

ADB to assist in Myanmar's infrastructural development

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—President U Thein Sein received a delegation led by President of Asian Development Bank-ADB Mr Haruhiko Kuroda at Myanmar International Convention Center here this morning.

The meeting focused on ADB's assistance for development of Greater Mekong Sub-region countries, development of Myanmar's delta region vital for food production, utilization of fresh water from three major rivers of Myanmar and water courses conservation for hydropower generation, and construction of India-Myanmar-Thailand motor road as Myanmar being the bridge between South-

East Asia and South Asia, construction of Myanmar-Laos Mekong Bridge and regional cooperation, technical and financial help in infrastructural development, communication links development and sustainable energy development fundamental for development of Myanmar.

MNA

President U Thein Sein shakes hands with President of Asian Development Bank ADB Mr Haruhiko Kuroda.

MNA



Appointment of Philippine Ambassador to Myanmar agreed on

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb—The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Honorable Mr. Alex Garcia Chua as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in succession to Her Excellency Ms. Maria Hellen B. De La Vega.

Mr Alex Garcia Chua was born in Manila on 8th November 1956. He obtained Bachelor of Laws from the Lyceum of Philippines University, the Philippines in 1982.

He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

the Philippines in 1978 and has served in various capacities at the office of Cultural Affairs and Information, Office of Asian and Pacific Affairs, Office of Consular Affairs, Office of Legal Affairs and served in various capacities at the Embassy and Consulate Generals in Beijing, Hong Kong and Guangzhou to the People's Republic of China. He is currently serving as Deputy Chief of Mission to the Philippines Embassy in the People's Republic of China since 12th February 2011.

Mr. Alex Garcia Chua is married.

MNA

Significant night temperatures (7-2-2013)

Namhsam	4°C
Heho	4°C
Pinlaung	5°C

Norway welcomes agreement on Kachin talks



Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway Espen Barth Eide.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway issued a statement that the Myanmar government has reached an agreement with KIO on 4 February.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway Espen

Barth Eide commented in this statement that the agreement reached between the government and KIO to continue talks with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the violent conflict in Kachin State was an encouraging news for him.

Over the last year there have been very positive developments in Myanmar. Ceasefire agreements have been signed with ten of the major armed ethnic groups. Norway has acknowledged this progress that a reconciliation process between the country's various ethnic groups and the government would be improved.

Both parties to the Kachin conflict now have a responsibility to make courageous decisions and come to the negotiating table and commit themselves to engaging in genuine political dialogue. Only when Kachin achieves ceasefire, will the first nationwide ceasefire get successful since Myanmar gained independence.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs said in his comment that it was a historic opportunity to bring about peace and Norway calls on the government and KIO to allow humanitarian aid to reach the conflict-affected population.

MNA

Hluttaws welcome visitors

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—A 50-member group of Shan national people of Pyu and Kyaukdaga Townships of Toungoo District in Bago Region observed the 16th-day

sixth regular session of first Pyithu Hluttaw this morning. A 147-member group of cultural organizations from Kachin, Kayah, Chin and Rakhine States and Sagaing

Region who are going to attend 66th Anniversary Union Day also observed Hluttaw Buildings this afternoon.

MNA

UNSG hopes silencing of the guns in Myanmar for the first time since its independence

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Ban Ki-moon issued a statement about negotiation between the government and KIO in Shweli on 4 February.

The UNSG in the statement said he welcomed the joint statement issued by the Union Peace-making Work Committee and the KIO delegation in Shweli of the People's Republic of China, and urged to continue efforts towards genuine and sustainable peace in Kachin

State, and hoped that the latest developments would result in silencing of the guns in Myanmar for the first time since its independence.

Special Advisor to the UNSG Mr Vijay Nambia visited the IDP camps together with government officials in Kachin State and met civil society organizations and stakeholders. He said the United Nations remains committed to continuing to extend all necessary help and support to the people



UN Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-moon.—MNA

of Myanmar, including through its good offices and the country team.

MNA



2013
66th Anniversary Union Day

Union A&I Minister receives Turkish, Thai delegations

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing held talks with Turkish Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Murat Yavuz Ates and Expert Mr Mikail Tasdemir of Turkish International Corporation and Development Agency of the Prime Minister's Office of Turkey, at the ministry, here, on 5 February morning. They discussed plans to provide assistance of farming machinery to Myanmar. Likewise, a delegation led by Mr Gen Chetta Tanajara of Thai-Myanmar cultural and economic cooperation committee called on the Union minister at the same venue this

morning and discussed cent per cent investment of Thailand in Myanmar for establishment of value-added factories with the use of vegetables and fruits grown in Nay Pyi Taw and Bago Region for the first phase to be able to export finished products for raising income and living standard of farmers.—MNA

Union Transport Minister meets VP of Sky Perfect Broadcasting Corporation of Japan

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Union Minister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung received a delegation led by Sky Perfect Broadcasting Corporation, Broadcasting Business Group Vice President Mr Minoru Yonezawa of Japan at his office, here, yesterday. At the meeting, the Union Minister said that Myanmar will get more prescribed weather data after JICA installs three weather radar stations and automatic weather monitoring system. He added that it needs a weather channel for awareness of disaster like storm "Nargis". The Union

Minister continued that it will be beneficial not only to nation's economy but to socio-economic life of the people. After that, both sides exchanged views on receiving and broadcasting weather news for both countries and requirement of the TV channel in Myanmar. MNA

Car loses control, hits bridge



MEIKTILA, 7 Feb—In the incident, two posts of the bridge were broken and the left part of the Saloon damaged. Driver Han Tun Zaw was seriously injured in the incident. Meiktila Police Station No 2 opened a file of lawsuit against driver Han Tun Zaw. Myanmar Alinn

Chief Justice of the Union calls for adherence to Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo called for making rational decision based on virtue, probity and expertise in jurisdiction at the fourth coordination meeting of the Supreme Court of the Union with region/state high courts and district courts at the meeting hall of the Supreme Court here yesterday morning. He called for logical consistency in making judgement of a case, urging them to cultivate moral courage to resist outside influences. He demanded emergence of reliable jurisdiction in line with principles embodied in Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct.



Present at the meeting were judges of the supremecourt, chief judges of region/state high courts, region/state judicial officers and district court judges. The meeting concludes tomorrow.—MNA

Officials, KEIDANREN discuss economic policy

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Officials from the governmental departments and KEIDANREN (Japan Business Federation) held talks over economic policies on development of Myanmar yesterday at Myanmar International Convention Centre (MICC) here.

Officials from Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration, Directorate of Trade, Electric Power

Department, Myanma Port Authority and Air Transport participated in the meeting with the KEIDANREN. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on investment by Japanese government and entre-preneurs, cooperation between the two countries in making efforts for development of Myanmar, strengthening mutual friendship between the two countries, improving the

infrastructures for import export businesses and ways for giving assistance to Myanmar based on clarifications of the ministries concerned. Also present at the meeting were Union Ministers U Soe Thane, U Nyan Tun Aung, U Khin Maung Soe, U Win Myint, Dr Kan Zaw and U Zeyar Aung, deputy ministers and departmental heads, the Japanese ambassador and officials of the Japanese embassy.—MNA

Stake driven for World tallest Buddha image

MONYWA, 7 Feb—A ceremony to drive stake for construction of the highest Buddha Image across the world, mounting to 242 feet, was held on Bandawa Hill in the precinct of Maha

Bawditahtaung of Sagaing Region on 24 January morning.

The 200 feet high Buddha image with 60 feet wide buttock on 42 feet high, 240 feet long and 180 feet

wide throne is located on 290 feet long and 220 feet wide area of plot.

Chief Minister of Sagaing Region U Tha Aye, Region Hluttaw Speaker U Thin Hlaing, Commander of North-West Command Maj-Gen Soe Lwin, region ministers and guests drove stakes at the auspicious time.

Gangaw Tahtaung Sayadaw Bhaddanda Aggavamsa of Pyin Oo Lwin of Mandalay Region administered the Five Precepts.

The Chief Minister and party offered alms to members of the Sangha. Gangaw Tahtaung Sayadaw delivered a sermon, and the congregation shared merits gained.

The Chief Minister, the region government and people donated K 100 million and Aye Yeik Wai Family K 101 million to officials.

The donation ceremony of wellwishers amounted to K 166.5 million.—Kyemom

Untimely rain, strong winds hit Kyangin Township

KYANGIN, 7 Feb—Trees fell down and some houses collapsed in the strong winds and untimely heavy rains in Kyangin Township of Ayeyawady Region at 1.45 pm on 30 January.

In the strong winds, the supervisory committee office of Township Commodity Transport Service was blown off in Ywathit Ward of Kyangin and some parts of the highway terminal

damaged. Moreover, 11 houses in Shwetaungsu, Ayeyanaing and Kyaukpon wards collapsed and 12 houses lost roofs. There was no death in the incident. Myanmar Alinn



WORLD

Syrian rebels fight close to heart of Damascus

AMMAN, 7 Feb—Syrian rebels battled President Bashar al-Assad's forces on the edge of central Damascus on Wednesday, opposition activists said, seeking to break through to the heart of the capital.

Their offensive aims to break a stalemate in the city of 2 million people, where artillery and air strikes have prevented rebels entrenched to the east from advancing despite their capture of army fortifications, the activists said.

"We have moved the battle to Jobar," said Captain Islam Alloush of the rebel Islam Brigade. The district links rebel strongholds in the suburbs with the central Abbasid Square.

"The heaviest fighting is taking place in Jobar because it is the key to the heart of Damascus," he said. Assad, battling to crush a 22-month-old uprising in which 60,000 people have died, has lost control of large parts of the country but his forces, backed by air power, have so far kept rebels on the fringes of the capital. Despite the setbacks, Assad has remained defiant, telling a visiting senior Iranian official on Sunday that Syria was able to confront "current threats ... and aggression". That visit came just after Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi met Syrian opposition leader Moaz Alkhatib in Moscow.—Reuters



Free Syrian Army members greet each other after heavy fighting between the Free Syrian Army and President Bashar al-Assad's forces, in the Jobar area of Damascus on 6 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

French tanker hijacked off Ivory Coast freed, crew safe

ABIDJAN, 7 Feb—A Luxembourg-flagged, French-owned petroleum products tanker hijacked off Ivory Coast at the weekend has been released, and its crew of 17 are safe, the vessel's owner said on Wednesday.

SEA-Tankers, which owns the vessel Gascogne, lost contact with the ship around 130 km (80 miles) off the coast on Sunday in what the International Maritime Bureau later said was an attack by Nigerian pirates.

It was the second tanker hijacking in Ivorian wa-

ters in the last three weeks.

Armed hijackings have been on the rise in the Gulf of Guinea, which is second only to the waters off Somalia for piracy. However, policing of the waters off Nigeria, Benin and Togo is increasing and Ivory Coast, with a poorly trained and equipped navy, is becoming a new target for Nigerian pirates. "SEA-Tankers are pleased to report that product tanker Gascogne has been released," the company said in a statement.

"All 17 seafarers are reported safe." It said two injured crew were being

taken care of.

Ivorian authorities had previously said the crew comprised seven Togolese, two Senegalese, two Ivorians, one South Korean, one Chinese and four sailors from Benin. The company gave no further details on how the two men had been injured or the circumstances of the Gascogne's release.

France's Foreign Ministry said the tanker had been released late on Tuesday after the pirates took it to Forcados in Nigeria and siphoned off around 200 tonnes of its cargo of diesel fuel.—Reuters

Nine Mexican police officers killed in ambush

MEXICO CITY, 7 Feb—Gunmen killed nine Mexican police officers and wounded another in an ambush in the southern state of Guerrero, an official report said on Wednesday.

According to the report, the police officers were patrolling an area in

the town of Tepoxtepec, in the municipality of Apaxtla de Castrejón, when they were attacked Tuesday night by a group of heavily armed men believed to have ties to organized crime.

The local Public Security Secretary said the nine officers died instantly and a

tenth suffered injuries.

According to Mexican daily *Excelsior*, Guerrero's Prosecutor's Office confirmed that the attack occurred on Tuesday at 10 pm local time (0300 GMT), and the site of the incident is now under protection.

Xinhua

Tsunami kills at least five in Solomons after big Pacific quake

HAWAII, 7 Feb—A powerful 8.0 magnitude earthquake set off a tsunami that killed at least five people in a remote part of the Solomon Islands on Wednesday and triggered evacuations across the



Partially destroyed houses are seen after a tsunami hit in the Venga village in Solomon Islands in this picture provided by World Vision on 6 Feb, 2013.

REUTERS

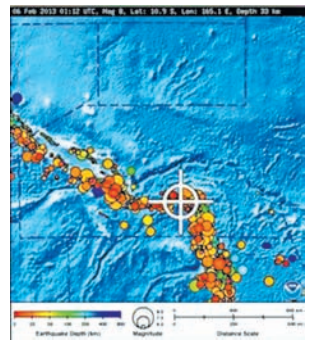
South Pacific as island nations issued tsunami alerts.

The quake struck 340 km (211 miles) east of Kira Kira in the Solomons, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre in Hawaii said as

it issued warnings for the Solomons and other South Pacific nations including Australia and New Zealand. It later cancelled the warnings for the outlying regions.

A tsunami measuring 0.9 metres (three feet) hit near the town of Lata on the remote Santa Cruz island, swamping some villages and the town's main airport as people fled to safety on higher ground. More than three dozen aftershocks up to magnitude 6.6 rocked the region in the hours after the quake, the US Geological Survey said.

Lata hospital's director of nursing, Augustine Pilve, told New Zealand television that five people had been killed, including



A bulletin released by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre/NOAA/NWS issued on 6 Feb, 2013 shows the area affected by the tsunami warning following a major earthquake measuring 8.0 magnitude off the Solomon Islands.

REUTERS

a boy about 10 years old, adding that more casualties were possible as officials made their way to at least three villages that may have been hit.—Reuters

Russia kills last man wanted for Moscow metro bombing

MOSCOW, 7 Feb—Russia said it had shot dead the last surviving militant involved in twin bombings that killed 40 people on the Moscow metro in 2010 during a night-time sweep of a forest hideout in the volatile North Caucasus.

The National Anti-Terrorism Committee (NAK) released a crossed-out photo of the alleged militant on Wednesday, his face framed by a thick beard.

Bombings and attacks on police and officials by Islamist fighters in the North Caucasus are a weekly occurrence, but insurgents have also staged numerous attacks on the Russian heartland.

Chechen Islamist rebel Doku Umarov, Russia's most wanted man and head of the umbrella Caucasus Emirate group, claimed responsibility for the metro bombings as well as a suicide bombing

that killed 37 at Moscow's busiest airport in 2011.

"Gusen Magomedov was the last remaining participant directly involved in the organization and implementation of terrorist attacks on the Moscow metro in March, 2010," NAK said. "Fair retribution has caught up with the last one of them."

It said Magomedov had been shot after opening fire on security forces combing forests near the village of

Kadyrkent in Dagestan, now the centre of militant violence in the North Caucasus. A video released by NAK showed a mangled body in a black jogging suit and a pistol lying in the underbrush. An NAK spokesman, Dmitry Pavlov, said Magomedov had personally escorted one of the two female suicide bombers responsible for the twin metro bombings to the entrance of the Moscow underground.—Reuters

A Dassault Rafale combat aircraft, which has been selected by the Indian Air Force for purchase, performs during the inauguration ceremony of the "Aero India 2013" at Yelahanka air force station on the outskirts of the southern Indian city of Bangalore on 6 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS



India says budget cuts won't delay Rafale talks

BANGALORE, 7 Feb—India pledged on Wednesday not to let defence cuts disrupt efforts to finalize a potential \$10 billion (6.3 billion pounds) purchase of French warplanes, but both sides played down expectations of a landmark deal in time for a visit by French President Francois Hollande next week.

India picked the Rafale combat jet, made by Dassault Aviation, for exclusive negotiations over a year ago after a hotly contested bidding war with rival manufacturers, but is still to finalize the 126-aircraft deal.

"The Rafale purchase is being reviewed by a cost

negotiation committee," Indian Defence Minister AK Antony told reporters.

"There are six to seven layers of procedure after that. We cannot cut short the procedure," Antony said at an air show in the southern City of Bangalore.

"There is no question of delay because of the budget cuts." In Paris, officials said the complex negotiations were going smoothly but ruled out a signature during a visit to India by Hollande on 14-15 February.

"Things are moving quite quickly. We hope the contract can be concluded as soon as possible but it won't be during the visit," said a French diplomatic

source who declined to be named.

"India never signs military contracts during political visits, but above all, the contract is not ready yet."

India, the world's biggest arms importer in recent years, plans to spend around \$100 billion over the next 10 years in upgrading its mostly Soviet-era military hardware to keep pace with China's ramping up of defence spending.

Despite the modernization push, India's defence budget will not escape a tightening of government spending this year, Antony said, as New Delhi looks to rein in its fiscal deficit.

Reuters

Microsoft and Symantec disrupt cyber crime ring

BOSTON, 7 Feb—Software makers Microsoft Corp and Symantec Corp said they disrupted a global cyber crime operation by shutting down servers that controlled hundreds of thousands of PCs without the knowledge of their users. The move made it temporarily impossible for infected PCs around the world to search the web, though the companies offered free tools to clean machines through messages that were automatically pushed out to infected computers.

Technicians working on behalf of both companies raided data centres in Weehawken, New Jersey, and Manassas, Virginia, on Wednesday, accompanied by US federal marshals, un-

der an order issued by the US District Court in Alexandria, Virginia.

They seized control of one server at the New Jersey facility and persuaded the operators of the Virginia data center to take down a server at their parent company in the Netherlands, according to Richard Boscovich, assistant general counsel with Microsoft's Digital Crimes Unit.

Boscovich told *Reuters* that he had "a high degree of confidence" that the operation had succeeded in bringing down the cyber crime operation, known as the Bamital botnet. "We think we got everything, but time will tell," he said. The servers that were pulled off line on Wednesday had been



The interior of a Microsoft retail store is seen in San Diego on 18 Jan, 2012.—REUTERS

used to communicate with what Microsoft and Symantec estimate are between 300,000 and 1 million PCs currently infected with malicious software that enslaved them into the botnet.

The companies said that the Bamital operation hijacked search results and engaged in other schemes that the companies said fraudu-

lently charge businesses for online advertisement clicks. Bamital's organizers also had the ability to take control of infected PCs, installing other types of computer viruses that could engage in identity theft, recruit PCs into networks that attack websites and conduct other types of computer crimes.

Reuters

Search engines more prone to cyber attacks

NEW DELHI, 7 Feb—Users are more likely to fall prey to cyber crime through search engines, online ads and social networking websites than pornographic or gambling sites, according to a report by technology giant Cisco.

"Common belief holds that one increases their individual risk to security threats when they seek out illicit content like counterfeit software, online deals, hacking sites or even view pornography," Cisco Vice President (Borderless Networks), India and SAARC, Mahesh Gupta said.

PTI

EU to order banks, energy firms to report cyber attacks

BRUSSELS, 7 Feb—Around 42,000 firms in the European Union, including airports, banks and hospitals, would have to inform regulators whenever their computers are hacked, under a proposed EU law to be published on Thursday. The law could set a global precedent for safeguarding critical infrastructure against digital attacks that have hit companies and government departments in an era of increasing "cyber-crime" and "cyber-terrorism". But some businesses worry they face extra costs.

Under the draft law, EU member states would have to draw up a monitoring system for companies that are critical to the economy. Those firms would then have to report major online attacks to national authorities and reveal security breaches. Almost 15,000 transport com-

panies, 8,000 banks, 4,000 energy firms, and 15,000 hospitals will have to report cyber attacks if the proposals are approved by EU governments and the European Parliament. Public administrations and operators of critical Internet services would also have to report. Firms with fewer than 10 employees would not be covered by the legislation.

"As the online world becomes a part of everything we do, securing that world is essential to ensuring a society that remains secure, prosperous and free," EU telecoms chief Neelie Kroes said in a speech last week. Inefficient measures on cyber security carry an economic cost in lost trade, an EU poll showed. In 2012, 38 percent of the EU's Internet users said they were concerned about making payments online. The proposed

calling for investment in laboratories that can be used by both academics and companies, according to Raupp.

The government also wants to expand the network of laboratories at state universities, Raupp added, saying that "the federal university system is expanding and we need to equip labs, (and students) need to learn by doing experiments, using laboratories." Meanwhile, the National Industry Confederation released a statement Wednesday describing 2012 as "a lost year" for a 2.7-percent slip in Brazil's industrial production, which grew 10.5 percent in 2010 and a scant 0.4 percent in 2011.—*Xinhua*



Russia launches six communication satellites with Soyuz rocket.—XINHUA

Russia launches six communication satellites with Soyuz rocket

MOSCOW, 7 Feb—A Russian Soyuz-2.1a rocket carrying six satellites blasted off on Wednesday from Pad 31 of the Baikonur space centre in Kazakhstan, the Russian space agency Roscosmos said. The launch was originally scheduled for Tuesday, but postponed due to bad weather. The rocket lifted off at 8:04 pm Moscow time (1604 GMT), tasked with sending six Globalstar telecommunication satellites into an orbit some 900

km from the Earth. The satellites, expected to enter the orbit in about 1.5 hours, were placed atop of a Fregat booster, which was the third stage of the rocket.

The satellites were developed by a European company, Thales Alenia Space, on orders of the Globalstar corporation, and designed to provide high-quality global personal mobile communication services. Each satellite has a weight of 700 kg and a service life of 15 years.

Xinhua

Baidu profit growth drops for eighth quarter

BEIJING, 7 Feb—Baidu Inc, China's largest search engine, saw the growth rate of its net profits decline for the eighth consecutive quarter since the first quarter of 2011, as attempts to find a way to fuel growth after years of quick development failed to bear fruit.

Analysts remain conservative on the company's progress in translating traffic into revenue in the mobile sector, which Baidu said is the focus of its future strategy. The company generated most of its revenue

from search advertising. The year-on-year growth rate of its net income reached 171.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2010, after rival Google Inc shut down its Chinese mainland service and redirected traffic to Hong Kong that year.

However, the rate dropped to 36.1 percent last quarter, according to the company's financial reports.

The company has pinned its hopes for the future on the mobile sector, as an increasing number of Chinese people access the

Internet with mobile devices. Robin Li, chairman and CEO, said on Tuesday that Baidu will increase its workforce in research and development this year to boost growth in the sector.

"Desktop search has been soft during the past quarter, and we expect that trend will continue for the coming year ... So desktop search will continue to be an important way for people to find information, but the real growth side is in mobile," Li said in a conference call.

The company has re-

BAIDU'S YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH



leased an updated version of its mobile browser and increased cooperation with handset providers in recent months. However, Li said it will take two years to prop-

erly generate income from mobile services, the same situation faced by most Chinese Internet companies that haven't been able to make

much money from it.

Qiu Lin, a stock analyst with Guosen Securities Co in Hong Kong, said the prospects for Baidu are pessimistic in the short term.—*Xinhua*

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Google to buy e-commerce firm Channel Intelligence for 125 mln USD

SAN FRANCISCO, 7 Feb—US e-commerce company Channel Intelligence on Wednesday announced that it has entered into an agreement to be acquired by Internet search giant Google.

“For over ten years, we have focused on making it easy for consumers to find and buy products online and help our clients grow their business. We’ve worked with Google for years, and

look forward to the great things we will be able to do together,” Channel Intelligence said in a blog posted on its website. In a separate press release, ICG Group, Channel Intelligence’s parent company, said that Google has agreed to pay 125 million US dollars in cash and the deal is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2013. Headquartered in Orlando in the US state

of Florida, Channel Intelligence provides technology to other companies to drive product sales online. According to information posted on its website, Channel Intelligence has been working with over 850 retailers worldwide and drives 2 billion dollars in sales online annually in computing, home improvement, appliances, consumer electronics, toys and other goods.—Xinhua



Google to buy e-commerce firm Channel Intelligence for 125 mln USD.—XINHUA

Sharp drop in drink deaths follows alcohol price rise

LONDON, 7 Feb—Increasing the minimum price of alcohol by 10 percent can lead to immediate and significant drops in drink-related deaths and may also have long-term beneficial health effects, according to a study published on Thurs-

day. Canadian researchers found that deaths caused by alcohol between 2002 and 2009 in the western Province of British Columbia dropped when the minimum alcohol price was increased, while alcohol-related deaths rose when

more private alcohol stores were opened.

The findings will be keenly scrutinized by alcohol policy makers, particularly in Britain where the government plans to introduce a minimum price on alcohol to try to clamp down on binge drinking and anti-social behaviour.

The United States does not currently set a minimum alcohol price. “This study adds to the scientific evidence that, despite popular opinion to the contrary, even the heaviest drinkers reduce their consumption when minimum alcohol prices increase,” said Tim Stockwell of the University of Victoria’s Centre for Addictions Research of British Columbia, who led the study.

Reuters



A customer takes a bottle of vodka from a shelf at a Russian supermarket in Benidorm, on 26 Nov, 2012.

REUTERS

Asian shares, euro pause ahead of ECB decision

TOKYO, 7 Feb — Asian shares and the euro paused from recent gains on Thursday, as investors awaited the European Central Bank’s policy meeting later in the day and President Mario Draghi’s view on euro zone growth prospects, optimistic that the worst may be over. “Risk assets traded heavily as market participants exercise caution ahead of the ECB, particularly with Europe’s political crisis hampering sentiment,” said Stan Shamu, market

strategist at IG Markets.

“There has been growing talk of currency wars lately and some are now saying the eurozone will soon consider a fixed rate for the single currency.”

European markets are seen in tight ranges, with financial spreadbetters predicting London’s FTSE 100 .FTSE, Paris’s CAC-40 .FCHI and Frankfurt’s DAX .GDAXI would open flat to up 0.1 percent. A 0.1 percent drop in US stock futures suggested a soft Wall Street start. LEUN

Daimler sees flat earnings for 2013

STUTTGART, 7 Feb — German auto maker Daimler (DAIGN.DE) forecast earnings this year would be roughly stable after meeting its profit target for 2012 and keeping its dividend flat. “Earnings are expected to improve in the second half

of 2013 compared with the level of the first half,” it said in a statement ahead of its annual press conference on Thursday.

Daimler expects 2013 earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) from its ongoing business will be in the

magnitude of last year’s 8.1 billion euros, which represented an annual drop of 10 percent.

The group had warned in October that it would miss by about 1 billion euros its original 2012 target of stable operating profit

Along with meds, brain stimulation may aid depression

NEW YORK, 7 Feb — Treating people with depression using weak electrical currents passed into the brain through a headband may help relieve some of their symptoms when combined with an antidepressant, a new study suggests. Researchers found that after six weeks of treatment with a combination of brain stimulation and sertraline, marketed as Zoloft, nearly two-thirds of depressed participants got significantly better.

But by itself, brain stimulation was no better than medication. “In the field of depression, it’s important to know about treatment options, and medications alone don’t work for everyone,” said Dr Sarah

Lisanby, a psychiatrist who studies brain stimulation at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

“Now there’s a broadened array of new, device-based therapies that allow us to affect brain function in less invasive ways,” including transcranial direct current stimulation, or tDCS, added Lisanby, who wasn’t part of the new research team. No tDCS devices, including the one used in the new study, are currently approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for use on the brain. But older types of non-invasive brain stimulation are approved and becoming established treatment options for depression, researchers noted.

Reuters

People look at a stock index board outside a brokerage in Tokyo on 30 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS



Japan’s Nikkei stock average .N225 ended down 0.9 percent, retreating from its highest level since Octo-

ber 2008 that it scaled on Wednesday as investors took a break from selling the yen.—Reuters

Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s not contagious

NEW YORK, 7 Feb — Despite concerns that faulty brain proteins could be transferred from person to person by treatments involving human fluids and tissues, a new study finds no signs of increased risk for two major degenerative brain diseases among recipients. “I think it’s reassuring to people who had transplants, blood transfusions, morticians and researchers who work on these diseases,” said the study’s senior author, Dr John Trojanowski, from the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine in Philadelphia.

Reviewing the records of children who were injected as long as 50 years ago with human growth hormones derived from cadavers showed that the recipients did not go on to develop Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s disease with any greater frequency than

Alzheimer’s to triple by 2050 as baby boomers age

CHICAGO, 7 Feb — The number of US residents aged 65 and older living with Alzheimer’s disease is expected to nearly triple to 13.8 million by 2050 as aging baby boomers swell the ranks of those living with the brain-wasting disease, US researchers said on Wednesday. The new estimates, published in the journal *Neurology*, confirm prior estimates and make clear the need for new and better treatments for Alzheimer’s, the leading cause of dementia that now affects some 5 million Americans and 38 million people worldwide.

The latest US estimates paint a grim picture as more and more of the nation’s baby boom generation pass the age of 65, putting them at higher risk for Alzheimer’s, an age-related disorder that slowly robs its victims of the ability to think and care for themselves. “Our study draws attention to an urgent need for more research, treatments and preventive strategies to reduce this epidemic,” said study co-author Jennifer Weuve, an assistant professor of medicine at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.—Reuters

the rest of the population — which suggests the two conditions are not contagious.

Trojanowski and his colleagues, who published their findings in *JAMA Neurology*, in fact found no cases of Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s disease in about 800 individuals who were injected with growth hormones that came from the bodies of people who may have had one of those two illnesses.

Doctors switched to synthetic hormones in the 1980s when they realized some children had received contaminated cadaver growth hormones that later led to their developing Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), the human version of “mad cow” disease, which causes a fast decline in mental functioning and generally death within a year.

Reuters

WORLD

France wants Mali UN force in place by April

PARIS, 7 Feb—France wants to have a United Nations peacekeeping force in place in Mali by April, Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said on Wednesday. “Once security is assured, we can certainly envisage, without changing the structures, that it (Mali mission) can be put in the framework of a peacekeeping operation,” Fabius said. When asked if it is possible to achieve the aim by April, Fabius said yes. “Our experts and partners are aiming for that,” he said.

Earlier Wednesday, Fabius said France will start to withdraw its troops from Mali in March. “We will continue to act in the north where some terrorist havens remain. I think that from March, if everything goes according to plan, the number of French troops should decrease,” the top diplomat told the free daily *Metro*.



A Malian transports wood with a donkey cart on the road between Timbuktu and Douentza on 4 Feb, 2013. REUTERS

After the UN Security Council talks on Mali, French Ambassador to the UN Gerard Araud on Wednesday called on the Security Council to deploy an international peacekeeping operation in Mali to take over from French forces.

French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Tuesday ruled out a long-

term deployment of French troops in Mali following positive progress made during France’s three-week military intervention against Islamist rebels. During his one-day visit to Mali last Saturday, French President Francois Hollande stressed that French soldiers would return home once the conflict-torn state has restored sovereign-

ty and a UN-backed African military force could take over from the French soldiers. At the request of Malian President Dioncounda Traore, France has already poured 3,500 soldiers into the West African country and carried out air strikes since 11 January in the rebel-held northern half of Mali.

Xinhua

John Kerry prefers peaceful resolution of conflicts



US Secretary of State John Kerry

WASHINGTON, 7 Feb—John Kerry on Wednesday vowed to resolve conflicts by peaceful means in the first place as he was publicly sworn in as the US secretary of state.

“I am proud to take on this job because I want to work for peace and because the values and ideals of our nation are really what represents the best of the possibilities of life here on earth,” Kerry said as Vice President Joe Biden administered his oath of office at the State Department.

“While my preference is for peaceful resolution to conflict, my journey has also taught me that when remedies are exhausted, we must be prepared to defend our cause and do what is necessary to stand up to extremism, terrorism, chaos and evil,” Kerry added.

The 69-year-old Vi-

etnam veteran succeeded Hillary Clinton as the top American envoy Friday when he was first sworn in at a private ceremony held in the Capitol Hill.

A five-term senator, Kerry was elected to chair the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in December 2008 after then chairman Biden was elected vice president.

As the Democratic nominee, Kerry launched a bid for the White House in 2004 but lost to then incumbent George W Bush by a margin of 34 electoral votes.

Referring to the episode, Biden said he only regretted that Kerry had not been sworn in as president in 2004.

“How different the world might be today had that occurred?” said the vice president.

Xinhua

Iran’s Ahmadinejad seeks strategic axis with Egypt

CAIRO, 7 Feb—President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, on the first visit to Cairo by an Iranian leader in more than three decades, called for a strategic alliance with Egypt and said he had offered the cash-strapped Arab state a loan. In a step by Iran to advance ties that were broken in 1979, the Iranian foreign minister said Egyptian tourists and merchants would no longer require visas to visit, Egypt’s state news agency reported. The effort drew a cool response, however. Shi’ite Islam Iran is still looked on with suspicion by many in Egypt, a predominantly Sunni Muslim nation. Points of contention include Iran’s support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and its policies elsewhere in

the Arab world.

Ahmadinejad said outside forces were trying to prevent a rapprochement between the Middle East’s two most populous nations, at odds since Iran’s 1979 Islamic revolution and Egypt’s signing of a peace treaty with Israel in the same year. “We must all understand that the only option is to set up this alliance because it is in the interests of the Egyptian and Iranian peoples and other nations of the region,” the official *MENA* news agency quoted him as telling Egyptian journalists.

Egypt’s foreign minister played down the significance of the visit, telling *Reuters* the Iranian leader was in Cairo chiefly for the Islamic summit beginning

Poachers kill 11,000 Gabon elephants in under a decade

LIBREVILLE, 7 Feb—Poachers have killed more than 11,000 elephants in Gabon’s Minkebe National Park rainforest since 2004, Gabon’s government said on Wednesday, with the massacre fuelled by increasing demand for ivory in Asia.

The densely-forested central African country is home to about half the world’s roughly 100,000 remaining forest elephants, the smallest species of elephant and coveted by ivory dealers for their harder and straighter tusks.

A study conducted by Gabon’s government along with advocacy groups World Wildlife Fund and the Wildlife Conservation Society found two-thirds of the forest elephants in Minkebe park had been killed off since 2004, or about 11,100.

“If we don’t reverse this situation rapidly, the future of elephants in Africa will be compromised,” Lee White, executive secretary of Gabon’s national parks agency, said in a statement issued by Gabon’s presidency.

Demand for ivory for

Russia to return Gabala radar station to Azerbaijan

BAKU, 7 Feb—Russia is working with Azerbaijan to return the Gabala radar station to the central Asian country, local media Thursday quoted Russian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Vladimir Dorokhin as saying.

This week, the Russian-Azerbaijani working group held a meeting discussing the withdrawal of Russian equipment from the Gabala radar station. “We need to return the station to Azerbaijan in the form we leased it,” Dorokhin said.

Russia and Azerbaijan signed an agreement in 2002 on leasing the Gabala radar station. “The equipment that was imported after the agreement is the property of the Russian Federation. Now we are working to determine

what Russia has the right to take out of the station,” the ambassador said, adding that the station will be completely handed over to Azerbaijan soon.

Partly because of cost concerns, Russia decided not to rent the Gabala radar station after its lease expired in December. The Gabala station, located in northwest Azerbaijan, was built during the Soviet era as one of the most important elements of the Soviet Union’s missile defence system.—Xinhua

Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (C) greets people as he visits the Al-Hussein mosque, in old Cairo on 5 Feb, 2013. REUTERS



on Wednesday, “so it’s just a normal procedure. That’s all.” He had earlier reassured Gulf Arab countries that Egypt would not sacrifice their security.

Egypt’s leading Sunni Muslim scholar scolded Ahmadinejad on Tuesday when he visited the historic al-Azhar mosque and university over Tehran’s attitude to its Gulf Arab neighbours and attempts to spread Shi’ite influence in Sunni countries.

In his meeting with

Egyptian reporters, *MENA* said Ahmadinejad denied accusations Iran was interfering in Bahrain, where a Shi’ite majority lives under minority Sunni rule.

Reuters

Three immigrants drown in Texas police chase

HOUSTON, 7 Feb—Three young men died on Wednesday as a sport utility vehicle carrying them and at least 10 other suspected illegal immigrants plunged into a stock tank during a police chase in Texas.

The incident happened about 2 am near the town of Poth, southeast of the Texas city of San Antonio, police said.

Wilson County Sheriff Joe Tackitt told reporters that one of his deputies reported spotting one SUV that only had one working headlight and tried to stop it, but the vehicle sped away.

The SUV veered off and continued off-road, slamming through several fences, before plunging into the pond, he said.—Xinhua

Reuters

INTERVIEW

Ivory poachers, grave threat to elephant population

Interviewer: Yan Gyi Aung
Photos: Forest Department

(from page 16)
between 40 and 50 with a pair of tusks and was estimated to have been killed around ten days ago. Following the investigation, three who killed the elephant were arrested along with weapons they used in killing the elephant. But the other three are still at large and police are in pursuit of them.

Likewise, an elephant was found killed near Kyaukpya Village, in Taunggalay Village-tract in



Ivory tusks seized from poachers.

Ngapudaw Township around 8 am on 8 August, 2012. It is a black male around 10 and was estimated to have been killed nearly seven days ago. Nine have been arrested in relation with the case from Ngapudaw Township. But, one is still at large. They have been prosecuted in advance under 1994 Section 35 (a) and Section 37 (a) of Protection of Wildlife, Wild Plants and Conservation of Natural Areas Law 1994. A total of 18 elephants died within two years from 2001 to 2012. Seven died because of disease and 11 were killed by humans.

U Kyaw Kyaw Lwin
Director
Bago Region Forest
Department

Q: How was the illegal elephant hunting in Bago Region?

A: It happened in Block No. 109 of Baingda Forest Reserve in Kyaukdaga Township in Bago District. An elephant was killed on 28 January and one of the three killers was arrested the following day. It is a male around 15. Its trunk and tusks were taken. The two killers are still at large. Actions are being taken under Section 37 (a) of Protection of Wildlife, Wild

Plants and Conservation of Natural Areas Law 1994.

Q: What are the punishments according to that section of the law?

A: Sub-section (a) of Section 35 is about hunting without license. The punishment for violation of this is either up-to-three-year prison term or a fine of up to K 10,000 or both. Sub-section (a) of Section 37 is about killing, hunting or hurting any of totally protected wild animals and keeping, selling,

carrying or exchanging either that animal or any part of it. The punishment is up-to-seven-years prison term or a fine of up to K 50,000 or both. Besides, the punitive actions will be taken against the offenders under other laws concerned.

Q: We've heard that a natural area will be established in Bago Region to protect wild elephants. How is it going on?

A: Yes, we are preparing to build a safe haven for elephants in Myauk Zamayi region between Hanthawady District and Bago District. It covers an area of 379.59 square miles (242938.48 acres). Trees grow well there and water is available from creeks throughout the year. There are also nice pastures for elephants. After we have made proper preparations, we'll take actions to drive the wild elephants inhabiting near town and villages into the haven.

U Ye Htut
Deputy Director
Nature and Wildlife
Conservation Division
Forest Department

Q: Let me know about elephant conservation in Myanmar.

A: Elephants are symbol of natural forests

and Myanmar's biodiversity and have been under proper care since the time of ancient monarchs.

The natural habitats of elephants have been established as natural areas and Shwe-ohn-daung Wildlife Sanctuary was set up in 1927, Alaungdaw Kassapa National Park in 1989, Rakhine Mountain Range Elephant Sanctuary in 2000 and Hukaung Valley wildlife Sanctuary in 2002.

In cooperation with Monitoring of the Illegal Killing of Elephant (MIKE), we have set Shwe-ohn-daung Wildlife Sanctuary and Alaungdaw Kassapa National Park as MIKE sites.

Q: How about the conflicts between humans and elephants?

A: Local residents in desperate search for alternative sources of livelihood are increasingly colonizing the habitats of elephants. Besides, their habitats have been narrowed due to mining and logging, making them to seek foods in farmlands and croplands of humans outside their habitats. So it has become usual that elephants raid farmer's fields for crops at harvest time. This has resulted in confrontation between humans and elephants. The conflict between human and elephant is most common in Thayawady, Letpadan, Taikkyi and Kyaukdaga townships and a total of 73 lost lives in those townships between 1996 and 2002 because of the conflicts.

Q: Let me know about the elephant and other wildlife poaching in Myanmar.

A: From 2011 to 2013, 18 elephants were killed. They were poached for their ivory tusks because the ivory tusks are offered high prices at illegal markets. Peoples in China, China Taipei, Hong Kong and Japan believe that ivory have magic powers and if they wear or use objects made of ivory, they can not be harmed by others and they can be in dignity and can enjoy good health. So, these countries have become the destination of the poachers.

In some countries including Kenya, Botswana and Tanzania in Africa, wild elephants were killed legally to prevent deforestation as the wild elephants had to eat

barks of trees due to scarcity of their pastures. Both male and female of *Elephas lexodonta* from Africa have tusks. Though authority from Africa asked permission from the Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species (CITES) to legally sell the tusks from those elephants, Asia Elephant Specialist Group had objected the action because, elephants in Asian countries might be poached for their tusks to illegal markets along with the ivory tusks from Africa.

However, today, elephants in Asian countries have been poached for their tusks and illegal ivory markets have been emerged. Therefore, to investigate the poaching and to control the illegal wildlife trading, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered (CITES) and TRAFFIC has worked together with ASEAN countries, and INTERPOL has also sent information to ASEAN countries.

An agreement was reached at the ministerial level



Dead body of an elephant after removing skin.

meeting of ASEAN countries held in Thailand in December, 2005, to form ASEAN-WEN (ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network) and ASEAN countries have worked together to prevent wildlife poaching in the region. National Wildlife Enforcement Task Force was formed in Myanmar by the Ministry of Forestry, Myanmar Police Force and other ministries concerned in 2007 to control the poaching of wildlife and their parts.

Q: Please clarify the smuggling of ivories in Myanmar.

A: Ivories from African and Asian countries have been smuggled into China via

some ASEAN countries. In Myanmar, wildlife and their parts have been smuggled at border towns such as Tachilek and Myawady and Mandalay has become the broker town for the smuggling. Wildlife and parts of wildlife from India have been smuggled into China though Tamu, Mawlaik-Momeik-Bhamo route while from 50 to 100 young elephants from Taninthayi region are being smuggled into a neighbouring country.

Q: Please let me know prices for them at illegal markets.

A: The illegal market prices for wildlife and their parts are: K 500,000 for a viss of ivory, K 20,000 for a viss of elephant leather, K 80,000 for a pangolin. Besides, hairs from elephant tail are used to make rings and smuggled at the markets. Elephant meat is sold as sambur meat at markets. The meat of a elephant which was hit by poisonous arrows can also harm a man who eat the meat. In some countries, some rich personnel use the

says a path can be made by walking of an elephant. When an elephant enters into jungle, it clears bushes, making paths for other wildlife and man. Besides, the bodies of elephants help pollination for plants.

Q: How about the population of elephants in Myanmar?

A: According the report of elephant expert G Caughley, there were about 6,000 elephants in Myanmar in 1972. According to survey conducted by employees of Ministry of Forestry in 1991, there were 4639 wild elephants in Myanmar. It is estimated that there are around 3000 wild elephants currently on Dawna Mountain Range and in Taninthayi Region. There are around 3000 elephants owned by Myanmar Timber Enterprise and around 2000 elephants owned by private sector. In Asia, Myanmar stands as the second largest population of elephants after India.

Q: Which measures

elephant leg as golf bags and some use them as stationery on tables.

Q: Please let me know type of elephants in Myanmar and their habits.

A: The elephants in Myanmar are divided into three types and they all are Asian elephants. The can live over 70 year. Female elephant can mate at the age of 15 and the normal length of time for pregnancy is 22 months. Sex ratio should be 3:1 or 5:1 to ensure reproduction rate.

Today, male elephants are being poached, and the lower population of male elephants would decrease the reproduction rate. There is a Myanmar proverb which

should be taken to conserve wild elephants?

A: Myanmar regards elephants as the sign of the nature and as a jewel. Myanmar loves elephants and they have sentimental value for Myanmar. Elephants play an important role in Myanmar's culture and literature. However, valuable elephants are facing extinction in Myanmar due to greedy poachers and the people should be aware of the threat. All are obliged to prevent poachers and wildlife and wildlife parts trading and to inform the authority if they see the suspicious acts of poaching wild life.

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 8 February, 2013

Meritocracy

Now Myanmar people are enjoying the fruits of democracy. The government could make the breakthroughs such as clearance of foreign debts, removal of sanctions, reentering into the world community etc. The new government's undertakings and policies have transparency. Due to various reasons the country has lagged behind in development. The government has been making a series of reforms since taking office. And efforts are being made for ensuring clean government and good governance.

Today is age of knowledge. So, knowledge is taking a leading role in every aspect. It needs to develop qualified human resources so as to keep abreast of developed countries. It is impossible to become a developed country by relying only on its natural resources. Some developed countries are not rich in natural resources. But they have reached developed status thanks to the qualified human resources. In order for qualified human resource development, the flourishing of meritocracy is a must.

Meritocracy means a system in which the talented are chosen and moved ahead on the basis of their achievement. That is to say, the talented should deserve a reward for his or her abilities. So, the meritocratic system is so crucial for organizations as well as for the whole country. For this, there should be healthy competitiveness in the organizations. The countries or organizations that encourage meritocracy are on the top lists. We must love meritocracy.

MICPA, ACCA, sign MoU

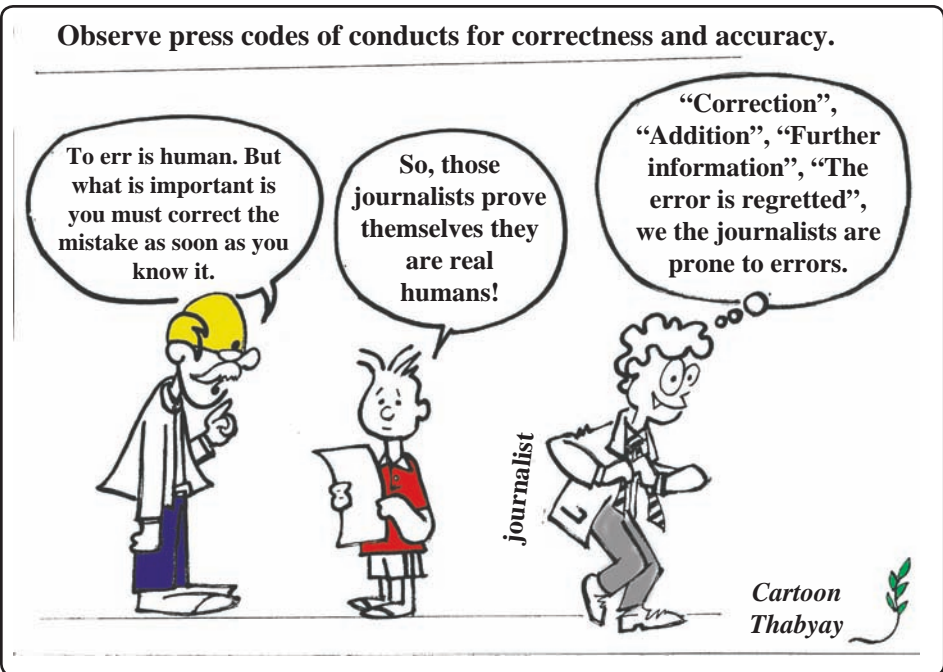
YANGON, 7 Feb—MICPA (Myanmar Institute of Certified Public Accountants) and ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 27th January 2013.

The two accountancy bodies seek to work together to achieve and promote the highest professional, ethical, and government standards,

advance public interest in the accountancy profession, and support it in Myanmar.

The MoU, signed in the spirit of mutual cooperation, is aimed at developing the accountancy profession in Myanmar and collaborating towards building capacity within the finance profession in Myanmar to support the country's economic development.

NLM



NATIONAL

Dinner hosted to mark 66th Shan State Day in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—A dinner to mark the 66th Shan State Day was hosted at Mawkhamnon Restaurant here this evening.

Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, committees chairmen from Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, MPs and guests.

During the ceremony, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann and Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Thein Zaw donated K1 million each to the fund of the self-reliance station hospital in Tawkywein and Daw Khin



Speaker of Pyidaungsu and Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet and party attend dinner to mark 66th Shan State Day.—MNA

Lay Thet K 1 million to the Shan Literature and Cultural Committee. Vice-Chairman

of the Union Solidarity and Development Party Thura U Aye Myint, on behalf of the party, presented the cash to responsible personnel.

MNA

District judges, law officers take oath

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo called for judiciary independence as district judges and law officers of the Supreme Court of the Union took oath this morning at coordination meeting between the Supreme Court of the Union and Region/State High Courts and district courts.

The chief justice also

Union Defence Minister receives US Ambassador

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Wai Lwin received US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Derek James Mitchell at the Ministry, here, this morning.

They had a cordial discussion on the Tatmadaw affairs.

demanding righteousness of judicial pillar and reliable legal system. A total of 131—68 district judges and 63 law officers from Supreme Court of the Union took oath before the chief justice and the remaining district, township judges and region/state law officers will reportedly take oath at respective region/state high courts.—MNA

Also present at the call were Deputy Minister for Defence Maj-Gen Kyaw Nyunt and officials.—MNA

Workshop on Treaty Banning Chemical Weapons held

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—National level workshop on implementation of the Treaty Banning the Chemical Weapons, took place at Golden Palace Hotel here from 4 to 6 February.

The workshop focused on detailed facts for implementation of the Treaty, drawing a law, setting up of a national authority,

Trainees of Global MBA visit Thailand

YANGON, 7 Feb—Under the programme of business trip series to Thailand and ASEAN, trainees from "Global MBA Offshore Program (Batch-1) from Training Institute of UMFCI visited Thailand from 13 to 19 January.

They visited Loxley Company, Department

training, benefits and future cooperation. Myanmar signed the Treaty Banning the Chemical Weapons on 14 January, 1993, whose signatories are 186.

It was attended by representatives led by Director Mr Mark Geoffrey Albon of International Cooperation and Assistance Department of the Treaty Organization for the Prohibition of

of International Trade Promotion, Thai Gems and Jewellery Traders Association, Bangkok Bank, Amata Nakom Industrial, Leamchabang Port, University of Thai Chamber of Commerce, Board of Investment in Thailand.

They also met with the principal and faculty

Appointment of Vietnamese Ambassador to Myanmar agreed on

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb—The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr. Pham Thanh Dung as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in succession to His Excellency Mr. Chu Cong Phung.

Mr. Pham Thanh Dung was born in Myanmar on 15th May 1962. He obtained Integrated Master in International Relations from the University of Diplomacy, Viet Nam in 1988.

He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam in 1991 and has served in various capacities of the Faculty of International Relations and Foreign Policy, Institute for International Relations in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. He is currently serving as Director General of the Center for Information and Documentation, Diplomatic Academy of Viet Nam since April 2011.

Mr. Pham Thanh Dung is married with two children.

MNA

Chemical Weapons, and representatives from the Ministry of Science and Technology, Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Finance and Revenue, Transport Ministry and Commerce Ministry.

MNA

members of the UTCC and discussed for MA degree.

The MBA Offshore Program was jointly conducted by Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and University of Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC)

NLM

ARTICLE

Hailing 66th Anniversary Union Day 2013

Folk performing arts of Union ethnic nationalities

Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja,
Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

Myanmar, a geopolitical entity is territorially the second largest member state in the regional community of ASEAN TEN, with a wide range of biodiversity and a mosaic of ethnic nationalities who have made their permanent homes in this land since time immemorial. Mother Nature has been kind to provide her bountiful wealth of natural resources to Myanmar ethnic nationalities well integrated under the network of geographical features of snow-capped mountains, forested hill ranges, highlands, valleys and plains, aquatic bodies of lakes, falls, springs, streams, rivers, shallow seas, and a long sea coast dotted with archipelagoes. In such ambient surroundings native inhabitants have lived a simple and peaceful life of agriculture, hunting, fishery, husbandry, small industry and trade.

In her long history there had been three Unions—namely the Union of Bagan founded by King Anawrahta [1044-1077 A.D] which lasted nearly three centuries, the second Union founded by King Bayint Naung (1551-1581 A.D) which lasted two centuries and the third Union founded by King Alaungpa-ya (1752-1760 A.D) which lasted 133 years. The fourth union was founded in 1947 by the Panglong Agreement on the 12, February of that year by the then leaders of ethnic nationalities led by Bogyoke Aung San. It is this auspicious date that we celebrate annually as the Union Day without fail.

Over hundred ethnic nationalities of Myanmar have gone through the ups and downs of their long past and have stood together through thick and thin of their lives. Despite differences and variations due to regional, local and climatic differences of their habitats, their commonalities and similarities are strong in their daily lives and cultural heritages. To choose only one area of their commonalities in cultural heritages you need to watch and understand their folk performing arts which they stage on the Union Day as well as on the occasions of their festivals and social occasions.

Cultural anthropolo-

gically folk performing arts of Myanmar ethnic nationalities may be broadly classified into four categories—(1) ritual or religious (2) economic or occupational (3) social and (4) recreational. Ritual or religious performing arts are those that are performed either to invoke the benevolent nat-spirits and beg favour from them or to propitiate the angry nat-spirits that have done harm to the individual or community or to drive out the evil spirits that molest men, or to make the spirit of the deceased person happy and accompany it to the kingdom of Dead.

Economic or occupational performing arts are those that are performed at the time of occupational activities. Since agriculture is the main economy of Myanmar ethnic nationalities it occupies a larger share of their attention and serves as a basis for mimetic dances depicting daily activities. There are also labour-driving dances music and songs which are meant to cheer up the persons laboring or to accompany labourious and monotonous activities, requiring unity of action. The practice of working to the rhythmic beating and chanting or dancing so as to get a greater unity, efficiency of movement and better result is prevalent among rural folks. In those areas where hunting is practiced as a secondly occupation, hunting dances, music and songs are performed war dances belong to this category. Though tribal warfare is dead and gone war dances are still performed to breed courage and manly spirit among male youths and to build group solidarity. In all such dances nat-spirits are called upon to provide their supernatural powers so that there be good harvest and good hunting.

Social and recreational performing arts are much more diverse than those under the previous two categories. Birth, name giving, puberty, courtship engagement, marriage, divorce, healing amusements and death etc. are not only the concerns of the persons involved, but also matters of social importance to the community. Therefore from the cradle to the grave social events of a person are marked by rituals, feasts of merit or communal singing, dancing and rejoicing. As such the

community has the obligation to celebrate them. In many ethnic nationalities a greater importance is given to death than to other events for it is a grievous event which deserves more sympathy and attention of the community. Besides Myanmar nationalities are more concerned for the life hereafter than the present life.

Due to space constraint in this article, it is deeply regretted and humbly apologized for giving each one sample of performing arts of seven major ethnic groups as follows:

(1) Khaung Cawi dance of the Chins

Among many folk dances of the Chins, Khaung Cawi dance is most common. It is performed at the Khaung Cawi festival, the greatest of its kind held in Haka and Falam areas. The purpose of the dance is to honour the wife of the person who is holding Khaung Cawi festival lasting seven days. Relatives, friends and people from neighbouring villages are invited to that festival. Seven to hundred mithans are slaughtered for ritual sacrifices and for feeding the celebrators. Relatives and friends bring mithans, rice beer and country spirit as their contribution to the festival. On the last day, the wife of the Khaung Cawi holder is seated on a gaily decorated palanquin which is raised on the posts. She is dressed in ornately embroidered silk costumes and she wears ornaments of gold, silver and amber, her head dress is a crown decorated with feathers of Sum Thawng birds. The palanquin with the Lady is carried by young bachelors and maidens who sing and dance to honour her as they proceed in procession. Children and elders also follow the procession singing and playing musical instruments. In Falam area the Zaniet tribes used to hold this festival. They set up posts with carvings and paintings on them, in front of the house of the festival holder, to mark the occasion and to honour him and his family.

Manao dance of the Kachins

Manao dance is one of Kachin folk dances performed at the Manao festival. It is the most well known dance common to all national groups living in Kachin State. Manao festival lasts for four to eight

days but it takes one year in advance to make preparation for it. It takes place in the open ground of about to feet across in front of the house of the Duwa who is holding the festival. Four Manao posts are set up in the centre of the ground. On them are painted in red, black and white, beautiful artistic designs. On two of the posts are hung a huge double drum and three big copper gongs which are played when the dance is performed. Buffalos, cattle, pigs and chicken are slaughtered as sacrifices to nat spirits. Liquor and rice beer are also offered. After the rites are performed in a customary manner, a big feast is held everyday during the festival from early in the evening to dawn. All are welcome to it. Abundance of food, meat, glutinous rice, liquor, rice beer are lavishly served to all comers.

Manao dance is led by a leader, dressed in traditional attire and armed with an encased sword slung at his waist. He wears brightly made headdress with peacock feathers and plumes. He conducts the procession of dancers, who are men and women of all ages and from all walks of life, in gala costumes. Men dancers carry encased swords at their left waists and bright coloured Kachin bags slung on their right shoulders. All dancers follow the leader's steps and copy his gestures and movements. Like a wiggly snake the procession moves round the Manao posts. Sometimes the dancers make formations of the designs painted on the posts. The Manao dance is both ritual and social. It is performed when propitiating the nat spirits or when celebrating war victory or when honouring the Duwa or at the funeral of the Duwa.

Ku Hto Po dance of the Kayahs

Ku Hto Po dance is a well-known Kayah dance, performed at Ku Hto Po festival, held in April or May to propitiate the sky god to get good rain and good harvest. It is an agricultural festival of Kayah State held at the time of sowing season. Other ethnic groups in Kayah State also participate in it because good rain and good harvest are their common needs.

Straight tall teak stalks or In trees in the woods are cut down and brought at down to the festival ground.

They are set up in the centre as sacred poles—12 to 45 feet in length. Their tops are adorned with tassels festoons paper streamer and flower and sprinkled with perfumed water. The spirit medium man performs the rites. Food, liquor, rice beer, slaughtered chicken and pigs are offered to sky god. Then the dance begins. The drum player leads the procession of dancers dressed in gala costumes. Conducting dance and music his beat on the drum rises from low to high pitch and his steps change from slow to quick. All follow him swaying their bodies gracefully, joining their hands to one another and their legs move into all directions in tune with the music beat. They move around the posts. Anyone can join the more the merrier. Women dancers wave their scarlet silk scarves making a spectacular scene.

Doun (Htolitone) dance of the Kayins

Well-known and most popular Kayin folk dance is doun dance. There are about 7 different doun dances. Plain douns and ballet douns are two major types. Plain douns are performed by men or women or men and women jointly. Movements and gestures are quick and jerky. Songs are chorus. They chant "Than chat" ridiculing social injustice and demanding immediate reforms. Women wave their handkerchiefs as they dance. Ballet doun depicts a story usually a Jataka with their movements, gestures and facial expressions and chorus songs the ballet doun lasts hours. Kayin doun dance needs arduous training and practice. It is a group dance starting with four to any even number musical instruments are wind and percussion instruments—buffalo horns, a big bronze frog drum, six drumlets, a pair of copper cymbals, a shrilling hne (oboe) and bamboo chappers. Doun dance is performed at pagoda festivals, reception or other happy occasions.

Harog hnite dance of the Mons

Similar cultural background and religion explain the close affinities in performing arts of the Mons, Rakhines and Shans. But there are distinctive features which mark their ethnic identities. Most Mon dances have slow and elegant movements and music is

melodious.

Harog hnite is one popular Men dance which is religious in theme but social by implication. It is a group dance—young maidens of four or six or any even number dressed in gala attire miming the procession of Kason Festival of pouring lustral water at the sacred Bodhi Tree in May. Boy dancers follow making mimetic dance gestures of helping maidens carrying water pots and flowers on their heads to win their favour. Kason festival gives a social occasion on which boys and girls can meet.

Azein Zeikey and doun dances of the Rakhines

Rakhines have their own folk dances performed at Buddhist festivals. Azein Zeikey and doun are popular and well-known group dances performed on the Union Day Celebrations. Rakhine doun is of two types—doun gyan and doun yein both performed by young men. Doun gyan has quick movements and dances clap their hands after every step. It is usually performed at a monk's funeral. Doun yein is performed by two to four rows of dancers. They make different formations as they sing and dance.

Oil lamp dance is performed by young women to pay homage to the Buddha. They show their skilful handling of oil lamps, suppleness and graceful movements.

Keinnara Keinnari and Tonaya dances of the Shans

These two dances are popular and favourite of the Shans. Keinnara is a mythical male bird and Keinnari is a mythical female bird after appeared in Buddha's Jataka stories. They have human faces and bird's body and wings. A young man and a young girl dressed like them dance like birds manipulating their dance dresses like wings and tails of a bird.

Tonaya is a mythical roaming beast with a snake body, goat's legs, deer's horns and tail and dragon's face. It exists in folk tales and is believed to bring luck, wealth and peace to mankind. Two men enter the Tonaya dummy, one taking front and the other the back to animate it clever performers can make the dummy move realistically. These dances are performed on auspicious occasions.

S Korea's IT exports rise as global tech market recovers

SEOUL, 7 Feb—South Korea's exports in the information technology (IT) sector rose the most in 27 months as global tech market showed signs of recovery, a government report showed on Thursday.

Exports in the IT industry increased 16.4 percent to 13.11 billion US dollars in January compared with a year earlier, the highest expansion in 27 months and keeping the growth trend for five straight months, according to the Ministry of Knowledge Economy.

The increase came amid the global IT market recovery. According to an IT research firm Gartner, the global IT market was expected to grow 4.2 percent in 2013 after expanding 1.2 percent in the prior year.

Strong shipments of smartphones such as Samsung Electronics' Galaxy

S3 and LG Electronics' Optimus G led the January growth. Handset exports jumped 32.7 percent in January, with those to China and Vietnam surging 77.2 percent and 291.9 percent each. The ministry expected the mobile phone exports to maintain a growth trend, boosting expectations for record-level earnings of tech firms. Samsung Electronics' fourth-quarter operating profit topped prior record high for five straight quarters. LG Electronics saw its smartphone sales breach those for feature phones for the first time in the company's history.

Helped by brisk exports, trade surplus in the IT sector reached 6.11 billion dollars in January, around 7 times the surplus for the overall industry. Imports in the sector rose 10.2 percent to 7 billion dollars.

Semiconductor exports

stayed above 4 billion dollars for six straight months due to demand for system chips. Exports of those chips, including mobile application processor for smartphones, increased for 41 straight months. Memory chip shipments declined amid the sluggishness in the global personal computer market.

Shipments of display panels increased 15.2 percent in January after rising 10.4 percent in the prior month. Those for TVs made the first growth in 15 months as demand for LCD TVs strengthened amid the launches of premium smart TVs. Exports of computer and computer-related products such as printers and monitors increased 22.8 percent after falling 14 percent in December last year due to demand for solid state drive (SSD).

Xinhua

Egyptian president to visit India next month

NEW DELHI, 7 Feb—Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi is to visit India in March, local media reported on Thursday.

Though both India and Egypt have given their consent to a visit by Morsi next month, the exact dates are yet to be finalized, 'The Times of India' newspaper reported.

Morsi's visit assumes significance as he had earlier told India that Egypt has the potential to join BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) nations, going on to even suggest a new name for the grouping, eBRICS, the report said.

Morsi, belonging to Muslim Brotherhood party, became Egypt's President in 2012 a year after the Arab Spring toppled Hosni Mubarak who had ruled the country for over three decades.—Xinhua



Policemen guard the site where an officer was killed by an alleged drug dealer when he tried to stop him in the city of Tijuana, Mexico, on 5 Feb, 2013. XINHUA

Total obtains hydrocarbons exploration licenses in Cyprus

NICOSIA, 7 Feb—French Total has become the third foreign energy company to obtain hydrocarbon exploration licenses in the Cypriot exclusive economic zone.

Cypriot Commerce Minister Neoclis Sylikiotis and Total's Middle East President for oil exploration and production, Arnaud Breuillac, on Wednesday signed contracts giving the French energy company exploration rights in two blocks off the south coast of the eastern Mediterranean island.

Italian-South Korean ENI-Kogas consortium signed similar contracts on

Jan. 24, giving it exploration rights in three fields and Texas-based Noble Energy has already tapped considerable reserves of natural gas in a block next to those allocated to Total.

In remarks after the signing ceremony, Sylikiotis said that the signing of the deal marks the successful conclusion of the second licensing round for hydrocarbons licensing. However, he added that more fields may be allocated at the end of a six-month extension period.

Breuillac said Total will proceed with oil and natural gas drillings, but added that it

is too early to say which one will come first. Total plans a new drilling shortly to confirm and evaluate the gas reserves it tapped last year, which were originally estimated at 5 to 8 trillion cubic feet.

Plans are under discussion with Israel to build a gas pipe to the south Cyprus shores and the possible construction of a liquefaction plant to process both Cypriot and Israeli natural gas in adjoining blocks.

Total investment for the two projects has been estimated at 10 billion euros.

Xinhua

Gunmen abduct Fil-Canadian boy in S Philippines

ZAMBOANGA CITY, 7 Feb—Unidentified gunmen abducted Thursday a Filipino-Canadian boy and his nanny in the southern Philippine city of Pagadian.

According to Chief Supt. Juanito Vano, West-

ern Mindanao police director, the one-year old victim, Timothy Mata Sokolov and his 17-year old nanny Caroline Remetre were abducted while strolling in their subdivision around 6:30 a.m. local time.

Vano said the suspects were on board a blue-colored Honda Jazz without a plate number dragged. The suspects snatched the victims and hurriedly sped off towards unknown directions.

Police and military forces in the nearby towns were alerted about the kidnapping. The police also blocked all the exit routes with checkpoints in Pagadian City.

Xinhua



Policemen inspect the site of road accident in Wumeng Township under an industrial and tourist development zone near Kunming, capital of Yunnan, on 6 Feb, 2013. Twelve people were killed and three others injured after a vehicle fell off a mountain cliff in Yunnan Province on Wednesday afternoon. XINHUA

Indonesia to depend import restriction policy in WTO after US protests

JAKARTA, 7 Feb—The Indonesian government is ready to clarify and defend its import restriction on horticulture products in the World Trade Organization (WTO) after the protest of the United States, a minister said here on Thursday.

"We must give protection to our farmers, because it is linked with the prosperity of many people," said

Coordinating Minister for Economy Hatta Rajasa.

The minister argued that Indonesia has difficulties in exporting its horticulture products to foreign markets and it is reasonable if Indonesia takes such policies.

"We also face difficulty in exporting our products. So should we give protection to our farmers,

what's wrong with that. If there is a legal suit to the WTO, we will face it," said Hatta, quoted by inilah.com, one of leading portals in the country.

Previously, the United States has complained the restriction on the importation of horticulture products by Indonesia and planned to file the complaint to the WTO.—Xinhua

2013 Aero-India Air Show kicks off

BEIJING, 7 Feb—The 2013 Aero-India Air Show has kicked off in the City of Bangalore. The 5-day show provides a significant platform in bolstering business opportunities for companies from both home and abroad in the international aviation sector. A win-win chance for India and global equipment and aircraft makers, the world's aviation heavyweights are landing in India in hopes of securing a share of the country's defense budget, which is expected to see increases in the billions of dollars. They were warmly welcomed by India, which is trying to upgrade its largely Soviet-era military equipment.

Arackaparambil Kurien Antony, Indian Defence Minister, said, "There are big opportunities for major international aerospace companies to enter into new alli-

ances and forge partnerships with the Indian industry and set up bases in India."

The Indian air force currently relies heavily on Soviet-era MiG fighters, sometimes dubbed "flying coffins" in India for their high crash rates. New Delhi is planning to buy 126 Rafale fighter jets, made by France's Dassault Aviation with negotiations over price still ongoing. The defence minister said importing arms is necessary but India's defense procurement policy was being adjusted, which means the government is looking to increase local arms purchases.

India became the world's biggest arms importer in recent years. It plans to spend 120 billion US dollars by 2017, on new defence acquisitions, which will make India the third largest defense spender after the US and China.—Xinhua



A girl looks at a swimming ray at Vancouver Aquarium in Vancouver, Canada, on 6 Feb, 2013. The Secret World of Sharks and Rays exhibition showcased different rare species of the ocean animals to boost the awareness of protecting endangered marine life.—XINHUA

REGIONAL

Business leaders hold seminar in Kyoto, W Japan

OSAKA, 7 Feb—A two-day business seminar seeking for a new economic development model from Japan's Kansai Region has started in Kyoto City, western Japan, on Thursday, attracting more than 500 business leaders and officials.

The Kansai Economic Seminar, co-organized by the Kansai Economic Federation and Kansai As-

sociation of Corporate Executives, was kicked off on Thursday morning in Kyoto International Conference Center with the aim of booting discussions about possible national and regional development to produce what they are proud of in the people in the next generation.

During the opening session on Thursday morning, Shosuke Mori, chairman of

the Kansai Economic Federation, stated participants should give their ideas from pragmatic point of view to work out the "acceptable" business approaches.

According to the organizers, participants are expected to join in workshops this afternoon and tomorrow, which will focus on several key themes such as "Establishment of resilient country", "Japa-

nese companies facing new capitalism", "Development of business environment towards participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free trade agreement negotiations and "Innovative Kansai".

During the 51st conference, students from universities are also invited to exchange their views with top business leaders.

Xinhua



Photo taken on 1 Feb, 2013 shows the scenery of the Baofeng Lake scenic spot in Zhangjiajie City, central China's Hunan Province. —XINHUA



A visitor looks at an Easter egg presented on the exhibition of "Fabergé: Legacy of Imperial Russia" in the Hong Kong Heritage Museum in south China's Hong Kong, on 6 Feb, 2013. The exhibition features the achievements of the jewellery industry of Russia from the 19th to the 20th centuries, and Peter Carl Fabergé (1846-1920) is the most successful jeweller of the period. —XINHUA

ASEAN Secretary-General, CPR vow to strengthen coordination

JAKARTA, 7 Feb — ASEAN Secretary-General and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to ASEAN agreed to further strengthen coordination and cooperation between ASEAN Member States and the ASEAN Secretariat in order to effectively implement the goals and objectives of the association, the ASEAN Secretariat said on Wednesday.

In his first meeting with the CPR at the ASEAN Secretariat since assuming office on 9 January, ASEAN Secretary-General Le Luong Minh said that although ASEAN has made significant achievements in recent years, there remains much to be done. "There is a need for the ASEAN Secretariat and the ASEAN Member States to improve our coordination, cooperation and communication as well as among the ASEAN sectoral bodies in implementing the three ASEAN Community Blueprints. Time was also

of the essence in view of the ASEAN Community 2015 target," he said in the meeting held on Wednesday.

Both the Secretary-General and the CPR also agreed that the central role of ASEAN remains important in ASEAN's agenda. Narrowing the development gap was also highlighted as one of the priorities of ASEAN.

During the meeting, the Secretary-General shared with the CPR his perspectives on the progress and challenges in ASEAN Community building efforts in the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). The secretary general and CPR also agreed to hold frequent and regular consultations in order to enhance their coordination and cooperation. The CPR expressed their full support and cooperation to assist the secretary general throughout his tenure.—Xinhua



Local residents look at the traditional decorations for the upcoming Chinese Lunar New Year in China Town, New York, the United States, on 6 Feb, 2013. The Chinese Lunar New Year, or Spring Festival, starts on 10 February this year. —XINHUA

200,000 Chinese tourists to come to Thailand for Lunar New Year

BANGKOK, 7 Feb—Thai public and private sectors are preparing Thailand for Chinese New Year as at least 200,000 tourists from China are expected to celebrate in the country, *Thai News Agency* reported on Thursday.

Thanitta Savetsila Maneechote, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Tourism and Sports, said the ministry expected about at least 200,000 tourists from China to choose Thailand as their destination during the Chinese New Year holiday, started Sunday and

extending through next week. Apart from Bangkok and northern Province of Chiang Mai, southern west coastal Province of Krabi, east coastal Province of Surat Thani and touristic island of Phuket, are among the destinations expected to be crowded with Chinese tourists.

Because of large number of tourists, the ministry has cooperated with several state and private agencies to arrange facilities for the tourists' convenience in Thailand.—Xinhua

Three killed in under-construction bridge collapse in Mumbai

NEW DELHI, 7 Feb — At least three persons were killed and several others injured when parts of an under-construction bridge collapsed near the Mumbai Airport late Wednesday night, a senior police official said on Thursday.

"The bridge collapsed suddenly at 10.30 pm when several construction work-

ers were working at the site. They were all trapped under the debris and were rescued by fire tenders. While one died on the spot, three others succumbed to their injuries at the hospital where they were admitted," he said, on condition of anonymity.

Local TV channels beamed footage of rescuers

pulling out those trapped under the debris at the under-construction bridge which, when completed, will connect international and domestic terminals of the Mumbai Airport.

The police have booked the private contractor of the site for negligence, the official added.

Xinhua

Shallow quake hits Sumatra, Indonesia

JAKARTA, 7 Feb— An earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale struck off North Sumatra of Indonesia earlier Thursday, the Indonesian Meteorology and Geophysics Agency reported.

The quake struck at

07:41 am Jakarta Time (00:41 GMT) with epicentre at 25 km southeast Sibolga of North Sumatra and with the depth at 64 km under the sea bed, an official of the agency told *Xinhua* over the phone.

An earthquake 5.6-

magnitude was reported by the agency that hit West Sumatra at 05:12 am on Thursday.

Indonesia sits on a vulnerable quake-hit zone called the "Pacific Ring of Fire".

Xinhua

Malaysia offers rewards for information leading to arrest of elephant killers

KUALA LUMPUR, 7 Feb— Malaysian authorities are offering a 50,000-ringgit (16,000 US dollars) reward for information that leads to the arrest of the culprits behind the death of 14 rare pygmy elephants last month if they were confirmed to be poisoned.

Sabah state tourism, culture and environment ministry said on Wednes-

day it hopes to have new leads with the offer.

Police are already investigating workers of several logging companies.

Ten elephants were found dead on 29 January on the eastern tip of Borneo for suspected poisoning after autopsies showed their intestinal tracts were ruptured.

Xinhua



A woman and her child look at flower settings in a shopping mall in south China's Hong Kong, on 6 Feb, 2013. As the Spring Festival draws near, many shopping malls in Hong Kong started using flowering settings to create the festival atmosphere. The Spring Festival, or the Chinese lunar New Year, falls on 10 February this year.—XINHUA

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

Announcement of Prequalified Firms for
Yangon International Airport Project



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

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

No	Reg. No.	Leading Firm	Consortium	Country
1	003	Invest Import AD	Invested Import	Serbia
			Airport Nikola Tesla Belgrade JSC	Serbia
			Ooo Pi	Russia
			Planum Limited	Cyprus
			Ener goprojekt – Industrija AD	Serbia
			Deneza M Engineering Ltd.	Serbia
			Shwe Taung Development	Myanmar
2	005	Toyota Tsusho Corporation	Toyota Tsusho Corporation	Japan
			Central Japan International Airport Co., Ltd.	Japan
			Aung Thaug Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
3	008	Vinci Airport	Vinci	France
			Muhibbah	Malaysia
			Shwe Taung Development	Myanmar
4	010	ITNL International Pte.,Ltd	ITNL International Pte Limited.	Singapore
			IL&FS Transportation Networks Limited	India
			Dublin Airport Authority	Ireland
			Htoo Construction Development Group Co.,Ltd	Myanmar
			Larsen & Toubro Limited	India
5	011	ACO Investment Group Co.,Ltd.	ACO Investment Group LLC	USA
			Myint Mo Oo General Services Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
			Mckinsey & Company, Inc	Hong Kong
			The MITRE Corporation	USA
			Unison Consulting, Inc	USA
			Fentress Architects	USA
			Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co., Ltd.	USA
6	012	Incheon Airport Consortium	Incheon International Airport Corporation	Korea
			Kumho Industrial Co, Ltd	Korea
			Halla Engineering and Construction Corporation	Korea
			AI Construction Co.,Ltd.	Myanmar
7	013	Okkar Thiri	Okkar Thiri Co.,Ltd.	Myanmar
			Flughafen Munchen GmbH (Munich Airport) & MUC	Germany
			Essar Projects (India) Ltd.	India
			Shihlin Electric & Engineering Corporation	Taiwan
8	014	Pioneer Aerodrome Services	Pioneer Aerodrome Services Co., Ltd.	Myanmar
			China Harbour Engineering Co., Ltd.	China
			CPG Consultant Pte Ltd.	Singapore
			Malaysia Airport consultancy Services Sdn. Bhd	Malaysia
9	017	Sojitz Corporation	Sojitz Corporation	Japan
			Maeda Corporation	Japan
			Japan Airport Terminal Co., Ltd.	Japan
			New Kansai International Airport Co., Ltd.	Japan
			Five Oceans Company Ltd.	Myanmar
10	020	Bouygues Batiment-First Pacific-Yoma-FMI	Bouygues Batiment	France
			First Pacific	Hong Kong
			First Myanmar Investment	Myanmar
			Yoma Strategic Holdings	Singapore
11	025	Yongnam-CAPE-JGC Consortium	Yongnam Holdings Limited	Singapore
			JGC Corporation	Japan
			Changi Airport Planners and Engineers Pte.Ltd.	Singapore
			Pac Link Trading Ltd	Myanmar

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

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

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Social networking services; provision of personal information including profiles and diaries on an electronic bulletin board on the Internet; providing information on finding and introducing friends via the Internet websites; providing geographical map information including providing geographical map information via the Internet and email; providing fashion information; providing information on newspaper articles; marriage partner introduction or dating services. (International Class 45)

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Tin Ohnmar Tun & The Law Chambers

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Dated 08 February,2013.

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MV DELPHINUS VOY NO (330)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DELPHINUS VOY NO (330) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-2-2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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AGENT FOR: FORTUNE SHIPPING & AGENCY
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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.

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CONTAINER LINES**

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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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 MOL (S'PORE) PTE LTD.**
Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

Netflix, Queen Latifah's film company strike TV distribution deal

LOS ANGELES, 7 Feb —Online video streamer Netflix Inc has struck a deal to show the films produced by Flavour Unit Entertainment, the companies said on Tuesday.

The deal will give Netflix the right of first refusal over the films by the production company, which has made films such as "Beauty Shop" and "Bringing Down the House," Netflix and Flavour Unit said in a joint release.

This means the films will bypass premium cable channels like HBO and Showtime that have

controlled the market of films to TV subscribers in the past. Flavour Unit is owned by actress and rapper Queen Latifah.

"We are delighted to work with Queen Latifah to be the exclusive destination for what are sure to be relevant, entertaining movies," Ted Sarandos, Netflix's chief content officer, said in a statement. The deal will begin in spring 2013, Netflix said. Netflix's agreement with Flavour Unit comes on the heels of a deal it has with Walt Disney Co in December.

Reuters



The headquarters of Netflix is shown in Los Gatos, California on 20 Sept, 2011.—REUTERS



Katie Holmes doesn't want to give up her freedom. PTI

NEW DELHI, 7 Feb—Katie Holmes is worried about dating again. The former Dawson's Creek actress has been single since splitting from ex-husband Tom Cruise last June and while she is keen to start seeing new guys, she doesn't want to lose her new-found freedom. A source said: "Katie's in a dilemma, because

What worries Katie Holmes?

she wants to date but is concerned where it could lead to from there. "She's worried that if she commits herself fully to another man, she will have to give up the freedom she's enjoying so much at the moment. As a single woman, she has no one controlling her nowadays, telling her what to do or who to see and she absolutely loves it!

PTI

UK celebrity chef Delia Smith hangs up her TV apron

LONDON, 7 Feb — Celebrity chef Delia Smith, who was inspired by the awfulness of British food, has decided to quit television, saying entertainment had overtaken education in modern cookery shows. Smith, 71, the UK's best-selling cookery author with more than 21 million copies sold, told fans at a trade show that she was leaving TV after about 40 years to focus on a new venture, the Delia Online Cookery School.

The chef said she is still passionate about teaching people how to cook in a no-nonsense style but she wanted to work online with her followers who have coined the phrase "doing a Delia" to refer to preparing one of her recipes. "This is the future for me and the population. It's miles ahead. If you do a TV program now, it's got to entertain," Smith was quoted by the Telegraph



British television chef Delia Smith arrives at a reception hosted by Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh to pay tribute to the contribution of more than 400 pioneers to British life at Buckingham Palace in London, on 13 Oct, 2003.—REUTERS

newspaper as telling a question and answer session at a trade show in Birmingham to promote her bakeware range. A spokeswoman for Smith, Melanie Grocott, confirmed that the chef

"However, at the same time, she also misses being with someone special to share experiences with and she doesn't want to be alone for the rest of her life."

Katie currently spends most of her time with the couple's six-year-old daughter, Suri, and while she loves being with her, she knows it's important for her to have other important people in her life. The source added to RadarOnline.com: "Katie's got Suri for the time being, and she is her best friend, but she does eventually want to find a man she can be that close with as well. She's just a little nervous and cautious about relationships still right now."

Singer Gloria Estefan, husband, plan Broadway show of their lives



Gloria Estefan introduces Christina Aguilera's performance at the 40th American Music Awards in Los Angeles, California, on 18 Nov, 2012.—REUTERS

NEW YORK, 7 Feb—Cuban-American singer Gloria Estefan and her music entrepreneur husband, Emilio, are developing a new Broadway show based on their lives, the show's producer said on Tuesday. The couple is working with the Nederlander Organization on the show that will trace their lives from leaving Cuba to international stardom. "The Estefans' journey of success, led by raw talent and passion, is captivating as it drove them from relative obscurity to global sensations," Jimmy Nederlander, the organization's president, said in a statement announcing the deal.

Estefan, one of the most successful Latin crossover stars, fled Cuba with her family as a toddler.—Reuters

had announced she would not be doing any more TV shows and was concentrating on her online cookery school. Smith's retirement will come as a disappointment to her many fans who opt for her practical, fail-safe recipes as opposed to some of the more flamboyant styles of newer celebrity chefs. Her cookbooks are a staple in many UK kitchens. Smith's departure from TV will also be a blow to some British supermarkets who report the "Delia effect"—a term listed in the Collins English Dictionary in 2001 to describe a rush for a certain ingredient or item used by Smith in a recipe. Smith in her online biography said she quit school at 16 and worked as a hairdresser, in a shop and in a travel agency before starting to cook, wondering why British food was so awful and French food so good.—Reuters

SPORTS



Juan Mata (L) of Spain vies with Martin Caceres of Uruguay during an international friendly soccer match between Spain and Uruguay in Doha, Qatar, on 6 Feb, 2013. Spain won 3-1.—XINHUA

Lefty commands spotlight at Pebble Beach

LOS ANGELES, 7 Feb—Celebrities such as actor Bill Murray and singer Huey Lewis have established a high profile at the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am but no one will command a greater share of the spotlight this week than defending champion Phil Mickelson. Fresh from a scintillating display of dominant golf at the Phoenix Open where he clinched his 41st PGA Tour victory by four shots on Sunday, Mickelson returns to the picturesque surrounds of Pebble Beach Golf Links close to the best form of his career.

The American left-hander has long been renowned for his magical short game and exciting shot-making but he is especially excited by his much

improved accuracy since acquiring a new driver which he put into play for the first time last week. “It just changed my whole deal,” a beaming Mickelson told reporters after closing with a four-under-par 67 on the Stadium Course at the TPC Scottsdale.

“The fact that this club is so easy to hit now, I think it’s going to change the rest of the year for me. I really do. “My iron play has always been the strength of my game ... but to drive it as easily as I did in play and to have the misses be so much less is going to set up for a very good year, I believe.” Armed with his new Callaway RAZR Fit Xtreme driver, four-times major champion Mickelson pounded the ball long and straight for most of

the week at Scottsdale, and came within a whisker of shooting a 59 in the opening round.

“To be able to make a driver that spins this low with this much loft for me has never been done,” said the 42-year-old, who had previously used a less-lofted model while adopting a more upward swing plane. “Now I’m able to make

the same golf swing as my irons. It really could be a revolutionary club for me.”—Reuters



U.S. golfer Phil Mickelson hits off the 11th tee of the north course at Torrey Pines during first round play at the Farmers Insurance Open in San Diego, California on 24 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

Okazaki double leads Japan past Latvia in World Cup warm-up

KOBE, 7 Feb—Shinji Okazaki struck twice as Japan made a winning start to 2013 with a comprehensive 3-0 victory over Latvia on Wednesday in a tune-up for next month’s crunch World Cup qualifier away



Shinji Okazaki (9) scores his second and Japan’s third goal during the second half of a friendly against Latvia in Kobe on 6 Feb, 2013. Japan won 3-0 ahead of a World Cup qualifier in March away to Jordan.—KYODO NEWS

to Jordan. The Stuttgart striker rattled in off the post to open the scoring late in the first half and sealed victory with a cool finish, seconds after Keisuke Honda had doubled the Asian champions’ lead at Home’s Stadium in Kobe.

“We haven’t been together as a team for about two months so we looked a bit rusty in the first half,” said Japan coach Alberto Zaccheroni.—Kyodo News

Lakers’ Gasol out indefinitely with foot injury

LOS ANGELES, 7 Feb—Los Angeles Lakers forward Pau Gasol has been sidelined indefinitely after sustaining a tear in his right foot, his team said on Wednesday. Gasol was injured during the Lakers’ victory over Brooklyn on Tuesday and received scans which confirmed an injury serious enough to keep him off court for a while.

Los Angeles has not given a specific timetable on his return and the 7-foot (2.13m) Spaniard will meet with team doctors on Thursday to sketch out a plan for his recupera-

tion. “I’m hoping to recover ASAP so I can be back with the team and keep fighting until the end of the season,” Gasol tweeted on Wednesday.

The Lakers (23-26) have only recently found their rhythm—win-

three games while nursing a shoulder ailment, and can hardly afford another injury.



Los Angeles Lakers’ Pau Gasol sits on the floor with a member of the Lakers medical staff after suffering an injury to his right leg in the fourth quarter of their NBA basketball game against the Brooklyn Nets in Brooklyn, New York, on 5 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

ning six of their last seven game—as they try to climb from 10th in the Western Conference into one of the top eight playoff spots. They are already without centre Dwight Howard, who has missed the last

Gasol had been moved to a reserve role to make room in the paint for Howard, but over his last three games had averaged 20 points and 8.6 rebounds in the starting lineup.

Reuters

Australians win race to top of Empire State Building

NEW YORK, 7 Feb—Australians Mark Bourne and Suzy Walsham were the fastest man and woman to race up the 1,576 steps of the Empire State Building on Wednesday in the run up of the iconic New York landmark. Bourne finished in 10 minutes, 12 seconds and Walsham clocked 12:05 in the race up 86 floors that is described as a vertical marathon, the New York Road Runner (NYRR), which organizes the annual Empire State Building Run-Up, said.

About 600 runners from 18 countries took part in the race, now in its 36th year. “Obviously I’m very happy to win and it’s nice to have all the training pay off,” said Bourne. “I wanted to pace myself well and fortunately it paid off.” Four-time champion Walsham was equally elated. “I had a bear on my back after my crash in 2009

and I trained specifically for this race. It’s a personal best time for me and I couldn’t be happier,” said Walsham who lives in Singapore.

Australian Darren Wilson came in second among the men, followed by Ricky Gates of San Francisco. Brooke Logan of Australia was the second woman to reach the top, ahead of Erika Aklufi, of Los Angeles, who placed third. German Thomas Dold, the defending men’s champion who has won the race a record seven times, did not compete because of illness.

About 30 elite men and women vertical racers, or tower runners, who storm up skyscrapers around the globe, along with fitness enthusiasts and some 200 charity runners ran from the lobby of the landmark building to the Observatory floor.

Reuters



Mark Bourne of Australia reacts as he crosses the finish line on the observation deck of the 86th floor of the Empire State Building in New York City to win the 36th Empire State Building Run-Up running race, on 6 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

Las Vegas sevens to help US push sport forward

WELLINGTON, 7 Feb—The stakes are high for the United States as they head into their home round of the rugby sevens world series under pressure to perform, men’s team coach Alex Magleby has said. The Las Vegas tournament from 8-10 February is the fifth leg of the nine-stop series, and rankings points at its conclusion will determine seedings for the sevens World Cup in Moscow in

June.

The Americans are tied for 14th in the standings with 18 points and a better placing in the Nevada tournament will help improve their position ahead of the tour’s first promotion/relegation playoffs in May. On top of that, the US team has just received support from the United States Olympic Committee for the sport’s debut at the 2016 Rio Games, and given the expectations from the world’s most successful Olympic nation, the pressure is on Magleby’s side.

“I think the first thing is, we have to win,” Magleby told Reuters after the Wellington leg of the series. “We have guys who can compete, so we are tasked with winning.”—Reuters



coach Alex Magleby

GENERAL

Gokteik Viaduct

The largest railway trestle in the world upon its completion in 1901, the Gokteik Viaduct is the highest bridge in Myanmar. Located in the center of the country about 60 miles (100 kms) northeast of the largest



city of Mandalay. Construction was overseen by Sir Arthur Rendel, engineer for the Burma Railroad Company. Stretching 2,260 feet (689 mtrs) from end to end, the viaduct has 14 towers that span 40 feet (12 mtrs) along with a double tower 80 feet (24 mtrs) long. These 15 towers support 10 deck truss spans of 120 feet (37 mtrs) along with six plate girder spans 60 feet (18 mtrs) long and an approach span of 40 feet (12 mtrs).—NLM

Hodgson warns Lampard against

US move

LONDON, 7 Feb—Frank Lampard underlined his importance to England with a superb winner in his side's 2-1 victory over Brazil on Wednesday but his chances of reaching the 100-cap milestone could be scuppered by a move out of Europe, coach Roy Hodgson said. The 34-year-old Chelsea midfielder's 60th-minute curler after

Hodgson, whose mix of youth and experience ensured a vibrant display from England, sees no reason why Lampard cannot emulate the feat of club colleague Ashley Cole who played his 100th international in the prestige Wembley friendly. However, Lampard's future at Chelsea is unclear and with no new contract

finals, providing England qualify.

"He was excellent tonight," Hodgson told reporters. "I think he can (reach 100 caps). I hope we keep him Frank in Europe but it's not for me to discuss his future with his current club, that's between him and the club. "I know he will have a lot of offers if Chelsea do decide they are prepared to let him go and I would rather hope that we will see him still, if not in England, then in Europe because that would make my task easier.

"If he does follow David (Beckham) and goes further afield it complicates things but it doesn't necessarily mean your career ends. "But he of course he understands that the further afield you go the more problematic it does become for him and for the media to follow you and the national team manager." With Arsenal's Jack Wilshere producing a classy midfield display alongside Steven Gerrard, Lampard's place in the starting team is no longer assured but as he proved his eye for goal is undiminished.—Reuters



England's Frank Lampard (C) scores past Brazil's goalkeeper Julio Cesar during their international friendly soccer match at Wembley stadium in London on 6 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

coming on as a halftime substitute for his 94th appearance was his 27th England goal since his first cap in 1999.

on the table a possible move to the MLS in the United States could jeopardize his chances of appearing in next year's World Cup

Presidential polls in Maldives set for September

MALE, 7 Feb—The Maldivian Elections Commission said on Thursday that presidential elections in the island will be held on 7 September this year.

This will be the first presidential polls held in the nation after President Mohamed Waheed replaced former president Mohamed Nasheed in February last year. The Elections Commission announcement also comes days after mounting international pressure by the European Union and other nations

reiterating calls for free and fair polls in the Maldives.

President Waheed on Sunday announced that he and his government was fully committed to a free and fair election and also urged the Elections Commission to declare the election date "as soon as possible". In April last year, just two months after Nasheed was replaced, Waheed announced that the presidential polls will be held in July 2013 due to wide protests demanding for an early election by Nasheed's supporters.—Xinhua

Blast rocks N Afghan, casualties feared

KUNDUZ, (Afghanistan), 7 Feb—A powerful blast rocked northern Kunduz town, the capital of Kunduz Province, 250 km north of Kabul on Thursday, casualties feared, a local official said.

The blast took place at 10:40 am local time in front

of the house of provincial governor Thursday morning, the official told Xinhua.

He also added that a police vehicle was damaged due to the blast. However, he declined to be identified, saying authorized officials would brief the media after

investigation.

Meantime, police spokesman in the province, Sayed Warwar Hussaini in talks with Xinhua confirmed the incident but insisted there were no casualties; adding investigation has been initiated into the incident.—Xinhua



Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni escorts the ashes of late King Father Norodom Sihanouk during a procession in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 7 Feb, 2013. A week-long royal funeral of Cambodia's late King Norodom Sihanouk came to an end on Thursday when part of his cremains were taken from the cremation site to keep in the royal palace in a procession.—XINHUA

Seven killed in avalanche in northern India

NEW DELHI, 7 Feb—At least seven people have been killed in an avalanche in Himachal Pradesh as heavy snowfall brought life to a standstill in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, a senior police official said on Wednesday.

"The victims were killed when the avalanche hit Kafnu village in the state's remote Kinnaur

district late Tuesday night. More people are feared to be trapped in the avalanche as efforts are going on to search for any more survivors," he said, on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, heavy snowfall has brought life to a standstill in the entire district. "The entire Kinnaur district is experiencing continuous heavy snowfall.

While four feet snow was recorded till Tuesday, another one-and-half feet was recorded this morning. Already a high alert has been sounded in the district," Kalpa Prashant Deshta, a local government official told the media.

However, power has been restored in the district which faced a blackout since last evening.—Xinhua

Leftist rebels kill 1 civilian every week in 2012

MANILA, 7 Feb—The Philippine military accused Wednesday the leftist New People's Army (NPA) of killing one civilian every week in 2012.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines issued

the statement by citing the atrocities committed by the rebels last year.

The leftist rebels were responsible for 374 violent incidents last year, which caused the death of 53 civilians over the country, military spokesman Colonel Arnulfo Burgos said.

"Rounding up the statistics, an innocent civilian is killed by the NPA every week last year," he said. Aside from the killings of civilians, he said that the violent incidents perpetrated by the rebels also resulted to the death of 81 military personnel, eight policemen, and 22 paramilitary.

"Such atrocities is a clear manifestation of the NPAs resorting to force and intimidation to coerce civilians including private

firms and individuals, even poor folks in far flung villages of the country to give in to their demands since the NPA has lost its mass base support," Burgos said.

In January this year, Burgos said NPAs staged several attacks that killed three soldiers and 10 civilians. However, Burgos said the Armed Forces was able to neutralize 555 rebels in 2012, of them, 367 voluntarily surrendered to the government.

As of end 2011, security officials pegged the strength of the NPA at 4,043 men. The NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front, has been waging war against the government for over four decades.—Xinhua



Vehicles run on a flooded street in northwest Pakistan's Peshawar on 6 Feb, 2013. At least 17 people were killed, 31 injured and many others displaced after moderate to heavy rainfall lashed several areas of Pakistan over the last 72 hours, local TV Dunya reported on Tuesday.—XINHUA

Urgent proposal on conserving High Court (Yangon) and Combined Office as ancient cultural heritages submitted



Deputy Minister for Sports U Thaung Htaik responds to questions.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Six questions were raised and one proposal submitted at today's Pyithu Hluttaw Session.

Regarding the question of U Aung San of Pabedan Constituency on winning chances for eight kinds of sports for which Myanmar did not win the medals in 26th SEA Games and hosting of international-friendly matches, Deputy Minister for Sports U Thaung Htaik replied that out of eight sports, badminton, basketball, cycling, golf, swimming and table tennis will be put in the coming SEA Games. Myanmar has no chance to win medals for eight kinds of sports. The ministry has decided to



U Aung San of Pabedan Constituency asking questions.—MNA

put such sports in the 27th SEA Games, upholding the motto of the 27th SEA Games "Green, Clean, Friendship"

The ministry is providing necessary assistances to athletes and upgrading international-standard sports grounds and gymnasiums. Asia Youth and Junior Weight Lifting Championship was held in Yangon from 5 to 12 November, 2012. South East Asia Archery Competition was also held in Nay Pyi Taw from 9 to 14 January, 2013. Plans are under way to host similar invitational competitions.

U Aung San said, "I am very pleased with the deputy minister's reply" Hluttaw decided to record



U Thein Aung of Thanbyzayet Constituency submits proposal.—MNA

the proposal on promulgating a law to ensure and protect standard fundamental rights



Thura U Aung Ko of Kanpetlet Constituency submits proposal.—MNA

of citizens submitted by U Thein Aung of Thanbyzayet Constituency

Diplomatic relations established between Myanmar and the Armenia

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Feb—The Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Republic of Armenia, with the purpose to promote the friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation, agreed to establish diplomatic relations at Ambassadorial level with effect from 31 January 2013.

The Joint Communique on the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries was signed by the Permanent Representative of the

Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations in New York on 31 January 2013. Myanmar has been making efforts to expand diplomatic relations with countries all over the world, and the Republic of Armenia has become the 111th country with which Myanmar has established diplomatic relations.

MNA

and an urgent proposal on urging the government to conserve High Court (Yangon) and Combined Office between Strand Road

and Bank Road in Yangon as ancient cultural heritages by Thura U Aung Ko of Kanpetlet Constituency.

MNA

MPs reckon further actions to be taken only after Rakhine's conflict investigation commission releases its report



U Naing Tun Ohn of Mon State Constituency No. (5) asking questions.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Feb—Dr Aye Maung of Rakhine State Constituency No (1) put forward a proposal urging the Union government to give special focus on border security, regional administration and immigration management with strategic long-term and short-term plans to ensure perpetuity of the State's sovereignty reviewing the conflicts resulted from ethnic strife in Rakhine State in last June to the today's Amyotha Hluttaw.

The proposal was put to vote for debate and then rejected for discussion.

U Hla Swe of Magway Region Constituency No (12) says, "It is rather early to discuss the proposal. It should be discussed only



Dr Aye Maung of Rakhine State Constituency (No. 1) submitting proposal.—MNA

after the Rakhine's Conflict Investigation Commission releases its reports. If not, it might influence the commission's functions."

U Phone Myint Aung of Yangon Region Constituency No. (3) remarks, "It would take time to settle the issue even after the commission's report comes out."

U Naing Tun Ohn of Mon State Constituency No (5) asked whether there is any plan to prohibit under-age driving. Union Minister for Rail Transportation U Zeyar Aung replied that 85 percent of the total number of licensed vehicles at present in Myanmar is motor bikes. Those who have attained the age of 16 are given licenses to ensure that students can ride motor bikes, the major mode of transportation for



Union Minister for Rail Transportation U Zeyar Aung answering questions.—MNA

them in going to schools. It has been planned to add traffic rules subject to curriculum at classrooms and coordination are being made with authorities concerned so that legal actions can be taken against the rule breakers.

Member of Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee Defence Services Personnel Hluttaw Representative Brig-Gen Kyaw Oo Lwin explained the committee's report on "Population and Households Census Bill."

Deputy Minister for Immigration and Population U Win Myint proposed the Hluttaw to approve the proposal and U Soe Win from Ayeyawady Region Constituency No. (2) seconded the proposal. The bill was approved as amended.



U Zong Hle Htan of Chin State Constituency No. (2) submits a proposal.—MNA

Deputy Minister for Communications and Information Technology U Win Than proposed the Hluttaw to discuss Communications Bill and the Hluttaw approved it for debate.

U Zong Hle Htan of Chin State Constituency No (2) submitted a proposal urging the Union government to give permits for mining in forest reserves and protected public forests in Chin State with lowest development index orienting the poverty reduction there. U Ha Shein Bwe of Chin State Constituency No. (8) seconded the proposal and the Hluttaw approved to discuss the proposal.

The Hluttaw session came to an end in the afternoon.—MNA

Ivory poachers, grave threat to elephant population

Interviewer: Yan Gyi Aung
Photo: Forest Department

Recently, we have read news about killing of wild elephants in Ngapudaw Township of Pathein District in Ayeyawady Region and Kyaukdaga Township in Bago Region. Following this, we went to Forest Department under the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry to interview about those incidents and the habitation of wild elephants in Myanmar.

U Zaw Win
Director
Ayeyawady Region
Forest Department

Q: Let me know about the killing of elephants.

A: it happened in



Director U Kyaw Kyaw Lwin of Bago Region Forest Department.—MNA

Block No. 2 in Sinhmoe Forest Reserve, Moe-teinmyin Village-tract in Ngayokekaung Sub-township, Ngapudaw Township, Pathein District. An elephant was found killed on 3 January afternoon. It is a black male (See page 7)