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KIA, TNLA and MNDAA launch coordinated surprised attacks in Muse, Kutkai Townships

THE KIA the TNLA and Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) launched coordinated surprised attacks on military outposts, police stations and a trade centre in Muse and Kutkai Townships in Northern Shan State early morning yesterday, according to the Information Committee of the State Counsellor's Office.

The attacks claimed lives of some security personnel as well as innocent people, according to the information committee.

The attackers also tried to blow up three bridges in the area, the committee said.

At about 2 am yesterday, they assaulted the police garrison in front of the office of the Road Transport Administration Department in Muse and the police and local people's militia had to repel them until they pull out southeastward.

At about 2.30 am, estimated 200 combined troops of the KIA and the MNDAA raided a government troops' outpost in front of Mongko police station in Ward-6, Mongko in Muse Township, while government troops' outpost in Phoungsai was attacked by about 100 of the combined groups and government troops' outpost in Mankan came under attack by about 80 of them. All outposts of the government troops returned fire until they ran away.

At about 6 am, some 50 troops of the two groups launched an attack on a government troops' outpost in Ward-1 in Kyukoke-Pangsang area while Pangsang police station was fired with heavy weapons from affiliated basic education high school in Pangsang. Later, they had to



Smoke billows in the attack on the Muse 105-mile trade zone. PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE

yield to the return-fire of the government security forces.

At about 6.20 am, police security troops for Nangpau Bridge came under the attack of about 100 TNLA troops and reinforcement to the bridge police had to

fight another group of about 40 TNLA troops. The two groups withdrew separately to the east and west. One army soldier, three policemen and a civilian lost their lives in the incidents while one policeman was injured and five

assorted arms were lost. About two feet of the floor of the bridge was also damaged during the attacks.

At about half past six, 105-mile trade zone southeast of Muse and a government troops'



An injured civilian is being taken to hospital.

PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE

outpost was attacked with heavy weapons and small arms by about 150 troops of the KIA and the TNLA while about 30 troops of the TNLA attacked the Pangsang Gate. All of them had to withdraw due to the resistance of the government security forces. When they withdrew due to the return-fire of the security forces, one people's militia and two innocent people lost their lives during the attacks and eight policemen, two customs staffers and 15 people injured in the fightings while the police lost 3 assorted weapons.

About 50 members of the TNLA also launched an attack on Kyinsankyawk (Honang) Police outpost, 12 miles northeast of Muse with heavy weapons and small arms but they had to withdraw when meeting with the resistance.

Moreover, Sumlon Bridge on Lashio-Muse Road and Nangpau bridge were blown up at 3.30 am and 6.45 am respectively and three shops near the latter bridge were also burnt down. About one square foot of the former was damaged. The floor and rails of Namtu Bridge were also damaged slightly due to an explosion in which three pedestrians were injured.

Due to the attacks of the three groups, a total of eight people including one soldier, three policemen, one people's militiaman and three people lost their lives and 29 people including nine policemen, two customs staffers and 18 people were injured. The police lost eight assorted weapons. Tatmadaw columns and the police are in hot pursuit of the attackers to protect the lives and property of the people.—Myanmar News Agency

“ A total of eight people including one soldier, three policemen, one people's militiaman and three people lost their lives and 29 people were injured . . .



သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမာန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

BFM's aid reaches farmers after rats destroy crops in Phekon Tsp

FARMERS in Phekon Township, Shan State, have been provided with aids as their rice and corn plantation were devoured by rats.

The aid provided by KBZ's Brighter Future Myanmar Foun-

ation reached 30 villages on 19 November after more than 1,445 acres of rice were destroyed by rats.

More than 1413 households with a total population of 6,901

will be provided with K50,000 each and warm clothes.

The donation ceremony was held at the Village of Sibü and responsible personnel of the BFM delivered the aid to the farmers.

To quickly respond to disasters, the foundation has established a K100 fund for disaster preparedness in regions and states under the leadership of its chairperson Daw Nang Lang Kham.

Meanwhile, as part of the effort to brace for La Nina in the upcoming winter, the BFM has imported 200,000 articles of warm clothes from China at the cost of more than US\$2million to distribute to residents, including IDPs, in areas which are expected to experience extreme cold weather.

—Thae Naing Oo (Myanmarsar)



A responsible personal of BFM hands over cash assistance to villagers. PHOTO: THAE NAING Oo (MYANMARSAR)

Black Friday Sale on 25-27 November

THE Black Friday Sale will take place in Myanmar in the last week of the month for the second time, with plans to display popular international products for sale, according to the shop.com.mm, local online retailer.

The three-day shopping period will start on 25 November and the deals are currently avail-

able to purchase online.

The organisers are planning to feature a wide range of supplies including personal goods, kitchen wares and furniture products which will be sold with a special discount programme which allows customers to get up to 80 % discount during the event, said Sumit Jasoria, man-

aging director of the shop.com.mm.

For those who purchase mobile handsets at the Black Friday sale will get Ooredoo SIM Card with special data package present.

The first Black Friday sale of Myanmar was launched in last November.—200

Thirty-three more suspects in Maungtaw violent attacks arrested

THE security forces comprising of the government troops and the border guard police arrested thirty-three suspects during the area clearance operations in Nganchaung village, Maungtaw Township on Saturday, according to the announcement of the Information Team of State Counsellor's Office yesterday.

It is found that the suspects are those who were in-

involved in the clash with the troops at Mayinchaung Village on 12th November and had fled from the village, said the announcement.

Those suspects composed of seven including Auli Hsaung from Pharwutchaung village, nine from Myawtaung village and seventeen from Pwintphyuchaung village, according to the announcement. —Myanmar News Agency



Suspected terrorists of recent violent attacks on some villages in Maungtaw District being rounded up by security forces in area clearance operations. PHOTO: MNA

100 adults come for breast exam daily: Yangon Central Women's Hospital

APPROXIMATELY about 100 women come the Yangon Central Women's Hospital (CWH) every day to receive breast examination, according to the hospital data.

As part of its efforts to reduce the incidence of breast cancer in Myanmar, the hospital provides breast examination to the public free of charge, inviting

people to come to the hospital's outpatient department between 2 and 4 p.m daily, a spokesperson of the hospital said.

Well-trained healthcare providers teach breast self-examination and physical examination of breasts to every new comer, in which some of them were brought to undergo breast cancer screening, Obstetrician and Gynaecolo-

gist Dr Kyaw Zin Win said.

He added that the hospital transfers some women, who need to undergo surgery for breast cancer, to the department of surgery.

Obese women aged over 50 years, women with no pregnancies, and some adults, who have a higher breast cancer risk including women who have a close relative with breast or ovarian cancer

top the list of the hospital's priority to conduct breast screening.

According to the World Health Organisation, breast cancer is the most common invasive cancer in females worldwide, with nearly 1.7 million new cases diagnosed in 2012.

Physicians say a woman in her 40 should have the choice to start annual breast cancer screen-

ing with mammograms, which is a diagnostic test used to look for any problems within the breast and surrounding tissues.

Breast cancer is the top common female cancer in Myanmar. According to a survey, every 125 women out of 100,000 are diagnosed with that kind of cancer in the country till 2013. —200

Crime NEWS

An explosion happens on Namtu Bridge on Lashio-Muse Highway

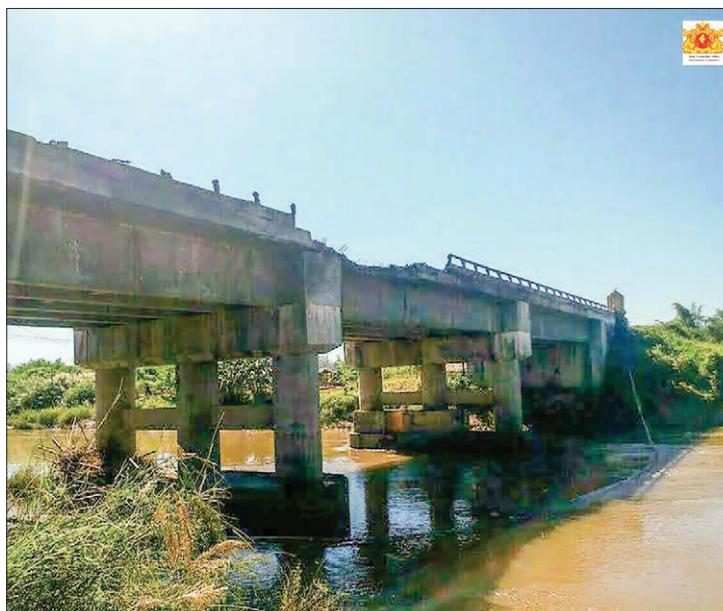
A MITSUBISHI Pajero exploded on the Namtu Bridge on Lashio-Muse Highway, Hsenwi Township, Northern Shan State on 20 November. Three people were injured in the explosion of the car, according to the State Counsellor's Office Information Committee.

At 10.30 am, the dark green Pajero coming from Kutkai township stopped on the Namtu creek crossing reinforced concrete bridge. While the bridge security guards told the driver not to stop on the bridge for security reasons, the driver left the scene saying he needed to pick up a package which was dropped off the car. The explosion occurred while the driver escaped to behind the bridge and the car

fell down to creek.

Because of the explosion, U Tun Aye from Kaung Haw village was seriously injured whereas Ma Nan Tin Myo Khine and Mg Zwe Htet Ko from Hsenwi Township were not seriously injured and they were all hospitalized at Hsenwi People's Hospital. The explosion damaged the floor of the bridge, resulting in a hole of about 6 feet in width and 10 feet in length and both sides of bridge railings were damaged.

The police found a suspicious looking person called Eik Awl (alias) Aung Zeya, son of U La Eik, from Manchest village and interrogated him to be able to expose other suspected criminals involved in the explosion. —Myanmar News Agency



The Namtu bridge seen after explosion of a Pajero on it. PHOTO: MNA

Yaba tablets sized in Bhamo

An anti-narcotics suppression squad from Bhamo searched a motorcycle ridden by Ma Wint War Tun near Man Khun village, Bhamo Township on 18 November.

Police seized 2,000 yaba tablets and the interrogation of Ma Wint War Tun has led to arrest of a drug dealer Ma San Oo living in Man Khun village. Police have charged Ma Wint War Tun (alias) Sai Mai, 22, and Ma San Oo, 36, under the Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—Myanmar Police Force

Myanmar delegation arrive back from Paris

A Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint arrived back from Paris, France, after attending meetings on development of co-operation in information, communication and media sectors between the two countries.

The delegation includes Chairman of the Government's Guarantees, Pledges and Undertakings Vetting Committee U Thein Swe, MP U Than Soe

Aung of Pyithu Hluttaw, Director-General of the Myanmar Radio and Television U Myint Htwe, Director of the Information and Public Relations Department U Myint Kyaw and U Aung Shin (Monywa Aung Shin).

They were welcomed at the Yangon International Airport by officials from the Ministry of Information and French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Oliver Richard.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint is welcomed back by officials. PHOTO: MNA

Three explosions hit Capital Hypermart in Dawbon



Police provide security to Capital Hypermart after explosions. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Three explosions occurred at Capital Hypermart in Dawbon township yesterday evening and there was no casualty in the accident, according to Fire Services Department.

The first blast took place at about six pm and the second half

an hour later, said Aung Than Myint, who was at his shop at the hypermat when the blasts happened.

Following the blasts, inspectors and demining squad of the Tatmadaw arrived at the market and cleared the area.—*Zarni Aung*

Sixty more suspects detained in Maungtau

SIXTY more people suspected of involvement in the violent attacks in Maungtau township were detained by security forces recently, according to the information committee of the State Counsellor's Office.

In area clearance operations in Kyetyoepyin Village by the police in Ngakhuya area on November 19 evening, the suspects were taken

into custody.

According to the press release, the suspects were involved in the armed attacks on security forces during the area clearance operations in Kyetyoepyin, Longton and Pyaungpita villages on 11 October. During the attacks, five members of the security forces were killed.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Vice President U Henry Van Thio and Union ministers visit the mid-year gems and jewellery emporium. PHOTO: MNA

Mid-year Gems and Jewellery Emporium-2016 opens

MID-year Gems and Jewellery Emporium for 2016 kicked off yesterday at Maniyadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw, with a visit by Vice President U Henry Van Thio.

Before the inspection visit to the emporium, the Vice President and Union ministers watched the documentary on history of Myanmar gems and jewellery sales, arrangement for the 2016 Gems and Jewellery Emporium and display of jade stones and gems.

Nearly 6,000 jade lots will be exhibited at the mid-year emporium from 22nd to 29th November while 439 lots of gems will be displayed from 20th to 21st November.

Gems lots with floor price from 500 euros to 20,000 euros will be sold through an open tender system whereas the items with floor price at 20,001 euros and above through competitive bidding.

The uncut jade stones with floor price set between 4,000

euros and 200,000 euros and finished jade stones with floor price set between 1,000 euros and 200,000 euros will be sold through an open tender system whereas the jade stones with floor price set 200,001 euros and above through competitive bidding.

Nearly 9,000 raw jade lots were exhibited at last year's emporium, earning 900 million euros, whereas nearly 6,000 jade lots were displayed at the emporium held in June, fetching 520 million euros.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Food provided to residents of Maungtau

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the Rakhine State Government are providing food to the residents of the state while security forces are tightening security in the area.

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye and Rakhine State Chief Minister, together with state ministers, visited Pantawpyin, Ywathitke, TatOoChaung, Gawduthara and Oodaung villages in southern Maungtau and provided rice, edible oil, salt, pulses, beans and dried fish to residents.

Local residents said that they did not have any difficulty for food and shelter but they were afraid to go from one place to another due to security situation.

"Schools have already been reopened in ethnic villages but I have not seen so in other villages," said Village Administrator U Tin Aung of Gawduthara Village.

The union minister and party proceeded to Maungtau Township Hospital and comforted patients there in the afternoon.

Later, the union minister and party visited northern ethnic villages in Maungtau including



Residents receive aid from Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. PHOTO: MNA

Aungzeya, Aungtharya and Aungmingala and presented food and toys for children in the villages.

"We assigned sentry for the security of the village. Schools have already been reopened but there are only a few teachers as they have not returned," said a villager from Aungmingala Village.

Afterwards, the union minister and party went to the Headquarters of No 1 Border Guard Police Headquarters and

met with families there before presenting snacks and toys for children.

"We visited the villages where violent attacks broke out including four ethnic villages and four other villages to provide food such as rice, edible oil and pulses and beans. I noticed that all children in villages we visited are healthy, quite contrary to the rumours that they are malnourished," the union minister said.—*Myanmar News Agency*

LOCAL Business

US dollar exchange rate hits the highest at Ks1,323

THE exchange rate stood at its highest point of Ks1,323 per US dollar on 19th November, according to the black market of foreign exchange, after reaching a 14-year record high on 18th November on global market.

The dollar price has been on the rise for 10 consecutive days at the local foreign exchange market, with an exchange rate of Ks1,293 on 10th November, Ks1,299 on 11th November, Ks1,302 on 12th and 13th November, Ks1,306 on 14th and 15th November, Ks1,310 on 16th November, Ks1,316 on 17th November and Ks1,322 on 18th November. The dollar opened at Ks1,321 and closed two kyats up on 19th November.

With a foreign exchange rate rising at black market, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) set the rate at Ks1,292 on 18th November, increasing the set exchange rates at Ks1,285 per US dollar from 27th October to 15th November, Ks1,287 on 16th November and Ks1,290 on 17th November.

The reason of rise in US dollar price resulted from the high demand in the market when it is rare to find the resellers of US dollar in the black market, said



A woman counts US dollars at a money changer in Yangon. PHOTO: REUTERS

the one engaged in foreign exchange market.

Despite the high exchange rate of US dollar, Myanmar currency appreciates against other currencies. A Singapore dollar price slumped by six kyats while Thai Baht was stable at Ks36 a baht from 1st to 19th November. Similarly, Japan yen price slumped by Ks55 per 100 yens.

In addition, China yuan price has decreased by two kyats per yuan whereas euro, by Ks39 per euro, according to the foreign exchangers.

The values of kyat as well as other currencies are depreciating against US dollar, resulting from an appreciation of US dollar in the global market.

The high US dollar price

affects electronic market, causing the lower demand. The price of electronic tools is positively related to the dollar price. Therefore, the electronic market is still cool with a high price. Some buyers are waiting for a special promotion period at the end of the year, with a thought they might get them at a cheaper price.—*Mon Mon*

New ward to be added to Yangon's Hlaingthaya Township

THE Yangon Region government plans to house a new ward in Hlaingthaya, a new satellite town of high population density, according to Col Tin Aung Tun, Minister for Security and Border Affairs.

Situated in the west of Yangon, Hlaingthaya Township is the most developed of the new satellite towns founded in the 1980s.

To reduce population den-

sity of commercial hub Yangon, the country's largest city with a population of nearly six million, the government has been implementing the housing projects in peri-urban areas.

Both phases II and III of Shwelinban affordable housing projects in Hlaingthaya Township will provide around 10,000 apartments. Tenders have recently been invited by the authorities for Kyansitmin housing

project with 1,260 units in the same township.

Likewise, the government's new Aungchantha project in Thanlyin Township will generate 3,400 apartments. The establishment of residential housings is part of the government's scheme for urban development.

The government already adopted several housing projects with 2,208 low-cost apartments in both Hlaingthaya and Dagon

Seikkan townships. Those flats have been sold through installment plan and full settlement plan by the region government, the Ministry of Construction and the Construction and Housing Development Bank.

The Ministry of Construction is also planning to build over 8,000 low-cost housing units in the next four years. Each new apartment will be sold for less than Ks10 million.—*200*

Sugar re-export to China earns over US\$677million in seven months

SUGAR re-export to China over the past seven months in this fiscal year 2016-2017 earned over US\$677million when that in the similar period of last fiscal year got only US\$28.007million, according to the statistics of the Commerce Ministry.

Sugar is imported mostly from sugar producing countries like Thailand and India, and Myanmar re-exported them to China because Myanmar sugar mill owners produce sugar mainly

for the local market as Myanmar sugar does not look appealing and not meet export quality for lack of advanced refining machinery.

The Commerce Ministry will also verify and approve the proposals concerning the commodities which can be re-exported, it is learnt.

The external trade value in this fiscal year is expected to reach US\$31billion. Therefore, concerted efforts are being exerted to meet a target.—*Ko Htet*



A woman prepares sugar-canes to plant in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: AMS

Twelve tonnes of watermelon seeds required to grow

TWELVE tonnes of watermelon seeds are required to grow a year, for the lack of watermelon seeds production, said U Soe Than Min Din, the chair of Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers Association (MFVP).

The seeds are illegally imported from China and other countries. The illegality has a risk of seed-borne disease and other damping-off diseases, it is learnt.

The pedigree seeds to grow watermelon and muskmelon are not able to be locally produced yet. The seeds illegally flow into Myanmar mainly from China, U Soe Than Min Din added.

Sometimes, some seeds are found to fail to germinate and grow properly, rendering the farmers difficult. Therefore, a forum was reportedly held in Mandalay to develop an awareness of seeds.—*200*

Mitsubishi to sell brand new cars in installment

MITSUBISHI will offer one to five year installment plan for Mandalay residents to purchase its 2016 brand new cars through a link with Yoma Bank, said Ko Soe Htut Aung, marketing executive from Mitsubishi Motors Cars Myanmar Limited.

Mitsubishi Car showroom was opened in Mandalay in the second week of November to introduce its brand new cars to Mandalay people. Mitsubishi decided to offer installment plan so that middle income people afford to buy, he added.

The installment plan will start in the last week of November, including those 2016 model cars, Pajero Sport, Pajero, ASX, Mirage and L200. Those cars will cover three year service for mechanical problems.

Those who purchase under installment plan must have double income than the monthly installment payment. Those who want to purchase Mitsubishi cars under installment plan have to provide the copies of National Registration Card, Housing Census, recommendations from ward administrative office and police office, document provided by the job mentioning monthly income and two honorable and respectable men to give a guarantee. Mitsubishi's Pajero is already popular among local residents.—*200*

Japan PM Abe: way to peace treaty with Russia coming into sight

LIMA — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Saturday that a way to concluding a peace treaty with Russia is “coming into sight,” raising hopes for tangible progress on a decades-old territorial row at bilateral summit meetings set for mid-December in Japan.

Abe, who made the comment after holding talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, was quick to add, however, that progress will be gradual, and not in the form of one big leap.

A territorial dispute between Tokyo and Moscow over a chain of western

Pacific islands, seized by Soviet troops at the end of World War Two, has upset diplomatic relations ever since, precluding a formal peace treaty between the two countries.

“For 70 years, we have been unable to have a peace treaty. This is not exactly a simple task,” Abe told reporters.

“A way to concluding a peace treaty is coming into sight... But we must make one step at a time. It is not easy to take a big step ahead.”

Putin met with Abe in September in Russia’s eastern port city of Vladivostok and agreed to deepen economic ties and work to make headway on negotiations for the conclusion of



Russian President Vladimir Putin (R) and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe attend a meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in Lima, Peru, on 19 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

a peace treaty ahead of his Japan visit in December.

At the outset of their Lima meeting, Abe told Putin he would like to hold a summit on 16 December in Tokyo to discuss bilateral economic matters, on top of a planned meeting in western Japan slated for 15 December.

Abe is betting his close ties with Putin and the lure of investment from Japanese companies could set the stage for progress in the territorial row, at a time when the Russian economy has been hit hard by sluggish oil prices and western sanctions imposed after Moscow’s annexation of Crimea.

Underscoring his desire to strengthen economic

ties with Russia, Abe earlier this year proposed eight sectors including medical technology and energy for cooperation, and gave his trade minister Hiroshige Seko an additional portfolio in charge of economic cooperation with Moscow.

The Lima meeting lasted for 70 minutes, which was exceptionally long for a bilateral summit on the sidelines of an international conference, a Japanese government spokesman said.

The two leaders devoted half of the time for a one-on-one session, with only translators present, to discuss in depth the territorial issue and other sensitive matters. Abe did not disclose the details of their discussion.—Reuters

Philippines tries to intercept bandits as more Indonesians snatched at sea

MANILA — Masked gunmen kidnapped two Indonesian fishermen in waters off eastern Malaysia and military units were on alert to intercept them as they headed towards the southern Philippines, the army said on Sunday.

Five men snatched the two fishermen late on Saturday from a Malaysian-registered fishing trawler off Sabah. The army suspects the incident could be the work of Abu Sayyaf rebels.

“The gunmen and their victims sped off towards

the southern Philippines,” army spokesman, Major Filemon Tan, told reporters, adding ground and naval units were trying to intercept the assailants.

Abu Sayyaf operates in the Sulu Archipelago close to Malaysia and was found-

ed with a separatist agenda, pledging allegiance to Islamic State and al-Qaeda.

But it is better known for its lucrative acts of banditry and piracy that have not abated, even as Philippine troops step up offensives to dismantle the

network.

President Rodrigo Duterte discussed the maritime threat of Abu Sayyaf with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak recently, agreeing to cooperate to stop the kidnapping.

Abu Sayyaf’s tactics

are brutal, decapitating hostages when ransom demands are not met.

They are holding 22 captives, including a Dutch, a German, a South Korean, five Malaysians, two Indonesians, six Vietnamese and six Filipinos.—Reuters

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Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

China’s Xi presses Philippines, Viet Nam to keep South China Sea issues bilateral

BEIJING — China’s President Xi Jinping, in separate meetings with the leaders of the Philippines and Vietnam, said disputes over the South China Sea should be resolved bilaterally, state media reported on Sunday.

The comments underscore Beijing’s opposition to involving other countries or international organisations in the maritime territorial dispute, where claimants to the waters also

include Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

Experts say China prefers a ‘divide and conquer’ tactic over allowing its opponents to group together.

Beijing has also repeatedly blamed the United States for stirring up trouble in the South China Sea, and opposes an arbitration tribunal’s July ruling in favour of the Philippines, rejecting China’s claims to economic rights across large

swathes of the waters. During a meeting in Peru, Xi told Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte “to actively mull maritime cooperation and promote positive interaction on the sea,” turning the South China Sea into “an opportunity for bilateral friendly cooperation,” said the official Xinhua news agency. That sentiment was echoed by Duterte, Xinhua reported. The Philippines president has overseen a

rapid improvement of previously frosty relations between the two countries since taking office in June.

The Philippines “is willing to properly address maritime issues with China through dialogue and consultation,” said Xinhua.

Xi made similar overtures to Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang while attending a summit of Asia-Pacific countries in Lima. The Chinese president said the two countries should “solve disputes through bilateral consultations and dialogues, adhere to a cooperative path of ‘shelving differences and engaging in joint development,’ and properly address problems in order to maintain regional peace and tranquillity,” Xinhua said.

The Chinese news agency did not say whether Quang also addressed the South China Sea.

On Thursday, a US think tank reported that Vietnam is extending a runway on an island it claims in the South China Sea, in apparent response to China’s building of military facilities on artificial islands in the region.—Reuters



Russian President Vladimir Putin (2nd L) and Chinese President Xi Jinping (C) attend a meeting of the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Business Advisory Council in Lima, Peru, on 19 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Meeting Putin, Philippines' Duterte rails at Western 'hypocrisy'

LIMA — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte lashed out at Western “bullying” and “hypocrisy” during his first meeting with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin and said when it came to alliances, the United States could not be trusted.

In talks with Putin during an Asia-Pacific summit in Lima, Duterte held nothing back in his views about major powers like the United States, suggesting he is sticking to his guns on re-aligning foreign policy away from Washington, despite his warm words for incoming US president, Donald Trump.

“Historically, I have been identified with the Western world. It was good until it lasted,” he told the Russian leader.

“And of late, I see a lot of these Western nations bullying small nations. And not only that, they are into so much hypocrisy,” he said, according to a transcript of Saturday’s meeting provided by his office.

Putin congratulated Duterte on his May election win and said he had done a lot in a very short time to build trust and confidence between Russia and the Philippines.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte attend a meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in Lima, Peru, on 19 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Duterte responded with similar words and then chided Western powers, particularly the United States, for intervening in conflicts for their own national interest and cajoling others to

side with them.

Duterte’s overtures to Russia are similar to those he made to China, until recently a bitter rival. He is now praising Beijing and tapping it for investment in

a stunning about-face that has unnerved a region wary of a Chinese hegemony taking shape in Southeast Asia.

The mercurial former mayor insists the shift is his pursuit of

an independent foreign policy, but that has come with repeated threats and verbal tirades against the United States, for decades a staunch ally, investor and donor.

Prior to leaving for Peru, Duterte said he might follow Russia and withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC) because of Western criticism of his deadly war on drugs. He said if Russia and China decided to create a “new order” in the world, he would be first to join.

In his talk with Putin, Duterte blasted the United States and its Western allies for taking the lead in wars he said had ultimately failed. “They seem to start a war but are afraid to go to war. That is what’s wrong with America and the other,” he said.

“They were waging war in so many places, in Vietnam, in Afghanistan and in Iraq ... They insist if you are allied with them that they follow you.”

Duterte has spoken of his admiration for Chinese President Xi Jinping and also for the leadership of Putin. In an interview with Al Jazeera broadcast on Thursday, he described Putin as sincere, and joked that he had a “hillbilly” style.—Reuters

At least 90 killed as India train derails, more than 150 injured

NEW DELHI — At least 90 people were killed and more than 150 injured when an Indian express train derailed in northern Uttar Pradesh on Sunday, with the toll set to rise amid a desperate scramble to locate survivors from the mangled wreck.

Police officials said about 20 people were still missing as authorities were trying to ascertain what caused 14 carriages of the train — travelling between the northeastern city of Patna and the central city of Indore — to suddenly roll off the tracks in Pukhrayan, 65 kilometres south of Kanpur city.

Amid scenes of desperation and anguish, survivors were looking for family members and some were also trying to enter the damaged carriages to rescue relatives and collect belongings, said senior

railway official Pratap Rai.

“We are using every tactic to save lives but it’s very difficult to cut the metal carriages,” Rai said from the accident site.

With the death toll set to rise further, the derailment could become India’s worst rail tragedy since 2005, when a train was crushed by a rock and another plunged into a river — each killing more than 100 people.

India’s creaking railway system is the world’s fourth largest, ferrying more than 20 million people each day, but it has a poor safety record, with thousands of people dying in accidents every year, including in frequent train derailments. Suresh Prabhu, India’s Railways Minister, said in a tweet the government would immedi-

ately investigate the causes of the derailment and promised accountability with the “strictest possible action,” and compensation for the affected passengers. Authorities were checking if the air brakes that would have prevented the disaster had failed, but added they would need to look further before concluding the cause of the accident.

The packed train, operated by the Indian government, derailed in the early hours of Sunday when more than 500 passengers were sleeping, survivors said.

TV footage showed badly mangled blue carriages, with crowds of people and police on top of the wreckage searching for survivors. One carriage was almost lying on its side, and appeared to have been completely torn apart.

Rescue officials with yellow helmets were working their way through the crowds, carrying victims from the mangled wreckage as teams struggled to remove the derailed wagons from the tracks, one of the main transportation routes for goods and passengers in northern India. “Suddenly I could feel that the carriage was overturning. I immediately held the metal rod near the bathroom door,” said Faizal Khan who was travelling with his wife and two children, all of whom survived the accident. Another survivor, Rajdeep Tanwar said. “I can see bodies lying near the tracks, everyone is in a state of shock. There is no water or food for us.”—Reuters



A view of a derailed train in Kanpur, in India’s northern state of Uttar Pradesh, in this still image taken from video on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

South Korea prosecutors say President Park was accomplice in corruption scandal

SEOUL — South Korean prosecutors said on Sunday that they believed President Park Geun-hye was an accomplice in a corruption scandal that has rocked her administration, in a heavy blow to her fight for political survival.

The prosecutors’ comments, which came as they indicted a close friend of Park’s and two of her former aides, are likely to spur stronger calls for her to step down or be impeached.

Park’s close friend Choi Soon-sil and former presidential aide An Chong-bum were charged with abuse of power by pressuring companies to contribute funds to foundations at the center of the scandal, said Lee Young-ryeol, head of the Seoul Central District Prosecutors’ Office.

“The special investigation team concluded that based on the evidence secured to date, the president was in complicity with Choi Soon-sil, An Chong-bum and Jeong Ho-seong to a considerable degree,” Lee told a news conference.

Jeong, also one of Park’s former aides, was indicted for leaking classified information to Choi.

Park’s lawyer Yoo Yeong-ha rejected the assertion that she was involved, calling it an “imagination” and saying prosecutors “have built a house of fantasy.”

Presidential Blue House spokesman Jung Youn-kuk said the prosecutors’ announcement

was “deeply regrettable.”

“The special investigation team made a claim as if the president has committed a grave crime when it announced the result of its investigation,” Jung said.

“The announcement is not truth at all and but a house of cards built on repeated imagination and speculation that completely ignores objective evidence.”

Park cannot be indicted because she has constitutional immunity, prosecutor Lee said, but added: “We will continue to investigate the president,” without elaborating.

Under the constitution, a sitting president cannot be indicted unless on charges of treason, but the conclusion by the prosecutors that Park was involved in the case prompted fresh calls from opposition parties for her to step down.

The main opposition Democratic Party and the centrist People’s Party said Park will face impeachment proceedings if she refuses to resign. But they stopped short of saying they would immediately initiate such a move.

Analysts said the prosecutors’ comments about Park’s role increased the prospect that she would face impeachment.

“It provided a legal basis for impeachment proceedings, not only her moral and political liabilities,” said Kim Jun-seok, a political science professor at Dongguk University in Seoul.—Reuters



French politician Francois Fillon, member of the conservative Les Republicains political party, votes in the first round of the French centre-right presidential primary election in Paris, France, on 20 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

French in center-right primary to pick presidential candidate to face Le Pen

PARIS — Conservative presidential hopefuls in France face the judgment of voters in a primary race on Sunday and the victor looks likely to win the presidency in next spring's election against a resurgent far-right.

With the French left in disarray under the deeply unpopular President Francois Hollande, opinion polls suggest that the center-right presidential nominee will meet and defeat the National Front's eurosceptic, anti-immigration leader Marine Le Pen in a runoff for the Elysee palace next year.

Even so, after Britain's shock "Brexit" vote and Donald Trump's surprise US election win, the French presidential vote is shaping up to be another test of strength between weakened mainstream parties and rising populist forces.

Former prime minister Alain Juppe, a moderate conservative, had appeared firmly on track to win the nomination of Les Republicains party. But over the past week the contest has been transformed into a nail-biting three-horse race.

Juppe has lost his lead in opinion polls to a last-minute surge by another former premier, Francois Fillon. Latest surveys show the two now running neck-and-neck with former president Nicolas Sarkozy.

Fillon promises to do away with the 35-hour working week, cut half a million public sector jobs and slash the cost of government — tough sells in a country where proposals for

market-oriented reform often arouse protests.

"I'm tagged with a liberal label as one would once, in the Middle Ages, paint crosses on the doors of lepers," Fillon told a rally in Paris on Friday, drawing laughter.

"But I'm just a pragmatist." For weeks, the bruising campaign battle focused on the duel between Juppe and Sarkozy. The two men present very different policy platforms to counter the populist tsunami that threatens mainstream parties in Europe.

Against a backdrop of deadly militant attacks on home soil and Europe's migrant crisis, Sarkozy, 61, styles himself as the voice of France's "silent majority".

He vows to ban the Muslim veil from public universities and burkinis from beaches and wants to renegotiate EU treaties, reining in the powers of the European Commission and reforming the Schengen free-travel zone.

At a rally in the southern city of Nimes on Friday he warned of a France whose "identity and unity are threatened".

"Political Islam is doing battle against our values. There's no room for compromise," he said, speaking in a region that has produced one of the far-right's two National Assembly lawmakers.

Juppe, 71, has sought to galvanize the political center-right, rejecting the "suicidal" identity politics of Sarkozy that he says will deepen rifts between France's secular state and reli-

gious minorities.

But Juppe has struggled to rouse the passions of voters and all the momentum was against him on the eve of the vote.

"France needs far-reaching and radical reforms," Juppe told supporters in the northern city of Lille. "But be careful of going too far, we must remain credible."

An admirer of late British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Fillon headed Sarkozy's conservative government between 2007 and 2012. He promises cost-cutting on a scale to which his rivals do not dare commit in a country with one of Europe's highest public spending levels.

Much will depend on turnout at the 10,228 polling stations. It is the first center-right primary in which anyone who pays 2 euros and signs a paper of allegiance to the party's values can vote.

Juppe needs a high turnout beyond core party supporters to win. A runoff will be held on 27 November if, as expected, none of the seven candidates wins more than 50 percent of the vote.

An Ifop-Fiducial survey on Thursday forecast an evenly split vote if Juppe and Fillon go head-to-head in a second round. Fillon would comfortably beat Sarkozy, the survey showed.

Should Sarkozy or Fillon emerge as her conservative opponent, polls and analysts suggest, Le Pen's electoral prospects would improve. —Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Queen to invite Trump to Britain for state visit — Sunday Times

LONDON — Queen Elizabeth will invite US President-elect Donald Trump for a state visit to Britain next year to try to cement close ties between the two countries, The Sunday Times newspaper said.

Citing two ministers and a senior official close to Downing Street, the Sunday Times reported that discussions between British officials and Trump's team would start soon to ensure that a date could be agreed for June or July next year.

Britain is keen to reinforce its "special relationship" with the United States as the government of Prime Minister Theresa May prepares to leave the European Union, a divorce that will shape the country's standing in the world.—Reuters

UK's Hammond pledges to spread wealth, but debt 'eye-wateringly' high

LONDON — British finance minister Philip Hammond said on Sunday he would aim to help struggling families and boost the country's long-term growth prospects when he announces Britain's first budget plans since the Brexit vote next week.

But Hammond also told BBC television that levels of public debt were "eye-wateringly" high and he would not be announcing a big increase in public spending.

"We've got to make sure that the prosperity that comes from seizing opportunities ahead is shared across the country and across the income distribution," he said, echoing promises by Prime Minister Theresa May to work for "just managing" families.

Hammond told the BBC that the government was keeping an open mind about its options for leaving the EU, downplaying suggestions from Britain's foreign minister Boris Johnson that the country should leave the EU's customs union.—Reuters

Seven children killed in rebel shelling of Aleppo school — monitor

BEIRUT — Syrian rebel shelling of a school in government-held western Aleppo killed at least seven children on Sunday morning, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group reported.

Syrian state television reported that at least 10 people had been killed in shelling of government-held parts of Aleppo, including children at the Saria Hasoun school in al-Farqan district.—Reuters

20 Cambodian garment workers injured as their truck turns upside down

PHNOM PENH — A truck transporting garment factory workers overturned in southwestern Cambodia's Kampong Speu province, leaving 20 workers injured, a Labor Ministry statement said on Sunday.

The latest accident occurred late Saturday afternoon when the speedy truck hit a motorcycle in the same direction before turning upside down on the roadside.

"Twenty workers got injured, eight in serious conditions," the statement said, adding that the ill-fated workers had been rushed to hospitals soon after the crash.

The truck driver had fled the scene.

Transporting factory workers in open trucks to and from factories is common in this Southeast Asian country. Earlier this month, some 26 garment workers were also wounded when their truck overturned in southeastern Svay Rieng province.

The country's 6.5-billion-US dollar garment industry is comprised of some 1,000 factories, employing around 750,000 workers.—Xinhua

Cargo ship being evacuated off England's storm-hit southern coast

LONDON — A cargo ship was being evacuated after it started to take on water off the coast of Dover after the biggest storm of the season hit southern England, the Coastguard said on Sunday.

Earlier, the port of Dover said ferry movements had been temporarily suspended because of the "very high winds", which the Met Office said could reach 70-80 miles per hour in exposed coastal locations.

The coastguard could not immediately give any further details.—Reuters

Opinion

Write for us

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Be careful of nuances of legal, lawful and legitimate

Khin Maung Aye

LEGALITY and legitimacy are the two words which very often confuse the readers. In fact, legality is a question of action — whether or not something that people are doing is a violation of either statutory law or common law whereas the term legitimacy is a question of origin or support for an action — whether or not an authority figure has taken their role, for example.

Again, the terms legal and legitimate as adjectives are different in that legal is relating to the law or to lawyers whereas legitimate is in accordance with the law or established legal forms and requirements. As a verb, legiti-

mate is to make legitimate, lawful or valid; especially to put in the position or state of a legitimate person before the law, by legal means.

It is also interesting to study the difference between the terms legal and lawful. Legal looks more into the letter i.e. form and/or appearance whereas lawful looks more into the spirit i.e. substance and/or content. Legal is more appropriate for conformity to positive rules of law; lawful for accord with ethical principle. Legal imports rather that the forms and/or appearances of law are observed, that the proceeding is correct in method, that rules prescribed

have been obeyed; lawful that the right is actual in substance, that moral quality is secured. Legal is the antithesis of equitable, and the equivalent of constructive. And the term legitimate is, according to the law and in accordance with the law's reasoning. (Doll)

When it comes to the legality in a humanitarian intervention, it involves international laws inclusive of the law on the use of force and the treaties such as 1948 United Nations Conventions on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and International laws on human rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 etc.

Thus, for a humanitarian intervention to be legal, the requirement of the UN Charter to respect others' national sovereignty must be fulfilled. Then only, will the legitimate concerns of the international community and states to prevent genocide be legal but this obligation does not entail a legal right to use military forces (The United Nations, 2016).

It is, therefore, recommended to be careful of the nuances of the terms legal, lawful, legitimate and morally obliging in order that they are not misunderstood with evil consequences not taking place.

Hope the COP22 Would be a Success

Khin Maung Myint

The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (COP22) is convening in Bab Ighli, Marrakesh, Morocco from 7 to 18 November. During the COP21, convened from the 30 November to 12 December 2015 in Paris, a consensus was reached on three agreements aimed at mitigating the impact of the climate change, by reining the temperature rises caused by the greenhouse gases. The threshold for entry into force of the Paris Agreement was set at 55 countries out of the 192 signatories accounting for 55% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

By 5 October 2016, that threshold was achieved. While waiting for 30 days required for the agreement to take effect, the number of ratifiers reached 92 accounting for 65•82% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. On 4 November it was officially declared effective. That accomplishment paved the way for the COP22 to get underway. Hopefully, the deliberations there would bear fruits that would benefit the world and the humankind.

I think we should review, very briefly, the agreements reached at COP21 or the Paris Agreement, so as to appreciate what the COP22 is trying to achieve. Of the three agreements that had come into effect, the most important is to hold the temperature rise at 2°Celsius and eventually bring it down to 1•5°Celsius above the pre-industrial levels. The second agreement is to increase the adaptability to the adverse impact of the climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emission developments in a man-

ner that does not threaten food production. The third and last, but not least, is to make money flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.

The Paris Agreement is the most comprehensive one and is proving to be effective. It is accelerating the transition to zero carbon economy that is already underway. People around the world are taking action to install solar and wind solutions that constitute the green energy, blocking the coal and oil infrastructures and measures are being taken to protect the forests. Such actions will definitely reduce the greenhouse gas emissions significantly.

These activities are testimonies of the peoples' desire for a different future and are taking the responsibility to create it themselves. Their endeavours would contribute much to the reduction of the greenhouse gases and help greatly in fighting the climate change and put a hold on the temperature rise.

So, what will be the main task of the present COP22 in Marrakesh? If the COP21 convened in Paris is about creating the framework for addressing climate change, the COP22 is about deciding on the rules so that the goals set at Paris are not only achieved but overachieved. With all the policies and financing in place to ensure that action occurs and no country is left behind.

In my previous article on the subject of the climate change, titled "A Glimmer of Hope for the Planet Earth", (4/11/2016, GNLM), I had been optimistic as to what the outcome of these climate conferences would be. However, like many people around the world, I'm starting to doubt the success of these endeavours to hold the rising temperatures at 2° Celsius and



eventually bring it down to 1•5° Celsius above the pre-industrial levels.

At the time of writing that article, I was greatly encouraged by the news that the large greenhouse gas emitting nations -- China, USA and India had ratified the agreements. They had pledged large amounts of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) each. Their combined total accounted for 42•08 % of the world's overall greenhouse gas emissions . The latest figures are even more encouraging. The number of countries that had ratified, now stand at 109 accounting for 76% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and more are expected to join in. Myanmar has yet to ratify it.

However, I'm now becoming a bit skeptical as to whether it would be able to achieve the goals set at COP21. So, what changed my opinion? Many climate change advocates around the world are

expressing their concerns and anxiety as to whether the results of the presidential elections in the United States of America would change the situations. They are concerned that the President-elect might not follow up on the pledges made by the previous administration.

Though I'm not interested in the politics of any country, including my own, I had followed the US presidential elections closely, to keep myself abreast with the current developments. In doing so, I was shocked to learn that the President-elect thought that the necessity to control the climate change is a hoax and is seeking a quickest way to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. Thus, I share the feelings of those who are concerned about the future of the control of the climate change and hence the future of the world.

However, observing the post election attitudes and behaviours of the President-elect, from the

media reports, I don't think he is as imprudent as he seems or as the people portray him to be, after all. Signs of relenting in his harsh stances taken during the election campaigns are quite visible now. Hope he would not be too committed to his idea of withdrawing from the Paris Agreements.

Here, I would like to borrow a few lines from the COP22 news bulletin issued on the 7 November. It urged the delegates in Marrakesh "to stay true to the spirit and words of Paris and ensure the rules reflect that spirit as well. In other words, they have ratified it, now they have to act on it". I would also like to pitch in my own suggestion to them. The whole world is relying on you and watching closely with great expectations that your endeavours would spare us from the ravages of the climate change and create a safe future for us. I sincerely hope that the COP22 will be a success.

Fed up with EU, Erdogan says Turkey could join Shanghai

ISTANBUL — President Tayyip Erdogan was quoted on Sunday as saying that Turkey did not need to join the European Union “at all costs” and could instead become part of a security bloc dominated by China, Russia and Central Asian nations.

NATO member Turkey’s prospects of joining the EU look more remote than ever after 11 years of negotiations. European leaders have been critical of its record on democratic freedoms, while Ankara has grown increasingly exasperated by what it sees as West-

ern condescension. “Turkey must feel at ease. It mustn’t say ‘for me it’s the European Union at

all costs’. That’s my view,” Erdogan was quoted by the Hurriyet newspaper as telling reporters on his plane on



Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan. PHOTO: REUTERS

the way back from a visit to Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

“Why shouldn’t Turkey be in the Shanghai Five? I said this to (Russian President) Mr Putin, to (Kazakh President) Nazarbayev, to those who are in the Shanghai Five now,” he said.

“I hope that if there is a positive development there, I think if Turkey were to join the Shanghai Five, it will enable it to act with much greater ease.”

China, Russia and four Central Asian nations — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

— formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2001 as a regional security bloc to fight threats posed by radical Islam and drug trafficking from neighbouring Afghanistan.

Turkish membership of the SCO, which had initially not included Uzbekistan and been known as the Shanghai Five, would be likely to alarm Western allies and fellow NATO members.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan speak Turkic languages, and Ankara signed up in 2013 as a “dialogue partner” saying

it shared “the same destiny” as members of the bloc.

Mongolia, India, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan are SCO observers, while Belarus, like Turkey, is a dialogue partner.

Dialogue partners are entitled to take part in ministerial-level and some other meetings of the SCO, but do not have voting rights.

Erdogan last week urged Turks to be patient until the end of the year over relations with Europe and said a referendum could be held on EU membership in 2017.— Reuters

Acknowledgement

The special thanks would go to the dedicated person who has participated in the “Discussion on Traffic Accident Prevention, Rescue and Treatment for Traffic Accident Victims” on 5th November, 2016 at KhoFu restaurant, in Yangon Regional Division.

Our appreciation would go to **U Aung Myint** (Chairperson of the Myanmar Engineering Society), the vice-president of Myanmar Organization For Road Safety; **Mr MD. Monsur Moharmmed** (CEO, Allengers Medical Systems Limited, India) from Bangladesh; **Professor Dr. MD. Iqbal Qavi** and the doctors from Bangladesh; **Professor Dr. U Aung Thein Htay** (Yangon General Hospital); the Associated Professor **Dr. Maw Oo** (University of Medicine - I); **Dr. Aye Mo Mo Lwin**, the Department Head (Admin), the University of Public Health; **Dr. Aung Lin**, the manager of the Emergency Ambulance Service Foundation, the Myanmar Medical Association; **Daw Zin Mar Lat @ Sonier** (MD Sincere Zin Trading Co. Ltd) as a Master of Ceremony; all the **attendees** of the ceremony - all the head of the Government hospitals and Private Hospital, the media, the owner and all the staffs of KhoFu for the best service and all the members of MORS.

Myanmar Organization For Road Safety

Syrian family of six among dozens killed in Aleppo attacks



An injured man searches for his relative under the rubble of a site hit by an airstrike at an industrial area of rebel-held Idlib city, Syria on 20 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BEIRUT — A barrel bomb killed a family of six in rebel-held eastern Aleppo early on Sunday, a war monitor, a rebel and two medics said, while rebel shelling killed seven children at a school in the government-held sector, state television reported.

The medics said the al-Baytounji family had suffocated to death because the barrel bomb, which fell in the Sakhour district at about midnight, had been laced with chlorine gas. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war, could not confirm that chlorine gas was used.

Rebel shelling killed at least seven children among 10 deaths in the Saria Hasoun school in al-Farqan district, Syrian state television and the Observatory reported.

Hundreds of people have been killed since

Tuesday in one of the heaviest bombardments of the country’s civil war, now in its sixth year, as the government and its allies attempt to quash resistance in Aleppo’s rebel-held eastern zone.

Syria’s military and Russia’s air force had observed a unilateral pause in the bombardment of eastern Aleppo, except for on the frontlines, after a month-long offensive from late September to late October, but recommenced strikes on Tuesday.

An inquiry by the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has found that Syrian government forces have used chlorine gas in barrel bombs at least three times during the war, though Damascus denies it.

Syria also denies using barrel bombs — improvised ordnance made

by oil drums filled with high explosive and shrapnel and dropped from helicopters. Their use has been condemned by the United Nations for causing unnecessary suffering.

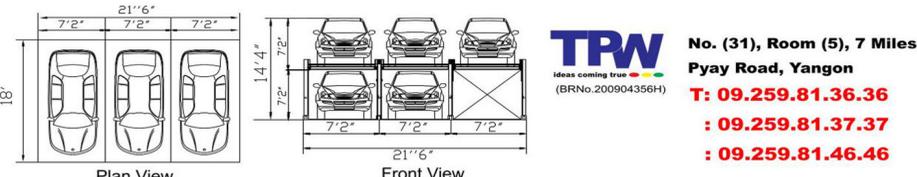
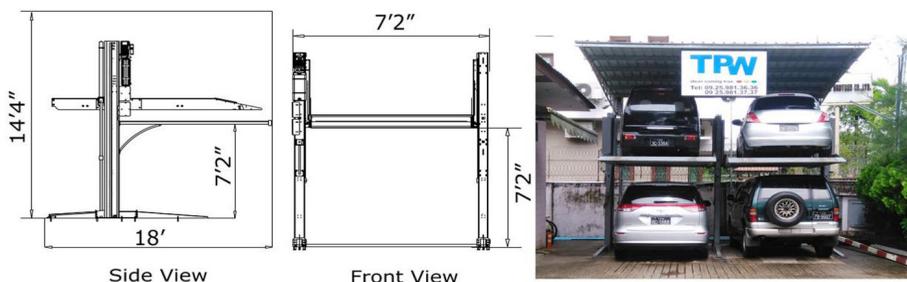
Staffan De Mistura, the envoy of the United Nations secretary general, arrived in Damascus for talks with Syrian Foreign Ministry officials on Sunday with Aleppo on the agenda.

Air strikes continued to hit several districts of eastern Aleppo early on Sunday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor said, after at least 54 people were killed in bombing on Saturday.

The two medics identified the family in a film distributed online. It showed the corpses of its four children stretched out on a floor, their lips blue and dark marks around their open eyes.—Reuters

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Asian export nations wary dollar boost gives Trump pretext to beat them

TOKYO/SEOUL — Asian currency policymakers are worried that the strengthening of the dollar on expectations of US President-elect Donald Trump's fiscal policies could be used by his administration as a stick to beat them with on trade protectionist grounds.

China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan are already on the US Treasury's monitoring list, along with Germany and Switzerland, having met some of the conditions to be labeled a currency manipulator, and are wary of the criteria being changed to make it easier.

The dollar's post-election surge, which has taken it to eight-year highs against China's yuan and 5-1/2 month highs against Japan's yen this week, has been driven by views that Trump's spending and tax plans will lead to higher interest rates.

"Weaker currencies will give an excuse for Trump to blame Asian countries, particularly China, for manipulating exchange rates," a Japanese official with knowledge of currency policy told Reuters. Asia's trade surpluses

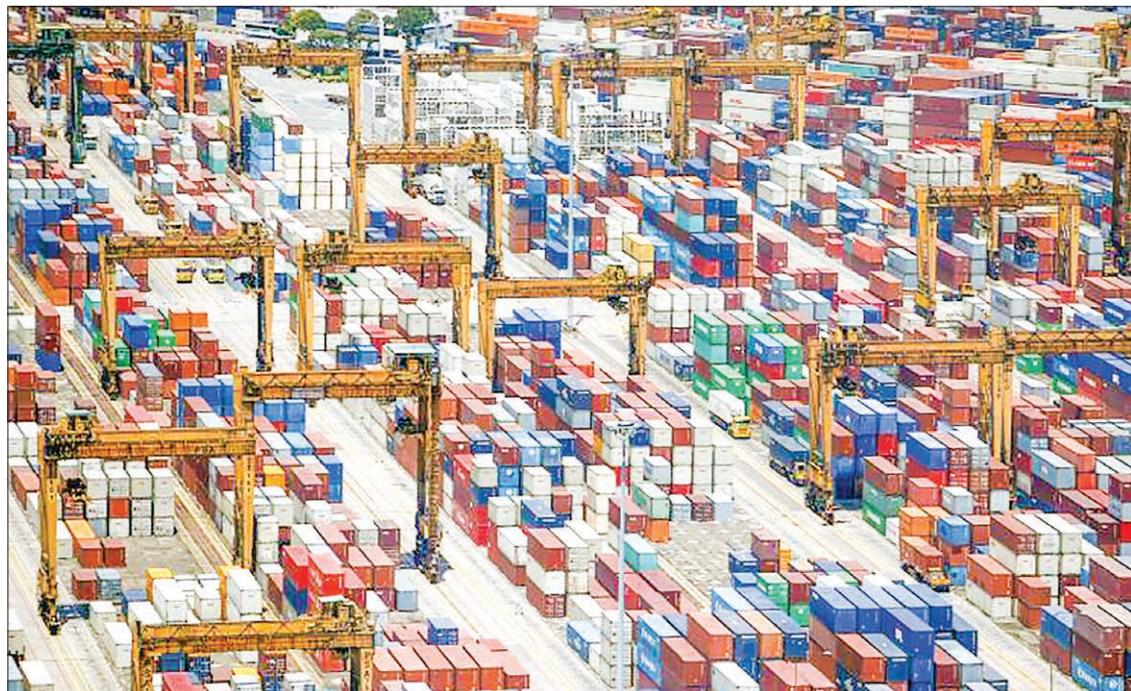
with the United States were firmly in Trump's sights during the election campaign. US government data shows China ran a surplus last year of \$366 billion, while Japan had a surplus of \$69 billion, South Korea \$28 billion, and Taiwan \$15 billion.

Trump said he would label China a currency manipulator on his first day in office, allowing him to slap 45 percent across-the-board tariffs on its exports, and accused other Asian nations of unfair trade practices.

"A major shift toward trade protectionism in the US could have a significant impact on Asian economies," Fitch Ratings said in a report.

"Disruption to trade between China and the US would have ramifications for the region," Fitch said, adding they expected the new administration would pursue incremental measures, such as raising more trade dispute cases at the World Trade Organization.

The US Treasury currently monitors three conditions to declare a country a currency manipulator; running a significant trade surplus; running a material current account surplus; and persistent one-sided foreign exchange intervention.



Containers are stacked up at PSA's Tanjong Pagar container terminal in Singapore on 24 July, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

ulator; running a significant trade surplus; running a material current account surplus; and persistent one-sided foreign exchange intervention.

The surplus levels and degree of intervention that trigger those conditions could be changed, however, making it easier to fall foul of the "manipulator" label.

"With Republicans in control of Congress, we think a Trump administration would secure passage of legislation relaxing the criteria,"

ING chief Asia economist Tim Condon said in a report.

South Korea is already bracing for tougher scrutiny under Trump and is anxious not to be tripped up by any such rule changes.

"We're paying close attention to make sure (South Korea) is not added to the list of 'enhanced analysis' or 'currency manipulators', even if the rules are strengthened," a South Korean foreign exchange official told Reuters.

Japanese Prime Minister Shin-

zo Abe on Thursday became the first foreign leader to meet with Trump since the election. Abe was seeking clarity on a range of campaign statements by the president-elect, but would not disclose specifics of the conversation.

China has warned Trump about putting up trade barriers, with President Xi Jinping telling him on Monday that cooperation was "the only choice" for relations between the world's two largest economies.—Reuters

China says terrorism, fake news impel greater global internet curbs

WUZHEN (China) — China's ambitions to tighten up regulation of the Internet have found a second wind in old fears — terrorism and fake news.

Chinese officials and business leaders speaking at the third World Internet Conference held in Wuzhen last week called for more rigid cyber governance, pointing to the ability of militants to organize online and the spread of false news items during the recent US election as signs cyberspace had become dangerous and unwieldy.

Ren Xianling, the vice minister of China's top internet authority, said on Thursday that the process was akin to "installing

brakes on a car before driving on the road".

Ren, number two at the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), recommended using identification systems for netizens who post fake news and rumors, so they could "reward and punish" them.

The comments come as US social networks Facebook Inc and Twitter Inc face a backlash over their role in the spread of false and malicious information generated by users, which some say helped sway the US presidential election in favor of Republican candidate Donald Trump.

Over the last year, China has formalized a series of internet controls, including a controversial

cybersecurity law passed earlier this month, rules that overseas business groups say could block foreign firms from the market.

Some fear such controls could, however, hinder the growth and innovation that is boosting Chinese influence in global tech.

The Wuzhen conference, held annually in the picturesque town outside Shanghai, gave a glimpse of China's tougher new stance; in past years attendees were given unfettered access to websites normally blocked by China's 'Great Firewall', including Google and Facebook, but not this year.

President Xi Jinping addressed the conference in a short video speech on Wednesday, repeating calls to respect "cyber sovereignty" — the imposition of government controls over cyberspace within China's borders.

Cyber sovereignty is seen as a direct challenge to the US-led view, which encourages non-government stakeholders to take the lead in governing specific internet industries.

"The value of the internet comes from its flexibility," said Jared Ragland, senior director of policy for the Asia-Pacific region at software lobbyist group BSA.

"We don't think it would be helpful to start treating it like a public utility that can be walled off behind borders."—Reuters

Facebook's Zuckerberg discloses steps to fight fake news

LIMA — Facebook Inc, facing withering criticism for failing to stem a flood of phony news articles in the run-up to the US presidential election, is taking a series of steps to weed out hoaxes and other types of false information, chief executive Mark Zuckerberg said in a Facebook post Friday evening.

Facebook has long insisted that it is a technology company and not a publisher, and rejects the idea that it should be held responsible for the content that its users circulate on the platform. Just after the election, Zuckerberg said the notion that fake or misleading news on Facebook had helped swing the election to Donald Trump was a "crazy idea."

Zuckerberg then said last Saturday that more than 99 per cent of what people see on Facebook is authentic, calling "only a very small amount" fake news and hoaxes.

But in his Friday posting Zuckerberg struck a decidedly different tone. He said Facebook has been working on the issue of misinformation for a long time, calling the problem complex both technically and philosophically.

"While the percentage of misinformation is relatively small, we have much more work ahead on our roadmap," Zuckerberg said.

He outlined a series of steps that were already underway, including greater use of automation to "detect what people will flag as false before they do it themselves."



Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg waves to the audience during a meeting of the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Ceo Summit in Lima, Peru, on 19 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

He also said Facebook would make it easier to report false content, work with third-party verification organizations and journalists on fact-checking efforts, and explore posting warning labels on content that has been flagged as false. The company will also try to prevent fake-news providers from making money through its advertising system, as it had previously announced.

Zuckerberg said Facebook must be careful not to discourage sharing of opinions or mistakenly restricting accurate content. "We do not want to be arbiters of truth ourselves, but instead rely on our community and trusted third parties," he said.—Reuters



People pose for pictures during the third annual World Internet Conference in Wuzhen town of Jiaxing, Zhejiang province, China, on 16 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS SCHEDULE

YANGON TO BANGKOK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-304	09:50	11:45	Daily
TG-2302	15:00	16:55	Daily
TG-306	19:45	21:40	Daily
PG-706	6:15	8:30	Daily
PG-702	10:30	12:25	Daily
PG-708	15:20	17:15	Daily
PG-708	18:20	20:15	3
PG-704	20:00	21:55	Daily
8M-335	7:40	9:25	Daily
8M-331	16:30	18:15	Daily
UB-017	15:10	19:20	1,3,5
UB-017	17:50	19:20	2,4,6,7
UB-019	8:05	9:35	7
UB-019	6:30	8:00	1,2,3,4,5,6

BANGKOK TO YANGON

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-303	7:55	8:50	Daily
TG-2301	13:15	14:10	Daily
TG-305	17:50	18:45	Daily
PG-701	8:50	9:40	Daily
PG-707	13:45	14:35	Daily
PG-703	18:25	19:15	3
PG-703	16:45	17:35	Daily
PG-705	20:30	21:45	Daily
8M-336	10:40	11:25	Daily
8M-332	19:15	20:00	Daily
UB-020	11:00	11:30	7
UB-018	20:20	20:50	Daily
UB-020	9:15	9:45	1,2,4,5,6

YGN TO ICN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KE-472	23:30	7:50	Daily

ICN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KE-471	18:45	22:25	Daily

YGN TO KUL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-505	8:30	12:45	Daily
AK-503	19:30	23:45	Daily
8M-501	7:50	11:50	1,3,5
MH-741	12:15	16:30	Daily
MH-743	15:45	20:05	1,4,6,7

KUL TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-502	6:55	8:00	Daily
AK-502	17:50	19:00	Daily
8M-502	12:50	13:50	1,3,5
MH-742	13:40	14:50	1,6,7
MH-740	10:05	11:15	Daily

YGN TO KMG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-416	12:15	15:45	Daily
MU-2032	15:20	18:40	2,4,5,6,7
MU-2012	12:25	18:40	3

KMG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-415	10:45	11:15	Daily
MU-2031	14:00	14:30	1
MU-2011	08:15	11:25	3
MU-2031	13:55	14:30	2,4,5,6,7

YGN TO TPE

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7916	10:45	16:15	1,2,3,4,6

TPE TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7915	7:00	9:45	1,2,3,4,6

YGN TO PEK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-906	23:50	0550+1	3,7

PEK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-905	19:30	22:50	3,7

YGN TO HAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-956	19:10	21:30	1,3,5,6,7

HAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-957	16:50	18:10	1,3,5,6,7

YGN TO SGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-942	12:10	15:00	2,3,4,5,7

SGN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-943	9:35	11:10	2,3,4,5,7

YGN TO HKG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-251	1:10	5:45	1,2,3,4,6,7
KA-251	1:30	5:55	5
UB-8027	9:45	14:15	1,5,7

HKG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-250	21:45	23:30	1,2,3,5,6,7
KA-252	22:50	00:30+1	4
UB-8028	15:15	16:55	1,5,7

YGN TO DOH

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-919	8:15	10:55	1,4,6

DOH TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-918	20:40	6:25	3,5,6

YGN TO CNX

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-724	13:10	15:05	Daily

CNX TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-723	11:40	12:35	Daily

YGN TO DAC

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-061	16:15	18:00	1,3,6

DAC TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-060	12:45	15:30	1,3,6

MDL TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-245	12:45	15:00	Daily

DMK TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-244	10:50	12:15	Daily

YGN TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-252	8:30	10:15	Daily
FD-256	13:25	15:10	Daily
FD-254	17:30	19:05	Daily
FD-258	20:05	21:55	Daily
DD-4231	08:00	9:50	Daily
DD-4235	12:00	13:45	Daily
DD-4239	21:00	22:45	Daily
SL-201	11:00	13:00	Daily
SL-207	20:05	21:45	Daily

DMK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-251	7:15	8:00	Daily
FD-255	12:05	12:55	Daily
FD-253	16:20	17:00	Daily
FD-257	18:05	18:55	Daily
DD-4234	10:25	11:15	Daily
DD-4230	6:20	7:05	Daily
DD-4238	19:30	20:15	Daily
SL-200	9:05	10:00	Daily
SL-206	18:15	19:05	Daily

YGN TO CAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-711	20:30	01:05+1	5
8M-711	8:40	13:15	2,4,7
CZ-3056	11:25	16:15	3,6
CZ-3056	17:30	22:35	1,5

CAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-712	2:45	4:20	6
8M-712	14:15	15:50	2,4,7
CZ-3055	8:50	10:25	3,6
CZ-3055	14:40	16:30	1,5

YGN TO SIN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-231	8:20	12:50	Daily
SQ-997	10:35	15:10	Daily
MI-515	14:20	18:50	1,5
MI-519	17:35	22:10	Daily
MI-522	15:45	20:15	4,6
MI-533	13:10	20:15	2
3k-584	19:15	23:50	2,5
3K-582	11:15	15:50	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2823	9:45	2:15	Daily
UB-001	7:30	12:00	Daily

SIN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-232	13:50	15:20	Daily
SQ-998	07:55	09:20	Daily
MI-522	11:00	12:20	4,6
MI-518	15:15	16:40	Daily
MI-516	12:00	13:25	1,5
MI-533	11:00	12:20	2
3K-583	17:05	18:35	2,5
3k-581	8:55	10:25	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2822	7:20	8:45	Daily
UB-002	13:15	14:45	Daily

YGN TO NRT

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-814	21:45	06:50+1	Daily

NRT TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-813	11:00	15:40	Daily

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Obama tells Latin America and world: give Trump time, don't assume worst

LIMA — US President Barack Obama did in Latin America what he tried to do in Europe: tell worried citizens not to draw negative conclusions about the man he once called unfit to serve in the White House, President-elect Donald Trump.

In the last stop of an international farewell tour that included visits to Greece and Germany, Obama continued his efforts to calm anxieties since Republican businessman Trump beat Democratic rival and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the US presidential race.

"My main message to you ... and the message I delivered in Europe is don't just assume the worst," Obama told a group of young people during a question-and-answer session in Peru on Saturday.

"Wait until the administration is in place, it's actually putting its policies together, and then you can make your judgments as to whether or not it's consistent with the international



US President Barack Obama addresses the audience at a town hall meeting with young leaders at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru in Lima on 19 November, 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

community's interest in living in peace and prosperity together."

Trump won the election after promising to build a wall on the US border with Mexico, rip up trade deals and ban Muslims temporarily from entering the United States.

Obama has sought to soothe fears by pledging to ensure a smooth transition of power and expressing optimism that the president-elect would shift away from inflammatory campaign rhetoric once he faced the realities of the job.

"It will be important for everybody around the world to not make immediate judgments but give this new president-elect a chance to put their team together, to examine the issues, to determine what their policies will be, because as I've always said,

how you campaign isn't always the same as how you govern," Obama said.

But Obama has couched his assurances largely in hopeful language that Trump's team would see the merits of policies that Democrats championed despite Trump's pledged to dismantle them, from the Iran nuclear deal to an international pact to fight climate change.

And the president, who campaigned vigorously for Clinton and showed visible disdain for Trump before his victory, has offset his words of reassurance with subtle digs at his successor by emphasizing themes of democratic values in Europe and Peru that Trump has been criticized for ignoring.

"You're seeing some countries that are going backwards rather than forwards in terms of freedom of the press, in terms of freedom of the Internet, in terms of respecting political opposition and civil society," Obama said on

Saturday.

Trump barred some news organizations from covering events during his campaign and threatened during a televised debate to jail Clinton for her use of a private email server while secretary of state.

Though Obama came on his trip able to assure European countries that Trump would respect US commitments to NATO, his other assurances, including for Latin American policy, seemed based more on optimism than knowledge of Trump's plans.

"With respect to Latin America, I don't anticipate major changes in policy from the new administration," he said, citing trade as a key exception.

Trump announced hawkish picks for attorney general, national security adviser, and CIA director on Friday that suggest he is setting up his administration to take a hard line confronting Islamist militancy and curbing illegal immigration.—Reuters

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Suspect in Australian bank fire identified as asylum seeker

SYDNEY — A man suspected of starting a fire in an Australian bank on Friday that injured 27 people has been identified as an asylum seeker, angering far-right groups and adding to an increasingly heated national debate over immigration.

Six people were taken to hospital in critical condition after the 21-year-old suspect walked into a Melbourne branch of Commonwealth Bank of Australia and lit an accelerant, setting himself and the office on fire, Victoria Police said, adding the man was also in serious condition.

Far-right anti-Muslim groups have seized on the arson attack to call for a ban on refugees entering the country. They rallied in the city on Sunday to celebrate Republic Don-



Emergency service workers are seen at a branch of the Commonwealth Bank after a fire injured customers in Melbourne, Australia on 18 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ald Trump's US presidential election victory.

Political debate around Australia's hardline asylum seeker policy has been heated recently.

Asylum seekers who arrive in Australian waters by boat are intercepted and sent to detention centres in Manus Island in Papua

New Guinea and Nauru in the South Pacific.

The detention camps have been heavily criticised by human rights groups over allegations of systemic abuses of the detainees and incidents of self harm.

Victoria's state Premier Daniel Andrews said

on Sunday there was no political motivation involved in the attack on the bank.

"It is not a commentary, and it oughtn't to be used as a political weapon by anybody who finds fault with any of the policy settings we have at the moment," The Age newspaper quoted Andrews as saying.

Habib Habib, from the Australian Burmese Rohingya Organization, said the man alleged to have carried out the attack was a Rohingya asylum seeker.

The man, who had spent time at an immigration detention on Christmas Island, was suffering mental and financial problems, he said.

A federal government source confirmed to Reuters the man arrived in Australia by boat in 2013.—Reuters

Atlanta hunter mistakes brother for animal, fatally shoots him

SOUTH CAROLINA — An Atlanta man shot and killed his brother while on a hunting trip in South Carolina after mistaking him for an animal, media reported.

Brian Pickle, 30, and his brother Scott Pickle, also from Atlanta, were

with their father in a heavily wooded area, according to the Atlanta Journal Constitution said. Scott's age was not given.

Union County Sheriff David Taylor told the newspaper the incident happened shortly before dusk on Saturday and that

Scott Pickle had been eager to hunt before nightfall.

Mistaking his brother for a small deer or coyote, Scott took aim and fired, striking Brian in the head, the newspaper quoted the sheriff as saying.

"We see these types of accidents all too frequent-

ly," Taylor said.

The Union County Sheriff's Office and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources are investigating the incident, media reports said. Neither immediately responded to Reuters' request for comment.—Reuters

From a Successful City to a Smart Nation

SINGAPORE — Have you ever waited for what feels like hours for a taxi? Or spent a lot of time worrying about elderly relatives who live alone? Or budgeted for your household utilities with little more than an educated guess?

These may seem like unrelated issues, but they are just some of the common problems that people face daily. In Singapore, however, there is a drive to find solutions to these pressing issues, and many more, by harnessing data, technology and networks. For example, with intelligent transport systems that manage traffic conditions and traffic flow, long taxi queues and rush-hour congestion could become a thing of the past. What's more, smart home technologies can keep residents updated on usage of household utilities, or reassure senior citizens that relatives and healthcare workers will be alerted if they are ever in distress.

Introducing the Smart Nation

"I'll give you three reasons [why Singapore is well suited for becoming a Smart Nation]. Firstly, because our ethos in our society is rational, technological and forward-looking. Secondly, because we have a population which is IT-savvy and understands technology. Thirdly, this is a highly connected and wired-up island." Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

Smart Nation, a country-wide initiative, was introduced by Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in 2014. The project aims to build a modern city, where technological advances can complement and enhance the everyday lives of its inhabitants. Innovations in the areas of transport and congestion-easing, business, smart housing and academic research are already ongoing, with many other ideas in the pipeline.

Propelling the Smart Nation plan from a vision to reality within the next ten years is highly ambitious, but those spearheading the initiative are confident this can be achieved. A move to develop smart cities is gaining pace throughout the world, as similar initiatives are being rolled out in developed metropolitan cities, such as: London, Seoul, Ontario and Taipei. Even developing countries like China and India are looking to invest in tech-gear cities as they move towards a smarter future. All these countries face many differing challenges. Singapore, however, has an advantage as it has inherited and nurtured some unique characteristics. These give it a strong foundation on which to build a Smart Nation.

Staying ahead of the curve

"Singapore will be the ideal test bed for proof of concept and prototype solutions for the existential future challenges [...] The key is not technology but to create opportunities for people to interact, build communities and have a higher quality of life." Foreign Affairs Minister Vivian Balakrishnan,



PSA's Pasir Panjang Terminal 5 (PPT5) control centre in Singapore, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Minister-in-charge of the Smart Nation Initiative

Since becoming an independent nation just over 50 years ago, Singapore has transformed as an economic powerhouse and maintained a highly influential position in the Asia-Pacific region. The small size of the city-state - where the 719 square kilometre country exists in a compact, but heavily urbanised area - makes major changes to its infrastructure easier to implement. Instead of seeing transformation confined to a specific region or municipality, as would be the case in other nations, Singaporean Smart Nation initiatives can easily be rolled out across the entire country.

Singaporean society has become incredibly tech-savvy and proficient. Since 2014, 88% of households in Singapore have internet access, and mobile penetration rate currently stands at 150%. With technology being such an integral part of Singaporean's daily life, the possibilities of how it can evolve in the coming years are staggering.

"In Singapore, we intend to get ahead of the curve," said Foreign Affairs Minister Vivian Balakrishnan, who is also Minister-in-charge of the Smart Nation Initiative, "We will invest in having the best cutting edge digital infrastructure. We will enhance the skills and capabilities of our people through education and SkillsFuture, so that we can harvest the bountiful opportunities of the future. We will support research and development of new platform technologies through our research institutes, universities, polytechnic and ITE. Singapore will be the ideal test bed for proof of concept and prototype solutions for the existential future challenges [...] The key is not technology but to create opportunities for people to interact, build communities and have a higher quality of life."

Speaking at Singapore's

World Cities Summit in July 2016, Minister Balakrishnan said the government would need to change the way it operates and interacts with the nation's people, and highlighted five fundamental points for smart-future development: openness to experimentation, open standards, open source, open data and open society. "We are taking full advantage that we are a city-state with a single layer government," he said. Open data sources, such as data.gov.sg and LTA DataMall, have been developed as a means to encourage co-creation and the exchange of ideas between the government and the public.

Incubating a Smart Nation

The government has begun setting aside resources for the Smart Nation drive in academia, research and development. With that in mind, early estimates show that there will be a crucial need for manpower to fill the various roles generated by the plan. Singapore is nurturing interest in technology amongst its young, to ensure its students have employable skills, and to help its workforce build up particular expertise needed in a highly competitive job market.

The National University of Singapore (NUS), ranked within the world's top 50 universities in 2015, has announced that its researchers are looking into three specific Smart Nation areas: "big data from different sectors, optimising results obtained from this analysis, and safeguarding cyber security." Numerous other programmes that allow higher education students and staff to take the time to brainstorm, research and create prototypes for Smart Nation projects, are already underway. At the same time, the initiative is also influencing early-stage education, with programmes such as PlayMaker. This helps pre-schoolers develop creativity, problem-solving and sequencing skills through the use of age and development-appropriate toys and resources that do not require screen time.

propriate toys and resources that do not require screen time.

Business inevitably plays a large part in any future development plans. The Singapore government has spared no expense in nurturing a technologically advanced and entrepreneurial climate, and there has been a steady increase in start-up companies basing themselves in Singapore. With one of the busiest ports in the world, Singapore has long been established as an international trading post. What's more, the nation's central business district is home to various multinational companies that appreciate the country's interest in business development.

Easing the burden on infrastructure and housing

Of course, for all nations, success comes with certain caveats. For instance, a growing population can lead to a strain on public transport. Singapore is no exception and is developing new technologies to ease the burden on its transport system and infrastructure. With the very latest sensor and data processing advances, Singapore can improve its traffic management system and deliver real-time information to people who travel around. Smartphone applications, such as SG Nextbus, use open data to help commuters keep tabs on bus arrival times so they don't have to wait. Self-driving vehicles are also a major focus for the future, and the government has already opened more than six kilometres of public roads in Singapore for test-driving prototypes.

Another Smart Nation initiative is bringing smart technology right into Singaporeans' everyday life and into their homes. The Housing & Development Board (HDB) (Singapore's public housing authority) provides homes to more than 80 % of the country's population. As a master planner and the largest developer in Singapore, HDB continually seeks out innovative ideas to ensure public

housing keeps up with evolving needs. In recent years, HDB has begun to bring smart technologies into public housing estates to create a more liveable, efficient, sustainable and safe living environment for residents. In 2015, it launched its first smart-enabled new homes for sale. HDB has also brought smart initiatives to older public housing estates, test-running them at Yuhua, which is located in the western region of Singapore. Under the trial, various smart devices that aim to make daily living easier have been made available to residents. For example, with the utilities management system, residents can track their electricity and water usage through mobile applications. The elderly monitoring system allows family members and caregivers to monitor the well-being of the elderly when they are alone at home.

Protecting the environment

As the world starts to feel the heat from global warming, Singapore has also taken steps to manage energy usage more intelligently. Policies put in place in Seoul, South Korea, have shown that governments can use technology to cut the amount of energy consumed, and lower the amount of emissions of a built-up modern city. Singapore, too, has adopted new technologies in the planning and design of its city, in a bid to become more environmentally-friendly. For instance, smart lighting is being explored in parks - from lights that automatically turn on when motion is detected, to brightness levels that change, depending on the time of day.

But this is just the beginning, and countless possibilities still lie ahead. With a firm foundation already in place and the incentive to build on it in the coming years, Singapore is perfectly poised to evolve into a Smart Nation. And no doubt, there will be some exciting and groundbreaking changes along the way.—Reuters

Japan's Takarazuka troupe provides new services to fans in Taiwan

TAIPEI — Taiwanese fans of the Japanese all-woman Takarazuka Revue troupe went to a movie theater in Taipei to see a live stream of the last show of its top stars on Sunday.

It marks a new way for the company to engage its some 10,000 fans in Taiwan, the second-largest market outside of Japan.

About 500 people came to Vieshow Cinemas in Taipei's Xinyi District to see the final performances of Kairi Hokusho, who plays the leading male role of the company's Star Troupe, Fu Hinami, the leading female character of the sub-troupe, and troupe member Kurara Mito.

It is a company tradition that top stars of its five sub-troupes present a special program at their final performance before retiring.

Sunday's performance and farewell show, which took place at Takarazuka Theater in central Tokyo, was streamed live to movie theaters in Taipei and Hong Kong.

The lack of subtitles did not bother Carol Su, who flew in from Vietnam just to see the show.

Su, 46, who came with her mother, said they developed a strong interest in Takarazuka per-

formances after the troupe first came to Taiwan in 2013.

It is not the first time for Takarazuka to live broadcast the final shows of its top stars in Taiwan. However, it is the first time the company invited the media to see the performance and report it, suggesting the century-old company, based in Hyogo Prefecture, is changing its marketing strategy.

The troupe, following its inaugural tour performance in Taiwan in 2013, came back for a second appearance in 2015, delighting the sold-out crowd whose warm response surprised troupe members.

Although the revue has received many requests to perform again in Taiwan, overseas performances are costly and the company can only afford to do so two to three times a year in Taiwan, Kensaku Murakawa, head of the troupe's promotion department, told Kyodo News.

So the company came up with the idea of live streaming the final shows of its top stars and hopes to provide the service on a regular basis, hopefully 10 shows annually, Murakawa said.

In addition, the troupe has produced performance DVDs whose distribution will be han-

dled by Sony Corp.

With the new services in place, the company hopes to see the number of its Taiwanese fans continue to grow.

Takarazuka has about 10,000 Facebook page fans in Taiwan, an impressive number for a country of 230 million people and for a company which presented its debut performance only three years ago.

Founded in 1913 by Ichizo Kobayashi, the founder of Hankyu Railways, the troupe was composed of a band of singing and dancing girls to help sell more train tickets on Kobayashi's company train line at the hot-spring resort of Takarazuka.

The troupe on average attracts 2.5 million Japanese each year, entertaining families through good times and bad for a century.

However, the fact that about 90 percent of the company's audience is female means it has limitations on attracting men.

As Murakawa suggested that the company will not build any more theaters on the near future, it is unlikely to significantly increase the number of new fans at home, motivating the company to turn its eye to the Asian market.

—Kyodo News



Kairi Hokusho, who plays the leading male role in the Takarazuka Revue troupe's Star Troupe, performs the final program in Tokyo, on 20 November 2016. The performance was streamed live in Taipei and Hong Kong. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Farhan Akhtar was blown away by performance of Jay-Z

MUMBAI — Actor-singer Farhan Akhtar has showered praise on the performance of American rapper Jay-Z, during the Global Citizen India concert here. Jay-Z made his debut here at the Global Citizen India concert last evening with his hit 'Bounce', set against a sample of AR Rahman's tune 'Chaiya Chaiya'. He also crooned his hit songs 'We gonna run this town tonight', '99 Problems', 'In Paris', 'Drunk In Love' and his Panjabi MC collaboration 'Beware Of The Boyz'.

"I enjoyed all the performances, it would be unfair to pick anyone in particular.

Everyone has done a good job and entertained the crowd. I have never seen Jay-Z play before and when I saw it, I was blown," Farhan said on the side-



Farhan akhtar, global citizen india Farhan Akhtar was also one of the artistes to perform at Global Citizen Fest 2016. PHOTO: PTI

lines of the festival here last night.

The 42-year-old actor-filmmaker believes everyone should work towards various social causes. "Start your own movement, do your own bit.

Like education is important for kids, health and sanitation is essential for women and kids, gender equality, these are important things for better future and we all must work towards it," he said.—PTI

With customized Fiat, Polish priest offers spiritual emergency service

BOLESLAWOW — In his small black Fiat 126 equipped with a blinking roof light shaped like a priest's bireta cap, Father Krzysztof Kauf zaps down the winding mountain road to answer his next call for assistance.

The Polish Catholic priest wants to be close to his parishioners, even if it means driving the tiny car up and down steep roads at any time of day or night.

Kauf recently founded a spiritual emergency hotline for his parishioners in the small southern village of Boleslawow in southern Poland with the aim of helping those in need.

"(People) need the presence of a priest, who will not be locked up inside a church rectory or in the office, but who will accom-

pany them in everyday life, in the everyday life that today is sometimes difficult and hard," he told Reuters. The priest says he has received calls at all sorts of hours, usually from residents asking for help in resolving family disputes, but also to provide comfort in cases of loss. "In case of a tragedy there is not much to say, but you have to be with the person," he said. "People need it because words cannot express everything as well as the presence of a priest, especially in difficult situations, when you are with them when they need this support." The small village counts a few hundred residents, some of whom helped Kauf customize the Fiat which advertises its "pastoral emergency" services.—Reuters

Crew begins dismantling Confederate monument in Louisville

LOUISVILLE — A work crew began to dismantle a Confederate monument in Louisville, Kentucky on Saturday, the mayor said, in the latest move to take down or relocate symbols of the slaveholding Southern Confederacy from the American Civil War.

Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer in a pair of messages on Twitter showed photos of figures

that had been removed from the monument.

"We've started disassembly (of) the Confederate Monument," Fischer wrote.

The 121-year-old memorial will be moved from its current location adjacent to the University of Louisville to the town of Brandenburg, a town about 40 miles (64 km) southwest of Lou-

isville that hosts a biennial Civil War re-enactment, officials have said.

Fischer said earlier this week that the Brandenburg location provides a "more proper context" for the monument, which is 70 feet (21 metres) tall.

Chris Poynter, a spokesman for Fischer, said in an email on Saturday the work of dismantling

the monument will continue for several days.

Students and staff members at the University of Louisville had said the memorial condoned slavery.

Earlier this year, a Louisville judge rejected a bid by opponents of the monument's relocation to keep it in its current location

Kentucky was a slave state

that did not join the Confederacy. Many Kentucky residents, however, fought for the South, which was ultimately defeated by the Union forces of northern states.

Confederate symbols have been removed from a number of centers of civic life in the United States over the last two years following criticism that the displays foster racism.—Reuters

1,000-year-old ruins unearthed in north China

SHIJIAZHUANG — Workers have uncovered ancient building ruins dating back to the Jin (960-1276) and Yuan (1271-1368) dynasties in north China's Hebei Province.

After four months of excavation at the Haifeng Town ruins in Huanghua City, the ruins of an ancient hearth, fire pits and wall footings have been uncovered among bricks, tiles and broken porcelain.

Staff working at the site have also unearthed a 6-meter-wide main road, flanked on both sides by the ruins of buildings.

Judging from preliminary assessment of the unearthed ruins and items, they are presumed to have been used during the Jin and Yuan dynasties, said Lei Jianhong, director of the research office for underwater archaeology at the Hebei Cultural Relics Insti-

tute. The excavation area, which is 30 meters long and 10 meters wide, is only a small part of the building cluster of the Haifeng Town ruins. The rich findings indicate that there was intense human activity at the site and the ancient town is likely to have had a flourishing economy and trade, said Lei, who led the dig starting in July.

It is the fourth excavation of the Haifeng

Town ruins. Standing at the mouth of a river, the town is thought to have been a port for the trade of porcelain and salt.

Scholars said ancient Haifeng Town is likely to be the northern tip of the Maritime Silk Road, from which Chinese porcelain was shipped across East Asia and beyond. But this cannot be verified until further archaeological findings are made.—*Xinhua*



Santa Leon McBryde performs at the Charles W Howard Santa Claus School in Midland, Michigan, US, on 29 October 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

The art of becoming Santa

MIDLAND, MICHIGAN — Randy Schneider has considered himself a professional Santa since 1999 when he found himself at a JCPenney store buying a beard and boots.

Now, Schneider, 66, has a beard of his own.

At the Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School in Midland, Michigan, some two hundred Santas and Mrs. Clauses came from across the United States, Canada, Denmark and Norway to learn wood toy-making, brush up on storytelling skills, drive sleighs, feed reindeer and, most importantly, spread the Christmas spirit.

Cookies are readily available at all times during the three-day training course on becoming Santa.

"It's the Harvard of all Santa schools," Schneider, a retired crane operator, said of the school, which was established in 1937 and made a non-profit organization in 1987 by directors Tom and Holly Valent.

"It's a privilege to be Santa," Tom said, sitting in a tall wooden chair with a "SANTA" engraving and green velvet upholstery.

"Every child that comes and sits on Santa's knee remembers that forever so when you're putting an everlasting memory into a child's mind, you want to make sure it's a good one."

Tom and Holly said they had to turn down roughly one hundred Santas because so many people had expressed interest in attending the Santa workshop. A sea of red cars, many of which had personalized license plates, showed the school was at capacity. A car with

a plate from Georgia read "UBGOOD" parked next to a car with a "HOHO" plate from Tennessee. Another, from California, was marked "IMCLAUS."

The organizers also said there was a record number of Mrs. Clauses in 2016.

"What a great place to find a husband!" one Mrs. Claus joked.

Kathy Armstrong had already found her Santa in college when she knit him a Christmas sweater.

The two have been married for 44 years. They both were physical therapists and retired roughly two years ago. That is when they had the idea to attend Santa school.

"Kathy has always collected Santas and I have always had a beard," said Bill.

"We decided it was something we both wanted to do," said Kathy.

The sweater Kathy made for Bill symbolized their love for Christmas.

"It had reindeer on it," Kathy, who also sewed her husband's Santa suit, said with pride.

"And it still fits!" Bill chimed. Over the three days, the couple struck silly yoga poses, practiced breathing techniques and broke out in song. The school fitness teacher had them dance as if they were wrapping presents, baking cookies and filling stockings to classic Christmas tunes like "Jingle Bells" and "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town" with the rest of their classmates.

"We even learned sign language," Bill, a loyal member of the International Brotherhood of Real Bearded Santas, said.

"It's important to be able to spread Christmas cheer to all children," he added.—*Reuters*

Dutch hope Indonesia will help solve mystery of missing WWII battleships

AMSTERDAM/JAKARTA — The Dutch prime minister on Friday called the disappearance of the wreckage of several allied warships dating back to the 1942 Battle of the Java Sea "unacceptable" and expressed hope that Indonesia would help solve the mystery.

A team of international divers searching for Dutch, British and American warships ahead of the 75th anniversary of the

decisive World War Two battle discovered that two Dutch ships, the De Ruyter and the Java, are no longer where they sank, the Dutch Defense Ministry said. Part of a third ship, the Kortenaer, had also disappeared.

The three ships were part of a fleet of allied vessels, including Australians, that set off from the last remaining allied port in Southeast Asia, the Indonesian city of Surabaya, to stop the Japanese advance.

It was defeated and thousands were killed when the vessels were sunk.

"The fact alone that war graves were violated is an extremely serious matter, with far reaching implications for the survivors and for all of us," Rutte told journalists in The Hague on Friday.

Rutte said the removal of the underwater graves of nearly 1,000 Dutch marines would be discussed during a government trade

mission to Indonesia next week.

"Imagine that a war cemetery ... would be seriously damaged or desecrated, that would be totally unacceptable and the same counts for what happened here," he said.

Indonesian Navy spokesman Gig Jonias Mokes Sipasulta said the ships should have been protected under international law.

"Normally in these cases those places can be turned into heritage sites, but for this there needs to be a discussion and a written request from the government of the country that feels they own the vessel, with the Indonesian government," he said.

Rutte said "the Indonesians are working with us to get to the bottom of this" and that it was unclear who was responsible for removing the remains, which may have been salvaged for scrap.

The search for the ships was initiated by the Karel Doorman Fund, named after a Dutchman who led the doomed allied naval assault in February 1942.—*Reuters*



Netherlands' Prime Minister Mark Rutte arrives at the EU summit in Brussels, Belgium, on 21 October, 2016. PHOTO: REUTE

		<p>10:03 Am News</p> <p>10:26 Am The Richly Blessed Gem Land</p> <p>10:53 Am Colonial Buildings and a New Yangon (11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Sunday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p>
<p>(21-11-2016 07:00am ~ 22-11-2016 07:00am) MST</p>		<p>Prime Time</p> <p>07:03 Pm News</p> <p>07:26 " Food Trip (Ep-3)(Part-2)</p> <p>07:51 " MONASTERY (Shwe In - Pin Kyaung)</p> <p>08:03 " News</p> <p>08:26 " Discovering Tribes "Gaybar Kayin")</p> <p>08:50 " Crocodile Keeper</p> <p>(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Sunday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am) (03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)</p>
<p>Today Fresh</p> <p>07:03 Am News</p> <p>07:27 Am Mosaic Painting (Precious Stones & Gems)</p> <p>07:42 Am Jade Pagoda: Weirawsana</p> <p>08:03 Am News</p> <p>08:26 Am A Visit To San-Taw-Shin Kyike-Hti-Yo Pagoda</p> <p>08:43 Am Excavation At Kawhmu</p> <p>08:52 Am Talented Musicians</p> <p>09:03 Am News</p> <p>09:26 Am Crab Business (Part-II) Soft Shell Crab</p> <p>09:38 Am On the River</p>		

Toure back with bang as Man City join Liverpool on top

LONDON — Yaya Toure returned to Manchester City's ranks on Saturday after a public apology to manager Pep Guardiola and scored twice in a 2-1 win at Crystal Palace that took them to the top of the Premier League alongside Liverpool.

While Liverpool's progress was checked by a goalless draw at Southampton, City clambered back level with the Anfield club on 27 points from 12 matches thanks to the double from old favourite Toure whose stand-off with Guardiola was quickly forgiven and forgotten.

On an afternoon when Jose Mourinho complained Manchester United were "the unluckiest team in the Premier League" after Arsenal snatched a 1-1 draw with an 89th-minute equaliser at Old Trafford, there was nothing fortunate about City's victory.

While resting key players before the Champions League clash with Borussia Moenchengladbach on Wednesday, Guardiola brought Toure in for his first league appearance of the season after the midfielder's apology following comments the player's agent made about the club and manager. The Ivorian repaid Guardiola's faith with a 39th-minute run and shot and, after Connor Wickham had equalised in the second half, netted an 83rd-minute winner.

After a three-month stand-off at the club, Toure sounded



Manchester City's Yaya Toure celebrates scoring their second goal with Kevin De Bruyne during match between Crystal Palace and Manchester City at Selhurst Park on 19 November. PHOTO: REUTERS

emotional as he spoke of being applauded back into the dressing room by team mates.

"They have always been brilliant with me, always supportive. I always want to be there to help them. I am professional, I always want to improve my game," he told the BBC.

"I was prepared mentally and I knew that one day my manager would need me."

Liverpool's recent magisterial progress ended in driving rain at Southampton where, al-

though they extended their unbeaten sequence to 10 games, the league's top scorers squandered a series of chances.

It left them still leading the way on the strength of having scored more goals than City but Chelsea, two points behind, have the chance to jump ahead of both if they win at Middlesbrough on Sunday.

Arsenal were grateful to extend their unbeaten streak to 17 games in all competitions after a last-gasp header from substi-

tute Olivier Giroud earned them a barely deserved point at Manchester United.

Juan Mata had put United ahead in the second half of a game they dominated but Giroud's late rescue act left Mourinho cursing his luck, even if he had stretched his unbeaten league record against old foe Arsene Wenger to 12 matches.

"We are the unluckiest team in the Premier League," Mourinho said of his sixth-placed team. "I'm not going to say they (Arse-

nal) didn't want to win but they couldn't be the way they normally play football.

"They were the lucky ones and we were the unlucky ones but that's football."

The draw left Arsenal fourth on 25 points, the same as Chelsea. Tottenham Hotspur are one point adrift in fifth after Harry Kane netted twice in three dramatic late minutes to earn a pulsating 3-2 win over West Ham United at White Hart Lane.

The England striker hammered home the winner from the penalty spot in stoppage time as Spurs came roaring back from 2-1 down to protect their record as the only unbeaten team in the league.

At the other end of the table Victor Anichebe struck twice and Jermain Defoe netted his 150th Premier League goal as Sunderland clambered off the bottom with a 3-0 win over fellow strugglers Hull City.

Swansea City are now bottom, with American Bob Bradley still looking for his first win as manager, after Seamus Coleman equalised for hosts Everton in the 89th minute to secure a 1-1 draw.

Leicester City's difficult reign as champions continued as they went behind to an Etienne Capoue goal at Watford after 33 seconds and ended up losing 2-1, a defeat that left them two points above the relegation zone. —Reuters

Kean, 16, makes Juve debut in easy win over Pescara

TURIN — Moise Kean became the first player born after the start of the year 2000 to play in Serie A when he featured in the last few minutes of an otherwise routine 3-0 win for leaders Juventus over lowly Pescara on Saturday.

Lorenzo Insigne scored his first Napoli goals for seven months to give last season's runners-up a 2-1 win at Udinese, while Chievo beat Cagliari 1-0 in the day's other game.

Kean, born in February 2000, entered as a substitute in the 84th minute after goals from Sami Khedira, Mario Mandzukic and Hernanes had already set up Juve's 23rd consecutive home win in Serie A.

Kean has already attracted attention with his performances and a prolific scoring record in Juve's under-17 team.

Juventus had an early scare when Gianluca Capri got clear of their defence, only to shoot wide from six metres.

Pescara, two places off the bottom, held out until Khedira



Juventus' Moise Kean celebrates with teammates at the end of the match between Juventus and Pescara, Italian Serie A at Juventus stadium, Turin, Italy on 19 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

played a one-two with Mandzukic and guided his shot past Albano Bizzarri in the 36th minute.

Mandzukic extended Juve's lead when he turned in Khedira's header from close range just after the hour and Hernanes completed the win with a long-range shot in the 69th minute.

Juventus, chasing a sixth

successive title, have 33 points, seven clear of AS Roma who visit Atalanta on Sunday (1400 GMT).

After a scrappy first period devoid of clear chances at Udinese, forward Insigne brought the game to life when he swept Jose Callejon's low cross into the roof of the net from six metres just after the restart.—Reuters

Sweden's Henrik Stenson tops European Tour's money list

DUBAI — Sweden's Henrik Stenson has won European Tour's Order Of Merit for the second time in his career after none of his challengers could usurp his position on the final day of the DP World Tour Championship in Dubai on Sunday.

The 40-year-old finished the tournament in some style, carding a seven-under round of 65. His rivals for the money-list title going into the season-ending event were compatriot Alex Noren, England's Danny Willett and Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy.—Reuters

Rooney slams 'disgraceful' treatment over photos

LONDON—Wayne Rooney believes he was the victim of "disgraceful" treatment following the publication of photos that showed him socialising at England's team hotel when on international duty last weekend.

The England and Manchester United captain said he was shown a "lack of respect" by the media after he joined in a wedding party in between the matches against Scotland and Spain. Rooney received criticism in some quarters, and backing in others, after the photos were sold to a newspaper and he ended up "unreservedly" apologising to interim England manager

Gareth Southgate over the images which he did say were "inappropriate" for someone in his position.

After United's 1-1 Premier League draw with Arsenal on Saturday he was in less apologetic mood, annoyed the furore over his behaviour had failed to subside in the media. "What's been going on is disgraceful," Rooney told reporters. "I'm proud to play for my country and I'm proud of my achievements.

"It's not finished yet. I think what's been going on is disgraceful. It shows a lack of respect and I think enough is enough. That's all I want to say."—Reuters