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Cars carrying aid workers attacked in Muse, one philanthropic man injured

Northern Shan State remained under attack yesterday, this time in Muse, near the Chinese border, when two cars carrying philanthropic workers were attacked, causing one man to be seriously injured.

At about 4pm yesterday, an armed group identified by the government as a combined force of KIA, TNLA and MNDAA opened fire on two automobiles owned by the Myittamon Philanthropic team in Muse township and the Parami Civil Society as the cars headed to the 105 mile trade zone to help displaced people, according to the State Counsellor's Office Information Committee.

The philanthropic teams left for the trade zone after they heard that there were displaced people in Lwein village and nearby camps. On their way, KIA, TNLA & MNDAA began shooting at the cars with light firearms from an uphill position, hitting Ko Ye Min Aung, 23, in the chest. The vehicle did not proceed to the camp, but instead returned to Muse hospital with the injured man on board.

It is reported that the injured man is continuing to receive medical treatment at the hospital.

Yesterday's 4pm attack came after Kutkai on Sunday endured repeated heavy artillery fire in several attacks by the KIA, the TNLA and the MNDAA, resulting in eight deaths and 29 injuries, according to the State Counsellor's Office Information Committee

The information committee said military outposts, police stations and a trade centre came under surprised attack by armed groups consisting mostly of KIA and TNLA troops, who also used vehicles along the Lashio-Muse Road and threatened to destroy the bridge between Namtu and Manton with explosives. Casualties and



Clinics are set up at five shelters in Muse to provide medical care to IDPs. PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE

“As the government troops cleared the area, traffic returned to normal state at 9am yesterday.”



Ko Ye Min Aung, 23, receives treatment at hospital. PHOTO: INFORMATION COMMITTEE OF THE STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE

injuries were reported as a result of the attacks, but no statistics were available, the committee said.

Early Sunday morning, the Kyukoke (Pangsang) police outpost came under fire by about 50 KIA/TNLA troops. Government troops made a clearance operation after the attack, the committee said.

At about 4 pm yesterday, KIA and TNLA troops fired three rounds using a 60mm long-range gun mortar at the township of Kutkai. One mortar round pierced the roof of Daw Gunkhaung's house, but did not explode. Other rounds exploded but did not result in any deaths, officials said.

Government troops pursued the armed groups as they fled in a north-east direction at about 4:10pm, according to the Information Committee.

Sunday at about 8 pm, KIA & TNLA troops blocked the road at milestone 262/2 with four 22-wheeled articulated trucks, one 12-wheeled lorry and one oil bowser. As the government troops cleared the area, traffic returned to normal state at 9am yesterday.

Later Sunday evening at about 9:30pm, the TNLA group planted a bomb at the Namlarchaung wooden bridge, destroying the bridge floor.

At about 6am yesterday, the KIA, TNLA and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) launched about 100 rounds of artillery fire for nearly 10 minutes until government troops pursued them, causing them to retreat towards the south, it is learnt.

Yesterday morning's attack on the philanthropic workers in Muse resulted in serious injury to a Myanmar man who was on his way to provide philanthropic help to internally displaced persons in camps near the border.—Myanmar News Agency



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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Depreciation of Myanmar kyat in 2014-15 due to surging US dollar

A strong US dollar and the trade deficit resulted in the depreciation of the kyat by 12.7 per cent, Deputy Governor Daw Khin Saw Oo of the Central Bank of Myanmar was quoted as saying at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Session yesterday.

She was submitting the report on implementation of fiscal policies and measures for financial stability of the CBM for the 2014-15 fiscal year at the session.

Demand for the US dollar was rising due to trade deficits during the fiscal year, she added.

However, the deputy governor said that economic growth was higher than that of previous 2014-15 fiscal year.

The economic growth rate rose from 8.4 per cent in 2013-14 to 8.7 per cent in 2014-15, according to statistics provided by the deputy governor.

Meanwhile, inflation slightly rose from 8.4 per cent in 2013-14 to 8.7 per cent during 2014-15, while the total amount of money



Deputy Governor Daw Khin Saw Oo. PHOTO: MNA

in circulation also increased by 20 per cent at the end of the fiscal year, the deputy governor said.

However, she admitted that the CBM had to buy treasury bonds and certificates worth 30 per cent of the government's budget deficit during the fiscal year.

At the end of the fiscal year,

the central bank had permitted four state-owned banks, 22 private banks, 37 representative offices of foreign banks, nine financial companies, 241 money changers, 15 insurance companies and 226 microfinance firms.

Annual earnings of financial companies were also increasing during the fiscal year, according to the report.

Representatives were invited to debate the report during future sessions.

At the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session, Union Minister for Electric Power and Energy U Pe Zin Tun sought approval of the session to sign an MoU on linking power networks of BIMSTEC countries, which he said was beneficial for Myanmar. Earlier, the session approved the amendment bills for the Ward/Village-tract Administration Law. — *Myanmar News Agency*.

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw to debate bill amending examination law



Dr Myo Thein Gyi. PHOTO: MNA

THE bill committee of the Pyithu Hluttaw put forward reports on a bill amending the 1973 Board of Examination Law and Oil and Petroleum Products Bill yesterday to the parliament.

Following the discussion by four MPs, Speaker U Win Myint invited MPs to discuss the amendments of the two bills in an ongoing session

of the parliament.

In his answer to questions at the parliament, Union Minister for Education Dr. Myo Thein Gyi said the ministry has been working on opening more than 136 matriculation examination centres nationwide including Yemyatni Village and Kyin Village in Htilin Township.

He also responded to the issues related to the upgrading of schools, the imbalance between number of students enrolled and teachers appointed, the development and replacement plans for the teachers in Mangtong during the six-month maternity leave, timely distribution of school text books to the students in Bilin of Mon State, construction of self-reliance schools with set standards in the coming fiscal year as well as the amendment bill of the 1973 Union of Myanmar Exam Board Law. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

3rd Regular Session of Amyotha Hluttaw Holds Its Fourth Day Meeting

THE subject of the country's fishing industry, which has declined in part due to alleged encroachment by foreign fishermen into Myanmar international waters, was addressed yesterday at the Amyotha Hluttaw's latest session.

Dr Aung Thu, the Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock Breeding and Irrigation, in response to a query raised by U Khin Maung Latt, representing constituency 3 of Rakhine State, gave his assurances that enforcement was being implemented.

"For the revitalization of the small-scale fishing industry of Rakhine nationals, MFLBI, Tatmataw, Myanmar Police Force, respective administrative forces, Rakhine State Cabinet and Rakhine State Peace Stability Implementation Committee have been supervising around the clock and educative talks are being made."

Bangladeshi-owned fishing boats have allegedly been operating in Myanmar waters, a violation of the law.

In answer to the question raised by U Khin Maung Latt as to whether there are any arrangements to arrest violators

who are operating Bangladeshi fishing boats illegally in Myanmar territorial waters, the minister said concerted efforts are being made.

"The Fishery Department has been conducting investigations of entry into and departure of all fishing boats registered — inshore and offshore, at the checkpoints and are examining fishing equipment and tools before their departure in cooperation with respective teams. As regards inshore and offshore boats in the sea, they are being investigated under the supervision of the Defense Ministry. And in Yathetaung Township and nearby areas, the Myanmar Police Force has been investigating. The Danyawady-based marine headquarters confiscated 60 boats — illegal fishing boats, boats carrying illegal immigrants, drugs, teak and timber and black marketing commodities valued at K 2244870000, which were confiscated and added to national finance between April 2013 and August 2016. In addition, 15 villages were upgraded as the Emerald Village Project in 2014-2015 fiscal year, five in 2015-2016 and two villages in

2016-2017 financial year — all together 22 villages", the Union minister said.

He went on to say that with the support of international organisations such as the Myanmar Sustainable Aquaculture Programme (MYSAP), Project for Exploiting Marine and its Sources for Sustainable Economic Development in Myanmar and conservation of marine species in fresh water and salt water areas in Myanmar are being implemented. The Union Minister also replied to questions raised by U Tet Tun Aung, constituency-2 of Rakhine States, U Kyaw Than, constituency 10 of Kyaukphyu, Rakhine State, U Win Aung, constituency 3 of Sagaing Region, U Khin Zaw Oo, constituency 3 of Mon State and U Kyaw Toke, constituency 3 of Mandalay Region.

Mahn Win Khaing Than, the Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, announced that any interested parliamentarians were invited to discuss the Law on Myanmar Territorial Sea and Marine Zones sent back by the Pyithu Hluttaw with an amendment attached. — *Myanmar News Agency*



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker receives Chilean Ambassador at the Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker receives Chilean Ambassador

MAHN WIN KHAING THAN, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, received Mr Javier Becker, Ambassador of Chile to Myanmar, based in Bangkok, Thailand, at the Hluttaw building in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. At the meeting, they discussed matters on promoting friendship and cooperation. — *Myanmar News Agency*

System breakdown causes nationwide power outage

A system breakdown at 230-KV grid at Taungdwingyi Shwetaung caused power blackout almost entire nation from 8.49 pm to 9.7 pm yesterday.

Inspectors of the Ministry of Electric Power and Energy immediately examined the incident. While they were carrying

out the inspection, the ministry managed to supply its emergency power to Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay and other major cities through other power grids including the Paunglaung grid, according to an official of the ministry. — *Zin Oo (Myanmar Alin)*

Chinese Embassy in Myanmar reacts to armed conflicts near border

THE Chinese embassy in Myanmar hopes the deadly conflicts in northern Myanmar will be resolved, but in the meantime will pledge humanitarian aid and medical treatment for those crossing the border to flee the fighting, they said in an announcement released yesterday.

The announcement stated that many locals residing in border areas fled into China, receiv-

ing medical treatment given as a humanitarian aid by the Chinese Government, with several injured people hospitalised. Northern Myanmar abuts the Chinese border, where skirmishes often occur between Myanmar troops and some ethnic armed groups. The Chinese government said they wish for a ceasefire and for the border area to become peaceful.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Humanitarian groups allowed to deliver aid to Maungtaw

Myint Maung Soe

HUMANITARIAN groups have been allowed into Rakhine State to deliver aid, according to U Khin Maung Swe, secretary of Rakhine State Government.

Rumours have it that residents in the northern part of Maungtaw District are facing difficulties as they have not received the international aids.

The resident representative of the UN and diplomats visited the scene of violent attacks on 3 November. The World Food Programme has been allowed to deliver aid while other UN agencies have been permitted to

provide basic services such as healthcare and drinking water since 4 November, according to the cabinet secretary.

Aid organisations are allowed to come to Maungtaw town but are not permitted to go to rural areas, as the situation is too complicated and potentially dangerous, officials said. Therefore, the aid organisations are permitted to deliver aid to rural areas through local staff, U Khin Maung Swe said.

International aid organisations including WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR and ICRC have been permitted to deliver aid in Maungtaw so far.

IDPs in Muse provided with aid, health care

MORE than 2,630 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who fled or were forced to leave their homes after KIA, TNLA and MNDAA attacked military outposts, police stations and the 105-mile trade camp in Muse and Kutkai on 20 November, are being sheltered at monasteries and churches in Muse.

The IDPs at the five temporary camps are being provided with food, water, warm clothes and blankets by the Shan State Government and are receiving medical care when needed, according to the Information

Committee of the State Counsellor's Office.

The Shan State Government has supplied 300 bags of rice and 1,000 bags of instant noodles to the camps daily and provided families of the victims who died in the attacks Ks500,000 to Ks1million each. The injured are being given Ks100,000 to Ks300,000 each, according to the press release of the committee.

Temporary clinics have been set up at the relief camps to providing health care to the IDPs.—*Myanmar News Agency*



IDPs in Muse receiving aid from authorities. PHOTO: INFORMATION COMMITTEE OF THE STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE



President U Htin Kyaw accepts credentials from Ms Satu Suikkari-Kleven, the newly accredited Ambassador of Finland at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

President U Htin Kyaw accepts credentials of newly accredited ambassadors

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw accepted credentials of the new-accredited ambassadors from Estonia and Finland at Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Mr Riho Kruuv, the newly accredited Ambassador of the

Republic of Estonia to Myanmar presented his credentials to the president at 10 am yesterday.

Ms Satu Suikkari-Kleven, the newly-accredited Ambassador of Finland, presented her credentials to the president at

10.35am yesterday.

Also present on the occasions were Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and Director-General U Ko Ko Naing of the Protocol Department.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Central Committee for holding 69th Independence Day celebration convenes 2nd meeting



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the second meeting of Central Committee for Holding the 69th Independence Day celebration at the Presidential Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

CENTRAL Committee for Holding the 69th Independence Day celebration held its second meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday at the Presidential Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, Vice President U Myint Swe in his capacity as the chairman of the committee said the 69th anniversary celebration will be held with four objectives and with full political essence.

The committee held the first

meeting on 19 October making six resolutions including organizing seven sub-committees to provide support to the central committee.

The seven sub-committees are the sub-committee for holding State flag hoisting ceremony, the sub-committee for holding reception and dinner, the sub-committee for security, the sub-committee for information, the sub-committee for President's message on the Independ-

ence Day, the sub-committee for health and the sub-committee for holding sports activities.

The chairmen and responsible personnel of the sub-committees reported on preparation for holding the anniversary celebration sector wise.

In his concluding remarks, Vice President U Myint Swe called for cooperation by respective departments to hold the ceremony successfully.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Demonstration of monsoon paddy harvesting held in Htigyaing



Monsoon paddy harvesting being demonstrated in Htigyaing. PHOTO: U KYAW KHE (HTECHINE—IPRD)

A demonstration of monsoon paddy harvesting on a model Sinayekari 3 paddy field was held at the No. 946 field owned by farmer U Kalar in Selan village, Kumbound village-tract, in Htigyaing Township, Katha District in Saging Region yesterday.

A 0.10 acre model paddy field — 66 square feet — was

harvested with the use of a combined harvester machine. The per acre paddy yield is 85 baskets.

At the demonstration, officials of Agricultural Services gave educative talks on the choosing of pedigree paddy seeds, plus do's and don'ts depending on the characteristics of paddy yield.

This year's paddy yield meets targets in part because officials went on field trips to give educative talks and agricultural techniques to the farmers.

Present at the demonstration were an official of Township Administration Department and township departmental officials.—U Kyaw Khe (Htigyaing—IPRD)

Short-life paddy price drops in Thaton, farmers stuck with high yield

ALTHOUGH there was a high yield of short-life paddy with a 90-day-yield, the price of short-life paddy has dropped in Thaton township, Mon state due to low demand, it is learnt from paddy growers.

"We were expecting quite a good price from this year's harvests. But farmers will be stuck with all the rice they have grown. The growers sell the short-life paddy to fulfill their field requirement. This time, the farmers were faced with difficulty when the price fell

for short-life paddy, said local farmer U Thein Myint.

Farmers from Thaton township grow both long-life and short life-paddy in the region.

"The prices of paddy fell this year because of lower demand from foreign countries. The drop in the price of the paddy impacted not only farmers but also rice sellers," said U Shwe Wa, a rice seller.

In Thaton region, the paddy plantations yield over 6.1 million baskets from over 123,000 acres of paddy fields

every year.

In 2015, the 100 baskets of short-life paddy fetched Ks0.7million, 100 baskets of Eimahta paddy fetched around Ks0.6million and 100 baskets of Meedon paddy fetched Ks0.6million.

In 2016, Pawsan paddy fetched Ks0.5million for 100 baskets and Eimahta paddy fetched Ks0.4million for 100 baskets and Meedon paddy fetched Ks0.4million for 100 baskets. — Myitmakha News Agency



Paddy fields being seen in Thaton Township. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Hotel must report on list of foreign guests to authorities

HOTELS and guest houses must compile a list of foreign guests to send to the authorities of township administration, the Ministry of Immigration and Population, according to deputy township officer U Win Myint of the Mandalay region Immigration department.

Action will be taken against the hotel managers if they do not report on the foreigner list. The action involves both fines and jail sentences.

"Some of the foreigners are staying at their relatives' houses. If we find out the problem and know that they are not staying at the hotel, we will conduct more awareness training," he added.

"Hotels and guest houses send a list of their guests. We

give them a form to fill out for the foreigners' list including their arrival date, return date and how long are they staying", he added.

The hotel must provide police the list of foreign guests within 24 hours.

"There are different types of visas such as travelling visas and business visas. Recently, the authorities added new types of visas such as education and medical visas for foreigners, said U Win Myint.

Previously, there were six types of visas for the foreigners, but this year, there are twelve types of visas. All foreigners must respect the culture, religion, customs and laws of Myanmar. — Aung Thant Khine

Crime NEWS

Over 100 tonnes of timber confiscated in Kawlin



Timber logs seized being seen. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

AUTHORITIES from Kawlin township confiscated timber weighing over 100 tonnes from nine illegal saw mills in Kawlin township, Katha district, Sagaing region on 17 and 18 November.

Acting on a tip-off, a combined investigative team comprising officers and staff from the Forestry Department searched the Larkar forest reserve and found five portable engines, related items, one elephant and timber weighing 42.5742 tonnes from five illegal saw mills on 17 November.

The next day, the combined team discovered more illegal

timber weighing 57.4916 tonnes in the forest. The combined team handed over the timber, engines and other related items to the Kawlin township forestry department. The elephant was returned to Kawlin timber extraction.

"The owner of the illegal saw mills from Larkar village and the 42-year-old mahout are being charged under section 6(1) of the Public Property Protection Act by the Kawlin police station. We are still investigating the other owners of the illegal saw mills", said an official from Kawlin township police station.— Myitmakha News Agency

LOCAL Business

MACCS encounters initial problems

MYANMAR Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS) was launched on 12th November at international ports and Yangon Airport International Cargo Terminal. Thilawa Special Economic Zone is reported to have had some implementation problems, importers and exporters said.

The system was found to have server outages and other system errors, resulting in difficulties for containers to load and unload.

MACCS was designed to help to deal with delays in container handling operations, but has encountered start-up problems. In addition to the internet connection problem, the staff are not used to the automated system yet, officials said. These problems need to be solved as soon as possible, said an official from vehicles importers and distributors association.

The MACCS system was launched with the assistance of the Japanese government to ensure the smooth flow of import and export processes. The system is planned to be expanded up to border trade camps, but only if the system is successful. —200



Workers work in a tea leaf field at Mong Mao in ethnic Wa territory in north east Myanmar October 1, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Awareness campaign to be offered for tea leaf growers from 40 villages

TEA-leaf growers from 40 villages will be provided with guidance on organic cultivation methods and good cultivation practices to yield quality tea-leaves, it is learnt from the Ywangan Tea Leaf Growers Association.

A pre-discussion will be made before the nationwide tea

leaf conference with an aim to enhance the tea leaf cultivation sector, according to association.

Quality tea leaf cultivation, organic cultivation and the emergence of quality tea-leaf factories will be highlighted in the discussions at that conference, said U Maung Nu, the chair of

the Ywangan Tea Leaf Growers Association. The pre-discussion will be held from 21st to 22nd November in the Ywangan area and the conference is planned to be held in January, 2017.

Myanmar started to export dried tea leaves to Germany upon its proposal to purchase. The de-

mand from Germany looks promising for the tea export market. The Myanmar Tea Association is helping the tea-leaf growers in every step of the tea growing process, from efficient farming to packaging according to international export criteria.—*Wint Yee Mon (AMIA)*

Winter crop farmers from Seikpyu Township delayed by erratic rain

WINTER crop farmers from Seikpyu Township are delayed in their harvests because of erratic torrential rain, which has caused the plantations to become overgrown with weeds, it is learnt.

Post-monsoon rain in Seikpyu Township resulted in a delay in winter crop production. Normally, the farmers start to cultivate the crops in early Oc-

tober after weeding the ground and preparing the land ready to cultivation. But the rainfall this year has been higher than previous years, causing difficulties for the farmers.

In addition to the delay, the post-monsoon rain has also caused a lower crop yield. The shortage of labour is added into this and so the wages have to be raised from Ks2,000 to

Ks3,000 a day. The farmers are forced to use mowers in cutting the strong weeds, incurring more cost for rental of mowing machines.

The farmers are suffering greatly from the low yield of the rain crops, the shortages of labour, the low price of the crop and the high cost of winter crop cultivation, said the farmers.—*Soe Lin Naing (IPRD)*

US-based Ball Corporation can produce 500 million cans per year

THE US-based Ball Corporation, which produces metal packaging for beverages and food products, reportedly has a production capacity of about 500 million cans per year in its Myanmar facility, with an investment of US\$45million, according to dealstreetasia.

The Ball Asia Pacific (Yangon) Metal Container Limited's facility was built in Zone A of Thilawa Special Economic Zone,

for manufacturing of aluminum beverage cans for beer, soft drinks, mineral water, fruit juice, energy teas, coffee, milk and yogurt drinks.

The Ball Corporation launched its third facility in Asia in the Thilawa SEZ in Asia, planning to upgrade its quality and packaging process because there are other can manufacturing factories in Thilawa.—*Mon Mon*

New investment law to be effective in April

THE new investment law will be effective beginning from April, said U Aung Naing Oo, the director-general of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The Myanmar Investment Law was passed on 18th October, 2016. However, the facts needed to be embodied into the rules and procedures are currently being amended. The amend-

ments are slated to be completed by 31st March, 2017 and effective the following month.

The old investment law will be invalidated once the new investment law takes effect, according to DICA.

All enterprises will no longer need to seek approval from Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) according to the new investment law, except

for strategic enterprises, heavy investment projects, those businesses for which assessments need to be made and which need verification that there will be no environmental impact.

In addition, those enterprises which have no background in their countries of origin and which can harm the public's health are not allowed to make investments in Myanmar.—200

Survey to be conducted on taxis licensed outside of Yangon

A survey will be conducted for taxis operating in Yangon with licenses from other towns starting in December, said Dr. Maung Aung, the secretary of the Yangon Transport Authority.

There are many taxis with licenses from towns other than Yangon, such as Bago and Patheingyi. The taxi survey will be carried out in cooperation with the organisations concerned. In the initial stage, the

survey will be conducted for taxis. Then the survey will proceed for cars without a Yangon license operating in Yangon. After turning in the surveys to City Taxi, a GPS system will be installed in the taxis so that they are easier to monitor, he added. Concerted efforts are currently being exerted to formulate a good transportation system, which help ease traffic congestion and reduce transportation costs.—200

Cambodia charges Australian nurse for running surrogacy clinic

PHNOM PENH — A Cambodian court charged an Australian nurse on Monday for allegedly operating an illegal fertility clinic, police said, weeks after the country declared a ban on commercial surrogacy.

Tammy Davis-Charles, 49, allegedly charged foreign couples \$50,000 for surrogacy services and paid Cambodian women between \$10,000 to \$12,000 to carry babies on their behalf, Police Colonel Keo Thea, director of Phnom Penh's anti-trafficking bureau, said. She was detained in the Cambodian capital at the weekend, and charged along with two Cambodian staff, Penh Rithy and Samrithchan Chariya.

"They acted as intermediaries in surrogacy and engaged in falsifying documents," Keo Thea said.

Davis-Charles was too ill to attend the court on Monday and was charged in absentia, he said.

Cambodia moved to shut down its booming commercial surrogacy industry, which attracted foreign cou-

ples seeking to become biological parents, last month after similar bans in Thailand, India and Nepal.

"If we don't crackdown on this, it will blossom," Keo Thea said, referring to commercial surrogacy.

"We don't want to become a country that exports humans."

Keo Thea said that Davis-Charles had moved her business to Cambodia more than a year ago after Thailand closed down its surrogacy clinics in Feb 2015.

Neighbouring Thailand had previously been a top destination for fertility tourism. Reuters was unable to reach Davis-Charles for comment. A spokesperson for Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said on Monday that consular assistance was being provided to an Australian woman arrested in Cambodia, without elaborating.

The Australian government has advised its citizens not to visit Cambodia for commercial surrogacy arrangements.—*Reuters*

India rail crash raises concerns of underinvestment as toll hits 142

PUKHRAYAN — Indian rescue workers concluded their search of the mangled carriages of a derailed train on Monday, bringing the number of passengers killed in the disaster to at least 142 and the injured to more than 200.

Sunday's derailment in the state of Uttar Pradesh was India's deadliest train crash since 2010 and has renewed concern about the poor safety standard of the state-run network, which is a lifeline for millions of Indians but has suffered from chronic underinvestment.

Police at the accident site said rescue teams had finished their search for bodies buried in the 14 carriages that derailed in the early hours while most of the more than 500 passengers were asleep.

"The rescue operations are over. We don't expect to find any more bodies," said Zaki Ahmed, police inspector general in the northern city of Kanpur, about 65 km (40 miles) from the site of the crash in Pukhrayan.

The largely colonial-era railway system, the world's fourth largest, carries about 23 million people every day. But it is saturated and ageing badly.



Rescue workers search for survivors at the site of Sunday's train derailment in Pukhrayan, south of Kanpur city, India, on 21 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Average speeds top just 50 kph (30 mph) and train accidents are common.

The crash is a stark reminder of how hard it will be for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to fulfil his promise to transform the railways into a more efficient, safer network befitting India's economic power.

Modi this year pledged record levels of investment and has announced a new high-speed line funded by Japan, but little progress has been made on upgrading

tracks or installing modern signalling equipment on the main network.

He has also shied away from raising highly subsidised fares that leave the railways with next to nothing for investment — by some analyst estimates, they need 20 trillion rupees (\$293.34 billion) of investment by 2020.

Modi on Sunday held a political rally about 210 km (130 miles) from the crash site in Uttar Pradesh, which heads to the polls early next year

in an election his Bharatiya Janata Party is vying to win.

Politician Mayawati, one of Modi's biggest rivals in the state, told media the government should have "invested in mending tracks instead of spending billions and trillions of rupees on bullet trains".

Authorities are looking into the possibility a fractured track caused the train to roll off the rails on its journey between the cities of Patna and Indore.—*Reuters*

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Japan, Viet Nam affirm coordination in South China Sea row

LIMA — Japan and Viet Nam on Sunday affirmed their commitment to peacefully resolving disputes in the South China Sea in line with international law, as Tokyo prepares to provide Hanoi with patrol ships to strengthen its maritime law-enforcement capabilities amid a territorial row with China.

Meeting on the sidelines of a Pacific Rim summit in Lima, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang agreed to promote domestic procedures for each country so as to implement the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a 12-nation free trade agreement, according to the Japanese Foreign Ministry. Preparations are under way to provide the patrol ships promised to Viet Nam in September, Abe told Quang.

Viet Nam is among a handful of Asian countries embroiled in territorial dis-



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (R) and Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang shake hands in Lima on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

putes with Beijing in the South China Sea.

Abe promised Japan's full support to Viet Nam for its hosting of next year's summit of the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

Quang praised a planned visit to Viet Nam in next spring by Japanese Emperor Akihito and Em-

press Michiko.

In separate talks, Abe and US President Barack Obama agreed to continue close bilateral coordination in promoting the TPP and handling other international issues, the ministry said.

Abe and Obama, who will leave office in January, hailed each other's leadership in strengthening

the Japan-US alliance for peace and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region.

In a meeting with James Soong, chairman of Taiwan's People First Party, Abe said he hopes Beijing and Taipei will promote peaceful relations through dialogue, and that stable cross-strait ties will contribute to peace and prosperity in East Asia, according to the ministry.

Abe and Soong agreed to continue developing relations between Japan and Taiwan under the administration of President Tsai Ing-wen launched in May. Tsai's Democratic Progressive Party has traditionally been skeptical of closer ties with China.

Abe held separate talks with Quang, Obama and Soong on the fringes of a two-day APEC summit that ended Sunday in the Peruvian capital. Soong attended the summit as Tsai's proxy.—*Kyodo News*

South Korea's opposition parties move towards President Park impeachment

SEOUL — South Korea's opposition People's Party will start collecting signatures for an impeachment motion against President Park Geun-hye, while the main opposition Democratic Party will review the conditions for impeachment, party spokesmen said on Monday.

South Korean prosecutors said on Sunday they believe Park was an accomplice in an influence-peddling scandal that has rocked her administration.

Park's close friend Choi Soon-sil and former presidential aide An Chong-bum have been charged with abuse of power by pressuring companies to contribute funds to foundations at the centre of the scandal.

Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets of Seoul on Saturday in the fourth straight weekend of protests against Park, in the biggest public demonstrations the country has seen since the 1980s.

Park, who's five-year term ends in February 2018, has resisted calls to resign but has apologised twice, saying she only sought to benefit the economy not herself, but acknowledges carelessness in her ties with Choi.

The People's Party, with 38 seats in the single-chamber 300-member parliament, has started efforts to remove Park from office and will talk with other parties to get signatures for an impeachment motion, said a party spokes-



Protesters shout slogans after they are blocked by riot policemen in a road nearby the presidential Blue House during their march calling South Korean President Park Geun-hye to step down in Seoul, South Korea, on 19 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

man Lee Yong-ho.

An impeachment motion requires at least half of the parliament to start and needs a two-thirds majority to pass.

If an impeachment motion passes parliament, it is reviewed by the Constitutional Court, which has to confirm it with at least six of its nine judges. Political analysts say an impeachment motion against Park has a good chance of passing.

The Democratic Party, which has 121 seats, said on Monday it would start reviewing the conditions for impeachment proceedings but did not commit to starting the motion.

"Impeachment proceedings need perfect preparations as much as possible," Choo Mi-ae, head of the Democratic Party told a party meeting, adding the best scenario was for Park to step down.

Political analysts have said

opposition parties are not pushing hard for impeachment because if the motion fails, it will improve Park's chances of surviving the crisis. In 2004, parliament voted to impeach then-President Roh Moo-hyun, only to have the motion overturned by the Constitutional Court. The move was unpopular with the public, which saw it as an abuse of power by the opposition, which had a majority then.—Reuters

Taiwan sees exchange with China's leader at APEC as positive

TAIPEI — A brief exchange between representatives from Taiwan and China at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' meeting is a "positive" development for relations across the Taiwan Strait, Taiwan's Presidential Office said on Monday.

China cut an official communications mechanism with Taiwan in June after new President Tsai Ing-wen refused to commit to the "One China Principle" that says Taiwan is part of the mainland. Beijing sees Taiwan as a breakaway province it has vowed to reclaim by force if necessary.

Taiwan has since repeatedly urged Beijing to resume talks and exchanges.

Taiwan's envoy James Soong had what Taiwanese media described as a "friendly" exchange with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the APEC meeting in Lima, Peru, at the weekend.

"We always welcome any interaction that would help both sides understand each other without political pre-conditions," Presidential Office spokesman Alex Huang said.

Huang described the brief discussion as "a positive thing".

"We are glad to see it," he said.—Reuters

With support of China's Xi, Philippine leader to ban fishing in disputed lagoon

MANILA — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte will issue an executive order declaring part of the disputed Scarborough Shoal a marine sanctuary off-limits to all fishermen, a move his office said was supported by Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping.

Duterte will make a unilateral declaration barring fishermen from exploiting marine life at a tranquil lagoon that was central to years of bitter squabbling, and the basis of an arbitration case brought and won by the Philippines.

The dispute over the Scarborough Shoal is one of several involving South East Asian countries seeking to counter China's growing assertiveness in the South China Sea.

Since 2012, China has deployed its coastguard to block the shoal from Filipinos, despite being located inside the 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone of the Philippines.

The establishment of a protected marine zone, if successful, could provide both countries a face-saving way to break the diplomatic deadlock without making



Fishermen ride on a small boat past their big boats as they prepare to fish at disputed Scarborough Shoal, at the coastal village of Cato in Infanta, Pangasinan in the Philippines, on 3 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

a political agreement or formal concessions.

Under the plan announced by the president's office on Monday, fishermen of both countries can cast nets on the fringes of the lagoon, but not inside it, allowing fish stocks to be replenished.

The move is the latest gesture towards China in what has been an astonishing reversal of Philippine foreign policy under

Duterte, who opted to befriend Beijing while admonishing long-time ally the United States for what he calls hypocrisy and bullying.

The about-face came soon after the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague ruled in favour of the Philippines in a complex ruling that undermined the territorial claims China stakes with a U-shaped dotted

line on its maps. China has refused to recognise the case.

The PCA award said no one country had sovereign rights to the Scarborough Shoal, thus all claimants were legally entitled to exploit its fish stocks.

Presidential Communications Secretary Martin Andanar said Chinese leader Xi, whom Duterte met at the weekend during an Asia-Pacific summit in

Peru, voiced support for the sanctuary plan.

He said Xi wanted to create a "favorable environment" at the shoal.

China has softened its stance since Duterte returned from a high-profile trip to Beijing in October. Filipino fishermen who went close to the shoal said China's coastguard was no longer repelling them, as it had done over the past four years.

Staunch environmentalist and former president Fidel Ramos, who in August broke the ice with Beijing as Duterte's special envoy, said a marine sanctuary was the right move and was "the highest form of aquaculture preservation".

Philippine security expert Rommel Banlaoi said the plan was to promote sustainable fishing rather than give China a graceful way out, adding that China had already softened its position on the Scarborough Shoal, without acknowledging so.

"They are adhering, in fact, to the ruling of the arbitration court by allowing our fishermen there," he said.—Reuters

Opinion

Write for us

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

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.

Never let yourself be dragged in any destructive activities by subversive elements!

Khin Maung Oo

WE have will known Aristotle's well-known saying, "Human beings are all political animals." Some may argue against the statement until now. Once they hear those words, they shake their heads, asserting, "We live on our daily income only. We have no spare time to glance at the politics. We are not interested in it. Politics is the thing of politicians, that is, it is only concerned with the government and the oppositions." Oxford Advanced American Dictionary defines politics as the activities involved in getting and using power in public life. Power means the ability or opportunity to do something and in another way it means a particular ability of the body or mind. The public includes every individual—ranging from those in the cradles to the dying. Some people say that a baby's crying is also politics. Quite right in saying so! He manages to show his ability as to he is needing milk. Figuratively speaking, he is dealing with

politics. Thus our working, our learning, our living in peaceful state and performing our duties are all concerned with politics, aren't they?

Each and every one of us belongs to a family. Families live collectively in a small area to form a ward or village. Villages combine into a village-tract, thus village-tracts into a town, towns into a district, districts into a region/state and regions/states into a country. A village can be likened to a nuclear family and a country to an extended family. The larger a dwelling place, the more likely it is to get involved to deal with problems. In a family, the head can manage its affairs easily whereas in a country its affairs have to be dealt with other than easily. With the increasing number of residents in a place, there will be problems arising here and there. A household leader is responsible to manage the whole affairs of his house. To do so, money is partially important so that they

can survive. He can assign responsibilities to each of the adults in his family, apart from the immature, to share with. Likewise, leaders at different levels need money/ budget to smoothly run their administrative machinery. It is customary for a government to earn its budget from different sources and divide it up among all sectors under its control.

Some people want to get power to get money, believing that money makes everything. In this way they become power cravers and try to get it in many ways. Among them, there include ways of spreading rumors, accusing the dignitaries of involving in dubious malpractices and giving the public the wrong information and defamatory stories, with a view to destroying people's support and trust toward the governing body. Now we have unprecedented rights of "freedom of speech" and "freedom of expression" in our hands, unlike in olden times. But we must pay attention not to hu-

miliate people according to social ethics. That is, we are required to avoid accusing without sufficient evidences though we have freedom of expression. Under the same roof, there are people with different views. If we find the fault of our house-hold leader, we have the right to point it out. We never mean we do not accept criticism. Simultaneously, self-criticism is also essential and needed.

Social media is very effective and useful for those who are willing and eager to share their knowledge. In an opposite way, it will become an effective weapon for those who are to create false news to ignite a furor or conflict or pitched battle. As conscientious citizens, we are responsible for pointing out weakness or malpractices of authorities through the body concerned that a special duty is assigned to deal with such cases. Prudence is our best friend not to fall for the trick and not to be dragged in destructive activities by subversive elements.

Towards The Way Home Back

Yin Nwe Ko (Linn)

IN human's history, there had ever been an activity. It was a close relationship between humans and narcotic. There were many distinct examples in which the fans – starting from the kings to the beggars – had subsisted on opium, cannabis, intoxicated brew, fermented glutinous rice, alcohol etc. One generation after another, they become well-known as various kinds of narcotic drug. Then they have already been in position that can make a huge threat to human society for ages. That one starts subsisting on and then one cannot abandon it later is known as an addict.

Drug addiction which is falling prey to the dangerous habit of taking narcotics is spreading fast among young men all over the world. It is a veritable malady that, once indulged in, gets into bones and cannot be shaken off with all efforts. The result is that not only the young addict but his family is often doomed. Various factors are at work for the spread of this infection. The commonest cause is a widespread feeling among

even tender-aged boys and girls, of deep depression and gloom. We live in an age of heightened tempo of life. Domestic atmosphere and parental relation today are not all that is desired. Often both father and mother go out to work outside, leaving the child uncared for. Thus sub-conscious discontent is primarily responsible for the teen-agers going astray.

There are also drug-traders around them, lying in wait to look for the possible victim. They have paid agents who tempt depressed and discontented boys. Tender-aged boys and girls feel naturally attracted to anything novel and unknown. So they are easily induced to take the drug for which the agents of drug-traffickers initially pay. Drugs like hashish, marijuana, heroin, L. S. D., coke contain high percentage of opium. Such drugs, when taken, at first leads to temporary forgetfulness with a kind of transport into a pleasant dreamland. Once initiated i.e. the habit is formed, the new addict must have it at the appointed hour and cannot do without it for all the world. Soon he turns anti-social, resorts to all sorts of

crimes to have the money to buy the drug and leads the life of a wreck or a ruined man with deadened sensation about the outside world and the cherished human values. He is lost to the society and gradually glides to his grave. In this way the promising career of a large number of youths is blasted. What a pity!

The path of getting addicted is rather smooth in comparison with the process of cure and reformation. The first task would be to isolate the young addict from his hardened companions. Then he or she has to be placed under specialized medical treatment. A sympathetic approach is to be followed to bring him back to the ways of normal life for ultimately rehabilitating him to the bosom of the society. The physicians as well as the Police have an onerous responsibility and role to play in this regard.

Drug addiction that is ruining bright families is also a social scourge. To combat and eradicate this evil organized efforts are called for both by the Government and Social Bodies. For this an intense anti-drug campaign has to be undertaken at first. Various mass media like

Radio, T. V., Cinema, the Press i.e. newspapers and periodicals have to be utilized, through lectures, slides, posters etc. Arrangements should be made to widely rouse awareness among the rising generation about the limitless evils and harmful effects of drug-taking. All routes to drug-smuggling have to be sealed so that drugs become scarce. Ex-addicts should not be looked down upon as lepers. They should be treated with all the compassion and care they socially deserve. The sense of optimism is to be bred in them so that they can turn a new leaf of life and become useful and responsible members of the society. The adage is worth quot-

ing "Every sinner has a future just as a saint has a past."

It is the humanitarian task that makes the production of various kinds of narcotic drug reduced down and got rid off as well as it is also the humanitarian one by which humans make the endeavor to receive the return of those who were once the drug addicts due to various reasons. Therefore, let us do the humanitarian task by which we welcome those who are drug addicted letting them know the knowledge and revealing their wrong view like the welcome of family members to the one who has been away from home for a long time and now return home.

"Domestic atmosphere and parental relation today are not all that is desired. Often both father and mother go out to work outside, leaving the child uncared for. Thus sub-conscious discontent is primarily responsible for the teen-agers going astray".

State Sangha Maha Nayaka holds 12th meeting



The 12th meeting of State Sangha Maha Nayaka in progress. PHOTO: MNA

THE first day of the 12th all-47-member meeting of the seventh State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee was held at Vijaya Mangala Dhamma Thabin on the Kaba Aye Hillock in Yangon at 8 am yesterday.

The meeting was attended by member Sayadaws led by Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and officials from the religious affairs department and department of perpetuation and propagation of sasana.

The meeting was presided over by the Chairman Sayadaw with joint Secretary Sayadaw Maha Gantha Vacaka Pandita Bhaddanta Sara acting as the master of ceremonies. First, the chairman Sayadaw delivered the Saraniya Ovadakatha. Afterwards, the union minister supplicated matters concerning the religious affairs. Next, the brief report on the performance of duties assigned on the first sub-group of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee was read out by the joint secretary Sayadaw. Afterwards, matters related to Vinicchaya rules, religious affairs and education affairs were discussed by the sub-group

member Sayadaws.

The meeting will continue today. The Sayadaws attending the meeting were offered with meals by Daw Khin Than Nwe, wife of late Lt-Gen Tin oo (Rtd), Daw Than Than Nwe, wife of late General Soe Win (Rtd); Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than (Rtd)-Daw Marlar Tint; Lt-Gen Aung Htwe (Rtd)-Daw Khin Hnin Wai, Lt-Gen Kyaw Win (Rtd) and his late wife Daw San Yee; Daw Khin Lay Myint, wife of late Lt-Gen Maung Bo (Rtd); Maj-Gen Tin Ngwe (Rtd)-Daw Nang Khin Hla Win; and Lt-Gen Ye Myint (Rtd)-Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Mid-year Gems and Jewellery Emporium-2016 crowded with traders

LOCAL and foreign merchants visited the mid-year Gems and Jewellery Emporium for 2016 yesterday at Maniyadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw, evaluating the lots and gems and jades.

More than 300 lots of gems will be sold today through the open tender system and more than 130 lots will be sold through competitive bidding.

Nearly 1,200 jade lots will be sold through the open tender system on 23rd November, 1,200 lots on 24th November, 1,200 lots on 25th November, 1,200 lots on 26th November and 1,122 lots on 27th November respectively. Thirty-five jade lots will be sold through competitive bidding on 28th November and 66 lots on 29th November.

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



Gems traders observing the precious stones to appraise them. PHOTO: MNA

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*

POEM:

When the history is lost

Flowers hate us 'cause we are poisonous. Forests hate us 'cause we are stormy. Streams hate us 'cause we are burning. Brothers hate us 'cause we are betraying. Villagers hate us 'cause we are beyond. Lengthy grudge begets pain -the war within. Hatred-strained love Never goes a long way. Life, thus, in myriad of years Keeps us far from our homeland. And we've been on the run. Years pass with no fresh poems. No pleasant songs we sing But mourning verses. We have violated rules of affection, Lost our national identity, Lived in graveyards, Right under the vast sky. It's the place Where there is no adorable flower bed.	Its' the forest Where there is no glory And absolutely no lush green foliage. The cold streams With silver surface dry up. There is only bleak And gloomy landscape Of god forsaken villages. I see our devoted sons, Left blurred on barren plains Were thrown into oblivion. And later they will become landless, Leading lives with no schools, No books, no education, no relatives, No waters, no rights. And no brains enshrined With wit and wisdom, No intelligence, no pride, Above all no nation, Seeking their lost paths in vain On other people's land. What sort of look do they have To wear on their faces? And what sort of history do they have To learn on the land of others.
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Maung Win War



At the press conference in Yangon on 21st November, teacher training program by SMBC was clarified. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

SMBC supports teaching training program for three years

TEACHER training in multiple languages using modern methods has begun following the signing of a memorandum of support for the programme by the Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation.

The training programme, which is intended to be supported for three years in Myanmar, is run by the United Nations Children's Fund with the Japan Committee for UNICEF in November this year. This program

aims to enable all children to receive high quality education by providing elementary and junior school teachers with training with respect to teaching classes involving multiple languages and diverse students, teaching methods and school management.

The program will provide training to 3,750 teachers and will improve the quality of education for 100,000 children aged 5-14, over three years.—*GNLM*



Keep a fire extinguisher in your car to make people on board and the car free from the danger of fire.

Fire Services Department



US President-elect Donald Trump (L) and Vice President-elect Mike Pence (R) greet retired Marine General James Mattis in Bedminster, New Jersey, US, on 19 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

In weekend of deliberation, Mattis favoured for Trump Pentagon chief

BEDMINSTER (N.J.) — President-elect Donald Trump on Sunday assessed several more contenders for top US posts including Chris Christie and Rudy Giuliani, as blunt-spoken retired Marine Corps General James Mattis emerged as a leading candidate for defence secretary.

Trump held meetings at his golf resort in Bedminster, New Jersey, with candidates for senior administration jobs after he takes office on 20 January. On Saturday, he conferred with Mattis and Mitt Romney, formerly a fierce Trump critic now under consideration for secretary of state.

Summing up two days of talks as he said goodbye to retired US Marines Corps General John Kelly on Sunday evening, Trump said he had made decisions on a couple of appointments.

“We really had some great meetings, and you’ll be hearing about them soon.”

Trump transition spokesman Sean Spicer said no decisions would be announced on Sunday night.

Trump discussed the treasury secretary job with Jon Gray, a board member of the Blackstone Group, two sources familiar with their meeting said.

A Trump transition team statement said their discussion included the US economy, global capital markets and the world financial situation, as well as tax reform and long-term debt.

The last person Trump escorted out of the clubhouse was Giuliani, the former New York mayor. Trump said earlier that Giuliani was a candidate for secretary of state “and other things.”

The Trump team statement said Trump and Giuliani discussed “administration priorities” as well as “restoring America’s prominence in the world, ongoing

national security issues and threats at various hotspots on a global basis.”

Christie, the Republican governor of New Jersey, advised Trump during the presidential campaign but was dismissed as the head of his transition team. Asked by reporters before the meeting whether there was a place for Christie in his administration, Trump sidestepped the question but called him “a very talented man, great guy.”

Trump met with billionaire investor Wilbur Ross, who he said was under consideration for commerce secretary. Asked whether he wanted the job, Ross told reporters: “Well, time will tell.”

Trump also received Jonathan Gray, the global head of real estate at the Blackstone Group, who is being considered for Treasury secretary, according to a person briefed on the matter.

The president-elect has already tapped three senior leaders of his national security and law enforcement teams, choosing US Senator Jeff Sessions for attorney general, US Representative Mike Pompeo as CIA director, and retired Lieutenant General Michael Flynn as national security adviser.

The selections so far suggest that Trump, true to his campaign promises, intends to steer national security and foreign policy in a sharply different direction from that of Democratic President Barack Obama, whose record Trump harshly criticised during his campaign.

Obama campaigned extensively for Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton before the 8 November election and warned during the campaign that Trump lacked the temperament and qualifications to be president.

In Peru, as he wrapped up his last foreign trip, one that was

overshadowed by Trump’s surprise election, Obama encouraged Democrats on Sunday to work with the new administration but said he would weigh in as a citizen if the Trump administration challenged values he holds dear.

In another sign of Trump’s novel approach to politics, the New York businessman who has never held public office said he planned to live in the White House but that his wife, Melania, and their 10-year-old son, Barron, would not move in immediately. He said they would move from New York to the White House “very soon, right after he finishes school.”

While Trump received lawmakers, politicians and business leaders behind closed doors over the weekend, he gave some hints about his thinking and possible Cabinet choices on Twitter.

On Sunday, he tweeted that “General James ‘Mad Dog’ Mattis, who is being considered for Secretary of Defence, was very impressive yesterday. A true General’s General!”

From 2010 to 2013, Mattis headed the US military’s Central Command, which oversees operations stretching from the Horn of Africa through the Middle East and into Central Asia including Afghanistan and Pakistan. During that time, he was at odds with the Obama administration on the need to prepare for potential threats from Iran and about resources for Afghanistan.

Mattis, 66, served as an American commander in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and was known to be popular among the troops. Speaking on “Fox News Sunday,” Vice President-elect Mike Pence, who now heads Trump’s transition team, said Mattis had “a legendary military career.”—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Obama says not worried about being last Democratic US leader for a while

LIMA — US President Barack Obama on Sunday said he is not worried about being the last Democratic US president for a while, noting democrat Hillary Clinton won the popular vote and his own approval rating remained high.

He added, however, that the Democratic Party needed to organise better and better convey its message.—Reuters

Putin says Russia will respond to NATO expansion — RIA

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russia would take countermeasures in response to NATO expansion, RIA news agency quoted him as saying on Monday.

“Why are we reacting to NATO expansion so emotionally? We are concerned by NATO’s decision making,” Putin was quoted as saying in an interview to be broadcast on Russian TV later on Monday.—Reuters

Warplanes strike military sites in Yemen capital — residents

SANAA — Arab coalition warplanes struck military sites in the Yemeni capital Sanaa on Monday, residents said, as two-day ceasefire that was marred by heavy fighting entered its final hours.

The raids hit army bases on a mountain overlooking the city, and the force of the explosions shook buildings as it rippled through several city neighbourhoods, they said.

Sanaa is controlled by the Iran-allied Houthi movement, which still holds vast swathes of the country despite a nearly 20-month military campaign by the Saudi-led alliance aimed at restoring Yemen’s exiled government.

A 48-hour ceasefire announced by Saudi Arabia which largely failed to halt nationwide combat is set to expire at noon (0900 GMT) on Monday.

The violence casts into doubt a UN peace proposal for the Houthis to quit main cities and Yemen’s warring factions to form a national unity government.—Reuters

French foiled terror attack with new arrests-minister

PARIS — French police arrested several men over the weekend and foiled a planned terror attack, Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said on Monday.

Seven people of French, Moroccan and Afghan origin and aged from 29 to 37 years, were arrested in all, two in Marseille and most of the others in the eastern city of Strasbourg, he said.

One of the world’s oldest and largest Christmas markets is due to open in Strasbourg on Friday. Cazeneuve did not say in his declaration to reporters what the target of the would-be attackers was however.—Reuters

Strong winds hit China as temperatures continue to drop

BEIJING — Strong winds hit much of China after a cold front dragged temperatures down by more than 10 degrees Celsius.

Beijing and neighbouring areas saw the first snowfall of the winter over the weekend.

A total of 1,506 snow-clearing vehicles and over 23,000 workers had been dispatched to cope with icy roads and possible road accidents by Beijing authorities as of 10 a.m. Monday.

Gales sweeping from the north have hit the capital city and will continue to affect the rest of China over the following days.

Freezing weather will linger until Wednesday, with blue alerts for cold spells issued in Beijing, Tianjin, Henan, Shandong, Jiangsu as well as Sichuan on Monday.

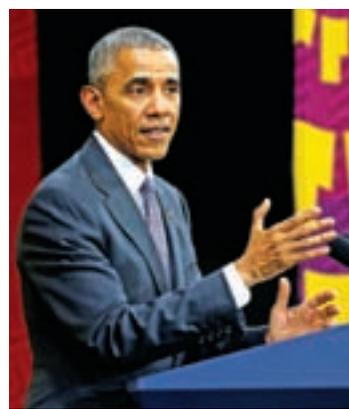
From Monday to Wednesday, temperatures in Beijing and neighbouring areas are expected to drop to as low as minus 14 degrees Celsius, while parts of Hunan, Hubei, Jiangsu and Sichuan provinces will experience a drop of 7 to 10 degrees Celsius in temperature, according to local meteorological authorities.

China has a four-tier colour-coded system for severe weather, with red being the most serious, followed by orange, yellow and blue.—Xinhua

Obama offers bleak assessment of situation in Syria

LIMA — US President Barack Obama said on Sunday that chaos in Syria could persist for “quite some time” and that Russian and Iranian support for President Bashar al-Assad’s air campaign had emboldened the Syrian leader’s crackdown on rebels.

“I am not optimistic about the short-term prospects in Syria,” Obama said at a news conference in Lima at the conclusion of a summit with leaders of Pacific Rim countries.



US President Barack Obama.
PHOTO: REUTERS

“Once Russia and Iran made a decision to back Assad and a brutal air campaign and essentially a pacification of Aleppo regardless of civilian casualties, children being killed or wounded, schools or hospitals being destroyed, then it was very hard to see a way in which even a trained and committed moderate opposition could hold its ground for long periods of time,” he said.

Obama, a Democrat who will be succeeded on 20 January by Republican President-elect Donald Trump, said he told Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Lima that he was deeply concerned about the bloodshed in Syria and that a ceasefire was needed.

“At this stage, we’re going to need a change in how all parties think about this in order for us to end the situation there,” Obama said, adding: “There’s no doubt that there will continue to be extremist forces in and around Syria because it’s still going to be in chaos for quite some time.”

Under Obama, the military aid programme overseen by the CIA has given arms and training to moderate rebels in coordination with countries including Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan.

Trump has signaled opposition to US support for the rebels, saying he wants to focus on fighting Islamic State. He has said he might even cooperate on fighting the militant group with Russia, Assad’s most powerful ally, which has been bombing the rebels for over a year in western Syria.

Obama’s trip to Peru was the last stop on an international farewell tour that included visits to Greece and Germany and was often overshadowed by questions about Trump’s election.

Obama said he had wrestled with the question of US involvement in Syria for five years.

He said he concluded the United States did not have a legal basis for military involvement in Syria and that doing so would have been a “strategic mistake” given the effort to stabilise Afghanistan and Iraq and the need to fight Islamic State.—Reuters

Turkish jets destroy 17 IS targets in northern Syria

ANKARA — Turkish jets on Sunday night destroyed some 17 Islamic State (IS) targets near Al-Bab in northern Syria under the Euphrates Shield operation, Anadolu Agency reported.

Turkish Air Force hit at least two IS-occupied buildings in Al-Bab region with 16 bombs, and 17 IS targets were destroyed by the attack.

Meanwhile, two Turkish soldiers were wounded in an IS attack in northern Syria on the same day.

The soldiers were wounded when IS bombed an area near

the city of Al-Bab, north of Aleppo, where Turkish troops are located. The wounded were taken to a hospital in Turkey’s border province of Gaziantep, according to hospital sources.

On Saturday, one Turkish soldier was killed in a similar IS attack to Turkish troops.

The Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army has been fighting around the Al-Bab and Al-Rai regions as part of Operation Euphrates Shield, which was launched in late August to rid the northern Syrian border area of terrorists.—Xinhua



Afghan security forces keep watch in front of a mosque where an explosion happened in Kabul, Afghanistan on 21 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Suicide bomber kills at least 27 at Shi’ite mosque in Kabul — police

KABUL — A suicide bomber killed at least 27 people and wounded dozens on Monday in an explosion at a crowded Shi’ite mosque in the Afghan capital Kabul, officials said.

The attacker entered the Barqir ul Olum mosque during a ceremony, the interior ministry said in a statement.

Fraidoon Obaidi, chief of the Kabul police Criminal Investigation Department, said at least 27 people were killed and 35 wounded and that the total may rise.

“I saw people screaming and covered in blood,” a survivor told Afghanistan’s Ariana Television. He said around 40 dead and 80

wounded had been taken from the building before rescue services arrived at the scene, but there was no independent confirmation of those figures.

The Taliban, seeking to reimpose Islamic law after their 2001 ouster, denied they were responsible for the attack. “We have never attacked mosques as it’s not our agenda,” said the movement’s main spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid.

Bloody sectarian rivalry between Sunni and Shi’ite Muslims has been relatively rare in Afghanistan, a majority Sunni country, but the attack underlines the deadly new dimension that grow-

ing ethnic tension could bring to its decades-long conflict.

Government Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah condemned the attack as a sign of barbarism but said Afghanistan should not fall victim to “enemy plots that divide us by titles”.

“This attack targeted innocent civilians — including children - in a holy place. It is a war crime & an act against Islam & humanity,” he said in a message on his Twitter account.

In July, more than 80 people were killed in an attack on a demonstration by the mainly Shi’ite Hazara minority that was claimed by Islamic State militants.—Reuters

Pakistan’s powerful army chief begins farewell visits

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan’s powerful army chief Raheel Sharif began a round of farewell visits on Monday, his spokesman said, damping speculation he might receive an extension when his three-year term ends this month.

The general has been immensely popular among ordinary Pakistanis, who see him as having effectively tackled crime and corruption, besides carrying the fight against Islamist terrorism to unstable tribal areas.

Sharif, who is due to retire on 29 November, had never said he would seek an extension, but

speculation of such a move has recently been rife in the media and among politicians.

“Army chief kicks off his farewell visits beginning from Lahore today,” military spokesman Lieutenant-General Asim Bajwa said on social network Twitter, adding that Sharif would meet soldiers on the visits.

“Accomplishment of peace and stability no ordinary task,” he added. “Our sacrifices and joint national resolve helped us in offsetting all odds.”

The army has ruled Pakistan for roughly half its 69-year

history, and tension with civilian governments — including that of current Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif — often runs high.

Sharif himself was ousted from power in 1999 by a military coup. Pakistan’s last two army chiefs, including Pervez Musharraf, who led the coup against Sharif, were both given extensions.

Prime Minister Sharif has until 28 November to name his choice of a replacement for the retiring army chief. Typically, the military provides the prime minister the dossiers of three or four contenders from which to choose.

Contenders this year include Lieutenant General Javed Iqbal Ramday, Lieutenant General Zubair Hayat, Lieutenant General Ishfaq Nadeem Ahmad and Lieutenant General Qamar Javed Bajwa, three of the prime minister’s aides told Reuters in September.

The succession will also be closely watched overseas.

With nearly 10,000 US troops in Afghanistan fighting the Afghan Taliban and other militant groups, Washington is losing patience with what it calls Pakistan’s failure to hunt down insurgents who launch attacks on Afghanistan from Pakistani territory. Pakistan denies this.—Reuters



Pakistan’s Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Army Chief of Staff General Raheel Sharif watch military exercises in Bahawalpure, Pakistan, on 16 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Merkel says she will seek fourth term as German chancellor

BERLIN — Angela Merkel announced on Sunday she wants to run for a fourth term as German chancellor in next year's election, a sign of stability after Britain's vote to leave the European Union and the election of Donald Trump as the next US president.

The 62-year old conservative, facing a voter backlash over her open-door migrant policy, said she had thought long and hard before eventually deciding to stand again in the September election, ending months of speculation over her decision.

"The decision for a fourth term is — after 11 years in office — anything but trivial — for the country, the party and, I say it consciously in this order, for me personally," she told reporters, striking a serious, almost sombre, tone.

"It is a decision not just for an election campaign but about the next four years ... if health allows it," she added after a meeting of senior members of her conservative Christian Democrat (CDU) party.

An Emnid poll on Sunday showed that some 55 per cent of Germans want Merkel, Germany's eighth chancellor since World War II, to serve a fourth term, with 39 per cent against, indicating that despite setbacks, she is still an electoral asset.

Merkel has steered Europe's biggest economy through the financial crisis and euro zone debt crisis and has won respect internationally, for example with her efforts to help solve the conflict in Ukraine. US President Barack

Obama last week described her as an "outstanding" ally.

With Trump's victory in the United States and the rise in support for right-wing parties in several European states, some commentators see Merkel as a bastion of Western liberal values.

"Angela Merkel is the answer to the populism of this time. She is, as it were, the anti-Trump," party ally Stanislaw Tillich, premier of the state of Saxony, told the RND newspaper group, adding she stood for reliability and predictability.

However, she rejected the responsibility that was pushed onto her after Trump's win as "grotesque and absurd".

"No person alone — even with the greatest experience — can change things in Germany, Europe and the world for the better, and certainly not the chancellor of Germany," she said.

Merkel's decision last year to open Germany's borders to around 900,000 migrants, mostly from war zones in the Middle East, angered many voters at home and dented her ratings.

Her party has slumped in regional elections in the last year while support for the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) has swelled.

In September, after a heavy defeat for the CDU in a Berlin state election, a humbled Merkel surprised the country by saying she wished she could turn the clock back on the migrant crisis, though she stopped short of saying her policy was a mistake.

Domestically, her biggest



US President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel meet at the chancellery in Berlin, Germany, on 18 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

challenge will probably be managing the integration of refugees in an increasingly divided society and keeping Europe's powerhouse economy on track.

"On a European and international level we have to stand up for our values and interests," she said, citing the euro zone crisis, the migrant crisis and Brexit as challenges.

rise of the AfD makes coalition arithmetic more complicated.

The SPD has not decided whether its chairman Sigmar Gabriel, Vice Chancellor and Economy Minister, will run against Merkel. One of the SPD's deputy leaders, Ralf Stegner, said it would be a mistake to underestimate Merkel but that the "myth of invincibility" was over.

seen as a talented negotiator but has also shown a ruthless streak.

A Protestant woman in a mainly Catholic and male-dominated party, at least when she became its leader in 2000, Merkel never built up a regional power base but over the years she has sidelined her main male rivals and has no obvious successor.

She still requires the official backing of her party at a conference in early December and also of her Christian Social Union (CSU) allies in Bavaria, who have fiercely criticised her open-door migrant policy. CSU head Horst Seehofer welcomed her decision on Sunday.

"We now want the trust of the population for another four years and therefore it is good that we have clarity," he said.

Germany has no limit on the number of terms a chancellor can serve and Merkel could end up matching the 16 years in office of her former mentor, Helmut Kohl. It was Merkel herself who broke with Kohl and told her party in 1999, in the midst of a funding scandal, that it should move on without him.—Reuters

"No person alone — even with the greatest experience — can change things in Germany, Europe and the world for the better, and certainly not the chancellor of Germany."

**Angela Merkel,
German Chancellor**

An Emnid poll on Sunday put Merkel's conservative bloc down one point at 33 per cent, nine points ahead of her nearest rivals, the Social Democrats (SPD), with whom she shares power.

In a system where coalition governments are the norm, many pollsters see another 'grand coalition' as the most likely option after the election, although the

Merkel said this election would be more difficult than any since reunification in 1990 due to the threat from the right, social divisions and the possibility that Germany's leftist parties could form a coalition.

Merkel, who grew up in Communist East Germany, is a physicist who only became involved in politics after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. She is

Australian minister links Lebanese migration to terror

SYDNEY — Australia's Immigration Minister Peter Dutton doubled-down on recent comments maintaining that allowing immigration from some countries was a "mistake," singling out Lebanese-Muslims on Monday as a source of terrorism.

Speaking in question time in the Australian lower house, Dutton said Lebanese nationals, the bulk of whom arrived in Australia around the time of the Lebanese civil war that began in 1975, were over-represented in terrorist-related offenses.

"The advice I have is that out of the last 33 people who have

been charged with terrorist-related offences in this country, 22 of those people are from second and third generation Lebanese-Muslim background," he said.

"Many people who have built this country over many decades deserve to be praised. But I am going to call out those people who are doing the wrong thing."

Dutton made the statement after opposition leader Bill Shorten questioned him on comments made in a television interview in which he said former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser of the Liberal party made "mistakes in

bringing some people in, in the 1970s, and we're seeing that today."

Unsurprisingly, Dutton's comments drew ire from across the political spectrum, with Shorten calling on Dutton to apologise for the "shameful remarks."

"Enough is enough. Our hardworking migrant communities shouldn't have to tolerate this kind of ignorant stupidity and (Dutton) needs to immediately apologize," he said in a statement.

"Millions of people, from all walks of life and from all corners of the world, have made Austral-

ia their home — and whole country has benefited as a result."

The Australian Broadcasting Corp. noted that it is not the first time that Lebanese-background Australians have been singled out, with a leaked government National Security Committee document in February also pointing to Lebanese-linked extremists in Australia.

"The most prominent ethnic group amongst Australian Sunni extremists are the Lebanese. The majority of this cohort can be linked to the wave of humanitarian migration to Australia as a result of the Lebanese civil

war (1975-1990), as well as their extended families and Australian-born descendants," the document read.

According to the brief, the "intake led to the transportation to Australia of a Sunni community which included elements who already held extremist beliefs, or who were more highly receptive to extremist messages."

"While there have been instances of extremist violence from within this community, most activities relate to the provision of ideological or political support and/or fundraising."—Kyodo News

Fillon, Juppe go head-to-head for French conservative presidential ticket

PARIS — Francois Fillon heads into a five-day run-off campaign for France's conservative presidential ticket as favourite over opponent Alain Juppe after a stunning first-round vote result that ousted ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy from the race.

Market analysts say the outcome opens up fresh uncertainty about the result of next year's actual presidential election, potentially increasing a still remote risk that far-right leader Marine Le Pen can win it.

Before that though, Fillon is up against another former prime minister, Alain Juppe in a second round of the primaries on 27 November. Juppe has a week to turn around his momentum-sapped campaign and win over the supporters of the other candidates.

With Fillon only six points short of the 50-per cent threshold needed in the first round and Sarkozy

on his side, it looks a tall order for Juppe.

However, any French voter can take part in the run-off next Sunday, and the views of pollsters and commentators have been much confounded in popular votes worldwide this year — not least Sunday's vote in which Fillon did far better than expected.

At stake is an almost certain place in the second round of next spring's presidential election, pollsters say, with the French left in turmoil under the deeply unpopular President Francois Hollande.

In that decisive poll next May, the conservative challenger would in all likelihood face National Front party leader Marine Le Pen.

A BVA poll in September showed Fillon beating Le Pen by a margin of 61 per cent of votes to 39 per cent, but recent opinion poll scenarios have not pitted him against her.—Reuters



A combination of file photos shows Alain Juppe (L), current mayor of Bordeaux and Francois Fillon, a former prime minister, who lead in the first round French center-right presidential primary election, on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Pope Francis walks after closing the Holy Door to mark the closing of the Catholic Jubilee Year of Mercy at the in Saint Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Pope extends power to forgive abortion to all priests

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis on Monday allowed all Roman Catholic priests the power to forgive abortion, a power previously reserved for bishops or special confessors. Francis, who has made a more inclusive and forgiving church a characteristic of his papacy, made the announcement in a document known as an "apostolic letter" after Sunday's close of the Catholic Church's "Holy Year of Mercy". He said he wanted to "restate as firmly as I can that abortion is a grave sin, since it puts an end to an innocent life."—Reuters

Two police officers shot in San Antonio, St. Louis; a suspect killed

ST. LOUIS — A police officer was killed in Texas and another shot in Missouri in apparently unrelated attacks on Sunday, and the suspect in the Missouri incident was killed in a shootout with authorities.

Another police officer was shot and wounded in a similar attack in Florida, although he was not seriously injured.

In Texas, a San Antonio police officer was shot and killed sitting in a squad car during a routine traffic stop outside the city's police headquarters on Sunday, authorities said.

The assailant stopped his car behind the parked police cruiser, walked to the patrol car and shot the officer in the head through

the window as he was writing a ticket, Police Chief William McManus said.

The gunman then reached through the window, fired a second shot into the officer, returned to his vehicle and sped away. The slain officer was identified as Benjamin Marconi, 50, a 20-year veteran.

Hours later, a St. Louis policeman was shot in the face as he sat in his cruiser at an intersection, by someone in a car who pulled up beside the officer, opened fire and fled. St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson said the wounded officer was conscious and able to speak after the attack.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported the suspect was later killed during a

shootout as he fled from officers who spotted his car. He has not been identified.

In Florida, local media reported another police officer was shot during a traffic stop on Sanibel Island, on the state's Gulf coast.

The officer was treated for a shoulder wound and later released, the reports said. The suspect was apprehended at his home on an island off Ft. Myers.

Investigators still lacked any immediate clue to the identity of the San Antonio gunman. They found no apparent link with the man who had been pulled over, McManus told reporters.

"This is everyone's worst nightmare," McManus said. Referring to recent

ambush killings of police officers in Texas and Louisiana, he said, "You never want to see anything like this happen. Unfortunately, like Dallas, like Baton Rouge, it's happened here now."

Texas Governor Greg Abbott said in a statement: "Attacks against law enforcement officers will not be tolerated in Texas and must be met with swift justice."—Reuters

Bank Holiday

All Banks will be closed on 24th November (Thursday) 2016 "National Day" under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

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AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
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Ariana Grande wins top American Music award, Green Day takes aim at Trump

LOS ANGELES — Canadian rapper Drake won his first ever American Music Awards on Sunday, Ariana Grande was named artist of the year, and punk band Green Day took aim at newly-elected US President Donald Trump.

"No Trump, no KKK, no fascist USA," sang Green Day, performing their controversial anti-gun violence single "Bang Bang" on the live show and re-writing some of the lyrics.

It was the most overt reference to the Nov. 8 US presidential elections at the three-hour awards show where the focus was otherwise mostly on music.

Pop singer Selena Gomez, 24, who surprised fans by making her first major public appearance since cutting short her world tour in August to deal with panic attacks and depression, won the best pop/rock female artist award.

In an emotional speech, Gomez thanked her fans for their loyalty and explained why she felt the need to take a break.

"Most of you know a lot of my life whether I like it or not. I had to stop. I had everything, but I was absolutely broken," said Gomez, who is also known for her on and off again romance with Justin Bieber for the past five years.

The American Music Awards are chosen by fans voting online.

Drake, 30, who got a leading 13 nominations, won best rap/hip-hop artist, song and album for his best-selling "Views", which earlier this year became the first album to earn one billion streams on Apple Music.



Singer Ariana Grande (C) performs 'Side by Side' during the 2016 American Music Awards in Los Angeles, California, US, on 20 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Singer Brian Kelley (L) and Tyler Hubbard of Florida Georgia Line pose backstage with their award for 'Favorite Country Duo/Group' during the 2016 American Music Awards in Los Angeles, California, US, on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Ariana Grande accepts the award for artist of the year at the 2016 American Music Awards. PHOTO: REUTERS

"For our genre, I like to keep things exciting and keep making music... more like this is coming soon," Drake said, accepting the award.

But pop singer Grande, 23, was chosen artist of the year, beating Justin Bieber, Rihanna and Gomez.

"I can't believe this. I am shaking with nerves," she said. "I hope that I can bring joy to you and make you feel unified and happy."

Former One Direction member Zayn Malik, who quit British boy band One Direction last year to launch a solo career, bested Canadian Shawn Mendes to take the best new artist trophy.

"It's been a crazy year... I didn't expect anyone to still vote for me," said Zayn, who now uses only his first name.

British singer Sting, who last week released his first pop/rock album in a decade, "57th and 9th," sang a medley of his hits and was presented with an honorary award recognising his contribution to the music industry.

Sting said he owed a debt to American rock and roll, adding "While I may be an Englishman in New York, my musical soul is all American." Bieber performed "Never Give Up" via satellite from a concert in Italy and won awards for best pop/rock male artist, album, song and video.

Lady Gaga, Kendrick Lamar, Nicki Minaj, The Weeknd, Niall Horan, James Bay and John Legend were among the dozens of other performers on the Los Angeles stage. The American Music Awards were created in 1973 as an alternative to the Grammys.—*Reuters*



Eddie Redmayne (L) poses with writer J.K. Rowling. PHOTO: REUTERS

'Fantastic Beasts' Debuts to Magical \$75 Million

LOS ANGELES — "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them" dominated the weekend box office, debuting to a boisterous \$75 million and launching a new cinematic franchise.

It confirms Warner Bros.' high hopes for the property and its decision to back five installments in the fantasy series. "Fantastic Beasts" is a spinoff of the Harry Potter films, but instead of Hogwarts, it unfolds in 1920s New York City and features an entirely new cast of wizards and mythical creatures.

The studio spent \$180 million to make the picture, enlisting Harry Potter creator J.K. Rowling to write the screenplay and bringing back David Yates, the director of several previous boy wizard outings. Eddie Redmayne stars as Newt Scamander, a textbook writer and collector of the titular beasts.

"This is dead on what we were

looking for," said Jeff Goldstein, president of domestic distribution at Warner Bros. "Jo Rowling brilliantly told a story that inspired her fanbase to come out in a big way."

It was a softer opening than any of the previous Potter films, but Warner Bros. argues that comparisons aren't fair. Those movies were based on global best-sellers, whereas "Fantastic Beasts" is largely an original work.

"It's not the same," said Goldstein. "It's apples and kumquats."

Audiences may have embraced the return to Potter-dom, but they gave the cold shoulder to several new films, among them the boxing drama "Bleed for This" and the Iraq War drama "Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk." Both pictures bombed, with "Bleed for This" eking out \$2.4 million and "Billy Lynn's" mustering \$930,000 after expanding from four to 1,176

theaters. It has earned \$1.1 million since opening in limited release a week ago, a disastrous result for a film that was expected to be a major Oscar contender.

Open Road is distributing "Bleed for This," which chronicles Vinny Pazienza's efforts to get back into the ring after a car accident. It has a \$6 million budget, which cushions the box office blow. Sony is backing "Billy Lynn's" along with Bona Film Group, Film4, and Studio 8. The \$40 million is a technological gamble. Ang Lee shot the picture so it could be exhibited at 120 frames per second in 3D at 4K HD resolution in order to achieve greater clarity and realism. Critics have been divided about the look of the picture, with some faulting it for looking too much like a telenovela. It's something of a moot point, as only a handful of theaters have the ability to exhibit the film

at the higher speeds. STX's "Edge of Seventeen" didn't fare much better than the other struggling new releases. The teen dramedy with Hailee Steinfeld only managed to pull in \$4.8 million for a seventh place finish. Heading into the weekend, it was expected to gross \$10 million. The film is one of the year's best-reviewed comedies. It centers on a high school girl grappling with the fact that her best friend is dating her brother. "Edge of Seventeen" cost \$9 million to make, and was positioned as counter-programming for women between the ages of 17 and 39.

"I wish to god it had started better," said Adam Fogelson, STX Entertainment Motion Picture Group chairman. "We hope that the love the critics have shown for it, leads to it being seen now and going forward."—*Reuters*

'Yoga injuries three times more in older participants than young'

WASHINGTON — The incidence of fracture and other yoga-related injuries in older participants is about three times higher than in the younger population, claims a new study.

Researchers from University of Alabama at Birmingham in the US, studied data from the US National Electronic Injury Surveillance System compiled from 2001 and 2014.

They found the overall rate of yoga-related injuries climbed to 17 per 1,00,000 participants in 2014, up from 10 per 1,00,000 in 2001. The injury rate for older participants was higher. Those 65 and older experienced an injury rate of 58 per 100,000.

Individuals ages 45-64

saw an injury rate of 18 per 100,000, while those between 18-44 years of age had an injury rate of 12 per 100,000.

Overall, the team found 29,590 yoga-related injuries during the study period. Nearly half were injuries to the trunk, and sprains or strains accounted for 45 per cent of all injuries.

"Yoga injuries are relatively rare, and as you might expect, the incidence tends to rise with the age of the participant," said Thomas Swain, researcher at University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"We did find that the injury rate is increasing over time, which may be a reflection of the increase in popularity of yoga, leading

to an increase in inexperienced participants who do not take the necessary precautions to avoid injury," said Swain.

"The incidence of fracture was highest in the older population, some three times higher than in the younger population," he said.

"For all injuries, the actual risk might be higher than our numbers show, as we surveyed results only from those who sought medical attention in an emergency department," Swain added. As with any sport or physical activity, it is important to be sure you are physically capable of the undertaking, said researchers.

"Talk to your physi-

cian before taking up yoga, be cautious, and recognise your personal limitations, particularly if you are over 65," Swain said.

"Yoga is harder and more demanding than some people believe," said Gerald McGwin, from University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"You need a realistic view of your own abilities, and you need to understand that some poses might be too challenging and inappropriate. A qualified, certified yoga instructor can help you with that assessment and is essential to a safe experience," said McGwin. The study was published in the Orthopedic Journal of Sports Medicine.—PTI



Great Dickens Christmas Fair kicks off in Daly City

People in the costumes of Victoria's era dance at the Great Dickens Christmas Fair in Daly City, the United States, on 19 November 2016. The annual Great Dickens Christmas Fair kicked off in Daly City on Saturday. PHOTO: XINHUA

Poland's National Museum in Szczecin wins World Building of the Year 2016

WARSAW — The Dialogue Centre Upheavals in a national museum in the Polish city of Szczecin won the World Building of the Year 2016 award at the World Architecture Festival, the Polish museum reported on Saturday.

The Dialogue Centre Upheavals is part of the National Museum in Szczecin, and was designed by Polish architect Robert Konieczny, principal at KWK studio. The competition's international jury chaired by architect David Chipper-

field stressed in the verdict that the Dialogue Centre Upheavals enriches the city and city life.

"This is a piece of topography as well as a museum ... a design which addresses the past in an optimistic, poetic and imagi-

native way," Chipperfield said. The Szczecin museum's branch was selected from 16 other projects and also won in the culture category. In July 2016, the building also won the European Prize for Urban Public Space 2016.—Xinhua

Chinese lantern festival kicks off in US to boost cultural ties

PHOENIX, (the United States) — The largest Chinese lantern festival in US history, Lights of the World, kicked off this weekend in the capital of Arizona to boost Sino-US cultural ties.

The event lasting to 29 January next year and running through four of the most important holidays —Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, New Year and Spring Festival — is expected to attract more than half a million local

residents, Song Yang, vice chairman of the US-China Cultural and Educational Foundation, told Xinhua Sunday night.

"It is also a good opportunity for Americans to get to know more about Chinese folk art," he said, adding that culture was a means for people to exchange different ideas and understand each other.

The festival in the Gila River Indian Community covers 22 acres, or about 90,000 square metres, and

showcases more than 80 huge lantern units.

Among the units, Heaven Temple is about 18 metres high and China Dragon assembled by China Dinnerware is 70 metres long. About 380 Chinese lantern craftsmen worked for three months to prepare the show and the units used over 160 tons of steel and over four million lights, Song, who co-invested more than six million US dollars in the event with a private compa-

ny from Sichuan Province, told Xinhua.

"It's a real good feeling to have this fantastic experience," Stephen Rowe Lewis, Governor of Gila River Indian Community, said in the inauguration Friday. "We regard these hand-made, special designed lights as a bless."

"It's a culture event and it's also a event beyond culture, the exciting thing will bring our two people together," he said.—Xinhua

Shanxi publishes details of Great Wall protection sites

TAIYUAN — The government of north China's Shanxi Province has published a circular with details about 4,276 Great Wall sites in the region in an effort to enhance protection.

The circular published earlier this month includes the names, location, dates, and protection areas of the Great Wall sections, as well as areas where construction is strictly controlled. The sites are spread across 40 counties and districts in eight cities in the province.

Government authorities said the protection areas and construction control areas, extending both above and below ground, were jointly designated by the Shanxi Culture Relics Bureau and the Housing and Urban-Rural Development Department of Shanxi.

Within the protection areas, no dismantling or reconstruction of the Great Wall is allowed, no construction projects are allowed, and no underground mining is allowed.

Within the construction control areas, construction projects should not affect the historical style

of the Great Wall, and construction blueprints should be approved before projects begin.

The Great Wall was built between the third century BC and the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The existing sections mostly date from the Ming era, with the Ming wall measuring over 8,800 kilometres.

Shanxi boasts a 1,400-km stretch of the Great Wall, 900 kilometres of which is Ming-era wall.

In 2006, a national regulation on Great Wall protection was released, but the sheer size of the structure has posed a challenge to enforcement. Statistics show that less than 10 percent of the wall is considered well-preserved, while about 30 percent has disappeared.

Dong Yaohui, vice head of the China Great Wall Society, said the circular is a step to implement China's cultural relics preservation law and the Great Wall protection regulation. The published information will help heighten awareness and improve efficiency of protection.—Xinhua

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(22-11-2016 07:00 AM ~ 23-11-2016 07:00 AM) MST		10:26 AM Super Traditional Fencing Form (Ep-3)
Today Fresh		10:42 AM Tea Leaves
07:03 AM News		10:49 AM Today Myanmar: Community Center & Mobile Library
07:26 AM A Novitiation Ceremony in a Rural Township		(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Sunday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
07:51 AM Culture Shows: Composer Ma Mya Lay		(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
08:03 AM News		Prime Time
08:26 AM Kyaiikhteeyoe: Bamboo Guns		07:03 PM News
08:32 AM Sayit-wyne Girls		07:26 PM A Day Out With Sarah (EP-5)
08:55 AM Black Gold (P - II)		07:51 PM Art Students: Theatrical Art
09:03 AM News		08:03 PM News
09:27 AM International Dances in Myanmar		08:26 PM Taste Of Myanmar (Papaya Salad)
09:45 AM Amazing: Magician Sak Kaw Ma		08:50 PM Young Lady Musician: Nge Nge Lay
		(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)
		(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

F1's South East Asia future in doubt as Ecclestone says Singapore wants to drop race — report

SINGAPORE — Formula One supremo Bernie Ecclestone has cast doubt over the future of the sport in Southeast Asia by telling a German magazine that Singapore no longer wants to host a grand prix after its current deal expires next year.

With neighbouring Malaysia also considering pulling out of the championship after 2018 because of declining ticket sales and TV viewership, the region could be left without a race for the first time since 1998.

The Singapore race costs some S\$150 million (\$105.04 million) to put on every year, 60 per cent of which is funded by the government. It was first staged in 2008 and the city-state renewed its contract for another five years in 2012.

Ecclestone's blunt comments in *Auto Motor und Sport*, however, suggested negotiations over a further extension have not gone well.

"Look at what we have done for Singapore," Ecclestone said. "Yes, the grand prix has cost Singapore a lot of money, but we've also given them a lot of money."

"Singapore was suddenly more than just an airport to fly to or from somewhere. Now they believe they have reached their goal and they do not want a grand prix anymore."

The event is organised in the city-state by Singapore GP, a



Part of the illuminated circuit is seen during the third practice session of the Singapore F1 Grand Prix at the Marina Bay circuit in 2010. PHOTO: REUTERS

private company owned by Ong Beng Seng, one of Singapore's richest men. A spokeswoman for the company said in an e-mail on Monday: "We don't comment on ongoing commercial negotiations."

Ecclestone, 86, is famous for outspoken media interviews during negotiations. The Briton attended this year's Singapore race amid negotiations on F1's takeover by US cable TV mogul

John Malone's Liberty Media.

Formula One announced a record-equalling 21-race provisional calendar for 2017 in September.

The Singapore race is one of the glamour rounds of the championship, taking place at night on a street circuit with spectators entertained by internationally renowned music acts such as Beyoncé and Justin Bieber.

Crowds, which topped

100,000 on all three days in the first year, have declined, however, with this year's race averaging 73,000 spectators for each day, down from 87,000 in 2015.

A decline in ticket sales in Malaysia is also behind the decision by the government and race organisers there to look at bringing an end to their annual round of the championship, which has been held at Sepang since 1999.

The loss of the Singapore

round, however, might encourage Malaysia to retain their round and hope to attract some of the 150,000 international visitors who went to the city-state in each of the first four years of the race.

Singapore's tourist sector is seeing a structural shift away from heavy spenders and towards the emerging middle classes of China, India and Indonesia, analysts say.

Tourist arrivals have been on the rise. In the first eight months of this year, before the F1 race, the number of visitors was up 10.3 per cent from the same period of 2015, at 11.3 million.

Singapore's tourism receipts in the first half of the year grew 12 per cent to S\$11.6 billion (\$8.13 billion), driven mainly by shopping, accommodation and food and beverage, which offset a fall in sightseeing, entertainment and gaming.

Trinh Nguyen, a senior economist for emerging-market Asia at French investment bank Natixis SA in Hong Kong, said the recent drop in F1 attendance may be a sign that the novelty of the event is wearing off, and may also be a reflection of weak regional growth.

"It (F1) also comes with costs. Thus, with tourism receipts (from F1) waning... the cost benefit calculus is tipping in the other direction," Nguyen said.—*Reuters*

Eclipsed Djokovic gets bitter taste of failure

LONDON — Handing out chocolates to the media has become a year-end tradition for Novak Djokovic at the ATP World Tour Finals but there was no doubting the latter half of the 2016 season has been anything but sweet for the once all-conquering Serb.

A winner at the London finale for four straight years from 2012, on Sunday the 29-year-old from Belgrade was facing up to the fact he will be heading for his winter break without the season-ending title or the world number one ranking.

While Andy Murray swooped to snatch both of those accolades away from the Serb on Sunday, more worrying for Djokovic is how he has struggled to battle the demons and doubts in his own head that has left him without a title since July.

It was only five months ago that talk of Djokovic becoming the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to complete a calendar Grand Slam gathered momentum after he won the French Open for the first time to complete a career slam and



Great Britain's Andy Murray and Serbia's Novak Djokovic with their trophies after the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals, O2 at Arena, London on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

become the first man in nearly half a century to hold all four majors at once. However, the emotional toll of fulfilling that lifelong dream at Roland Garros appeared to knock him sideways and Djokovic has not recovered since.

"The last five, six months have not been ideal," he said.

"There were things I could

have done better on the court. I know that. It was a tough season... I'd just been through so much emotion in the first six months with Roland Garros.

"I needed some time to really take it all in, digest it. But I didn't have that time. I had to... be on the court right away. I guess that all had its toll."—*Reuters*

Chelsea take over at the top by beating 'Boro'

LONDON — Chelsea replaced Liverpool at the top of the Premier League with a comfortable 1-0 win at Middlesbrough thanks to a first-half Diego Costa strike on Sunday.

It was the London side's sixth successive league victory without conceding a goal and put them on 28 points from 12 games, a point ahead of the Merseyside club and Manchester City.

The league's leading scorer, Costa, hit his 10th goal of the season to put them in front four minutes before the break.

'Boro, promoted last season, found it hard to make any clear opportunities against a solid Chelsea defence and remain in the bottom six, one point clear of the relegation places.

Despite starting brightly, the hosts struggled against the 3-4-3 system that has brought

the west London side such success since manager Antonio Conte introduced it at the start of October following a 3-0 defeat by Arsenal.

Eden Hazard, who has rediscovered the form that made him Player of the Year in England two years ago, prompted attacks from wide on the left and, with Victor Moses continuing to enjoy himself out on the right, Chelsea started creating chances.

Moses, up against former Manchester United defender Fabio de Silva, shot wildly high but did better in setting up Pedro, whose goalbound shot was brilliantly touched over the bar by Victor Valdes.

When Moses won another corner shortly before the interval, a clutch of 'Boro defenders failed to clear the ball and Costa reacted faster than any of them to volley home.—*Reuters*