

## President U Thein Sein congratulates Chinese Premier of the State Council

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—His Excellency U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of congratulations to His Excellency Mr Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, on his election as the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China at 12<sup>th</sup> National People's Congress of China on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2013.

MNA

## New Zealand recognizes Myanmar's political and economic reforms

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—President U Thein Sein held talks with New Zealand Prime Minister Mr John Key, at Langham Hotel in Auckland of New Zealand this afternoon.

The New Zealand Prime Minister expressed thanks for Myanmar President's visit to New Zealand. He recognized Myanmar's political and economic reforms. He reaffirmed that New Zealand would extend a

helping hand to Myanmar's democratization process and economic reform. Arrangements would be made for appointment of New Zealand Ambassador in Yangon, he added.

The President said that both countries have established diplomatic relations since 50 years. The relations between the two countries did not improve as it should be due to different political systems

practised twenty years ago. Since taking office, the new government has been engaged democratic transition as well as reintegration with the international community.

Exchange of visits is the important milestone in the history of both countries' relations. The two countries would promote bilateral relations more in the future. He expressed special thanks for New Zealand's support

for removal of sanctions against Myanmar and using the official name Myanmar instead of Burma.

The two exchanged views on cooperation in the sectors of agriculture, livestock, education, mining, hydropower and geo energy. It was attended by Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) Gen Hla Htay Win, Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Tin Naing Thein, U Ohn Myint, U Khin Yi, Dr Mya Aye, Dr Myint Aung, Dr Kan Zaw, Dr Ko Ko Oo, deputy ministers and departmental heads.

After that, they met the press. In the evening, the President met opposition party leader Mr David

**President U Thein Sein and New Zealand Prime Minister Mr John Key meet the press.**

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**President U Thein Sein shaking hands with New Zealand Prime Minister Mr John Key, at Langham Hotel in Auckland of New Zealand.**

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Shearer and Foreign Affairs Spokesman Mr Phil Goff at Langham Hotel. At the call, they exchanged views on Myanmar's political and economic reforms and

future expectations. After that, the President and party attended a dinner hosted by the New Zealand Prime Minister.

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## King Alaung Paya's message to British Monarch George II kept in Wilhelm Leibniz Library

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—The golden palm-leaf inscription sent by Myanmar King Alaungpaya to British Monarch George II in AD 1756 is reported to be kept at Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library in Hanover of Germany. In his palm-leaf letter to King George II, King Alaungpaya had allowed British traders to live in Haiggyi Island for trade and expressed his wish for strengthening ties with Britain.

The message was sent under the status of an independent sovereign on equal terms. And King George II handed it over to a library in Hanover, his

birthplace.

The inscription measuring 55 cmx12 cm is gold foil of standard quality with 12 rubies of the same quality embedded in each ends. The inscription includes ten lines written with stylus and dated 10 Waxing of Kason, 1118 ME. It was put folded in an ivory casket.

Scholar Dr Friedrich Hulsmann discovered the inscription from that library in Hanover in 2007 after 250 years. With the help of a Luxembourg historian, he made research into it and became to know that it was written in Burmese. Then the letter was translated

computer-aided.

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library is one of the famous libraries in northern Germany with a collection of over 1.6 million works of literature around the world including the world's oldest book from 8 AD.

The message was photocopied, magnified and hanged with the fixture. The original one is kept under special care and would be applied to the list of memory of the world. Union Minister for Culture U Aye Myint Kyu and officials had a chance to observe the letter while visiting the library in Hanover.

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**Significant day temperatures (15-3-2013)**

<b>Chauk</b>	<b>41°C</b>
<b>NyaungU</b>	<b>40°C</b>
<b>Minbu</b>	<b>40°C</b>



## Seizure of illegal confectionery in Bago Region



WAW, 15 March — Mobile Team-2 seized goods that failed to pay customs while conducting a search of vehicles at mile post No (81/4) near Sathwarchon village in Bago Region on 9 March.

The team confiscated 68 cartons of confectionery on the vehicle driven by

Yazar Soe, 21 cartons of confectionery, 12 cartons of lighter and 1193 items of men's and ladies' wear on the vehicle by Nyunt Win and 100 cartons of seasoning powder on the vehicle by Wai Lwin.

They were charged with possession of illegal goods.

*Kyemon*

## Mechanical fault leaves container truck crash

YANGON, 15 March — A container truck went out of control and crashed into a wall on new Strand Road, at about 9.30 pm on 10 March. The accident caused damage to the front part of the truck and the wall.

The container truck

driving along the new Strand road hit the wall after its swivel joint went out. The driver broke his leg jumping out of the truck before crashing into the wall but the truck conductor got injury to his head.

*Kyemon*



## Drug dealers, user arrested in Waingmaw, Myitkyina Townships

MYITKYINA, 15 March — Police members of Myitkyina anti-narcotic special squad led by Police Inspector Zaw Myo Lwin seized 100 stimulant tablets worth K 300,000 and K 14000 from Aik Hlaing (a) Maung Tae while stopping his motorbike and making a search of his leather jacket near Nat Myin Kha bridge in Waingmaw Township on 9 March.

Aik Hlaing (a) Maung Tae, 39, of Ward-2 in Naungsipaw village of Waingmaw Township was charged with possession of narcotics.

According to the confession of Aik Hlaing (a)

Maung Tae, a combined force comprising anti-narcotic special squad members and police members of Waingmaw Police Station conducted a search of the house of U Khum (a) Aik Paung in Nantwah village in the township on 9 March. They discovered and seized a package of raw opium, 128 stimulant tablets, about 9.5 grams of heroine and K 1,015,500, and arrested U Khum (a) Aik Paung and his wife Daw Sai Moug and Haw Kyint Wai (a) Ah Wee (a) Ah Wai who was there to use narcotics.

Waingmaw Police Station filed a lawsuit against

## Old man hit by two cars, killed in hit-and-run incident

YANGON, 15 March — An old man was knocked down by two cars and he was pronounced dead on the spot at the scene of incident on Insein Road, here, at about 7.30 pm on 8 March.

A taxi driving from north to south hit an unidentified 70-year-old old man who was crossing over the intersection of U Yay Khe street with Aung Theikdi Street on Insein Road near Khawechan bus-stop in Mayangon Township. The victim was knocked down again by another taxi driving on the opposite lane while he tried to stand up at the place he fell down.

The two vehicles drove

MAWLAMYINEGYUN, 15 March — A ceremony to hand over new school building for newly-upgraded Kyawzan village affiliated middle school took place at the school in the village in Mawlamyinegyun Township of Ayeyawady Region on 4 March.

Deputy Minister for Education U Aye Kyu, Ayeyawady Region Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding

away after hitting the old man. The victim died of serious injuries at the scene of the incident. Police are investigating into the case to expose the hit-and-run drivers.

*Kyemon*

## Candle fire destroys eight buildings of Dhamma Yeiktha in Shwedaung Township

SHWEDAUNG, 15 March — A total of eight buildings— five wooden buildings and three RC ones— were reduced to ashes in the fire occurred at Soonloon Shwegugyi Dhamma Yeiktha in Taungpein-inn village in Kyeethe village-tract in Shwedaung Township of Bago Region on 9 March.

The fire started at about 10.30 pm in a wooden building of 81-year-old Nun Daw Htay Yi where a candle was lit. The candle had set other materials in the building on fire.

The fire died down at

about 10.50 pm thanks to the collective efforts of fire crews accompanied by two fire engines and local people. No injury was reported but eight buildings in the compound of the Dhamma Yeiktha were burnt in the fire.

*Kyemon*

## Fuel filling under intense heat cause fire in Hlinethaya Township



YANGON, 15 March — A fire broke out while filling fuel from a fuel tank to a fuel bowser under the scorching heat at a jetty in a container yard on the bank of Hline River near Hlinethaya Bridge in Hlinethaya Township at about 12 noon on 12 March.

The fire spread and

U Sann Maw, Director-General U Eikhti Hla of the Ministry of Education, Deputy Commissioner U Kan Win and a local formally opened the new school building.

Next, a townselder handed over documents

related to the new school building to the township education officer.

The newly-opened school building is 120 feet long, 30 feet wide and 15 feet high. The one-storey building was built at the cost of K 30 million. — *Kyemon*

## Fire negligence in Thingangyun Township



YANGON, 15 March — A fire accident happened to an apartment at Waizayandar Housing on Waizayandar road in Thingangyun Township at 10.15 am on 12 March. The fire started from an overheated washing machine in Room (210) of Building-2 where the flat owner left the machine running.

No sooner had they been informed of the outbreak

of fire by duty-conscious persons than fire crews accompanied by two fire trucks of Thingangyun and South Okkalapa Townships rushed there and managed to bring the fire under control. They put out the fire at about 10.30 am.

Thingangyun Police Station filed a lawsuit against Daw Min Min Than, 38, for fire negligence.

*Kyemon*

destroyed a fishing boat, two fuel bowser, a warehouse and a wooden building nearby. Fire crews put out the fire at about 12.55 pm.

A responsible person said that the trawler which was burnt in the fire is worth about K 200 million. A fire crew said that two victims who were nearby when the

fuel bowser was caught in fire were hospitalized for injuries.

A witness said that police members had arrested a man who tried to commit a theft of a fuel barrel while firefighters were struggling to control the fire.

*Kyemon*



## WORLD

## UN development chief flags failings of “war on drugs”



UN Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator Helen Clark speaks during a meeting of Resident Coordinators and Resident Representatives of the UN in the Middle East and North Africa, in Rabat on 30 March, 2012.

REUTERS

MEXICO CITY, 15 March—There is increasing evidence that the US-led war on drugs has failed, with criminalisation often creating more problems than it solves, said Helen Clark, the head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Speaking ahead of Thursday's presentation of the UNDP's 2013 Human Development Report, Clark, a former Prime Minister of New Zealand, said Latin American leaders should be encouraged to develop different policies to tackle the drug scourge.

## West aims to sabotage Iran vote—Teheran rights official



File photo shows Mohammad Javad Larijani talks to Reuters during a private interview in Teheran.—REUTERS

GENEVA, 15 March—Western powers are trying to sabotage Iran's presidential election in June but the vote will go ahead and offer a fair choice between reformists and conservatives, a senior Iranian official said on Thursday.

Journalists and others suspected of complicity in a plot to destabilise the Islamic Republic have been arrested and will receive due process, said Mohammad Javad Larijani, Secretary-General of Iran's High Council for Human Rights. “The (Iranian) security people discovered that there is a grouping connected to the secret services of a number of European countries—I can name one

“I've been a health minister in my past and there's no doubt that the health position would be to treat the issue of drugs as primarily a health and social issue rather than a criminalized issue,” Clark told *Reuters* in an interview.

“Once you criminalize, you put very big stakes around. Of course, our world has proceeded on the basis that criminalization is the approach,” she added.

Clark did not prescribe remedies to the Latin American governments but said they should “act on evidence,” noting that she favoured treating drugs as a public health problem.

In recent years, many Latin American governments have begun to openly challenge the forty-year orthodoxy of the US-led “war on drugs” that seeks to stamp out the cultivation and distribution of drugs like marijuana and cocaine.

Frustrated by ceaseless bloodshed and a perception that the United States has not done enough to curb its own drug consumption, many leaders in the region are now speaking openly about the possibility of legalizing drugs.—*Reuters*

of them which is Britain's secret service, and they were creating a grouping to do sabotage in the structure of the campaign,” Larijani told *Reuters*.

“Their job was to create an atmosphere of worriedness, which prevents the tranquillity which is needed for competition,” he said during a 45-minute interview in English in Iran's mission to the United Nations in Geneva. He offered no proof or details. The UN human rights investigator on Iran, Ahmed Shaheed, said on Tuesday that Teheran's silencing of journalists and opposition leaders could jeopardise the legitimacy of the presidential election in June.—*Reuters*

BEIJING, 16 March—Li Keqiang was endorsed as Chinese premier Friday morning at the ongoing session of the 12th National People's Congress (NPC), the country's top legislature.

Nearly 3,000 NPC deputies voted to approve the nomination of Li, by newly-elected President Xi Jinping, as the candidate for premier at the ongoing parliament session.

He has been the seventh premier since the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, replacing Wen Jiabao who had headed the State Council since 2003.

Li, born in 1955 in Anhui Province, joined the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 1976 and graduated from Peking University with law and economics degrees.

After working as provincial leaders in Henan and Liaoning provinces, he was elected to the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in 2007 and appointed vice premier in 2008.

Li was re-elected to the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in November.

Xinhua



Xi Jinping (R) shakes hands with Li Keqiang at the fifth plenary meeting of the first session of the 12th National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, on 15 March, 2013. Li Keqiang was endorsed as the premier of China's State Council at the meeting here on Friday.—XINHUA

## Iraq war costs US more than \$2 trillion



US Navy Hospital Corpsman HMI Richard Barnett, assigned to the 1st Marine Division, holds an Iraqi child in central Iraq in this 29 March, 2003 file photo.

REUTERS

NEW YORK, 15 March—The US war in Iraq has cost \$1.7 trillion with an additional \$490 billion in benefits owed to war veterans, expenses that could grow to more than \$6 trillion over the next four decades counting interest, a study released on Thursday said.

The war has killed at least 134,000 Iraqi civilians and may have contributed to the deaths of as many as four times that number, ac-

ording to the Costs of War Project by the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University.

When security forces, insurgents, journalists and humanitarian workers were included, the war's death toll rose to an estimated 176,000 to 189,000, the study said.

The report, the work of about 30 academics and experts, was published in advance of the 10th anniversary

sary of the US-led invasion of Iraq on 19 March, 2003.

It was also an update of a 2011 report the Watson Institute produced ahead of the 10th anniversary of the 11 September attacks that assessed the cost in dollars and lives from the resulting wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq.

The 2011 study said the combined cost of the wars was at least \$3.7 trillion, based on actual expenditures from the US Treasury and future commitments, such as the medical and disability claims of US war veterans.

That estimate climbed to nearly \$4 trillion in the update. The estimated death toll from the three wars, previously at 224,000 to 258,000, increased to a range of 272,000 to 329,000 two years later.

Excluded were indirect deaths caused by the mass exodus of doctors and a devastated infrastructure, for example, while the costs left out trillions of dollars in interest the United States could pay over the next 40 years.—*Reuters*

## Action needed to rebuild confidence over Iran's nuclear programme

VIENNA, 15 March—Iran should take actions to prove its nuclear programme is peaceful, instead of making only promises, Vienna based diplomats said here on Thursday.

Commenting on Iranian plans to submit a written promise to the United Nations that it will not seek to develop nuclear bombs, the diplomats told *Xinhua* on condition of anonymity that the promise made no sense without substantial step to meet the world's concerns.

The diplomats urge Teheran to increase the transparency of its nuclear programme, to meet the demands of the P5+1 countries, namely China, US, Britain, Russia, France, Germany, and to cooperate with the UN nuclear watchdog to clarify outstanding issues in its nuclear programme.—*Xinhua*

## Damascenes panicked by call for men to fight Assad's war

DAMASCUS, 15 March—When a government-linked Islamic body in Syria said this week it was a “sacred duty” to join the army and fight the revolt, Damascus was ablaze with rumours of a mass military draft.

Men of military age panicked, worrying they would be given a gun and told to fight never-ending street battles with rebel fighters before being returned to their families in a wooden box, like thousands of soldiers over the past two years.

President Bashar al-Assad's forces are stretched



A picture of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad riddled with holes is seen on the facade of the police academy in Aleppo, after it was captured by Free Syrian Army fighters, on 4 March, 2013.—REUTERS

thin across the country as the opposition takes further ground, overrunning military

bases and executing prisoners. Fleeing reservists say morale is low among troops,

who are virtually imprisoned in their barracks by officers who fear they'll defect or flee. Mohammed, a 30-year-old who supports Assad, said he would rather flee the country than fight the rebels.

“So what exactly would I be doing if I got drafted? Killing rebels? They'll kill me back,” he said, asking to withhold his second name for fear of retribution.

“I'd be dead no matter what, like a lamb to the slaughter,” said Mohammed, who completed his two-year mandatory military service years ago.—*Reuters*



## SCIENCE &amp; TECHNOLOGY

## Chile unveils world's largest astronomical observatory

SANTIAGO, 15 March—Chilean President Sebastian Pinera on Wednesday presided over the launching of the world's largest astronomical observatory in the remote Atacama Desert of the northern Chilean



Andes. Home to the world's most powerful telescope, the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), the observatory is the result of a collaboration between Europe, the United States, Japan and Chile, according to an ALMA Press release.

"One of our many natural resources is Chile's spectacular night sky," Pinera told the more than 500 guests gathered for the

event.

"I believe that science has been a vital contributor to the development of Chile in recent years. I am very proud of our international collaborations in astronomy, of which ALMA is the latest

and biggest outcome," said Pinera.

Located 5,000 metres above sea level, the assembly of ALMA's antennas was recently completed and the telescope has already provided "unprecedented views of the cosmos with only a portion of its full array," the observatory said.

ALMA "is able to observe the universe by detecting light that is invisible to the human eye (and) will

show us never-before-seen details about the birth of stars, infant galaxies in the early universe, and planets coalescing around distant suns," the observatory added.

Already "astronomers are having to rewrite a major part of the history of the universe," the observatory said, because the telescope has shown that the strongest star bursts in the cosmos "took place much earlier than previously thought." Those results will appear in the 14 March edition of the journal *Nature*.

ALMA Director Thijs de Graauw said the telescope "dwarfs anything else we had before," adding "we are eager for astronomers to exploit the full power of this amazing tool."

The antennas of the ALMA array, 54 12-meter dish antennas and 12 smaller 7-meter dish antennas, work together as a single telescope. Each collects radiation coming in from space and the data is brought together and processed by a specialized supercomputer.—*Xinhua*

## Trade panel delays decision on Apple, Samsung patent fight



WASHINGTON, 15 March—The US International Trade Commission said on Wednesday that it would delay a decision on allegations that Apple infringed upon patents owned by Samsung Electronics in making the iPod touch, iPhone and iPad.

An administrative law judge at the ITC had said in a preliminary ruling in September that Apple did not infringe the patents. The full ITC said it would review the matter. If the full ITC reversed its internal judge and found Apple guilty of infringement, the ITC could order its products banned

from the US market.

The ITC said it would now issue a decision on 31 May. It requested filings on questions related to the effect of banning the Apple products on the public interest and whether there were acceptable substitutes for the Apple products if they were to be banned.

Apple has a parallel complaint filed against Samsung at the ITC, accusing Samsung, a major Apple chip provider as well as a global rival, of copying its iPhones and iPads. An ITC judge said in that case that Samsung infringed on four

Apple patents. Apple and Samsung have taken their bruising patent disputes to some 10 countries and four continents as they vie for market share in the booming mobile industry.

Samsung is the world's largest smartphone maker, while Apple is in second place, according to Gartner Inc, a technology research company. The case at the International Trade Commission is No. 337-794.

Reuters

## US scientists unearth ancient Chinese coin on Kenyan island

WASHINGTON, 15 March—A joint expedition of US scientists has unearthed a 600-year-old Chinese coin on the Kenyan island of Manda that shows trade existed between China and east Africa decades before European explorers set sail and changed the map of the world, according to a statement issued on Wednesday by the Field Museum in Chicago. The coin, a small disk of copper and silver with a square hole in the centre so it could be worn on a belt, is called "Yongle Tongbao" and was issued by Emperor Yongle who reigned from 1403-1425 AD during the Ming Dynasty. The emperor's name is written on the coin, making it easy to date.

Emperor Yongle, who started construction of China's Forbidden City, was interested in political and trade missions to the lands that ring the Indian Ocean and sent Admiral Zheng He, also known as Cheng Ho, to explore those shores.—*Xinhua*

Reuters

## Locals, biologists face off over Philippine whale shark feeding

TAN-AWAN, (Philippines) 15 March—Tan-awan, in the southern Philippines island of Cebu, used to be a sleepy village that never saw tourists unless they were lost or in transit. Yet now they flock there by the hundreds—to swim with whale sharks, the world's largest fish.

Whale sharks are lured to the Tan-awan coastline of the Oslob district by fishermen who hand feed them small shrimp, drawing divers and snorkelers to see the highly sought-after animals, known as gentle giants of the sea. But the practice has sparked fierce debate on the internet and among biologists, who decry it as unnatural. "Some



A sign advertising whale shark watching is pictured as a tricycle passes by in the village of Tan-awan, Oslob, in the southern Philippines island of Cebu on 27 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

people are asking that we stop feeding, but if we stop feeding, what is our livelihood?" said Ramonito Lagahid, vice chairman of

the Tan-awan Oslob Sea Warden and Fishermen Association (TOSWFA). "We have to go back to fishing."

Though whale sharks as large as 12.7 metres (42 feet) and a weight of more than 21.5 tons (47,400 lbs) have been confirmed, they feed mainly on algae, plankton and krill. Contrary to their name, the animals are docile and pose no risk to humans.

Much of their life cycle remains unknown to science, including total population numbers. Some are killed in areas where they tend to congregate, and the species as a whole is considered "vulnerable" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). But Lagahid says there have always been whale sharks in Tan-awan.

He remembers seeing them even when he was young.

"They are always around when we go out at night to collect 'uyap,' he said, referring to a kind of small shrimp that the whale sharks are fed. "Many times we have to stop fishing because the whale sharks are around."

Word about the whale sharks got out globally about two years ago via Internet postings from witnesses, and tourists began flocking to the village both from the Philippines and around the world. Most days see several hundred, but 2012 numbers peaked with 1,642 on Good Friday in 2012.

## CERN scientists say particle is no "super-Higgs"

GENEVA, 15 March—Physicists who found a new elementary particle last year said on Wednesday it looked like a basic Higgs boson rather than any "super-Higgs" that some cosmologists had hoped might open up more exotic secrets of the universe.

"It does look like the SM (Standard Model) Higgs boson," said physicist Brian Petersen of ATLAS, one of two research teams working in parallel on the Higgs project at CERN in Switzerland.

His assertion, on a slide presentation to a conference

at CERN and posted on the Internet, was echoed by the other group. "So far, it is looking like an SM Higgs boson," said slides from Colin Bernet of CMS.

The two groups work separately and without comparing findings to ensure their conclusions are reached independently.

It has been assumed since the triumphant announcement last June that a new particle spotted at CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC) was the Higgs, named after British

theoretical physicist Peter Higgs, that, theories say, gave mass to matter after the Big Bang 13.7 billion years ago. But CERN has yet to confirm that. CMS may issue more information on Thursday at an expert gathering in the Italian Alps. A confirmed discovery of the Higgs boson, which could happen this year, would likely win a Nobel prize.

Meeting at CERN, near Geneva, the scientists said on Wednesday that the particle looked very much like it fit into the 30-year-old Standard

Model of the makeup of the universe.

If confirmed on Thursday, it would mean LHC scientists will have to wait until late in this decade for any sign of "new worlds of physics".

Until the last few days there had been some faint signs that the discovery might prove to be something more than the particle that would fill the last gap in the Standard Model, a comprehensive explanation of the basic composition of the universe.—*Reuters*



A technician looks at collision at the CMS experiment in the control room of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) near Geneva on 5 April, 2012.—REUTERS



## BUSINESS &amp; HEALTH

## Moody's downgrades outlook for Dutch banks

THE HAGUE, 15 March — Rating agency Moody's on Thursday downgraded its long-term forecasts for the creditworthiness of three Dutch banks ABN Amro, NIBC and Rabobank from "stable" to "negative".

The negative outlook for ING Bank was maintained. An outlook is not necessarily a precursor of a rating change, but a negative outlook means that a rating may be lowered. The credit status remains the same now. Last year Moody's had already downgraded the long-term debt and deposit ratings of the Dutch banks, along with the status of many other banks. Rabobank is the most stable Dutch bank on Aa2, ING and ABN Amro are on A2 and NIBC on Baa3. "The negative outlook is driven by Moody's view that the operating environment in the Netherlands is becoming more challenging than previously anticipated," Moody's said in a Press release.

"This implies greater

## HK's GNI surges 8.2 pct in Q4 2012

HONG KONG, 15 March — Hong Kong's gross national income (GNI) rose to 562.7 billion HK dollars (about 72.5 US dollars) in the fourth quarter of 2012, up 8.2 percent on the same period last year, the city's Census & Statistics Department announced on Thursday.

According to the statistics, gross domestic product rose 7.2 percent to an estimated 556.6 billion HK dollars at the same time. Compared with GDP, Hong Kong's GNI was larger by 6.1 billion HK dollars, representing a net external primary income inflow of the same amount, and equivalent to 1.1 percent of GDP in that quarter. After netting out the effect of price changes, Hong Kong's GNI increased 3.7 percent in real terms compared to the corresponding rise of 2.5 percent recorded for GDP.

For 2012 as a whole, GNI increased by 4.8 percent over a year earlier to 2,083.6 billion HK dollars at current market prices. After netting out the effect of price changes, Hong Kong's GNI increased slightly by 0.4 percent in real terms in 2012 over 2011.—Xinhua

downside risk in asset quality in areas where the banks have large concentrations, beyond the impact that normal cyclical changes would be expected to have."

Moody's found three major developments that could undermine the creditworthiness of these big banks. First, the shrinkage of the economy this year, second the rising unemployment rate and finally Moody's estimated more losses in real estate.

Xinhua

## Three years on: China's medical reform

BEIJING, 15 March — China introduced a health care system reform three years ago in 2009. The reform is aimed at making health care affordable and accessible for all Chinese citizens by 2020. CCTV reporter Nie Jia takes a look at the progress of the reform over the last three years.



A new batch of medicine arrives. With sensors, the computer scans and records all the information about the drugs. This also goes back to the supplier via the internet to make sure the order is correct. As part

of a pilot scheme, this is how this health clinic in a small township in Sichuan Province now operates.

Luo Wei, Head of Health Clinic in Xing Yi Township, said, "By using computers, we streamline our processes and reduce waiting times for patients— from registering, to checking up, to

prescriptions, everything can be done over the internet." The new computer system also monitors medical practices. The local health bureau has designated on-line supervisors to monitor drug use, medicine prices,

## Cove Energy directors look to replicate success in Mozambique

LONDON, 15 March — Three key executives that were behind the creation and sale of Cove Energy Plc (CNVGF.PK) have reunited to raise funds for oil and gas exploration in waters off Mozambique, *the Financial Times* reported on Sunday.

John Craven, Michael Blaha and Michael Nolan, now directors of Discover Exploration, are looking to raise about \$50 million, *the Financial Times* reported.

Discover Exploration is focusing on waters east of Mozambique in the Rovuma Basin. The waters are controlled by the small island state of Comoros.

Discover Exploration is backed by directors' funds and privately held Dutch oil company Oranje-Nassau Energie, the daily reported.

*The Financial Times*

also reported that the company plans to tap further funds from institutional investors in London, after having signed a production sharing contract with Comoros.

Thailand's PTT Exploration & Production PTTE.BK snapped up London-listed Cove Energy

THE HAGUE, 15 March — Dairy company Royal FrieslandCampina reported a record revenue of 10.3 billion euros (13.3 billion US dollars) in 2012, the company said on Thursday.

Although the Dutch company continues to experience difficult market conditions in Europe, sales were up 7.1 percent compared to the 9.6 billion euros of 2011.



A man walks past the Bank of Japan in Tokyo on 7 March, 2013.—REUTERS

LONDON, 15 March — Global economic news is improving here and there,

but a batch of data due this week is unlikely to shake financial markets' conviction

that major central banks are not about to take away the punch bowl.

If anything, even more monetary easing could be in the pipeline. A minority of policymakers at the Bank of England wants to expand its bond buying. The nominee to head the Bank of Japan is promising profound change to root out deflation.

Even the conservative European Central Bank (ECB) pondered a further interest rate cut last week after its staff forecast that the euro zone would not only remain in recession in 2013 for the

second year in a row but would shrink by more than previously thought.

Extraordinarily loose global policy settings speak volumes about how much spare capacity there still is in the post-crisis world economy — despite Friday's surprisingly strong US job figures. "My best guess is that the output gaps are sufficiently large in all the major economies that central banks can do additional stimulus if need be," said Derry Pickford, macro analyst at investment managers Ashburton in London.—Reuters



## US Senate Democrats offer budget plan with tax increases and spending cuts

WASHINGTON, 15 March — US Senate Democrats on Wednesday unveiled their budget blueprint for the new fiscal year starting on 1 October, a competing version to the House GOP plan and the first budget in the Senate in four years.

The plan, presented by Senate Budget Committee Chairwoman Patty Murry, would seek 975 billion dollars in spending cuts over the next decade and roughly the same amount of new tax revenues. The

blueprint also proposed a 100 billion dollars stimulus package which would fund infrastructure projects and education programmes.

In contrast with the House GOP budget, the Senate plan will not balance the budget but will put the deficit on a sustainable path.

At the markup of the plan among her Senate colleagues, Murry said the highest priority of her budget is to create the conditions for job creation, economic growth, and prosperity built from the middle out, not the top down. "Our budget is built on three principles: Number one, we need to protect our fragile economic recovery, create jobs, and invest in long-term growth. Number two, we need to tackle our deficit and debt fairly and responsibly.

And number three, we need to keep the promises we've made as a nation to our seniors, our families, and our communities," Murry stated.

Her comments to some extent echoed the President Barack Obama's position. He told House Republicans on Wednesday that his priority is to prevent an economic slowdown, but not a 10-year balanced budget.

The House GOP plan, put forth by House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan on Tuesday, revived some controversial issues in the budget battle.

Xinhua



for \$1.9 billion last year after Royal Dutch Shell (RDSA.L) abandoned its bid.—Reuters

John Craven (L) speaks during the Reuters Global Energy and Climate Summit in London on 14 June, 2011.

REUTERS

## Dutch dairy company FrieslandCampina reports record revenue

Net profit increased by more than a quarter (26.9 percent) from 216 million euros up to 274 million euros.

FrieslandCampina benefited primarily from growth in the categories of infant and toddler nutrition, dairy-based beverages and branded cheese.

The company expects a slight growth in demand this year for dairy products, mainly

by higher demand from Asia, South America, Russia and Africa. The Asian countries are already accounted for about a quarter of the company's revenue. Cees 't Hart, CEO of Royal FrieslandCampina, explained further investments are planned to achieve more growth. "Most of the investments are taking place in the Netherlands," he said.

Xinhua



## WORLD

## Israel's Netanyahu clinches coalition deals



Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during a farewell event for outgoing Defence Minister Ehud Barak at Bar-Ilan University near Tel Aviv on 13 March, 2013.—REUTERS

JERUSALEM, 15 March—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu clinched deals on Thursday for a coalition government set to curb benefits for ultra-Orthodox Jews, a hot-button issue that has pushed peacemaking with Palestinians to the sidelines.

In control of 68 of parliament's 120 seats, the new administration — the first in a decade without ultra-Orthodox parties — is expected to take office next week, just days before a visit by US President Barack Obama.

"There is a government," said Noga Katz, a

spokeswoman for Netanyahu's right-wing Likud party, citing agreements with the centrist Yesh Atid and far-right Jewish Home parties as well as a smaller faction headed by former foreign minister Tzipi Livni.

Yesh Atid, led by ex-TV news anchor Yair Lapid, and high-tech millionaire Naftali Bennett's pro-settler Jewish Home rode a wave of anger in a 22 January election over state handouts and military draft exemptions long granted to the ultra-Orthodox minority.

After surprisingly strong showings at the bal-

lot box, the two political upstarts effectively black-balled Netanyahu's largely loyal religious allies, a dramatic change that left the prime minister weakened as he enters his third term in office.

Although Lapid has advocated a resumption of peace talks with the Palestinians stalled since 2010, his party's second-place finish was a reflection of a renewed public focus on bread-and-butter issues such as the high cost of living.

Public expectations are high that the new government could affect real change in what many Israelis see as state coddling of the ultra-Orthodox that gives them little incentive or opportunity to learn skills and contribute to the economy.

Netanyahu will turn his attention again to the Palestinian issue and Iran's nuclear drive in his talks with Obama, with whom he has had a testy relationship. But US officials have said Obama is not coming with any peace plan and expectations of any swift movement on the Israeli-Palestinian track are low.

Reuters

## France, UK push EU to end Syria arms ban

BRUSSELS/PARIS, 15 March—France and Britain will urge European Union governments to lift an embargo on supplying weapons to the Syrian opposition, President Francois Hollande said on Thursday, warning that France could go it alone if no EU agreement is reached.

The French president justified his call to increase help to the Syrian opposition after a two-year uprising against President Bashar al-Assad by saying that weapons were being delivered to Assad's government, particularly by Russia. "We want the Europeans to lift the arms embargo — not to go towards a total war, we think a political transition must be the solution for Syria — (but)

France President Francois Hollande holds a news conference during a European Union leaders meeting in Brussels on 14 March, 2013.

REUTERS

we must accept our responsibilities," he said as he arrived for an EU summit in Brussels. "(We) cannot allow a people to be massacred as it is being today," said Hollande, adding that Britain saw eye-to-eye with France on the issue.

He said France and Britain aimed to persuade their EU partners during discussions on the second day of the summit to lift the embargo for the opposition before the end of May.



If agreement at EU level is not possible, he indicated that France could go it alone in abandoning the embargo. "If by chance one or two countries were to block the move ... I can't speak for others, but France itself would take its responsibilities," he told a news conference.

The arms ban is part of a package of EU sanctions on Syria that rolls over every three months. An extension agreed last month

cept it.

"The closest point of approach between these aircraft was approximately 16 miles," Little added.

Two US military aircraft were escorting the Predator, and the Iranian plane broke off pursuit after a verbal warning.

"All US aircraft re-

mained over international waters at all times," Little stated.

According to the Pentagon, Iranian aircraft fired on a US drone operating over the Arabian Sea last November. The Iranian aircraft was said to have fired two missiles at the drone and missed.—Xinhua

## Blasts, clashes kill at least 25 in central

## Baghdad

BAGHDAD, 15 March—Coordinated blasts killed at least 25 people in the heart of Baghdad on Thursday near the heavily fortified Green Zone, where several Western embassies are located, police and medics said.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the explosions, but Sunni Muslim insurgents have been redoubling their efforts to undermine Iraq's Shi'ite-led government and foment inter-communal conflict this year.

The brazen attacks in broad daylight will fan concerns about Iraq's fragile security, which has come under growing strain as the increasingly sectarian conflict in neighbouring Syria threatens to upset its own Sunni-Shi'ite balance.

Police said two car bombs exploded in the Alawi District, one of them near the Justice Ministry building, before a suicide car bomber blew himself up near an Interior Ministry office.

A suicide bomber then walked into the Justice Ministry and militants attacked the building, clashing with

Iraqi security forces, who eventually regained control.

"I went to the second floor to do something when I heard a big explosion, then a second one," said Ammar Ghanim, a policeman who was inside the ministry at the time of the attack.

"We heard shooting and a few minutes later three attackers wearing

civilians, police and medics said. Three militants were also killed. At least 50 people were wounded.

Iraq's power-sharing government has been all but paralysed since US troops left more than a year ago and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, a Shi'ite, is facing protests in the country's Sunni heartland, which



Members of the Iraqi Army gather near the site of a bomb attack at Alawi District in Baghdad on 14 March, 2013.—REUTERS

military uniform came up to the second floor and randomly started shooting," he said. "I got shot in the leg and I am very proud to have killed one of them (the attackers)."

Among the dead were at least 7 policemen and 15

shares a porous border with Syria.

Violence has intensified as Sunni opposition has swelled, and Iraq's al Qaeda affiliate has urged the protesters to take up arms against the government.

Reuters

## Libya detains suspect in attacks on US outposts in Benghazi

TRIPOLI/WASHINGTON, 15 March—Libyan authorities have detained a man investigators believe could be an important witness or suspect in the attacks on US outposts in Benghazi, Libya last September, according to people familiar with the matter.

The man, a Libyan national identified as Faraj al-Chalabi, fled to Pakistan after the attacks and only recently returned to Libya, said the sources, who include people in the United States and Libya close to the ongoing investigations. One Libyan security source said he was from Eastern Libya.

The US government is aware of al-Chalabi's detention and there are signs

American investigators may have been able to pose questions to him, according to the sources. It is not clear whether those questions were posed in person or through Libyan authorities.

Precisely what role the detained man played in the 11 September, 2012 attacks is unclear.

US sources in Washington said they did not believe he was a principal instigator or a front-line leader of the attacks on a poorly guarded temporary US diplomatic mission compound and a more fortified CIA compound nearby.

US Ambassador Christopher Stevens, two CIA security officers and another US diplomat were killed in the attacks.—Reuters

The US Consulate in Benghazi is seen in flames during a protest by an armed group said to have been protesting a film being produced in the United States on 11 Sept, 2012.

REUTERS



## Pentagon says Iran jet tried to intercept US drone

WASHINGTON, 15 March—An Iranian warplane tried earlier this week to intercept a US drone but failed, the US Defence Department said on Thursday.

In a written statement, Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said that the Iranian jet tried to intercept an unarmed MQ-1 Preda-

tor remotely-piloted aircraft over "international waters" on 12 March, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

Little said that the unmanned aircraft was conducting a "routine classified surveillance flight" over international waters in the Gulf, when Iran sent an F-4 Phantom 2 jet to inter-



LOCAL NEWS

**Parking lot under construction along Strand Road in Yangon**

YANGON, 15 March—Engineering Department (Road/Bridge) of Yangon City Development Committee reclaims car parks along Strand Road from Botahtaung Township to Lanmadaw Township for declining traffic congestions in Yangon City.

On 7 March, sessions of car parks from 15 feet to 19 feet in length, totalling 1700 feet in length were

constructed along Phoneygi Road in Lanmadaw Township.

In-charge of the construction U Soe Win said that the construction tasks of car parks would be completed in the first week of April.

At present, drains are being constructed along newly-built Strand Road in Yangon City.

Myanma Alinn



**Free health care services provided to patients by Shwe Parami Health Foundation**

YANGON, 15 March—Under the arrangement of the Ministry of Health, Shwe Parami Health Foundation opened the ceremony to provide health care services to local people in Homalin of Hkamti District in Sagaing Region on 9 March, with an address by Patron of Shwe Parami Foundation Shwe Parami Tawya Sayadaw Ashin Chandadhika.

Deputy Minister for Health Dr Win Myint explained eye care services

for the people.

Chairman of the foundation U Shein Win briefed on free care for eye patients. Townselder U Tun Shwe spoke words of thanks.

The Sayadaw, the deputy minister, Deputy Director-General (Treatment) Dr Than Win of Health Department, the head of Sagaing Region Health Department and party went to Homalin Hospital (100-bed) and put glasses on the patients and

explained dos and don'ts for eye patients. They viewed treatments for general, ear, nose, throat and dental patients.

Under the close supervision of Head of Sagaing Region Health Department Dr Tin Maung Aye, Assistant Director Dr NilarThein and eye specialists from Mawlamyine, Sittway, Bago and Maubin People's Hospital and Yangon Eye Specialist Hospital performed surgical operation

at eye patients free of charge together with specialists from various fields from 8 to 12 March.

Up to 9 March noon, the specialists provided health care services to 2722 patients in various diseases from Leshi, Hkamti, Mawlaik and Phaungpyin townships nearby Homalin Township and put glasses on 297 eye patients.

MNA

**Objectives of the 68<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Armed Forces Day 2013**

1. To uphold the national policy namely non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity, and perpetuation of sovereignty
2. To play the leading role in the national politics by the Tatmadaw joining hands with all national races with Union Spirit and the true patriotism in line with the Constitution
3. To crush all destructive elements at home and abroad through the strength of State, People and Tatmadaw
4. To build up a strong, competent, modern, patriotic Tatmadaw to safeguard the security and sovereignty of the nation

**Experience on Annual general meeting of MAAF recounted**



BAGO, 15 March—A ceremony to recount the experience in the Annual General Meeting 2012 of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation by Bago Region Women's Affairs Organization was held at Seikta Thukha Hall of

Sasana Beikman in Bago on 7 March evening.

Patron Daw Myint Myint Soe made a speech. Chairperson of Bago Region Women's Affairs Organization Daw May Thu explained undertakings of the region organization and

suggestions and reviews at the AGM of the federation.

After that, chairpersons of 28 townships in Bago, Toungoo, Thayawady and Pyay District organizations reported on their respective sectors.

Myanma Alinn

**Stimulant tablets worth K 176 million seized in Shan State**

HSIPAW, 15 March—Members of Lashio Anti-Drug Special Squad of Shan State (North) searched a saloon driven by Phone Maung Maung Oo from Muse to Mandalay at 1 pm on 5 March.

They seized 25 packets of stimulants each containing 2000 tablets each with WY brand in the chest of drawers and 19 packets of stimulant each containing 2000 tablets from passenger Ma Soe Soe Than, totalling 88000 tablets

weighing 7.92 kilos worth K 176 million.

Lashio Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against Ma Soe Soe Than, 42, of Sugyi Htandaw Ward of Kyaukse under the law.

Myanma Alinn

**Nyaunglebin sees better transport thanks to newly-opened Cheinchaung Bridge**

NYAUNGLEBIN, 15 March—A ceremony to inaugurate Cheinchaung Bridge was held in Kaukmethu Village of Gwaygon Village-tract in Nyaunglebin Township of Bago Region on 3 March morning.

Nyaunglebin Township Constituency Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Soe Myint, Amyotha Hluttaw Representative U

Ye Myint, Bago Region Hluttaw representatives U Saw Lin Aung and U Soe Paing and Township Administrator U Thihan Soe formally opened the new bridge.

The steel frame and wooden floor facility is 95 feet long and 10 feet wide. Its clearance is 25 feet high.

Bago Region Government built the bridge spending K 17.3

million from the regional development fund for 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Thanks to the bridge, the local people of villages from Nyaunglebin Township and those of eastern bank in Shwegyin Township of Sittoung River will have easy access to other regions, enjoying betterment of social, health, education and economic sectors.—Myanma Alinn

**Illegal commodities, goods without custom duty seized at Sittoung Bridge**

WAW, 15 March—Mobile Team-2 seized vehicles with the loads of illegal commodities and goods without custom duty at the strategic road junction of new and old Sittoung Bridges in Waw Township in Bago Region at 2.20 am on 11 March.

The authorities seized 62 refrigerators worth K 7,440,000 from the vehicle driven by U Hu Sein, 15 boxes of edible oil and 37 packets of soft drinks worth K 566,400 on the vehicle driven by Min Thu and 10 containers of 40-viss edible oil worth K 640,000 from the vehicle driven by Zaw Min Oo.

The authorities opened files of lawsuit against illegal



commodity carriers under the law.

Myanma Alinn

Officials check illegal commodities and goods without custom duty.



# PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 16 March, 2013

## XXVII SEA Games

It is such a long time Myanmar has waited to host the SEA Games, the regional sports gala of South East Asia, for the third time on her soil. 44 years is rather too long for older generations to relive their enjoyable experiences of the SEA Games. And it would also be the first time for younger ones to witness such a big event in their whole life.

The SEA Games, held every two years since 1959, is the largest sports event in South East Asia. Myanmar first hosted SEA Games in 1961 and for the second time in 1969. Myanmar won 104 medals in the 1961 SEA Games and 149 medals in 1969.

The XXVII SEA Games are to be held in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay and Ngwesaung Beach from December 11 to 22, 2013. All the sports federations have been undergoing intensive training with their eyes firmly fixed on collecting gold medals.

Clinching victories in sports events is no doubt crucial for Myanmar after decades of disappointing results and performance in almost all regional sports events. But at the same time, it would present us a rare chance to rebuild and restore and give us greater exposure to other cultures, finally after 44 years of waiting.

The games are seen as an opportunity to demonstrate the common characteristics of Myanmar people such as hospitality, friendliness and kindness. As the theme of the games is "Clean, Green and Friendship", we are to make the host cities cleaner and greener but it seems that the games gain less attention from citizens at the moment. Perhaps more stimulation efforts would be needed to arouse their interests in SEA Games as a means of reintegrating with the outside world.

It would be a brand new start for Myanmar sports to wake up and battle back, ushering us into a new diplomatic era with Myanmar taking the ASEAN Chair in 2014. The onus is on all of us to convince that we deserve.

## Government ditches tax clearance certificates

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Thanks to the development of political, economic and social conditions of the State, there has been an increase in arrivals and departures of inbound and outbound visitors.

Myanmar citizens need to take tax clearance certificates (Gha) (Patakha (OC)-12) from Internal Revenue Department if they so abroad.

However, the procedures are found to cost much for

them while being lengthy.

Now, the line ministries are striving for implementation of public services which are people-centered and focused on people's wishes.

So, as a task for easing the troubles of people, all people who will leave home (except those who have yet to pay the tax) are not needed to take the tax clearance certificates as of 15 March, announced the Ministry of Finance and Revenue.

MNA

## NATIONAL

### Vice-President U Nyan Tun attends dress rehearsal of equestrian event



Vice-President U Nyan Tun greets participants at the opening ceremony of equestrian event as a dress rehearsal for the XXVII SEA Games.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Parton of the Vice-President U Nyan Tun attended the opening

ceremony of equestrian event as a dress rehearsal for the XXVII SEA Games,

MNA

### Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives US, British, Belgian guests

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann received US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar Mr. Patrick Murphy and party at Zabuthiri Hall of the Hluttaw Complex, here, at 1 pm today.

Also present at the call together with the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker were Pyithu Hluttaw Committee Chairmen U Hla Myint Oo and U T Khun Myat, Secretaries U Maung Toe and U Ko Ko Tun, and officials concerned of the Hluttaw Office. The US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator was accompanied by US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Derek Mitchell and officials.

The meeting focused on further cementing bilateral

relations and cooperation between Myanmar and US.

The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker also received a delegation led by former British Prime Minister Mr. Tony Blair at the same venue.

They cordially discussed amity and cooperation between the two countries and parliamentary affairs.

The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker also held talks with a delegation led by Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs Mr. Didier Reynders at the same venue at 2:30 pm today. At the talks, they discussed the parliamentary functions and political and economic reforms, further promoting of cooperation between Myanmar and Belgian through amity.

MNA

### ASEAN countries, US to promote cooperation

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin, together with the deputy ministers, received US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Derek Mitchell, Special Representative and Policy Coordinator Mr. Patrick Murphy and Foreign Affairs Officer Ms. Cecily Brewer

at Maykhala Hall of the ministry, here, this morning.

The meeting focused on natural disaster preparedness management, opportunity for availability of technology and assistance for social welfare tasks, promoting cooperation between ASEAN member countries and the US, and further cooperation between Myanmar and the US.

MNA



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann shakes hands with US Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Myanmar Mr. Patrick Murphy.—MNA

### Union Defence Minister receives Former British Prime Minister

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Wai Lwin received Mr Tony Blair, Former Prime Minister of Britain at the Ministry, here,

at Wunnatheikdhi horse race course, here, this morning.

Among the spectators were Chairman of the Leading Committee Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan, Union ministers, deputy ministers, the President of Myanmar Equestrian Federation (MEF) and members.

Union Minister U Tint Hsan, MEF President U Pyone Maung Maung, Technical Director of Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) Maj Yap Mou Soon extended greetings and opened the ceremony. Contestants from Myanmar, Cambodia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia will compete in two-day event in Wunnatheikdhi horse race course as of tomorrow.

MNA

this afternoon.

They had a cordial discussion on present democracy reform process in Myanmar and issues on Kachin State.—MNA



NATIONAL

## 2013 Union Budget allows pay increase for civil servants

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Union Minister for Finance and Revenue U Win Shein put forward 2013 Union Budget Bill on behalf of the Union government at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session today.

The budget allows pay rise of K 20,000 for civil servants both in service and retirees in 2013-2014 FY with extra allowances remain

unchanged. The budget includes K 385.682 billion for 1,200,000 permanent civil servants, 740,000 daily wage earners at government departments and 760,000 pensioners. The budget also comprises special expenditure—K 156008.256 million for XXVII SEA Games, K 7522.316 million for taking ASEAN Chair in 2014 and K 13850.846

million for taking nationwide census in 2014.

According to findings of the joint bill committee, the amount of tax collected has increased significantly while K 580 billion could be allocated to region/state governments, K 134 billion more in comparison with 2012-2013 FY.

The session continues on 18 March.—MNA



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session in progress.—MNA

## Pyithu Hluttaw approves motion on reviewing 2008 constitution, US\$ 2.6 million injected into saving Inlay Lake



Thura U Aye Myint puts forward urgent proposal.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Pyithu Hluttaw unanimously approved an important motion on formation of committee and commissions to review



U Thein Tun Oo raises question. MNA

the 2008 constitution. Thura U Aye Myint of Wetlet Constituency tabled the motion today, suggesting Pyithu Hluttaw and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw



Dy Minister Dr Daw Thet Thet Zin replies to query.—MNA

to form committee and commission comprising law experts and intellectuals to review the 2008 constitution so that it can be in conformity with the current situation of

the country due to reforming process.

U Ye Tun of Hsipaw Constituency expressed his delight for the motion, saying that the motion reflects the altruistic will of the ruling party.

U Lwin Oo of Thanlyin Constituency seconded the motion, stressing the need for reviewing the constitution whether it is right though it was voted by 92.48 per cent of the people in favour of it and for working for what they found out after reviewing it.

During today session of Pyithu Hluttaw, Deputy Minister for Communications and Information Technology U Win Than answered a question raised by U Thein Tun Oo

of Amarapura constituency affirming that the ministry would appoint current daily waged workers or muster roll workers of the ministry as permanent employments of the ministry depending on their skills and education when the time has come to include them in the organization set-up of the ministry.

Regarding the question of how the fund for conservation of Inlay Lake was being spent on the project raised by U Win Swe of Nyaungshwe Constituency, Deputy Minister Dr Daw Thet Thet Zin of Environmental Conservation and Forestry

Ministry replied that as of 1 January, 2012, measures have been taken for projects such as environmental and forest conservation, protection of water and soil degradation, agriculture, livestock breeding and fishery, development of socio-economy as part of efforts for conservation of Inlay Lake and the project would end on 31 December, 2013.

US\$ 600,000 under the programme of UNDP and US \$2 million by Norwegian government totalling US \$2.6 million have been injected into the projects, she added.

MNA

## MP calls for granting autonomy to region/state governments as to religious affairs



U Paw Lyan Lwin of Chin State Constituency (9) submits proposal. MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—U Paw Lyan Lwin of Chin State Constituency (9) at Amyotha Hluttaw session today urged the Union government to grant autonomy to region/state governments in managing religious affairs in line with the rights vested by

the Constitution.

The Amyotha Hluttaw National Races Affairs Committee member said the national races affairs committees of the two Hluttaws and Internal Peace-making committees made field trips to 14 regions and states from May to June and listened to the voices of local people who spoke of difficulties and undesirable delays as regards religious affairs. The joint committee members from two Hluttaws agreed to put forward the case to the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

What the locals have said are realistic and reflect the objective conditions in the grass-root level of the society, said U Paw Lyan Lwin recommending that the region/state governments' intervention would be the most effective in tackling the problem as the sole means of ensuring

fundamental rights and responsibilities embodied in the Constitution.

The Hluttaw approved to discuss his proposal.

U Kham Sun Meng of Chin State Constituency (5) said: "U Paw Lyan Lwin's proposal focuses on equality and non-discrimination in religious affairs.

The Religious Affairs Ministry allocates funds to respective religions yearly. And the funds usually do well. But, he is asking for grant autonomy to region/state governments in managing religious affairs in accordance with the rights vested by the constitution."—MNA



Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win receives Mr Wang Yingfan, Special Envoy on Asian Affairs of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the People's Republic of China.—MNA

## General Soe Win receives Chinese Special Envoy

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Soe Win met Mr Wang Yingfan, Special Envoy on Asian Affairs of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the People's Republic of China, at Zeyathiri Beikman, here, this afternoon.

They had a cordial discussion on cooperation for comprehensive strategic partnership countries and

amity and cooperation between two Tatmadaws.

It was also attended by Chief of Staff (Navy) Commodore Tin Aung San, Chief of Staff (Air) Brig-Gen Lwin Oo and Maj-Gen Aung Ye Win from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army). The Special Envoy was accompanied by Chinese military attaché to Myanmar Senior Colonel Xiong Shawei and officials.

MNA



## Mexican telecoms reform opens door to all players

MEXICO CITY, 16 March—The Mexican government's planned overhaul of its phone and television markets opens up the field to all players, one of the architects of revamp said on Wednesday, which could offer telecoms tycoon Carlos Slim a way into the local TV business.

The telecoms reform bill, presented by President Enrique Peña Nieto on Monday, could end broadcaster Televisa's rule of the

airwaves and Slim's stranglehold on the phone business.

The government is seeking to boost competition in the closed sector by allowing more foreign ownership of media and phone companies. Regulators would also be given the power to force players commanding more than 50 percent of the market to sell assets.

This could lead Slim, the world's richest man, to

offset pressure on his phone business by pushing into Mexican television, a market that he has been kept out of so far.

In an interview with *Reuters*, deputy communications minister Jose Ignacio Peralta, one of the architects of the bill, said provided regulators did not judge that a player seeking to enter a market would damage competition, it might be allowed in.

*Reuters*



Mexico's President Enrique Peña Nieto speaks during the presentation of a telecommunications reform bill in Mexico City on 11 March, 2013.—REUTERS

## Bomb scare disrupts train traffic between Switzerland and Italy

GENEVA, 15 March—Rail traffic through the Alps between Switzerland and Italy was interrupted on Wednesday due to a bomb threat, Swiss police said.

Valais cantonal police said the editor of a local media received an anonymous phone call at about 11:15 am which claimed there was a bomb on a train being in the Simplon tunnel for maintenance, Swiss news agency ATS reported.

The tunnel was closed from around 11:30 am until 5:00 pm, and police moved the train out of the tunnel late in the afternoon in order to search for explosives.

Swiss rail company SBB said buses have been arranged to take passengers to the Italian border city of Domodossola.—Xinhua



Afghan policemen stand near the weapon cache in Jawzjan Province in northern Afghanistan, on 14 March, 2013. Afghan security forces found a Taliban weapon cache during an operation in Jawzjan on Thursday, police officials said.—XINHUA

## Two killed, one missing in Portugal's Azores landslide

LISBON, 15 March—Two men were killed and at least one other man is missing in the village of Faial da Terra on the island of Sao Miguel, in Portugal's Azores Islands, following a landslide that buried three entire homes on Thursday.

"This morning there was a mud landslide which affected three homes and four families were rescued by firefighters or managed to escape through a window," said the mayor of the

Village Carlos Avila.

In a statement the mayor added, "Firefighters pulled out a family of five people from a bedroom, but the father was already dead. The mother and three daughters aged five, eight and 16 were rescued alive and unhurt." According to the mayor, one home where two young brothers lived was "completely buried" and "a body of one was recovered around 6 am this morning." One of the brothers around 30 years

old is still missing.

"Rescue teams totalling more than 40 men, some using dogs, are currently searching for possible survivors amongst the rubble of three very old buildings over 100 years old at the base of a steep slope," the mayor said.

Avila added that the cause of the landslide was a "huge amount of heavy rain that fell all day Wednesday on the island and became more intense from 5 pm."

*Xinhua*

## Women feel pressed to work more as economy finds footing

WASHINGTON, 15 March—Federal employee Leslie Shah went back to work just after her second child celebrated his first birthday, one of a growing number of American mothers who are choosing full-time work since the economic downturn.

"It really came down to a financial decision," said Shah, 44, who lives in Maryland just outside Washington. "Gas prices are up, my grocery bill is up."

More American women are feeling pressed to work a greater number of hours even as the country

emerges from its economic doldrums. A Pew Research Centre Report released on Thursday found nearly one

in three Americans mothers last year said they would prefer a full-time job, up from one in five in 2007.



A woman opens a glass door with a "Now Hiring" sign on it as she enters a Staples store in New York on 3 March, 2011.—REUTERS

Lead researcher Kim Parker cited the 2007-2009 recession as the likely factor behind the findings, adding that fewer women said they wanted to work full time before the downturn.

"I doubt that that's because that's what they really want, but that's what they really need to provide for their families," Parker said in an interview.

Pew's findings, based in part on its survey of 2,511 adults nationwide in late 2012, came amid renewed public debate about working mothers in the United States.—Reuters



Palestinian children play in the al-Shati refugee camp in Gaza City on 13 March, 2013. About 700,000 Palestinians left their homes and settled in refugee camps in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and neighbouring Arab countries.

XINHUA

## New York to seek power in case nuclear plant closes

New York, 15 March—New York utility regulators on Thursday approved a proposal to seek 1,350 megawatts (MW) of generation or transmission later in March to keep the power grid reliable in case Entergy Corp's Indian Point nuclear power plant is closed.

The New York Public Service Commission (PSC) staff said that if the 2,037-MW plant shuts in 2015 when its last reactor operating license expires, the

additional power would be needed by the summer of 2016.

One megawatt can power about 1,000 homes.

The PSC said it was not taking a position on whether Indian Point, which produces about a quarter of the power used in New York City, should shut down.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo wants the two reactors at Indian Point to shut when their operating licenses expire in 2013

and 2015 in part because the plant is within the heavily populated New York metropolitan area, which is home to about 20 million people.

The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which regulates the country's nuclear power plants, has said Indian Point is safe.

Entergy is seeking new 20-year operating licenses from the NRC for the Indian Point reactors.

*Reuters*

## UN curbs Golan patrols after peacekeepers seized

BEIRUT, 15 March—UN peacekeepers monitoring the ceasefire line between Syria and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights have scaled back patrols after rebels detained 21 observers for three days last week, diplomats said on Thursday.

The seizure of the unarmed observers, all Filipinos, highlighted the vulnerability of the 1,000-member UN Disengagement Observer Force to the growing violence in Syria.

Diplomats in New York expressed concern that the future of UNDOF, whose mission began in 1974, may now be in doubt.

It also heightened concern in Israel that Islamist rebels, separated from Israeli troops only by a toothless UN force, may be emboldened to end years of quiet maintained by President Bashar al-Assad and his father before him on the Golan front.

"They have reduced

their patrols for now, halted patrols in areas like the place where the Filipinos were taken hostage," one diplomat in the region said.

A senior Western diplomat in New York said the UN peacekeeping department "decided to restrict the movement of UNDOF. So they're no longer doing patrols, they've closed down some of the observation posts, and they're retreating a safer part of the area."

*Reuters*



REGIONAL

**Paramilitary recruits watch a demonstration during a regular training session at an army base in Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu Province, on 9 March, 2007.**  
REUTERS



**New Zealand one of world's friendliest nations for tourists**

WELLINGTON, 15 March —New Zealand, along with Iceland, has been judged the world's friendliest nation for tourists, according to a report released by the World Economic Forum.

This year's "Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report" ranked 140 countries based on attractiveness and competitiveness in the tourism and travel industries.

One of the rankings looked at how welcome tourists were in each coun-

try on a scale of one to seven, categorized as "Attitude of population toward foreign visitors."

The analysis showed that New Zealand and Iceland were the friendliest, with a score of 6.8 out of 7 apiece. Morocco was next in line, while Macedonia and Austria ranked at fourth and fifth.

Adversely, Bolivia was found to be the least welcoming to foreigners, followed by Venezuela and then Russia, according to

the report.

In the overall Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index — which is "based on the extent to which they are putting in place the factors and policies to make it attractive to develop the travel and tourism sector" — Europe dominated the top five positions with Switzerland, Germany and Austria in the respective top three. Switzerland has held the top spot since the index began five years ago.—Xinhua

**Asia's defence spending overtakes Europe's**

LONDON, 15 March —Asia's defence spending overtook Europe's for the first time last year, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said on Thursday, reflecting China's military rise and shrinking European economies.

In its annual report on the world's militaries, it said China's defence spending in real terms rose 8.3 percent between 2011 and 2012, while in Asia as a whole, spending rose

4.94 percent last year.

At the same time, nominal defence spending among European NATO members had shrunk to around 2006 levels due to budget cuts, the IISS said in "The Military Balance 2013". "Indeed, the increase in Asian spending has been so rapid, and the defence austerity pursued by European states so severe, that in 2012 nominal Asian spending \$287.4 billion (192.3 billion pounds) exceeded total official de-

fence spending not just in NATO Europe, but across all of Europe, including spending by non-NATO European states," it said.

The IISS, however, played down Washington's planned "pivot" to Asia, saying that it had announced only limited new military deployments there while reducing in its forces in Europe. "But as far as Asia was concerned there was less to this rebalance than first appeared," the report said.—Reuters

**Singapore expected to order F-35 fighter jets soon**

SINGAPORE, 15 March —Singapore is in the "final stages of evaluating" the F-35 to upgrade its air force, a process US sources say should turn quickly into orders for several dozen of the stealthy warplanes that have been beset by cost overruns and delivery delays.

Singapore, a major business and shipping hub with the best-equipped military in Southeast Asia, is expected to submit a "letter of request" soon for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, said two US government officials who were not authorized to speak publicly on the matter.



**F-35 Joint Strike Fighters (rear to front) AF-2, AF-3 and AF-4, can be seen flying over Edwards Air Force Base in this 10 Dec, 2011 handout photo provided by Lockheed Martin.—REUTERS**

The city-state could start the process as soon as this week to buy the planes built by Lockheed Martin Corp, one of the officials said. Pratt & Whitney, a

unit of United Technologies Corp, makes the engine for the F-35.

Singapore's defence minister, Ng Eng Hen, said on Tuesday the air force

"has identified the F-35 as a suitable aircraft to further modernise our fighter fleet".

"Our F-5s are nearing the end of their operational life and our F-16s are at their mid-way mark," he said in parliament. "We are now in the final stages of evaluating the F-35."

Ng gave no timeline but said the defence ministry "will have to be satisfied that this state-of-the-art multi-role fighter meets our long-term needs, is on track to be operationally capable and, most importantly, is a cost-effective platform."

Reuters

**Japan's upper house approves nomination of new BOJ leadership**

TOKYO, 15 March —Japan's upper house on Friday approved the nomination of Haruhiko Kuroda for Bank of Japan governor and that of Kikuo Iwata and Hiroshi Nakaso for deputy chiefs.

The House of Councilors, the upper house, approved the government's selection of Asian Development Bank President Kuroda, Gakushuin University professor Iwata and BOJ Executive Director Nakaso, despite that the ruling coalition lacks a majority in the chamber.

The new leadership will take over next Wednesday after current BOJ Governor Masaaki Shirakawa resigns on Tuesday, when his two deputies' five-year terms end.

The ongoing Diet process will only allow Kuroda to serve the remainder of Shirakawa's term, which goes through 8 April this year.

Kuroda will have to need another Diet confirmation in order to continue for a five-year term.

Xinhua

**Bangladeshi released from captivity of Somali pirates after 12 months**

DHAKA, 15 March —One Bangladeshi, who was a sailor in a Panama registered ship-Royal Grace owned by a Dubai businessman, has been released from captivity of Somali pirates, Bangladesh's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Thursday.

According to a statement of the ministry, "Md Alauddin on Wednesday reached the port-Salalah of the Sultanate of Oman."

Alauddin was received by an official of Bangladesh Embassy in Muscat who went there to extend

all necessary cooperation including food, clothing and emergency medicines to the released Bangladeshi national, it said.

It is learnt that Alauddin is safe and sound. He spoke with his family members in Chittagong, some 242 southeast of capital Dhaka, said the statement.

It said the Royal Grace and its 22 personnel were hijacked by the Somali pirates on 2 March last year. Among them 17 were Indian, three Nigerian, one Pakistani and this Bangladeshi national, it added.—Xinhua



**Vehicles move on a waterlogged street after heavy rain in northwest Pakistan's Peshawar on 14 March, 2013. At least two children were killed and three other injured when the roof of a fragile house collapsed due to continuous heavy rains in Peshawar, local media reported on Thursday.—XINHUA**

**Indonesia hosts int'l meeting to concept joint tsunami alert drill**

JAKARTA, 15 March —A meeting on tsunami alert and efforts to minimize the risk from tsunami began on Thursday in Padang, the capital city of Indonesia's West Sumatra Province. The two-day meeting gathered experts from 12 countries, including Indonesia, Australia, the United States, Brunei Darussalam, China, India, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Vietnam.

Officials from international organizations concerning the tsunami disaster — the International Red Cross (IFRC), the United Nations' office for the Coordination

of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR) also attended the meeting. Secretary of Indonesia's National Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB) Fatchul Hadi said the meeting would concept the simulation of tsunami alert drill called Table Top Exercise (TTX) scheduled to be held in Padang in April this year.

Xinhua



## ADVERTISEMENT &amp; GENERAL

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV FU XIN SHAN VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV FU XIN SHAN VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 17.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S COSCO SHIPPING CO LTD

Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (499)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA TAMPAN VOY NO (499) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-3.2013 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 ADVANCE CONTAINER  
LINES

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV BLPL ECLIPSE VOY NO (1211N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BLPL ECLIPSE VOY NO (1211N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV GSS YANGON VOY NO (1310)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GSS YANGON VOY NO (1310) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.3.2013 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 CHINA SHIPPING (MALAY-  
SIA) AGENCY SDN BHD

Phone No: 256908/378316/376797

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV DELIGHT VOY NO (164)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DELIGHT VOY NO (164) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-1 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 PHULSAWAT SHIPPING  
CO LTD.

Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

## MV BANGKAJA VOY NO (83)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKAJA VOY NO (83) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.3.2013 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-4 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 WONGSAMUT OCEAN  
SHIPPING CO LTD.

Phone No: 256916/256919/256921

## Iran, Russia, Vatican threaten to derail UN women's rights appeal

UNITED NATIONS, 15 March—An “unholy alliance” of Iran, Russia, the Vatican and others is threatening to derail a UN declaration urging an end to violence against women and girls by objecting to language on sexual, reproductive and gay rights, some UN diplomats said on Wednesday. Delegates to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women are racing to reach a consensus deal on a final document by Friday and some diplomats say the future of the commission—a global policy-making body created in 1946 for the advancement of women—is

at risk if they fail to broker a compromise.

“There's this sort of unholy alliance ... coming together to oppose language on sexual health, reproductive rights and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) rights,” one senior UN diplomat said. “It's tough going, but progress is being made.” “People recognize that if there's a failure again this year to get an outcome document, then the whole future of the status of women commission is at risk,” he said on condition of anonymity because negotiations are still underway.

Reuters



Flags fly in front of the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 31 July, 2008. REUTERS

## Colorado lawmakers approve sweeping gun-control measures

DENVER, 15 March—Both chambers of the majority Democratic Colorado legislature approved a package of four gun-control measures on Wednesday, capping months of debate in a state that has experienced two of the deadliest mass shootings in US history. The most controversial of the bills that are now headed to the desk of Democratic Governor John Hickenlooper is a ban on ammunition magazines with more than 15 rounds, which the governor said he will sign into law.

The passage of the bills could push Colorado to the forefront of a national gun control debate reignited by several mass shootings last year, including the December massacre of 20 children



A handgun, very similar to the gun used by alleged gunman Wade Michael Page, is seen at The Shooter Shop, where Page purchased the weapon, in West Allis, Wisconsin, on 7 Aug, 2012.—REUTERS

and six adults at a school in Newtown, Connecticut. The sponsor of the Colorado magazine-limit bills, state House Representative Rhonda Fields, told fellow lawmakers in a floor debate on Wednesday the proposal was about “saving lives.” “These

are weapons that should be used in a theater of war and not in our local theatres,” said Fields, a Democrat whose district includes the suburban Denver movie theatre where a gunman killed 12 people in a shooting rampage last July. Colorado was also the

site of the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School, where two teenagers shot dead a teacher and 12 other students before committing suicide.

Other bills included in the package of gun-control laws approved by Colorado lawmakers included a measure to make firearm buyers pay for their own background checks and a ban on online certification for concealed-carry permits, both of which Hickenlooper has said he supports. Another measure would bar gun purchases by people convicted of domestic violence crimes. Hickenlooper had previously said he was undecided about that until he could see the final version.

Reuters

## Three pro-secession activists killed in fresh clashes with Yemeni police

ADEN, (Yemen), 15 March—At least three activists of a secessionist movement were killed and 10 others injured in fresh clashes with police troops in Yemen's southern port city of Aden on Wednesday, a security official told Xinhua.

The police troops opened fire and attempted to disperse hundreds of se-

cessionist demonstrators in Aden's neighbourhood of Mansoura, leaving at least three people killed and 10 others injured, the local security official said on condition of anonymity.

“The pro-secession activists blocked main roads with rocks and burned tires cross the Mansoura District after a protest rally,” the

security source said. Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi has called for separatist groups in the country's southern regions to take part in a planned reconciliation national dialogue to settle disputes and promised to compensate them.

Separatist sentiment escalated after a four-month civil war in 1994. Southern-

ers complain of being economically and politically marginalized and discriminated. Hadi announced that the government will hold the national dialogue on 18 March to solve disputes among political factions and pave the way for amending the constitution and preparing for presidential elections in 2014.—Xinhua



ENTERTAINMENT

## Miley Cyrus, Liam Hemsworth break up, reportedly over her love of partying

NEW DELHI, 15 March—Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth—who have been dating since 2009 but separated twice in 2010—have reportedly gone their separate ways after the former Hannah Montana star's partying ways became a "problem" for the Hunger Games actor.

One source said: "Miley and Liam are done; it's over. She likes to party really hard and can be pretty wild. It became a problem for him."

Another source added to the New York Post newspaper: "They



"While Miley has insisted they are still together, right now they are very, very much apart."

Liam—who proposed to the 20-year-old singer-and-actress last March—recently flew back to his native Australia to escape his problems and spend time with his brother Chris Hemsworth and the actor's family, wife Elsa Pataky and nine-month-old daughter India Rose.

A source said: "He needed to get away from Los Angeles and spend some time with

Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth dated for over three years.

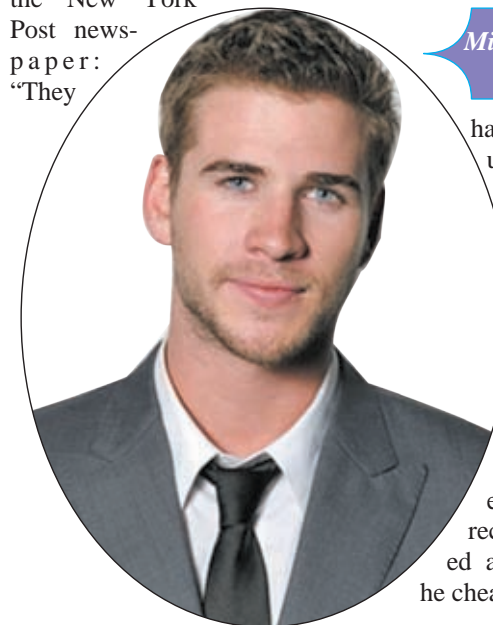
have broken up before, and are broken up again now. There was drama because she suspected he had a wandering eye. And she recently tweeted a denial that he cheated.

his brother and friends."

However, despite the split friends close to Miley—who was recently photographed without her engagement ring—are hopeful they will reconcile their differences and reunite once again.

One pal said: "Miley is a fiery character, and they do fight, but she is crazy about Liam. She isn't ready to accept it might be over for good."

PTI



## Steven Spielberg's special gift for Amitabh Bachchan

MUMBAI, 15 March—Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan has received a special gift from Hollywood filmmaker Steven Spielberg, who has been mingling with the Hindi film fraternity. Steven Spielberg gifted his coffee table book to Amitabh Bachchan.

"Another evening with Steven Spielberg at dinner... a gift for me from him... his coffee table book. What he wrote inside CBD. CBD: Cannot be disclosed," tweeted Amitabh.

The 70-year-old veteran not just anchored Spielberg's masterclass with as many as 61 Indian filmmakers, but he was also the first guest to arrive at a party organised by Indian business tycoon Anil Ambani and his wife Tina in Spielberg's honour.

PTI



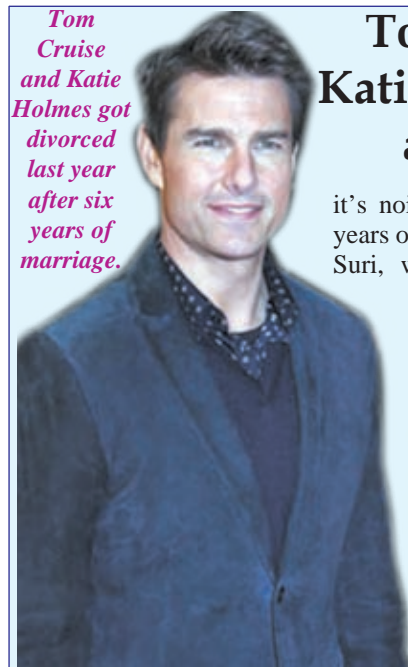
Ranbir Kapoor

## Ranbir Kapoor comes to the rescue of injured make-up man on set

MUMBAI, 15 March—Ranbir Kapoor may be in the news for his films and his romantic dalliances but the actor flaunted his kind side when he stalled a shoot to come to the aid of his make-up man Hemant Naik. Hemant had sustained injuries on the sets of his film.

A source says, "Ranbir was shooting for Karan Jo-

har's Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani in Manali when a huge reflector fell on his make-up man. It was a windy day and the reflector fell on Hemant's head. Within no time he was bleeding and Ranbir rushed to him along with other crewmembers. While he was being taken to the local hospital, Ranbir insisted on going as well." The ac-



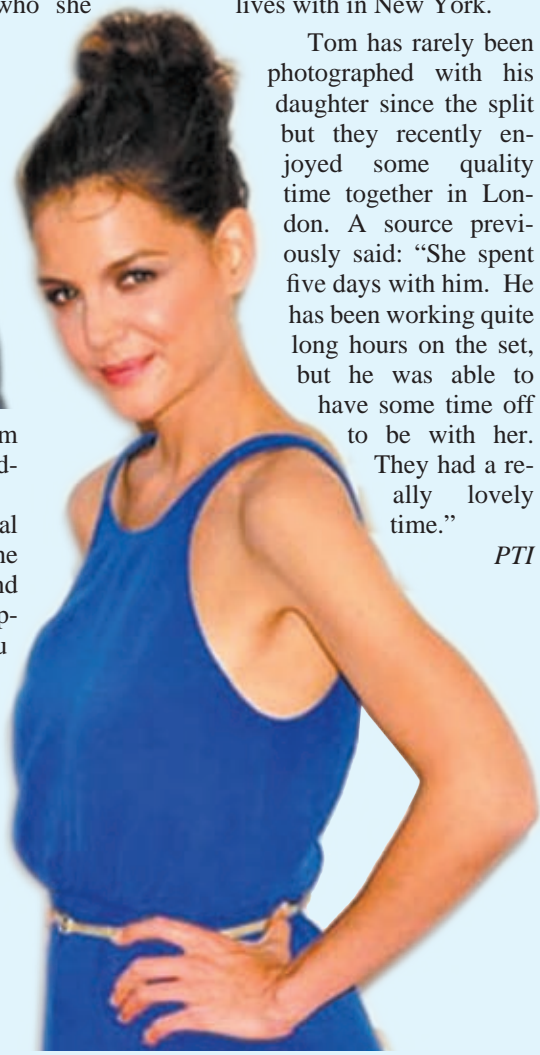
Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes got divorced last year after six years of marriage.

## Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes happy after divorce

it's noisy!" The ex-couple divorced last July after six years of marriage and Katie was awarded sole custody of Suri, who she lives with in New York.

Tom has rarely been photographed with his daughter since the split but they recently enjoyed some quality time together in London. A source previously said: "She spent five days with him. He has been working quite long hours on the set, but he was able to have some time off to be with her. They had a really lovely time."

PTI



NEW DELHI, 15 March—Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes are "incredibly happy" since they got divorced.

The former couple's good pal Adam Shankman, who directed the 50-year-old actor in Rock of Ages and worked with Katie, 34, when she appeared as a guest judge on So You Think You Can Dance, claims Tom is "happy as a clam" after spending time with their daughter Suri, six, recently.

He told UsMagazine.com: "They are incredibly happy. I've just been emailing with him. He's coming back. He's shooting ['All You Need Is Kill'] in London and seems as happy as a clam. I know he sees his daughter.

"Katie seems really happy. You just fight through all the noise. And

## Jennifer Aniston's wedding guests are on standby for her big day

NEW DELHI, 15 March—44-year-old actress Jennifer Aniston, who is reportedly set to marry Justin Theroux, hasn't told anyone about where the wedding will be held till now for privacy reasons.

Jennifer has told guests, including her mother Nancy Dow, who she was previously estranged from, to be prepared to move quickly once they receive information about the whereabouts of the extremely private celebration because they will only be given short notice.

A source told gossip website RadarOnline.com: "Indications are it's going to be a small, private affair with just a select few invited. Those that are going have been told to expect a call at short notice, drop everything they are doing and head to the location when revealed."

Guests have heard rumours about the wedding being held in Hawaii or even Greece—but most expect it to be staged in California.

"One person who has

been told to expect a call is Jen's mom Nancy. She has been told to hang by the phone for a call any day now with all the arrangements."

After being encouraged by Justin, Jennifer, who was previously married to Brad Pitt, has been steadily rebuilding her relationship with Nancy in recent years, who was hospitalised in November after falling and breaking her elbow and is still suffering from the effects of a stroke in 2011.—PTI



Jennifer Aniston is leaving no stone unturned to keep her wedding a private affair.—PTI



## SPORTS

## Thai Chinnarat leads in Delhi after birdie blitz



Thailand's Chinnarat Phadungsil.

NEW DELHI, 15 March—Eight birdies in nine holes on the back nine gave Thailand's Chinnarat Phadungsil a five-shot lead after the first round of the Avantha Masters golf on Thursday.

The 24-year-old hit a blemish-free round of 11-under-par 61 in the event, co-sanctioned by the European Tour and the Asian Tour, at the Jaypee Greens Golf & Spa Resort near the Indian capital.

Chinnarat's compatri-

ots Chawalit Plaphol and Chapchai Nirat were among the five who were tied for second place, five shots back on six-under 66. After making the turn on 33, Chinnarat holed seven straight birdies before paring the 17th hole and finished his round after gaining another shot on the last.

"That's my best-ever round," he said later. "Today I had a lot of great putts. Back nine I hit the driver better than the front nine. But I holed my putts, that's

why I made my score."

Home favourite Abhijit Singh Chadha, who turned professional last year, was equally impressive in the morning when he overcame strong winds for a bogey-free round of 66 in the 1.8-million-pound (\$2.69-million) event.

"It's a good field and it's the first time I'm playing in an event sanctioned with the European Tour," the 21-year-old said. "I've got no experience at all.

"I've played a couple of events on the Asian Tour, and playing with the big boys really gives you lots of confidence and it's a really good feeling for me."

Eight players, including Finns Joonas Granberg and Jaakko Maekitalo and the Australian duo of Scott Hend and Scott Barr, were six shots off the pace at five-under 67. (\$1 = 0.6700 British pounds)—Reuters

## Nadal crushes Federer, plays Berdych next

INDIAN WELLS, (California) 15 March—Rafa Nadal produced vintage form against an out-of-sorts Roger Federer, crushing the Swiss 6-4, 6-2 in their heavily anticipated quarter-final at the BNP Paribas on Thursday.

The Spanish left-hander, competing in his first hardcourt event since his return from seven months on the sidelines with an ankle injury, outplayed his long-time rival with a sharp display at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden.

Nadal broke the defending champion once in the first set and three times in the second to wrap up victory in one hour 24 minutes in front of a packed house on the Stadium Court.

The Spanish world number five improved his record against Federer to 19-10 and will next face sixth-seeded Czech Tomas Berdych, who swept past



Rafael Nadal of Spain returns a shot against Roger Federer of Switzerland during their men's singles quarterfinal match at the BNP Paribas Open ATP tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California, on 14 March, 2013.—REUTERS

big-serving South African Kevin Anderson 6-4, 6-4 earlier in the day.

"After seven months away, I am very happy to be in the semi-finals here," a beaming Nadal said court-side after taking advantage of a slew of backhand errors by his opponent, who has been struggling with a

back niggle throughout the tournament.

"I don't think Roger felt 100 percent tonight. Always it is a very, very special match against Roger, the best player in history. I feel like it is a classic match whenever we play."

With a near-capacity crowd eagerly watching,

## Paraguay drop 2010 World Cup captain Villar

ASUNCION, 15 March—Former captain and goalkeeper Justo Villar was dropped from Paraguay's squad on Thursday for this month's World Cup qualifiers in Uruguay and Ecuador.

Gerardo Pelusso also opted against recalling striker Roque Santa Cruz, in good form for Champions League quarter-finalists Malaga, to face the coach's home country Uruguay in Montevideo on 22 March and Ecuador in Quito six days later.

Santa Cruz and Villar were a key part of the Paraguay side that reached

the quarter-finals for the first time in South Africa in 2010.

Villar was an unused

for two qualifiers in October.

Paraguay, who hired Pelusso last year after sack-

Paraguay's national team goalkeepers

Justo Villar (L) and Diego Barreto attend a training session in Ypane, some 30 km (19 miles) from Asuncion on 8 Oct, 2012.

REUTERS



substitute in October when Paraguay, bottom of the South American group, ended a run of four defeats with a 1-0 home win over Peru, his place having been taken by Diego Barreto.

Santa Cruz, who last played for his country in the 3-1 defeat in Argentina in September, was dropped

ing Francisco Arce, are in serious danger of failing to qualify for the finals for the first time since 1994.

The top four teams progress to the 2014 finals in Brazil and the fifth-placed side face Asia's fifth-ranked nation in a two-legged play-off.

Reuters

## Prior and seamers put England in control

WELLINGTON, 15 March—Matt Prior produced an exceptional counter-attacking innings then Stuart Broad captured two wickets in successive balls as England took control of the second test against New Zealand by the close of play of the second day on Friday.

England, bowled out for 465 just minutes before the tea interval, reduced New Zealand to 66 for three at stumps and put themselves firmly in charge of the match with three days still to play.

Kane Williamson was 32 not out, while Dean Brownlie was on eight after Eng-

ceeded in catching an outside edge and the ball flew to Alastair Cook at first slip.

Former New Zealand captain Ross Taylor was then clean bowled with a beautiful delivery that seamed slightly away and clipped the top of Taylor's off stump to leave the hosts in dire straits on 48 for three.

Brownlie survived the hat-trick delivery with a push to midwicket for two runs.

"For Broady to get two balls in the right area back to back was credit to him (and) those couple of wickets at the end certainly turned that last session," said Prior, who launched a blistering counter-attack to score 82 runs from 99 balls



England's Kevin Pietersen acknowledges the crowd after he reached fifty runs during the second day of the second test against New Zealand at the Basin Reserve in Wellington on 15 March, 2013.—REUTERS

land's pace bowlers had given the New Zealand lineup a torrid working over in the final session.

Broad seized on the earlier work by James Anderson and Steven Finn to lure Hamish Rutherford (23) into chasing a full wide delivery that only suc-

and halt any momentum New Zealand had been gathering.

"That was hats off to the bowlers, grabbing the opportunity.

"We've got to make sure that we come in tomorrow and really press this advantage home."—Reuters



Red Bull Formula One driver Sebastian Vettel (L) of Germany smiles with Ferrari Formula One driver Fernando Alonso of Spain during the official news conference at Albert Park circuit in Melbourne on 14 March, 2013, ahead of the Australian F1 Grand Prix.—REUTERS

MELBOURNE, 15 March—Red Bull's Sebastian Vettel began his quest for a fourth successive Formula One world title by setting the quickest time in first free practice for the season-opening Australian Grand Prix on Friday.

The German steered the car he has nicknamed 'Hungry Heidi' around the Melbourne street circuit in one minute 27.211 seconds to finish ahead of the Ferrari

duo of Brazilian Felipe Massa (1.27.289) and Spain's Fernando Alonso (1.27.547).

Briton Lewis Hamilton was fourth quickest in his first outing for new team Mercedes, ahead of Vettel's Australian team mate Mark Webber, still searching for his first win in his home race.

Finn Kimi Raikkonen had set the early pace in his Lotus and ensured four former world champions would finish in the top six, while

Adrian Sutil made an excellent start on his return to Force India after a year out of the sport by setting the eighth quickest time.

McLaren had a disappointing morning with 2009 world champion Jenson Button, who has won three of the last four Australian Grands Prix, only managing the ninth fastest time and his new team mate, Mexican Sergio Perez, lapping 11th quickest.—Reuters



GENERAL

MR provides Best service for foreigners

YANGON, 14 March— For the convenience of traveller, Myanmar Railways placed LED Board showing the departure and arrival time of the trains, at Yangon Railway Station. As there are language barriers between foreigner and local people, such kind of the activity could contribute a lot to tourists and travellers.



Kyemon

Kerber, Wozniacki gifted semi-final spots



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus talks about withdrawing from the tournament due to a right ankle injury before her quarterfinal match against Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark at the BNP Paribas Open WTA tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California, on 14 March, 2013.—REUTERS

INDIAN WELLS, (California) 15 March—In a bizarre coincidence, top seed Victoria Azarenka and seventh-seeded Australian Samantha Stosur withdrew from their quarter-final

matches at the BNP Paribas Open on Thursday due to leg injuries.

Australian Open champion Azarenka of Belarus pulled out with an inflamed right ankle after Stosur had exited earlier in the day with a calf injury, handing walkovers for fourth seed Angelique Kerber and Caroline Wozniacki into the semi-finals.

Azarenka, who demolished Russian Maria Sharapova 6-2, 6-3 in last year's final, had complained about her ankle earlier in the week and she limped as she made her way toward the players' dining area after her warm-up for the match. The Belarusian's premature departure gifted eighth-seeded Dane Wozniacki, the 2011 champion here, a place in the last four for a third time at the Indian

Wells Tennis Garden.

"I tested it out as much as possible," a visibly distressed Azarenka told reporters. "I tried absolutely everything I could to do, but I have been advised by the doctor, by my own team, that it's just a very, very high risk already."

"There is a big inflammation which keeps bothering one part or another," said the Belarusian, who had an MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) on her ankle on Wednesday.

"It cannot get better with me playing on it, especially playing the last three matches on it. I'm still looking forward to next week (the WTA event in Miami) to see if I can recover and take it from there."

Reuters

New cruise debacle for Carnival as ship stuck in port

LONDON, 15 March—A Carnival Cruise Lines ship with 5,600 passengers and crew was stuck at a Caribbean port with equipment trouble on Thursday, a month after another Carnival vessel was disabled by a fire that trapped thousands of passengers at sea for days.

The incident is the latest black eye for an industry battered by problems ranging from norovirus outbreaks to the Costa Concordia accident in Italy in 2012 that killed 32 people.

Carnival Corp said the cruise ship Carnival Dream was stuck in port in St Maarten after its emergency diesel generator malfunctioned during testing on Wednesday.

The liner, among the company's largest, was on a weeklong cruise and had been due back in Port Canaveral, Florida on Saturday.

The problem caused



A view of the Carnival Dream cruise ship moored at the AC Wathey Cruise Facilities after a diesel generator malfunctioned causing temporary disruptions, in Philipsburg, Sint Maarten, on 14 March, 2013.—REUTERS

temporary disruptions to elevator and toilet services but the ship never lost power, the company said, adding that only one public toilet had overflowed.

Carnival Corp said it was arranging to fly the passengers, via charter flights and regularly scheduled flights from the Caribbean island, to Orlando or their final destination. Passengers will get a refund equal to

three days' worth of travel and half off a future cruise.

The Carnival Dream is being held at dock while company engineers work on the problem. The company said passengers were free either to leave the ship and go into port or to remain onboard until their flights.

The cruise industry has proven resilient in the face of a series of disasters. The Cruise Lines International

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(16-3-13 09:30 am ~ 17-3-13 09:30 am) MST

- \* News
- \* Workshop on Electric Power Development and Challenges in Myanmar
- \* Sharing Experiences of the Mekong Region
- \* Myanmar Academy of Arts & Science Education in Germany
- \* Music
- \* News
- \* New Infrastructure and Good Staff at Your Service
- \* Take the Correct Route, Drive Safely
- \* News
- \* "Great Shwedagon" (Episode-5) Nine wonders Around the Platform of Shwedagon Pagoda
- \* Culture Stage
- \* What makes a Man Perfect
- \* News
- \* New Infrastructure and Good Staff at Your Service
- \* Take the Correct route, Drive Safely
- \* "Easily Cooked & Tasty Dishes" Mutton Curry
- \* News
- \* Unique Biodiversity of Indawgyi Lake (Part-I)
- \* Miss Myanmar International 2013
- \* Myanmar Movies "Life is Struggling"

Myanmar TV

(16-3-2013, Saturday)

- |                                               |                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 7:00 am                                       | National Spirit                                    |
| 1. Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw | 4:25 pm                                            |
| 7:25 am                                       | 17. Cultural Dances                                |
| 2. Health Programme                           | 4:50 pm                                            |
| 7:30 am                                       | 18. University Of Distance Education (TV Lectures) |
| 3. Morning News                               | -Second year (Physics)                             |
| 7:40 am                                       | 5:15 pm                                            |
| 4. International News                         | 19. Road to 27th SEA Games (Wushu)                 |
| 8:00 am                                       | 5:25 pm                                            |
| 5. Nice & Sweet Song                          | 20. Beautiful ASEAN                                |
| 8:05 am                                       | 5:50 pm                                            |
| 6. Poem Garden                                | 21. People Talks                                   |
| 8:15 am                                       | 6:00 pm                                            |
| 7. Documentary                                | 22. Evening News                                   |
| 8:30 am                                       | 6:15 pm                                            |
| 8. 27 th SEA Games                            | 23. Weather Report                                 |
| 11:05 am                                      | 6:20 pm                                            |
| 9. Musical Programme                          | 24. Celebrity and Dinner                           |
| 11:10 am                                      | 7:00 pm                                            |
| 10. Game For Children                         | 25. News                                           |
| 11:40 am                                      | 7:10 pm                                            |
| 11. Round Up Of The Week's TV local News      | 26. TV Drama Series                                |
| 1:10 pm                                       | 8:00                                               |
| 12. Teleplay                                  | 27. News                                           |
| 1:40 pm                                       | 28. International News                             |
| 13. Dance of National Races                   | 29. Weather Report                                 |
| 1:50 pm                                       | 30. Myanmar Series                                 |
| 14. SEA Games (Teleplay)                      | 31. TV Drama Series                                |
| 4:00 pm                                       | 10:00 pm                                           |
| 15. Opening Song                              | 32. News                                           |
| 4:05 pm                                       | 33. Gitadagale Phwintbaohn                         |
| 16. Songs For Upholding                       |                                                    |

China exports more mechanical, electrical products in 2012

BEIJING, 15 March— China increased the value of its exports of mechanical and electronic products to 1.18 trillion US dollars in 2012,

taking up a greater share of the global market, according to new data. Vice Commerce Minister Jiang Yaoping said on Thursday that the 8.7-percent year-on-year growth brought the global share achieved by products from China to 16.1 percent in the first 11 months of last year, up 0.9 percentage points from 2011.

The combined import and export volume of the products rose 6.7 percent year on year to 1.96 trillion US dollars, he said.

Exports of mechanical and electronic products, accounting for 57.6 percent

of China's total exports, reached more than 230 countries and regions in the world and grabbed 29.1 percent of market share in emerging economies, Jiang added.

He advised enterprises to strengthen efforts in research and development and improve market diversification to fend off rising protectionism amid a sluggish global economic recovery. 2012 was the 18th consecutive year in which the mechanical and electronic sector has been China's number-one exporter in trade volume.—Xinhua



Giant Panda Tuan Tuan (L) and Yuan Yuan view each other in the Taipei Zoo, southeast China's Taiwan, on 14 March, 2013. The panda pair in the zoo, a gift from Chinese mainland, were being arranged to meet each other as the female Yuan Yuan is in estrus.—XINHUA



## President U Thein Sein visits Auckland University



*President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein observing universal technology services.—MNA*

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—President U Thein Sein and party visited Fonterra Company in Auckland of New Zealand this morning.

There, he held talks with CEO Mr Theo Spierings and Chairman Mr John Wilson on small-scale milch cow breeding

as part of Myanmar's rural development and poverty alleviation tasks, investment opportunities in cow breeding and milk and dairy products in Shan State and higher rate of individual milk drinking in Myanmar and feeding of cow milk to children.

The President and

party visited Auckland University. In meeting with the Professor Stuart McCutcheon and officials there, he said that Myanmar's economic reform called for capital, technology and human resources. It is possible to get capital and technology from foreign investors. Human resources

development comes only from education sector. In a bid to develop human resources, plans are under way to upgrade universities and six other universities as Centers of Excellence. For it, Myanmar is also making cooperation with universities from US, Japan and the ROK. Auckland

University is invited to join Myanmar universities. Some Myanmar students are pursuing education under scholarship programme. He urged them to accept more students from Myanmar.

After that, Union Ministers Dr Mya Aye, Dr Ko Ko Oo and Dr Kan Zaw, Deputy Minister

Dr Win Myint discussed cooperation in English, Marine Science, public health and geosciences subjects with Auckland University.

Afterwards, the President and party visited seismic measurement at Geosciences Department.

MNA

## Vice-President U Nyan Tun receives former British Prime Minister, Belgian Dy PM



*Vice-President U Nyan Tun shaking hands with former Prime Minister of Britain Mr. Tony Blair.—MNA*

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Nyan Tun received a delegation led by former Prime Minister of Britain Mr. Tony Blair at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, this morning.

Also present at the call together with the Vice-President were Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Thant Kyaw and departmental heads. The former Prime Minister of Britain was accompanied by British Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Andrew Richard Heyn.

At the meeting, they discussed cooperation in implementation of a long-term plan for economic development that is crucial for

frameworks of economic and social reforms of Myanmar in 2012-2015 and further strengthening governance and public administration.

The Vice-President also received Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs Mr Didier Reynders and party at the same venue in the afternoon.

They focused on environmental conservation, maintenance of water course in major rivers, cooperation in education and health sectors, investment in port construction at economic zones, relationship between EU and Myanmar, assistance for XXVII SEA Games and chairmanship in ASEAN in 2014.

It was also attended by Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Thant Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Transport U Han Sein and departmental heads. The Belgian delegation was accompanied by Belgian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Marc Michielsens.

## Vice-President U Nyan Tun to pay goodwill visit to Viet Nam

NAY PYI TAW, 16 March—At the invitation of Her Excellency Madam Nguyen Thi Doan, Vice President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, U Nyan Tun, Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, will pay a goodwill visit to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in the near future.—MNA



*Vice-President U Nyan Tun cordially greets Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs Mr Didier Reynders.—MNA*

## Kachin State chief minister meets EU ambassadors

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March—Kachin State Chief Minister U La John Ngan Hsai held talks with ambassadors from EU member countries led by French ambassador to Myanmar at the meeting hall of the state government office on 13 March.

The chief minister also attended a ceremony to open a new school building at Myitkyina University yesterday. During the ceremony, Deputy Education Minister Dr Ba Shwe, State Social Affairs Minister Daw Bauk Ja, the director-

general of the Department of Higher Education (Upper Myanmar) and the rector of the university formally opened the new school building. The chief minister looked round the new school building.

MNA

MNA