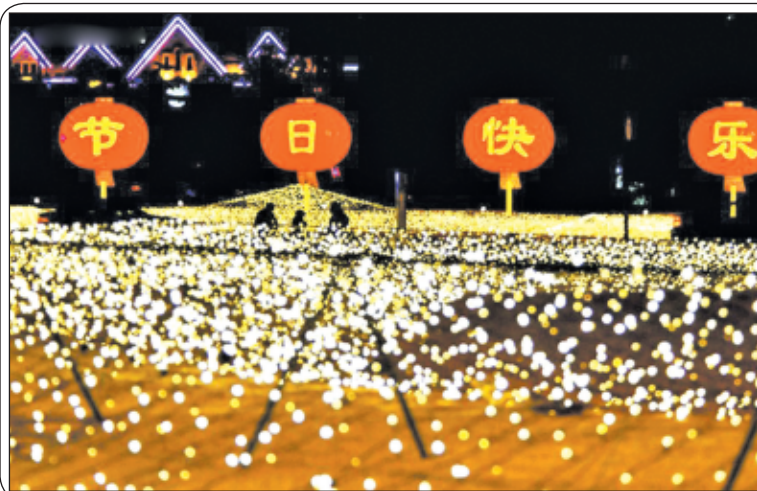


Photo taken on 30 Dec, 2012 shows the lighting scenery at the People Square in Dalian, northeast China's Liaoning Province. The lights were lit to celebrate the coming of new year. XINHUA

Over hundred infect norovirus in Japanese Yokohama

TOKYO, 1 Jan— More than a hundred people have infected norovirus at a hospital in Japan's Yokohama, municipal officials said on Monday.

A total of 112 people, including 82 patients and 30 staff, at the Yokohama Denentoshi Hospital have infected gastroenteritis caused by the infectious

virus by Monday morning, the officials was quoted by Japan's *Kyodo News* as saying. The disease has probably caused death of four seniors, who died of breathing problems with reports of the virus' symptoms of vomit and diarrhea, on 29 Dec in the hospital. The officials said local government has inspected four times in the

hospital to try to find the infection route and Japan's health ministry has urged local governments to pay attention to the epidemic.

Meanwhile, Maebashi city in Gunma Prefecture also reported a senior female, who was detected positive to the virus test, died at a nursing home, according to *Kyodo*. Xinhua

Foreign inflows increasing in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, 1 Jan— Returns from Sri Lanka's booming post-war tourism industry, higher remittances and long term borrowings are expected to increase foreign inflows into the country, the Central Bank said in its latest data here on Monday.

For the first eleven months of 2012, workers' remittances recorded a growth of 17.1 percent year-on-year, amounting to 5,432 million US dollars, it said.

Earnings from tourism during the first 11 months of 2012 increased by 23 percent year-on-year to 905.3 million US dollars, which is expected to further increase given that the island passed its record one million arrivals over the weekend.

"Higher inflows in terms of tourism earnings and workers' remittances are expected to increase foreign exchange liquidity in the market, thereby

strengthening the external value of the rupee, "the Central Bank said.

It also said substantial foreign currency inflows have been recorded in the capital and financial account of the balance of payments during the first eleven months of 2012.

Foreign investments at the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) increased to 280 million US dollars, on a net basis, by the end of November 2012, while there have been a significant increase in foreign investments in government securities, with net inflows to Treasury bills and Treasury bonds during the first 11 months of 2012 reaching 833 million US dollars.

Meanwhile, long-term loans obtained by the government during the first 10 months of 2012 amounted to 2,614 million US dollars.—Xinhua



Children play on the beach in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, on 31 Dec, 2012. Many tourists came to seaside in Sanya to spend the last day of 2012. XINHUA

United Nations peacekeeping mission ends service in Timor Leste

DILI, 1 Jan— The United Nations peacekeeping mission officially ended its service in Timor Leste on Monday after 13 years taking part in preserving peace and security during the transition period into an independent state after it opted to separate from Indonesia. The ending of its service in Asia's youngest

nation was marked with the taking down of its flag and sending 1,500-strong mission members to their respective countries.

Head of UN Integrated Mission in Timor Leste Finn Reske-Nielsen said in a statement that the departure of the mission would not end the partnership between UN

and Timor Leste, saying that challenges still remain.

"There remains much work ahead, this is a historic moment in recognizing the progress already made. We look forward to a new phase in this relationship focusing on social and economic development," he said.

Xinhua

Indonesian capital imposes car free night for new year's eve celebrations

JAKARTA, 1 Jan— Capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta, applied car free night due to new year's eve celebrations, local media reported on Monday. The celebration is named Jakarta Night Festival (JNF). Governor of Jakarta, Joko Widodo, will lead the

countdown of new year of 2013.

According to Kompas.com, due to the celebration, main streets in Jakarta will be closed for vehicles from 8.00 pm on Monday to 2.00 am on Tuesday.

Around 5 parking areas

were set for people who want to enjoy JNF.

Local government built 16 stages for JNF, which are prepared for many top artists and art performers.

Fireworks display is also planned to be part of the entertainment.—Xinhua

S Korea's welfare spending to top 30 pct of budget in 2013

SEOUL, 1 Jan— South Korea planned to spend the highest portion of budget on public welfare next year amid the president elect Park Geun-hye's pledge to increase social spending.

The special budget committee under the South Korea's National Assembly tentatively agreed on Sunday on the 2013 budget of 342.7 trillion won (321.94 billion US dollars), up 0.2 trillion from the preliminary budget

plan proposed in September by the government.

The committee's lawmakers from both ruling and opposition parties agreed to increase 4.3 trillion won next year on public welfare spending instead of reducing 4.1 trillion won in social overhead capital (SOC) expenditure. Among the total, 97.1 trillion won will be allotted to social welfare expenditure and additional 5.5 trillion won will be spent

on public welfare projects.

The figure breached the 100 trillion won mark for the first time in the country's history and the expected 3 trillion won increase will raise the proportion of the public welfare budget to the total to top the 30 percent mark for the first time.

The record level of budget for public welfare came after Park's campaign pledge to increase social spending.—Xinhua

Seven dead in central China road accident

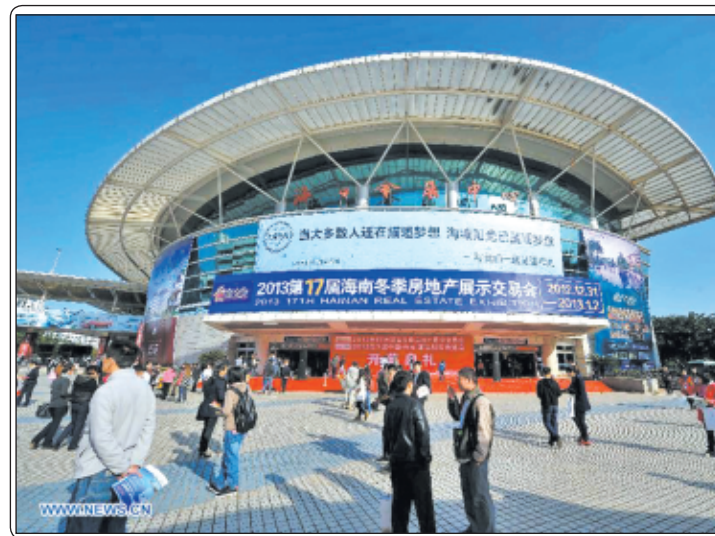
WUHAN, 1 Jan— Seven people, including two children, were killed and five others injured after a head-on collision between a minibus and an SUV Sunday afternoon in central China's Hubei Province.

The minibus collided with the SUV at around 3:00 pm on a section of National Highway 106 in Tongshan County of Xianning City. The icy road due to days of snow and sleet contributed to the collision, a local government spokesman said on Monday morning.

Seven died at the scene. The five injured were rushed to a local hospital for treatment, the spokesman said. The cause of the accident is under investigation.

Xinhua

Photo taken on 31 Dec, 2012 shows the site of the opening ceremony for the 17th Hainan Winter Real Estate Exhibition and Trade Fair in Haikou, capital of south China's Hainan Province. The three-day exhibition kicked off here on Monday, showcasing some 60 real estate projects.—XINHUA



CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV ORA BHUM VOY NO (324)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ORA BHUM VOY NO (324) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.1.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER
LINES**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 4th January (Friday) 2013, Independence day, being public holiday Under the Negotiable Instruments Act.
Central Bank of Myanmar

Central African Republic President Francois Bozize (C) speaks to a crowd of supporters and anti-rebel protesters during an appeal for help, in Bangui on 27 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

**Israel eases ban on building material for Gaza**

GAZA, 1 Jan—Israel eased its blockade of Gaza on Sunday, allowing a shipment of gravel for private construction into the Palestinian territory for the first time since Hamas seized control in 2007.

A Palestinian official with knowledge of an Egyptian-brokered ceasefire that ended eight days of fighting last month between Israel and Gaza militants said the move had been expected as part of the deal.

"This is the first time gravel has been allowed into Gaza for the Palestinian private sector since the blockade," said Raed Fattouh, the Palestinian official overseeing the shipment of 20 truckloads of the material.

Israel tightened the blockade after Hamas, an Islamist group that refuses to recognize the Jewish state, took power five years ago. But under international pressure, Israel began to ease the restrictions in 2010 and

has allowed international aid agencies to import construction material.

The gravel was transferred a day after Egypt allowed building material into Gaza through its Rafah crossing, departing from a six-year ban. It was part of a shipment donated by the Gulf Arab state of Qatar, which has pledged \$400 million to finance reconstruction.

Gaza economists say nearly 70 percent of the enclave's commercial needs—including building material and fuel—were being met through shipments via Israel and a network of smuggling tunnels running under the Egyptian border.

One Palestinian official said Israeli counterparts had promised "other building items" would be allowed into Gaza in the coming days.

"Israel has promised to ease the blockade more if the truce continues to hold," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

Reuters



A truck loaded with building materials drives at the Rafah crossing with Egypt, in the southern Gaza Strip on 30 Dec, 2012.—REUTERS

Germany mulls tank deal with Saudi Arabia

BERLIN, 1 Jan—The German government has given the green light in principle to sell 30 armoured vehicles worth about 100 million euros (132 million US dollars) to Saudi Arabia, German newspaper *Bild am Sonntag* reported on Sunday.

The newspaper cited government sources saying that Saudi Arabia could eventually purchase up to 100 Dingo 2 armoured vehicles.

Boasted by its maker as "the safest and best-protected wheeled vehicle in its class", the tank can carry eight infantry personnel and is equipped with a top-mounted machine gun as standard. The vehicle is also equipped with atomic, biological and chemical protection system.

The report said the national security council

chaired by Chancellor Angela Merkel has already given the green light in principle, although a final decision on the deal has yet to be made.

Proposed arms deals with Saudi Arabia have drawn intense domestic attention and criticism. Social Democrat chancellor candidate Peer Steinbrück said last week that it was "extremely dangerous that Germany has become the world's third largest exporter of weapons."

However, Angela Merkel reportedly said in a speech in October that it is in Germany's interests to "enable partners to intervene effectively to preserve or re-establish security and peace in their regions."

Xinhua

Central African Republic rebels threaten to enter capital

BANGUI, 1 Jan—Rebels in Central African Republic could enter the capital Bangui as early as "tonight, or tomorrow morning" if President Francois Bozize refuses their conditions for peace talks, a rebel spokesman said on Sunday. The three-week-old Seleka rebellion has advanced to within 75 km (45 miles) of Bangui, posing the most serious threat yet to Bozize's

nearly 10 years in charge of the turbulent and resource-rich former French colony.

African Union Chairman Thomas Yayi Boni is due to meet Bozize on Sunday to lay the groundwork for peace talks in Gabon with Seleka, an alliance of three armed groups that accuses Bozize of failing to honour a 2007 deal under which members who laid down their guns were meant to be paid.

Seleka said it is demanding direct talks with Bozize along with guarantees of safety for its generals.

"We are waiting to see what comes out of today's meeting between Bozize and ... Yayi Boni before we make a final decision," rebel spokesman Nelson Ndjadder said by telephone from France. "We could march into Bangui tonight or tomorrow morning," he said.

Ndjadder said the rebel force numbered around 3,000 and was growing as new fighters joined during a swift advance from the country's northwest since early December. The rebel onslaught has highlighted the instability of a country that has remained poor and turbulent since independence from France in 1960, despite rich deposits of uranium, gold and diamonds.—Reuters

Dubai ruler urges citizens to honour low-class workers

DUBAI, 1 Jan—Dubai's ruling Emir Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid al-Maktoum on Sunday urged citizens to give gifts to blue-collar workers in the sheikhdom to celebrate the seventh anniversary of his ruling on 4 Jan, 2013.

The Emir of Dubai issued the directive on Sunday, asking citizens not to celebrate his tenure, but to give presents to workers like cleaners, public drivers or construction workers. Sheikh Mohamed, who is also the

vice-president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), succeeded as ruler of Dubai when his older brother and predecessor Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid al-Maktoum had a heart attack on 4 Jan, 2006.—Xinhua

Iran's navy adopts cyber defence techniques in ongoing drills

TEHERAN, 1 Jan—An Iranian navy commander said Sunday that Iran used cyber defence techniques in its ongoing naval military exercises, Press TV reported.

On Friday, Iranian navy launched a six-day massive drill in its southern waters. The naval drills, dubbed Velayat 91, or Guardianship 91, are being carried out in the Strait of Hormuz, the Sea of Oman, the north of the Indian Ocean, the Gulf of Aden and the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait.

"During the second day of the drills, aggressive forces launched a cyber attack against the computer network of defensive forces in order to infiltrate the network and hack information or spread viruses," Rear Admiral Amir Rastegari said, adding that the cyber defence forces successfully detected the threat and blocked it.

Iranian navy's "cyber defence group" is a specialized unit that monitors and protects the computer network of the naval forces and detects "all cyber infiltration and immediately takes necessary measures to counter them," Rastegari said.—Xinhua



Citizens tour the West Lake in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province, on 30 Dec, 2012. Most parts of Zhejiang witnessed strong wind and a temperature drop after a snowfall on Saturday.—XINHUA

23 people hospitalized for gas poisoning in Istanbul

ANKARA, 1 Jan—At least 23 people were hospitalized for gas poisoning in a hotel in the Turkish largest city of Istanbul early Monday, local newspaper *Today's Zaman* reported on its website. About 21 of the

poisoned are foreign tourists and two are employees in Modern Sultan Hotel in Fatih District of Istanbul, according to the report.

Ambulances were deployed to the hotel, said the report, adding that some of

the poisoned people were unconscious.

Four tourists were in critical condition, added the report, firefighter and gas experts were sent to the hotel to avoid further accident due to gas leak.—Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT



Wellington, Double Oscar-winning sound editor Mike Hopkins

Oscar-winning sound editor drowns in New Zealand

WELLINGTON, 1 Jan—Double Oscar-winning sound editor Mike Hopkins has drowned in a rafting accident in New Zealand, police said on Monday.

Mr Hopkins, a 53-year-old New Zealander, died after being thrown into a fast-flowing stretch of river in the remote Tararua Ranges in the central North Island on Saturday. His two rafting companions both survived.

All three were wearing

life jackets, wetsuits and helmets, Senior Sergeant Carolyn Watson said.

Mr Hopkins won Oscars for his work on *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* in 2003 and *King Kong* in 2006 while working with American Ethan Van der Ryn.

He also worked on several other notable movies including *Blade Runner*, *Superman*, *The Last Emperor* and *Octopussy*.

PTI

Cameron Diaz remembers people by their haircuts

LONDON, 1 Jan—The *Gambit* actress admits she has always struggled to remember people's names, so resorts to visual clues to associate them with when seeing them again.

She explained: "The feeling when I'm trying to remember a name is total emptiness. It's something that's been with me for a long time. I used to remember people by their haircuts. I'm a visual person. "But now I have so many faces that I meet on a daily basis that I can't capture all of them."

Cameron — who left school at 16 to pursue a model-

ling career — admits she has no idea how she managed to graduate from high school.

She said: "I did graduate but I honestly have no idea how. I don't think I ever did one day of work in school."

The 40-year-old actress was in fact something of a rebel when she attended Long Beach Polytechnic High School, and bought marijuana off budding young rapper Snoop Dogg, who was there at the same time.

She said: "He was a year older than me. I remember him, he was very tall and skinny. He wore lots of ponytails. I'm pretty sure

I bought weed from him. I was green even in high school."

PTI



Cameron Diaz

I don't read tabloid magazines: Kristen Stewart



Actress Kristen Stewart

LONDON, 1 Jan—Actress Kristen Stewart refuses to buy tabloid magazines because she does not want to read about herself.

The 22-year-old, who is dating actor Robert Pattinson, hates reading about herself, specifically her love life, reported *Daily Express*.

"It's the most disjointed, uninformed, and completely unsatisfying and completely depressing. They don't write about my personal life. You know what I mean? The same exact thing about being able to choose your path and your career—you don't step outside your life and look at it like you're someone else."

"I have the same friends I've had for years and years. I make new friends too. I'm a really good judge of character. I know who I like, and I know who I don't like, almost to a fault," she said.

PTI

Jennifer Lawrence's New Year resolution is to stand up for herself

LONDON, 1 Jan—The *Silver Linings Playbook* star thinks she is a pushover and wants to learn how to be more assertive without upsetting other people.

She told *Marie Claire* South Africa's January 2013 issue: "My New Year's Resolution is to stand up for myself. It's hard for me. Nobody wants to be disliked. You always want to be polite and be nice. I tried to find a balance in saying what I mean and still being nice. I

can't do it. I have this 'okay' attitude and everything. I end up allowing myself to get walked over and resenting it."

Jennifer, 22—who is dating British actor Nicholas Hoult—also revealed she prefers staying at home rather than having wild nights out.

She said: "I don't like going out that much. I'm kind of an old lady. After it's 11pm, I'm like 'Don't these kids ever get tired?' When I'm out, I think about



Jennifer Lawrence

my couch."

While the stunning star has been blasted for her curvy figure, Jennifer has no plans

to lose weight. She added: "I'd rather look chubby on screen and like a person in real life."—PTI

Elvis Presley, The Beatles top list of most-forged autographs

LOS ANGELES, 1 Jan—Elvis Presley and The Beatles top the list of most-forged celebrity signatures in 2012, with less than half of their autographs for sale certified as genuine, memorabilia authenticators PSA/DNA said on Thursday. The King and The Fab Four British rockers, who topped the list two years ago when it was last released, joined notable figures such as former US President John F Kennedy and late pop star Michael Jackson on the list of most-forged celebrity signatures.

Late American astronaut Neil Armstrong landed at No 3 on the list, after fake Armstrong signatures rose significantly after his death in July. One reason forgeries of Armstrong's autograph soared was that he rarely signed for fans during his life, Joe Orlando, president of Newport Beach-based PSA/DNA, told *Reuters*.

"Armstrong is someone who is very conscious of the value of his own autograph,"

Orlando said. "Even before he passed away he was very tough to get...It really heightens the level of his market." Secretaries and assistants responding to huge volumes of fan mail are one reason for fake signatures floating through the marketplace, said Margaret Barrett, director of entertainment and music memorabilia at Heritage Auctions in Los Angeles.

"Back in the day, the kids would write to the movie studios," Barrett said.

"There was absolutely no financial gain 50 years ago and secretaries and assistants just wanted to make them happy. A lot of times people stumble upon an old box of signed photographs in grandma's attic and don't know they're forged."

Barrett, whose specialty is late Hollywood actress Marilyn Monroe's autographs, said that official documents such as contracts and checks are reliable sources to verify whether or



Singer Elvis Presley is pictured in this undated publicity photograph which is autographed.—REUTERS

not a signature is forged.

"A good rule of thumb is to compare it a signed contract," she said. "Sometimes (celebrities) would have secretaries or other sign photos and letters but they couldn't have a contract signed by a proxy."

Reuters

Wozniacki bundled out of Brisbane

International

BRISBANE, 1 Jan—Caroline Wozniacki's preparations for the Australian Open were in tatters on Monday after she was bundled out of the Brisbane International by Kazakhstan's world No 103 Ksenia Pervak.

Wozniacki's defeat completed a disastrous 12 months in which the Dane relinquished the No 1 ranking and failed to threaten at any of the major championships.

The world No 10 started strongly but wilted as Pervak, a 21-year-old qualifier on the comeback trail from a serious pelvic injury, committed

61 unforced errors but still completed a 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-1) victory for her first win against a top 10 player.

"Had a lot of long rallies and a lot of even games, and it just didn't go my way," she said.

"Obviously it's tough to lose 7-6 in the third. It was a tough match. Could have gone both ways. She just went for it and it went in for her. Hopefully I can get some more matches in Sydney and be more prepared for Melbourne."

Wozniacki said knee troubles had hampered her during the year.

"You know, I'm still 10 in the world," she said. "Just the most important thing is that you're healthy. I had some struggles with my health. Obviously that makes a difference.

"But as long as I'm healthy and I can fight and be competitive, that is the most important thing.

"You play the sport you love to do, and obviously it's more fun when you're winning. Right now in these situations it's not so much fun. There is always the next week - I guess that's the good part about tennis."

Wozniacki, sporting a



Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark hits a return to Tsvetana Pironkova of Bulgaria during their WTA Tournament of Champions semi-final match in Sofia on 3 Nov, 2012. REUTERS

ring on her wedding finger, downplayed speculation she was engaged to the golfer Rory McIlroy, who was among the spectators on Monday.

"It was a Christmas present and it fit on this finger," she said. "I put it on, and all of a sudden I hear that I'm engaged. I'm not. It's already twice we've had

to shut down engagement rumours.

"Don't worry, we will let you know if that time happens. We're just taking one day at a time."—Reuters

Milan hoping to keep Robinho or Pato

MILAN, 1 Jan—AC Milan are still hoping to keep at least one of their two unsettled Brazilian strikers, Alexandre Pato and Robinho, club president Silvio Berlusconi said in a radio interview on Monday.

Pato is involved in negotiations for a move to world club champions Corinthians and Robinho has also been the subject of speculation over a return home with his former club Santos among the contenders.

"I hope that only one of them leaves," Berlusconi told Radio Lombardia. "I'm especially sorry about Pato because until he started this incredible sequence of injuries, he was Milan's number one player for the future, a true champion."

Pato, signed as a 17-year-old and now 23, has suffered an extraordinary 16 muscular injuries in the last two years, costing him, among other things, a place in Brazil's squad at the 2010 World Cup.

Brazilian media have



AC Milan's Brazilian players Pato (R) and Robinho celebrate after winning the Italian Serie A title at the end of their match against AS Roma at the Olympic stadium in Rome on 7 May, 2011. REUTERS

reported that he has agreed terms to join Corinthians in a deal that is expected to be finalised on Thursday.

Robinho, 28, has played for Real Madrid, Manchester City and Milan since leaving Santos in 2005, although there is a general feeling in Brazil he has never quite lived up to his early potential.

Berlusconi added that

it could be two or three seasons before Milan are in the fight for honours again after they sold several top players including Sweden striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic to cut costs.

"We must devote ourselves to a work of rebuilding and I believe will not be less than three years before we get to the

point where we have a team champions and turn ourselves into contenders again," he said.

Milan, reportedly among the clubs hoping to sign Ivory Coast striker Didier Drogba, are seventh in Serie A and have reached the last 16 of the Champions League.

Reuters

Italy's AS Roma plans new stadium for 2016 season

MILAN, 1 Jan—Italian top-flight soccer team AS Roma hopes to be playing in its own brand-new stadium in four years' time as the loss-making club seeks to raise its profile and boost revenue.

AS Roma's plan comes after Juventus, currently top of Serie A, became the first top Italian club to own its own ground having built a 41,000-seat stadium instead of relying on the Stadio delle Alpi which it had to share with Torino.

Such purpose-built modern facilities could help Italy in any future bid to host either a World Cup or European Championship.

AS Roma said on its website the stadium, which will

be privately financed and located in the southwest of the city, will have a seating capacity of between 55,000 and 60,000.

Reuters



US businessman James Pallotta looks on before the Serie A soccer match between AS Roma and Chievo at the Olympic stadium in Rome on 8 Jan, 2012.—REUTERS

Deportivo look to Domingos for La Liga survival

MADRID, 1 Jan—Survival in La Liga is the priority for new Deportivo La Coruna coach Domingos Paciencia, who was appointed to replace the sacked Jose Luis Oltra on Monday.

"It is important for Depor to stay in the Primera division and for this we need the commitment of everyone," Domingos told a news conference after agreeing to take charge of La Liga's bottom club until the end of the season. "It is a tough job but I like those, and it is for that reason I am here."

The former Portugal international, who turns 44 on Wednesday, led Braga to second in the Portuguese league in 2010, and his side beat Liverpool on their way to the final of the Europa League the following season, where they lost to Porto.

He moved to Sporting last year, but despite leading

them to the Portuguese Cup final, he was sacked in February as they struggled to keep pace in the title race.

"We tried to sign him when he was a player with Porto but Tenerife beat us to his signature," Deportivo president Cesar Augusto Lendoiro said.

"We are convinced we will be able to save ourselves." Promoted Depor were knocked out of the King's Cup at the first hurdle last month, and after managing only two wins in 17 league matches on their return to the top flight, they sacked Oltra on Sunday.

The Galician club is struggling with crippling debts and Lendoiro has said they will be forced into administration unless a deal with the Spanish tax authorities can be hammered out before the end of the year.

Reuters

Tunisia win first Nations Cup warm-up game

SHARJAH, 1 Jan—Tunisia began their preparations for next month's African Nations Cup with a 2-1 win over Iraq in a warm-up international in Sharjah on Sunday. Issam Jemaa and Fakhreddine Ben Youssef scored second-half goals before Iraq converted a late penalty through Younes Mahmoud to reduce the deficit.

Jemaa's goal came just after the break after the referee overruled an offside call from his linesman and Ben Youssef made it 2-0 soon afterwards. Tunisia are holding a training camp in Dubai and have three more preparatory internationals planned in the United Arab



Tunisia's national soccer team players line up for a team photo before their African Cup of Nations qualification match for the 2013 Africa Cup of Nations against Sierra Leone at Monastir Olympic Stadium on 13 Oct, 2012.—REUTERS

Emirates before they head to South Africa where they start their Nations Cup campaign on 22 January against Algeria in Rustenburg.—Reuters

GENERAL

Repaved road commissioned into service in Nyaunglebin

NYAUNGLEBIN, 1 Jan—As a gesture of hailing the 65th Anniversary Independence Day, repaved Maha Bawga Road, 1100 feet long and 10 feet wide, was put into service in Ward 2 of Nyaunglebin on 28 January.

The road was built at a cost of K 19,027,304 by the Township Development Affairs Committee in 2012-2013 fiscal year. Township level authorities cut the ribbon to open the repaved road.—NLM



Kenyans usher in 2013 with hope for peaceful elections

NAIROBI, 1 Jan — Chants, ululations and songs of joy reverberated across Kenya as the East African nation bid a turbulent 2012 good-bye and ushered in the New Year with full of hope. While some Kenyans congregated at places of worship for vigils to pray for the start of the New Year, others converged at entertainment spots to dance 2012 away.

The rest welcomed 2013 from the comfort of their homes, where they followed live broadcasts of various New Year events on television. And as the clock ticked towards midnight, chants of welcoming the New Year echoed across the East African nation as Kenyans shouted in joy. It was evident that Kenyans were glad to see 2012 fold up, a year which will go down in history as one of the toughest for the country. During the year, Kenyans saw incidents of terror attacks perpetuated by suspected Somali militant group Al-Shabaab sympathizers increase, claiming

lives of tens of people and injuring scores others in various towns, among them the capital Nairobi and Mombasa. The East African nation also witnessed its prominent sons and daughters continue to succumb to cancer as the killer disease haunted the country.

"Happy New Year," shouted Nairobi resident Phanice Abuya to her friends and family as the clock hit midnight, signifying the start of 2013. The group, which had gathered at her home in Komarock on the east of Nairobi for a night vigil, responded in chants and dance, welcoming in 2013.

After about 5 minutes of revelry that involved lighting fireworks, toasting glasses full of wine as they congratulated each other for completing the year, the group went to the next phase of celebrations, which was sharing their New Year wishes. "My prayer is that we have peaceful elections and elect credible leaders who will steer this country to greater heights," said

George Abuya. The East African nation will hold a crucial general election in about 60-days that will see incumbent President Mwai Kibaki retire and the country adopt a devolved system of government.

The polls, to be held under a new constitution, will be the first for Kenya since the bungled 2007 elections that saw Kenyans maim, kill and displace each due to disputed presidential results. "This is my year of hope. I pray to get married and start a new life," said Caroline Kemunto, 30, as the group cheered her.

The rest of the members talked about their hopes and wishes before the group continued with celebrations into wee hours of 2013. Daniel Kibuchi, who attended a church service in Nairobi's central business district, said they sang and danced the night away as they prayed for peace and security ahead of polls. "The service started at about 9:30 p.m. local time (1830 GMT).

Xinhua

Djokovic in injury scare at Hopman Cup

PERTH, 1 Jan—Australian Open champion Novak Djokovic suffered an injury scare at the Hopman Cup on Monday when the world No.1 hurt his leg as fans pushed towards him while he signed autographs.

Djokovic had wrapped up a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Italian Andreas Seppi when the incident happened. The Serb left his racquets and bag on the court and limped straight up the players tunnel to receive a medical assessment in the locker room.



Novak Djokovic of Serbia hits a return to Andreas Seppi of Italy during their men's singles match at the Hopman Cup tennis tournament in Perth on 31 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(2-1-13 09:30 am ~

3-1-13 09:30 am) MST

- * News
- * Myanmar Heritage to the World (Part-1)
- * News
- * Real Goods & Real Service
- * News
- * "Easily Cooked & Tasty Dishes" Fried Chicken Win Stuff
- * News
- * Mya Nan San Kyaw Golden Palace in Myanmar
- * 1st Anniversary of Myanmar Ratification on UNCRPD JOB FAIR
- * News
- * Myanmar Tourism Master Plan (Final Workshop) (Part-1)
- * News
- * Myanmar Tourism Master Plan (Final Workshop) (Part-2)
- * News
- * Ancestor And Successors
- * News
- * The Divine Beverage For You!
- * Myanmar Movies "Life is Struggling"

MYANMAR TV

(2-1-2013, Wednesday)

- | | | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------|---|
| 7:00 am | 1. Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw -Uppatasanti Paritta | 5:30 pm | 13. Documentary |
| 7:25 am | 2. To Be Healthy Exercise | 5:40 pm | 14. Classical Song |
| 7:30 am | 3. Morning News | 5:50 pm | 15. 65th Anniversary Independence Day Programme |
| 7:45 am | 4. Dhamma Puja Song | 6:00 pm | 16. Evening News |
| 7:55 am | 5. Nice & Sweet Song | 6:15 pm | 17. Weather Report |
| 8:05 am | 6. Health Programme | 6:20 pm | 18. Teleplay |
| 8:15 am | 7. Cultural Dance | 6:40 pm | 19. Shwe Yin Chone Than |
| 4:00 pm | 8. Martial Song | 7:00 pm | 20. Documentary |
| 4:05 pm | 9. Song of National Races | 8:00 pm | 21. News |
| 4:10 pm | 10. Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions | 8:00 pm | 22. International News |
| 5:10 pm | 11. Performance With Song | 9:00 pm | 23. Weather Report |
| 5:15 pm | 12. Road to 27th SEA GAMES | 10:00 pm | 24. TV Drama Series |
| | | | 25. News |
| | | | 26. Myanmar Movies |

Sharapova looks back on banner year

BRISBANE, 1 Jan—Maria Sharapova said 2012 had been the most memorable year of her career after her victory at the French Open and carrying Russia's flag at the opening ceremony of the London Olympics.

"A lot of things came together," she said in Brisbane on Monday. "It was the grand slam that was going to take a little bit longer than the others for me.

"I knew that physically I needed a few extra years to get stronger to move more efficiently on that surface," she said of her win on the French clay.

"The Olympic experience was one that I'll never forget because it was my first time being an Olym-

pian. I was the first Russian female athlete to carry the flag for my country, so it was very emotional. It was such an incredible experience."

Sharapova, competing in this week's Brisbane International tournament, said there was more depth in women's tennis than at any stage of her 12-year career. "It's much more physical than it has been," she said.

"Maybe five years ago you go into a tournament

that's had good results, beaten top players, hasn't been consistent enough but is a really tough, tough player. "The inconsistency obviously shows that their ranking is not high enough, therefore you're facing them in the first few rounds.

"It is a much stronger sport. And also with technology and racquets and improvements of all the things we have. There are so many things in tennis that in other sports you



Maria Sharapova of Russia tosses a ball during her match against Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark in an exhibition tour in Sao Paulo on 7 Dec, 2012.

REUTERS

and you would treat the first couple of rounds as, you know, not as a warm-up, but you don't have to go into the first round thinking, okay, this is where I really have to play my best tennis.

"Now it's certainly much different because you can be facing an opponent

don't consider: the balls, the racquets, the strings. That changes yearly."

World No 1 Victoria Azarenka, who will defend her Australian Open title in Melbourne, labelled this the toughest era in the history of the women's game.

Reuters

Speaker earmarks upcoming parliamentary session for “important laws”



NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan—A coordination meeting for holding sixth regular session of First Hluttaw took place at Hluttaw Building here this morning.

Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyein, Union ministers and officials of the Hluttaw Office attended the meeting.

Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann makes speech at coordination meeting for holding sixth regular session of First Hluttaw.

MNA

The Speaker in his opening speech called for collaboration and coordination in performing duties. He also underscored the flourishing of democratic practices.

He also predicted long-haul parliamentary session, earmarking the approval of National Plan, Union Budget, taxation laws, SEZ law, national investment law and other important pieces of legislation.

He called on every stakeholder and citizen to participate in legislation.

Secretary of working

committee for holding Hluttaw meetings Director-General of Hluttaw Office U Kyaw Soe reported on works of the central committee and working committees.

Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Aung Kyi, U Thein Tun, U Nyan Tun Aung, U Zeyar Aung, Dr Pe Thet Khin, U Kyaw Lwin, U Htay Aung and U Khin Maung Soe, and Nay Pyi Taw Council Chair-man U Thein Nyunt reported on their respective parts in organizing Hluttaw session. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann attended to the needs.

The concluding remarks by the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker brought the meeting to an end.—MNA

Myanmar Medical Research Conference on 7-11 January

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan— With a view to enhancing medical research works and receiving good research results for users by presenting the findings of the researchers from various departments under the Ministry of Health, the 41st Myanmar Medical Research Conference will be held at the Department of Medical Research (Lower Myanmar) on Ziwaka street in Dagon Township from 7 to 11 January 2013.

At the conference, 88 medical research papers will be read out and 26 posters will be displayed at the poster show.

Moreover, 12 educative talks will be conducted at the conference. NGOs at home and abroad, pharmaceutical companies, lab equipment, chemical supplier companies, private labs at home and abroad, hospitals and booths of clinics will display their products.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 1 Jan— “Myanmar’s economy is based on agriculture which is the lifeblood of the State. So, all the future agriculturalists need to strive to become experts who could shoulder the responsibilities of the State” said Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing while welcoming freshers at University of Agriculture (Yezin) in Zeyathiri Township this morning.

The Union minister and the rector of the university provided stationery and cash assistance to 64 first and second year students.

The Union minister proceeded to Agricultural Research Farm in Tatkon Township where he viewed thriving maize, groundnut and sunflower plantations.—MNA

University of Agriculture welcomes freshers



Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing presents stationery and cash assistances to a fresher.—MNA

Significant temperatures on (1-1-2013)

Haka	-1°C
Loilem	3°C
Putao	5°C

Watermelon sees up-ward prices



Daw Hla from the Village of Sin-te-gyi nurtures watermelon plants.

Watermelon growers in central Myanmar have seen up-ward prices for the fruits as it is in high demand these days.

“A watermelon broker at the China-Myanmar border market phoned me recently to take good care of our plants so that we can harvest marketable fruits and the price for the fruits is expected to be up when we harvested in March,” said Daw Hla, 51, as she is working on her two-acre of watermelon farmland in the village of Sin-te-gyi located about 10 miles east of Nay Pyi Taw.

A price for one-kg fruit which is considered to be marketable at the border market has reached over 1000 kyats at the border market recently though there was no-buyers for the fruits for the export market last

month.

Watermelon has been popular among the farmers since the income from the fruits reached its peak in 2009. To compete with rich non-inhabitant farmers from border areas, farmers in areas around Nay Pyi Taw have scheduled their planting season to be able to harvest the fruits in December before the New Year and in March in attempts to avoid the mass harvest of watermelons.

“Watermelon farming is a kind of lottery. We, small farmers, are not sure to win or loss from the harvest as we have to compete with fruits grown in Myanmar by rich non-inhabitants agro businessmen from Myanmar-China borders,”

Daw Hla added.

The price for the watermelon at the Myanmar-China border market was downward last month as fruits from both Myanmar traditional farmers and all non-inhabitant agro-business men from the border areas had been exported to the market while watermelons from Vietnamese farmers were flowing into the market at the same time.

To grow watermelon, traditional farmers borrow money from private lenders with the interest rate of 10 per cent while they get loans from the government with interest rate of 2 per cent to grow rice.

By Aye Min Soe