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Nay Pyi Taw holds grand ceremony in commemoration of 69th Independence Day

A ceremony to hoist and to pay tribute to the national flag to mark the 69th anniversary of Independence Day was held at City Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning, with more than 3,000 people in attendance.

The ceremony was held in accord with four national objectives: to build a genuine Union in the future, making use of the common agreement which will emerge from the negotiations and discussions to be reached at the Union Peace Conference -21st century Panglong ; for all nationalities to collectively preserve and protect non-disintegration of the Union; non-disintegration of national unity; and perpetuation of sovereignty; to strive hard to draw up a constitution suitable for the union and in accord with democratic principles and norms for the emergence of a democratic federal union and to endeavour to create good economic conditions that ensure equitable development between the regions and the states and that will be in conformity with the national economic policy and goals.

The flag was raised at 4:20 am, followed by the arrival of departmental personnel, military officials and the rank and file of



The State Flag is hoisted at a ceremony to mark Myanmar's 69th Anniversary Independence Day. PHOTO: MNA

Pobbathiri military command, members of Red Cross Society, Fire Brigade and local residents at City Hall Square at 6am.

A ceremony to salute the National Flag was held at 6.45 am,

followed by a salute to Vice-President U Myint Swe, Chairman of the Central Committee for the 69th Independence Day from the Guard of Honour. Afterwards, the Vice-President saluted the

National Flag together with the people while the Guard of Honour played the national anthem.

Those present at the ceremony also paid tribute to fallen leaders and soldiers and the Guard of

Honour took the four-point oath.

Vice President U Myint Swe also read a message sent by President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the 69th Independence Day. — Myanmar News Agency



U Kyaw Zeya. PHOTO: MNA



U Kyaw Moe Tun. PHOTO: MNA

Aid from Indonesia headed to Myanmar

FOUR shipping containers of food and clothing, the first batch of ten containers of aid from Indonesia, for the two communities in Maungtau Township, is expected to arrive Yangon port on Wednesday.

On behalf of the Union Government, U Kyaw Moe Tun, Director-General of the International Organizations and Economic

Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, welcomed Indonesia's shipment of aid through diplomatic channels.

The move comes after coordination between the two governments through diplomatic relations last month. The government will deliver the aid which includes clothing, dried noodles and food for children to both Muslim and

Buddhist communities in northern Rakhine, he added.

The first four containers were loaded on a vessel at Tanjungpriok Port in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 29th December, 2016, according to the Myanmar Embassy in Jakarta, at the presence of Indonesian President and Myanmar Ambassador in Jakarta U Aung Htoo.

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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

President hosts 69th Anniversary Independence Day dinner

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw and his wife hosted a dinner in commemoration of the 69th Anniversary of Independence Day at the President's Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

The president and wife arrived at the dinner in front of the President Office at 6.30 pm and individually greeted guests.

Also present at the dinner were State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr Shwe Hlwan, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint and wife Daw Cho Cho, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife Daw Nang Kyin Kyi, Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo, Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the



President U Htin Kyaw and his wife Daw Su Su Lwin greet dignitaries at a dinner to mark 69th Anniversary Independence Day. PHOTO: MNA

Union U Myo Nyunt and wife Daw Htay Yee, Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thein and wife Daw Aye Thi-

da, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win and wife Daw

Than Than Nwe, the vice speakers and wives of the Pyithu Hluttaw and the Amyotha Hluttaw, Chairman of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission Thura U Shwe Mann and wife, union ministers and their wives, the union attorney general, the union auditor general, the chairman of the Union Civil Service Board and their wives, the chairman of the peace commission and the chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council and their wives, the joint chief of staff (Army, Navy and Air) and senior military officers and their wives, chairmen of Hluttaw affairs committees, deputy ministers, Hluttaw representatives, representative of political parties, departmental heads, diplomats of foreign missions and their wives and resident representatives of UN agencies and their wives.

During the Independence Day dinner, fireworks were set off and the Myanmar Radio and Television presented entertainment programmes.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Yangon puts on grand spectacle for Independence Day

A grand ceremony was held at the Maha Bandoolla Park in Yangon in commemoration of the 69th Independence Day yesterday.

The ceremony featured the raising and saluting of the national flag.

The flag was hoisted at 4.20

am, the hour when Myanmar gained her independence from the British Empire.

A ceremony to salute the national flag was held at 4.25 am and Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein took the salute from the Guard of Hon-

our and saluted the flag together with the people.

Those present at ceremony also paid tribute to fallen leaders and soldiers and too the four-point oath.

Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein also read a message sent

from President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the 69th Independence Day.

More than 3,500 people attended the ceremony.

Also present at the ceremony were Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Tin Maung Tun, Com-

mander of the Yangon Region Command Brig-Gen Myo Zaw Thein, Yangon Region Chief Justice U Win Swe, MPs of Yangon Region Parliament, senior military officers and representatives from political parties.—*Ko Ko Zaw*



Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein reads a message sent from President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of the 69th Independence Day. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH



People visit the Independence Monument in the Maha Bandoolla Park in Yangon. PHOTO: YE HTUT



Children take part in the sports activity marking the 69th Anniversary Independence Day in Yangon. PHOTO: YE HTUT

Bravery titles conferred on soldiers by President

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw made an address and presented titles for bravery at a ceremony held in the Theater Room at the President's Palace yesterday morning.

The President noted that the ceremony was held on Independence Day, a way to further highlight the importance and reverence for those who have served Myanmar with distinction.

"The present ceremony is a specific and extraordinary one, in which persons who contributed their arduous effort and unchanging enthusiasm in building up the nation and those who served the country bravely without having any thought for their personal interests, will be presented with honorary awards," the President said yesterday. "Being specific and extraordinary, the ceremony is held on this auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of great nobility for Myanmar. Our nation-

al people sacrificed their lives for gaining independence for years. With the concerted effort, valor, zeal and enthusiasm of the whole Myanmar populace under the leadership of our national leader, Bogyoke Aung San, independence was achieved. For the independence which our national leaders and our forefathers achieved with great risks to survive till the end of our world, we must defend it in unity and hand in hand with each other. It is incumbent upon all citizens to safeguard the 69-year old independence and to make the country develop into a peaceful and modern nation."

The President added that the honorary titles were bestowed, some of them posthumously, after receiving recommendations from a scrutiny board.

"In building up the nation into a peaceful and modern federal democratic Union, it is a great virtue to honour those who



President U Htin Kyaw greets bravery titles winners at the ceremony to confer honorary titles on those who served the country bravely. PHOTO: MNA

are well worth honouring for their extraordinary contribution, remarkably more than others, for the security of the nation, rule of law, peace and stability of the area and nation-building sectors. In this ceremony, one Thiha Thura title winner and 14 Thura title winners will be presented honorary title awards, upon the recommendation of the scrutiny board for their marvelous contribution without having any fear to sacrifice their lives. And it can be said a criterion for their individual deed. For those who cannot accept the titles in person it will be an honour forever for their posterity. I myself hereby want to assert that I deeply respect and honour them on behalf of the State and the People. And I urge all to safeguard the independence and sovereignty of the State without keeping racial and religious prejudices and hatred in your minds and leave good examples for future generations."

Afterwards, the President conferred the Thiha Thura title and Thura bravery awards on 15 soldiers. Relatives of fallen soldiers received the posthumous awards presented by the President.

The Thiha Thura title was posthumously conferred upon Capt. Swan Ye Aung, BC-53098, of No 109 Light Infantry

Regiment, for bravery. The Thura title was conferred posthumously for bravery for Lt-Col. Zaw Myo, BC-31480, of No. 4 Myanmar Regiment, Maj. Yazar Min Tun, BC-34227, of No. 6 Light Infantry Regiment and Capt. Nay La Win, BC-38326 of No. 1 Myanmar Regiment. The Thura title was also conferred on Capt. Min Aung, BC-42667 of No. 11 Myanmar Regiment, Capt. Nyein Chan Kyaw, BC-46947, of No 4 Myanmar Regiment (posthumously), Capt. Soe Nyunt Naing, BC-54561, of the Defence Services (Army) Officers Training School (Bahtoo), Capt. Yan Kyaw, BC-55704, of regional Control Command (Sittway), Maj. Thet Khaing, BC-60773 of the Defence Services Academy, Capt. Pyai Sone Aung, BC-61690, of No. 9 Light Infantry Regiment, WO II Win Naing, BC-597385, of No. 109 Light Infantry Regiment (posthumously), Lance Corporal Hla Aye, Ta-327111, of No. 6 Light Infantry Regiment (posthumously), Lance Corporal Ye Zaw, Ta-372335, of No 119 Light Infantry Regiment (posthumously), Lance Corporal Nay Min, Ta-404009, of No. 4 Myanmar Regiment (posthumously) and Lance Corporal Poe Lay, Ta-477215, of No. 11 Myanmar Regiment.

Present at the ceremony

were Daw Su Su Lwin, wife of the President, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counselor, Vice-President U Myint Swe and wife, Vice-President U Henry Van Thio and wife, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint and wife, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife, Chief Justice of the State U Tun Tun Oo, Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife, Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt, Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thein, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief of (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win, Vice-Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw, Vice-Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, Chairman of Assessment Commission on Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Legal and Special Cases, Union Ministers, Union Attorney General, Union Auditor General, Chairman of Union Civil Service Board, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air), high-ranking officials of Chief of Staff (Army) and their wives, chairmen of Hluttaw Affairs Committees, Deputy Ministers, award winners and their families. — Myanmar News Agency



U Khin Maung Win, father of Capt Swan Ye Aung, BC-53098, of the No. 109 Light Infantry Regiment, accepts Thiha Thura title for his son presented by President U Htin Kyaw. PHOTO: MNA

Proposals for aid should be sent through proper diplomatic channels: MOFA

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a press release yesterday to the embassies of ASEAN member states in Yangon, referring to the Retreat of ASEAN Foreign Ministers on 19th December 2016 in Yangon.

In the press release, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the embassies of the following arrangements to be pursued in offering cash and in-kind support to Rakhine State from the Government of ASEAN Mem-

ber States:

- Proposals should be sent through proper diplomatic channels.
- When the proposal is received, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will promptly coordinate with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the Government of Rakhine State. Coordination will also be made with the relevant departments for tax exemptions, customs clearance, etc. In this re-

gard, details of humanitarian aid such as quantity and weight need to be provided in advance.

- Cash or in-kind assistance are to be meant for both communities without any distinction.

- When in-kind assistance arrives at Yangon Airport/Seaport, the Ministry will coordinate with the donor country and the relevant departments for transporting donated items to Rakhine State.

- The Rakhine State Government will distribute the assistance to both communities. If any village or location is notified by the donor country for distribution of donated items, necessary coordination will be made for sending such donations to the designated places.

- Handing-over ceremonies of donation can be arranged upon request by the respective country.
- For the sake of trans-

parency, status of the assistance will be given to the respective embassies by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- If the assistance from the governments of ASEAN member states is in cash, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has opened a bank account to be used for providing humanitarian assistance and necessary support for both communities in Rakhine State. —GNLM

Maungtaw Township celebrates 69th Anniversary of Independence Day



Children participate in 100-meter running event to mark 69th Independence Day. PHOTO: KO MIN

A state flag-hoisting ceremony to celebrate the 69th Anniversary of Independence Day was held at 4:20 am in the Township General Administrative Office in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, yesterday with district and township department officials, ward and village administrators and local people in attendance. The attendees saluted the state flag at the event.

The ceremony to mark Independence Day was held in the township sports ground at 7:30

am, where Deputy Commissioner U Ye Htut read out the message sent by President U Htin Kyaw on the occasion of Independence Day.

Officials presented prizes to winning students of a composition contest held in commemoration of Independence Day, as well as to those who have actively participated in township activities in 2016-2017. Present at the ceremony were district and township departmental officials,

social associations, ward and village administrators, local people and students as well as invited persons.

Sports competitions including futsal football, cane-ball, tug of war, a 100-meter event for children and a 500-meter event were held to commemorate the Independence Day. Officials presented prizes to the winners of respective sports events in the evening.—Zin Oo (Myanmar Alinn)

Four suspects, 14 hand-made guns seized in Buthidaung

UPON receipt of the news at about 3 am yesterday that those who had completed an insurgent military training course were nearing the village of Maunggyitaung in Buthidaung township carrying weapons, security forces blocked entry routes in order to intercept them.

While searching, security forces detained Mamad Karat the trainer and 3 trainees named

Kumuru, De Mamud, Mardular — 4 in all. After interrogation that resulted in confessions, security forces searched for weapons, finding 14 hand-made guns in a field of betel palms which belonged to De Mamud.

It is learnt that legal action will be taken against the arrested in accord with the law. —State Counsellor of the Information's Office



Four suspects and 14 hand-made guns seized in Buthidaung.

PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR OF THE INFORMATION'S OFFICE

Crime NEWS

Young girl missing after rollover crash

A SIX-YEAR-OLD girl is still missing after a rollover crash on Tuesday that sent her into a creek beside the road between

Kengtung and Tachilek in Mongphyat Township in eastern Shan State.

A Toyota Fortuner SUV



The Toyota Fortuner SUV that overturned into the Nantlon Creek in Mongphyat Township. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

carrying six people en route from Kengtung to Tachilek slid out of control and overturned into the Nantlon Creek near the road on 3 January evening. According to investigators, apart from the child, four other people sustained serious injuries and were sent to Kengtung General Hospital after the crash. The young girl named Ma Mari is still missing.

Responsible officials including members of Red Cross are searching along the creek, said Inspector Saw Than Oo of No. 116 Traffic Police Station in Kengtung Township.

Action will be taken against the 43-year-old careless driver Yaw Na Shar under the existing laws.—Myitmakha News Agency

Nobody injured in fiery incident in Hakha

A FUEL fire incident occurred in Hakha, the capital town located in the north-east corner of Chin State on Wednesday morning, destroying a petrol station.

According to the investigation, the flash fire started when the owner move a container of petrol from one place to another near a stove at the filling station at around 7:45 am on Wednesday. There were no injuries.

With the assistance of local police, about 16 firefighters brought the blaze under control within 15 minutes. The Hakha Township Fire Service Department used three fire engines to fight the fire.

The actual amount of loss has yet to be calculated, but the department estimated that the loss will be about Ks50,000, said U Sa Ro Ma, head of the department.

Action is being taken against U Shan Mann, the owner of the filling station, who will face charges under Section 285 of the Penal Code, relating to negligent conduct with respect to fire or combustible matter.

Only five fire incidents have occurred in the capital of Chin State during the whole 2016. The Wednesday morning incident is the very first one for the city this year.—Myitmakha News Agency



Firefighters putting out a blaze that occurred in Hakha Township on Wednesday. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Man arrested for smuggling of illegal drugs

A MAN was arrested by police after he was found in a possession of a cache of yaba pills in Paung Township in Mon State on Wednesday morning, police say.

Acting on a tip-off, police searched a suspected man named Kyaw Zin Oo, 29, who was sit-

ting at a restaurant in Thoekya Village in Thephyugon Village-tract, Paung Township, Mon State. They discovered a cache of 29 WY brand yaba pills worth about Ks116,000.

Police are still investigating the case in an effort to arrest

other people associated with the case.

Kyaw Zin Oo has been charged under Section 15/16 (c) of the Narcotic drugs and Psychotropic Substance Law by Thaton District Police Force.—Myitmakha News Agency

LOCAL Business



PHOTO: AUNG SHINE OO

Low quality C&D graded jade to be sold in local currency

AN emporium showcasing grade C and D jade of low quality will be held in March in Nay Pyi Taw, said an official from Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association.

"The jade will be sold in kyats, providing raw materials to local jade merchants. This event will be held once a year, though jade entrepreneurs asked for a biannual emporium. We will try to schedule the events as they requested. There will be no quality jade to be displayed in this event," the official said.

More than the sole reliance on the Chinese jade market, ef-

orts are required to penetrate European markets as well in order to protect Myanmar's jade market, say sources in the jade trading industry.

Myanmar needs to produce the finished products so as to allow domestically produced jade to secure trade with European markets.

The Southeast Asian nations of Thailand, Viet Nam, Cambodia, together with China, all possess natural jade deposits, but the majority of the world's highest quality jade is reportedly found in Hpa Kant, Kachin State, it is learnt. — *Ko Khant*

Bus line owners need to submit route proposals by 6th January

BUS LINE owners need to submit their proposals by 6th January on how to cover over 50 routes of the Yangon Region Public Bus Transport that were announced on 3rd January by the chief minister of Yangon.

"We have to submit a propos-

al of the routes which we want to operate and we will go the original route," said Ko Ta Yoke Lay, a 45 bus line owner.

Previously, about 300 bus lines ran 50 to 60 routes in the city.

Under this system, the bus

lines were organised to systematically operate. But the number of bus lines have been cut from 300 to 50.

Out of over 7,000 buses in Yangon, about 4,000 buses are currently running, it is learnt. — *Myitmakha News agency*

Trade value through Muse slumps by \$400 million

Myanmar-China trade value from 1st April to 23rd December in this fiscal year reached US\$4,091.964million, which is down from \$4,265.773million in the similar period of last year.

The trade between Myanmar and China flows in and out of Muse, Lweje, Chin Shwe Haw, Kanpikete and Kengtung. Out of those border trade camps, Muse and Kengtung trade value declined when compared to last fiscal year.

The trade value through Muse slumped by \$407.046million, whereas that through Kengtung dropped by \$7.196million.

The values of trade through border trade camps as of 23rd December in this FY were \$3482.520mil at Muse, \$123.349mil at Lweje \$415.873mil at Chin Shwe Haw, \$66.626mil at Kanpikete, \$3.596mil at Kengtung, \$52.801mil at Tachilek, \$641.522mil at Myawady, \$77.871mil at Kawthaung,



A file photo shows 105-mile border trade zone. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

\$137.667mil at Myeik, \$10.267mil at Htee Khee, \$2.035mil at Maw Taung, \$0.139mil at Maese, \$3.074mil at Sittwe, \$3.647mil at Maung Taw, \$42.704mil at Tamu and \$24.812mil at Reed respectively.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, fisheries, minerals, forest products,

manufacturing goods and other products to foreign countries while capital goods, raw industrial materials and personal products are imported into Myanmar.

The border trade value as of 23rd December in this FY amounted to \$5,088.503million, which slumped by \$15.318million with that of last fiscal year.—*Mon Mon*

Industrial zone to be established in Ayeyawady this year

AN industrial zone focused on enhancing agriculture and livestock products will be set up in Myaung Mya, Ayeyawady Region, according to the Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation Limited (MAPCO).

This industrial zone will be on 221 acres of land with an aim at producing value-added agricultural and livestock products, creating more job opportunities for the local residents, upgrading human resources, having an effective impact on the regional development activities and producing skilled labourers.

Building of the zone aims

at offering a reasonable price of the land rental for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and agribusinesses, improving the investments and trade and carrying out the benefit of shareholders, according to MAPCO.

Sixty per cent of MAPCO's rice exports from 2012 to 2016 went to African markets, followed by the China market, it is learnt.

MAPCO, founded in 2012, is a private sector company and is seen as a key contributor to the development of agriculture in Myanmar.

—*Ko Htet*

With exorbitant car prices, market cools

WITH car prices exorbitantly high, car sellers are content to watch and observe the market, according to car market experts.

The prices of the cars with free permits which are individually imported are significantly on the rise. Licensed used car prices are also sky high.

The car prices jumped as a result of the model year limit in

import license in 2017. As a result the market has been cool as buyers are watching and waiting for prices to come down.

Currently, the price of a permit-free car is up by about Ks4million whereas the price of the licensed used cars increases by Ks2million, according to the auto market. —*Ko Khant*

Thai leaders say general election on track for this year

BANGKOK — Thai Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan said on Wednesday a general election will be held this year after doubts were raised by a member of the national legislative assembly.

Thailand's next polls will restore civilian rule following a 2014 coup, and will be the first under a new constitution, approved in a referendum last year, that critics say will ensure military oversight of elected governments.

"We can't move it. It has its time frame. What the National Legislative Assembly has said is their problem," Prawit, who is also defence minister, told reporters in Bangkok.

A member of the military-appointed National Legislative Assembly said on Monday the election would have to be delayed until 2018 to allow time to pass laws needed to hold it.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, a former army chief who led the 2014 overthrow of the last



Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha (R) and Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Prawit Wongsuwan greet government officers before a weekly cabinet meeting at Government House in Bangkok, Thailand, on 4 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

elected government, has sought to dispel concern his military government might delay the restoration of democracy, dismissing talk among politicians that the vote would be delayed.

"In terms of the roadmap, you mustn't heed what anyone else says," Prayuth told reporters in Bangkok.

The army said the 2014 coup, the second takeover in six years, was necessary to restore stability after months of sometimes deadly street protests against the government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

Some Western governments have pressed for a swift return to democra-

cy. The junta has struggled to kick-start a lackluster economy which, after years of impressive growth, is struggling amid high household debt and low consumer confidence.

The next step in the transition back to civilian rule is for new King Maha Vajiralongkorn to endorse

the new constitution.

The king, who came to the throne following the death of his father, King Bhumibol Adulyadej in October, has until next month to do so.

Critics say certain elements of the constitution could stifle democracy including a provision establishing an appointed upper house Senate with seats reserved for military commanders.

Some politicians have suggested that the election should be postponed until 2018 because this year, the country will be focusing on preparations for the cremation of the late king and the subsequent coronation of the new one.

Amnuay Klangpa, a former lawmaker from Yingluck's party, urged Prayuth to stick to his word on the election timing.

"I hope the prime minister keeps his word and holds elections according to the government's roadmap at the end of this year," he said.—Reuters

Two wounded, one dead after rare gun rampage in China

BEIJING — A government official was suspected to have carried out a rare shooting rampage in China on Wednesday in which two officials were wounded when a gunman burst into a meeting and opened fire, the Xinhua news agency reported.

The shooting happened at an exhibition center in Panzhihua city in Sichuan province. The gunmen fired multiple shots at city leaders assembled there before fleeing, Xinhua reported. The shooter was suspected to be the chief of the city's Land and Resources Bureau, who was found dead after committing suicide on the second floor of the building, it said.

Xinhua did not give any more details about the attack or a motive. Telephone calls to the city government's information office were not answered.

The mayor and the head of the city's municipal committee were wounded but would survive, Xinhua said.—Reuters

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Acting Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Expatriate Consultant Editor

Mark Angeles
markrangeles@gmail.com

Senior Translators

Khin Maung Oo, Myint Win Thein
editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

International News Editor

Ye Htut Tin
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Local News Editors

Tun Tun Naing (Editor)
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor)

Translators

Khaing Thanda Lwin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Hay Mar Tin Win,
translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Ei Myat Mon

Chief Reporter

Tun Aung Kyaw,
reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Computer Team

Tun Zaw (Chief of Computer Team), Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin
Circulation

San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532, Hotline - 09 974424114

Advertising inquiry

01 8604530, Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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Indonesian military says cooperation with Australian military suspended

JAKARTA — Indonesia suspended cooperation with the Australian military in December for "technical reasons", a spokesman for the Indonesian defence forces said on Wednesday, after offensive material was seen at an Australian training base.

The suspension is the latest in a string of spats between the sometimes uneasy Asia-Pacific neighbours, who have important military ties ranging from counterterrorism cooperation to border protection.

"All forms of cooperation have been suspended," Indonesian military spokesman Major General Wuryanto said. He said a broad range of activities would be affected.

"There are technical matters that need to be discussed," Wuryanto said. Among these issues was offensive training material seen at an Australian military base.

It was "highly likely" cooperation would resume once those issues were resolved, Wuryanto said.

Australia stopped conducting joint training



FILE PHOTO: Australian Army soldiers Major General Stuart Smith (L) and Sergeant Francis Jakis (C) run with Indonesian Army soldiers during the Junior Officer Combat Instructor Training course conducted by the Australian Army's Combat Training Centre in Tully, Australia, on 10 October, 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

exercises with Indonesian special forces, known as Kopassus, after accusations of abuses by the unit in East Timor in 1999 in the lead-up to the former Indonesian territory's independence.

Jakarta and Canberra have since resumed military ties, citing a desire to cooperate on counterterrorism that became imperative after the bombing of two nightclubs on the Indonesian holiday island of Bali in 2002 that killed 202 people, including 88 Australians.

With ties gradually warming again, the first

joint training exercise on Australian soil since 1995 was staged in the northern city of Darwin in September last year.

According to a report in Indonesian newspaper Kompas on Wednesday, the Indonesian military sent a letter to their Australian counterparts warning that cooperation could be suspended and then the head of the country's military, Gatot Nurmantyo, sent a telegram putting this into force on 29 December.

An Indonesian special forces trainer had seen training material that in-

sulted Indonesia's founding principles of "Pancasila", which include belief in god, the unity of Indonesia, social justice and democracy, Kompas said.

The offices of Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, Defence Minister Marise Payne and Australia's Department of Defence all declined to comment on the suspension of military cooperation.

Australian media reports said the offensive material was found at Campbell Barracks, an army base in the Western Australian city of Perth. The barracks declined to answer any questions when contacted by Reuters.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo planned to visit Australia in November to cement improving ties, with a focus on economic and maritime cooperation and efforts to counter Islamist militancy, but the trip was postponed amid unrest in Jakarta.

Indonesia last suspended military ties with Australia in 2013 over revelations defence spies tapped the mobile phone of then President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.—Reuters

Abe calls for “new nation-building” in Constitution’s 70th year

ISE, (Japan) — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Wednesday his administration will proceed with “new nation-building” in 2017 as Japan marks the 70th anniversary of its post-World War II Constitution, a document he has long sought to revise.

“Now is the time to look to the future, in anticipation of the next 70 years, and proceed with new nation-building,” Abe said at a New Year press conference in Ise in Mie Prefecture, central Japan, after visiting the Ise Grand Shrine in the city earlier in the day.

“We, who are living today, must learn from our predecessors of 70 years

ago who built postwar (Japan), face our challenges head-on and fulfill our responsibilities for the future,” Abe said.

Revising the war-renouncing Constitution, which was introduced while Japan was still under postwar occupation by the United States and has remained unaltered since, has been a long-standing goal both of Abe and the Liberal Democratic Party he leads.

Gains by the LDP and likeminded lawmakers in last year’s upper house election pushed them past a legal hurdle required to formally consider a constitutional amendment.

Hinting at a more



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visits the Ise Jingu shrine in Ise, Mie Prefecture, on 4 January, 2017. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

self-reliant Japan, Abe said “our future is not something we are given by (other) people.”

“We, the Japanese

people, will carve it out with our own hands -- now is the time when the grit (to do so) is needed” he said.

Abe also said his ad-

ministration will “keep putting the highest priority on the economy this year,” continuing to work to pull Japan out of deflation that has dominated the past two decades.

Abe said the next ordinary Diet session will convene on 20 January and will be aimed at “opening up (Japan’s) future.”

The premier said he is “not thinking at all of dissolving” the House of Representatives for a snap election, which he has the sole discretion to do at any time.

With a government panel continuing to debate possible responses to Emperor Akihito’s apparent wish to abdicate, Abe reit-

erated that the issue is “an extremely serious matter and must not be turned into political fodder.”

Noting that 2017 is the Year of the Rooster in the Chinese zodiac, Abe said he will continue to advance “proactive diplomacy, looking across the globe with a bird’s-eye view, this year.”

Last month, Abe hosted Russian President Vladimir Putin for a summit in Japan.

Sources have said Abe and US President-elect Donald Trump may be planning a meeting in the United States at the end of this month, shortly after Trump’s inauguration.—*Kyodo News*

Armed men linked to Muslim rebels free more than 150 from Philippine prison

MANILA — Around 100 armed men with links to Muslim rebels stormed a prison in the southern Philippines on Wednesday, killing a guard and freeing more than 150 prisoners, some of them Islamic militants, officials said.

The Southeast Asian, majority Roman Catholic nation has for decades been plagued by insurgency by Muslim rebels in its southern islands.

The gunmen opened fire at guards at the North Cotabato District Jail in Kidapawan, prison warden

Peter Bongat said on radio. Of the jail’s 1,511 inmates, 158 managed to escape, he said.

Eight prisoners had since been caught, two had surrendered, while six were killed, according to the office of the president.

Shirlyn Macasarte, acting governor of North Cotabato, said her office had been tipped off about the plan by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) to free its members as early as the second quarter of last year.

“They were involved

in murders and at the same time I think they have experience in bomb making so we watched them closely,” Macasarte told news channel ANC.

The leader of the attackers, known by the alias Commander Derby, had links with the BIFF, a splinter group of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Macasarte said.

Some members of the MILF and BIFF were said to be behind the killing of 44 police commandos in a secret mission two years ago to capture a Malaysian



Prison personnel patrol during a manhunt for more than 150 inmates who escaped after gunmen stormed a prison in North Cotabato province, southern Philippines on 4 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

bomb maker with a \$5 million bounty from the US State Department on his

head. In 2014, the government signed a peace deal with the MILF, the big-

gest Muslim rebel group, but clashes still occur with smaller groups.—*Reuters*

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Yangon Region Government Yagon City Development Committee Invitation for Bids

Date 3rd January 2017

Name of Project: Installation, Maintenance and Operation of Street Furniture Items in the City of Yangon.

1. YCDC invites bids from the interested bidders for the Installation, Maintenance and Operation of Street Furniture Items and the grant of an exclusive right to advertise on the street furniture items in the City of Yangon.

2. The interested bidders may obtain further information about this invitation for bids from the following office during office hours:

Engineering Department (Road and Bridge), Yangon City Development Committee, City Hall, Yangon.
Telephone no. 09-431 93314

3. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased upon submission of a written application to the above address and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Kyat 50000 (fifty thousand kyats only) to YCDC..

4. Bids documents shall be delivered in person to the above office on or before 15 hrs. on 17th February 2017. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Any bid submitted after the designated date and time will be rejected.

5. All Bids must be accompanied by bid security (tender guarantee) in the amount of Kyat 300,000,000 or USD 250,000 issued by local bank as described in the bidding documents.

6. Bids will be opened in a session to be held at the office of Yagon City Development Committee in the presence of representatives of the bidders on the date and time as may be notified to the bidders.

Yangon City Development Committee

Taiwan objects to Vietnam deporting telecom fraud suspects to China

TAIPEI (China) — Taiwan on Tuesday strongly objected to the deportation from Vietnam to China of four Taiwanese nationals suspected of telecommunications fraud, saying the move was carried out under pressure from Beijing.

The latest deportation followed a series of similar cases this year where Taiwanese nationals in Kenya, Malaysia, Armenia and Cambodia have been arrested for alleged involvement in cross-border telecom scam groups and sent to China.

The deportations arose from the “one-China” policy of most countries under which they maintain formal relations only with the People’s Republic of China rather than Taiwan,

a self-ruled island that Beijing regards as a renegade province. The four suspects, along with one Chinese national, were arrested in the northern Vietnamese city of Haiphong in December. Despite repeated requests from Taiwan envoys in Vietnam to have the four deported to Taiwan, they were “forcibly” sent to China, Taiwan’s foreign ministry said.

“China said that in this case the victims were mostly in China and demanded Vietnam to repatriate all of the suspects to China (based on a bilateral legal treaty), obstructing our efforts to understand the case and visit the Taiwanese suspects,” it said in a statement.

Taiwan’s China policymaker, the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), urged

Beijing on Tuesday to open dialogue as soon as possible, saying its actions were unhelpful in tracing the source of the cross-border fraud groups and affected mutual trust in joint Chinese-Taiwanese crime-fighting efforts. China has suspended dialogue with Taipei since June, a month after pro-independence Tsai Ing-wen took office as Taiwan’s president, because Tsai has refused to accept Beijing’s “one China” principle that deems Taiwan a part of China.

“China and Vietnam maintain close cooperation in combating cross-border telecoms and internet fraud crime,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular press briefing on Wednesday.

Geng did not comment on Taiwan’s objection, saying it was not a foreign affairs matter.

According to MAC officials, there are over 200 Taiwanese suspected of telecom fraud who have been deported from third countries to China this year.

Chinese authorities have sought to contain an explosion of telecom crime it says has led to huge financial losses, with callers often impersonating officials or authority figures and preying on the elderly, students or the unemployed.

The fraud has spread overseas, with Chinese speakers recruited in neighboring self-ruled Taiwan increasingly setting up operations in East Africa or Southeast Asia.—*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.

Freedom is not free, come let us reason together

Khin Maung Oo

BY nature, all of us want freedom. Especially when we are under foreign rule, we want it more. We want to live, say, go about and work freely. So long as one's freedom does not harm others, freedom will be a lovable thing for everyone. Once in the past, we were robbed of our rights—right of governing our country, right of expressing what we wish, and so on. Colonialists occupied our country, seized our natural resources, and exploited our minerals. The worst thing is that they destroyed the unity among our national brethren. Armed with whatever weapons they had, such as it was, compared to those of our enemy, our forefathers fought against the colonialists for the freedom and independence they longed for, sacrificing their lives. Since the time we lost our independence, we, Myanmar people including national ethnic brethren living across the nation, took part in

our determined struggle to liberate ourselves from colonial rule. This depicts that patriotism conceived in us emerged spontaneously if demanded by circumstances.

Well convinced of being unable to fight against the colonialists with incomparable weapons, the Thirty comrades led by Bogoyoke Aung San decided to get military assistance and training from a great alien country to wage war against the enemy. Formed by Bogoyoke Aung San, the Burma Independence Army (BIA) that is, the Tatmadaw fought against the colonialists hand in hand with the patriotic national ethnic brethren. Freedom is not free. It was won by blood, toil, sweat and tears. Now, Myanmar had gained its Independence for nearly 7 decades.

Sorrowfully enough, since the time of gaining our Independence, solidarity among us—our national brethren, has been bro-

ken into pieces. Our country did not develop as we had hoped. Instead, some areas have not been able to completely enjoy the taste of independence yet. We hear and see news about our displaced brethren in our dailies and social web pages like Facebook. Whenever we see such desperate faces, deep sorrow occurs in us. At the time when our urban children are enjoying themselves on streets, in parks and at entertainment shows on Independence Day, they may be waiting for humanitarian assistance and relief supplies from donors, or lying in places without shelters and blankets. The joy of learning in is still an impossible dream for them. Now is the time for all of us to make them dream their futures and fulfill their hopes. We all know what brought about these conditions. Unless we remove our doubts, fears, mistrusts and mutual misunderstandings, we will never ever reach an agreement

we all want and hope for.

Peace cannot be attained through fighting. Conflicts will increase hatred and ceaseless fighting. Now we are beginning to see the dawn of peace. The 21st Century Panglong Conference is our unique solution to reach our goal—attainment of nationwide eternal peace. For the benefit of our country and betterment of our future generations, now is the time for all to come forth for meaningful and sincere and honest dialogues at the round-table negotiations. However, there is one important condition and that is we all need to sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement as a first step. We firmly believe that we will reach our desired goal if we all make gaining internal peace our top priority. Let us forget about the gains and benefits of the present moment and work heart and soul for the long-term happiness, peace and prosperity of our future generations.

The State and Region Sanghanayaka Committees in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Ba Sein
(Religious Affairs)

ACCORDING to the resolution of the First Successful Congregation of the Sangha of All Orders of 1980, the different levels of the Sangha Organizations throughout the country could be formed and the very first unity of the Sangha of All Orders could be reconstructed within one-hundred year in the history of Buddhism of Myanmar. The different levels of the Sangha Organizations are as follows:-

1. State Ovadacariya (Patron) Committee of Sangha
2. State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders
3. State Sanghamahanakaya Committee
4. State/Region Sanghanayaka Committees
5. Township Sanghanayaka Committees
6. Ward/Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees

These different levels of the Sangha organization represent over five-hundred thousand members of the Sangha in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar who are striving to carry out the purification perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana. Out of the six different levels

of the Sangha Organizations, the State and Regional Sanghanayaka Committees have been formed throughout the seven States and the seven Regions of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar since 1980. Each committee consists of nine members of the Sangha including Chairman and Secretary elected by the majority of the members of the Sangha who are residing in limited place of respective States or Regions. The general election of the State/Regional Sanghanayaka Committees shall be held in accordance with principles of the Sangha Organizations after five year's term.

There are altogether 49 State/Regional Sanghanayaka Committees which have been formed throughout the country since 1980. They are carrying out the noble tasks of the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana under the guidance of the State Sanghamahanayaka Committee of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The annual plenary meeting of the State/Regional Sanghanayaka Committees shall be held in accordance with the principles of the Sangha Organizations.

Any member of the Sangha in order to be elected as a member of State/Regional Sanghanayaka Committees shall have possessed the following qualities;

1. Shall be of (20) Vasas of monkhood.
2. Shall be well-versed and learned in Pariyatti Scriptures and Tipitaka Canons.
3. Shall be worthy of and respected by members of the Sangha and devotees.
4. Shall be desirous of carrying out the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana.
5. Shall have a superior's qualities such as being vigilant, tolerant and forgiving.
6. Shall be a member of Sangha who resides in the State or Region where the election shall be held.
7. Shall be a member of Sangha who actually is able and competent to take responsibilities lying upon him.
8. Shall be willing to construct the unity of members of Sangha and Sangha sects in the States/Regions.
9. Shall be free from the dispensation of justice (bribery).
10. Shall be a member of Sangha who is not expelled from as member of the State/Regional Sanghanayaka Committees because of any reason in connection with loosing qualities.
11. Shall be a member of Sangha who is not punished under any penal law.

The members of the Sangha of having possessed the above-mentioned qualities are only eligible to be elected as member of the State/Regional Sanghanayaka Committees.

Functions and duties

The State/Regional Sanghanayaka Committees are responsible to take the following functions and duties which lead to the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana. They are as follows:-

1. They shall have to carry out their functions in accordance with the principles of different levels of Sangha Organizations and the procedures of different levels of Sangha Organizations, the procedures of the settlement of Vinayadhammakamma Adhikara Disputes Act and other decisions and Instructions which were approved and adopted by the plenary meeting of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders.
2. They shall have to carry out their functions mainly leading to the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana and the unity of the members of the Sangha.
3. They shall have to make monks and novices (Samaneras) in respective States and

Regions to obey and follow the instructions of the State Sanghamaganayaka committee.

4. They shall have to prepare the name-list of annual records and data of members of the Sangha residing in respective States and Regions and said it to the State Sanghamaganayaka Committee.
5. They shall have to submit their work-done reports to the State Sanghamaganayaka Committee from time to time.
6. They may have to give the instructions to the township and ward/village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees as it is necessary.
7. In accordance with the instructions of the State Sanghamaganayaka Committee, they shall have to decide and settle the disputes relating to Pariyatti and Patipatti affairs occurring in their respective States and Regions.
8. They shall have to supervise the election of the township Qvadacariya (patron) Committees of Sangha, the formation/limitation of the township Sanghanayaka Committees and the election of the State and Regional Working Committees of the Sangha.

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Defence Services members honored with medals



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing greets bravery title winners and relatives of those who were conferred on posthumous titles by the Tatmadaw. PHOTO: MNA

A ceremony to confer honorary medals and posthumous titles to officers and other ranks was held at the Zeyarthiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the ceremony, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said that the Tatmadaw has been performing its duty to defend the independence and sovereignty of the country at all times, under any government or political system with loyalty to the people and the country and warned members of the defence services to make correct decisions in accordance with the time and situation to avoid unnecessary losses.

In addition, the senior general said that the Tatmadaw has

been trying to solve armed conflicts through peaceful means rather than relying on military means and as wars lead to losses of lives of members of the defence services, the Tatmadaw has always been desirous of peace by actively participating in the peace process.

At the ceremony, the senior general presented gallantry awards to a colonel, four lieutenant colonels, eight majors, sixteen captains, three lieutenants, seven warrant officers-2, one company sergeant, six sergeants, eight corporals, eighteen lance corporals and three privates. Gallantry certificates of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services were awarded to one lieutenant colonel, six majors, three cap-

tains, two warrant officers-2, one sergeant, one corporal and two lance corporals. Certificates of honour of the commander-in-chief of defence services went to two major-generals, four colonels, one lieutenant colonel, six majors, eight captains, three warrant officers, one company sergeant, five sergeants, one corporal and four privates.

After the ceremony, the senior general posed for documentary photos with award and certificate winners and their families.

A total of 21 female personnel were presented with gallantry awards and certificates this year. The remaining awards will be presented to winners at regional commands.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myeik archipelago region designated as community-based tourism site

THE Ministry of Hotels and Tourism will make the Myeik archipelago in Taninthayi region a new tourist destination within the first six months of 2017, it is learnt.

“Our ministry is extending new tourist destinations in every

region. Currently, we selected Myeik archipelago, which has good potential. Our decision came only after conducting field trips together with locals, ministries, regional government and travel and tour companies in Taninthayi region. We will intro-

duce our Myeik destination at the ASEAN Tourism Forum, which will be held in Singapore on January 16 to 20,” said U Tint Thwin, director-general of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The new hotels and tourism development working committee was formed in the last week of December in Taninthayi region, with 23 members from Taninthayi regional government, an official from Myanmar tourism federation, travel and tour businessmen from Myeik region. The new working committee will hold a meeting today to start the project, it is learnt from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

“Our Taninthayi regional government will cooperate with other ministers to implement the development of Taninthayi region. There are a lot of beautiful places in Myeik archipelago, but we haven’t taken people there yet. The new designation will create job opportunities for the local people, said U Myint Maung, Taninthayi region minister for natural resources and environmental conservation.—*Soe Win (MLA)*



Myeik archipelago in Taninthayi region a new tourist destination within the first six months of 2017. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Appointment of Ambassador agreed

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr. Waldemar Dubanowski as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, with residence in Bangkok.

Mr. Waldemar Dubanowski was born on 23 February 1964 in Warsaw, Poland. He studied Social Sciences at the Warsaw University and did postgraduate studies in foreign trade and management at the Warsaw School of Economics. He joined the Ministry of Industry and Commerce as an Advisor to the Undersecretary of State in 1993. He served as the Chief Specialist at the office of the Government Plenipoten-

tiary for European Integration and Foreign Assistance, Minister’s Advisor at the Chancery of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Committee and Director of the Team of the Cabinet of the President at the Chancery of the President of the Republic of Poland respectively. He served as the Secretary of State and Chief of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Poland in 2005. He was the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Singapore from 2009 to 2013. Since June 2014, he has been serving as Director and Council Member of the Foundation named the “Innovative Poland”.

He speaks English, German, and Russian. He is married, and has two children.

Aid from Indonesia to be delivered...

>> FROM PAGE 1

Regarding an aid flotilla from Malaysia, which is reportedly headed to Myanmar, U Kyaw Zeya, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said there has been no offers from Malaysia through the diplomatic channels.

“It would be appreciated if aid from foreign countries are delivered to both communities in Rakhine in a fair and balanced manner,” said U Kyaw Zeya.

At the retreat of ASEAN foreign ministers last month, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed Myanmar’s readiness to grant necessary humanitarian access. — *Myo Myint and Tun Win Naing*

Over 2,600 people participate in Mandalay Mayor’s mini-marathon race

The Mandalay Mayor’s mini-marathon was launched in front of City Hall at the corner of 26th and 71st streets, Chanayetharsan township, Mandalay at 6am yesterday, it is learnt.

Of the 2,624 people who participated in the marathon, 63 men and 47 women were in the open-to-all event and 1,665 men and 849 women were in the novice event. The starting point was the MCDC office and the finish-

ing point was Bahtoo Stadium. The prizes ranged from Ks 0.1 million to Ks 1 million. There were also five consolation prizes amounting to Ks70,000 each.

For the novice event, prizes ranged from Ks1.5 million to Ks0.6 million. The comfort price will be Ks0.1 million each.

For the age category of 60 years and above, the prize amounts were Ks0.2 million each. — *Myitmakha News Agency*

The State and Region Sanghanayaka ...

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9. They shall have to be in consultation with the respective state and regional authorities concerned when conducting the matters concerning with them in case of the Sasana Affairs.
10. They shall have to submit the reports of the important matters out of the matters that have been done in a year to the annual meeting of the State and Regional Working Committee of the Sangha for approval.
11. They shall have to inform the State Sanghamahanayaka Committee within five days about the falling of vacancy of any representative of Sanghasammutti, any member of Vinayadharas, any member of State and Regional Sanghanayaka Committee, and State and

Regional Ovadacariya (patron) Committees of the Sangha, and any member of the State Levels of Sanghanayaka Committees as soon as it is known.

We all Buddhists throughout the Republic of the Union of Myanmar are ready to support and provide the four kinds of requisites to the members of the Sangha of the State and Regional Sanghanayaka Committees who are carrying out the noble tasks of the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana and always pay respect to them. We wish that may all the members of the Sangha of the State and Regional Sanghanayaka Committees be healthy and wealthy to carry out the noble tasks of the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana more than ever before.



US President-elect Donald Trump talks to members of the media at Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida, US, on 21 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

New Republican-led US Congress lays groundwork for Trump era

WASHINGTON — The Republican-led Congress begins a new session on Tuesday where it will start laying plans for enacting President-elect Donald Trump's agenda of tax cuts, repeal of Obamacare and the rollback of financial and environmental regulations.

With Trump set to be sworn in as president on 20 January, Republican lawmakers hope to get a quick start on priorities that were blocked during Democratic President Barack Obama's eight years in the White House.

Since his election on 8 November, the Republican president-elect has made clear he wants to move swiftly to enact proposals he outlined during the campaign such as simplifying the tax code, slashing corporate tax rates and repealing and replacing Obama's signature health insurance program known as Obamacare.

Republicans have long sought to dismantle Obamacare, insisting it was unworkable and hampered job growth. But they face a dilemma over how to provide health insurance for the 13.8 million people enrolled in Obamacare who could lose their coverage. The law aims to provide health insurance to economically disadvantaged people and expand coverage for others.

In a 19 December interview with Kentucky Educational Television, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican, said that before the election, he assumed Democrats would take back control of the Senate and hold on to the White House, ending any talk of repealing Obamacare.

"I didn't think ... Trump had a chance of winning," McConnell said.

The opposite occurred and now Republicans find they have

to deliver on their campaign promise, even though they have not agreed on a replacement healthcare program.

The first meeting of the 115th Congress will be full of ceremony, as the 435 members of the House of Representatives and a third of the 100-member Senate are sworn in.

Amid the celebration will be a move by House Republicans to clear the decks for Obamacare repeal.

That will come in the form of a vote on rules governing House procedures in the two-year term of the chamber. Tucked into the rules package is a move to prevent Democrats from slowing or stopping Obamacare repeal legislation because of the potential cost to the US Treasury of doing so.

Leading Democrats warned on Monday of a fierce battle over Obamacare.

"We're going to fight as hard as ever to protect the ACA (Affordable Care Act)," said Representative Steny Hoyer, the House's second-ranking Democrat.

Speaking to reporters, Hoyer and House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi said they would launch an effort to mobilize grassroots support for Obamacare by explaining how repeal would create a ripple effect hurting a majority of Americans.

Obama is scheduled to meet on Wednesday with congressional Democrats to discuss strategies for fending off the Republican attacks on Obamacare.

The Senate will kick off hearings on Trump's choices to head his Cabinet departments and other top jobs in the new administration.

It is also expected to receive a Supreme Court nomination from Trump early in his term to

replace conservative Justice Antonin Scalia, who died last February. Republicans refused to consider Obama's nomination of Merrick Garland last year.

Prominent Republican Senator John McCain has warned that Rex Tillerson, Trump's choice for secretary of state, will have to explain his relations with Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom McCain has called a "thug and a murderer."

Tillerson, who spent much of his career at Exxon Mobil Corp, has been involved in business dealings in Russia and opposed US sanctions against Moscow for its incursion into Crimea.

While McConnell repeatedly called for removing Obamacare "root and branch," he said in the Kentucky television interview that his top priorities for the new Congress were dealing with the "massive overregulation" he said had been a brake on the US economy and accomplishing tax code changes to stop companies from moving jobs offshore.

Republican lawmakers also want to curtail or block regulations aimed at controlling industrial emissions that contribute to climate change, and roll back banking industry reforms enacted after the near-collapse of Wall Street in 2008.

Republicans might use upcoming spending bills funding government agencies to try to kill some of those regulations. Trump is also expected to try to use his executive powers toward that end.

Republicans will hold a slightly smaller majority in both the Senate and House than they enjoyed the past two years.

That means Democrats will still have bargaining power, especially on issues that divide Republicans, such as spending priorities.—Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hitler's "Mein Kampf" a hit in Germany

BERLIN — About 85,000 copies of an annotated edition of Adolf Hitler's "Mein Kampf" have been sold since it was first launched a year ago, the book's publisher said on Tuesday.

The Bavarian regional government, which held the copyright of the anti-Semitic Nazi manifesto, had banned reprinting since the end of World War II. Its relaunch was made possible after the copyright expired in late 2015.

The book was republished by the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, or IfZ, with critical notes by scholars. The first print run was 4,000 copies, but the institute boosted production immediately based on intense demand.—Kyodo News

Turkish foreign minister calls on Iran to stop truce violations in Syria

ANKARA — Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu called on Iran to exert pressure on Shi'ite-backed militias and the Syrian government to stop violating a ceasefire in Syria, warning it was putting planned peace talks in peril.

Turkey is working with Russia on the question of sanctions for those who violate the ceasefire deal, which was brokered by Ankara and Moscow, Cavusoglu said in a televised interview with the state-run Anadolu news agency.

He warned that peace negotiations being prepared by Moscow in the Kazakh capital, Astana, could fail if increased ceasefire violations are not halted.—Reuters

Fire at China nursing home kills seven: Xinhua

BEIJING — A fire at a private nursing home in China killed seven people on Wednesday, the official Xinhua news agency reported, the latest deadly incident in a country struggling to improve its safety record.

The blaze broke out at 4:10 am (2010 GMT) at the nursing home in Chaoyang township in the northeastern province of Jilin, and was put out 17 minutes later, the news agency reported.

It not clear how the seven people had died. Firefighters rescued the other 32 people living at the home, Xinhua reported.

In 2015, a fire at an home for the elderly in Henan province killed 38 people, stirring debate about whether China's growing population of old people are getting proper care.

The fire at that time prompted President Xi Jinping to call on authorities to take immediate steps to ensure accidents do not happen.—Reuters

Stefanovic: Decision on elections to be made in citizens' best interest

BELGRADE — The decision whether to call early parliamentary elections will be made in the citizens' best interest, and the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) will not be governed by party interests when making it, Serbian Deputy PM and SNS official Nebojsa Stefanovic said Tuesday.

"We will together decide on whether parliamentary elections will also be held in addition to the presidential elections once all reasons for and against have been weighed carefully and precisely," Stefanovic told Tanjug.

It is the most important for the citizens that the government, elected and paid by them to produce results, works in their interest, Stefanovic noted.

As the most responsible figure, PM Aleksandar Vucic will make the decision in the best interest of the citizens, not the party, Stefanovic said.—Tanjug

China begins first freight train service to London — Xinhua

LONDON — China has begun its first freight train service to London from Yiwu, a famed wholesale market town in the eastern province of Zhejiang, the Xinhua news agency reported.

The train will travel for 18 days over more than 7,500 miles (12,000 km) to reach Britain from China, Xinhua said. It will pass through Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Germany, Belgium and France before arriving in London.

Former British Prime Minister David Cameron raised some eyebrows with allies by pitching Britain as the pre-eminent gateway to the West for investment from China and proposing to make London the main international trading centre for offshore yuan.—Reuters

Turkey extends emergency rule to maintain purge of Gulen supporters: deputy PM

ANKARA — Turkey's parliament voted overnight to extend emergency rule by three months in a move which the government said was needed to sustain a purge of supporters of the US-based Muslim cleric accused of orchestrating July's failed coup, state media said.

Emergency rule, first imposed in Turkey after an attempted putsch on 15 July and then extended in October, enables the government to bypass parliament in enacting new laws and to limit or suspend rights and freedoms when deemed necessary.

The extension, effective from 19 January, comes as Turkey reels from a series of attacks by Islamist or Kurdish militants, most recently on Sunday when a lone gunman shot dead 39 people in an Istanbul nightclub during New Year celebrations.

Ankara accuses Pennsylvania-based preacher Fethullah Gulen and his supporters, whom it terms the Gulenist Terror Organisation (FETO), of being behind the July coup attempt. Gulen denies the allegations.

"The purge of FETO from the state has not been completed. We

need the implementation of emergency rule until FETO and all terror groups have been purged from the state," Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus said in parliament ahead of the vote.

More than 41,000 people have been jailed pending trial in connection with the attempted coup out of 100,000 who have faced investigation. Some 120,000 people, including soldiers, police officers, teachers, judges and journalists, have been suspended or dismissed since the coup, although thousands of them have since been restored to their posts.—Reuters



Police special forces patrol outside the Reina nightclub which was attacked by a gunman, in Istanbul, Turkey, on 3 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Iraqi forces press gains against Islamic State in eastern Mosu

ERBIL, (Iraq) — Iraqi forces pressed gains against Islamic State militants in eastern Mosul on Wednesday and have retaken two more districts, security sources said, with thousands more civilians fleeing the fighting.

An elite interior ministry unit had entered the Mithaq district and were clearing it on Wednesday, the sources said, while counterterrorism forces retook an industrial zone on Tuesday.

The militants are using the city terrain to their advantage, concealing car bombs in narrow alleys, posting snipers on tall buildings with civilians on lower floors, and making underground tunnels and surface-level passageways between buildings.

"We were very afraid," said one Mithaq resident.

"A Daesh (Islamic State) anti-aircraft weapon was positioned close to our house and was opening fire on helicopters. We could see a small number of Daesh fighters in the street carrying light and medium weapons. They were hit by

planes." Most of those fleeing are from the eastern districts but residents of the besieged west, still fully under the militants' control, are increasingly attempting to escape, scaling bridges bombed by the coalition and crossing the Tigris by boat.

Despite shortages of food and water, most Mosul residents had stayed in their homes rather than fleeing as many had expected before the offensive began in October.

The UN refugee agency has said 125,568 people have been displaced from Mosul, a city of about 1.5 million, and more than 13,000 of those have fled in the five days since the US-led coalition renewed an offensive that had stalled for weeks.

That represents an increase of nearly 50 percent in the number of people who fled every day from Mosul over the several weeks of relative calm that ended last weekend.

Twelve weeks into Iraq's largest military campaign since the

US-led invasion of 2003, security forces have retaken about a quarter of Mosul.

"Finally we have been freed," a second Mithaq resident told Reuters by phone. "We feared fighting would be fierce, but it was easy compared with other areas. Daesh members fled without putting up strong resistance."

Counterterrorism units pushed into eastern Mosul in October but regular army troops tasked with advancing from the north and south made slower progress and the operation stalled.

After redeploying forces, Iraqi forces have been advancing on three fronts toward the Tigris river that bisects Mosul, in a second phase of the offensive. Victory in Mosul would probably spell the end for Islamic State's self-styled caliphate but in recent days the militants have displayed the tactics to which they are likely to resort when they lose the city, with bomb attacks in Baghdad, and attacks on security forces in territory they have lost.—Reuters



Supporters of Israeli soldier Elor Azaria, who is charged with manslaughter by the Israeli military, hold a poster which reads in Hebrew "A soldier that was sent to the battle field cannot be a murderer full stop" during a protest outside the military court in Tel Aviv on the verdict day for the soldier, Tel Aviv, Israel, on 4 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Israeli soldier convicted of manslaughter in killing of immobile Palestinian assailant

JERUSALEM — An Israeli soldier who shot dead a wounded and incapacitated Palestinian assailant in the occupied West Bank was convicted of manslaughter on Wednesday in one of the most divisive trials in Israel's history.

Hundreds of far-right protesters rallied in support of Sergeant Elor Azaria along a busy Tel Aviv street and some clashed with police outside an army base where the lengthy verdict was read out.

Despite a campaign by Azaria's family and rightist politicians criticising the armed forces for putting him on trial at a time of Palestinian street attacks, members of Israel's military establishment argued that shooting in violation of regulations could not be countenanced.

A three-judge military court rejected the 20-year-old conscript's arguments that he acted in self-defence.

The shooting was caught on video by a Palestinian rights activist, and the footage, distributed to news organisations, ensured the incident drew international attention.

Reading for 2-1/2 hours from

the verdict, chief judge Colonel Maya Heller said Azaria shot the Palestinian out of revenge in March 2016 after the assailant stabbed and wounded a fellow soldier in the West Bank town of Hebron.

"He deserves to die," Azaria was quoted in the verdict as telling another soldier, just after fatally shooting the Palestinian in the head as the man, who had been wounded minutes earlier by Israeli military gunfire, lay motionless in the street.

"One cannot use this type of force, even if we're talking about an enemy's life," the court said in its verdict. "We unanimously convict the accused of manslaughter and of conduct unbecoming (a soldier)."

Sentencing will be handed down at a later date. Politicians from right-wing parties have already called on President Reuven Rivlin to pardon the soldier, who has been dubbed "everyone's child" by the campaign supporting him.

The manslaughter charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment.—Reuters

Italy says same gun used in hijack of Berlin market truck, Milan shootout

ROME — A gun fired at Milan police by the man suspected of attacking a Christmas market in Berlin last month was the same one used to kill the driver of the truck that ploughed into revellers in the German capital, Italian police said on Wednesday.

Anis Amri, a failed asylum seeker from Tunisia, was shot dead in a gunfight with police in the Milan suburb of Sesto San Giovanni on 23 December days after he allegedly killed 12 people in Berlin.

Amri is also suspected of

shooting dead a truck driver in Germany and hijacking his vehicle, which he then drove into the Christmas market crowd. Police had been carrying out tests to ascertain if the same gun was used in both the Berlin and Milan shootings.

"The comparison carried out between the exploded cartridge from the terrorist's weapon in Sesto and the one found by the German police has given unequivocal proof that they were fired from the same gun," police said in a statement.—Reuters

UK's opposition Labour "too weak" to win an election — think tank

LONDON — Britain's opposition Labour Party is too weak to win a national election and should look to form an alliance with other smaller parties in order to have a chance of regaining power, a Labour-supporting think tank said on Tuesday.

Beset by internal rifts, the party has struggled to articulate a clear position on Brexit which it had campaigned against, giving Prime Minister Theresa May's ruling Conservatives a freer ride as she plots Britain's divorce from the EU.

Opinion polls consistently put Labour about 10 percentage points behind the Conservatives and if replicated at the next election due in 2020, Labour would win less than 200 seats in the 650-seat House of Commons for the first time since 1935, the left-wing Fabian Society said.

With polling in the past overstating Labour's

popularity, it could actually win as few as 140 seats, the think tank, one of Labour's original founders, said in an analysis paper entitled "Stuck".

"For the time being Labour has no realistic chance of winning an election outright," said Fabian Society General Secretary Andrew Harrop.

"It is much more plausible to imagine a group of anti-Conservative parties securing sufficient votes to form a governing alliance ... although even this would still require a very large reversal in Labour's present fortunes."

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, a veteran socialist, was re-elected in September after a challenge from one of his lawmakers that exposed sharp divisions between the party's elected representatives and grassroots supporters.

On Monday, the head



Jeremy Corbyn, the leader of Britain's opposition Labour Party reacts as demonstrators protesting about Syria disrupt his speech on human rights in central London, on 10 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

of Britain's biggest trade union and Labour's largest financial backer was reported as saying he did not think Corbyn would seek to cling on to power if the party's opinion poll ratings were

"still awful" in 2019.

Commentators say Labour's weakness is giving May breathing space on her plans for Brexit about which she has so far given few details.

It has also meant her attention has been on addressing divisions in her own party between those who want a "hard Brexit" with a focus on curbing immigration and those who want Britain to remain in the EU's single market.

However, despite its problems and the fact only half of those who voted for the party in 2015 say they support it today, the quirks of Britain's first-past-the-post electoral system mean Labour will not die out, Harrop said.

"Labour is too strong to be supplanted by another opposition party; and too weak to have any realistic chance of governing alone ... The question now is whether the party can move forward, not back?" he said.

Labour's poor ratings and a court battle over whether parliament's approval is needed to begin EU divorce talks have in-

creased speculation that May, appointed prime minister after June's Brexit vote, could seek to boost her slim parliamentary majority by calling a snap vote.

Labour already face an upcoming electoral test after lawmaker and vocal Corbyn critic Jamie Reed, whose northern English constituency voted strongly in favour of Brexit, said he would step down this month.

In a December election for a vacant Conservative-held parliamentary seat, Labour slipped from second to fourth place.

The Fabian Society said Labour faced a "Brexit dilemma" with leave supporters flocking to May's Conservatives and remainers to the pro-EU Liberal Democrats.

"Labour needs to be the party for the millions of voters who were neither die-hard remainers nor leavers," said Harrop.—Reuters

German minister eyes police overhaul after Christmas market attack

BERLIN — Germany must grant federal police more powers to counter threats like terrorism and cyber attacks, Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said on Tuesday, two weeks after a failed asylum seeker rammed a truck into a Christmas market and killed 12 people.

In his most detailed response yet to the 9 December attack, de Maiziere said Germany lacks laws that other countries have, and police and intelligence bodies are too fragmented.

"Our state must be better prepared for difficult times than it has been," de Maiziere said at the start of an election year in which immigration and security will be at the top of the political agenda.

"The federal government needs to be able to steer all security authorities where central government and the states work together on national security," he wrote in a full-page newspaper article in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

Each of the 16 federal states has its own police force and intelligence agency, and the country's worst attack in more than 35 years has reignited debate about how best to prevent information from falling between the cracks.

After the Christmas market attack, it emerged that Tunisian suspect Anis Amri had spent nearly a year and a half in Germany, using various names and moving between different parts of the country

despite being identified as a security threat. For several days he evaded an intensive search, crossing three international borders before being shot dead in Italy.

De Maiziere said the federal police agency should lead national man-hunts, and a discussion about centralising intelligence agencies was needed. Better coordination was also required to monitor several hundred individuals believed to pose a threat, including many who have returned from Syria and Iraq.

The minister said Germans should not fear installing more video cameras in public places to help prevent and solve crime. Germans have an aversion

to such measures after mass snooping under the communist East German Stasi and the Nazis.

He also said failed asylum seekers who are viewed as a danger should be held until they can be deported.

Amri, whose attack was claimed by Islamic State, was due to be sent home after his asylum application was rejected but Tunisia refused to take him because of missing papers.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, who is seeking a fourth term this year, is under growing pressure for allowing more than a million migrants into Germany over the past two years, which critics say has made the country more vulnerable to an attack.—Reuters

Vucic could win presidential elections in first round

BELGRADE — If he runs for president, Aleksandar Vucic could win the presidential elections in the first round already, while Tomislav Nikolic could have major problems in a run-off vote, shows a recent survey conducted by the Politika daily and the Faktor Plus opinion poll company.

The survey, based on a sample of 1,200 people, indicates Nikolic would be tied with Vuk Jeremic in potential run-off elections, and that he would win 62 pct of the votes in a showdown with Sasa Jankovic, and 53 pct or 58 pct if he faced Vojislav Seselj or Ivice Dacic, respectively.

Vucic would get 76



Aleksandar Vucic. PHOTO: TANJUG

pct of the votes if he were to face Seselj in a run-off vote, and 68 pct or 74 pct in a race against Jeremic or Jankovic, respectively.

Vucic would also beat Nikolic convincingly in run-off elections — 64 pct of respondents said they would vote for Vucic, with 34 pct opting for Nikolic.—Tanjug

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MCC HA LONG VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC HA LONG VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SHAHR E KORD VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SHAHR E KORD VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S LAND & SEA LOGISTICS
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SIMA PRESTIGE VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SIMA PRESTIGE VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 5.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES
Phone No: 2301185

China says aircraft carrier testing weapons in South China Sea

BEIJING — A group of Chinese warships led by its sole aircraft carrier is testing weapons and equipment in exercises this week in the South China Sea that are going to plan, China’s foreign ministry said on Wednesday.

Exercises by the ships, in particular the aircraft carrier Liaoning, since last month have unnerved China’s neighbors, especially at a time of heightened strain with self-ruled Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own, and given long-running territorial disputes in the South China Sea. China says the Soviet-built Liaoning and the other ships conduct routine exercises that comply with international law. “The Liaoning aircraft carrier group in the South China Sea is carrying out scientific research and training, in accordance with plans,” Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular news briefing.

“The purpose is to test



the performance of weapons and equipment,” he said.

The People’s Liberation Army Navy said on its official microblog this week that the aircraft carrier conducted drills in the South China Sea with its fighter jets and helicopters. US warships have

also been conducting what they call “freedom of navigation” patrols through the South China Sea over the past year as concern grows about Chinese construction of air strips and docks on disputed reefs and islands.

The group of warships

sailed through waters south of Japan and then rounded east and south of Taiwan late last month on their way to the south China province of Hainan. Taiwan’s defence minister warned at the time that “the threat of our enemies is growing day by day”.

Taiwan media have reported that the Liaoning could sail north up the median line of the Taiwan Strait, the narrow body of water separating Taiwan and China, on its way to its home port of Qingdao.

Taiwan’s defence min-

istry said the talk about the timing and northward route of the Liaoning was speculation, and it would make preparations based on the situation and “maintain its grasp of the movements” of the ship. Business relations between mainland China and Taiwan have grown significantly over the past decade but tension has increased since the island elected a president from an independence-leaning party last year.

China distrusts President Tsai Ing-wen and has stepped up pressure on her following a protocol-breaking phone call between her and US President-elect Donald Trump last month.

Beijing suspects Tsai wants to push for the island’s formal independence, a red line for the mainland, which has never renounced the use of force to bring what it deems a renegade province under its control.

Tsai says she wants to maintain peace with China.—Reuters

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES– INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT)

[COUNTRY] The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
[NAME OF PROJECT] Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project
Loan No.: 5889 -MM
Assignment Title: International procurement specialist
Reference No.: C4-IST-IC02

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has applied for financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The consulting services (“the Services”) include Assisting and advising the project team at all stages of procurement for contracts, providing technical assistance on tender, preparing communications and coordinating between Ministries and World Bank. The services of international procurement specialist will cover for 12 months.

The Ministry of Construction (MOC)and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI)now invites eligible individual consultant (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (e.g. consultant’s profile, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, etc.). The minimum qualifications and experience requirements are:

- Must have an advanced degree in management, economics, business administration, engineering or any related field
- At least 10 years of working experience in public procurement in developing countries, including at least 5 years in conducting procurement under World Bank financed projects.
- Familiarity with government and foreign aid project operations
- Excellent communication skills, including speaking and writing in English
- Willingness to train local staff on day-to-day basis
- Good working knowledge of computer programs such as word, excel etc.

The attention of interested individual consultant is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants [under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants] by World Bank Borrowers(Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. An individual consultant will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultant Selection method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours [09:30 to 16:00 hours’ local time].

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by, **FRIDAY 27 January 2017 (16:00 hours local time)**.

Attn: **Daw Tin Moe Myint, Director,**
Department of Rural Development
Office no-14, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Tel: **95 67 409410, 9595118240**
Fax: **9567409210**
E-mail: **rbbdrd@gmail.com**

For Detailed information please contact:
U Kyaw Swa Aung (Director)
Department of Rural Development
+95(0) 943434333
ksaung@hotmail.com

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES– INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT)

[COUNTRY] The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
[NAME OF PROJECT] Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project
Loan No.: 5889-MM
Assignment Title: International Road and Bridge Advisor
Reference No.: C4-IST-IC01

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has applied for financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The consulting services (“the Services”) include Technical supervision, administration and coordination support, procurement, financial management, safeguard, monitoring and reporting, capacity development.The services of international road and bridge advisor will cover for 3.5 years.

The Ministry of Construction (MOC)and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI)now invites eligible individual consultant (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services(e.g. consultant’s profile, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, etc.). The minimum qualifications and experience requirements are:

- At least Master’s Degree in Civil Engineering with a specialization in Highway, Road, or Transportation engineering from a recognized University;
- Minimum of 10 years large-scale project management experience;
- Demonstrated experience in design, rehabilitation, and maintenance of roads; estimate and contract preparation and negotiation; experience with procurement of engineering services and works contracts;
- Demonstrated technical background in labor-based appropriate technology road construction, build-back-better, DRM, CBDRM;
- Good knowledge of World Bank guidelines and requirements;
- Previous work experience in the region is an asset.

The attention of interested individual consultant is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants [under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants] by World Bank Borrowers (“Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. An individual Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultant Selection method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

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Department of Rural Development
Office no-14, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Tel: **95 67 409410, 9595118240**
Fax: **9567409210**
E-mail: **rbbdrd@gmail.com**

For Detailed information please contact:
U Kyaw Swa Aung (Director)
Department of Rural Development
+95(0) 943434333
ksaung@hotmail.com

Hanks, Kidman honoured as 2017 awards season starts in Palm Springs

PALM SPRINGS, Calif — Hollywood stars Tom Hanks and Nicole Kidman were among the actors honoured at the Palm Springs International Film Festival on Monday night as the 2017 awards season began.

Oscar winner Hanks received the “Icon Award” for his portrayal in drama “Sully” of pilot Captain Chesley Sullenberger, who in 2009 carried out a successful emergency plane landing in the Hudson River.

Kidman took the “International Star

Award” for “Lion”, in which she plays an Australian woman who adopts an Indian child. Also honoured at the festival’s Film Awards Gala were Andrew Garfield with the “Spotlight Award” for his role in Mel Gibson’s war drama “Hacksaw Ridge” and Natalie Portman who received the “Desert Palm Achievement Award, Actress” for her portrayal of Jacqueline Kennedy in “Jackie”.

“Manchester by the Sea” actor Casey Affleck took the “Desert Palm Achievement

Award”. “Arrival” actress Amy Adams was given the “Chairman’s Award”, Annette Bening was honoured with the “Career Achievement Award” and “Moonlight” actor Mahershala Ali took the honours in the “Breakthrough Performance” category.—Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS



Janet Jackson. PHOTO: REUTERS

Janet Jackson, 50, announces birth of first child

NEW YORK — Pop star Janet Jackson gave birth on Tuesday to her first child, a boy, at the age of 50, her publicist said.

“Janet Jackson and husband Wissam Al Mana are thrilled to welcome their new son Eissa Al Mana into the world,” the singer’s representative said in a statement to People magazine.

“Janet had a stress-free healthy delivery and is resting comfortably,” the statement said.

Jackson and Qatari businessman Al Mana married in 2012, and the singer in April

postponed her “Unbreakable” world tour so they could focus on starting a family.

In October, she showed off her baby bump in an exclusive photo for People magazine.

Jackson, the fiercely private youngest child of the famed Jackson singing family, has not given any details of the pregnancy or where the baby was born.

She had two previous marriages: a year-long union with soul singer James DeBarge in the mid 1980s, and to dancer Rene Elizondo Jr from 1991-2000.—Reuters

‘Pentatonix Christmas’ tops Billboard album charts for second straight week

NEW YORK — US a capella group Pentatonix extended its run at the top of the Billboard 200 album chart for a second week with “A Pentatonix Christmas,” according to Nielsen

SoundScan figures for the final week of 2016 released on Tuesday.

The five-member group from Texas sold 101,000 units for the week and also saw its

2014 holiday release, “That’s Christmas To Me,” notch up another 42,000 units to take the No 9 spot on the Billboard 200.

In a week with few new releases, Canadian rapper The Weeknd rose to second place with his album “Starboy,” while R&B singer Bruno Mars was at No 3 with his latest album “24K Magic.”

The Billboard 200 album chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

On the digital songs chart, which measures online song sales, Rae Sremmurd’s viral hit “Black Beatles” moved back into No 1, while “Mercy,” the Shawn Mendes piano ballad about heartbreak, soared 12 places to land at No 2.

British singer George Michael, who was found dead on Christmas Day, saw a surge in popularity. His 1984 hit “Careless Whisper” entered the digital song charts in spot 21, and other hits including “Faith” and “Freedom” found their way into the top 30.—Reuters



Pop group Pentatonix arrives at the 50th Annual Country Music Association Awards in Nashville, Tennessee, US, on 2 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

‘La La Land’, ‘Manchester by the Sea’ and ‘Moonlight’ sweep New York Critics Circle

NEW YORK — “La La Land” continued its domination of the Best Picture category for this awards season by taking the top prize at the 82nd New York Film Critics Circle awards on Tuesday night.

Directed by Damien Chazelle, the musical love story of an aspiring actress and a jazz musician set in Los Angeles is considered an Oscar front-runner this year.

Casey Affleck picked up Best Actor for his portrayal of a man who becomes the reluctant guardian for his teenage nephew after his brother dies, in the film “Manchester by the Sea”.

“Well, I’ve been singled out

by this organization before in a less flattering way, but you got to take your lumps, you know, if you’re going to enjoy the sugar ... So it’s nice to be in this room and to know that at least a majority of them appreciated the job I did in this movie, if not all of them,” Affleck said.

French actress Isabelle Huppert was recognized as Best Actress for her work in the drama films “Elle” and “Things To Come”.

“I feel like I have twins, it’s great, it’s really great ... and I think both films speak in a very honest way about a woman’s condition in a very contemporary way,” she said.

Best Supporting Actress went to Michelle Williams for her roles in “Manchester by the Sea” and “Certain Women”.

“Moonlight”, which follows a young black man growing up in a tough Miami neighborhood, picked up multiple trophies.

Mahershala Ali snagged Best Supporting Actor for his depiction of a crack dealer, while Barry Jenkins was named Best Director and James Laxton Best Cinematographer.

Founded in 1935, the New York Film Critics Circle is among the oldest critics groups in the United States, and its awards are seen as a bellwether for the Oscars.—Reuters



(L-R) Producer Gary Gilbert, actors Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, director Damien Chazelle and producer Jordan Horowitz pose backstage with their award for Best Picture for ‘La La Land’ during the 22nd Annual Critics’ Choice Awards in Santa Monica, California, US, 11 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

China’s icy Harbin gets ready for annual snow festival

HARBIN, (China) — Artists put the final touches on a dazzling display of ice sculptures in China’s northern city of Harbin on Wednesday, home to one of the world’s biggest ice and snow festivals.

The 2017 Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival kicks off on Thursday and runs to the end of February.

The event, in the northeastern province of Heilongjiang, draws visitors from all over China as well as foreign tourists to one of the country’s coldest places, where winter temperatures can fall to minus 35 Celsius.

Qing Wenyu, a tourist from the southern Guangxi region, was among the travellers getting a sneak peak at the sculptures mostly carved out of ice blocks cut from the frozen surface of a nearby river.

“When I was in primary school, I read about how it snows in the northern part of our country in a textbook. So this has really attracted me to this place for some 10 years or so,” said Qing after taking a ride down an ice slide.

Nearby, artists laboured over their icy creations, some of which resembled famous historical figures and landmarks such as Italy’s Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Work on the ice carvings begins in mid-December, with some projects rising as high as a two- or three-storey building, the festival’s official website said.

In addition to the sculptures, Harbin offers visitors a slew of activities, ranging from winter swimming and ice sailing to a mass wedding ceremony on ice that attracts couples from around the globe.

Zhang Yanyan, a 31-year-old tourist from southern Fujian province, said she was drawn to the colourful lights that illuminate the ice sculptures at night.

“I think they’re all beautiful. I really like it here,” she said.—Reuters

UK royal Kate given photographic society’s seal of approval

LONDON — Britain’s Duchess of Cambridge, whose pictures of her children Prince George and Princess Charlotte have graced the front pages of newspapers and magazines worldwide, was commended on Tuesday by the Royal Photographic Society for her family snapshots.

Kate, the wife of Queen Elizabeth’s grandson Prince William, was given honorary lifetime membership of the charity in recognition of her “talent and enthusiasm”.

Her photographs, the first official portraits to be taken by a member of the royal family, have included shots of George holding his younger sister and of the young prince on his first day at nursery school.

“The Duchess of Cambridge has had a long-standing interest in photography and its history,” said Michael Pritchard, chief executive of the society which was formed in 1853 and counts Elizabeth’s great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria and her husband Prince Albert among its early patrons.

“She is latest in a long line of royal photographers and the Society is pleased to recognise her talent and enthusiasm through honorary membership,” Pritchard added.—Reuters

Britain’s Queen Elizabeth resumes duties as she recovers from cold

LONDON — Britain’s Queen Elizabeth has given an honour to a member of her staff in a private ceremony, resuming official duties as she continued to recover from a heavy cold that forced her to miss Christmas and New Year church services, a spokeswoman said.

The 90-year-old monarch fell ill before Christmas, delayed her trip from London to her country estate at Sandringham in eastern England by a day, then took the very rare decision not to attend the festive season church services.

She has not been seen in public since before she became unwell and Buckingham Palace has said she was recuperating from a heavy cold.

On Tuesday, the queen gave a member of her staff, Raymond Whetton, the insignia of a Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order, an honour that usually rewards personal service to her or the monarchy.

A spokeswoman said the private ceremony took place at Sandringham and no pictures were available.

The queen also sent a personal message of condolence on Tuesday to Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan following the New Year’s Eve attack on a nightclub in Istanbul that killed 39 people.—Reuters



Floats which were featured in the 128th annual Rose Parade are pictured in Pasadena, California US, on 3 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(5-1-2017 07:00am ~ 4-1-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Paper Products... Plain but Pretty
07:46	Am	Ywar Thit's Monhinkhar
08:03	Am	News
08:27	Am	Tour of national heritages and archeological sites
08:51	Am	Myanmar Masterclass: U Maung Aye
09:03	Am	News
09:27	Am	Products of Myanmar- Shin Ma Taung Thanakhar
09:44	Am	village Belle
10:03	Am	News
10:27	Am	"Myanmar's Traditions and Culture" Novicehood in Myanmar

10:52 Am Black Gold (Part - I)

(11:00 Am~03:00 Pm)-Wednesday Repeat(07:00Am~11:00Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00Am)

Prime Time

08:03	Pm	News
07:27	Pm	Travelogue: To my dream city (Part-2)
07:45	Pm	MONASTERY (Bargayar Kyaung)
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Myanmar Traditional Identity (EP- 2) Myanmar Chinthe (Myanmar Lion)
08:41	Pm	Lucrative Myanma Rattan Industry

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) -Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm~03:00 Am)-Wednesday Repeat(07:00Am~11:00Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) -Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

MRTV

Programme Schedule
(5-1-2017, Thursday)

6:00 Am	◆ Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadw	2:25 Pm	◆ Weekly Sport Info
7:30 Am	◆ NRC Programme	3:15 Pm	◆ TV Drama Series
8:30 Am	◆ NKH Programme "Observing Newts" (2) (Life of the Newts)	4:35 Pm	◆ Myanmar Series
8:50 Am	◆ Documentary	5:15 Pm	◆ Football Magazine
9:30 Am	◆ Beautiful ASEAN	5:35 Pm	◆ Applied Financial Knowledge
9:50 Am	◆ ASEAN Spotlight	6:35 Pm	◆ Current Affairs
9:40 Am	◆ MRTV Worker's Programme	7:15 Pm	◆ TV Drama Series
10:30 Pm	◆ TV Drama Series	8:00 Pm	◆ News/International News/ Weather Report
12:35 Pm	◆ TV Drama Series	8:35 Pm	◆ Documentary
1:20 Pm	◆ Fine Arts-Bosom of Dramatic Performance	9:00 Pm	◆ News/ Weather Report
2:15 Pm	◆ Myanmar Traditional performing Arts Competitions	◆ TV Drama Series	◆ Talk on Old Film (Part-3)

Note/ Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)

Arsenal show their mettle to snatch point, Swansea win

LONDON — Flimsy before halftime, fabulous by the end; Arsenal revealed the split personality that has undermined so many of their Premier League title attempts as they snatched an unforgettable 3-3 draw at Bournemouth on Tuesday.

Out-battled for an hour by their modest south coast opponents, Arsenal belatedly sparked into life and Olivier Giroud's glancing header two minutes into stoppage time completed their remarkable recovery from 3-0 down.

It was the first time Arsene Wenger's side had recovered from such a deficit to draw in the Premier League and while they remained fourth, eight points adrift of leaders Chelsea who have played a game less, it could yet prove to be pivotal moment in their season as defeat would have been a hammer blow.

Swansea City's new manager Paul Clement was not officially in charge of his side's match at Crystal Palace but his presence helped the Swans move off the bottom of the table with a 2-1 victory at fellow strugglers Crystal Palace.

Stoke City also beat Watford

2-0 to leave Chelsea's match at fifth-placed Tottenham Hotspur on Wednesday the final installment of a hectic fixture list.

The packed schedule over the Christmas-New Year period seemed to catch up with Arsenal who were back in action just 48 hours after beating Palace on Sunday.

They were second-best throughout the first half as Bournemouth moved 2-0 ahead after 20 minutes with a neat Charlie Daniels goal and a Callum Wilson penalty.

Ryan Fraser made it 3-0 in the 58th minute before goals from Alexis Sanchez and Lucas Perez set up a barnstorming finale.

Bournemouth were hanging on grimly after skipper Simon Francis was sent off in the 82nd minute but were breached again by a rampaging Arsenal side in stoppage time as Giroud pounced to follow up on his "scorpion" volley against Palace on Sunday.

"It was not a result we wanted before the game but at 3-0 down we'd have signed for 3-3," Wenger, whose side will slip out of the top four if Tottenham beat Chelsea, said.



Bournemouth's Callum Wilson goes down under challenge from Arsenal's Petr Cech leading to penalty appeals during the match between AFC Bournemouth and Arsenal at the Vitality Stadium on 3 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

"I believe we refused to lose. There's a great resilience in the team and we saw that today.

"Defensively we had some weaknesses tonight that were unusual and in some positions at the back we suffered."

Clement was named as Swansea's new manager shortly before they kicked off at Selhurst Park.

The former Bayern Munich assistant would have taken heart from the way his new club dominated the first half in which Alfie Mawson gave them a 42nd-minute lead and by the way they

snatched a late victory through Angel Rangel.

Palace have now failed to win in their three matches under new manager Sam Allardyce and sit just above the bottom three in 17th place, one point above Swansea and Sunderland.

Like Wenger, Allardyce said the quick turnaround from playing on Sunday had undermined his side.

"Whether you're tired or not you have to play and I told them that at halftime," he said.

"I was baffled with our first-half display, we were lumping

the ball to Christian Benteke and who told them to do that? They were confused."

Alan Curtis was officially in charge of Swansea but Clement came down to the dugout in the second half.

"He came down for some moral support, he made his presence felt at halftime, but there was not too much to say," Curtis said. "We would have surprised a lot of people with our performance today." Ryan Shawcross and Peter Crouch scored either side of halftime for Stoke as they eased into mid-table. —Reuters

Guardiola needs time to establish City among Europe's elite

LONDON — Manchester City may need a decade of consistent performances in the Champions League to establish themselves among Europe's biggest clubs, manager Pep Guardiola has said.

City have won two Premier League titles, an FA Cup and two League Cups in the last six seasons under managers Roberto Mancini and Manuel Pellegrini, but the Spaniard wants his side to excel in Europe's elite competition.

"We don't have the history with this shirt, of Barcelona, Juventus, (Bayern) Munich or Manchester United. Not their titles," the 45-year-old manager told NBC.

"It's about being in Europe and over the next decade to be there (in the Champions League) every year. That's more

important to this club than winning one title, believe me, more than that.

"We have to convince people at this amazing club that they are good. They are good. And the fans as well."

City have qualified for the Champions League every year since 2010 and they reached the semi-final for the first time last season.

Guardiola believes it is not just the manager but several other factors that determine success at a club.

"I chose Manchester — to prove myself and have a new challenge," he said. "If people think, 'Pep's here; City will win'. No. That's not something you can switch on or off. "You need many, many other things to change and we are in the process of doing that." —Reuters

Pertamina drops sponsorship for F1 driver Haryanto

JAKARTA — Indonesian driver Rio Haryanto has suffered a major setback in his bid to return to Formula One this season after state-owned energy company Pertamina announced it was ending its sponsorship.

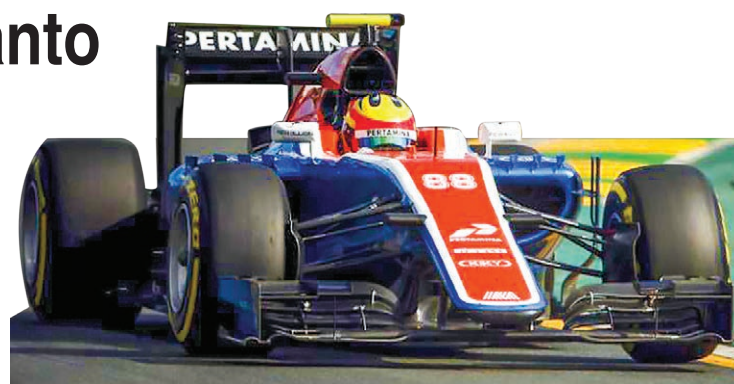
"This year there will not be a continuation of participation by Pertamina in F1," spokeswoman Wianda Puspongoro said in a statement on Tuesday, noting that Pertamina could not meet a sponsorship deadline.

"Of course we regret this very much, but we have already made maximal efforts for Rio and Indonesia," she said.

Haryanto, the first Indonesian to race in Formula One and only Asian driver on the grid last season, said in a text message that he had "not yet confirmed" his position and hoped to reach a decision as soon as possible.

"We are still working on a plan to keep Rio in Formula One," Haryanto's manager, Piers Hunnisett, told Reuters.

"People in the Formu-



Manor Racing F1 driver Rio Haryanto drives during the Australian Formula One Grand Prix in Melbourne. PHOTO: REUTERS

la One world felt he did a good job and he deserves to be there," Hunnisett said, adding that it would be a "great shame" if Haryanto missed out on a seat in 2017. The only likely vacancies still open are the two Manor seats and there is lingering uncertainty about that team's future ownership.

Swiss-based Sauber, who like Manor expect their drivers to bring financial backing, are expected to sign German driver Pascal Wehrlein, who is backed by Mercedes, alongside Sweden's Marcus Ericsson.

"Obviously, we were hoping

to move into a team like Sauber - that was the plan but things are going to slow down a little bit," said Hunnisett.

Haryanto started 12 races for Manor in 2016, alongside Wehrlein, before being replaced by French rookie Esteban Ocon after the German Grand Prix in July. Ocon has since moved on to Force India. Pertamina have been Haryanto's constant backers in the costly sport, and Hunnisett said last month that while he was looking for other non-government backers he was confident that Pertamina would continue to sponsor Haryanto. —Reuters