



■ NATIONAL  
Vice President,  
Commander-in-Chief  
arrive back from India  
► PAGE 2

■ NATIONAL  
House catches  
fire in Kaungna  
Village  
► PAGE 2



■ NATIONAL  
Vice President  
U Henry Van Thio delivers  
speech on International  
Migrants Day  
► PAGE 2

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Monday, 19 December 2016

## Brief description of the violent attacks commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> October in Maungtaw district, Rakhine State

The Information Committee of the State Counsellor's Office released this question-and-answer interview on 16 December. The statement confirmed that the attacks were systematically planned in advance and carried out by the Aqa Mul Mujahidin organisation, which is active in Maungtaw, and linked to terrorist groups. The statement also said that a tour of the Maungtaw area will be given to local and international media starting today until 22 December.



Questions and Answers regarding Maungtaw Situation, Rakhine State

Q - What triggered the recent events in Maungtaw?

A - Since after the conflicts in 2012, Rakhine was a peace and tranquil state where no religious persecution or clashes between different communities ex-

isted until 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 when around 400 violent attackers started to commit their surprise night attacks to 3 border outposts in Maungtaw Township. With further numeral attacks carried out by those attackers, the joint combat

operations of Tatmadaw and Police forces against them continue till today to restore peace and security in the unsound areas.

Q - Are there any loss of lives or weapons and injuries from the government

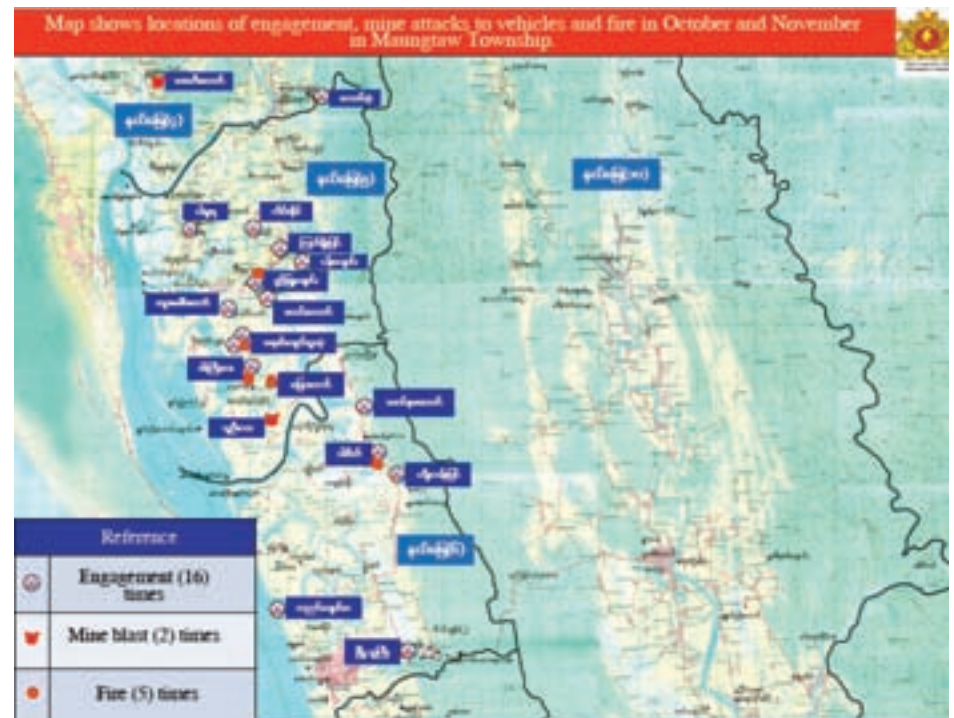
side in 9/10 attacks on 3 border outposts?

A - Yes, there were some tragic losses and wounded. As a result of these attacks, 9 members of the Myanmar Police Force were killed, and 51 weapons of various types and 10130 rounds of

assorted ammunition, 47 bayonets, and 164 magazines were lost. Following the defensive actions of the police, the bodies of 8 attackers were found, and 2 attackers were captured alive. 1 homemade pistol, 2 rounds of ammunition, and

1 magazine were seized. Apart from 26 weapons, which recouped back amid of 67 weapons lost from both Tatmadaw and Police Department, there're 41 weapons still left to recover until 15-12-2016.

>> SEE PAGE 3



## Independent journalists to tour conflict areas in northern Rakhine

A GROUP of independent journalists including local and foreign media will tour Maungtaw township today, which is still under a security lockdown following deadly attacks on border guard posts in October and subsequent vio-

lent clashes last month.

The media team that will participate in the three-day tour include journalists from the Myanmar News Media Council, the Central News Bureau, the Mizzima Media Group, the Myanmar Times, the

Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club, Kyodo News, European Press Photo-EPA, MITV, 7 Day and the Myanmar News Agency.

"As Maungtaw is still a military operations area, the Ministry of Informa-

tion selected a suitable number of journalists from the broadcast media, print media and news agencies," said the report of the Myanmar News Agency. The news and photos collected by the media group will be handed out to other media

via the web portal of the Ministry, said the report.

The journalists will be escorted by security forces as they are go to an areas where the attacks occurred, said the government's spokesman U Zaw Htay.

The move comes after Mr Kofi Annan's call on the government on 6<sup>th</sup> December to allow access to information in northern Rakhine in order to refute widespread rumours about rights abuses in the area.—GNLM

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Vice President U Myint Swe and Senior General Min Aung Hlaing are welcomed by officials. PHOTO: MNA

## Vice President, Commander-in-Chief arrive back from India

VICE PRESIDENT U Myint Swe and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing arrived back Yangon yesterday after attending a ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary of the demise of King Thibaw held in Ratnagiri, India.

They were welcomed at the Yangon International Airport by

Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein, Chief of Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Mya Tun Oo and senior military officers from the Office of the Ministry of Defence, Commander of Yangon Command, Yangon Region Development Affairs Minister, Indian Ambassador to Myanmar, Indian military attaché and officials.

The ceremony was held on Friday with donation to the Members of the Sangha, merit sharing and submission of the letter of supplication to the deceased King by the royalties.

The late king Thibaw, queen Supayalat and two infant daughters were exiled to Ratnagiri, India, after abdicating the throne.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Appointment of Ambassador agreed

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr. Andrii Beshta as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, with residence in Bangkok.

Mr. Andrii Beshta was born on 14th December 1976 in Rozhyshche, Ukraine. He was graduated from the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Faculty of International Relations in 1998. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine in 1998 and served at various capacities. He was Acting Director-General of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine from 2011 to 2016. Since January 2016, he has been serving as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Kingdom of Thailand.

Mr. Andrii Beshta is married, and has two sons and a daughter.—*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

## Fire breaks out in Ngakhuya (North) Village

LOCAL police put out a fire at a tent in Ngakhuya Village in Maungdaw Friday.

The fire broke out at 9:40

pm and destroyed the tent owned by Mammaud Myar, but did not spread to other houses nearby.

—*Myanmar News Agency*

## House catches fire in Kaungna Village

RESIDENTS in Kaungna Village, Maungdaw, had to extinguish a fire yesterday at about noon that started while meals were being cooked at the thatched house of villager Mammad Zawlal.

The fire was successful-

ly put out at about 12:45 not to spread to neighbouring houses. About Ks30,000 worth of property was damaged during the fire.

Action has been taken in accordance with the law.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Vice President U Henry Van Thio delivers speech on International Migrants Day

VICE PRESIDENT U Henry Van Thio delivered a speech on International Migrants Day 2016 at the International Convention Centre (2) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

In his speech, the Vice President said that the number of migrant workers has been increasing day by day due to people in search of job opportunities as a result of globalization, economic development of individual countries, better job opportunities and the gap between different social strata.

It is necessary for world countries to try to achieve international positive outcomes by fully abiding by the human rights of migrants and sharing responsibilities of countries of origin, medium countries and destination countries, the Vice President pointed out.

Boat people are neither political asylum seekers nor refugees but victims of human trafficking, and Myanmar has been providing humanitarian assistance to them by providing shelter, food and healthcare before sending them back properly to their countries of origin, according to the Vice President.

He continued that remittances from Myanmar migrant workers in other countries contribute to the economic development of the country while the workers bring back many benefits upon their return like reapplication of skills and knowledge gained abroad, capacity building of local workers, reduction of poverty by creating job opportunities at home and higher levels of socio-economic status.

It is necessary for countries to use safe and lawful management practices and embrace collaboration, the Vice President said. Myanmar is cooperating with regional countries so that Myanmar migrant workers can enjoy their rights, protection and safety, he said.

The Vice President pointed out that countries of origin of migrant workers, governments of countries that receive them, labour organizations, employer organizations and civil society groups all need to find out ways to solve problems facing migrant workers in order to implement the goals and policies of the ASEAN Declaration of the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers.



Vice President U Henry Van Thio delivers a speech at the ceremony to mark the International Migrants Day 2016 in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

In conclusion, the Vice President said that safe and secure migration depends not only on governments but also on individual knowledge and protection provided by society. He urged all to help migrant workers by recognizing their courage, perseverance and dreams and to encourage them to create a prosperous world and to bring benefits to the host countries.

After VP's speech, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe explained the measures taken for migrant workers.

Later, Mr Kieran Gormen-Best, Chief of Mission of The International Organization for Migration (IOM), read out the message of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Director-General of the

IOM for the event.

Afterwards, the Union Minister presented certificates of honour to donors who helped with the repatriation of detained Myanmar nationals from 11 camps in Malaysia to Myanmar.

After the ceremony, the Vice President posed for documentary photos with guests and went round the exhibition booths to look at what was being exhibited.

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister Lt-Gen Sein Win, Dr Myint Htwe, Ministers from State/Region governments, Hluttaw representatives, the UN and INGOs and the media.

The event was organized with the aim of making aware of the endeavors of the Union Government to protect the rights of Myanmar migrant workers abroad, promoting the rights of migrant workers and positive outcomes, helping migrant workers by dissemination of knowledge to them and raising the social status of families of migrant workers.

Myanmar has been the 147th member country of the IOM 2012 and this is the fifth time Myanmar has held the annual event.—*Myanmar News Agency*



The number of Muslim villages destroyed in fire in Maungtaw Township (16-12-2016)									
No	Village Tract	Village Tract	House		Household		Population		House destroyed in fire
			Previous	Now	Previous	Now	Previous	Now	
1.	Dagunur	Dagunur	392	182	255	255	3004	2196	210
2.	Myontawng	Myontawng	652	621	432	429	5651	5435	12
3.	Kyikampyin	Watabik	318	92	255	-	2416	-	226
4.	Prasapthachang	Prasapthachang	135	112	97	97	996	996	43
5.	Ye Khathung Gwam	Ye Khathung Gwam	527	250	401	-	3620	-	277
Total			2016	1888	1912	1210	21338	14062	768

## Brief description of the violent attacks commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> October in Maungtaw district, Rakhine State

>> FROM PAGE 1  
Q – Who or which group led these 3 strikes?

A – According to the initial findings of the interrogations of the captured two, the attacks in Maungtaw Township were systematically planned in advance over a long period of time, assisted by foreign funding and the support of members of foreign terrorist organizations. The attacks were carried out by the Aqa Mul Mujahidin organization which is active in Maungtaw, and linked to the RSO terrorist groups. . The leader of the Aqa Mul Mujahidin is Havistoohar, a religious and social extremist. On 11th October, Havistoohar published a video to social network which was contained a declaration of Jihad on Myanmar. He similarly broadcast sev-

eral footages aiming to boost foreign funding and supports.

Q - Are there any similar attacks happened since after the 9/10 incidents?

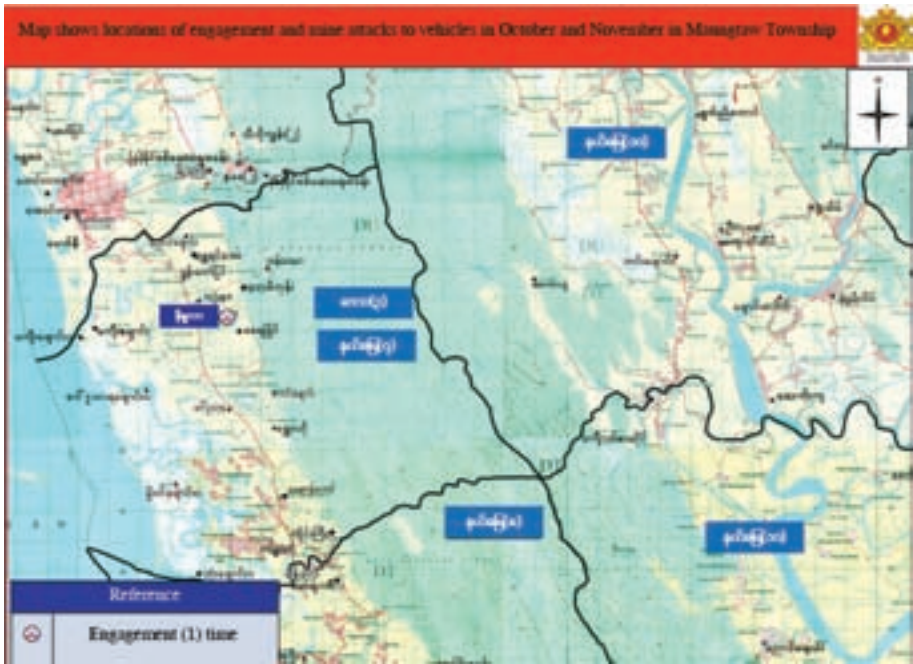
A – Yes, there are. Overall, 11 additional strikes were prevailed all over the infected areas. So far, seven members of the Tatmataw have given their lives and three wounded, two weapons lost and four strikers were shoot to death.

Q - What has the Government managed to do regarding ending the tragic Rakhine conflicts? What will be the further actions?

A - We specified these areas as operation field on the day that armed attackers carried out the 9/10 incidents and issued

curfew under section 144. One more fact is that the Government is tackling the events by forming a Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace and Development in Rakhine State chaired by the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Su Kyi since 30th May 2016. Moreover, the Government is striving to get solution by founding Rakhine Advisory Commission led by Mr. Kofi Annan. In addition, State Counsellor Office Information Committee has been formed. Investigation Commission led by Vice-President U Myint Swe has also been formed and ran to take actions. Furthermore, aids have been supported quite a few times for local people living in Maungtaw. Humanitarian aids have been given by such authorities as Ministry of Social Wel-

Table shows the number of engagements and mine blasts in Maungtaw Township				
No.	Date	Engagement	Mine attacks to vehicles	Remark
1	9-10-2016	3	-	
2	10-10-2016	1	-	
3	11-10-2016	1	-	
4	12-10-2016	4	-	
5	13-10-2016	2	-	
6	14-10-2016	1	-	
7	18-10-2016	1	-	
8	3-11-2016	1	-	
9	9-11-2016	1	-	
10	12-11-2016	4	2	
11	13-11-2016	2	-	
total		21	2	

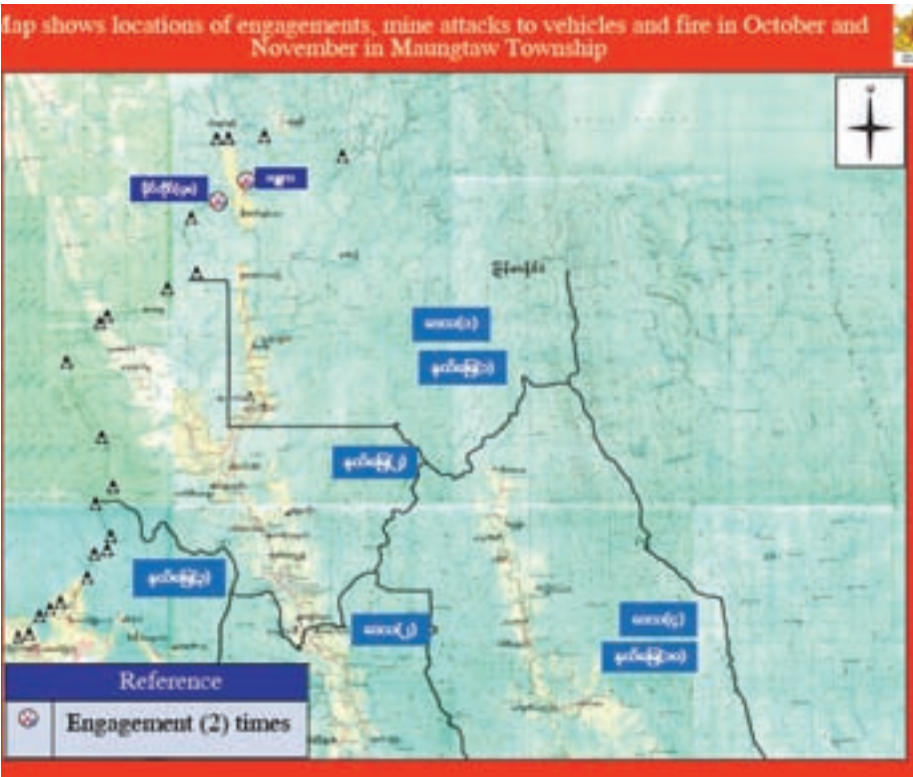


fare Relief and Resettlement, Ministry of Border Affairs, Rakhine State Government and such international organizations as UNHCR and WFP, and local volunteers and donors since 4th November. Additional assistances are continuously supplied to

the required villages. In terms of free media opportunity, Independent Media Team which includes local and international press-es will take a tour within Maungtaw region from 19th to 22nd December. It has been announced to return back the weapons

taken by violent attackers in the concerned areas. Peace is the only way to settle today's conditions and it will certainly take time to bring peacefully coexisted communities.

(State Counsellor's Office Information Committee)





# LOCAL Business

## Border trade hits over \$4.8b this fiscal year

MYANMAR'S border trade value counted up until 9 December this fiscal year reached over US\$4.8 billion, an increase of over \$160 million compared with the same time last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 April and 9 December of this year, the trade value totalled \$4.865 billion. Border trade exports amounted to \$2.933 billion while the total imports reached \$1.871 billion.

This period last year, border trade was worth \$4.704 billion, including \$2.922 billion from the export sector and \$1.781 billion from the import sector.

The border trade camps with China include Muse, Lweje, Kanpikete, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung. The country has carried out border trade with neighbouring Thailand through the Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthaung, Myeik, Hteekhee and Mawtaung border gates. The cross-border trade camps between Myanmar and Bangladesh are Sittwe and Maungdaw, while the country trades directly with India via the Tamu and Reed border gates.

Among all border gates, the Muse border has the highest volume and value of total border trade.



Trucks line up near Muse 105-Mile Trade Zone in northern Shan State. FILE PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

Myanmar mostly imports personal goods, industrial raw materials, construction equipment, automobiles and capital goods mainly from China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Germany, France and Hong Kong. It exports agriculture products, fish-

eries products, mining products, forest products and industrial goods.

According to the second five-year National Development Plan for the period between fiscal years 2016-2017 and 2020-2021, efforts are being made by the

ministry to promote the country's export sector by shipping new valued-added products from the manufacturing sector within the next five years.

Roughly 80 % of Myanmar's total external trade is through sea routes.—*Khine Khant*

## Trade using ITCs at borders reaches over Ks6.9billion

TRADE value with the Individual Trading Card (ITC) at border gates hit over Ks6.9 billion from 1 April to 2 December of this fiscal year, according to the Commerce Ministry.

The Tamu border trade camp is reported to have the largest volume of trade with a value of Ks5.118 billion.

Over the first nine months of this fiscal year, the export value with ITCs was over Ks642 million, while the import value with ITCs was Ks6.278 billion.

Trade values were over Ks2.704b at Myawady trade camp; over Ks526m at Muse border gate; Ks481m at Tachilek trade camp; over Ks1m at Lwejel border; over Ks1.5b at Kanpikete border gate; over Ks225m at Kawthaung border town; over Ks326m at Reed border trade camp; over Ks578m at Mawtaung; over Ks10m at Kengtung and over Ks1m at Maese trade camp.

From FY2012-2013 to date, the ministry issued a total of 1,152 ITCs to businesspersons to trade at borders. The commerce ministry permitted 292 ITCs in FY2012-13; 261 cards in FY2013-14; 317 cards in FY2014-15; 146 cards in FY2015-16 and 136 cards from April and 2 December of this FY.

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

## Yangon City Development Committee plans waste-to-energy facility in Thakayta Township in Yangon region

YANGON City Development Committee is putting forth continuous efforts to establish a new waste-to-energy factory in Thakayta Township under its master plan, said U Aung Myint Maw, deputy head of YCDC's Pollution Control and Cleansing Department.

The new plan aims to reduce

the city's air, land and water pollutions caused by waste items, with a target to generate over 150 megawatts of electricity obtained from garbage, he added.

The department usually disposes of garbage collected from six downtown townships to Daweigyaung and Hteinbin, which are located about 16 miles from

downtown Yangon. The waste materials from the eastern and southern parts of Yangon mostly go to Daweigyaung, and rubbish from Yangon's west and north are disposed of in Hteinbin.

Generally, trash produced from downtown areas and related townships have been sent to Thakayta Township. That is why

the authorities wish to implement a waste-to-energy plant there.

Waste collection in Yangon is estimated at over 2,000 tonnes a day. The YCDC collects garbage from every township and disposes it to designated areas including Shwepyitha, Hlawga in Mingaladon, Dagon Seikkan and Dala townships.—*200*

## Global Community Makes Record \$75 Billion Commitment to End Extreme Poverty

A coalition of more than 60 donor and borrower governments agreed today to ratchet up the fight against extreme poverty with a record \$75 billion commitment for the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's fund for the poorest countries.

"This is a pivotal step in the movement to end extreme poverty," World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim said. "The commitments made by our partners, combined with IDA's innovations to crowd in the pri-

vate sector and raise funds from capital markets, will transform the development trajectory of the world's poorest countries.

The funding will enable IDA to dramatically scale up development interventions to tackle conflict, fragility and violence, forced displacement, climate change, and gender inequality; and promote governance and institution building, as well as jobs and economic transformation—areas of special focus over the next three years..

"With this innovative pack-

age, the world's poorest countries – especially the most fragile and vulnerable – will get the support they need to grow, create opportunities for people, and make themselves more resilient to shocks and crises," said Kyle Peters, World Bank Group Interim Managing Director and Co-Chair of the IDA18 negotiations. "IDA's focus on issues like climate change, gender equality and preventing conflict and violence will also contribute to greater stability and progress around the world."—*World Bank*

## Over 14,000 workers took overseas jobs in seven countries last month

MORE THAN 14,000 Myanmar workers officially accepted overseas jobs in seven countries last month, according to official figures issued by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

In November alone, over 11,000 people out of 14,803 went to neighbouring Thailand last month, while 2,562 others were legally sent to Malaysia, followed by 328 individuals to Japan, 97 workers to Korea, 75 to Singapore, 12 to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and nine to Qatar.

A total of 19,204 local job seekers also joined suitable jobs across the country last month. Of them, 1,041 people are now serving as government staff nationwide. The commercial capital of Yangon topped the chart with over 13,300 new employees, followed by Bago Region with 1,858 and Mandalay with 840.

The ministry has put forth concerted efforts to create more domestic employment opportunities for local job hunters.—*Myanmar News Agency*



## Malaysia confirms its eighth Zika virus case

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia confirmed an eighth Zika virus case on Sunday, involving a 67-year-old man who first showed symptoms in late November.

An online statement from the Health Ministry's director general, Noor Hisham Abdullah, did not specify if the man from the state of Selangor contracted the case locally or overseas.

The statement said that during 14-28 November, the man was in Kuala Lumpur, in the Selangor city of Shah Alam and in Perak state, north of Selangor.

"His family members were questioned and their blood and urine samples were taken as soon as he

(the patient) tested positive for Zika," said Noor Hisham.

"Active case detection is being conducted in the patient's residential area to detect if neighbouring residents have symptoms of Zika."

Malaysia confirmed its first Zika case in September, after a woman tested positive for the virus following a three-day visit to neighbouring Singapore.

US health officials have concluded that Zika infections in pregnant women can cause microcephaly, a birth defect marked by small head size that can lead to severe developmental problems in babies.

—Reuters

## Abe gov't support rate down to 54.8% with unpopular casino law: poll

TOKYO — The support rating for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Cabinet slipped from the previous month to 54.8 per cent in a Kyodo News poll released on Sunday, with nearly 70 per cent of respondents opposed to a law to allow casino gambling in Japan and over half viewing negatively a recent Japan-Russia summit.

The Cabinet approval rating dropped from 60.7 per cent in November, while the disapproval rating rose 3.7 percentage points to 34.1 per cent in the two-day survey conducted over the weekend.

Regarding the legalization of casinos, which Abe's Liberal Democratic Party forced through with limited Diet deliberations, 69.6 per cent were opposed while 24.6 per cent expressed support.

Abe's Cabinet presented casino gambling in the country as a way to boost economic growth by attracting foreign tourists, but most of the opposition parties as well as members of the LDP's junior coalition partner Komeito argued casinos could worsen problem gambling and compromise public safety.

The new law paves the way for building "integrated resorts" that include hotels and entertainment facilities with casino gambling.

Asked about such facilities being built near respondents' residences, 75.3 per cent said it would not be desirable while 21.9 per cent would not object to their construction.

In the survey, 54.3 per cent of respondents viewed negatively the outcome of bilateral talks between

Abe and Russian President Vladimir Putin over territorial and economic issues held Thursday and Friday in Japan. The summit was viewed positively by 38.7 per cent.

During the two-day summit meetings, Abe and Putin failed to narrow differences over a decades-old territorial dispute related to Russian-held islands off Hokkaido that are claimed by Japan, which has prevented the two countries from concluding a postwar peace treaty.

In the survey, 53.8 per cent said they do not expect progress in territorial talks while 43.4 per cent said they do. On the recent crash landing of a US military Osprey aircraft off Okinawa, 66.8 per cent of respondents said the deployment of the tilt-rotor transport aircraft in

the southern island prefecture needs to be reviewed, compared with 28.0 per cent who saw no problem with the deployment.

Among other legislation, 45.3 per cent opposed ratification of the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade agreement involving Japan and 11 other countries, and enactment of related laws, while 37.8 per cent expressed support.

As for Abe's upcoming visit to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in late December, 85.3 per cent backed the plan while 10.9 per cent were negative.

On an amendment to revamp the nation's pension system that will allow benefits to be reduced in line with wage declines, 54.8 per cent welcomed the move while 36.1 per cent disapproved. —Kyodo News

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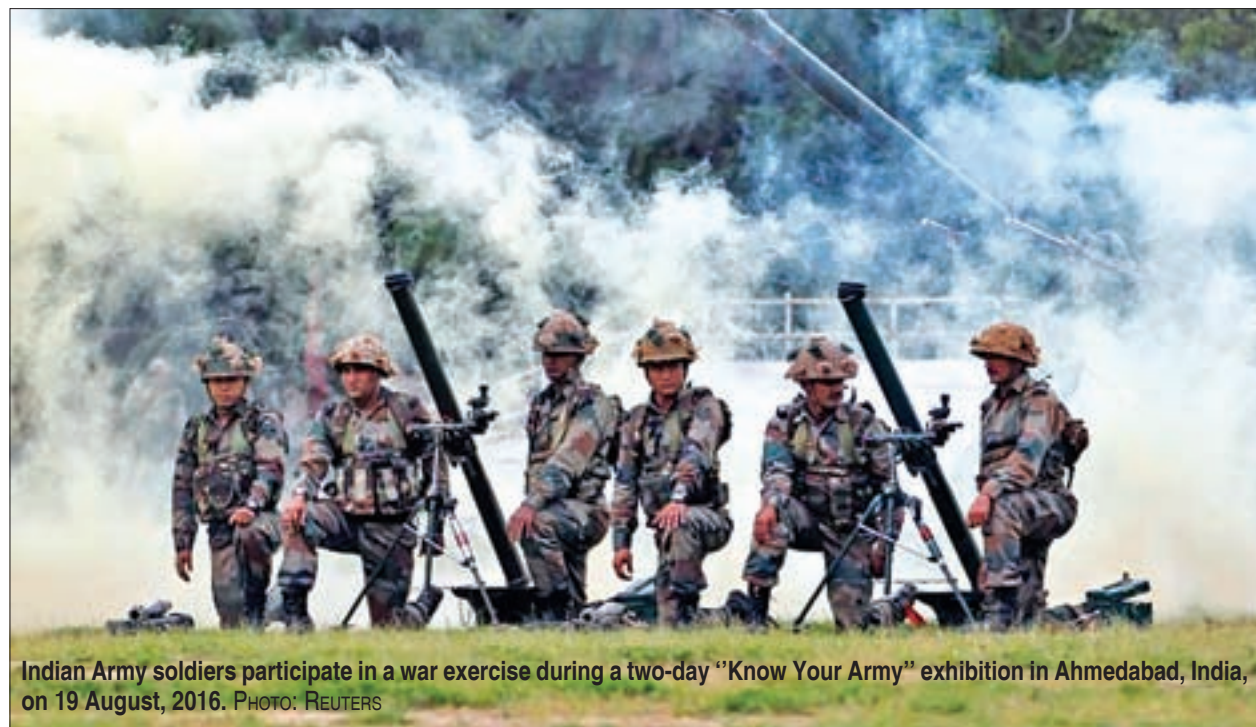
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Indian Army soldiers participate in a war exercise during a two-day "Know Your Army" exhibition in Ahmedabad, India, on 19 August, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

## India appoints new army, air force and intelligence chiefs

NEW DELHI — The Indian government has appointed new heads of its army and air force among a series of senior military and intelligence appointments, officials said, two weeks before its two most senior defence force chiefs are due to retire.

Vice Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Bipin Rawat was named as the new chief of the army to succeed General Dalbir Singh Suhaag.

Air Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa, a fighter pilot, was chosen as the new chief of India's air force to replace Air Chief

Marshal Arup Raha. The appointments were announced on Twitter by a defence ministry spokesman late on Saturday.

The appointment of Rawat, a counterinsurgency specialist, raised eyebrows among opposition parties because he was given the job ahead of two more senior candidates.

"Why has seniority not been respected in appointment of Army Chief," Manish Tewari, a former government minister and leader of the opposition Congress party, said on Twitter.

The appointment

was also questioned by Communist Party of India leader D. Raja, but a spokesman for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said it was not a matter for political debate.

"The government appoints people to the office based on what it considers to be the most appropriate choice," BJP spokesman G.V.L. Narasimha Rao said.

Indian media reported that it was the first time since 1983 that the most senior candidate had not been chosen to replace an outgoing army chief.

Rawat also has expe-

rience working along the Line of Control, the de facto border between areas controlled by India and Pakistan in the disputed Kashmir region.

The Indian government also announced senior appointments to its two main intelligence agencies.

Rajiv Jain was named as the new chief of the domestic Intelligence Bureau and Anil Dhasmana as the head of India's external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). Both will serve for the next two years.—Reuters



## China to return seized US drone, says Washington 'hying up' incident

BEIJING — China will return an underwater US drone seized by a naval vessel this week in the South China Sea, both countries said on Saturday, but Beijing complained that Washington had been “hying up” the incident.

US President-elect Donald Trump, who has vowed to take an aggressive approach in dealing with China over its economic and military policies, jumped on the unusual drone seizure with a pair of provocative tweets, accusing Beijing of stealing the equipment.

The drone, known as an unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV), was taken on Thursday, the first seizure of its kind in recent memory. The Pentagon went public with its complaint after the action and said on Saturday it had secured a deal to get the drone back.

“Through direct engagement with Chinese authorities, we have secured an understanding that the Chinese will return the UUV to

the United States,” Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said in a statement.

The drone, which the Pentagon said was operating lawfully was collecting data about the salinity, temperature and clarity of the water about 50 nautical miles northwest of Subic Bay, off the Philippines.

It was seized just as the USNS Bowditch was about to retrieve it, US officials said.

China’s Defence Ministry said a Chinese naval vessel discovered a piece of “unidentified equipment” and checked it to prevent any navigational safety issues before discovering it was a US drone.

“China decided to return it to the US side in an appropriate manner, and China and the US have all along been in communication about it,” the ministry said on its website.

“During this process, the US side’s unilateral and open hying up is inappropriate, and is not



Chinese and Russian naval vessels participate in the Joint Sea-2014 naval drill outside Shanghai on the East China Sea. PHOTO: REUTERS

beneficial to the smooth resolution of this issue. We express regret at this,” it added.

Trump, a Republican who takes office on 20 January, waded into the dispute on Twitter early on Saturday from his seaside resort club Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida, where he

plans to spend the holidays.

“China steals United States Navy research drone in international waters - rips it out of water and takes it to China in unprecedented act,” he said.

After China said it would return the drone, Jason Miller, a spokesman for Trump, tweeted

a link to a news story, saying: “@realdonaldtrump gets it done.”

There was, however, no evidence that Trump had played any role. US officials said the negotiations took place in Beijing during the overnight hours in the United States. Miller did not respond to requests for comment.—Reuters

## Bird flu outbreak hits zoo events linked to Year of Rooster in Japan

TOKYO — The recent outbreak of a highly virulent strain of bird flu in Japan has taken a toll on bird exhibits and events at zoos nationwide ahead of the Chinese zodiac Year of the Rooster in 2017, a survey by Kyodo News showed on Sunday. According to the survey, 64 zoos that belong to the Japanese Association of Zoos and Aquariums, or about 72 per cent, have taken measures to prevent the spread of bird flu, such as cancelling bird exhibits or events related to the Year of the Rooster.

The most popular measure taken at zoos was to cancel events

in which visitors would be allowed to touch and feed birds, given the bird flu virus could be brought in on visitors’ shoes. A zoo in Chiba Prefecture, east of Tokyo, decided to stop offering a service in which visitors can take pictures with chickens for New Year’s greeting cards. Higashiyama Zoo and Botanical Gardens in Nagoya, central Japan, has temporarily closed its zoo area after detecting the highly pathogenic bird flu virus in black swans that died between late November and early December.

Despite the precautions, zoo operators remain concerned about

whether they will be able to protect their birds from infection. “We’re taking measures so that wild birds (that could be carrying the virus) stay away, such as by placing nets above birds and putting them inside houses at night, but it is difficult to reduce the risk to zero,” said an official at Izu Shaboten Zoo in Ito, Shizuoka Prefecture. The Environment Ministry said it had logged 69 cases of avian flu infection affecting birds in the wild and zoos in 13 prefectures this winter as of Friday, topping the record 62 cases marked in the 2010-2011 season.—Kyodo News

## Japan, France eye ministerial talks on security issues in early Jan

TOKYO — Japan and France are considering holding ministerial talks on security issues in Paris in early January, a Japanese government source said Sunday, with efforts to sign a bilateral pact on logistics cooperation between their forces likely to be high on the agenda.

During the “two-plus-two” talks involving the countries’ foreign and defence ministers, the participants are also expected to discuss ways to deal with terrorism and the North Korean nuclear threat, while also exchanging views on the foreign policies of the next US administration led by President-elect Donald Trump.

At the previous talks in Tokyo in March last year, the countries signed an agreement on the joint development of defence equipment and also agreed to start talks on an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement that would allow Japan’s Self-Defence Forces and the French military to provide supplies and services to each other. The government source said Japanese Defence Minister Tomomi Inada and Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, and French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault and Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian are expected at the envisioned meeting to agree to step up efforts to sign an ACSA.—Xinhua



Photo taken on Dec. 17, 2016 shows buildings enveloped in smog in Beijing, capital of China. Beijing activated its first red alert for smog this winter on Friday. The sky was gray across much of north China on Saturday as at least 24 cities, including Beijing and Tianjin, have activated red alerts to address the pollution. PHOTO: XINHUA

## North China’s air pollution less than expected: ministry

BEIJING — North China’s latest bout of air pollution has so far been less serious than expected, thanks to counter measures adopted by local authorities, China’s top environmental watchdog said Sunday.

At least 23 cities in north China, including Beijing and Tianjin, have activated red alerts as the air began to turn hazy starting Friday, prompting local governments to impose car restrictions on roads and cut emissions for factories.

The heavy smog came a bit later than previously forecast as efforts paid off, and pollutant density in the air has somewhat been reduced in these cities, the Ministry of Environmental Protection said.

However, further observation is needed to confirm the actual effects of these measures, and air pollution is still likely to worsen as weather conditions continue to be unfavorable, said the ministry.

Pollution levels are likely to peak between Sunday and Monday, it said, adding that there will be another peak on Wednesday, it said.

The ministry has sent 13 inspection teams to check whether local governments have taken appropriate measures to address heavy pollution and sanction illegal factory emissions.

In Beijing, the air quality index (AQI) reading reached 253 at

3 p.m. Sunday, indicating heavily polluted air, according to the Beijing Municipal Environmental Monitoring Center.

China’s National Meteorological Center(NMC) maintains an orange alert for smog on Sunday for north China, warning that air pollution will be the most severe from Monday evening to Wednesday.

Some regions will see PM2.5 density levels exceeding 500, the NMC said, adding the smog is expected to disperse from Wednesday night.

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



# With water cannons and Southern belles, Trump ends 'thank you' tour

MOBILE, (Ala.) — US President-elect Donald Trump wrapped up his post-election "thank you" tour on Saturday with celebratory geysers from water cannons, greetings from hoop-skirted Southern belles and some gloating over the TV newscasters who had expected him to lose.

In the last in a series of rallies Trump has staged during the past three weeks — mainly in battleground states that gave him the margin of victory in the 8 November election — Trump came back to where it all began for his improbable presidential campaign.

It was in Mobile, Alabama, last year where Trump, a real estate magnate and reality television star with no previous political experience, drew a huge crowd that gave notice to his rivals that he was a threat for the Republican presidential nomination.

When his plane landed at the Mobile airport on Saturday, it taxied beneath blasts from two water cannon trucks. Stepping off the plane, a half dozen young women wearing Old South hoop skirts in

a panoply of pastel colours were on hand to greet him. Speaking at Ladd-Peebles Stadium, where there was a steady drizzle that he said would ruin his suit, Trump relived his tense election night when he went from big underdog to eking out a victory over heavily favoured Democrat Hillary Clinton.

Faced with predictions that he would lose, Trump said he told his wife, Melania, that he was at peace with his campaign because he had worked so hard.

"I went to my wife and I said, 'You know what, I don't feel badly about this,'" Trump said.

Trump said the faces of the newscasters seemed to sink as his fortunes improved, part of his running diatribe against the US mainstream news media that he claims is stacked against him.

"They got paid a lot of money," Trump said of television commentators. "They don't know what the hell they're talking about, folks."

Trump, who will be sworn into office on 20 January, took swings at a few other favourite

targets from his campaign: corporations that outsource jobs, Islamic State militants, drug dealers, illegal immigrants, and the political culture in Washington.

But he pulled his punches when it came to first lady Michelle Obama, who in excerpts from an interview with Oprah Winfrey set to air on CBS on Monday, said: "We feel the difference now. See, now, we're feeling what not having hope feels like."

"I honestly believe she meant that statement in a different way than it came out," Trump said.

Trump lost the popular vote by more than 2.5 million votes but still won 306 votes in the Electoral College, plenty more than the 270 required to win.

With some Democrats now saying the Electoral College should be abandoned and that the presidential election should be decided by the popular vote, Trump said he's happy with the system the way it is now.

"I never appreciated it until now, how genius it was," he said.—*Reuters*



US President-elect Donald Trump greets campaign manager and senior advisor, Kellyanne Conway (C), and Campaign Communications Director Hope Hicks (L) during a USA Thank You Tour event in Mobile, Alabama, US, on 17 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

## US forces may fly Osprey on Monday after accident off Okinawa

NAHA (Japan) — The US military has told the Japanese government that it will fly one of its Ospreys within Okinawa, possibly on Monday, to return it for maintenance work after grounding all tilt-rotor aircraft in the prefecture following a crash landing, a government source said Sunday.

The US military in Japan is also proposing a full resumption of operations involving Ospreys, which take off and land like helicopters but cruise like planes, the source said.

The move is certain to fuel anger among locals who want the aircraft to remain grounded amid safety concerns. Okinawa

Governor. Takeshi Onaga, after inspecting the coastal area where the Osprey crash-landed and broke apart Tuesday, said Tokyo should tell the US forces that it will not allow any of the aircraft to fly.

"Once allowed, they will fly one after another," Onaga told reporters, adding that the relationship between the central and local governments will be "completely destroyed" if Tokyo does not reject Osprey flights.

According to the government source, the US military has said it wants to fly one Osprey that is currently on Iejima Island airfield to its home base US Marine Corps

Air Station Futenma on Okinawa's main island.

The latest accident involving an Osprey aircraft has reignited concern among the people of Okinawa, which hosts the bulk of US military facilities in Japan.

A total of 24 MV-22s, including the one that crash-landed in the shallow waters off the coast of Okinawa on Tuesday night during training, have been deployed to the Futenma base in the crowded residential area of Ginowan.

No one died in the incident, but it was the first major accident involving an Osprey since the start of its deployment in Japan in 2012.—*Kyodo News*

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Armed gunmen attack police patrols in Jordanian city of Karak, casualties reported

AMMAN — Unidentified armed gunmen fired at several police patrols in drive-by shootings in the southern Jordanian city of Karak with reports of several casualties, security sources said.

They said the attackers were being pursued in an ancient castle in the mountainous city where some of the assailants had taken cover after shooting at a nearby police station.

Police dispatched special forces to hunt the attackers with an unconfirmed report that at least five police officers were injured and one bystander hurt, according to one source. A militant attack was not ruled out, the security sources said. There was no immediate comment from the authorities.—*Reuters*

#### Buses attacked, burned on way to evacuate besieged villages: monitor, state media

BEIRUT — Several buses en route to evacuate ill and injured people from the besieged Syrian villages of al-Foua and Kefraya were attacked and burned on Sunday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and Syrian state television said.

Some buses, as well as Red Crescent vehicles, reached the entrance to the villages.

The coalition of forces fighting for the government of President Bashar al-Assad are demanding people to be allowed to leave the two villages in exchange for allowing evacuations of rebels and civilians from east Aleppo.—*Reuters*

#### Seven contenders to contest France's left-wing presidential primary

PARIS — Seven candidates will compete for the French left-wing primary in January to win the nomination for next year's presidential election, the organizers said on Saturday.

Four people from the ruling Socialist Party will run in the competition including ex-prime minister Manuel Valls and three former members of his executive staff ex-economy minister Arnaud Montebourg, Benoit Hamon and Vincent Peillon, both had managed education portfolio.

Two ecologists Francois de Rugy, vice president of the National Assembly and Jean-Luc Bennahmias, president of Democratic Movement appeared in the list of contenders vying for left ticket to take part in the race to the Elysee Palace.

Former housing minister Sylvia Pinel, head of the Radical Left Party, is the only female candidate in the two-round primary scheduled for 22 and 29 January. —*Xinhua*

#### Drone attack kills 16 IS fighters in East Afghanistan

JALALABAD, (Afghanistan) — A total of 16 militants affiliated with Islamic State (IS) group were killed after an unmanned plane targeted their hideouts in Achin district of the eastern Nangarhar province on Friday, provincial police chief Hazrat Hussain Mashriqwal said Saturday.

The air raids, according to the official, were conducted in Abdulkhil village of Achin district Friday night during which a huge weapon cache of IS militants was also destroyed.

Militants' loyal to IS are yet to make comments on the situation. Nangarhar province with Jalalabad city as its capital, 120 km east of Kabul, has been the scene of IS outfit's violent incidents over the past nearly one year.

Scores of IS fighters have reportedly been killed by airstrikes in the eastern Nangarhar province over the past couple of months. —*Xinhua*

#### Suicide bomber kills 43 soldiers in Yemen's Aden: officials

ADEN — A suicide bomber killed at least 43 soldiers in the southern Yemeni port city of Aden on Sunday, officials there said, a week after an attack by the militant Islamic State group killed 50 troops nearby.

The officials said the soldiers were queuing to collect salaries near a military base in the Khor Maksar district when the attacker blew himself up. At least 60 other troops were wounded, they said.

Aden is the temporary capital of Yemen's internationally recognised government in exile in neighbouring Saudi Arabia.

The administration has struggled to establish its control in the city as militants have launched dozens of attacks against its forces.—*Reuters*



# Opinion

## Write for us

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## Peace is the only way to normalise the situation in Rakhine State

Aye Min Soe

SINCE the deadly 9 October attacks on the border outposts in northern Rakhine, tensions are high between the two communities and both communities are afraid. There is fear. There is mistrust.

In Rakhine, it is not just the Muslims who are nervous and worried. The Rakhine people are worried too. They are worried about the fact that they are shrinking as a Rakhine population, percentage-wise.

At a time when we should find a way of breaking down the barriers of fear and mistrust and assist in building trust between the two communities, international communities should not concentrate on the negative side of the situation.

In fact, since after the conflicts in 2012, Rakhine has been a peaceful and tranquil state where no religious persecution or clashes between different communities occurred until the 9th of October when around 400 violent attackers carried out their coordinated surprise attacks on three border outposts in northern Rakhine.

During the interrogations, two captured prisoners confessed that the attacks on Maungtau Township have been systematically planned in advance over a long period of time, assisted by foreign funding and supported by members of foreign terrorist organisations.

The attacks were carried out by the Aqa Mul Mujahidin organization which is active in Maungtau, and is linked to the RSO terrorist groups. The leader of the Aqa Mul Mujahidin is Havistoohar, a religious and social extremist.

To be able to bring the conflict areas under control, the government designated the areas as "military operations area" on the day that armed attackers carried out the 9/10 incidents and imposed curfew under section 144.

The government has formed the Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace and Development in Rakhine State chaired by the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Su Kyi since 30th May

2016 to tackle the issue.

Moreover, the Government is striving to find a peaceful resolution of the problem by establishing the Rakhine State Advisory Commission led by Mr. Kofi Annan.

An Investigation Commission led by Vice President U Myint Swe has also been formed and has already started its work. The commission conducted field trips to meet the Muslim communities and probed into the reports of alleged rapes and the killing of Muslim children in the village of Kyetyoepyin in Maungtau that had been reported in the UK newspaper The Guardian. All those who were questioned and told of the allegations in the Guardian newspaper said that the report was not true and that the alleged cases had not taken place in the village.

Furthermore, aid and relief supplies have been provided quite a few times for local people living in Maungtau.

Humanitarian aid and assistance have been given by such authorities as the Minis-

try of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Ministry of Border Affairs, Rakhine State Government and such international organisations as UNHCR and WFP, and local volunteers and donors since 4th November. Additional assistance and relief supplies are being continuously supplied to the villages which are in need.

The media and international community should be very careful whether the information related to human rights abuses in the northern Rakhine come from reliable sources or not. Or, they are just aggravating the situation.

In terms of free media opportunity, independent journalists including local and international press agencies have been allowed to take a tour of Maungtau region from 19th to 22nd December.

Peace is the only way to normalise the situation and it will certainly take time to bring about a situation when communities can co-exist peacefully.

## Rakhine affair, don't try to profit from others' woes

Kyaw Myaing

THERE is a saying. If you love someone, you see only the good things. If you hate someone, you see mistakes all the time. If you love someone, you do not see any mistakes. However, if you hate someone, you see mistakes and you feel very revengeful. This is the nature of the human heart. In the present situation, should we ask, is this what is happening. It has been nearly 70 years since Myanmar gained independence. Furthermore we are a member of the United Nations and a member of ASEAN. Our policy has been not to bear any ill will towards any country and not to interfere in the affairs of any country politically or racial issues. Not only that, we try to be on good terms with all our neighbouring countries and all countries of the world. We practice only a policy of non-alignment and neutralism.

However, at present the international community has been putting pressure on us, taking advantage of the instability, with

regard to the unfortunate internal events which occurred as a result of external causes. They wanted to spread false news giving false hopes. These people should really ask themselves whether their actions have been justified and appropriate.

In actual fact, the problem of the western door of Rakhine State, no matter how much this story has been disseminated by a certain organization with a view to instigating and hate-mongering in the international community, the clear and correct actions taken may be seen clearly. In fact, the Rakhine State has been one of the states of Myanmar borne by historical facts and it has existed since independence with firm foundations and stability. Regarding what has happened, it is clear to everyone who initiated and created this problem.

Even though there have been the victim of violent attacks, Myanmar has handled this problem with full regard to humanitarian considers and looked upon these criminal acts in a lenient manner and acted in accordance with the law. These show clearly Myanmar's correct and righteous actions.

Although we have acted leniently, the situation changed from bad to worse. There have been frequent ambushes. It can now be seen in a very practical manner that the stories that security forces and the public have committed human rights abuses in the villages without any regard to humanitarian considerations have proven to be false.

These frequent acts of instigation and intervention in Myanmar's internal problems, should they be regarded as attempts to test our resolve; or should they be regarded as attempts to create a wedge between the Armed Forces and the people? These acts to divide us based on our internal problems are reprehensible acts.

Recently, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mr. Najb Razak participated in a demonstration against Myanmar and instigated the crowds instead of using diplomatic channels to resolve the problem. This act has damaged the relations between the two countries. It has hurt his position and integrity and laid bare his inner thoughts. At a press conference held in conjunction with the

national conference of the Action Party (DAP), Dr. Mahathir criticized this action by questioning why he did not use diplomatic channels to solve this problem although he had the power to do so. Dr. Wan Wan Azizah, an opposition leader has also criticized Najib.

All over the world, no matter from which country they may have come from, no matter for whatever reason they have entered the country, whether it be in search of better economic opportunities, or be it for diplomatic, political or touristic reasons, all these people need to abide by the laws of the land and have a high regard for its customs and traditions and conduct themselves accordingly. A visitor should act and behave like a visitor and not use the front room of the house as his toilet room. We would not want that.

Many have advised that international refugees should be accepted and placed in refugee camps. However, all countries in the world have seen what these host countries have gone through. In the present age, international travel is open and transparent and

it is so easy to travel from one place to the other. Therefore we need to be very careful of the fact that terrorists and destructive elements could easily come in together with other passengers.

In Myanmar, there is freedom to travel as well as study and observe. However, media persons and foreign newspapermen take pictures and shoot video stories. We have seen that they especially like to shoot pictures of large crowds or where lots of people congregate. We have seen that they then make news stories based on the said pictures and videos to magnify insignificant internal problems disseminate it through the internet and Facebook to spread negative news about Myanmar. We have seen many instances such as these so foreign media agencies should take special note of this.

Although it is true that the international community takes great interest in Myanmar affairs, this is not an international problem. However, we have abided by international practice and placed a high regard for leaders of other countries.

>> SEE PAGE 9



## 2016 KOICA Feedback Seminar & Myanmar KOICA Club Annual Meeting

THE Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Myanmar Office and Myanmar KOICA Club (MMKC) held the 2016 KOICA Feedback Seminar & Myanmar KOICA Club Annual Meeting in Yangon on Saturday.

KOICA offers training, seminars and scholarship programmes in various sectors to improve the capacity building of human resources of Myanmar government officials. MMKC, which is an association of alumni of KOICA fellowship programmes, was founded in 2010. Now it has 131 members and was registered as a local NGO in Myanmar this year. The purpose of the meeting is for sharing knowledge, experiences and promoting cooperation between KOICA fellowship program participants. At this meeting, MMKC presented the brief introduction

about MMKC and 2016 MMKC Activities in Myanmar. And KOICA Master's Degree Participants and KOICA Fellowship Programme Participants also presented their experiences and knowledge acquired during their training programmes in Korea. Moreover, performance teams and singers perform K-pop dances, songs and Myanmar traditional dances as a cultural exchange program.

H.E. Dr. Aung Thu, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, H.E. Mr. Yoo Jae-Kyung, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Myanmar and Dr. Shin Euicheol, Chief Representative of KOICA Myanmar Office attended this meeting. One-hundred and thirty people participated in the meeting, including officials from various government ministries.—GNLM



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu attends 2016 KOICA Feedback Seminar. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

## ASEAN foreign ministers arrive in Yangon

FOREIGN ministers from member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) started arriving in

Yangon by air yesterday morning to attend the informal meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers.—Myanmar News Agency

## Rakhine affair, don't try to profit from ...

>> FROM PAGE 8

However, when these leaders themselves begin to profess one-sided views and utter one-sided words, this has caused a great deal of dismay and sadness. It looked so ugly. In actual fact, he should have spoken out only after a visit to the affected areas for a first hand observation.

Now in the case of Myanmar's problem, it seems as though the doctor has dispensed the wrong medicine. He has confused a medicine for taking orally with a medicine to be used as a lotion. It looks as though someone has used the outer wall internally and vice versa. In Myanmar, we have always had the three main national causes:

- Non-disintegration of the Union
- Non-disintegration of National Solidarity
- Perpetuation of Sovereignty.

Although these may just be three lines, if we amplify the meaning of these three lines, they be-

come vibrant and alive for Myanmar and they will remain complete and sufficient for us forever. This needs to be understood.

In conclusion, we wish to let it be known that Myanmar will stand tall among the countries of the world and base her action on honesty and civility. We are ready to have relations with any country in friendship while practicing a Neutral Foreign Policy without siding with or criticizing either side. We want it to be known that this is how we intend to conduct ourselves going forward. Since Myanmar is a country where Buddhism flourishes and where all national races live in accordance with the Teachings of the Buddha:

- To make right effort
- To utter right speech
- To have right view

Let me reiterate that we believe in these teachings and abide by them at all times.

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People take to the street in support of the Tatmadaw in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

## Hundreds stage demonstration in support of Tatmadaw in Yangon

MORE than 10,000 people participated in a demonstration in support of the Tatmadaw and its victories in front of Mahabandoola Park near City Hall in Yangon yesterday.

The demonstrators set out from the Yaygezai Bus Stop near the eastern stairway of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda at about 2 pm in the afternoon and marched to the park holding placards that say, "We express our support for the Tatmadaw, which is waging a fair war to protect the union, race and religion," and chanting similar slogans.

They stopped in front of the park and gave a two-min-

ute silent salute to fallen soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the lives and property of the people.

"We are staging the demonstration to support government troops who risk their lives for their country. We hope that they will be able to perform their duties more successfully when they learn that we are staging a demonstration in support of them. We cannot accept anything that hinders peace and hurts civilians," Ko Myo Win, a demonstrator said.

The demonstration was organised by the Myanmar War Veterans Organization, the Union of Patriotic Myan-

mar Monks, Civilian Troops for Defending Myanmar Land, Patriotic Youths Network, Rakhine Youths Association, Brotherhood of New Nationalistic Fervour, Nationalist Writers, members of the Red Cross Society, representatives of nationalist people, Private Nationalists, monks and members of the public.

The groups issued a nine-point statement after the demonstration condemning the attacks against military and police posts, government buildings and lives and property of the public by armed groups, which also hinder the ongoing peace process.—Zaw Gyi (Panita)

## Myanmar women's team win gold in 20th Asian Petanque Championship

THE Myanmar Women's Team (B) won the Nation's Cup For Women's Triple at the 20th Asian Petanque Championship 2016 yesterday.

The event, held at the Wunna Theikdi Petanque Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw, was organised by the Asia Petanque Federation and the Myanmar Petanque Federation with the aim of securing success for Myanmar Petanque teams in the 29th SEA Games.

Yesterday's events included the junior triple, men's triple, women's triple, nation's cup for men's triple and nation's cup for women's triple.—Myanmar News Agency



Myanmar Women's Team (B) being seen after receiving the gold medal. PHOTO: MNA



# Syria government, rebels working to secure Aleppo evacuation deal

ALEPPO, (Syria)/BEIRUT — A new deal is being negotiated to complete the evacuation of rebel-held areas of Syria's east Aleppo which ground to a halt on Friday after demands from pro-government forces that people also be moved out of two villages besieged by insurgents.

A Syrian rebel official and a government official said early on Saturday the evacuation of Aleppo would resume and the two Shi'ite villages would be evacuated, as well as the wounded from two towns near the Lebanese border and east Aleppo.

But sources said negotiations between pro-government and opposition forces as well as their international backers, were still going on to finalize how the evacuations would take place and how many people would leave.

The chaos surrounding the evacuation reflects the complexity of Syria's civil war, with an array of groups and foreign interests involved on all sides.

Aleppo had been divided between government and rebel areas in the nearly six-year-long war, but a lightning advance by the Syrian army and its allies began in mid-November following months of intense air strikes, forcing the insurgents out of most of the rebel-held territory within a matter of weeks.

A senior Syrian rebel offi-



A child sleeps while waiting to be evacuated with others from a rebel-held sector of eastern Aleppo, Syria on 17 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

cial from the powerful Ahrar al Sham group involved in the talks on Saturday said the deal was being held up by Iran and its allied Shi'ite militias which were insisting people be allowed to leave the besieged Shi'ite villages of Kefraya and al-Foua before allowing the Aleppo evacuation to proceed.

"Iran and its sectarian proxies are using the humanitarian situation of our people in besieged

Aleppo and preventing civilians from leaving until the evacuation of their groups in al-Foua and Kefraya," Munir Sayal, the head of the political wing of the movement, told Reuters in a telephone interview.

Al Farouk Abu Bakr, the head rebel negotiator inside Aleppo charged with negotiating on their behalf, earlier said an agreement was reached that included the two Shi'ite villages

as demanded by Iran. But he said later that Tehran had once again obstructed a deal.

As darkness fell on Saturday afternoon and temperatures began to fall below freezing, there was no sign the evacuation was happening. A resident in Aleppo told Reuters that nobody had left the rebel-held enclave and no buses had entered. He also said he had heard gunfire near where people were to wait for the buses.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said thousands of cold, scared and injured people were still in east Aleppo waiting to leave. It said it had received some indications that a deal would be reached soon.

The Syrian government official, part of the team negotiating the evacuations, said: "It was agreed to resume evacuations from east Aleppo in parallel with the evacuation of (medical) cases from Kefraya and al-Foua and some cases from Zabadani and Madaya."

The towns of Madaya and Zabadani are blockaded by pro-government forces.

The operation to evacuate fighters and civilians from the last opposition-held area of Aleppo was suspended on Friday, its second day, after pro-government militias demanded that the wounded also be brought out of al-Foua and Kefraya, and protesters blocked a convoy on the road out of Aleppo.

Another Free Syrian Army official Zakaria Malhafji said that he expected the Aleppo evacuation to resume on Sunday after reaching an agreement that also includes simultaneous evacuation from the two Shi'ite villages. "Tomorrow morning the evacuation from Aleppo will begin again", Malhafji told TV news channel al-Arabiya al Hadath.—Reuters

## Head of UN nuclear watchdog says Iran showing commitment to deal

DUBAI — Iran has shown commitment to the deal on its nuclear programme agreed with world powers, the head of the United Nations atomic energy watchdog said on Sunday, following complaints by Tehran over what it calls a US violation of the accord.

The White House said on Thursday that a bill extending US sanctions against Iran for 10

years would become law without President Barack Obama's signature, adding this would not affect overall implementation of the nuclear agreement.

"We are satisfied with the implementation of the (agreement) and hope that this process will continue," IAEA director general Yukiya Amano was quoted as telling reporters in Tehran by the IRNA news agency.

"Iran has been committed to its engagement so far and this is important," Amano was quoted as saying after meeting Iran's nuclear energy chief, Ali Akbar Salehi.

Under the 2015 deal, Iran curbed its nuclear fuel production activities in exchange for relief from economic sanctions.

In response to the US sanctions move, Iran ordered its scientists on Tuesday to start developing systems for nuclear-powered marine vessels.

That action is expected to worsen tensions with Washington, already heightened by a promise by US President-elect Donald Trump's to scrap the deal.

Iran on Saturday also requested a meeting of a commission comprising representatives of signatories to the accord that is overseeing its implementation.

"At the meeting, we brought up some of our complaints, and clarified some matters," said Salehi, quoted by the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

"As we have repeatedly said, we will not violate the agreement, unless the other party does that."—Reuters



International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Yukiya Amano prepares for a board of governors meeting at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna, Austria on 6 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Turkey's Erdogan blames Kurdish militants after bomb kills at least 13, wounds 56

ANKARA, (Turkey) — A car bomb killed at least 13 soldiers and wounded 56 when it ripped through a bus carrying off-duty military personnel in the central Turkish city of Kayseri on Saturday, an attack President Tayyip Erdogan blamed on Kurdish militants.

The blast near a university campus comes a week after deadly twin bombings targeted police in Istanbul and may further infuriate a public smarting from multiple attacks by Islamic and Kurdish militants this year, and a failed coup in July.

It could also increase tension in the mainly Kurdish southeast, where militants from the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) have waged a three-decade violent insurgency that has seen some of the worst fighting in the last year.

"The style and goals of the attacks clearly show the aim of the separatist terrorist organisation is to trip up Turkey, cut its strength and have it focus its energy and forces elsewhere," Erdogan said in a statement.

"We know that these attacks we are being subjected to

are not independent from the developments in our region, especially in Iraq and Syria."

Erdogan frequently refers to the PKK as "the separatist terrorist organisation". The PKK, which wants autonomy for the Kurdish minority, is considered a terrorist group by the United States, the European Union and Turkey.

Turkey, a NATO member and part of the U.S. coalition against Islamic State, has also been angered by Washington's backing of Syrian Kurdish fighters against the Sunni hardline group.

Ankara sees the Washington-backed Syrian Kurdish militia as an extension of the PKK and is worried the advance of Kurdish fighters across its borders in Syria and Iraq could inflame Kurdish militants at home.

Erdogan confirmed that 13 people had been killed and 55 wounded in Saturday's blast. Officials later raised the number of injured to 56, including four in critical condition.

Broadcaster NTV and other local media later put the death toll at 14.—Reuters





•• INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS SCHEDULE ••

YANGON TO BANGKOK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-304	09:50	11:45	Daily
TG-2302	15:00	16:55	1,5,6,7
TG-302	15:00	16:55	Daily
TG-306	19:50	21:45	Daily
PG-706	6:00	8:15	Daily
PG-702	10:30	12:25	Daily
PG-708	15:30	17:25	Daily
PG-704	18:20	20:15	Daily
8M-335	7:30	9:15	Daily
8M-331	16:30	18:15	Daily
UB-017	15:45	19:15	2,4,6,7
UB-017	17:45	19:15	1,3,5
UB-019	8:00	9:30	3,5,7
UB-019	8:55	10:25	1,6

YGN TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-252	8:30	10:15	Daily
FD-256	12:55	14:20	Daily
FD-254	17:35	19:25	Daily
FD-258	21:40	23:30	Daily
DD-4231	08:00	9:45	Daily
DD-4235	12:00	13:45	Daily
DD-4239	21:00	22:45	Daily
SL-201	11:00	13:35	Daily
SL-207	19:45	21:45	Daily

YGN TO CAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-012	07:00	11:30	7
8M-711	8:40	13:15	2,4,5,7
CZ-3056	11:35	15:50	3,6
CZ-3056	17:40	22:20	1,5

YGN TO SIN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-231	8:20	12:40	Daily
SQ-997	10:25	15:10	Daily
MI-515	14:20	18:50	1,3,5
MI-519	17:35	22:10	Daily
MI-522	16:20	20:50	4,6
MI-533	13:35	20:50	2
3k-584	19:40	00:10	Daily
3K-582	11:35	16:05	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2823	9:45	2:15	1,2,4,5,6,7
UB-001	7:30	11:45	Daily

YGN TO NRT

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-814	22:10	06:45	Daily

BANGKOK TO YANGON

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-303	8:00	8:45	Daily
TG-2351	10:10	11:00	1,5,6,7
TG-301	13:15	14:00	Daily
TG-305	18:05	18:50	Daily
PG-701	8:45	9:40	Daily
PG-707	13:45	14:40	Daily
PG-703	16:45	17:35	Daily
PG-705	20:30	21:45	Daily
8M-336	10:15	11:00	Daily
8M-332	19:20	20:05	Daily
UB-020	10:35	11:10	3,5
UB-018	21:05	21:35	Daily
UB-020	11:30	12:05	1,6,7

DMK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-251	7:15	8:00	Daily
FD-255	11:35	12:25	Daily
FD-253	16:20	17:05	Daily
FD-257	20:15	21:10	Daily
DD-4234	10:30	11:15	Daily
DD-4230	6:30	7:15	Daily
DD-4238	19:25	20:15	Daily
SL-200	08:45	10:00	Daily
SL-206	17:10	18:35	Daily

CAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-012	12:30	15:45	7
8M-712	14:15	15:50	2,4,5,7
CZ-3055	8:40	10:35	3,6
CZ-3055	14:40	16:40	1,5

SIN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-232	13:40	15:15	Daily
SQ-998	07:55	09:20	Daily
MI-522	11:30	15:30	4,6
MI-518	15:15	16:40	Daily
MI-516	12:00	13:25	1,3,5
MI-533	11:30	12:45	2
3K-583	17:30	19:00	Daily
3k-581	09:10	10:40	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2822	7:20	8:45	1,2,4,5,6,7
UB-002	13:00	14:30	Daily

NRT TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-813	11:00	16:30	Daily

YGN TO ICN

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

YGN TO KUL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-505	8:30	12:45	Daily
AK-503	19:10	23:30	Daily
8M-501	16:00	20:15	2
8M-501	11:45	15:45	1
MH-741	11:15	15:40	Daily
MH-743	16:00	20:15	1,4,6,7

YGN TO KMG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-416	12:30	16:00	Daily
MU-2032	15:30	18:50	Daily
MU-2012	12:55	19:55	3

YGN TO TPE

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7916	10:50	16:10	Daily

YGN TO PEK

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

YGN TO HAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-956	19:10	21:35	Daily

YGN TO SGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-942	12:10	14:55	2,3,4,5,7

YGN TO HKG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-251	1:05	5:25	Daily
UB-8027	09:00	13:30	1,3,5,7

YGN TO DOH

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-919	8:05	11:30	1,4,6

YGN TO CNX

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-724	13:40	15:35	Daily

YGN TO DAC

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-061	16:45	18:30	1,3,6

MDL TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-245	12:55	15:15	Daily

ICN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KE-471	18:30	22:30	Daily

KUL TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-504	6:55	8:00	Daily
AK-502	17:20	18:30	Daily
8M-502	16:45	17:45	1
8M-502	21:10	22:10	2
MH-742	13:55	15:05	1,4,6,7
MH-740	09:10	10:15	Daily

KMG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-415	10:50	11:30	Daily
MU-2031	14:00	14:30	Daily
MU-2011	08:20	11:55	3

TPE TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7915	7:00	9:50	Daily

PEK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-905	19:30	22:50	3,5

HAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-957	16:40	18:10	Daily

SGN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-943	9:25	11:10	2,3,4,5,7

HKG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-250	21:50	23:45	1,3,5,7
KA-252	22:20	00:10	2,4,6
UB-8028	14:50	16:20	1,3,5,7

DOH TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-918	20:10	5:20	3,5,6

CNX TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-723	12:00	12:55	Daily

DAC TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-060	13:30	16:00	1,3,6

DMK TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-244	11:10	12:25	Daily



# INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS SCHEDULE

MDL TO SIN			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-533	15:45	20:50	2
MI-522	14:15	20:15	4,6

SIN TO MDL			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-522	11:30	13:20	4,6
MI-533	11:30	14:50	2

MDL TO BKK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-710	14:10	16:35	Daily

BKK TO MDL			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-709	12:00	13:20	Daily

MDL TO KMG			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2030	14:25	17:15	Daily

KMG TO MDL			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2029	13:20	13:15	Daily

NYT to BKK			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-722	19:50	22:50	1,3,4,5,6,7

BKK TO NYT			
Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-721	17:20	19:20	1,3,4,5,6,7

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MH = Malaysia Airlines	
MU = China Eastern Airlines	
NH = All Nippon Airways	
SQ = Singapore Airways	
PG = Bangkok Airways	
UB = Myanmar National Airlines	
VN = Vietnam Airline	
3K = Jet Star	AK = Air Asia
AI = Air India	CA = Air China
CI = China Airlines	CZ = China Southern
DD = Nok Airline	FD = Air Asia
KA = Dragonair	KE = Korea Airlines
MI = Silk Air	QR = Qatar Airways
TG = Thai Airways	TR = Tiger Airline

DAY	4 = Thursday
1 = Monday	5 = Friday
2 = Tuesday	6 = Saturday
3 = Wednesday	7 = Sunday





Demonstrators holding Polish and EU flags gather outside the Parliament building during a protest in Warsaw, Poland, on 17 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Polish opposition extends parliamentary protest after media access row

WARSAW— Around two dozen members of Poland's main opposition party extended their sit-in protest in parliament on Sunday after talks to resolve a dispute over proposed restrictions on media access failed to produce an agreement.

New rules for journalists in parliament put forward by the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party have led to the biggest political stand-off in years in the European Union state, with protests spreading across the country on Saturday.

President Andrzej Duda was planning talks on Sunday to try to defuse the row, while powerful PiS

leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski also intervened to try to broker a resolution.

PiS has tightened its grip on state media and the legal system since coming to power a year ago and been criticised by Western allies over plans to reform the highest court which its opponents say is an attempt to contravene democratic standards. Kaczynski ordered a meeting between the speaker of the upper house of parliament and about a dozen media representatives at short notice late on Saturday.

After the meeting, speaker Stanislaw Karczewski said that a consensus

was reached to meet again on Monday and discuss concrete proposals.

"No one has ever wanted to limit journalists' access to important political events," PAP news agency cited Karczewski as saying after the meeting.

Members of the opposition Civic Platform (PO) began their protest on Friday, blocking the plenary hall podium ahead of a budget vote.

A small group of protesters held an overnight vigil in front of parliament until Sunday morning, with another demonstration scheduled in defence of the constitutional court later

in the day and a pro-government rally afterwards. Prime Minister Beata Szydlo has said the protest was just whining by parties that lost an election in 2015 after eight years in government. However, there were signs of a more conciliatory approach from her office on Sunday. "It might be necessary ... to admit that our politicians have inadequately communicated the proposed changes to the journalists, to our society and the opposition used this as a pretext," Pawel Szefernaker, the secretary of state in the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, told the Radio ZET station.—Reuters

## New Zealand's new leader names his cabinet, changes inner circle

WELLINGTON — New Zealand's new prime minister Bill English announced his cabinet on Sunday, introducing four new faces and rejigging his inner leadership group.

After popular leader John Key's surprise resignation, the National Party had a chance to refresh its line-up of senior politicians as the government prepares to battle for a fourth term in an election due around September 2017.

English, former deputy premier, was confirmed as prime minister on Dec. 12, one week after Key announced he was stepping down after eight years.

The prime minister told reporters his "refreshed" cabinet builds on Key's success and "provides a mix of new people, alongside experienced ministers either continuing their roles or taking up new challenges". The new line-up sees three incumbent ministers — Amy Adams, Simon Bridges and Jonathan Coleman — brought into the inner "kitchen

cabinet". Paula Bennett was named earlier as deputy prime minister. She has been given five cabinet portfolios: women's affairs, tourism, police, climate change and state services. Steven Joyce, senior cabinet minister under Key, becomes finance minister and infrastructure minister.

Transport Minister Simon Bridges retains that portfolio, and also becomes economic development minister and associate finance minister. Murray McCully, foreign minister for eight years, will remain in that position until retiring from it on 1 May.

English, who 13 years ago oversaw an election loss for the National Party to the centre-left Labour Party, takes the reins of a country in good economic shape compared with much of the developed world.

For April-June, New Zealand reported annual economic growth of 3.6 percent, compared with 3.0 percent the preceding quarter.—Reuters

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 MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE  
 ( INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER )  
 ( 16 / 2016 )

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-069(16-17)	OTECO Gate Valves and Spares for Rig Pumps (16) Items	US\$
(2)	IFB-070(16-17)	Assorted Sizes of Steel Casing & Accessories (8) Items	US\$
(3)	IFB-071(16-17)	Assorted Sizes of PDC and Tri-Cone Bits (13) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-072(16-17)	Spares for BOP Ex ZJ-70L Drilling Rigs (6) Items	US\$
(5)	IFB-073(16-17)	Spares for FA-1600 Triplex Pump Ex Ex EMSCO Rig (9) Items	US\$
(6)	IFB-074(16-17)	Spares for NAT-55 and EMSCO Drilling Rigs (40) Items	US\$
(7)	DMP/L-016(16-17)	Spares for Allision Transmission Ex KB-150 Well Servicing Truck (32) Items	Ks
(8)	DMP/L-017(16-17)	Spares for MWM D 226-4 1/Set Engine Ex MTBN-3 River Craft (30) Items	Ks
(9)	DMP/L-018(16-17)	Steel Wire Rope (2) Items	Ks
(10)	DMP/L-019(16-17)	Mud Testing Equipments (6) Items	Ks

Tender Closing Date & Time - 16-1-2017, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 19<sup>TH</sup> December, 2016 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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(၂) ကြော်ငြာအရောင်းကွမ်းကျင်ဝန်ထမ်း ကျား (၁) ဦး ၊ မ (၂) ဦး  
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 (ယာဉ်မောင်းကွမ်းကျင်၍ လိုင်စင်ရှိသူ ဦးစားပေးမည်။)

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# German courts should go after fake news on Facebook now: minister

BERLIN — German judges and state prosecutors need to crack down straight away on fake news disseminated through social media platforms such as Facebook, Germany's Justice Minister Heiko Maas said in an interview published on Sunday.

Maas, a Social Democrat in conservative Chancellor Angela Merkel's coalition, has repeatedly warned the US technology company to respect laws against defamation in Germany that are more rigid than in the United States. He told the *Bild am Sonntag* newspaper the principle of free speech did not protect against slander.

"Defamation and malicious gossip are not cov-



A man is silhouetted against a video screen with a Facebook logo as he poses with a Samsung S4 smartphone in this photo illustration taken in the central Bosnian town of Zenica, on 14 August 2013. PHOTO: REUTERS

ered under freedom of speech," Maas said, just days after other top government officials called for legislation to tackle "hate speech" and fake news on

Facebook and other social media platforms.

"Justice authorities must prosecute that, even on the internet," he said, noting that offenders could

face up to five years in jail. "Anyone who tries to manipulate the political discussion with lies needs to be aware (of the consequences)."

The issue of fake news has taken on new urgency after warnings by German and US intelligence agencies that Russia has sought to influence elections and sway public opinion.

German government officials have expressed concern that fake news could influence the parliamentary election expected in September, in which Merkel will run for a fourth term.

Germany's strict libel and slander laws are meant to protect citizens by mak-

ing it a crime to defame others. More than 218,000 cases involving insults were filed with prosecutors in 2015. But few internet cases were prosecuted.

Maas said he wants to change that: "We need to fully utilize all the legal authority at our disposal," he said.

Fears of fake news ahead of the election have increased after the head of Germany's domestic intelligence agency, Hans-Georg Maassen, reported a rise in Russian propaganda and disinformation campaigns aimed at destabilizing German society.

"Facebook is earning an awful lot of money with fake news," Maas told *Bild*

am Sonntag. "A company that earns billions from the internet also has a social responsibility. Prosecutable defamation must be deleted immediately, once reported. It needs to be made easier for users to report fake news."

On Friday, the parliamentary floor leader for Merkel's conservatives, Volker Kauder, said the government wanted to introduce a law in early 2017 that would require social media firms to set up local offices to respond faster to complaints.

Facebook Inc. FB.O said on Thursday it would take measures to prevent fake news spreading.—*Reuters*

## Brexiteer Farage says he wants to be a bridge between UK and Trump

NEW YORK — Leading Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage said on Sunday he wanted to be a bridge between the British government and the new US administration.

Last month US President-elect Donald Trump said Farage — the former leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) — would be great as Britain's envoy to Washington, but the British government dismissed the suggestion.

"I can help to be a bridge between the government in this country, the new trade department in this country, and not just Donald Trump but his team, his administration, and I would like to do that," Farage told BBC Radio.

"If you wanted to get business from the biggest company in the world and there was someone there that had the contacts and connections, the first thing you would do is to employ that person because that is how the world works."

Farage, who said he did not think he would get a role in the US adminis-



Nigel Farage stands in the lobby of Trump Tower in Manhattan, New York, US, on 15 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

tration because he had a British passport, said Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May had banned members of her senior team of ministers from speaking to him.

However, trade secretary Liam Fox said he had received no such instruction.

"We have long-standing understandings of how we deal with incoming administrations ... We don't need anything as an adjunct to what the government already does and has successfully done in

the past," he told BBC TV. "We have got a perfectly good ambassador in Washington at the present time."

Farage spent decades campaigning for Britain to leave the European Union and helped to force the then Prime Minister David Cameron to call the June referendum that brought the Brexit vote.

He spoke at a Trump rally during the US presidential campaign and has met the president-elect since his victory. —*Reuters*

## Goat with superfine wool cloned in China

HOHHOT — The world's first cloned goat bearing superfine cashmere wool was born in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Bayan-nur city government announced Sunday.

The goat was born and will be raised in a base for animal husbandry research conducted by experts from agricultural universities and academies in Inner Mongolia and southwest China's Yunnan Province.

The cashmere fiber from the goat is less than 13.8 micrometers thick, much finer than the average of 15.8 micrometers grown by the famous Erlang Mountain goats in Inner Mongolia.—*Xinhua*

### Submission IEE Report of 3D Seismic Survey in Offshore Block M9 by PTTEPI

PTTEPI International Limited (PTTEPI) plans to conduct a marine seismic survey in Block M9, located in Gulf of Moattama, Myanmar. This is scheduled to commence in early 2017. An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) for the proposed activity has been prepared by PTTEPI, Environmental Resources Management (ERM), and Resource & Environment Myanmar (REM) and was submitted to Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) and Environmental Conservation Department (ECD) on December 1st, 2016. The report is publically viewable at the following locations:

- PTTEPI's office in Yangon : 2 Sei-Myaung Yeiktha Lane 8 ½ Mile Road, Mayagone Township, Yangon, Republic of the Union of Myanmar
- Dawei Township General Administrative Department Office, Dawei District, Tanintharyi Region
- Yebu Township General Administrative Department Office, Dawei District, Tanintharyi Region
- On PTTEPI's website as follows : [www.pttep.com](http://www.pttep.com)

Feedback on the report can be submitted to PTTEPI in writing by contacting the following e-mail address : [TinNilarSoe@pttep.com](mailto:TinNilarSoe@pttep.com)

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## Chris Pratt surprises wife with wedding ring

LONDON — On a red carpet event of Pratt's film "Passengers", Faris, revealed that the actor gave her the surprise two days prior to the premiere of his movie. "He just got me

this ring. I know. Like, two days ago. I look (at it) and I'm like, 'I can't believe it, either!' He's an incredibly romantic man and I'm very, very lucky," she said.

The stunning oval-cut stone, circled by a halo of diamonds and offset with a sparkly gold band, appears to be considerably bigger than Faris' original wedding ring.—PTI

## Radcliffe reveals how he shocks fans with his smoking habit



Actor Daniel Radcliffe.  
PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Actor Daniel Radcliffe says he likes to shock people by asking them for cigarette lighters because most of them don't expect him to smoke.

The 27-year-old star, who shot to fame as Harry Potter in the "Harry Potter" franchise, says he has a habit of losing lighters and that is why he always ends up asking for it from strangers, reported Femalefirst.

"I do smoke and I like roll-ups. I get a kick out of asking people for a light — I'm always losing lighters. 'They fumble in their pockets, look up and realise they've committed the crime of giving Harry Potter cancer,'" he said.—PTI



Nicole Kidman doesn't want her kids to become actors. PHOTO: PTI

## Nicole Kidman thanks husband for helping her cope with father's loss

LONDON — Oscar-winning actress Nicole Kidman has praised husband and musician Keith Urban for helping her cope with the death of her father, Dr Anthony Kidman.

The 49-year-old star said she called Urban 'screaming and crying' when she first heard about her father's death. "He was about to go onstage, and he walked offstage and he got on a

plane. He had just gotten there. He flew six hours, and he was right back there," she recalled. "And he literally picked me up and carried — pretty much carried me through the next two weeks. And that, to me, that's a marriage, and that's love. And I'm so grateful to have that. And I also had, you know, my children going, 'It's going to be all right, Momma'." she said.—PTI

## Michael Jackson's son praises King of Pop

LOS ANGELES — King of Pop Michael Jackson's son Prince Michael credits him for teaching him 'what it is to be a man.' Now 19, the legendary musician's son opened up about how his father influenced the man he has become.

"He taught me what it is to be a man; he showed me what it is to be a father. For me, (I want)

to pass that on to my kids, or to help someone else who has kids." "My cousin TJ Jackson's kids, I treat them as if they were my kids. I have fun with them, I love watching them. That being said, I do hype them up, and they do get wild around me, but I think that would probably be the way to continue the teachings."

Prince remembered the impact his father, who died in 2009, had on others and the joy he shared. "I do have a memory: He had taken us to a hospital for children, and I remember that they were very sick. But when he walked into the room it lit up. All of the kids got happy," he said.—PTI

## Brad Pitt will get to spend four hours with children on Christmas

NEW DELHI — Hollywood star Brad Pitt has been allowed four-hour visit to his children on the Christmas Day by a court, a source close to the actor told Daily Star. Actress Angelina Jolie, his estranged wife, has reportedly agreed that Brad he can deliver gifts in the morning and early afternoon. Angelina filed for divorce from Brad Pitt in September and they are currently in the middle of a custody battle of their six children. Soon after filing for divorce, Angelina moved out of Brad's home and a rented beachfront mansion in Malib, where she lives with Maddox, 15, Pax, 13, Zahara, 11, Shiloh, 10, and eight-year-old twins Knox and Vivienne.

"She doesn't have the heart to refuse to let him see the children over the holidays and they would probably never forgive her

if she did. But Brad is going to have to use every ounce of his acting skill when he arrives with their presents and put on a brave face to mask the torment he's going through over spending so little time with them," said a source close to the former couple told Daily Star.

Angelina filed for divorce on the grounds of "irreconcilable differences" and is demanding sole physical custody of the kids with visitation rights only for Brad, whose lawyers have filed a counter-claim. As part of the Family Services probe, Brad was ordered to undergo anger management counselling and submit drug tests prior to agreed visits with the children.

"He bit his tongue and suffered through all of that in the hope Angelina would allow him more time with their kids. But he



Angelina Jolie's allowed Brad Pitt to give gifts to their children. PHOTO: PTI

was really choked when he didn't get to spend a single moment with them at Thanksgiving last month. And although he can't wait to see them at Christmas, he's dreading how hard it will be

for him to leave them again after four hours," the source told Daily Star.

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt met on the sets of 2005 film Mr And Mrs Smith, when Brad was

married to actress Jennifer Aniston. Brad and Angelina got married in 2014 after living together for almost a decade. They last co-starred in By the Sea, which was also directed by Angelina.—PTI



## Christmas light displays boost atmosphere in Canada



Houses decorated with Christmas light and decorations are displayed along the street in Vancouver, Canada, 16 December, 2016. Vancouver neighbourhoods express their artistic ability through the incredible Christmas light displays which boost up the atmosphere in the streets for the upcoming Christmas. PHOTO: XINHUA

## “your name.” becomes No. 1 grossing Japanese film in China

BEIJING — Anime film “your name.” on Saturday became the highest-grossing Japanese movie of all time in China, as young people flock to watch the blockbuster love story, despite years of difficult political relations between the two countries.

Box office sales of the film topped the 530 million-yuan (\$76.16 million) record set in 2015 by “Stand By Me Doraemon, a 3-D animated film featuring a robotic cat character from a famous Japanese manga series, according to data provided by China’s popular website for cinema tickets, Maoyan.com.

The new all-time high was set quickly after the film, directed by Makoto Shinkai, premiered across China on 2 December.

Full of picturesque scenes, the body-swapping fantasy involving two high school students living different lives in different places — a country girl who yearns for a life outside and a Tokyo boy — was first released in Japan in late August. Since then, it has become a cultural sensation at home and abroad.

China approved the screening of Shinkai’s

smash-hit at theaters with exceptionally fast speed, at a time when Tokyo and Beijing are trying to repair bilateral ties.

China is the world’s second-largest cinema market after the United States. However, the government limits the number of foreign films that can be distributed each year and tightly controls which movies are shown.

When the Doraemon film arrived at theaters in May 2015, it was the first Japanese motion picture to go on general release in China since July 2012.

China shut out Japanese films in 2013 and 2014, during which time diplomatic ties between the two countries were at their lowest ebb in decades due to disputes over wartime issues and the sovereignty of a group of small islands in the East China Sea. In 2015, there were only two Japanese films distributed nationwide. But this year, possibly reflecting China’s strong will to improve public sentiment toward Japan, the number of Japanese films allowed to be shown in Chinese theaters jumped to 11, including Shinkai’s animation. —Kyodo News

## Venezuela opens first Confucius Institute

CARACAS — The opening of the first Confucius Institute in Venezuela on Friday at the Bolivarian University of Venezuela (UBV) in Caracas will strengthen China-Venezuela ties.

Ricardo Menendez, Vice-President for Planning and Knowledge, hailed the institute as being a “service of brotherhood” at the opening ceremony.

“The inauguration of this Confucius Institute has long been awaited. Over 200 people are pre-registered for the first training courses here,” Menendez said to the guests, including the Chinese Ambassador to Venezuela Zhao Bentang.



Participants pose for a photo during the opening ceremony of the first Confucius Institute in Venezuela, at the Bolivarian University of Venezuela (UBV) in Caracas, Venezuela, on 16 December, 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA

Three more Confucius Institutes are set to open in the South American country in the first half of 2017, Menendez added.

“The Venezuelan people

have a new window from which to look at China. There is a new bridge to deepen the friendship between China and Venezuela,” said Zhao, who

spoke after Menendez.

“We invite all Venezuelan people to learn the Chinese language here in the Confucius Institute,” added the diplomat.

Director of the institute, Andreina Bermudez Di Lorenzo, told Xinhua that it is “an honor for UBV to receive the first Confucius Institute in Venezuela ... as a bridge to strengthen the inter-cultural strategies between two peoples.”

She said that 209 students had signed up in the pre-registration phase and the institute would offer 11 Chinese language classes, nine at the beginner level, one at the intermediate and one at the advanced level.—Xinhua

## Philippine shopping mall giant opens project in N China

TIANJIN — A major shopping mall project opened in China’s northern city of Tianjin Saturday.

Located in the Tianjin Free Trade Zone, the 3-billion-yuan (431 million US dollars) project, developed by SM Investments Corporation, the Philippines’ largest listed company and shopping mall operator, covers a gross floor area of 560,000 square meters.

The project, featuring a parking lot that can house 8,700 cars and three oval-shaped buildings linked together by a central ring, was designed based on the idea of “wuxing,” or the five elements in Taoism,

an ancient Chinese religion originating from the writing and philosophy of Lao Tze (571-471 B.C.).

Since entering the Chinese market in 2001, the group has invested in various projects in eight cities including Xiamen, Chengdu, Suzhou and Chongqing. The project in Tianjin is the biggest in China.

Hans Sy, Chairman Emeritus of the Board of Directors of SM Prime, said the Tianjin complex aims to offer one-stop shopping for residents in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

He added that the group is optimistic.—Xinhua

### mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(19-12-2016 07:00 AM ~ 20-12-2016 07:00 AM) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:27	Am	Myanmar Delicate Artistic Creations-Gem Stone Painting)
07:46	Am	Traditional Thatch Roof - Thet Nge
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Pann Kyi
08:38	Am	A Visit To Ye
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Crab Business (Part-II) Soft Shell Crab
09:39	Am	Elephant Catching and Scaring Trip Mile Stone 26
09:53	Am	Tea Leaves
10:03	Am	News

10:26	Am	Shwe Maw Daw : The Glory Of Bago City
10:53	Am	Next Generation: Nyan Kyal Say

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

Prime Time		
07:03	Pm	News
07:27	Pm	Food Trip (Ep-5)(Part-2)
07:54	Pm	Goldsmith
08:03	Pm	News
08:25	Pm	Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of Versatility (Part- 4)
08:52	Pm	Kindhearted Pet Lovers

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

(For Detailed Schedule – [www.myanmaritv.com/schedule](http://www.myanmaritv.com/schedule))



# Real survive scare to win club cup with Ronaldo hat-trick

TOKYO — Real Madrid suffered an almighty fright before a Cristiano Ronaldo hat-trick hauled them back from 2-1 down and gave them a 4-2 win over rank outsiders Kashima Antlers in the Club World Cup final on Sunday.

Two goals from Gaku Shibasaki stunned the European champions as the Japanese hosts took a 2-1 lead early in the second half before a Ronaldo penalty brought Real level on the hour.

The 11-times European champions then survived several more scares and a possible sending-off for captain Sergio Ramos before Ronaldo scored twice more in the first period of extra-time.

Real, who won the tournament for the second time in three years and were crowned champions for a fifth time overall, appeared set for an easy victory when Karim Benzema gave them a ninth-minute lead but Shibasaki changed the story by levelling one minute before halftime.

Kashima were the first Asian team to reach the final although they qualified for the tournament as champions of host nation Japan. Asian champions Jeonbuk Motors had lost in the quarter-finals.

Real went ahead when Luka Modric's volley was parried by Hitoshi Sogahata and Benzema



Real Madrid celebrate winning the FIFA Club World Cup Final with the trophy at International Stadium Yokohama in Japan on 18 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

tapped in the rebound. Kashima refused to be overawed, continued playing their neat football and snatched a shock equaliser just before the break.

Shoma Doi's cross found Shibasaki, whose first touch was poor but he was gifted a second attempt when Raphael Varane failed to clear and he smashed the ball into the net. Shibasaki struck again six minutes after the

break when he collected a poor Real clearance, got away from three opponents and fired a low shot past Keylor Navas from 25 metres.

Real were facing their first defeat since they lost to VfL Wolfsburg in April, a run of 36 competitive games, until Lucas Vazquez was bundled over by Shuto Yamamoto and Ronaldo converted the resulting penalty

on the hour. Kashima continued to give as good as they got and had three good chances in the final minutes of normal time. Fabricio's goalbound drive was tipped over by Navas and the Costa Rican goalkeeper came to the rescue again one minute later by blocking Mu Kanazaki's shot after he got free of the Real defence. Yasushi Endo could have won it with the last kick but fired

wide at the far post while Sergio Ramos was lucky to escape a second yellow card for a push on an opponent.

Ronaldo ended Kashima's dream when he collected Benzema's sliderule pass and fired past Sogahata eight minutes into extra-time, then settled the match six minutes later with an emphatic finish into the roof of the net.—Reuters

## Eleven in a row Chelsea are kings of the Palace

LONDON — Leaders Chelsea tightened their stranglehold on the Premier League after a 1-0 win at Crystal Palace earned them an 11th consecutive victory and sent them nine points clear on Saturday.

Yet another Diego Costa goal meant Antonio Conte's unstoppable side remained firmly on course for the title despite the fog enveloping Selhurst Park in the day's early kickoff.

Zlatan Ibrahimovic was again at his irrepresible best, scoring both of resurgent Man-

chester United's goals in a 2-0 victory at West Bromwich Albion.

Champions Leicester City had striker Jamie Vardy sent off as they trailed 2-0 at Stoke City before battling back to draw 2-2, Daniel Amartey scoring a late equaliser.

Sunderland finally began to see some daylight at the bottom as a 1-0 home win over Watford edged them off the foot of the table, ahead of Swansea City and Hull City who both lost.

Chelsea have triumphed in

14 of their opening 17 league matches under Conte, a feat never achieved before by a manager new to England's top flight.

They have also won 11 in a row in a single season for the first time as the Italian continues to try and eclipse the kind of domination Jose Mourinho enjoyed in his first stint at Stamford Bridge from 2004-07.

Chelsea have 43 points, nine clear of Liverpool, who visit neighbours Everton on Monday, and Arsenal, who travel to fourth-placed Manchester City (33 points) on Sunday.

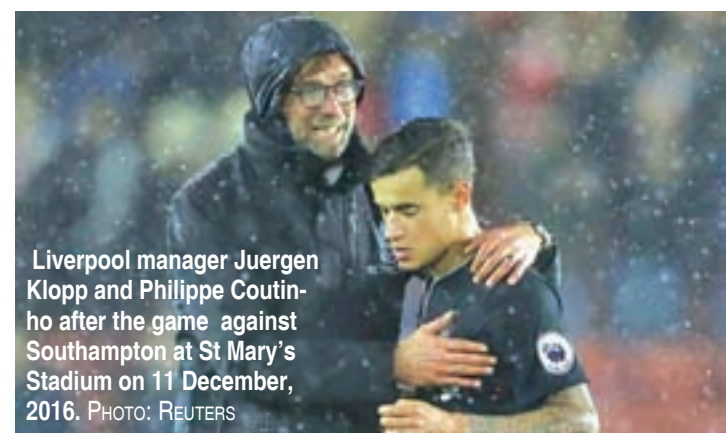
"If I don't say I am pleased for this record I am dishonest. I am not a person who loves stats but it's my first season in England and to win 14 games out of 17 is fantastic," former Juventus and Italy coach Conte told a news conference.

"I like to see the present but I look more to see the future and I want the future to be special for us. The only way for this is to work. "We have room to improve. We are working on our principles. This season I've tried to play with different formations. Now we've found a good balance offensively and defensively."—Reuters



Chelsea manager Antonio Conte and Branislav Ivanovic celebrate after the game against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park on 17 December, 2016 Reuters / Peter Nicholls Livepic

## Klopp won't rush back improving Coutinho



Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp and Philippe Coutinho after the game against Southampton at St Mary's Stadium on 11 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Influential midfielder Philippe Coutinho was making encouraging progress from an ankle injury but will not be rushed back to boost Liverpool's Premier League title aspirations, manager Jurgen Klopp has said.

The 24-year-old Brazilian, who was initially expected to be out for five to six weeks, has been on the sidelines since sustaining the injury during the 2-0 win over Sunderland at Anfield last month.

"It would be cool. He is improving a lot," Klopp told British media when asked if Coutinho could be back for the

clash against Manchester City at Anfield on New Year's Eve.

"He is off his crutches since the West Ham United game (on Dec. 11), when we left the stadium he was walking in front without them."

Coutinho said he has set his sights on making his return against City.

Klopp, however, insisted the midfielder will not be rushed back into action. "We will have to see," the German manager added. "No idea at the moment. I never rush a player back. I'm the most patient person in Liverpool. I always wait for someone. I can't rush it."—Reuters