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President marks 3rd anniversary of the government with speech: Six-decade long civil war to end soon, but Armed Forces will continue to be included in negotiations to solve political issues

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March — President U Thein Sein delivered a speech to mark the third anniversary of his government at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, the Union Parliament, on Wednesday.

In his speech, the president expressed his delight with the country's achievement of national consolidation to a satisfactory extent and a new political culture of partnership.

He also expressed gratitude to the international community for their support for the country's economic reform and for helping Myanmar to get on the right track in

a stable manner towards a democratic society and development.

President U Thein Sein also expressed the government's commitment to encouraging responsible investments, to ensure that investment related to extracting natural resources will not affect the environment and socio-economic situation.

Regarding the dispute on farmlands across the country, he urged MPs and responsible persons from the land utilization management offices to collaborate to find justifiable solutions as the government wants to make sure that ownership is true and

authentic in accordance with the existing laws.

Regarding a nationwide ceasefire agreement between the government and ethnic armed groups, the president said that agreements have been reached between the government and the leaders of the ethnic armed groups, and that a nationwide peace agreement will be signed soon.

"I believe that the conflicts that have lasted for over sixty years will soon come to an end," said President U Thein Sein in his address at the parliament.

The people have been enjoying the annual GDP

growth rate of 5%, showing the effectiveness of the country's reforms, he added.

Concerning the country's democratic transition, President U Thein Sein said the Armed Forces will continue to play a role in the democratic transition. He said they need to continue to be included in the political negotiations to find solutions to the political issues in Myanmar.

"We will be able to steadily reduce the role of our Armed Forces as we mature in democracy, and make progress in our peace building efforts," he said.—NLM

Sultan of Brunei concludes visit

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkhiah Mu'izzaddin Wadd-

aulah and party left here for Brunei by air on Wednesday morning.

They were seen off at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Union Minister U Wun-

na Maung Lwin, Deputy Minister Dr Aung Kyaw Myat and officials.—MNA



Brunei Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkhiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah being seen off at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by officials.—MNA

Presentation on success of SEA Games to be held 28 March

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—To elaborate on how Myanmar successfully held the 27th SEA Games, including opening and closing ceremonies, officials will give a presentation in the Chatrium Hotel in Yangon from 9 a.m. to noon on 28 March. There will also be a platform for discussion, with interested people invited to come and join the discussion. Due to a limited number of seats, those wishing to attend the presentation should register with Daw Khin Oo, Tel: 09422515100.—MNA

President congratulates signing of Historic Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro

NAY PYI TAW, 27 March—U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent message of Congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Benigno S Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines and to the people of the Philippines, on the Signing of the Historic Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro on 27 March 2014.—MNA

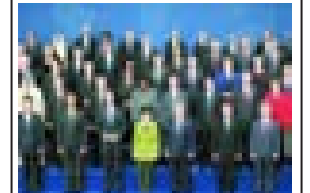
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Japanese government grants US\$ 1,502,515 for eight grass-roots projects

YANGON, 26 March—Mr Mikio Numata, Japanese Ambassador and Chairmen of the Committees from State and Region concerned signed the grant contracts for eight projects today, under its Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security Projects (GGP) Scheme, totaling US\$ 1,502,515.

The five schools and one monastic school projects in Kawa, Hpa-an, Hinthada, Hopin, Myitkyina and Bilin Townships will benefit over 2,400 students, who are now studying under insufficient learning environment in old school buildings. The fund will be used for constructing new R.C buildings with sufficient classrooms, toilets and purchasing of school furniture.

In Ayeyawady Region, Nyaungwine Village in Hinthada Township is in need of a permanent RC bridge since the thirty-six villages in the area are seeking the better access for their socio-economic activities. Under such circumstances, the fund will

fulfill villagers' needs to solve the difficulties of students, farmers, patients and community people by newly constructed 240 feet long bridge.

In Kachin State, pregnant women of Bhamo Township, who do not have access to appropriate facilities to deliver their babies, will benefit from the new obstetrics and gynecology ward to be constructed by the project. The fund will be used to construct new ward building and provide medical equipment for Bhamo General Hospital.

The Government of Japan has assisted 685 various grass-roots projects in Myanmar under this GGP scheme since 1993. Among them, 311 education projects, 31 transport projects and 175 health care projects are included. It is expected that these assistance will further strengthen existing friendly relations between Japan and Myanmar. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.—NLM



Mr Mikio Numata, Japanese Ambassador, and Mya Kan Tha Basic Education Post-Primary School in Hopin of Kachin State at signing ceremony for grant contracts for projects.—NLM

GOLD PRICE (26-3-2014)

Yangon Gold Price

Buying K 669,400 per tical: Selling K 670,000 per tical

Mandalay Gold Price

Buying K 669,400 per tical: Selling K 670,000 per tical

Foreign Exchange Rate

USD Buying K 962: Selling K 966

SGD Buying K 752: Selling K 760

Euro Buying K 1315: Selling K 1335

Union Parliament Deputy Speaker receives CEO of WAGGS

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) and Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Parliament) U Nanda Kyaw Swa met Ms Mary Mc Phail, Chief Executive Officer of World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday. They discussed undertakings of WAGGS and its assistance for Myanmar Girl Scouts Association.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Nanda Kyaw Swa meets Ms Mary Mc Phail, Chief Executive Officer of World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.—MNA



Free medical service

TAIKKYI, 26 March—An Eye Specialists team led by Eye Surgeon Professor Dr Kan Nyunt and Professor Dr Thein Aung provided free Eye Care Services to about 1600 patients with eye complaints at Okkan Station Hospital, Taikkyi Township, Yangon Region.

The team is supported and aided by Taikkyi Township Medical Officer Dr Kyaw Zin Pyone, Okkan Station Medical Officer Dr Cherry Kyaw Myint and hospital staffs, Township Red Cross members and Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association members.

Overall Eye Care Expenditure of the team is donated by wellwisher Shwe Ngar U Thein Myint and Daw Khin Thein and family, Shwebontha St, Pabedan Township, Yangon. It is learnt that this is fifth time for them as such that type of donation at Okkan starting from 2008.—NLM



Eye patients being given free treatment at Okkan Station Hospital, Taikkyi Township, Yangon Region.—NLM

Myanmar, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to boost closer ties

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—At the invitation of Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Mr. Peng Qinghua, Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Committee of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China, and party paid a goodwill visit to Myanmar for three days.

Mr Peng Qinghua held talks over promoting closer ties and cooperation between Myanmar and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region with Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin.

The People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region presented six Dongfeng Fengxing Luxury MPV vehicles worth Yuan 1.05 million to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Union Minister



Union FM U Wunna Maung Lwin shakes hands with Mr. Peng Qinghua, CPC Secretary Committee of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of China.—MNA

hosted a luncheon to the Taw Win Hotel on Tuesday.—MNA

Agreement on development of water distribution system signed

YANGON, 26 March—Yangon City Development Committee and Mekorot Development & Enterprise Ltd of Israel signed an agreement on development of water distribution system at YCDC on Wednesday.

On the occasion, U

Myint Oo, head of the committee's Engineering Department, and Vice-President Mr. Zvi Pinczowski from Mekorot Development & Enterprise Ltd signed the agreement and exchanged the notes.

MNA

NATIONAL

Projects for Rakhine State discussed

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) and Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Parliament) Thura U Shwe Mann made an opening speech at

the meeting on matters related to giving green light by the Union Government to eight projects submitted by Rakhine State Government in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Planning and Financial Development Committee Chairman U Soe Tha, deputy ministers, ministers of Rakhine State Government and officials made

clarifications on the projects.

At 4.45 pm, the Speaker together with Chairperson of Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Parliament) Rule of Law and Tranquility

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met media men at the same venue.

At the meeting, they replied to questions raised by media men.

MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw concludes ninth regular session, stressing great strides in pursuit of peace and prosperity, rule of law



Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint participating in discussion.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—Ninth regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) concluded on Wednesday, with the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker stressing the need of great strides in translating the nation into the one with peace and prosperity and the rule of law, calling on the entire people to cooperate with law enforcement organizations.

On the last day of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session, MPs listened to President U Thein Sein's speech to Parliament to mark the third anniversary of his administration and approved 2014 Union Taxation Bill and Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Bill.



Union Minister U Win Shein replying to questions.—MNA

In his speech at today's session, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann highlighted the completed tasks of the current session in which Pyidaungsu Hluttaw passed 21 laws including National Planning Bill, Union Budget Bill and Union Taxation Bill. He continued that Parliament coordinated matters related to land grab issues, taxation and electricity bills with administrative machinery for the sake of the country and its people.

During the term of First Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, a total of 92 laws were promulgated to present, eight had been sent to the President to sign and 51 bills are under discussion, he added.

He assured that Parliament is ready to enact a National Education Law paving a way for ensuring achievements in human resource development projects. He suggested developing a link between basic and higher education and vocational education to the Union government, calling for necessary preparations and investments in it.

He stressed the need of a spirit of goodwill in making and passing fair and just laws that encourage national interest and could be truly adhered to by the



MP Daw Tin Nwe Oo participating in discussion.—MNA

citizens. He called on parliamentarians to follow and respect legislation.

During Q and A session of Pyithu Hluttaw on its final day, Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Maw Tha Htway replied that establishment of coal-

fired power stations are carried out in accord with the standards of the World Bank and standardization on water quality and aquatic ecology will take place following the rules and regulations of the environmental conservation law.

Regarding a question about the government grant-land, Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint said that application for grant-lands are to be subjected to scrutiny according to rules and regulations as the issuance process of grant-land certifi-



MP U Saw Hla Tun taking part in discussions.—MNA

icates is unlike that of use of farmland certificates.

In his concluding remarks on the final day of Pyithu Hluttaw session, Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann thanked respective committee and commis-



Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa taking part in discussion.—MNA

sion members for their efforts in approving the



MP Dr Myat Nyana Soe participating in discussions.—MNA

recent Bills. He called on parliamentarians to hold further discussions with Amyotha Hluttaw counterparts and make field trips in order to listen to the voices of people and to submit proposals pay-

ing the way for interest of the people before the resumption of the tenth regular session.

On the final day of Amyotha Hluttaw session, Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin welcomed a proposal to form a commission in order to translate the existing Myanmar-language laws into English version ones.

He assured of the readiness for translation from Myanmar to English despite a need for manpower in his office for translating 153 English-language laws into Myanmar version ones and said 89 laws enacted by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw have been translated into English version so far. He then elaborated on the process that will take about two years to finish.

In his speech regarding the tasks of the ninth regular session of Amyotha Hluttaw, Speaker U Khin Aung Myint gave an account of the Amyotha Hluttaw Library where a total of 8979 books have been kept to date.

He called on the representatives to strive for realization of people's power as they were elected by the citizens. The next session of Amyotha Hluttaw is expected to resume at the end of this May, he added.

MNA

Use of Dome House introduced

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—Union Minister for Industry U Maung Myint received a delegation led by Chairman Mr Lee Tasoon of FUJI TAKESAGO SAKE BREWERY of Japan and Managing Di-

rector U Min Min Aung of Silver Wave Trading Ltd at his office, here on Tuesday.

Japanese side discussed world first technology-applied Dome House building is suitable for dry areas. The technology of

Dome House building can prevent outbreak of fire easily, free from insects, earthquake resistance at reasonable price. Use of Dome House is suitable for hotels, restaurants, agriculture and barracks.—MNA

Workshop on gender equality opens in Pyapon

PYAPON, 26 March—Opening of Workshop on knowledge about Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Gender, organized by Social Welfare Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement took place at the hall of district General Administration Department in Pyapon, Ayeyawady Re-

gion on Sunday, with officials attending.

Speaking at the workshop, Deputy Commissioner U Kyaw Soe Win said that Myanmar has signed convention to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in 1997 and Social Welfare Department has been striving for disseminating knowledge about gender equality and Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in the country as of 2010. The government put emphasis on gender equality and improvement of women's status to keep abreast with the world, he added.

Then, Deputy Director Daw Naw Thawah of Social Welfare Department (Head Office) extended greetings.

Chan Tha (Pyapon)



Union Minister for Education Dr Daw Khin San Yi received Ms Mary Mc Phail, Executive Director and Ms Ching Ching Wee-Ong, Regional Director of Asia Pacific Region of World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts at the ministry on Wednesday afternoon. The Union Minister said arrangements of scout get-together will be held by end of April or early May, and the ministry provides assistance for Myanmar scouts associations. They discussed formation of girl scouts organization and joining WAGGS and training of scouts at basic education schools.—MNA

Linyaungchi Library installed Sky Net receiver



CHAUNGU, 26 March—Sagaing Region government donated a set of Sky Net receiver to Linyaungchi Library in Kinmontaw Village in ChaungU Township of Sagaing Region on Monday.

The Sky Net receiver already installed at the library has got one year guarantee and received 86 channels.

The headmaster of Kinmontaw Village BEMS (branch) expressed his thanks for installing Sky Net receiver at the library. In doing so, he said the local people know what is happening in the world and they can apply the knowledge TV programme in the practical fields.—Township IPRD

Japanese Embassy donates school building in Myingyan Tsp



MYINGYAN, 26 March—Japanese Embassy to Myanmar has donated one school building at

Monastic Basic Education Post-Primary School at Sankya Monastery in the eastern part of Myingyan, Mandalay Region, so that students can pursue education conveniently.

According to the chairman of board of trustees, the two-storey building is under construction to complete before the end of

2014. It is estimated to cost over K 100 million.

About 500 students from nearby villages are pursuing education at the school.

During school holidays, officials give computer and tailoring training courses to students at the school.—U Zaw Min Nang (Myingyan)

Construction and Housing Development Bank (branch) put into service in Zabuthiri Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—Construction and Housing Development Bank opened its branch in Zabuthiri Township, Dekkhina District, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on Wednesday.

Deputy Minister for Construction U Soe Tint, Chairman of the bank U Min Htein and officials cut the ribbon to open the new branch. According to officials, Central Bank of Myanmar has given a licence to run Construction and Housing Development Bank with the capital K 100 billion in July 2013.



The Bank has opened its branches in Botahtaung and Dagon Townships and

Nay Pyi Taw. Officials said it has plans to open further branches in the remaining

regions including Mandalay.

Ko Myo (Shwe Paukkan)

Rural people of Tiddim enjoys sufficient potable water



TIDDIM, 26 March—Hailing the 69th Anniversary Armed Forces Day, a water tank was opened at Mulnum (D) Village in Dawlwin Village-tract of Tiddim Township in Chin State on Tuesday.

A village in-charge

explained that the government built a 5000-gallon-capacity water tank and also installed 2-inch diameter water pipeline with the length of two miles for public consumption.

The water pipeline project of Mulnum (D) Vil-

lage started during 2013-14 fiscal year spending 15.00 million kyats fund provided by Rural Development Department. The project was implemented by Royal City Men Co. Ltd and it completed on 15 March.

Nay Su (Chin Hill)

Systematic usage of pesticide disseminated

NAY PYI TAW, 26 March—Agriculture Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation opened the pesticide user course No 2 at the hall of No 100 Basic Education Primary School in Tatpoe Ward of Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on Monday.

Officials of the department gave lectures on use of pesticides and trade system, raising quality of fruits and crops and export process. The training period will last from 24 to 28 March. It was attended by 100 trainees. The training course was aimed at widening the scope of pesticide users.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

Talks on rabies infection in humans given in Mohnyin

MOHNYIN, 26 March—Talks on rabies infection in humans were given to 120 people from Kankawgon and Htantabin Villages due to outbreaks of rabies infection in Mohnyin on 23 March.

The Mohnyin District Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department

and the Health Department conducted the talks and injected anti-rabies vaccines to about 50 dogs.

In addition, rabies prevention pamphlets were distributed to the public.

Of eight people bitten by infected dogs, two died of the disease in Mohnyin.—NLM-001



Ma Zargyi Myint of Kankawgon Village recounts her experience that her mother died of rabies due to bite of infected dog.

Interfaith workshop held in Magway

MAGWAY, 26 March—An interfaith workshop on “unity and peaceful co-existence among the people of all faiths” took place at the Monastery on Pyitawtha Road in Magway Region on Monday.

It was organized by the Yadana Myay Social Development Association.

Leaders of four major

religions extended greetings on the occasion.

Project Director Dr Hnin Aye Ko of Yadana Myay Social Development Association explained the purpose of the association and its plans. Similar workshops will be held in Chauk, Yenangyoung and Pakokku soon.

Kaung Thuta (Minbu)

LOCAL NEWS



Loipawng Pagoda under renovation for its magnificence

TACHILEK, 26 March—Loipawng Pagoda, called U Aung Zeya Pagoda dubbed by Myanmar people, is located on Loipawng Hill in Weinfankham Ward of Mae Sai, Chiang Rai District, northern Thailand.

The pagoda was damaged at the umbrella and some part of gold foils in weather and Tahley earthquake of shan State in 2011.

Under the guidance of Tachilek Naga Hnakauing Monastery monk Agga Mana Pandita Bhaddanta Dhammasiri, Padamya Monk of Bago and disciples will offer gold foils to the whole structure of pagoda, repaire umbrella and hoist a diamond orb atop the pagoda.

The renovation tasks commenced on 24 March.

Maung Yin Kyay

Social association wins reliance of Pyapon dwellers



PYAPON, 26 March—The Karunashin social service association (Pyapon) opened its office on Tuesday morning.

Chairman of the construction committee U Myint Thein handed over documents related to chairman of the association U Thein Hlaing. Secretary of the association U Myo Myint read out the annual report.

The association

formed with local people is located in the compound of Maha Bonsan monastery in Ward 14 of Pyapon in November 2011.

The association has given services to over 400 dead bodies. Members of the association contributed voluntary services to the funeral service regardless of citizen, religion, the rich and poor.

Thuza Nwe (Pyapon)

Basic vocational courses uplift status of women

MONYWA, 26 March—With the aim of developing women's status and turning out skilful women in domestic sciences, the Women's Vocational Training School was established by Education and Training Department of Ministry of Border Affairs in Hkamti, Sagaing Region.

On 21 March, the training courses on basic domestic science course No 6, advanced tailoring course No 8, knitting course No 6, and traditional weaving course No 2 concluded at the school. The training courses lasted 14 weeks from 16 December to 21 March. Altogether 10 trainees attended the advanced

course, 33 at basic domestic science course, two at knitting course and five at traditional weaving course, totalling 50.

One sewing machine each was awarded to outstanding trainees. In addition, sewing machines will be sold to the trainees in installment.

Departmental officials, Base Tactical Operations Commander Col Kyaw Kyaw Min and Region Parliament MP U Mya Maung awarded the outstanding trainees.

Thanks to the training courses, local national women will have self reliance, self confidence and high morale.—*Region IPRD*

Change rate of electric meter bill clarified in Monywa

MONYWA, 26 March—A ceremony to clarify rate of electric meter bills was held at the hall in Monywa of Sagaing Region on Sunday.

Chief Engineer U Aung Myint of Electric-

ity Supply Enterprise explained collection of meter bill with new rates.

Power consumption is increasing 15 per cent yearly, so the Ministry of Electric Power is implementing the power plants in line with

its plans as soon as possible. However, the financial matters become a barrier in implementing the projects. That is why the collection of meter bill rate was increased for cover the cost of generating the electricity

to some extent. Indeed, the change of rate cannot affect the power consumption of basic strata and small-scale industries. Likewise, if the heavy industries consume larger amount of power, the bill rate will be decreased.

The Chief Engineer clarified that the money that came out from the collecting new charge rate will be spent on implementing the installation of power lines and power stations. In consequence, the consumers will use electricity at full capacity. Likewise, the industries will not face power shortage in their production. The government will create extension of power network in a short time, he added.

Only when the power networks can be extended, will the industries be operated in full swing for contributing to development of State economy.

Region IPRD



Akha nationals mark 90th anniversary of initiation into Buddhist order

KENG TUNG, 26 March—Under the supervision of Akha Buddhist Care Association, a ceremony to mark the 90th anniversary of initiating the Akha nationals into Buddhist order took place at the Myoma sports ground in Ward 5 of Kengtung, Eastern Shan State, on Monday.

Shan State Akha Buddhist Care Organization Patron U Ah Zi, Chairman Saddhamma Jotikadhaja U Ah Zo and Commander of Triangle Region Command Maj-Gen Than Tun Oo cut the ribbon to open the ceremony.

The commander donated solar panels and other devices, two laptops and K 1 million to the organization through officials.

Akha nationals have been scattering in various areas of townships and sub-townships in Eastern Shan State since yore.

On 24 March 1924, the Akha nationals from Wamsan Village in Yangkha Village-tract of Kengtung Township launched the initiation of themselves into the Buddhist order.

The ceremony to mark the Buddhist initiation was



held from 22 to 26 March with festivities at the

sports ground.

Naing Naing Aung Wai

Officials of Akha Buddhist Care Association accepts donations from a wellwisher.

Thai acting premier vows to fight against undemocratic moves

BANGKOK, 26 March — Thai acting Premier Yingluck Shinawatra said on Tuesday that her caretaker government will stick to democratic rule despite sustained anti-government protests.

Addressing a general caucus of the Pheu Thai (for Thais) Party, core of the coalition government, Yingluck said the caretaker government will not give in to the street protests but will continue to run the country until a post-election government has been set up. She made comments in response to the protesters' persistent calls for the making of a non-elected prime minister following the Constitutional Court's recent ruling of the 2 Feb-

ruary election as null and void.

The Election Commission will organize a new election in a 60-day time in accordance with the constitution and electoral law.

"I'm not going to keep premiership to myself longer than legally obliged under the constitution.

"We'll adhere to democratic rule. We've traveled on a path from which we may have diverged for a while but we'll finally return to the path toward democracy," she said.

She thanked the rank and file of the Pheu Thai Party for fighting against undemocratic moves with patience and refrained from violence in coping with the street protesters.—Xinhua



Anti-government supporters march through streets in Bangkok, Thailand, on 26 March, 2014. People's Democratic Reform Committee protesters marched in Bangkok for the third day to invite Bangkok people to join their mass rally on Saturday.—XINHUA

Kerry to visit Jordan to discuss Israeli-Palestinian talks

WASHINGTON, 26 March — US Secretary of State John Kerry will travel to Jordan on Wednesday in a bid to salvage the faltering peace talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians, the State Department said on Tuesday.

The top American envoy was breaking off his current trip to Europe with President Barack Obama, as the two sides were wrangling over the release of more Palestinian prisoners, an issue that is threatening to scuttle the talks scheduled to expire by this Saturday.

State Department spokeswoman Marie

Harf said Kerry, now in Rome, will meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and speak to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the phone or videoconference in Amman, the capital of Jordan.

She told reporters at a daily news briefing that Kerry will try to "narrow the gaps" between the parties and work on a framework that will guide future negotiations by sketching the outlines of an accord, as Washington is seeking to extend the talks beyond the original deadline.

Xinhua

THE HAGUE, 26 March — World leaders agreed on Tuesday to reduce to a minimum stocks of nuclear materials that could be exploited by terrorists, in a move that can be seen as a major success for US President Barack Obama.

Over 50 countries and international bodies that gathered for the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague said in their joint statement that measures to secure weapons-grade plutonium and highly enriched uranium urgently need to be updated.

They agreed on the need to enhance the global nuclear security system,



Leaders attend a photo session of the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 25 March, 2014. — KYODO NEWS

particularly focusing on the role played by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"We encourage States to minimize their stocks of HEU (highly enriched uranium) and to keep their

stockpile of separated plutonium to the minimum level, both as consistent with national requirements," the leaders said in the Hague Communique adopted at the end of the two-day summit in the Dutch city.

The statement also called on countries to "establish appropriate security plans" for managing high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said progress has been made under the current framework, but more work needs to be done to ensure nuclear security.—Kyodo News

North Korea fires missiles as US, Japan, South Korea leaders meet



(From R) Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, US President Barack Obama and South Korean President Park Geun Hye smile at their trilateral meeting in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 25 March, 2014. — KYODO NEWS

SEOUL/THE HAGUE, 26 March — North Korea fired missiles into the sea on Wednesday just as US President Barack Obama brought together the

leaders of South Korea and Japan to discuss how to deal with Pyongyang and to thaw chilly ties between Washington's two key Asian allies.

The launch of the two medium-range Rodong ballistic missiles began at 2:35 am. Japan and Korea time, Japan and South Korea said — precisely when

South Korean President Park Geun-hye and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe were sitting down with Obama in The Hague.

The firing off North Korea's east coast toward Japan appeared to be a show of defiance by Pyongyang.

It followed a series of short-range rocket launches over the past two months, and could help improve cooperation between Tokyo and Seoul in the wake of the first meeting between Abe and Park since the Japanese premier took office 15 months ago.

Japan's relations with South Korea, as well as China, has been strained by what Seoul and Beijing say is Abe's refusal to properly

atone for Japan's wartime past.

North Korea's "provocations and threats" would be met by a united response, said Obama, who will visit Japan and South Korea in April.

"It is the first time that the three of us have an opportunity to meet together (on) some serious challenges that we all face," Obama said after meeting both leaders on the sidelines of a nuclear security summit in The Hague.

South Korean Defence Ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok told reporters in Seoul that the launches were "a clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions and a grave provocation against South Korea

and the international community".

Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told parliament that Tokyo had protested against the launches through its embassy in Beijing, while Abe ordered his government to confirm the safety of airplanes and ships in the area.

Defence Minister Itsunori Onodera ordered the military to step up surveillance. US officials also condemned the latest launches.

But Japan's plans to resume high-level talks next week with Pyongyang, suspended since December 2012, would not be affected, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said.—Reuters

WORLD

Search for airliner debris resumes, but 'not absolutely open-ended'

SYDNEY, 26 March — Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said on Wednesday authorities will continue searching for debris linked to missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 “until there is no hope of finding anything,” but, he added, the search effort is “not absolutely open-ended.” Speaking on Nine Network, Abbott said relatives and loved ones of those in the missing plane that experts concluded

crashed into the southern Indian Ocean will be welcome to come to Australia.

“It’s just an unspeakable time for these people and if they want to come to Australia we’ll make them welcome and we’ll do everything we can to assist,” Abbott said.

When asked how long the search would continue he said, “We keep searching until there is absolutely no hope of finding anything.”

“There is quite a bit of debris in this part of the southern Indian Ocean,” he said, adding it had been photographed on a number of occasions but had not been recovered yet because of the difficulty of locating debris in a vast ocean.

“But we are just going to keep on looking. We owe it to people to do everything we can to resolve this riddle,” he said, adding, “It’s not absolutely open-ended, but it’s not

something that we will lightly abandon.”

The search for missing debris in a vast area around 2,500 kilometers southwest of the Western Australia capital Perth began again after being suspended Tuesday because of poor weather.

Seven military and five civilian aircraft from Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the United States will be involved in the search and

recovery effort Wednesday in an area totaling 80,000 square kilometers.

Two vessels, Australian naval ship HMAS Success and Chinese polar supply ship Xue Long will also join in the search.

Earlier in the week, Malaysian authorities said satellite experts concluded the missing aircraft, Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, “ended in the southern Indian Ocean.”

The plane was bound

for Beijing from Kuala Lumpur with 239 people on board when it vanished March 8 while above the South China Sea.

It is suspected the plane made a U-turn toward the Malay Peninsula and flew north to the Andaman Sea before radar contact was lost.

Satellite data later revealed the aircraft continued to fly for about five hours after it disappeared from radar.—Kyodo News

EU to press Obama at summit for aid in cutting Russian gas imports

BRUSSELS, 26 March — The European Union will press US President Barack Obama on Wednesday to help reduce Europe’s reliance on Russian energy by exporting US natural gas, at a time of chill in relations with Moscow over its intervention in Ukraine.

After a visit to a World War One battlefield, Obama will have just 75 minutes over lunch with the EU’s top officials to tackle issues ranging from energy to climate change, in a meeting that will be dominated by the Ukraine crisis.

Yet if there were any doubts about the EU-US relationship after last year’s revelations that Washington spied on its allies,



US President Barack Obama arrives at Brussels Airport on 25 March, 2014.—REUTERS

Obama plans to assuage them later in the day in a speech to some 2,000 guests, before leaving for Rome.

“Recent developments just underscore the impor-

tance of the transatlantic relationship,” Obama’s top trade envoy, Michael Froman, said during a visit to Brussels before the summit. “Right now, as we look around the world,

there is a powerful reason for Europe and the United States to come together to demonstrate that they can take their relationship to a new level,” said Froman, who is the US Trade Representative.

Obama will seek to send that message in his tour of Flanders Field in northern Belgium where US soldiers fought a century ago, a visit steeped in historical significance that has been accentuated by the tensions with Russia over Crimea.

Earlier this week, both sides sought unity in The Hague, where Obama and Germany, France, Britain and Italy, along with Japan and Canada, warned

Russia it faced damaging economic sanctions if Moscow took further action to destabilise Ukraine following its seizure and annexation of Crimea.

Ukraine will be foremost in discussions on Wednesday in light of the EU’s efforts to scale back its imports of Russian energy. Russia provides around one third of the EU’s oil and gas and some 40 percent of the gas is shipped through Ukraine.

EU leaders dedicated part of a summit to the issue last week and German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she supported asking Obama to relax restrictions on exports of US gas.

Reuters

Iraq electoral commission resigns en masse weeks before vote

BAGHDAD, 26 March — The entire board of Iraq’s electoral commission tendered its resignation on Tuesday in protest against political interference, casting doubt on a nationwide vote scheduled for next month. The Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) said it had found itself caught between conflicting

rulings from parliament and the judiciary regarding the exclusion of certain candidates from the election, due on 30 April.

IHEC’s sudden move further complicates the outlook for a vote already clouded by violence across the country where Sunni Islamist militants have regained momentum over the past year.

“The commission is subject to intense pressures resulting from the conflict between the legislative and judiciary powers,” it said in a statement.

“In order to get out of this vicious circle, the members of the electoral commission have taken the decision to present their resignation collectively.”

Reuters



Employees of the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) count ballots during a regional parliamentary election after the closing of a polling station in Arbil, capital of the autonomous Kurdistan region, about 350 km (217 miles) north of Baghdad, on 21 Sept, 2013.—REUTERS

Venezuela arrests 3 generals linked to coup plot

CARACAS, 26 March — Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said Tuesday his government has detained three Air Force generals linked to a coup plot by hardline right-wing opposition groups.

The generals were arrested after lower ranking officers notified security forces, Maduro said during a meeting of foreign ministers from the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) seeking to help mediate an end to violent anti-government protests that have rocked Venezuela since early February.

The generals were detained late Monday and placed in the custody of the military courts, Maduro said, without identifying them.

“We captured three generals that we were investigating thanks to the strong morale of our revolutionary armed force — three generals that planned to get the Air Force rise up against the legitimately

constituted government.

All of them have been placed in the hands of the military courts,” he said.

The death toll from the violent protests has now reached 35, said Maduro, blaming small violent gangs known here as “guarimbas.”

“Each case (of fatality) is the direct responsibility of the guarimbas,” he said, countering allegations by the opposition that the security forces are to blame for the deaths.

Maduro asked Unasur to support a Truth Commission created by the National Assembly to investigate the violent deaths.

The Unasur delegation, representing Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela, was to meet with the political committee of the country’s ongoing National Peace Conference and with Venezuelan church leaders.

Xinhua

Japan, Australia fail to agree on tariffs in FTA talks

TOKYO, 26 March — Japan and Australia failed to reach an agreement over tariff elimination on farm products in their ministerial free trade talks in Tokyo on Wednesday, only confirming they will continue negotiations.

After meeting with Japanese farm minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, Australian Trade and Investment Minister Andrew Robb told reporters that they had good talks, but added more discussions are needed.

Hayashi also told reporters they had a “very good discussion” and “exchanged honest opinions,” but did not elaborate.

The main sticking points are how to deal with tariffs on Australian beef and Japanese motor vehicles. The two countries are striving to strike a deal in April, when a summit between Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is planned.

Robb also met with Akira Amari, minister in charge of the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade talks, and will meet with Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida as well as trade minister Toshimitsu Motegi later in the day. Momentum in the negotiations has picked up recently, especially after Robb expressed hope of striking a deal in April when he met with a Japanese ruling party lawmaker in February on the margins of a TPP ministerial meeting in Singapore.

Kyodo News

PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 27 March, 2014

When democratic transition comes together with technology

Myanmar is now passing through an exciting era when the nation's democratic transition takes place simultaneously with the revolution of technology, especially the mobile technology. Only a few nations in the world may face such advantages to enter

the new era. But the advantages would still be on paper if we simply give a blind eye to these advantages. We have yet to tap the technology for catalyzing the positive change.

We could amplify the mobile technology, taking latecomer's advantage. We have a chance to build up the exiting IT infrastructure. Recently, the licensed international telecom service provider Ooredoo organized the first-ever Hackathon in Myanmar where the country's mobile developers showed off their talents and also how they could drive the change with mobile technology.

The government is developing e-government system with the support of an Indian IT firm and other organizations. The government has been developing

the e-government and e-governance for years, but it cannot still make an impact.

IT can cut red tape. IT can help increase government transparency. IT can help raise public awareness. The information technology can do many things positive in the new era of the democratic Myanmar. We should attach greater importance to the IT in bringing about positive change.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.tun@gmail.com with your name and title.

Launching A Systematic Approach To Learning English

Kin Mg Oo

Today English is playing an essential role in every field and everywhere of the world. Not to mention a man who knows English, even one who picks up the language can be said to have an access to success & general knowledge. Here I do not mean wealth. Wealth does not necessarily attend success. As known by all, undeniably English is being learnt more and more throughout the world, hence increasing need for us to know English as much and soon as possible so as to keep up with the ever-changing world. For saying so, someone may ask me whether a nation cannot develop into a prosperous and modernized one if we lack that skill. If so, my stock reply will be, "yes". Sources for knowledge and information we need are plentiful nowadays, most of which are books written in English. Yet, so as not to lag behind, we must work at our fastest pace. Our country, Myanmar, abounds with academicians, language experts and skilled teachers at the chalk-face, who always deal with English & have responsibilities to make sure that their valuable skills are passed down to youths of today so that they can serve the country one day. There seems to be an element of hyperbole in such a claim that scholars with a special knowledge on the language failed to make concerted efforts for enthusiastic children to be able to acquire their longed-for language skills, if possible, before they proceed their learning at universities and colleges. In our country, English had become a compulsory subject from kindergarten classes to matriculation. In such a period of time, school-children who passed their BEHS exams should have known English considerably. Have they had the required skills? In reality, its answer will be a negative one at the present time. Sadly those students were LEP ones, excluding a low percentage. Would that author-

ities concerned had known the truth. Who was responsible for this? Now is not the time when we will have to blame each other. Knowing that their children's teachers lacked qualifications, some parents who paid attention to their offspring's education failed to disclose the true situation. Headmasters and educational officers also would have known it. Most of the young teachers themselves did not get good education in their schooling days. Moreover, they could not give time for further improvement in teaching career, in pursuit of money. In fact they all were subjected to the bad education system. Let bygones be bygones. Now it is time to solve this problem. "The road to hell is paved with good intentions," as the saying is. We need to do actually. The days are gone when the requirements of the younger minds went uncared.

All high school students must have a high level of competence in English to gain world knowledge. Concurrently there need to be many language experts who will have to make the world known to Myanmar and make Myanmar known to the world, as well. Each and everyone of today's youths has a respective hope for their career. Out of the four skills of the language, reading skill should be ranked first. That is because our main objective of learning a language is definitely to get knowledge and information, that is, to comprehend (read & understand). Delivering, keeping as records or sharing what we encounter or find out with others will follow it. Here we need to assess ourselves as to whether we had qualified enough to be able to read stories and novels written in English by ourselves, and to write letters & essays of mediocre level, even though we spent for nearly one decade at schools. Approximately, less of 30% of the students who finished academic learning

at matriculation had those skills. Authorities concerned of the Education Department and most parents would not like to accept this figure, for not being an officially released report. But this is not a lie. If there will arise a doubt in you, you can find it convinced that my claim was reasonable, by giving some time to interview those students. I am not writing this just for laying the blame on the failure of a teaching system. When I was a boy, I had ever heard some scholars say that we were used as guinea pigs in implementing the then Education System by the government. What a miserable and irrecoverable loss of national resources; time, labor and intellectualism! Useless as it is to look at the past mournfully, we should learn our lesson from our past's experiences, for the betterment of our future.

Once we develop a disease, we should rush to see a doctor and consult with him. Instead, if we try to heal our suffering by taking medical treatment and palliatives from a charlatan, it will be worse surely. Likewise we are now facing the difficulty of learning English. How will we solve this problem? It is not a brief illness, but a chronic one. The most responsible persons should not neglect it any longer, assuming that it is a national cause and a great burden to be accomplished, hand-in-hand with savants & doyens in academic fields, interested scholars, experienced teachers, well-known prolific writers and retired veterans of the Education Department. For saying so, it does not mean that the former are not qualified with abilities to perform this duty without the outsiders' help. We were blessed with the experienced and learned ones par excellence. It would be a great regret for us in future if the latter will go uninvited to take part in the campaign for searching a proper right method of teaching English in schools at primary, sec-

ondary and tertiary levels. Under the aegis of the Education Department, there should be convened discussions, workshops and seminars which will be composed of many language experts and literati. They will be able to discuss effective teaching methods and recompile necessary syllabuses and curriculums. Their collective efforts will benefit everyone. Giving refresher courses to subject teachers on the job and opening extramural classes for those who want to proceed to get further studies, should be taken into consideration as well. Because most of the graduates lack required qualifications of reading & writing skills in English, even after getting their respective degrees. Some may disbelieve my saying that I had ever taught English to an MA degree holder whose English was very bad. She specialized in English as a major subject. There can be found similar ones surrounding around us. This problem should not be assumed to be trivial. With the increasing number of well-educated youth population in a country, the nation will develop into an advanced state rapidly. The future of a country belongs to its youths. Only if they are well-qualified enough to be able to lead the country, will it develop and prosper overnight.

Procrastination is the thief of time. And, "Time and tide waits for no man", as the saying goes. As if we need to implement an urgent reforestation when there is a wide spread of deforestation in an area, we are now facing the problem to find out the workable solution that will produce able teachers firstly, and then to pass their knowledge on to younger generation in time. With collective effort of the scholars, we will certainly achieve success with a capital S. I would like to admit that I am not a scholar and I have a scatter of knowledge on the language. My only claim to

fame was that I had a chance of studying under the guidance of well-known teachers such as Sayargyi U Ko Lay (Zeyar Mg), Sayargyi U Tint Lwin, Sayargyi U Sao Htun Hmat Win, Sayargyi Dr Min Tin Mon, Sayargyi Dr Khin Mg Nyunt and others. It was very lucky for me to have had such a rare opportunity and I profited a lot from their marvelous intelligence and knowledge banks. They can be likened to walking lexicons. Like those language experts, there are still in every field of our country, many outstanding intelligentsia with a vast area of knowledge. Inability to describe them individually can be regarded to be attributed to my fault. But let me name some of them. Sayargyi U Than Oo, Sayargyi U Mya Zin, Sayargyi U Tha Noe, Sayargyi Min Tin Mon, Sayargyi Dr Khin Mg Nyunt, Sayargyi U Thaw Kaung and many excellent teachers are still alive. Their suggestions & contribution will be of great use. We firmly believe in their willingness to help. Nowadays organizations such as NEER, emerged. The government itself is launching to change the national education system at high speed. And it is heartening for us to have a rare opportunity to express our attitudes, opinions and suggestions in today's highly esteemed papers. This reminded us of writings of well-known prolific writers such as Saya Tet Toe, Motley Ko Ko, Aba (U Than Myint), Tetkatho Ne Win, U Myint Thein (Advocate), Lecturer U Thet Tin and many other writers. Those aroused our eagerness to know English. Likewise, press media is becoming an important forum for our people.

Last but not least, I would like to humbly tender the following suggestions.

1/ The government

should give elite refresher courses to all teachers, especially to primary assistant ones, and encourage them to be self-motivated educators. To be able to do so, it is suggested that education workers get good salaries, plus fringe benefits, bonus and other allowances, for example-cost of living allowance. Then they need not spend their time to get extra income. Instead they can manage to build their intellectual capacity for self-development in their spare time.

2/ Authorities of Education Department should compile reliable curriculums and syllabuses for classes at different levels urgently. The most important thing is to make school inspectors assess teachers' and students' qualifications regularly.

3/ Need-blind university-admission-system should be substituted with something more appropriate. Simultaneously experts ought to convince students that their deep-rooted habit of memorizing lessons will not be helpful for advanced learners to sustainably study in real life.

4/ Under the guidance of Education Department, PTA (Parents and Teachers Associations) of all the schools across the nation should arrange to hold ad lib speech, debate or essay writing contests in English. By doing so, inferior students will emulate superior peers. And parents should cooperate with teachers constantly to know about their offspring's progress.

5/ As for people's forum, our press media always should grant an advice column in their papers. If possible, the papers should persuade students to contribute articles and letters. Then, we firmly believe that our students will never go down on the totem pole.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I disclosed my opinions as a layman, in all sincerity.

(U) Kin Mg Oo residing in Yangon was a former consultant of 5Movies and former training officer of SkyNet. Now he is teaching English.

Spanish court says Catalonia sovereignty claim illegal

MADRID, 26 March — Spain's Constitutional Court on Tuesday partially struck down a sovereignty claim approved by lawmakers last year in the northern region of Catalonia, a vital step toward a referendum on full independence, court papers showed.

In January 2013, Catalonia's regional parliament unanimously adopted a declaration of self-determination saying the people had the right to vote on breaking away from the rest of Spain. The Madrid court declared "null and unconstitutional" the first point in the Catalan ruling which said the people of the region had the legal right to infringe the Spanish constitution.

Catalan President Artur Mas has promised to hold a referendum on secession from Spain on 9



Pro-independence protestors shout slogans in front of Catalonia's regional parliament as lawmakers voted inside, in Barcelona, on 16 Jan, 2014.

REUTERS

November, saying Catalonia should be a separate state within the European Union and the euro zone.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy says such a vote would be unconstitutional. Mas has

been buoyed by a groundswell of public support for the referendum but with the European Union and Spanish government firmly opposed, full independence seems unlikely. The Catalan Parliament in Barcelona

voted in January to send a petition to the national legislature seeking the power to call a popular vote on the region's future. That initiative is still pending a vote in Madrid.

Reuters

Imperial couple visit Ise Shrine with sacred treasures

ISE, (Japan), 26 March — Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko visited Ise Shrine in Mie Prefecture on Wednesday, following last October's first ceremony in 20 years to transfer the shrine deity to a new building.

During their visit to the shrine dedicated to the ancestral deities of the imperial family, the imperial jewel and sword, two of the family's three sacred treasures, were moved out of Tokyo's Imperial Palace for the first time since they made a similar visit 20 years ago. The other treasure, a mirror, is always kept at the shrine in central Japan.

In the morning, the emperor and empress paid a visit to the shrine's Geku

compound, which is dedicated to Toyouke Omikami, the god responsible for food, clothing and shelter.

The couple will move to the Naiku compound, 4 kilometres from Geku, which enshrines Amaterasu Omikami, worshipped as the ancestral deity of the imperial family, in the afternoon.

The visit to the shrine, regarded as a private one, is the first since November 2001 by the current imperial couple.

Before World War II, the emperors used to carry the sacred treasures when they stayed outside the Imperial Palace at least one night.

But the custom ceased to be carried out after the



Japanese Emperor Akihito (third from L) pays a visit to the Geku compound of Ise Shrine in Mie Prefecture on 26 March, 2014. The emperor and Empress Michiko visited the shrine following a ceremony in October 2013, the first in 20 years, to transfer the shrine deity to a new building. — KYODO NEWS

war in light of the principle of separating government and religion in the Constitution as well as security concerns.

The emperor and empress are scheduled to

return to Tokyo on Friday following a tour of a museum showing exhibits related to last year's ceremony to reconstruct the shrine facilities on Thursday.

Kyodo News

Russia's Medvedev says sanctions will not hurt

MOSCOW, 26 March — Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev shrugged off sanctions over Moscow's annexation of Crimea, saying even if the West imposes more pu-

nitive measures, companies that want to work in Russia will not be deterred, *Interfax* news agency reported on Tuesday. "Everything will be fine," Medvedev was

quoted as saying when asked how cooperation with foreign oil and gas companies would be affected if Western nations broaden sanctions against Russia. — Reuters

Abe, Obama agree to speed up bilateral talks on Pacific free trade

THE HAGUE, 26 March — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and US President Barack Obama agreed Tuesday to speed up bilateral talks toward signing a Pacific free trade pact, Abe said. Abe told reporters after a brief one-on-one meeting with Obama that they agreed to "accelerate negotiations toward concluding a Trans-Pacific Partnership pact and tell working-level officials in each government to work" to that end. An early signing of the TPP is expected to be a key topic in a planned full meeting between Abe and Obama when the US president visits Japan next month. Abe and Obama reached the agreement ahead of a fresh round of two-day bilateral negotiations on the TPP starting Thursday in Washington.

Hiroshi Oe, deputy chief TPP negotiator of Japan, and Wendy Cutler, acting deputy US trade representative, will take part in the meeting. Japan and the United States, the two biggest economies in the envisioned TPP pact, have been at odds over issues such as Japan's desire to keep tariffs on agricultural produce as an exception under the TPP.

Both governments also have differences over US calls on Japan for greater access to the auto industry by lifting nontariff barriers such as regulations.

Abe also said he told Obama of his thought that the strong bilateral alliance has "contributed to peace and stability as well as prosperity of Asia" and he will highlight the matters during their full talks planned for next month. — *Kyodo News*

Malaysian jet debris hunt steps up, black box detectors arrive

PERTH / BEIJING, 26 March — US equipment designed to detect black box signals arrived in Australia on Wednesday, as searchers stepped up efforts to find some trace of a Malaysian airliner thought to have crashed 18 days ago thousands of miles off course in the Indian Ocean.

A dozen aircraft from Australia, the United States, New Zealand, China, Japan and South Korea were once more scouring the seas some 2,500 km (1,550 miles) southwest of Perth in the hunt for wreckage, after bad weather on Tuesday forced the suspension of the search.

"The crash zone is as close to nowhere as it's possible to be but it's closer to Australia than anywhere else," Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said, before leading the country's parliament in a moment's silence. "A considerable amount of debris has been sighted in the area where the flight was last recorded. Bad weather and inaccessibility has so far prevented any of it from being recovered. But we are confident that it will be." — *Reuters*

Health Care Activities...

(from page 9)

Sr.No	Township	IDP Camp/Villages	Organization	Total Population
6	Rathedaung	A Nauk Pyin Naung Pin Gyi	Township Health Department IRC	994
7	Buthidaung	Urban Area	Township Health Department	2500

Activities by Ministry of Health for the Patients at Stabilization Center in Thet Key Pyin

The referral services have been provided to the patients at stabilization center at Thet Kye Pyin. The preparation has been arranged with coordination by senior consultant from Sittway General Hospitals. Darpaing Emergency Hospital has been prepared to provide emergency health care services and referral.



Readers enjoy "London book bridge" at the Ho Chi Minh City Book Fair 2014 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, on 24 March, 2014. The 8th Ho Chi Minh City Book Fair with the theme of "Books-Culture and Development" opened to public here on Monday, attracting more than 160 domestic and foreign publishers. — XINHUA

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Leaving politics behind, Russian-US crew blasts off for space

CAPE CANAVERAL, (Florida), 26 March — Two Russian cosmonauts and a US astronaut blasted off for six-month stay aboard the International Space Station on Tuesday, a partnership unaffected by the political rancor and economic sanctions triggered by Russia's annexation of Crimea.

The Russian Soyuz rocket carrying cosmonauts Alexander Skvortsov and Oleg Artemyev and NASA astronaut Steven Swanson lifted off at 5:17 pm EDT from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

The trip to the space station, a \$100 billion research laboratory that flies about 260 miles above Earth, was scheduled to take about six hours.

However, an unknown

problem caused the crew's Soyuz capsule to skip two planned steering maneuvers, delaying the crew's arrival until Thursday.

"The crew is in no danger. The Soyuz (is) equipped with plenty of consumables to go even beyond the next two days, should that become necessary. Nobody expects that that will be the case," mission commentator Rob Navias said during a NASA Television broadcast.

Russian flight controllers expect to get more information about why the Soyuz's thrusters failed to fire when the capsule flies over ground communications stations later on Tuesday.

"Initial information indicates the problem may have been the spacecraft

was not in the proper orientation for the burn," NASA said in a status report posted on its website.

Russia's state television channel Rossiya-24 quoted national space agency Roscosmos as saying the flight of the Soyuz spaceship was now taking place "in a reserve mode" after its orientation engines failed to ignite. "It's all normal on board," it said.

Docking was tentatively retargeted for 7:58 pm EDT on Thursday. Several hours before the docking, Soyuz will make a final emergency maneuver to enter the orbit of the space station, RIA news agency quoted a Russian space official as saying.

The arrival of Skvortsov, Artemyev and Swanson will return the



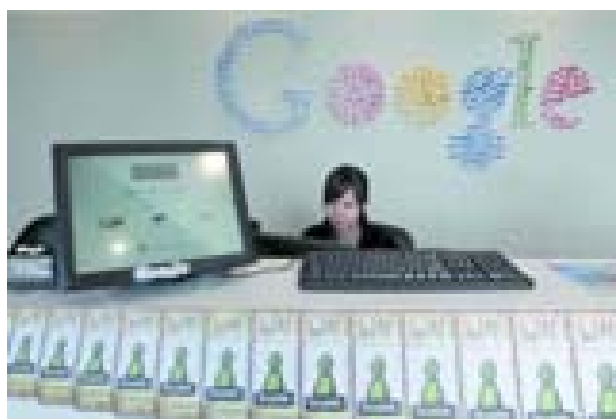
The Soyuz TMA-12M spacecraft carrying the International Space Station (ISS) crew of US astronaut Steven Swanson, Russian cosmonauts Alexander Skvortsov and Oleg Artemyev blasts off from its launch pad at the Baikonur cosmodrome on 26 March 26, 2014.—REUTERS

station to a full six-member crew.

The orbital outpost, a

project of 15 nations, has a NASA astronaut returned been short-staffed since to Earth on 11 March. two other cosmonauts and Reuters

Google slashes cloud computing prices in rivalry with Amazon



An employee sits behind a reception desk during a media tour in the Google data centre in Changhua Coastal Industrial Park, central Taiwan, on 11 Dec, 2013.

REUTERS

SAN FRANCISCO, 26 March — Google Inc slashed its cloud computing service prices on Tuesday, seeking to wrest customers from Amazon.com Inc and Microsoft Corp in the fast-growing market of

renting computers and data storage to companies.

Price cuts range from 30 to 85 percent. Google's Cloud Storage will cost 2.6 cents per gigabyte, about 68 percent lower for most customers.

Google's Compute Engine services will cost 32 percent less across all sizes, regions and classes.

"The cost of virtualized hardware should fall in line with the cost of the underlying real hardware," Google Senior Vice President Urs Holzle said in a post on Google's official developers blog on Tuesday in conjunction with a cloud event that the company hosted in San Francisco.

Holzle noted that hardware costs have improved by 20 to 30 percent during the past five years but that "public cloud prices fell at just 8 percent per year."

Cloud services are increasingly popular among tech startups and larger companies, which rely on computers owned and

operated by the likes of Amazon and Google, the world's No. 1 Internet search engine, instead of buying the equipment themselves.

Amazon, one of the largest online retailers, was among the first companies to recognize the opportunity. Amazon Web Services provide the underlying infrastructure for key aspects of popular Web companies such as online movie streaming service Netflix Inc and social network Pinterest.

Amazon's Web Services will hold an event in San Francisco to discuss its business on Wednesday. Amazon did not immediately respond to a request for comment on whether it would respond to Google's price cuts.—Reuters

HTC debuts flagship smartphone in race against Samsung

LONDON, 26 March — Taiwan's HTC Corp unveiled a new flagship smartphone on Tuesday, an upgrade to the award-winning HTC One that it hopes will claw back some of the market share lost to Samsung.

The HTC One M8 has a 5-inch display, slightly larger than its predecessor, as well as improved camera technology, a faster processor and updated software, the company said.

Chairwoman Cher Wang said at an event in London that the new device, which has a premium metal body, was an evolution of last year's HTC One. The HTC One was lauded by critics, she said,



HTC CEO Peter Chou shows the new HTC One (M8) phone during a launch event in New York, on 25 March, 2014.

REUTERS

and it was still winning awards, including 'Smartphone of the year' at the Mobile World Congress in February.

"The best smartphone in the world gets better in every way," she said of the new model. But HTC One — the group's biggest selling model to date — was not enough to stop more than two years of sliding sales as

the company battled rivals such as Apple and Samsung — the market leader in terms of sales.

Just over two years ago HTC supplied one in every 10 smartphones sold around the world. In 2013 its global market share had fallen to just 2 percent, according to Strategy Analytics analyst Neil Mawston. The drop in its share price

has also been precipitous.

Its latest sales figures, for February, were 36 percent lower than a year ago.

It is fighting back with a new line of cheaper handsets, including a mid-tier handset unveiled in Barcelona last month, as well as the HTC One M8.

Analysts at CCS Insight said the HTC One M8 was a "make-or-break" device for HTC.

"The company has learned lessons from the phone's well-received but underperforming predecessor," they said.

"HTC must capitalize on the phone's distinctive design and premium materials to re-establish itself in the market."—Reuters

'Candy Crush' maker King scores \$7.1 billion valuation in IPO

NEW YORK, 26 March — Mobile game maker King Digital Entertainment Plc priced its initial public offering on Tuesday at the mid-point of its expected range, valuing the "Candy Crush Saga" maker at about \$7.1 billion despite questions about whether it can replicate the success of its smartphone smash-hit. The offering marks the largest United States IPO from a booming mobile gaming industry that has been keen to emerge from the shadow of Zynga Inc, the social gaming firm that lost half its value after a 2011 IPO that valued it just below King at \$7 billion.

London-based King priced its IPO at \$22.50 per share, with the stock to debut on the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday. Its offering of 22.2 million shares would raise about \$500 million at that price. "It's fair to say that if it was a very high-demand IPO, we would've seen the price at the upper end of the range," Sterne Agee

analyst Arvind Bhatia said. "At the mid-point, it's a successful IPO but perhaps not a runaway success."

Even if King, whose other games include "Bubble Witch Saga" and "Papa Pear Saga", pulls off a strong debut, the real test will be the stock's staying power in coming weeks and months. King hopes to avoid Zynga's fate by virtue of a stronger focus on a mobile gaming market worth an estimated \$17 billion.

"What's more important than the price is how it trades tomorrow and in coming sessions," Bhatia said. "If the investors are in because they expect a quick profit and it doesn't happen because it doesn't get a lift, people will exit quickly." Founded in Sweden in 2003, the company has drawn plaudits for transforming "Candy Crush Saga" into a household name that was the most downloaded and top-grossing free app of 2013 on Apple Inc's app store.—Reuters



Japan's ruling party approves bill to revise referendum law

TOKYO, 26 March—The ruling Liberal Democratic Party approved on Wednesday a bill to revise the country's referendum law, paving the way for enactment during the current Diet session with an eye to future Constitutional reform.

The crux of the proposed bill, endorsed at a joint meeting of LDP panels related to the matter, is to lower the minimum voting age from 20 to 18. The LDP, headed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, will likely submit it to the Diet with other parties in early April.

Amending the pacifist Constitution, which has never been revised since its promulgation in 1946, has drawn criticism from some opposition lawmakers.

A proposal for constitutional revision can be initiated with the support of at least two-thirds of the lawmakers in both houses of parliament, and must be endorsed by a majority in a referendum.

The LDP and its coalition partner, the New Komeito party, have agreed with three opposition parties — the Democratic Party of Japan, Your Party, and People's Life Party — to jointly submit the bill, raising the likelihood of Diet passage before the current session ends on 22 June.

But other opposition parties are not united in their response. The Japan Restoration Party has put off a decision on whether to support the bill, while the Japanese Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party are demanding the bill be scrapped.

The revised law would lower the voting age four years after it takes effect, and allow civil servants to take part in organizational efforts to rally support for or opposition to a proposed constitutional amendment.

Kyodo News

Cambodia's opposition party to rally on Sunday

PHNOM PENH, 26 March— opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) is scheduled to hold a people's congress on Sunday afternoon at the capital's Freedom Park to consult with its supporters over current political situation, its President Sam Rainsy announced on Wednesday.

"We will meet with about 3,000 supporters on Sunday afternoon, 30 March at the Freedom Park to hear people's recommendations over the ongoing political dispute," he said at a news briefing.

"The upcoming gathering is not a demonstration to topple [the government], so don't use this pretext to ban our rally," he said, adding that the party had already submitted a request to the City Hall this morning for the gathering.

Sam Rainsy also reiterated his call for a top-level meeting with Prime Minister Hun Sen to negotiate over the post-election dispute. Long Dimanche, spokesman for the Phnom



Sam Rainsy (R), president of the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), speaks at a Press briefing in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 26 March, 2014. The CNRP is scheduled to hold a people's congress on Sunday afternoon at the capital's Freedom Park to consult with its supporters over current political situation, its President Sam Rainsy announced on Wednesday.—XINHUA

Penh City Hall, confirmed that the City Hall has received the CNRP's request for the Sunday's rally, but said that no decision has been made yet.

"We will hold a meeting to consider the proposal," he told *Xinhua*.

Political row between Hun Sen's ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and Sam Rainsy's CNRP has simmered since the July election results showed that the CPP won 68 parliamentary seats against 55 seats for the CNRP.

Complaining about serious ballot-rigging, the CNRP refused to accept the outcome and has boycotted parliament and conducted numerous protests—some turned violent—to demand the resignation of Hun Sen and a re-election.— *Xinhua*

Taiwan's Siew to attend Boao Forum

BEIJING, 26 March—Taiwan politician Vincent Siew, honorary chairman of the Taiwan-based Cross-Straits Common Market Foundation, will attend the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2014, Ma Xiaoguang, spokesman with the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, told a press conference.

The Boao conference is expected to be held in south China's Hainan Province between 8 and 11 April.

Siew attended the forum's annual conference and met with Chinese President Xi Jinping last year.

Xinhua

Tokyo court grants Japanese citizenship to another Filipino-Japanese

MANILA, 26 March—Another Filipino of Japanese descent was officially recognized on Monday as a Japanese national by a Tokyo family court, a non-profit organization helping him said on Tuesday.

Yuka Kanamaru of the Philippine Nikkei-Jin Legal Support Centre said Rogelio Kimura, 69, from the northern Philippine province of Nueva Ecija on Luzon island, acquired his Japanese citizenship more than three years after filing his petition.

Kimura, the son of a native from Hiroshima who came to the Philippines in 1936 and got married to a Nueva Ecija woman three years later had been a "stateless citizen" since his father was repatriated to Japan after World War II.

The social bias against Japanese descendants at that time up to the 1960s also forced him to hide his Japanese roots, Kimura said in an interview last year.

Named by his father as "Masao" and officially registered as a Japanese national, Kimura started tracing his father's whereabouts only in 1986, leading him to his father's family registry in 1998. By that time, his father had already been dead for three years.— *Kyodo News*



Residents do morning exercises amid fog and smog in Changchun, capital of northeast China's Jilin Province, on 26 March, 2014. The city was hit by smog on 26 March and suffered from heavy air pollution.—XINHUA

Okinawa, Singapore airport to promote trade, eye direct flights

NAHA, 26 March—The Okinawa prefectural government and Singapore's Changi Airport Group agreed on Tuesday to promote trade and seek to launch direct flights linking the southern Japan prefecture with the city state.

Including layover times, it currently takes over 10 hours to

travel between Singapore and Okinawa, but direct flights would shorten the trip to five hours, according to the operator of Changi airport, a major Asian hub.

"We hope a closer traffic network with Asia will be established through direct flights between Singapore and Okinawa," said Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu

Nakaima at a signing ceremony at Naha airport for the partnership accord between the prefecture and the Changi group.

The prefectural government is aiming to boost tourist numbers from Southeast Asian countries, Australia and India, in the run-up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.— *Kyodo News*



Okinawa Gov Hirokazu Nakaima (L) and Wong Woon Liong, senior advisor to Changi Airport Group in Singapore, sign an accord in Naha, Okinawa Prefecture, on 25 March, 2014, to promote trade and seek to launch direct flights linking the southern Japan prefecture with the city state. KYODO NEWS

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV SHAMIN VOY NO (35) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28.3.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

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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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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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

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

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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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CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

Albania, Mongolia to strengthen relation


TIRANA, 26 March — A memorandum of understanding was signed on Tuesday here between Albania and Mongolia to strengthen relations between the two countries, according to Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA).

Albanian Deputy Foreign Minister Sokol Dervishaj held a meeting with visiting Mongolian Foreign Minister Damba Gankhuyag on the occasion of the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Albania and Mongolia.


Dervishaj briefed Gankhuyag on Albania's achievements, Albanian government's priorities and the active role in the region, said ATA.

Gankhuyag confirmed his readiness to promote cooperation between the two countries by improving the legal framework of co-operation between Albania and Mongolia, according to ATA.

Xinhua



Bank of India



*Opening
Representative Office
Today
March 27, 2014
At
No. 205, 2nd Floor, Central Towers,
Anawratha Road, Kyauktada Township,
Yangon, Myanmar*

Bank of India

Kyauktada Representative Office
Small no. 205, 2nd Floor, Central Towers, Anawratha Road, Kyauktada Township, Yangon, Myanmar

BOI

American sentenced to 16 years in New York City pipe bomb case

NEW YORK, 26 March — An American Muslim charge for attempting to make a pipe bomb was

sentenced to 16 years in prison on Tuesday, the Manhattan District Attorney's office said.

Jose Pimentel, a 29-year-old Dominican-born US citizen, was arrested in 2011 after a police informant secretly recorded meetings with him as he bought bomb materials and read online instructions on how to assemble them, according to court documents.

Pimentel was accused of plotting to attack police stations, post offices and military personnel in and

around New York City.

In a statement on Tuesday, Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance said Pimentel had a personal website that advocated violence against US citizens and government agencies and that had links to bomb-making instructions.

The components seized by the New York police department were detailed in a step-by-step bomb-making guide published by al-Qaeda's Inspire Magazine, Vance said.

Reuters



Jose Pimentel, 27, is seen in Manhattan Criminal Court in New York on 20 Nov, 2011.—REUTERS

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Sharon Stone: You are the age you really are

LOS ANGELES, 26 March — Actress Sharon Stone, says irrespective of what people tell you about how old you look, it is important to accept your



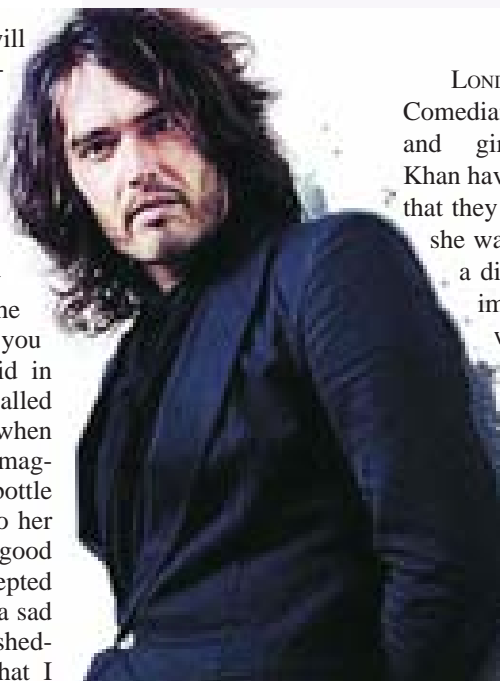
The Basic Instinct star turned 56 on 10 March.

actual age.

Stone, who will be seen in John Turturro's forthcoming film Fading Gigo-lo, turned 56 on 10 March.

"People can say you look 30 or you can lie and say you're 42. But in the end, you're the age you really are," Stone said in a statement. She recalled a moment that came when she turned 40. With a magnifying mirror and a bottle of wine, she went into her bathroom and had a good cry. "I cried and I accepted myself. It wasn't just a sad cry. It was just that shedding and accepting that I wasn't the thing I was before," she said.—PTI

Russell Brand engaged to Jemima Khan?



Russell was earlier married to singer Katy Perry for 14 months.

LONDON, 26 March — Comedian Russell Brand and girlfriend Jemima Khan have fuelled rumours that they are engaged after she was spotted wearing a diamond ring. Jemima, 40, was seen wearing a diamond ring yesterday in east London and she apparently looked very happy, reported Daily Mirror.

"It looked like an engagement ring. It was very pretty and

classy. She looked very happy," the source said.

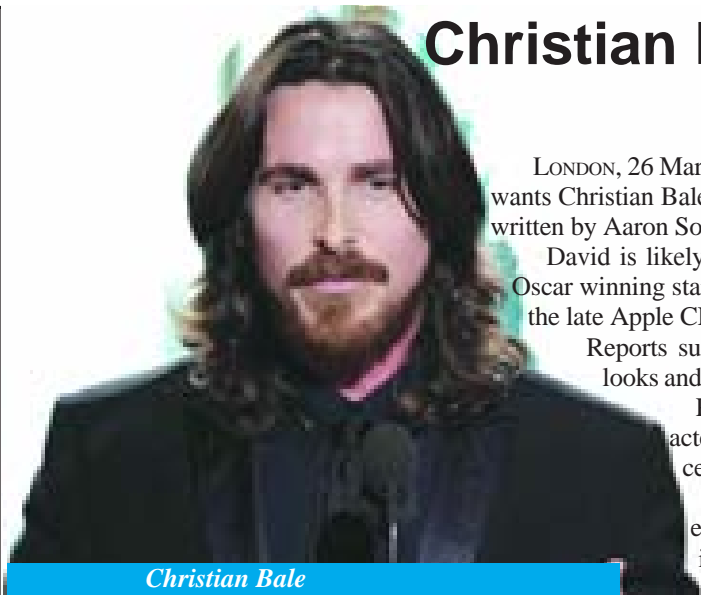
The 38-year-old funnyman, who fuelled dating rumours with Jemima last year, had earlier said that the journalist made him a "changed man".

Jemima has two sons with former cricketer Imran Khan. She also dated actor Hugh Grant.

The Get Him To The Greek star has remained tight-lipped about his love life since splitting from Katy Perry in December 2011 after 14 months of marriage.

PTI

Christian Bale To Play Steve Jobs?



Christian Bale

LONDON, 26 March — Fight Club director David Fincher reportedly wants Christian Bale to play the role of late Steve Jobs in the new film written by Aaron Sorkin.

David is likely to direct the film only if they manage to get the Oscar winning star of The Dark Knight trilogy to perform the role of the late Apple CEO, reported Contactmusic.

Reports suggest that with Christian having Steve Job-esque looks and great acting skills, he seems to be a sensible choice.

Previously, actor Ashton Kutcher played the character of Steve in 2013's Jobs but not with much success.

Steve, who was diagnosed with cancer in 2003, eventually died after losing his battle to the disease in 2011.

PTI

Anushka Sharma to produce and star in thriller



Her first production NH 10 will be co-produced by Eros International and Phantom Films.

MUMBAI, 26 March — Actress Anushka Sharma's first production venture NH 10 will be co-produced by Eros International Media Limited (Eros International) and Phantom Films.

To be directed by Navdeep Singh, NH 10 is an action thriller about a road trip that goes wrong, and apart from producing it, Anushka will feature in it.

"The film is an exciting collaboration with Anushka and Phantom and we are happy to associate with this talented team. NH 10 promises to be an interesting journey and we are looking forward to supporting and nurturing such strong content driven films," Sunil Lulla, managing director, Eros International Media Ltd, said in a

statement.

Anushka, who made her acting debut in 2008 opposite Shah Rukh Khan in Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi, is thrilled about the film.

"I'm doubly thrilled about NH-10, as it's a superb role and it also kick-starts this new phase in my film journey," said the actress, who features in Phantom Films' Bombay Velvet.

Now, she is happy to collaborate with the banner for her production venture. "This is my second film after Bombay Velvet with Phantom, and it's a blast working with them. It's going to be super-exciting working together again on what promises to be an explosive film," said the 25-year-old.

PTI

Actress Gwyneth Paltrow and Coldplay's Chris Martin separate



A combination photo of singer Chris Martin of Coldplay performing during a concert as part of their "Viva La Vida" tour in Barcelona on 4 Sept, 2009 and actress Gwyneth Paltrow posing during the premiere of her film "Iron Man" in Berlin on 22 April, 2008.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 26 March — Actress Gwyneth Paltrow and husband Chris Martin, the lead singer of alt-rock band Coldplay, said on Tuesday they are separating after 10 years of marriage.

"It is with hearts full of sadness that we have decided to separate," the couple said on Paltrow's lifestyle website, Goop.com, in a post entitled "Conscious Uncoupling."

"We have come to the conclusion that while we love each other very much we will remain separate. We are, however, and always will be a family, and in many ways we are closer than we have ever been," they added.—Reuters

Justin Bieber gets a new tattoo on flight

LOS ANGELES, 26 March — Pop star Justin Bieber got his new tattoo done while on a flight and tattoo artist Bang Bang says it's "the most difficult tattoo I've ever done for sure".

TMZ reports that Justin got fresh ink on a flight to Canada just five days after his infamous Miami Beach arrest.

New York-based Bang Bang, who has tattooed the likes of Rihanna, Selena Gomez, Katy Perry and many other big celebrities, inked the new tattoo on Bieber.

Bang Bang told TMZ the work was done at 40,000 feet and during terrible turbulence. He called it "the most difficult tattoo I've ever done for sure".—PTI



Justin has recently rekindled his romance with singer Selena Gomez.

GENERAL

Arsenal have to look over their shoulders, says Wenger

LONDON, 26 March — Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger all but conceded that their title bid is over and warned that his side had to focus on finishing in the top four after a 2-2 home draw with Swansea City in the Premier League on Tuesday.

Wenger's men started the week as title contenders but they have faltered in a 6-0 thrashing at league leaders Chelsea in his 1,000th game in charge on Saturday and a disappointing draw with Swansea after a last-minute Mathieu Flamini own goal.

Arsenal are now six points ahead of fifth-placed Everton, who won 3-0 at Newcastle United on Tuesday and have a game in hand, with a place in next season's Champions League at stake.

"Winning the title isn't the biggest worry we have at the moment," Wenger told a news conference.

"We have to be realistic. We must look behind us. Everton won and, of course, now we have to focus and play the next game (at home to Manchester City). "Manchester City had a good result tonight (a 3-0 win at Manchester United). They look a bit unstoppable. Them and Chelsea are the favourites now for the title. We don't have too much room to come back into it."

Chelsea have 69 points from 31 games ahead of City on 66 from 29, with Liverpool in third on 65 from 30, Arsenal are fourth with 63 from 31 while Everton have 57 from 30.

Arsenal's Champions League qualification spot looks all the more precarious with Manchester City coming to The Emirates on



Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger watches play during their English Premier League soccer match against Swansea City at the Emirates stadium in London on 25 March, 2014.—REUTERS

Saturday before Wenger's side visit Everton on 6 April.

Wenger had hoped for an instant response to the miserable Chelsea result but Swansea took an unlikely lead after 11 minutes when Neil Taylor crossed from deep and Wilfred Bony out-jumped the defence to plant a header just inside the near post.

Arsenal dominated possession as the visitors protected their lead but the nerves from the crowd permeated into the players, and the home side failed to turn domination into chances. Lucas Podolski's introduction after the break signalled a greater attacking intent by the hosts and in the 73rd minute he converted a Kieran Gibbs pull back before setting up Olivier Giroud to score a minute later with a cross from the left.

But Wenger's disastrous week was summed up when his defence allowed Leon Britton to surge into the box in the last minute.

Arsenal central defender Per Mertesacker stretched to stop the Swansea player but his tackle only deflected the ball against diving goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny, with the rebound hitting Flamini and trickling over the line.

"The result is very disappointing," said Wenger. "At 2-1 we were maybe too conservative because our confidence level had been affected by Saturday and we just wanted to win the game without pushing any more forward."

"A mistake happened and it created the result we didn't want tonight."

Wenger's miserable week could have been worse as Jonathan de Guzman ran clear on Arsenal's goal in the fourth minute of added time only for the referee to blow his whistle to end the game.

Swansea manager Gary Monk was baffled by the decision and believed his side were unjustly denied a chance for a vital win as they fight to avoid getting

dragged into a relegation battle.

"It was a poor decision," Monk told reporters.

"They told us it was going to be four minutes at the end of the game, we scored in that period so they added an extra minute on the clock. So it's five minutes minimum, we're clean through on goal and they blow up 30 seconds short."

"It would have definitely been a shot on goal. It's going to be a goalscoring opportunity for sure."

"In all the games I've ever played in I've never had the whistle blown in those circumstances."

Swansea are 15th but only five points above the drop zone, having played three games more than Sunderland who are in 18th position and occupy the last relegation place.

They host fellow strugglers Norwich City on Saturday knowing a win is vital to help secure Premier League safety.

Reuters

UN sees meeting of Russian, Ukrainian FMs as "a welcome sign of dialogue"

UNITED NATIONS, 26 March — A meeting between Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers came in as "a welcome sign of dialogue" as UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon encourages direct talks between Moscow and Kiev, a UN spokesman said on Tuesday.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Monday met with Ukraine's acting Foreign Minister Andriy Deshchyt'sya in The Hague, the Netherlands, for crisis talks on the sidelines of a nuclear security summit that ran through Tuesday. The meeting is the first of its kind since Moscow's annexation of the Crimean peninsula. "The Russian foreign minister and acting foreign minister of Ukraine had met with each other, in a welcome sign of dialogue," Farhan Haq, the deputy UN spokesman, said in response to a question at a daily news briefing here. "The secretary-general, in his own diplomatic efforts, has encouraged direct dialogue between Moscow and Kiev." Since the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis, the UN chief has made clear the need for all states to abide by the principles of the UN Charter, including those regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes and regarding sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. He has also been pressing all sides for a de-escalation of the situation. Also on Tuesday, UN under-secretary-general for political affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, returned to New York after several days of consultations in Ukraine.

Xinhua

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(27-3-14 07:00am~ 28-3-14 07:00am) MST

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US set to approve international debut of F-35 fighter

WASHINGTON, 26 March — The US Defence Department is poised to approve the first trans-Atlantic flight of Lockheed Martin Corp's F-35 fighter jet in July, when the new warplane is expected to take part in two international air shows near London, according to multiple sources familiar with the issue.

US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel is "very close" to a decision that would allow two or three F-35s to fly at two British hoes, three sources, who were not authorized to speak publicly, said Tuesday. The shows are the

Royal International Air Tattoo, or RIAT, an annual military air show outside

London, and the Farnborough air show, held every other year.



A Lockheed Martin F-35B Lightning II joint strike fighter flies toward its new home at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida in this US Air Force picture taken on 11 Jan, 2011.—REUTERS

The international debut of the new US fighter jet will be closely watched by potential buyers, including Canada and Denmark, which helped fund the plane's development but are rethinking their planned procurements.

F-35 backers say the decision reflects growing confidence in a program that is about 70 percent over budget and years behind schedule, but skeptics say the plane still faces big challenges, including completing the software needed to integrate weapons on the jet.

Reuters

Bundesliga Standing Table

Pos	Clubs	P	W	D	L	Point
1	Bayern	27	25	2	0	77
2	Borussia D.	27	16	4	7	52
3	Schalke 04	27	15	6	6	51
4	Bayer	26	14	2	10	44
5	Wolfsburg	27	13	5	9	44
6	Borussia M.	26	12	6	8	42
7	Mainz	27	12	5	10	41
8	Augsburg	26	11	6	9	39
9	Hertha	27	10	6	11	36
10	Hoffenheim	26	8	8	10	32
11	Hannover	26	8	5	13	29
12	Eintracht Frankfurt	26	7	8	11	29
13	Werder	27	7	8	12	29
14	Freiburg	26	6	7	13	25
15	Stuttgart	26	6	6	14	24
16	Hamburger	26	6	5	15	23
17	Nurnberg	26	4	11	11	23
18	Braunschweig	27	5	6	16	21

Bayern wrap up fastest Bundesliga title triumph

BERLIN, 26 March—Bayern Munich clinched the Bundesliga title in record time by beating Hertha Berlin 3-1 on Tuesday thanks to goals from Toni Kroos, Mario Goetze and Franck Ribery with seven games left in the campaign.

Last season's treble winners claimed their 23rd Bundesliga crown with a 10th straight away victory, stretching their winning streak to a staggering 19 consecutive league games and their unbeaten run to 52 league matches — all Bundesliga records.

"I am satisfied that we did it," Spanish coach Pep Guardiola, in his first season in charge, told reporters. "A game earlier or later does not matter. Congratulations to everyone at the club."

"Now we will go out to dinner and celebrate," added Guardiola, who managed to avoid the traditional on-pitch beer shower from his players. "We will enjoy the free time we have here."

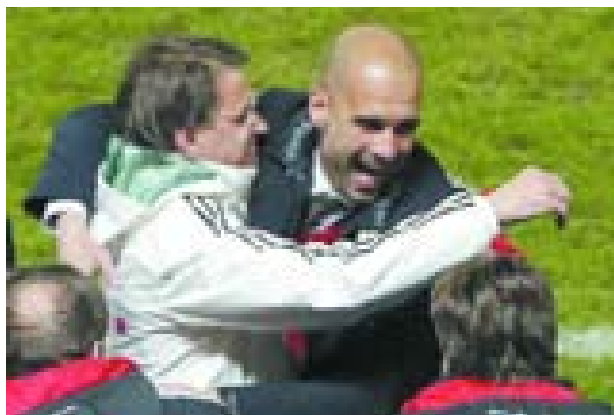
The Spaniard, who won 14 out of 19 titles in four years at Barcelona, has added the Bundesliga crown to the European Super Cup and Club World Cup titles Bayern won earlier this season.

They have an unassailable 25-point lead over second-placed Borussia Dortmund, who were runners-up last term, with 21 points to play for in Guardiola's first season in charge.

"First of all the praise belongs to the coach and the



Bayern Munich players celebrate with mock-up German soccer championships trophy after their German first division Bundesliga soccer match against Hertha Berlin in Berlin on 25 March, 2014.—REUTERS



Bayern Munich's coach Pep Guardiola celebrates with an unidentified person (L) after the German first division Bundesliga soccer match against Hertha Berlin, in Berlin on 25 March, 2014.—REUTERS

team," Bayern sports director Matthias Sammer told reporters as Guardiola celebrated with his players on the pitch.

"After the success of last season we continued to be very focused and we managed to win the league even earlier than last year. We have a concentration and a momentum right now which is unusual."

Among those not present in the stadium to celebrate Bayern's triumph was Uli Hoeness, the club's former player, long-time man-

ager and president, who was found guilty of tax evasion and sentenced to prison earlier this month.

Germany coach Joachim Loew was in the stands and heaped praise on the team that provides the national side's backbone.

"To win the title that early is an amazing performance," Loew told reporters. "Pep Guardiola developed the team even further. His mark can be seen in their dominance and their possession."

It did not take long

for Bayern to show they meant business in front of a sell-out 76,000 Olympic stadium crowd, with Kroos slotting in a deflected clearance in the sixth minute and Goetze heading home Bastian Schweinsteiger's cross in the 14th.

Adrian Ramos pulled one back for the hosts with a well-taken penalty in the 66th minute to inject some life into the second half as Bayern took their foot off the gas.

But Frenchman Ribery, who had come on as a substitute, completed a dazzling move, after a silky run and pass from Goetze, when he chipped the ball over goalkeeper Thomas Kraft to wrap up the points and the title.

Bayern's success was their 24th German league title because they were also champions once — in the 1931/32 season — before the Bundesliga was created in 1963.

Dortmund could do nothing to prevent Tuesday's celebrations in the capital after drawing 0-0 in their Ruhr valley derby at home to Schalke 04.

Dortmund coach Jurgen Klopp was quick to congratulate arch-rivals Bayern.

"It is very impressive how Bayern did it," he told reporters. "You have to take off your hat to them. They were so consistent in their strong performances and they were hungry."

Reuters

Williams wins as Sony Open locked down by bomb scare

MIAMI, 26 March—Defending champion Serena Williams closed in on a seventh Sony Open title with a 6-2, 6-2 quarter-final demolition of German Angelique Kerber on Tuesday, a win that came as the Crandon Park tennis facility was locked down due to a bomb scare.

Williams' win sets up

a semi-final rematch of last year's final against Maria Sharapova, a five-time runner-up on the Miami hardcourts, who advanced with an equally impressive 7-5, 6-1 win over eighth-seeded Czech Petra Kvitova.

While Williams was shutting down fifth seed Kerber, Miami Dade police were locking down the

sprawling tennis complex after a suspicious package was found at the main entrance.

Four lane traffic was halted in both directions in front of the complex while spectators were prevented from entering or leaving the facility.

"Yeah, there was a bomb threat and a lockdown but that's all I know about it. Scary," said Williams.

Sharapova and Williams, who have both achieved a career grand slam and held the number one ranking, were expected to develop into one of the great rivalries in women's tennis.

But it has not quite worked out that way with Williams dominating the series, winning 15-of-17 career meetings including the last 14.—Reuters



Serena Williams

Nadal brushes off bomb scare to cruise through in Miami

MIAMI, 26 March—Unruffled by a bomb scare that locked down the Sony Open late on Tuesday, world number one Rafa Nadal brushed past Italy's Fabio Fognini 6-2, 6-2 to join Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer and Andy Murray in the last eight.

Officials announced a suspicious package had been left near the main entrance to the sprawling tennis facility which was quickly locked down, keeping thousands of spectators from entering or leaving while Miami Dade police investigated.

The all clear was given just before Nadal stepped onto the Crandon Park center court to face Fognini in the final match of the night.

The Spaniard showed no signs of being alarmed by the bomb scare as he

completed the win in 62 minutes.

"Every day I have to try to find my rhythm, try to think about myself, what I have to do well, so I just try to be focused on what I really need to do to play well," said Nadal.

"Then the opponent is free to do whatever. Tonight was not an easy match for him, for the conditions

that I told you before. So it was a little bit strange, but in general, I think I was very focused and solid with my serve."

Nadal's next opponent is Canadian Milos Raonic, who beat Benjamin Becker 6-3, 6-4.

"He's a very dangerous opponent," added the Spaniard.

Reuters



Rafael Nadal