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**Heartbeat of The Nation** 

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## In Kachin, reporters battle the fog of war

By Kyaw Hsu Mon and Bill O'Toole

DURING the dark days of tight media censorship, the Tatmadaw's protracted conflicts with armed ethnic rebels in the countryside were among the many subjects off limits to journalists. Today, emboldened by the Ministry of Information ending its draconian pre-publication censorship rules, reporters are grabbing the opportunity to report on the conflict in Kachin State - and encountering the difficulty of sorting fact from fiction.

Before Yangon-based freelance journalist Ma Nyein Nyein Pyae left for Laiza, her friends and family warned her she was likely to be killed. Instead, the weeklong trip was one of the best experiences she's had as a journalist, she said.

She said she felt the Kachin Independence Army and Laiza residents were "very honest and frank" about the conflict.

A journalist from Yangon-based Modern Journal, who just returned from a trip to Laiza, agreed with Ma Nyein Nyein Pyae's assessment.

She said she did not feel particularly worried for her safety as she visited rebel camps. "It's safe for me to stay there even though I have heard the loudest bombs

going off the whole week," she said.
For Ma Jun Wai Naing, a freelance journalist based in Myitkyina, the domestic coverage of the conflict highlights the dramatic shift in the media industry since the conflict broke out in 2011.

"It's easier to talk to people," she said. "Everything is more open than last year."

Ma Jun Wai Naing said she has not been pressured or intimidated by the government over her reporting of the conflict, and said she does not know any reporters who

Journalists' main problem with the government is the continued wariness on of Tatmadaw leaders to speak to them. "I ask [military officials] questions and they don't tell me anything," said Ma Jun Wai Naing.
"That's a small problem for me."
Deputy Minister for Information U Ye

Htut, who is also a spokesperson for the president, told The Myanmar Times that the government generally does not allow journalists to meet Tatmadaw officials out of concern for journalists' safety. He said the offices of high-ranking military officials are potential targets for insurgent attacks.

Journalists interviewed for this story agreed that the most challenging aspect of covering the conflict is not obtaining information but identifying fact from rumour. "There are a lot of rumours in [Kachin State]," said Ma Jun Wai Naing. "The government and the KIA both have

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### In Myingyan, NLD unrest boils over

Members of the National League for Democracy protest outside a party office in Myingyan, Mandalay Region, on January 24. About 1000 people took part in the demonstration, which was sparked by allegations of cheating in ward assemblies in the township that were held to select delegates for an upcoming national assembly. Similar protests are planned in Mandalay, where members are also unhappy at how ward assemblies have been conducted. Full story page 3. Pic: Phyo Han

## Former minister, officials under investigation: govt

By Htoo Aung with AFP

YANGON – The government has launched a probe into alleged high-level corruption in its telecommunications ministry, officials said last week, following a vow to tackle graft.

The government's Bureau of government minister known BSI in Nay Pyi Taw. If a case Special Investigation (BSI) has to have been investigated is built with enough evidence questioned more than a dozen ministry officials and may also grill former telecoms minister U Thein Tun minister Thein Tun, who abruptly resigned on January 16, the officials said.

He would be the first

for corruption under the new reformist government which came to power in March

"About 20 officials at the telecommunications ministry have been questioned by the

after the inquiry, then they might summon the former minister," a government official who did not want to be named said on January 24.

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Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks to journalists during a break in the hluttaw session on January 9. Pic: Soe Than Lynn

## Say it ain't so, Daw Suu

WE all make mistakes. I am the bozo who thought President Barack Obama would not visit this region right after the American elections. Of course, he came.

A colleague now has a hat waiting for me and asks how I'd like it cooked – normally, I prefer them steamed with a black bean sauce.

It won't be the first time I've had to eat my hat. In 2000, on a tour of opium eradication schemes in northeast Myanmar, I attended talks given by senior military and police officers.

One of them was the regional commander, Major General Thein Sein, a balding, bespectacled, mousylooking man, who left most of the spiel to his police sidekicks.

Knowing that the commanders are important men, however, I watched him for signs that he might be destined for greater things.

My notes bear testimony to my impercipience: "Thein Sein speaks poor English. He's a quiet, reserved guy, kind of weedy and clearly going nowhere."

Ouch, pass the hat. He was soon promoted, became prime minister in 2007, and finally Myanmar's first elected president in March, 2011.

He has introduced a raft of reforms that have astounded the world and almost eclipsed the iconic opposition leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Indeed, the respected International Crisis Group emulated my gaffe when it forecast that changes under Thein Sein's government "would be incremental rather than dramatic".



In fact, as the Group's Southeast Asia director Jim Della-Giacoma admitted a week ago: "They have been dramatic."

So dramatic that the man I termed mousy and going nowhere now gets the kind of global plaudits formerly monopolised by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

In April, the Crisis Group will present him and former Brazilian President Lula da Silva with its prestigious "In Pursuit of Peace Award" in New York.

It is intriguing that it is going to U Thein Sein and not the Lady. But then her recent actions indicate that he is a wiser choice.

Let's face it, she betrayed her status as an exemplar of democracy by refusing to speak out in defence of the persecuted Muslim Rohingya and the mostly Christian Kachin.

Worse followed this month when she embraced the formerly despised business cronies who milked the country for their own personal gain – and who effectively kept the military in power.

On January 9, asked about her National League for Democracy accepting large sums of money from these people, she dissembled by talking about her distaste for grudge

"If the cronies support the NLD and other charitable organisations, then let them. Instead of using their money for something wasteful, they are using it to support those in need. It is a very nice thing," she said.

It is a very nice thing," she said.

Aw, Daw Suu, say it ain't so. You know, ivory chopsticks and shark's fin soup are pretty nice too.

What really grates is that when aid agencies sought to provide humanitarian relief to Myanmar's impoverished people during the crushing years of military rule, she counselled against it.

In her view, if the regime handled aid distribution, much of it would go to military families — or even be sold privately. "This is what we want to guard against," she told me personally at the time.

But she knew full well that the government had to oversee imports, aid included, and she knew that because of that the agencies monitored them very closely; but still she objected – and so the aid stayed out.

Yet now we must believe that aid for her party – black dough from U Tay Za, U Kyaw Win and other cronies – will all go to her party's coffers and not a cent will find its way into the back pockets of NLD officials.

Well, we too should not bear grudges, but it would be nice if Daw Aung San Suu Kyi could also admit that she has made some bad calls in the past.

I have a nice steamed hat with bean sauce I could share with her.

## Myanmar in transition: a student's perspective

By Nyi Nyi Ohn Myint

AFTER many years of stasis, Myanmar has finally opened its doors – and the world is waiting on its welcome mat.

There has been a great deal of change. Some of those changes bring opportunities, like the alterations to foreign investment regulations and loosening of political restrictions. However, one must question: how great really are these changes?

To foreign companies, Myanmar is a huge dollar sign and everyone wants a big chunk of it. For me, I can't help but wonder at the potential negative impacts that these changes may have on the people of this nation.

There is a conflict between the rich and the poor as the people who have an educated, "business" mindset lead the companies and enterprises. Many of the people who don't have these attributes work for those that do. Big money runs the businesses and the businesses are based on cronyism to a certain extent.

There is a capitalist mantra that "anyone can be rich if they work hard enough". This mantra, however, is often false as there isn't much room in the top class. Making money means taking it from others, whether this happens through taxation, sales or other means. Ultimately, this means that the rich cannot exist without the poor.

More businesses are marching into Myanmar but I wonder how much good will this do for the 99 percent of Myanmar who are not rich? Workers put in the effort to make the goods that we consume but are not given any say in the business, or even safety precautions in

their workplace. For many people, going to work each day means putting themselves in some degree of danger.

I feel that this transition is being rushed: Myanmar is trying to rapidly modernise in order to rise to catch up with its neighbours and other members of the international community. What we should keep in mind is that modernisation is the brother of Westernisation, and Westernisation often eradicates local culture. As these changes progress, our views on eating, fashion and other cultural patterns will be altered, regardless of whether this change is positive.

My question is: Why try to fit in when you were born to stand out? I dread the day I see more people wearing jeans than longyi, and eating more hamburgers than mohinga. The sad truth is that, in Yangon at least, that day has pretty much already arrived

The sadder truth is that I am wearing jeans as I type this. My last meal was Italian. I appreciate the irony that I'm using the education that modernisation offered me to demonstrate my anger towards the negative aspects of it.

You can change the government. You can change industry. But changing culture is another matter, and one that should be considered deeply. Like many Myanmar, I have great pride in my nation and its identity.

But I wonder how much we will have left to be proud of when we transform from a country so rich and unique into a mere puzzle piece of the bigger picture.

(Nyi Nyi Ohn Myint, 16, is a student at the International School Yangon.)

### The Mail Box

Dear editor,

In your December 31 edition there was an opinion column by someone from Rakhine State living in Yangon ("An open letter to President Obama"). I am an American volunteer who served in Myanmar from 2009-12. I was born in East Pakistan, which is presently known as Bangladesh. I studied history and I am well aware of the history of present-day Rakhine State too. I am also

a peace activist.

I think the argument on the ethnicity of Rohingya versus Bengali is a very cheap argument. The problem is not ethnicity. The problem is the lack of equal opportunity for Muslims in Myanmar and lack of respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The government, allied with the National League for Democracy, had a historic opportunity

to do justice to Muslims in Myanmar as a whole. Centuries of oppression and neglect could be healed. Instead, the NLD leadership allied with the government to continue oppression of Muslims in Myanmar. It is a gross mistake.

Muslims have lived in Rakhine State since the 9th century. It is a historical fact. Many Muslims fought against the Japanese and British forces as well. Two distinguished Muslims were martyred along with General Aung San. Please look around the world: Israeli occupation and firm grip on Palestine is slipping. The rise of the Arab spring and gradual fall of puppet Muslim governments is imminent. This is food for thought from a peaceloving American towards all concerned.

With best regards, Mir D Khan Denver, Colorado

Got something to say? We want to hear from you. Address all correspondence to the Editor, *The Myanmar Times* (English). We endeavour to respond to all correspondence in a timely manner.

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## Rakhine State bus crash leaves 14 dead

By Nan Tin Htwe

THE MYANMAR TIMES

FOURTEEN people were killed last week when a bus fell into a 60-foot ravine near Taunggok in Rakhine State, in what the head of the bus line described as the worst accident in its 50-year history.

The Aung Thitsar bus was carrying 34 passengers when it left the road at about 1:30am

## We have never had such a terrible accident.

on January 23 while travelling from Yangon to Thandwe. The company said brake failure was the cause of the crash, which occurred about 35 kilometres from Taunggok and also left 13 people injured.

"All the bus lines on that route have had accidents where three or four people have died. But we have never

had such a terrible accident. Our bus line has been running for 50 years," Aung Thitsar chief U Maung Maung Naing told *The Myanmar Times* on January 23.

U Maung Maung Naing said that the company was careful to ensure its buses were properly maintained because the road to Rakhine State is "mountainous and rough".

He said the company will "take responsibility" for the dead and injured, adding that two people suffered serious injuries.

An Aung Thitsar official in Taunggok said by phone that seven men and seven women died in the crash, and one woman was flown to Yangon for treatment for a head injury on the day of the accident.

Both the driver, U Zaw Myint Naing, and conductor, Ko Zaw Min, were killed in the crash.

"He was an experienced driver. He had worked with us for almost seven years," said U Maung Maung Naing.



### Hitting the road

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrives at Yangon International Airport before departing on January 24. The National League for Democracy leader left Myanmar on a trip to Hawaii and South Korea, during which she is scheduled to receive a human rights award. *Pic: AFP* 

## NLD facing more unrest over assembly

More demonstrations planned for Mandalay after 1000 members protest in Myingyan over 'unfair' assemblies

By Phyo Wai Kyaw and Than Naing Soe

NATIONAL League for Democracy members in Mandalay Region's Myingyan township demonstrated outside a party office last week calling for the results of "unfair and undemocratic" ward assemblies be annulled ahead of a township meeting on January 27.

The unrest over the process of selecting delegates for the upcoming national assembly also appeared likely to spread further, with members from three other townships in Mandalay waiting for permission to protest together outside a party office.

About 1000 members from Myingyan township protested outside the office in No 6 ward on January 24, calling on party leaders to annul the results of recent ward assemblies and to ensure fairness and democracy within the party.

"We are not against the party ... we are just against those in the party who use undemocratic methods. The regional assembly commission confirmed the result of ward assemblies that were unfair and undemocratic. We are all angry at the regional assembly commission. The township assembly is going to be held on January 27 and we object to it and will continue our protest until that day," party member Dr Win Naing told *The Myanmar Times* on January 24.

He said members from three other townships are also preparing to protest in Mandalay and if they get permission the Myingyan group will join them for the demonstration.

Member U Ko Ko Naing from Htanaungtaing village in Myingyan township said some ward assemblies were held "just on paper" and members had no chance to participate.

"We informed officials from the headquarter assembly commission about these issues but they ignored it. There are 85 villages in the township but just 68 villages held assemblies; the rest missed out. The party's theme is fairness and peace but there is no fairness in the party," U Ko Ko Naing said on January 24.

NLD member U Ko Ko Aung from Mandalay's Pyigyitagun township said he had submitted a request to protest outside the regional NLD office to the police station in Chan Aye Thar San township but was still waiting for permission as of January 26.

"We submitted the proposed letter today," he said on January 23. "But officials said that they could not allow us to use the place we requested and instead offered a space behind Mandalay Central Railway Station. They also said that they could allow only about 100 members to participate so we are not sure [when we will] be able to protest ... whenever it is, we have

submitted the letter and are waiting for the reply from the police. Then we will decide our plan."

If the protest is approved, members from Myingyan, Tada Oo and Natogyi townships will demonstrate together with their counterparts from Mandalay, U Ko Ko Aung said.

"There could be about 2000 members at the protest in Mandalay if it goes ahead. We are waiting for a reply from the police station and if we don't like their response we will discuss whether to continue with the protest. But we will continue to fight against the bad features of our party," he said U Ko Ko Aung.

U Ko Ko Aung and six other members from Pyigyitagun township were selected as representatives for the township assembly but were then suspended by the headquarters following complaints from their defeated opponents. The township assembly was then postponed

pending an investigation into the dispute.

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"The main reason for the protest is that we are not pleased at those in our party who are worse than dictators. We want the top officials to know about the unfairness in the party. We met with officials at the party headquarters but they did not accept our explanation," he said.

A spokesperson for the party's head office was repeatedly unavailable for comment last week.

In recent weeks, residents in Maubin, Ayeyarwady Region, also protested over the preparations for the assembly, while in late 2012 hundreds of members resigned in Labutta township.

However, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Ohn Kyaing said in an interview with 7Day News on January 10 that the conflicts represented only 5 percent of all ward assemblies and the majority had encountered few problems.



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## Civil society group forced to turn back on Laiza mission

By Nan Tin Htwe

MORE details - some of which conflict with state media reports - have emerged about a civil society group that was forced by the military to turn back on its approach to Laiza.

Ko Nay Myo Zin, leader of Myanmar Social Development Network, was stopped by military officers on January 24 about 25 kilometres from Laiza, the headquarters of the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO).

The English edition of the state-run New Light of Myanmar reported the following day that authorities turned back a civilian vehicle bound for Laiza at Dotphoneyan to avoid "unnecessary losses", without providing further details. However, the paper's Myanmar edition said the group continued despite the warning and head to La Ja Yan.

About 8km further down the road, they turned back after authorities explained "well" about the risks, the paper reported.

But Ko Nay Myo Zin told The Myanmar Times from Bhamo in southern Kachin State on January 25 that he and four members of the group were "harshly" stopped by the deputy commander of Battalion 320.

"First, their behaviour was harsh – shouting 'Turn off your camera'," Ko Nay Myo Zin said. "I asked them whether they would shoot if we continue. Then they apologised and said that they were just following orders and we will put them in a difficult situation if we continue. So we



Members of Myanmar Social Development Network in Kachin State's Bhamo last week. Pic: Supplied

turned back," he said.

The commander said the group should turn back because Kachin Independence Army (KIA) soldiers would shoot him and his team if they continued, or they would encounter a landmine. They also said he should not proceed as the group was not part of an official delegation. However, Ko Nay Myo Zin said he believed the Kachin would "welcome", rather than shoot at, the group if it approached Laiza.

The group set out from Yanogn on January 21 in a truck carrying 25 bags of warm clothes for displaced people. The vehicle carried the group's logo, along with a blue poster with a picture of an AK-47 and the words, "Let flowers blossom instead of bullets."

When asked about the incident,

presidential spokesman U Ye Htut said the KIA planted landmines on the road and the soldiers were trying to prevent further loss of life.

"If he is welcomed by the KIA, it's better to take the road from Shweli. If he is injured by a landmine, only the Tatmadaw will be blamed," U Ye Htut said in an email.

Ko Ming Seng, a coordinator at Kachin Peace Network who went to Laiza with Ko Nay Myo Zin in June 2012, said that the team could have planned the trip better.

He also said that civil society groups' focus on Laiza could create the perception that the KIO does not want peace.

"What they are trying to do is to make people more aware of the fighting and need for peace. But going to Laiza is not the only answer," Ko Ming Seng said.

Ko Nay Myo Zin's wife, Ma Zin Myo Maw, said she did not try to stop her husband despite the dangers of the trip. "I wasn't worried. I'm a Buddhist and believe in *karma*. If you do good things, good things will come to you. I just prayed for his safety," she said.

Ko Nay Myo Zin established Myanmar Social Development Network immediately after being released from Insein Prison in January 2012 under a presidential amnesty. A former lieutenant in the Tatmadaw, where he served from 1994 to 2005, Ko Nay Myo Zin was arrested in 2010 under the Unlawful Association Act for his involvement with the National League for Democracy.

### From page 1

### Former minister

He said U .Thein Tun was being closely watched by the authorities.

'He has been told to report to the authorities concerned if he wants to travel outside Nay Pyi Taw," the official said.

Presidential spokesman U Ye Htut confirmed the investigation.

We are making the probe and the investigation has been ongoing. It might be difficult to elaborate," he told The Myanmar Times by email.

An official from Myanma Posts and Telecommunications, the state-owned provider of telecoms services, said it has been told to give the statistics and figures to the government.

He said that more 10 people at MPT are under investigation.

Rumours about the corruption spread last week through social media, particularly Facebook. with users sharing documents that appeared to show transfers in the hundreds of thousands of dollars between a person named "U Thein Tun" and a former chief engineer at MPT. The veracity of the documents could not be verified.
Prior to U Thein Tun's

resignation, the Ministry of Communications, Information and Technology had called for expressions of interest for two operator licences and said it planned to increase the overall teledensity to 75 to 80 percent of the population by 2015-2016. The deadline to submit documents passed on January 25 and it is unclear if the process will be affected by the investigation. (See related

story page 23.)
U Ye Myat Thu, an executive from the Myanmar Computer Federation, said the government needed to strengthen its regulatory framework and procedures to attract investment.

He said it was important that decisions on investment were "institutional" rather than "personal".

Investment should be based on a system rather than a person," he said. "These institutions are not strong yet. ... If we rely only on a person, corruption will occur.'

But the federation's general secretary, U Zaw Min Oo, said he did not think the investigation, which he described as "a minor case", would deter potential investors. "It is our internal problem. The investors will focus on the telecommunications law and foreign investment law and regulations," he said. U Lwin Naing Oo, managing

director of telecoms firm Shwe Pyi Tagon, said he was expecting tough competition for the two licences. "Shwe Pyi Tagon is going to submit

an expression of interest," he said last week ahead of the deadline. "I expect that many investors will do the same. I don't think this news about graft will affect international

The investigation comes after President U Thein Sein has pledged to clean up the country as part of reforms that promise greater democracy and measures to establish the rule of law.

In a rare public move to tackle graft, authorities in November ordered state loans totalling tens of millions of dollars to be clawed back from private businesses.

The move came after the auditor general found dozens of cases of "misuse and dishonest actions" involving 15 ministries that resulted in nearly US\$65 million in loans leaving government coffers.

A new anti-graft law will enable authorities to "investigate and rigorously prosecute those involved in corruption in both the public and private sectors", according to an official document distributed at a recent donor forum. -AFP

### In Kachin

their own sides to every story ... sometimes the rumours make people very afraid."

She recalled seeing a mother in Myitkyina yell at her young daughter to put on a rain coat during a light rainstorm, telling the young child that the rain had acid in it from the government's chemical

The government has been accused of using chemical weapons against ethnic minority armies but this has never been verified and the government denies the charge. Ma Jun Wai Naing said there

was no evidence of acid rain, either from chemical weapons or other sources, in Myitkyina but residents "generally believe the story".

The cause of a recent helicopter crash of in Kachin State that killed several Tatmadaw soldiers has also been contentious, with residents in the area where the helicopter went down rejecting KIA claims that it had been shot down. (See

related story page 13.)

Ma Nyein Nyein Pyae said
there was also a persistent rumour among government troops that the KIA was secretly working with the Chinese military. "The KIA furiously refuse it and say that China doesn't help them," she said, adding: "It's complicated."

When asked how she sorts through all the conflicting information, Ma Jun Wai Naing said: "I contact both sides and I write both sides ... I follow the story and find out what is true and what is false."



## TIGER BALM®







## Residents fight SEA Games venue

Yachting venue at Nawe Saung being built on 30-acre site that government confiscated from residents 15 years ago

By Tim McLaughlin and Aung Si Hein

THE Southeast Asian Games is supposed to mark Myanmar's return to the international arena, and will be the first time in decades it has hosted a major sporting event.

Organisers are hoping to present an image of a new country emerging from decades of military rule when the games open on December 11.

But at Ngwe Saung, 50 kilometres west of Pathein in Ayeyarwady Region, an old conflict threatens to drown out the feelgood factor when the beach plays host to the games' yachting

A 30-acre beachfront complex in nearby Bu Kway Gyi village is being developed for the event by Yangon-based Myint & Associates, whose chief executive officer, U Moe Myint, is president of the Myanmar Yachting Federation.

The complex includes stands for spectators and facilities for athletes. When The Myanmar Times visited during December, the foundations had already been laid, empty cement bags were scattered across the beach and heavy machinery was lurching across the sandy soil.

It is also being built on

disputed land.

Many residents of Bu Kway Gyi have filed complaints against the Ministry of Sports. Three brothers - U Sein Than, U Soe Lwin and U Kyin Myint

 have found themselves entangled in an legal battle that has already seen them serve a two-month prison

The three inherited a 10-acre coconut plantation from their father in 1972, with a tattered land deed as proof of ownership.

The brothers say that in 1997 Major Yin Sein, who was then secretary of the district Peace and Development Council, strong-armed them into

I don't see any rule of law in the Nawe Sauna land issue ... the minister for sports is assuming that he can do anything he likes.7

selling their plantation well below the market price, as part of a regional development plan. The brothers received just K1200 for each tree as part of the deal.

Until 2011 the men avoided confronting the government out of fear. But emboldened by the reform process the three mounted a campaign to reclaim the grove when they learned it had been given to the Ministry of Sports in 2012, after laying untouched for 15 years.

Legal documents provided to the The Myanmar Times

by Du Waar Khun Munn Naing and Law Associates show that on June 16, 2011, U Aye Myint Kyu, the then-deputy minister for sports and current minister for culture, told the men that their land was part of a 30-acre site needed for the SEA Games yachting competition. U Aye Myint Kyu is also chairman of the Preparation Committee for  $27^{th}$  SEA Games.

Over the following months, many attempts to negotiate a settlement

Ayeyarwady Region general administration department secretary U Aye Kyaw told the brothers on October 2, 2012, that their 10 acres would not be given back and they would receive no compensation unless they presented a payment proposal compensation proposal that he approved.

After five months of filing letters and appeals with district offices the brothers believed that their campaigning had paid off when, on March 29, Pyi Myanmar, owned by Dr Tin Tun Oo, published an article that quoted Minister for Sports U Tint San as saying that the land was to be given back to the owners "in compliance with public

He also told the journal that he acknowledged that the situation in Myanmar had changed since the original confiscation.

'We tried to negotiate after people spoke out against the land confiscation. Since we could not reach an agreement, we gave the land back," said U

Tint San, who owns ACE Construction.

After reading the article, the brothers began building homes on the property on May 5 and the homes were finished two days later.

However, USoe Nyunt, the deputy director of the Sports and Fitness Department in Ayeyarwady Region, then filed charges against them for trespassing. They were the brothers' claims to the

land or the bad publicity the dispute could bring. "It is not my concern," he said. "I think it is finished and [the land] belongs to the government.

But apparently not for the residents of Bu Kway Gyi, who have rallied around the brothers. Additional support has come from members of the 88 Generation student to discuss the case. However, he said he believed SEA Games venue construction was being done for "the honour of the country".

Myint & Associates declined to comment to The Myanmar Times over the phone, requesting questions be submitted via fax. The company did not respond to faxed questions or repeated emails.



U Sein Than (right) of Bu Kway Gyi village, near Ngwe Saung. Pic: Thiri

found guilty on October 5 and sentenced to two months hard labour.

"U Aye Myint Kyu spoke for nothing," U Sein Than told *The Myanmar Times* in early December, days after he was released. "Those who trespassed against us are the Ministry of Sports, which is a governmental body.'

Deputy Minister for Sport U Thaung Htike said he was aware of the issues but was dismissive about group and National League for Democracy.

"I don't see any rule of law in the Ngwe Saung land issue," U Wai Hlaing Tun, a lawyer from the NLD who is giving the brothers legal advice on the case, told The Myanmar Times on January 16. "The minister for sports is assuming that he can do anything he likes.'

U Tin Maung Oo, an official from the Pathein district sports and physical fitness department, refused

As construction moves forward in Bu Kway Gyi, the brothers continue to press for the return of the land and say they hope that the involvement of the NLD will help achieve a favourable outcome.

For now, they appear stuck between Myanmar's authoritarian past and a present that, according at least to the narrative of the SEA Games, shows greater respect for the rights of its citizens.

7 News

### USGS conducting quake training

SCIENTISTS from the United States Geological Survey will this week conclude a training program aimed at improving knowledge about earthquakes, a Myanmar Earthquake Committee official said.

THE MYANMAR TIMES

Two USGS experts, along with local guest speakers, conducted a workshop in Yangon from January 21 to 25. A second workshop will conclude in Nay Pyi Taw on January 31.

The training was a collaboration between the United States Agency for International Development, USGS, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology and the Myanmar Engineering Society.

"Earthquake study in our country is just in its infancy. From this training we can learn more about earthquakes and apply that knowledge to our earthquake risk reduction works ... it will be fruitful for us," said committee secretary U Saw Htwe Zaw.

He said participants include representatives from government departments and non-government organisations, as well as geologists and engineers.

Participants will get an introduction to seismology and engineering seismology during the training, U Saw Htwe Zaw said.

-Aye Sapay Phyu



The 4.7-acre factory compound in Thaketa township that was privatised in 2011 despite being leased to a company under a contract that runs until 2017. Pic: Ko Taik

## Company slams government over privatisation confusion

By Noe Noe Aung

A COMPANY that won a privatisation auction in 2011 but has never been able to use the land has threatened to use foreign media to warn potential foreign investors about the risks of doing business in Myanmar.

As The Myanmar Times reported in December, Mega Marine director Daw May Aye Mon paid a total of K3.3625 billion (about US\$4 million) for the 4.7-acre plot in Thaketa township. But the current tenant, who participated unsuccessfully in the auction and runs a food canning operation at the site, refuses to leave because he says his contract with the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) runs until 2017.

Frustrated at the inability of the Privatisation

Commission and MIC to negotiate a resolution, an official from Mega Marine said on January 22 that the company would discuss the issue with foreign media to "let the world know about the irresponsible government officials".

"There is no solution yet. The officials give so many excuses and no one takes responsibility for this case. We have been waiting for two years for them to solve this situation. We are disappointed," said U Yan Myo Aung.

"Neither MIC nor Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries offered any solution yet. The Privatisation Commission told to talk with MIC and MIC told us to solve it with Privatisation Commission or Ministry [of Livestock and Fisheries]," he said.

"What would they do if it was a foreign investor in our place? There are a lot of foreign companies looking to invest in our country. But if officials cannot take responsibility for problems like this, it'll hurt the image of the government. I think businesspeople should be aware of the land problems that they might face [here]."

Before the auction, the plot was owned by the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries' Livestock Feedstuff and Milk Products Enterprise and was leased to Thailand-Myanmar company, Myanmar Makro Industry, through MIC under a 20-year contract.

MIC director U Than Sein Kyaing told *The Myanmar Times* in December that the commission is attempting to find a solution in cooperation with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries and Privatisation Commission, which has declined to comment on the case.

## Kachin release prisoners of war

By Tim McLaughlin

THE Kachin Independence Army earlier this month released eight underage recruits from the Tatmadaw captured during the fighting in Kachin State, the International Labour Organisation has confirmed.

The eight soldiers, who were recruited as minors but are now aged over 18, were released on January 14. The ILO acted as an intermediary between the government and the Kachin, and is working with the government to have them formally discharged.

"I am pleased to confirm that the ILO has received from the KIA eight Tatmadaw underage recruits who had been held by the KIA as prisoners of war," Mr Steve Marshall, the ILO's liaison officer in Yangon, told *The Myanmar Times* by email on January 20

"Both the Tatmadaw and the government of Myanmar have cooperated positively in respect of their return with the Ministry of Social Welfare providing direct support.

"The ILO is currently working with the government towards the boys receiving formal discharge documentation. UNICEF and their operating civil society partners will be providing them with rehabilitation support.

"It is very gratifying to see the safe return of these boys and to know that they now have the opportunity to resume normal life – the very positive approaches adopted by the KIA, the government of Myanmar and the Tatmadaw, without which this could never have happened, should be recognised and appreciated."

Due to the sensitive nature of the case, Mr Marshall said he could not comment on how long or where the boys had been held while in KIA custody.

La Nan, a spokesperson for the KIA, said that the prisoners had been held at Muse on the Myanmar-China border until ILO

The very positive approaches of the KIA, the government of Myanmar and the Tatmadaw should be recognised.

officials arrived from Yangon.

"The child soldiers confessed to us when they first arrived that they could not bear the persecution of their officers. We did not catch them during battle. When they reached to our camps they said they had gotten got lost or they came to us to be arrested," La Nan said by phone from Laiza.

The KIA is the armed wing of the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO). Headquartered in Laiza, on the China border, the group has been fighting the

Tatmadaw since June 2011, when a 17-year ceasefire broke down.

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Mr Marshall said in a recent interview with ILO News that the ILO believes there are about 5000 child soldiers in Myanmar. He said the process to release them is continuing to gain momentum.

"We started the complaints mechanism in 2007, and between 2007 and 2011 we had approximately 260 boys discharged from the army. Since 2012 so far, it would be close to 60, so it's increasing," he said in November.

In late June, the government and the UN signed an action plan that is designed to prevent the recruitment and use of children by the Tatmadaw and allow for the release of underage recruits.

By signing the plan, the Tatmadaw and government have committed to preventing underage recruitment, as well as identifying, discharging and reintegrating underage recruits.

But the Tatmadaw is not alone in using child soldiers in Myanmar. In 2011, the UN said in a report that it believed seven other armed groups were also actively recruiting and using underage soldiers, including the KIA.

including the KIA.

Other listed groups were the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, Karen National Liberation Army, Karen National Liberation Army-Peace Council, Karenni Army, Shan State Army-South and United Wa State Army.





## Government, Kayin prepare for political dialogue: facilitator

By Ei Ei Toe Lwin

POLITICAL talks between the government and Kayin leaders could begin as early as next month, peace facilitator U Hla Maung Shwe said last week.

U Aung Min last week met Kayin groups in Kayin State for preliminary talks on launching the political dialogue, Ü Hla Maung Shwe told *The Myanmar Times*.

During his two-day trip to the region, U Aung Min met members of the Karen Peace Council, Karen National Union (KNU) and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) to discuss political issues.

"U Aung Min met informally with leaders of the Karen Peace Council on January 21 in Hpa-an. He met leaders from the KNU the next morning and DKBA leaders in Myawaddy on the afternoon of January 22. They discussed political issues and the peace process to be implemented in the future. But we did not confirm a date for the start of a political

dialogue. The government is ready to hold talks once the date is confirmed. We expect a meeting in February on the political dialogue," said U Hla Maung Shwe, who is one of the founders of Myanmar Egress.

All three organisations signed ceasefire agreements with the government after it came to office in March 2011. DKBA has also signed an agreement with the government to cooperate on drug eradication activities.

"There are no changes, although we signed a ceasefire agreement with the government," said Colonel San Aung, head of the DKBA Intelligence Bureau.

DKBA plans to raise human rights issues and the possibility of self-administrative status for the region in the political talks.

"We really want a comprehensive peace, as well as a ceasefire in Kachin State. All ethnic groups want to cooperate with the government openly and honestly in the context of the peace-building process," said Colonel San Aung.

## KNU urges collaboration on Kachin ceasefire talks

By Win Ko Ko Latt

THE conflict in Kachin State has "to some extent" affected the peace process for other armed ethnic groups that have already agreed ceasefires, a senior Karen National Liberation Army official said last week.

However, KNLA Brigade 3 commander Brigadier General Saw Eh Ka Lu Thein stressed that it was important that groups such as the KNU collaborate with both the government and Kachin to help resolve the conflict.

He said both sides shared responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities in June 2011 and the failure to end the conflict.

"The Kachin conflict should be settled through negotiations. But as the ruler, the government can do more about this than we can," he said.

Speaking to reporters at the Karen National Union liaison office in Kyaukkyi township, Bago Region, on January 20, Brig Gen Saw Eh Ka Lu Thein said all



Commanders of Karen National Liberation Army Brigade Brigadier General Saw Eh Ka Lu Thein speaks at the Karen National Union's office in Kyaukkyi township, Bago Region, on January 20. *Pic: Win Ko Ko Latt* 

stakeholders needed to work together to move the peace process from ceasefires to political dialogue.

The battles between the Tatmadaw and KNLA over the past 60 years had produced no decisive victory for any side but incurred serious losses, he said.

"We fought so much and left so many people dead. A solution must be sought and that solution is collaborative negotiations," he said.

An important requirement for the development of long-term peace is a constitution that guarantees equality and the right to determine one's own destiny, he said.

If the constitution has these features then there is "no need to hold weapons; we can turn our efforts to development activities," he said. The KNU would transform into a political party.

The armed forces should also transform from a "Bamar Tatmadaw" to a "union Tatmadaw", he said.

Brig Gen Saw Eh Ka Lu Thein's comments came a day after President U Thein Sein said that political dialogue would begin early in 2013.

U Aung Min, the deputy leader of the national peace negotiating team, told *The Myanmar Times* after President U Thein Sein's speech at the Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum in Nay Pyi Taw that the government would hold discussions "both individually and collectively" with armed ethnic groups.

"It has been announced that we would discuss with United Nationalities Federal Council," U Aung Min said, referring to the 11-member coalition of armed ethnic groups founded in February 2011. – Translated by Thit Luin

## ်ရုပ်ပြုဖခင်ကြီး ဒေါက်တာဘိုကြီးအား တစိန္ဒစိပြည္ခ်ဳ သတိရအောက်ိဳဖေ့လွမ်ဳိးဆွတိခြင်း<sup>°</sup>

ဘုရား၊သိမ်၊ကျောင်း၊ ဓမ္မာရုံရဟန်းဒါယကာကြီး မြန်မာ့တိုင်းရင်းဆေးသမားတော်ကြီး ရုပ်ပျိုဖခင်ကြီး သုဓမ္မမကိဇောတဓရ သီဟသုဓမ္မမကိဇောတဓရ ဒေါက်တာဘိုကြီး (လူမှုထူးချွန်) ကွယ်လွန်သွားသည်မှာ (၂၈.၁.၂၀၁၃) ရက်နေ့တွင် တစ်နှစ်ပြည့်မြောက် သွားပြီးဖြစ်သော်လည်း ယနေ့တိုင် ရုပ်ပျိုမိသားစု နှင့်ချစ်တပည့်ဝန်ထမ်းများက ဆရာကြီး၏ မေတ္တာ၊စေတနာ၊ကရုကာ အပြည့်ထား၍ ပြုစုစောင့်ရှောက်ပေးခဲ့မှု နှင့် လူမှုအရေး၊ နိုင်ငံအရေး၊ ပညာရေး၊ကျန်းမာရေး၊ ရပ်ရေး ရွာရေးတို့ပါမကျန် ပါဝင်ထမ်းရွက်ပေးခဲ့သည်ကို ယနေ့တိုင်အမှတ်ထင်ထင်မေ့မရဖြစ်ကြရပါသည်။ သို့ပါ၍ ဆရာကြီးအားရည်စူး၍ ရွှေဘိုမြို့ချမ်းသာကြီးဘုရားအရှေ့ဘက်စောင်းတန်း တွင် (၂၈.၁.၂၀၁၃) နှင့် (၂၉.၁.၂၀၁၃) ရက်နေ့များ၌ (၂) ည တိုင်တိုင် ဓမ္မသဘင် စီရင် ကျင်းပပူဇော်ကြမည်ဖြစ်ပြီး ရဟန်းသံဃာတော် အရှင်သူမြတ်တို့အား ဆွမ်း၊ကွမ်း၊ဆေး၊ဝတ္ထုကပ်လှုပြု၍ ရေစက်သွန်းချကာ ဆရာကြီးအားအမှူးထား၍ အမျှပေးဝေပါသည်။ ကြည်သာဝမ်းမြောက် သာခု.....သာခု ေခါဆိုနိုင်ပါစေသော်....

ကျန်ရစ်သူမိသားစု ချစ်ဇနီး ဒေါ်တင်န နှင့် သားသမီးများ ရုပ်ပျိုတိုင်းရင်းဆေးမိသားစုနှင့် ဝန်ထမ်းများ

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9 News

## Crash probe in the spotlight?



THE MYANMAR TIMES

A DEPARTMENT of Civil Aviation investigation into the cause of the tragic Christmas Day Air Bagan crash, which left two people dead, represents a fresh test of Myanmar's reforms, as potential investors wait to see just how thorough regulators will be.

"The crash is a tragedy... but this could be a good opportunity for the DCA and the MOT (Ministry of Transport) to show the world that they are concerned about transparency and safety," said Mr Dominique Savariau, an aviation expert at Myanmar Carlton Consulting in Yangon.

The government responded to the crash, which also left 11 people injured, by forming a four-member investigation team on December 26. The team is led by U Win Swe Tun, a deputy director general at the DCA.

Although Myanmar has undertaken a number of important political and economic reforms over the past two years, these have done little to change perceptions about the extent of corruption.

In its 2012 corruption index released in late 2012, Transparency International placed Myanmar 172<sup>nd</sup> out of 176 countries surveyed. While the index is not without its critics—there are questions over the timing and extent of research for Myanmar's ranking—many foreign investors are still wary of the risks of doing business in Myanmar.

"Most of the industries in Myanmar belong to exmilitary workers or close friends of the military," said Mr Rahul Ghosh, the Singapore-based head of Asia Research for Business Monitor International (BMI)



and editor of the firm's report, *Myanmar Awakens*. "There's a lack of competition" that turns off potential investors, he said.

Air Bagan is one of several companies owned by tycoon U Tay Za, an entrepreneur infamous for his close ties to the former military regime. Despite many Western countries lifting sanctions over the past year, U Tay Za, a number of his companies

sources familiar with the industry is that the upper echelons of both Air Bagan and the Department of Civil Aviation are largely drawn from Myanmar's Air Force. Observers remain skeptical about how much information the investigation team will reveal – particularly if those results are bad for Air Bagan

"It is hard to say whether Air Bagan would be duly of technology at the Heho airport to a potential lack of training and, lastly, an aged jet—all issues that are likely to be relatively widespread in the Myanmar aviation industry. It is unlikely then that the government will mete out any sort of crippling punishment."

Mr Savariau, however, expressed optimism that the investigation will yield honest, open results, if only could be divisions in the government over how to handle the investigation and its findings. "The Myanmar government does have a vested interest in protecting Myanmar airlines, especially the ones that are partly owned by the government. That said, the government doesn't want to just support Myanmar airlines," he said.

He said the government appeared eager for more foreign business, adding that it also has "a good record of investigating crashes".

A joint delegation from the DCA and Air Bagan is in Canberra, Australia, using facilities at the Australian Transport Safety Bureau to sift through data from the flight's black box data recorder. Neither the airline or DCA could be reached for comment on the progress or nature of their collaboration but Mr Julian Walsh, general manager for strategic capability at the bureau, said it was not uncommon for airlines and government officials to work together to investigate accidents.

### President to discuss Inle in Norway

By Aye Sapay Phyu

January 28 - February 3, 2013

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein is expected to travel to Norway in late February, with cooperation on Inle Lake conservation one of the major topics to be discussed, Norway's charge d'affaires to Myanmar said last week.

Mr Arne Jan Floelo said on the sidelines of an Inle Lake conservation workshop held in Nay Pyi Taw that Norway had made a substantial commitment to efforts to preserve the site, which is a major international tourist attraction.

"President U Thein Sein will be going to Norway in the end of February and Inle Lake will be discussed. For Norway, our commitment has been to at least three projects. We hope that the government has got useful input and assistance from these projects. And that will help the discussion around the next step, where we go from here," he said on January 25.

One aspect of Norway's support has been the provision scholarships for 120 Myanmar students to undertake a master degree at the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand.

"In these scholarships ... there is also an assignment to go back to Myanmar and write about issues about the lake," Mr Floelo said.

He said Norway will wait for the government to outline its priorities in moving forward conservation plans for the Inle area.

"If they need [more] support, we will be happy to hear about it. And we can then discuss how Norway can possibly [get more] involved ... in saving Inle Lake," he said.

### 'It is hard to say whether Air Bagan would be punished if it is found to have made egregious errors.'

and most immediate family members and associates remain blacklisted from doing business with firms from the United States. European Union sanctions that were suspended for one year in April 2012 also remain in place.

The investigation is seen by some as a test of the government's commitment to transparency. One concern expressed by punished if it is found to have made egregious errors regarding the Christmas Day accident in Heho. Tay Za undoubtedly continues to enjoy a close connection with powerful government officials," said Mr Andrew Wood, an Asia analyst for BMI and co-author of Myanmar Awakens. "On the surface, the incident appears to be a confluence of factors, ranging from a lack

to attract investors to the industry. "The government wants foreign airlines and foreign insurance companies to do business [with them]," he said. An honest investigation "will create confidence, even if it's painful", he said.

Mr Leithen Francis, who has been covering aviation in Southeast Asia since 2003 as an editor for Aviation Week magazine, said there

### Seminar examines judicial reform

By Tim McLaughlin

GOVERNMENT and NGO officials gathered in Nay Pyi Taw last week for a seminar focused on reforming the country's justice system, an important step in the overall reform process.

The two-day "Promoting Justice Sector Development in New Democracies" seminar, co-hosted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Attorney General's Office, drew 180 participants to Nay Pyi Taw.

"Justice sector development is crucial for the fundamental rights of citizens," Attorney General Dr Tun Shin said in his opening address on January 24.

"At current, the promotion of the justice sector in new democracies is very popular subject, but no seminar of this kind has yet been organised in our country."

Speakers presented an update on Myanmar's judicial system, as well as lectures on legal definitions, the importance of increasing access to legal education, case management and the role of the justice sector.

The seminar came less than a month after President U Thein Sein called for a sustained commitment to reforms in his New Year's radio address

## Several members of parliament used the question and answer sessions to level criticism at the attorney general.

The newfound ability to hold a conference on justice was not lost on participants.

"Even the idea would not have even happened. Justice sector development would not have happened," UNDP country director Toily Kurbanov said of U Thein Sein's call to not forget those who had worked for years under Myanmar's military regime for greater legal advocacy and development.

Attendees did not squander the new forum for discussion.

Several members of parliament used the question and answer sessions to level criticism at the attorney general. Answers to questions on Myanmar's human rights record, including the merits of life long imprisonment and capital punishment, evoked passionate responses.

Law experts from Vietnam, Indonesia and India also spoke about their respective countries' legal sector development.

But officials stressed that the country would need to forge its own way to properly address legal issues that are unique to Myanmar, including customary and traditional legal practices still favoured in some areas. "It is our task to tread this path in our own proper way," said Dr Tun Shin

## Lawyers' Network to register in Mandalay

By Than Naing Soe

THE Lawyers' Network (Upper Myanmar) is poised for its official launch, says high court lawyer Tawwin U Khin Maung Than.

The Mandalay-based group will register with the Myanmar Lawyers' Council and connect with networks from other regions and states, including Magwe and Sagaing regions, and Shan, Chin and Kachin states.

The organisation will formulate views on the drafting and enactment of laws and by-laws by the government, the hluttaw, political parties and civil society, he said. It will also work to protect the rights of lawyers and restore respect for the role of lawyers in the administration of justice.

The capacity of lawyers will be built up through local and overseas training, workshops, the discussion of legal papers and talks by veteran lawyers.

Lawyers' Network also aims to defend workers, farmers, civil society and the poor, and to heighten public awareness of legal issues to achieve respect for human rights according to the law, said U Khin Maung Than.

The network has formed a chairman's team, a legal consulting team and working groups, including a law committee, and communications and information, finance groups, he said.

The Lawyers' Network originated from a meeting with United Nations special envoy Tomas Quintana at which lawyers discussed the military regime's habit of revoking the licences of lawyers who were involved in politics. – Translated by Thit Lwin

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## Govt slams US Kachin statement

Embassy statement could 'cause misunderstanding'

By Kyaw Hsu Mon

DEPUTY Information Minister and spokesperson for the president U Ye Htut has labelled a United States embassy statement on the Kachin conflict as "unfair", saying it ignores recent attacks by the Kachin Independence Army.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also criticised the statement, saying it "could cause misunderstanding in the international community as it did not mention anything about terrorist actions and atrocities committed by the KIA".

The January 24 statement issued by the embassy in Yangon said the US is "deeply concerned" by the continued violence in Kachin State. The statement referred to media reports that indicated the Tatmadaw had continued to launch military offensives in the vicinity of the KIA headquarters at Laiza, despite the government announcing that a ceasefire would take effect from January 19.

The statement said the US strongly opposes the fighting, which it said has resulted in civilian casualties and undermined efforts to advance national reconciliation.

It also expressed concern for the safety of civilians in conflict areas

and urged the government to allow United Nations and international humanitarian agencies access to areas where assistance is needed.

The US also called for both sides to take all necessary steps to undertake dialogue that can lead to a sustainable peace in Kachin State.

U Ye Htut said on his Facebook page that the statement was not balanced because it did not make mention of the Tatmadaw soldiers, police and civilians who had been attacked by the KIA in Kachin State.

He said the government understands the concerns about the Kachin fighting but said the US should be careful to not only condemn the government. He said the statement should have criticised both sides for their role in the conflict.

In a press release published in state-run media on January 26, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs echoed these concerns, saying the statement gave the impression that "only the Myanmar government and the Tatmadaw launched the offensive" following a recent failed ceasefire.

The statement said the KIA had violated the ceasefire and the Tatmadaw had responded "just to protect and safeguard the peace and tranquility of the community and for the prevalence of law and order".

### Team still chasing Spitfire dream

By Kyaw Hsu Mon

UNDETERRED by their failure, so far, to unearth any World War II-era Spitfire aircraft, a British aircraft enthusiast and his backers are continuing their search.

Lincolnshire farmer David Cundall will keep digging, both at Mingalardon Airport and at two northern locations where he believes up to 140 Spitfire fighters were buried in the late 1940s. The aircraft were said to have been buried on the orders of Lord Louis Mountbatten with the help of American engineers. It is not clear why they were interred, or why they were not dug up again after the British colonial authorities departed.

According to Mr Cundall and U Soe Thein, a retired professor from Yangon University's geology department who is also taking part in the search, about 35 of the aircraft are at Mingalardon Airport, 18 in Myitkina, Kachin State, and six at Meiktila, Mandalay Region.

"It's too early to say we haven't found a Spitfire at Mingalardon. We've only dug in one place there, and there are lots of problems, such as service pipelines, underground wires and so on, as well as security," said U Tun Kyaw, general manager of Shwe Taung Paw, a Myanmar company that is also engaged in the Spitfire hunt.

U Htoo Htoo Zaw, the managing director of Shwe Taung Paw, told the state-run New Light of Myanmar on January 22 that the team would dig in another



Members of a British-led excavation team at Mingalardon airport in Yangon on January 9. Pic: AFP

15 places as part of its survey of Mingalardon Airport. He accused the British Broadcasting Corporation, which has reported on the search team's failure to find a Spitfire, of misleading its audience, adding: "We've only dug in one place at Mingalardon so far. The airport compound is very big."

On January 18, the BBC quoted a spokesperson for Wargaming.net, a Belarusian website that is financing the search, as saying there were no Spitfires in Myanmar.

U Tun Aung Kyaw questioned the company's motivation for announcing that there were no Spitfires so soon after the search had begun.

"I think Wargaming may have

others reason to announce this news at such an early stage. We do not know why they said that, to be honest, because it is far too early to say anything definite," U Tun Kyaw said.

He said it might take four or five more months before a definitive result can be announced. "We still believe there are Spitfires buried underground," he said.

The team will also pursue its search at Myitkyina. Earlier this month, they announced the discovery of a "man-made" buried object, but were unable to proceed because of "murky waters".

"We're digging in both places now," U Htoo Htoo Zaw confirmed



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## Villagers file charges against soldiers

By Soe Than Lynn

THE MYANMAR TIMES

A SHAN State Hluttaw representative says members of the Tatmadaw who allegedly beat and detained villagers in Kyaukme township after the soldiers accidentally shot one of their own colleagues should be severely punished if found guilty.

U Sai Kham Kyaw, the representative for Kyaukme 1, said he helped organise the release of the villagers, who have filed grievous bodily harm charges against the soldiers.

"The stationed military unit beat and arrested some local people from Kyainkaing village last week. As their state hluttaw representative, I called the relevant departments and eight villagers, including the head of the village and secretary, were released the next day. Those who are seriously injured are in Kyaukme hospital," U Sai Kham Kyaw said.

He said it was essential that the

their future. Such acts of bullying are not only unpleasant for the villagers but also will affect the military and hinder their work in the long term. That's why we opened a case [against the soldiers] with a view to making these bad village, and shined his torch light on them. The column shot at him but he was not wounded ... and fled in panic. The column continued to shoot and a soldier was hit by friendly fire. He died about 15 minutes later, after being brought

worried about their safety, he said. The group arrived at the regiment base ahead of the soldiers and when they explained about the incident they were beaten and detained, he said.

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U Sai Kham Kyaw heard about the incident on January 16 and secured the release of the eight men that evening

men that evening.

But he said U Wiya, the man who disturbed the column of soldiers, is still in hiding.

"I sent a complaint letter to the commander-in-chief and a copy of that letter to the president, Pyithu Hluttaw, minister for border affairs and state military operations chief on January 21. They haven't responded yet," U Sai Kham Kyaw said.

- Translated by Thit Lwin

### 40nly if action is taken will villagers no longer live in fear.

regular "acts of persecution" that the military perpetrated against ethnic minorities over the past 20 years did not continue. If found guilty, the soldiers should face stiff punishments as permitted under the law, he said.

"Only if action is taken against such acts will villagers no longer live in fear and feel secure about habits disappear," he told *The Myanmar Times* last week.

He said the incident occurred after a resident of Kyainkaing village encountered a column of Tatmadaw soldiers at about 6:30pm on January 14.

"In the darkness, U Wiya mistook the column for cattle, which usually enter farmland at the edge of back to the village," U Sai Kham Kyaw said.

The soldiers forced the villagers to make a casket for the soldier and fetch monks to conduct the funeral rites. The following day, they aggressively detained the village head and secretary and six other residents followed them by motorbike because they were

### On Bago tour, NLD leader pledges to help mine victims

By Win Ko Ko Latt

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi last week vowed to help people who have been left disabled by landmines during a visit to Bago Region.

The Pyithu Hluttaw representative and head of the Rule of Law, Stability and Peace Committee said she would work to ensure landmine victims received vocational training and also artificial limbs.

"All need to collaborate with this effort, including disabled people themselves," Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said at the ceremony held in Mone, in Bago Region's Kyaukkyi township, on January 20. The ceremony was attended by more than 600 guests, including 235 disabled, nearly all of whom had lost limbs to landmine accidents.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said she would help to raise funds for training programs and other assistance. But she also said that everybody could help people with disabilities by not viewing them as a burden

She said the large number of people with landmine injuries was a consequence of the lack of peace over the past six decades and she urged people to cooperate to further the peace process.

One former Tatmadaw soldier who lost one of his legs to a landmine said he wanted to learn carpentry so he could start a small business.

"I have a wooden artificial leg given by Tatmadaw but because it is awkward I just walk with a crutch instead. If the ground is flat I can also use a bicycle. I am very happy that Amay Suu will help us but I was already very happy just that she came here," said Ko Thaung Lwin, who left the Tatmadaw in 2002.

The Mone ceremony was part of a one-day trip that also saw Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visit Kyaukkyi, where she met officials from the Karen National Union and its armed wing, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), to discuss the peace process.

Brigadier General Saw Eh Ka Lu Thein, commander of KNLA Brigade 3, told *The Myanmar Times* in Kyaukkyi that while there were few landmines in the area under his command they remain a problem in other regions affected by the decadeslong conflict.

Residents said the number of landmine accidents in the area had declined significantly since the Karen National Union signed a ceasefire with the government in January 2012.

- Translated by Thit Lwin



Shopkeepers at the Ye Gyaw Market in Pazundaung township are attempting to block a Yangon City Development Committee plan to redevelop the market. *Pic: Ko Taik* 

## Ye Gyaw Market rebuild hits a snag with residents

By Noe Noe Aung

OPPOSITION from shopkeepers has stalled a project to build a new market and apartment complex. The development is scheduled to replace Yangon's Ye Gyaw Market, a large site at the corner of Bogyoke Aung San and Ye Gyaw roads in Pazundaung township.

On January 14, state media reported that work on the project, led by Yangon City Development Committee, had been suspended pending negotiations between the construction company and shopkeepers.

"We are going to replace the old Ye Gyaw Market with an eightstorey building, with Aung Myin Pyae Sone construction company as the contractor," said U San Shwe Htun, head of YCDC's Department of Markets.

"It will be also a residential building," he added.

U San Shwe Htun said existing Ye Gyaw Market shopkeepers would be allocated ground-floor

space in the new development, which would also include shops, a supermarket, parking for 50 cars and apartments. The plan is to complete construction within two years.

But shopkeepers say the location identified as a potential temporary market while the rebuilding is underway is not acceptable, and many shopkeepers do not want to leave the existing site.

The proposed location for the temporary market is between Myaung Gyi and Shwe Hnin Si roads in Pazundaung township, which is a short walk from Ye Gyaw Market.

"We don't want to move to another place because we have so many things to consider. We have agreed to a temporary move if a suitable site can be found. But the idea of moving is very difficult," said one shopkeeper.

But U Aung Naing, a spokesperson for residents of the No 9 quarter of Pazundaung township, said the shopkeepers were worried they might not be able to return to the site once the redevelopment is finished.

"They also don't like the temporary location proposed," said U Aung Naing. He said objections from residents had already blocked a move to another proposed site.

"The site the company proposed was too small and not appropriate for tailors' shops, which make up most of the shops at Ye Gyaw. Greengrocers and some general stores also operate in the market, so residents are worried that transient sellers might be left in place when the legal sellers move out," said U Aung Naing.

However, U Aung Naing said

shopkeepers are in favour of redeveloping the market if an acceptable compromise can be reached.

"The market should be rebuilt. It is old and unsafe, and doesn't look good enough for a city like Yangon," he added.

Ye Gyaw Market was built during the colonial period as a garage for military vehicles.

### Barcamp hits a new attendance high mark

By Htoo Aung

MORE than 6000 people attended the annual Yangon Barcamp earlier this month, breaking the previous high of 4700. The turnout meant the Yangon leg of the worldwide internet and technology conference was a record breaker for the second year running.

"This is the fourth conference we've had in Yangon. We received more than 6300 registrations this year but a lot of attendees did not register," said Ko Ko Ye, tech support team leader for Barcamp Yangon.

"We also had 15 international Barcampers who registered, as well as another 20 or so who did not register," he said.

He added that Barcamp is a forum for sharing technology and knowledge, and the January 26 and 27 event covered 150 topics ranging from youth to politics and photography.

Attendee Ko Win Shein said he goes to Barcamp every year.

year.

"I think it is the biggest IT discussion forum you can go to, but some people come for product promotion and to promote training programs," he said. "But I think future IT developments should have been discussed more this year."

Organisers looked to improve on last year's event by expanding the resources available to attendees. This year's features included a Barcamp museum, maps, guideline videos and free photographs for Barcampers.

Mr Thomas Feichter, an Italian barcamper who attended the Yangon event, was approached by organisers to give a presentation. "For me it's the first time I'm joining Barcamp. I'm giving a presentation on Drupal Hosting on Aegir and Nginx," he said, referring to the free content management framework used by websites worldwide.

But he added that he also came to the conferences to make contacts in the IT and business fields. "I definitely want to return next year."

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NEWS



Members of an investigation commission set up to probe the cause of outbreaks of Rakhine State, including comedian and activist Zagarnar (right), at a press conference at Yangon's Chatrium Hotel on September 17, 2012. Pic: Ko Taik

### Rakhine commission aims for new March deadline

By Ei Ei Toe Lwin

THE MYANMAR TIMES

AN INVESTIGATION commission set up to probe outbreaks of communal violence in Rakhine State is aiming to submit its report by the end of March – more than four months later than originally planned.

Commission spokesperson Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing told *The* Myanmar Times last week that the new date had been agreed after discussion with the President's Office.

"The commission submitted an interim report to the president on November 17. Now we will try to finish our final report by the end of March. We are paying close attention to ensure our report into the incidents is accurate," said Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing, who is also secretary of the commission.

"We have to struggle very hard to complete these tasks successfully. It is a difficult case and we have so many things we need to do ... to meet the mandate of the commission," he said, adding that local authorities in Rakhine State had been particularly helpful.

The President's Office announced the formation of the 27-member investigation commission on August 17. 2012. As well as expose the real cause of the incidents that occurred in Rakhine to "fully participate" in the State in May and June, it commission's activities.

is also required to make suggestions "for the national interest" and file a report by November 16.

The commission's members include leaders of the country's four main religions, as well as politicians, civil society activists and journalists.

But commission members hinted that the process has not been particularly smooth, with serious divisions over how to carry out the commission's tasks.

Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing said groups were formed within the commission to handle different tasks and members made "occasional" visits to Rakhine State. He conceded that there were "a few challenges" during the investigation process.

'We can't just do anything that we want. When we make a decision, we present it to all members and we even discuss it with the President's Office. But there may be some differences of opinion among members. If they are not satisfied with any of the commission's decisions, any member can discuss their complaints with us at anytime," he said.

Commission member Dr Aye Maung, who is also chairman of the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party and an Amyotha Hluttaw representative, said he had not been able

"I'm too busy with other issues so I haven't even read the interim report," Dr Aye Maung said. "But the commission is doing its tasks normally so it will be able to submit the final report."

Commission member U Kyaw Khin, the general secretary of a Myanmar Muslim association, said he was "satisfied" with the team's progress so far.

'We expect that the commission will give its report without bias," he said.

But Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing said it was too early to discuss any findings. "We can't give any detailed information about our commission's findings yet. We can only say that we will try to get an accurate answer about the conflicts despite the challenges we

face," he said.

While the latest outbreak of violence was more than three months ago, Dr Aye Maung and other commission members said Rakhine State is still unstable.

You can see this from the fact that the government still has not been able to lift the section 144 (curfew) in Rakhine State. It is difficult to build trust between the two communities so the government should pay attention to managing the conflict in Rahkine State because it is like a bomb that can explode at any time," Dr Aye Maung said.

## Villagers dismiss KIA chopper claims

No signs of combat damage on helicopter in Jan 11 crash

By Bill O'Toole

RESIDENTS of Tar Law Gyi village in Kachin State have dismissed the Kachin Independence Army's claim that it shot down a Tatmadaw helicopter that crashed 3 kilometres (1.9 miles) south of their village on January 11.

The KIA and the government have given conflicting reports on the circumstances surrounding the crash, which claimed the lives of three soldiers on board. The Kachin army said it shot down the Mi-35 aircraft, while the government reported in the state-run New Light of Myanmar that the crash was the result of a mechanical failure.

U San Wai, a captain and spokesperson for Tar Law Gyi's citizen militia, told The Myanmar Times that he and several other farmers with land near the crash site were certain that the crash was the result of a mechanical failure.

Farmer U Saung Thaung Nyunt told *The Myanmar* Times he was outside working in his garden at about 3:30pm when he saw the helicopter go down. He said he did not see any smoke or irregular flying, nor did he hear or see the helicopter engage in any ground or aerial combat. He said the helicopter made a slow descent into an untended field 2km (1.2 miles) from his property.

U San Wai did not witness the crash but shortly afterwards led a group of Tatmadaw soldiers to the crash site, allowing them to collect the soldier's bodies. There, he met an army engineer who diagnosed the engine problems. The helicopter showed no signs of combat, nor was there any fighting in the area around

Tar Law Gyi that day, he

Tar Law Gyi is 9km (5.6 miles) south of Mvitkvina and most of its residents are members of the Tai-Leng, or "Red Shan", ethnic group. Tai-Leng Nationalities Development Party chairman U Sai Htay Aung says Red Shan people have taken no side in the Kachin fighting but "are a nation afraid of both

To maintain their relative autonomy and protect themselves from exploitation at the hands of both government and KIA troops, Tar Law Gyi Myitkyina but crashed near Tar Law Gyi, he said.

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After conferring with his fellow officers, U San Wai reported that there was no fighting in the outpost La Nan mentioned, and said the closest front in the conflict was more than 15km (9.3 miles) from the crash site.

Mr Dominique Savariau, a former helicopter pilot in the French Air force and a senior consultant and aviation expert at Myanmar Carlton Consulting, told The Myanmar Times that based on his knowledge both sides of the story could be credible.



and several other nearby villages, which are also home to the Red Shan, have established pyithu sit (citizen militias) to guard and administer their communities, of which U San Wai is the leader.

When told of the villagers' account, KIA spokesperson La Nan said that the reason the villagers had not heard any fighting was because the helicopter engaged KIA ground troops at an outpost 6km (3.7 miles) south of the crash site. It was damaged and tried to fly back to

He said it would not take much to bring down an Mi-35 helicopter, adding that "a kid with a stone could do it" - especially if the stone damaged the rear rotor.

However, Mr Savariau stressed that an impartial investigation into the crash is still necessary for transparency. Though he admits the possibility of such an investigation is remote, he said it could have benefits outside of the Kachin conflict. -Additional reporting by Khin Su Wai in  $\dot{Mandalay}$ 

### Heritage conservation forum held

By Htar Htar Khin

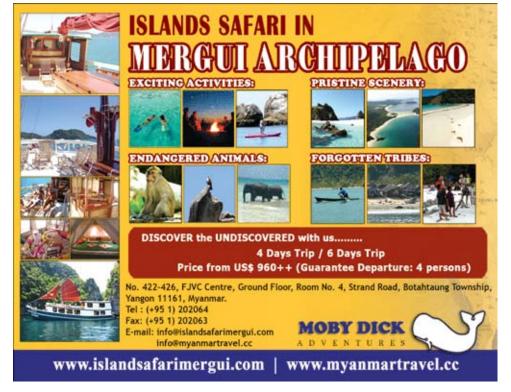
CITY planners and conservation experts met on January 24 to discuss preserving Yangon's unique historical and architectural heritage. The Forum on Managing Conservation Zones took place at the House of Memories restaurant on U Wisara Road in Yangon.

The forum brought together more than 30 participants from a range of organisations, including the Yangon City Development Committee,

the Port Authority, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, the Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development, Yangon Heritage Trust, JICA, UN-Habitat and Association of Myanmar Architects. International experts and embassy representatives also took part.

Their aim was to ensure a coordinated approach by government and other key agencies towards the effective management of conservation zones in Yangon, to develop clear ideas about heritage regulations and policies for the downtown conservation zone and to discuss the strategy and conservation plan objectives for the Secretariat, Yangon Heritage Trust said in a statement.

Topics discussed included the listing of historic buildings in Yangon, the designation of conservation zones, and rules and regulations to conserve the heritage zones, and related matters. The forum discussion was led by Dr Thant Myint-U.



**N**EWS

## Cooperate with us: U Thein Sein

President calls on civil society to work more closely with government to strengthen reform process

By Zaw Win Than

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein last week urged communitybased social organisations to engage with the government to "intensify" their participation in the reform process.

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He said cooperation between different "forces" was essential for the country to continue moving forward.

"I firmly believe that, regardless of the challenges we are subjected to, the joint efforts of all the forces in our country will definitely pave the way for success in all the reforms we undertake. I therefore would like to call on the civil society groups to intensify their participation in nation- and state-building activities," U Thein Sein said on January 20 at a meeting with civil society leaders at the Yangon Region government office.

U Thein Sein said the government recognises that civil society organisations are an important actor in national development.

"I encourage civil society organisations to work hand in hand with the government in state-, nation- and peacebuilding activities by making

a positive contribution to the creation of national identity that is in line with ... political stability, economic growth and social harmony,' he said.

"I'm not suggesting that civil society organisations must agree with us on everything. I am just inviting you all to work with the government in different areas that we agree on."

The president's willingness to meet civil society organisations was widely praised by participants.

Daw Khin Sandar Nyunt, a spokesperson for the Peace Network, said she believed the civil society meeting with president will improve cooperation with the government.

"I expect to have more consultation meetings and mechanisms for giving feedback between authorities and civil society groups from different areas. I believe from this meeting, there will be more insightful collaboration between the different authorities and civil society in the near future," she said.

U Maung Maung Soe Tint, chairman of Border Development Association, said the meeting showed the president's level of trust in



President U Thein Sein meets representatives of civil society organisations in Yangon on January 20. Pic: Aung Htay Hlaing

the public.
"To expand civil society networks throughout the whole nation, I would like to request the president to organise a national-level civil society forum as possible. I think the forum like this will be a place to listen to the voices and suggestions of different parts of civil society and can help find solutions to certain problems," he said.

He said a cooperation committee should be formed for civil society organisations to coordinate

their activities.

U Thein Sein said at the meeting that the government will relax restrictions on registering associations and on their activities in order to enable political parties and civil society organisations to operate freely.

He said the Myanmar Peace Centre is prepared to work with all civil society partners in the peace process and pledged to continue the peace-building process until genuine peace is achieved.

The government is now

NAY PYI TAW – President

U Thein Sein vowed on

January 19 to put the nation's

impoverished people at the

heart of reforms in a speech

wooing international donors

whose help is badly-needed

to rebuild the battered

After decades of military

rule Myanmar's people

remain among the world's

poorest, prompting President

U Thein Sein's pledge to raise

living standards, boost jobs

and support farmers and

The government "must be people-centred" and

respond to their "needs, expectations and wishes",

U Thein Sein told donors -

including officials from the

United States, European

Union, Japan, World Bank

and International Monetary

Fund (IMF) - in Nav Pvi

Taw, according to an English

"While focusing

on improvements in

productivity, job creation

transcript of his comments.

small businesses.

will help reduce poverty

he said.

he added.

doing everything it can to turn ceasefire agreements into political dialogue. My administration will avoid using piecemeal measures when dealing with ethnic problems but [will use] the means that will lead to lasting peace," he said.

The president vowed to institute a system that ensures equal rights among all ethnic groups but said they must abide by the principles of non-disintegration of the union and perpetuation of

and income opportunities

we will also need to help

people have better access

to education, healthcare,

social welfare, electricity and telecommunications,'

Myanmar will fulfill those

aspirations "more effectively

and successfully if we ...

receive assistance from the international community",

The country has asked

the IMF for help in 2013,

according to a report released

country's economy bounced

along in the 2011-12 financial

year, posting a 5.5 percent

growth rate that is expected

Planning and Economic

Development Dr Kan Zaw

said the government was

crafting a 20-year economic

plan and welcomed "ideas

knowledge, systems and

technology" as well as cash

assistance. -AFP

Minister for National

The study says the

last week by the body.

to hit 6.25pc this year.

### through its free mobile medical services, an official President vows reforms

The foundation visited Kangyi Daung near Pyapon in Ayeyarwady Region from December 28 to 30 and treated about 9000 patients for a range of ailments, including skin, urinary, liver, ear, throat and eye problems, as well as cleft lips and

THE MYANMAR TIMES

**Briefs** 

**UNFC** to discuss

Kachin with govt

YANGON - The United Na-

tionalities Federal Council

said last week it had agreed

to hold talks with the government to try to end the

The UNFC, which was formed by about a dozen

ethnic groups, expects to

hold talks with Myanmar

peace negotiators by mid-

February, possibly in Thai-

land, spokesman Khun Ok-

uation because of the serious

fighting there," Khun Ok-

ker, chairman of the Pa-O

National Liberation Organi-

sation, said by telephone.

"The first meeting is likely

before mid-February. KIO

(Kachin Independence Or-

ganisation) leaders will be

there and the Kachin issue

will be discussed," he added.

**Shwe Parami treats** 

**HEALTHCARE** foundation

Shwe Parami treated more than 9400 patients in two

regions earlier this month

thousands in delta

"The meeting could be

to be held in Thailand.'

ker said on January 22. "The upcoming meeting will focus on the Kachin sit-

conflict in Kachin State.

palates. In the second week of January, its members visited Pane Zalote and Kan Kalay villages in Nyaunglebin township, Bago Region, and treated another 467 pa-

A spokesperson said that the foundation aimed to help people in rural areas where access to healthcare is lim-

"There are many people who can't access medical service because of transportation costs and medical fees. We will try to expand treatments and coverage because our sayadaw wants to help more poor patients throughout the country," he said.

The foundation was established under the guidance of the venerable Sayadaw Ashin Cendardika in 2011.

Since then, the foundation has treated 60,209 people. - Cherry Thein



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I	2.	Gender and Health Specialist (IICA2)	Yangon	International	31-Jan-13
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NEWS

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## Peace walk continues despite police charges

By Htoo Aung and Soe Sandar Oo

POLICE have charged five members of a group of peace marchers who set off on foot from Yangon for the Kachin Independence Organisation headquarters at Laiza last week with breaching the peaceful protest law.

The group set off from City Hall at about 7:30am on January 21 and planned to complete the approximately 1300-kilometre journey in six weeks, walking up to 14 hours a day.

But Yangon Region Police Force said in a statement last week that the group's leader, Ko Yan Naing Tun, and four other people have been charged under section 18 of Law Relating to Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession because they did not have permission for the march.

The four were charged in 12 Yangon Region townships: Ahlone, Hlaing, Hlegu, Insein, Kamaryut, Kyauktada, Kyeemyindaing, Lanmadaw, Latha, Mayangone, Mingalardon and Pabedan. They were also later charged in Daik U and Bago townships.

However, the police have not made any arrests and the group has vowed to press on to Laiza – leaving open the possibility that some of the marchers could face dozens of charges, which each carry a maximum prison term of

Ko Yan Naing Tun told The Myanmar Times by phone from Bago Region's Nyaunglebin township on January 25 that he was unconcerned about the

"No court summons has been sent to our homes. Filing charges is the job of the police, we will just continue to walk to Laiza," he said.

While one woman in the group was forced to return to Yangon after being hit by a motorbike, he said about 50 people, including four monks, would press on. Earlier, he insisted that the walk was not a protest or political activity.

"It is not a protest at all. We won't ask for anything. We are travelling on foot for peace. That's all," Ko Yan Naing Tun said before the group set out.

He said the group had sent letters to various government departments and ministries informing them about the

Our purpose is for Kachin people to have peace from all that shooting. We want a peaceful country. Our journey also represents [our desire] for a ceasefire," he said.

Although he is a member of the National League for Democracy, Ko Yan Naing Tun said the group did not represent any political party or organisation.

U Tun Aung, a lawyer from the Lawyers' Network, said he believed the charges were not warranted.

"They are marching by themselves. They are just walking and it does not concern the law. How can you say that people walking in public is breaking section 18 of Law Relating to Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession?" he said.

However, a Myanmar Police Force official from Yangon Region alleged that the group had broken the law because they did not get permission under the peaceful protest law and were "not walking legally".



An activist holds a peace flag at the start of a planned 1300-kilometre walk from Yangon to Laiza on January 21. Pic: AFF

"They didn't apply for permission to walk around. Police checked them because they are not walking legally. They are violating section 18 because they do not have a permit to walk around in a group," he said.

Mr Phil Robertson, the deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Asia Division, called on the government to withdraw the charges.

"The decision to charge these marchers reveals the Burma government still harbours some worrying authoritarian inclinations that left unchecked can seriously undermine the

cause of rights respecting reform. These activists should not have been charged in the first place, and the government should immediately drop the charges and end this travesty," he told The Myanmar Times

Ko Yan Naing Tun said he anticipates the trip will take about six weeks, which would mean the group will have to cover an average of 30 kilometres a day.

After arriving in Laiza, they plan to place a light blue flag with a picture of a dove and olive branch in front of a refugee camp and will stay a

week with the refugees.

"We cannot afford to support them [financially] but we will let Myanmar and the rest of the world know about their troubles, what problems they face and what kind of help they need,"

"People can also give letters to us for the Kachin people. I will carry and deliver them if I arrive there.

Before their departure, the group visited Shwedagon Pagoda on January 20 and recited a poem for peace, written by Dagon Tayar, at Thakhin Kodaw Hmaing's

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### RIVERORCHID WINS BIG AT CAMPAIGN ASIA PACIFIC

Riverorchid has brought home Indochina's first ever "Creative Agency of the Year" and "Media Agency of the Year" accolades from Campaign Asia Pacific's 2012 Agency of the Year awards festival. The awards recognise riverorchid's drive to become the leading communication specialists within Indochina.

Yangon, Jan 21, 2013 - Riverorchid has finished the year triumphantly with two golds at the 2012 Campaign Asia Pacific Agency of the Year awards ceremony. The independent advertising agency took home one top honour for Creative, awarded to riverorchid Cambodia, and another for Media presented to riverorchid media. With this year-end honour from the prestigious publication, riverorchid once again reinforced its competitive edge as the foremost agency specialising in Indochina communications.

Since 1994, the Agency of the Year competition has recognised companies and individuals who have contributed to raising industry standards whilst also excelling in business performance. As the only agency performance awards in the region with results tabulated by PricewaterhouseCoopers for the last nine years, it opens up competition opportunities for all Asia-Pacific media, communications, advertising, creative, digital agencies including Australia and New Zealand.

Besides the two newly bagged golds from Campaign Asia Pacific, riverorchid also boasts of an impressive collection of many other prestigious international awards. These include the Guinness World Record for an activation concept for Viso in Cambodia, a PMAA (Promotion Marketing Award of Asia) for Best Brand Awareness & Trial Campaign in 2012, and five gold and five silvers at 17th Annual Communicator Awards 2011 held in the USA.

These international awards as well as the Creative Agency of the Year and Media Agency of the Year Awards for Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar consolidate riverorchid's positioning as the leading, fully-integrated advertising, media, and communications network in Indochina, delivering a full package of services, media and brand solutions. "In riverorchid, we pride ourselves on offering a full range of communications services ranging from above the line to below the line to research. It is a great honour for us to receive this recognition for two of our biggest and most important disciplines - creative, where we aim to deliver execptional local resonance, and media where we are proud to have the best planning tools in the region," said riverorchid CEO Santiphong Pimolsaengsuriya (also known as Pick).

Riverorchid has offices in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and in Myanmar. The Myanmar office has been operating since 2006, providing professional services to the likes of AirAsia, Samsung, Korean Air, Asia Foods, Cobra Energy Drink and City Mart, among others. Their services range from creative, PR, design, activation and media management. Their Myanmar office is located on Thiri Mingalar street, 8 Mile, Mayangone township and can be contacted by calling 01-653530 or by emailing robert@riverorchid.com.



Riverorchid wins big at Campaign Asia Pacific "Agency of the Year 2012"

CONTACT: Robert Pulido, Head of Agency (robert@riverorchid.com)

January 28 - February 3, 2013 The Myanmar Times

### Mandalay-Myitkyina train times changed

By Si Thu Lwin

TRAIN schedules on the Mandalay-Myitkyina route were amended last week, with state media suggesting the changes were designed to avoid travelling in Kachin State at night because of recent bombings.

The changes to the schedule came into effect on January 25 and affected five of the six services a day on the line.

"We don't know why the train timetable has been changed. It was ordered by our headquarters," said a deputy stationmaster at Mandalay Railway Station.

However, the state-run New Light of Myanmar reported on January 24 that the change was "probably to reduce the risks" following "a spate of mine blasts on railroads and bridges not only in Mohnyin, Mogaung townships in Kachin State but also in Indaw township in Sagaing Region".

Myitkyina-bound Express 37 now departs Mandalay at 4:30am, Bunk 33 at 5:55pm, Express 55 at 7:15pm, Express 57 at 8pm, Express Mail 41 at midday and Exciple 42 at 5:05am

Freight 43 at 5:05am.

Heading to Mandalay, the Express 38 departs Myitkyina at 4:30am, Bunk 34 at 1:50pm, Express 56 at 7:40am, Express 58 at 11:40am, Mail 42 at 5am and Freight 44 at 7:30am.

The number 47 local train leaves Mandalay for Naba at 6:15am, with the number 48 leaving Naba at 7:30am. – Translated by Zar Zar Soe



### Developer sets SEA Games deadline

First phase of \$120m Mandalay hotel, retail and residential slated for late 2013 completion

By Phyo Wai Kyaw

THE first phase of a US\$140 million hotel, retail and residential project in Mandalay will be completed in time for the Southeast Asian Games in December, one of its developers says.

The K120 billion Mingalar Mandalay project was launched in September 2012 and is a joint venture between Mandalay City Development Committee, CAD Construction and New Star Light Construction

New Star Light Construction and New Star Light Construction.
Situated on a 47-acre, MCDC-owned site on 73<sup>rd</sup> Street in Chan Mya Thar Si township's *Myothit*, or new city, district, the first phase of the project will include a four-storey apartment block with 127 units and

four-storey shopping centre with parking for 1000 cars. The precinct will also contain a three-storey, MCDC-run hotel and a four-star hotel run by international chain Novotel, which is owned by Accor Group.

A second phase, which is scheduled for completion in 2014, will include 48 condominium units owned by MCDC, 96 units owned by Novotel and 69 housing plots.

"We have finished about 35 percent of the first phase of the project and hope to begin selling space in the complex soon. We expect to finish the rest of the project in 2014," CAD chairman U Zin Min Swe said on

He said the project could have a transformative effect on the *Myothit* 

area, which for now mostly comprises detached houses, with little large-scale development.

"I hope this area becomes a kind of economic zone. When selling space in the development I will give priority to those who want to run shops selling branded items and those who really want to come and run shops and do business here," U Zin Min Swe said. He said the development will also

He said the development will also include a street market that will open at night. The precinct will have a dedicated 10 megawatt power supply and four 8-inch tube wells.

A freelance broker based in the *myothit* district said property owners are expecting the Mingalar Mandalay development to boost land prices in the surrounding area.

"Some property owners on 73rd Street near the project don't want to sell their plots, they just want to hold on to them. Some others are asking about K450 million to K500 million for a 2400-square-foot plot but it is so rare to find buyers at the moment," broker U Kyaw Myint said on January 21.

"Some residents wait and watch to see how much condominiums in the project will be sold for as they could be cheaper than existing stock on 73<sup>rd</sup> Street," he said.

The project is situated between the city's downtown and the developed parts of the *Myothit* area. It is close to the Mandalay football academy and a new football stadium that is under construction.

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Unit 1508-1509, Sakura Tower

Kyauktada Township, Yangon
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
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28 January 2013

### Mobile team targets illegal border trade

By Si Thu Lwin

A MOBILE investigation team on the Mandalay-Muse highway has seized contraband valued at more than K60 million since January 1, an official said last week.

The team was established last year to increase legal trade volumes and improve consumer protection. From November 1 to December 31, 2012, it conducted "educative" activities, issuing warnings rather than confiscating goods.

But since January 1, it has uncovered 19 cases of contraband goods worth more than K60 million. Food items are usually destroyed, while other confiscated goods are auctioned or returned after paying a fine, said U Aung Win, director of the Mandalay-Muse Mobile Team. Those who tip off the team to illegal trade are rewarded with a percentage of the value of confiscated items, he said.

"We burn imported foods, such as frozen chicken, duck, chicken sausage and some other meats that are imported without the approval of the Food and Drug Administration," he said. "Other illegal goods that we seized can be returned, after paying a fine that is equivalent to double their value, within one month. If the fine is not paid we will auction them."

The 31-member team comprises officials from the Customs Department, Myanmar Police Force, region-level general administration department, a border trade association and even journalists.

Minister for Commerce U Win Myint urged cooperation with the mobile team and said it would help the country reach its trade volume target of US\$19 billion.

"Fertilisers, insecticides, foods that are dangerous for children and fake drugs are entering the country. The government needs to take action against [illegal imports] and we are now investigating. This can also encourage trade volume growth if traders pay tax for a licence to import goods legally," he told journalists in Shan State on January 18

"[Traders] should not respond to our action with



Members of a mobile investigation team destroy frozen meats imported illegally from China. Pic: Si Thu Lwin

anger because we are guiding them towards doing business the right way."

But the main opposition to the team appears to be coming from motorists, who have complained that the stringent checks are creating long queues at the 105-mile checkpoint on the Mandalay-

Muse highway.

"There's normally a queue of vehicles about 4 miles long (6.4 kilometres) waiting at the 105-mile checkpoint. The investigation team was needed to increase its workforce and it takes too long to scan goods using its X-ray machine," said Ko Maung Htoo, who drives regularly on the highway.

Officials also concede that there are other routes that can be used to bypass the investigation team, and say they plan to expand the investigation team.

"We will expand the investigation team members to be more effective and we will install another X-ray machine at the gate," U Win Myint said.

Department of Border Trade deputy director U Myo Aung said more mobile teams will be formed to combat illegal trade between Yangon and Myawaddy on the border with Thailand and at railway stations and ports. – Translated by Zar Zar Soe

.7 News

# Shares in Mandalay industrial park to be sold from February

By Si Thu Lwin

THE MYANMAR TIMES

THE backers of a new industrial park in Mandalay Region say they will begin selling shares in the project to local and foreign investors next month.

Mandalay Industry Development Authority and Taw Win High Technology Team Company signed a contract on January 9 to develop Mandalay-Myo Thar Industrial Town on a 10,000-acre site in Myingyan township.

Officials have declined to say when building work at the project site will get underway, but work started on a nearby port, at Simee Khone on the Ayeyarwady River, in late 2012.

"We will sell shares in the Mandalay-Myo Thar project in February so that profits can be shared between all nationalities in Myanmar, as well as foreign investors," said Mandalay Region Minister for Electricity and Industry Dr Myint Kyu, who is also chairman of the project.

He said in an interview on January 21 that the shares will be sold in accordance with Myanmar's laws on foreign investment.

He said the project has attracted interest from Singaporean, Japanese, South Korean, British and Dutch investors.

"As a first step we are building an international river port at Simee Khone for transporting imports and exports to the industrial town," the minister said.

U Aung Win Khine, chairman of Taw Win High Technology Team, said the industrial town project

and AirAsia Travel Service Centre.

will provide an economic boost to towns within 80 kilometres (50 miles) of the port and industrial town, including Myingyan, Natogyi, Tada-U, Sagaing, Myinmu, Myaung and Yesagyo.

It will create many job opportunities and improve the skills of workers, he said.

"This project will be constructed on more than 10,000 acres to house up to 2500 factories including small, medium and large industries. It will also support jobs for nearly 200,000 in the area," he said

"We have already negotiated compensation with the farmers who previously worked the land that will be used for a project and they are satisfied," he said. – Translated by Zar Zar Soe



### Road toll rises 40 percent in 2012

By Phyo Wai Kyaw and Than Naing Soe

THE number of road deaths in Mandalay increased about 40 percent in 2012, traffic police said last week.

About 200 deaths were recorded in Mandalay district, the traffic police department said in a statement, an increase of about 60 deaths on the previous year.

Of the 560 recorded accidents, 340 involved motorcycles, up from 310 motorcycle accidents in 2011.

"About 120 of the deaths were from motorcycle accidents," said a traffic police officer, who asked not to be named.

Residents said the increase did not come as

a surprise: the number of motorycles on the city's streets has increased significantly in the past year because the government allowed residents to register illegally imported motorcycles, known as "withouts".

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"I think most people are concerned about the danger posed by motorcyclists who ride carelessly in town. Officials should try to take more effective action against people who ride at high speed," said Ko Aung Ko, 27.

He suggested installing more traffic lights and CCTV cameras could help to reduce accidents.

Mandalay district has about 250 traffic police, while Mandalay Region has 547,000 registered vehicles, included 470,000 motorcycles.

### Mandalay Convention Centre planned

By Si Thu Lwin

MANDALAY City Development Committee is planning to build a convention centre for international conferences, an official said last week.

The centre will be built on a 2.38-acre, MCDC-owned site on southern Theitpan road in Chan Myar Thar Si township, said U Myo Aung, head of the committee's Building Department. It will include a function hall for up to 1500 guests, six meeting halls and parking for about 200 cars, he said.

However, he declined to say when construction work would begin or how much the project would

In September, Mayor U Aung Maun said a new conference centre was needed because the city hall is being used regularly for trade fairs.

Residents said a larger exhibition space was needed in the city, which is the main economic centre in upper Myanmar and a corridor for trade with both China and India.

"It would be great if a larger centre is built because at the moment residents mostly have to use the city hall in Chan Aye Thar Zan township for ceremonies and other events," said car broker U Aung Zaw. – Translated by Zar Zar Soe



January 28 - February 3, 2013 The Myanmar Times

## Thilawa hits snag on land ownership

By Antoni Slodkowski

THILAWA – If Japan's plans to develop a massive industrial complex in Myanmar push ahead, U Win Aung's village will be cut in half, his cottage and ricefields razed.

The 39-year-old is one of hundreds of farmers who make their living off rice paddies earmarked for the Thilawa economic zone, a project that has become the centrepiece of Japanese investment in Myanmar.

U Win Aung, who supports a family of 12 by farming 30 acres, says he was forced to sell his land at US\$20 an acre to Myanmar's military junta in the 1990s. The government did not take over the land, but is now demanding the villagers vacate to make way for the Japanese.

That puts the matter in a grey area – the villagers are asking for extra compensation but the government has refused, although prices around Thilawa are between \$10,000 and \$20,000 an acre.

"There's no way we can afford a single acre here now," U Win Aung told Reuters. He and other villagers said they were hoping the quasi-civilian government, which took over almost two years ago, would negotiate.

After decades of military dictatorship, issues like land rights are a minefield for foreign companies looking to take advantage of the opening-up of Myanmar.

Japan, seeking to fend off Asian rival China from getting entrenched in Myanmar, is one of the biggest investors.

But there are signs that Japan may tread cautiously now, although it is not clear what action it can take in cases like that of U Win Aung and the Thilawa villagers.

Land rights matters have become an inflammatory issue in Myanmar after riot police raided residents protesting against expansion of a copper mine onto farm land last year, unleashing nationwide outrage.

"I have never seen anything like Thilawa before," said Takeharu Kojima, a Myanmar expert at the Japan International Cooperation Agency. "It will be very difficult to resolve, as land issues are always hotly debated when we help build infrastructure abroad."

Behind the scenes, local officials have pushed Japan to help settle the land rights issue by putting up money for compensation for farmers like U Win Aung, but the Japanese have been reluctant to get involved.

"As a private Japanese company, we have nothing to do with it. It's up to the government of Myanmar to clear the land," said Takayoshi Nakao, who runs Marubeni Corp's operations in Yangon.

Less than three years before the planned opening of the Thilawa zone, a fifth of the 2400 hectares earmarked for Japanese factories is still occupied by farmers like U Win Aung, a source familiar with the plans said.

Japanese trading houses Marubeni, Mitsubishi Corp and Sumitomo Corp are completing preparations for the first 440 hectares of development of the Thilawa zone. The Japanese government has pledged to provide cheap loans to pay for the infrastructure around the zone, an investment estimated at more than \$11 billion

Japanese manufacturers who could set up shop in Thilawa, about 30 minutes from Yangon, include Suzuki Motor and Honda Motor, which have shown an interest in opening factories in Myanmar.

The military government tried to build a business park there in the mid-1990s and forced farmers to sell the land at a discounted price, a Myanmar government source and local villagers said.

But after the investment fell through, it left them undisturbed, they said.

"We didn't hear from anyone for nearly two decades," said U Win Aung, as he rested in his field.

"People didn't really know what they were signing and even if they had known, they wouldn't dare to protest because they were talking to the government with guns," he said, his teeth rust-red from chewing betel nut.

U Win Aung and other villagers from Phalan, a settlement of 350 households, sent a letter to the government demanding fair compensation. They say

they have not been consulted about the timing of Japan's investment or informed about when to move out.

"I don't think they would be this bold under the previous government. It's because we have democracy now why they were brave enough to write the petition," said U Myint Thu, the Phalan village head.

Meanwhile, rich Myanmar speculators have bought up land around Thilawa, a development that could delay the opening, initially planned for 2015, people involved in the project and local residents say.

Land around Thilawa has been quoted between \$10,000 and \$20,000 an acre, said a Myanmar government source involved in the development of Thilawa. Japanese officials and business executives worry that will make it more difficult to build roads and bridges and other infrastructure.

The Thilawa project is being coordinated by one of the wealthiest men in the country – also called U Win Aung and nicknamed Dagon after the name of his company – who is also on the US sanctions list because of his ties to the former military government.

"Dagon" U Win Aung, no relation to the Thilawa farmer, made his fortune exporting timber and running construction projects including the development of Myanmar's capital, Nay Pyi Taw. He said he is confident the Thilawa project will press ahead as planned.



A vessel at the Myanmar International Terminal Thilawa port near the proposed Thilawa special economic zone. Pic: Stuart Deed

"Thilawa will be a great success. I'll organise the consortium and make sure that the project is beneficial for the people," he told *Reuters* earlier this month in Yangon.

The villagers are hoping they can replicate their life elsewhere, but not too far away from where they live now.

"I understand I have to leave my land here – I only want to be able to buy a similar plot somewhere close," said U Win Aung, the farmer. "Farming is the only thing I know in life."

-Reuters

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Dated: 28 January 2013

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Dated: 28 January 2013

## WB investment arm pledges \$2m for loans

SMALL businesses – especially those run by women – are to receive a financial boost. The World Bank, in cooperation with other foreign lenders, is to donate US\$2 million to set up a new microfinance institution in Myanmar to help address the significant demand for financing from small and medium enterprises.

The World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC) said last week that loans could be provided to more than 200,000 people, mostly micro and small businesses run by women, by 2020.

Along with KfW, a German government-owned development bank, and COFIBRED, a subsidiary of the French banking group BRED Banque Populaire, IFC will support Cambodia's ACLEDA Bank in establishing ACLEDA MFI Myanmar Company. IFC said it would lend \$2 million to ACLEDA Bank, the loan to be repaid with shares in ACLEDA MFI Myanmar, which is scheduled to begin operations this year.

"This is a key milestone of our long-term partnership with IFC," said In Channy, chief executive officer of ACLEDA Bank, the largest Cambodian bank by assets.

"As a leading microfinance provider in Cambodia, we are confident that we can leverage our extensive experience in providing affordable financing to serve Myanmar's smaller enterprises and low-income households." IFC says its investment is part of the World Bank's strategy to revitalise Myanmar's private sector and reduce poverty by connecting people with markets and muchneeded financing.

The statement said Myanmar has one of the world's most underdeveloped financial services industries as a result of the country's decades of isolation. "Our investment in a microfinance institution is a good start to our support for Myanmar's economic reforms," said Sergio Pimenta, IFC's director for East Asia and the Pacific.

"Through ACLEDA MFI Myanmar, IFC will help scale up the country's microfinance industry and increase access to financial services for both the urban and rural poor. This will help convince other players that affordable microfinance services can be delivered effectively in Myanmar."

 $-Zaw\ Win\ Than$ 

19 News

## NPT protest averted after govt agrees compensation

By Su Hlaing Tun

THE MYANMAR TIMES

FARMERS in the capital have secured more than US\$200,000 in compensation from the Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee for 170 acres of land confiscated in December 2012 for the expansion of a cement factory, ahead of a planned protest over the seizure.

The K1.2 million paid for each acre of paddy land and K1 million for other types of cultivable land is thought to be the highest paid in the Nay Pyi Taw Council area, which comprises eight townships. Residents have been told they will receive the money in the second week of February.

A group of about 150 people from Aungchantha village in Lewe township who lost land to the Taungphila cement factory project applied to Lewe township police station on January 18 for permission to hold a peaceful demonstration.

"The day after the application was submitted, the police station asked us to negotiate with the factory, saying that if settlement was not reached, they would sue us under the law, without saying which specific charges," one farmer from Aunchantha village said last week.

"They have to pay because they want [the land]. Originally, we were determined to protest to demand [compensation] in conformity with the law," Ko Aung Thu told *The Myanmar Times* on January 21.

However, the compensation might not quell the unrest over the project, as it only applies to land acquired in 2011 for an expansion of the factory, not the 395 acres confiscated in 2006.

"Those farmers said that they would also try to get a reasonable amount of compensation," said Ko Aung, who is to receive



Residents of Aungchantha village in Nay Pyi Taw's Lewe township watch as a fence is erected on their confiscated land earlier this month. *Pic: Supplied* 

compensation as a result of last week's settlement.

The factory was owned by Ministry of Industry 1 until August 2011, when it was transferred to Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee.

Those who lost land in 2006 received K100,000

Last time they grabbed land, I lost 17 acres. If they take some more, I don't know how we'll survive.

an acre. While Ministry of Industry 1 said at the time that the payment was for crop compensation, official contracts describe it as a donation, the farmers said.

But the farmers said that most of the land that has been acquired is not being used for the factory.

"They are growing sugarcane and *matpe* (beans) on the land they grabbed," said Ko Thet Zaw. "People who work at the factory are cultivating it. And now they grabbed even more land, so where can we grow paddy? Now most farmers around here have become tenants because they no longer own any of their own land."

Ko Tun Tun, who owns 12 acres of land, said the compensation came following a failed mediation attempt and then a confrontation between farmers and factory workers over the building of a fence on the land on January 17.

"They invited farmers to attend a meeting [on September 27, 2012] but we had no right to speak up," he said.

"Last time they grabbed land, I lost 17 acres. If they take some more, I don't know how we'll survive. I can't afford to give any more," farmer U Tin Thaung said before the factory agreed to pay compensation.

"We tried in vain to request

"We tried in vain to request them to stop taking our

## Unrest in capital over ward elections

RESIDENTS in a Nay Pyi Taw ward have accused the township administrator of interfering in the process of selecting their local administrator.

The group of five people appointed to oversee the selection in Pobbathiri township's Wunnadepa quarter said they were not given enough time to assess the qualifications of the candidate during the January 11 vote, and were pressured by the township administrator, U Tint Kyaw Lwin, to reappoint the incumbent ward administrator. They also complained that while up to 19 people from the ward were eligible to cast a vote for their choice of administrator, only 11 took part.
They told *The Myanmar* 

They told *The Myanmar Times* on January 23 that the selection process should be conducted again.

"We are mostly dissatisfied with the fact that the five members of our overseer group were forced to sign instantly on the day of the selection. So we signed without having any time to assess [the qualifications of the candidate] as we were supposed to. We didn't assess whether he was good or bad," said U Pvon.

U Kyi Thein, another member of the overseer group,

said on January 23 that the administrator for Wunnadepa had effectively been chosen by the township administrator. "The old administrator won [in Wunnadepa]. Frankly speaking, they made it happen," he said.

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Retired government employee U Aung Than said the selection process in Pobbathiri seemed to be contrary to the Ward and Village-tract Administration Law. "What should happen is that only after overseers have assessed qualifications of the ward administrator will his name be put to the township administrator [for approval]," he said.

Wunnadepa quarter has 48 households, of which 19 are entitled to participate in the selection of their ward administrator. The remaining households are unable to participate because they are not officially registered in the quarter.

Township administrator U Tint Kyaw Lwin said nothing untoward had taken place during the selection process.

"We are in the democratic period, so it is up to residents of Wunnadepa quarter whether they want to come and participate in the election," he said.

-Pyae Thet Phyo, translated by Thit Lwin



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work," he said. – *Translated* 

by Thit Lwin

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Dated: 28 January 2013

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## Ministry to grant outbound tour licences for Bodhgaya

By Yu Yu Maw

THE MYANMAR TIMES

TRAVEL companies will soon be able to apply for licences to offer Bodhgaya packages after the Ministry of Religious Affairs agreed to relinquish control over tours to the pilgrimage site, Union of Myanmar Travel Association secretary U Naung Naung Han said last week.

The UMTA, with the support of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, submitted a request to the Ministry of Religious Affairs on December 18, asking that it issue outbound licences to private companies, he told a press conference on the ASEAN Tourism Forum in Yangon.

"Travel and tour companies have not had the chance to officially sell Bodhgaya outbound tours. Since 1988, the Ministry of Religious Affair handles the pilgrimage tours and they did not give official permits to travel agents," he said.

It was not clear whether the decision had been made before the January 16 resignation of Minister for Religious Affairs Thura U Myint Maung, who had held the post since mid-2003. A number of sources said they did not believe the events were linked.

A spokesperson from the Ministry of Religious Affairs told *The Myanmar Times* on January 18 that the ministry did not stop travel companies from offering Bodhgaya packages. He said it had allowed five companies to officially offer packages because they met the ministry's customer service standards, but about 50 other companies offered packages

unofficially.

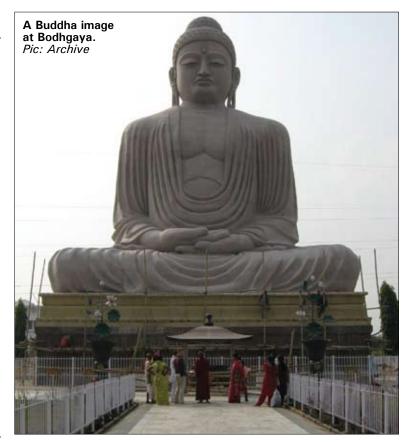
"We replied to the request that we have no objection. Approval of outbound licences for Bodhgaya not only concerns our ministry; the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is the main actor because it is the only one who issues outbound licences. We have nothing to say [about the request] and do not stop out thing "the applicance said.

anything," the spokesperson said. He said, however, that the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism should have issued a law covering outbound tour operators before it started to issue outbound licences. He said regulation was needed because pilgrims to Bodhgaya, in northeastern India, often complain about poor service from operators.

"We have five tour companies that are officially doing tour programs with our rules and regulations. We drew up those rules because they were sorely needed. We don't want to prohibit the travel companies from offering Bodhgaya tour programs but we receive many complaints from travellers to Bodhgaya."

Most complaints concern transportation, accommodation and food, he said. "We don't want travellers to suffer these kinds of problems during their pilgrimage. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism should choose qualified tour companies when it issues licences to tour companies. We know that many companies offer good service but some are really bad."

The issue highlights the lack of formal regulation of the sector, observers noted. While Myanmar has a tourism law, introduced in 1991, it makes no mention of outbound tourism.



Anecdotal reports from travel companies suggest demand for tours, not only to Bodhgaya but also Southeast Asian destinations, such as Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia, has grown significantly in recent years.

"We always just talk about tourist arrivals. But we never think about making any statistics for outbound tourism," said U Naung Naung Han from the UMTA.

UMTA chairman Dr Aung Myat Kyaw told *The Myanmar Times* the decision to issue licences for Bodhgaya was "the first step for outbound tourism development".

"We will cooperate with the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism for the development of outbound tours to Bodhgaya," he said. "And we will continue working on our request to get outbound licences to offer packages to any destination."

### Company makes \$500k donation for pilgrimages

January 28 - February 3, 2013

NEWS

By Cherry Thein

A MYANMAR company has donated more than US\$500,000 to enable 485 monks and nuns to undertake a pilgrimage to Bodhgaya in India, the organiser of the trip said last week.

Senior officials from Shine Hope Company donated the money to Venerable Ashin Chekinda, an associate professor at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University in Mayangone township.

The company will provide K1 million for each monk and nun to cover the 14-day pilgrimage, while Venerable Chekinda also provided \$100 to each of them to cover daily expenses.

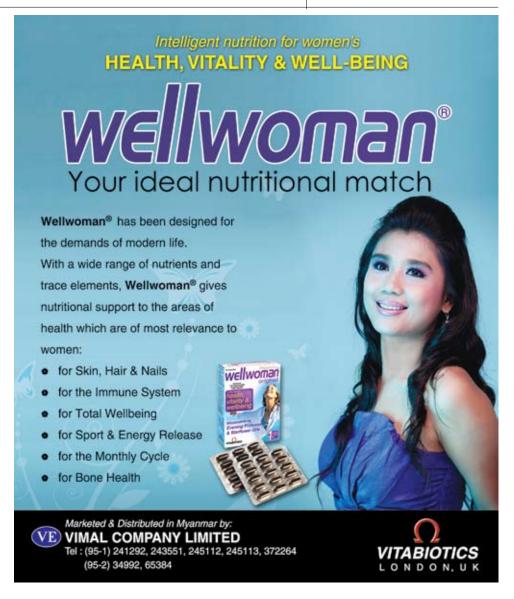
"I want to send monks and nuns who teach Pariyatti and Paripatti (Buddhist literature) in their monasteries on this pilgrimage because they need to learn about Bodhgaya the most," he said.

A member of the trip arrangement committee, Venerable Ashin Nyanassara from Kabar Aye Tipiraka Monastery, said 180 monks went on the same pilgrimage last year. "This year we also decided

"This year we also decided to offer pilgrimages for 120 Buddhist nuns because they are also important for the propagation of Buddhist literature," Venerable Ashin Nyannassara said.

Buddhist monks or nuns who teach at a monastery, have never been to Bodhgaya and have a passport are eligible to apply for the trip in person at Kabar Aye Tipiraka Monastery or by calling 09-501-5024, 09-512-1891 or 09-511-3295.





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## TIMESBUSINESS

THE MYANMAR TIMES

### Trade volume tipped to fall as govt pulls back from economy

By Aye Thidar Kyaw

A LIKELY year-on-year fall in trade volume in the 2012-13 fiscal year is being attributed to the economy's transition towards a larger private sector, industry sources say. Ministry of Commerce officials say the government has been reducing its exports and imports while encouraging the private sector to take over.

Ministry officials said last week that the combined trade volume in

the previous fiscal year amounted to about US\$18 billion but by January 14 the year-to-date trade volume for 2012-13, which ends March 31, was about \$13.6 billion. Imports amounted to about \$7.1 billion and exports stood at \$6.5 billion. The Ministry of Commerce has estimated \$9.6 billion in exports and \$7.5 billion in imports for the full year.

A decrease in the value of some commodities, particularly beans, is also behind the fall in export revenue, they say.

Another striking feature of the latest figures is the huge volume of automobile imports, which has resulted in more than 50,000 vehicles imported in the past year.

The value of natural gas, gems and mining products and forestry products exported by the government fell by about 15 percent compared to the same time last year, while the private sector's contribution fell by about 8pc.

"The trade volume from the government sector decreased in both normal and cross-border

trade compared to last year. The government has encouraged the development of the private sector more, and the trade volume will reflect that shift," said one official.

Automobile imports both by private individuals and government departments have surged, however. Together with materials imported for infrastructure projects, the two categories amounted to nearly 80pc of total imports, he added.

U Ohn Sein, chairman of the Bayintnaung Wholesale Commodity

Exchange Centre and also a trader, said the bulk of exports was made up of beans and pulses, rice and fisheries products. He said prices for many commodities have fallen in the past year.

For example, prices of a popular type of pulse, *matpe* (black gram), have been about 25pc lower compared with last year.

"But the government reduced commercial taxes on major items, and the exchange rate is stable, so traders are unlikely to suffer," he said



## Four companies confirm telecoms interest

M Y A N M A R h a s attracted at least four expressions of interest for telecommunications licenses to be issued as the nation tries to boost one of Asia's lowest phone penetration rates following decades of military rule.

S i n g a p o r e Telecommunications Ltd, Southeast Asia's biggest phone company, Axiata Group Bhd, Malaysia's largest cellular operator by market value, Singapore's ST Telemedia Pte, a unit of Temasek Holdings Pte, and Norway's Telenor ASA said they submitted expressions of interest to the Myanmar government before the January 25 deadline.

"It is a logical and interesting market to consider investing in," Axiata said in an emailed statement to *Bloomberg News*. "It represents a

strategic market given its high growth potential."

Myanmar is offering two licenses to boost telecom coverage to as much as 80 percent of the country by 2016, the government said January 15 when inviting foreign companies to submit bids. Myanmar's 5.44 million mobile-phone subscribers as of last month amounted to a 9pc penetration rate, compared with 70pc in Cambodia, 87pc in Laos and more than 100pc in Thailand, the ministry said. The country has a fixed-line penetration rate of about 1pc, it said.

UThanZaw, a director at the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, said on January 26 that a statement would be released, without giving a timeframe. Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Thein at the Ministry of Finance and Revenue, who

is a member of the selection board, said he has not yet been informed about the process. U Ye Htut, a spokesman for President U Thein Sein, was not immediately available to comment.

"SingTel maintains an interest in investment opportunities in large, underpenetrated markets and will be financially disciplined in its evaluation of such opportunities," the Singapore's biggest phone company said in an emailed statement, adding that it submitted its interest with Myanmar partners.

The licenses will be issued by June and may last as long as 20 years with an option for renewal, the government said on January 15. Myanmar's parliament may approve a draft telecommunications law, which will include the creation of an independent regulator by 2015, in the first

half of this year, it said.

The country of 64 million people has one of the lowest per-capita gross domestic products in Asia, according to International Monetary Fund estimates.

SingTel, which also owns Australia's second-biggest phone company, holds stakes in mobile-phone operators in countries including Thailand, the Philippines and India. Kuala Lumpur-

based Axiata already has mobile-phone interests in countries including India, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

ST Telemedia owns stakes in technology and phone companies including StarHub Ltd, Singapore's second-biggest telecommunications operator. It also holds shares of mobile- phone companies in Malaysia and Vietnam, as well as the largest cable-TV

operator in the Philippines.

Oslo-based Telenor, the Nordic region's biggest phone company by revenue, has wireless assets in Asia countries including Malaysia, Thailand and Bangladesh.

"We believe that we are well-positioned to contribute in developing a successful mobile industry in Myanmar," Glenn Mandelid, a spokesman based in Thailand, said via email. – *Bloomberg* 



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## Asia Green Development Bank planning to go public

By Aye Thidar Kyaw

ASIA Green Development Bank is aiming to become a public company in preparation for the formation of Myanmar's stock exchange in 2015, company officials said last

The bank will become a public company if its board approves the decision and the Directorate of Investment and Companies Administration also gives the green light, said AGD's deputy managing director, U Thet Lwin Shwe.

A report on AGD's Facebook page on January 23 said the bank was given approval by the Central Bank of Myanmar in December to become a public bank.

Only the management of assets will change if we

become a public bank. We will offer free shares to all employees, and then we will sell shares to the public," U Thet Lwin Shwe said, adding that the bank's board of directors will further discuss the matter and release updated news on the company's website.

He added that the bank must complete several more steps before it can become a public company, the most important being to appoint an independent

Of Myanmar's 19 private banks, Myanmar Citizen, Co-operative, First Private, Myanmar Fisheries and Livestock Development, Myanmar Industrial Development and Myawaddy banks, are already public companies but AGD is the first of four newcomers to announce plans to go public.

U Maung Maung Win, then a deputy governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, said at a capital market forum held last August that Myanmar needs many public companies and companies, and the bank encouraged this course of action.

"Myanmar has little experience with public companies but there will be more of them in future as the country develops,' another Central Bank official said.

"Public banks are safer because the decisions from the boards of directors are more reliable. Public banks also make larger investments and do more to help the economy," he added.

Co-operative Bank managing director U Pe Myint said his company became a public bank in 2004 and it sold shares to employees and the public for K10,000 each. He said the company pays an annual dividend of about 18 percent.

Private banks and other companies should change [go public] if they want to be involved in the stock market in 2015 because there are still very few public companies in Myanmar," he said.

U Zaw Lin Htut, general

manager for Kanbawza Bank's international banking division, said the company has no plan to become a public company, even though it wanted to be part of the stock exchange when it was formed.

"It will take time ... but at the moment we can handle our investment well and we don't have a stock market yet," he

### Investment underwhelming, despite lofty promises: survey

By Justin Heifetz

ALTHOUGH global multinational corporation interest in investing in Myanmar's frontier market is high, only about 5 percent of respondents in a major survey are investing heavily, while less than 10pc are spending heavily.

 $\overline{\text{The Asia Business Outlook}}$ Survey (ABOS) 2013, which is produced every year by the Economist Corporate Network and was released on January 7, reveals how regional business leaders are investing in and managing their operations in the Asia-Pacific region.

Despite talk of the importance of frontier markets, this year's survey shows that the business community remains cautious on Southeast Asia, with Myanmar not even on the radar for 30-40pc of companies surveyed, Justin Woods, the survey's co-author and director of the Economist Corporate Network's Southeast Asia division told The Myanmar Times on January 11.

There is a huge amount of interest in what happens in Myanmar," he said. 'Myanmar's natural resources, its geographic position: There are a lot of reasons to be interested in investment.

"But it's a case of deciding when the opportunity becomes real.

Mr Woods said that Myanmar's business reform processes need to continue in the right direction – and that sanctions need to be lifted permanently - to attract more investment.

Laws and regulations need to be improved, and the Foreign Investment Law [FIL] and Mining Law need to be made more certain.

"Foreign multinational companies need more certainty. They follow all the reforms very closely, but the [laws and regulations] are not certain enough yet,"

Mr Woods predicted that Myanmar will gradually attract more foreign investment than other countries in Southeast Asia, mostly because of its large population of about 60 million.

"Companies are less keen to devote their resources to a country that's relatively small. It's what makes Myanmar exciting as a production base," he said.

Florence Grangerat, in charge of the Myanmar operations of Audier & Partners, a Vietnam-based international law firm providing legal services for global business and industry in South East Asia, told The Myanmar Times on January 20 that foreign investors often express reluctance over the country's legal and jurisdictional framework. They are unsure as to how they will be protected in the case of disputes, she said.

"[Clients] don't know if they can expect unbiased treatment or security of their investments," she said.

To accelerate foreign investment, Myanmar should put dispute resolution mechanisms into place, Ms Grangerat said.

"Mvanmar is not a member of the 1958 New York Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards. This means in effect that arbitral awards issued outside of Myanmar are not enforceable in Myanmar.

"The country has to afford investors the means of protecting their rights and investments. A proposal submitted by the Myanmar Parliament's Judicial and Legal Affairs Committee to amend the current arbitration framework was approved on March 8 last year. Although the intention appears to be that Myanmar will accede to the 1958 New York Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, the timeframe for this proposal ... has not been disclosed yet," she said.

Ms Grangerat added that Myanmar's banking system is outdated and fragmented between a myriad of local banks, and that the industry is in "dire need" of an improved legal framework to attract foreign investment.

Mr Woods said relatively cheap, low-end consumer goods are thriving. He expects to see a gradual increase of investment as conditions on the ground improve.

The 2013 ABOS was completed by more than 200 senior executives with management responsibility for business throughout Asia. The respondents mainly represent large companies; three quarters manage companies with more than US\$1 billion in global revenue, and 35pc of respondents oversaw operations in firms with revenue of \$10 billion or more.

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### CORRECTION:

Our story on Huawei Technologies last week contained several factual errors. In particular we incorrectly called the company Huawei Electronics, and named the managing director Mr Geng – his full name is Mr Ren Geng. We also stated that the company had donated US\$300 million in equipment for the Southeast Asia Games and \$200 million for building a 4G network. The correct figures are \$3 million and \$2 million respectively. We apologise for any confusion caused by these errors.

25 Business

### CNPC oil, gas pipelines to open in June

THE MYANMAR TIMES

BEIJING — Oil and natural gas pipelines linking China and Myanmar — Beijing's "new strategic channels" — are expected to be finished by the end of May and could be operating soon after, state media reported on January 21.

Gao Jianguo, the head of the project under the China National Petroleum Corporation, told the state-run *Xinhua* news agency that the 1100-kilometre-long pipelines should be completed by May 30 and could become operational in early June, "barring insurmountable barriers".

The pipelines run from the western Myanmar port of Kyaukpyu and enter China in Yunnan province, *Xinhua* said, describing them as "China's new strategic energy channels".

The military junta that ruled Myanmar for decades had a close relationship with China, but since taking power in March 2011 the country's new government under President U Thein Sein has introduced a welter of reforms and see ties with the West improve.

The oil pipeline will allow crude to be shipped to China from the Middle East via the Indian Ocean, bypassing what *Xinhua* described as the "risk-prone Strait of Malacca".

The oil pipeline is designed to transport 22 million tonnes annually while the gas pipeline has a design capacity of 12 billion cubic metres a year, the report said. – *AFP* 

## Garment industry body sees bright future, with growth outside Yangon

By Myat May Zin

THE garment industry has been growing rapidly in the past two years on increased orders from Japan and South Korea, a spokesperson for the key industry body said last week.

U Aung Win, vice president of the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association, said the value of orders from Japan more than doubled between 2010 and 2011, to US\$350 million from \$170 million. Orders from South Korea increased to \$240 million in 2011 from \$120 million in 2010.

He added that the statistics for 2012 are still being collected but was confident export earnings would at least match the results from 2011.

"Garment industry export earnings are rising, which we predict will lead to an increase in the number of factories," he said. "We are providing training at Myanmar Garment Human Resource Development Centre (MGHRDC) in Yangon. But most factories are located in Yangon and the labour density is too high already.

"We need more garment factories, and it would be better for new factories to be installed in other states and regions to reduce



A Myanmar Garment Human Resource Development Centre trainee practices her sowing at a factory in Insein township last week. *Pic: Ko Taik* 

the labour density in Yangon," he told *The Myanmar Times*.

"We are planning to build about 50 garment factories in Pathein township in Ayeyarwady Region. The first, which will be operated by Delta Industrial Group (DIG), will open in May." he said

will open in May," he said. He added that MGHRDC is training potential DIG employees.

Trainee Ma Zar Zar Hlaing said: "DIG called for employees early last year and started doing interviews in May. I am doing supervisory training here and will then work at the factory in Pathein.

"Only graduates can apply for supervisor positions," she said,

adding that MGHRDC arranged accommodation and food during the training in Yangon. It also paid trainees K1000 a day to cover other costs.

January 28 - February 3, 2013

Mr Hiroyasu Asai, an MGHRDC trainer, said the centre had trained more than 1000 garment workers since it started in 2009.

"We have trained 700 operators, 500 supervisors and 30 maintenance staff. We will change our training to meet the demand for skilled labour at future garment factories," he said.

U Aung Win said the future is bright for the industry.

"We anticipate that there will be more than 700 new factories in 2015 that will employ more than 100,000 people," he said.

"The main challenge for investors is high land prices in Yangon, which is why we believe that companies will look to other states and regions to build factories, particularly since 90 percent of the people who work in Yangon's factories come from elsewhere," he said, adding that 90-95pc of all factories are in Yangon Region.

He added that the main advantage of setting up factories in Yangon is transportation because it has the ports able to handle imports and exports.



### JOB WATCH

### Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

WHO Office in Myanmar will shortly conduct a tender for procurement of 206 motorcycles to be used in various parts of Myanmar. Duly authorized and qualified companies are invited to submit their Expression of Interest for supply of motorcycles with the following generic specifications:

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- 7. Max Speed
- 8. Brakes Drum/Disc
- 9. Minimum Fuel Consumption L/100Km

The Expression of Interest should specify the subject, the relevant information about the company, including the company's name and registration certificates; complete address including phone, fax numbers and e-mail; name and title of the contact person; information concerning the capacity (i.e. financial strength and resources) and experience of the company; company profile, service centers throughout Myanmar, ease of availability of spare parts, previous relevant experience gained during the last three years in contracts for provision of similar services of similar scope, magnitude in a similar environment. This Request for Expression of Interest does not constitute a solicitation

WHO reserves the right to change or cancel these requirements at any time in the REOI and/or solicitation process. WHO considers a firm's qualifications and experience in the service area, and previous performance, when preparing a list of invitees. Thus, submitting an EOI does not automatically guarantee a firm will be considered for receipt of the solicitation when issued. Due to the high volume of communications, WHO is not in a position to issue confirmation of receipt of EOIs. WHO reserves the right to reject EOIs received after the deadline below. The expressions of interest may be submitted by mail, email or facsimile or hand delivery in a sealed envelope clearly marked with the inscription "Expression of Interest for Motorcycles to WHO (MMR) and addressed as follows to be received not later than Friday, 08 February, 2013 at 16.00 hours Yangon Time. ALL INFORMATION SHOULD BE SUBMIT-TED IN ENGLISH

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### With UN gone, Timor faces economic challenges

By Raimundos Oki

KULAU RAI HUN, East Timor – East Timor is striking out on its own after 13 years of UN protection, facing the daunting challenge of how to retool its economy and ease its dependence on energy to tunnel out of poverty.

Foreign troops ended their peacekeeping mission in the half-island nation of 1.1 million people on December 31 and Asia's youngest country is turning its focus from security to building an economy almost entirely from scratch.

A 20-year plan spearheaded by Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao aims to transform the nation of predominantly poor subsistence farmers to an upper-middle-income economy that exports cash crops, livestock and processed oil products.

The task is mammoth for what the IMF has dubbed the "most oildependent economy in the world", which produces little beyond some US\$15 million in coffee a year, mostly for Starbucks, accounting for 90 percent of its non-oil exports.

World Bank country manager Luis Constantino said East Timor was, in fact, a "big example of things actually going right".

"They rightly focused on stability, they achieved peace, they created confidence in the state, they devised a vision and they put institutions in place to guide the country forward," Constantino told *AFP*.

However, the country's doubledigit growth in recent years has come almost entirely from controversial state spending of the nation's \$11 billion petroleum

The money has steamrolled much-needed infrastructure, most of which was destroyed in Indonesia's 24-year occupation, when some 183,000 people—then



a quarter of the population – died from starvation, fighting and

"Now there's the challenge to diversify Timor-Leste's economy to one that's not just dependent on oil but creates other sources of wealth," Constantino said, referring to the country by its official name.

After criticism, the government plans to draw only 66pc of its budget, or \$1.2 billion, from the petroleum fund this year, down from 80pc in 2012.

But the opposition Fretilin Party said the government had neglected 75pc of the population who are subsistence farmers.

"If you look at the amount of money the previous government spent, over \$4 billion, you wonder where it all went," Fretilin member of parliament Estanislau da Silva said.

Only 20 minutes from the centre of the capital, Dili, what

the economic challenges mean for ordinary people is only too apparent.

Malnourished children with bloated stomachs and runny noses play among ramshackle tin huts in the village of Kulau Rai Hun, as jobless parents sit idly by a dirt road, drinking coffee and smoking.

and smoking.

Marta de Jesus, 48, and her husband, a taxi driver who earns \$5 on a good day, cannot grow or buy enough food to meet their nutritional needs.

"We get through around 50 kilograms [110 pounds] of rice every week. That's all we eat. If we have more money we can buy meat and sometimes corn," she said outside her two-room dirt-

The couple had 13 children, two of whom died from malaria and malnutrition.

The country's fertility rate – the fourth highest in the world, with

an average of 6.5 children per family—will only exacerbate food insecurity and unemployment, which is more than 40pc among youths, said AusAID.

To tackle both issues, the government plan includes the cultivation of cash crops such as palm oil, vanilla and candlenut for export. The country imports almost all fruit and vegetables.

But experts are sceptical.

"It's never going to develop a viable secondary industry sector, it simply doesn't have a sufficient market domestically, nor does it have the requisite skills," Damien Kingsbury from Deakin University in Melbourne said.

Downstream energy industries are touted as the nation's best hope, but Kingsbury called an estimated \$10 billion development of the southern coast as an oil and gas supply base and refinery "questionable at best".

Charles Scheiner from the Timor-Leste Institute for Development Monitoring and Analysis said the plan was "a very attractive dream for the kind of lives the people deserve".

It should focus, however, on realistic goals, such as improving health and education, which received only some 10pc of the budget, he said.

"Timorese don't need propane, or diesel fuel. They need food and water, and 80pc are farmers, so that's where the focus of economic development should be," Scheiner said, adding only 2pc of the budget goes to agriculture.

Deputy Prime Minister Fernando La Sama de Araujo said the government recognised the scale of the challenge but was still hopeful it could improve people's lives.

"We can't say we're going to solve the poverty issue 100pc, but we're trying to reduce it. And we're optimistic the government can tackle it." – *AFP* 



### Jakarta to start metro this year

JAKARTA – The Indonesian capital Jakarta will soon start building a metro system to try to unravel its infamous traffic jams, 26 years after the idea was first mooted, officials said on January 21.

The city administration and the central government finally agreed in mid-January on how to split the cost, with 49 percent to be paid by the central government.

The city initially wanted to pay 42pc of the cost but finally agreed on 51pc, said Eko Hariyadi, a Jakarta administration spokesman.

Hariyadi said work would start this year, pending an announcement of the winner of the tender.

 $Two\ consortia\ of\ Japanese\ and\ Indonesian$ 

construction firms, Obayashi-Shimizu-Wijaya Karya and Sumitomo-Hutama Karya, are competing for the work.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency has agreed to give a soft loan for the first stage of the long-awaited project, which will cost 15.7 trillion rupiah (US\$1.63 billion) and is expected to be completed by the end of 2016, said Sutanto Soehodho, deputy governor for transportation and macro economy.

The city has spent nearly three decades discussing the merits of different mass transport systems to alleviate congestion in greater Jakarta, home to 20 million people.

Poor infrastructure is one of the main constraints on the growth of Southeast Asia's

largest economy, experts say. It was hit by serious floods earlier this month.

One thousand new vehicles hit the roads daily in the capital and it could face complete gridlock as soon as next year unless traffic problems are addressed, said a study by the private Indonesian Transportation Society.

Its chief Danang Parikesit said even the metro would not be the "silver bullet" to solve Jakarta's traffic problems.

"Other projects should be done as well to really address the transportation system,"

Jakarta is one of the last major cities in Asia without a metro. Singapore inaugurated one in 1987, Manila in late 1984 and Bangkok in 2004. – *AFP* 

### **B**USINESS

January 28 - February 3, 2013

## Stopgap generators arrive in YGN

By Soe Sandar Oo and Htoo Aung

 $NATURAL\,gas\text{-}fuelled\,generators$ intended to meet the shortfall in Yangon's power supply in summer have started arriving at the city's ports, Yangon Electricity Supply Board chairman U Aung Khaing said last week.

The generators, which have been imported from the United States, Austria and Spain, are intended to provide up to 200 megawatts of electricity to the city in the summer months as the hydroelectric plants that feed Yangon run low on water and generate less power. U Aung Khaing said the natural gas to power the generators would be provided by the Ministry of

"This is what we're doing to

meet electricity demand this summer," U Aung Khaing said at the Hteedan port, in Kyeemyindaing township on January 18. "YESB is cooperating with foreign companies in the hope that we'll be able to make more power available when it's needed," he said.

The generators will be installed at the Hlawga, Ywama, Ahlone and Thaketa power stations.

It has been common in recent years for electricity to be rationed in the city from January to June, particularly from March onward.

He said all the generators would arrive by the end of February and be installed and operational by March 31.

YESB has begun rationing power at the city's industrial zones to ensure adequate power for residential use, U Aung



### Mudajaya outlines MDY power plant

MALAYSIAN firm Mudajaya Group Berhad has scheduled construction of a US\$750-million power plant in Mandalay Region, with work beginning in the second half of 2014, Malaysia's Business Times reported on January 23.

The project is slated to be completed in two phases, the first of which is the building of a 500-megawatt coalfired plant, while the second is a solar plant, which has no generation targets as yet.

Business Times reported that Mudujaya Group has set up a company with IJM Corp Bhd co-founder Datuk Koon Yew Yin, with ownership split 70 percent and 30pc respectively to fund the project. No local partners have yet been announced.

- Christian Myers

### MP calls for mining permit extensions

By Su Hlaing Tun

RUBY Dragon chairman and Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Nay Win Tun last week urged the government to extend mining concessions for Myanmar companies from three years to a minimum of five years.

Speaking at a meeting at the Ministry of Mines to elect central executive committee members of the Myanmar Mining Association, he said it would improve standards at the country's mines.

"Because work has to be done in a rush over three years, mines cannot be made well," said U Nay Win Tun, who is also chairman of the Amyotha Hluttaw Minerals and Resources Committee.

Mining is only possible for about half of the three years currently allowed because mines are forced to shut during the rainy season, he said.

 $He \, said \, longer \, concessions$ would encourage the development of larger, environmental impact.

'It will be better if permits are extended to five years for small enterprises, 10 years for medium-sized production and 20 years for large

If they make proper use of advanced technology and machinery, there will be less he said, adding that illegal prospectors were also responsible for miningrelated environmental

Dr Myint Aung also emphasised the importance of the industry adhering to

The mining industry - Translated by Thit Lwin

more professional mining operations that use better technology and have less

mines," he said.

impact on the environment," problems. Minister for Mines

environmental standards.

is a priority sector for the state. However, we need to remember that natural resources and the environment should be preserved for future generations. As we develop the mining sector, a 'green' mining approach will have to be adopted," he said.

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For C.P. Pharmaceuticals International C.V. Dated: 28th January, 2013.



January 28 - February 3, 2013 THE MYANMAR TIMES

## Sony sells New York HQ for \$1.1b

rocketed 12.2 percent on January 18 after the embattled Japanese consumer electronics giant said it was selling its US headquarters in Manhattan for US\$1.1 billion as part of

a huge restructuring.
The Tokyo-listed shares finished at 1149 yen, boosted by a weak yen and after the announcement that New York-based commercial property firm Chetrit Group was leading a consortium that agreed to buy the Madison Avenue skyscraper.

The sale, expected to close in March, comes as the firm undergoes a corporate overhaul aimed at returning to profitability after four years in the red.

In June, the company's hard times saw its stock value tumble below 1000 ven a share for the first time since the era of the Walkman.

"Sony is undertaking a range of initiatives to strengthen its financial foundation and business competitiveness and for future growth," it said in a statement announcing the

The company was "balancing cash inflows and outflows while working to improve its cash flow by carefully selecting investments, selling assets

TOKYO - Sony shares and strengthening control of working capital such as inventory", it said.

"This sale is made as a part of such initiatives."

The deal would net Sony about \$770 million after paying off building-related debt and transaction costs, it said, adding that businesses including its movie and music divisions would remain in the tower for up to three years under a lease agreement with

The 37-storey building, home to about 1500 employees and on one of New York City's best-known thoroughfares. opened in 1984 and was sold to Sony in 2002.

Sony was "re-evaluating" its outlook, which forecast a 20 billion yen (\$223 million) annual net profit in the fiscal year ended March, "to take into account this sale and other factors"

Toshiyuki Kanayama, market analyst at Monex, said the sale was an "obvious plus for Sony's balance sheet, but does not instantly improve its creditworthiness or investability in the eyes of investors".

The rise also came as Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 index jumped nearly 3 percent as a weaker yen helped shares of exporters including Sony, which had climbed 5.67pc the day

before after Goldman Sachs upped its recommendation on the stock to neutral from

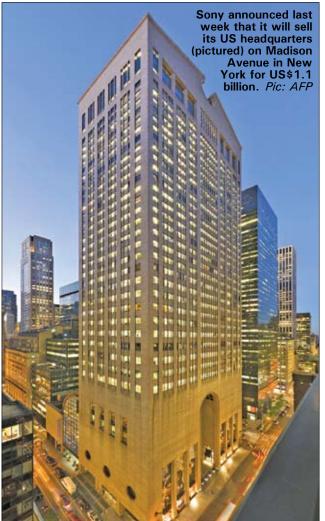
The maker of PlayStation game consoles and Bravia televisions lost a whopping 456.66 billion yen in its last fiscal year, with its massive restructuring including selling off its chemical division while investing 50 billion yen in camera and medical equipment maker

Last year, the firm said it would cut about 10,000 jobs and spend nearly \$1 billion on an overhaul designed to shake up its product line and cut costs, which its chief Kazuo Hirai described as 'urgent".

The sale announced last week comes after Japanese media reported that the firm was also planning to sell one of its main buildings, in Tokyo's Osaki district, which accommodates Sony's struggling television

Japan's battered electronics sector including giants Sony, Panasonic and Sharp has suffered from myriad problems including a high yen, slowing demand in key export markets, fierce overseas competition and strategic mistakes that left its finances in ruins.

- AFP with Dow Jones



### Bad loans hit record at banks in Spain

MADRID - The mountain of bad loans held by Spain's banks grew to a new record in November, with more than one in nine at risk of not being repaid, central bank figures showed January 18.

The level of doubtful loans mostly real estate creditshit 11.38 percent of total loans, up from 11.23pc in October, the Bank of Spain said in a report.

It was the highest level since existing records began

The total value of doubtful loans was 191.63 billion euros (US\$258 billion) in November, the central bank

 $Spain\,secured\,agreement\,in$ June last year for a European Union rescue loan of up to 100 billion euros to shore up its banks, which have been struggling with bad loans since a 2008 property crash.

A first tranche of 39.5 billion euros was disbursed in December, of which 37 billion euros went to four banks, including the hardesthit Bankia, which have been rescued with state money and nationalised. -AFP

### New Empire State Building spire dazzles rivals

By Sebastian Smith

NEW YORK - When owner Anthony Malkin found his Empire State Building's dominance of the New York skyline under attack, he turned to Hong Kong for an idea that could dazzle any rival into submission: light.

The 1200 newly installed lamps now illuminating the skyscraper's famous spire have brought the most visible change to the Art-Deco building since it was raised over Manhattan at the start of the Great Depression.

The spire, the same one that King Kong climbed in the black and white 1933 movie, had been lit up in some manner since 1956, with colours introduced in

In a nightly city tradition, New Yorkers would find the spire either in standard white or honouring some special event: blue and white when the Yankees win the Baseball World Series, red and green for Christmas, green for Saint Patrick's Day, and so on.

But the huge, inefficient lamps installed in the 1970s each the size of a small table – left only a dull glow on the spire.

And the so-so performance was apt for an iconic building struggling for relevancy in a competitive age.

Downtown, the new World

Trade Center was rising on the ruins of the Twin Towers, last year reclaiming its crown as New York's tallest building.

Also uncomfortably close, the Bank of America tower has become one of a growing gang of Midtown interlopers with their own sky-high light

Malkin knew the not live on past glories.

The biggest wake-up

'We found ourselves in Hong Kong and Shanghai, and I looked at that landscape and that skyline and I came back to New York and I said, wow, we are behind the times – not just the Empire State Building, but the whole skyline of New

The dream of putting some Hong Kong into King Kong's spire was born.

It took until last year before the technology, using LED lights, evolved enough, particularly in the power

moment for me came in 2004 when I went with my older son's class trip to China," he told AFP in an interview in the lavishly restored lobby of the Empire State Building.

York."

Nearby at Penn Station,

plans were hatched for a new skyscraper that would crowd in on the splendidly isolated position of the Empire State Building.

centrepiece of his family's real estate holdings, which he calls "the world's most famous office building", could

> result was spectacular. Where the Empire State Building once loomed discreetly over the twinkling Manhattan nightscape, today's spire is an allsinging, all-dancing pillar of light, which technicians can program to almost any combination imaginable.

of the basic white. But the

Instead of the 500 old clunkers, the new barrage of LED lamps "throw" light up the spire, reaching further, with greater intensity, and using an amazing 73 percent less electricity, said Jeremy Day, an engineer with Philips Color Kinetics, which installed the system.

"If you can verbally describe to me what you want your lights to do, we can probably find a way to program it, Day said, showing off the new installation on a narrow balcony that runs around the  $72^{\rm nd}$  floor.

The lights of the Empire State Building shine through fog enveloping New York on January 16. Pic: AFP

Before the new system's debut at the end of November last year, a team of workers would have to climb daily out to the lights and insert the correct filters ahead of nightfall.

Stacks of the huge coloured disks have been left gathering dust alongside battered-looking former lights on the 72<sup>nd</sup> floor. No one has to go out in the snow and rain carrying the antiquated objects anymore: a click of the mouse from the building's main computer room downstairs controls every one of the 1200 LEDs.

"Each one of these lights are individually addressed. We can actually target each one of these and give it an individual colour," Day said.

Already, some funky experiments have taken place atop the world's grande dame of skyscraper architecture.

The lights flashed and pulsed in rhythm to a performance by Grammy Award winner Alicia Kevs at the unveiling in November. On election night, the spire showed the vote tally in blue and red as President Barack Obama won a second term.

And in the week ending January 20, the public was being asked to vote on Facebook to choose the seven

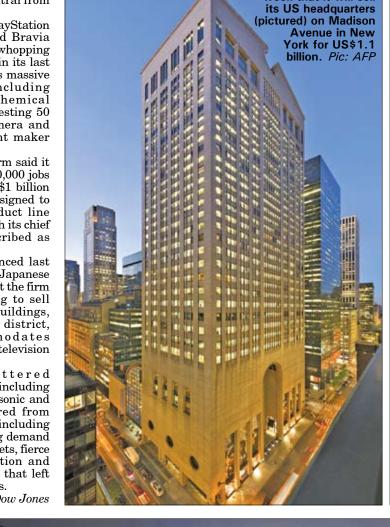
colours that will comprise the building's standard

But Malkin, who has also spent millions on an environmentally friendly retrofit of the Empire State Building, says there's no chance of the skyscraper going too far down the Hong Kong route.

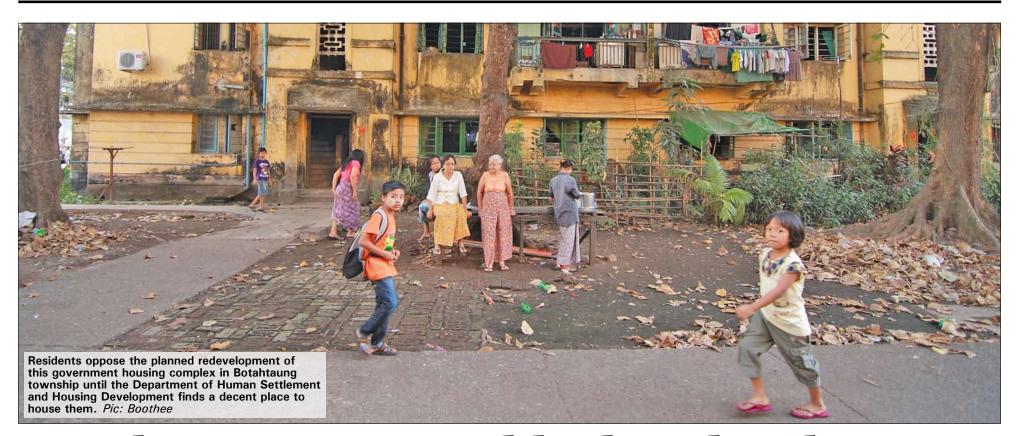
"It's never going to be for a commercial purpose. It's not a billboard," he said.

Day also cautioned against going crazy with the tower's

"It's funny. With all that capability, sometimes I think the best looking shows are the simple ones," Day said. "Nothing stands out to me like when the whole building's blue." – AFP



### **PROPERTY**



## Botahtaung tenants block redevelopment

By Htar Htar Khin

RESIDENTS of a  $government\ housing\ complex$ in Botahtaung township are refusing to sign an agreement with the Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development to redevelop the site.

The development is on 51st Street and is usually referred to as "51st Housing Estate" by locals.

Many of the residents told The Myanmar Times last week that the information coming from the department was unclear and they would not sign the agreement until they understood the planned

redevelopment.
DHSHD held a meeting with residents on December 25 to discuss the redevelopment dispute with disgruntled tenants.

U Than Shwe, a resident of block 4, said DHSHD officials at the meeting addressed three points that had been raised by residents.

The meeting called all residents to talk about three key points relating to the redevelopment plans," he said. "The first is that residents would be guaranteed their own space in the redevelopment; that space would be at least 600 square feet in size; and finally that DHSHD would take

responsibility for housing residents elsewhere during the redevelopment, which was the biggest concern for all residents," he said.

We all agreed on the first two points but would appreciate more details. But the major point is how DHSHD plans to temporarily house residents while the site is redeveloped because this affects our businesses

and daily living the most." A  $\rm\,D\,H\,S\,H\,D\,$  handout released at the December 25 meeting says the site was built in 1954-55 and is falling apart. Additionally, the apartment blocks are not comfortable for residents, and need to be redeveloped jointly

with private construction companies.

Residents said they also feared that they will not be able to afford the rent, which will be K10,000 a month, when the redevelopment is

A ground floor resident of block 4, who has lived at the development for "many years", said rents are extremely low; when she first moved in she was paying K66 a month.

"We don't want to move out of here but DHSHD is trying to force us to sign an agreement to have the site redeveloped," she said.

U Than Shwe said block 2, 3 and 4 residents were reluctant to sign redevelopment agreements after the December 25 meeting because they felt DHSHD was unfairly pressuring them, and a follow-up letter from the department on January 9 had reinforced that belief.

"DHSHD ordered us to sign the agreements in a letter that arrived by January 9 that told us we had to return signed forms by January 11 at the latest.

"But we chose not to because we're still worried about how DHSHD is going to house us during the development," he said.

"So we wrote letters explaining our fears and

sent them to DHSHD instead of the signed agreements,'

he said.
"We're not opposed to the redevelopment or other government projects because we know that the redevelopment will improve our lives but we are confused and worried about the resettlement program," he

Residents said they had been informed that the redevelopment would be done in two phases, with blocks 3, 4 and 5 in the first phase, and the remaining blocks in phase two.

The site has seven blocks, each containing 32 apartments.

### US existing-home sales dip in Dec

WASHINGTON - US existing-home sales dipped in December, capping a year that saw the briskest sales pace in five years as the housing market recovers, a trade group said on January 22.

Sales fell 1 percent from November to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.94 million last month, the National Association of Realtors said.

The NAR revised downward its November estimate to 4.99 million, from an initial 5.04 million.

The December sales reading was weaker than the 5.10 million pace expected by analysts.

But on a 12-month basis,

sales marked a 12.8pc increase from the December 2011 level, a fresh sign that the housing market has turned the corner six years after prices collapsed.

Total sales in 2012 were 4.65 million, up 9.2pc from 2011, the strongest increase since 2004, the NAR said.

The 2012 sales volume was the highest since 2007, boosted by record low mortgage interest rates. an improving job market and pent-up demand six years after the market collapsed.

The median home price rose for the 10th consecutive month yearover-year in December to US\$180,800, a robust

11.5pc higher.

Limited inventory pushed 2012 median home prices 6.3pc higher to \$176,600, the biggest annual increase since 2005.

The number of potential buyers who stayed on the sidelines accumulated during the recession, but they started entering the market early last year as their financial ability and confidence steadily grew, along with home prices, said NAR chief economist Lawrence Yun.

Likely job creation and household formation will continue to fuel that growth," he said, predicting gains in sales and prices in



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January 28 - February 3, 2013

## Kim Dotcom apologises after start-up website swamped

WELLINGTON — Megaupload founder and alleged online piracy kingpin Kim Dotcom on January 22 apologised for teething problems with his new filesharing service, saying massive global interest had swamped the website.

The mega.co.nz site, a replacement for the outlawed Megaupload, was launched on January 20, with New Zealand-based Dotcom staging a lavish party at his Auckland mansion, a year after his arrest in the world's biggest online piracy case.

Dotcom said the site, which he had claimed attracted one million visitors and more than 500,000 registered users in its first 14 hours, was proving so popular that it was experiencing technical difficulties.

"The massive global PR around the #Mega launch is simply too big to handle for our start-up. I apologise for poor service quality," he tweeted.

The 39-year-old German national, who changed his name from Kim Schmitz, said his team was working around the clock to resolve the issues and the service would be running normally within 48 hours, declining to give an update on user numbers.

"If I would tell you how many signups we had since the launch you wouldn't believe it. I can't believe it. So, I won't tell you," he said.

50, I won't tell you," he said. New Zealand internet



Kim Dotcom at the launch of the new website in Auckland on January 20. Pic: AFP

consultant Steve Simms said the problems appeared to be linked to delays in servers being updated to recognise the site certificate, as well as the overwhelming number of visitors seeking to sign up. Dotcom hopes the new venture will rival the success of Megaupload, which boasted 50 million visitors daily and accounted for four percent of internet traffic before it was shut down after his arrest last January.

Free on bail as US authorities seek his extradition on a range of charges including money laundering, racketeering and copyright theft, Dotcom has said he needs to relaunch his internet empire to help pay his legal bills.

US authorities allege Megaupload sites netted more than US\$175 million in criminal proceeds and cost copyright owners more than \$500 million by offering pirated copies of movies, TV shows, music and other content

Dotcom denies the charges, which carry jail terms of up to 20 years.

The new website offers

The new website offers cloud storage with state-ofthe-art encryption to ensure only users, not the site administrators, know what they are uploading.

That would theoretically stop authorities from accusing administrators of knowingly aiding online piracy, the central allegation facing Dotcom in the Megaupload case.

While on bail in New Zealand, his legal team has had some successes challenging the prosecution case, including a ruling that the police raid was illegal and a government admission that Dotcom was illegally spied upon before his arrest. His extradition hearing is due to be held in August. – *AFP* 

### Web speeds eased in 2012

WASHINGTON – Global internet connection speeds around the world slowed in late 2012, showed a survey released on January 23 that suggested a temporary stall in broadband gains.

Akamai Technologies' third quarter "State of the Internet" report also showed China remained the biggest source of computer attacks and that Brazil and China appear to have the biggest surge in Web use.

The global average connection speed decreased by some seven percent between the second and third quarters of 2012 to 2.8 megabytes a second (Mbps).

But that appeared to be a temporary decline, since average connection speeds were up 11pc year over year.

South Korea continued to have the highest average

connection speed at 14.7 Mbps, followed by Japan (10.7 Mbps) and Hong Kong (8.9 Mbps).

THE MYANMAR TIMES

Globally, adoption of "high" broadband (speeds above 10 Mbps) grew 8.8pc in the third quarter and overall global broadband adoption grew 4.8pc, the report said.

For the second quarter in a row, Brazil experienced the greatest year-over-year growth of 39pc within the group of top 10 countries. China showed the largest quarter-over-quarter increase of 5.7pc

In analysing Web attacks from 180 countries or regions, Akamai said China remained the single largest source, with 33pc of all attacks originating within its borders. The United States accounted for 13pc, followed by Russia at 4.7pc. - AFP

### 'Gangnam Style' earns \$8m

SAN FRANCISCO – Google said on January 22 that the YouTube page showcasing the "Gangnam Style" video by South Korean rapper Psy has reaped more than \$8 million in ad revenue.

Google chief business officer Nikesh Arora revealed the figure while discussing the money-making potential of YouTube during a quarterly earnings call with financial analysts.

Ad revenue from popular YouTube videos is shared with creators of the content.

In December, "Gangnam Style" became the first video to break a billion views on YouTube, marking a historic milestone on the internet.

A counter at the YouTube

page showed that the music video has been watched more than 1.23 billion times since it was uploaded in July last year. Kevin Allocca, YouTube's trends manager, attributed Psy's success "to the universal appeal of catchy music – and er, great equine dance moves."

"Gangnam" is estimated to have earned the rapper millions more from digital downloads, advertising deals and on-demand services.

Psy, whose real name is Park Jae-Sang, won adulation in his homeland for the global hit and was awarded one of South Korea's highest cultural honours, the Okgwan Order of Cultural Merit. – *AFP* 

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beverages; tea-based beverages; tea; iced tea; curry (spice); curry roux; instant curry; cereal-based snack food; rice-based snack food; chips (cereal products); flour-milling products; noodles; corn flakes; tapioca; ingredient topped on bowl of rice consisting primarily of pre-cooked vegetables, pork, beef, eggs, tofu or seafood".



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## TIMESWORLD

### Cameron reaches out to EU partners

DAVOS, Switzerland -British Prime Minister David Cameron insisted last week he was not turning his back on Europe as he met world leaders for the first time since unveiling plans for an EU referendum.

The global elite gathered at the World Economic Forum in Davos on January 24, a day after Cameron unveiled his controversial proposal to let the British public vote on whether to stay in the European Union.

Cameron held talks with German Chancellor and EU powerbroker Angela Merkel and the prime ministers of Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands at the annual forum as he tried to win their backing for his plans.

"This is not about turning our backs on Europe – quite the opposite," Cameron told the audience of business leaders, top politicians and journalists.

'It's about how we make the case for a more competitive, open and flexible Europe and secure the UK's place within it."

Cameron's announcement on January 23 that he wants to renegotiate Britain's relationship with Brussels and then hold an "in-or-out" referendum on membership by the end of 2017 has delighted his increasingly anti-EU party.

In a poll of 2000 people published in The Times on January 25, 40 percent said they would vote to leave, 37pc would want to stay and 23pc were undecided.

European leaders in Davos called on Britain to remain in the 27-nation

Dutch premier Mark Rutte warned that without the EU, Britain would be "an island somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, somewhere between the United States and Europe".

Merkel reached out to Cameron by vowing more action on one of the key reforms he wants for Europe boosting competitiveness,
 saying it was "a central issue to ensure Europe's prosperity for the future."

But Cameron rejected any idea of a European superstate or of Britain ever adopting the euro and added that he did not agree that "there should be a country called Europe". -AFP

### UK and EU: an uneasy partnership

British Prime Minister David Cameron wants to renegotiate the terms of Britain's European Union membership



Jan 1963: French President Charles de Gaulle says "non" to British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's bid to join the European Economic Community

• 1969: De Gaulle resigns

• 1967: De Gaulle

aimed at ending currency

1970: Edward Heath becomes UK Prime Minister and successfully European Monetary System, renews Britain's bid to join Europe Jan 1973: Britain joins the EEC

1984: With her famous demand: "I want

my money back", British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher obtains a permanent rebate on Britain's contribution to the EEC

**1990:** Britain stays out of the Schengen accord that dismantles border controls in Europe

 1992: UK Prime Minister John Major signs the Maastricht Treaty creating the European Union (EU) but refuses to adopt its Social Chapter or the European Single Currency

Cameron refuses to sign a European accord on budget discipline

2011: British PM David Sameron refuses to Jan 23, 2013: Cameron says if he wins the next general election he will hold a referendum by end-2017 on whether Britain should stay in the EU or leave

### trafficking Rohingyas BANGKOK - Thai appeared in the Thai

Thai officers accused of

authorities said last week they were investigating allegations that army officials were involved in the trafficking of Rohingya boat people fleeing Myanmar's Rakhine state.

There were army officials involved - some local unit heads," a senior Thai intelligence official who did not want to be named, told AFP on January 21.

Rohingya usually come ashore on Thailand's southwestern Andaman coast but recently they have been found in Songkhla province bordering Malaysia on the other side of the peninsula, he said.

They could not be there if there were no government officials involved. The trafficking will involve brokers. They could have paid 40,000-60,000 baht (US\$1350-2000) to travel to Malaysia overland," the official added.

National Security Council secretary general Paradorn Pattanathabutr said the army was investigating the claims, which first

media, but had found no evidence of wrongdoing.

"If we found somebody guilty, they will be punished," he added.

A spokesman for Thailand's Internal Security Operation Command, whose officers have been accused by local media of involvement in the people smuggling, said he was aware of the allegations but could not confirm or deny them.

'We have to investigate but up to now we don't have any information, he said.

Described by the UN as among the most persecuted minority groups in the world, Rohingya have for years trickled abroad to neighbouring Bangladesh and, increasingly, to Muslim-majority Malaysia.

An explosion of tensions between Buddhist and Muslim communities in Rakhine state since June 2012 has triggered a huge exodus of Rohingya, mostly heading for Malaysia.

Hundreds have been detained in Thailand in recent weeks. -AFP

## NKorea lashes out over new sanctions

SEOUL-North Korea lashed out at rival South Korea on January 25, even as China and the United States sought to pressure Pyongyang into backing away from a threatened nuclear test.

In the latest in a series of bellicose warnings sparked by a tightening of UN sanctions, the North's top body for inter-Korean affairs threatened the South with unspecified "physical counter-measures"

'Sanctions amount to a declaration of war against us, the Committee for Peaceful Reunification of Fatherland said in a statement.

"If the South Korean puppet regime of traitors directly participates in the socalled UN 'sanctions', strong physical countermeasures would be taken," it added.

The warning, carried by the official Korean Central News Agency, came a day after North Korea's top military body threatened to conduct a third nuclear test and boost its ability to strike the United

The current upsurge in tensions has its roots in Pyongyang's

defiant decision with a longrange rocket

launch on December 12 insisting it was a peaceful mission to place a satellite in orbit. The rest of the world saw it as a banned ballistic missile test and on January 22 the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution that expanded

the number of North Korean entities on an international blacklist.

The US, supported by Japan and South Korea, spearheaded the UN resolution

Pyongyang reacted furiously, vowing to boost its nuclear arsenal and to conduct a third nuclear

stressed that any test would be a "significant violation" of UN Security Council resolutions.

"Further provocations would only increase Pyongyang's isolation, and its continued focus on its nuclear and missile program is doing nothing to help the North Korean people," Carney told of the international family," Panetta said.

In addition to the UN measures, the United States added names to its own blacklist that freezes any USbased assets of designated individuals and groups and makes it a crime for anyone in the United States to assist

> The resolution was notable for receiving the backing of

North Korea's sole major ally, China, which had shielded Pyongyang from stronger sanctions demanded by Washington.

In an unusually frank warning on January 25, China's state-run media  $cut\ aid\ to\ Pyongyang\ if\ it\ goes$ ahead with a nuclear test.

"If North Korea engages in further nuclear tests, China will not hesitate to reduce its assistance," the Global Times, which is close to China's ruling Communist Party, said in an editorial.

"China hopes for a stable peninsula, but it's not the end of the world if there's trouble there," it added.

As North Korea's main economic lifeline, China is seen as the only country with any genuine leverage over the isolated and nucleararmed state. Pyongyang has long played on Chinese fears of the consequences of North Korea's collapse to defy Beijing's efforts to rein in its nuclear weapons program.

-AFP

### to push ahead to a declaration of war against us.

test and even longer-range rocket launches in an "all-out action" against its "sworn US enemy".

In Washington on January 24, White House spokesman Jay Carney criticised the North Korean threat as "needlessly provocative" and reporters.

Outgoing US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said the United States was "fully prepared" for a test from Pyongyang.
"But I hope... they

determine that in the end, it is better to become a part indicated that Beijing would



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## Obama issues call for unity, equality

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama inaugurated his second term on January 21 with an ardent call for unity, but warned his foes their "absolutism" must not thwart action on climate, immigration and gun control.

Obama was publicly sworn in for another four White House years before a flag-waving crowd of an estimated one million and then delivered an inaugural address in which poetic power veiled clear signs of a liberal governing

We do not believe that in this country freedom is reserved for the lucky, or happiness for the few," Obama said, from the Stars and Stripes-draped West Front of the US Capitol building, the epicentre of America's political divides.

The 44th president repeatedly used the "We the People" preamble to the US Constitution to suggest how to reconcile America's founding truths and the current discord and dysfunction of its embittered political system.

"Decisions are upon us and we cannot afford delay," said Obama, flexing the freedom of a leader who no longer needs to face voters and the urgency of a president who knows that second-term powers soon wane.

"We cannot mistake absolutism for principle, or substitute spectacle for politics, or treat name-calling as reasoned debate. We must act, knowing that our work will be imperfect," Obama declared.

Obama, America's first black president, took the oath of office with his hand resting on Bibles that once belonged to Abraham Lincoln, the president who ended slavery, and civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr.

In another echo of history, the inaugural ceremonies took place on the federal holiday marking King's birthday, and most of the crowd appeared to be African Americans.

Later, on a day mixing the pageantry of the presidency with the blunt business of drawing political battle lines, Obama and wife Michelle stepped out of their armoured car to greet wildly cheering crowds in the inaugural

Though his speech was watched across the globe, Obama sketched over foreign policy, disdaining "perpetual war" and promising diplomatic engagement backed with military steel -though he did not dwell on specific crises

"We will show the courage to try and resolve our differences with other nations peacefully not because we are naive about the dangers we face, but because engagement can more durably lift suspicion and fear."

While reaching for a soaring note of national unity, Obama's address was laced with liberal ideology and policy certain to enrage Republicans.

"Together, we resolved that a great nation must care for the vulnerable and protect its people from life's worst hazards and misfortune," Obama said.

"Now, more than ever, we must do these things together, as one nation and one people.

While irking Republicans, Obama's signs of intent on issues like gun control and climate change may also worry Democrats from conservative territory running in 2014 mid-term polls, who may hold the fate of his agenda in their hands.

In an apparent bid to frame his legacy, Obama said America must shield the weak, the poor and those lacking health care and demanded equality for all races and gay rights, and security from gun crime for children.

"Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law – for if we are truly



First Lady Michelle Obama sings along with "Let's Stay Together" performed by Jennifer Hudson while dancing with US President Barack Obama during the Inaugural Ball at a convention centre in Washington on January 21. Pic: AFP

created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well," Obama

"Our journey is not complete until we find a better way to welcome the striving, hopeful immigrants who still see America as a land of opportunity," he said, signalling a policy drive on a deeply contentious issue.

And in an oblique reference to his bid to end the scourge of gun violence, Obama said: "our journey is not complete until all our children, from the streets of Detroit to the hills of Appalachia to the quiet lanes of Newtown, know that they are cared for, and cherished, and always safe from harm."

He also vowed to meet the threat of global warming, despite scepticism on climate change among some Republicans and daunting political and economic barriers to meaningful action.

Obama's Republican foes welcomed his reach for unity but, like the president, hinted at ideological divides.

"The president's second term represents a fresh start when it comes to dealing with the great challenges of our day; particularly, the transcendent challenge of unsustainable federal spending and debt," said Republican Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell.

Defeated Republican vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan congratulated Obama saying, "we serve the same country, one that

is still in need of repair."

Speaking to AFP, Republican senator John McCain, who lost the White House race to Obama in 2008, damned the address with

"I thought it was an excellent speech, delivery was obviously excellent," McCain said. "I didn't hear any conciliatory remarks associated with it."

After his speech, Obama dined on bison and lobster with VIP members of Congress before heading back to the White House on the inaugural parade route.

Dozens of groups - marching bands, cultural organisations and military units - then strode past the bullet-proof parade reviewing stand, earning applause from Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and other dignitaries.

Obama took the oath for a first time on January 20 in a private ceremony at the White House because the constitution states that US presidential terms end at noon on January 20. – AFP

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### A daughter offers praise

WASHINGTON - To everyone else, he is the president of the United States, but to his young daughters Barack Obama is just Dad, who sometimes messes stuff up.

Obama's 11-year-old daughter Sasha on January 20 gave a rare glimpse into the president's personal life, after watching her father take the oath of office to begin his second term.

"Good job Dad," Sasha said, as her father gave her a hug after the swearing-in ceremony in the Blue Room of the White House.

'I did it," Obama replied, before his mischievous daughter offered her verdict on the spectacle.

"You didn't mess up," Sasha Obama said, in remarks picked up by a television microphone, apparently referring to the president's first-term swearing in, when a verbal stumble while reciting the oath of office necessitated a

Obama was also heard to say "thank you, sweetie," to his wife Michelle after she congratulated him on his nascent second term.

But there was a mess-up when civil rights icon Myrlie Evers-Williams offered the official blessing for Obama at his public inauguration ceremony on January 21.

"America, we are here our nation's capital, on this day, January the 21st, 2013, the inauguration of our 45th president, Barack Obama," Evers-Williams said.

Obama is the 44th president. -AFP

### **CORRIGENDUM**

In the Trade Mark Caution Notice for trademark "LU logo 96 en couleurs" of GENERALE BISCUIT, appearing in this paper on 24th December, 2012, at page No. 14, under paragraph 3, in the second line, please read "pies", instead of "pipes" and under same paragraph in the sixth line, please add "and/or filled" before "and/or flavoured"

World

THE MYANMAR TIMES January 28 - February 3, 2013

### **Briefs**

### Mumbai plotter gets 35 years

CHICAGO - An American man who admitted to scouting targets ahead of the deadly 2008 Mumbai attacks and then cooperated with US authorities to avoid execution was sentenced on January 24 to 35 years in prison.

David Coleman Headley, 52, pleaded guilty in 2010 to 12 charges related to the carnage in Mumbai and a second plot to attack a Danish newspaper that sparked outrage over its publication of cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed.

Heavily-armed tants killed 166 people and wounded hundreds more during a three-day rampage in Mumbai in November

### Assad makes rare public appearance

DAMASCUS – Syria's embattled President Bashar al-Assad attended prayers at a Damascus mosque on Thursday, in a rare public appearance.

Assad joined prayers at Al-Afram mosque in a northern district of Damascus to mark the Prophet Mohammed's birthday in his first public appearance since making a speech on January 6.

Assad's proposal for national dialogue in the speech was directed only to opposition groups deemed acceptable by the Damascus regime. It was immediately shunned by his opponents.

### Russia backs down on hospital plan

ST PETERSBURG - Russian authorities on January 23 promised not to close the main hospital treating children with cancer in the country's second city and hand it over for the exclusive use of senior judges, in an apparent U-turn following a public outcry.

The public had reacted angrily to a plan to hand over hospital No 31, which has Saint Petersburg's biggest children's cancer unit, and use it exclusively to treat senior judges who are set to relocate to the city.

The Kremlin confirmed on January 23 that the plan would not go ahead.

### Strays set example for pedestrians

BUCHAREST dogs crossing at crosswalks are being used by the Romanian traffic police in a new safety campaign to convince pedestrians to be more careful.

"If they can do it, then everyone can do it - cross on pedestrian crossings!", says the short TV spot while showing several stray dogs using zebra and pelican crossings.

A total of 360 pedestrians died last year in Romania of a "lack of discipline", the traffic police said on January 23. – *AFP* 

### Poll setback poses dilemma for 'King Bibi': analysts

JERUSALEM - Benjamin Netanyahu's Pyrrhic election victory and the shock strength of Yair Lapid's centrist Yesh Atid mean tough choices for Israel's premier, heralding a period of political instability, pundits said

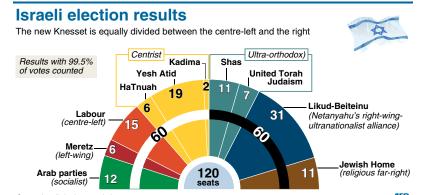
"A blow for Netanyahu, a running start for Lapid," was the banner headline in the top-selling Yediot Aharonot on January 23.

In results that defied expectations and just nine months after it was created, Yesh Atid won 19 seats to become Israel's second-strongest

Netanyahu's Likud-Beitenu list saw its representation cut from 42 seats to 31.

In third place was the centreleft Labour with 15, in a result which saw the Knesset's 120 seats evenly split between the rightwingreligious bloc and the centre-left.

"On Tuesday we got a new king: Yair," wrote Yossi Verter in the leftleaning Haaretz, indicating that the



days were over for "King Bibi" - the nickname given to Netanyahu by Time magazine.

The joint Likud-Yisrael Beiteinu slate that he headed suffered a searing collapse, and he personally received a resounding slap in the face from rightist voters," he added.

"He'll retain his job, but under tougher conditions, with a less comfortable coalition and a party whose discontent will only grow."

Nahum Barnea, Yediot's chief political commentator, described Netanyahu as "a tragic figure" who had alienated himself from the public with his personal behaviour and political zigzagging.

"A prime minister, when he is elected, receives a large helping of respectability. Netanyahu squandered his completely. He squandered it with his personal behaviour. He squandered it with his political decisions."

The seeds of public discontent were sown during the 2011 protests over the cost of living and found voice at the ballot box on January 22, taking votes from Netanyahu and handing them to Lapid, the centre-left Labour party and the leftwing Meretz, he

"The feeling of disgust with the political game did not die... The protest is the real winner of the elections."

Netanyahu's Likud also failed by losing its grip on the political centre, allowing the party to slide to the right through its disastrous electoral "marriage" with Yisrael Beitenu, Haaretz said.

"(It) turned out to be a match made in hell. It delegitimised Likud," the newspaper adding.

Coalition negotiations are expected to take at least two weeks, with Netanyahu facing a raft of tough choices, analysts said. - AFP

### US military lifts ban on women serving in combat roles

WASHINGTON – Ushering in a new era for the US military, Defence Secretary Leon Panetta on January 24 lifted a ban on women serving in ground combat, saying female troops had proven themselves in a decade of war.

The ground-breaking decision reflected the changed realities of the battlefield, Panetta said, with women soldiers having already fought in conflicts that lack clear frontlines.

"Female service members have faced the reality of combat, proven their willingness to fight and, yes, to die to defend their fellow Americans," Panetta told a news conference.

'Not everyone is going to be able to be a combat soldier. But everyone is entitled to a chance," he said before signing a document ending the ban.

President Barack Obama hailed the move as "historic" and "another step toward fulfilling our nation's founding ideals of fairness and equality.'

The move highlighted evolving social attitudes and marked yet another sweeping change for the military under Obama, who led a drive to end a ban on openly gay troops.

Although some Republican lawmakers oppose the idea, it likely will face little concerted opposition, as Americans have become accustomed

to seeing women in uniform and at war.

Panetta unveiled the decision after a monthslong review by chiefs of all the armed services who unanimously endorsed a gradual change that would be phased in over the next three years.

Under the decision, the armed services will have until January 2016 to carry out the new policy. Military departments would have to submit detailed plans on

implementing the order by May 15, 2013, Panetta said.

The change will apply mainly to the Army and the Marine Corps, as the Air Force and Navy already have lifted most prohibitions on women in combat, allowing them to fly fighter jets and fire weapons on ships.

Women make up about 14.5 percent of the active duty US military, or about 204,000 service members.

## Fiery Clinton denies Benghazi cover-up

fiery Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on January 23 angrily dismissed Republican charges of a cover-up over the deadly Benghazi attack and warned the world needs to combat rising extremism.

Combative and at times emotional, Clinton gave no ground to congressional critics still seeking to determine why the administration at first blamed the September 11 assault on a protest outside the US mission in eastern

"With all due respect, the fact is, we had four dead Americans. Was it because of a protest or because of guys out for a walk one night and (who) decided to go kill some Americans?" she told a tense Senate hearing.

What difference does it make?" she demanded, thumping her fist on the table as Senator Ron Johnson repeatedly asked her why the administration had initially linked the attack to protests against an anti-Islam Internet video.

"It is our job to figure out what happened and do everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again, senator," she said.

Later, there were also testy exchanges before a House committee, when



**US Secretary of State Hillary** Clinton testifies before the senate committee last week. Pic: AFF

Representative Jeff Duncan told Clinton: "Madam Secretary, you let the consulate become a death trap. And that's national security malpractice."

Clinton replied she had come to give an "open, transparent presentation" and could have just kept the findings of an inquiry classified and "then, you know, just said goodbye. That's not who I am. That's not what I do."

Her more than five hours of testimony came on the eve of a Senate hearing to confirm her successor, John Kerry, who is expected to be easily voted in and could take over within days.

Clinton insisted there was no administration cover-up of the events, when dozens of heavily-armed al-Qaedalinked militants overran the compound and a nearby

an eight-hour firefight in which four people, including US ambassador Chris Stevens, were killed.

"Nothing could be further from the truth," Clinton insisted, stressing that in the days afterwards the administration did not have "a clear picture yet." She choked back a sob

as she described having to call the families with the news that Stevens, and information manager Sean Smith, had been killed.

She urged senators to learn from the attack as they confront a rapidly evolving political landscape in the wake of the Arab Spring.

"Benghazi didn't happen in a vacuum," Clinton told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, warning of the dangers of Al-Qaeda and its sympathisers.

"We have to recognise this is a global movement. We can kill leaders, but until we help establish strong democratic institutions, until we do a better job communicating our values and building relationships, we're going to be faced with this level of instability."

But top Republican senators rejected her explanations, with Senator Rand Paul suggesting she should have been fired for not reading requests for additional security. -AFP

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January 28 - February 3, 2013 THE MYANMAR TIMES

## Amid deep rifts, Egyptians mark two years of upheaval

CAIRO – Egypt on January 25 marked two years since the start of the revolution that toppled Hosni Mubarak and brought in an Islamist president, at a time of deep political divisions and fears of an economic crisis.

After the seismic political changes of 2011, the Arab world's most populous nation is struggling to find its balance, between a leadership that boasts the legitimacy of the ballot and opponents who accuse the Islamists of betraying the goals of the revolution that brought them to power.

The slogan that brought Egypt to its feet in 2011 – "bread, freedom, social justice" – has been revived, highlighting the fact that many feel little has been achieved since 2011.

Tension was also high in the country last week ahead of a court verdict on January 26 in the trial of dozens of defendants over the country's worst football disaster.

More than 70 people were killed in Port Said in February last year during clashes in the Suez Canal city between fans of home side Al-Masry and the Ultras of Cairo's Al-Ahly.

Thousands of supporters of Al-Ahly club demonstrated in Cairo earlier this month to demand severe punishments for those responsible for the stadium deaths and have vowed to launch a "new revolution" if justice is not served.

"Egypt is still in transition, and this will continue while demands for justice, social progress and the fight against corruption are not satisfied," said Ahmed Abd Rabbo, professor of political science at Cairo University.

"But we cannot say that



Graffiti outside the presidential palace in Cairo showing Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi (left), ousted president Hosni Mubarak (right) and the former head of the army, Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi. *Pic: AFP* 

CAIRO-Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi appealed for calm on January 25 after seven people died in clashes between police and protesters on the second anniversary of the revolt that toppled Hosni Mubarak.

Morsi, in a message posted on his Twitter account, urged "citizens to adhere to the values of the revolution, express opinions freely and peacefully and renounce violence".

At least seven people died in the anti-government protests on January 25, said the health ministry, six in Suez and one in Ismailiya, in the northeast, while 456 were injured in unrest in 12 provinces.

In the province of

Ismailiya, which neighbours Suez, protesters stormed the governorate headquarters, setting fire to a room used by security services and looting furniture and equipment, witnesses said.

Demonstrators had earlier set fire to the Muslim Brotherhood headquarters in Ismailiya, they said.

– AFF

Egypt has not moved forward on the path to democracy. Egyptians have seen five elections or referendums in two years, and have proved that they're capable of choosing through the ballot

boxes," he told AFP.

Despite being deeply fragmented after the uprising, the opposition came together in December to oppose an Islamist-drafted constitution.

The text was eventually

approved but left the country deeply divided ahead of parliamentary elections.

President Mohamed Morsi is the first Egyptian leader elected in a free election, following a brief transition led by a military council, and the first Islamist and civilian to head the country.

His critics accuse him of placing Islamist ideology above the national interest, as well as of incompetence in dealing with public affairs.

He is also facing an economic crisis: foreign investment has plunged, tourism is in crisis and a budget deficit shows no sign of recovery.

Two years after he was forced to resign, Mubarak, who was sentenced to life in jail for his involvement in the deaths of protesters in 2011, has been granted a retrial but the ailing former president's fate has for many become irrelevant. – *AFP* 

## Morsi condemns military intervention in Mali

RIYADH - Egyptian President Mohammad Morsi told fellow Arab leaders meeting in Riyadh on January 21 that he opposes French-led military action in Mali against Islamist rebels.

"We do not accept at all the military intervention in Mali because that will fuel conflict in the region," Morsi said at the opening of an economic summit in the Saudi capital.

But Egypt's Islamist president argued any intervention in Mali "should be peaceful," and called for funding on "development" in the African nation.

"We do not accept extremism, violence, or aggression against civilians, but also we do not want to create a new bloodbath," he said.

France swept to the aid

of the crippled and weak Malian army on January 11, a day after the hardline Islamists made a push towards Bamako in the government-held southern triangle of the bow-tie shaped nation.

France had won backing for its action from the UN Security Council the previous week.

A UN-approved Africanled intervention force known as AFISMA is being assembled but needs up to 200 million euros (US\$265 million).

The crisis erupted when the nomadic Tuaregs, who have long felt marginalised by government, launched a rebellion a year ago and inflicted such humiliation on the Malian army that it triggered a military coup in Bamako in March.

\_ AFP

## Kenya fights hate speech ahead of March election

NAIROBI – With elections weeks away, Kenya is tackling the hate speech that fanned ethnic violence that followed presidential polls five years ago in which more than 1,00 people were killed.

Set up in 2008 after the contested polls, Kenya's National Cohesion and Integration Commission tries to identify those guilty of hate speech in the run up to the next elections on March 4.

"If you are guilty of hate speech, we will get you," Milly Lwanga, who heads a team monitoring hate speech at the commission, said on January 20.

Field officers primarily attend political gatherings to monitor what is said, and include police officers, journalists, students and community leaders.

"They blend in and send us

everything in raw format," said Kyalo Mwengi, a legal officer at the commission, adding that the Nairobibased team then checks the audio or video recordings.

"If there are elements of hate speech, we summon the person in question ... and warn them. Most of those warned cease immediately," said Lwanga.

Violence following the last elections shattered Kenya's image as a beacon of stability in east Africa, with what began as political riots quickly turning into ethnic killing.

The violence was the worst in Kenya since independence in 1963.

So far, the commission has investigated more than 100 hate speech cases, but fewer than ten of those cases went to court, and none of the accused was found guilty. -AFP

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Dated: 28th January, 2013.

## Al-Qaeda number two in Yemen dead: govt

SANAA – Yemen said on January 24 that the cofounder and second-incommand of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Saudi national Saeed al-Shehri, has died.

The Supreme National Security Committee said Shehri had succumbed to wounds received in a counter-terrorism operation in the northern Saada province on November 28 and had been buried by the al-Qaeda network at a secret location in Yemen.

Shehri was "one of the (al-Qaeda) leaders who played a major role in the planning of local, regional and international terrorist acts," a Yemeni statement said.

Shehri was released from Guantanamo Bay in Cuba in 2007 and was flown to Saudi Arabia, where he was put through a rehabilitation program. He later disappeared and resurfaced

as AQAP's number two.

In a related development, a Yemeni security source said on January 23 that seven suspected al-Qaeda members, including two Saudis, were killed in a US drone attack in a village east of the Yemeni capital, Sanaa.

Amid an escalation in such attacks, five suspected al-Qaeda militants were killed in a US drone strike on January 22 near the Saudi border north of Sanaa, tribal sources and witnesses said.

An raid northeast of Sanaa on January 21 killed four Al-Qaeda suspects, Yemen's interior ministry said. On January 19, air raids attributed to a US drone killed nine suspected members of the group.

The attack on January 23 brought to at least 38 the number of people killed in suspected US drone strikes since December 24. – *AFP* 

## BP fears worst for missing hostages

IN AMENAS, Algeria -Britain's BP said on January 22 it fears the worst for employees still unaccounted for in the Algerian hostage siege as authorities searched for five missing foreigners and tried to identify seven charred bodies.

THE MYANMAR TIMES

The oil giant, one of three companies running the desert gas plant at In Amenas, was to hold a minute's silence at its offices around the world on January 23 for the victims of the four-day standoff with Islamist militants.

37 foreigners of eight different nationalities and an Algerian were killed in the siege by the hostage-takers, who were demanding the release of Islamist prisoners and an end to France's intervention

"The gas complex is so big that we are still in the process of looking for bodies, especially those of missing foreigners," said an official at the plant, 1300 kilometres (800 miles) southeast of

BP chief executive Bob Algeria's government said Dudley warned that there

could be little hope for four missing employees of the British company.

We have been gravely concerned for these colleagues and feared one or more fatalities among their number," he said. "It is with great sadness that I now have to say that we fear the worst for them all.

The plant, a vital part of Algeria's revenue-generating natural gas industry, is being brought back on stream but questions remain about the Algerian government's handling of the crisis and the

shockingly high body count. Canada's government called in the Algerian ambassador to demand proof of official claims in Algiers that two Canadians were among the 29 militants killed by security forces, who brought the standoff to a bloody end on January 19.

The governments of Japan and Malaysia both expressed frustration at a lack of information about the fate of their nationals and pressed for more clarity from Algiers, as the repatriation of victims' bodies and survivors

The Japanese public has been traumatised at the loss of at least seven nationals in the attack, the country's biggest loss of life at the hands of militants since 9/11, and the government is unable to account for three others.

The Algeria tragedy touched many countries. Six Filipino hostages are known to have died, along with three Americans, three Britons and

White House spokesman Jay Carney was asked in his daily briefing on January 22 whether Washington shared earlier criticism and disquiet raised by Japan and Britain over aspects of the Algerian government's conduct.
"The blame for this

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tragedy rests with the terrorists who carried it out, and the United States condemns those actions in the strongest possible terms," Carney said, avoiding a direct answer.

Algeria has said special forces managed to free 685 Algerian and 107 foreign hostages, most of them on January 17, during a first rescue operation.  $-\bar{A}FP$ 

### African troops advance as abuses reported in Mali

BAMAKO – African forces were moving towards Mali's centre on January 24, as pressure grew on Malian troops over summary killings and rights abuses in a French-led assault on Al Qaedalinked groups.

The first troops from a UNmandated African force aimed at replacing the French mission have "already started to move towards central towns," Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said in Paris on January 23, adding that the force had deployed "far quicker than envisaged"

He said 1000 troops from West African countries and Chad had already arrived in Mali, which has been split in two since April.

A Malian defence official said that 160 soldiers from Burkina Faso had arrived in Markala, 270 kilometres (170 miles) north of the capital Bamako, to "take up the baton from the French" guarding a strategic bridge on the Niger

The UN has authorised the

deployment of a 3300-strong force under the auspices of 15-nation West African bloc ECOWAS. But the involvement of Chad, which has committed up to 2000 troops, means the force could now be much

Nearly two weeks after France swept to Mali's aid to stop an Islamist advance towards Bamako, reports emerged of atrocities committed by Malian soldiers and growing fears of attacks among light-skinned ethnic communities.

Most of the al-Qaeda-linked rebels being hunted by the armies are either Tuaregs or Arabs.

The International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH) said that in the central town of Sevare at least 11 people were executed in a military camp near the bus station and the town's hospital, citing evidence gathered by local researchers.

The organisation called for an immediate independent inquiry to "determine the scale of the abuses



A French flag is displayed over a vendor's stall in Segou, southcentral Mali, on January 23 as life returns to normal after the French-led offensive against Islamists. Pic: AFF

and to punish the perpetrators". French Defence Minister Jean-

Yves Le Drian urged extreme 'vigilance" against any abuses, saying the "honour of the (Malian) troops is at stake".

"We cannot accept any rights violations. The international community will face a very serious situation if (the intervention force)

is identified with abuses," Fabius

Le Drian said France had run up a bill of 30 million euros (\$40 million) in 12 days in Mali, but added that it would not make a serious hole in the defence budget, which included about 630 million euros for external operations.

France said it had already deployed 2,300 soldiers in Mali, its former colony, whose poorly trained and equipped force has been overwhelmed by Islamist rebels occupying the vast arid north and seeking to push south.

International moves to aid the French-led operation have accelerated, with the US military airlifting French troops and equipment from France into Mali.

Italy, Germany, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Arab Emirates are also providing transport planes or helicopters required to help move the African and French troops around Mali's vast expanses. -AFP

### France conquers hearts in central Malian town

MOPTI, Mali – "France has earned our eternal gratitude," the mayor of Mopti said on January 22, echoing residents who had feared the central Malian town would be the next to fall to advancing Islamist radicals.

Home to about 120,000 people, Mopti is a mere 50 kilometres (30 miles) from Konna – which fell to the al-Qaeda-linked fighters on

The seizure of Konna sparked panic in Mopti, about 630 kilometres northeast of the capital, Bamako. Hotels and businesses closed and many people fled in

But the capture of Konna after the military intervention by former colonial ruler France halted the rebel advance brought relief to anxious locals.

Idraogo Mamadou, making tea on a dusty road, said: "We were bracing to become slaves to these people. They are not motivated by religion at all. They are bandits who are only seeking money."

A hotel owner whose establishment is on the banks of the Niger river was

one of the few to stay.
"When Konna fell, it was total panic here," said the hotel owner, a Christian in a majority-Muslim country. "All those who had a car. or had money, fled. There wasn't a drop of petrol in the gas stations and the road to Bamako was completely

Idrissa Diakite, 32, was too poor to flee but simply closed his roadside grocery kiosk, locked himself inside the house and "prayed to God".

"All the officials had fled because the Islamists are cruel with them," he added. So when (French President Francois) Hollande sent his soldiers, it was a great

The French helping hand was a turning point for Mayor Omar Bathily.

"Before this I was anti-French.... The whole question of visas, the humiliation inflicted on Malians in France. But now it's over. For all my life, I will say 'Thank you and long live France!"

The head of Mali's chief Muslim group has strongly supported the French-led campaign, an important voice in a country whose population is 90-percent Muslim.

Mahmoud Dicko said the offensive was "not an aggression against Islam," adding: "It was France that came to the rescue of a people in distress who had been abandoned by the Muslim countries." - AFP

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P.O. Box No. 26, Yangon.

Phone: 372416 Dated: 28th January, 2013 January 28 - February 3, 2013 THE MYANMAR TIMES

## Holding the foreign world at bay

### COMMENT by Fouad Ajami

THE men who fought in Vietnam, a war that symbolises America's overreach and failures abroad, have not ascended to the presidency in the way that the World War II generation did. But under President Obama, Vietnam veterans Chuck Hagel and John Kerry could get a chance to pull America back from its foreign entanglements.

Obama's nominations of these men and the world's disenchantment with this president, signal that in his second term, the United States will have a less zealous mission in the world. The mantra is not quite George McGovern's "come home, America," but it is not far from that Vietnam-era weariness of distant lands and causes. And who better than a president with a foreign pedigree and two combat veterans from the Vietnam War at the helm of the Pentagon and the State Department to give this retrenchment a sense of legitimacy?

All three men would disavow the charge that they are "declinists" who believe that American power is past its zenith, but there is an unmistakable pessimism at the heart of their worldview: the United States is flat broke, with pressing priorities at home.

Foreign engagements begin well and end in futility. The United States does not know enough about the inner workings of these distant places to help more than harm. And besides, an American embrace can suffocate those whose causes we might take up.

Syria burns, but as Obama's approach has made clear, the United States should hold steady and aloof, because there is no way of divining the motivations of the rebellion - or the kind of society the rebels would build if and when the Assad regime falls. The law of unintended consequences haunts America's deeds; we know well that American blood and treasure can be wasted at the altar of ideology

The United States is not that exceptional to begin with, this triumvirate believes. Hagel and Kerry have forthrightly said so on many occasions, while Obama has had to be more circumspect. In his first campaign for the presidency, he drew a distinction between good wars of necessity and bad wars of choice. But there is no mistaking the worldview of the politician who rose, unexpectedly, amid economic distress, to the height of political

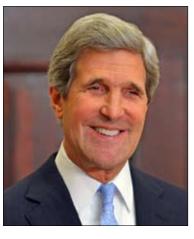
The French have a fitting expression for the Obama phenomenon that broke out abroad, like a fever, in 2008: trompe l'oeil, a trick of the eye.

Weary of the assertive nationalism of George W. Bush, Europeans and the Arab world welcomed Obama as a break with the "war on terror" and the American sense of embattled certitude. But the crowds in Paris and Berlin, not to mention Karachi and Cairo, mistook the animating passion of the candidate they had fallen for; they thought of him as a cosmopolitan man at home in the world. While he had lived in Jakarta as a boy, and had a Kenvan father and an Indonesian stepfather, he cut his teeth as a politician in the most American of cities: Chicago.

To the extent that the ideology of such a nimble man can be divined, the mission of his presidency has



Some of the 481 combat boots – for every one of the California servicemen and women who died in the Iraq war – displayed at the 'Eyes Wide Open' exhibit in front of San Francisco City Hall in March 2012. A total of 4486 US military personnel were killed in Iraq between 2003 and 2012. President Barack Obama's nominations of John Kerry (below left) and Chuck Hagel (below right) to be his secretaries of State and Defence, respectively, during his second term, signal that the United States will have a less zealous mission in the world, writes Fouad Ajami. Pic: AFP



been the redistributive state at home. His legacy, as he sees it, will be his signature legislation, Obamacare. Yes, Osama bin Laden was killed on his watch, but the rescue of General Motors seems closer to his heart.

Two years or so into his presidency. the world caught on: Underneath the exotic name and the speeches referring to American follies abroad risk and cost of this undertaking.



American commitments abroad.

"How many of us really know and understand Iraq, its country, history, people and role in the Arab world?" Hagel said on the Senate floor in 2002, in the debate that preceded and authorised the Iraq

"The American people must be told of the long-term commitment,

"We are each a product of our experiences, and my time in combat very much shaped my opinions about war," Hagel said in an interview with Vietnam Magazine last autumn. "The night Tom and I were medevaced out of that village in April 1968, I told myself: If I ever get out of this and I'm ever in a position to influence policy, I will do everything I can to avoid needless, senseless war. I never forgot that vow I made to myself, and I tried to live by it during my time in the

By Hagel's moral code, his vote on Iraq was clearly a lapse in judgment. The passion with which he would speak about the war two or three years later and his attack on the troop surge as a monumental  $\,$ error, felt like the penance of a man who believed he should have known better than to ever have supported

If Hagel for years remained convinced that the Vietnam War was a noble cause badly executed, Kerry's path after his service as

the United States of America." The United States had gone there with lofty notions of freedom, but the South Vietnamese "only wanted to work in rice paddies without helicopters strafing them and bombs with napalm burning their villages and tearing their country apart.

There would be no taking back these words. In the eyes of Kerry's detractors, combat, three Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star would not fully acquit him.

Emotionally tighter and more inhibited than Hagel, Kerry has put Vietnam at a good remove from his public persona. He has become a troubleshooter, travelling to foreign places but mostly to the chancelleries, to meet leaders and heads of state. Discretion is his code, since the attacks on him by Vietnam veterans during his presidential bid in 2004 rendered him a more cautious man. From his perch in the Senate, he has avoided controversies and redefined himself as an experienced mediator.

Kerry promises to be no more powerful as a Secretary of State than Hillary Clinton has been. This president, in the mould of Bush, is the "decider" on the crucial issues of our engagements abroad. Kerry won't challenge or resist the White House's primacy.

The world need not worry about the assertiveness of US power under Obama, Kerry and Hagel. It is people in distress - who might recall a different era when American armour and boots on the ground spelled the difference between rescue and calamity - who must come to terms with the nearcertainty that the cavalry will not turn up. – The Washington Post

(Fouad Ajami, a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, is the author of *The* Syrian Rebellion and The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's

### The world need not worry about the assertiveness of US power under Obama, Kerry and Hagel. It is people in distress...who must come to terms with the near-certainty that the cavalry will not turn up.

was a president who holds the foreign world at bay. The spell of his stirring speech in Cairo, in June 2009, has been broken. Instead of being taken in by Obama's magic, Muslims are burning him in effigy in Karachi. His approval rating among Pakistanis is as bleak as that of Bush.

Obama can live with the foreign world's disenchantment with him. He has a domestic agenda to focus on and he has two combat veterans from the Vietnam War to scale back We should not be seduced by the expectations of dancing in the

The Nebraskan was speaking of Iraq, but the war in Vietnam has haunted and defined him. He cast a vote authorising the use of force for the new war, but it did not take long before the former infantryman with two Purple Hearts gave voice to his disillusionment. As is well known, Hagel served alongside his younger brother, Tom, in Vietnam; both were wounded.

different – as different, perhaps, as Nebraska and Massachusetts. His 1971 appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has trailed Kerry ever since. He spoke of American soldiers who had "raped, cut off ears, cut off heads . . . randomly shot at civilians, razed villages in fashion reminiscent of Genghis Khan.'

It had been idle to launch that war, for there was "nothing in South Vietnam, nothing which could happen that realistically threatens

# Snow and its many varieties It snows when a mass of cold air meets a mass of warmer, humid air in the atmosphere

### Snow hits flights in Europe

LONDON - Hundreds of flights were cancelled and hazardous roads and railways disrupted traffic and caused countless accidents across Europe on January 21 as heavy snow and freezing weather gripped the continent.

THE MYANMAR TIMES

Frankfurt airport, Germany's main air hub, cancelled about 500 departing and arriving flights, representing 40 percent of its daily schedule.

The busiest airport in Europe, London Heathrow, scrapped more than 200

Freezing rain and snow also led to treacherous conditions on railways and roads, triggering many accidents.

more than 1000 weatherrelated accidents and in the northeast, near Berlin, an entire section of motorway was shut to traffic.

In Belgium, three people died and two others were seriously injured when a minibus in which they were travelling skidded off the road, overturned and caught fire at a motorway exit near Bruges, police said.

In Moscow, unusually heavy snowfall of almost 50 centimetres (20 inches) caused traffic jams but did not affect flights at its airports, which are wellequipped for snowstorms.

The snowfall during the previous four days in the Russian capital exceeded the average for the month of January, said Moscow In southwestern Deputy Mayor Pyotr Germany, police recorded Biryukov. -AFP

### Gas leak creates a stink in France and England

PARIS - The stench of rotten eggs wafted across Paris and northern France on January 22, even reaching across the sea to England, after a gas leak that authorities said was very smelly but entirely harmless

Headaches, sore throats and nausea were nevertheless among the complaints listed in calls made overnight to emergency lines in Paris by more than 10,000 people.

France's Ecology Minister, Delphine Batho, who cut short an official trip to Berlin to rush to the site of the leak. a chemical plant at Rouen in Normandy, said there was no health risk.

She said there would be an investigation to "determine the origin and establish whether the company was responsible".

The leak began early on January 21 at a plant run by Lubrizol, a firm that is part of billionaire US investor Warren Buffett's empire, and within a day its odour had reached millions of people across northern France.

Winds carried the invisible gas about 100 kilometres (60 miles) down the densely populated Seine river valley to Paris, and later northwards over the Channel and into England, where it even reached as far as south London.

The offending odour came from a gas called mercaptan, which, among other uses, is added to municipal gas because its sulphurous smell alerts people to gas leaks.

The Lubrizol plant, which makes additives for industrial lubricants and paint, shut down production as workers battled to plug the leak.

Despite the official insistence that there was no danger, French social media were awash with people in the affected regions complaining of headaches and nausea from the gas that smelled like rotten eggs.

The smell had largely disappeared from Paris by the afternoon on January 22.-AFP

### Merkel laments 'painful' defeat in state election

Chancellor Angela Merkel on January 21 called a knife-edge defeat in a state poll "painful" and said her party had to work to shore up support ahead of the September general

Merkel's ruling centreright camp lost its decade-long hold on the northeastern state of Lower Saxony by just one seat to the opposition Social Democrats and Greens on January 20 in one of the tightest races in recent memory.

"Of course when you have been on such an emotional rollercoaster then a defeat is that much more painful," she told reporters after a meeting of her Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

We have got to ensure that we in future election campaigns get the necessary majorities together."

The stunning upset left her junior coalition partners, the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP), reeling after months of anaemic poll numbers and sniping at their luckless leader, Economy Minister Philipp Roesler.

In a dramatic showdown, Roesler, who is also Merkel's vice chancellor, offered to step down after nearly two years at the helm of the FDP in favour of his main rival, parliamentary group leader Rainer Bruederle. But the latter declined.

However Roesler will not carry the FDP's banner into the national election in eight months' time, leaving the job of chief candidate to Bruederle.

The move was seen as Roesler outfoxing his challenger with a provocative ultimatum, buying him time at least until a party congress in March when the FDP will vote on its leadership and probably saving his job.

After a suspense-packed race with broad implications for the general election, the

centre-left said it aimed to use its victory to create fresh momentum for its bid to deprive Merkel of a third four-year term.

"It shows the race until September is far from over," said Peer Steinbrueck, the Social Democrats' embattled challenger to Merkel.

The Social Democrats and Greens also won a majority in the Bundesrat upper house of parliament which represents the states, allowing them to stop legislation from Merkel's government and launch their own draft bills.

Merkel, who campaigned hard for state premier David McAllister, a half-Scot seen as a potential successor as chancellor, enjoys a strong lead in national polls due to her fierce defence of German interests in the eurozone

But pundits said the state win could help turn around the battered campaign of the

gaffe-prone Steinbrueck. The website of news weekly

Der Spiegel described the result as a "nightmare" for the chancellor.

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"It could not have been worse for Merkel and the CDU," it wrote. "The message for the national election is clear: the fight for the chancellery will be much more brutal than Merkel imagined."

The FDP managed to capture nearly 10 percent in the state election - more than doubling many pollsters' forecasts and garnering their best result in Lower Saxony in post-war history.

But its success came at their allies' expense. The CDU scored just 36pc, with voters splitting their ballots under Germany's two-vote system in a bid to rescue the state coalition by helping the weak FDP.

Merkel said her CDU would now go it alone.

"It will be a general election campaign in which everyone fights for himself and his own votes," she said. -AFP

### Dozens of Russians flee Syria

MOSCOW- Dozens of Russians fleeing the violence in Syria arrived back in Moscow on January 23, in the first operation organised by the Russian authorities to help its nationals escape.

Two planes owned by the emergencies ministry carrying 77 people fleeing Syria touched down at Moscow's Domodedovo airport on a flight from the Lebanese capital, Beirut, to which they had travelled from Syria by road, the ministry said. Russia has vehemently

denied that the assistance is the start of a mass evacuation of the thousands of Russian citizens still believed to be living in conflict-torn Syria.

The RIA Novosti news agency said 8000 Russians are registered with the consulate.

But it said there could be as many as 25,000 Russian women who have married Syrians living in the country. -AFP

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For: Wyeth LLC Dated: 28th January, 2013. January 28 - February 3, 2013 THE MYANMAR TIMES

### Singapore pushes for a baby boom

By Shamim Adam

SINGAPORE - Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is cranking up a national debate on babies this month, with proposals to Parliament that would attempt to stem the country's slumping birthrate. Penelope Sim isn't listening.

"My mother-in-law hates me and she says I'm selfish, but I don't really care," Sim, a human resources consultant who's been married for six years, said as she shopped for MAC lipstick and eye liner, a brand of Estee Lauder Cos. "Everything's crazy expensive and life's already stressful enough here without kids. If there's no one to carry on the family name, then so be it.'

Sim, 33, embodies Lee's challenge to convince Singaporeans to wed younger and procreate more, four decades after concern about overcrowding prompted his father to urge citizens to delay nuptials and have smaller families.

Lee is caught between a rock and a hard place. While the birthrate was about 1.3 children per woman in 2012 barely enough to replace one parent - a backlash against soaring immigration forced the government to curb the influx of foreigners, leading to labou©r shortages and slower economic growth.

Measures since 1987 to reverse declining fertility, includinghandoutsofasmuch as S\$18,000 (US\$14,600) and extended maternity leave, have not worked. The nation's birthrates in 2010 and 2011 were the lowest in 47 years of independence. About 36,000 babies were born to residents in 2011, compared with nearly 50,000

The failure to encourage more births means the country will have to contend with a shrinking pool of workers and consumers, a deterrent to future investment. It will also increase the burden on younger employees to pay for an ageing population. Lee has said higher taxes will be needed in the next two decades as the government boosts social spending to support the elderly.

Singapore's first cohort of baby boomers turned 65 last year and its number of elderly will triple to 900,000 by 2030, shows data from the National Population and Talent Division. The nation defines baby boomers as those born between 1947 and 1964.

The city state is not alone in struggling with falling birthrates. The level in the United States hit a record low in 2011, while Japan's population is forecast to drop by almost a third by 2060 from 128 million in 2010. China's three-decade-old, onechild policy is accelerating declines in its workforce and Germany's birthrate is among the lowest in Europe even as it spends billions of euros to encourage women to have more children.

Singapore resorted to immigration in recent vears to raise numbers. The



A white-painted bronze sculpture of a baby by British artist Marc Quinn in the Garden by the Bay in Singapore on January 21. The sculpture, titled "Planet", which depicts the artist's son, was unveiled on January 18 and is for permanent display. Babies are a big issue Singapore, where the birth rate has declined sharply since independence in 1965. Pic: AFP

SINGAPORE - Singapore on January 21 announced increased cash bonuses for parents of newborn babies and introduced paternity leave as part of a package of measures to boost population and reduce dependence on foreigners.

Parents of Singaporean babies born since August 26 last year will receive a cash gift of S\$6000 (US\$4900) a rise of 50 percent, which applies to each of a couple's first two children.

The financial incentive

will rise to S\$8,000 for a couple's third and fourth babies, as the government attempts to offset the high cost of raising a family one of the gripes often aired by young couples in the city-state.

At least one parent must be a Singapore citizen to be eligible for the handout.

The government will subsidise one week of paternity leave for fathers of babies born from May 1 this year, the National Population and Talent Division (NPTD) agency

also announced in a press

In addition, new fathers will be eligible to stay off work for a second week by taking a chunk of the standard 16-week maternity leave granted to their wives, it

Housing issues were also addressed in the S\$2 billion (\$1.63 billion) Marriage and Parenthood Package. Couples with at least one child below 16 will be given priority to buy governmentbuilt apartments, where most Singaporeans live.

Many couples keep their families small until they get their own flats.

"We hope that the enhanced marriage and parenthood measures will help create a more conducive environment for Singaporeans to set up families," Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean said in the press release. Singapore's birth rate of 1.20 children per woman, based on 2011 figures, is well below the 2.1 figure needed to sustain the native population. -AFP

A "Stop at Two" campaign in the 1970s and the natural decline in childbirth as the economy developed brought the fertility rate down to 1.82

Last August, Lee Kuan Yew lamented that the number of births in the city has halved since he came to power in 1959, even with

'If we go on like that, this place would fold up because there will be no

"We have to find effective ways to encourage Singaporeans to have more babies," the younger Lee said in his New Year message. "We are not impersonal, calculating robots, mindlessly pursuing economic growth and material wealth.

Pursuit of possessions may be partly to blame. Singaporean women are more materialistic than their American counterparts, which could explain a smaller desire for children, showed a 2010 study by researchers at the Singapore Management University and the Northern Illinois University.

In the 1990s, success in Singapore was measured by the attainment of the so-called five Cs -cash, car, credit card, condominium and country club membership. Now, there are 9.3 million credit cards in circulation on the island, private property prices are at a record, and a Volkswagen Golf can cost more than the median price of an existing US home.

The role of women in the economy may also have contributed to the falling birth rate. They made up 44 percent of the resident labour pool last year as the government encouraged greater participation and offered larger tax breaks to working mothers. In 2010, female graduates outnumbered males in three of the five most common fields, including business and administration.

A survey by I Love Children, an organisation that promotes a "childrenplenty" Singapore, showed couples cited money as the top factor for not having babies.

It costs at least S\$340.000to raise a child in Singapore from infancy to the age of 21, the Asian Parent website estimated last year. A middle-income US family may spend \$234,900 to raise a child born in 2011 to the

age of 18, a government

report showed last year.

"A lot of women in my generation feel torn between work and family, said Farah Azmi, a 34year-old accountant for a pharmaceutical company who married her boyfriend of four years in 2011.

"I definitely want to have kids but I won't be able to be there for them like my mum was there for me and my brothers. What's the point of having kids if they're going to be brought up by an outsider, by your maid?"

As Lee tries to push for bigger families, his father's "Stop at Two" campaign may come back to haunt him. Small families are happy, own more, have more to eat, and enjoy better health and education, posters from the 1970s extolled.

"I'm stopping at one," said Corinne Chia, who is six months pregnant with a baby boy she plans to name

Jeremy.
She said the cost of bringing up a child is the main reason she does not intend to have more. "He's not even born yet and I joke to my friends that I'm already broke."

-Bloomberg News

population has increased by 1.1 million in the past decade to 5.3 million. At the height of the influx, in the year to June 2008, the nation added 251,000 people.

In a package of measures released on January 21 on a government website called "Hey Baby," Singapore said it will boost its annual budget on marriage and parenthood to S\$2 billion from S\$1.6 billion, including spending on matchmaking, housing grants, subsidised childcare

On January 21 it announced measures to make childcare more affordable and also introduced paternity leave (see story this page).

Social-policy experts are not optimistic that the measures will reverse the

"No pronatalist policy can bring the fertility rate back to replacement level," said Theresa Devasahayam, a researcher at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, who has

skilled workforce to sustain growth. The economy has expanded for all but four years since independence in 1965, bringing million-dollar high-rise apartments and shopping malls in place of pig farms and fishing villages.

Singapore's home ownership rate is about 89 percent and the Boston Consulting Group estimates there were 188,000 millionaire households in the city state in 2011. The Economist Intelligence Unit

encouraged sterilisation.

by the end of the decade.

twice as many people.

### What's the point of having kids if they're going to be brought up by an outsider, by your maid?

and fertility treatments and cash gifts for babies. In 2001, the budget was S\$500 million.

The prime minister, who has four children, is encouraging couples to start a family earlier by giving priority to public housing to those with kids below 16. With some of the most expensive real estate in Asia, government-subsidised homes are the only affordable option for most young couples and waiting lists for new apartments can extend years. The government will make a S\$3000 contribution to childhood medical expenses.

published papers on gender, ageing and labor policies in the city state.

'The government is in a fix. For the moment, it has little choice but to keep importing labour and keep the country's doors open to foreigners.'

The new measures come before a January 26 byelection in which all four candidates for the Punggol East parliamentary seat have highlighted the cost or availability of childcare.

Singapore, smaller in size than New York City, has few natural resources and the government relies on a declared Singapore to be the best place in Asia to be born in 2013. Gross domestic product per capita climbed to \$50,123 in 2011 from \$516 in 1965.

Back then, the country boasted a fertility rate of 4.7 and so many women gave birth in the national maternity hospital in 1966 that it entered the Guinness Book of World Records.

The so-called birthquake raised concern that the fledgling economy would be overburdened, and Lee's father, Lee Kuan Yew, promoted family planning, legalised abortion and

original citizens left to form the majority," Lee, 89, said in a speech published in the Straits Times. "We've got to persuade people to understand that getting married is important, having children is important.

Singaporean men and women are delaying getting married in part because they want to "concentrate fully" on their jobs or studies, a government survey of 2120 singles showed this month. The median age for grooms has risen to 30.1 in 2011, from 26.9 in 1970. For brides, it has climbed to 28,

### **Briefs**

### Gandhi trails Modi, magazine poll finds

THE MYANMAR TIMES

NEW DELHI – India's ruling Congress party is headed for defeat in elections next year and barely one in five voters thinks Rahul Gandhi, its likely candidate, would be the best prime minister, a poll in *India Today* magazine suggested on January 25.

Gandhi – whose father, grandmother and great-grandfather have all served as prime minister – is widely expected to lead Congress into the polls after being elevated to the post of party vice-president on January 19

on January 19
But only 22 percent of voters surveyed by the magazine said he would make the best prime minister, well behind the hardline Hindu nationalist politician Narendra Modi who had a 36pc rating.

### Dhaka planning to buy submarines

DHAKA — Bangladesh is planning to acquire its first submarines to boost its naval power in the Bay of Bengal, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said on January 24.

Hasina did not give details of how many submarines the country would buy and from where, but a senior army general has said that Bangladesh is in negotiations with China on the subject.

The announcement came nine days after Hasina signed a US\$1 billion defence deal in Russia to buy training fighters, helicopters and anti-tank missiles.

### Death sentence for UK grandmother

DENPASAR - A 56-year-old British grand-mother was sentenced to death on January 22 for smuggling cocaine into the Indonesian island of Bali, in a shock verdict after prosecutors recommended 15 years imprisonment.

Lindsay Sandiford sobbed as the court in Bali's capital, Denpasar, handed down the sentence, over a drugs haul worth US\$2.4 million found in her suitcase as she arrived on a flight from Bangkok last May.

The last death sentences were carried out in June 2008, when two Nigerian drug traffickers were executed by firing squad.

### Outrage in Japan over 'unbearable' hostage deaths

TOKYO – Japan grieved last week over its greatest loss of life at militant hands since 9/11 as the carnage in Algeria provoked soulsearching for a people who have been relatively immune to Islamist terror.

There was blanket media coverage of the news that at least seven Japanese nationals had been killed in the Algerian hostage crisis, all of whom were employees or contractors for Japanese engineering firm JGC.

"We lost many capable employees. I cannot find the right words," JGC spokesman Takeshi Endo said on January 22 as he choked back sobs. "It's just unbearable."

The personal stories of the victims have stoked the sense of outrage in Japan.

It emerged that one of those killed was a 66-year-old engineer for JGC who was reaching the end of a long career in the world's trouble spots — and had been sent back to Algeria at the last minute.

Several newspapers demanded that Tokyo beef up its intelligence operations and coordinate its responses to hostage crises with countries more versed in Islamist attacks, such as Britain and the United States.

The *Nikkei* business daily said the Japanese government should also step up its efforts to safeguard nationals working in places that are increasingly important to the country's energy-starved economy.

"There is only so much Japan can do to collect information in the African continent. We should consider a structure under which relevant countries can effectively share information," it said.

"But at the same time, we must also arrange ways and methods to rescue Japanese nationals in case of emergencies."

Japanese people have been occasional victims of outrages around the world, but without any significant military involvement in wars in the Muslim world, the country has been largely sheltered from reprisal attacks.

The toll from the terror in Algeria is the highest for Japan since jihadists flew passenger planes into New York's Twin Towers, killing more than 2700 people, including 24 Japanese.

Rokuro Fuchida, 66, was among the victims in the

hostage crisis. The JGC engineer believed his work in Algeria was done last year when he returned to Japan to celebrate New Year with friends and family, a relative told the *Asahi Shimbun*.

January 28 - February 3, 2013

He was called back to Algeria to fix a glitch on a project just days before the militants began their rampage on January 16.

Ahead of his deployment, Fuchida wrote excitedly about his upcoming mission on his Facebook page.

"Next, I expect to be in Algeria on the African continent to see the starry sky!" – *AFP* 

### Indian panel backs tougher penalties for sexual offences

NEW DELHI – An Indian panel set up after a student was fatally gang-raped on a bus recommended new, tougher penalties for sexual crimes on January 23 but stopped short of calling for the death sentence.

Commission member Gopal Subramanium said all gang rapes should be punishable by life imprisonment that "should mean the rest of the person's life". The penal code currently stipulates gang rapists face a minimum 10 years to a life term.

The panel was established after the brutal attack on the 23-year-old student in mid-December that sparked violent street protests over the lack of safety for women and impassioned calls for harsher laws to punish rapists.

The panel said its main focus had been to prevent widespread sexual crime in India rather than just to prescribe punishments.

"We need a correction of the societal mindsets. Deficiencies can be overcome by our leaders, the judiciary and the police," panel head and former chief justice of India J.S. Verma said.

The panel urged stronger punishment for trafficking

of women and children and crimes such as groping, stalking, unsolicited sexual contact and voyeurism.

Though sexual harassment is commonplace in India, the student's gang rape has touched a public nerve, sparking an outpouring of criticism about the systemic mistreatment of women in Indian society.

The woman, who was also violated with an iron rod, died of massive internal injuries 13 days after the December 16 attack, prompting widespread public demands

### We need a correction of the societal mindsets.

for India to introduce the death penalty for rapists.

"We did not recommend the death penalty because we received overwhelming suggestions against it," including from women's groups, said Verma.

Verma rejected calls for lowering the maximum age for juvenile offenders to 16 from 18, saying it would not help prevent crimes. Two of the six suspects in

the assault say they are under 18 and should be tried under juvenile law which provides for a maximum punishment of three years for any offence.

Media reports said India's ruling Congress party had suggested the death penalty for rapists in exceptional cases. The panel received some 80,000 suggestions from India and abroad on tackling sex crimes as well as improving the rights of women.

Verma attributed widespread abuse of women to government, police and public apathy over the problem. He said there had been a "shocking" lack of contributions to the panel's deliberations from the police who had been widely accused of inaction following the attack on a student.

Verma said the panel, appointed on December 24, had compiled its report swiftly in order for it to be considered by parliament in the upcoming session starting next month.

"A positive response from the government to our recommendations will be the real tribute to the memory of the gang-rape victim," said Verma. – *AFP* 





Former North Korean President Kim Il-Sung, pictured on April 15, 1992, during celebrations in Pyongyang for his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, and a photo of his grandson, North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un, taken on April 15 last year at a military parade marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his grandfather's birth. North Korea on January 24 described as "sordid" persistent rumours that Kim Jong-Un has had plastic surgery to resemble his grandfather. There has long been speculation that Kim Jong-Un's resemblance to the country's founding leader is not 100 percent natural, though with little or no evidence. *Pic: AFP/Jiji Press* 

### Gary the goat exonerated

SYDNEY – An Australian court on January 23 heard the case against a goat accused of munching on flowers in central Sydney – and found in favour of the peckish beast.

Gary the goat waited outside the court while his owner, James Dezarnaulds contested an A\$440 (US\$464) fine issued last August, after police caught Gary eating flowers outside the Museum of Contemporary Art.

Magistrate Carolyn Barkell accepted that Gary had been eating the flowers when police arrived, the Australian Associated Press (AAP) reported.

But she said there was no evidence that Dezarnaulds, a comedian also known as Jimbo Bazoobi, had taken Gary to the museum with the intention of vandalising the vegetation. Paul McGirr, described by AAP as Gary's lawyer, told the court police had issued the wrong infringement notice because it related to a person and not a goat.

He said it could not be proved that Bazoobi put Gary up to the act. Barkell cancelled Bazoobi's fine but dismissed his application for legal costs. – *AFP* 

### Manila takes dispute with China to UN tribunal

MANILA – The Philippines has taken China to a UN tribunal to challenge its claim to most of the South China Sea, including territory belonging to the archipelago, Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario said on January 22.

Del Rosario told reporters that Manila had referred Beijing to an arbitration panel under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – a 1982 treaty signed by both countries – and would ask it to declare Chinese claims in the area invalid.

"The Philippines has exhausted almost all political and diplomatic avenues for a peaceful negotiated settlement of its maritime dispute with China," he said.

"On numerous occasions, dating back to 1995, the Philippines has been exchanging views with China to peacefully settle these disputes. To this day, a solution is still elusive.

"We hope that the arbitral proceedings shall bring this dispute to a durable solution."

China's territorial claims overlap those of the Philippines as well as Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam and Taiwan.

During the past two years, the Philippines and Vietnam have complained about China's increasing assertiveness in enforcing those claims, particularly around areas believed rich in oil and natural gas reserves.

Manila says the Chinese stance led to a standoff last year with the Philippines over rich fishing grounds around the Scarborough Shoal, a formation much closer to the Philippine coast than to China's shores.

The Philippines in its submission says Beijing's so-called "nine-dash line" outlining its territorial claims over most of the sea, including waters and islands close to its neighbours, is illegal, said del Rosario.

A briefing paper provided by the foreign department alleged that within the ninedash line, "China has also laid claim to, occupied and built structures on certain submerged banks, reefs and low tide elevations that do not qualify as islands under UNCLOS, but are parts of the Philippine continental shelf, or the international seabed".

China swiftly dismissed the submission with ambassador Ma Keqing repeating her country's stance to an official in the Philippines foreign office.

"Ambassador Mareiterated the principled position of the Chinese side, and stressed that China has indisputable sovereignty over the islands in (the) South China Sea and its adjacent waters," a Chinese

embassy statement said.

"The Chinese side strongly holds the disputes on (the) South China Sea should be settled by parties concerned through negotiations," it added.

UNCLOS generally requires both parties to undergo arbitration and it was unclear if and when the UN would act given China's stance.

Rene de Castro, a political science professor at Manila's De La Salle University, said the Philippines' submission was a last throw of the dice and unlikely to force Beijing's hand.

"We have exhausted all our options and we're scraping the barrel really." – *AFP* 

### Britain's Prince Harry has mental problem, says Taliban

KABUL – Britain's Prince Harry, who compared shooting insurgents in Afghanistan to playing video games, has probably developed a mental problem, the Taliban said on January 22.

"There are 49 countries with their powerful military failing in the fight against the mujahideen, and now this prince comes and compares this war with his games, PlayStation or whatever he calls it," Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid told *AFP*.

Harry, third in line to the throne, said he had killed

Taliban insurgents during a 20-week posting flying scores of missions over the restive southern province of Helmand in an Apache attack helicopter.

As co-pilot, Harry was in charge of the weapons systems in a two-man cockpit, firing Hellfire airto-surface missiles, rockets and a 30-millimetre gun. He described the weapons systems as a joy.

"It's a joy for me because I'm one of those people who loves playing PlayStation and Xbox, so with my thumbs I like to think I'm probably quite useful," he said in interviews released on January 21 after the end of his posting.

"This is a serious war, a historic war, resistance for us, for our people," Mujahid said by telephone from an undisclosed location.

"But we don't take his comments very seriously, as we have all seen and heard that many foreign soldiers, occupiers who come to Afghanistan, develop some kind of mental problems on their way out."

Asked by Britain's *Press* Association if he had killed from the cockpit, Harry said: "Yeah, so lots of people have.

"Take a life to save a life," he said. "If there's people trying to do bad stuff to our guys, then we'll take them out of the game."

The Taliban have been waging an insurgency in Afghanistan for 11 years since being ousted from power for harbouring al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden after the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

During the war, they have faced more than 140,000 troops from more than 50 countries but remain a serious threat to the Western-backed government with NATO troops due to withdraw in 2014.

"We have always wanted to capture or kill this prince, but he was mostly kept inside, safe, and in guarded places underground," said the Taliban spokesman, Mujahid.

"At one point when our mujahideen attacked the airport, we were aware of his

presence there but he was hastily flown away."

THE MYANMAR TIMES

This was a reference to a major Taliban attack on Camp Bastion in Helmand last September when Britain's defence minister admitted that Harry had been moved to a secure location.

The prince flies a £45-million (US\$71-million) aircraft, part of NATO's uncontested air power in Afghanistan where the Taliban are armed mainly with assault rifles, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. – AFP

# Citizenship-for-votes inquiry has Malaysian govt on the defensive

KUALA LUMPUR - For years, charges have swirled that a secret Malaysian scheme gave citizenship to huge numbers of illegal migrants in a politically important state in exchange for votes for the ruling coalition.

Now, an inquiry is finally airing detailed allegations that have the government on the defensive ahead of elections that pose the greatest threat yet faced by the ruling bloc that has controlled Malaysia for 56 years.

A Royal Commission of Inquiry opened on January 14 with former officials admitting they gave citizenship to Filipinos and Indonesians in resource-rich Sabah, one of two Malaysian states on jungly Borneo island.

One former official said some 100,000 identity cards (ICs) were handed out in 1993 ahead of a crucial state election, Malaysian news reports said. Another admitted signing hundreds of thousands of ICs in the 1990s

The testimony has revived accusations of

treason against former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, who is alleged to have masterminded the scheme to shore up support for his government.

As head of the ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, Mahathir dominated Malaysia for 22 years with his famously hardball political tactics until he resigned in 2003.

Current prime minister Najib Razak is battling to rally support for the BN ahead of polls he is expected to call within months, in an era when the coalition's power grip has slipped.

But outrage over "Project IC", as the alleged scheme is widely known, is undercutting his claims that the national electoral roll is free of fraud.

The opposition and election-reform advocates allege massive fraud in voter rolls nationwide and have seized on the testimony as proof of government vote-tampering.

"What we are concerned about is that this is still going on. That's what we want to stop," Ambiga Sreenevasan, head of the clean-elections activist coalition known as "Bersih", or "Clean", told a news conference on January

The outlines of "Project IC" have been whispered about for three decades and have bolstered the view of Sabah as a reliable "fixed deposit" of votes for the BN to help it weather challenges elsewhere.

The government allegedly targeted Muslims from neighbouring Indonesia and the predominantly Muslim southern Philippines.

More than half of Malaysia's 29 million people are Muslim ethnic Malays, but indigenous tribes, many of them Christian, predominate in Sabah.

Malaysia's opposition alleges some 700,000 may have illegally received ICs. A one-time battleground state, Sabah has been pro-BN since the mid-1990s.

Mahathir, still a vocal and influential conservative figure, has denied the existence of "Project IC," but admitted at a press conference earlier this month that foreigners in Sabah were given citizenship, saying no laws were broken. – AFP

### Thai gets 11-year jail term for insulting the monarchy

BANGKOK – A Thai political activist was ordered jailed for 11 years on January 23 in the latest tough sentence under the kingdom's controversial royal defamation law.

The European Union said it was "deeply concerned" by the punishment imposed on Somyot Prueksakasemsuk, 51, in connection with two articles that appeared in his magazine in 2010.

"The verdict seriously undermines the right to freedom of expression and press freedom," the EU delegation in Bangkok said in a statement.

Amnesty International, which considers Somyot to be a "prisoner of conscience", described the Bangkok Criminal Court ruling as "a serious setback for freedom of expression in Thailand".

The United Nations human rights chief Navi Pillay expressed deep concern about the verdict and "extremely harsh" sentence.

"The court's decision is the latest indication of a disturbing trend in which lese majeste charges are used for political purposes," she said in a statement.

Somyot is a supporter of the "Red Shirt" protest group, which is broadly loyal to ousted former premier Thaksin Shinawatra.

The activist's defence team said he would appeal against the sentence, which comprises 10 years for two counts of lese majeste and one year for an earlier suspended defamation sentence.

Rights groups noted the activist's arrest in April 2011 came just days after he launched a campaign to collect 10,000 signatures for a parliamentary review of the lese majeste law.

He was brought to court in shackles, having been held for nearly two years without bail.

"The courts seem to have adopted the role of chief protector of the monarchy at the expense of free expression rights," said



Somyot Prueksakasemsuk arrives at the Bangkok Criminal Court on January 23. *Pic: AFP* 

Brad Adams, Asia director at New York-based Human Rights Watch.

"The court's ruling appears to be more about Somyot's strong support for amending the lese majeste law than about any harm incurred by the monarchy."

The royal family is a highly sensitive subject in politically turbulent Thailand. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 85, who is revered by most Thais, has been in hospital since September 2009.

Rights campaigners say the lese majeste law has been politicised, noting that many of those charged are linked to the Red Shirt movement

Under the legislation, anyone convicted of insulting the Thai king, queen, heir or regent faces up to 15 years in prison on each count.

Thailand has been riven by political divisions since Thaksin was topped by royalist generals in a 2006 coup. – *AFP* 

### Translator/Sub-editor

The translator/sub-editor will work on The Myanmar Times features supplement desk and will be responsible for translating reporters' copy from Myanmar language to English. Sub-editing English articles will also be required. The successful candidate will report to the Features Supplement Editor.

The translator/sub-editor must:

- Be a Myanmar national
- Be fluent in Myanmar and highly proficient in English
- Have a bachelor's degree
- Have a strong interest in news and current affairs
- Have the capacity to work under pressure and meet deadlines

Applicants should send a two page curriculum vitae with a covering letter explaining why he/she is the most suitable candidate for the role.

The deadline for applications is 31 January 2013.



The Human Resources Manager Myanmar Consolidated Media Company Limited 379-383 Bo Aung Kyaw St, Yangon Or by email to mcmhrd@myanmartimes.com.mm

### **Features writer**

The features writer will write articles for the features supplement desk on a wide variety of topics and issues. The successful candidate will report to the Features Supplement Editor. The features writer must:

- ▶ Be a Myanmar national
- Have a bachelor's degree
- ▶ Be fluent in Myanmar and highly proficient in English
- Have the ability to conduct research and interviews and have a flair for writing
- Be confident and creative
- Have the capacity to work under pressure and meet deadlines

Applicants should send a two page curriculum vitae with a covering letter explaining why he/she is the most suitable candidate for the role.

The deadline for applications is 31 January 2013.

### **MCM**

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### Time out

### National orchestra seeks wider audience

By Zon Pann Pwint

THE National Symphony Orchestra of Myanmar was founded in 2001, but the group has faced an uphill battle attracting a wide audience with its repertoire of Western classical music.

Member musicians hope this will soon change, with plans being made to undergo intensive training under a Japanese conductor, as well as to perform four concerts throughout the year, with the first one scheduled for the National Theatre in Yangon on March 2.

U Maung Maung, a clarinetist in the orchestra, said one of the problems has been lack on

ongoing, high-level training. "In past years, we received brief trainings by experienced conductors from abroad. We had weeks of intensive training, but after the trainer went back home, things went back to normal," he said.
The orchestra consists of 65

musicians drawn from staff at Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV), student musicians from National University of Art and Culture, officer musicians from the Myanmar Police Force, and expert musicians from outside the country.

The orchestra has performed only three public concerts during its 12-year existence.

"When we were founded we didn't have proper training. The members practised playing in an orchestra bit by bit," Ŭ Maung Maung said.

The early training programs were run intermittently by a musician from the United States, and in 2004 an orchestra concert was held at MRTV's Studio A for invited guests.

"After the trainer went back to the US, we tried practising by ourselves but it wasn't systematic because we lacked a leader," U Maung Maung said, adding that no further preparations were made to

perform a concert until a group of European musicians visited Yangon in 2007.

"As a result, at that time we held our first grand public concert at the National Theatre for free after intensive training. After the concert, the situation turned cold again," he said.

After that concert was held, some members of the orchestra appeared on staterun television to accompany Mvanmar classical songs, but there was no chance to perform with a full Western orchestra.

The situation appears to be looking up, however, after the orchestra performed two public concerts in July 2012, led by Japanese conductor Yoshikazu Fukumura.

Mr Fukumura came to Myanmar last June, along with musicians from various Asian countries, and provided two weeks of intensive training for the local classical musicians. This was followed by public concerts in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw.

Mr Fukumura plans to return to Myanmar next month, accompanied by another group of musicians, to help revive the National Symphony Orchestra. Starting on March2, four orchestral concerts will be held throughout the year under the guidance of the Japanese conductor.

'Unless we are led by a conductor from abroad, we dare not perform in public because some foreign audience members are knowledgeable about orchestra music," U Maung Maung said. "We dare not make any mistake before then. When we are welltrained, we are very confident to play before the public."

"The concert was our best he said, referring to the Yangon performance last July. "The theatre was full, and the audience supported and meeting their



Myanmar's National Symphony Orchestra performs at the National Theatre in Yangon in July 2012. Pic: Ko Taik

us and liked the music very much, so we were inspired to keep the orchestra alive.".

He said Mr Fukumura and the foreign musicians were demanding trainers, and gave the orchestra very difficult songs that "only professional musicians from abroad could play well".

'They challenged our abilities so we had to try five times harder than usual when we practiced with them," he said. "This was challenging for all members of the orchestra. The exercises were beyond the abilities of most of the members.

Viola player U Win Min Phyo Ko agreed, described practicing with Mr Fukumura and the foreign musician as 'very hard".

"It is really hard work practicing with them, following their instructions expectations," he said, adding that the quality of the playing improved after orchestra members were compelled to learn difficult notes from music composed by Beethoven and Mozart, alongside foreign musicians.

"We learned how the foreign musicians dealt with playing these difficult notes. It was rewarding to work with them, and later we were able to play the difficult notes just like they could," he said.
"We believe we will be able

to leave a lasting impression on audiences, and that such training will continue to improve the quality of each individual member of the orchestra."

U Maung Maung said that although Myanmar audiences are not yet big fans of

exposure will help change their attitude.

"They need more chances to listen to classical music, so we plan to hold many more concerts in Myanmar to help us connect with the audience. Then they will slowly grow accustomed to the music," he said.

He added that the National Symphony Orchestra needs a regular conductor who can provide long-term training, and musicians also need to be sent abroad to study music until they achieve professional level.

"We also need young musicians to be trained for the orchestra," he said.

U Win Aung, director of broadcasting at MRTV under the Ministry of Information, said that plans to establish a National Symphony Orchestra date back to the early 1960s.

"At that time staff officers from MRTV were sent to Russia to study music. When they came back, the group practiced for the orchestra. But the official orchestra was not formed until 2001,' he said.

### Local model nabs top prize in S Korea

By Lwin Mar Htun

MYANMAR model Htun Ko Ko nabbed the grand prize at the Asia New Star Model contest, organised by the Korea Model Association and held in Seoul, South Korea, on January 14.

Htun Ko Ko said he was very surprised to win the competition, which attracted 60 contestants from 15 Asian countries. "I didn't expect to win because the other contestants were very smart and stylish too," he told The Myanmar Times.

"I didn't even hear them announce my name as the winner because I was having trouble with their language, but then my friends told me I had won, which made me very happy."

Six contestant from Myanmar took part in the contest, all of whom were chosen from the New Face of Myanmar model contest held at Strand Hotel last November.

At that event, Htun Ko Ko won the Mr New Face of Myanmar award.

"Previously I had won some title awards at various contests, but that was my first "mister" prize. I was very happy because the first prize was the chance to travel abroad, and I started preparing right away for the contest in South Korea, including getting my outfits ready and getting skin treatments."

The group of Myanmar contestants departed for South Korea on January 11 and returned to Yangon on January 18. In the lead-up to the event they practiced night and day. "While training, we woke up early every day and went to sleep late. Our trainer was constantly evaluating us on our preparation. But the hardest part about adjusting to South Korea was the supercold winter weather," said Htun Ko Ko.

He said he was very excited and nervous about going to Seoul because it was his first trip abroad, but once he arrived there his fears dissipated.

"I was also afraid because I went there as a representative of Myanmar, so I needed to be careful with my every action. So many people from all around the world were watching the event, and if I did something wrong while on the stage, it would reflect poorly on me and

my country," he said.

Htun Ko Ko said the feeling of being on stage was basically the same in South Korea as in Myanmar, but the stage design, arrangements and support for the contestants were much better in Seoul.

Another difference was that the contestants were not asked to perform in South Korea, only to model clothing in three categories: sportswear, evening dress and traditional clothes.

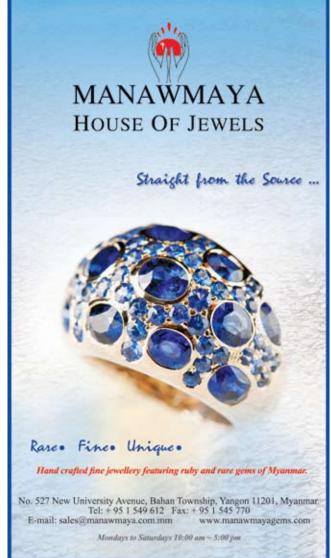
"The model show in Seoul included many entertainment programs, so the contestant only had to walk on stage three times but did not have to perform,' he said. "In Myanmar, we have to dance and sing when the judges ask. But in South Korea, the judges didn't ask us to

For winning the grand prize, Htun Ko Ko was awarded 1.5 million won (US\$1404), plus the possibility of travelling to Milan, Italy, to learn more about modeling.

Htun Ko Ko started modeling in 2008 at the Mr and Ms Exit contest, where he won the prize for Best Personality. Because he still lives in his hometown of Bago, he must travel to Yangon every time he takes part in a local model contest.

"I never attended any modeling classes, I just started applying to take part in competitions as a hobby. But after awhile couldn't stop doing my hobby and wanted to become a professional model. Even travelling between Yangon and Bago doesn't make me tired," he said.

'Since starting my life as a model I've face many difficulties. I've had many struggles along the way, but these are things that only I can know," he added.



# Film tells story of young student shot dead in 1988

By Zon Pann Pwint

SEVERAL local authors have written books detailing their experiences during the 1988 protests in Myanmar, or about time spent in jail resulting from their participation in the pro-democracy movement.

Now movie director U Anthony is preparing to make a feature film about the reallife events surrounding the death of Ma Win Maw Oo, a high school student who was shot dead by the Myanmar government on September 19, 1988, as she marched with fellow classmates from Basic Education High School (4) Kyeemyindaing.

She was carrying a picture of independence hero Bogyoke Aung San when she was murdered. She was the eldest of six siblings and was in eighth standard when she was killed.

"At the time Ma Win Maw Oo was shot dead, she was only 16 years old," U Anthony told The Myanmar Times.

He said he learned of the young student's tragic story from seeing her photograph on the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) website, and learned more from articles run in local journals last year around the anniversary of her death.

"I conducted four interviews with her father, who shared his memories of incidents from his daughter's life that occurred 25 years ago," U Anthony said. "He said that she was very earnest about achieving



Film director U Anthony. Pic: Boothee

political change but was too young to risk her life."

He said he wrote most of the script based on these interviews with the girl's father, but was still searching for one of the doctors who carried her to the hospital after she was shot.

"Dr Saw Lwin and Dr Win Zaw assisted in carrying Ma Win Maw Oo away from the scene of the shooting and to the hospital when she was injured at midday on September 19," U Anthony

said.

"Dr Win Zaw is still alive, and I'm enquiring as to his whereabouts through the Myanmar Medical Association. He might remember her last words or something that will help my film."

He said Ma Win Maw Oo's death was not forgotten in previous years, even though the government never allowed the tragic anniversary to be officially

acknowledged.
"The girl's parents were

anxious about the unexpected visits paid to them by the military government in the past, and felt uneasy about hold an anniversary ceremony in public," he said.

in public," he said.
Her father, U Win Kyu, said he expected the film to make him sad about his daughter's death, but he was happy that her efforts for the good of Myanmar would be in back the spotlight.

"Many people have seen the photograph of my injured daughter being carried by two doctors that was broadcast internationally, but most people don't know the full story behind it," he said

He added that in the past, government agents even stopped monks from coming to his house to accept alms to commemorate the anniversary of the girl's death

"Minutes before she died at hospital, she asked her father to promise that he would conduct the traditional Buddhist ceremony of sharing merit with others on her behalf, once the country gained democracy," U Anthony said.

"U Win Kyu has not yet shared her merit with others, but he plans to do so this year on September 19, on the 25th anniversary of her death. My film will end with this scene."

He said he will choose the actors for the film in March and start shooting in April, with plans to screen it at a cinema on September 19, 2013.

### Taw Win Centre to host Hello Democracy Filmfest

THE Mingalabar Democracy Film Festival will be held at Taw Win Centre in Yangon from January 29 to 31.

On the first two days 33 films will be screened, selected from 55 works submitted for consideration in four categories: photo essays, short films, documentary and animation.

The films will be shown from 10am to 5pm each day at two DVD cinemas on the ground floor of Taw Win Centre on Pyay Road. Admission to the screenings in from

Awards will be given in

each category, and filmgoers will also be invited to cast ballots for the Audience Choice Award. The winners will be announced and awarded on January 31 at 6pm, on the seventh floor of Taw Win Centre.

Before the award-presenting ceremony, guests will be treated to the winning selections in a song-writing contest accompanying the film festival, with prizes given in traditional music, hip-hop, modern (pop and rock) and audience choice categories. — Zon Pann

### 'Django Unchained' doll banned on eBay

LOS ANGELES — Online auction giant eBay last week banned the sale of dolls linked to Quentin Tarantino's blood-soaked western about a freed slave *Django Unchained*, describing them as "offensive".

The toymaker who manufactured the dolls had already discontinued them, after protests from black advocacy groups, according to the celebrity news website TMZ.

An eBay spokeswoman, Kari Ramirez, confirmed that the auction website had banned them. "These were removed as they were in violation of our Offensive Materials policy," she said.

The eBay policy includes a section listing "racially or ethnically offensive language, historical items, reproductions and works of art and media" that are subject to restricted use or banning from the site.

The banned list notably includes "items marketed inappropriately with an intolerant regard toward religion, sexual orientation, race, or ethnic background".

Django Unchained stars
Jamie Foxx as a slave freed by
a bounty hunter, with whom he
teams up over the winter on a
killing spree before seeking to
liberate his wife, employed by
a plantation owner played by
Leonardo DiCaprio.

The dolls include reproductions of Foxx's Django and bounty hunter Dr Schultz, as well as DiCaprio's character, and that played by Tarantino regular Samuel L Jackson.

TMZ reported earlier this month that the Weinstein Company, the movie's producers, had asked the dolls' manufacturer to stop production after protests from groups including Reverend Al Sharpton's National Action Network.

It said only about 1000 of the dolls had been sold before production was shut down.

Django Unchained has already triggered controversy, both over its use of violence — hardly a surprise with Tarantino — and its depiction of slavery, with African American director Spike Lee calling it "disrespectful".

"American slavery was not a Sergio Leone Spaghetti Western. It was a Holocaust. My ancestors are slaves. Stolen from Africa. I will honour them," he tweeted, referring to the 1966 movie *Django*, which Tarantino references.

The provocative director's latest movie won two Golden Globes earlier this month, and is nominated in five categories for the Oscars, which top off Hollywood's annual awards season on February 24. — AFP

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- ▶ Know the following languages for development: PHP and MySQL
- Know the following languages for design: CSS, JavaScript, jQuery, HTML, XML
- ▶ Know how to use Content Management System (CMS), especially Joomla
- ▶ Know how to use the following software: Adobe Photoshop and Dreamweaver
- Have a good understanding of graphic design and front-end web design
   Provide his or her portfolio

Applicants should send a one page abridged curriculum vitae together with a covering letter summarizing the reasons why they believe they are the most suitable person for the position. Applications will be accepted until end of January 2013 and can be sent to



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THE MYANMAR TIMES January 28 - February 3 , 2013

### Sculptor sculpts sculptor in art collaboration

By Nyein Ei Ei Htwe

A LOCAL sculptor and a female artist from Norway collaborated on an art project on February 25, by simultaneously sculpting portraits of one another at Art Plus Art Gallery in Yangon.

Myanmar sculptor U Kyaw Kyaw Min said he invited Norwegian artist Merete Sejersted Bodtker to take part in the project during her visit to Yangon.

"Ms Bodtker sculpted a portrait of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi two weeks ago, and she invited some Myanmar sculptors to see her work," he said. "When I checked her sculpture I saw her brilliant skill, so I invited her to sculpt my portrait while I did the same for her, and she accepted my

The sculptures were created

from 10am to 2pm (with a one-hour break for lunch) using clay, from which plaster moulds will be made at a later date.

"I will keep the plaster moulds for display in a one-man show in the future," said U Kyaw Kyaw

"We each made our sculptures by looking at one other instead of using photographs, which I think is more interesting," he said, adding that the event was documented by a video crew so that a film could be made for broadcast in Norway.

"The main purpose of this sculpting event is to showcase each other's skills," said U Kyaw Kyaw Min. "I want to let everyone know that I learned sculpting from my father, U Lwin Maung, while Ms Bodtker studied in the United States. But we are at the same level."



U Kyaw Kyaw Min and Merete Sejersted Bodtker sculpt one another at Art Plus Art Gallery in Yangon

### Composer sues Forever Group over copyright concerns

By Nuam Bawi

A LOCAL music composer said last week that he was taking legal action against Forever Group for the unauthorised use of his songs on television programs broadcast by

Composer KAT said three of his songs — "Kyo Nay Say Chin De" (I Want You to Welcome "Nauk Sone Ya Htar" (The Last Train) and "Nya Yeh Suu" (Night's Thorn) — were used by the television station without permission.

At different times between December 31 and January 6, the songs were performed by contestants on the Eaint Met Sone Yar song contest program, and were also broadcast live at the New Year's Eve countdown concert and at an Independence Day concert. All of these programs were aired by MRTV-4.

"I decided to take action because the broadcast media are doing these kinds of things all the time nowadays. My songs were used not once but three times," KAT told The Myanmar Times.

"I sent a notice letter through my lawyer to Forever Group that if they do not contact me to negotiate by January 25, I would move forward with a lawsuit for using of my songs without permission.

He said that similar cases on the past have mostly been solved through negotiations between the relevant parties, but many singers and composers were not satisfied with the results.

"They don't stand up and take any legal action because they don't want to be disappointed or get tangled up in the court system," said KAT.

Observers said the case should make people in

Myanmar sit up and take notice of the poor state of copyright enforcement in the country.

Most of the country's current copyright laws have been on the books since the colonial era, and the World Intellectual Property

amounted to "eating up the mind of the creator" "We must give the artist a fee if we can give it, otherwise we must at least acknowledge them as the

Department (retired), said

that using a composer's

music without permission

Similar cases on the past have mostly been solved through negotiations between the relevant parties, but many singers and composers were not satisfied with the results.9

Organisation (WIPO) has given Myanmar until June 2013 to update its laws to adhere to international standards.

U Chit Naing, director general of the Information and Public Relations creator. But we have a temporary exemption from international copyright laws from WIPO, so it has become a bad habit for us to take someone else's intellectual property," he said.

U Chit Naing said that only

five or six such copyright cases have been prosecuted in court, while the rest have been reconciled through private negotiation.

That's also because of our traditional mindset, which is to hesitate. So when they come to apologise, the creator is placated," he said. In a past case, film director

Tun Wai made a movie about the Naga Hills based on a book written by Naga Taung Tan Maung Kyi Sein, without asking the author for permission. The novelist approached

the director, but decided not to take any legal action after a number of people convinced him that he should feel proud that a movie had been made from his book.
"Although it's good to

deal with such cases through understanding, we also have to consider that we are developing open relationships with other countries and we are no longer isolated, so we need to take international copyright laws into account that benefit creators of intellectual property," said U Chit Naing, But writer Chit San Win

argued that Myanmar was not yet prepared to step up to the international level when it comes to copyright issues.

"If we have to start practicing international copyright laws now, this would be a loss for Myanmar. Because we are a poor country, we still need to conduct research and learn from other developed countries. We have very limited techniques for enforcing copyright laws," he said.

"This will be a problem for the public because if journals are not able to translate international news, health news, cultural news and so on because the fees are too expensive, local people will not be exposed to this knowledge.'



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January 28 - February 3, 2013

# Portuguese wine sales rise on Asia, ex-colony demand

By Henrique Almeida

LISBON — On the top floor of Angola's tallest building, overlooking the bay of the capital Luanda, a relatively unknown bottle of Benfeito Portuguese wine sold for a record US\$21,600 at an auction.

In Sao Paulo, Brazil, a 2000 Barca Velha red, produced more than 8000 kilometres (5000 miles) away from the steep, rocky vineyards of Portugal's Douro Valley, costs 2400 reais (\$1175) at Restaurante A Bela Sintra — more than four times its cost at Portuguese retailer Winept.com. It's often sold out.

"Portuguese wines are making a comeback," Frederico Falcao, president of Portugal's Vine and Wine Institute, said in an interview. "Part of the reason is that consumers in emerging markets such as China, Angola and Brazil are

evolving and buying more old-world wines."

Wine exports from Portugal, including port and table wine, rose 7.6 percent in the first 11 months of 2012 to 648 million euros (\$862 million) from the same period a year earlier, according to the country's National Statistics Institute. The sales are boosted by demand from the former Portuguese colony of Angola, China and some South American countries.

One of the biggest

One of the biggest challenges facing local winemakers is not being able to increase output fast enough to meet growing demand from abroad, said Alexandre Soares dos Santos, chairman of the Jeronimo Martins retailer that owns a supermarket chain in Portugal and discount stores in Poland.

"If we want to be serious about increasing our exports then we need to produce wine on a much bigger scale," he said. That means winemakers need to merge and invest in state-of- the-art equipment to crush their grapes instead of treading them underfoot in large vats called lagares, said Jose Hermoso, an analyst at the International Wine & Spirit Research.

"The fact that most of the wine companies in Portugal are family-owned may work against further consolidation but it has to happen," Hermoso said in an interview.

Sogrape, Portugal's biggest wine exporter, has been leading the way in terms of mergers

After starting out as a wine bottler and distributor in Portugal in the early 1940s, the family-owned company began buying up estates in the Douro — the world's oldest designated wine region — to create some of the country's best known wine brands, including Mateus Rose, Barca Velha and Sandeman.



Portugal winemakers (from left) Dirk van der Niepoort, Miguel Roquette, Francisco Olazabal, Joao Alvares Ribeiro Ferreira and Cristiano van Zeller. *Pic: Wine & Partners* 



The steep, rocky vineyards of Douro Valley. Pic: Wine & Partners

"It's so sweet," said Kasumi Imai, a 73-year-old Japanese woman after tasting several ports during a tour of Sogrape's Port Sandeman wine cellar in Vila Nova de Gaia, northern Portugal.

Sogrape is also investing abroad. The Oporto, northern Portugal-based company has acquired Bodegas LAN, a Spanish winery famous for producing high-quality wines. Sogrape also owns wineries in Argentina, Chile and New Zealand.

Sogrape's chief executive officer Salvador Guedes's drive to increase exports has paid off. Sogrape wine sales are forecast to rise to 210 million euros last year from 179 million euros a year earlier, according to Guedes.

Other producers are joining forces to promote their different brands of wines in markets as far away as China, where Portuguese wine sales increased 18pc last year in the period through October, according to Portugal's statistics office.

Adrian Bridge, managing director of a 320-year-old family business that makes Croft, Fonseca and Taylor ports from vineyards in Portugal's Douro region, formed a partnership with his main competitor in Portugal, the Symington Group, three years ago to set up a vintage port academy in China,

where the name Portugal means "grape teeth".

"Everybody wants to talk about China but for us it is a market that is going to take some time to develop," Bridge said in an interview from his family's Yeatman Hotel, overlooking the city of Oporto. "We're taking a long-term view that we have to develop that market through education."

The Douro Boys are doing the same. They are five of the Douro region's top winemakers: Dirk van der Niepoort from Niepoort Vinhos, Miguel Roquette from Quinta do Crasto, Francisco Olazabal from Quinta Vale Meao, Joao Alvares Ribeiro from Quinta do Vallado, and Cristiano van Zeller from Quinta do Vale Dona Maria.

"We formed a partnership about 10 years ago to promote our wines and the Douro region in foreign markets," Cristiano van Zeller said in a telephone interview. "We've managed to put Douro on the map. It's been a huge success."

Yet some winemakers have remained successful going at it alone in key markets such as Brazil. Piriquita red, a table wine, is today the bestselling European wine in the former Portuguese colony, according to Antonio Soares Franco, whose familyowned company Jose Maria da Fonseca produces the wine from grapes that grow

in the plains of southern

Portugal.
"It's our best export market," Soares Franco said.

Others prefer to ride on the coattails of the bigger companies who spend millions of dollars promoting their wines in foreign markets such as Brazil, China and Angola as opposed to merging with

these bigger companies.
Pedro Tamagnini, whose
Quinta dos Avidagos estate
produces just 80,000 bottles
a year, sends international
wine brokers video footage of
his green-terraced vineyards
along the Douro river to
explain his production
process and increase sales.

"The trick is to be creative when you have a limited budget," Tamagnini said. Ricardo Guerra, the

Ricardo Guerra, the entrepreneur who helped produce and sell the bottle of Benfeito wine in Luanda in 2011 for a record price, is another case in point. After the auction, he set up his own wine distributor in Angola, which last year bought more Portuguese wine than any other country except for France, according to the statistics office in Portugal.

"Business is going well," the 32-year-old Guerra in a telephone interview from Luanda. "People still refer to me as the guy who sold the \$20,000 bottle of wine."

Bloomberg News

### The anti-drone hoodie and other stealth fashion wear

By Ryan Gallagher

LONDON — George Orwell is often cited for the prophetic vision of a surveillance society he painted in his novel 1984. But one thing the celebrated author didn't predict was Big Brother's impact on fashion.

Enter Adam Harvey.

In a move that demonstrates that drones, facial recognition technology and cell phone snooping are starting to affect the broader culture, the New York-based artist has designed a line of high-tech garments made with sophisticated fabrics that can block signals and thwart cameras.

Launched last week in London

as part of a collaborative project with fashion designer Johanna Bloomfield, Harvey's line of "Stealth Wear" clothing includes an "anti-drone hoodie" that uses metalised material designed to counter thermal imaging used by drones to spot people on the ground. He's also created a cell phone pouch made of a special 'signal attenuating fabric". The pocket blocks your phone signal so that it can't be tracked or intercepted by devices like the covert "Stingray" tool used by law enforcement agencies like the FBI. And if that's not enough, Harvey has also made what he calls an "XX-Shirt", which uses material designed to "protect your heart from X-ray radiation".

The 31-year-old artist, who studied mechanical engineering as an undergrad at Penn State, says the increased use of military surveillance technologies in civilian environments inspired him to create the clothing line. "Military technology is coming home from the war," he tells me, referring to the growing use of spy drones across the United States. "These pieces are designed to live with it, to cope with it — to live in a world where surveillance is happening all the time."

The clothing range, which also includes an "anti-drone scarf", is primarily intended to spark a dialogue about the rapid advance of surveillance across society. Though they are pieces of concept

art, at the same time they do have a genuine practical use and are being manufactured for public sale. Harvey hasn't pinned down exactly what the cost of the garments will be yet — and he admits they're not likely to be cheap, due to the expensive materials involved. But it doesn't take a genius to predict that activists and other privacy-conscious individuals will be among his first customers. The "fashionably paranoid market" is his target demographic, Harvey jokes.

The artist's past endeavours have taken a similar stand against the rise of surveillance technologies. A previous project called "CVDazzle" explored how face-painting and hair-styling could be used to thwart

face-recognition cameras. He's not alone in this anti-snooping field, either. Last year, German artist Martin Backes created a counter-surveillance balaclava called "Pixelhead". Meanwhile, others have tried using DIY methods such as infrared head torches to frustrate the operators of security cameras.

As surveillance becomes more ubiquitous, it seems, we can expect to see increasingly creative and innovative efforts to challenge it coming from all corners of society. Fashion might be most commonly associated with models and catwalks — but it's a sign of the times that it can now be about drones and data mining, too.

– Slate

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THE MYANMAR TIMES

January 28 - February 3, 2013

## Phyo's Cooking Adventure Phyo cuts through culture to reveal life's true taste

Pumpkin soup for the soul (and for eating)

MANY pumpkin soups are too creamy and thick for Myanmar people, so when choosing this week's

recipes I picked ones that were similar to thinner curries and spicy soups.

I finally settled on two spicy pumpkin soups that can help warm you up on cold winter nights. The first is Mexican pumpkin soup with spicy chilies, which might heat you up more than expected.

Both of these recipes can make good vegetarian dishes if you use vegetable stock. If you skip the meat, there's no need to worry: The beans will provide your protein intake for the meal.

Chunky pumpkins are used in these soups, which are quite similar to Myanmar's pae`ka kar hinn, or beans and vegetables in Indian-style stew.

### Mexican pumpkin soup INGREDIENTS

(6 servings)

700g of pumpkin 1 onion (diced)

2 tablespoons of olive oil 2 teaspoons of cumin

1 teaspoon of chili powder 1 teaspoon of Tabasco

chili sauce (optional) 1 teaspoon of paprika (smoked if available)

 $2 \ cloves \ of \ garlic \ (crushed)$ 4 medium potatoes

**FOOD REVIEW** 

(chopped)

 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of *pae* lun beans 4 cups of vegetable or chicken stock

Drizzle of honey Salt and black pepper to

### **PREPARATION**

Soak the beans in water for at least two hours in advance, then boil them in lightly salted water until they are cooked through.

Cut the pumpkin open and remove the seeds, then cut it into chucky cubes. Wash, drain and set aside. Cut the potatoes into cubes slightly smaller than the pumpkin cubes

Add half the olive oil into a pot and sauté the diced

onion. When they become clear, add the cumin seeds, chili powder, paprika and garlic, and sauté for a few more minutes.

Add the remaining olive oil, plus the pumpkin and potatoes. Stir and sauté until they are coated with the onion and spice mixture. Then add the vegetable or chicken stock into the pot, and let the soup boil for 2 minutes.

Turn the heat down, cover the pot and allow the soup to simmer for half an hour. When the pumpkin and potatoes are cooked, drizzle them with the honey.

Add salt and freshly cracked black pepper for

Old-fashioned fun in the heart of Yangon

taste, and serve with lime wedges. Corn chips or tortilla chips add a crunchy texture, and the soup also goes well with pae` kyaw

(fried beans commonly eaten

Pic: Phyo

Pumpkin soup with spices INGREDIENTS

(6 servings)

with mohinga)

2 tablespoons of olive oil 1 onion (finely chopped) 2 garlic cloves (crushed) 1 teaspoon of grated fresh

ginger 2 teaspoons of curry

powder 700-800g of pumpkin

½ cup of red lentils (washed and drained)

1.25 litres of reduced-salt

 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of natural yogurt Fresh coriander leaves to serve

### **PREPARATION**

Cut the pumpkin open and remove the seeds, then cut it into 3 cm cubes. Wash, drain and set aside.

Sauté the diced onion with olive oil in a pot over medium heat. When the onions become clear, add the garlic, ginger and curry powder, and fry them until the aroma is released.

Add the lentils and stir for a couple of minutes. Add the pumpkin into the pot and stir well.

Add the stock into the pot and bring to a boil for 2-3 minutes. Turn the heat down and simmer the soup for 20-30 minutes.

Let it cool down and ladle the soup into a blender, then blend the ingredients until smooth. Perform this process in batches by filling the blender halfway each time. Combine the smoothly blended soup into the pot, and warm it over very low heat. (If you prefer chunky soup, you can skip the blending step.)

Add salt and black pepper for taste. Ladle the soup into bowls, and serve with a spoonful of natural yogurt and fresh coriander leaves.

It's also enjoyable to dip nan bread (called nan pyar in Myanmar) into the soup. The bread can be bought at many of the bigger tea shops around Yangon.

### **Main** Tips

If you have time, you can grill the pumpkin and let it caramelise a bit for sweeter flavour. The onions can also be fried until caramelized, which will likewise add sweetness to the soup.

You can add some more vegetables to the soup, such as eggplant, green beans, frozen peas and sweet potatoes. For quick vegetable stock, I use reduced-salt Messels stock powder and prepare it as per the package instructions.

### **QUAFFING QUOTE** "I hid myself in food."

Gordon Ramsay (British chef and restaurant owner)

### **NEXT WEEK**

Chicken schnitzel and mushroom sauce.

### Red Wine

Chateau Haut Selve Red (Graves) 2008



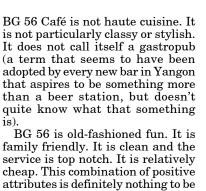
Score BOX

### White Wine

**Bouchard Pere & Fils** Bourgogne La Vignee

Chardonnay 2009 The pleasantly robust aroma of this chardonnay promises big payoff in the flavour department, and devotees of restrained oakiness in particular will not be disappointed.

OURGOON



BG 56 takes its name from its location: About 100 metres east of the venerable Woody House, it occupies Number 56 on Bogyoke Aung San Road, at the quiet Pazundaung end past the Ye Gyaw junction. The bright, shiny exterior lights up the street and is matched by the bright, shiny interior, which features both tables and a row of booths. I would hazard a guess that if an American diner was assimilated into Yangon downtown dining, this is what it would look like.

The service is exceptional. The staff were incredibly patient with the younger members of our crew, who wanted to know what was in every dish as they pondered their order. The waiters



also managed to get the order correct despite having multiple dishes and drinks velled at them simultaneously. The food arrived promptly, although each dish was brought out separately.

The menu covers a range of Western, Chinese and Thai dishes and, while a little too extensive for my taste, it is thankfully not as overwhelming as many other restaurants in the city. My pick is the grilled chicken with rosemary sauce (K3400). It's not exactly how mum used to make it, but it's a reasonable approximation given the circumstances and price. The Chinese-style prawn in a hot and sour sauce was also incredibly tasty, as was the wonton soup (K1400). The Chinese fried noodles (K2200) got the tick of approval from the Myanmar diners in our group for the inclusion of chopped chicken organs rather than the normal breast meat, although I would have

preferred the latter. The drink menu is rather basic but, in keeping with the family-oriented vibe, gets bonus points for its extensive ice cream and smoothie selection.

However, not everything on the menu proved a hit: a pizza was derided by one harsh eight-yearold critic as "barbarian food". Still, there's enough to like about BG 56 — convenience, price, fun, good service — to keep this reviewer coming back for more. -TK

### BG 56 Café

56 Bogyoke Street, Pazundaung township

Food: Drink: 8 Atmosphere: 9 Service: X Factor:







Ko Zaw Min Lat @ City



Thet Mon Myint @ Diamond

Palace New Shop Opening





Wint Yamone Hlaing @ Miss Now How 2013 Contest

Yu Thandar Tin @ Miss Now How 2013 Contest

ANMAR TIMES









U Sai Yee and Daw Thin Thin family @ Myanmar Cotto Thank You Party



Ko Kyaw San Oo @

@ New V Rohto Lucky Draw Program

U Thant Zin Htwe @ Ma Aye Myat Mon @ Asus Asus Promotion Event Promotion Event

**Rohto Menthdatum (Myanmar) staff members** @ New V Rohto Lucky Draw Program Opening

Awn Seng @ Diamond Palace New Shop







Moe Yu San @ Miss Now How 2013 Contest





you have a high potential of a achieving your goal successfully.





YH 731

15:00 17:10 15:45 17:10

YH 732

17:10 19:15

18:00 19:25

YJ 762

17:20 18:40

17:55 19:15

W9 129

14:30 15:40

75 = Golden Myanmar Airlines

### DOMESTIC FLIGHT SCHEDULES 08:55 10:05 SUN YJ 902 08:10 10:05 07:35 08:55 YJ 891 06:10 09:00 YANGON TO NAY PYI TAW YH 909 06:00 07:40 10:25 10:25 YJ 891 06:10 08:15 6T 401 YH 918 08:30 10:25 06:20 09:20 06:30 08:45 06:45 09:00 08:30 10:25 YJ 892 UB-C1 16:00 17:00 06:15 07:40 W9 141 YH 910 W9 144 6T 402 09:35 10:45 08:45 10:45 K7 223 YH 506 6T 501 07:45 08:45 11:30 12:30 06:20 08:25 08:55 10:15 09:50 11:10 TUE YJ 751/W 11:00 12:10 09:00 11:05 K7 222 06:30 08:40 UB-B1 YH 727 11:15 12:40 YJ 911 6T 351 K7 225 UB-C1 16:00 17:00 K7 244 06:45 08:10 13:45 14:55 15:30 17:25 YJ 212 YJ 212 16:15 17:25 08:00 09:00 14:15 15:30 16:25 19:15 17:35 18:45 11:00 12:55 11:30 12:30 15:00 16:25 YJ 761 6T 342 16:15 18:50 6T 502 17:35 18:55 16:00 17:00 11:00 12:55 06:00 08:15 YANGON TO SITTWE 07:45 08:45 YH 738 16:50 18:45 06:00 08:25 6T 501 14:45 16:45 MON 6T 611 11:30 12:55 11:30 12:30 W9 129 18:25 19:45 06:10 09:00 YH 732 YH 731 15:00 17:10 **TUE** K7 422 6T 611 06:45 08:40 11:30 12:55 06:10 09:15 17:20 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### A Japanese gu

### By Edward Schneider

LOCATED near a fishing village on the Sea of Japan, Flatt's is a guesthouse and restaurant operated by an Australian chef and his local-born wife. It's a small, traditional place of the kind you see all over Japan: There are four guest rooms with tatami-mat floors, futon bedding and views over the garden and out to the sea, indoor and outdoor bathhouses and a dining room furnished with low tables and cushions.

After meals, the owners spend time chatting with their guests, just as you do with yours. The ingredients are hyper-seasonal, ultralocal and fresher than most you'll ever see.

But there's a twist: Ben Flatt's training is mainly in Italian cooking. And that's what he's pursuing, in his own way, on the Noto Peninsula, north of

Now, when travelling in Japan, my wife and I have always steered clear of Western food (except for pastries). But how could we resist something like this?

For people like us, who speak little Japanese (or none, in my case), arrival at a small rural guesthouse can seem fraught with uncertainty and misunderstandings, although the ending is invariably happy. But here at Flatt's, those first steps are easy: The owners speak English. Ben Flatt met his wife, Chikako, when she was teaching in Sydney, and he followed her home to Noto, where he has now been for 17 years.

The absence of a language barrier means that you can ask even complicated questions and that you'll enjoy a fuller experience. We've had great fun in places where scant English is spoken, but we've missed real interaction with the hosts and with other guests. At Flatt's, this conversational dimension is restored, and it makes a memorable difference.

For dinner we were offered the option of sitting at a Western-style table. This was sorely tempting, until we saw that it would isolate us from the main action. So we chose Japanese-style seating with the understanding that we would quickly end up sprawling rather than sitting neatly, buttocks on heels.

We began with a potato soup that said a lot about this restaurant. The potatoes were homegrown; the savouriness came in part from ishiri, a deeply flavourful liquid made from fermented salted squid innards. Most people buy ishiri in bottles; Ben brews his own, and it is remarkable in the way it adds umami, or savouriness, without bringing along the flavour of seafood. This soup tasted not of squid, but of potatoes, enhanced. (This is akin to the way anchovies are used in Mediterranean cooking.) There was good focaccia, from the Flatts own nearby bakery/cafe.

For the most part, the remainder of our meal was seafood-based. The fishing boats go out around 3am and return a few hours later. This is exciting: Seafood

### **Tourism Myanmar Update**

Director Mg Myo Min will organise a traditional a nyeint show, titled Rosy Traveller, at People's Park on February 8 and 9, with the aim of raising funds for the Myanmar Marketing Committee. Anyone interested in sponsoring the event can contact Ms

Tin Nwe Wynt (09-502-

9602) or Ms The Ei Nway

Rosy Traveller

(09-502-9603) for further details.

Chinese New Year Chatrium Hotel is celebrating Chinese New Year through February 15 by presenting variations on raw sea bass and raw salmon at Tiger Hill Chinese Restaurant. Minimum order six people. For more details, please telephone +951-544-500.

The Myanmar Marketing Committee (MMC), the marketing arm of Myanmar The Myanmar Marketing Committee (MMC), the marketing arm of Myanmar Tourism Promotion Board, aims to market and promote Myanmar as a destination to develop the Myanmar tourism industry. For more information and reference please visit our website at www.myanmar-tourism.com or contact the MMC Office at Diamond Condominium A, Room 904, Level 9, Building 497, Pyay Road, Kamaryut township, Yangon, Myanmar. Telephone and Fax: +951 523-473; Mobile: 09-502-9602 and 09-502-9603; Email: mtpb@mptmail.net.mm.

533223

Myanmar.

### **Domestic Airlines**



### Air Bagan Ltd.(W9)

56, Shwe Taung Gyar Street, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. Tel: 513322, 513422, 504888, Fax: 515102

### Air KBZ (K7)

33-49, Corner of Bank Street & Maha Bandoola Garden Street, Kyauktada Tsp,Yangon Mvanmar Tel: 372977~80, 533030~39 (Airport) Fax: 372983

146, Dhammazedi Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon Tel : (Head Office) 501520,

Air Mandalay (6T)

Tel: 951 516654, 532253, 09-731-35991~3.Fax: 951 532333

525488, Fax: 525937. Airport:

533222~3. 09-73152853. Fax:

Asian Wings (AW)

No.34(A-1), Shwe Taung Gyar

Street, Bahan Township, Yangon

### Yangon Airways(YH) 166, MMB Tower, Level 5, Up-

per Pansodan Rd, Mingalar . Taungnyunt Tsp, Yangon. Tel: (+95-1) 383 100, 383 107, 700 264, Fax: 652 533

### **RAVEL**

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13:50

DON MUEANG TO MANDALAY

KUNMING TO MANDALAY MON MU 2029 14:00 13:5

### esthouse with gusto



Flatt's, a guesthouse in Noto-Cho, Japan, shown on October 16, 2013, is operated by an inventive Australian chef and his local-born wife. Pic: Edward Schneider/The Washington Post

comes into the kitchen alive and in prime condition.

The next dish was notably tender whelk in a gentle garlicky emulsion - the first detectable garlic we'd had since arriving in Japan 12 days earlier. Then, another gastropod: sazae (turban shell) with basil dressing, served alongside slices of raw hiramasa (yellowtail amberjack) with a homemade salt/yuzu/ chili condiment (yunanba) that had been aged for two

Pasta followed: herbscented egg noodles with squid, served atop a black sauce made with fresh squid ink and more ishiri. Again, the ishiri was there to deepen flavours, not replace them; I wouldn't have recognised its presence without prompting. The dish was lovely. Rather than a potentially murky tangle of black, beautifully pale squid and noodles are set against an inky background. The pasta tended to clump a bit, even when tossed with the sauce, but the flavours were elegantly balanced.

A small lettuce and tomato salad also came from the Flatts' garden. Crackling-crisp fried okoze (stonefish) followed, with yuzu, thyme and local (of course) sea salt. Then a dish of pure umami: a shiitake mushroom-cap "steak" with ishiri and Parmesan. All that savouriness may sound overwhelming, but

it wasn't. Finally, a fine fish we'd eaten several times on this trip: nodoguro (black-throat sea perch), here topped with mild home-salted cod roe and lots of herbs and served with a light pan sauce. It was perfectly cooked, and the subtle accompaniments let the moist flesh shine.

A light dessert and tea from the Flatts' own tree for my wife (espresso for me) were followed by a relaxing hot bath and a comfortable night's sleep.

We didn't know what to expect in the morning: croissants or foraged wild vegetables. The latter came closer to what we found on our breakfast table: many little dishes, entirely Japanese, including tofu and various vegetable preparations along with broth in a big scallop shell over a burner, in which we were invited to poach squid rings and an assortment of vegetables. Rice balls were toasting over a charcoal brazier off the main dining

room, as was homemade salt-preserved fish (which I found too intense, even as a condiment).

After breakfast, we wandered around the vegetable garden, then began to think about how we'd get back to Kanazawa. The Flatts consulted transport schedules online (there's wifi), and then Ben drove us to a bus stop to catch a co nvenient service to the city.

Apart from that breakfast, it's hard to slip Ben's cooking into either an Italian or a Japanese pigeonhole. He's doing what good cooks should always do: bringing his own background and skill to bear on local ingredients and approaches, and doing it with an acute palate and polished technique.

27-26-3 Yanami, Notocho, Housu-gun, Ishikawa,

Tel 011-81-768-62-1900 Accommodation with dinner and breakfast: US\$125 to \$170 a person, plus 5 percent tax, depending on the choice of menu and not including drinks. Meals only start at \$50, lunch and dinner. Reserve by phone.

– The Washington Post

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### International Airlines

### Air Asia (FD)

33, Alan Pya Pagoda Rd, Ground Flr Parkroyal Hotel, Yangon. Tel: 251 885, 251 886

### Air Bagan Ltd.(W9)

56, Shwe Taung Gyar Street, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. Tel : 513322, 513422, 504888, Fax : 515102

### Air China (CA)

Building (2), corner of Pyay Rd and Kaba Aye Pagoda Rd, Hotel Yangon, 8 miles, Yangon, Myanmar. Tel : 666112, 655882.

### Air India

75, Shwe Bon Thar St, Pabedan Tsp, Yangon. Tel : 253597~98, 254758. ax: 248175

### Bangkok Airways (PG)

#0305, 3rd Fl, Sakura Tower, 339,

### Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Kyauktada Tsp, Yangon. Tel: 255122, 255 265, Fax: 255119

### Condor (DE) Unit 10-05, 10th Floor, La Pyayt Wun Plaza, 37, Alanpya Pagoda Road,

Dagon Township, Yangon, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Tel: - 95 1 -370836 up to 39 (ext : 810)

### Dragonair (KA)

Unit 1107, 11th Floor, Sakura Tower, 339 Bogyoke Aung San Road, Kyauktada Tsp; Yangon. Tel: 95-1-255322

### Malaysia Airlines (MH)

335/357, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Pabedan Tsp, Yangon. Tel: 387648, 241007 ext : 120, 121, 122 Fax : 241124

### Myanmar Airways International(8M)

08-02, Sakura Tower, 339, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Kyauktada Tsp, Ýgn. Tel: 255260. Fax: 255305

### Silk Air(MI)

339, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, 2nd Floor, Sakura Tower, Kyauktada Tsp. Yangon, Myanmar. Tel: 255 287~9, Fax: 255 290

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### Thai Airways (TG)

Room No. 1101, Sakura Tower, 339, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Kyauktada Tsp, Ygn. Tel : 255491-6, Fax : 255223

### Vietnam Airlines (VN)

#1702, Sakura Tower 339, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Kyauktada Tsp, Yangon. Fax 255086. Tel 255066/ 255088/ 255068.

	Internation
FD & AK = Air Asia	IC = Indian Airlines Limited
TG = Thai Airways	W9 = Air Bagan
8M = Myanmar Airways	3K = Jet Star
International	AI = Air India
PG = Bangkok Airways	QR = Qatar Airways
MI = Silk Air	KE = Korea Airlines
VN = Vietnam Airline	NH = All Nippon Airways
MH = Malaysia Airlines	SQ = Singapore Airways
CZ = China Southern	DE = Condor Airlines
CI = China Airlines	MU=China Eastern Airlines
CA = Air China	BR = Eva Airlines
KA - Dragonair	DF - Condor

MON FD 2760
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THUR FD 2760
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IC = Indian Airlines Limited
W9 = Air Bagan
3K = Jet Star
AI = Air India
QR = Qatar Airways
KE = Korea Airlines
NH = All Nippon Airways
SQ = Singapore Airways
DE = Condor Airlines
MU=China Eastern Airlines
BR = Eva Airlines
DE = Condor

### Subject to change without notice

January 28 - February 3, 2013 THE MYANMAR TIMES

### Film recalls photographer killed in Libya

PARK CITY, Utah — The life and work of British war photographer Tim Hetherington, who died covering fighting in Libya in 2011, is celebrated in a film that was presented at the Sundance Film Festival last week.

Which Way Is the Front Line from Here? The Life and Time of Tim Hetherington was directed by Sebastian Junger, with whom the photographer made an Oscar-nominated 2010 documentary about Afghanistan, Restrepo.

Junger recalled the April 2011 phone call, reporting that Hetherington had been injured in Misrata. Ashort time later his death was confirmed. Junger interviewed fellow journalists at a New York memorial for his friend.

"Suddenly I was making a film," he said, recalling that Hetherington — who had dual US nationality — "had documented his last day of life extensively with a video camera, and that material became the beginning of [the film]."

"Journalists are dying with greater and greater frequency in war zones, and their deaths are better and better documented because everyone, it seems — including



War photographer Tim Hetherington is assisted by Libyan rebels on April 20, 2011, as he climbs down a building in the besieged city of Misrata, hours before he was killed while covering the Libyan conflict. *Pic: AFP* 

rebel fighters — carries small video cameras," he said. "The well-recorded

"The well-recorded tragedy of my friend's death, I thought, might be able to inform other journalists and the general public about the risks of the job."

The movie was presented out of competition at

Sundance, where the two men won the Grand Jury Prize for a documentary in 2010 for *Restrepo*, which recounted the life of a platoon in the war in Afghanistan.

Produced by US cable channel HBO, it follows the training and career over a decade of the Briton, from his

first warzone images in Liberia to his death on April 20, 2011, at the age of 41, with fellow photographer Chris Hondros.

Born on Merseyside, he studied English literature at Oxford before deciding to become a photojournalist, living and working for several years in Africa —

where he became the only photographer behind rebel lines in Liberia in 2003.

He later moved to New York and worked for Vanity Fair, winning wide praise for his work in Afghanistan, including the World Press Photo of the Year award in 2007 for a picture of an exhausted US soldier on the Afghan frontline.

As well as Hetherington's own still and video images from his final days, Junger filmed interviews with family and friends, notably photographer James Brabazon, who was in Liberia with him and praises his talent for documentary.

Junger agrees. "Tim was much more than just a combat reporter. True, he initially made his name shooting video during the Liberian civil war and achieved widespread prominence with the documentary *Restrepo*.

"But his ultimate value as an artist lay in his ability to integrate multiple media and transcend the limitations of his profession. He refused to even call himself a photographer, preferring the more ambiguous 'imagemaker'

"That ambiguity allowed him to do almost anything

he wanted, creatively speaking." To underline how much

To underline how much his friend was more at ease behind the lens than in front of it, Junger opens the film with a close-up declaration from Hetherington, hesitating over his words.

Finally, he decides which ones to use telling the camera: "I think the important thing for me is connecting with real people. To document them even in extreme circumstances, when there is not a neat solution, when there is not a neat guideline saying, 'This is what it's about.' I hope this is what my work shows."

Junger says his film "chronicles Tim's passage from a terrified and untested photographer in Liberia to one of the masters of his profession".

"By necessity it is very much a war movie, but it also strives — as Tim did — to defy the expectations of the genre," he said. "Some of Tim's most courageous work did not take place in war zones but in the ridiculously creative enclaves of his mind. He never flinched from either. I hope I have made a film that does not flinch as well." — AFP

### **Events Flash**

### Ngwe Phyoe show

Artist Ngwe Phyoe will hold a solo exhibition at Gallery 65 (65 Yaw Min Gyi Road, Dagon township) from January 26 to 30.

### Group show

Agroup exhibition featuring paintings by 17 artists will be held at Armanthit Art Gallery (143 Myanma Gonyi Road, Mingalar Taung Nyunt township, Yangon) from January 26 to February 1.

### Art Field

Lokanat Art Gallery (62 Pansodan Street, First Floor, Kyauktada township) is hosting the "Art Field" group exhibition from January 29 to February 2. The show includes the work of more than 20 painters.

### Book fair

The Myanmar Publishers and Distributors Association will hold book fairs at Taw Win Centre on Pyay Road from January 26 to 28, and at the National Theatre (Myoma Kyaung Road) from January 31 to February 3.

### Literature festival

The Irrawaddy Literature Festival will be held at Inya Lake Hotel in Yangon from February 1 to 3. The event will include author readings and discussions,

film screenings, photo exhibitions and vendors' stalls. Among the writers slated to appear are Fergal Keane, Jung Chang, Pascal Khoo Thwe, William Dalrymple and Vikram Seth. Tickets are available for K1500 (each day) at Inya Lake Hotel, the British Council, Monument Books and Today bookstores.

### Y-Talk Concert

A hip-hop and rock concert will be held at Myawsinkyun in Kandawgyi Park, Yangon, on February 2, to mark the anniversary of Y-Talk telecom network. Performers will include R Zarni, Haelay, Soe Tay, SIR, J-Me, Jouck Jack, Kyaw Htut Swe, Hlwan Paing, Snare, Bunny Phyoe, Sandy Myint Lwin, Thiri Swe, Eaint Chit and Bobby Soxer.

### Calle de la Salsa

Tuesday is salsa night at 50th Street Bar, featuring free dance classes (salsa, bachata, mambo, meringue and more), plus dance shows and drink specials. With music by DJ Mani and special guests.

### Wednesday wine

The Wednesday Wine Club meets every (you guessed it) Wednesday at the QP Inya Shop (30 Inya Road). Taste four or five wines for K10,000 a person. Contact chad.quarto@gmail.com or 09-7321-8711.



### YOUR STARS

By Astrologer Aung Myin Kyaw

### Aquarius

(Jan 20 - Feb 18)

Conscience is more important in some situations than in others, but it's always a good guideforindividualconduct. React cleverly to unfairburdensor demands. An insufferable interferencewilldisturbyour mindand personalfreedom, obligating you to make sudden changes in your policiesandresponsibilities. You might feel as if love is driving you crazy, but don't use it as an excuse to give up.

### Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20)

Holding yourself up to higher standards will be required to make positive changes in matters of the heart. Lend a helping hand to parents, mentorsand oldpartners as much as possible. Allow your faith and beliefin yourself isto become self-propagating, which will inevitably improve your mental powers and quality of life. Help someone close to you escape from embarrassment.

### Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Allthatoccurs around you is transient, but you are still able to control the situation enough to turn your ambitions into reality. Be suretomake constant efforts against social interference. Keep your emotional pleasure under control, lest you squanderyour creative thoughts and capabilities. A romantic favour will have greatpotential to enrichand brighten your life.

### Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Immoralityisoften taughtin the name of morality, and you should take care to differentiate reality from illusion in the world around you. Also, learn to separate what you really need from what the "wants" that stem from a sense of selfishness. A long relationship is required to discover someone's distinct nature and character. Ultimately, a deceiver only deceives himself. In your love life, the dividing line between rightand wrong is so thin as to be imperceptible.

### Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

Youmust not practice self-deception by resorting to makebelieve. A lifewithout vowsis like a ship without an anchor, or an edifice that is built on sand instead of a solid rock. If you can conquer the forces of delusion, you will find yourself treading on the path to spirituality. Never allow your knowledge to exceed the wisdom that lies withinyou.

### Cancer (June 22 - July 22)

Acertain degree of physical harmony and comfort are necessary, but excessive amounts can become a hindrance. The ideal of creatingan unlimited number of wants and needs stems from the poisonous power of delusion, which can act like a snare in your

life. Sensitivities about feelings, communication and intimacy are important in personal relationships.

### Leo

(July 23 - Aug 22)

Freedom is the law of individual growth, which must be the universal condition of positive progress. You will find yourself engaged in complicated communication aimed at improving your finances. Take all the time necessary to properly deal with social disagreements with close friends or siblings. Use your love to add beauty to the world.

### Virgo (Aug 23 - Sept 22)

Manage your speech and actions by maintaining clear thoughts and understanding atall times. Your adaptable nature will lead to positive change, which will help you develop your humanity and humility. Remember the words of author William James, who said human beings can alter their lives byaltering their attitudes. Know that nothing is impossible for pure love.

### Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

When the time comes to reform yourself, rely on spiritual knowledge andwisdom. Never allow your zeal for reformation to exceed the limitations set by your local community. Winning the confidence of the people is an indispensable condition for success. Always remember to givethanks for the blessings of the day. Now is the time to end your loveless life.

### Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

Anoptimistlaughs to forget, but a pessimistforgets tolaugh and smile. Allow yourself torealise the specific limitations of reason; just as matter misplaced becomes dirt,reason misused become lunacy. If you want something really important to get done, you must not merely satisfy reason, you must also move the heart.

### Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

The habitofputting things off is nota harmless little mannerism fora successful person; realise that procrastinationis not necessarily an ingrained, unchangeable part of your personality. Regard yourself as a Personof Destiny, and don't allow anyone to cut down your ideal of yourself. You can emerge only out of a perfect model, just a sculptor sees his subject in uncut rock. Your sexual desire itself might become aroyal path to spiritual realisation.

### Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Courage, endurance, fearlessness and, above all, self-sacrifice arethe qualities ofgood leaders. Dutyand responsibility cannot be divided into separate pursuits for those in a leadership role. Don't allow bad advice to lead you down the path of deception and mismanagement. Look up old friends and mentors, and invite them to join your communityas consultants.

For a personal reading contact Aung Myin Kyaw, 4th Floor, 113, Thamain Bayan Road, Tamwe Township, Yangon. Tel: 0973135632, Email: williameaste@gmail.com

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Projects and Programs. Organizing Seminars and Workshops. Undertaking public relations activities. Assistingindatacollection, compilation, data analysis and writing reports. Handling operation and logistic matters. Eligible candidate for Programme Assistant should possess following qualifications;-University Graduate. Fluentin English (reading, writing, speaking). Age less than 45 years. Good relationship with Myanmar governmental offices. Ability to work in a team and maintain harmonious relationship with other staff. More than 5 years of working experience in the organization/s. Good computer skills and knowledge of Word, Excel & Power Point. (2) Job Description: The Administrative Assistant will work closely with respective Japanese Staff and Administrative Officer and be responsible for:-Assisting in administrative and general affairs of the office. Assisting in operation of NGO-JICA Japan Desk including library and meeting facilities. Assisting in Office IT management. Handling in operation and logistic matters. Eligible candidate should possess following qualifications;-University Graduate. Fluentin English (reading, writing, speaking). Age less than 40 years. Ability to work in a team

and maintain harmonious relationship with other staff. More than 5 years of working experience in the organization/s. Good computer skills and knowledge of Word, Excel & Power Point (having experience in Computer Networking will be advantages). **Duration** of assignment: From March 2013 (negotiable), yearly renewal upon satisfactory performance. How to apply: Qualified and interested persons are requested to send the applications with updated C.V, educational credentials and references to JICA Myanmar Office, Room 701, 7th Floor, Room 701, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sakura Tower, No. 339, BokyokeAung San Road, Kyauktada Township, Yangon, not later than 5:00 p.m., February 15, 2013. Note: Only short listed candidates will be contacted for subsequent interviews

interviews.
(1) MECHANICAL Engineering 3 Posts:
Bachelor or Diploma in
Mechanical Engineer
ing.Over 1 years handson experience in trouble-shooting, repairing and servicing of automobile.
Techni cal knowledge
in Euro 4 diesel engine
& electrical system. Computer literate with knowledge in Micrsoft Excel, Word and Power Point. (2) Inventory Point. (2) Inventory controlEngineer-3Posts: Degree in Mechanical Engineer ing or other Engineer ing discipline. 2 years experience. Apply with application letter, Resume furnishing details of experience, expected salary, with expected salary with necessary documents to Greater Man Int'l Services Co., Ltd. HIGER Service Show Room :(Za Myin Zwe 4), Dagon Rd, Aung

30-1-2013. (1)CHIEF ENGINEER -M.E / B.E (civil) degree holder, Age 35 ~ 45 years, 7 years and above experence, Prepare monthly project progress reports which related cost control materials and project expenditure, work schedule. Using Microsoft, Auto Cad and other related software. Must have experienced in high rise building. Manage entire project and lead engineer team to meet with deadline. (2) **Project Manager** - M.E / B.E (civil) degree holder, Age 40 ~ 50, 8 years above experience, Assist in preparation for project tendering, Must have experience in high rise construction, Having knowledge of require ment and ability

Mingalar Bus Station, Yangon.Closing Date:

Micro soft , Auto Cad & other related software. Pls submit full resume Pls submit full resume with expected salary to Live Life Co.,Ltd 440, Waizayantar Rd - South Okkala, Ph: 565911, 8551294, 09-731-17666

A M&E engineering company is looking for (1) Electrician 3 posts (2) Welder 3 nosts: RE

(2) Welder 3 posts: BE (or) AGTI (or) THS (or) Certificate in Electrical and Welding fields will be an added advan tage.At least 5 years experience in related fields. Good written & verbal communication skill in English. Willing to travel extensively within the country. Pls submit CV with relevant documents relevant documents to : myrcitraelect@ g m a i l . c o m Ph: 521 214

FOR ENGLISH

FOR ENGLISH
LEARNING Center (1)
Experienced 4 skills EnglishTeachers (Native speaker) (2) Experienced Pre school teachers
(3) Experienced Market ing Persons (4) Must be Bachelor graduates (5) Must know basic computer. Pls contact : tun.john@gmail.comPh: 09-5241687.

SAVOY HOTEL is urgently looking for (1) Reservation - 1 post, must have at least 1 year experience in hotel field and good English skill. (2) European Chef - 1 post, mush have at least 2 years experience and good English skill.

and good English skill.
Application letter by email to savoy.hra @ gmail.com or 129, Dhammazedi Rd, Yangon. Tel: (95-1) 526298, 526289.

ALBA is looking for (1).
Local English Teacher (Full time/ Part time) (2). Local Re-leaving Teacher (Full time) The candidate must be: University Graduate, Fluent in spoken and Fluent in spoken and written English, Must have the experienced in related filed, Must have excellent commu nication & interperso nal skill. Interested applicants should send the curriculum vitae together with a recent photo and copies of testimonials to 66, Shwedagon Pagoda Rd, Dagon Township. Ph: 376236, 376314, Email: admin@ albaedu.

**URGENTLY** REQUIRED **Executive Assistant**To provide professional support to the company CEO through. Effective communication prioriti zation & organization. Liaise between company department/ offices, managers. Manage meetings and appointments, travel meeting minutes. Arrange travel (flights, hotel bookings, visas etc.) Develop and maintain categorized filing and document systems. Maintain high level of discretion and confidentiality Qualifications: University degree, Fluent in Myanmar and English (ability to translate highly desirable), Excellent interpersonal skills & ability to liaise effectively with high level & foreign clients, overnment officials. Experience in similar position preferred. Attractive salary based on experience & qualification. Pls submit CV and a cover letter to

schedules, invitations,

kthanda@capital8.com. sg within two weeks. CAPITAL Automotive has been appointed as the official distributor and dealer for several international automo tive brands. They will sell new vehicles from a showroom and support their customers with internationally trained staff working in the state of the art workshop and parts facilities. Capital Automotive are search ing for the best people to work with these automotive vehicles and toprovidetheir customers

with the highest level of service. Today we have service. Ioday we have the following positions available: (1) Sales Managers - 2 posts. (2) Parts Manager - 1 post. (3)Workshop Manager - 1 post. (4)Marketing Manager - 1 post. (5) Accountant - 1 post. (6) Workshop mechanics Workshop mechanics - 6 posts. (7)Sales people - 4 posts. Customer Service staff - 6. Pls send Service staff-6. Pls send CV to aungthu. winmg @ rmagroup. net, Pls put contact ph or hand deliver to 27(A), Kaba Aye Pagoda Rd, Yankin, Yangon, Pls kindly put your detail address on CV's. Clos ing date: 28 Jan 2013

Jan 2013.

KELVIN CHIA Yangon
Ltd is a foreign legal
consultancy firm is seeking(1)Lawyers who will work on a variety of corporate & commercial matters & transactions in Myanmar. If you are a Myanmar-qualified lawyer with strong English language skills, you are invited to apply to join our Myanmar practice group. Myanmar nationals admitted to int'l bars are also welcome to apply. Training will be provided. Applicants may email to kim@ kcyangon. com and submit your curriculum vitae. (2)
Corporate Affairs
Executive/ Assistant

As a corporate affairs

executive/ assistant, you will be involved with business development, networking, market research and liaison work. Applicants should be proficient in English, energetic and self-motivated. All nationalities are welcom (Myanmar, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, etc). Pls email application & curriculum vitae to kk@ kcyangon.com.
(1) ADMIN Manager

M 1 Post : Age 40 to 50. Bachelor Degree in Administration or Management. 5 year experience. (2) Chief Accountant - F 1 Post : Bachelor Degree in B.Com (or) ACCA Part 2/ CPA. 3 year expeirences.
(3) Marketing Executive - M/F 2 Posts : Bachelor Degree in Business Management/English (or)
Petro engineering. Age 23-28. 2 year experience.

(4) Invoicing Officer
(Account Receivable) - F
1 Post: B.Com or Diploma in Accounting (LCCI Level 3). 2 year experience. For 3). 2 year experience. For all posts: Must have good English speaking, reading and writing. Pls send CV 2 passport photos, copy of NRC card, academic transcripts (copy and testimosist) desumpts.

transcripts (copy and testimonial documents.

ADMIN STAFF officer

- F/M 2 Posts : Any graduate. Age 25 ~ 35. Must have good in English, active & pleasant personality. Must have knowledge in import & export Must in import & export. Must have good M.S office & Internet. Must under stand in customer communication skills.
Add: Bldg 5, Rm 2,
Aungthabyae St, Yuzana
Plaza, Mingalar Taung
Nyunt. Ph: 202467,
4411553,

REQUIRED urgently by a foreign company Public Relation Officer. Myanmar Citizen, Any Gender. Minimum Age 30 plus Years. Good Knowledge of English (both Spoken and Written). Job Profile includes PR Work with various ministries national, & international

agencies. Good salary. Ph: 09-511-8453. YIUS (Need Native English Teacher) Full-Time (M/F) 1 Post. Responsible person, YIUS focus on learning at least 5 years experien ces in teaching-must have Study English Language Teacher. Bldg 7, Rm 4, Myanmar ICT Park, Hlaing University Campus, Ph:652311,

652297

FOR English Learning Center: (1) Experienced 4 skills English Teachers (Native Speaker). (2) Experien ced Pre-School Teachers (Local). (3) Experienced Marketing Persons (4) Reception :Must be Bachelor Graduates. Must know Basic Computer. Email: tun.john@. gmail.com, Ph: 09-524-1687. SAVOY Hotel is

urgently looking for (1)
Receptionist - 2 posts
must have at least 1
year experience in hotel
field. Application letter by
email to operations @ savoyhotel-yangon. com or 129, Dhamma zedi Rd, Yangon. Tel: (95-1) 526298, 526289.

1). ACCOUNTS and Admin Manager 1 post (2). Export/Import Manager 1 post (3).

Korean Interpreter 2
posts. Ph: 09-431-66071.
Myanmar DYC Co.Ltd,
Mingaladon Industrial

INTERNATIONAL Law INTERNATIONAL Law Firm required Expatiate Lawyer Graduate of foreign law school. At least 1 year experience Send CV to Su Su Hlaing, email - suhlaing07@ gmail.com. Ph. 540995, 556692.

### **Business Development Manager - Yangon, Myanmar**

Established in 1982, PPI Industries Sdn. Bhd. (PPI) is the leading spiral steel pipe manufacturer in Malaysia. The factory is located on a 30 acres site in Penang and has a production capacity of 80,000 metric tones per annum. PPI supplies its products mainly to structural and marine piling projects as well as water conveyance projects in the region. Established in 1962, Syn Tai Hung Trading Sdn. Bhd. (STHT) is one of the largest building materials trading companies in Malaysia, with branches nationwide. It trades and distributes a wide range of building materials, from bulk items like reinforcement bars and cement to architectural products like roof tiles, ceramic tiles, sanitary wares and specialised coatings.

Both PPI and STHT are subsidiaries of Wah Seong Corporation Berhad (www.wahseong. com), which is listed on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange.

### Job Description:

The candidate will be carrying out market research activities and sales & marketing of products and services offered by PPI and STHT.

- 1. To conduct market research on following areas:
  - Building materials, such as cement, steel bars, etc.
  - Spiral welded steel pipes for structural, marine piling and water conveyance application.
  - Polyethylene (PE) and High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) pipes for water conveyance application.
  - Market research scope and methodology will be disclosed only to the successful candidate.
- To promote company products and services.
- Research and identify potential customers for products or services.
- Develop sales plans to introduce products in new markets.
- Keep tab on industry news and trends, products, services, competitors, relevant information about legacy, existing, and emerging technologies, and the latest product-line developments.
- Visit prospective buyers at commercial, industrial, or other establishments to show samples or catalogues, and to inform them about product pricing, availability, and
- 7. Attend trade shows and seminars to promote products or to learn about industry developments.

### Requirements:

- 1. A degree preferably in Civil / Structural / Mechanical Engineering, Physics, Mathematics, or Applied Sciences.
- Must have minimum 5 years of working experience, preferably in the construction 1 metal works / manufacturing industry.
- Knowledge in building materials, working experience in Sales / Marketing / Business Development will be an added advantage.
- Members of Myanmar Engineering Society are encouraged to apply.
- Must be able to work independently with minimal supervision and must be willing
- Candidate must be fluent in English and must possess good business sense, organisation skills, and problem-solving skills.
- Candidate must possess the ability to build relationships with local authorities and customers (both local and abroad) effectively.
- 8. Attractive remuneration package awaits the incumbent candidate.

Interested candidates please submit your resume with recent photograph to ryan.lee@ ppimalaysia.com.

All applications should reach us by 17th February 2013 and please note that only shortlisted candidate will be notified.

### Thilawa Cement & Building Materials Ltd. "World leader in building materials"

No. 17(B), 4th Lane West Shwegongdine, Bahan Township Tel (951) 510933, 525737

### HR Manager (1 Post)

of machinery,

- 5 to 10 years experience in Human Resources
- Proficiency in Spoken and Written English Good degree in HR from reputable institution
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Able to handle recruitment process and administrative side of HR function Capable of working in autonomy, taking initiatives
- International experience is a plus

### Marketing and Sales Manager (1 Post)

Using

- 5 to 7 years experience in Marketing and Sales Proficiency in spoken and Written English
- Strong knowledge of the construction market
- Experience in managing a team and leadership skills
- Willing to learn multinational marketing techniques and adapt them to local market
- Dynamic and result driven
- Experience in Cement industry is a plus

### Finance Manager (1 Post)

- 7 to 10 years experience in finance and accounting (CPA)
- Proficiency in spoken and written English Good degree in finance and accountancy from reputable institution
- Strong analytical, interpersonal and communication skills
  - Able to manage all aspects of corporate finance (accounting, tax, credit,
- control....) Experience with a multinational is a plus

Interested candidates can submit CVs with recent passport sized photocopy of NRC Card, Labour registration card and related documents to the company address or by email. (hr.lafarge.mm@gmail.com) before February 15th, 2013

### The Essentials

### **EMBASSIES**

Australia 88, Strand Road, Yangon. tel : 251810, 251797, 251798 251809, 246462, 246463, fax: 246159

Bangladesh 11-B, Than Lwin Road, Yangon. tel: 515275, 526144, fax: 515273, email: bdootygn@mptmail.net.

**Brazil** 56, Pyay Road, 6<sup>th</sup> mile, Hlaing Tsp, Yangon. tel: 507225, 507251, 507482. fax: 507483. email: Administ.yangon@ itamaraty.gov.br.

Brunei 317/319, U Wizara Road, Sanchaung Tsp, Yangon. tel: 526985, 524285, fax: 512854 email: bruneiemb@ bruneiemb.com.mm

Cambodia 25 (3B/4B), New University Avenue Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 549609, 540964, fax: 541462, email: RECYANGON @mptmail. net.mm

China 1, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 221280, 221281, 224025, 224097, 221926, fax: 227019, 228319

Egypt 81, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 222886, 222887, fax: 222865, email: egye mbyangon@mptmail. net.mm

France 102, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 212178, 212520, 212523, 212528, 212532, fax: 212527, email: ambaf rance. rangoun@

diplomatie.fr **Germany** 9, Bogyoke Aung San Museum Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 548951, 548952, fax: 548899

email: info@rangun.

diplo.de

Street, Yangon. tel: 391219, 388412, 243972, fax: 254086, 250164, 388414, email: indiaembassy @mptmail. net.mm

India 545-547, Merchant

Indonesia 100. Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Yangon. tel: 254465, 254469, 229750, fax: 254468, email: kukygn @indonesia.com.mm

Israel 15, Khabaung Street, Hlaing Tsp, Yangon. tel: 515115, fax: 515116, email: info@ yangon.mfa.gov.il

Italy 3, Inya Myaing Road, Golden Valley, Yangon. tel: 527100, 527101, fax: 514565 email: ambyang.mail@ esteri.it

Japan 100, Natmauk Road, Yangon. tel: 549644-8, 540399, 540400, 540411, 545988, fax: 549643

Embassy of the State of Kuwait Ćhatrium Hotel, Rm: No.416, 418, 420, 422, 40 Natmauk Rd, Tarmwe Tsp, Tel: 544500.

North Korea 77C Shin Saw Pu Road, Sanchaung Tsp, Yangon. tel: 512642, 510205, fax: 510206

South Korea 97 University Avenue, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 527142-4, 515190, fax: 513286, email:

myanmar@mofat.go.kr Lao A-1, Diplomatic Quarters, Tawwin Road,

Dagon Tsp, Yangon. tel: 222482, fax: 227446, email: Ĺaoembcabíd mptmail. net.mm

Malaysia 82, Pyidaungsu Yeiktha Road, Ýangon. tel: 220248, 220249, 220251, 220230, fax: 221840, email: mwkyangon@mptmail. net.mm

Yeiktha, Yangon. tel: 545880, 557168, fax: 549803, email: nepemb @mptmail.net.mm Pakistan A-4, diplomatic

Nepal 16, Natmauk

Quarters, Pyay Road, Yangon. tel: 222881 (Chancery Exchange) fax: 221147, email: pakistan@ myanmar. com.mm

**Philippines** 50, Sayasan Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 558149-151, fax: 558154, email: p.e. yangon@gmail.com

Russian 38, Sagawa Road, Yangon. tel: 241955, 254161, fax: 241953, email: rusinmyan@mptmail .net.mm

Serbia No. 114-A, Inya Road, P.O.Box No. 943-Yangon tel: 515282 515283, fax: 504274, email: serbemb@ yangon.net.mm

Singapore 238, Dhamazedi Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. tel: 559001, fax: 559002, 559922, email: singemb\_ ygn@\_ sgmfa. gov.sg

Sri Lanka 34 Taw Win Road, Yangon, tel: 222812, fax: 221509, email: slembassy. yangon@gmail.com, info@slembyangon.org, www.slembyangon.org

Thailand 94 Pyay Road, Dagon Township, Yangon. tel: 226721, 226728, 226824, fax: 221713

United Kingdom 80 Kanna Road, Yangon. tel: 370867, 380322, 371852, 371853, 256438, 370863, 370864, 370865,

fax: 370866 United States of

America 110, University Avenue, Kamayut Township, Yangon. tel: 536509, 535756, 538038, fax: 650306

Vietnam Building No. 72,

Thanlwin Road, Bahan Township, Yangon. tel: 511305, fax: 514897, email: vnemb myr@ cybertech.net.mm Royal Embassy of Saudi

**Arabia** No.287/289, U Wisara Rd, Sanchaung Tsp. tel: 01-536153 516952, fax : 01-516951

### UNITED NATIONS

ILO Liaison Officer Rm (M1212~1220), 12 Fl-A, Traders Hotel. 223, tel: 242 393, 242811. fax: 242594.

**IOM** 12th Flr, Traders Hotel, 223, tel: 252560 ext. 5002

UNAIDS Rm: (1223~1231), 12 Fl, Traders Hotel. tel: 252361, 252362, 252498. fax: 252364. UNDCP 11-A, Malikha St,

Mayangone tsp. tel: 666903, 664539. fax: 651334.

UNDP 6, Natmauk Rd, Bahan tel: 542910-19. fax: 292739. UNFPA 6, Natmauk Rd,

Bahan tsp. tel: 546029. UNHCR 287, Pyay Rd,

Sanchaung tsp. tel: 524022, 524024. fax 524031. UNIAP Rm: 1202, 12 Fl,

Traders Hotel.tel: 254852,

254853 UNIC 6, Natmauk St., BHN tel: 52910~19

UNICEF 14~15 Flr, Traders Hotel. P.O. Box 1435, KTDA. tel: 375527~32, fax: 375552 email: unicef.yangon@unicef. org, www.unicef.org/myanmar.

UNODC 11-A, Malikha Rd., Ward 7, MYGN. tel: 666903, 660556, 660538, 660398, 664539, fax: 651334. email: fo.myanmar@unodc.org www.

unodc.org./myanmar/ UNOPS Inya Lake Hotel, 3rd floor, 37, Kaba Aye Pagoda Rd, Mayangone Tsp. tel: 951-657281~7. Fax: 657279.

UNRC 6, Natmauk Rd, P.O. Box 650, TMWE tel: 542911~19,

292637 (Resident Coordinator), fax: 292739, 544531. WFP 3<sup>rd</sup>-flr, Inya Lake Hotel, 37, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd. tel: 657011~6 (6-lines)

WHO 12A Fl, Traders Hotel. tel:250583.

Ext: 2000.

**ASEAN** Coordinating Of. for the ASEAN Humanifarian Task Force, 79, Taw Win st, Dagon Township. Ph: 225258.

Service Insein Rd, Insein tel: 641672, 641673. fax: 641561

FAO Myanma Agriculture

### **General Listing**

### ACCOMMODATION-HOTELS

Avenue 64 Hotel

No. 64 (G), Kyitewine Pagoda Road, Mayangone Township. Yangon. 09 8631392, 01 656913-9

Chatrium Hotel Royal Lake Yangon 40 Natmauk Rd, Tarmwe.

tel: 544500. fax: 544400.



No.7A, Wingabar Road, Bahan Tsp, Yangon. Tel : (951) 546313, 430245. 09-731-77781~4. Fax: (01) 546313. www.cloverhotel.asia. info@cloverhotel.asia

Confort Inn

4, Shweli Rd, Bet: Inya Rd & U Wisara Rd, Kamaryut, tel: 525781, 526872

Hotel Yangon No. 91/93, 8<sup>th</sup> Mile Junction, Mayangone. tel: 01-667708,

667688. Inya Lake Resort Hotel 37 Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd. tel: 662866. fax: 665537



hotel No. 205, Corner of Wadan Street & Min Ye Kyaw Swa Road, Lanmádaw

Tsp, Yangon. Myanmar. Tel: (95-1) 212850 ~ 3, 229358 ~ 61, Fax: (95-1) 212854. info@myanmarpandahotel .com http://www. myanmarpandahotel.com

### PARKROYAL Yangon, Myanmar

33, Alan Pya Pagoda Rd, Dagon tsp. tel: 250388. fax: 252478. email: enquiry.prygn@ parkroyalhotéls.com Websité: parkroyalhotels.

Savoy Hotel 129, Damazedi Rd, Kamayut tsp.

Seasons of Yangon Yangon Int'l Airport Compound. tel: 666699. Sweet Hotel

73, Damazedi Road, San Chaung Tsp, Ph: 539152 Sedona Hotel

Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Yankin. tel: 666900. Strand Hotel 92 Strand Rd. tel: 243377.

Summit Parkview Hotel 350, Ahlone Rd, Dagon Tsp. tel: 211888, 211966. fax: 227995

Thamada Hotel

fax: 289880.

5, Alan Pya Phaya Rd, Dagon. tel: 243639, 243640, 243641

Traders Hotel

223 Sule Pagoda Rd. tel: 242828. fax: 242838.

### Winner Inn

42, Than Lwin Rd, Bahan Tsp. Tel: 503734, 524387. email: reservation@winner innmyanmar.com Yangon YMCA

### 263, Mahabandoola Rd, Botataung Tsp. tel: 294128,

Yuzana Hotel 130, Shwegondaing Rd, Bahan Tsp, tel: 01-549600,

543367 Yuzana Garden Hotel 44, Alanpya Pagoda Rd, Mingalar Taung Nyunt Tsp, tel: 01-248944



Reservation Office (Yangon) 123, Alanpya Pagoda Rd, Dagon Township Tel : 951- 255 819~838

Hotel Max (Chaung Tha Beach) · 042-423 46~9 Tel

042-421 33, F-mailmaxhotelsreservation@ gmail.com

Managed by Max Hotels

### ACCOMMODATION-HOTELS (Nay Pyi Taw)



ROYAL KUMUDRA HOTEL Reservation Office (Yangon)

123, Alanpya Pagoda Řd, Dagon Township Tel : 951- 255 819~838

Royal Kumudra Hotel, (Nay Pyi Taw)

: 067- 414 177 067- 4141 88

maxhotelsreservation@ amail.com

Managed by Max Hotels

### **ACCOMMODATION LONG TERM**

Espace Avenir No 523, Pyay Rd, Kamaryut. tel: 505213-222.

Golden Hill Towers 24-26, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Bahan Tsp. tel: 558556. ghtower@ mptmail.net.mm.



09-4200-56994. E-mail: aahappyhomes@ gmail.com, http://www. happyhomesyangon.com Marina Residence

8, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Mayangone Tsp. tel: 6506 51~4. fax: 650630. MiCasa Hotel Apartments

17, Kabar Aye Pagoda Rd, Yankin Tsp. tel: 650933. fax: 650960 Sakura Residence

9, Inya Rd, Kamaryut Tsp. tel: 525001. fax: 525002.

The Grand Mee Ya Hta **Executive Residence** 372, Bogyoke Aung San Rd, Pabedan Tsp. tel 951-256355 (25 lines).

### ACCOUNTANTS AND CONSULTANTS

Charted Certified,

Certified Public Accountants. tel: 09-501-0563. drtinlatt@matglobal.com

### **AIR CONDITION**

Chigo No. 216, 38 Street (Upper), Kyauktada Tsp,



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### General

83-91, G-F, Bo Aung Kyaw St, Kyauktada Tsp, tel : 706223, 371906

### **ASTROLOGER**

Saya Min Thoun Dara Astrologer

No(2), Maha Wizaya Pagoda North Stairway, Dagon Tsp. tel: 296184

### **BARS**

50th Street

9/13, 50th street-lower Botataung Tsp. Tel-397160.



Beer Gallery Mini Zoo, Karaweik Oo-Yin Kabar.



Kamayut Tsp. Tel: 01-527506 email: inyaone@gmail.com www.inya1.com



Strand Bar 92, Strand Rd, Yangon, Myanmar. tel: 243377.fax: 243393, sales@thestrand.com.mm www.ahmhotels.com



**Lobby Bar** PARKROYAL Yangon, Myanmar. 33, Alan Pya Phaya Road, Dagon Tsp. tel: 250388.

### **Emergency Numbers**

➡Ambulance ≊tel: 295133. ➡ Fire ≊tel: 191, 252011, 252022.

Police emergency stel: 199.
Police headquarters stel: 282541, 284764.
Red Cross stel:682600, 682368
Traffic Control Branch stel:298651 Department of Post & Telecommunication \*\*tel: 591384,

Immigration etel: 286434. Ministry of Education @tel:545500m 562390 Ministry of Sports @tel: 370604, 370605 Ministry of Communications \*\*tel: 067-407037. Myanma Post & Telecommunication (MPT) \*\*tel: 067-

Myanma Post & Tele-communication (Accountant Dept) €tel: 254563, 370768.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs @tel: 067-412009, 067-412344. Ministry of Health @tel: 067-411358-9. Yangon City Development Committee @tel: 248112.

### HOSPITALS

591387.

Central Women's Hospital @tel: 221013, 222811. Children Hospital @tel: 221421, 222807 Ear, Nose & Throat Hospital @tel: 543888 Naypyitaw Hospital (emergency) \*\*etel: 420096. Worker's Hospital \*\*etel: 554444, 554455, 554811. Yangon Children Hospital @tel: 222807, 222808, 222809. Yangon General Hospital (East) @tel: 292835, 292836, 292837. Yangon General Hospital (New) etel: 384493, 384494, Yangon General Hospital (West) etel: 222860, 222861,

Yangon General Hospital (YGH) ≘tel: 256112, 256123,

281443, 256131.

**ELECTRICITY** Power Station @tel:414235

POST OFFICE

General Post Office 39, Bo Aung Kyaw St. (near British Council Library). 🕾 tel:

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT Yangon International Airport \*\* tel: 662811.

VANGON PORT Shipping (Coastal vessels) \*\*tel: 382722

RAILWAYS

Railways information <a>\*stel: 274027, 202175-8.</a>

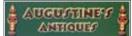
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### **EMYANMARTIMES**

January 28 - February 3, 2013 THE MYANMAR TIMES

### Germany football coach calls for tighter stadium security

BERLIN – After hooligans forced a Bundesliga game to be delayed by throwing lit flares last week, Germany coach Joachim Loew is leading the call for tighter security measures in football stadiums.

On January 19, hooligans in the Eintracht Frankfurt fan block forced their team's 3-1 defeat at Baver Leverkusen to be delayed by six minutes after lighting flares

and setting off fireworks.
Referee Wolfgang Stark marched both teams off the pitch amidst safety concerns for the players after the pyrotechnics started landing on a corner of the pitch.

"It is absolutely unacceptable

when a game needs to be interrupted like that," said Loew, who was in

the stadium.
"When missiles are thrown thereby endangering other spectators, it's extremely important to take action against these people with all the power available.

After clubs in Germany's top two leagues voted on December 12 to adopt controversial new security regulations, outlined by the German Football League (DFL), safety at football grounds remains a hot topic here.

A contentious point of the new regulations involves the clubs' right to demand full body searches for any fans suspected of carrying pyrotechnics.

The images of masked Frankfurt fans waving flares at Leverkusen's BayArena only strengthens the argument for strip searching all fans going to attend a game, says Juergen Klopp, coach of German champions Borussia Dortmund.

"We thought we had a result we could live with," said Klopp referring to the regulations, which were modified after fans' protests

"It's bad when you see images like this. There is nothing more detrimental to a discussion than if you see pictures like those."

The German Football Federation (DFB) are expected to impose a six-figure fine and insist Frankfurt play a game behind closed doors as this is not the first time Eintracht have appeared before the DFB's disciplinary committee.

According to German magazine Kicker, the Hessen club has already paid  $473,000 \operatorname{euros} (US\$629,450) \operatorname{in}$ DFB fines for their fans' behaviour since 2002.

Leverkusen chairman Wolfgang Holzhauser has said he wants to pass any fines his club may face, for their part as hosts, onto the fans responsible and wants to increase the price of tickets for away fans.

"The rockets flew directly onto the pitch, near to players. It didn't look so dramatic, but if it hit one of the players that is an attempt at grievous bodily harm," said Holzhaeuser.

Eintracht can escape heavy punishment if they help identify those responsible for the January 19 pyrotechnics.

"Only if the culprits are tracked down and pointed out to the disciplinary committee can clubs escape heavy punishments on a regular basis," said DFB vicepresident Rainer Koch.

"Eintracht are on board with



Ray Rice of the Baltimore Ravens runs the ball to score a touchdown in the second quarter against the New England Patriots during the 2013 AFC Championship game at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, Massachusetts, on January 20

### **Brotherly rivalry set as** Ravens reach Super Bowl

FOXBORO, Massachusetts - Joe Flacco threw three touchdown passes in the second half on January 20 as the Baltimore Ravens rallied to beat New England 28-13 to reach the second Super Bowl in club history.

Flacco carved up the New England defence as the Ravens avenged a loss to the Patriots in last year's American Football Conference championship game in Foxboro.

The Ravens advanced to their first National Football League championship contest since the 2000 season and will face San Francisco, who also won on the road on January 29, beating the top seeded Atlanta Falcons 28-24 in another come-from-behind thriller in the National Conference title game.

"Last year we came up a bit short but the guys came

out in the second half today and made plays," Flacco said. "We needed to put pressure on them like that and it worked pretty well."

The win means Ravens veteran Ray Lewis will cap his career with a Super Bowl appearance. And two brothers will coach against each other in Super Bowl 47. John Harbaugh's Ravens will square off against his younger brother Jim's San Francisco team on February 3 in New Orleans.

"It will be a great football game," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said. "Two great teams squaring off, I can't wait.'

Flacco sliced up the Patriot's defence by throwing three touchdown passes after halftime, as the Ravens scored 21-consecutive points at Gillette Stadium. Flacco completed 21-of-36 passes on the game.

"Absolutely amazing,"

said 13-time Pro Bowler Lewis, who says he'll retire at the end of this, his 17th NFL campaign. "Our team is awesome. It is our time. Every man out there sacrificed for each other and we did earn our way to the Super Bowl."

Anguan Boldin caught two of Flacco's touchdown passes and Ray Rice ran for a TD.

Tom Brady set the alltime NFL record for career playoff yards, but he couldn't get the job done when it mattered the most as the Ravens denied New England a record-tying eighth Super Bowl berth.

"Both teams knew each other well," said Patriots defensive back Devin McCourty. "It came down to man versus man on a lot of different situations.

"They came up with way more big plays than we did. We needed to make those plays if we wanted to win

Brady completed just 29of-54 passes for 320 yards with two interceptions. He had one touchdown pass to Wes Welker.

One of the key turning points was when New England's Steven Ridley took a huge hit to the helmet from Baltimore's Bernard Polland and fumbled the ball away in the fourth quarter.

Ridley immediately went to the dressing room for medical treatment and didn't return.

A New England offence that had averaged nearly 35 points per game in the regular season punted the ball five times, including three inside Baltimore territory.

Baltimore defeated the New York Giants 34-7 in their only other Super Bowl appearance. -AFP

### Surfers ride high on Morocco's winter waves

TAGHAZOUT, Morocco - $Fleeing\,the\,gloom\,of\,northern$ Europe in search of warm winter waves, surfers are flocking to a fishing village on Morocco's Atlantic coast now selling itself as a top surf destination.

It may be a world away from Australia's Gold Coast, or Hawaii's Waimea Bay.

But with enough wind, the ocean breakers at Taghazout swell to four or five metres (13 to 16 feet) and are usually at least 300 metres long, making it the Maghreb country's best surf spot, according to Moroccan pro Boukel Simo.

Morocco's first "surf festival", held at Taghazout in late December, caught the attention in particular of board riders fed up with the ice and cold of the northern hemisphere winter.

"Surfers arrived from all over, mostly Europe," said Mohammed, who repairs surfboards in Taghazout.

"The conditions in December are perfect: winter waves and sunshine.'

Add to that the blue skies, mild winter temperatures the sea averaged  $\hat{1}9$  Celsius during the three-day festival - and an international airport at nearby Agadir, there is plenty about Taghazout to impress sun-deprived surfers.

Phil, a New Zealander living in London, who like his Finnish friend Antton had flown out for the festival, was sold on Morocco's surf.

Less than five hours by olane from northern Europe, the only alternative is the Canary Islands, he explained, "and that's more expensive".

"In Europe it's cold and dark at the moment." he added.

The Cecille family, from La Rochelle on France's Atlantic coast, arrived in Agadir, but not with the intention of spending their holiday in Morocco's top beach resort. They headed immediately for Taghazout.

"It's been two months since I last surfed. It's great here," said Baptiste, the 17-year-

The village is already a victim of its own success, however, with some visitors complaining of crowded waters during peak season.

"Avoid the Christmas holidays. ... The whole of Europe is out there," wrote one contributor on the website allosurf.net.

The village now hosts numerous "surf camps", touted by travel agencies, and offering accommodation and courses in a water sport that has flourished since the

Surfboards lie alongside fishing boats pulled up on the wide sandy beach at Taghazout, where the tourism trade has provided work for locals like Omar, an instructor who works at the surf camps.

The high season runs until April.

"After that, there aren't many people here," said Xavier Frederic, a Frenchman who has run a pizzeria in the village since 2005, and whose 20 tables were fully booked for the duration of the festival.

The event's organiser, Mehdi Ouhabbi, is seizing the opportunity to clean up Taghazout's beaches and raise concerns about the environment.

### Less than five hours by plane from northern **Europe**, the only alternative is the Canary Islands.7

"In one day, we filled more than 200 bags of litter that we found on the beach," he said, pointing to a pile of rubbish nearby, beneath which a trickle of waste water from the village flowed directly out onto the sandy shore.

"Running water arrived here three years ago, but there are no plans for water treatment facilities," with the local authorities citing a lack of funds, Ouhabbi said.

The waste water "smells bad and it makes the surfers' eyes sting", he said.

Ouhabbi admitted there was little hope the village would retain its laid-back surfers' paradise character, pointing to plans for a vast hotel and golf complex in the area.

"At the beginning it was just a few hippies," said Marco, a Frenchman who has lived in the area for 25 years. "But it could become big business, a new Cote d'Azur," he added.

### New division highlights frailties of MNL teams

By Aung Si Hein

MYANMAR Football Federation has revealed details of a nine-team second division in the Myanmar National League, with matches to be held from mid-February to the end of June.

The formation of MNL2 on January 22 comes despite the travails of clubs such as Hantharwady United FC and Mawrawady FC, which have been on the verge of folding, and the generally shaky foundations of the national league, which relies on the largesse of businessmen to bankroll teams.

The federation has been preparing for a second division since early 2012 and argues it will help improve professionalism in Myanmar football, as it will control quality in the top tier. The bottom two clubs in the Myanmar National League will be relegated to the second division at the end of each season.

Unsurprisingly for Myanmar football fans, Chin United FC and Mawrawady FC have been relegated to the new second division following disastrous seasons in the top flight that saw them end the year at the foot of the table.

Division two matches will begin on February 15 and the season will conclude on June 28, with matches played at Yangon's Aung San, Padonmar and Salin stadiums.

Despite launching to much fanfare in 2009, Myanmar National League teams are still struggling to generate income to cover expenses, with owners left to pick up the tab.

After his team's weak performance last year, Hantharwady United owner U Aung Moe Kyaw of International Beverages Trading Company requested permission to hand back his club licence to MFF. Eventually a new partner was brought into the club to share the financial burden.

MFF president U Zaw Zaw has

publicly stated that the federation is a non-profit body working for the betterment of football in Myanmar and has no responsibility to save struggling clubs.

U Ye Myo Hein, an MFF official who is in charge of running the new division, said the federation was trying to attract sponsorship to help cover costs but would not hand out money to the teams.

"We cannot support MNL 2 clubs with private money. We supplied K20 million to each MNL 1 club because we received sponsorship money. But we do want to make the prizemoney bigger so we are trying to lure sponsors to division two," he told *The Myanmar Times*.

Clubs in the new league insist they will be taking the competition seriously.

Chin United FC manager U John Tat Hlei said he had been surprised at how his side struggled in the MNL last year and is looking to bring in foreign talent to bounce back to the top division quickly.

"We thought that we could compete well in MNL without any foreign players but we were wrong. Drawing lessons from the serious mistakes we made last season, this year we're making contracts with three Nigerians and we are also looking for another Asian footballer. We want to be promoted back to division one so we don't want to make the same mistakes," U John Tat Hlei said.

Among the other teams in MNL 2 is Horizon FC, which has been formed by Horizon International School

"Sports and education go together and we want to be part of the journey. Myanmar football is really rising in the region and has a bright future ahead. Our aim is to [be one of] the 14 teams of MNL 1," said Omer Cliek, vice president of Horizon International School.

Horizon has hired two Turkish players, a foreign fitness coach and a foreign head coach to lead its football team, he said.

### Irked readers sue Armstrong

California – Two readers once inspired by Lance Armstrong's books and now irked by his confession of doping are suing the disgraced cyclist in a California court.

Public affairs consultant Rob Stutzman and chef Jonathan Wheeler say they want their money back in the wake of Armstrong's "ignominious public exposure and fall from glory," in a lawsuit filed in a US district court on January 22.

The two claim they and others "would not have purchased the books had they known the true facts concerning Armstrong's misconduct and his admitted involvement in a sports doping scandal."

The lawsuit also names several publishing firms involved in the production of Armstrong's books *It's Not About the Bike* and *Every Second Counts*.

"Although Stutzman does not buy or read many books, he found Armstrong's book incredibly compelling and recommended the book to several friends." – AFP

### Snedeker, Choi share lead in US

CALIFORNIA – Defending champion Brandt Snedeker fired a seven-under par 65 to share the first-round lead with South Korea's Choi at the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines on January 24.

Snedeker finished without a bogey on Torrey Pines' more forgiving North Course, while Choi had eight birdies and one bogey on the South Course.

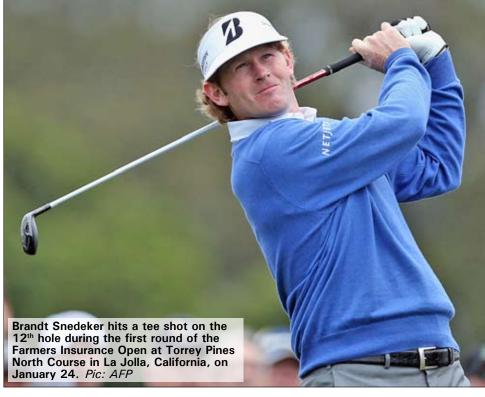
Tiger Woods, making his US PGA Tour season debut in the US\$6.1 million event, emerged from an erratic round on the South Course three off the lead on 68.

Snedeker and Choi were one stroke in front of a group of eight players sharing third place on 66. Former Masters champion Mike Weir of Canada headlined the group, which also included England's Ross Fisher and American Charles Howell – who lost in a playoff on January 20 at the Humana Challenge.

Canadian Adam Hadwin, Billy Horschel, Josh Teater, Luke List and Scott Stallings were also in the group at six-under.

Nine more players, including Bo Van Pelt and England's David Lynn, were tied on five-under 67

Woods headlined another big group on 68 that also included Japan's Ryo



Ishikawa, Fiji's Vijay Singh and South Korea's Lee.

Woods opened his 2013 season at the European Tour event at Abu Dhabi last week, missing the cut after taking a penalty for an improper drop.

On January 24, he started promisingly with a birdie at the first on the South Course where Woods won

the most recent of his 14 majors at the 2008 US Open.

But Woods three-putted for a double-bogey at the par-four fourth. He responded with a birdie at the fifth and an eagle at the par-five sixth where he holed out from a bunker.

Woods had four more birdies before he was

slowed again by bogeys at 15 and 17. "I made a few mistakes out there, but I made some nice plays as well," the former long-time world number one said.

Snedeker certainly wasn't counting out Woods. In addition to his US Open triumph in 2008, Woods has won the PGA Tour event at Torrey Pines six times,

including four in a row from 2005-2008.

"I think he's won here more times than I've won on tour, so I think he knows the place pretty well," Snedeker said.

"He's very similar to me. He loves putting on these greens."

Ishikawa, the 21-year-old Japanese star playing his first full season as a PGA Tour member, had five birdies and a bogey on the North Course.

"I've done my goal today, so I'll focus on tomorrow," said Ishikawa, who recently bought a house in nearby Carlsbad, California.

Snedeker is one of the coholders of the North Course record of 61.

After teeing off on 10, he birdied 14, then strung together four birdies in a row from the 16th through the first, then added backto-back birdies at seven and eight for good measure.

"These greens bring out my best," Snedeker said. "I put in a lot of hard work yesterday on the putting green because I wasn't real happy with the way I was rolling it. I came out here today and rolled it the way I wanted to."

Choi's eight birdies included four in a row on the back nine and he played the four par-fives in four-under. – *AFP* 

### Pre-SEA Games event this month

A SOUTHEAST Asian Games warm-up event will be held from February 19 to 26 to evaluate the progress of Myanmar's athletes, Minister for Sports U Tint San said last week.

Twenty-nine events are to be held in the Union Government Cup, he said at a press conference.

"We have planned it so athletes can gain some experience [of what the SEA games will be like]. They will have the same food and accommodation as during the [SEA] Games," the minister said.

The events will also help athletes familiarise with the weather conditions and venues. The opening and closing ceremonies of the pre-SEA Games will be held at the Wunnatheikdi stadium, but the sporting events will be held at a range of sporting facilities, a Ministry of Sports official said

"Around 5000 athletes will take part in the events. ... They will be accommodated at the games village," he said. – Translated by Thit Lwin



### TIMESSPORT



# I'm still on the pace, Federer insists after Murray defeat

By Robert Smith

MELBOURNE – Roger Federer dismissed suggestions he was slipping off the pace at the top of men's tennis after his five-set loss to Andy Murray in the Australian Open semi-finals on January 25.

Federer, at 31 the senior member of the "Big Four", went down in a fourhour duel with third seed Murray as he suffered his third straight semi-final defeat in Melbourne.

But the world number two, who holds a record 17 Grand Slam titles, insisted "nothing has changed" in his matchups against his younger rivals Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Murray.

"Well, nothing has changed. I've played these guys, what, 60 times, the three guys around me in the rankings," Federer said.

"So we know each other really well. We play each other very close very often. Keep on trading wins and losses." Federer said Djokovic, bidding for his fourth Australian title against Murray in the January 27 final, has taken a step forward but he said he was excited about his prospects for the year ahead.

"Novak has done probably the best job getting more wins than losses. That's why he's ranked where he is," he said.

"I enjoy the matches with Rafa (Nadal), Novak and also Andy again tonight. It's nice playing five sets against him. It was tough tennis. I enjoy that.

"So I go from here with a good feeling for the year. I didn't play a tournament leading in, so now obviously I know where my level is at.

"I also know that I have even more time to work on my game, work on my fitness this year. It's something I'm excited about."

Federer acknowledged he was always chasing in his semi-final against Murray, but he said he had his chances.

"Obviously, I was down in the score basically from the start. Definitely it was more of a chase. I was able to level it a couple of times," he said.

"It was a tough match. I had my chances. Obviously you're going to go through a five setter with some regrets.

"But overall I think Andy was a bit better than I was tonight. I had to find my range a little bit early on and then adjust my game style as well, the way I was playing.

"So he did a good job of getting me there. I was hoping to do a bit better, but overall I'm pretty pleased with the tournament. I played good tennis. I'm moving well and was fit in the 10 sets I played in the last two matches.

"I'm upbeat about the tournament, but it's disappointing, going out in five. You know, it's not the first time it's happened here."

Federer has now lost in five sets five times at the Australian Open, including the 2009 final when defeat to Nadal left him in tears. -AFP

### Aussie selectors make changes for WI clash

SYDNEY-Australia brought batsman Aaron Finch back into their one-day squad unveiled on January 25 for the first of two cricket internationals against the West Indies next month.

David Hussey made way for Finch, paying the price for what the selectors said were "concerns" with the batting performance in a recent series against Sri Lanka.

Australia levelled the series 2-2 in Hobart on January 23 but struggled against Sri Lanka's swing bowlers and looked to have been saved by the rain in Sydney on January 20.

"David Hussey has been dropped from the squad as the NSP (National Selection Panel) keeps a constant eye on the future," said national selector John Inverarity.

Inverarity said skipper Clarke should be fit to play the opening game of the series of five on February 1 at the WACA.

The West Indies also take on Australia at Canberra on February 6, at Melbourne two days later and Brisbane on February 13. – *AFP* 

### Real Madrid deny rift over Mourinho

MADRID – Real Madrid president Florentino Perez last week denied a report that top players had demanded coach Jose Mourinho leave before next season, warning the club: "It's him or us."

Top sports daily *Marca* splashed on the front page its claim of an ultimatum delivered to chairman Florentino Perez on January 22.

"President, it's Mou or us," headlined the paper in its account of the meeting between captains Iker Casillas and Sergio Ramos and the club management.

According to the paper, they told Perez that several players were ready to leave the club if the self-anointed "Special One" remained in charge for the next season.

"What was published is simply a lie," Perez told a news conference at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium on January 24.

"I have come to deny a report that is simply false and which, in my opinion, is aimed at destabilising the club."

Perez, a construction magnate, said he had met with Casillas and Ramos as well as Real Madrid director general Jose Angel Sanchez but denied the conversation described by Marca took place.

"The meeting was to agree on the bonuses to be given players for various competitions. It is completely false that during this meeting we received such an ultimatum," he said.

"Absolutely nobody from the newspaper called us to confirm the information that was published," he added. Spanish media have been

Spanish media have been full of reports of a rift in the dressing room between Mourinho and heavyweights like Casillas and Ramos complaining about his aloof style.

Real Madrid supporters have also started to lose faith in Mourinho, according to a poll published in pro-Real Madrid Spanish sports newspaper Marca earlier this month.

Mourinho was jeered at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium earlier this month after he benched Casillas for two matches in what has seen as an attempt to assert his authority.

Real Madrid won the Spanish league last year but are lagging in third this season with 40 points, 15 behind arch-rivals and leaders Barcelona. – *AFP* 

