

President U Thein Sein tips agriculture, livestock breeding for economic growth of Chin State

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb—President U Thein Sein urged a boost in agriculture and livestock breeding despite the fact that the region is not naturally favoured to engage in economic activities in a meet

with Tiddim Township authorities.

President U Thein Sein flew to Tiddim of Falam District in Chin State from Kalay of Sagaing Region this morning as he continued his tour of inspection.

He was accompanied by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint, Union ministers, chief ministers of Sagaing Region and

Chin State, Lt-Gen Myint Soe of the office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), the commander of North-West Command, deputy ministers, the region minister, MPs and departmental heads.

The President met



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein meeting with departmental officials in Tiddim Township of Chin State.

MNA

and growing of maize. He also reiterated his call for uplifting of the education standards.

Chin nationals welcomed him with traditional songs on arrival at Haka in the evening.

MNA



Sim cards at reasonable prices

The year 2010 witnessed an expansion of mobile market in Myanmar with mobile shops popping up in Yangon, Mandalay and major cities of the country. Mobile phones become an essential toy for urban population. The speculations emerged in later 2012 that Sim card prices will be cut, getting ready potential mobile users in the wait for low-cost Sim cards.

The mobile market shows extensions to the outskirts of the cities. The small mobile shops in the outskirts of Yangon offer services similar to their bigger counterparts in downtown areas. The sale of GSM and CDMA handsets is still on the increase. The mobile shops now are selling handsets and Sim cards and providing other mobile services. Handsets with cutting-edge

Byline: Moe Thuzar Soe

technologies have showed good sale records. "As now is Android age, buyers do not think of price if the handset meets their demands. They are well-informed before buying a handset," an official of mobile phone shop said. Android handsets are leading the local market.

Samsung Galaxy series, iPhone and Huawei handsets make the top sellers list. The middle-aged mobile users are now turning their attention to HTC handsets with HTC Butterfly introduced to the local market officially with some localization.

"All walks of life will be able to use mobile phones if Sim card prize are reduced," the official said.

Trs: HKA



local authorities at the local battalion in Tongzang in Tiddim Township.

The President also stressed the need to improve the pass rate of

matriculation exam.

He called on townsenders to help their own region pursue social and economic growth.

The President then proceeded to Falam and met the local authorities and townsenders, calling for test breeding of cows

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein being welcomed by Chin national race dance troupe in Falam of Chin State.

MNA



Union Sports Minister meets players of selected football teams

YANGON, 16 Feb — Chairman of Myanmar National Sports Committee Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan met with players from Myanmar National Football Team, Myanmar Women's Team, youth selected teams and Futsal men's and women's team that are making preparations for taking part in the XXVII SEA Games, at the hall of Myanmar Football Federation in Yangon on 8 February.

President of MFF U Zaw reported on preparation of the teams for the coming SEA Games and introduced foreign coaches to the Union ministers.

In his instructions, the Union Minister urged them to achieve success in the SSVII



SEA Games; as the entire people expect the Myanmar team to secure gold medal in the football sport, they must pour out vigorous efforts in their sports event in full swing.

The president of the federation introduced players and coaches of Myanmar selected teams to the Union

minister.

Foreign coaches are assigned by Myanmar Football Federation duties to Myanmar National Teams.

A Japanese coach is appointed for U-14 team, a Brazilian for U-16, a German for U-19, two Korean coaches for U-23 and two Iranians for Futsal teams.—Kyemon

Car strikes, kills young man crossing road in Aungmyaythazan Township

MANDALAY, 16 Feb — A man was knocked down by a light truck while crossing the road and pronounced dead while receiving medical treatment at the hospital in Mandalay. The light truck driven by Aung Myo Thant, 27, hit Myo Zaw, 22, while

the latter was crossing the Mandalay Hill ring road near No (95) Infantry Battalion in Aungmyaythazan Township on 26 January. The victim suffered serious injuries and he was taken to Mandalay General Hospital.

No (1) Aungmyay-

thazan Township Police Station filed a lawsuit against the reckless driver.

Kyemon

Judges, judicial officers take oath in Bago region



BAGO, 16 Feb — The oath-taking ceremony of the judges and judicial officers was held at Bago Region High Court on 14 February.

Chief Justice of Bago Region High Court spoke on the occasion.

Next, the judges and

judicial officers took oath before the Chief Justice.

Then, experiences and instructions from the fourth meeting between the Supreme Court of the Union and Region/State High Courts were recounted.

Kyemon

Campaign against plastic bags

SAGAING, 16 Feb — Staff led by Assistant Director U Ngun Khar and Staff Officer U Tin Soe of Arid Zone Greening Department in cooperation with local people totaling 150 collectively performed picking up plastic bags for the sake of the

environment and keeping the surrounding clean at near around the Sikhongyi Pagoda in Sagaing and along Monywa-Mandalay road to Ayeyawady Bridge (Yadanabon) in cooperation with local people totaling 150 on 12 February.

They performed free

The collected plastic bags were dumped at the designated places by two vehicles of the department.

Local authorities are taking necessary measures and educating the people to be aware of the terrible consequences of a plastic bag.—Kyemon

Pakokku District Deputy Commissioner's Cup (Goal Luck) football tournament concludes

PAKOKKU, 16 Feb — The final match of Pakokku District Deputy Commissioner's Cup (Goal Luck) football tournament was held in conjunction with prize-giving ceremony in Pakokku of Magway Region on 12 February. The final match between TU-Mech football team and No(7) football team ended 2-0.

Next, the prize presentation ceremony followed. Chairman of organizing committee U Myint Aung, Head of

Pakokku Township Police Force Police Major Than Soe, Pakokku Township Administrator U Aung Naing Oo, Factory Manager U Aung Kyaw Oo, Head of Pakokku District Police Force Police Lt-Col Zaw Win and Pakokku District Auditing officer Daw Myint Myint Htay presented prizes to football players. Deputy Commissioner U Tin Maung Win handed over the championship trophy to first-prize winning TU-Mech team.—Kyemon



New concrete street, bridge opened in Kamayut Township

YANGON, 14 Feb — The opening of concrete street and new bridge was held on Kan street in Kamaryut Township on 12 February.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, region Development Affairs Minister Mayor U Hla Myint, region Hluttaw representative U Mya Ngwe, a townselder and wellwisher U Soe Naing formally opened the new concrete road and bridge.

The 365-foot ad 12-foot concrete street was built at the cost of K 5.1 million by Yangon City Development Committee.

The 25 feet long and 14 feet wide reinforced concrete bridge was built with the contribution of K 8 million by wellwisher U Soe Naing.

Kyemon

Workshop on Social Safety Net in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 16 Feb — Jointly-organized by Social Welfare Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and UNICEF (Myanmar), a region-level Workshop on Social Safety Net was held at Swam Hotel in Mandalay. Chairman of the Board of Social Welfare U Yu Lwin Aung gave talks on Social Welfare Law and Social Safety Net, Deputy Director-General U Aung Tun Khaing of Social Welfare Department on the

need of social security in Myanmar society, UNICEF Consultant Dr Phone Myint on situation of children in Mandalay Region and the advisor to social policy of UNICEF on requirements social protection for children. Next, those present held discussions on matters related to social security, objective condition of the aged and children in Mandalay Region, the role of the region government and its implementations in social sector.—Kyemon

Specialists provide local people with free health care

KALAY, 16 Feb — A 15-member specialist team accompanied by 18 surgeons of Kalay Hospital made a field trip to Inndin village-tract in Kalay Township of Sagaing Region on 8 February.

medical treatment to 267 patients, including nine who were given surgeries.

Kyemon

New tarred streets, power line installation in Nay Pyi Taw Lewe Township

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb — The opening of new tarred Myothit 1st street and Khayay street was held at the designated place at the corner of Myothit 1st street and Lanmadaw street on 14 February, attended by Nay Pyi Taw Council members U Kan Chun and U Myint Swe, Lewe Township Hluttaw representatives U Htay Win and U Hmat Gyi, departmental personnel and townselders.

Officials concerned formally opened the new tarred streets and those present strolled along the street. Next, the ceremony to mark the completion of installation of power lines for 17 streets in Lewe

Township followed at the top of Intaingtha street.

The newly-opened streets were upgraded by Engineering Department (road/bridge) in accord with the instruction of the chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee. The construction of the 2360-foot Myothit 1st street cost K 17.7 million and the 1250-foot Khayay street K 13.9 million. Moreover, Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee spent K 21.2 million in installation of power lines for 17 streets in the township.

Kyemon



WORLD

Canadian minister quits over inappropriate lobbying

OTTAWA, 16 Feb—Canadian Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan resigned unexpectedly on Friday after admitting he had inappropriately written a letter to a tax court on behalf of a constituent.

Duncan is the first minister to resign on a point of accountability since the Conservatives of Prime Minister Stephen Harper came to power in early 2006 vowing to clean up Ottawa.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty was formally reprimanded last month for urging the telecommunications regulator to grant a radio license to a company in his Parliamentary constituency. He kept his job.

Duncan said he had sent a character reference letter to the court in June 2011 on behalf of a constituent who was dealing with the Canada Revenue Agency.

"While the letter was written with honourable intentions, I realize that it



Canada's Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan speaks during Question Period in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on 6 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

was not appropriate for me, as a Minister of the Crown, to write to the Tax Court. I have therefore offered my resignation," Duncan said in a statement.

A government official said there was a big difference between writing to a regulator about a radio license and Duncan's lobbying of the federal Tax Court.

"Writing a letter to a judge ... is a definite no-no," the official told *Reuters*, referring to Duncan's case.

Parliament is not sitting next week so the opposition will not have a chance to raise Duncan's resignation quickly in elected House of Commons.

Although Harper is in no danger of losing power — the Conservatives have a majority of seats in the House of Commons and the next election is not until late 2015—the resignation follows a series of setbacks.

Earlier this week, a Conservative member of

the upper Senate chamber was suspended after being charged with sexual assault. Two other Conservative senators are being probed over whether they claimed excessive expenses.

Last March, the federal ethics commissioner ruled that Industry Minister Christian Paradis had violated ethics rules by telling bureaucrats to set up a meeting with a former Conservative legislator who wanted to do business with Ottawa.

After the same commissioner reprimanded Flaherty last month, he said he had meant to send the letter in his capacity as a legislator and not as a minister. He blamed staff for the error.

The government official told *Reuters* that after the Flaherty case, ministers had been told to review their correspondence. Duncan then discovered the tax letter and offered his resignation to Harper.

Reuters

UN Security Council warns against arms transfers to Yemen

UNITED NATIONS, 16 Feb—The UN Security Council warned on Friday against attempts to destabilize Yemen with weapons shipments as the country tries to rebuild after two years of upheaval and expressed concern that former president Ali Abdullah Saleh was undermining the process.

The 15-member council said it was ready to consider further measures, including sanctions, "if actions aimed at undermining the Government of National Unity and the political transition continue."

Yemen said its coast guard seized missiles and rockets on 23 January believed to have been sent by Iran. Iran has denied any connection to the weapons, which were found aboard a vessel off the coast in an operation coordinated with the US Navy.

The Security Council has asked its group of experts that monitors compliance

with the Iran sanctions, which includes a ban on arms exports, to investigate the incident after Yemen officially complained, Britain's UN Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant told reporters.

"The Security Council expresses concern over reports of money and weapons being brought into Yemen from outside for the purpose of undermining the transition," the Security Council said in a statement.

The council also expressed concern over reports of interference "by individuals in Yemen representing the former regime ... including former president Ali Abdullah Saleh and former vice president Ali Salim Al-Beidh."

Under the US-backed power transfer deal, President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi is overseeing reforms for a two-year interim period to ensure a transition to democracy.

Reuters

Ecuador prepares for presidential elections

QUITO, 16 Feb—Ecuadorians were banned from selling all alcoholic beverages on Friday until 12 hours after the general elections are closed at 5 pm local time (2200 GMT) on Sunday.

Anyone found breaking the rule or showing up drunk at a polling station will be slapped with a steep fine of 159 US dollars, which equals half a month's basic wage. Authorities have stepped up security around more than 40,000 polling stations country-wide for some 11.6 million eligible voters, who will be able to cast ballots starting from 7 am (1200 GMT) on Sunday.

On Friday, 8,963 detainees awaiting sentences participated in an early

voting in accordance with the constitution.

The National Electoral Council is expected to carry out a rapid count after the polls are closed and announce the winners later on Sunday. Ecuador's eight presidential hopefuls and legislative candidates have been campaigning for a month and a half for the general elections with incumbent President Rafael Correa and his ruling PAIS Alliance Movement firmly in lead.

Polls have placed Correa, who enjoys an impressive 80 percent approval rate, comfortably ahead of his rivals, while the PAIS Alliance Movement is projected to win a majority of the 137 contested seats of

the National Assembly.

If Correa wins, it will be his third presidential term, following his first election in 2006 with 57 percent of the vote, and second in 2009 with 52 percent.

According to the polls, he is likely to garner 50 to 60 percent of the vote this time. Under Ecuador's election law, to secure victory in the first round, a candidate must capture either a majority of the vote or a plurality of more than 40 percent with a margin of at least 10 percentage points over the second-place candidate. Failing this, a runoff will be held.

Correa's immediate rivals, but not threats, include a former banker, an ex-president and a banana magnate who is also Ecuador's wealthiest man, all trailing considerably behind in the polls.—*Xinhua*



Ecuador's President and candidate for re-election Rafael Correa (L) receives a gift during the final political rally, in Quito, Ecuador, on 14 Feb, 2013.

XINHUA

Honeymoon wears off for Mexico president's reform push

MEXICO CITY, 16 Feb—A political pact forged with rivals and a couple of key laws already under his belt, Mexico's new President Enrique Pena Nieto got off to a strong start, but he faces hurdles to push through deep economic reforms.

Armed with a wide-reaching agenda, the 46-year-old former state governor wants to overhaul Mexico's tax system, state oil monopoly Pemex, a telecoms sector dominated by the world's richest man, Carlos Slim, and competition regulations in a bid to modernize the economy and boost growth to 6 percent a year.

Despite lacking an outright majority in Congress, Pena Nieto managed to push the 2013 budget barely a week after taking office on 1 December



Mexico's President-elect Enrique Pena Nieto attends a media conference after a business meeting at the FIESP (Sao Paulo Industry Federation) in Sao Paulo on 19 September, 2012.

REUTERS

and passed a landmark education bill after sealing a broad accord dubbed the "Pact for Mexico" with leftist and conservative opponents.

But his plans may be starting to slip. "Some were far too quick to voice optimism during the typical honeymoon of a new government," said Gabriela Cuevas, a senator for the opposition conservative

National Action Party (PAN). "It's not that simple."

Mexico's economy is expected to grow by around 3.5 percent in 2013, slowing from around 4 percent last year. Economists say deep reforms are vital to spur stronger growth. "Other countries have done it, why not Mexico?" Pena Nieto told PRI congressmen late last month.—*Reuters*

Clashes rage in vicinity of Syria's Aleppo Airport, airbase

DAMASCUS, 16 Feb—Clashes continued on Friday between the rebels and the Syrian troops in the vicinity of a military airfield and the international airport of the country's northern Province of Aleppo, activist reports said. The rebels have unleashed attacks against the civilian airport of Aleppo and the nearby al-Nairab airbase

since Wednesday, activists said, placing the death toll of the three-day-long clashes at 150, roughly evenly divided between the rebels and the government troops.

The pro-government *al-Watan* daily said recently that the Syrian army was poised to wrest back control over the Brigade 80 base, of which the rebels have overrun large

swathes. It said the army ringed the base to recapture it. The paper said the brigade was used by the government troops to provide protection for Aleppo's international airport and the adjacent al-Nairab airbase.

Meanwhile, a leading commander of the rebels in Aleppo was quoted by the Saudi-funded al-Arabya TV

as saying on Friday that the rebels' attack would continue until the civilian airport and the airbase fall in their hands.

The recent incidents came as the rebels had been taking pains to achieve territorial gains in a bid to empower their position in possible negotiations with the administration of President Bashar al-Assad, local analysts say.—*Xinhua*

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



David Einhorn, president of Greenlight Capital, speaks during the Sohn Investment Conference in New York, on 16 May, 2012. — REUTERS

NEW YORK, 16 Feb — David Einhorn reiterated his arguments on Friday that a judge should block a

shareholder vote on Apple Inc's proposal to eliminate its ability to issue preferred shares without investor ap-

Ahead of hearing, Einhorn reiterates case against Apple

proval, days before a court hearing. In court filings in US District Court in Manhattan, Einhorn's Greenlight Capital attempted to rebut Apple's arguments that the company's proposal was "pro-shareholder." "Apple should not be allowed to substitute its judgment for its shareholders' judgment, and should be enjoined" from letting the vote proceed, Greenlight said in a motion.

A hearing on Einhorn's motion for an injunction against the 27 February vote on the proxy proposal

is set for Tuesday.

A spokesman for Apple declined comment. Greenlight sued Apple last week as part of Einhorn's larger effort to have the iPhone maker share more of its \$137 billion in cash with investors. As part of that goal, Einhorn has pushed for Apple to issue to its shareholders perpetual preferred stock with a 4 percent dividend. Among the Apple proxy proposals up for a vote 27 February is Proposal No 2, which would remove the company's current system

of issuing preferred stock at its discretion without a shareholder vote.

Greenlight's lawsuit contends Apple violated US Securities and Exchange rules by "bundling" three separate amendments to its charter into Proposal No 2. While Greenlight supports two of the amendments, it does not back the one related to preferred stock. Apple in a Wednesday filing argued the proposal was not bundled and that it had not forced shareholders into an unfair choice. It also

noted Proposal No. 2 was supported by proxy advisory services Institutional Shareholder Services and Glass, Lewis & Co. But Einhorn argued on Friday that ISS and Glass Lewis's support is premised on the belief that eliminating so-called "blank check" preferred stock powers enables a company to defend itself against a takeover.

"In my view, Apple is not a realistic take-over candidate because of, among other things, its enormous market capitalization," Einhorn wrote.—Reuters

Electronic Arts, Zynga settle competing lawsuits



which had been launched the prior August and at one point become Facebook's second most popular game ahead of Zynga's "FarmVille." It said Zynga was able to clone "The Sims Social" in part with the help of executives it had hired away from Electronic Arts, and who had access to critical information on how that game was developed. Six weeks later, Zynga countersued, accusing Electronic Arts of trying improperly to stop employees from switching companies. Zynga said this violated a 2011 agreement between the companies over employee solicitations.

In separate emailed statements on Friday, Electronic Arts spokesman John Reseburg and Zynga spokeswoman Kelly Kunz said: "EA and Zynga have resolved their respective claims and have reached a

settlement of their litigation in the Northern District of California." Silicon Valley companies compete intensely to attract talented employees, but sometimes agree to refrain from poaching each other's workers. In 2010, several companies agreed with US antitrust authorities to stop entering such agreements. Zynga is based in San Francisco, and Electronic Arts is about 25 miles south in Redwood City, California.

In October, Zynga said it would significantly scale back its investment in "The Ville" as part of a cost-cutting plan that included the phasing out of 13 older titles. The company on 5 February reported a \$6.9 million adjusted fourth-quarter profit, surprising analysts who expected a loss, but posted a net loss of \$209.5 million for all of 2012.—Reuters

NEW YORK, 16 Feb — The video game publisher Electronic Arts Inc and social gaming company Zynga Inc have agreed to settle competing lawsuits over alleged copyright violations and the recruiting of employees.

Terms of the settlement were not disclosed, but both companies agreed to permanently drop claims they had raised in litigation begun last August in San Francisco federal court.

Electronic Arts had alleged that Zynga's new game "The Ville" ripped off EA's "The Sims Social,"

NASA's Fermi telescope proves supernova remnants produce cosmic rays

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb — A new study using observations from NASA's Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope reveals the first clear-cut evidence the expanding debris of exploded stars produces some of the fastest-moving matter in the universe, US space agency NASA announced on Friday. This discovery is a major step toward understanding the origin of cosmic rays, one of Fermi's primary mission goals, NASA said in a statement.

Cosmic rays are subatomic particles that move through space at almost the speed of light. About 90 percent of them are protons, with the remainder consisting of electrons and atomic nuclei. In their journey across the galaxy, the electrically charged particles are deflected by magnetic



fields. This scrambles their paths and makes it impossible to trace their origins directly. Through a variety of mechanisms, these speedy particles can lead to the emission of gamma rays, the most powerful form of light and a signal that travels to us directly from its sources.

Since its launch in 2008, Fermi's Large Area Telescope has mapped million- to billion-electron-volt gamma-rays from superno-

va remnants. The energy of visible light is between two and three electron volts. The new Fermi results concern two particular supernova remnants, known as IC 443 and W44, which scientists studied to prove supernova remnants produce cosmic rays. IC 443 and W44 are expanding into cold, dense clouds of interstellar gas. These clouds emit gamma rays when struck by high-speed particles escaping the remnants.—Xinhua

Meteorite explodes over Russia, more than 1,000 injured

CHELYABINSK, 16 Feb — A meteorite streaked across the sky and exploded over central Russia on Friday, raining fireballs over a vast area and causing a shock wave that smashed windows, damaged buildings and injured 1,200 people.

People heading to work in Chelyabinsk heard what sounded like an explosion, saw a bright light and then felt the shock wave, according to a Reuters correspondent in the industrial city 1,500 km (950 miles) east of Moscow.

The fireball, traveling at a speed of 30 km (19 miles) per second according to Russian space agency Roscosmos, had blazed across the horizon, leaving a long white trail that could be seen as far as 200 km (125 miles) away. Car alarms went off, thou-



The trail of a falling object is seen above a residential apartment block in the Urals city of Chelyabinsk, in this still image taken from video shot on 15 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

sands of windows shattered and mobile phone networks were disrupted.

The Interior Ministry said the meteorite explosion, a very rare spectacle, also unleashed a sonic boom. "I was driving to work, it was quite dark,

but it suddenly became as bright as if it were day," said Viktor Prokofiev, 36, a resident of Yekaterinburg in the Urals Mountains.

"I felt like I was blinded by headlights." The meteorite, which weighed about 10 metric tons and

may have been made of iron, entered Earth's atmosphere and broke apart 30-50 km (19-31 miles) above ground, according to Russia's Academy of Sciences.

The energy released when it entered the Earth's atmosphere was equivalent to a few kilotonnes, the academy said, the power of a small atomic weapon exploding.

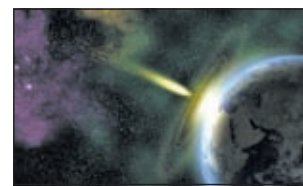
No deaths were reported but the Emergencies Ministry said 20,000 rescue and clean-up workers were sent to the region after President Vladimir Putin told Emergencies Minister Vladimir Puchkov to ease the disruption and help the victims.

The Interior Ministry said about 1,200 people had been injured, at least 200 of them children, and most from shards of glass.

Reuters

Ancient asteroid strike in Australia "changed face of earth"

SYDNEY, 16 Feb — A strike from a big asteroid more than 300 million years ago left a huge impact zone buried in Australia and changed the face of the earth, researchers said on Friday. "The dust and greenhouse gases released from the crater, the seismic shock and the initial fireball would have incinerated large parts of the earth," said Andrew Glikson,



a visiting fellow at the Australian National University.

The asteroid was bigger than 10 km (6 miles) in diameter, while the impact zone itself was larger than 200 km (120 miles) — the third largest impact zone

in the world. "The greenhouse gases would stay in the atmosphere for tens of thousands of years," Glikson told Reuters.

The discovery was made after another researcher alerted Glikson to some unusual mineral deposits in the East Warburton Basin in South Australia. Glikson and colleagues analyzed quartz grains drawn from deep beneath the earth's surface in research starting in 2010 and the crater itself was recently identified, he added. The strike may have been part of an asteroid impact cluster which caused an era of mass extinction, wiping out primitive coral reefs and other species, added Glikson, co-author of a study published in the journal *Tectonophysics*.

Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Study finds possible link between diabetes, increased risk of heart attack death

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb— Having diabetes doubles a person's risk of dying after a heart attack, but the reason for the increased risk is not clear. A new University of Iowa (UI) study suggests the link may lie in the over-activation of an important heart enzyme.

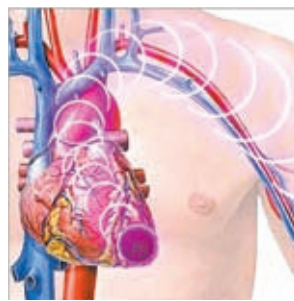
"Many studies have shown that patients with diabetes are at especially high risk for dying from a myocardial infarction (heart attack). Our study provides new evidence that this excess mortality could involve a pathway where oxidized

CaMKII enzyme plays a central role," says Mark Anderson, UI professor and senior author of the study published on Friday in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*.

Diabetes affects more than eight percent of the US population, and heart attack is the most common cause of death in people with diabetes. Diabetes also causes increased oxidative stress — a rise in the level of so-called reactive oxygen species that can be damaging to cells. In 2008, Anderson's lab showed that CaMKII (calcium/

calmodulin-dependent protein kinase II) is activated by oxidation. The new study links oxidative stress caused by diabetes to increased death risk after a heart attack through the oxidation-based activation of the CaMKII enzyme.

The study showed that heart rates in the diabetic mice slowed dramatically and, like humans with diabetes, the mice had double the death rate after a heart attack compared to non-diabetic mice. Evidence from the diabetic mice suggested that the excess deaths following

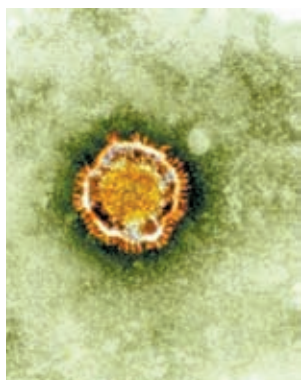


heart attack was due to heart rhythm abnormalities, prompting the team to investigate the heart's pacemaker cells, which control heart rate.

Looking at the diabetic mice, the team found that pacemaker cells had elevated levels of oxidized CaMKII enzyme and more cell death than pacemaker cells in non-diabetic mice.

Xinhua

New virus hits 12 globally with new British case



The coronavirus in an undated image.—REUTERS

LONDON, 16 Feb—A fourth person in Britain has contracted a potentially fatal SARS-like virus which was unknown in humans until a few months ago, but health officials said on Friday the risk to the population remained very low. Confirming the third British case this week of infection the new virus — known as novel coronavirus, or NCoV — the Health Protection Agency said the patient was one of a cluster of three in the same family.

This latest case brings the total number of confirmed cases globally to 12, of which four have been diagnosed in Britain, the HPA said. Of the total, five have died. Most of the infected lived or had recently been in the Middle East. NCoV was identified when the World Health Organization (WHO) issued an international alert in September 2012 saying a virus previously unknown in humans had infected a Qatari man in Britain who had recently been in Saudi Arabia. The virus belongs to the same family as SARS, or Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome — a coronavirus that emerged in China in 2002 and killed about a tenth of the 8,000 people it infected

worldwide. Symptoms common to both viruses include severe respiratory illness, fever, coughing and breathing difficulties. The HPA, which earlier this week said the other two patients from the same family were being treated in intensive care units in separate hospitals in northern and central England, said the third case in the cluster was mild. "The patient — is recovering from a mild respiratory illness and is currently well," it said in a statement. John Watson, the HPA's head of respiratory diseases said that despite this, the HPA was advising the patient to self-isolate and limit contact with other people. Health officials are currently following up other household members.

Reuters

S&P 500 ekes out 7th weekly gain after thin, choppy trading

NEW YORK, 16 Feb— The S&P 500 eked out the seventh straight weekly gain on Friday after a thin but choppy trading day amid mixed economic data and slumping sales of Wal-Mart. The Dow Jones Industrial Average edged up 8.37 points, or 0.06 percent, to 13,981.76. The S&P 500 went down 1.59 points, or 0.10 percent, to 1,519.79. The Nasdaq Composite index lost 6.63 points, or 0.21 percent, to 3,192.03. Wal-Mart shares began to tumble at about 2:00 pm EST (1900 GMT) after Bloomberg reported that an internal memo called February sales at the world's biggest retailer "a total disaster," dragging down the Dow Jones industrial average and the

European recession brings down world manufacturing output

UNITED NATIONS, 16 Feb—A prolonged recession in industrialized countries and its negative impact on developing and emerging economies kept the world manufacturing output low in 2012, said a new United Nations report released on Friday. According to the world manufacturing production statistics for 2012, published by the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), world manufacturing output grew by 2.2 percent in 2012, significantly lower than the 3.1 percent projected midway through last year.

The world's industrialized countries experienced particularly low manufacturing value added (MVA) growth of an average

rate of 0.3 percent, said the International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics. Meanwhile, developing and emerging industrial economies' combined share of world MVA in 2012 stood at 35 percent. Their gains were largely negated by the sustained recession in Europe. The global economic crisis beginning in 2009 has not only forced huge job cuts in the manufacturing sector of industrialized countries but also pulled down labor productivity, the UN agency reported. In the longer term, that number is expected to remain high because more countries will transition from developing to industrialized.

Xinhua

No increased cancer risk after IVF

NEW YORK, 16 Feb—Women getting fertility treatments can be reassured that in vitro fertilization (IVF) does not increase their risk of breast and gynecological cancers, according to a new study of Israeli women. "The findings were fairly reassuring. Nothing was significantly elevated," said lead author Louise Brinton, chief of the Hormonal and Reproductive Epidemiology



Branch at the National Cancer Institute in Rockville, Maryland. Still, she added, "We should continue to monitor these women."

IVF treatments can involve ovulation-stimulating drugs or ovary puncturing to collect eggs—procedures that researchers have suspected may increase women's risk of cancer. Indeed, previous studies linked IVF

favor with investors after a string of recalls and financial setbacks cast doubt on Fisker's survival.

Over the past several months, Chief Executive Tony Posawatz and other Fisker executives have met with several investors and automakers, particularly in China.

Executives met with officials from several Chinese automakers, including Dongfeng Motor (600006.SS), Geely Auto

Green car startup Fisker aims to secure foreign partner in weeks

DETROIT, 16 Feb— Fisker Automotive has received serious offers from at least three overseas automakers willing to invest in and partner with the cash-strapped US hybrid maker, which hopes to finalize a deal within weeks, people familiar with the matter said.

Potential suitors for the green-car startup include at least two Chinese automakers and one European company, two sources said. Fisker is hoping to sew up a deal by mid-March, another source said. Fisker is looking to raise between \$200 million and \$300 million, and sources said it could wind up forming a strategic pact with two or more partners.

"The company has received detailed proposals from multiple parties in different continents which are now being evaluated by the company and its advisers," Fisker spokesman Roger Ormisher said in an email. He declined to comment further.

A strategic pact would give Fisker the funds to build its second model, the Atlantic plug-in hybrid. Such a deal is also important to gain

0175.hk and Beijing Auto BEJINS.UL, sources said.

Officials from those companies were not immediately available to comment.

The company has also held discussions with Wanxiang Group, China's largest auto parts maker that has since purchased bankrupt US lithium-ion battery maker A123 Systems (AONEQ.PK), Fisker's primary battery supplier.

Reuters

early in life to heightened risks of breast cancer and borderline ovarian tumors. But other studies found little connection between fertility treatments and cancer. The association has been difficult to untangle, experts said, in part because it's hard to know whether unmeasured factors not related to IVF itself may affect the risk of cancer in women who have trouble conceiving. And so far, there haven't been a lot of women who developed cancer after fertility treatment included in studies.

"We all want answers, but it's a very difficult exposure to study, particularly when we don't have the numbers we would really like," Brinton told *Reuters Health*.— Reuters

WORLD

Big powers to offer easing gold sanctions at Iran nuclear talks

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb—Major powers plan to offer to ease sanctions barring trade in gold and other precious metals with Iran in return for Iranian steps to shut down the nation's newly expanded Fordow uranium enrichment plant, Western officials said on Friday. The officials said the offer is to be presented to Iran at 26 February talks in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and they acknowledged that it represents a relatively modest update to proposals that the six major powers put forward last year. Speaking on condition of anonymity, the officials said their decision not to make a dramatically new offer in part reflected skepticism that Iran is ready to make a deal ahead of its 14 June presidential election.

The group, which includes Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States—and



A worker holds a gold necklace at a gold workshop in the city of Isfahan, 414 km (259 miles) south of Teheran on 3 May, 2007.—REUTERS

is known as the P5+1 — wants Iran to do more to prove that its nuclear programme is for only non-military purposes and to permit wider UN inspections.

Iran denies it is seeking nuclear weapons but has refused, in recent years, to halt its uranium enrichment, a process that can produce fuel for nuclear reactors or,

ultimately, for bombs.

Israel, which is regarded as the Middle East's only nuclear power and which views a nuclear-armed Iran as an existential threat, has raised the possibility of taking military action to halt the Iranian atomic programme. While stressing he wants to resolve the dispute with Iran through diplomacy, US

President Barack Obama on Tuesday repeated a veiled military threat, saying “we will do what is necessary to prevent them from getting a nuclear weapon.”

The core of the new offer revises last year's demand that Iran stop producing higher-grade uranium, ship any stockpiles out of the country and close down its underground enrichment facility at Fordow, near the holy Iranian city of Qom.

“The next proposal is remarkably close to the old one,” said one official who spoke on condition of anonymity, describing it as “a way to test whether they are serious or not.” According to an IAEA report released in mid-November, Iran has a stockpile of 134.9 kg of 20 percent enriched uranium, bringing it closer to the ability to produce the 90 percent uranium needed to provide fissile material for atomic bombs.—Reuters

Hagel likely to be next US Defence Secretary despite GOP stalling tactics

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb—Former Republican Senator Chuck Hagel is likely to be confirmed as the next US Defence Secretary despite Republicans' attempts to stall the nomination process with procedural hurdles, experts said. “The Hagel nomination is not dead,” said Brookings Institution senior fellow Darrell West. “I expect him to be confirmed soon.”

Senate Republicans on Thursday blocked a vote on Hagel's nomination, demanding the White House

provide more information on September's terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya that left four Americans dead, including the ambassador.

Republicans charge the White House with not being forthcoming over the incident and with misleading the public about whether the attack was spontaneous or an organized terror operation.

“The Senate will vote again in two weeks and the nominee is likely to get the 60 votes needed to cut off debate and move forward with

the nomination,” West said, describing the GOP's tactics as “nomination theater designed to make Hagel and (President Barack) Obama look bad but not to derail the confirmation.”

The White House on Thursday blasted the GOP move, with Spokesman Jay Carney charging Senate Republicans with putting “political posturing ahead of our nation's security,” noting that the filibuster of a Defence Secretary nominee is a historical first.—Xinhua

Car bomb hits Libya's Benghazi

TRIPOLI, 16 Feb—A car bomb exploded on Friday near al-Berka area in downtown Benghazi, Libya's second largest city, leaving no casualties, local security sources told Xinhua.

The car belongs to a commander of Defence Min-

istry named Ayman Eriq, who had received threats through his cell phone a few days ago, the sources said on condition of anonymity, adding that the explosion was triggered by a homemade bomb which had been placed under the car by an unknown

group. Libya will mark on Sunday the second anniversary of the unrest that toppled former leader Muammar Gaddafi on 17 Feb, 2011 as fears of fresh protest and violence haunt the country recently, especially in Benghazi.—Xinhua



Firefighters try to put out a fire at Xiqing District of north China's Tianjin Municipality, on 15 Feb, 2013. An enterprise here caught fire on Friday. The cause and losses of the accident were not known immediately.

XINHUA

US consumer sentiment increases to 3-month high in February

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb—US consumer confidence rose in February to the highest level in three months, the Thomson Reuters/University of Michigan index of consumer sentiment revealed on Friday.

The preliminary reading of the consumer sentiment, which records the figure for the first half of a month, edged up to 76.3 in February from 73.8 in the previous month. It's the highest level since November 2012, boosted by rising stock prices, increased property values and a reviving jobs market.

The index gauging consumer expectations for six months from now, which more closely projects the direction of consumer spending, also climbed to 68.7 in February from 66.6 in January. The index of current conditions, reflecting Americans' perceptions of their financial situation and whether

they consider it a good time to buy big-ticket items like cars, rose a solid 3 points to 88 from a month ago.

The index averaged 64.2 during the last recession from December 2007 to June 2009, and 89 in the five years leading up to the recession.

After plunging in December 2012 for the fears of “fiscal cliff”, US consumer sentiment began to bounce back in January and February, suggesting that consumer spending will improve in the coming months and provide a boost to the US economic recovery.

Although higher payroll taxes started to kick in on 1 January, consumers didn't largely scale back their spending last month. US retail and food services sales rose 0.1 percent in January after growing 0.5 percent in December 2012, the US Commerce Department said on Wednesday.—Xinhua



A Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG Roadster is on display during the 40th Canadian International Auto Show at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in Toronto, Canada, on 14 Feb, 2013. The 11-day Canadian International Auto Show kicked off on Thursday in Toronto with about one thousand vehicles from over 120 exhibitors being displayed.—XINHUA

Venezuela's Chavez has difficulty talking

CARACAS, 16 Feb—Venezuela's ailing President Hugo Chavez is breathing through a tracheal tube and has difficulty talking, top aides said on Friday after releasing images of the recovering head of state for the first time since he was operated on two months ago.

“The respiratory infection that emerged during the post-operative stage was controlled, but a certain degree of (breathing) insufficiency persists,” Communication and Information Minister Ernesto Villegas read a written statement broadcast on national radio and television stations.

“Given the situation, which is being duly treated,

Commandant Chavez currently breathes through a tracheal tube, which makes talking temporarily difficult,” he added.

After displaying the images of Chavez flanked by two of his daughters, Science and Technology Minister Jorge Arreaza, who is also Chavez's son-in-law, was interviewed by national news network Telesur.

Chavez “has lost his characteristic voice,” said Arreaza, adding it was only a temporary setback.

For now, “one has to pay attention” to be able to make out what Chavez is saying, and often the president “must express his ideas in writing.”—Xinhua

WORLD

Cameron may fly in to Shell India tax row

LONDON, 16 Feb—Oil company Royal Dutch/Shell has asked the British government to raise the subject of a tax dispute with India during Prime Minister David Cameron's visit there next week, according to a source familiar with the request.

The dispute blew up earlier this month when tax authorities revalued by \$2.7 billion (1.7 billion pounds) a 2009 transaction by Shell with a wholly-owned subsidiary, and claimed a tax payment was due.

It comes as India faces a potential seeks to balance the need to shore up its finances by raising tax receipts with its desire to encourage foreign investment.

The Anglo-Dutch oil group's run-in with tax offi-

cial follows a long-running \$2 billion Indian tax claim on British mobile telecoms group Vodafone which has dented foreign investor confidence in the country.

Finnish phone maker Nokia earlier this week became the latest international company to protest against an Indian tax investigation.

The amount claimed from Shell was not specified, and an Indian tax official told *Reuters* it would be confined to interest on that amount.

Shell has responded vigorously to the tax claim, which was revealed initially in Press reports.

"Taxing the money received by Shell India is, in effect, a tax on foreign direct investment, which is contrary not only to law but also to



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron waits to greet his Pakistani counterpart, Raja Pervez Ashraf, at Number 10 Downing Street in London on 12 Feb, 2013.

REUTERS

the spirit of the recent global trip by the finance minister," Shell India Chairman Yasmine Hilton said on 4 February.—*Reuters*

China, AU pledge to enhance friendly cooperation

BEIJING, 16 Feb—China and the African Union (AU) held their fifth strategic dialogue to boost cooperation on Friday.

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and AU Commission Chairman Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma co-chaired the dialogue, the first of which was held in 2008.

Yang said China is willing to expand cooperation with the AU in a variety of fields, including infrastructure, agriculture, human resources and media, in a bid to advance the development of China-Africa ties.

"As the AU joined in the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, whose fifth ministerial conference launched a train of measures concerning cooperation with the AU, relations

between the two sides now have a solid foundation," Yang said.

China and the AU should further coordination in international and regional affairs, Yang added.

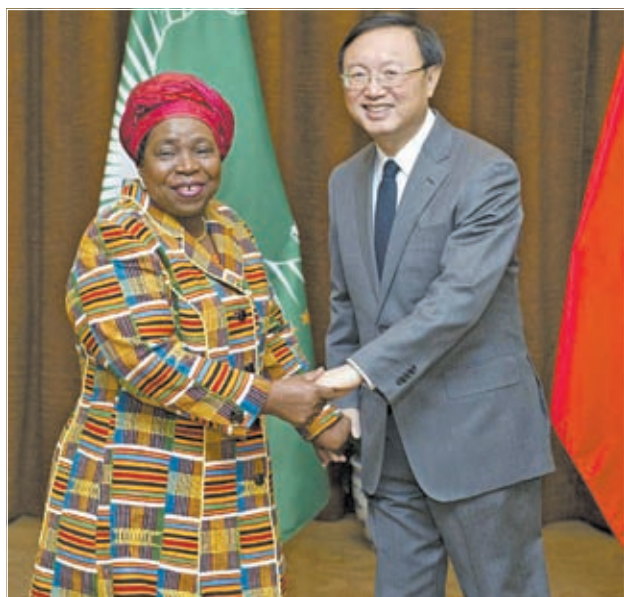
Zuma thanked China for its enduring support on the cause of peace and development in Africa, noting that Africa regards China as a trustworthy partner.

Africa would like to draw on China's experiences in readjusting its economic structure, thus promoting its continuous development, she said.

Both sides also exchanged views on the situation in Africa and other international and regional issues of common concern.

Zuma is visiting China from 14-17 February as a guest of the government.

Xinhua



Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi (R) shakes hands with Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (L) ahead of the fifth China-AU strategic dialogue in Beijing, capital of China, on 15 Feb, 2013.—XINHUA

Daughter of Cambodia's late King Sihanouk to lead royalist party

PHNOM PENH, 16 Feb—Princess Norodom Arun Rasmey, the youngest daughter of Cambodia's late King Father Norodom Sihanouk, will be elected as the President of the royalist political party Funcinpec to contest in July's general elections, the party's spokesman Tum Sambol said on Saturday.

Princess Norodom Arun Rasmey is currently serving as Cambodian ambassador to Malaysia.

"The princess has already agreed to accept the position at the request of the party's board members and she will be officially elected as the party's president during the party congress on 21 March," he told *Xinhua*

over telephone.

He said that the party decided to choose the princess for the position because she came from a political background with an impeccable resume.

"More importantly, Funcinpec is a royalist party, so it is our top priority to choose a royal member to lead the party," he said. "Another reason is that the party wants to promote women into politics."

Funcinpec was first founded by late King Father Norodom Sihanouk in 1981. Sihanouk's son, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, led the party to electoral victory in the 1993 UNTAC-sponsored elections.

At that time, Ranarid-

dh was co-prime minister in a "two-prime ministers" government with Hun Sen for four years until there was a bloody factional fighting in 1997 and Ranariddh was ousted from the position.

Since then, the party's popularity has gradually declined due to internal rifts and it won fewer seats at the National Assembly from term to term.

Currently, Funcinpec is led by Nhik Bun Chhay and Arun Rasmey's husband, Keo Puth Rasmey.

In the last general elections in July 2008, the Funcinpec Party won only two seats out of the 123 parliamentary seats.

Xinhua

Japanese PM to visit US next week on tie

TOKYO, 16 Feb—Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will visit the United States next week from 21 to 24 February, local media reported on Friday, citing Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga.

The postponed US trip by Abe aims at restoring and enhancing the Japan-US alliance, which the prime minister called as the core of Japan's foreign policies. Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida will accompany Abe to vis-

it Washington, *Kyodo News Agency* reported, citing the top spokesman.

Abe will meet with US President Barack Obama on 22 February in Washington, said Suga, adding the two leaders will also exchange views on regional affairs, especially the nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Abe planned to visit the United States in January but the trip was delayed due to Obama's busy agenda in the month.—*Xinhua*



Indonesian narcotic police officers take out some of the marijuana from Aceh which would be smuggled to Java Island by 14 suspects during a burning in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 15 Feb, 2013.

XINHUA

Obama campaigns against gun violence

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb—US President Barack Obama on Friday went all out against gun violence, using two public appearances to stress the issue, hammering home his message of tougher gun control.

Obama tackled the issue directly with a campaign-style speech at Hyde Park Academy High School in his hometown Chicago.

He highlighted gun violence that plagued the city, saying "Americans are asking for common sense proposals to make it harder for Americans to get their hands on a gun."

Pointing out that the government's gun control measures won't stop every crime, Obama said the community has to be involved.

"A child opens fire on another child, there is a hole in that child's heart that government can't fill, only community, parents, teachers and clergy can fill that,"

Obama said.

Before the speech, Obama participated in a roundtable discussion with 16 students enrolled in a youth anti-violence programme, a school-based counseling, mentoring, violence prevention and educational programme for at-risk young men, according to the White House.

The visit follows the weekend funeral of Chicago teenager Hadiya Pendleton, who was killed days after performing during Obama's inauguration in Washington. She was shot last month about a mile from Obama's Chicago home.

Police said she was the innocent victim of a gang-related shooting. Michelle Obama attended her funeral in Chicago.

Obama headed to his hometown after a White House ceremony to award the Presidential Citizens

Medals. Recipients included six educators killed in last year's Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre.

At the emotional ceremony, Obama hugged family members of the slain teachers in presenting the medals, saying "they had no idea that evil was about to strike. And when it did, they could have taken shelter by themselves." They could have focused on their own safety, on their own well-being. But they didn't. They gave their lives to protect the precious children in their care."

Obama has made gun control a priority in his second term agenda. He made a dramatic call in his State of the Union address on Tuesday for Congress to vote on his package of gun measures, amid fierce opposition from the National Rifle Association.

Xinhua

Eurozone registers 81.8 bln euro trade surplus in 2012

BRUSSELS, 16 Feb—The eurozone's trade in goods recorded a surplus of 81.8 billion euro (109.2 billion US dollars) in 2012, compared with a deficit of 15.7 billion euro in 2011, Eurostat said on Friday.

The Eurostat data also showed that the 27-nation European Union (EU) recorded a deficit of 104.6 billion euro in 2012, which was an improvement on the previous year's deficit of 162.7 billion euro.

In December 2012, euro area's trade in goods balance with the rest of the world delivered a 11.7 billion euro surplus, compared with a surplus of eight billion in the same period of 2011.

For the EU, the figure was 700 million euro deficit in the last month of 2012, compared with 200 million in December 2011.—*Xinhua*

NATIONAL

President U Thien Sein visits Maha Thaka Padima Buddha Image in Kalay

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 17 February, 2013

Save our marine resources

Food sufficiency is essential prerequisite for survival of human beings. Ill health, low life expectancy and poor capacity to work and to pursue education are impacts of the evil consequences of poverty caused by food crisis which have a devastating effect not only on our generation but also on the next one.

Myanmar is rich in natural resources—land and water resources. The nation sees adequate production of food thanks to the vast area of arable farmlands and agriculture-oriented policy of the country. As Myanmar is gifted with coastal waters, seeing a large quantity of rivers, creeks and lakes, the nation not only sees domestic food sufficiency in meat and fisheries sector but also exports the surplus.

In fisheries sector, freshwater fishing is being carried out as inland water fisheries apart from offshore and onshore fisheries. The Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries allowed national entrepreneurs to fish in river, creek and sea and to run fish farms.

With the advancement in modern fish farming methods at present, quality species of fish are available to develop fish farming business. Breeding of quality fish species through modern methods and extended construction of fish farms will ensure domestic fish consumption sufficient and export of the surplus.

Releasing of fingerlings in ponds and lakes is one of the ways to protect the fish species from extinction threatened by fishing in natural waters. Aiming to ensure sustainability of marine life in rivers, creeks and dams and to be free from extinction of fish species, various kinds of fingerlings are to be released into to substitute the quantity of fish we have had. Moreover, necessary laws are to be enacted and announcements should be issued for sustainability of marine resources.

As Myanmar possesses in abundance water resources, Myanmar marine products are available at any time. The consumers are duty-bound to follow the disciplines for sustainability of water resources and abundance of fish species, thereby contributing to ensuring food sufficiency and sustainability of natural resources.



NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb— President of the Republic U Thein Sein visited Maha

Quintana visits relief camps in Kachin State

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb— Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana and party, met Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai and the state government members, at the meeting hall of Kachin State government yesterday evening.

At the call, they exchanged cordial views on efforts made for ending the conflicts in Kachin State, providing assistances to the displaced families by the government in cooperation

of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein visited Maha

Afterwards, Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana and party encouraged the displaced people in Gyan Mai Kaung Baptist Church and Saint Paul's Church in Myothitgyi ward in Myitkyina. Then, they met humanitarian staff at resident office (branch) under UN Agency, at Yuzana ward in Myitkyina.

This morning, Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana visited relief camps in Thagara Thayattaw monastery in Waingmaw Township and Law Waw Baptist Church and met the displaced persons in private. He met prisoners at Myintkyina Jail and viewed the condition of the jail. In Yangon, He met Yangon University faculty members and students at Arts Hall of Yangon University this afternoon.

The professors, deans and students discussed human rights in Myanmar, incidents in Rakhine and Kachin States, universities and international laws and UN. Afterwards, Mr Quintana called on Chairperson of Pyithu Hluttaw Committee on Rule of Law and Tranquility Chairperson of National League for Democracy Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, at her residence. In the evening, he was seen off at Yangon International Airport by the UN resident coordinator and officials.

Thaka Padima Buddha Image at Raja Giri Hill near Kyigon Village in Kalay Township today.

Accompanied by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party, the President paid obeisance and offered fruits, flowers and water to the Buddha Image which is made up of teak which was floating upstream the Nerinjara River near Kawleik Kalay Village in the township in January, 2004.

During the visit, the President signed in the visitors' book and made cash donations.

According to the board of

trustees of the pagoda, the teak log is 16 ft long and 10 ft and one inch in circumference and about 120 years old.

Afterwards, the President visited the thriving sunflower plantations and bee keeping near the village.

Local farmers reported to the President on double cropping in the area and bee keeping which provide high income to the farmers.

They viewed producing honey at the bee keeping farm. The President called on officials concerned for organizing and educating the farmers to keep bees while engaging in agriculture as they can also earn high income by keeping bees.

MNA



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein pays homage to Maha Thaka Padima Buddha Image in Kalay.—MNA



Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Mr Tomas Ojea Quintana gives encouragements to displaced people sheltering at Saint Paul's Church in Myitkyina.

MNA

with international organizations and INGOs, the rule of law and security measures and dissemination of knowledge on danger of landmines and clearance of landmines.

MNA

Are we enjoying the motor race?



Hline Ni

LOCAL NEWS

Stamp duties handed over to YCDC



YANGON, 16 Feb—Yangon Region Internal Revenue Department handed over two per cent of stamp duties for 2012-2013 fiscal year to Yangon City Development Committee at its office on 6 February morning.

After making a speech, Head of the region department U Thaug Aye handed over K1,712,535,840 of stamp duties as two per cent to Assistant Head of Department of YCDC U Kyaw Myint.—*Myanma Alinn*

Free clinic marks first anniversary

MANDALAY, 16 Feb—The first anniversary of Hnalonhla Pinle free clinic was held at the clinic on Shwemann Okkyaung Monastery of Aungpinle Monastery on 16th street between 87th and 88th streets in Pyigyianlon Ward of Aungmyethazan Township on 4 February.

Officials presented certificates of honour to wellwishers.

The clinic is kept open from 9 am to 12 noon daily. The clinic is closed one day for every 14 days. Eye care is provided to the patients every Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. The clinic has provided healthcare services to over 18,000 patients during one year period.

Those wishing to donate cash and medicines to the clinic may dial 09-2002500 and 09-2003052.

Myanma Alinn



New school buildings handed over in Nay Pyi Taw



NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb—Members of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Myint Swe and Dr Than Aung and Assistant Director U Thein Win formally opened the school building, 60 by 30 feet built by Tatlan Co with K 21.6 million at Bawdigon Basic Education Primary School in Lewe Township on 9 February.

The school building

constructed at a cost of K 64.8 million for Basic Education High School No. 6 was handed over by Tatlan Co to Ministry of Education in Thawutthi Village-tract of Lewe Township. Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council Dr Than Aung, Assistant Director U Thein Win of Ministry of Education, townselder U Zaw Aung and Chairman

of School Board of Trustees U Paw Tun opened the new building.

Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Myint Swe pressed the button to open the school. Next, responsible persons from the construction company handed over documents related to the building to officials.

Myanma Alinn

New building of pre-primary school opened



HKAMTI, 16 Feb—A ceremony to open the new building of pre-primary school built on a self-

reliant basis was held in Pawmaing Ward of Hkamti in Sagaing Region on 4 February morning.

Sagaing Region Hluttaw representative U Mya Maung and Deputy Commissioner of the district General Administration Department U Tun Tun Naing formally opened the school building.

The region Hluttaw representative presented certificates of honour to 13 wellwishers.

Construction of the two-storey school building costs K 15.4 million.

Myanma Alinn

Ponnagyun dwellers promote reading habit

YANGON, 16 Feb—In commemoration of the 66th Anniversary Union Day, Ponnagyun Township Information and Public Relations Department organized mobile library, wall magazine, photo show and gave talks on raising

reading skill at Saya Tun Hall of Basic Education High School in Ponnagyun on 8 February noon.

At first, the Township Administrator made a speech.

The head of Township IPRD, the assistant township education officer and the

headmistress of BEHS gave talks on uplifting of moral for raising reading skill.

Next, the attendees of the ceremony viewed round the wall magazine, photos and books displayed at the hall.

Myanma Alinn

Illegal timber seized in Toungoo District

TOUNGOO, 16 Feb—Assistant Director U Thein Shwe of Toungoo District Forest Department, Staff Officer U Thaug Naing of Toungoo Township Forest Department and staff seized 1.804 tons of ironwood, 2.872 tons of other wood, two engines for saw mills, two circular saws and one mobile phone from three places in Kyauk Oh Chaungphyu protected public forest (XXIUI) in Sanmyaung region of Toungoo Township on 3 and 4 February.

Likewise, staff of Yedashe Township Forest Department seized 56

logs of ironwood weighing 16.384 tons in Block No. 100 of West Swa forest reserve on 3 February.

The departmental officials are exposing the owners of timbers.

Myanma Alinn

ALFS donates cash to Shwegondine Nursery, quake victims

YANGON, 16 Feb—Asia Pacific Ladies Friendship Society (ALFS) donated K 2.4 million to Shwegondine Nursery of Social Welfare Department

on Middle Shwegondine Street in Bahan Township and K 3 million to women and children of earthquake-hit areas of Mandalay and Sagaing Regions at the hall of the nursery in Shwegondine on 5 February afternoon.

Chairperson of the ALFS Japanese Mrs Haruko Komura explained the purpose of donations and presented cash donations.

Deputy Director-General U Aung Tun Khaing of the Social Welfare Department accepted the donations and returned certificates of honour to



Law and rules on pesticides, fertilizers clarified

MANDALAY, 16 Feb—Mandalay Region Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding U Myint Than attended the ceremony to explain law and rules on pesticide and fertilizers the donor.

Staff Officer (Admin) Daw Khin Mar Aye of the nursery explained daily duty and functions of the nursery for providing care to children to the chairperson and Daw Aye Nyein, wife of the Myanmar Ambassador to Japan, and party and conducted them round the nursery.—*Myanma Alinn*

at the Mandalay Region Agriculture Department in Mandalay on 6 February morning.

Officials of the Land Utilization Division of Agriculture Department explained matters related to law and rules on pesticide and fertilizers and replied to queries raised by those present.

The clarification ceremony was attended by region Hluttaw representatives, directors of Agriculture Department, departmental officials, pesticide and fertilizer entrepreneurs, farmers and media, totalling 146.

Myanma Alinn

China hopes to deepen pragmatic cooperation with Slovakia



Chinese Vice Premier Hui Liangyu (L) meets with Slovakian President Ivan Gashparovic in Bratislava, Slovakia, on 15 Feb, 2013.—XINHUA

BRATISLAVA, 16 Feb — China was willing to deepen pragmatic cooperation with Slovakia in all fields, said Chinese Vice Premier Hui Liangyu on Friday during a meeting with the Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico.

Hui said that China attaches great importance to developing ties with Slovakia, and it is China's firm policy to further develop

friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries.

He said that China wishes to work with Slovakia in actively tapping the potential of cooperation in various fields to benefit the two people.

Hui said China actively supported the European Union's efforts in dealing with the sovereign debt crisis, and has provided Eu-

rope with assistance within its own means.

A sound Chinese economy is conducive to the European economy and the world economy at large, said Fico, adding that Slovakia was ready to work with China to enhance their political, trade, agricultural and people-to-people exchanges and cooperations.

The prime minister said that Slovakia wishes to promote the mutual investment and welcomes Chinese enterprises to participate in the infrastructure construction of Slovakia, and his country is willing to promote the pragmatic cooperation between central and eastern European countries and China to a new level.

During the visit, Hui also witnessed the signing of memorandums on deepening agricultural cooperation and on promotion of cooperation of small and medium enterprises between the two countries.

Xinhua

Chinese official says G20's Moscow meeting to discuss array of financial issues

MOSCOW, 16 Feb — Finance ministers and central bank officials of the Group of Twenty (G20) have been seeking to strengthen financial supervision and avoid currency devaluations in the Moscow meeting, a Chinese official said here on Friday. Financial supervision remains a major issue in the G20 process, Chinese Vice Finance Minister Zhu Guangyao told the Chinese media on the first day of the closed-door meeting scheduled on Friday and Saturday.

Zhu cited the fact that the United States has vowed to implement the global banking regulatory stand-

ard Basel III in the coming months while the European Union has submitted the bill for parliament approval.

Though the implementation has been prolonged, the United States and Europe have already recognized the significance of fulfilling their commitments, he said. The Basel III rules on bank capital adequacy were worked out by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) in response to the global financial crisis.

They strengthen bank capital requirements and introduce new regulatory re-

quirements on bank liquidity and capital adequacy ratio.

G20 finance ministers and central bankers demanded decisive movements from the US and European sides and welcomed the latest promising signal, Zhu said, adding efficient implementation of the Basel rules will enrich the contents of the G20 accord and enhance the group's credibility.

Meanwhile, the effect of the ultra-loose monetary policies adopted by some developed economies has aroused concerns from developing countries, said the Chinese official.—Xinhua

People gather at the site of a fire accident in a cotton factory in southern Pakistani port city of Karachi, on 15 Feb, 2013. At least two labourers were injured in the accident, local media reported.

XINHUA



UN Security Council hails start of national dialogue in Yemen

UNITED NATIONS, 16 Feb — The UN Security Council on Friday stressed the importance of inclusiveness during the transition process in Yemen and welcomed the upcoming launch of the National Dialogue Conference on 18 March.

In a presidential statement read by Kim Sook, South Korea's permanent representative to the United Nations, who holds the rotating presidency of the Security Council for this

month, the Security Council reiterated the need for the transitional period to be "a Yemeni-led process, underpinned by a commitment to democracy, good governance, rule of law, national reconciliation and respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people in Yemen."

The 15-nation UN body urged all the parties in Yemen to "adhere to resolving their differences through dialogue and con-

sultation, reject acts of violence to achieve political goals, refrain from provocations," the statement said.

Highlighting the importance of involving the full participation of all segments of society, the Security Council called upon all parties to honor the timetable and benchmarks set out in the transition agreement and for all sides to "act in good faith, in a peaceful, transparent, constructive and reconciliatory manner," said the statement. The presidential statement also raised the issue of legislation on transitional justice to support reconciliation, urging the Yemeni Government to pass this legislation without further delay.

"The Security Council

maintains its expectation that the National Dialogue Conference will lead to a constitutional referendum and elections by February 2014," the statement said.

Reaffirming its commitment to the unity, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Yemen, the Security Council also commended those that have engaged constructively in the preparatory stages of the process. Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi announced on last Wednesday the government will hold the national dialogue conference on 18 March to solve disputes among political factions and pave the way for amending the constitution, the official *Saba* news agency reported.—Xinhua

Obama hails outgoing Italian president

WASHINGTON, 16 Feb — US President Barack Obama on Friday hailed outgoing Italian President Giorgio Napolitano as a "visionary leader" and praised bilateral cooperation in NATO and Afghanistan.

Talking to the press prior to their meeting at the White House, Obama called his Italian counterpart "a visionary leader who has helped to guide and steer Europe towards greater unification, but always with a strong transatlantic relationship in mind."

"I want to thank the people of Italy for their enormous contributions to the NATO alliance," Obama said. "Italy is one

of our biggest contributors in Afghanistan, and makes enormous sacrifices."

Obama said he would talk with Napolitano, among others, about his plan to pursue a free trade agreement with the European Union, as he had outlined in his State of the Union address on Tuesday.

For his part, the 87-year-old Italian president, who will step down in May after serving a seven-year term, called the proposed free trade pact "a new historic stage" in relations between Europe and the United States "not only economically, but also from a political and moral point of view."

Xinhua



A bird rests on a plum tree in full blossom on the Jinfo Mountain in Xiuning County, east China's Anhui Province, on 15 Feb, 2013.

XINHUA

No horsemeat found in Portugal

LISBON, 16 Feb — The Portuguese government has confirmed that no horsemeat has been found in beef after a nationwide operation carried out in January, local media reported on Friday.

Portugal carried out a nationwide operation to check food safety standards on 22-24 January, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Economy and Employment was quoted by *The Portugal News* as saying.

The operation came after the horsemeat scandal came up to the surface in mid-January when Irish food inspectors detected horse-

meat in frozen beef burgers made by firms in Ireland and Britain and sold in supermarket chains including Tesco, Britain's top retailer. The spokesperson added that during the operation, a total of 53 establishments were checked by health and safety authority ASAE.

Among them, eight were found to have committed infringements and one had its activity suspended, but "no irregularities similar to the ones announced in Britain and Ireland were found," the spokesperson said.—Xinhua

FARC sets free kidnapped policemen in Colombia

BOGOTA, 16 Feb — Two Colombian policemen, identified as Cristian Yate and Victor Alfonso Gonzalez, were set free by the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrilla group on Friday, former Senator Piedad Cordoba said.

Cordoba said that the freed policemen are healthy and thanked the rebels of the FARC for keeping their promise of freeing the hostages, who were captured in January in the Valle del Cauca Department.

"We want to thank this

overture that undoubtedly is a very important step toward the peace in this country. Also, we want to thank the company of the International Red Cross, as well as for the help that the National Government gave for this event", Cordoba said.

The former Senator added that the humanitarian mission will travel immediately to another area where they expect the freedom of Josue Alvarez, a soldier who was taken hostage in Nari department on 29 January.

Xinhua

REGIONAL

Four gov't soldiers injured in landmine attack in N Philippines

MANILA, 16 Feb — Four government soldiers got injured in a landmine attack planned by leftist rebel group of New People's Army (NPA) in Northern Philippine Province of Isabela on Friday, local military said on Saturday.

Col Loreto Magundayao, spokesman for the Philippine Army's 5th Infantry Division, said troops from the 86th Infantry Battalion were on a security operation when the rebels detonated the landmine around 1 am Friday along a road in Ibutan village, San Mariano, a town in Isabela.

"According to the report (from the field), the

troops were engaging in a military operation that responded to the information given by the villagers on the enemy presence and extortion activities in the area," said Magundayao. After the explosion, he said, the soldiers engaged the undetermined number of rebels in a 30-minute firefight. The rebels withdrew, leaving behind a civilian pack, a long magazine for M16 rifle, and used detonating cords.

The troops are currently conducting "hot pursuit operations" against the fleeing rebels, he said, adding the rebels' use of landmine was against the 1980 Geneva Convention.—Xinhua



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (far R) speaks in Tokyo on 15 Feb, 2013, at the first meeting of a panel of experts to discuss how to create a Japanese version of the US National Security Council to strengthen the leadership role of the prime minister's office in global affairs.

KYODO NEWS

Indonesia moves to control coal export

JAKARTA, 16 Feb — The Indonesian Government has asked administrations at provincial and district levels nationwide to strengthen control on coal production in order to prevent the exportation of the commodity from exceeding government-set quota, an official said here on Friday.

Deputy Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Susilo Siswoutomo said the control, which would include the revision of licenses for miners, was badly needed as many miners without export license have exported coal illegally.

The Southeast Asia's largest economy plans to restrict coal export in order to maintain the sustainability of supply amid growing domestic demand, which is forecast to increase in the future as the government would reduce reliance on oil-related fuels and the demand would rise from power plants and smelters.

The demand for coal

from power generating plants as well as smelters would increase in the near future as the government has banned new power plants from using fossil-fuel since May last year due to declining production and reserves.

Besides, Indonesia also has planned to construct 27 new smelters for processing raw mining products, as the government has required miners to build the processing units and pay a 20 percent export tax since May last year should they continue to export 65 types of raw mining products.

Indonesia is the world's second-largest exporter of thermal coal, with 20.8 billion tons of proven coal reserves, data from the Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry showed.

The country's total coal production was estimated at 332 million metric tons last year, up from 290 million tons in the previous year.

Xinhua

Feature: Printed books still appeal to Bangladesh readers

DHAKA, 16 Feb — While in many parts of the world the printed page is now facing extinction due to the Internet and online publications, people in Bangladesh seem to keep the romantic appeal of books and other printed materials alive.

This can be deduced from hundreds of visitors who have waited in long queues to enter Bangladesh's largest annual book fair that opened in this capital city early this month, eager to buy books and other published materials. "Internet books could never diminish the appeal of printed books," AK Nasir Ahmed Selim, a leading book publisher, told Xinhua.

He said availability of electronic books might pose a threat to printed books, but it could never diminish the appeal of the printed materials.

Selim said the annual book fair plays a significant role in keeping the printed books alive amid the challenges posed by the Internet and on-line publications.

"A reader doesn't read an online book or an e-book as seriously as he/she reads a printed book," said Selim whose publishing house never failed to put up a stall in the fair for the past two decades.

The Amar Ekushey Boi Mela, which literally means "Immortal Twenty First Book Fair," is being

held in Dhaka's Bangla Academy premises in commemoration of the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for protecting the dignity of the mother tongue on 21 February, 1952. 21 February is now being observed throughout the world as the "International Mother Language Day."

Every day, hundreds of bookworms of all ages flock to the month-long book fair with friends and families in search of new books written by their favourite authors.

An enthusiastic eight-year-old Zahra Fatima Amin, who came with her parents, was seen browsing through books at the children's corner of the fair.

"I like to read books. I

like stories of horror," Zahra said. "Every year I come to the fair and buy some books, such as fairy tale, adventure story."

Zahra's mother Fariel Samiha Azim said that she wants her children to read Bangla books.—Xinhua

Customers consult staff at a stand during Indonesia Travel and Holiday Fair in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 15 Feb, 2013. Indonesia is expecting a steep growth in foreign tourists visiting the country for medical treatment this year to 2 million from last year's figure of 300,000, an Indonesian tourist business association official said here on Friday.—XINHUA



Australian navy's new Landing Helicopter Dock ship named Canberra

MELBOURNE, 16 Feb — The Australian Navy's first of two new Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) ships was officially named *Canberra* on Friday at a ceremony held at Williamstown, Victoria, with the attendance of Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Minister for Defence Stephen Smith.

According to a report released by the press office of Gillard, the in-construction new ships of Canberra class will be more than 230 metre long, 27.5 metre high and weigh around 27,500 tonnes. The first ship will be accepted into navy service in the first quarter of 2014 and the other one will be in 2016.

The new ships have a capability to deliver 2,000

personnel along with their equipments, which is a "quantum leap" for the Australian Defence Force, said the report.

This is not the first time an Australian warship was named *Canberra*. The first *Canberra* was a county class heavy cruiser which joined the Pacific War and was sunk during the famous Savo island battle by the Japanese navy in 1942.

Shortly after that, then US President Franklin Roosevelt named an American Baltimore class heavy cruiser the *USS Canberra*, in memory of the lost Australian ship for its bravery in combat. This is the only US Navy ship named for a foreign ship or capital.

Xinhua

Roadside bomb, a lethal weapon of Afghan militants

KABUL, 16 Feb — The makeshift roadside bombs which are largely used by anti-government militants in Afghanistan have been proved as a lethal weapon in the conflict-ridden country as nine people have been killed in the roadside bombings over the past eight days counting from last Friday, according to officials.

In the latest incident of such attack, two persons were killed and another injured in the eastern Kunar Province 185 km east of Afghan capital Kabul Friday, an official confirmed.

"A roadside bomb organized by anti-government militants exploded in Sarkano District at 01:15 pm local time today, leaving two persons dead and wounding another," an official told Xinhua but

declined to be identified, saying authorized officials would brief the media after investigation.

Meantime, a doctor in Assadabad hospital confirmed that two dead bodies including a local police constable and an injured one had been taken to hospital from Sarkano District this afternoon.

A similar incident on Monday, 11 February hit a vehicle of Afghan army in the eastern Nangarhar Province 120 km east of Kabul, leaving one person dead and injuring another, a local official said.

"A mine planted by militants on a road in Khotyandi District, struck a vehicle of the national army in Mimla village at around 10:00 am local time on Monday killing a soldier and injuring another," se-

curity official Hazrat Husain Mashriqiwal told Xinhua.

On 10 February, a roadside bomb struck a police van in the northern Kunduz Province injuring at least one policeman.

The bloodiest attack which took place in the shape of roadside bombing over the past eight day had also claimed the lives of six civilians in Taleban former stronghold Helmand Province as a civilian car ran on a mine, last Friday on 8 February.

"Six innocent civilians including two women lost their lives as their car ran over a mine in Nad Ali District of Helmand on Friday evening," spokesman for Helmand's provincial administration Ahmad Zirak told Xinhua.

Xinhua



A young boy carries a bag for his parent in the waiting room of Nantong Coach Station in Nantong, east China's Jiangsu Province, on 15 Feb, 2013. Many children travel with their families during the Spring Festival travel rush. The Spring Festival holiday came to an end on Friday.—XINHUA

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV KOTA RATNA VOY NO (877)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA RATNA VOY NO (877) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17-2.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.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.

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

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV MATTYS VOY NO (1308)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MVMATTYS VOY NO (1308) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17-2.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ECHINA SHIPPING (MA-
LAYSIA) AGENCY SDN BHD**

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797



File photo shows the former yokozuna Taiho, who died of heart disease in January 2013 at the age of 72. The government will award a posthumous national honour to the late yokozuna in recognition of his historic sumo victory record, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said on 15 Feb, 2013.
KYODO NEWS

German state of Bavaria confirms finding horsemeat in lasagna

MUNICH, (Germany), 16 Feb — The southern German state of Bavaria has also found horsemeat in lasagna, officials said late on Friday. The state government has already strengthened food control after German federal government announced on Wednesday that Germany was also hit by the widening horsemeat scandal, according to state officials.

Andreas Zapf, president of Bavarian state office for health and food safety, said that checks will be conducted not only on burgers and frozen lasagna, but also on other cooked dishes with meat. The supermar-

ket chain Real announced on Wednesday that it had discovered horsemeat in falsely-labeled frozen lasagna and it had removed the product from shelves for precaution since Friday.

The scandal came up to the surface in mid-January when Irish food inspectors detected horsemeat in frozen beef burgers made by firms in Ireland and Britain.

So far, companies and slaughterhouses in a number of European countries have been dragged into the scandal, including France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, Bulgaria and Norway, media reports said.—Xinhua



Members of a dancing group from southwest China's Sichuan Province perform during Malaysia-China folk dancing performance in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 15 Feb, 2013.

XINHUA

S African airways appoints new CEO

BEIJING, 16 Feb — South African Airways has appointed a new acting CEO. The new chief walks into his role with huge expectations on his shoulders. He is the third person to take charge of the unprofitable airline in four months.

Vuyisile Kona was appointed executive chairman in September by Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba. Just before Christmas the minister made him acting CEO. Less than 2 months later the board suspends him, just a day after the company starts testing the investment market with a R 1.5 bln bond, as a tide over until they get their bail-out package from the SA government. Chief strategist at Investment Solutions Chris Hart was diplomatic in his analysis.

Chris Hart, chief strategist of Investment Solutions, said, "An enormous amount of taxpayer money committed to SAA, and that was committed on the premise that SAA that there would

be a turn around strategy. Now it looks like that this money is really going to be there just to keep the company afloat, and that more money will be required for the actual turnaround strategy that needs to still to be put in place. So when you've got managerial instability its unlikely that you're going to see this turnaround strategy going to be put into place."

Airline analyst Linden Burns suggests that the board had no other choice, and despite, the fact that it was announced as a precautionary measure, we still don't know what the reason for the suspension was.

Airline analyst Linden Burns said, "The move to suspend the acting CEO is probably a good move, the board obviously want to have a company or an organization that is beyond reproach and where they are not going to be questions asked about corporate governance. They've moved very swiftly to ad-

dress that."

The new acting CEO is no stranger to the airline industry. In fact, he is no stranger to SAA, having worked in their corporate environment for several years.

Burns said, "Mango's chief executive Nico Bezuidenhout is a well known entity in the low cost market and he's been running a very tight ship, very efficient, he's a very astute airline manager. That's when we will start seeing more stability, I think Nico will be able to steady the ship."

It has been made clear, via the minister and the board that both acting CEOs are simply that. Their search continues for a permanent appointment. However Hart says that while Bezuidenhout might have

6.0-magnitude quake hits off the east coast of the North Island of New Zealand

HONG KONG, 16 Feb — An earthquake measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale jolted off the east coast of the North Island of New Zealand at 05:16:18 GMT on Saturday, the US Geological Survey said.

The epicentre, with a depth of 204.50 km, was initially determined to be at 36.1297 degrees south latitude and 178.0450 degrees east longitude.—Xinhua

the right experience and qualifications, there is another more pressing issue.

Hart said, "I think when it comes to appointments in parastatals and civil service, is that there's a strong emphasis on re-dressing transformation imperatives, that seem to be more important than anything else."

So while the new acting CEO could be the right man for the job, he clearly doesn't fit the profile of the person that the SAA board and the minister are looking for. Reporter: "Minister Gigaba is known for taking action quickly. But he may want to reconsider his pace when appointing somebody to take over the ailing national carrier. Perhaps it's time to look elsewhere."

Xinhua

UN food agency scales up aid to Syria

UNITED NATIONS, 16 Feb — The World Food Programme (WFP) is expanding its food assistance inside Syria to reach 2.5 million people in the coming months, as the political crisis and violent conflict continue in the Middle East country, a UN spokesman said here on Friday.

"With that expansion, the agency will need nearly 160 million US dollars to cover the cost of its Syria operation up to June this year," UN spokesman Martin Nesirky said at a daily news briefing.

"This past Wednesday, the World Food Programme dispatched an additional load of 62 tonnes of food — enough for 10,000 people — to Al-Hassakeh city

and Al-Shaddadi District in northeast Syria," Nesirky noted.

"That delivery followed reports of new waves of displacement, which brought hundreds of families to the area after intense fighting," he added.

As the situation in Syria reached a bloody stalemate, the WFP recently said that about 40,000 people had fled heavy fighting between the armed opposition and the government army in the eastern town of Shaddadeh in Hasaka Province.

Last week, UN human rights chief Navi Pillay estimated the overall death toll from the 23-month Syria crisis at nearly 70,000.

Xinhua



The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima, western Japan, opens an exhibition on 15 Feb, 2013, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Robert Jungk, an Austrian writer known for his efforts to focus international attention on the devastation caused by the 1945 atomic bombing of the city. The exhibition is due to run through 28 March, 2013.

KYODO NEWS

ENTERTAINMENT



Ben Affleck's film *Argo* is up for Best Picture. Jessica and Jennifer are competing for Best Actress.—PTI

Ben Affleck, Jessica Chastain and Jennifer Lawrence to be Oscar presenters

NEW DELHI, 16 Feb—Nominees Ben Affleck, Jessica Chastain and Jennifer Lawrence will present at the Academy Awards. Ben — who received a producer nod for *Argo* which is also up for Best Picture — showed he is not upset over his Best Director snub by agreeing to take to the stage at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on 24 February. Jessica and Jennifer will compete in the Best Actress category for their work in *Zero Dark Thirty* and *Silver Linings Playbook* respectively.

Previously confirmed presenters include Sandra Bullock, Nicole Kidman,

Halle Berry and Reese Witherspoon, who have all won the coveted Best Actress award in the past. Sandra earned her Best Actress award for 2009 drama, *The Blind Side*, while Reese won in 2005 for her role as June Carter Cash in Johnny Cash biopic, *Walk the Line*. Nicole was crowned Best Actress for playing Virginia Woolf in 2002's *The Hours* and Halle earned her Oscar for 2001's *Monster's Ball*.

Other stars confirmed to present at the awards include fellow Best Actress winner, Meryl Streep, who won her third award in the category for last year's

The *Iron Lady*, Channing Tatum, Jean Dujardin, Octavia Spencer, the cast of *The Avengers* and the cast of the 2003 Best Picture winner, *Chicago*.

The producers of this year's Oscars telecast, Craig Zadan and Neil Meron, have revealed they want this year's ceremony to be more performance based than ever. Adele is expected to sing her hit song *Skyfall* from the latest James Bond film, while Norah Jones, Dame Shirley Bassey and Oscar winner Barbara Streisand will also take the stage.

PTI

Harbhajan Singh to do a cameo in Akshay Kumar's Punjabi film

NEW DELHI, 16 Feb—Indian Cricketer Harbhajan Singh is all set to make his big screen acting debut in Bollywood superstar Akshay Kumar's Punjabi production 'Ba Ji in Problem'. Singh, who is popularly known as Bhajji, will appear in a cameo but it is not yet revealed if he will play his cricketing self or a new character.



The film is produced by Kumar and Ashvini Yardi's company Grazing Goat Productions.—PTI

Bhopal rolls out red carpet for Begum Kareena Kapoor Khan

MUMBAI, 16 Feb—Kareena Kapoor is in Bhopal to shoot for Prakash Jha's *Satyagraha*. Husband Saif Ali Khan's extended royal family is also settled in the Madhya Pradesh capital.

A source says, "Kareena is staying at the same hotel where Amitabh Bachchanji will be received. The red carpet was rolled out for her with a grand welcome ceremony including aarti, teeka and garland." A Bhopal-based source tells us, "Kareena prefers to be simple and her taste in food is also similar."

Joining Bebo in Bhopal will be husband Saif and mother-in-law Sharmila Tagore.

The couple will bring in Valentine's Day in the city. And according to a source close to the couple, Kareena has already received her gift—a solitaire!

PTI



Kareena Kapoor

Shah Rukh-Parineeti, Salman-Anushka: odd couples we'd like to see

NEW DELHI, 16 Feb—While we're thrilled at talk of Sridevi reuniting with former heroes Kamal Haasan and Anil Kapoor, we can't help but wonder what it would be like to see some unusual suspects on-screen together. So, just because it was Valentine's Day, we allowed our imaginations to run wild and match-make for some of the biggest Bollywood stars. We may not ever see these couples on screen anytime soon but maybe, just maybe, we'll get some filmmakers thinking.

Katrina Kaif - Sushant Singh Rajput

She's the Kat who's got all the cream and he's the small screen star whose debut film *Kai Po Che* already has him flying high. It would be fun to see Kat, beloved of the 40-plus actor brigade, with young blood like Sushant.

Shah Rukh Khan - Parineeti Chopra

He's the "king of romance" and she is B-Town's current Miss Spontaneity. Some even say she's Bol-

lywood's new Kajol. So it certainly would be a treat to see SRK play Ishaqzaade to Parineeti Chopra in a film which could hardly be in Darr of morphing into a flop onscreen.

Anushka Sharma - Salman Khan

Live a little dangerously, Anushka. She had a literal match made in heaven with Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi opposite SRK followed by *Jab Tak Hai Jaan*. Will she be brave enough to take a chance with Salman, considering Katrina Kaif was Dabangg enough to finally play leading lady to SRK last year?

Aamir Khan - Deepika Padukone

He is known to pick his leading ladies with care. She, on the other hand, has a Cocktail of big budget films to her credit so. We would just love to see Aamir twirl Deepika out of her comfort zone even if some standing on tiptoe is required. So we have a whole mix and match set of Bollywood's old school and new school. Mix it up, we say.—PTI



Shah Rukh Khan and Parineeti Chopra have never appeared together in a film but would make an interesting pair.—PTI

Cage channels caveman in animated film 'The Croods'

BERLIN, 16 Feb—DreamWorks Animation's new 3D adventure "The Croods" brings the prehistoric age to the 21st century in the form of a dysfunctional family of cave dwellers forced to flee the comforts of home and search out a new life in the unknown. "Never not be afraid" and "Fear keeps us alive" are the mantras for Grug, the ape-like father voiced by Nicolas Cage and whose first instinct is always to find a cave, block up the entrance and stay there as long as possible.

But while he seeks to protect his brood from giant, hyena-like predators lurking in the shadows, his teenaged daughter Eep (Emma Stone) is desperate

to spread her wings, and it is her curiosity that leads the Croods to the other main character Guy. Guy introduces the Croods to fire and

to a new way of thinking, and when the world literally falls apart around them they flee the collapsing deserts and canyons to find a lush,

tropical world full of exotic yet dangerous creatures.

Flying pink piranha birds devour walking whales in seconds, while tiny monkeys with giant fists use Grug as a punch bag. Much play is made of the first modern family coming up with the first pair of sunglasses (out of stone), the first pet, and the first photograph—made by smashing a flat rock against the Croods' faces and leaving indentation marks.

For Cage, the appeal of "The Croods", which hits theatres in March and has its premiere at the Berlin film festival on Friday, was that the themes were recognizable today.

Reuters



Actors Nicolas Cage and Emma Stone arrive on the red carpet for the screening of the movie "The Croods" at the 63rd Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin on 15 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

SPORTS

Roger and out! Federer sent packing by Benneteau

ROTTERDAM, 16 Feb—Defending champion Roger Federer suffered a shock 6-3, 7-5 defeat by Frenchman Julien Benneteau, who has yet to lift a tour title during his 13-year career, in the World Indoor Tournament quarter-finals on Friday. The top seed struggled throughout with his first serve and was broken three times in the opening set. Benneteau, 31, broke again early in the second



Roger Federer

set before the world number two, backed by a capacity crowd of 10,500, broke back.

Federer had chances to break again in the 11th game but world number 39 Benneteau managed to hold him off before clinching victory on his first match point as a backhand pass from the Swiss went out. "If you lose your serve five times, like I did today, you can't win indoors," Feder-



Frenchman Julien Benneteau

er told reporters. "Julien played great, created more chances than I did and fully deserved to win. "I fought back at the end of the second set and had chances to take it into a third but that would have been more luck than I deserved." Benneteau next meets fellow countryman Gilles Simon who put out Martin Klizan when the Slovakian retired through injury while trailing 6-7, 6-3, 3-0.

"This is a really good win and I am pleased with the way I played today," said Benneteau. World number seven Juan Martin Del Potro stayed on course for his second successive appearance in the final by sweeping aside Finn Jarkko Nieminen 6-3, 6-4. The Argentine, beaten in last year's final by Federer, will

play Grigor Dimitrov in the last four after the Bulgarian came from behind to defeat Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis 6-7, 7-6, 6-3 in a thriller.

"There are no easy matches here," said Del Potro. "Nieminen played some excellent forehands on important points and I had to stick to my game plan and be patient." The 21-year-old Dimitrov looked down and out when he trailed 6-5 in the second set but he then reeled off 18 consecutive points to level the match, including taking the tiebreak 7-0, before going on to reach his final indoor semi-final. "I can't remember ever scoring 18 straight points before and I didn't even notice it during the match," said the Bulgarian.

Reuters

Riviera provides feast or famine for Donald

PACIFIC PALISADES, (California), 16 Feb—It has generally been a case of feast or famine for Luke Donald at the Northern Trust Open, but the Briton is not surprised given the unique challenge facing the players at Riviera Country Club. The iconic par-71 layout which winds its way through the Santa Monica Canyon is renowned for its small greens and shrewd bunkering, leaving a very small margin of error for approach shots.

World number three Donald has recorded five top-15 finishes at the event in 11 appearances, including a runner-up spot in 2010, but he has also missed the cut here on four occasions.

between success and failure around here.

"The greens are very tricky. If you get a little bit hot with the putter like I have done the last couple days ... those kinds of things you need to go your way; especially around a course like this where putting and short game is tricky." The greens are small, and again, you just have to be a little bit off for it to show up. I think it's just the nature of the golf course." The five-times PGA Tour champion was delighted with his improvement in the second round, having been two over par after eight holes on Thursday before finishing with an opening 69.—Reuters



Luke Donald of England tees off on the 16th hole during the second round of the Northern Trust Open golf tournament at Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles on 15 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

Yao Ming named Houston Goodwill

Ambassador

HOUSTON, 16 Feb — Former NBA star Yao Ming was officially named Goodwill Ambassador of the US city of Houston on Friday by the city's mayor at a ceremony here. Yao, the former Rockets centre who lived in Houston for ten years, was also given key to the city by Mayor Anise Parker at the ceremony in downtown Houston.

Yao was appointed as Houston's Goodwill Ambassador because of "the outstanding success" he has had as a professional basketball player for the Rockets since 2003 and the eight



Former NBA star Yao Ming

years he has participated in the All-Star Games, as well as the international connections he has fostered and the cultural enhancement he has brought to the Houston community, read an

proclamation from Parker. The title is also a recognition of the contributions Yao has made and is making "through unselfish public service for the benefit and welfare of humanity," the proclamation said. "Houston has been enriched by your presence and is grateful for your dedication to improving the cultural fabric of our city," it said.

Yao, who retired in 2011 after having played with the Rockets for nine seasons, was back in Houston from China for the NBA All-Star game as a judge of the Slam Dunk Contest.—Xinhua

Talks end without deal to allow NHL players for Sochi



TORONTO, 16 Feb—The National Hockey League (NHL) and Olympic officials ended two days of talks on Friday without an

agreement that would free players to take part in the 2014 Sochi Winter Games.

With the countdown to the Sochi Olympics now less than a year away, NHL commissioner Gary Bettman, NHL Players Association (NHLPA) chief Donald Fehr, International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) president Rene Fasel and representatives from the International Olympic Com-

mittee (IOC) met on Thursday and again for nearly three hours on Friday at the league's New York headquarters to try and hammer out a deal. The NHL and NHLPA had no comment on the progress of negotiations and there was no announcement about plans for future talks, though Fasel warned the clock was ticking.

Reuters

Santos cool on Moreno talks

RIO DE JANEIRO, 16 Feb — Santos coach Muricy Ramalho admitted on Friday the club is unlikely to sign former Wigan Athletic striker Marcelo Moreno from Brazilian rivals Gremio.

Santos made an approach for Moreno earlier

this month having identified the Bolivian international as an ideal centreforward to support Neymar, Lancenet reported.

But Ramalho conceded Moreno's high wage demands and the glut of foreign players already at Santos could stymie a possible

deal for the 25-year-old.

"He is a great player but it will be difficult unless the conditions change," Ramalho said. "The fact he is a foreign player also complicates matters because we already have three. For that reason we are giving preference to a Brazilian centre forward." Under Brazil's Football Confederation (CBF) rules, clubs can only select a maximum of three foreign players in any given match. Santos already have Argentine trio Walter Montillo, Ezequiel Miralles and Patricio Rodriguez in their squad.—Xinhua

Santos coach Muricy Ramalho



Lee returns to Japan determined to deliver

TOKYO, 16 Feb — Japan's 2011 Asian Cup hero, speaking to reporters at Haneda airport before going on to join up with Tokyo at their pre-season training in Miyazaki said, "I am looking to score a goal a game. Results are the most important thing."

Injuries and other factors have kept the 27-year-old striker out of the side at Southampton this season and he has returned to the J-League on loan through the end of June.

Tadanari Lee returned to Japan on Friday determined to rediscover his scoring touch after joining FC Tokyo from Premier League club Southampton on a short-term loan deal.

Kyodo News
Tadanari Lee meets the Press at Haneda airport in Tokyo after arriving from Britain on 15 Feb, 2013.—KYODO NEWS



GENERAL

Beautiful town in Mon State



Thanwin Bridge

Mawlamyine is the main gateway to south-eastern Myanmar. Thanwin Bridge, the longest rail-cum-road bridge in Myanmar is the most prominent landmark in the area. Mawlamyine has several sawmills and rice mills as teak and rice are transported down the Thanwin. It was once a busy shipbuilding centre and remains an important port. The city also has a solar-powered plant for extracting salt from seawater and a diesel electric plant.—NLM

Serena becomes oldest woman player at number one

DOHA, 16 Feb—Serena Williams showed tennis was not just the domain of teenagers as she climbed back to the top of the world rankings on Friday, becoming the oldest female to hold the coveted position at the age of 31. The American is world number one for the sixth time in her storied career after finishing off former Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova 3-6, 6-3, 7-5 with a thumping ace in the quarter-finals of the Qatar Open.

Williams will meet



Maria Sharapova of Russia reacts after defeating Samantha Stosur of Australia during their women's quarter-final match at the Qatar Open tennis tournament in Doha on 15 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

Russian Maria Sharapova, who had also been in hot pursuit of the number one ranking this week, in a lip-smacking semi-final on Saturday. "I'm so sensitive nowadays, I'm always crying! I've just been through so much and never thought I'd be here again," Williams, who recovered from 4-1 down in the third set, told the crowd as she fought back tears.

At 31 years, four months and 24 days, she will be the oldest woman in the top spot since computer rankings began in 1975. Williams eclipses fellow American Chris Evert, who was 30 years, 11 months and three days when she last held the ranking in 1985.

Since then teenagers like Steffi Graf, Monica Seles and Sharapova have often been world number one but, more than a decade after first claiming top spot, 15-times grand slam champion Williams showed she still hungers for success.

Reuters

Payton, Heinsohn and Hardaway named Hall of Fame finalists

HOUSTON, 16 Feb—Nine-time NBA All-Star guard Gary Payton, two-time NBA-winning coach Tom Heinsohn and smooth shooting point guard Tim Hardaway were named on Friday among the 12 finalists for induction into the Basketball Hall of Fame. Among those also named as first-time finalists were three-time National Collegiate

Athletic Association (NCAA) Coach of the Year Sylvia Hatchell, WNBA All-Star guard Dawn Staley and six-time NBA All-Star Mitch Richmond.

Payton, a point guard and defensive specialist for 18 NBA seasons, ranks in the top 10 all time in assists and steals. "A guy coming from Oakland, California, I never dreamed of this,"

World For World

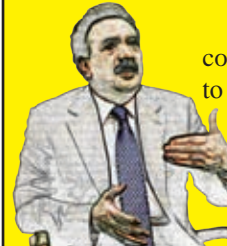
"If I weren't an optimist, I wouldn't have taken this job."



John Kerry
US Secretary of State

The top US diplomat said he was optimistic about the peace process between Israeli and Palestine. He also revealed his willingness to explore every possibility. Kerry succeeded Hillary Clinton as the US Secretary of State in January.

"The nation has rejected Talebanization."



Rehman Malik
Pakistani Interior Minister

The minister made the comment as he asked Taleban to declare one-month ceasefire first to start dialogue with the government. He also said the country would not forgive the crimes of killing innocent citizens.

"While much has been done, much more is needed."

After UN had allotted a large sum of 5.13 million US\$ as aid to flood-hit Mozambique, the UN resident coordinator there stressed the need to exert more efforts to help victims recover from the recent floods.

UN Resident Coordinator in Mozambique
- NLM -

Sources: Reuters and Xinhua

Packers release record-setting defensive back Woodson



Green Bay Packers cornerback Charles Woodson (L) intercepts the ball against Chicago Bears wide receiver Earl Bennett (80) in the second half during their NFL football game in Green Bay, Wisconsin on 13 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

TORONTO, 16 Feb—The Green Bay Packers released record-setting defensive back Charles Woodson after a seven-year stint that included a Super Bowl championship, the National Football League (NFL) team said on Friday.

Woodson started in all 100 games he played for Green Bay since signing with the team as an unrestricted free agent in 2006 and holds franchise records for defensive touchdowns with 10 and the most interception returns for touchdowns

with nine.

He was named to the Pro Bowl eight times during his career and was a key member of the Packers team that won the Super Bowl for the 2010 campaign, establishing career highs in tackles (105) and forced fumbles (five). "He has been an integral part of the Packers' success and our Super Bowl title in 2010 would not have been possible without his contributions," Packers General Manager Ted Thompson said in a statement.

"A once-in-a-generation talent ... we look forward to his eventual induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame." The 1997 Heisman Trophy winner as US college football's top player, Woodson was selected by Oakland with the fourth

pick in the 1998 draft and spent eight seasons with the Raiders before signing with the Packers.

Woodson won NFL defensive rookie of the year honours and became one of the league's premier defensive backs with 55 career interceptions.

He is the first NFL player to return an interception for a touchdown in five straight seasons and is tied for second in league history with 11 career interception returns for touchdowns. Former Packers wide receiver Donald Driver announced his retirement earlier this year but the 36-year-old Woodson is expected to land with another NFL team, saying he wants to play for a Super Bowl contender.

Reuters



Miami Heat guard Gary Payton

President U Thein Sein urges different echelons of administrative mechanism to change mindset and behaviors



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein meets district and township-level departmental personnel in Kalay.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb— President U Thein Sein called on different echelons of administrative mechanism to change their mindset and the way they behave in line with the democratization process as he met district- and township-level departmental personnel at Aung Zeya Yeiktha in local station of

Kalay this evening.

The President heard reports on progress in reforms, preparation for nationwide census-taking in 2014, conservation of forest resources and bio-diversity, government's encouragement for livestock farming, progress in implementation of education promotion plans

and improvement of public health care and rural health care service delivery, actions for rule of law and financial matters presented by Union ministers.

The intention of the administrative mechanism is peace and stability of the State under the rule of law and enabling the country stand tall on the global stage, improving the socio-economic status of the people, noted the President.

Lower echelons of the administrative organs are to perform their duties with a sense of responsibility, royalty and righteousness to ensure effectiveness of the governance, stressed the President.

Though the ongoing political and economic reforms have achieved certain success, there still remain challenges and difficulties, mentioned the President. He urged the different levels of

government staff ranging from departmental heads to clerical staff to adapt themselves to meet the demands of changing era and system. He stressed the need for competency and morality of the bodies concerned to ensure effectiveness of administrative mechanism and called on them to change their mindset and behaviours. He called for energetic collaborative efforts to enable the country to stand

tall among global nations.

Also present were Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief (Air) Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint, Union ministers, Lt-Gen Myint Soe from Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), departmental heads, deputy commissioners, and township administrators.

MNA



Notice to matriculation exam identity card

NAY PYI TAW, 16 Feb— Myanmar Examinations Board announced today that the students from regions and states except Yangon who will sit for the matriculation exam to be held from 13 to 22 March, 2013, are to take out their identity cards as

of 21 February, 2013 and the students from Yangon Municipal Area, as of 25 February, 2013. In so doing, the students from Basic Education High Schools and BEHSs (Branch and Affiliated) may take out their identity cards from their respective school

heads and the external students, from the examiners of their respective exam centers. The students may make direct contacts with respective examiners and township education officers if there is something inconvenient.

MNA

MRTV invites companies to broadcast live 27th SEA Games

Local and foreign companies have been invited to carry out broadcasting services such as live broadcast of the opening and concluding ceremonies of the 27th SEA Games, working for IBC

(International Broadcasting Centre) and broadcast of seven sports events.

Those interested of companies at home and abroad may submit their proposals to the director-general of Myanmar

Radio and Television (Tatkon) not later than 28th February, 2013, and the day on which the officials of companies would meet will be announced.

Myanmar Radio and Television

Agriculture Department has distributed hybrid maize seeds which can produce over 100 baskets in average per acre to the farmers in Nay Pyi Taw Tatkon township this winter.

The local farmers have shifted to U008 strain of maize seeds today from 888 strains of maize.

"We have distributed U008 strain of maize seeds free of charge to 350 farmers for 456 acres in 38 village-tracts," said U Chit Swe Oo, Staff Officer of Tatkon Township Agriculture Department.

To distribute the seeds to farmers again in the next growing season, U008 strain of maize seeds are being hybridized at the

60-acre Agriculture Research Farm in Tatkon.

"We have planned to distribute the seeds again in the coming winter, but it might not be free this time," he added.

Without turning a blind eye to the needs of the farmers after giving the hybrid seeds to the farmers, employees of the Myanmar Agriculture Department have made field trips to the farmland and providing technical assistance to them.

If farmers follow the new method of maize cultivation, they can put one acre under 2300 plants. A new hybrid strain of plan can yield two maize buds per plant, produce 30,000 maize buds per acre. Therefore, one

acre can produce 100 to 120 baskets of maize grains. The price for maize grains has reached K 6500 per basket currently. The maize grains, having marketability to make feedstuff for chickens, are exported to China through Muse.

A maize can be harvested four months after planting while a corn lasts just two and half months to be harvested. Incomes of the farmers are rising as the per acre yield of the U008 strain has reached over 100 baskets.

There are 2433 acres of maize plantations in Tatkon

High-yield maize seeds provides high income to farmers in Tatkon Tsp



Township in the rainy season for the 2012-13 growing season while 600 acres in the winter.

The Myanmar Agriculture Department has encouraged the farmers to expand the maize acres in

the upcoming rainy season.

*Myanmar Alinn:
15-2-2013
(Trs: AMS)*