

# The New Light of Myanmar

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Volume XX, Number 338

13<sup>th</sup> Waxing of Tabaung 1374 ME

Sunday, 24 March, 2013

## Vice-President U Nyan Tun visits Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March—Vice-President U Nyan Tun visited Ho Chi Minh Museum in Hanoi on 21 March.

The Vice-President then went to Thang Long Industrial Park, a joint venture between Vietnam and Japan in Dong Anh District, to observe industries, environmental conservation measures and apartment factories there.

Thang Long Industrial park project covering an area of 274 hectares was launched near Hanoi

in 1998 and came into operation in 2008 with local and foreign small and medium-scale industries making investments in it.

The Vice-President met President of ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASEAN CCI) and Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) Dr Vu Tien Loc and the chairman of Daewoo International Corp at Melia Hanoi Hotel.

The Vice-President then went to An Khanh (Splendora) new town project

being implemented by VINACONEX in the west of Hanoi.

VINACONEX is reported to have invested 3.8 billion USD in the new town project covering an area of 264 hectares.

The Vice-President visited Myanmar Embassy in the evening and then left there for Ho Chi Minh City.

Vice-President U Nyan Tun visited

**Vice-President U Nyan Tun at Cu Chi Tunnel.**

MNA



**Vice-President U Nyan Tun meets Chairman of Vietnamese Public Affairs Committee Mr Le Huan Kuam.—MNA**



Cu Chi Tunnel, Saigon Province and Chang Sin Hi-Tech Park and Fpt Vietnam yesterday. He paid a call on Chairman of Vietnamese Public Affairs Amata Industrial Park and Nestle Factory in Bein Hoa of Dong Nai (See page 8)

### Noteworthy amounts of rainfall recorded (23-3-2013)

Machanbaw	0.47 inch
Putao	0.31 inch
Myitkyina	0.19 inch
Katha	0.19 inch

## French hotel group sets to invest in Myanmar hotel industry

By: Maung Thitsa

Myanmar has basic infrastructures and potentials for development of tourism industry. As the best time for Myanmar to attract tourists has come now, hoteliers from foreign countries are eyeing a slice of Myanmar hotel industry.

Accor Group, a French hotel group, is planning to invest in hotel industry in the country, said an official from the Ministry of

Hotels and Tourism.

“The tourism industry would be booming. International tourism agencies are set to include Myanmar in their tourism destinations and international travelers are also interested in visiting Myanmar. So, hoteliers from France are planning to make investment in hotel industry in Myanmar,” he said.

Accor group from France has planned to build three hotels in Yangon, Nay

Pyi Taw and Mandalay respectively.

At present, Myanmar has over 36 foreign-invested hotels and business buildings across the country.

Myanma Alinn: 16-3-2013

Trs: AMS

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**A high-rise hotel in Yangon attracting globetrotters by offering better accommodation.**



## Gas generators for Ywama power plant arrive in Yangon



NAY PYI TAW, 23 March — As a short-term plan to generate more electricity, the Ministry of Electric Power is implementing the task of building more gas-fire power plants in Ywama, Ahlon, Hlawga and Thakayta.

Thirteen gas generators transported from Germany for a 50 MW Power Plant which is under construction in the compound of Ywama Power Station arrived at Asia World jetty on 17 March. Arrangements are being

made to install the generators at the power plant. Upon completion, 50 MW of electricity will be sent to the national power grid, thereby supplying more electricity to the public.

MNA

## High-voltage fault sparks house fire in NyaungU

NYAUNGU, 23 March — A high-voltage fault sparked

a fire at a house in Aung Myaytha ward in NyaungU

at about 10 am on 21 March.

The fire broke out due to an electrical overload of an air-conditioner at the house of Daw Than Hla, 45. A saloon worth K 21.5 million, a bus worth K 25 million, a house with a built-in garage and a warehouse were completely gutted by fire, but no causality was reported. NyaungU police station filed a lawsuit against the house owner. — *Kyemon*



## SEABA's CEC meeting in Nay Pyi Taw

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March — A meeting of CEC members of Southeast Asian Basketball Federation took

place at Golden Guest Hotel, here, on 19 March.

Submission of annual report, clarification of expenditures and discussion on follow-up tasks of the association were made at the

meeting. The SEABA is an organization formed with 10 ASEAN member countries. Its CEC meeting is held every two years. Myanmar hosted the 2013 meeting for the first time. — *MNA*

## Shan State Chief Minister meets local people

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March — Shan State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat met with local people of Nyaungshwe Township at the meeting hall of Nyaungshwe Township General Administration Department on 16 March.

Next, the chief minister looked into Town Hall, Buddhist Culture Museum and preparations being made at Basic Education High School No (1) where outstanding students will be staying.

MNA

## Sittoung riverbank erosion forces houses to move to safer places



TOUNGGOO, 23 March — Within two years, bank erosion of Sittoung river disrupted local households and forced 28 houses in Ywadanshe village in Tounggoo Township of Bago Region to move to safer places. The scale of bank erosion of Sittoung river which is used to be situated 200-foot east of the village has become larger and the water course of the river had been diverted to the middle part of the village during the flooding season in 2011.

Because of the bank erosion, 15 houses were relocated to safer places in 2011 and 13 in 2012.

As the bank erosion has now reached 30 yards from the embankment, local people in the village and its environs are in fear of bank erosion. Bank erosion along Sittoung river have caused severe damage to farmlands and forced homes to move to other places. Moreover, the shortage of land has made relocation difficult.

*Kyemon*

## Cash donation, publications for village libraries in Inlay region

INLAY, 23 March — Leader of social and cultural Working Group of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation Dr Khin Swe Myint together with WAO members of the Department of Archaeology,

National Museum and Library in Shan State visited libraries in Inlay region on 16 and 17 March.

Dr Khin Swe Myint and members donated 300 books and different kinds

of journals, newspapers and magazines to libraries in Shwe Inn-tein, Heya Ywama, Khaungdine and Mongthauk villages. They also made cash donations for the funds of village libraries. — *Kyemon*

## Reinforced with new diesel generators Thakayta power plant

YANGON, 23 March — Aiming at ensuring adequate electricity supply in summer, arrangements are being made for timely installation of generators at new gas power plants which are under construction in Yangon Region.

On 19 March, nine 1250 KVA diesel-powered

generators shipped from Japan arrived at Asia World jetty in Ahlon Township, here, and they were transported to Thakayta power plant project in Thakayta Township. It was the second arrival of generators. Works are being made for the soonest installation of new generators

at the project.

Upon completion, nine megawatts will be sent to the national power grid. So officials and staff of the Ministry of Electric Power are trying hard day in, day out to be able to supply electricity to the public as quick as possible.

MNA



## Deputy Ministers visit SMEs in Yangon Region

YANGON, 23 March — Deputy Minister for Industry U Thein Aung, Deputy Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr Daw Khin San Yi, Yangon Region Minister for Electricity and Industry U Nyan Tun Oo, Yangon Region Minister

for Planning and Economy U Than Myint and UMFCCI officials visited small-and medium-scale enterprise and value-added processing activities of industries, here, on 16 March.

They made an inspection tour of One Two Two rice mill at Shwelinban industrial zone in Hlinethaya Township and observed value-added processing of

rice there.

Next, they proceeded to bronze smith's workshop of Thiri Myanmar Co., in North Okkalapa Township.

In the afternoon, they viewed production process of rotor blades for motorized boat, axles and rudders used in building ships at Swam Ah Pyae industries in South Dagon industrial zone-2.

MNA

## WORLD

## Chinese leader bolsters Russian ties on first foreign trip

Moscow, 23 March—Chinese leader Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of relations with Russia as a counterweight to US influence by visiting Moscow on his first foreign trip as president, and secured more oil to fuel China's growing economy.

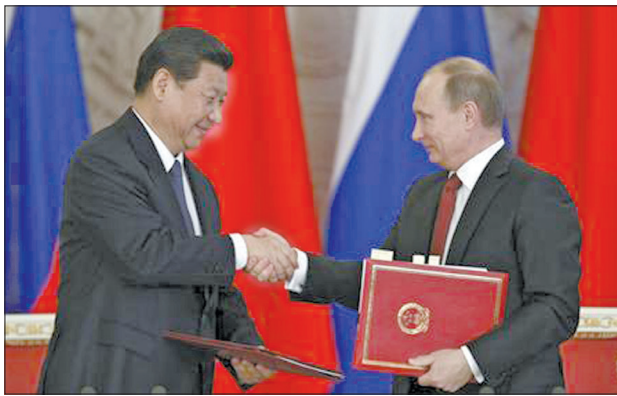
Although relations between Moscow and Beijing have rarely been smooth, they have improved in the past decade and Xi highlighted this by signing energy, trade and political deals on Friday to strengthen ties between them.

Russian President

Vladimir Putin has long sought to blunt US influence overseas, while China is grappling with the expanded military and economic interest the United States has displayed in Asia since 2011.

Xi became the first foreign guest to be met in the Kremlin by an honorary cavalry escort created by Putin in 2002, officials said, and looked at ease with the Russian leader in its glittering halls despite the formality of the occasion.

Putin, 60, greeted Xi with a firm handshake and a grin then ushered him down



Russia's President Vladimir Putin (R) exchanges documents with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping during a signing ceremony at the Kremlin in Moscow on 22 March, 2013.—REUTERS

a red carpet past a long line of officials and into the Kremlin's gilded Green Room. The meeting was carefully scripted and any disharmony was glossed over. But Putin looked

more comfortable with Xi than with the French and German leaders, Francois Hollande and Angela Merkel, who raised human rights concerns during recent visits.—Reuters

## What's at stake in UN arms trade negotiations?

UNITED NATIONS, 23 March—Members of the United Nations have been meeting at the world body's New York City headquarters this week for a final round of negotiations on what could become the first international treaty to regulate the \$70 billion global conventional arms trade.

The treaty drafting conference will continue until 28 March. Following are questions and answers about the draft arms trade

treaty. The point of an arms trade treaty is to set standards for all cross-border transfers of any type of conventional weapon—light and heavy. It would also create binding requirements for nations to review all cross-border arms contracts to ensure the munitions will not be used in human rights abuses, terrorism, violations of humanitarian law, do not breach UN arms embargoes and are not illegally diverted. It would require

governments to refuse to export weapons to countries that would likely use them to violate human rights or commit war crimes. It would also require governments to regulate arms brokering.

The current draft treaty says that the following weapon types will be covered by the pact "at a minimum": battle tanks; armoured combat vehicles; large-caliber artillery systems; combat aircraft; attack helicopters; warships; missiles and missile launchers; small arms and light weapons, ranging from assault rifles to handguns.

It would not cover unconventional weapons like nuclear, chemical and biological arms. Separate treaties cover those. Human rights groups, arms control advocates and a majority of the United Nations' 193 member states want a strong treaty that imposes tough new standards on the largely unregulated arms trade.—Reuters



Firearms seized from a gang of weapon smugglers are displayed at the Federal Police headquarters in Brussels on 12 May, 2011.—REUTERS

## S African union urges energy coordination at BRICS summit

JOHANNESBURG, 23 March—The energy coordination strategy should be on the agenda at the coming 5th BRICS Summit, a leading South African trade union said on Friday.

"The question of energy, its production, supply and consumption will be a litmus test of whether the constellation known as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) is a coherent political entity," said the National Union of Metalworkers of South

Africa (NUMSA) in a statement.

The 5th BRICS Summit is scheduled to be held in the South African port city of Durban on Tuesday. "Between themselves the five BRICS countries have abundant energy sources such as coal, oil, gas, nuclear and other renewable energy sources," said the statement. "There is no doubt that for their continued economic development, the BRICS countries require ongoing supply of energy."

"There can be no

question about the fact that for these economies to grow and develop, they will need to ensure a continually growing supply of energy. As such, one of the agendas of the BRICS summit will have to be the question of energy production, distribution and consumption," the statement added.

The union expressed hope that the BRICS summit could reach an understanding on the energy cooperation, especially in the development of renewable energy.—Xinhua

## Colombian rebels repeat cease-fire call

HAVANA, 23 March—The rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) on Thursday repeated a call for a cease-fire with the government as the two sides were in negotiations for a peace deal to end five decades of fighting. FARC delegate Tanja Nijmeijer, reading from a statement, said the government's refusal to enter into a bilateral cease-fire has led to several violent incidents.

Recurrent clashes were disruptive to the negotiations, said the negotiator on the last day of the sixth round of peace talks in Havana, Cuba.

The FARC statement also contained six proposals in the areas of social and educational reform, including an initiative to establish free and universal elementary and middle-school education to eradicate illiteracy in the countryside. FARC was founded in the early 1960s by peasant farmers demanding the fairer distribution of land and better living conditions. The government estimates the group counts between 8,000 and 9,000 members.

Xinhua

## Brazil's President very likely to get reelected

RIO DE JANEIRO, 23 March—President Dilma Rousseff is the most likely winner of the next general election 18 months away, according to latest survey results.

The Ibope poll released on Friday by the *O Estado de Sao Paulo* daily shows that 52 percent of the voters backed Rousseff if elections were being held now, while another 24 percent said they might vote for her.

Only 20 percent said

## Obama scores unexpected successes on Middle East trip

JERUSALEM, 23 March—US President Barack Obama flew out of Israel in a duststorm on Friday, leaving behind a trail of symbolic gestures and fine oratory that should help preserve the status quo at a time of regional upheaval.

In an unexpected diplomatic flourish, he also facilitated a surprise telephone call between the Prime Ministers of Israel and Turkey, putting two US allies firmly on track to revive a once close relationship that had become badly frayed.

Obama set such low expectations for the three-day trip that he can easily proclaim it is mission accomplished, having wooed skeptical Israelis, eased their fears over Iran

a comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian peace deal is still possible.

"This visit marks a resumption of American attention to the conflict, which is very important after two years of utter absence from the scene," said Ghassan al-Khatib, an academic and a former Palestinian government spokesman.

"It probably won't lead to any new negotiations, which in any case would be meaningless given the huge gulf between the two sides. But it might bring some accountability to the Israelis." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeared highly satisfied by the public show of joviality displayed



US President Barack Obama is greeted by Bedouin Jordanian honour guards upon his arrival at Amman Airport, on 22 March, 2013.—REUTERS

and shown Palestinians that he had not forgotten their aspirations.

True, many Palestinians remained disillusioned, feeling that Obama had buckled to Israeli pressure and backtracked from his previous demands for a halt to Jewish settlement building in the occupied West Bank on land they want for a future state.

But after a bruising first term of failed Middle East diplomacy, Obama's prime concern seems to be that the situation does not get any worse, while keeping alive slender hopes that

by Obama during their meetings, dispelling the frosty scowls and sniping that marked encounters over the previous four years. "The atmosphere was much better than in all their meetings before," said a senior Israeli official. "He gave the impression that he really wanted to start afresh," he said of Obama.

Obama has already spent more time talking to Netanyahu than to any other world leader, according to the White House, and the pair put several more hours on the clock through this week.—Reuters

they would not vote for Rousseff no matter what, according to the poll, which was conducted among 2,002 voters from 142 municipalities nationwide with a 2-percent margin of error. Ten percent said they would certainly vote for former Senator Marina Silva, who finished third in the last election, and 30 percent said they might vote for her.

Half of the respondents said they would not vote

for Jose Serra, the runner-up in the last elections, and 35 percent said they would or might vote for Serra, who comes from the main opposition Social Democratic Party (PSDB).

An earlier Ibope poll found a record-high 63 percent approval rate for the president, compared to 39 percent for her predecessor Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva at the same point of his first term. Lula still got reelected.—Xinhua

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Readcube: An all-in-one tool for reading PDF articles

BEIJING, 23 March—ReadCube, a new programme for digital articles reading and managing, has been praised highly on the Internet.

“I’m a big fan of ReadCube,” a Facebook user wrote in the name of samantics, adding that the software is fast and easy to operate.

As a comprehensive, all-in-one tool, ReadCube offers specific multi-functions, such as clean operation interface, daily recommendation service and a better experience of reading PDFs of scholarly articles. It is a worthy competitor comparing with existing reference management software, US tech blogger Yaara Lancet wrote in an article of PC World.

Launched by the



A file photo of ReadCube

American software company Labtiva in June 2012, ReadCube integrated search on PubMed and Google Scholar, two of the biggest online resources of scientific papers.

Besides, Labtiva has established cooperative relationships with the

University of Utah and Nature Publishing Group, so as to provide authoritative articles for the users. Currently, most researchers worldwide have to purchase articles individually, that may cost them significant research fund. Even the university libraries always want to provide the

need to pay for reading articles in any journal on Nature.com, including more than 50 titles for which the institution does not hold full site licenses, he added. The goal for ReadCube Access is to establish a model mutually beneficial to researchers, libraries, and publishers to expand access to research literature by supplementing existing site licenses, according to Sinisa Hrvatin, the Labtiva co-founder.

“We want to help researchers with immediate access to the resources they need, but no library can afford to subscribe every journal in every discipline. Moreover, the researchers may spend too much time on managing the mass of article files rather than doing their research.

However, ReadCube was seen by many users as a promising programme to solve these problems.

“ReadCube Access programme gives our researchers and students fast and low-cost access to the specialized content they need in order to do their scholarly work,” said Rick Anderson, the Associate Dean for Scholarly Resources and Collections from the University of Utah. Researchers no longer

need to pay for reading articles in any journal on Nature.com, including more than 50 titles for which the institution does not hold full site licenses, he added. The goal for ReadCube Access is to establish a model mutually beneficial to researchers, libraries, and publishers to expand access to research literature by supplementing existing site licenses, according to Sinisa Hrvatin, the Labtiva co-founder.

“We want to help



A file photo of ReadCube

scientists access any journal article they need, without having to pay 30 US dollars per article or jump through other hoops,” he said.

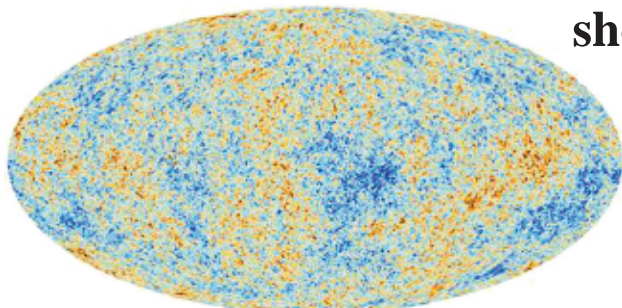
ReadCube was also acclaimed for its compatibility on different format of article files.

“ReadCube Access coexists alongside with our existing HTML full-text, PDF and app access options,” said Steven Inchcombe, Managing Director of Nature Publishing Group. The convenient and time-saving features on article management were also the reason for ReadCube’s popularity among its users.

“ReadCube brings long-needed functionality to the PDF, retaining its benefits of portability, familiarity, and print-like layout while transforming it into an interactive gateway to related articles and cited literature,” said Jay Flynn, an executive from Wiley, a global provider of content and workflow solutions.

Xinhua

Universe is older than previously thought, new study shows



An image of the anisotropies of the Cosmic microwave background (CMB) as observed by Planck is seen in this handout released on 21 March, 2013 by the European Space Agency.—REUTERS

CAPE CANAVERAL, 23 March—Closer scrutiny of radiation left over from the creation of the universe shows the Big Bang took place about 13.8 billion years ago, 100 million years earlier than previous estimates, scientists said on Thursday.

The findings are among

the first results from analysis of data collected by the European Space Agency’s Planck spacecraft, which is providing the most detailed look to date at the remnant microwave radiation that permeates the universe.

This relic radiation was first detected in 1964 and

later mapped by two NASA spacecraft - COBE, launched in 1989, and WMAP, which followed two years later. With even greater sensitivity, Planck has picked out details of tiny temperature variations in the so-called cosmic microwave background.

The fluctuations, which differ by only about 100-millionths of a degree, correspond to slightly more dense regions of space, places that later gave rise to the stars and galaxies that fill the universe.

“It’s as if we’ve gone from a standard television to a high-definition television. New and important details have become crystal clear,” Paul Hertz, NASA’s Director

of astrophysics, told reporters on a conference call.

Overall, the new data fits well with existing models of how the universe evolved, but it presents some new puzzles as well.

“The variations from place to place in the map that Planck has made tell us new things about what happened just 10 nano-nano-nano-nano seconds after the Big Bang when the universe expanded by 100 trillion, trillion times,” said Charles Lawrence, Planck project scientist with NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif.

“We can see the subtle effects of gravitational pulls from literally everything in the universe.”—Reuters



Google’s Eric Schmidt

Google’s Eric Schmidt uses a BlackBerry, says likes its keyboard!

NEW DELHI, 23 March—Google Executive Chairman Eric Schmidt uses a BlackBerry! May be too surprising, but it’s true. “I am a BlackBerry user. I like the keyboard of

BlackBerry,” said Schmidt answering some rapid-fire questions from the Editor of a British daily at Google’s Big Tent—a forum to discuss Internet and its impact on economy, governance etc.

Nokia wins German patent ruling against HTC

FRANKFURT, 23 March—A German court ruled in favour of Finnish mobile phone maker Nokia on Tuesday, saying some devices made by Taipei’s HTC infringed on its power-saving patent.

The case was one of 22 infringement suits Nokia has brought against HTC in Germany, a major battleground in the global patent war between makers of mobile phones, tablet computer devices and their operating software.

“Nokia is pleased with this decision, which confirms the quality of Nokia’s patent portfolio,” Nokia said in an e-mailed statement. The power-saving patent refers to a technology for saving battery power while



A Nokia smartphone is seen in this photo illustration taken in Bucharest on 24 Jan, 2013.

REUTERS

connected to a network.

HTC said its business in Germany would not be affected by the Mannheim regional court’s ruling as it covers only three handsets the company no longer imports into the country.

It said it would appeal the decision while also continuing efforts to have

the patent declared invalid by the German Federal Patents Court and the English Patents Court. Nokia said it has also asserted the power-saving patent against HTC in the UK and at the United States International Trade Commission, with a hearing in the United States to start in two months.—Reuters

Ground system improves satellite navigation precision

WUHAN, 23 March—A ground system aimed at enhancing the navigation precision of China’s homegrown BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) was approved in central China’s Hubei Province on Friday. The BeiDou Ground Base Enhancement System (BGBES), a network consisting of 30 ground base stations, an operating system and a precision positioning system, was approved by the evaluation committee led by Sun Jiadong, an academician with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and chief designer of the BDS. The system is expected to help improve the BDS’ positioning precision to 2 cm horizontally and 5 cm vertically via tri-band real-time precision

positioning technology, and to 1.5 metres with single-frequency differential navigation technology.

The former technology, which is much more precise, will be used in special industries like mapping, land resources, urban construction, planning and water conservation, as well as national construction projects.

The latter will be put into public use, including vehicle positioning services, said Shi Chuang, Director of the global navigation satellite system research centre of Wuhan University. Planned by the central government, the BGBES was built by the centre and the Hubei Provincial Surveying and Mapping Bureau as a national pilot project.—Xinhua

BlackBerry is a technology rival of Google’s operating system Android—an open software—which is used in many makes of smartphones, like Samsung Galaxy. BlackBerry’s operating system is BlackBerry OS. Schmidt also categorically said there isn’t any plan to converge Android and Web browser Chrome and Apps divisions. “No is the answer, we don’t make decisions based on who the leader is, we make decisions based on where the technology takes us,” he said when asked if the three will be merged.

“...there can be more commonality for sure (between Android and Chrome) but they surely be remain separate for a very long time because they are so different products,” Schmidt said.

PTI

## BUSINESS &amp; HEALTH



## Energy drinks may increase blood pressure, disturb heart rhythm

WASHINGTON, 23 March—Energy drinks may increase blood pressure and disturb your heart's natural rhythm, according to a research presented on Thursday at the American Heart Association's 2013 scientific sessions.

Researchers analyzed data from seven previously published observational and interventional studies to determine how consuming energy drinks might impact heart health.

In the first part of the pooled analysis, the researchers examined the QT interval of 93 people who had just consumed one to three cans of energy drinks. They found that the QT interval was 10 milliseconds longer for those who had consumed the energy drinks. The QT interval describes a segment of the heart's rhythm on an electrocardiogram; when prolonged, it can cause

serious irregular heartbeats or sudden cardiac death.

"Doctors are generally concerned if patients experience an additional 30 milliseconds in their QT interval from baseline," said Sachin Shah, lead author and assistant professor at University of the Pacific in California.

Researchers also found that the systolic blood pressure, the top number in a blood pressure reading, increased an average of 3.5 points in a pool of 132 participants. "The correlation between energy drinks and increased systolic blood pressure is convincing and concerning, and more studies are needed to assess the impact on the heart rhythm," Shah said. "Patients with high blood pressures or long QT syndrome should use caution and judgment before consuming an energy drink.—Xinhua

## BP announces 8 bln USD share repurchase

LONDON, 23 March—British oil giant BP said on Friday that it intends to carry out a share repurchase programme with a total value of up to 8 billion US dollars, following the completion of the sale of BP's 50 percent interest in TNK-BP to Rosneft in Russia. The announced repurchase, also called buyback, programme is expected to return to BP shareholders an amount equivalent to the value of the company's original

investment in TNK-BP, the third largest oil producer in Russia, said BP in a statement.

BP invested around 8 billion dollars in cash, shares and assets in the formation of TNK-BP in 2003. Over the following decade BP received a total of 19 billion dollars in dividends from the joint venture.

BP sold its interest in TNK-BP to Rosneft, followed by a reinvestment in Rosneft shares, for an

## Malaysia to host IAS conference on HIV

KUALA LUMPUR, 23 March—The 7th International AIDS Society (IAS) Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention will be held in Kuala Lumpur from 30 June to 3 July this year, a statement issued by IAS said on Friday.

Leading scientists, clinicians, public health experts and community leaders from all over the world will gather at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre to discuss latest developments in HIV-related research.

According to the statement, the conference is aimed at sharing the latest research in biomedical aspects of the virus and effective ways to prevent and treat the epidemic.

It marks the first time that the biennial event, organized by IAS in partnership with the Centre of Excellence for Research in AIDS, University of Malaya and with the support of the Malaysia Convention and Exhibition Bureau, will be held in Asia, the statement said.—Xinhua

BEIJING, 23 March—China's economy should expand by 8.5 percent in 2013 and more in 2014, with inflation and export demand the biggest near term risks to growth that should average 8 percent in this decade at current rates of investment and reform, the OECD said on Friday.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

## S African media says Cypriot financial crisis possible on BRICS summit agenda

JOHANNESBURG, 23 March—The Cypriot financial crisis might be in discussions at the coming 5th BRICS Summit, the South African media reported on Friday.

The lawmakers in the European island country of Cyprus Tuesday rejected the conditional 10-billion euro bailout plan by the European Union (EU), which demanded Cyprus for a levy on bank depositors to raise 5.8 billion euros in dealing with the financial crisis, the South African Broadcasting Company (SABC) said.

The EU planned "hair-cut" has "backfired" all over Europe and

offered one of the most upbeat assessments of China's prospects of any of the major multilateral institutions in its new Economic Survey of China, which was unveiled in Beijing.

The 161-page survey, the first such report from the Paris-based OECD since 2010, was particularly optimistic about the outlook for investment spending in the world's No 2 economy.

other parts of the world, including the BRICS member countries, said the SABC.

BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and the 5th BRICS Summit is scheduled to be held in South African port city of Durban on Tuesday.

"The entire banking system in the country is momentarily closed. When they reopen in a few days, it is expected that a mass rush of depositors will try to withdraw their money," the SABC warned.

Xinhua

## China growing strongly

It pointed to substantial deficits in rail and road capacity relative to other major economies at similar stages of development, as well as to sub-standard housing as offering scope for more profitable spending on infrastructure.

"The level of investment in the private sector is well-founded by the rates of return, and in infrastructure, we still think there are tremendous needs," Richard Herd, the head of the OECD's China desk, told a media conference.

"We're positive on investment in the sense that we see rates of return remaining quite high," he

added.

Many private sector economists believe China's GDP growth by the end of this decade will be nearer 5 percent than the 10 percent average annual rate it has hit for the last 30 years.

China's official growth target for 2013 is 7.5 percent and 7 percent on average in the five-year plan that runs to 2015.

Growth slowed to a 13-year low of 7.8 percent in 2012, with weak demand in the European Union and the United States — the two biggest export customers — the main drag on growth.

Reuters



A woman looks for goods at a supermarket in Beijing on 22 March, 2013. China's economy should expand by 8.5 percent in 2013 and more in 2014, with inflation and export demand the biggest near term risks to growth that should average 8 percent in this decade at current rates of investment and reform, the OECD said on Friday.

REUTERS

## China to stabilize its overseas market: commerce minister

BEIJING, 23 March—Despite mounting challenges, China will work hard to stabilize its overseas markets, Commerce Minister Gao Hucheng said on Thursday.

The country will accelerate foreign trade restructuring to improve trade quality and build technology, brands, quality and service as new trade advantages, the new minister said during an interview with Xinhua.

He vowed to realize the goal of not allowing the growth rate in foreign trade to fall below that of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In the domestic market, the priority is expanding consumption and cutting logistics costs, Gao said.

In regards to regional economic integration, Gao said every economy has the right to choose a suitable economic integration path based on its own situation

and development level, and China holds an open and tolerant attitude toward this.

The international trade rule system represented by the World Trade Organization is the foundation for global free trade, and its role can not be replaced by any regional pacts, Gao said.

"Under the current situation, we should first safeguard existing multilateral trade rules and fight trade protectionism," Gao said.

China eyes an 8-percent increase in foreign trade in 2013. Its foreign trade climbed 6.2 percent year on year to 3.87 trillion US dollars in 2012, considerably lower than the 10-percent growth previously targeted by the government.

Meanwhile, China has targeted 7.5-percent economic growth and 3.5-percent inflation this year.

Xinhua



BP boss Bob Dudley (right) and Rosneft chief Igor Sechin announced the TNK-BP deal on Thursday.

REUTERS

overall consideration of 12.48 billion dollars in cash, including 0.71 billion dollars in TNK-BP dividends received by BP in December 2012, together with shares representing 18.5 percent of Rosneft. As a result, BP now holds a 19.75 percent interest in Rosneft.

"BP is moving on to the next phase of its business in Russia, becoming the largest private shareholder in Rosneft, Russia's leading oil company," said BP Group Chief Executive Bob Dudley. "In the process we have also released cash, equivalent to at least six years of BP's anticipated future dividends

from TNK-BP.

We look forward now to working closely with Rosneft and together developing opportunities to create value for both companies." Dudley said that the size of the proposed buyback program, which is expected to exceed that required to offset the earnings per share dilution expected as a result of the sale of TNK-BP, also reflected the reduction in BP's asset base following its major 38 billion dollars divestment programme over the past three years.

The buyback is expected to take 12 to 18 months to complete.—Xinhua

## WORLD

## Turkish PM says Kurdish peace moves open to sabotage



Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan addresses the media before his flight to Denmark for an official visit at Esenboga Airport in Ankara on 19 March, 2013.—REUTERS

ISTANBUL, 23 March—Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan accused Kurdish politicians on Friday of trying to sabotage talks to end a 28-year-old insurrection, lamenting the absence of Turkish flags during a mass rally to mark a ceasefire by Kurdish rebels.

Jailed rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan called on his fighters to cease fire and withdraw from Turkey in a letter read to hundreds of thousands in the city of Di-

yarbakir in the mainly Kurdish southeast on Thursday. Kurdish red-yellow-green flags and banners displaying Ocalan's face dominated the crowd.

In line with that call, the militants' top field commander based in northern Iraq, Murat Karayilan, ordered his fighters to halt hostilities against Turkish forces, local media reported on Friday, the most concrete sign yet the rebels were behind their imprisoned leader.

The reports could not be immediately confirmed.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) led by Ocalan, imprisoned on an island since 1999, had originally demanded an independent Kurdish state. However, it has moderated its declared demands to political autonomy and broad cultural freedom within Turkey.

Erdogan, taking a big political gamble in pushing talks with Ocalan, must avoid stirring fears among conservatives that any deal with the PKK could lead to the breakup of Turkey.

"We are going through an extremely sensitive process vulnerable to provocations," Erdogan told a meeting of his ruling AK Party officials in the capital Ankara.

"The absence of our star and crescent flag in Diyarbakir was a provocation designed to sabotage the process," he said, accusing organizers of the celebrations of "insincerity." "Today is the day for unity, togetherness and fraternity."

The Kurdish conflict

has killed 40,000 people, opened Turkey to accusations of human rights abuses, undermined its ambitions to play a greater role on the world stage and consigned its southeast to poverty. For its part, the PKK is regarded by the United States, European Union and Turkey as a terrorist group.

The mass rally was organized largely by local Kurdish politicians and officials of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) represented in the national parliament—figures whose co-operation he will need to press the peace process.

BDP co-leader Selahattin Demirtas said Kurds had no problem flying the Turkish flag but were uneasy about it being forced upon them.

"The Turkish flag is the flag of everyone living in this country. However, I think those who are imposing it do not have good intentions. This imposition by racist elements amounts to having to kneel before the flag," Demirtas said.—Reuters

## Russia says US-Georgia military exercises threaten peace

Moscow, 23 March—Russia criticized the United States and Georgia on Friday over their joint military exercises in the former Soviet republic, accusing Washington of putting peace at risk five years after a war between Moscow and Tbilisi.

The United States started annual training exercises in Georgia in 2010, two years after Tbilisi fought a five-day war with its former Soviet master over two breakaway Georgian regions.

The Russian Foreign Ministry voiced "concern" about the exercises at Vaziani military training ground, in which 400 US marines are participating. They started on 11 March and continue until 5 April.

"We believe that any foreign military assistance to Georgia, whatever the motivation, complicates the prospects for strengthening peace and stability in the region," the ministry said in a statement.

Russia and Georgia accuse each other of starting

the 2008 war, in which Russian forces repelled a Georgian offensive in breakaway South Ossetia and drove deep into the small ex-Soviet republic before a ceasefire brokered by the European Union.

Moscow has repeatedly warned that US military aid or cooperation could encourage pro-Western Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, portrayed by the Kremlin as bellicose and unbalanced, to unleash a new conflict.

The United States and Georgia say the exercises are aimed at training for combat in Afghanistan, where Georgian soldiers have served since 2004, underscoring the nation's desire for closer cooperation with NATO.

Ties between Russia and Georgia have improved since Saakashvili's party lost its dominance in parliament in elections last October and billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili, who made his fortune in Russia, became prime minister.—Reuters

## Fear of army reprisals sparks Mali refugee flight

MBERA, (Mauritania), 23 March—Fears of ethnic reprisals by government troops in Mali have driven thousands of Arabs and Tuaregs in the country's north to abandon their homes and flee to Mauritania, undermining efforts to reunite their war-torn homeland.

At least 20,000 civilians have trekked westward across the dunes to the crowded Mbera refugee camp since mid-January when government forces reentered northern Mali on the coattails of a French ground and air campaign that swept Islamist rebels from the region.

The refugees joined 54,000 others who already fled to Mauritania when the rebels seized northern Mali in April 2012 and went on to impose a violent form of

sharia law involving amputations and public whippings. In the Mbera camp, where rows of plastic-covered shacks and makeshift tents stretch into the distance beneath the beating Saharan sun, many refugees have no plans to return to Mali despite the fall of the Islamists.

They say that for Arabs and Tuaregs—minority groups associated by many in Mali's black African majority with the rebels—life in the north is no longer safe. "Innocent people were being arrested, killed and thrown down wells. It is inhuman," said Rissa Ag Cheibani, a local chief who fled from Goundam, near Mali's ancient desert town of Timbuktu. "What we are seeing is score settling."

Reuters



A woman walks past a child playing with water in a refugee camp in Sevaré on 26 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

## Israeli PM apologizes to Turkey over Gaza flotilla deaths

JERUSALEM, 23 March—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu apologized on Friday to Turkey for errors that might have led to the deaths of nine Turkish activists during a 2010 raid on a boat off the Gaza Strip, his office said in a statement.

Netanyahu talked with his Turkish counterpart Tayyip Erdogan earlier in the day in a telephone call engineered by US President Barack Obama during a visit to Israel, looking to restore badly impaired ties between the two US allies.

"Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed an apology to the Turkish people for any error that may have led to the loss of life, and agreed to complete the agreement for compensation," the Israeli statement said.—Reuters

## Nigerian gunmen invade prison, bank, police station in northern state

YOLA, (Nigeria), 23 March—Nigerian police in Adamawa State on Friday said unknown gunmen launched multiple attacks

on the Ganye Divisional Police Headquarters, prison and a bank. State police spokesperson Mohammed Ibrahim confirmed the attack to Xin-

## France, Britain fail to win easing of Syria arms ban



France's Foreign Affairs Minister Laurent Fabius attends a news conference after a bilateral meeting at San Carlos Palace in Bogota on 25 Feb, 2013.

REUTERS

ers at the close of Friday's talks.

Assad's supporters and opponents accused each other of using chemical weapons after 26 people were killed in a rocket attack near the northern city of Aleppo this week.

In a letter to EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton setting out their case, Fabius and British Foreign Secretary William Hague said they were "increasingly concerned about the regime's willingness to use chemical weapons".

Countries such as Germany and Austria remain opposed to lifting the arms embargo for the rebels. They fear it could lead to

weapons falling into the hands of Islamist militants, fuel regional conflict and encourage Assad's backers, Iran and Russia, to step up arms supplies to him.

"We are reluctant about lifting the embargo ... We have to avoid that weapons could come into the wrong hands and that terrorists, jihadists, extremists would misuse these weapons," Germany's Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle told reporters. The EU has until 1 June to decide whether to renew or amend its sanctions on Syria and discussions on what to do about the arms embargo will continue in EU working groups.—Reuters

hua on phone, but said they had no details yet.

The attack in the northeastern state came barely two months after similar ones on

police stations and prison in Maiha and Song local government areas of the state during which many people died.—Xinhua

## WORLD

## Thrifty truckers wary of pricey natural gas vehicles

LOS ANGELES, 23 March—Truckers considering natural gas as an alternative to high-priced diesel say the cost of vehicles that run on the cheap and cleaner-burning fuel is still too high for them to see a timely payback on their investment. A push to run more of the nation's truck fleet on cleaner, domestically produced natural gas is rapidly gaining momentum.

Suppliers like T Boone

Pickens' Clean Energy Fuels, Royal Dutch Shell and China's private ENN Group are scrambling to build natural gas fueling stations along US highways, while Cummins-Westport Inc will begin later this year selling a 12-liter natural gas engine able to power the biggest trucks on the road.

Truck companies too, are enthusiastic — up to a point. The trucks that will sport the new engine, made

by a joint venture of Cummins Inc and Westport Innovations Inc, will have expensive tanks for storing compressed or liquefied natural gas. With the industry still reeling from an economic slump that pushed margins below 5 percent, truckers have little ability to make big bets on new equipment.

Customers like household products giant Procter & Gamble and building materials maker Owens Corning, however, are increasingly demanding that their products be hauled on cleaner trucks using cheaper fuel. Natural gas trucks' greenhouse gas emissions are about 20 percent lower than those of diesel trucks. But truck companies must fork over an extra \$40,000 to \$80,000 per natural gas truck — a big markup considering a heavy-duty diesel truck starts at about \$100,000.—Reuters



TTSI trucks are pictured refueling with liquefied natural gas (LNG) in Port of Los Angeles in San Pedro, California in this on 29 May, 2008 photograph.—REUTERS

## Senior US envoy to visit China, South Korea, Japan

WASHINGTON, 23 March—The top US diplomat for East Asian and Pacific affairs will visit China, the Republic of Korea and Japan next week to discuss a range of bilateral, regional and global issues, the State Department said on Friday.

While in Beijing on Sunday, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Joseph Yun will meet with senior government officials to discuss “a wide range of global, regional and bilateral issues,” the department said in a statement.

During his stay in Seoul on 25-27 March, Yun

will “consult and coordinate” with senior government officials on a range of bilateral and regional issues, including measures to strengthen bilateral engagement and deepen cooperation on security and defence. In Tokyo on 27 March, Yun will meet with senior officials to build on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Washington last month and “underscore our continued close coordination with the government of Japan on a full range of bilateral, regional and global issues,” the State Department said.

Xinhua

## Global conversation conducive to shaping post-2015 agenda

UNITED NATIONS, 23 March—As the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) draws near, the United Nations has embarked on a new process to consult with diverse stakeholders from all over the world that will ultimately shape the post-2015 agenda, a senior UN official told Xinhua.

In a recent interview with Xinhua, Olav Kjørven, assistant Secretary-General for development policy at the UN Development Program (UNDP), said, “This is the first time ever that we actually are having a global conversation about what sort of world people want to live in, what sort of future people want to have on this planet.”

The World We Want 2015 initiative aims to create a collective vision of the most important priorities of people in every part of the world, including indigenous populations, women and youths, to ultimately inform what the development agenda should include when the current MDGs expire in 2015.

The initiative is part of the UN efforts to gather viewpoints from people worldwide to help shape the future global development agenda after 2015, the deadline for the MDGs, a set of eight anti-poverty targets to be reached in two years.

“We have the technological means that allows us to reach out like never

before to citizens,” said Kjørven. “What we are hoping is that through this mobilization of citizenry, in terms of their interest in this discussion, is that we'll be getting a lot of valuable insights and inputs that can help us understand what people would like to see.”

So far, more than 200,000 people from 189 countries have contributed to this process through surveys and on the worldwewant2015.org website. Consultations are also taking place in 83 countries right now, at the regional level and in thematic dialogues.

“We are, in a sense, connecting the work of the UN to the realities of peo-



People watch a 4D movie at an underground cinema in the Kailuan national mine park in Tangshan, north China's Hebei Province, on 22 March, 2013. The 60-metre-deep cinema was reconstructed from a coal roadway which was built 130 years ago. The film showed in the cinema was about coal mining.

XINHUA

## US shuts down 149 airport control towers to cut spending

WASHINGTON, 23 March—The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) under the Transportation Department announced on Friday that 149 airport control towers will be closed across the country beginning on 7 April due to the agency's budget saving implementation plan.

“We heard from communities across the country about the importance of their towers and these were very tough decisions,” US Transportation Secretary

Ray LaHood said in a statement.

“Unfortunately we are faced with a series of difficult choices that we have to make to reach the required cuts under sequestration,” LaHood noted. Roughly 85 billion US dollars of spending cuts started to hit various US governmental departments this year starting on 1 March. The spending cuts, the so-called “sequester” or “sequestration” in US government budget language, were included in the

August 2011 debt reduction package. The FAA will work with the airports to ensure the procedures are in place to maintain the high level of safety at non-towered airports, said FAA Administrator Michael Huerta.

The FAA will begin a four-week phased closure of the 149 air traffic control towers beginning on 7 April, part of its efforts to save 637 million dollars spending this year, according to the statement.

Xinhua

## UN chief hails normalized ties between Israel, Turkey

UNITED NATIONS, 23 March—UN Secretary-General on Friday welcomed the agreement between the Israeli and Turkish governments to restore normal bilateral relations, hailing the move “an important and hopeful signal for the stability of the region.”

“The Secretary-General welcomes that the governments of Israel and Turkey have agreed to restore normal relations between them, and appreciates the role of US President Barack Obama in reaching this positive outcome,” said a statement issued here by Ban's spokesman.

“Assisting Israel and Turkey in restoring their

good relations had been a core objective of the secretary-general's efforts in the aftermath of the May 2010 flotilla incident,” the statement said. “Today's announcement is an important and hopeful signal for the stability of the region.”

The process of normalizing bilateral relations began on Friday after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan to apologize for errors that resulted in the deaths of activists aboard a Gaza-bound flotilla in May 2010. Obama, who is visiting Israel, was reported to broker the call.

Xinhua



Comedians practice for an audition in the lobby of the Senegal National Grand Theater, in Dakar, capital of Senegal, on 14 March, 2013. The 1,800-seat theater, financed by the Chinese government, with a construction area of 3.442 hectares, is mainly used for performance purposes, and as cinema and conference hall sometimes.—XINHUA



Artists perform during the opening ceremony of the “Tourism Year of China” in Moscow, on 22 March, 2013. The “China-Russia Tourism Year” program, which began last year with the “Tourism Year of Russia” in China, aims to foster tourism ties and humanistic exchanges between the two countries.—XINHUA

Xinhua

# PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 24 March, 2013

## Reforestation

On average, more than 400,000 hectares of Myanmar's forest that covers nearly 50 percent of the country are lost between 2000 and 2005, based on statistics. According to FAO's 2011 report, the country is ranked number four in the world with annual deforestation rate of over 1 percent.

Although Myanmar is one of the richest areas of biodiversity, some parts of the country are increasingly under threat of deforestation caused by excessive production of firewood and high rate of illegal timber extraction, environmentally unfriendly agricultural methods and reclamation of new farmlands, establishment of salt fields, fish farms, pawn ponds and human settlements. The apparent impact of deforestation is land degradation which includes soil erosion and loss of soil fertility.

Forest depletion not only causes dramatic climate change but also harm food security and livelihood of the people living in land degradation-prone areas, thereby increasing the poverty rate in rural areas where people whose livelihoods depend on the forests. Although we cannot get back the forests we have destroyed due to various reasons, a chance we have to save our carbon sinks is to reforest and preserve the remaining forests what little is left. So an increased awareness of environmental issue at all levels of society is needed to be able to hand down good conditions of the natural environment to future generation. The onus is on all of us to make great strides in reforestation as it is one of the clear commitments to the government's drive to alleviate poverty.

Everyone is to be aware of the value of forests because healthy forests help to reduce physical and chemical contaminants of the environment and act as an effective sink for a number of pollutants. Provided that forests are totally wiped out, mankind will disappear from this earth in the not too distant future. As they are one of the world's primary carbon sinks, without them human life shall become miserable.

No matter how much of forests we have destroyed and soil fertility we lost, it is not too late to reverse the causative trend and to start reforestation program, playing our active part in environmental conservation if we act now.

## AFD to help in Myanmar's infrastructural development

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March—Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and French Development Agency (AFD) signed an MoU yesterday.

Under the MoU, Myanmar will receive aids from the AFD in terms of infrastructure for rural development, food security, agricultural development, health, water supply and sanitation and is hoped to improve socio-economic status of Myanmar people.

### Deputy Minister visits relief camps in Meiktila

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March—Deputy Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Minister U Phone Swe visited relief camps in violence-torn Meiktila. He inspected

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw appealed for AFD's assistance as one of the donor organizations to Myanmar. It was also attended by French

distribu-tion of aids to victims in relief camps. Plans have been laid to provide foodstuff to 9644 victims for a week with the contribution of wellwishers.

MNA

## Vice-President U Nyan Tun...

(from page 1)

Committee Mr Le Huan Kuan at the committee office and Party Secretary of Ho Chi Minh City Mr Le Thanh Hai at Reunification Palace.

The meetings focused on enhanced cooperation between Myanmar and Vietnam.

The party secretary hosted a dinner to the Myanmar delegation led by Vice-President U Nyan Tun.

Vice-President U Nyan Tun visited Dragon City Real Estate Project, Phulong Real Estate Holdings, HD Holding, Sovico Holdings, CT Group and Vietjet

# NATIONAL



Vice-President U Nyan Tun and party pose for documentary photo with Vietnamese officials at Ho Chi Minh Hi-Tech Park in Ho Chi Minh.—MNA

Airline this morning.

The delegation left for Myanmar at 11.30 am LST. They were welcomed

back on arrival at Yangon

International Airport by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe,

Vietnamese Ambassador Mr Pham Thanh Dung whose accreditation had been agreed on and officials.—MNA

## Meiktila restores calm, aids being provided to victims

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March—Stability has been restored since 22 March evening in Meiktila where riots broke out on 20-21 March from a personal brawl at a shop.

As the unsettled mob brought buildings and shops down, the President declared State of Emergency with Ordinance No. 1/2013.

Displaced victims are being located in six relief camps—3620 in BEHS-1 Meiktila, 1250 in BEHS-2 Meiktila, 498 in BEMS-2 Meiktila, 111 in BEPS-8 in Meiktila, 2342 in Meiktila District Indoor Stadium and 386 in Aung Zeya Hall.

Some 600 victims are being provided refuge by Yadana Oo monastery in northern Pyi Thaya ward. Deputy Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U



Relief items being unloaded from a truck for supplying them to local people in Meiktila.—MNA

Phone Swe and officials are coordinating the needs of the victims.

The Mandalay Region government officials led by Chief Minister U Ye Myint are fulfilling the needs of victims at the donation centre housed by Meiktila District Administrator Office.

Eden Company,

members of Sangha and wellwishers from Mandalay, The Action Time Foundation, SkyNet, Mandalay Region, the ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, officials, lawmakers made donations this morning.

Drinking water, instant noodle and foods are provided to the victims this

morning.

Food and relief aids donated by wellwishers in Yangon were transported to Meiktila with Y-8 aircraft.

The victims are allowed to return to their home if their homes are in stable neighbourhood.

The security forces have been engaging in clean-up operations since this morning.

A total of 21 dead bodies from damages of wards were reportedly found during the clean-up.

Those bodies were beyond recognition and could not be identified, said the report. The official death toll in Meiktila violence has reached 32, according to the latest report this evening.—MNA



People travelling in Meiktila that returns to normalcy.—MNA



LOCAL NEWS

Myanmar Rock fans to greet Michael Learns in Yangon



Entertainment of Michael Learns to Rock (MLTR), which is the first international concert in Myanmar, will be held at the People's Square in Yangon in the evening of 31 March.

Myanmar Rock stars Zaw Win Htut and Phyu Phyu Kyaw Thein will join the world famous Rock star Michael Learns at the concert.

Michael Learns to Rock (MLTR) was set up in 1988. It has so far sold over 11 million of music albums and it is a Pop-Soft Rock Band that possesses music fans in Asia. The concert will be jointly organized by Friendship Entertainment and Postel Communications Myanmar.

The tickets for the concert will be sold in four

classes which are K 19900, K 34500, K 99000 and US\$ 160.

Tickets are available at City Marts in Yangon and Mandalay, Friendship Entertainment and Postel Communications Myanmar. **Byline: Moe Thuza Soe; Photo: Thant Zin Win**

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

High speed motorbikes kill drivers in Lewe Township

NAYPYITAW, 23 March— Two traffic accidents in Lewe Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area killed two persons in a single day.

At 1 am on 9 March, a Kenbo motorbike driven by Aung Win, 35 of Shante Village-tract in Lewe Township leaving Thawuthti for Pinyinman

plunged into the roadside due to out of control between mile posts 5/0 and 5/1 on the detour of Ywathit Village in Lewe Township. Aung Win died on the spot. Ayela Police Station opened a file of lawsuit.

At 11.45 pm on 9 March, a motorbike driven

by constable Moe Lin Aung, 29 of the SB from Thawuthti-Intha Checkpoint leaving Ayela for Thawuthti plunged into the right road side in front of Basic Education Middle School No. 2 in Pyanchi Village of Lewe Township.

He died on the spot with serious injuries. Ayela Police Station opened a file of lawsuit.

Myanma Alinn

Ward/village-tract administrators' proficiency course concludes

YEDASHE, 23 March— A conclusion ceremony of ward/village-tract administrators' proficiency course No. 1/2013 was held at the hall of General Administration Department in Yedashe Township, on 16 March.

At the ceremony,

Township Administrator U Htay Kyaw gave a speech and presented certificates. Then, he presented awards to three outstanding trainees.

A total of 50 trainees from 50 wards and village-tracts attended the two-week course.—NLM

Water crafts face difficulties in water course of Chindwin River

YESAGYO, 23 March— Chindwin River is flowing between Yesagyo Township of Magway Region and Myaung Township of Sagaing Region, sharing 19 nautical miles border between the two townships.

As a result, about 40 villages along the banks possess alluvial lands for cultivation of crops yearly.

At present, sandbanks

emerge in many places in the water course of Chindwin River.

In consequence, the water craft face difficulties in their drives.

Myanma Alinn

Opening more brokerages to benefit commodity producers, consumers

YANGON, 23 March— As part of efforts to promote local and foreign trade, Myanmar has planned to open more border trade camps, while making preparations for extending commodity brokerages so as to develop domestic trade, said an official of Yangon Brokerage.

"Arrangements are being made to open brokerages for convenience of traders at home. As a result, producers, traders and consumers will enjoy more convenience in trading," he explained.

At present, two brokerages are bustling in Bayintnaung and on Wadan Street of Yangon. Chilli, onion, beans and pulses and so on are being traded at Bayintnaung Brokerage.

Wadan Street Brokerage focuses on trading of rice. At present, trading is convenient for commodity producers and customers but it needs to extend trading on a wider scale for enabling sellers and buyers across the nation to get easy access to brokerage trading.

As such, a plan is underway to open one more brokerage at Thiri Mingala Market in Yangon with the aim of not only ensuring convenience of producers and customers but also contributing to stability and declining of commodity prices.

Moreover, the producers face high transport charge and instable prices of commodity to be sent to

Yangon's brokerages.

They have more difficulty of spending long time on transport routes.

That is why arrangements are being made for opening new brokerages in the entire nation for ensuring smooth flow of commodities.

Relief supplies donated to fire victims in Ayadaw Township



AYADAW, 23 March— People from nine households became homeless due to a fire broke out in Naunggyi-aing Village of Ayadaw Township in Monywa District in Sagaing Region on 1 March evening.

A ceremony to donate relief aid to fire victims by Myanmar Red Cross Society and wellwishers was held at the relief camps on 10 March

afternoon.

Commanding Officer of Township Red Cross Battalion Police Major Tin Thein, Deputy Commanding Officer U Myint Lwin and Red Cross members donated relief items worth K 60,000 each to fire victim households, wellwishers of the township cash and clothes to the fire victim households.

Myanma Alinn

Photo shows a sandbank that emerges in water course of Chindwin and watercraft dock at the jetty due to difficulty for runs in the river.



## WORLD

## Ghana vows measures against piracy threat to oil, gas industry

TAKORADI, (Ghana), 23 March—Ghanaian Minister for the Interior Kwesi Ahoi on Friday vowed to step up protection of oil and gas exploration off Cape-Three-Points of the Western Region from piracy and other forms of maritime security threat.

The minister was speaking at the official sod-cutting ceremony for the construction of administrative and academic blocks for the Marine Police Academy at Aiyinase, 287 km west of the national capital, Accra. He noted that collaboration between the two security agencies would help clamp down on any threat posed by pirates to the oil and gas industry and ensure peace and harmony on the West African country's territorial waters.

In view of this, he urged the Ghana Navy and the Marine Police Unit of the Ghana Police Service to communicate and share essential security information to combat maritime crime and protect Ghana's petroleum installations.

Ahoi said the Police Marine training school would train and sharpen the skills of police personnel on maritime security.

The Navy, he said, would defend the territorial waters of the country against external aggression while the Police Marine Unit would arrest and prosecute criminals arrested on the high seas.

Ahoi commended the United States government and the United States African Command (AFRICOM)

for providing funding for the construction of the two-storey block for the school.

He expressed optimism that the Police Marine School would become a mini-university for training of police personnel in Ghana and the West African sub-region.

The acting Inspector General of Police (IGP), Mohammed Ahmed Alhasan, said the oil exploration had its associated security implications hence the re-activation of the Police Marine Unit to beef up maritime security.

The school will also offer first class maritime training to police personnel to sharpen their skills to combat illegal human trafficking, narcotic smuggling, toxic waste disposal as well as any

other threat posed to oil and gas installations.

Ahoi said the Police Marine Unit would collaborate with all the necessary state agencies to enhance security on Ghanaian waters, adding that it would also serve as a deterrent to criminals.

The Deputy United States Ambassador to Ghana, Madam Carolyn Pat Alsup, said the United States was happy to partner Ghana in strengthening its maritime security.

She urged the Police Marine Unit, navy and the Fisheries Commission to communicate and share information to ensure maximum security of the country's maritime domain.

Xinhua



Citizens take part in an activity held to celebrate the World Water Day in Nanjing, capital of east China's Jiangsu Province, on 22 March, 2013. 22 March marks the World Water Day, an annual event with the aim to draw international attention to the critical lack of clean, safe drinking water.—XINHUA

## Two prison guards injured in new breakout attempt in Greece

ATHENS, 23 March—Two prison guards were injured on late Friday night in a new breakout attempt by a group of inmates in a northern Greece prison complex, local media reported.

Some ten inmates managed to climb onto the roof of Trikala's prison at the Peloponnese peninsula and started shooting at guards at the courtyard with assault rifles, while a minivan also fired at guards standing close to the gate, according to media reports citing police sources.

Both of the two injured guards have been transferred to a local hospital. One of them was suffering from serious wounds at the abdominal and is undergoing a surgery.

Police forces have been deployed in the area to track down the minivan, while a recount of inmates is being conducted to deter-

mine whether any convicts have escaped and whether they are any weapons hidden inside the prison.

Sources said Friday's incident was to avenge the failed breakout attempt by notorious Greek convict and gang boss Panayotis Vlastos from the same prison by helicopter in late January this year.

Vlastos was slightly injured by prison guards during an exchange of fire with him and his accomplices, and the helicopter was forced to land outside the gate.

Last weekend, another convict in Greece, Albanian national Alket Rizaj, held prison guards at a central Greece prison as hostages for 24 hours during another failed attempt to break out. He and his fellow inmates later surrendered and no one was injured.

Xinhua

## Three-day fighting kills six in Lebanese port city

BEIRUT, 23 March—At least six people, among them a Lebanese soldier, were killed in three days of fighting between two rival neighbourhoods in Lebanon's northern port city of Tripoli as of Friday.

Earlier reports said three were killed and 22 injured overnight on Thursday in clashes between residents of Bab al-Tabbaneh, who are Sunni and back the overthrow of Syrian President Bashar Assad, and of Jabal Mohsen, who are mainly Alawites from Assad's sect.

Tension increased after a shooting incident on Wednesday afternoon at the governmental hospital in Tripoli, which left three

injured.

"Army continued to take security measures in the tense neighbourhoods ... including raids in areas where the gunmen are located," said a guidance directorate statement on Friday.

Some suspects were arrested and arms and ammunition were seized from them, said the statement.

One soldier, identified as Hassan Diab, was killed, and several others were injured during the mission, it added. The two neighbourhoods have been engaging in clashes since 2008. The past rounds of clashes left more than 100 dead and over 1,000 wounded.

Xinhua

## Most Germans expect euro zone crisis to worsen

BERLIN, 23 March—Nearly two thirds of Germans expect the euro zone crisis to worsen and almost half fear for their savings, according to an opinion poll released on Friday, amid rising concerns that Cyprus may be forced to quit the common currency.

The tiny Mediterranean island must strike a bailout deal with the euro zone before next Tuesday or face the collapse of its banking sector.

Germany has led euro zone calls for Cyprus to stomp up nearly six billion euros through a levy on depositors in Cypriot banks as part of the bailout deal, a plan Nicosia has rejected.

The ZDF Politbarometer poll showed 64 percent of Germans expect a deepening of the euro crisis and only 9 percent expect it to ease. Some 49 percent of those polled said they

feared for their savings, up from 39 percent in a previous poll last June.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's centre-right coalition has taken a tough stance on Cyprus, which it sees as a safe haven for money laundering, ahead of Germany's federal election in September.

The Cyprus crisis has triggered concerns about a bank-run by citizens anxious to withdraw savings that could spread across the euro zone, prompting Merkel to repeat assurances about the safety of German deposits first made during the 2009 global financial crisis.

But despite such assurances the poll showed slightly more than a third of Germans did not believe their savings were secure while 63 percent did. A large majority of respondents did not expect a bank-

run in other EU states because of Cyprus.

The survey, which can-



A picture illustration taken with the multiple exposure function of the camera shows a one Euro coin and a map of Europe, on 9 Jan, 2013.—REUTERS

vassed the views of 1,296 people on 19-21 March, also showed Merkel's party retaining a clear lead over other parties but suggested she may have to forge a "grand coalition" with the main opposition Social Democrats (SPD).

The poll gave the conservatives 40 percent, the center-left SPD 29 percent, the Greens 14 percent and

the Left Party 7 percent.

But Merkel's current coalition partner, the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP), were again on 4 percent, below the 5 percent threshold for entering parliament. Such a result would probably force Merkel into renewing a coalition with the SPD like the one she led from 2005 to 2009.—Reuters

## Fuel tanker hits into Emirates aircraft at Zambian airport

LUSAKA, 23 March—More than 350 passengers were stranded for several hours at Zambia's biggest international Airport, the Kenneth Kaunda Airport, after an Emirates aircraft EK 714, a Boeing 777-300ER, was severely damaged by a fuel tanker during take-off, the Zambia Daily Mail reported on Friday.

The Dubai-bound plane was about to refuel in readiness for take-off on Wednesday night when the

fuel tanker rammed into it. There were however no injuries.

Gillian Langmead, the airline's spokesperson said the plane was bashed by a tanker and all the passengers were told to go back to their hotels while fresh arrangements were being made.

The aircraft is currently parked at the airport and is being repaired by a team of engineers, she added.

Xinhua



People line up to fill their water tanks in front of ancient stone taps on the UN World Water Day in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 22 March, 2013. According to the UN report, more than one in six people Worldwide does not have the access to 20-50 liters of fresh water a day to ensure their basic needs like drinking, cooking and cleaning.—XINHUA

## REGIONAL



Visitors view motorcycles at a motorcycle exhibition in Tokyo, capital of Japan, on 22 March, 2013. XINHUA

## Indonesian cities to take part on earth hour

JAKARTA, 23 March—Over 30 cities in Indonesia, a vast archipelago country, will join in Earth Hour 2013 on Saturday (23 March) at 8:30 pm, as the world's largest environmental movement to help save the planet, *Antara* news wire quoting official said here on Friday.

"Thanks to the increasing public campaigns particularly on the social network, Earth Hour has been able to attract more Indone-

sian cities to participate in the movement promoting a change of life style," WWF Indonesia's Climate and Energy Programme Director Nyoman Iswarayoga, said here.

The NGO has been campaigning Earth Hour in Jakarta since 2009. In 2012, Earth Hour was considered the world's largest environmental campaign which was participated in by two billion people in 7,001 cities in 152 countries.

This year, 14 mayors and district heads as well as 5 governors across Indonesia have been committed to joining Earth Hour.

The huge participation indicates the success of Earth Hour campaign in Indonesia, said Nyoman.

The country's capital of Jakarta has taken part in Earth Hour since 2009 as a movement to make Jakarta greener, he stated.

As in the previous years, Earth Hour in Jakarta

will be celebrated by turning off the lights in several iconic buildings such as the Jakarta Governor's office, the National Monument (Monas), the Hotel Indonesia (HI) Circle, the Arjuna Wiwaha fountain, and the Youth Statue.

The lights along main boulevards such as Sudirman, Thamrin, Gatot Subroto and Rasuna Said streets, will also be turned off.

Xinhua

## 23 killed, over 30 injured in east Pakistan road accident

ISLAMABAD, 23 March—At least 23 people were killed and over 30 others injured in a road accident that occurred in Pakistan's eastern Punjab Province early Saturday morning, said local police.

Local Urdu TV channel Dunya quoted unidentified police sources as saying that the accident took place

at about 2:00 am (local time) when a bus hit a roadside pole near Shekupura, a district located some 40 kilometers northwest of Lahore, capital of Punjab Province.

The bus was on the way from Lahore to Faisalabad, a key industrial city in central Punjab Province.

Police and rescue team rushed to the site after the

accident was reported. Local media quoted eyewitnesses as saying that the bus overturned after it smashed onto a pole on the roadside. All the injured have been shifted to the district hospital in Shekupura. Hospital sources said that many of the injured were in critical condition and the death toll may further rise.—Xinhua



Security officials work at the bomb blast site in southwest Pakistan's Jafarabad, on 22 March, 2013. At least six people were killed and over 40 others injured when a bomb hit a bus terminal in Jafarabad District on Friday morning, local media reported.—XINHUA

## Singapore, Belarus tie up in trade, investment

SINGAPORE, 23 March—Singapore and Belarus enhanced their trade and investment ties by signing cooperation agreements during the inaugural Singapore-Belarus Business Forum on Friday, local media *Channel NewsAsia* reported. The agreements were signed between the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Singapore Business Federation (SBF), as well as Singapore International Chamber of Commerce.

They committed to explore "opportunities, as well as technological and industrial cooperation."

Belarus' Senior Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Semashko said Singapore companies may have potential business opportunities in petrochemical and pharmaceutical sectors in Belarus.

The forum is in conjunction with Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko's state visit in Singapore, from Wednesday to Thursday. The city-state's Ministry of Foreign affairs said on Thursday that the two countries also signed an agreement on the mutual waiver of visa requirements for holders of diplomatic and official passports.

Xinhua

## Bangladesh tornado death toll rises to 20

DHAKA, 23 March—The death toll caused by a devastating tornado in eastern Bangladesh rose to 20 on Saturday, a local TV channel reported.

According to local TV channel "Time", the tornado, which swept through four sub-Districts of Bangladesh's northeastern Brahmanbaria District, some 109 km east of the capital Dhaka, Friday evening left over 200 others wounded.

Mahmud Mozumder, chief executive officer of the district, Friday told *Xinhua* over the phone that the

tornado had flattened hundreds of houses, trees and electric poles while damaging crops on farmland in four sub-districts.

The tornado, with a speed of over 70 kilometres per hour, was accompanied by hail storm and lasted for a few minutes, he said, adding that the victims were killed by collapsed houses and fallen trees.

The railway connecting Dhaka to the country's Chittagong port, some 242 km southeast of capital Dhaka, and northeastern Sylhet, some 241 km north-

east of capital Dhaka, remained disrupted as trees fell on the tracks. Road communications in some districts also remained suspended.

The Disaster Management and Relief ministry announced Saturday that 20,000 Taka (about 250 US dollars) will be given to each family of dead person, and 5,000 Taka (about 62.5 US dollars) to the family of the wounded.

An army medical team from Comilla Cantonment has been sent to the affected areas.—Xinhua

## One NATO soldier killed in blast in E Afghanistan

KABUL, 23 March—One soldier with the NATO-led coalition forces was killed in a blast in restive eastern Afghanistan on Friday, the coalition confirmed in a Press release.

"An International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) service member died following an improvised explosive device attack in eastern Afghanistan today," the ISAF said in the release.

However, the brief release did not reveal the nationality of the victim under

the ISAF policy, only saying "It is ISAF policy to defer casualty identification procedures to the relevant national authorities,"

The latest causality brings the number of foreign soldiers killed in Afghanistan to 22 so far this year.

Currently about 100,000 NATO-led ISAF forces, with nearly 66,000 of them Americans are deployed in the country to help provide security in the war-hit central Asian state.

Xinhua

## Japanese gov't applies for land reclamation on US Futenma base

TOKYO, 23 March—The Japanese government on Friday submitted an application to Okinawa prefectural government for land reclamation to relocate the US Futenma base within the island prefecture, local media reported.

The application is for land reclamation in the less-populated coastal area of Henoko in Okinawa to relocate the US Futenma air base, which now locates in a crowded residential area in Ginowan in the prefecture, according to Japan's *Kyodo News Agency*.

Japan and the United States agreed to move the key US base within the prefecture and both sides con-

firmed the plan would be proceeded during a meeting between Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and US President Barack Obama last month in Washington.

However, Okinawa government and residents have given voice to protest the plan and wanted the base to be moved outside the prefecture, which hosts a bulk of US bases in Japan.

Relations between the prefectural government and Japanese central government chilled due to the relocation issue, although Abe said his government is mulling to reduce Okinawa's burden of hosting the US bases.

Xinhua



A staff member introduces meteorological knowledge to children at Ningxia Meteorological Bureau in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on 22 March, 2013. The bureau invited students and citizens to visit the observatory on 22 March, one day before the World Meteorological Day.

XINHUA

## Nigerian journalist kidnapped by gunmen

AKURE, 23 March—Four gunmen abducted a journalist in Nigeria, leaving behind her little child and house-help, local television disclosed on Friday.

Olubunmi Oke, who works with the Nigerian Television Authority in Ondo State in the southwest of the West African country, was returning home when a taxi trailing her car forced it to a stop on Thursday. Television General Manager Bennie Mordi said Oke was abducted in front of a hotel while returning

from her place of work.

Mordi said an eyewitness said a taxi cab was trailing her vehicle and forced it to stop before taking her away on Thursday night.

“This is serious. I cannot imagine what they want from a journalist. Where is the money they are asking for, I pray for God’s immediate intervention for the safety and peaceful release of my staff,” she said.

The General Manager said the police said the taxi cab used to carry out the ab-

duction had been recovered at Igbara-Oke in Ifedore Local Government Area of the state.

The police spokesman in the state Wole Ogodo, confirmed the incident, saying the police was on top of the case. A colleague of Oke’s, Kemi Fakeye, said the victim’s mother earlier on Friday received a telephone message from the abductors, in which they demanded for a ransom of 8 million naira (more than 500,000 US dollars) for her release.—Xinhua



Staff members of the newly-merged State General Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television pose for group photos during a ceremony to hang the new nameplate in Beijing, capital of China, on 22 March, 2013.

XINHUA



Job hunters inquire information at a job fair held for college students in Harbin, capital of northeast China’s Heilongjiang Province, on 22 March, 2013.

XINHUA

## US base shooting incident leaves three

### Marines dead

WASHINGTON, 23 March—Three active-duty Marines are dead in a shooting that has been linked to a “love triangle” involving the three, US media reported on Friday.

The authorities at the Quantico Marine Corps Base in the US state of Virginia responded to the shooting incident, which took place on-base at about 11 pm Thursday, Ameri-

can Forces Press Service reported. Officials said the shooter died of an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound. The incident is still under investigation.

NBC News reported the three Marines knew each other and may have been involved in a “love triangle.” Two of the Marines, including the shooter, were men, while the third was female. The shooter reported-

ly killed the other two and then himself.

In a statement released Friday morning, Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel was saddened to learn of Thursday’s shooting as well as another tragedy earlier this week.

Seven Marines were killed in an explosion during a drill at a Nevada base on Tuesday.—Xinhua

## HK Airport wins green award

HONG KONG, 23 March—Hong Kong International Airport was awarded the Airport Carbon Accreditation “Optimization” certificate on Friday, which turned it to be the first and only airport in the Asia-Pacific to achieve this standard.

The certificate was awarded by the Airports Council International Asia-Pacific’s Regional Director Patti Chau to Airport Authority Chairman Marvin Cheung at a ceremony here. Officiating at the ceremony, Secretary for Transport & Housing Prof Anthony Cheung said the accreditation is an important milestone towards a sustainable future. “Environmental protection has always been an integral aspect of the airport’s development, and this is also one of the policy priorities of the new govern-

ment, so it is rewarding to see the airport become a pioneer in the Asia-Pacific region and an exemplar of environmental excellence,” he said.

The Airport Authority said the airport reduced carbon intensity by nearly 14 percent in the last two years, and is on track to meet the goal it set in 2010 of a 25 percent reduction by 2015 on 2008 emission levels. Airport Carbon Accreditation was initially launched in June 2009 and expanded to the Asia-Pacific in November 2011. As the only institutionally-endorsed carbon management certification standard for airports, the programme independently assesses airports with four progressive levels of accreditation, including “Mapping”, “Reduction”, “Optimization” and “Neutrality”.—Xinhua



US new citizens take part in the Oath of Allegiance as America’s newest citizen during a special naturalization ceremony at the historic Federal Hall in New York, on 22 March, 2013. A total of 75 citizenship candidates who originate from 40 countries participated in the ceremony, held by US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). During the last decade, USCIS welcomed more than 6.6 million naturalized citizens into the fabric of the nation. In fiscal year 2012, approximately 763,681 individuals naturalized.—XINHUA

## Indonesia moves to improve power service, cut energy subsidy

JAKARTA, 23 March—The Indonesian government, state-run power utility of PLN and presidential task force authorized to monitor development (UKP4) signed on Friday an agreement on a particular scheme designed to improve PLN’s service in expanding the country’s electrification ratio thus reducing the energy subsidy set in state budget.

Through the scheme called Service Level Agreement (SLA), 11 ministries,

PLN and UKP4 are expected to intensify coordination in order to improve PLN’s capability in securing power supply in the country.

“Continuing communication among institutions at the forum should be conducted so as to make PLN comply with its obligation. PLN is the only institution we rely on when it comes to increasing power supply capability,” Vice President Boediono said in his remarks at the signing ceremony here.

He expected that the SLA mechanism would work effectively and eventually help the country in

attaining higher growth.

The SLA scheme obliges PLN to provide power supply that fits the standards already determined, and assure the completion of power infrastructure on schedule.

Besides that, through support and facilities discussed at the forum, PLN would be encouraged to efficiently manage the power subsidy, so that it can be minimized and rightly delivered to consumers who deserved to receive it.

Indonesian Finance Minister Agus Martowadoyo expected that the SLA scheme would cut power subsidy which is estimated

at 440 trillion rupiah (about 45.2 billion US dollars) within the next four years, or 110 trillion rupiah (about 11.2 billion US dollars) annually. The subsidy reduction is expected to be within a range of 20 to 50 trillion rupiah (up to 5.1 billion US dollars), the minister said.

Indonesia saw power subsidy swell up to 101 trillion rupiah (about 10.3 billion US dollars) last year from 65 trillion rupiah (6.6 billion US dollars) allocated in the first place due to the increasing oil prices in international market.

Xinhua

## Ukrainian PM calls for truck ban on country’s highways

KIEV, 23 March—Ukrainian Prime Minister Mykola Azarov said on Friday that the government is mulling a ban on big vehicles on country’s highways, as heavy-truck traffic is destroying the quality of Ukrainian roads.

“After we opened our borders, the number of heavy vehicles flooded our roads, which were not designed to such traffic. And it lead to roads destruction,” Azarov said after his visit to the National Transport University in Kiev. The government considers it necessary to provide special roads for heavy transport and restrict its movement on other highways, Azarov said.

The Premier noted that the majority of Ukrainian

roads were built according to the Soviet-era standards and they do not meet the requirements of modern logistic. The Ukrainian government decided on Friday to provide an extra 950 million US dollars for road construction and maintenance, in addition to the about 3 billion dollars allocated in the 2013 budget for the rehabilitation of the country’s road network.

Xinhua

## Half of Philippine police have no pistols

MANILA, 23 March—Philippine President Benigno S Aquino III said Friday that shortage of guns among the 148,000 personnel of the Philippine National Police (PNP) will be addressed before the end of the year.

Aquino, in a speech during the commencement of the Philippine National Police Academy, admitted that 50 percent of the PNP personnel do not own pistol issued by the PNP.

“That’s why before the year ends, we are target-

ing to get hold of around 74,800 units of 9 millimeter pistol that we purchased under the PNP Capability Enhancement Programme,” he said.

With the delivery of these units, Aquino said the government could achieve the 1:1 ratio in the number of policemen and guns.

Cops who do not have service handguns issued by the PNP are being provided by the local government units where they are assigned.

Xinhua

ENTERTAINMENT

Robert Pattinson gets 8 million pounds for ad campaign



Robert Pattinson

LONDON, 23 March—Twilight hunk Robert Pattinson has acted out with four stunning models in a new advertising campaign for which he is said to have got a whopping 8 million pounds.

The 26-year-old indulges in some arty bed-hopping for a new Dior men's clothing campaign which will be appearing everywhere from May, reported Sun Online.

He filmed his demanding gig just after his girlfriend Kristen Stewart cheated on

him with married director Rupert Sanders.

"The advert is sexually explicit. It is pushing the boundaries of what you can get away with in advertising. Robert is topless for part of it and kissing one of the models."

"There's another scene where he takes part in a foursome in various states of undress, although it's not clear whether those scenes will make the final cut," a source said.

Dior are deliberately making an advert to ruffle some feathers.—PTI



Russell Brand and Katy Perry.

Russell Brand: Marriage to Katy Perry was a drag

LONDON, 23 March—Funnyman Russell Brand says his marriage to ex-wife Katy Perry was shaky right from the beginning.

Brand, 37, had a lavish wedding in India and the TV presenter split from the pop star in December 2011 after 14 months of marriage, reported Sun online.

"That marriage was shaky from the get-go, before I'd even got off the elephant. It was

a drag, man. Let me tell you a thing about marriage. Marriage is a bond that can last up to 14 months. It is a sacred 14-month arrangement. Begins on an elephant — ends in a newspaper," Brand said on a radio interview.

Brand was with Noel Gallagher to promote the Teenage Cancer Trust gigs which the rocker is curating.

Gallagher said Brand had once turned up at his London home on Valentine's Day, carrying flowers for his wife Sara MacDonald, but was mocked by his sons Donovan and Sonny.

"About seven seconds after Russell walked through the door, Donovan insulted his footwear. I got very proud of that. 'He said, 'Why are you wearing ladies' shoes?'," Gallagher added.

PTI

Gwyneth Paltrow's diet cleanse "changed" her marriage

NEW DELHI, 23 March—Gwyneth Paltrow's diet change made her marriage a challenge.

The 40-year-old actress — who has children Apple, nine, and Moses, seven, with Coldplay frontman Chris Martin — undertook a dramatic cleanse a few years ago which saw her cut out wheat, dairy, sugar and processed foods, and says altering her eating habits made her a better person.

She explained to the new issue of *Self* magazine: "You feel lighter and your emotions get smoother of unexpressed anger. I made every- more important than my and then be alone in my or fighting with hang- when they got stuck not learning anything ing the difficult conver-



The actress is happy that her cousin sister Parineeti Chopra got a special mention at the National Awards. PTI

*Self* magazine: "You feel er. [Before,] I had a lot one else's feelings own. I'd suck it up car yelling at traffic ers in my closet together. You're unless you're hav- sations.—PTI

Gwyneth Paltrow



Lindsay Lohan

Lindsay Lohan's former assistant skips questioning in witness tampering case

LONDON, 23 March—Lindsay Lohan's former assistant failed to show up for a meeting with her prosecutors.

Gavin Doyle — who was with the 26-year-old actress when she crashed into a cement truck on the Pacific Coast Highway last June, to which she pleaded "no contest" after being charged for lying to police

and trying to blame him — was due to be questioned on Tuesday (19.03.13) as part of an investigation into her lawyer Mark Heller for allegedly witness tampering before her trial on Monday (18.03.13).

A law enforcement source told RadarOnline.com: "Gavin was supposed to meet with Terry White on Tuesday morning to dis-

cuss allegations that Lindsay's attorney, Mark Heller, wanted him to change his testimony at Lohan's lying to the cops trial.

"It's been alleged that Heller instructed Doyle to say photographers were chasing the car Lindsay was driving prior to their crash last year — and that he grabbed the steering wheel, causing Lohan to smash into the cement dump truck. By not showing up for the meeting with White, Doyle isn't doing himself any favours and this makes his behaviour seem very suspicious. "Terry White is now evaluating what his options are going forward. This will be handled, and at the very least, referred to the New York State Bar, where Heller has a legal license, for further investigation."

PTI

Priyanka Chopra upset over Barfi! National Award snub

MUMBAI, 23 March—Actress Priyanka Chopra, whose performance in Barfi! was appreciated by the audience, is upset that the film did not get a single National award.

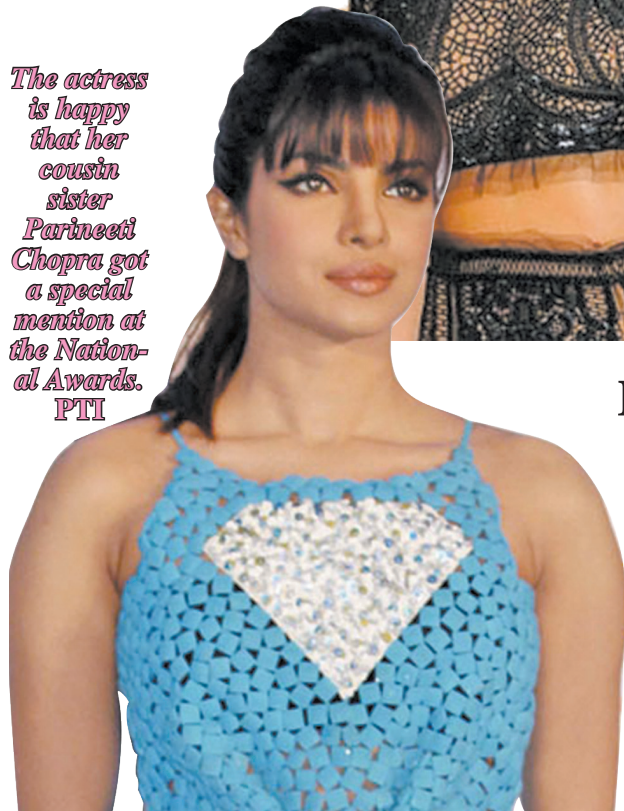
The winners of the 60th National Film Awards were announced on Monday.

"I am feeling bad that Barfi! did not win National Award. But then it is up to the jury why they did not give the award," Priyanka told reporters here at the launch of her first item song Babli Badmaash.

Barfi! was a love story between a speech and hear-

ing impaired boy, played by Ranbir Kapoor, and an autistic girl, played by Priyanka.

Though the movie did not win a National Award, Priyanka is happy for her cousin Parineeti won a special mention for her performance in Ishaqzaade.—PTI



## SPORTS

## Late goal hands China 1-0 victory over 10-man Iraq in Asian Cup qualifying

Yu Hanchao (L) of China tussles for the ball against Ala' Abdulzehra (R) of Iraq during their Asian Cup qualifying match in Changsha, China, on 22 March, 2013. XINHUA



CHANGSHA, 23 March—Substitute Yu Dabao scored in stoppage time to hand China a 1-0 victory over 10-man Iraq in Group C of the 2015 AFC Asian Cup qualifying here on Friday night.

In rain-soaked conditions at the Changsha Helong Sports Centre, Yu, who came off the bench in

the 70th minute, lashed the ball into the net following a goalmouth scramble in the 93rd minute.

"It is a bit lucky for us to win the match, the rain was too heavy for us to make any ground teamwork, I even couldn't see clearly when I hit the ball, but finally we got the victory, which is precious for

us," Yu said.

Iraq were down to 10 men after defender Ali Adnan Kadhim was sent off for a second bookable offence just before halftime.

The home side struggled for 90 minutes for a goal, but their efforts were all in vain in the midst of downpour until Yu Dabao's late winner.

## Haas grabs Bay Hill lead, Woods and Rose in pursuit

ORLANDO, (Florida), 23 March—American Bill Haas carded a bogey-free six-under 66 to surge into the second-round clubhouse lead at the Arnold Palmer Invitational on Friday with Tiger Woods and overnight leader Justin Rose in hot pursuit. Haas, playing the back nine first on another chilly day at Bay Hill, collected birdies at 12 and 13 before adding an eagle at the par-five 16th to reach the turn at four-under.

The 30-year-old dropped two more birdies on his inward stretch to reach nine-under 135 for the tournament, one shot clear of compatriot John Huh (69).

"Obviously, I feel

good about shooting two good scores at this place," Haas told reporters. "I didn't know the media tent where it was, I've never been in here."

"Never had that much great success here but I've always enjoyed coming. I had a nice week



Bill Haas of the US watches his shot on the 13th tee during second round play in the Arnold Palmer Invitational PGA golf tournament in Orlando, Florida on 22 March, 2013.—REUTERS

off last week, got some rest, got away from it, and just felt pretty good coming in."

Americans Ken Duke (68), JJ Henry (67) and Jimmy Walker (69) are in the clubhouse three off the pace on 138.

Rose, who held a two-shot overnight lead on Huh, was among the late starters and moved to nine under for the tournament after recording birdies at the second and sixth holes.

Tiger Woods, who can reclaim the world number one ranking from Rory McIlroy on Sunday with an eighth win at Bay Hill, moved to six under for the tournament after recording a birdie and eagle over his first six holes.—Reuters

## Injured Walcott ruled out of World Cup qualifiers



Arsenal's Theo Walcott (R) talks to Jack Wilshire during a team training session at their training ground in London Colney on 18 Feb, 2013.—REUTERS

LONDON, 23 March—Arsenal striker Theo Walcott has been ruled out of England's World Cup qualifiers against San Marino on Friday and Montenegro next week after picking up a groin and hip injury in training.

"(Walcott) sustained the problem in training with the national team on Thursday and will fly back on Saturday to be assessed by the Club's medical staff," Arsenal's website

The win boosts China's hopes of reaching the Asian Cup finals in Australia in 2015.

"We are still alive in this group of death, it is an award to all of our players, who never gave up until the final whistle," China coach Jose Camacho said after the match.

Camacho came into Friday's match under tremendous pressure following a miserable run of results, and there were rumors that the former Real Madrid and Spain boss would be replaced by Chinese Super League champions Guangzhou Evergrande coach Marcello Lippi.

"I will fight to the final minutes, but the decision will be made by the Chinese FA," said the 57-year-old Spaniard.

Xinhua

## Ferguson fined and Nani banned following United exit

LONDON, 23 March—Manchester United Manager Alex Ferguson has been fined 10,000 euros (8,500 pounds) and their Portuguese winger Nani suspended for one match by UEFA following their Champions League exit to Real Madrid earlier this month.

Ferguson failed to speak to the media after the last 16 second leg in which Nani was given a contro-



Manchester United's manager Alex Ferguson reacts after the Champions League soccer match against Real Madrid at Old Trafford stadium in Manchester, on 5 March, 2013.—REUTERS

versial red card as United lost 2-1 at Old Trafford to go out of the competition 3-2 on aggregate.

In a statement issued on Friday, UEFA said: "Manchester United FC midfielder Nani has been suspended for one match by UEFA's Control and Disciplinary Body, following the red card he received at the UEFA Champions League round of 16 second leg against Real Madrid CF at Old Trafford on 5 March.

"Manchester United head coach Sir Alex Ferguson has been fined 10,000 euros for non-fulfilment of the post-match media obligations at the same match."

Nani was sent off in the 56th minute with United winning 1-0 and looking as if they were going to win the match.—Reuters

## Hamilton sees Mercedes progress in the long run

SEPANG, (Malaysia), 23 March—Lewis Hamilton is confident his Mercedes can be more competitive at the Malaysian Grand Prix than it was at last week's season-opener in Melbourne after an encouraging first day of free practice on Friday.

Hamilton qualified third but finished fifth in the first competitive outing for his new team at Albert Park and despite not being able to match the one-lap speed of his rivals at Sepang, the Briton was buoyed by his day's work.

"It felt quick and better than it did in the last race and fingers crossed it will be," the 2008 world champion told reporters, despite lapping more than a second slower than Melbourne winner Kimi Raikkonen's Lotus.

"We have taken a step forward on long-run pace but the others look pretty quick as well, so it's difficult to judge where we are.



Mercedes Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain drives during the second practice session of the Malaysian F1 Grand Prix at Sepang International Circuit outside Kuala Lumpur, on 22 March, 2013.

REUTERS

"The Lotus looks really quick and it's not until after I analyse the laps that I can judge how good ours was," said Hamilton, who was ninth in both sessions at Sepang.

Managing tyres appears to be the main dilemma facing most teams this season and after rapid degradation

cost Hamilton a chance of a podium in Australia, the Briton feels his team are learning how to get the most out of the Pirellis.

"In the first session, we did chew up the tyres a bit but that was mostly due to the set up of the car, which had a lot of oversteer," he added.—Reuters



Argentine football player and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Lionel Messi (R) and Argentine football player Javier Mascherano (L) show T-shirts during the launching of the "Week of Premature Birth" campaign, in Ezeiza, Buenos Aires, on 21 March, 2013. Argentina will face Venezuela in a 2014 World Cup qualifying soccer match in Buenos Aires on 22 March.—XINHUA

GENERAL



Dancers participate in a ritual to celebrate the Spring Equinox, in Mexico City, capital of Mexico, on 21 March, 2013. People from different parts of Mexico arrived at some archeological sites to celebrate the Equinox of Spring.—XINHUA

Britain's oldest wine merchant to sell Chinese wine

LONDON, 23 March—Britain's oldest wine merchant Berry Bros & Rudd (BBR) announced on Friday it has become the first major retailer in the country to sell Chinese wine. The 314-year-old wine merchant said it would sell four wines from leading Chinese winemaker Changyu alongside the finest offering from Bordeaux and Burgundy.

The four wines are 2008 Chateau Changyu Moser XV, Ningxia; Chateau Changyu Gold Label Ice Wine, Liaoning; Chateau Changyu Blue Label Ice Wine, Liaoning; and Chateau Changyu Black Label Ice Wine, Liaoning, with the price ranging from 19 pounds (29 US dollars) to 65 pounds.

From this week, the four Chinese wine varieties will be for sale alongside the finest

wines from around the world including Ch Petrus from Bordeaux and Domainecontti from Burgundy in BBR stores and website, it said in a statement. A group of connoisseurs, including several famous experts, will taste the four wines. The ice wines are made from frozen grapes, which give the wines a fresh and pure flavour and an intense sweetness.

The BBR buying Director Mark Pardoe said, "China is already the eighth largest producer of wine in the world so it was only a matter of time before it entered the international market and its huge geographical size and range of climates mean that there must be regions capable of producing good wine."

"Until now the country's focus has been on its volume-driven domestic market,

and other export efforts have based on external investment. Changyu's strategy represents a change, with home-grown investment in partnership with international expertise, with a real will to get things done," he said.

"We expect to taste wine of great quality from more Chinese producers," said Pardoe. The BBR, a supplier to the Royal Family since the reign of King George III, now has shops in London and Basingstoke, as well as business in China's Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan and duty free presence in Dubai.—Xinhua

Factory fire in Siberia extinguished

IRKUTSK, (Russia), 23 March—A fire that engulfed a factory in Russia's Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk on Friday has been put out, the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

The fire broke out at a workshop of a harvesting machine plant at 09:40 local time (0240 GMT). No one was injured in the fire. Violation of the

technological process may have caused the fire, said the report.

The Tractor Plants company, the owner of the plant, decided in February to transfer the workshop from Siberia to the Chuvash Republic.

The company said the plant will be closed by the end of 2013. Xinhua

Ship collision causes oil spill near Shanghai

BEIJING, 23 March—Two foreign cargo ships collided off the coast of Shanghai on Tuesday, resulting in an oil leak that has spread across 0.3 square kilometers of water, according to a statement released Friday by the State Oceanic Administration (SOA).

The collision between a British cargo ship and a Panamanian one occurred

early Tuesday morning, causing the British vessel to leak oil, the statement said.

According to the statement, local maritime authorities in Shanghai are organizing forces to clean up the oil slick, while the SOA East China Sea Branch has vowed to continue monitoring the leakage and publicize the results in a timely manner. Xinhua

**MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL**  
(24-3-13 09:30 am ~ 25-3-13 09:30 am) MST

- \* News
- \* Japan Festival 2013
- \* News
- \* Music Programme
- \* News
- \* Chewing Betal Quid: Good or Bad?
- \* Myanmar's Gold Market
- \* News
- \* "Great Shwedagon" Historic & Mysterious places
- \* News
- \* Myanmar Movies Impact "If you had old stories (Part-1)"
- \* News
- \* Myanmar Movies Impact "If you had old stories (Part-2)"
- \* News
- \* Chewing Betal Quid: Good or Bad?
- \* Myanmar's Gold Market
- \* News
- \* Myanmar Movies "Touching Bonds"

**Myanmar TV**  
(24-3-2013, Sunday)

<b>7:00 am</b>	1. Paritta By Venerable Min Gun Sayadaw	<b>4:00 pm</b>	16. Opening Song
<b>7:25 am</b>	2. Health Programme	<b>4:05 pm</b>	17. Songs For Upholding National Spirit
<b>7:30 am</b>	3. Morning News	<b>4:10 pm</b>	18. Musical Programme
<b>7:40 am</b>	4. International News	<b>4:20 pm</b>	19. University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) -Third Year (Law)
<b>7:50 am</b>	5. Nice & Sweet Song	<b>4:50 pm</b>	20. Sing & Enjoy
<b>7:55 am</b>	6. (38) Phyar Mingalars	<b>6:00 pm</b>	21. Evening News
<b>8:15 am</b>	7. Teleplay (Traffic)	<b>6:15 pm</b>	22. Weather Report
<b>8:25 am</b>	8. SEA Games (Go for Gold) (Swimming)	<b>6:20 pm</b>	23. Cartoon Series
<b>11:00 am</b>	9. Martial Song	<b>6:45 pm</b>	24. TV Drama Series
<b>11:10 am</b>	10. Musical Programme	<b>7:00 pm</b>	25. News
<b>11:20 am</b>	11. Round Up Of The Week's TV International News	<b>7:10 pm</b>	26. TV Drama Series
<b>11:30 am</b>	12. Myanmar Movies	<b>8:00</b>	27. News
<b>1:20 pm</b>	13. Song Varities	<b>8:00 pm</b>	28. International News
<b>1:35 pm</b>	14. Documentary	<b>8:00 pm</b>	29. Weather Report
<b>1:45 pm</b>	15. Dance of National Races	<b>10:00 pm</b>	30. Tamnyethnar Takwetsar
		<b>10:00 pm</b>	31. TV Drama Series
		<b>10:00 pm</b>	32. News
		<b>10:00 pm</b>	33. New Melody

Striker-less Germany ease past Kazakhstan 3-0 to stay top

ASTANA, 23 March—Germany eased past lowly Kazakhstan 3-0 on Friday without deploying any strikers for the first time in a competitive match under coach Joachim Loew as they stayed top of their World Cup qualifying Group C.

Two goals in two minutes midway through the first half from midfielders Bastian Schweinsteiger and Mario Goetze, playing in a forward role, quickly put the Germans in control and dashed any faint hopes for the hosts.

Thomas Mueller grabbed Germany's third goal in the 74th minute in a lacklustre

second half after the second-bottom home side attempted a brief comeback and even hit the bar.

The result lifted leaders Germany to 13 points from five games, recovering from a 4-4 draw with Sweden in

October when they had led 4-0.

Despite a midnight kickoff to accommodate German viewers with a prime-time start back home and an artificial pitch, Germany did not need long to adapt.

Loew, whose 4-2-3-1 system had led Germany to two straight semi-finals in the past two

major tournaments, opted for no forward in his 91st game in charge even before Thursday's injury to striker Mario Gomez.

The coach had only previously gone without a striker for a brief period in a friendly against France in February. Goetze made an instant impact up front, charging past three defenders in a 20-metre solo run only to have his close-range effort smothered by keeper Andrei Sidelnikov. Reuters



Germany's national team players celebrate a goal next to Kazakhstan's goalkeeper Andrei Sidelnikov during their 2014 World Cup qualifying soccer match in Astana on 23 March, 2013.—REUTERS

## Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann, wife and party leave for New Zealand

YANGON, 23 March— At the invitation of Speaker of Lower House of New Zealand Rt Hon David Carter, a Myanmar delegation led by Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann and wife Daw Khin Lay Thet left here by air this morning.

They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by Deputy Speaker of the Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Deputy Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin

Thet Htay, Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Sein Tin Win, Deputy Speaker U Tin Aung, and those from Pyithu Hluttaw Committees and commissions.

The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and wife were accompanied by Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw International Relations Committee U Hla Myint

Oo, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Agriculture, Livestock Breeding and Fishery Development Committee U Soe Naing, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Investment and Industrial Development Committee U Htay Myint, member of Pyithu Hluttaw Public Accounts Committee Dr Win Myint and officials.

MNA



*Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann and party being seen off by officials at Yangon*

*International Airport.—MNA*

## Union level Peace-making Work Committee, PNLO agree to start political dialogues

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March—The Union level Peace-making Work Committee and Pa-O National Liberation Organization (PNLO) held peace talks at national level at Myanmar Peace Center on Shweli Street here today, signing an

agreement in ten major sectors.

Present at the talks were Vice-Chairman of Union level Peace-making Work Committee Union Minister U Aung Min, Union Ministers U Khin Maung Soe, U Win Tun and U Ohn Myint, Shan

State Chief Minister U Sao Aung Myat, PNLO Chairman Col Khun Okka, general secretary U Khun Myint Tun, Col Khun Thurein and CEC members, representatives from the youth union, women affairs and labour affairs organizations.

The two sides reached an agreement in ten major sectors including relief, social affairs, anti-drug, and regional development, most important of all continued ceasefire. The two parties also agreed to continue political dialogues.

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## Mandalay Region government forms committees for peace and stability in Meiktila Township

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March—Mandalay Region government has formed committees for ensuring peace and stability in Meiktila Township starting from 22 March.

Those committees are Central Supervisory Committee including Region Chief Minister U Ye Myint as Chairman, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint as Secretary with eight members, Security Committee chaired by Commander of No 4 Operations Control Command Col Moe Myint Tun and six members, Rescue and Resettlement Committee chaired by Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Phone Swe and three members, Rule of Law Committee

led by Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint as Chairman and five members, Education Committee by Deputy Minister for Education U Aye Kyu as Chairman and seven members, Health Committee by Deputy Director-General Dr Soe Lwin Nyein as Chairman and two members, Religious Affairs Committee by Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs Dr Maung Maung Htay as Chairman and three members and Information Committee by Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Aung Kyaw Moe as Chairman and seven members. Peace and stability has been restored in Meiktila Township after issuing declaration of state of emergency on 22 March by the President Office.

MNA

## 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary World Meteorology Day observed

YANGON, 23 March— The Meteorology and Hydrology Department under the Ministry of Transport marked the 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary World Meteorology Day at the department, here, this morning. Director-General of Meteorology and Hydrology Department Dr Har Yin Naing Tiyan gave a speech and Deputy Director-

General U Kyaw Moe Oo read a message sent by M Jarraud, General Secretary of World Meteorological Organization.

In line with this year's motto "Watching the Weather to Protect Life and Property", the department is monitoring and issuing weather conditions day and night for the public.

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## Interfaith Friendship Organization issues statement on restoring of peace and stability

NAY PYI TAW, 23 March—The Interfaith Friendship Organization issued a statement on its stance for situation of Meiktila on 20 March.

The following is the unofficial translation of the statement.

### Interfaith Friendship Organization Republic of the Union of Myanmar Request to followers of different religions and statement of religious leaders of Interfaith Friendship Organization

We the religious leaders of Interfaith Friendship Organization, issued this statement expressing our deepest sympathy for sufferers regarding the issue which began as a personal brawl on 20 March in Meiktila, Mandalay Region and then escalated into a sectarian violence.

1. First of all, we would like to request the members of the Sangha to help ease the tensions with benevolence and beg for your forgiveness if we have done anything wrong.
2. We would also like to urge the government organizations to lay effective security plans and provide security to people of the two communities, take actions as necessary under the law as soon as possible.
3. Followers of different religions including the four major religions in Myanmar are also requested to make sure each other adhere to law and maintain the community harmony with love and kindness and are to keep themselves away from unnecessary conflicts.
4. The media is also requested to report only appropriate and correct news and avoid circulating rumors that could lead to conflict.
5. Myanmar is on the right track toward greater development, however various forms of undesirable conflicts are posing threat to its progress and the public is requested not to take part in unlawful acts but to stop them in unity with a good sense of awareness.

U Shwe  
(Hinduism)  
Patron

U Sein Win Aung  
(Buddhism)  
Chairman

U Nyunt Maung Shein  
(Islam)  
Vice-Chairman

Dr Tha Nyan  
(Christianity)  
Secretary