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Vol. III, No. 269, 13th Waxing of Pyatho 1378 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Tuesday, 10 January 2017

Plan for 2017-2018 discussed prior to parliament submission



President U Htin Kyaw, left, addresses the meeting of the National Planning Commission of the Union Government in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

THE National Planning Commission of the Union Government held a meeting this month to seek approval for its plan for the 2017-2018 fiscal year before it is submitted to the parliament.

Myanmar's economy is estimated to grow at a 5.7 per cent rate in the current fiscal year of 2016-2017, and the country's GDP growth is expected to rise to 7 per cent. Per capita GDP is expected to reach more than K1.7 million, according to the meeting.

President U Htin Kyaw, in his capacity as Chairman of the commission, called on regional and state governments to attach importance to projects in their respective regions and states in order to be in



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. PHOTO: MNA

conformity with the policies laid down by the Union Government.

The Union Government has adopted a 12-point economic policy and has drawn up tasks for implementing the economic policies, said the President.

Plans should be adaptable to suggestions made by the parliament when they are submitted to the parliament for approval, as the government and the parliament have a system of checks and balances.

The National Plan drafted by the Ministry of Planning and Finance in accordance with the objectives and policies of the State is expected to fulfil the expectations of the ministries and regional and state governments, he added. The plan was drawn up by the incumbent government for the first time during its tenure in office.

The country's economic growth slowed in the first six

months of the current fiscal year due mainly to a slump in agricultural production, foreign investment and the export sector.

Political and economic situations in foreign countries also contributed to the economic slowdown, he said.

President U Htin Kyaw stressed the need to draw the projects region-wise and sector-wise under the National Plan of the

2017-2018 fiscal year in terms of short term and long-term visions and to plan big projects within the budget allocation of the State.

Assessments should be carried out for the projects to be implemented in the 2017-2018 fiscal year on whether the projects will be successful, benefit the people, contribute to regional development and not harm the environment, he added.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the Deputy Chairperson of the commission, called for the country's national planning to consist of projects that can contribute to short-term and long-term interests of the Union.

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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Pilot project for National ID data collection underway in Sittway



Immigration officials participate in course in collecting statistics for a National Electronic ID (NeID) in Rakhine State. PHOTO: MNA

A TRAINING course in collecting statistics for a National Electronic ID (NeID) in Rakhine State was opened at the Rakhine State Immigration and Population Department in Sittway on Sunday, with an opening address by Director-General of the Immigration and Population Department U Aye Lwin.

A total of 44 staff from Rakhine State, Sittway District and Sittway, Buthidaung and Maung-taw township Immigration and Population Departments were in attendance to learn how to collect statistics for the NeID.

Township officers and staff from Sittway Township Immigration and Population Department entered the personal data of individual residents and took photos of members of families for registration of household

members using internet technology.

Rakhine State Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Htein Lin, Development Affairs Minister U Min Aung, Commander of Regional Military Command (Sittway) Brig-Gen Hla Myint Soe and the director-general of the IPD inspected the process and greeted local residents.

Pilot projects are also being implemented in Pubbathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Chanayetharzan Township in Mandalay Region and Insein Township in Yangon Region. Data for a total of 162 people was collected during the pilot project in Sittway, and plans are underway to collect such statistics in Buthidaung and Maung-taw.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Out of monthly savings of Union Ministers and Hluttaw Representatives, K 2000 lakhs donated to peace process

K 2000 Lakhs out of monthly savings of Union Ministers and Hluttaw representatives from the National League for Democracy were donated to peace process in Myanmar yesterday.

At the ceremony held at the NLD's headquarters in Bahan Township yesterday, U Tin Oo, patron of the National League for Democracy gave the donation money to U Naing Ngan Lin, Yangon Region Cabinet's minister for Social Welfare and member of the Peace Commission.

As regards the donation, Thura U Tin Oo, spoke on behalf of the NLD that the donation was made in dedication to the 21st Century Panglong Peace Conference of the country.



U Tin Oo, patron of NLD, hands over K 2000 Lakhs, to U Naing Ngan Lin, Yangon Region Social Welfare Minister. PHOTO: ZAW GYI

Out of monthly savings of Union Ministers and Hluttaw representatives, the amount of K 2000 lakhs were donated to be used in the process of the peace. — *Zaw Gyi (Panita)*

Special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar arrives

Ms Yanghee Lee, special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, arrived in Myanmar on Sunday evening for her fifth trip to the country.

During her visit she will visit Rakhine State and meet with the Myanmar Human Rights Commission and Myanmar media council. In addition, she will meet with Hluttaw Affairs Committees



Ms Yanghee Lee is welcomed by an official at the Yangon International Airport. PHOTO: MNA

of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw and Union Ministers in Nay Pyi Taw, it is learnt.

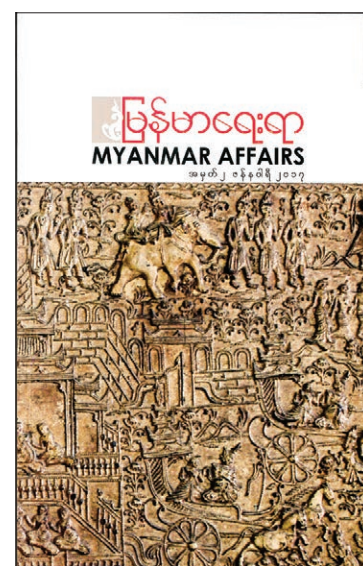
A press conference on the trip is to be held in Yangon.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myanmar Affairs Volume-2 in circulation

THE Volume-2 of “Myanmar Affairs”, (January 2017) published by the Centre for Myanmar Affairs Studies of the Ministry of Information, came out yesterday.

“Myanmar Affairs” Book 2 includes 18 articles on politics, the economy, social affairs, education and two articles in English. Articles in Myanmar were written by: Oway U Nyo Mya; U Wun (Min Thu Wun); Dr Maung Maung Gyi; James Brendan; Min Tin; Kyaw Lin Oo; Aung Kyaw Aye Chan; Wint San; Dr Myo Nyunt (Macroeconomics); Dr Myint San; Yamin Myat Aye; Zaw Aung; Phoe Hlaing; Dr Aung Gyi; Naing Hteik; Myint Kyaw (Zalun); Ye Myint Kyaw and Maw Lin. In the English section, two articles were written by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Nu.

The Centre for Myanmar Affairs Studies is publishing a “My-



anmar Affairs” book every three months. The book is available at Duwon Bookshop at No 212, 31st street (upper block), Pabedan Township, Yangon.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Parliamentary meetings to be resumed on 30th January

PARLIAMENTARY meetings will be resumed on 30th January, according to an announcement of the parliament yesterday.

The statement signed by Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, which is made up of Pyithu Hluttaw, and Amyotha Hluttaw, said that Pyidaungsu Hluttaw will hold its 4th regular meeting at 1:30 pm in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Pyithu Hluttaw will hold its 4th regular meeting at 10am in Nay Pyi Taw on 30th January,

according to the announcement of Pyithu Hluttaw signed by its Speaker U Win Myint.

The Amyotha Hluttaw will also hold its 4thth regular meeting at 10 am in Nay Pyi Taw on the same day, according to the announcement of Amyotha Hluttaw signed by its Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

The parliamentarians are to report their presence to the Hluttaw on 27th January but not later than 28 January.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Message of Greetings sent by President U Htin Kyaw to the Kachin State Day Celebration Ceremony (10 January 2017)

My dear esteemed brothers and sisters, national brethren residing in the Kachin State,

On this very blessed, significant and auspicious 69th Anniversary of Kachin State Day which falls on 10th January, I send my greetings and good wishes for the auspiciousness of my ethnic brothers and sisters, and all Union citizens residing in the Kachin State.

On 10th January 1948, after gaining Independence, the first meeting of the Kachin State Council was held and to honour the establishment of the Kachin State Government, 10th January was designated as Kachin State Day. From that day onwards we have been celebrating annually and today marks the 69th Anniversary.

The Kachin State comprises 4 districts, 18 townships, and 30 towns and it is also a State which is inhabited by such Kachin racial groups as the Jingphaw, Rawang, Lisu, Lachid, Lhaovo, and Zaiwa; Shan racial groups such as Tailai, Tailay, Tailon, Taisar, Tai Khamti; Burmans and other ethnic racial groups totaling a population of a little more than 16,00,000 who are living together in friendship and cordiality.

Kachin State is rich with precious gems and minerals such as gold and jade and is the home of the one and only snow-capped mountain ranges in the whole of South-East Asia. It also has very beautiful scenery. Furthermore, it is also the region where the river Ayeyar-

waddy, which may be called the life-blood of Myanmar has its source.

Such a beautiful and peaceful Kachin State which is rich in mineral and natural resources, has been unable to enjoy its natural beauty and has not been able to use its natural resources effectively for development purposes.

In the implementation of development projects, without peace, stability and rule of law in the respective areas, these projects cannot be completed successfully. In working for the development of Kachin State as a whole, all the respective areas, and sectors will develop in a balanced way only if there is peace and stability in the respective areas. All the ethnic national races living in Kachin State have known the taste of peace and they are also yearning for peace. Gaining peace is also the biggest desire of the entire people.

Now is the time for all the ethnic national brothers and sisters to work hard with sincerity for the cessation of all kinds of armed conflicts which have arisen due to many causes, for genuine and long lasting peace. At a time like this, we will be able to wrest ourselves out of this "conflict quagmire" and attain genuine and lasting peace only if all our ethnic national brothers and sisters work hard with sincerity and correct "cetana".

Our Union Government has initiated the first meeting of the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Pan-

glong, from 31 August 2016 to 3 September in Nay Pyi Taw with the aim of bringing peace for the whole Union and all-round development and progress. The ultimate goal of this conference is to work towards the establishment of a Democratic Federal Union by first securing internal peace, by resolving political problems through political means and also to find solutions for fundamental rights and equality for ethnic national races.

The "National Reconciliation and Peace Centre" has been established and operations have begun for peace to prevail in the whole country including the Kachin State. It is necessary for all ethnic national races and Union citizens to all join hands and work hard collectively together with the Union Government for the peace process to be successful.

In conclusion, on this day and at this time, for the national reconciliation and peace process, which Union Government is implementing to succeed as soon as possible, I wish to urge all ethnic national brothers and sisters to work collectively in unity and harmony with firm Union spirit and genuine patriotic spirit.

On this blessed and auspicious Kachin State Day, I am sending this Message of Greetings as I wish all nationals of the Kachin State peace, prosperity and happiness.

*Sd/ Htin Kyaw
President*

Finance Commission discusses budget for next fiscal year

A MEETING of the Finance Commission was held at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon to discuss the budget for the next fiscal year, a task that will factor in challenges that are similar to the ones from the previous year, the President said.

"In implementing the national economic development and stability of the national economy in the financial year 2017-2018 as in the fiscal year 2016-2017, there are still challenges for the Union Government. The challenges — fall in the country's major income from the export of natural gas due to the unstable prices of global natural gas, slumps of incomes due to reduced export of timber, plunging income on account of re-scrutiny of grant of mining plots, distributing power supply with losses for the sake of the public, facing the great needs of infrastructures for national development, requirement to implement for the emergence of favorable environments and acceptable laws and rules so that influx of direct investments from home and abroad can come into the country, are facing the country and it is urgently needed to study and prepare to overcome these challenges," the President said.

Present at the meeting were President U Htin Kyaw, the President of the State and Chairman of the Finance Commission, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, Vice-Presidents and Vice-Chairmen of the Finance Commission U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Secretary of the Finance Commission and Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Kyaw Win and Union Ministers, Chief Ministers of Regions and States, Union Attorney General, Union Auditor General and



The finance commission holds its meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

responsible officials.

The President said a budget estimate for the 2017-2018 fiscal year should include projects that spur development, but that it should not throw the country into debt.

"The present 1/2017 meeting of the Finance Commission is to discuss and adopt the Budget Estimate for the financial year 2017-2018 of the Union and Bill on 2017 Budget of the Union. As for the Finance Commission, it is to approve the Bill on 2017 Budget of the Union. And, having laid down 12 economic policies, the Union Government will implement people-centered sustainable economic development. Expenditures are required to be spent by dividing systematically, to help national development projects and economic policies of the State. Yet, it is necessary to keep the budget deficit under the present 5 per cent of the GDP, for the debts so as not to increase too much and to maintain the durability of the debt. The State has been spending annually more on education and health for the development of human resources. Besides, expenditures on social security and reforestation, ac-

quisition of power supply, rural development and progress of infrastructures are being spent to keep balance. Expenditures for the social security of financial year 2017-2018 were increasingly granted," said President U Htin Kyaw.

The spending plans for regions and states will increase, the President said, using a system being utilized by other countries.

"As regards the Budget for the Regions and States, in supporting regions and states from the finance fund of the Union, budgets are being divided among them in proportion with the standardized systems being exercised by other countries. As for the states and regions, it is necessary to increase their income sources and concurrently spend effectively the finance supported by the Union for the development of the regions and states. It has been found that the Ministry of Planning and Finance has drawn up the Medium Term Fiscal Framework, and expenditure framework has been drawn up for the departments and organizations at the Union Level. Similarly, it has been learnt that the Union Government has designated the fulfil-

ment to the deficits of regions and states by using macroeconomic indicators and indexes," the President said.

Afterwards, Vice-President U Myint Swe, Vice-Chairman of the Finance Commission spoke in detail about the total income of the departments and organizations of the Union for the financial year 2017-2018, budget amounts allocated to the regions and states from the Union Fund, special funds for spending essentially for unpredictable natural disasters and the State's contribution to the Fund for the Management of National Natural Disasters.

Vice-President U Henry Van Thio, Vice-Chairman of the Finance Commission, talked at length about the commercial tax and the special commodity tax, and explained the need for the Commission to approve the budget for the fiscal year 2017-2018. Following this, Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Kyaw Win, Secretary of the Finance Commission, clarified the Budget of the Union for the fiscal year 2017-2018 and Bill on the Budget of the Union for the financial year 2017. —Myanmar News Agency

Plan for 2017-2018 discussed prior. . .

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She also stressed the importance of "correctness and accuracy" for national-level planning and flexibility so that projects are adaptable to global changes, pointing out that the global economy and the country's economy can change from day to day.

The State Counsellor also called for cooperation and coordination between ministries, governments and also between the Union Government and regional and state governments as part of efforts for seeking a solution to differences of opinion. She also said the plans should be adaptable to suggestions made by the parliament when they are submitted to the parliament for approval, as the government and the parliament have a system of checks and balances.

At the meeting, the Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Kyaw Win clarified the draft of the national-level planning for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, and Union ministers and chief ministers of the regions and states reported on tasks for implementing the projects.

In his concluding remarks, President U Htin Kyaw said the projects should ensure transparency, saying the incumbent government is currently implementing previous projects and would stop some projects that the government cannot afford to continue. He also urged the participants of the meeting to do their best not to repeat mistakes that occurred in the past when they implement the projects in the time of the new government. —Myanmar News Agency

Myanmar Clarifies Myanmar-India Demarcation Fencing in Naga Self-administered Zone

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, clarified the Myanmar-India demarcation fencing between BP-145 & BP-146 in order for the public to be informed of the true situation and of the mutual cooperation on border affairs between Myanmar and India.

In the clarification, it is described that the major objective of Myanmar's arrangement to construct a border fence between BP-145 & BP-146 is to hinder

the construction of buildings in Myanmar's territory beyond the demarcation line between the two countries. It is absolutely not, for the people from both sides, to restrict the regular travel in official ways in accord with their traditions and customs. It is intended for our regional authorities to effectively perform the management of the border affairs.

It is also stated that Myanmar will carry out, in accord-

ance with the prescriptions of Myanmar-India border agreement signed by both sides, in constructing the demarcation fencing. According to the agreement, Myanmar will construct the fencing in Myanmar territory 10 meters from the demarcation border line. It has been arranged for doors and gates to be made at the necessary places, for the convenience of the regional people. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Ks380m in government funds for rural electrification in Yamethin Township

AUTHORITIES started implementing the development projects covering rural electrification and upgrading of primary school facilities in Yamethin Township, Mandalay Region, said U Aung Myo Oo, an MP of Yamethin Constituency.

Mandalay Region government granted over Ks380 million in poverty reduction funds to carry out development tasks in Yamethin Township, he added.

Nine rural primary schools will be upgraded under the pro-

ject, which allows conducting electricity supply programmes in four villages. Those projects have been initiated under the supervision of respective working committees chaired by regional Hluttaw representatives.

A committee includes a township education officer, the secretary of township electricity department, members of the administration office, a development affairs committee and two town elders. The government plans to spend Ks295 million to recon-

struct school structures in Thein-gonkyang, Thaphangonkyang, Payutseikgon, Kanma, Inbound, Taunggyi, Theye and Htanaung-gon villages and over Ks89 million for an electrification project in Inpingyi, Ingon, Ahlegon and Inpinyoe villages. All of the villagers warmly welcome the government's development support, said U Aung Myint, a resident in Kanma Village, who wished for the authorities to repave the village-to-village roads in the township. — *Myitmakha News Agency*

WY-brand stimulant tablets seized in Shwegu

AN anti-narcotic suppression squad seized WY stimulant tablets at Khon Kham Ward 1 in Shwegu Township, Bhamo district, Kachin State on 7 January.

Acting on a tip-off, police searched a house owned by Daw Tint and arrested her in posses-

sion with 162 WY-brand stimulant tablets and four unused lead plates.

Police filed charges against her under the Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — *Nay Lin Aung (Shwegu)*



Daw Tint.
PHOTO: MPF

Man arrested for drug smuggling in Lashio

A MAN in his 60s has been arrested for drug dealing in Lashio, a town in the north of Shan State, according to a police report.

Acting on a tip-off, members of an anti-drug squad searched the house of Jawgan in Kaunhone Village in Weinhtan Village-tract

on Wednesday evening, arresting the house owner after he was found in a possession of a cache of 11,000 yaba pills worth Ks22 million and over Ks4.5 million worth of opium powder weighing 241.2 grams plus Ks3 million in cash.

According to police investigations, the suspect, who has abused drugs for about 15 years, started selling the illegal stimulants over the past six years.

Police are still investigating the case in an effort to arrest others who are involved in the case.

Action is being taken against the suspect under Section 15/19 (a)/ 20 (a)/ 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Anti-drug squad uncovered three drug-related cases within the very first week of 2017 in Lashio Township. — *Myitmakha News Agency*



Drugs and cash confiscated by police from Jawgan, 60, in Lashio Township. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Crime NEWS

Stimulants found during clearance operation in Shan State

DURING clearance operations by the Tatmataw in a camp 9-and-a-half miles north of Konkyan Township in Shan State, 2,450 WY-brand stimulant tablets worth Ks 36 lakh

were discovered yesterday afternoon.

Tatmadaw columns continue to conduct clearance operations in the area. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Raw opium, stimulants found in taxi



Hein Si Aung alias Aung Aung with passenger Zaw Myo Tint.
PHOTO: MPF

MEMBERS of anti-narcotic squad 25 from Taunggyi searched a taxi driven by Hein Si Aung alias Aung Aung with passenger Zaw Myo Tint on board at milepost 98, Bawathantayay bridge on Taunggyi-Meiktila road on 9 January and found 11,992 stimulant tablets.

Similarly, anti-narcotic squad 28 from Kengtung

searched a motorcycle ridden by Sai Aung Tun near Khae Nin Oriental toll gate in Lashio on 8 January and found 1,800 stimulant tablets and 850 grams of raw opium.

Police filed charges against them under the Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — *Myanmar Police Force*

Hawker killed in truck brake failure accident

A 30-YEAR-OLD hawker was killed on the spot when a farm truck's brakes failed and struck him on Sunday in Lashio Township in northern Shan State, according to police.

The farm truck, heavily loaded with cargo, was being driven by Aung Ye Hein, 27, from west to east on Yaykan-

taung Street when it crashed into a stall as the driver lost control of the car, which had moved backwards after going uphill. The collision killed U Myat Min, the owner of the stall.

The reckless truck driver has been charged under Section 304 (a) of the Penal Code. — *Myitmakha News Agency*



Hawker dies after being struck by car in Lashio.
PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

LOCAL Business

Fishery exports fetched nearly US\$ 400million in nine months of this FY

The export of fishery products as of 30th December in this fiscal year 2016-2017 was US\$ 394.098 million, \$66.164million higher than that of last fiscal year.

The fishery export sector attained its highest level of over US\$650million in 2012-2013. Since then, the value of fishery exports has gradually declined.

Pedigree fingerlings are required to transition from traditional methods of fish farming to a modern farming system. Moreover, throwing the feedstuff such as bran and peanut oil cake into lakes

causes the wastage and losses, resulting in high amounts of feedstuff used to feed the fish. The feedstuff produced by a feed production machine should be utilised in fish farming.

In addition, the purity of the lake water is also important so as to prevent the fish from infectious diseases and to increase the growth rate and hatching rate of the fish. Those engaged in fish farming should check the quality of the lake water to manage at the library of the Fishery department, according to Myanmar Fish Federation.—*Mon Mon*

Myanmar stands second in demand lists for Japanese used cars

Myanmar was second on the demand lists for Japanese used-cars from 2014 to 2016, according to an announcement released by the Japan External Trade Organisation.

Japanese automakers focus on technical specifications in the manufacturing process, which

results in even their used cars to be favoured. Used cars made in Japan are highly desired among Myanmar buyers, said U Tun Aung, an owner of Tun Maw car showroom.

Ninety per cent of imported Japanese cars over the past three years are second-hand.—*200*

Managing market more possible for Myanmar to practice than free market

A managing market system in which the government sometimes intervenes is more likely for Myanmar rather than a free market, experts said.

Myanmar's market-based economy is still not in the position to practice a free market system, said U Kyaw Win, a writer.

A free market is normally managed by mostly middle class people, whereas Myanmar's market has been controlled by elites for many years. As a result, it is difficult to transform Myanmar's market economy

into a free market, he continued.

"Concerted efforts need to be exerted by all the stakeholders. A key point is to improve the capacity of the employers and produce skilled employees," said U Kyaw Min Tun, the retired prorector of the Yangon University of Economics.

In a bid to enhance economic development, the government should formulate and enact the rules, policy and laws. The requirement of infrastructure is still a challenge to be faced, he added.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

FDI hit US\$3.5 billion in nine months

A total of US\$ 3,521.522 million of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flowed into the country as of 31st December 2016 in this fiscal year, according to the statistics of the Directorate of Investments and Company Administration (DICA).

The transport and communications sector received the highest FDI with US\$ 1628.872 million, followed by the manufacturing sector with US\$ 883.141 million and the power sector with US\$ 605.672 million. Additionally, the real

estate sector attained FDI of US\$ 165 million, the hotel and tourism sector received FDI of US\$ 97.226 million, livestock and fisheries, US\$ 86.688 million, and over US\$ 54 million into other services.

Out of twelve permitted sectors for FDI, only seven sectors have attracted significant attention from foreign investors. Singapore was the number one country or region in terms of the amount invested in Myanmar, followed by China, Hong Kong and Thailand.—*Ko Htet*

Over 2,700 jade mine licences expire in Kachin's jewellery territories

THE licences of over 2,700 jade mining blocks in six jewellery territories including Lonekhin and Hpakant jade mining sites have expired for over the past seven months, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

A total of 2,772 licences for jade mining sites located in Lonekhin, Hpakant, Hkamti, Mongshu, Mogkok and Nantayaseik

mining areas in Kachin State expired between July last year and January this year.

The Myanmar Gems Enterprise announced that licences for 321 jade blocks expired in July, 365 in August, 321 in September, 273 in October, 957 in November, 350 in December and 195 in January.

The ministry granted seven-year permit and five-year permit

for jade mining companies operating in Lonekhin and Hpakant jewellery territories. The majority of similar business in Mohnyin and Hkamti mining areas obtained licenses in 2011 and the rest from other mining sites received the permission in 2013.

The ministry would neither allow license renewal nor grant permits for new jade blocks in Hpakant area.—*Khine Khant*



A file photo shows people gather around machines at a jade mine in Pharkant, Kachin state. PHOTO: REUTERS

Export value increases over \$500 million this year

THE export value of Myanmar with foreign countries reached US\$8.298 billion in the first nine months of this fiscal year, an increase of \$509.393 million compared with same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

From April to December, the country exported \$2.007 billion worth agriculture products, \$6.235 million worth

animal products, \$394 million worth fisheries products, \$729 million worth mineral products, \$176 million worth forest products, \$3.784 billion worth industrial products and others worth \$1.201 billion to its trade partners.

This year, \$5.590b worth products went to foreign countries through private sector while the government sector exported

products worth \$2.7b.

The country sold over \$7.789b worth products including \$3.838b from government sector and \$3.950b from private sector to foreign buyers last fiscal year.

Myanmar imported agriculture products, raw materials and personal goods amounting to US\$11.527b between 1 April and 30 December of this year.—*Shwe Khine*

Border trade via ITCs reaches over Ks8.2 billion

BORDER trade value through the use of the Individual Trading Card (ITC) exceeded Ks8.2 billion between 1 April and 23 December of this year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Over the first nine months of this financial year, the import value with ITCs was Ks7.5 billion, while the export earning was Ks715 million.

Trade values were over Ks551m at Tamu trade camp, over Ks583m at Muse border gate; over Ks3.5b at Myawady trade camp; over Ks495m at Tachilek border

gate; over Ks6.6m at Lwejel gate; over Ks1.6b at Kanpikete trade camp; over Ks270m at Kawthaung border gate, over Ks377m at Reed, over Ks690m at Mawtaung border, over Ks24.4m at Kengtung and over Ks14.9m at Maese border gate.

The ministry firstly introduced the ITC system at Tamu border trade camp in late 2012. In 2013 the system was rolled out to numerous border trade camps. As part of trade promotion programme, the Commerce Ministry issued over

1,157 ITCs to businesspersons to trade at borders from 2012-2013 fiscal year to date.

The ministry permitted 292 ITCs in FY2012-13; 261 cards in FY2013-14; 317 cards in FY2014-15; 146 cards in FY2015-16 and 141 cards this FY up to 23 December.

An ITC holder may trade up to Ks15m in five days at border trade camps and import and export offices, with a trade value of Ks3m a day on average, according to an announcement released by the ministry.—*Kyaw Swa*

Thailand considers death penalty for officials convicted of graft

BANGKOK — Thai officials convicted in corruption cases involving more than 1 billion baht (\$28 million) could face the death penalty under a proposal approved on Monday by the military-appointed National Reform Steering Committee.

Analysts say such a stern punishment for all forms of graft was a further way for the ruling junta to control its opponents, including allies of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted in a 2006 coup. Of the 162 steering committee members present on Monday, 155 voted in favour of the measure. It also stipulates that officials who are found guilty of corruption worth less than 1 billion baht could face up to five years in prison. "The meeting agrees with this measure," a member of the committee said in a televised session. "We will take recommendations from legislators before forwarding them." The measure must now be submitted to Cabinet, parliament and then to Thailand's constitution committee for deliberation before it is adopted. Legislators say the process

could take some time.

The junta took power in a 2014 coup after months of protests that led to the ouster of civilian prime minister Yingluck Shinawatra, Thaksin's younger sister. Since then, it has sought to burnish its graft-busting reputation by cracking down on shady patronage networks.

However, it has been reluctant to touch the monarchy, military and religion, Thailand's most powerful institutions.

The junta has instead focused on silencing its opponents, including supporters of Yingluck and her brother, by imposing restrictions on public gatherings and by jailing several opposition members.

Thaksin and his allies have commanded the ballot boxes since 2001, helping to elect a series of populist governments that chafed against institutions aligned with the royalist elite, including the military and Bangkok-based middle classes. Yingluck is on trial on corruption charges stemming from a rice subsidy scheme that critics say incurred billions of dollars in losses.—Reuters

Give us back our troop carriers, Singapore urges Hong Kong



Singapore's Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen speaks at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Manama Dialogue Regional Security Summit in Manama, Bahrain on 10 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

SINGAPORE — Singapore's defence minister said on Monday that the nine armoured vehicles seized in Hong Kong could not be detained or confiscated but that he welcomed Hong Kong's pledge that the dispute would be handled in line with its laws.

Hong Kong customs seized the troop carriers in November as they were being shipped from Taiwan to Singapore after military exercises on the island that Beijing regards as a breakaway province, sparking tension between Singapore and China.

Beijing, which re-

gained sovereignty over the former British colony of Hong Kong in 1997, then warned countries against maintaining military ties with Taiwan.

Singapore Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen, answering questions in parliament, said the vehicles were Singapore property.

"They are protected by sovereign immunity even though they were being shipped by commercial carriers. They are immune from any measures of constraint abroad. They cannot legally be detained or confiscated by other countries," Ng said.

Ng added Singapore

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong had written to Hong Kong chief executive Leung Chun-ying to request their return.

The response was that an investigation would take some time and that Hong Kong would handle the matter in accordance with its laws, Ng said.

"Singapore welcomes this response," he said.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang told reporters at a regular briefing that Beijing hoped "all relevant countries, including Singapore, first, can conscientiously abide by the one China principle".

"Second, we hope the Singapore side can conscientiously abide by Hong Kong's laws," Lu said.

The seizure of the vehicles came amid mounting regional uncertainty and signs of tension between China and Singapore, which has deepened its security relationship with the United States over the last year and remains concerned over Beijing's assertive territorial stance in the South China Sea. Singapore and Taiwan have a longstanding military relationship that began in the 1970s and involves Taiwan being used

as grounds for Singaporean infantry training.

Beijing has grudgingly tolerated this agreement since China and Singapore re-established diplomatic relations in the 1990s, with Singapore recognising Beijing's "one China" policy, in which China says Taiwan is part of its territory.

But China has repeatedly warned Singapore against getting involved in the South China Sea dispute in which China asserts sovereignty over various waters and islands claimed by the Philippines, Taiwan, Viet Nam, Malaysia and Brunei.

Singapore has no claims in the South China Sea, but as the biggest port in Southeast Asia, its open economy depends on free navigation in the area. Singapore Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan, also answering questions in parliament, reiterated Singapore's support for China. "We must welcome a rising China, a stronger China, an economically more integrated China and we have to focus on the opportunities while at the same time recognising that there will be issues to resolve from time to time," Balakrishnan said.—Reuters

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

Indonesia's president moves to rein in 'out of control' military chief

JAKARTA — Indonesia's President Joko Widodo reproached his military chief in a meeting last week amid concerns the commander was "out of control" after he unilaterally suspended defence cooperation with Australia, two sources briefed on the meeting said. Widodo's intervention highlights alarm about General Gatot Nurmantyo, who promotes the notion that Indonesia is besieged by "proxy wars", in which foreign states seek to undermine the nation by manipulating non-state actors.

Analysts and some of Widodo's aides are also concerned that Nurmantyo is laying the groundwork for an expansion of the military's role in civilian affairs in the world's third-largest democracy and may have political ambitions himself. Widodo, the first president from outside the military and political establishment, needed to move quickly to



Indonesian military Chief Gatot Nurmantyo talks to reporters in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 5 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

demonstrate his authority as the country's commander-in-chief, one senior government official said. "With Gatot, the feeling is like he's a little out of control," he said. Nurmantyo declared a rupture in military ties after an Indonesian officer found "offensive" teaching material while on a language

training course in Australia late last year. The material suggested that Indonesia's Papua province should be independent and mocked the nation's state ideology, Pancasila, according to Nurmantyo. One of the officials told Reuters Widodo and others in the government were caught off guard

when local media reported Nurmantyo's announcement of the suspension in military ties with Australia.

While the general was not formally reprimanded, the official said, Widodo served him a warning during a meeting at a presidential palace in Bogor, outside Jakarta.—Reuters

Chinese state tabloid warns Trump, end one China policy and China will take revenge

SHANGHAI/TAIPEI — State-run Chinese tabloid Global Times warned US President-elect Donald Trump that China would take “take revenge” if he reneged on the one-China policy, only hours after Taiwan’s president made a controversial stopover in Houston.

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen met senior US Republican lawmakers during her stopover in Houston on Sunday en route to Central America, where she will visit Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador. Tsai will stop in San Francisco on 13 January, her way back to Taiwan.

China had asked the United States not to allow Tsai to enter or have formal government meetings under the one China policy. Beijing considers self-governing Taiwan a renegade province ineligible for state-to-state relations. The subject is a sensitive one for China.

A photograph tweeted by Texas Governor Greg Abbott shows him meeting Tsai, with a small table between them adorned with

the US, Texas and Taiwanese flags. Tsai’s office said on Monday she also spoke by telephone with US senator John McCain, head of the powerful Senate Committee on Armed Services. Tsai also met Texas Senator Ted Cruz.

“Sticking to (the one China) principle is not a capricious request by China upon US presidents, but an obligation of US presidents to maintain China-US relations and respect the existing order of the Asia-Pacific,” said the Global Times editorial on Sunday. The influential tabloid is published by the ruling Communist Party’s official People’s Daily.

Trump triggered protests from Beijing last month by accepting a congratulatory telephone call from Tsai and questioning the US commitment to China’s position that Taiwan is part of one China.

“If Trump reneges on the one-China policy after taking office, the Chinese people will demand the government to take revenge. There is no room for bargaining,” said the Global Times.—*Reuters*



Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen exits at the Omni Houston Hotel during a ‘transit stop’ enroute to Central America, in Houston, Texas, US, on 7 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Thai floods kill 21 and hit rubber production



People walk in a flooded street at Muang district in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, southern Thailand, on 6 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

BANGKOK — Widespread flooding in Thailand’s south has killed 21 people, hit rubber production in the region and shut down infrastructure, officials said on Monday, as the military government increased aid to flood-affected areas.

Thailand’s wet season usually ends in late November and heavy rain and flooding are rare in January. Unseasonably heavy rain has hit 12 out of 67 provinces, officials said.

“We have sent soldiers, police and the Min-

istry of the Interior to ease the situation,” Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan told reporters.

The death toll from the floods stood at 21 on Monday with more than 330,000 households affected, according to the Department Disaster Prevention and Mitigation.

The department said that the main airport in the southern province of Nakhon Si Thammarat would remain shut for the foreseeable future. A rail route from the Thai capital Bangkok to Nakhon Si

Thammarat has also been suspended.

Southern Thailand is a major rubber-producing area and the floods have come at a particularly bad time for farmers, said Uthai Sonlucksub, president of the Natural Rubber Council of Thailand.

“This the worst impact we have had in the area in 10 years. The floods are very heavy. The problem is this year we’ve seen both drought and flooding so it has been disastrous for rubber farmers,” Uthai told Reuters.

Uthai said that rubber prices would increase this year because demand is set to exceed supply.

“I’ve had orders from China but we aren’t even sure if we can meet these orders because of the havoc the floods have caused,” he said. “If they buy, it’ll be at higher-than-expected prices.”

Widespread floods in 2011 killed more than 900 people and caused major disruption to industry, cutting economic growth that year to just 0.1 percent.—*Reuters*

South Korean leader’s friend Choi now charged with bribery

SEOUL — South Korean special prosecutors team have filed fresh charges including bribery against a close friend of impeached President Park Geun-hye, the central figure in a political scandal that has engulfed the country, the team said on Monday.

Choi Soon-sil, in jail since late October and on trial since last month, al-

ready faces charges of abuse of power and attempted fraud. On Monday, Lee Kyu-chul, spokesman for the special prosecution team, said it had filed the additional charges.

He declined to provide further details during a regular briefing. Choi’s lawyers were not immediately available for comment. Choi, 60, who has known

Park for four decades, is accused of colluding with Park to pressure big businesses, including Samsung Group, to contribute to non-profit foundations backing the president’s initiatives.

Choi has denied any wrongdoing.

Also on Monday, two senior executives of Samsung Group were ques-

tioned as part of the corruption probe.

South Korean prosecutors are trying to ascertain whether Samsung, the country’s biggest conglomerate, sought favours from Choi and Park in return for funding some of their initiatives.

No Samsung officials have been accused of wrongdoing.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV CHINDWIN STAR VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CHINDWIN STAR VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2017 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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

We warmly welcome the city reforms

Khin Maung Oo

YANGON city is very much crowded as this is where most of the key business centers are located. With the dense population, it is facing many urban challenges in living, education, transport, housing, public health and social welfare matters. Though successive governments had tried to solve these problems, effective solutions had not yet been achieved.

Recently it has been heard that a new system of bus service will be introduced for Yangon city dwellers to make it more convenient for them to do their daily commutes to their jobs and in performing their daily routines. We hope that this new initiative to reform the Yangon city transport system will meet the approval of the Yangon popu-

lace.

Previously, a complicated myriad of bus lines had undisciplined bus lines, some of which annoyed and did frightening threats to passengers. In answer to these intolerable deeds, some citizen activists tried to counter these intolerable acts by forming citizens' action groups.

At such a time, the arrangement of the Yangon Region Cabinet to fulfill the needs of the people is a sign of virtue. Accordingly, it is incumbent upon the active participation of the newly assigned responsible personnel to successfully implement the system of new bus lines.

Under the committee for the supervision of multi-vehicle lines in the Yangon Region, there were 18 organisations of lorry and trucks and over 300 bus lines

plying the streets of Yangon. Now, nearly 60 bus lines, in which bus lines on the same route have been systematically combined, will launch their operation under the new system of bus lines.

The present new bus line system involves the purchase and substitution of new buses and setting up of public-owned bus lines after abolishing previous one, merging bus lines on respective routes into groups systematically, paving the way for the emergence of public-owned bus lines with investment from the government and reforming of existing bus lines.

In doing so, the disciplined bus lines plying previously as well, should take part in the new system to be formed in accord with necessary guidelines and

rules. As for car owners who used to neglect the interest of passengers except for earning hefty profits, they should now not only select and appoint polite, patient and skilled drivers and conductors but also check and examine carefully as to whether these employees follow the relevant rules and regulations in performing their duties or not.

Out of the people living in Yangon Region, about 2 million are travelling by buses plying in the different areas, thus patience and driving skills play an important role in providing good and efficient transport services. Likewise, passengers should take an active part in the successful implementation of the new plan by travelling in discipline as good citizens.

What will you do in 2017?

Mg Thaung Win
(Ex-diplomat)

THE New Year, 2017 is already started as the time-mechanism is moving days and nights. Changing from the old year to the new one is not uncanny. However, it is not easy to answer the question : what will you do in New Year? If you answer the question easily, you could only perform small tasks. Everybody has much works to be done in 2017. Whether those tasks and dreams could be carried out successfully or not is depending on the attitude and effort of each person.

If you would like to get success in 2017, you should write down the dreams with the priority lists. For example, there are so many works depending on ages such as physical exercise, reading, voluntary-works and religious- tasks. If the work which are essential for a person could be finished without fail, then, the lives filled with the happiness of physical and mental could be gained. It is sure that everybody has different dreams. Nevertheless, I'd like to suggest some dreams that should be implemented first and foremost in 2017. I sincerely believe that a person who begin the above tasks without fail could get much benefits.

Doing of physical exercise

The task that should do without fail in 2017 is to do physical exercise. The motto: "Health is a good luck for everyone" is always right. Human realize the value of health, when he or she is not feeling well. No matter how much the wealth are possessed, the health could not be bought with money. Hence, preventative measure is better than cure. To be healthy and fit, doing of physical exercise should be made regularly. For example, walking exercise should be made daily about thirty minutes. If possible, a little running should be done for sweating. When we get age of over thirty years, Cholesterol are weighted in our body. If our Body Mass Index (BM) is not matched, something is wrong in our body. Taking the food that are suitable for health much contributes to our health. Nevertheless, sport dress, hat and shoes are should be bought urgently to do physical exercises in New Year.

Reading

A person is surely needed to read the literature every day to extend his or her knowledge. It could not be finished to write down the benefits of literature. Those who read and who do not are different on attitude, opinion and belief over the lives within certain periods. A person who

does not read the literature is like a blind man and foolishly believes the others' words. Those who read the literature could solve the problem in right way. Moreover, they could lead the other persons. A community organized by avid readers is surely peaceful and developed. In contrast, a community that is far from literature is surely influenced with criminals. For exception, there may be some people who do not practise practically, although they read the literature. However, it is universal true that reading gives much profits to us. Therefore, reading the literature should be carried out without fail in 2017.

Religious Devotions

All humans are going to grave daily. When a person is passed away, he has to leave all he possessed such as wealth, wife, husband, daughter, son, position, rank and fame. That is why, the thing we could bring together with us should be searched. That is non other thing but charity, virtue and mediation. Offering of scented water, alms-food, light-candle to Lord Buddha and reciting of Buddha's Teachings, counting the beats and mediation should be made daily without fail. Making of religious devotions always give much benefits to us. Thus, religious devotions should be con-

ducted in 2017, daily.

Abstain from narcotic-drug, alcohol, betel-chewing and smoking

Narcotic-drug that damages to the people is the common enemy of human. Those who use several drugs including methamphetamine damage their lives themselves. The youths who would like to try the drugs are always fell as the prey of narcotic-drugs. Narcotic-drug is the thing that should not be completely tried. In addition to, alcohol, cigarette, betel-chewing are also damaging the health. We should avoid those things. Those alcohol, betel-chewing and cigar are leaks of family income. So, narcotic- drugs, alcohol, betel-chewing and cigar that completely damage to human should be abstained in 2017.

Conducting of voluntary-work

Giving kind assistance to those who are in need of help is voluntary-work. Providing emergency aids to disaster victims is noble voluntary-work. For example, collective blood donation, donating stationeries to the children those who are in need of help, consult with the patients, are the voluntary-works. There are so many voluntary-works that do not need money. For example, helping of aged-persons, cleaning of wards and villages could be con-

ducted. Throwing of rubbish, splitting of betel-chewing and smoking at designed places are also voluntary-works. Nevertheless, voluntary-works that contribute to public benefits should be conducted in 2017.

Learning of language

Language plays an important role in dealing with each other. At present, the language that is mainly used in the world is English language. Studying of English is not too difficult because it has just 26 alphabets. The youths those who want to improve in their lives should study not only Myanmar language but also another ones. Especially, if English language is studied, much profits could be got surely. Hence, a language should be studied in 2017 without fail.

In a nutshell, now it is 2017. The fact that we all have to accept is aging of one year because a year is already passed over. Accordingly, we are needed to resolve the tasks for 2017. Especially, priority dreams are to be laid down such as health, education, religion, social and economic tasks. May be the persons those who serve for the sake of the nation and the people, implementing the works that could not completed in the previous years and the news tasks in New Year, successfully.

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Htin Kyaw

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 4 January.

From President of Spain H.E Mr.Felipe R, Excellency,

On the occasion of the celebration of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I wish to send you my most cordial greetings along with the government and the people of Spain.

I reiterate to you, President, my best wishes of personal welfare, peace and prosperity for the friendly people of Myanmar.

Wish my highest consideration.

From H.E. Mr.János Áder, President of the Republic of Hungary Excellency,

On the solemn occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar allow me to express my best wishes and heartfelt congratulations to you and to the Nation of Myanmar.

I am convinced that through our shared efforts we will further strengthen the mutually beneficial cooperation between our countries.

I avail myself of this opportunity to wish Your Excellency best of health and every success in your highly responsible position.

From H.E. Mr.Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine Excellency,

On behalf of the Ukrainian people and my own please

accept my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am ready to continue to contribute to strengthening of relations of friendship and mutual confidence between our states, as well as to further development of efficient cooperation in the spheres of mutual interests.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I wish You, Your Excellency, good health and all successes in your responsible state activity, as well as peace, reconciliation and prosperity to the friendly people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

From H.E. Mrs. Doris Leuthard President of the Swiss Confederation Excellency,

The celebration of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a most welcome opportunity for me to extend to Your Excellency on behalf of the Swiss Federal Council our sincere congratulations and our best wishes for the prosperity of your country, for the pursuance of the peace process, as well as for your personal health and well-being.

I am convinced that the mutual trust and friendship enjoyed by our two countries, further reinforced by the recent first round of political consultations and the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of our diplomatic relations, will deepen in the coming year.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my high-

est consideration.

From H.E. Mr.Andrzej Duda President of the Republic of Poland Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Polish Nation and myself. I am honoured to convey to Your Excellency my best wishes and congratulations.

Poland admires and supports democratic changes that has been taking place in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Nowadays Myanmar occupies crucial place in Polish foreign policy towards South East Asia. I personally count on the further enhancement of political and economic contacts between our countries. I do hope that 2017 will bring further intensification of bilateral cooperation.

Please accept, Your Excellency, my best wishes of good health and well-being, both in Your public capacity, as well as in Your private life.

With the assurances of my highest respect.

From H.E. Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I take the opportunity to express to you my warmest congratulations and best wishes for the prosperity, progress and welfare of the friendly people of your country.

Foreign Ministers send felicitations to State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Ministers sent to State Counsellor, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 4 January.

From H.E. Mr.Daniel Mitov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I have the pleasure to extend to you my cordial congratulations and best wishes for your personal health and happiness and for further success in your highly responsible assignment.

I avail myself of the opportunity to reiterate my willingness to work together with you to further develop and deepen the relations of traditional friendship between Bulgaria and Myanmar on bilateral basis as well

as in the framework of the EU-ASEAN enhanced partnership and the ASEM dialogue.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E. Mr.Witold Waszczykowski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Excellency,

On the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I am honoured to extend to Your Excellency my best wishes and congratulations.

We are impressed with the democratic and economic reforms that have been undertaken in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. We support this process and are open to share our experiences in the field of political transformation. Myanmar has become crucial partner of Poland on the Asian continent as well as priority country of our development assistance.

I would also like to take this opportunity to convey to Your Excellency my wishes of good health and prosperity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest respect.

UN Special Rapporteur holds talks with authorities, SCOs in Myitkyina

MS YANGHEE LEE, special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, held talks with Kachin State Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Thura Myo Tin and party in Myitkyina yesterday.

Following the meeting, she met with personnel from the Kachin Baptist Convention and civil society organisations.

During the visit, Ms Yanghee Lee will visit Internally Displaced Persons' camps in Myitkyina and Waingmaw.—
Myanmar News Agency



Ms Yanghee Lee meeting with authorities at Kachin State Government Office. PHOTO: MNA

Cosmetics expo coming to Yangon in March

A COSMETICS exhibition planned by the Myanmar Cosmetics Association will come to Yangon in early March, with organisers offering a 10 per cent discount on all beauty items, an event organiser said.

The new event will be held starting 3 March at Tatmadaw Hall in Yangon with plans to display a wide variety of cosmetics for both men and women including skincare, beauty enhancement, salon cosmetics, anti-aging products, organic and herbal beauty products, make-up and haircare products through 160 booths.

The MCA only allowed companies that have agreed to provide

at least 10 per cent discount on the regular price of every item to participate in the fair, said U Win Naing, deputy chairman of the MCA.

Interested companies may register to participate in the upcoming event at the MCA located at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry office tower on Minyekyawswa Road in Lanmadaw Township. More than 100 kinds of beauty products are manufactured in the country in cooperation with foreign cosmetic companies. Currently, there are over 1,000 kinds of foreign-made cosmetics in domestic market.—
Myitmakha News Agency

Trump accepts US intelligence on Russia hacking, top aide says

WASHINGTON—President-elect Donald Trump accepts the US intelligence community's conclusion that Russia engaged in cyber attacks aimed at disrupting the presidential election and may take actions in response, his incoming chief of staff said on Sunday.

Reince Priebus, the former Republican National Committee chairman, said Trump understands that Moscow was behind the intrusions into the Democratic Party organizations. "He accepts the fact that this particular case was entities in Russia so that's not the issue," Priebus said on "Fox News Sunday."

Priebus' comments marked a major shift. Trump has repeatedly dismissed claims that the Russians were trying to help him, arguing that those charges are the product of his political opponents trying to undermine his victory.

It was the first acknowledgment from a senior member of the



US President-elect Donald Trump. PHOTO: REUTERS

president-elect's team that Trump has accepted that Moscow was involved in the hacking and subsequent disclosure of Democratic emails during the 2016 presidential election. In a statement on Friday after receiving his intelligence briefing, Trump did not refer specifically to Russia's role in

the presidential campaign.

Priebus said Trump plans to order the intelligence community to make recommendations as to what should be done. Depending on those recommendations, "actions may be taken," he said.

He did not elaborate. —Reuters

British foreign minister arrives in US to meet Trump advisers

LONDON — Britain's foreign minister Boris Johnson has arrived in the United States to meet close advisers to President-elect Donald Trump and senior Congressional leaders to discuss ties between the countries.

Last June's vote to leave the European Union has left Britain facing some of the most complicated negotiations since World War Two, with the country keen to deepen ties with the United States and other nations to show that Brexit will not diminish its standing in the world.

Johnson's visit, which was not flagged in advance, is

part of Prime Minister Theresa May's strategy to improve relations with Trump's team after the president-elect irritated the government by saying that outspoken anti-EU campaigner Nigel Farage would be a good choice for Britain's ambassador to Washington.

May's two most senior aides made a secret trip to the United States last month.

"Following the successful meeting last month between the Prime Minister's chiefs of staff and President-elect Donald Trump's team, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson is undertaking a

short visit to the US for meetings with close advisers to the president-elect and senior Congressional leaders," a spokesman for Britain's foreign ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

"The discussions will be focused on UK-US relations and other foreign policy matters."

May had told Sky News earlier in the day that she was sure that Britain and the United States would build on their close ties and that their "special relationship" would endure despite describing some of his comments about women as "unacceptable".—Reuters

US would shoot down North Korea missiles: Carter

WASHINGTON—The United States would shoot down a North Korean missile if it threatened US territory or that of its allies, Defence Secretary Ashton Carter said Sunday.

Carter made the remarks after North Korea stepped up rhetoric indicating the likelihood of an intercontinental ballistic missile launch, with Pyongyang reportedly saying the same day it could take place at any time and location determined by the leadership.

In an NBC interview Carter described Pyongyang's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile

programs as a "serious threat" to the United States.

The United States is prepared to shoot down a North Korean missile "if it were coming towards our territory or the territory of our friends and allies," Carter said.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said in a New Year address that his country has entered the final stage of preparing to test-launch an ICBM, ahead of US President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration.

North Korea's Central Broadcasting Station on Sunday quoted a North Korean Foreign

Ministry spokesman as saying Pyongyang could launch an ICBM if top leaders decide to do so, according to Tokyo-based Radiopress which monitors North Korean media reports.

North Korea is developing ICBMs as part of national defence efforts to counter a nuclear war threat posed by the United States, the unnamed spokesman was quoted as saying.

Kim Jong Un's regime conducted two nuclear tests and test launched more than 20 ballistic missiles last year in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions.—Kyodo News

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkey may hold referendum on new constitution in early April — deputy PM

ANKARA—Turkey may hold a referendum in the first week of April on a new constitution which would create an executive presidential system, handing incumbent President Tayyip Erdogan greater powers, Deputy Prime Minister Nurettin Canikli said on Monday.

Parliament's general assembly is due to start debating the proposed constitutional changes later on Monday and work on the package is expected to be completed in 18-20 days, Canikli said in an interview with A Haber television.

The reform package is expected to be approved by parliament, in which the ruling AK Party has a strong majority, and would then go to a referendum.—Reuters

British PM rules nothing in or out in Brexit talks — spokeswoman

LONDON—British Prime Minister Theresa May is ruling nothing in or out before starting departure talks with the European Union and wants the best deal for businesses to trade with the single market, her spokeswoman said on Monday.

The pound fell to two-month lows after traders felt May had indicated during an interview on Sunday that Britain would dramatically rework trade ties with the EU after Brexit.

"She hasn't ruled anything in or out — she's said she wants the best possible deal for trading with and operating within the single market," the spokeswoman said.—Reuters

Turkey believes Trump will not repeat mistakes of last administration—Cavusoglu

ANKARA — Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Monday he believes that US President-elect Donald Trump will not make the same mistakes as the outgoing administration in relations with Turkey.

Addressing Turkish diplomats gathered in Ankara for an annual ambassadors' conference, Cavusoglu said Turkey expects Washington to extradite US-based cleric Fethullah Gulen

and to end its cooperation with the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia.

Turkey blames the followers of Gulen, who has lived in self-imposed exile in Pennsylvania since 1999, for orchestrating a failed coup attempt last July. It views the YPG, which has enjoyed US support in the fight against Islamic State, as an extension of Kurdish militants fighting inside Turkey.—Reuters

Poland retracts from curbing media access to parliament

WARSAW—Polish ruling party has retracted from its proposals to limit media access to the country's parliament, speaker of the upper house said on Monday, adding that the party wants to resolve the ongoing parliamentary crisis conciliatory.

"We are taking a step back," Stanislaw Karczewski,

the speaker, told journalists. "We have made a decision to go back to the old rules, we are not changing them."

The party's proposal in December to limit journalists' access led to a sit-in protest of opposition lawmakers who are still blocking the access to the podium in the lower house.—Reuters

Former Iranian president Rafsanjani dies of heart attack — state media

DUBAI — Former Iranian president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani died in hospital in Tehran where he was taken after suffering a heart attack on Sunday, state media reported.

State run Press TV said Rafsanjani, 82, died from a heart attack despite efforts by doctors to save him.

Rafsanjani was an influ-

ential figure in Iran, and headed the Expediency Council, a body which is intended to resolve disputes between the parliament and the Guardian Council.

Tasnim news agency also quoted his relative and aide Hossein Marashi as saying that Hasehmi had died at the hospital in Tehran.—Reuters

Iraqi forces reach Tigris in Mosul as suicide bombs hit Baghdad

MOSUL — Iraqi special forces battling Islamic State reached the eastern bank of the Tigris river in Mosul on Sunday for the first time in a three-month, US-backed offensive to capture the city from the militants, who still control its entire western half.

The group also claimed one of two attacks at two Baghdad markets in which 20 people were killed, the latest in a spate of bombings, tactics to which Islamic State is resorting as it comes under pressure in Mosul, its last major stronghold in Iraq.

Units of Iraq's elite counter-terrorism service (CTS) have fought their way to the eastern bank of the Tigris, spokesman Sabah al-Numan said.

It was the first time Iraqi troops in the city itself have reached the river, which bisects Mosul, since the offensive to drive out Islamic State was launched in October. Iraqi forces already control the Tigris to Mosul's south.



Iraqi forces backed by tribal militias during battle to retake a village from the Islamic State on the eastern bank of the river Tigris, Iraq on 7 December, 2016.
PHOTO: REUTERS

They are not expected to push across the river without first recapturing the rest of the eastern districts, and in fact all the bridges have been taken out of service by air strikes.

But reaching the eastern bank shows the accel-

erated pace of the latest Iraqi advance, which has made daily gains since re-starting 10 days ago.

Brett McGurk, Washington's envoy to the US-led coalition backing the Iraqi offensive, said in a tweet that Islamic State's

defences in eastern Mosul were "showing signs of collapse".

The CTS has spearheaded advances inside Mosul as part of a 100,000-strong force backed by US air power of Iraqi troops, Kurdish

fighters and Shi'ite militias fighting the militants. After a period of stuttering advances in Mosul last month, Iraqi forces have gained momentum in a new push since around the start of the year.

CTS forces also

clashed with Islamic State fighters near a historic site in eastern Mosul, a senior commander said, in a bid to drive them out of more neighbourhoods.

"This morning CTS troops advanced in two directions towards the Bala-diyat and Sukkar districts," Lieutenant General Abdel-wahab al-Saadi said.

"During the advance, Daesh (Islamic State) tried to confront us from the historic hill," he said, referring to an elevated area near the ruins of the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh, east of the river and inside Mosul.

Saadi said Iraqi forces and warplanes from the international coalition "dealt with" Islamic State fighters positioned on the hill, and dozens were killed.

A series of air strikes sent plumes of smoke into the sky as rockets fired by Iraqi forces whizzed through the air. Sustained bursts of gunfire around midday eased as night approached.

—Reuters

At least four dead in Palestinian truck attack in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian rammed his truck into a group of Israeli soldiers on a popular promenade in Jerusalem on Sunday, killing four of them in an attack that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said is likely to have been inspired by Islamic State.

It was the deadliest Palestinian attack in Jerusalem in months and targeted officer cadets as they disembarked from a bus that brought them to the Armon Hanatziv promenade, which has a panoramic view of

the walled Old City. The military said that a female officer and three officer cadets were killed and that 17 others were injured. Police said three of the dead were women.

Police identified the truck driver as a Palestinian from Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem and said he was shot dead. His uncle, Abu Ali, named him as Fadi Ahmad Hamdan Qunbor, 28, a father of four from the Jabel Mukabar neighbourhood.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said

that nine Jabel Mukabar residents, including five members of the attacker's family, were arrested on suspicion of aiding the attacker. The Israeli military regularly takes soldiers on educational tours of Jerusalem, including the Armon Hanatziv vantage point. Netanyahu visited the scene and convened his security cabinet, a forum of senior ministers, to discuss Israel's response. He said that security forces were controlling access in and out of the neighbourhood.—Reuters

Eight police killed in attack in north Sinai

CAIRO — At least eight policemen were killed in an attack on a checkpoint in the northern Sinai city of al-Arish on Monday, security and medical sources said.

The attack was launched with a car bomb, planted in a street cleaning car that the attackers had stolen a few days earlier, three security sources told Reuters. After the bomb exploded, attackers fired guns and rocket-propelled grenades at the checkpoint, they added.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, which

also wounded 13 people, including four civilians. Police found the body of one of the attackers driving the vehicle that exploded.

An Islamist insurgency in the rugged, thinly populated Sinai Peninsula has gained pace since the military toppled President Mohamed Mursi of the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's oldest Islamist movement, in mid-2013 following mass protests against his rule.

The militant group staging the insurgency in Sinai pledged allegiance to Islamic State in 2014

and adopted the name Sinai Province. It is blamed for the killing of hundreds of Egyptian soldiers and policemen since then.

In late November Islamic State claimed responsibility for an attack on a security checkpoint that killed 15 soldiers.

In its weekly online magazine Al-Nabaa released in November, Islamic State urged members to join other branches of the group active in areas like Sinai, Libya, Yemen and West Africa if unable to reach its self-declared "caliphate" in Iraq and Syria.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV UNI AMPLE VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UNI AMPLE VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2017 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 EVERGREEN SHIPPING
LINE**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2017 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.

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LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV FSL BUSAN VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV FSL BUSAN VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.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.

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**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GLODEN SEA**

Phone No: 2301185

Germany's left parties set conditions for tie-up to threaten Merkel

BERLIN — Germany's left-leaning parties have set terms for forming a potential coalition after September's election in a tie-up that could replace conservative Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Together, lawmakers from the center-left Social Democrats (SPD) and the smaller leftist Linke party, along with the environmentalist Greens, have more seats in parliament than Merkel's conservative bloc. Latest polls show this would continue to be the case.

However, the center-left SPD, which rules with Merkel in a right-left federal "grand coalition", has long refused to cooperate with the Linke at the national level, largely because of the party's foreign policy views.

Both parties said they would want to see significant policy moves in order to consider working together.

Signaling a readiness for change, Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel (SPD), told Der Spiegel magazine: "We don't want a new edition of the grand coalition."



German Chancellor Angela Merkel makes a speech during the session "Global Responsibilities in a Digital Age" in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos on 22 January, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

"If it happens too often, then those who are dissatisfied only have the choice between extreme left or right," he added.

The parties have already met to explore the possibility of forming a coalition to replace Merkel after the election.

"Of course, I can imagine a Red-Red-Green coalition, if it allows the formation of a stable government. But that depends completely on the Linke," Gabriel said. "They must decide whether they want to govern or re-

main a radical opposition."

Merkel's conservative bloc ruled in a grand coalition with the SPD from 2005 to 2009, then with the smaller liberal Free Democrats (FDP) from 2009 to 2013, after which she teamed up with the SPD again in another grand coalition.

The SPD would not go along with policies like leaving the euro, said Gabriel. Sahra Wagenknecht, who leads the Linke in the Bundestag lower house of parliament, sees problems in the existing set-up of the

single European currency bloc.

Wagenknecht said she hoped the SPD, after ruling with Merkel's conservatives, could strengthen its social policies.

Arguing that the SPD had been involved in cuts to social services that hurt its electorate, Wagenknecht added: "The stronger we perform, the greater the chance the SPD will correct its course there and, of course, that we can form a joint government."

A fractured electoral landscape risks complicating the coalition arithmetic, with a repeat version of the incumbent 'grand coalition' of Merkel's conservative bloc and Gabriel's Social Democrats the only outcome that looks a sure possibility.

Much will depend on the performance of two parties now not even represented in the Bundestag: the FDP, which faces a battle to clear the 5 percent hurdle to win seats in the lower house, and the anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.—Reuters

Londoners face Tube misery as workers set to strike from Sunday

LONDON — Londoners face transport chaos at the start of the working week after two unions representing workers on the London Underground said they would go ahead with a 24-hour strike from Sunday evening.

Metro operator Transport for London (TfL) said most stations in central London would be closed due to the action by the RMT and TSSA unions in a dispute over staffing levels after the closure of ticket offices in recent years.

The walkout on the Tube is part of a wave of strikes hitting British rail and air passengers at the start of 2017.

Thousands of commuters are suffering Britain's worse rail disruption in decades in a dispute over the whose role it should be to open and close doors on Southern's trains, while British Airways staff will strike for two days over pay on Tuesday.

TfL said services would not start until 0700

GMT on Monday, and they would be severely reduced across the network, with no trains from stations such as Victoria, Kings Cross and Waterloo.

The London Underground, better known as the Tube, carries up to 4.8 million passengers a day.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan appealed to the unions to cancel the strike, which he said would cause misery for millions of workers and tourists in the city.

"My message to the unions is clear: it is not too late to cancel this strike and get back around the negotiating table for the sake of all Londoners," he said.

"I have instructed Transport for London to continue negotiating and we will be available all weekend to try and resolve this dispute."

TfL said it agreed more staff were needed in stations, and it had already started recruiting 200 extra workers.—Reuters

State Bank of India (Yangon Representative Office)

Notice of Closure of Yangon Representative Office

[due to registration of State Bank of India (SBI) Yangon Branch]

It is hereby notified that pursuant to the Head Office's Board of Directors' Resolution dated [2 December 2016], the above Yangon Representative Office has been closed down with effect from [2 December 2016] since the existence of the Yangon Representative Office is no longer required.

Advertisement To Creditors

All persons claiming to be creditors of the above Yangon Representative Office are, therefore, requested to submit details of their claims together with any documentary evidence in their possession and the names and addresses of their attorneys, if any, to the undersigned Liquidator at the address given below before [15 February 2017] or in the default thereof, they will be excluded from the settlement of such debts and claims.

Daw Tin Tin Yee
Liquidator, Facilitation Limited
Room (4), 1st Floor, 24 (C),
Yaw Min Gyi Street, Dagon Township,
Yangon.

Mr. Anil Bankey
Co-Liquidator, Representative
State Bank of India - Yangon
Representative Office
[Under Closing Down]

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (1 / 2017)

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars and Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-079(16-17)	Spares for CNG Compressor Cooling System (7) Items	US\$
(2)	DMP/L-020(16-17)	Assorted Kind of Engineering Workshop Tools (3) Groups	Ks
(3)	DMP/L-021(16-17)	Brandt Shale Shaker Screen for NAT; 55 Series (3) Items	Ks
(4)	DMP/L-022(16-17)	Mechanical Seal for Andritz Pump(6)Items	Ks
Tender Closing Date & Time - 24-1-2017, 16:30 Hr			
Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 5 TH January, 2017 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.			

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206 / 411274

US military vows more complex training in Europe to deter Russia

BREMERHAVEN, (Germany) — The US military on Sunday vowed to increase the scope and complexity of its European training exercises to deter Russian aggression, as more US tanks, trucks and other equipment arrived in Germany for a big buildup on NATO's eastern flank.

"Let me be clear: This is one part of our efforts to deter Russian aggression, ensure the territorial integrity of our allies and maintain a Europe that is whole, free, prosperous, and at peace," US Air Force Lieutenant General Tim Ray, deputy commander of US European Command, said in pre-

pared remarks.

Ray underscored the United States' "rock-solid commitment to Europe" in the northern German port of Bremerhaven, where he marked the arrival in recent days of some 2,800 pieces of military equipment that will be used by nearly 4,000 US troops in exercises in NATO states near Russia.

The US and NATO buildup in eastern Europe comes days after US intelligence agencies accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of ordering an effort to help Republican Donald Trump's electoral chances by discrediting Democrat Hillary Clinton in the 2016

presidential campaign.

Ray said the US military's nearly 70,000 service members in Europe were adapting to rapidly changing strategic challenges such as Russia's military operations in Ukraine, migrant flows from Syria, and Islamist radicalism, as evidenced by a truck attack in Berlin that killed 12 people in December. The US military and NATO are seeking to boost their ability to quickly respond to emerging threats by pre-positioning supplies and equipment across Europe, while upgrading airfields, ranges and other infrastructure after years of neglect.—Reuters



US tanks, trucks and other military equipment, which arrived by ship, are unloaded in the harbour of Bremerhaven, Germany on 8 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Beijing launches environmental police force to tackle air pollution



Buildings are seen among smog during a polluted day in Beijing, China, January 6, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

The smog-hit Chinese capital of Beijing will establish a police force to deal specifically with environmental offences as part of its efforts to clean up its air and crack down on persistent polluters.

The smog police will crack down on open-air barbecues, garbage incineration, biomass burning and dust from roads, Beijing's acting mayor Cai Qi said on Saturday, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

"These acts of non-compliance with regulations are actually the result of lax supervision and weak law enforcement," Cai told a government meeting.

Nearly three years into a "war on pollution", large swathes of northern China were engulfed in smog over the New Year, with dangerous air quality readings in major cities like Beijing, Tianjin and Xian forcing many people to stay in doors. The smog which blanketed cities, disrupting flights, port operations and schools, was caused by increased coal use for winter heating and unfavourable weather conditions. The central government has promised to make greater use of police and law courts to

prosecute companies and local officials responsible for exceeding emissions limits. But while China's environmental legislation has been beefed up in recent years, authorities have long struggled to build up the staff required to enforce laws.

China's continuing reliance on fossil fuels, especially in the north, made the fight against pollution difficult, China's environment minister Chen Jining said on Friday.

He said the six provinces and regions hit hardest by smog over the last month, including Beijing, consume a third of the country's total coal and emit around 30-40 percent of China's major atmospheric pollutants, despite accounting for just 7.2 percent of China's total area.

But he said China would still be able to solve its pollution problems faster than western countries, including Germany.

"They needed 20-40 years to solve it. I believe we will do it faster than they did," Chen said, according to a transcript posted on the State Council's website. "We shouldn't lose confidence because of a few days of heavy pollution," he added.—Reuters

China voices concern over N Korea's long-range missile threat

BEIJING/WASHINGTON — China said Monday it is "deeply concerned" over North Korea's latest threat to test-fire an intercontinental ballistic missile.

"The current situation on the Korean Peninsula remains complex and sensitive. We hope all relevant parties refrain from words and deeds that would escalate tensions," Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang also told a press briefing.

Shortly after a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said Sunday that Pyongyang could carry out an ICBM test at any time and location determined by its leadership, the United States said it would shoot down any missiles that

threaten its territory or that of its allies.

In an NBC interview, Defence Secretary Ashton Carter described North Korea's nuclear arms and ballistic missile programmes as a "serious threat" to the United States.

Ahead of US President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration on 20 January, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said in a New Year address that his country has entered the final stage of preparing to test-launch the long-range missile.

The North Korean spokesman was quoted by the country's state-run Korean Central News Agency as saying that its ICBM development is "part of its

efforts for bolstering its capability for self-defence to cope with the ever more undisguised nuclear war threat from the United States."

"Explicitly speaking again, the United States is wholly to blame for pushing (North Korea) to have developed an ICBM as it has desperately resorted to anachronistic policy hostile toward (the country) for decades to encroach upon its sovereignty and vital rights," the unidentified spokesman said.

Kim's regime conducted two nuclear tests and test-launched more than 20 ballistic missiles last year in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions.

In a related develop-

ment, South Korean Defence Ministry spokesman Moon Sang Gyun said the South's military is closely monitoring North Korea, focused on the possibility it may carry out a launch of its new road-mobile KN-08 or KN-14 ICBMs.

"North Korea's threatening with provocations like the launching of an ICBM amounts to damaging peace and stability in the international community," Moon told a press briefing.

"North Korea will face much stronger and more thorough sanctions and pressure by us and the international community if it ignores our warnings and launches an ICBM," Moon said.—Kyodo News



Photo shows S-400 missile system in the Red Square during the Victory Day military parade. PHOTO: ITAR-TASS

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV NINOS VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NINOS VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.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.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GLODEN SEA

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV CAPE FLORES VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV CAPE FLORES VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.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.

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SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GLODEN SEA

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV PIONEER GLORY ,BG;POE 2502 VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PIONEER GLORY ,BG;POE 2502 VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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(S'PORE) PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301186

Meryl Streep tears into Trump in Golden Globes speech

BEVERLY HILLS, (Calif) — Actress Meryl Streep turned a Golden Globe acceptance speech into a scathing attack on US President-elect Donald Trump, saying she had been heartbroken by his imitation of a disabled reporter during his campaign.

"There was one performance this year that stunned me," Streep, 67, said as she was honoured with the Cecil B DeMille lifetime achievement award Sunday night.

"It sank its hooks in my heart. Not because it was good. It was that moment when the person asking to sit in the most respected seat in our country imitated a disabled reporter."

The three-time Oscar winner was referring to a 2015 incident at a South Carolina rally when Trump flailed his arms and slurred in his speech in an apparent mocking of New York Times reporter Serge Kovaleski, who has a physical disability. Trump later denied that he was imitating the reporter.

"It kind of broke my heart when I saw it and I still can't get it out of my head because it wasn't in a movie. It was real life," Streep said.

"This instinct to humiliate when it's modeled by someone in the public platform by someone powerful it filters down into everybody's life. Disrespect invites disrespect. Violence incites violence."

In a brief telephone interview with the New York Times, Trump said he was "not surprised" that he had come under attack from "liberal movie people."

He said he had not seen Streep's remarks or the Globes ceremony, but called the actress "a Hillary lover," in reference to her high-profile support for his rival Hillary Clinton.

Actors and studio executives in heavily Democratic Hollywood were mostly behind Clinton.

While Streep did not name Trump directly, she used almost the entire speech to criticize his behavior and policies, while calling for Hollywood to stand strong against any attacks and to support a free press through organizations such as the Committee to Protect Journalists.

The audience sat in stunned silence for much of it.

Streep earned a cheer from the crowd when she said that,

"Hollywood is crawling with outsiders and foreigners."

"If you kick them all out, you'll have nothing to watch but football and mixed martial arts, which are not art," she said, as the audience cheered on.

Trump, who takes office on 20 January, made a tough stance on immigration a cornerstone of his campaign.

Streep ended her speech with a nod to her long-time friend, "Star Wars" actress Carrie Fisher, who died last month after a heart attack.

"As my friend, the dear departed Princess Leia, said to me once, 'Take your broken heart and make it into art,'" Streep said, her voice cracking with emotion.

The Committee to Protect Journalists tweeted to the actress, "Thank you Meryl Streep for your generosity & support of our mission to protect journalists and press freedom around the world."

Streep has been nominated for a Golden Globe 30 times and won eight times. She joins Denzel Washington, George Clooney, Woody Allen and Jodie Foster as recipients of the Cecil B DeMille award.—Reuters



Actress Meryl Streep accepts the Cecil B DeMille Award. PHOTO: REUTERS

Casey Affleck, Mel Gibson in spotlight as Golden Globes kick off

BEVERLY HILLS — Hollywood's awards season gets underway on Sunday with the Golden Globes, an often raucous party where the champagne flows along with pointed barbs and surprises.

Musical "La La Land," black coming-of-age movie "Moonlight" and the grief drama "Manchester by the Sea" lead the nominations. But there is plenty of room for upsets on a night that will test the red carpet nerves of best actor front-runner Casey Affleck for "Manchester by the Sea," and the comeback potential of director Mel Gibson.

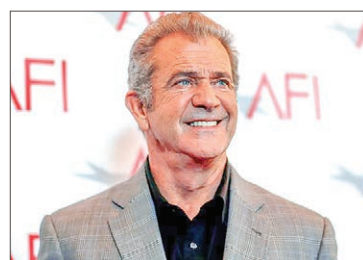
Gibson's visceral war drama "Hacksaw Ridge" is up for best drama and director awards, and marks his return to form a decade after a drunken, anti-Semitic rant that made the Oscar-winner a Hollywood outcast.

"There could be a big comeback moment that the Globes might want to present. I wouldn't be surprised to see Mel pick off the best director prize," said Pete Hammond, awards columnist for entertainment website Deadline.com

"That would be right in line with what the Golden Globes have done in the past — honouring big names," Hammond said, recalling last year's surprise Globe award to Sylvester Stallone.

Jimmy Fallon hosts Sunday's three-hour spectacle, broadcast live on NBC television, in what is

seen as a safer choice after seven years in the hands of acerbic Briton Ricky Gervais and the zinger-prone duo of Tina Fey and Amy Poehler.



Actor Mel Gibson. PHOTO: REUTERS

The genial Fallon, who hosts NBC's late night "The Tonight Show," says his brand of humour is more subtle.

"I'm hopefully going to book the people in this crowd the next week, so I'll be edgy, but it's all in good fun, and I know how far I can take it," Fallon told the Hollywood Reporter ahead of the ceremony.

The Golden Globes takes place as Donald Trump, who was opposed by most of the show business community, prepares to take office as the first US president with a career in reality TV.

"The whole night won't focus on that (Trump), but it will be a week before the inauguration, so it will be on everyone's mind. It's the first and maybe the last party that we'll have in 2017," quipped Fallon.

Viola Davis ("Fences"), Na-



Casey Affleck. PHOTO: REUTERS

talie Portman ("Jackie") are widely expected to take home Golden Globes, while the revered Meryl Streep will get the annual lifetime achievement award.

Hosted by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the Globes also hand out prizes for television and are often the first to honor new work, including drama series "Mr Robot" in 2016.

Presenters on Sunday include Leonardo DiCaprio, Jon Hamm, Sting, Ben Affleck, Felicity Jones, Amy Schumer and Carrie Underwood.—Reuters

'Rogue One' Narrowly Beats 'Hidden Figures' to Win Weekend

LOS ANGELES — Disney-Lucasfilm's "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" edged "Hidden Figures" in the race for the top spot at the North American box office with an estimated \$22 million at 4,175 locations, estimates showed on Sunday.

"Hidden Figures," a comedy-drama about pioneering African-American women in the early days of the American space program, trailed by only \$200,000 with \$21.8 million at 2,471 sites. So the positions could reverse when final figures for weekend are released on Monday.

Snowy weather in the Eastern United States held down overall moviegoing during Friday and Saturday.

It was the fourth consecutive weekend victory for "Rogue One," which has lifted its domestic total to \$477.3 million. The eighth "Star Wars" movie is now the eighth-largest domestic grosser of all time, trailing "Finding Dory" by less than \$10 million.

"Rogue One" also launched in China with \$31 million in its first weekend, pushing the international total to \$437 million. Its worldwide box office has hit \$914.4 million in less than a month.

Illumination-Universal's "Sing" was headed for a close

third with \$19.6 million at 3,955 sites. Sony's opening of "Underworld: Blood Wars" is looking at a fourth-place finish with \$13.1 million at 3,070 locations, followed by Lionsgate's expansion of awards contender "La La Land" with \$10 million at 1,515 venues.

Sony's sci-fi romance "Passengers" finished sixth with \$8.8 million at 3,400 sites, bringing its total to \$80.9 million after three weeks. Fox's third weekend of romantic comedy "Why Him?" followed with \$6.5 million at 2,904 locations for a total of \$49 million.

"Hidden Figures" is performing well above recent forecasts, which had ranged between \$16 million and \$18 million. Taraji P. Henson stars as Katherine Johnson, an African-American mathematician who, along with her colleagues Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monae), helps launch astronaut John Glenn into space.

The awards-season contender has a modest \$25 million budget. Spencer is up for a Golden Globe in the supporting actress category on Sunday along with a SAG Award. The ensemble cast has also been nominated for a SAG Award.—Reuters

Millions of devotees in Philippines join Black Nazarene procession



Devotees jostle to touch the image of Black Nazarene as they parade a black statue of Jesus Christ during the annual Catholic religious feast in Manila, Philippines on 9 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

MANILA — About a million and a half barefoot Philippine devotees praying for miracles joined a procession on Monday for a black statue of Jesus Christ being paraded through the old commercial centre of the capital, Manila.

The devotees crowded around the carriage — pulled by ropes and pushed from behind — bearing the statue, known as the Black Nazarene, which is believed to have healing powers, as it crawled through the narrow streets.

The faithful reached out towards the icon in the

hope that even the slightest touch would bless them, heal their illnesses and those of their relatives.

“My purpose here is to give thanks to the Lord for all the blessings he has given me and my family every day,” Jimray Bacomage, 37, told Reuters, saying the Black Nazarene had healed his broken arm.

About 80 percent of the more than 100 million people of the Philippines are Roman Catholic and the former Spanish colony is famous for its colourful religious festivals.

The Black Nazarene, a

life-sized wooden statue of Christ kneeling with a cross on his shoulder, is also paraded through the city on Good Friday to commemorate his crucifixion.

“The Lord solved all the problems that came our way ever since I started attending the Feast of the Black Nazarene 16 years ago,” said Roilo Damiucon, 72.

About 4,000 soldiers, police and emergency workers were on duty for the procession but police said there were no serious incidents.

Some Western govern-

ments had warned of “possible terrorist threats to the procession”. Mobile telephone services in the area were cut and authorities banned the use of drones and firecrackers.

More than 100 devotees suffered minor injuries in the throng, the Philippine Red Cross said. In 2016, two people were killed and more than 1,200 people suffered minor injuries. The procession is expected to last more than 20 hours and up to 15 million are expected to pay their respects, church officials said.—Reuters

Paris boosts cycling infrastructure, names 2017 ‘year of the bike’

PARIS — Paris plans a major boost to its cycling infrastructure and will ban cars from outside the Louvre museum as it steps up its fight against traffic pollution, the mayor said on Sunday.

Socialist mayor Anne Hidalgo announced a new two-way 4 kilometre bike lane to run along the Rue de Rivoli, a major east-west thoroughfare and one of the city’s most famous streets, and to connect the Place de la Bastille and Place de la Concorde.

She also said Paris will accelerate a plan to double the surface of its cycling lanes by 2020. “Climate is the number one priority. Less cars means less pollution. 2017 will be the year of the bicycle,” Hidalgo said in a statement. The noisy and polluted Rue de Rivoli, which links major landmarks like the Louvre Museum, Palais Royal and the historic Marais area, would become an area for walking, cycling and shopping, where the space for cars will be halved. The city will also ban private cars from the historical Place du Carrousel du Louvre, which cuts through the Tuileries park and the square in front of the Louvre, the world’s most visited museum with about 9 million visitors per year.

Paris this year plans to pedestrianise most of the Marais by limiting car traffic there to residents, public transport and local businesses. From 2018, Paris will also start operating a new “tram-bus” along the right bank of the Seine to boost public transport infrastructure as part of its bid for the 2024 Olympics.

Deputy mayor in charge of transport Christophe Najdovski said cities like Bordeaux and Lyon are way ahead of Paris in terms of reopening access to their riverbanks and banning polluting diesel cars from the city centre, as Tokyo has done.

“We have a lot of work left to do, as is obvious from the numerous days with peak pollution levels at the end of 2016,” Najdovski said. In September, Paris turned a stretch of highway on the right bank of the river Seine into a pedestrian zone in an attempt to reduce pollution despite fierce protests from drivers and the conservative opposition.

In the past 15 years, private car traffic in Paris has fallen by about 30 percent as the city introduced its popular Velib bicycle sharing scheme and its Autolib electric vehicle sharing scheme, city authorities said.—Reuters

Thailand expects tourism revenue of nearly \$50 billion in 2017



A Thai classical dancer poses for photos at the Erawan shrine in central of Bangkok, Thailand, on 30 August, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BANGKOK — Thailand expects revenue from foreign tourists to rise 8.5 per cent to 1.78 trillion baht (\$49.8 billion) this year, a deputy prime minister said on Monday.

The expected rise results from an improved outlook for global tourism as well as Thailand’s investment in infrastructure, Deputy Prime Minister Thanasak Patimaprakorn told reporters.

“This is another year that we will need to focus on quality tourism more than tourist numbers,” he said.

Thanasak expects daily tourist spending to increase to 5,200 baht per person this year, from 5,100 baht last year.

Last year, Thailand had 32.6 million visitors, a rise of nearly 9 per cent from the year before.—Reuters

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(10-1-2017 07:00am ~ 11-1-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Adventurous Young Photographer
07:47	Am	Five Hair Relic Enshrined Pagodas
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Director: Thiha Kyaw Soe
08:40	Am	Visiting A Serene Village In The Northwest Of Myanmar
08:56	Am	Colonial Buildings and a New Yangon
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Archery Session (from Ramayana Play)
09:48	Am	Today Myanmar: Yangon Night Market
10:03	Am	News

10:26	Am	History And Mystery Behind The Caves
10:51	Am	One of the Useful Purposes of Bamboo

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Day Out With Sarah (EP-6)
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Taste Of Myanmar (Rakhine Monte Ti)
08:50	Pm	Serene and Happy Rural Life in Myanmar

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

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

Fourth-tier Plymouth hold Liverpool youngsters at Anfield

LONDON — Fourth-tier Plymouth Argyle shut up shop and kept the door firmly closed to earn a 0-0 draw away to Liverpool's youngest ever starting XI in Sunday's FA Cup third round tie at Anfield while Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur both won.

Determined defending and unstinting effort kept League Two Plymouth in the game against a Liverpool side lying second in the Premier League, almost 70 places above them.

Spurs, eight-times FA Cup winners, took a long time to break down Aston Villa before winning 2-0 but Premier League leaders Chelsea had no such trouble against third-tier Peterborough United, winning 4-1 despite having John Terry sent off.

Middlesbrough also had a man dismissed but beat Sheffield Wednesday 3-0.

Liverpool, with a League Cup semi-final first leg against Southampton to come on Wednesday, made 10 changes from the side that drew at Sunderland on Monday and fielded five teenagers.

Argyle, spurred on by almost 9,000 noisy fans who travelled the 470 km to Merseyside, defended stoutly while showing little ambition to go forward and test a Liverpool defence in which Joe Gomez returned after more than 15 months out injured.

The visitors had only 23 per cent of the possession, not managing a shot for 60 minutes and finally bringing a save from Liverpool goalkeeper Loris Karius five minutes later.



Liverpool's Daniel Sturridge in action with Plymouth Argyle's Ben Purrington during the match between Liverpool v Plymouth Argyle at FA Cup Third Round - Anfield on 8 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

The home side, however, had few outstanding chances despite 28 attempts on goal.

Sheyi Ojo, 19, missed with a header from six metres early on, 17-year-old Ben Woodburn was denied by Argyle goalkeeper Luke McCormick and when Divock Origi put the ball in the net he was adjudged to have fouled his marker.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp waited until just over an hour had been played before

making any substitutions. He then sent on Daniel Sturridge for Emre Can and the England international immediately put a shot just wide.

Adam Lallana and Roberto Firmino then replaced Ovie Ejaria, 19, and Woodburn, who had succeeded Michael Owen as the club's youngest goalscorer earlier this season.

As the pressure increased in the last 10 minutes, Sturridge sent a weak header and a low drive wide, and McCormick clutched a

deflection off a defender right on the line to earn a replay.

At Stamford Bridge, Spanish international Pedro scored twice as Chelsea went through comfortably at home to Peterborough.

He gave them the lead after 18 minutes, which was extended by Belgian forward Michy Batshuayi and Willian.

Terry, making his first start since October, was then sent off for dragging down Lee Angol to prevent a clear scoring opportu-

nity, but Pedro scored his second goal for the 10 men after Tom Nichols had pulled one back.

Manager Antonio Conte said later that Chelsea may appeal against the dismissal.

Tottenham, making nine changes, could not break down Villa until England midfielder Dele Alli appeared as a substitute for the final half an hour at White Hart Lane.

He helped another Spurs replacement, Frenchman Georges-Kevin N'Koudou, set up defender Ben Davies to score his first goal for the club in the 71st minute.

Son Heung-min doubled the lead with 10 minutes left.

Middlesbrough defender Daniel Ayala was the miscreant at home to Championship (second-tier) side Wednesday, receiving a straight red card just before the hour mark.

The Premier League team led 1-0 at that point after skipper Grant Leadbitter's direct free kick a minute earlier.

Alvaro Negredo got their second in the 67th after a goal-keeping error and Marten de Roon claimed 'Boro's third in added time.

Fulham reached the fourth round with a 2-1 win at Cardiff City in a meeting of two Championship sides.

The winning goal was bundled in by 16-year-old Ryan Sessegnon, an England under-17 international, making him one of the youngest scorers in the history of the competition.—Reuters

FIFA proposes Americas-wide qualifying contest for 2026, says official

CARACAS — FIFA has proposed merging the CONCACAF and South American qualifiers as part of its plans to expand the 2026 World Cup, a leading official from the region said in a newspaper interview.

Venezuelan Football Federation president Laureano Gonzalez said the idea for the merger had come from FIFA president Gianni Infantino.

Gonzalez, who is also a vice-president of CONMEBOL, the governing body for South America, said it would want at least 14 places at the finals for the two regions combined before accepting the proposal.

CONCACAF represents North and Central America as well as the Caribbean.

The FIFA Council is due to vote on Tuesday whether to increase the number of teams at the finals from the current 32 to

either 40 or 48 from 2026. FIFA will decide at a later date which regions will be awarded the additional slots.

CONMEBOL currently has four-and-a-half places at the World Cup for its 10 members while CONCACAF, which has 35 FIFA members in its ranks, has three-and-a-half places.

"There is a suggestion from Gianni Infantino to unify the CONMEBOL and CONCACAF qualifiers," Gonzalez told the Venezuelan sports daily Meridiano.

"This would have support if they gave us more places. At the moment, we have seven between the two confederations, plus two half places," he said.

"If this went up to 14, similar to what Europe has for more or less the same number of teams, the idea would catch on in the continent."—Reuters

FA chief wants to increase prize money on offer for Cup

LONDON — The Football Association wants to increase the prize money on offer to clubs in the FA Cup and is considering scrapping television appearance fees, chief executive Martin Glenn said on Sunday.

Under the current system, clubs get paid more money if their game is televised.

Yet with only nine of 32 FA Cup third-round games being broadcast this weekend, several lower-league sides have expressed discontent their games were not chosen for live coverage. "The FA Cup is a great way of redistributing money to the lower leagues. The prize money is 25 million pounds (\$30.70 million) and we're looking to increase that in the coming years," Glenn told the BBC.

"We've sold the international rights for more money, and that's hopefully going to allow us to benefit smaller clubs. Right now it's a bit of a lottery.



FA Chief Executive Martin Glenn. PHOTO: REUTERS

"So one of the things we're thinking about, would be where you just make it a unity payment, so that everyone would get the same amount. It wouldn't be quite the lottery it is now. It would seem to be something we could consider." Glenn defended Premier League Bournemouth, who came under fire for making a full 11 changes for Saturday's third-round

3-0 loss to third tier Millwall. The FA boss said he understood why top flight teams needed to juggle their resources.

"I think Bournemouth were an outlier. (Manager) Eddie Howe can make his own reasons for it. It doesn't upset me. The Premier League teams really understand the value the FA Cup brings them," he said.—Reuters