

President U Thein Sein sends felicitations to Serbian President

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Feb—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Tomislav Nikolic, President of the Republic of Serbia, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Serbia, which falls on 15 February 2014.—MNA

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No reply for release of Myanmar inmates in Thai prisons

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Regarding a question about sentenced Myanmar citizens in Thailand by U Thein Nyunt of Thingangyun Constituency at the 14th-day session of Pyithu Hluttaw today, Deputy

Minister for Homes Affairs Brig-Gen Kyaw Zan Myint replied that not only diplomatic channels but also constant efforts are being made for the release of Myanmar inmates in Thai prisons not only in accord with

laws, bylaws, rules and regulations of Thailand. Although several requests had been made for granting a pardon for more than 660 Myanmar inmates, no reply was received. He said signing of an MoU with

Thailand is impossible as Transfer of Sentenced Persons Law has not yet been enacted in Myanmar. A total of over 3900 Myanmar citizens are serving prison terms in Thailand and most of them were convicted of narcotics

offences, he added.

Next, Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry Dr Aye Myint Maung responded to the question of U Aye of Homalin Constituency that

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Sitagu ShweU Yazuthit Free Eye Hospital opened in Thegon Tsp



Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun presses a button to open Sitagu ShweU Yazuthit Free Eye Hospital.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Sitagu ShweU Yazuthit Free Eye Hospital was opened this morning in Tat Village, Thegon Township, Pyay District, Bago Region.

On the occasion, Sitagu International Buddhist Academy Chancellor Venerable Sayadaw Bhaddanta Nanissara made clarification on the purposes of the opening.

Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun supplicated on purpose of opening the hospital.

Wellwishers donated cash to the funds of the

hospital. On behalf of the Sayadaw, the secretary of Sitagu Missionary Association presented medicines and other hospital equipment to Thegon Township Hospital.

Union Minister U Hla Tun, Bago Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win and wellwisher Daw Shwe U formally opened the hospital and visited there.

MNA

Specialists from abroad to provide free health care services to patients at ENT Hospital (Yangon)

The specialists from abroad will give free health care services to the patients at Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital on Banyadala Street, Tamway Township.

Arrangement has been made to provide free health care services by the ear, nose and throat specialists from England on 17-19 February. Arrangements are being made to directly cure the patients by the specialists when they arrive in Myanmar.

The patients need to

register at the hospital to receive treatment of ear, nose and throat disorders as of early February.

The specialists will treat throat cancer and oral cancer and will undergo surgeries if necessary. The ear, nose and throat patients have been undergoing medical check-up at Out-patients department of the hospital daily. Now, they will have a chance to receive free health care services of the specialists from foreign country. It is learnt that free health care services are being given

Byline; Maung Maung Myint Swe;
Photo; Tin Soe (Myanma Alinn)

to the patients by the specialists from Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand two times per year at the hospital.

The ear, nose and throat specialists are providing not only treatments to the patients by making field trip in Myanmar but also joint surgeries at



Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital in Yangon.

Myanma Alinn; 13-2-2014

Trs: KHS

Photo shows Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist Hospital (Yangon) which gives health care to people.

KAWTHOUNG, 14 Feb—Under the arrangements of Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development and Taninthayi Region government, a ceremony to distribute chickens and pigs to rural people was held at Tanyonpada Village of 10th-Mile Village-tract in Kawthoung Township yesterday.

Head of Taninthayi Region Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department Dr Khin Maung explained purpose of providing the chickens, cows and pigs to the local people, arrangements for disbursement of loans to the local people with sort interest rate by Rural Development Bank and plans of caring animal health.

Officials presented 22 pigs to 11 local people.

The head of the region department and party visited integrated farms of local battalions and attended to

Chickens, pigs provided to rural people



the needs.

With the aim of

ensuring rural development, poverty alleviation and

development of meat and fish sector, Taninthayi

Region government allotted funds to townships. Each

Meiktila to get four digital traffic lights

MEIKTILA, 14 Feb—As part of efforts to reduce traffic incidents and enforce traffic rules, four digital traffic lights worth K 19.2 million will be installed in front of the Basic Education

High School No.1, at the Magiykon junction, in front of Thirimingala bus terminal and Zwe Yon water tank in Meiktila Township.

Plans are underway to install more traffic lights

in Wundwin, Mahlaing and Thazi townships of Meiktila District. Mandalay Zarni Electronics will make installation of traffic lights in these four townships.

NLM-018



Prizes awarded to winners in sports events



PAKOKKU, 14 Feb—The prize presentation for the Pakokku District Deputy Commissioner's Trophy (Volleyball, Chess, Table Tennis) Tournament and Township Management Committee Chairman's Trophy U-25 Football Tournament took place at District Sports Ground in Pakokku of Magway Region

on 12 February.

Chairman of Township Management Committee U Aung Naing Oo and officials presented prizes to the winners in the novice, junior and open class events of international chess, volleyball and table tennis events.

Kyemon-Aung (Mann Tekkatho)

Ngaphe people get water supply

MINBU, 14 Feb—Ngaphe Township Development Affairs Committee supplies water to villages of the township through water pipelines spending K 3 million for 2013-14 fiscal

year.

The water pipeline in 13000 feet length has been laid from the spring to the residences of Linte Village successfully.—Kyemon-Tin Tun Oo (IPRD)

Sports

Suzuki Wagon hits overturned Probox

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—A traffic accident occurred between mile posts 67/1 and 67/2 on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway in DaikU Township of Bago Region at 11.10 pm on 9 February.

Police from Okshitkon Expressway Police Outpost inspected the traffic accident.

In the incident, A Probox driven by Tun Tun Min, 28, of Yankin

Township, heading for Yangon from Mandalay, hit a buffalo and then stopped at the tree.

After that, a Suzuki Wagon driven by Kyaw Zin Oo, 23 of Hlinethaya Township of Yangon Region, bumped against the buffalo again.

In the incident, Tun Tun Min and his brother Aung Thein Min and Naing Lin from Probox, Kyaw Zin Oo and Ko Aung Min of



Suzuki Wagon was injured. Police rushed to the injured to DaikU People's Hospital.

Both vehicles were damaged and these vehicles lost K 1.5 million each for

damages. Okshitpin Expressway Police Station opened a file of lawsuit against Tun Tun Min and Kyaw Zin Oo under the law.—Min Khant Maung

Accident

Two vehicles crash each others

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—According to the information, police of Thayet Myoma police station inspected traffic accident of Tuk-Tuk driven by Than Zaw Moe, 25 of Thayet Township and a vehicle driven by Tun Naing, 24 of

Thayet Township bumped against each other.

Than Zaw Moe suffered from injuries.

Thayet Myoma Police Station opened files of lawsuit against both drivers under the law.

Min Khant Maung

Rural Development

township got K 9 million for providing animal pedigrees to the rural people spending the fund.

In Kawthoung Township, locals have got 150 pigs, 580 chickens and two cows.

Plans have been adopted to give more assistance to the locals.

Kyemon-Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

Basic first-aid course concludes

PAKOKKU, 14 Feb—Mechanical Training School (Pakokku) of Ministry of Industry conducted the basic first-aid course 1/2014 at the training school in Chaukkan Village-tract in Pakokku Township on 12 February.

Staff Officers Dr Thura Ko Ko and U Than Win of Social Welfare Department and U Ye Htut Zaw of the training school presented certificates to the trainees.

Deputy Commanding Officer U Kyaw Thura of the Pakokku Township Red Cross Brigade handed the medical bag to the training school through Principal U Soe Win.—Kyemon-Aung (Mann Tekkatho)

WORLD

Volcano erupts in Indonesia, 100,000 evacuated, airports closed

JAKARTA, 14 Feb — A volcano erupted late on Thursday night on the heavily populated Indonesian island of Java, sending a huge plume of ash and sand 17 km (10 miles) into the air and forcing the closure of three airports.

Mount Kelud is 140 km south of Indonesia's second biggest city Surabaya, a major industrial centre. The cloud from the eruption was seen as far as 9 km to the west, and forced the shutdown of airports at Surabaya and the cities of Yogyakarta and Solo.

"Areas to the west of Mount Kelud, including central Java, Yogyakarta,

Cilacap, Magelang, Temanggung and Boyolali are still experiencing showers of ash because last night the biggest eruption ... threw sand and ash 17 km into the air to the west," National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Nugroho said by telephone.

Cilacap is home to a major oil refinery, but there was no immediate word on whether its operations had been affected. Its refineries supply about a third of the country's fuel needs.

The agency later said the cloud was dissipating and that the volcano was no longer erupting.

Nugroho said the agency was still trying to con-

firm reports that two people had died.

"We don't have data yet on how many people have been evacuated in total. We can say 200,000 people were affected. We received reports of deaths but we have not verified them yet," he said.

The eruption caused minimal damage to buildings, Sutopo said, but had left 3 to 5 cm (1 1/2 to 2 inches) of ash and sand on roads. An estimated 200,000 people live within a 10 km radius of Mt Kelud, one of nearly 130 active volcanoes in the world's fourth most populous country.

At least 11 people were



Workers stand near a Citilink airplane covered with ash from Mount Kelud at Adi Sucipto Airport in Yogyakarta on 14 Feb, 2014. —REUTERS

killed earlier this month in the north of the island of Sumatra when Mount Sinabung erupted.

The volcano has been

spewing lava and ash for months, forcing thousands to flee the area and destroying crops.

President Susilo Bam-

bang Yudhoyono wrote in a message on Twitter that he planned to visit the area near Kelud.

Reuters

Kerry says N Korea will not be accepted as nuclear state



US Secretary of State John Kerry speaks during a joint Press conference after talks with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se in Seoul on 13 Feb, 2014. KYODO NEWS

SEOUL, 14 Feb— US Secretary of State John Kerry reiterated on Friday amid a visit to South Korea that the United States will not accept North Korea as

a nuclear state and called for the North's "verifiable denuclearization."

"Let me be clear, the United States will not accept North Korea as a

nuclear state," Kerry said at a joint news conference after talks with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se.

He called on North Korea to take "meaningful actions" to prove it is really committed to denuclearization.

Kerry, who also held talks with President Park Geun Hye after arriving in Seoul earlier in the day, also urged South Korea and Japan to find ways to resolve conflicts arising from their shared history.

Yun said South Korea welcomes "constructive efforts" made by the United States to improve ties between countries in Northeast Asia.

But in an apparent reference to Japan, he said, "Any neighbouring country

should not say or do regressive things that go against the history."

Bilateral ties between South Korea and Japan are strained due to disputes over interpretation of history related to Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945. They also have a territorial dispute over islets in the Sea of Japan.

Kerry also said annual US-South Korea military exercises will begin as scheduled on 24 February despite North Korea's call for them to be canceled or postponed.

He urged North Korea not to link the drills to the holding of reunions of Korean families separated by the 1950-1953 Korean War.

Kyodo News

Britain unveils 272 bln USD defence spending plan

LONDON, 14 Feb— Britain's Ministry of Defence (MoD) on Thursday released a 164-billion-pound (272 billion US dollars) defence equipment spending plan for the next decade, a move aimed at easing years of mismanagement in the country's military expenditure.

It outlines Britain's defence equipment spending from 2013 to 2023, detailing major defense projects and corresponding budgets in the sectors of aircraft carriers, combat air, helicopters, submarines, as well as defense information systems over the next decade.

According to the plan, a total of 38 billion British pounds, nearly a quarter of the overall budget, will be invested in the country's

nuclear deterrent submarines and related equipments for the coming 10 years. The sum reflected a rise in the production costs of Britain's new generation nuclear deterrent "successor" submarines, as the country is undertaking an ambitious upgrading of its Trident system, a sea-based nuclear weapons system that can fire ballistic missiles from submarines.

Other major defence outlays for the coming decade include 17.4 billion pounds for surface ships including two Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, 18.8 billion for the Combat Air sector, 15.8 billion for Information Systems and Services, and 13.1 billion for land equipment.

Xinhua

Japan committed to reaching broad agreement at next TPP meeting

TOKYO, 14 Feb — Japan's minister in charge of the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade talks expressed commitment on Friday to concluding the ambitious trade deal at a TPP ministerial meeting starting next week in Singapore.

TPP minister Akira Amari also said he will hold bilateral talks with US Trade Representative Michael Froman on Saturday in Washington over outstanding issues to pave the way for early conclusion of the pact.

"We need to reach a broad agreement by any means" at the 22-25 February ministerial conference of all 12 TPP member countries, he told a Press conference. "The key is whether Japan and the United States can reach an agreement on remaining issues," Amari said.

Tokyo and Washington, the two biggest economies in the TPP, have been at odds over how to deal with tariffs Japan seeks to retain on key farm products including rice and wheat.

Kyodo News

Police move onto protest site in Bangkok, no violence

BANGKOK, 14 Feb — Thai police moved onto a protest site in Bangkok on Friday where demonstrators have been camped out for more than three months in their campaign to topple the government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, a Reuters witness said.

There was no violence as at least 1,000 police cleared protesters from a site stretching from Royal Plaza to the United Nations headquarters, an area that

has been occupied since anti-government rallies began in November.

A few of the officers were armed but most carried just batons and shields, the witness said.

Some protesters hurled abuse but otherwise police met no resistance in a historic area of the capital that includes Government House and the Metropolitan Police headquarters, scenes of violent clashes in November and December.

The area is not one of



Anti-government protesters camp on Rama VIII bridge in Bangkok 4 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

the three largest protest sites, where demonstrators have been rallying to try to oust Yingluck, and in recent weeks the numbers there have dwindled to a small hard core.

The protesters blocked

voting in a fifth of Thailand's constituencies in a general election on 2 February. They want electoral rules rewritten before any fresh poll and have vowed to keep up their campaign.

Reuters

WORLD

Russia, US promise to help push forward Syria peace talks

GENEVA, 14 Feb — Russia and the United States reaffirmed their support to the ongoing second round of Geneva II conference on Syria and assured that they would help to push forward the stalled peace talks, said UN-Arab League Special Envoy to Syria Lakhdar Brahimi on Thursday.

After the two-hour long trilateral meeting with Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Gennady Gatilov and US Under Sec-

retary of State Wendy Sherman held this afternoon amid the current round of negotiations between Syrian two warring sides, Brahimi told a press conference that the “regular” trilateral meeting was “useful and important.” The envoy briefed the two sides, which initiated the Geneva II conference, about the progress of the peaceful process which is in an effort to solve the nearly three-year-old Syria conflict.

“They have kindly re-

affirmed their support to what we are trying to do, and promise that they will help both here and in their capitals and elsewhere to unblock the situation for us, because until now we are not making much progress in this process,” said Brahimi. The international mediator said in the near future, though the exact date was not set yet, he would travel to New York, the location of the UN headquarters, to report to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and

probably also to the Security Council, in regard of the Syria peace talks.

When asked about whether the ongoing conference would end up as a failure, Brahimi, after noting the difficulty and complication of the situation, answered: “Failure is always staring at us in the face. As far as the United Nations is concerned, we will certainly not leave one stone unturned if there is a possibility to move forward.”—Xinhua



UN-Arab League Special Envoy to Syria Lakhdar Brahimi speaks at a Press conference in Geneva, Switzerland, on 13 Feb, 2014. Russia and the United States reaffirmed their support to the ongoing second round of Geneva II conference on Syria and assured that they would help to push forward the stalled peace talks, Brahimi said on Thursday.

XINHUA

Colombia, rebels say making progress in talks over drug trade



Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos (C) speaks in between Defence Minister Juan Carlos Pinzon (L) and police chief Rodolfo Palomino during an official ceremony at the police headquarters in Bogota on 4 Feb, 2014 file photo. —REUTERS

BOGOTA, 14 Feb — The Colombian government and FARC guerrilla negotiators said on Thursday that they had made progress toward an agreement on combating illegal drug trafficking, a sign that peace talks were making headway before elections.

The joint statement by President Juan Manuel

Santos' government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) said there had been “advances” in the negotiations, the latest round of which concluded on Thursday. The talks are due to resume on 24 February.

“We have been working nonstop throughout this round of conversations

and we have started building agreements on the point ‘solving the illicit drugs problem,’” the statement said. Sustained progress could help President Juan Manuel Santos in his campaign for re-election in May. Santos has been criticized by opposition candidates for his decision to negotiate with the guerrillas rather than defeat them militarily.

Progress in the talks also indicates that they have not been hampered by accusations that rogue members of military intelligence were spying on government negotiators. FARC has also said its delegation was being spied upon. Drug trafficking is the third of six points under discussion by the two sides. The talks, hosted by Cuba over the past 15 months, aim to end half a century of hostilities in Latin America's longest running guerrilla conflict.

Reuters

Chubu Electric seeks to restart Hamaoka nuclear plant

TOKYO, 14 Feb — Chubu Electric Power Co. applied on Friday for a state safety assessment of one of its reactors at the Hamaoka nuclear power plant in central Japan that was forced to shut down in 2011 as the previous government viewed operation of the complex as too risky.



Masatoshi Sakaguchi (R), vice president of Chubu Electric Power Co, hands applications to an official of the Nuclear Regulation Authority in Tokyo on 14 Feb, 2014, for a state safety assessment of one of its reactors at the Hamaoka nuclear power plant. The plant in central Japan was forced to shut down in 2011 as the previous government viewed operation of the complex as too risky. —KYODO NEWS

With the move, the total number of reactors for which applications for safety checks have been submitted to the Nuclear Regulation Authority rose to 17. The NRA is expected to employ the same procedure to check the Hamaoka No. 4 unit as for the other reactors, effectively ignor-

ing the unusual government request issued in May 2011 for operation of the plant to be suspended because of doubts about its preparedness for tsunami.

Located on the Pacific coast, about 190 kilometres southwest of Tokyo, the Hamaoka complex is known to be located on an assumed epicentral area for a massive earthquake. Two of the five reactors at the plant were retired in 2009.

Chubu Electric has been working to install huge seawalls and implement other measures to protect the plant, which are expected to be completed by September 2015. Japan has revamped its regulatory setup by launching the NRA and also introduced a set of new safety requirements that reflect the lessons learned from the disaster at Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Fukushima Daiichi plant, sparked by a huge earthquake and tsunami in March 2011.

Kyodo News

Cuba hopes EU talks will lead to US gesture

HAVANA, 14 Feb — Cuba hopes the opening of negotiations on a new political agreement with the European Union could lead to similar talks with the United States, a visiting EU commissioner said Cuba's foreign minister told her on Thursday.

EU Education Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou said she, too, hoped the launching of an EU-Cuba dialogue would lead to better relations between Cuba and the United States, which severed diplomatic ties with the communist island in 1961 and

imposed an economic embargo a year later.

Vassiliou spoke to reporters after meeting Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez. “He said if negotiations with the EU start, it would be a good message also for the U.S. and that we hope that President Obama will be able to also proceed with a similar gesture without any political costs,” Vassiliou said.

By suggesting Obama could extend an opening to Cuba without political costs, Rodriguez may have been referring to a public opinion poll released



Androulla Vassiliou European Commissioner for Education (L) and Johann Schneider-Ammann Switzerland's Economy minister listens to CERN Director General Rolf Heuer (not pictured) during a visit of the Compact Muon Solenoid (CMS) experience at the Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in the French village of Cessy near Geneva in Switzerland on 15 April, 2013 file photo. —REUTERS

on Tuesday showing most Americans, and a strong majority of Floridians, support normalizing relations

with Cuba.

Rodriguez did not make himself available to reporters.—Reuters

Bomb hoax prompts evacuation at Oklahoma university

HOUSTON, 14 Feb — A school bus hub and a parking garage at Oklahoma State University (OSU) were evacuated Thursday after a bomb threat was reported, university officials said. A female called university police on Thursday morning and reported a bomb at the bus terminal. The university then evacuated the terminal and a nearby parking garage, according to a campus alert on the OSU's official website.

Police deterred traffic

around the area and notified university officials immediately. A temporary bus terminal was set while students were directed to park in other garages.

Authorities at OSU said they found nothing of concern after doing an initial sweep of the area. They called the Oklahoma Highway Patrol bomb squad and troopers with dogs to search the area. The facilities were reopened after a secondary sweep found nothing suspicious, according to the website.—Xinhua

WORLD

US denies plans to destabilize Kenya

NAIROBI, 14 Feb — The US government on Thursday refuted allegations that it is planning to undermine and destabilize the Kenyan government. US Ambassador to Kenya Robert F Godec said the statement by Kenya's National Security Advisory Committee (NSAC) that Washington seeks to "undermine" or "destabilize" the government of Kenya is false.

"The Government of the United States is a strong and committed partner of the government of Kenya and has been so for 50 years," Godec said in a statement issued in Nairobi.

"Reflecting the US commitment to our partnership, we work with the Kenyan government and civil society throughout the country on security, health, education, conflict prevention, agriculture, and in many other areas," he added. The East African country's top security organ has accused the US development agency of planning to destabilize the government by sponsoring streets demonstrations.

A statement from Cabinet Secretary Francis Kimemia said Kenya's NSAC has asked the Foreign Ministry to urgently summon the US Agency for International Development (USAID) officials to give more information over its plans to topple the government using activists. "NSAC is in possession of credible intelligent documents and information detailing how the US donor agency has consistently funded the demonstrations by activists," Kimemia said in the statement on Thursday.

Xinhua



United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (L) points to Ameerah Haq, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, as she signs the Compact at the UN headquarters in New York, on 13 Feb, 2014. Leaders of UN departments, offices, funds and programmes on Thursday signed compacts with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in a public commitment to strengthening the UN as a more performance-driven organization.

XINHUA

Death toll rises to 6 in car bomb attack near Mogadishu airport

MOGADISHU, 14 Feb — At least six people are confirmed dead and more than 16 others wounded after a car bomb exploded outside the main gate of the Mogadishu airport, Somali medical officials said on Thursday. The UN office in the Horn of Africa country said in a statement four of its security guards were among the injured. The office confirmed the car bomb "exploded close to a convoy of UN vehicles."

"The UN in Somalia strongly condemns the attack and expresses deep sorrow at the reported deaths and injuries of Somali bystanders. A UN car was damaged but no UN staff were injured. Four security escorts were lightly injured," UN envoy to Somalia Nicolas Kay said in a statement.

Chief of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Mahamat Saleh Annadif strongly deplored the deadly car bomb

attack near the Mogadishu airport.

A car laden with explosives was remotely detonated as other vehicles passed outside the gate of the Mogadishu International Airport.

"I send my heartfelt condolence to the bereaved friends and families and join the Somali people in unequivocally condemning this craven attack which is a classical display of Al-Shabaab's faltering capabilities," said Annadif.

The AMISOM chief called on Somalis to join hands with the security forces in countering Al-Shabaab's activities.

"Around 1240 HRS, a Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) went off outside the restaurant located next to the Aden Abdulle International Airport injuring and killing innocent civilian passersby," AMISOM said in a statement.

Xinhua

Snow hits Japan archipelago, disrupting traffic

TOKYO, 14 Feb — Snow hit the Pacific coast of eastern and western Japan on Friday, leading to cancellations and delays of air, railway and road traffic.

Snowfall reached 7 centimeters in Nagoya, 4 cm in Osaka and 1 cm in central Tokyo in the morning. Late last week, heavy snow hit Tokyo and its vicinity.

In other areas, snowfall reached 14 cm in the ancient capital of Nara, 4 cm in Tokushima and 3 centimeters in Takamatsu on the smallest main island of Shikoku. The Japan Meteorological Agency said heavy snow would continue hitting western and eastern Japan through Saturday,

urging people to take precautions.

Heavy snow is also expected to hit the Tohoku region in northeastern Japan from Saturday to Sunday, the weather agency said.

Cold air poured into an atmospheric depression which moved off the southern coast of the Japanese archipelago, bringing snow, the weather agency said.

Japan Airlines Co canceled seven flights to and from Tokyo's Haneda airport, while All Nippon Airways Co canceled 40 flights to and from Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya.

Central Japan Railway Co, known as JR Tokai, and West Japan Railway Co, known as JR West, slowed

down bullet train operations on some parts of the Tokaido-Sanyo Shinkansen lines, causing delay, the railway operators said.

Many highways across the country were closed to traffic due to heavy snows.

In Tokyo, many people suffered injuries as they slipped and fell, police and firefighters said.

Snowfall may reach up to 50 cm in mountainous areas in the Kanto-Koshin region and the Tokai region in central Japan, 25 cm in the Kinki region in western Japan, 20 cm in Shikoku and the Tohoku region, and 10 cm in downtown Tokyo by Saturday morning, the weather agency said.

Kyodo News

Hiroshima University Belarus institute to study low dose exposure

HIROSHIMA, 14 Feb — Japan's Hiroshima University said on Thursday it has agreed with a Belarusian research institute to jointly study the health effects on humans of exposure to low dose radiation.

The university's Research Institute for Radiation, Biology and Medicine and Belarus's Republican Research Centre for Radiation Medicine and Human Ecology aim to contribute to the treatment of people exposed to radiation following the March 2011 accident at Tokyo Electric Power Co's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

The Belarus organization was established to promote the health and welfare of victims of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster in the former Soviet Union. Hiroshima University will bring its extensive experience in radiation medicine and the treatment of radiation expo-



Toshiya Inaba (R), the leader of a research institute at Hiroshima University, and Alexander Rozhko, head of a Belarusian research institute, shake hands in Hiroshima, western Japan, on 13 Feb, 2014, after concluding a deal to jointly study the health effects on humans of exposure to low dose radiation. —KYODO NEWS

sure to the research venture.

During a signing ceremony Thursday on the university's campus, officials noted that the agreement will allow researchers and graduate students from the two countries to meet and exchange views on their

work.

"We hope to learn about the valuable knowledge gained from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster," said Toshiya Inaba, the leader of the university's research institute.

Kyodo News

Cultural sites in north Mali damaged by armed extremists

UNITED NATIONS, 14 Feb — Some 90 percent of the 11th century archaeological site of Gao Saneye in northern Mali was pillaged by Islamic extremists during their seizure of the region in 2012, United Nations cultural officials reported on Thursday.

Lazare Eloundou Assomo, country director of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization (UNESCO), said after visiting the Malian city with Malian and international experts that traditional musical instruments and costumes were destroyed, and a World Heritage site mosque needs urgent repairs.

The report on the damage to cultural heritage in the town of Gao was completed after a UN assessment last year of

Timbuktu, another major heritage site in northern Mali, found that damage there was more extensive than first estimated, including the destruction of parts of the 15th century Djingareyber Mosque, one of three madrassas comprising the University of Timbuktu.

"Concerning Gao's heritage, we must address the trauma experienced by

the local population following violent attempts to destroy their cultural identity and practices, including traditional music," Assomo said.

"Urgent measures are required to safeguard the Tomb of Askia World Heritage site before the next rainy season in June," said the official.

Xinhua



A couple pose for photos during a lantern exhibition in Ningbo, east China's Zhejiang Province, on 13 Feb, 2014. The Chinese Lantern Festival fell on Friday this year, the same day as the western festival for lovers - the valentine's day. —XINHUA

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Jaw-inspiring: Ancient fish was pivotal in evolution of face, researchers find

WASHINGTON, 14 Feb — Let's face it. It's easy to take for granted that mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish — vertebrates just like people — have a face. But it has not always been the case. The first creatures with a backbone — jawless fish from hundreds of millions of years ago — did not. Scientists have been eager to learn how the evolution of the face unfolded. A small, primitive armored fish known as Romundina that swam the seas 415 million years ago and whose fossilized remains were unearthed in the Canadian Arctic is providing some revealing answers.

With Romundina at the centre of their work, Swedish and French researchers described in a study published in the journal *Nature* on Wednesday the step-by-step development of the face as jawless vertebrates evolved into creatures with jaws. The evolution of the

jaw led to development of the face. The researchers scanned the internal structures of Romundina's skull using high-energy X-rays at the European Synchrotron (ESRF) in France, then digitally reconstructed the anatomy in three dimensions.

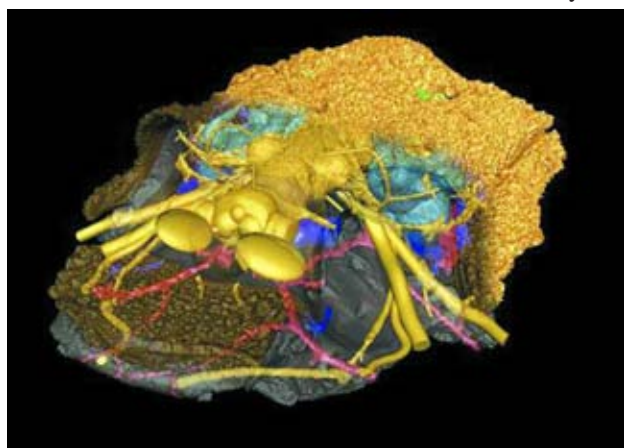
Romundina, one of the earliest jawed fish, was found to boast a mix of

primitive features seen in jawless fish and more modern ones that appear in fish with jaws. Its head had a distinctive anatomy, with a very short forebrain and an odd "upper lip" extending forward in front of the nose, they said. Romundina was a type of fish called a placoderm that thrived during the Silurian and Devonian periods in Earth's history but

disappeared about 360 million years ago. It was small, but some placoderms like the fearsome Dunkleosteus became apex predators bigger than a great white shark.

Per Ahlberg, an expert in vertebrate evolution at Uppsala University in Sweden, said Romundina was roughly 8 inches long, had a small defensive spine on its back and had jaws without real teeth but with flat crushing plates. Its front end was encased in armour, while its back end was flexible, with fins and a shark-like tail, Ahlberg said. It may have hunted small invertebrates like worms and crustaceans. While the very first vertebrates were jawless, the only ones left are lampreys and hagfishes. "The face is one of the most important and emotionally significant parts of our anatomy, so it is interesting to understand how it came into being," Ahlberg said by email.

Reuters



A computer model of a Romundina based on scan data from the 2cm long Romundina skull is shown in this image courtesy of Uppsala University in Sweden.

Reuters

Comcast takeover of Time Warner Cable to reshape US pay TV

NEW YORK, 14 Feb — Comcast Corp's proposed \$45.2 billion takeover of Time Warner Cable Inc could face close scrutiny from US antitrust regulators because of the deal's poten-

tial to reshape the country's pay TV and broadband markets. The company resulting from the merger of the top two US cable service providers would boast a footprint spanning from

New York to Los Angeles, with a near 30 percent share of the pay TV market as well as a strong position in providing broadband Internet services.

The all-stock deal, announced on Thursday, would put Comcast in 19 of the 20 largest US TV markets, and could give it unprecedented leverage in negotiations with content providers and advertisers. The friendly takeover came as a surprise after months of public pursuit

of Time Warner Cable by smaller rival Charter Communications Inc, and immediately raised questions as to whether it would be blocked by the Department of Justice or the Federal Communications Commission. Time Warner Cable shares jumped 6.8 percent to \$144.50, still substantially short of the \$158.82 per share value that Comcast put on its offer, indicating investors' worries about regulatory clearance.

Reuters



A Time Warner Cable installation van is shown in Palm Springs, California on 29 Jan, 2014.

Reuters

Hackers used previously unknown Internet Explorer flaw in new attacks

SAN FRANCISCO, 14 Feb — A previously unknown flaw in a recent version of Microsoft Corp's Internet Explorer web browser is being used to attack Internet users, including some visitors to a major site for US military veterans, researchers said on Thursday.

Security firm FireEye Inc discovered the attacks against IE 10 this week, saying that hundreds or thousands of machines have been infected. It said the culprits broke into the website of US Veterans of Foreign Wars and inserted a link that redirected visitors to a malicious web page that contained the infectious code in Adobe Systems Inc's Flash

software. FireEye researcher Darien Kindlund said that the attackers were probably seeking information from the machines of former and current military personnel and that the campaign shared some infrastructure and techniques previously attributed to groups in mainland China.

He said planting backdoors on the machines of VFW members and site visitors to collect military intelligence was a possible goal. A VFW spokeswoman didn't immediately respond to requests for comment. A Microsoft spokesman said the company was aware of the "targeted" attacks and was investigating. "We will

take action to help protect customers," said spokesman Scott Whiteaker.

The latest version of the browser is IE 11, which is unaffected, and a Microsoft security tool called the Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit also protects users who have installed that. Previously unknown flaws in popular software are a key weapon for hackers and are sold by the researchers who discover them for \$50,000 or more, brokers say. They are most often bought by defense contractors and intelligence agencies in multiple countries, but some of the best-funded criminal groups buy them as well. —Reuters



A Microsoft Surface tablet is seen during the launch of Microsoft Windows 8 operating system in Hong Kong on 26 Oct, 2012. —Reuters

Microsoft Windows 8 lags predecessor in first-year sales

SEATTLE, 14 Feb — Microsoft Corp's Windows 8 system has racked up more than 200 million license sales since its launch 15 months ago, according to Tami Reller, its head of marketing, lagging Windows 7 which sold 240 million within its first year.

The latest Windows 8 sales figure, announced by Reller at a Goldman Sachs technology conference on Thursday, is the first that Microsoft has made public for more than six months. The relatively slow sales of Windows 8, and its latest incarnation Windows 8.1, reflect a steady two-year decline in personal computer sales, as smartphones and tablet sales explode. Sales of tablets are set to overtake PCs worldwide next year.

Windows 8 was designed as a flexible new system that would work equally well on desktops PCs and touchscreen tab-

lets, but it ended up alienating many traditional users, while the company's Surface tablet has not won over many Apple Inc iPad users. More worryingly for Microsoft, the number of people actually using Windows 8 is persistently low. While many businesses technically have purchased Windows 8 licenses, few have installed the system on office machines.

According to tech statistics firm NetMarketShare, only about 11 percent of PC users worldwide are using Windows 8 or 8.1. Meanwhile, 48 percent are sticking with Windows 7 and 29 percent are still running Windows XP, which is more than a decade old. Windows 7, helped by the fact that it replaced the generally unpopular Windows Vista, is Microsoft's most successful operating system to date, selling more than 450 million licenses.

Reuters

China robot studies SW Indian Ocean seabed



The Chinese research vessel, Dayang 1, used in the discovery of the first hot vents in the Indian Ocean. —Xinhua

BEIJING, 14 Feb — China has used a domestically made underwater robot to study polymetallic sulfide in the southwest Indian Ocean,

the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) said on Thursday.

Scientists aboard the "Dayang-1" oceanic re-

search vessel remotely operated the "Hailong" unmanned underwater vehicle on five occasions from late January to early February, with one of their five attempts failing. They found sulfide in more areas of China's exploration contract area, and gained new understanding of the characteristics of the carbonate area, according to the SOA.

This detailed information is important for China's future research in the polymetallic sulfide exploration contract area, the SOA said. The hydrothermal sulfide is a kind of sea-bed deposit containing copper, zinc and precious metals such as gold and silver. —Xinhua

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Plain cigarette packs spur quitline calls

NEW YORK, 14 Feb — Drab olive cigarette packs bearing a prominent quit-smoking helpline number, introduced more than a year ago in Australia, had a sizeable and sustained effect on interest in quitting, researchers say. Just one of many controls imposed on cigarette marketing and sales over the past decade in that country, the plain packaging was linked to a 78-percent spike in calls to territorial quitlines within a month of its introduction.

“The results suggest the legislation does have a positive early impact (on smokers) and so other countries could feel more confident in introducing similar legislation,” said Jane Young, a cancer epidemiologist at the Sydney School of Public Health,

who led the study. The plain packages, implemented in October 2012, mean that every brand’s cigarettes look nearly identical, with the brand name relegated to a small, standardized font. In March 2006, cigarette packaging with graphic health warnings including photos of cancer-riddled lungs and gangrenous limbs was introduced in Australia.

“(The labels) inform consumers about what might happen to them when they use the product,” said Joanna Cohen, director of the Institute for Global Tobacco Control at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, Maryland. “The plain and standardized packaging is meant to reduce the appeal of the package and show the warning. Hope-



Near empty cigarette shelves are seen at a CVS store in New York on 4 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

fully current smokers will quit because they are more aware of the health impacts, and fewer people will start,” said Cohen, who was not involved in the new study. Young’s team wanted to isolate the impact of just the switch to plain packaging on interest in quitting.

They looked at the number of calls in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory to the national quitline before and after introduc-

tion of the plain packages. Calls jumped from 363 a week before the packaging change to a peak of 651 calls a week four weeks after the new packages were introduced, Young and her colleagues report in the Medical Journal of Australia. The study also compared those results to the number of calls received by the Quitline after Australia’s addition of graphic warning labels.

Reuters

Air pollution may increase high blood pressure risk in pregnant women



WASHINGTON, 14 Feb — Exposure to air pollution during pregnancy may increase the mom-to-be’s risk of developing high blood pressure, a new US study said on Thursday. Researchers at the University of Florida found that exposure to four air pollutants, including

two specific types of fine and coarse particulate matters, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide, may be just as toxic to pregnant women, if not more so, as breathing in cigarette smoke.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), particulate

matters include acids, dust, metals and soil particles, which are released from industries and forest fires and can form when gases react with each other in the air. Sulfur dioxide is emitted from power plants and industries while most carbon monoxide is produced by car exhaust. “Fetal development is very sensitive to environmental factors,” said Xiaohui Xu, an assistant professor of epidemiology in the university. “That is why we wanted to do this research. Hypertension (high blood pressure), in particular, is associated with increased morbidity and mortality, causing a lot of problems for the mother

and fetus, including preterm delivery.”

The researchers examined data from 22,000 pregnant women who gave birth between 2004 and 2005 in Jacksonville, Florida, and then gauged how much pollution the women were exposed to throughout their pregnancies using data the EPA gathered daily.

Mothers who suffered from chronic hypertension, had previously given birth prematurely and had complications during delivery were excluded from the study. The researchers found 4.7 percent of women in the study developed hypertension during pregnancy.—Xinhua

Japan Airlines and ANA clash again over Tokyo landing rights

TOKYO, 14 Feb — Japan Airlines (9201.T) said it has applied to fly from Tokyo’s Haneda airport to Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam prompting a complaint from ANA Holdings, which urged regulators to deny its local rival the right to open up new routes from the world’s fourth busiest hub. The latest stand off threatens to re-ignite a dogfight for dominance at the lucrative airport that in October saw ANA awarded 11 new landing slots at Haneda, worth around \$20 million a year each in operating profit, compared with only five for JAL.

Regulators then said that it did not want to let JAL open new routes because a state-led \$3.5 billion bailout of the carrier in 2010, that resulted in most of its debt being waived, gave it a competitive edge over ANA. Such landing rights allocations are usually split evenly. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s government, which was in opposition when JAL was rescued, proved sympathetic to ANA’s call for a rebalance

through the landing right hand out.

“We hope the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau will make an appropriate decision,” ANA said in a statement following JAL’s bid to start flights to Vietnam. Incensed by the slot allocation last year, which JAL said would cost it 6 billion yen (\$58.73 million) a year in lost operating profit, the airline had considered taking unprecedented legal action to overturn the decision.

Japan’s aviation regulators, however, have never revised landing right allocation and JAL instead is looking to tap late-night unused slots in a bid to gain greater access to flights from Haneda. With no new runways or airports planned for Tokyo, ANA’s advantage over JAL at the Tokyo airport could be locked in for years. ANA’s president, Shinichiro Ito will speak at a press briefing in Tokyo at 0630 GMT to unveil the carriers latest midterm business plan. (\$1 = 102.1650 Japanese yen)

Reuters



A airport worker drives a luggage transport vehicle past one of the company’s Boeing Co’s 787 Dreamliner plane (L) and a Boeing 767 at Narita international airport in Narita, east of Tokyo, on 11 Nov, 2013.—REUTERS

Meditation might reduce workplace stress

NEW YORK, 14 Feb—Regular doses of meditation might prevent work-related stress and burnout, a small US study suggests. Teachers and support staff working at a school for children with behavior problems felt less stressed after practicing 20 minutes of Transcendental Meditation (TM) twice a day for four months.

But participants “reported feeling less stressed and more energetic within a few days,” said the study’s senior author Sanford Nidich, of Maharishi University’s Institute for Natural Medicine and Prevention in Fairfield, Iowa. Starting stress levels among the participants had averaged 39

on a 40-point scale and fell 5 points by the end of the study period. In comparison, 20 school staffers who did not meditate started with stress levels around 37 on the same scale and those rose 2 points during the same period. Meditating participants also felt less depressed and less emotionally exhausted, according to Nidich and his coauthors. But meditation seemed to have the strongest effect on stress levels, they note in their report, published in the *Permanente Journal*.

The researchers don’t describe the techniques taught to participants in the study in detail, but TM, a trademarked method of

meditation, generally involves sitting with one’s eyes closed for 20 minutes twice a day and thinking about a particular sound or mantra. “Automatic self-transcending techniques, such as TM, involve the effortless use of a sound without meaning (mantra), which allows the mind to settle to quieter levels of thought,” Nidich’s team writes. Certified instructors teach the practice nationwide at a cost of \$960 for the full course, according to the TM.org website. “The devil’s advocate might claim that the effect is non-specific, and has nothing directly to do with TM,” said alternative medicine researcher Dr Ezard

Ernst in an email to *Reuters Health*.

Ernst, of the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom, was not involved in the new study. He said the results do not show a causal link between TM and reduced stress levels among the school staffers. “We would need a much more rigorous trial and several independent replications” before drawing any conclusions, Ernst said. Plenty of past research points to apparent benefits from various forms of meditation, such as TM or the popular “mindfulness meditation” approach, for conditions ranging from anxiety to pain. Workplace stress can have costly side effects in the

form of employee turnover. A 2012 study by the Centre for American Progress puts the cost of replacing an employee at 10 to 30 percent of that worker’s annual salary.

Some meditation can be done without leaving your desk, said Janice Marturano, founder and director of the Institute for Mindful Leadership in Oakland, New Jersey. Mindfulness meditation is retraining our mind’s ability to direct our attention,” said Marturano, who was not connected to the new study. “Simply putting your feet on the floor, and paying attention to the weightiness of your legs or the breath in your body can bring your mind back to the present,”

she said. Meditation is a way to avoid working on “auto-pilot,” Marturano said, explaining that today’s 24/7 workplace connectivity requires employees to be mentally present at most times — something that doesn’t necessarily come naturally.

The workplaces of the future could benefit by having a quiet room for workers to visit for 10 minutes or less, Marturano said. “Employees who come out of a stressful meeting or situation can then go inside and reset their minds so they do not have to carry that stress with them for the rest of the day,” she said.

Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 15 February, 2014

Family, basic unit of society

What is the difference between a house and a home? Without the ones who love you, care you and wait for your homecoming, and whom you love and you care, a house is not a home and as incomplete as a tree without leaves, lacking the liveliness.

Human is not an island. No matter how strong a man is, there are times he would need a shoulder or a hand or a few words like "everything gonna be alright", amidst the twists and turns and ups and downs of human life.

The family is the basic unit of every society. Therefore, the rise and fall of a society greatly depends on the values and ethics present in our very home. There is a traditional saying that parents are the very first teacher of their offspring. In general, how they grow up or in what kind of environment they are brought up has significant influence on the way they think and behave.

The traditional role of women as housewives has gone with the time as a result of slow economic progress and ever-rising commodity prices. Consequently, parents of dual-earner families find it difficult to strike a balance between work and home obligations. Sadly, most of the parents of modern families are devoid of time to communicate with their children.

A family is built on the foundation of mutual love, care, support and understanding, all of which needs time—to speak and listen to each other—to get fostered. Being the very first place that shapes the tender minds of children, home plays the most important role in promoting love among people.

It goes without saying that a child who grows up being loved will see the bright side of the life whereas a child who grows up amid traumas will see the other side.

Over the past few years, the way Myanmar couples celebrate Valentine's Day has changed with every guesthouse in major cities like Yangon and Mandalay doing brisk business on this particular day. Meanwhile, the number of single-parent families is on the increase in our society against the time-honored tradition of marriage for life. Nonetheless, family breakdown is still not viewed as a problem worldwide.

All in all, the more the number of happy and loving homes in a society, the more peaceful that society will become. It is beyond doubt.

Japan-made maritime technology-applied equipment introduced

Introduction ceremony of Japan-made maritime technology-applied equipment in progress.—MNA

No reply for release ...

(from page 1)

volumes of yearly production of teak log and other hardwood will drop as of 2014-2015 FY in accord with the forest management plan.

Then, Pyithu Hluttaw approved the Registration of Association Bill submitted by Public Affairs Management Committee and received Amyotha Hluttaw-approved Pyidaungsu Hlut-

taw Development Fund Bill.

Only the conservation action has been targeted to the sea prawn species as extensive research is still ongoing for commercial cultivation of marine prawn and technology is needed for such aquaculture business, said Deputy Minister for Livestock Breeding, Fisheries and Rural Development Dr Aung Myat Oo in reply to

the question of MP U Kyaw Kyaw of Rakhine State Constituency (2) at the today's Amyotha Hluttaw session. A ban on fishing and transporting sea prawn with a weight of less than 150 grams to the market has been banned and the natural habitats of sea prawn have been put under protection, he added. Moreover, punitive action has been taken against those who violated the law and rules and regulations of the Fisheries

Department, he voiced.

Next, a member of Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee read out the committee's report on the Bill amending the National Drug Law and the Hluttaw approved the Bill as no objection to it. Then, two parliamentarians discussed a report of Amyotha Hluttaw Public Accounts Committee and the Hluttaw approved it. The 14th-day session is scheduled to hold on 17 February.—MNA

Myanmar to implement fourth five-year drug elimination plan

Union Minister Lt-Gen Ko Ko addresses meeting 1/2014 of Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Myanmar's 15-year drug eradication master plan was launched in 1999-2000 and it was extended for another five years till 2018-19. Anti-narcotic police corps was formed to fight against drugs in Myanmar. With regard to alternative development tasks, it needs to create job opportunities for locals that are compatible with the region. As 90 percent of poppy cultivation is grown in Shan State, it needs to adopt a strategy that can create job opportunities for locals and to consider private sector investment, said Chairman of Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen

Ko Ko at the committee's 1/2014 meeting at auditorium of the ministry, here, this morning.

The Union minister highlighted that the committee has monitored over 6900-ton of illegal-imported controlled chemicals in 2013, saying use of drugs including stimulants have been rapidly increasing among the young people. He called region/state anti-narcotic committees to launch pilot projects for giving medical treatment and rehabilitation tasks.

The defence services and Myanmar police forces destroyed 12700 hectares of poppy plantation in 2013 in collaboration with relevant partner organizations. Myanmar hosted ministerial level meeting on MoU on drug control cooperation between

six countries, the 34th ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD) and bilateral meetings on drugs control cooperation between Myanmar, India and Lao and Nay Pyi Taw declaration on drug control cooperation among six countries was signed in 2013, he added. Committee Secretary Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Maj-Gen Zaw Win reported on work progress of 10 working groups.

Union FM meets Thai Citi Country Officer, Director of OECD

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, received Mr Darren Buckley, Citi Country Officer (Thailand), at the ministry at 10:00 am today.

They exchanged views on further steps of Myanmar's Sovereign Ratings.

The Union Minister

Banking services and monetary affairs discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Banking and Monetary Affairs Development Committee U Aung Thaung received responsible persons of Citi (Corporate and Investment Banking) at the hall No.1 (I) of Hluttaw Building here

also met with Director Mr Marcos Bonturi of Global Relations Secretariat of Organization for Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) at the same venue at 11:00 am today. Both sides exchanged views on establishment of the OECD new Southeast Asia Regional programme.—MNA

yesterday morning. During the meeting, they discussed banking services and monetary affairs, loan issue and sharing experiences among ASEAN countries and other developing countries.

MNA

NATIONAL

Vice-Senior General Soe Win attends opening of Singapore Air Show-2014



Vice-Senior General Soe Win views round scale models at Changi Exhibition Center in Singapore.—MYAWADY

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win attended opening ceremony of Singapore Air Show-2014 at Changi Exhibition Center in Singapore on 11 February.

The Vice-Senior General viewed round military equipment and scale models at the Air Show.

In the evening, he enjoyed the dinner hosted by Lt-Gen Ng Chee Meng, Chief of Defence Force, Singapore Armed Forces, at Raffles City Convention Centre.

On 12 February, the

Public Announcement for remonstrance of changing political party's name

The Mon Democratic Party headquartered at No. 181, in Myaingthayar Ward on Yarzadirit Street in Mawlamyine Township in Mon State, registered by the Union Election Commission as a political party under the Article 9 of Political Parties Registration Law, submitted applications to change its name as Mon National Party to the Union Election Commission on 10-2-2014.

It is hereby announced in accord with Political Parties Registration Rules 14 (d) that if there is anyone who want to remonstrate about the name "Mon National Party", they may remonstrate with the Union Election Commission with firm evidence within seven days from the date of the announcement.

Union Election Commission

Vice-Senior General looked round military and civilian aircraft and helicopters, and watched the flight demonstration of Singapore Air Force and international air

forces.

Next, the Vice-Senior General left Singapore for Yangon by Silk Air flight at 2 pm on that day.

Myawady

Statement No. (2/2014) of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission regarding findings of Commission Team from its investigation of the incident at Ducheeratan village-tract

1. A team from the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) comprising the Secretary and three members visited Sittway and Maungta Township and made a tour of Ducheeratan Village-tract from 30 January to 3 February 2014, in order to investigate the news reports on the incident that had occurred at Ducheeratan middle village.
2. During the trip, the Commission Team carried out the following activities with regard to:
 - (a) the news of the killing of 8 Bengalis,
 - (b) the news of 40 Bengalis killed in the police shooting in connection with the attack on the police patrol team by a group of Bengalis from Ducheeratan middle village on the night 13 January, and
 - (c) the Internet news that Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) treated 22 patients wounded in the above-mentioned shooting:
 - met and had discussions with some Ministers of the Rakhine State on 30 January and 3 February 2014 and took statements from the relevant responsible officials
 - took statements from officials concerned, including three high-ranking police officials, District Administrator and also from the Administrator of Kinchaung village, some villagers, and four detainees being remanded and under investigation at the Maungta Police Station
 - interrogated both male and female villagers from Ducheeratan middle village and surrounding Bengali villages and took statements from them
 - met with about 20 village elders and Islamic religious leaders from the Ducheeratan village-tract at the primary school of Ducheeratan middle village and verified with them the news of the killing of 8 and 40 Bengalis
 - met with over 200 women from Ducheeratan middle village and heard and noted their complaints on the Ducheeratan incident and took statements from some of them
 - had discussions with the representatives of UNHCR, UNOCHA and Medicine Sans Frontiers (MSF)
 - had discussions with Rakhine townelders of Maungta Township
 - had discussions with Islamic religious leaders and elders of Maungta Township
 - conducted an inspection tour of Ducheeratan villages, including Ducheeratan west village where a

fire broke out on 28 January 2014

- inspected the former cemetery of Khayay Myaing village

3. The following are the facts found out by the Commission Team from the above-mentioned activities.
 - (a) The news report that 8 Bengalis were killed on 9 January 2014 was not known in Khayay Myaing and Kinchaung villages where Rakhine nationals live. However, this news was rumored in Ducheeratan middle village and other villages where Bengalis reside.
 - (b) Although the information that a woodcutter discovered 8 Bengalis buried at the Khayay Myaing cemetery emerged in Ducheeratan Bengali villages, no evidence was detected to confirm this information.
 - (c) On interrogation, it was found that Rakhine nationals obtained this information as Internet news.
 - (d) Neither in meeting with the elders and religious leaders of the Ducheeratan village tract nor in meeting with over 200 women of Ducheeratan middle village, mention was made by any of them of this information.
 - (e) Different news versions of the killing of 8 Bengalis could not be confirmed.
 - (f) It was known that some army and police forces entered Ducheeratan villages to search for police sergeant Aung Kyaw Thein after the incident at Ducheeratan middle village on the night of 13 January 2014.
 - (g) Regarding the killing of 40 Bengalis from Ducheeratan village, the Commission Team took statements from the departmental officials concerned, high ranking police officials and policemen, responsible persons from the villages concerned, Bengali elders and women from Ducheeratan villages. These statements, however, contained no information that substantiate the alleged news of killings.
 - (h) Although the Commission Team urged Bengali religious leaders and women to frankly come forth with their views, no proof was discovered to confirm the alleged news.
 - (i) The Commission Team observed that the statements made by Bengali villagers did not contain any information on the attack by villagers on the police patrol commanded by police sergeant Aung Kyaw Thein.
 - (j) Discrepancies were noted in the news on the alleged killings of Bengalis. For example, it was reported that over 100 people were killed during the police shooting on 13 January 2014 while the news that a list of 52 people killed given to the Human Rights Commission was found to be incorrect. In fact, such a list was not

given to the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission.

4. In the discussion with MSF, it was stated by MSF that 22 people which included 1 person with gunshot wound, 4 people with swellings, 10 people with cuts and bruises and 7 emotionally upset people, were treated by them. However, MSF did not provide the patients' names and identities to the Commission Team as it keeps the patients list as confidential due to the humanitarian nature of its work. MSF also stated that they did not report the case of gunshot wound either to the police to the government health department and that it merely urged the patient to continue his treatment at a government clinic. According to the township medical officer, no government clinic in Maungta received any patient with gunshot wound. However, as a result of the investigations by District Administrator and Township Medical Officer, it was also learnt from two doctors of the MSF that their clinics did not treat any such patients.
5. The Commission Team discussed its findings with other members of the Commission on 5 February 2014 and reaches the following conclusions and recommendations:
 - The news of the killing of 8 Bengalis and 40 Bengalis did not emerge in the Ducheeratan village-tract and it is therefore concluded that the said news is unverifiable and unconfirmed
 - The government departments and organizations concerned delayed in issuing the news on the true situation regarding the incident at Ducheeratan middle village and this delay gave rise to the spread of rumors and unsubstantiated news
 - The Commission concludes that the attempt of the 3 policemen to stop the attack of a group of Bengali villagers failed due to defective ammunition and led to a confused situation that finally resulted in the disappearance of the police sergeant Aung Kyaw Thein. It is recommended that necessary steps should be taken to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.
 - The villagers from Ducheeratan east and middle villages fled on 13 January 2014 and as a result, the looting of their possessions, rice stocks and cattle must have occurred during the ensuing commotion. It is therefore recommended that steps should be taken urgently to provide food and other basic needs to the two villages in question.
 - In view of the continued tensions and concerns among the villages involved in the Ducheeratan incident, special security arrangements should be initiated as a matter of priority to prevent further issues from emerging again in those areas.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

Date: 14 February 2014

Yangon

Abhidhamma course concludes in Meiktila Tsp

MEIKTILA, 14 Feb—The concluding ceremony of Abhidhamma course was held at Sasana Beikman in Myomalay Ward, here, on

9 February.

Officials presented certificates to the trainees. Altogether 30 trainees attended the course which is

conducted once a week. The Mandalay Region Hluttaw Representative donated K 50000 to the official of the course.—NLM-018

Students enjoy School Family Day in Ottarathiri Tsp



NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Shwenatha Basic Education Middle School in Shwenatha Ward of Ottarathiri Township held the School Family Day and

prize presentation for the outstanding students on 9 February.

The ceremony was attended by Director of Education Planning and Training Department U Aung Myo and departmental officials together with local people totalling about 250.

Students performed dances to the guests.

Departmental officials gave prizes to the outstanding students in the examinations.

Than Naing (Zabuthiri)

Faculty members from Kyaukse University give lecture to students in Tatkon

TATKON, 14 Feb—The faculty members led by Associate Professor Dr Sai Tun Aye of Physics Department from Kyaukse University gave lectures to the students for uplifting matriculation pass rate at No (1) and (2) BEHSs in Tatkon on 11-12 February. Lecturer Daw Cho Cho Myint gave lecture on Maths, Associate Professor Dr Sai Tun Aye on Physics, Assistant

Lecturer Dr Htin Zaw Latt and Assistant Lecturer Dr Thida Soe on Biology, Lecturer Daw Thida Aung and Lecturer Daw Khin Sanda Soe on English and Assistant Lecturer Dr Thi Thi Aung on Chemistry to 940 students.

They also lectured five subjects to 470 students in two sections at No (2) BEHS.

Township IPRD



Nay Pyi Taw motorcycle market cools down

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Motorcycles without licence will be allowed to take licence in Nay Pyi Taw. Because of the news prices of the motorbikes at the market fell, according to the motorbike sales centre in Pyinmana Township.

At present, China-made motorcycle Kenbo 110 brand

is sold at K 510,000, Kenbo 125 brand K 560,000, Kenbo 125 CZI K 680,000, Luoja 110 brand K 515,000, Luoja 125 K 560,000 and so on.

People are eager to know how to fix the tax rate for the motorcycle without licence and they want to pay the tax for their motorcycles equal to that of companies.

Although sales of motorcycles is cool at the showrooms in Nay Pyi Taw, those who are unaffordable to buy brand new products purchase good second hand motorbikes at K 200,000 to K 300,000 each at the brokerage.—News and Photo: Ko Myo (Shwe-paukkan)



Myawady District Deputy Commissioner U Tint Wai Thon reads out the message sent by President Agga Maha Thayay Sithu, Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Thein Sein on the occasion to mark 67th Anniversary Union Day at Mya Sandi Park in Myawady of Myawady District on 12 February.

TUN TUN OO (MYAWADY BORDER TOWN)

Toungoo Township IPRD shows books, photos

TOUNGGOO, 14 Feb—Toungoo District Information and Public Relations Department held the wall magazines, photo and book shows at Myat Yadana Library in Ngaphe-in village of Toungoo on 11 February.

The Staff Officer of the department explained the purpose of the ceremony.

The department shows the photos depicting the regional development tasks.

Members of the Township Writers Association Tekkatho Pwing Thu Aung

gave talks on emergence of the Union Day at the prayer hall of Koe Nawin Pagoda.

NLM-017

Meiktila marathon

MEIKTILA, 14 Feb—Under the leadership of Meiktila Township Sports and Physical Education Department, men's and women's marathon events were kicked off in front of Basic Education High School No.1 in Meiktila on 12 February. It was sponsored by Duwun Golden Umbrella purified drinking water, ICE AGE purified drinking water and Thukha Hospital.

Officials awarded K 100,000 each to first prize winners in both classes, K 70000 to second and K 50000 to third. The funds obtained from the race will be donated to social organizations.

NLM-018

Anti-Narcotic Drives

Narcotics, arms seized in Taunggyi

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Members of No 25 Anti-Drug Squad seized 870 stimulant tablets worth K 2.61 million, 50 grams of materials in using opium worth K 25,000, one Walther-380 ACB pistol, seven rounds of ammunition, one magazine from Naing Win(a) Ah Phein and one RAMI-9mm pistol, 6 rounds of ammunition and one magazine from Ah Ti on board a Hilux driven by Sai Maung, 42



of Ward 5 in Namsang on 10 February. Taunggyi Myoma Police Station opened files of

lawsuit against those under the law.

Min Khant Maung

Stimulant tablets seized in Kengtung

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—Members of No 28 Anti-Drug Squad (Kengtung) searched the suspects at Shentit Hotel in Ward 4 of Kengtung on 9 February night.

The police seized 10000 stimulant tablets worth K 25 million, three mobile phones and K 2 million from Aik Yi's motorcycle, Sai Yi and Aik Saik from Mongkhat

and Kengtung townships in Shan State.

Kengtung Myoma Police Station opened files of lawsuit against those suspects under the law.

Min Khant Maung

REGIONAL

S Korea PM, Murayama discuss history issues, mending bilateral ties

SEOUL, 14 Feb — South Korean Prime Minister Chung Hong Won and former Japanese leader Tomiichi Murayama voiced hope on Thursday that their countries will be able to overcome their differences over history and mend strained bilateral ties, South Korea's *Yonhap News Agency* said.

Chung told the former Japanese prime minister that "only if we settle the past through a correct perception of history will there be a future for our two countries' relations," *Yonhap* said, quoting Chung's office in a Press release.

The meeting in Seoul came amid heightened bilateral tension due to differing perceptions of history and a territorial dispute over South Korean-controlled islets in the Sea of Japan that are known as Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan.

Chung was quoted by the office as telling Murayama that he regrets recent remarks and actions by Japanese politicians which further damaged bilateral relations, and he hopes Murayama will continue to help change the situation, according to *Yonhap*.

Murayama, who was Japan's first Socialist prime minister in almost five decades when he came to power in June 1994, is best known for having issued a statement in 1995 apologizing for the wartime suffering inflicted by Japan on its Asian neighbours. The so-called Murayama Statement is still considered Japan's official position but current Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, since coming to power in December 2012, has fueled concern in neighbouring countries such as South Korea that Japan is leaning to the right.

Kyodo News



Former Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama (L) and South Korean Prime Minister Jung Hong Won hold talks in Seoul on 13 Feb, 2014.—KYODO NEWS

Japan-Mekong forum to open in Tokyo to promote economic ties

TOKYO, 14 Feb — Government officials, businesspeople and experts from Japan and five Southeast Asian countries along the Mekong River will hold a forum on Tuesday in Tokyo to promote economic cooperation, the Foreign Ministry said on Friday.

Participants including those from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam will focus on the three areas of infrastructure and special economic zones, health and medicine, and tourism, the ministry said.

The meeting will bring together Norio Mitsuya, Ja-

pan's parliamentary senior vice foreign minister, Sommath Pholsena, Laos' minister of public works and transport, Lei Lei Thein, Myanmar's deputy minister of national planning and economic development, and Vuthy Chea, deputy secretary general of the Council for the Development of Cambodia, among others.

The outcome of the Forum for the Promotion of Public-Private Cooperation in the Mekong Region will be reported to a foreign ministerial meeting and a summit of Japan and the Mekong states slated for

later this year, according to the ministry.

In a meeting with Mekong leaders in December in Tokyo, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe vowed Japan's continued support for the development of the region as the two sides reaffirmed commitment to increasing cooperation toward the creation of the so-called ASEAN Economic Community by 2015.

The five Mekong states form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations with Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore.

Kyodo News

China plans world's longest underwater tunnel

BEIJING, 14 Feb — China is planning to build the world's longest underwater tunnel beneath the Bohai Sea by 2026, according to a Friday report in the *China Daily*. A blueprint of the tunnel, which could cost an estimated 220 billion yuan (36 billion US dollars), will be submitted to the State Council, China's Cabinet, in April, it said.

"Once approved, work could begin as early as 2015 or 2016," Wang Mengshu, a tunnel and railway expert at the Chinese Academy of Engineering who has worked on the plan since 2012, was quoted as saying by the paper. By length, it will surpass the combined length of the world's two longest underwater tunnels — Japan's Seikan Tunnel and the Channel Tunnel between Britain and France.

The 123-kilometre tunnel will house a rail line connecting the port cities of Dalian in Liaoning Province and Yantai in Shandong Province, according to the plan.

"Using the tunnel, it will take only 40 minutes to travel from Dalian to Yantai," Wang said. At the moment it is a 1,400-km drive or about eight hours by ferry. Passenger vehicles can be loaded onto rail carriages and transported at about 220 kilometers per hour, massively shortening the travel time between the two cities.—Xinhua



Chinese acrobats perform in celebration of the Year of China-India Friendly Exchanges in New Delhi, India, on 13 Feb, 2014.—XINHUA

Xi cheers college grad village officials

BEIJING, 14 Feb — President Xi Jinping has called for village officials who graduated from college to improve themselves and contribute more to underdeveloped rural areas.

Xi made the comments in a letter to Zhang Guangxiu, 28, who became an official in a village in eastern China's Shandong Province in 2009 upon graduation.

Winning local residents' praise for her painstaking work, Zhang's story was brought into the media spotlight and brought sympathy nationwide following her diagnosis with acute leukaemia in September 2010.

Central leaders including Xi saw to her receiving treatment in Beijing from early 2011, and she returned to her post in June last year.

Xi's letter, made public on Thursday, was written on Jan. 28 in reply to a letter from Zhang, in which

she told the President about her recent life and work.

Welcoming Zhang back to her job, Xi expressed his pleasure at her recuperation and advised her to take care of herself.

"Changing the appearance of villages and helping farmers live good lives... requires good policies from the Party and the government as well as vast, unremitting efforts from rural people, guided by grassroots officials," Xi said.

According to Xi, hundreds of thousands of college graduates have been offering their services and realizing their value in the countryside since the "College to Village" campaign started in 2008. "Your sacrifice and contribution are heartily felt by rural people, and I'm happy with your progress and achievements after reading many graduate village officials' outstanding stories," Xi wrote.

Xinhua



Children display lanterns, pictures and their calligraphy works during an activity in Changchun, capital of northeast China's Jilin Province, on 13 Feb, 2014. A series of activities for children were held at the Museum of the Imperial Palace of "Manchukuo" on Thursday to celebrate the coming Lantern Festival, which falls on 14 February this year.

XINHUA

2 killed, 8 hurt in S Philippine ambush

MANILA, 14 Feb — Two people were killed while eight others were wounded after terrorist group Abu Sayyaf ambushed government troops in southern Philippines on Friday morning, a military official said.

Capt. Ryan Lacuesta, Civil Military Operations Officer of the 2nd Marine Brigade, said a member of the Abu Sayyaf and a

village peacekeeper were killed while six other village peacekeepers and two Marines were hurt.

Lacuesta said government troops were on their way to provide reinforcement to village peacekeepers when their convoy was waylaid by the Abu Sayyaf in Long Kiaban village, Talipao town in Sulu Province.

He said the firefight be-

tween the militants and the Marines and village peacekeepers lasted for about an hour.

Lacuesta said the incident could be considered as a "retaliatory action" by the Abu Sayyaf against the village peacekeepers who have been conducting continuous law enforcement operations against the militants.

Xinhua

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV THIGAYU VOY NO (01/14) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15.2.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(5) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKAJA VOY NO (91) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 16.2.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WONGSAMUT OCEAN
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Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

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Philippines attracts 4.68 mln foreign tourists in 2013

MANILA, 14 Feb — Tourist arrivals in the Philippines rose by 9.56 percent on year to 4.68 million in 2013, the Department of Tourism (DOT) said on Thursday.

Tourism Secretary Ramon R. Jimenez, Jr. said visitors continued to flock to the country's tourist spots, including those in central Philippines which was devastated by a magnitude 7.2 earthquake and super typhoon Haiyan in the last quarter of 2013.

"Our key source markets generally performed well during the month of December, proof that international confidence has been regained," said Jimenez in a statement.

DOT said visitor count reached an "all-time high" or more than 400,000 during the months of January, February, March, July, and December.

Jimenez said South Korea, the United States, Japan, China and Australia were the top five sources of tourists last year. DOT also said total revenues gained from foreign tourists went up by 15.1 percent on year to 186.15 billion pesos (4.4 billion US dollars). The average daily expenditure of foreign tourists also increased by 8.7 percent to 101.12 US dollars last year.—Xinhua



Lovers queue to wait for marriage registration at a marriage registry on the Valentine's Day as well as the Chinese traditional Lantern Festival in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on 14 Feb, 2014. The registry here is expected to issue more than 300 certificates, three times more than the other days, on the Valentine's Day, which coincides with the Lantern Festival, the 15th day of the first month of the Chinese lunar calendar.—XINHUA

29 prisoners escape during attack on Yemen's central prison

SANAA, 14 Feb — Yemen's interior ministry said on Friday that 29 prisoners, most of them al-Qaeda inmates, escaped during attacks on the central prison in the capital Sanaa on Thursday night, which left seven people dead and four wounded.

It said in a statement carried by the official Saba news agency that 19 of the 29 prisoners were convicted of terrorism-related charges and they escaped through a hole blown open by a car bomb in the prison's western wall, taking advantage of chaos when the guards exchanged shooting with a group of gunmen.

The ministry released the name list of the 29 prisoners, three of whom were accused of plotting to assassinate Yemeni President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi in the past months.

The ministry said in a statement on Thursday night that it foiled the attempt by terrorists to break into the central prison, and the attack left seven people dead and two wounded, without specifying whether the victims were civilians or soldiers.

It also said that some prisoners took advantage of the chaos and managed to escape and it launched an investigation into the attack and sent soldiers to search

for the escaped prisoners.

Meanwhile, a one-minute video recorded by a resident and posted on local media showed that the clashes started with a brief exchange of gunfire around the prison with several shells shining in the sky, followed by a powerful explosion.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attack, but al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula was blamed by the government for such kind of attacks.

Security personnel have blocked roads leading to the prison in northern Sanaa, which is close to the country's main airport.

Xinhua

Cuba opens Int'l Book Fair

HAVANA, 14 Feb — Cuba on Thursday opened an International Book Fair with Ecuador as the guest country of honor.

Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa has an-

nounced to present at the fair his book "Ecuador: From Banana Republic to the non-Republic."

Ecuador brought more than 10,000 books to the event.

The book fair will be held in Havana till 23 Feb before it travels around Cuba until its close on 9 March in the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba.

Xinhua

44 die from swine flu in Egypt

CAIRO, 14 Feb — The number of people died from swine flu in Egypt since the beginning of December 2013 has increased to 44, Ahmed Kamel, spokesman of the Egyptian Health Ministry, told Xinhua Thursday.

Virus A/H1N1, known as "swine flu," has been "categorized under the seasonal influenza by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2010," the spokesman said.

Kamel said that the ministry's hospitals received this winter 577,183 suspect cases of influenza, 24 percent of which were positive. "Only 342 of them were confirmed with H1N1 virus and 44 of them died so far."

"It is just a type of seasonal flu whose effect is stronger on high-risk people like those with chronic diseases, those with immunodeficiency, old people over 65, children under two, pregnant women, etc," Kamel clarified, noting that 75 percent of the 44 deaths

were similar cases.

He also denied reports that some doctors died while dealing with A/H1N1 patients.

"The only medical team member who has recently died of H1N1 virus was a nurse in a hospital at Qalioubiya governorate northern Cairo," he said.

Kamel also reassured that the Health Ministry has a strategic stock of the Tamiflu, the H1N1 antiviral drug. "Pharmacies ran out of the drug because of citizens' panic, but it is available for any patient for free at the ministry's hospitals."

The illnesses started with flu-like symptoms, then progressed to pneumonia and, in some cases, organ failure. The Egyptian government killed about 300,000 pigs in 2009 when the virus first spread in the most populous Arab state. However, the spokesman said Thursday that it has nothing to do with "swine" unlike what a lot of Egyptians may think.—Xinhua



Rescuers work at the site of the traffic accident which claimed five lives in Santai Village of Pengxi County in Suining City, southwest China's Sichuan Province, on 13 Feb, 2014. The accident occurred at midday on 13 Feb when a minivan slammed into a truck on the 304 provincial road, causing five dead in the minivan and four others injured.—XINHUA

ENTERTAINMENT



Director Diao Yinan (R) poses with cast members Liao Fan (L) and Gwei Lun-Mei during a photocall to promote the movie "Black Coal, Thin Ice" at the 64th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin on 12 Feb, 2014. REUTERS

Chinese directors master Nordic noir, shoot-'em-up Western

BERLIN, 14 Feb — An overweight detective with a drinking problem and a fresh divorce stumbles through the snow to catch a killer armed with ice-skates, showing China has no need to envy the Nordics when it comes to crime in a cold climate. A city lawyer rides through the desert on horseback with a satellite navigator to rescue a girl from a deadly smuggler. Not Arizona but China again, showing it may have something to teach Quentin Tarantino when it comes to spaghetti Westerns.

The thriller "Black Coal, Thin Ice" and the darkly funny "No Man's Land" are among three Chinese films competing for the top Golden Bear award at this year's Berlin film festival. Berlin jury member Tony Leung, star of arthouse hits such as Wong Kar Wai's "In the Mood for Love" and Hong Kong thrillers like the triad movie "Infernal Affairs", said Western audiences would be seeing "more and more Chinese movies". "I think Chinese cinema, the Chinese film industry is grow-

ing globally in the past 10 years, and I think people are getting interested in our Chinese culture," said Leung.

The juxtaposition of Western genres with Chinese culture is part of the allure of "Black Coal" and "No Man's Land", though the challenge of making movies there is also clear. Director Ning Hau said "No Man's Land" took four years to reach the screen partly because censors demanded so many changes. Neither film is overtly political.—Reuters



British film director Ken Loach pose during a photocall during the 64th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin on 13 Feb, 2014. REUTERS

Director Loach says small jabs at society got better results

BERLIN, 14 Feb — British film director Ken Loach, receiving a lifetime achievement award at the Berlin film festival on Friday, said the more ambitious his films were in trying to push a social or political agenda, the less successful they were in achieving that aim. Loach, 77, who in his five-decade career has frequently crossed swords with the British establishment and is a fervent opponent of what he sees as "wars of intervention and imperialism" by the United States and Britain, told a festival news conference that one of his greatest successes came with "Cathy Come Home" in the mid-1960s.

The Oxford University graduate began his film career in what was known at

the time as "kitchen-sink" realism and his films have often focused on outcasts, social problems and on occasion on the British role in Ireland. "Cathy Comes Home", which was aired as a docudrama on the BBC and aroused a storm of phone calls to the state broadcaster, had the modest goal of shining a light on the plight of families split up in some circumstances due to welfare rules at the time, Loach said. "It contributed to changing the law," he said, but added: "The grander the theme the less chance you have of an immediate response. It's more like contributing to a discussion and adding one small voice to the rest of the noise that is out there."

Reuters

Deepika Padukone on Ranbir, Salman and Big B

NEW DELHI, 14 Feb — It's truly rosy at the top, especially when you are Deepika Padukone, Bollywood's current golden girl whose shelves are weighed down with trophies. But 2013's heroine no 1 accepts her success with a humility which is certainly infectious. So has she been able to accommodate all the awards?

Deepika admits laughing, "Yes have made space though some are spilling over," with a wink but says she hopes the good fortune

of 2013 spills into the New Year as well. Not only filmmakers but brands too are wooing the actress with the Midas touch. Dressed in electric blue pants and a silk black shirt, the actress launched a tablet in the capital and admitted that being constantly on the move, she was attached to her gadgets to stay connected with the world. So who is on her speed dial, "I don't believe in speed dials, I keep my options open," she says.

A music buff, the actress said it was the song Ka-

bira from Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani that she constantly heard on loop and the good news for Ranbir-Deepika fans is that they will be seen together in Imtiaz Ali's next movie. Though considered for Sooraj Barjatya's next with Salman Khan, the actress said she was very keen to work with the Dabangg Khan but could only speak for movies she was in. With rumours rife about her being considered for Shuddhi, the actress denied it saying, "I have not been approached by Dharma Productions." What about the film with Shoojit Sircar with Big B, the actress said though she would love to do a film with Big B, she did not have any confirmation on the project. So would we soon see her do a woman centric subject since she seemed quite capable of carrying the weight of a film on her slim shoulders? Deepika shrugged her shoulders and smiled saying we will talk soon on that.

PTI



Deepika accepts her success with humility.—PTI

'Winter's Tale' movie explores love, miracles in adult fairy tale

NEW YORK, 14 Feb — Fairy tales are not only for children and "Winter's Tale," the film adaptation of a best-selling book, aims to lure even jaded, middle-aged adults into believing in the magic of eternal love and the power of miracles.

The film, which opens in US theaters on Valentine's Day, is based on Mark Helprin's 1983 fantasy novel of the same name, and stars Golden Globe winner Colin Farrell ("In

Bruges") as a burglar who falls in love with an heiress played by English actress Jessica Brown Findlay, of TV's Downton Abbey. Set in the early 1900s in a mythical New York with cobblestone streets, stately mansions and thieving street gangs and also in the present, "Winter's Tale" is a romance that transcends time with magical elements such as a flying white horse and a hero who exists for 100 years without aging.

"This is a fairy tale for grownups," said first-time director Akiva Goldsman, who won an Oscar in 2002 for best screenplay for "A Beautiful Mind." "It is a wink and a nod to people who have had loss and need to believe in magic," he added. Goldsman, 51, fell in love with the critically acclaimed novel, but he admits magical realism is a genre that will not appeal to everyone. "It is the co-existence of serious dra-



Actress Bella Thorne arrives for the premiere of the movie "Winter's Tale" in New York on 11 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

matic scenes and a flying white horse," he said, "That is either delightful to you or aversive.—Reuters

Alia Bhatt: Don't think my father will direct me



Alia Bhatt says her father Mahesh Bhatt will not return to direction for anybody.—PTI

MUMBAI, 14 Feb — Actress Alia Bhatt says she

but she doesn't think it is going to be possible. Alia made her Bollywood debut with Student Of The Year, which also marked the launch of actors Varun Dhawan and Sidharth Malhotra.

While Varun's second film Main Tera Hero is directed by his father David Dhawan, Alia doubts she will ever get a chance to work under her father's direction, no matter how much she wants it. "I would love to be directed by my father, but I think he won't return to direction for anybody."

That's not possible," Alia said here.

Mahesh Bhatt, who is credited with movies like Dil Hai Ke Manta Nahin, Aashiqui, Hum Hain Rahi Pyar Ke and Zakham, last directed Kartoos starring Jackie Shroff and Sanjay Dutt in 1999. Alia is awaiting the release of her next film Highway, helmed by Imtiaz Ali.

The 20-year-old believes she is "very competitive", but said: "I am not competitive in a negative way, competitive in a way to outshine myself."

PTI

SPORTS

Liverpool have an advantage in title race, says Mourinho

LONDON, 14 Feb — Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho believes Liverpool have an advantage in the Premier League title race because they will not be distracted by the Champions League. Liverpool are the only side in the top four who are not involved in European competition and Mourinho thinks it could be a crucial factor as he again stated his table toppers are not favourites for league glory in May.

“There are teams with more potential than others, obviously. There is another, like Liverpool, with a big advantage with

the fact that they don't play in the Champions League,” Mourinho told Britain's Sky Sports News on Thursday. “Playing in this is going to take concentration and energy from the teams that are involved in it. I think it will be good fun. “When I say we're not the top candidate everyone thinks ‘here he is again, with what you like to call the mind games’. But it's just my feeling. The league is amazing - it is difficult for every one of us.”

Chelsea could only draw 1-1 at lowly West Bromwich Albion on Tuesday and lead the table by

a point from Arsenal, with Manchester City a further two points back and Liverpool one behind Manuel Pellegrini's men.” Maybe we lost two points or won one point against West Brom and I think it will be like this until the end of the season,” Mourinho said. “All teams need points for their objectives — some for relegation, some for the Champions League — so the fight for points will be harder.”

Mourinho also backed England manager Roy Hodgson's decision not to try to coax Chelsea captain John Terry out of interna-

England manager Roy Hodgson prepares to watch Chelsea play Southampton in their English Premier League soccer match at St Mary's stadium in Southampton, southern England on 1 Jan, 2014. —REUTERS



Hodgson backed to lead England after World Cup

LONDON, 14 Feb — England manager Roy Hodgson has got the backing of the FA general secretary to lead the country into the next European Championship in France following this year's World Cup. Alex Horne, one of the four men who appointed 66-year-old Hodgson as England boss, told Friday's edition of *The Times* that he could not see any reason to make a change before Euro 2016.

“For me personally, Roy is our manager to France and I'm happy with that, very happy with that,” he said. “I think he's been brilliant. He's exactly what we hoped for.” Asked what would be an acceptable performance at the World Cup in Brazil, where England face Italy, Uruguay

and Costa Rica in Group D, Horne said an unbeaten qualifying campaign had already proved Hodgson's value.

“Pass mark? For me, personally, he's done it by getting through that group,” said Horne. “We go with confidence. We'll prepare well. We go optimistic that we are going to enjoy it and play well. It's not an easy group, it's not an easy tournament.” The experienced Hodgson, who led Switzerland to the World Cup in 1994 and Euro 96, took over the England job in May 2012 after Italian Fabio Capello resigned and steered the country to the Brazil tournament from a group including Ukraine and Poland.

Reuters

Positive thinking helps Garrigus flourish at Riviera



Robert Garrigus

PACIFIC PALISADES, (California), 14 Feb — Robert Garrigus, energised

by the power of positive thinking, banished memories of previous struggles

at Riviera Country Club as he charged up the Northern Trust Open leaderboard on Thursday. In four previous starts at the revered venue, Garrigus had broken par only once while never finishing better than joint 51st but he transformed that for the better on a glorious, sun-splashed day as he fired a four-under 67 in the opening round.

“I completely changed my attitude,” American Garrigus told reporters when asked what had made the difference for him at a



Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho holds the ball during the team's English Premier League soccer match against West Bromwich Albion at the Hawthorns in West Bromwich, central England, on 11 Feb, 2014.

REUTERS

tional retirement for the World Cup after a solid season by the centre half. “I'd never intervene. He (Hodgson) is in charge and has everything in his hand. He has made that decision,” the Portuguese remarked. “For

me as a Chelsea manager I'm happy players play with their national teams - but at the same time I'm happy an important player like him is fully focused on his work at Chelsea.”

Reuters

China's Zhang wins Olympic 1,000m speed skating gold

SOCHI, 14 Feb — Less fancied Zhang Hong claimed China's first ever Olympic speed skating title on Thursday, winning the women's 1,000m with a large margin. The 25-year-old Olympic debutante, who clocked one minute 14.02 seconds in the seventh pair, had to wait for 22 more skaters to finish the race before knowing she had made



Less fancied Zhang Hong claimed China's first ever Olympic speed skating title on Thursday, winning the women's 1,000m with a large margin. —XINHUA

history. After missing out on a 500m medal on Tuesday, Zhang took the country's only second gold in Sochi, beating Dutch triple gold medalist Ireen Wust by a stunning 0.67 seconds. Another Dutchwoman Margot Boer took bronze in 1:14.90. Zhang raced against Christine Nesbitt of Canada and overpowered the defending champion with a superb last lap that timed 28.99 seconds.

Then she sat down in the middle of the oval for an agonizing one-hour wait. “I don't think anybody could feel what I felt while waiting,” she said. Zhang's best 1,000m World Cup result this season was a sixth, but she showed improving form by finishing second in the world sprint championships in the Japanese city of Nagano on 19 January. “China has been waiting so long for this breakthrough,” said Zhang's coach Feng Qingbo. China won its first Olympic speed skat-

ing medal in 1992 when Ye Qiaobo finished runner-up over both 1,000m and 500m. But the gold had never come until the Sochi Games.

“We have been waiting for this gold medal for 22 years,” said Zhang.

Xinhua

Injured skater Plushenko retires from Games, overshadows men's hockey

SOCHI, (Russia), 14 Feb — Russia's flamboyant figure skater Yevgeny Plushenko pulled out of the Winter Olympics through injury on Thursday in a shock twist that immediately deflated home fans pumped up by an opening victory for their beloved men's ice hockey team. At the Iceberg Skating Palace, there was disbelief when the announcement came over the public address system that the 31-year-old would not compete in the men's individual figure skating event after he injured himself during his warm-up.

The news came just seconds before Plushenko was due to start his short programme, and left a stunned audience wondering if they had witnessed

Brazil rise to ninth in FIFA world rankings

RIO DE JANEIRO, 14 Feb — Brazil rose one spot to ninth in the latest FIFA world rankings released on Thursday. Switzerland gained the most ground in the top 10, rising two places to sixth while Portugal rose one spot to fourth.

England had the steepest fall among teams in the top 20, slipping two places to 15th. The sharpest mover was Armenia who jumped eight places to 30th while Denmark climbed four spots to No 20. Spain remain the world's top-ranked team ahead of Germany, Argentina, Portugal and Colombia.

FIFA Top 10:

- 1: Spain 1506
- 2: Germany 1314
- 3: Argentina 1255
- 4: Portugal 1219
- 5: Colombia 1211
- 6: Switzerland 1159
- 7: Uruguay 1157
- 8: Italy 1135
- 9: Brazil 1125
- 10: Netherlands 1122

Xinhua

the end of a glittering career. Plushenko, a controversial selection for the Games because of the lack of competitive action in the build-up, won his fourth Olympic medal on Sunday when he helped Russia triumph in the inaugural team competition. But during his warmup he repeatedly clutched his back.

“I came out for the warm-up... and in the first triple Axel I stepped out and felt like I had a knife in my back,” he told reporters. “And the second triple Axel, it was a horrible one. It was a hard landing and after this I didn't feel my right leg. I took four painkillers and it didn't help. I think it was God saying, ‘Yevgeny, enough is enough’.”

Reuters



Russian men's ice hockey team celebrate winning against Slovenia at the end of their men's preliminary round ice hockey game at the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympic Games on 13 Feb, 2014.

REUTERS

GENERAL



The Matsuzakaya Ueno department store shows on 12 Feb, 2014 a gold-plated giant panda statue and pure gold made in the shape of a chocolate tablet which will be sold at the store in Tokyo. The 1-meter tall statue covered with 2,000 gold leaf sheets is priced at 8.88 million yen and the 1-kilogram chocolate-shaped gold at 12.6 million yen.

KYODO NEWS

Prizewinning novelist Kenichi Yamamoto dies at 57

OSAKA, 14 Feb — Kenichi Yamamoto, a Naoki Prize winner renowned for his historical novels, died of lung adenocarcinoma at a Kyoto hospital on Thursday, his family said. He was 57.

Yamamoto won the prize in 2009 with "Rikyu ni Tazuneyo," or "Ask This of Rikyu," which described the life of Sen no Rikyu (1522-1591), a Japanese tea master who perfected the tea ceremony and raised it

to the level of an art.

The film of the same title based on the novel won the Best Artistic Contribution award at the Montreal International Film Festival last year. It starred Kabuki actor Ichikawa Ebizo.

A graduate of Doshisha University in Kyoto Prefecture, Yamamoto debuted in 2002 with his novel "Sengoku Hiroku: Hakuyoden," a story about a falconer in the Sengoku (warring states) era.—Kyodo News

Del Potro, Murray into ATP World Tennis quarters

ROTTERDAM, 14 Feb — Defending champion Del Potro beat Paul-Henri Mathieu of France 6-2, 7-6 (2) to reach the ATP World Tennis quarterfinals on Thursday. The Argentine had to save two set-points on serve at 5-6 in the second set to move on to next play Latvian Ernests Gulbis, who beat eighth-seed Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria 6-4, 7-6 (3).

Second-seeded Murray eliminated Austrian qualifier Dominic Thiem 6-4, 3-6, 6-3. They were evenly matched in the first two sets, with Thiem saving three break points to take the second. But Murray asserted himself in the third, in an exciting match which lasted 2 hours, 21 minutes.

Del Potro was troubled with wrist injury, saying "still feeling pain in his left wrist." "Sometimes I get frustrated. It's not easy when I want to close the point and hit hard but I have to hit slices. But I have done this for the past month on the tour and I have to deal with it. If the pain goes away I will start to hit the backhand harder again."

Murray faces Marin Cilic in the quarterfinals after Cilic upset fifth-seed Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 6-4, 6-4.

Xinhua

MYANMAR TV

(15-2-2014, Saturday)

6:00 am	2:30 pm
1. Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw	20. Business News
6:20 am	2:45 pm
2. Physical Exercises	21. Hyper Sports
6:30 am	3:00 pm
3. Musical Programme	22. News
6:45 am	3:15 pm
4. Documentary	23. TV Drama Series
7:00 am	4:00 pm
5. News/Weather Report	24. News
7:20 am	4:15 pm
6. Business News	25. 2014 University Entrance Examination (Chemistry)
7:40 am	5:00 pm
7. Hyper Sports	26. News
8:00 am	5:15 pm
8. News/ International News	27. Teleplay (Traffic)
8:30 am	5:25 pm
9. India Drama Series	28. Documentary
9:00 am	6:00 pm
10. News/ International News	29. News/Weather Report
9:30 am	6:20 pm
11. Documentary	30. MRTV Youth Programme
10:00 am	7:00 pm
12. News	31. News
10:15 am	7:20 pm
13. TV Drama Series	32. Pyi Thu Ni Ti
11:00 pm	7:20 pm
14. Myanmar Traditional Performing Arts Competition	33. What are human rights?
11:25 pm	8:00 pm
15. Game For Children	34. News/International News/Weather Report
12:00 pm	8:35 pm
16. News/International News/Weather Report	35. Business News
12:25 pm	8:45 pm
17. Round Up of The Week's TV Local News	36. Hit Songs of Stars
1:25 pm	9:00 pm
18. Round Up of The Week's Hluttaw News	37. News
2:15 pm	38. Myanmar Series
19. Musical Programme	39. Gitadagale Phwintbaohn

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

15-2-14 07:00 am ~ 16 -2-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * Great Shwedagon-Charitable Associations
- * World News
- * Myanmar Traditional Art Bronze Casting
- * Local News
- * A Novitation Ceremony in a Rural Township
- * World News
- * Inspiration
- * Local News
- * Me N My Travel (Min Gun)
- * World News
- * Distinguished Myanmar Ladies "Tin Moe Lwin"
- * Local News
- * Lucrative Myanma Rattan Industry
- * World News
- * TECH School
- * Local News
- * Who can match their Unique Music and Fashion
- * World News
- * In the Studio "Na Di Htike"
- * Local News
- * Truly Magical Pindaya
- * World News
- * Hip-Hop and Design
- * Local News
- * Myanma Traditional Wedding Dressing Style
- * World News
- * Graffiti: Character Art
- * Local News
- * Sagaing Hills & Nostalgic Panorama
- * World News
- * The Storytellers

Rooney can take World Cup by storm, says England manager

LONDON, 14 Feb — Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney can be one of the outstanding talents of this year's World Cup in Brazil, according to England manager Roy Hodgson. It will be Rooney's fifth major tournament, but in two previous World Cups he has not lived up to the stunning impression he made as an 18-year-old at the 2004 European Championship finals in Portugal. He was named in UEFA's team of the tournament there after scoring four goals in four games.

At the 2006 World Cup, having barely recovered from a foot injury, he did not score and was sent off as England lost to Portugal in the quarter-finals.

Four years later, when England lost to Germany in the round of 16, his form was again disappointing, while at Euro 2012, having been banned for the first two games, he scored against Ukraine but struggled in the quarter-final loss to Italy. Hodgson believes that this time he will benefit from a recent break through injury, telling reporters: "I think with Wayne it's a great opportunity this year to really show on a world stage what a magnificent player he is."

"Maybe once or twice in the past I can say without too many fears of contradiction that on the world stage he hasn't exploded as he has on our national stage, where we all accept him as being an outstanding player." The



Manchester United's Wayne Rooney (R) is challenged by Arsenal's Laurent Koscielny during their English Premier League soccer match at the Emirates stadium in London on 12 Feb, 2014. REUTERS

message to him is 'This is your chance'. I just rejoice in the fact that he's playing so well." Rooney has scored 11 goals for United

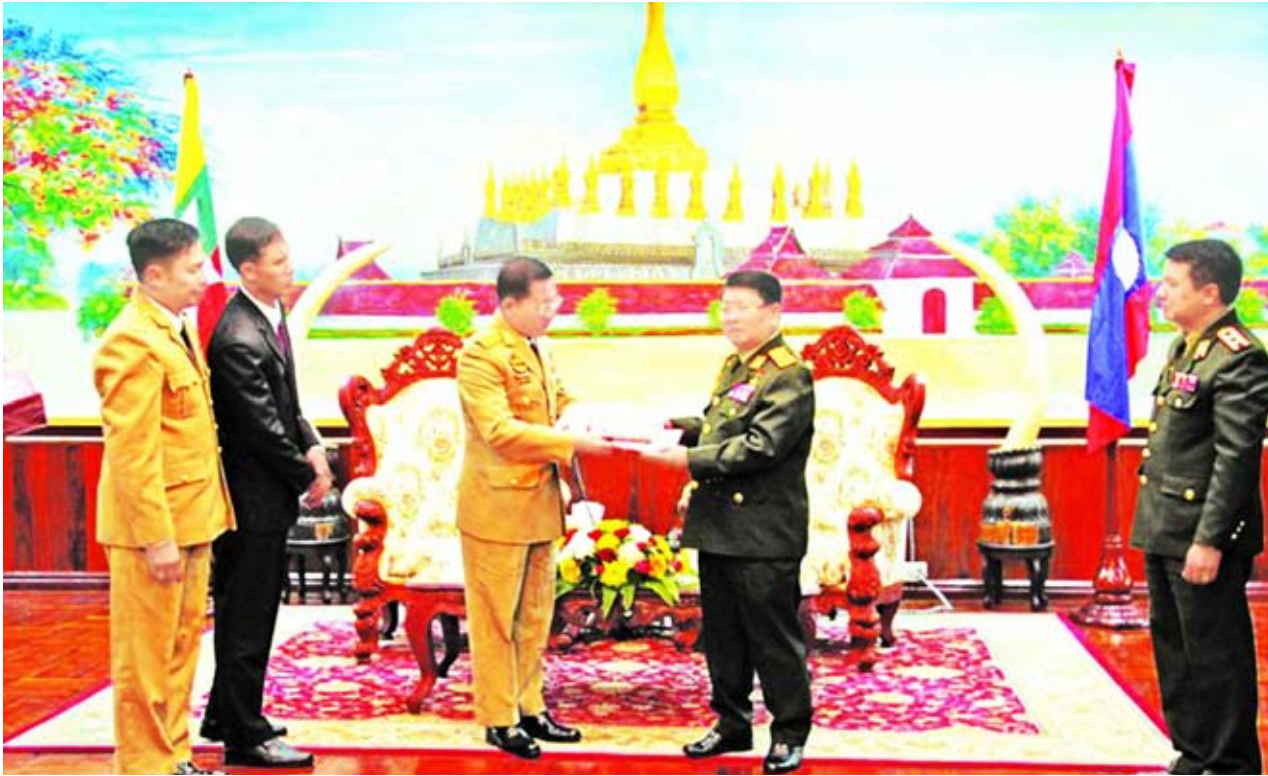
this season, although none since December 26, and has stood out for the champions during an otherwise poor Premier League campaign.

His record for England is 38 goals in 88 games, the fifth highest tally behind Bobby Charlton (49), Gary Lineker (48), Jimmy

Greaves (44) and Michael Owen (40).

Hodgson said the possibility of Rooney's United team mate Adnan Januzaj qualifying to play for England was a long way off and added that it is up to the English FA's Board to pursue the matter if they want the current rules changed. Januzaj, who is being wooed by a number of national teams, would not be eligible for England until 2018 at the earliest. Even then it would require the FAs of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales to scrap their present residency agreement, under which a player must have been educated in that country for five years under the age of 18.—Reuters

Myanmar, Laos vow border cooperation in the areas of combating illegal armed groups, illicit trade and human trafficking



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents medicines and gifts to Laotian Deputy Prime Minister and National Defence Minister Lt-Gen Douangchay Phichith.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence of Laos People's Democratic Republic Lieutenant General Douangchay Phichith welcomed Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ministry in Vientiane today.

In holding talks with the Laotian Deputy PM and party, the Commander-in-Chief said his visit aimed to enhance friendship between the two armed forces. He continued Myanmar-Laos Friendship Bridge which is under construction and set to complete in March, 2015 would contribute towards

further trade relations between the two countries. He called for border cooperation in the area of combating illegal armed groups that could disrupt bilateral trade along the border and exchange of visits and trainees from the two armed forces. He stressed the need to take punitive actions against illegal businesses of transporting and selling goods and human trafficking along the Mekong River

as it would border security in the future. He pointed out the importance of opening of liaisons offices for effective security measures.

The Laotian Deputy PM and National Defence Minister vowed to make full cooperation in handling border issues and to promote cooperation between the two armed forces.

Next, the Commander-in-Chief presented medicines and gifts to the Laoti-

Union FM sends felicitations to His Counterpart

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Feb—U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Ivan Markic, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Serbia, which falls on 15 February 2014.—MNA

an Deputy PM and National Defence Minister.

Then, the Senior General laid wreaths at Unknown Soldier's Monument in Vientiane. Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing stressed the need to enhance amity and friendship between Myanmar and Laos in meeting with embassy staff and their families at the residence of the Myanmar ambassador to Laos in Vientiane yesterday.

He said Myanmar is moving towards a democratic system which is

agreed with real situations of the country and building friendly relations with international community. He pointed out the importance of good neighbourly relations with neighbouring countries, saying that Laos is a good neighbour. He also called on embassy staff to act in accordance with diplomatic etiquettes.

Next, the Senior General and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla presented gifts to the ambassador, the military attaché and officials and attended a dinner hosted by the ambassador.

Myawady

Educational broadcasting discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—The Ministry of Education held a meeting to broadcast an educational TV channel at the ministry here this morning.

Deputy Minister Dr Zaw Min Aung explained the purpose of broadcasting the educational channel.

Director-General of Myanmar Radio and Television U Tint Swe stressed the needs of broadcasting.

The ministry intends to make public educational news, activities and documentary photos through the channel.

MNA

Media accreditation for 3rd BIMSTEC Summit, related meetings

NAY PYI TAW, 14 Feb—A coordination meeting prior to the Third Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit and the 16th BIMSTEC Senior Officials' Meeting will be convened at Royal Kumudra Hotel on 1-2 March and the 14th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and the Third BIMSTEC Summit at Myanmar International Convention Centre on 3-4 March in Nay Pyi Taw.

Local and foreign media persons who wish to cover the events are to visit www.thirdbimstecsummit.gov.mm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for online registration by completing the prescribed MEDIA REGISTRATION FORM by clicking MEDIA REGISTRA-

TION on the HOME page not later than 25 February. Identification pass will be issued to journalists who are willing to cover the meetings on 1 and 2 March at Royal Kumudra Hotel and those who wish to cover the meetings on 3 and 4 March at MICC in the morning of the start of the respective meetings.

Foreign journalists are required to apply for their visas at the nearest Myanmar Embassies. Please contact Foreign Economic Relations Department (Ph: 067 412509) for information about identification pass/visa for foreign journalists and News and Periodicals Enterprise (Ph: 067 412126) for information about identification pass for foreign new agencies based in the country and local journalists.—MNA

Mingala Myanmar to disburse loan to small-scale entrepreneurs

Development of SMEs is vital for development of a country. It needs assistance from the State, business firms and international banks and financial institutions. Now, Mingala Myanmar will disburse loans to SMEs in Myanmar.

"There is a plan to disburse loans to the SMEs in the country and disbursement of loans starts in February. We will give out loans to around 30-40 people in February. Payment period and number of borrowers are not limited," said Daw Thuzar, an official from Mingala Myanmar.

Disbursement plan includes programme to disburse loan to those who had borrowed loan and repaid them in time

and those who expanded their businesses and the new entrepreneurs who will operate small-scale business.

"The SME borrowers must operate their business actually. They need to show licence to run business along with CSCs, household certificates and proof of home ownership. If they are in conformity with above-mentioned facts, they will have a chance to borrow K 10 million," she continued.

With a view to increasing income of ordinary people and improving their socioeconomic status, disbursement of loan was launched in 2011. At present, K 1 million each are being disbursed to over 6000 small-scale entrepreneurs in Myanmar and

**Byline: Maung Maung Myint Swe;
Photo: Tin Soe (Myanma Alinn)**



about K 2000 million of loans have been disbursed across the country. Arrangement is being made to disburse K 10 million to the small-scale entrepreneurs without pledge in form of property as of 1 February.

SMEs include small in-

dustries, catering services and other small-scale businesses. So, the small-scale entrepreneurs will be able to operate their business with 2.5 percent of the interest rate.

Myanma Alinn:

5-2-2014

Trs:KHS