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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi joins hands with ASEAN foreign ministers before the start of the retreat for ASEAN Foreign Ministers at the Sedona Hotel in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

Rakhine efforts need time and space: State Counsellor

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said yesterday that the Union government is committed to the resolution of the complex issues in Rakhine State, but pointed out that "time and space are critical for the efforts to bear fruit."

The State Counsellor's comments were made at a retreat hosted by Myanmar for ASEAN Foreign Ministers at the Sedona Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

During the retreat, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi briefed the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on recent developments in northern Rakhine

State following the coordinated armed attacks against three border police outposts in the beginning of October.

She also provided information on the Myanmar government's efforts to address the issue, including the provision of humanitarian assistance to both communities in northern Rakhine State in cooperation with UN agencies.

The State Counsellor emphasized the importance of strengthening ASEAN unity and resolving the differences among ASEAN family members through peaceful and friendly consultations.

"The Government of Myanmar reiterated its readiness to grant necessary humanitarian access"

In turn, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers expressed their appreciation to the Government of Myanmar for convening the meeting and for briefing them on developments in Rakhine

State. There was a candid and transparent exchange of views based on the spirit of the ASEAN family. ASEAN welcomed the steps taken by Myanmar to address the challenges in Rakhine State.

They also suggested ways of promoting peaceful coexistence and harmony among the communities, protecting the human rights of the civilian population and providing greater humanitarian assistance and health care for all in the State.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers expressed the willingness

of their countries to help with humanitarian and development assistance.

The Government of Myanmar reiterated its readiness to grant necessary humanitarian access and to keep ASEAN members informed of developments in Rakhine State.

The State Counsellor also expressed her appreciation for the understanding and warmth with which fellow members of ASEAN have responded to the national reconciliation and peace issues in Rakhine State.
—Myanmar News Agency



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U Win Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw.
PHOTO MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw committees hold coordination meeting

A coordination meeting 2/2016 between U Win Myint, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw, and chairmen and secretaries of the parliamentary committees was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with the opening remarks by the Speaker. At the meeting, chairmen and secretaries of the parliamentary committees reported on the resolutions of the previous

meeting and tasks being carried out. After hearing the reports, Speaker U Win Myint reviewed the works.

The meeting ended with concluding remarks by the Speaker. It was also attended by Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Ti Khun Myat and officials of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Pyithu Hluttaw

2nd Pyithu Hluttaw 3rd regular session's 17th meeting held

THE designation of the Pontaung Ponnya region of Gangaw township in Magwe Region as an ecotourism area was one of the topics discussed at the most recent meeting of the Pyithu Hluttaw.

"Designation of the region as ecotourism area can make the youths have access to job opportunities in the local area. And it can control the smuggling of wood, making the national revenue increase. Sustainable conservation of the natural environment can be carried out and prices of local products will be able to be raised. The motion was submitted to the Hluttaw to be able to set up a profitable industry with a few amounts of capital," said Daw Yin Min Hlaing of the Gangaw constituency in Magwe region to the 17th Meeting of 3rd Regular Session, 2nd Pyithu Hluttaw held yesterday.

She added that "Ecotourism means organised holidays and vacations that are designed so that the tourists damage the environment as little as possible, especially when some of the money they pay is used to protect the local environment and animals. For the environment to be conserved in natural ways, construction of infrastructure by the use of local products, generating electrical power through solar and wind energy, giving care to the use of water without wastage, keeping natural environment and enemies from being harmed, practising of trashing wastage, inclusion of demanding sports such as cycling, walking and rowing are especially included in the implementation of the project."

In other news from the Pyithu Hluttaw, it is learnt that the

Pontaung Ponnya region is situated in the border area of Sagaing and Magwe Regions, with two mountain ranges linking south and north. To the east, there is the Pontaung mountain range, with Ponnya to the west. It is the region which produces rare species of birds, orchards and wood.

U Ohn Win, Union Minister for Resources and Environmental Conservation made the comments in reply to a question raised by U Naing Htoo Aung, Nahtogyi constituency. The Law on Law Translation Commission with an amendment attached sent back by Amyotha Hluttaw was approved by the Pyithu Hluttaw. It is learnt that six amendments of the Bill which are disagreements between the Pyithu Hluttaw and the Amyotha Hluttaw will be submitted to Pyihtaungsu Hluttaw. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker holds talks with Vice Chairman of Agro & Rural Affairs Committee of NPC of China



Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than receives Mr Wang Guosheng, Vice Chairman of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress of China. PHOTO: MNA

Mahn Win Khaing Than, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw, received Mr Wang Guosheng, Vice Chairman of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress of China, at the reception hall of the parliament yesterday.

At the meeting, they discussed promoting of the friendship and matters related to

cooperation between the two parliaments.

Also present at the call were Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Thar Aung, chairman, secretary and members of the Pyithu Hluttaw's Agriculture, Livestock and Fishery Development Committee and officials of the Pyithu Hluttaw Office. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

2nd Amyotha Hluttaw 3rd regular session's 17th day meeting held

THE buildup of silt in reservoirs and the effectiveness of alternative medicine were discussed at the most recent meeting of the Amyotha Hluttaw yesterday.

In response to a question from U Win Maung of constituency 6, Magwe Region, the Union Minister Dr Aung thu for Agriculture, Livestock Breeding and Irrigation said a buildup of silt in reservoirs is being monitored.

"With a view to securing the sustainable use of the reservoirs, conditions of silting up in these reservoirs will be constantly observed and necessary surveys will be carried out occasionally" said Dr Aung Thu at the 17th day meeting of 3rd Regular Session, 2nd Amyotha Hluttaw. "Out of all reservoirs built in Magwe Region, 12 were 20 years and older, with many 10 to 15 years old. With the increasing deforestation, conditions of silting up become high. For the time

being, it is not required to dig up the silting because it is still very far away to reach the floor of the drainage pipe."

The issue of the effectiveness of alternative medicine was brought up in a question by Dr Kyaw Than Tun (Canton) of constituency 3, Mandalay Region.

"It will take strenuous effort ... to develop the sector of alternative medicine. Concurrently, there is the need to test as to whether the alternative medicine is really effective or harmful. The ministry aims to make research work effectively. In 1995, there was a term paper submitted to the seminar on the research of indigenous medicine as to whether it was possible to use Yarke traditional medicine to stop narcotics. During the period from 2004 to 2014, Yarke was used to stop narcotics at the hospital. To win the trust of people as to using the medicine, research work is essential. To do research

work, we need 4 steps to perform, including the facts whether it is dangerous or not and there will be side-effects on the use of it. Moreover, we need to follow the international rules and regulations. Until now, in our country research on indigenous medicine is still weak," said Dr Myint Htwe, Union Minister for Health and Sports. Afterward, Dr Aung Thu, Union Minister clarified the questions raised by Dr Pyae Phyo of constituency 7 of Ayeyawady Region and U Ba Myo Thein of constituency 5 of Yangon Region.

U Zaw Min, chairman of Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee, read out the report of the committee as regards the 2nd Amendment Law on Union Election Commission (the Bill), receiving the approval of the Hluttaw upon every clause. Concerning the bill, the Hluttaw decided to approve it. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Discussion on Foreign Currency Exchange

FOR the stability of foreign currency exchange rates, U Kyaw Win, Union Minister for Planning & Finance, Dr Than Myint, Union Minister for Commerce, U Kyaw Kyaw Maung, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM), U Maung Maung Win, deputy minister for Planning & Finance, U Set Aung, vice chairman of CBM and U Toe Aung Myint,

permanent secretary of the ministry of commerce held a meeting in the meeting hall of the Ministry of Planning & Finance yesterday afternoon.

In the meeting, it was broadly discussed how the American dollar is gradually appreciating and how exchange rates of other currencies against the dollar are dropping. The ministers and of-

ficials noted that though there is the normal slumping of currency exchange rates, some are taking advantage of the situation in order to manipulate the exchange rates. Plans currently in practice and further plans to be carried out were discussed in the meeting. Included in the discussion were matters on allowing the import of luxury commodities, essential goods,

motor vehicles, Duty Free Shop Goods and cosmetic products only after careful scrutiny. As regards exports, increasing use of the L/C System — Letter of Credit System — instead of exercising the T/T System — Telegraphic Transfer System, scrutiny of the remittance of foreign currency to overseas countries to re-invest capital, scrutiny of earnings coming into the

country from exports and re-exports, assessment of reducing taxes levied on exports, assessment of increasing taxes on imported luxury items, submission of authorised bank statements and taking legal action against companies that try to cheat with bank statements.

Similar meetings will be held regularly every week, it is learnt. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Representatives pray for God's blessings to President, wife & family

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives consisting of national races and their families came to the President's Palace in Nay Pyi Taw to pray for God's blessing to the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, wife Daw Su Su Lwin and family at 6:30pm on Monday as a pre-birthday celebration of Jesus Christ. In the prayer ceremony, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives comprise national races and their families greeted and offered a floral basket of Christmas presents and entertained with hymns.

Afterward, Dr Daw Shwe Pon of Bago constituency read the Bible with U Sein Aung of Paletwa constituency, giving blessings to President, wife and family. Then, the representatives sang hymns and prayed for God's blessing to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the President. In return, the President gave Christmas presents and posed for photos. —*Myanmar News Agency*



Parliamentarians sing hymns and pray for President U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin. PHOTO: MNA

Training for prevention of human trafficking begins in Toungoo

AN opening ceremony for a training course for Prevention of Trafficking in Person (TIP) and Development of Personalities of Youth organised by the Myanmar Library Association, The Asia Foundation and the Ministry of Information took place in the hall of Toungoo District Information and Public Relations Department yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, deputy district administrator Daw Nyunt Thuza delivered the opening speech. Daw Miki Kyaw Myint, Program and

Operations Officer of the Asia Foundation, explained the establishment of the Asia Foundation and its conducting comprehensive strategic planning process. Vice chairperson of the Myanmar Library Association Daw Ah Win talked about changes in the roles of both of libraries and librarians.

A total of 15 trainees from Toungoo, Myingyan, Taunggyi and Kengtung will attend the five-day training course, which will run between 19 and 23 December. —*Shwe Win (Pyay)*

State Counsellor receives Deputy FM of Brunei, Indonesian FM

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, held talks separately with Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Trade of Brunei Darussalam, and Ms Retno Marsudi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia at the Sedona Hotel at 10.30 am and 1 pm respectively yesterday. —*Myanmar News Agency*



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talks with Ms Retno Marsudi. PHOTO: MNA

International, local artists show contemporary creations

INTERNATIONAL and local contemporary artists gathered at the Yangon Gallery in Yangon, exhibiting their paintings and creating their works under an art workshop program titled "Cohesive Art Fair Myanmar 2016 — Pre Activity of Zaykabar Museum" yesterday.

"This is the first time in Myanmar with participation of contemporary artists from the USA, China, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, the Netherlands and Korea along with local artists," said Beikthano U Tin Win, a well-known artist in Myanmar. The artworks, including sculptures, were on display for the public starting 18th December.

The workshop was held with practical creation of the artists to the public following their visit to Bagan,

Myanmar's ancient city and one of the popular tourist attractions of the country.

"These are Bagan," said Park Jin Woo, an artist from South Korea, showing the three paintings he created yesterday at the workshop.

"As a medium, I used watercolour, acrylic and Chinese ink in my creation," he added.

Some artists will give talks on arts at the National University of Arts and Culture in Yangon today.

"We really want to express our special thanks to the international painters and sculptors for their participation in this event," said Dr Khin Shwe, Chairman of Zaykabar Company, which sponsored the event.

The two-day exhibition attracted local artists and arts enthusiasts. —*GNLM*



Park Jin Woo from South Korea.



Pamela Blotner from the USA.



Kaiqin Zhang from China.



Suzanne Reese Horvitz from the USA.

IDPs return Mongko

Internally displaced persons are returning as the situation in Mongko, where armed conflicts happened between the government forces and the armed groups recently, has returned into normalcy.

Following table is the list of the IDPs who arrived back home in four wards and eight village-tracts.

No.	Ward/Village	Houses	Household	Male	Female	Total
1	Ward-1	20	5	58	57	115
2	Ward-2	-	-	64	66	130
3	Ward-3	-	-	23	19	42
4	Ward-4	10	17	41	30	71
5	Ward-5	15	7	27	19	46
6	Kunglon Village-tract	13	13	38	39	77
7	Kaungkwe Village-tract	16	16	25	23	48
8	Nawko Village-tract	2	2	24	14	38
9	Haymoe Village-tract	50	48	115	121	236
10	Phaungsai Village-tract	30	25	30	34	64
11	Phawmaw Village-tract	9	9	22	19	41
12	Manjap Village-tract	2	2	35	9	24
13	Lwewein Village-tract	10	10	17	12	29
Total		177	154	499	462	961

Kawthaung residents to get free eye surgery

PEOPLE living with eye diseases who currently reside in Kawthaung, a border town located in Myanmar's Taninthayi Region, have been invited to take part in an upcoming free eye care programme of local donor groups.

Organised by Kawthaung Group Co Ltd in cooperation with a local charity foundation, the eye care support is planned to be offered to residents free of

charge at Kawthaung District General Hospital from 26 December to 20 January.

Eye specialists and surgeons from Yangon will visit the hospital to perform surgical operations in collaboration with eye specialists from the host hospital, with plans to absorb all medical charges to patients before and after surgery.

The most common eye dis-

eases in the country are cataracts, glaucoma, corneal diseases, injuries and retinal diseases. Cataracts are the most common cause of vision loss in people over age 40 in Myanmar and is the principal cause of blindness in the world. According to the World Health Organisation's assessment, cataracts are responsible for 51 per cent of the world's blindness.—*Kyaw Soe (Kawthaung)*



Photo: Eye surgical operation being performed by surgeons.

Twelve condominiums to be built in Myeik Town

A DOZEN condominiums with nearly 2,500 apartments are planned to be built on a 27-acre project area on Strand Road in Myeik, a city in Taninthayi Region in the near future.

The new project will start later this month jointly invested by Pyae Phyto Tun International Company and South Asia International Investment Group

P.T.E Ltd (Singapore).

The Taninthayi Region government has already granted them to develop the construction.

The development will include eight 32-storey towers, two 28-storey towers and two 22-storey towers. It will also contain sports grounds, football pitches, shops, a swimming

pool, sightseeing facilities and a clinic.

A park and mini jetties will also be constructed.

The sale of those condominium apartments is scheduled to begin next month, said the organisers who plan to announce the set prices for each apartment at the time of sale.—*Wah Wah*

Government troops repair church damaged by explosions of ammunitions of armed groups

GOVERNMENT troops are repairing a church in Mongko damaged during the attacks of the KIA, the TNLA, the MN-DAA and the AA from 20 November to 6 December.

The church in Ward (2) of Mongko was damaged on 3 December morning by explosions caused by ammunition stored

the armed groups while they were stationed there.

As stability has been restored in the area, government troops are also rebuilding other damaged buildings during the attacks and carrying out rehabilitation tasks in Mongko. —*Myanmar News Agency*



Government troops repair church damaged by explosions. PHOTO : MNA

30 per cent of restaurants don't put tax stamps on customer receipts

THE Internal Revenue Department collected over Ks74 million over the past two months in fines from over 280 restaurants in Yangon which failed to put tax stamps on the bills issued to customers, according to the department.

"We, inspection teams, found on average around 30 out of 100 restaurants during inspection tours in target townships were not complying. It shows that 70 per cent of restaurants abided by the government's tax rules and regulations," said U Aung Kyaw Tint, head of Yangon Region internal revenue department.

Complaints from a number of customers who did not receive stamps on the bills increased, he added.

Between October and 16 December, the department col-

lected Ks74.1 million from 283 restaurants after the officials discovered that they failed to follow the existing tax rules, most of those restaurants are in North Dagon, Mayangon, Insein, Yankin, Botahtaung, Ahlon, Thingangyun, Hline, Latha, Lanmadaw, Mingaladon and South Dagon townships.

Some of those restaurants failed to collect 5 per cent sale tax from patrons while some others broke the rule to put tax stamps on the bills issued to their clients.

Restaurants which fail to use tax stamps will face a fine of Ks200,000 for the first time, Ks500,000 for the second time, Ks700,000 for the third time. After the fourth time, those will face a fine of K1 million.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Crime NEWS

Young man charged under weapons law

A 19-year-old man in Kyaikhto Township in Mon State has been charged under Section 19 of the Arms Act on Monday morning.

Ko Nge was arrested by police after he was found drunk in the heart of Khawe Village, where he was holding a 12.5-inch knife and loudly using swear words, police said.

He was found in a possession of a knife in the village

while police were carrying out their regular patrol, said Inspector Tin Aung Soe of Theinzayat Police Station.

According to investigators, the young man has an "immoral background, and he created several problems in the village and bothered people around his environment after drinking alcoholic beverages".—*Myitmakha News Agency*

LOCAL Business

Parboiled rice exports to European market on the rise

PARBOILED rice exports to the European market are experiencing an upward trend, with an export volume of 2,000 tonnes this year.

The parboiled rice is being exported to European markets through normal trade. China is the main buyer of Myanmar's rice, but the export volume to China this year decreased, resulting in a glut of rice stock in the domestic market, according to an official from the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Rice exports through border trade this year were mainly on the decline, although exports via sea trade had not changed, officials said. Currently, border trade has raised its head again but there is still confiscation of rice by Chinese authorities. Rice exported through border trade is consid-

ered legal trade in Myanmar but exports above a certain limit are not legitimate to China. Although this regulation has been largely ignored in the past, it has recently been enforced by Chinese authorities. Myanmar officials are currently conducting discussions with Chinese authorities concerning an increase in rice export quota to China and border trade, it is learnt.

Myanmar has reached an agreement with Indonesia to export nearly 300,000 tonnes of rice. Similarly, discussion regarding rice exports to Viet Nam and the Philippines is ongoing.

Myanmar is still weak in techniques for rice production, with foreign direct investment required to improve the agriculture sector, it is learnt.—200

GAC car company to open automobile showroom in Yangon

GUANGZHOU Automobile Group Co (GAC) will open an automobile showroom in Sang-yaung Township, Yangon Region on 21st December, said an official from the LS automotive group, which imports and sells GAC vehicles in Myanmar.

"The price of GAC automobiles is fair and we hope GAC cars will appeal to a wider customer base in Myanmar" said a GAC representative. "This being so, GAC has plans to open its showroom in Myanmar. The lat-

est models will be mainly sold in this showroom".

The models -- GS4, GS5, GA6 and GA5 will be displayed at the showroom. GAC branded SUV cars can be purchased at over Ks40million, the representative said. Vehicles manufactured by GAC are of high specifications, and so these cars can be utilised in the long term. GAC will produce around 500,000 vehicles in 2017, expecting to increase its production up to 1 million by 2021, it is learnt.—200

Reopening of Muse-Mandalay Union Road results in steady flow of truckloads of fruits

LORRIES carrying fruits streamed into the Muse 105th mile trade zone after the Muse-Mandalay Union Road was reopened on 18th December, said the depot owners.

There were about 60 trucks carrying fruits on 17th December due to the blockage of the road. After clearance of the road blockage, the number of trucks entering Muse increased up to more than 260 on 18th December.

The merchants, the truck drivers and owners are financially doing well due to the reopening of the road, especially with the appreciation of the Chinese yuan and the high demand.

Fighting on 20th November between government troops and ethnic groups caused a blockage of Muse-Mandalay Union Road. Traffic was cleared starting from 17th December.

"Nevertheless, the traffic on this road is usual. The traffic is going to slightly ease and the high supply is placed on Muse market when the price is high, allowing those engaged in Muse trade to do well", said U Maung, a fruit merchant.

The exchange rate for one Chinese Yuan was at Ks193 and the rate rose a bit to Ks195 on 18th December, it is learnt.—Myitmakha News Agency



Bamboo products on display. PHOTO: SOE WIN (MLA)

Export of bamboo and rattan furniture increases by 30 per cent

EXPORTS of furniture made from bamboo and rattan this year has increased by 30 per cent when compared to last year, fetching about US\$13million, according to the Myanmar Rattan and Bamboo Entrepreneurs Association.

Furniture exports experienced a boost due to high demand from abroad this year. Nevertheless, the export volume is negligible when compared to the neighbouring countries.

The price of materials is also high in keeping with the appreciation in the dollar price and raw material prices. Previously, only about US\$10 million worth rattan and bamboo furniture were exported. This year, the export value earned from rattan and bamboo furniture will be about US\$13million, said an official from the association.

The association will put forth efforts to have wider access to

more rattan and bamboo markets and to boost the technology.

The exports constitute ninety per cent of rattan and bamboo products, flowing into Korea, Japan and European countries, it is learnt. The finished products of rattan and bamboo are mostly manufactured in Yangon and Ayeyawady regions. The raw materials are supplied from Kachin and Rakhine states, Taninthayi and Ayeyawady regions.—Ko Khant

Honda to begin automobile after-sales business in Myanmar

HONDA announced yesterday it has started its after-sales business for automobiles in Myanmar. The announcement was made at the opening ceremony of an all-new Honda authorized after-sales outlet in Yangon, which is operated by Honda's new business partner, Eastern Nova Co., Ltd.

Eastern Nova, a Myanmar's local firm with an excellent knowledge of automobile after-sales, has taken up the responsibilities to conduct after-sales activities for Honda vehicles as Honda's authorized after-sales dealer in Myanmar.

The agreement was reached among three parties: Eastern Nova, Honda Motor Co., Ltd., and Asian Honda Motor Co., Ltd, Honda's regional headquarter for the Asia and Oceania Region, to materialize high quality after-sales service for the owners of Honda vehicles.



A Honda Motor Co's automobile displayed outside the company showroom in Tokyo. PHOTO: REUTERS

Myanmar has been experiencing a very encouraging economic growth of around 8% in recent years, and it is regarded as one of the important markets with high potentials to grow in Asia with a population of 50 million. The sales of new vehicles have been permitted since 2011, and currently Honda reckons that more than 42 thousand units(1) of Honda cars have been already registered and

used in the market. In view of this current situation, and in order to provide high quality of services for the valued customers, Honda has decided to set up the all-new authorized after-sales framework. In order to fulfill the expectations from Honda's customers in Myanmar and maximize their "Joy" of driving Honda vehicles, Honda is committed to providing better services with quality.—GNLM

Singapore says deported close to 70 suspected radicals in past two years

SINGAPORE — Singapore has deported the majority of the 70-odd foreigners it has investigated for suspected radicalism in the past two years, although none planned to carry out attacks in the city-state, the ministry of home affairs said on Monday.

Singapore, which has never seen a successful attack by Islamist militants, has been on heightened alert in recent months, with authorities telling the population that such an event was a matter of “when” not “if”.

Earlier this year, Indonesian police arrested six suspected militants believed to be linked to the Islamic State group and plotting an attack on Singapore. The city-state has also jailed six Bangladeshi workers who were charged with contributing money for attacks in Bangladesh. Most of the foreigners deported were radicalised through “expo-

sure to radical propaganda on social media,” and some used it to radicalise others, the ministry said in a statement. It did not specify their nationalities.

“None of them had any plans to carry out acts of violence in Singapore at the time they were investigated, but as they were in various stages of radicalism, their presence posed a security concern for Singapore,” the statement said.

“Consequently, they were deported after the authorities in their home countries were informed of their cases.” Five of those deported were maids working in Singapore. Dian Yulia Novi, who was arrested in an anti-terror raid this month for plotting to attack the presidential palace in Jakarta, worked in Singapore as a maid in 2008-09, but at the time did not show signs of being radicalised, the ministry said.—Reuters

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The oceanographic survey ship, USNS Bowditch, is shown on 20 September 2002, which deployed an underwater drone seized by a Chinese Navy warship in international waters in South China Sea, on 16 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

China says discussing return of undersea drone with US military

BEIJING — The Chinese and US militaries are having “unimpeded” talks about the return of US underwater drone taken by a Chinese naval vessel in the South China Sea last week, China’s foreign ministry said on Monday.

The drone, known as an unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV), was taken on Thursday in waters off the coast of the Philippines, the first seizure of its kind in recent memory.

The Pentagon went public with its complaint about the incident and said on Saturday it had secured a deal to get the drone back. China’s defence ministry had earlier accused Washington of hyping up the issue.

“What I can tell you is that at present, China and the United States are using unimpeded military channels to appropriately handle this issue,” foreign

ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular briefing.

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

Asked about Trump’s comments, Hua said describing the drone as stolen was “completely incorrect”.

“The key is that China’s navy had a responsible and professional attitude to identify and ascertain this object,” she said.

“If you discover or pick something up from the street you have to examine it and if somebody asks you for it you have to

work out if it’s theirs before you can give it back.”

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.

The Philippines said the occurrence of the incident inside its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) was “very troubling”.

“Not only does it increase the likelihood of miscalculations that could lead to open confrontation very near the Philippine mainland but the commission of activities other than innocent passage which impinge upon the right of the Philippines over the resources in its EEZ are violations of the Philippines rights over its EEZ,” Defence Minister Delfin Lorenzana said in a

statement.

China is deeply suspicious of any US military activities in the resource-rich South China Sea, with state media and experts saying the use of the drone was likely part of US surveillance efforts in the disputed waterway.

The overseas edition of the ruling Communist Party’s People’s Daily said in a commentary on Monday the USNS Bowditch, which was operating the drone, was a “serial offender” when it came to spying operations against China.

“The downplaying of the actions of the drone cannot cover up the real intentions in the background,” it said. “This drone which floated to the surface in the South China Sea is the tip of the iceberg of US military strategy, including towards China.”—Reuters

South Korea very concerned over bird flu outbreak, aftermath: vice finance minister

SEOUL — South Korea is very concerned about a bird flu outbreak that has seen the biggest-ever cull of chickens and other poultry, its second vice finance minister said on Monday.

“The number of culled birds is rising very quickly,” Song Eon-seok told reporters in an unscheduled briefing at the government headquarters in Sejong, south of Seoul.

“It’s grown in a short amount of time and we

are very worried.”

Song said the government has enough funds to aid farmers and those in the industry who face financial hardship in the wake of this outbreak, which has seen the culling of more than 16 million birds, almost one-fifth of South Korea’s poultry population. The lack of manpower to help in the culling and sanitizing has emerged as the most urgent issue, he said, despite the deploy-



A South Korean health official disinfects a vehicle to prevent spread of bird flu in Pohang, South Korea, on 19 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ment of soldiers stationed in nearby areas and public workers to help.

Song also said South Korea’s debt-to-gross domestic product ratio is ex-

pected to be managed to stay below 40 per cent in 2017. This year, the finance ministry sees the ratio standing at 38.7 per cent or 38.8 per cent.—Reuters



A police investigator makes an inventory of the Methamphetamine, locally known as Shabu, worth 120 million pesos (\$2.41 million), that was confiscated during a drug-buy bust police operations in a mall at a Guadalupe city, metro Manila, Philippines on 21 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Filipinos fear extrajudicial killings, but approve of drugs war — survey

MANILA — Eight out of 10 Filipinos worry they or someone they know might become a victim of extrajudicial killings, an opinion poll published on Monday found, although a majority also gave President Rodrigo Duterte's drug war an "excellent" rating.

More than 2,000 people have been killed by police in anti-narcotics operations in the Philippines since Duterte took office on 1 July. Another 3,000 deaths, some attributed to masked men on motorcycles or vigilantes, are under investigation.

Social Weather Stations (SWS), an independent pollster, asked 1,500 Filipinos nationwide if they were concerned that either they or someone they knew could fall victim to an extrajudicial killing, and 78 per cent said they were either very worried or somewhat worried.

The SWS survey was conducted with face-to-face interviews

on 3-6 December, with the results posted online on Monday.

Despite those fears, the survey also found Filipinos were staunchly behind Duterte's drugs war, which has drawn international concern and a request from a United Nations human rights expert to investigate. Duterte's drugs war received an "excellent" mark from an overwhelming majority of respondents, a rating determined by deducting the eight per cent of respondents who said they were dissatisfied from the 85 per cent who were satisfied.

"I am not surprised with the conundrum that people acknowledge that the anti-drug campaign is fitting, so they allow it. But they would like less killings," said Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute for Political and Electoral Reform.

Martin Andanar, Duterte's communication secretary, said the government recognised concerns

among Filipinos but reiterated that the killings were not state-sponsored.

"Rest assured that the Duterte administration respects the law and upholds the basic rights of our people, regardless of beliefs and political persuasion," he said in a statement.

The survey, which had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 per cent, also found 71 per cent felt it was important to keep those suspected of drug use or drug trafficking alive. A similar figure said the extrajudicial killings were a serious problem. A convincing 88 per cent also believed there had been a decrease in the illicit drug problem in their communities.

The firebrand leader, known as "the Punisher" and "Duterte Harry", has said he personally killed criminals while he was mayor of southern Davao City, leading senators to warn him that he risked being impeached.—Reuters

South Korea returns eight North Koreans and vessels after sea rescue

SEOUL — South Korea sent eight North Koreans and two vessels it had rescued drifting at sea last week back across their maritime border on Monday, and patrol vessels from the North were on hand to receive them, the South's unification ministry said.

All eight of those rescued had said they wanted to return to the North, ministry spokesman Jeong Joon-hee said. Their return came after North Korea had ignored notice on Thursday of plans to repatriate the crew, some of whom were suffering frostbite, and the vessels, Jeong told a media briefing.

At least one person was believed to have died from starvation, and possibly more, according to survivors, Jeong said last week. One of the ships set sail in September and the other in November, he said.

South Korea's relations with the North are at a low point after the North conducted two nuclear tests and numerous test-launches of ballistic missiles this year.

The North reacts sensitively to announcements by South Korea of defections of its people. It has accused the South of kidnapping 13 employees of a restaurant in China who defected to the South in April.—Reuters

Cambodia to host Mekong-Lancang foreign ministers' meeting this week

PHNOM PENH — The second Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC) foreign ministers' meeting will be held on 22 and 23 December in northwest Cambodia's Siem Reap province, Cambodian foreign ministry said in a statement on Monday.

Cambodian foreign minister Prak Sokhonn and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will co-chair the meeting that will also gather foreign ministers from Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam, said the statement.

"The meeting will provide an excellent opportunity to review the progress made as well as to exchange views on the future directions of MLC framework since the successful convening of the first MLC Leaders' meeting in March

2016," it said.

According to the statement, the MLC foreign ministers will endorse the joint press communiqué of the 2nd MLC foreign ministers' meeting, the matrix of follow-ups to the outcomes of the 1st MLC Leaders' meeting, and the general principles for the establishment of the Joint Working Groups on the MLC key priority areas.

The six countries along the Mekong (known as Lancang in the Chinese stretch) launched the MLC mechanism in 2015 and convened the first Leaders' meeting in March 2016.

Five priority areas under the MLC include connectivity, production capacity, cross-border economic cooperation, water resources, agriculture and poverty reduction.—Xinhua

Scientists discover 163 new species in Greater Mekong region: WWF

BANGKOK — A rainbow-headed snake and a dragon-like lizard are among 163 new species that scientists recently discovered in the Greater Mekong region, conservation group WWF said on Monday, adding rapid development in the area, from dams to mines, was threatening wildlife survival.

The discoveries, published in a report on Monday, include a gecko in Laos with pale blue skin and a rare banana species discovered in northern Thailand that is critically endangered because of increasing deforestation.

The Greater Mekong is home to some of the world's most endangered species. Rare or endangered animal parts, including

tiger bones and rhino horns, are seen as collector's items by some and are often used in traditional medicine.

In June, Thai wildlife authorities raided the Tiger Temple west of Bangkok, a popular tourist attraction. There they discovered scores of dead tiger cubs, frozen tiger carcasses, skins and dead cubs in jars, as well as other protected species.

It remains unclear why the Tiger Temple was storing dead tiger cubs and parts, although officials have said they might have been used for traditional Chinese medicine.

Jimmy Borah, Wildlife Programme Manager for WWF-Greater Mekong, said the

new species discovered in the Greater Mekong region were a reminder that there is hope at a time when extinction rates are increasing at an alarming rate.

"The Greater Mekong region keeps reminding us that there are many incredible, unexplored areas, leading to new discoveries happening every year and it is crucial that we protect them before they are lost," Borah told Reuters.

A 2016 report by WWF found that by 2020 global populations of fish, birds, amphibians, mammals and reptiles could have declined by two-thirds in just 50 years.

The Greater Mekong is a global hub for illegal wildlife



Gekko Bonkowski is pictured in this handout picture received by Reuters on 18 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

trade.

"Many collectors are willing to pay thousands of dollars or more for the rarest, most unique and most endangered species, often buying them at the region's

illegal wildlife markets," said Borah.

"To save them, it's crucial that we improve enforcement against poaching and close illegal wildlife markets."—Reuters

Opinion

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Peace and Stability will bring about development

Editorial from
Kyemon
(the Mirror)

IT can be said that the region has now begun to regain a certain state of peace and stability due to the government's efforts, in the best way possible, to deal with the problems of instability in the area which occurred on account of violent armed attacks on Maungtaw region, northern Rakhine State.

The Maungtaw region situated in northern Rakhine State shares a border with Bangladesh, managing to open a border pass gate and to operate a border trade business with it. Mountains, rivers, creeks, beaches and fair weather which are typical features of the geographical landscape of the State has given the local populace fa-

vorable conditions for living and making a decent living for themselves.

The area can be said to be a good place for creating job opportunities and fruitful business as the border trade zone had been used for importing commodities and equipments used for businesses from Bangladesh and exporting rice, fish, fried fish and marine prawns from Myanmar.

Yet, a series of armed attacks disrupted the border trade for over two months, thus border trade businesses bore fruits no longer as in previous months as goods had to be exported via the Sittwe trade zone. As the Maungtaw border gate has

not yet reopened, the area suffered a great loss.

Now that respective responsible officials are trying their best to reopen the Maungtaw trade zone, prospects for reopening the border gate are very good. Infiltration of destructive elements from across the border to conspire subversive armed attacks together with some locals has contributed to the ruin of peace and stability in Maungtaw area. Having collected circumstantial evidence, arrangements to totally remove these destructive elements are now under way.

It is not an easy task to bring the situation back to normal with a certain degree

of peace and stability from the current state of unrest in the region. But, it is hoped that it is just a matter of time to reach the normal state if and when the problem is subtly solved with strict rules and laws, with a view to bringing about the benefits of peace to the local populace.

It is the locals who suffer losses if peace and stability is lost in the region. Keeping in mind that peace and stability can bring about development, all the locals are required to take responsibility to cooperate with responsible persons enforcing the rule of law and effectuating area development, without taking part in destructive activities.

Norway: A reliable partner for Asia

Børge Brende,
Foreign Minister of Norway

Norway supports the move towards closer regional cooperation in Asia

Over the past generation, the global economic centre of gravity has been moving towards Asia. This economic shift is now accompanied by deepening co-operation in the region. Norway supports this development, and over the past few years we have actively sought to strengthen relations with Asia. Here I would like to outline the main reasons for this, and describe the areas where we see the greatest potential for future cooperation.

Norway has made an effort to join some of the most important arenas for political and economic cooperation in Asia. In 2012, we were accepted as a member of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the principal meeting place for political dialogue between Asia and Europe. ASEM is a valuable and effective arena for political discussions with our Asian and European partners. Then in 2015, Norway gained sectoral dialogue partner status with ASEAN, the first medium sized economy outside the region to do so.

One of our main reasons for approaching Asia has been to increase trade and investments. Asia currently accounts for 30 % of the global gross domestic product, and the Asian Develop-

ment Bank estimates that by 2050 this will have increased to over 50 %. In countries like India and China, growth has been accompanied by the lifting of hundreds of millions of people out of poverty. Moreover, at a time when free trade is under pressure, many countries in Asia are taking laudable steps towards removing trade barriers between them. Norway is a strong supporter of free trade, and we recently gathered over 20 countries in Oslo to move the free trade agenda of the WTO forward, in preparation of the WTO ministerial meeting in Buenos Aires in 2017.

Norway's trade with Asia is both deepening and widening. ASEAN is today our fourth largest trading partner. And we want to increase our trade with Asia even further. As a member of the European Free Trade Association, Norway has given priority to negotiating free trade agreements with a number of Asian countries, including Hong Kong, Philippines, Singapore and South Korea. Negotiations are also underway with India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

Norway's economic links with Asia date back several centuries. In the 1850s, when China and India accounted for around 50 % of global GDP, and Tokyo was a capital with several million inhabitants, the Norwegian merchant navy was the largest in the world. Norwegian ships, to-

gether with thousands of Norwegian seamen, played an important part in the economic growth of Asian countries 150 years ago.

Still today, Norwegian companies in the maritime sector continue to play a vital role in many Asian countries. At the same time, there are also important investments in fisheries, hydropower, and oil and gas. In total, around 500 Norwegian companies have been established in Asia, increasing foreign direct investment in the region. The Norwegian public sector is also investing in Asia. The Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global, one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds with almost USD 900 billion invested abroad, has placed over 20 % of its equity investments in Asia. As a sign of our commitment to further regional integration in Asia, Norway became a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) earlier this year, providing USD 550 million in capital. It is no coincidence that the two most recent Norwegian diplomatic missions to be opened are in Asia, in Yangon and Mumbai. Myanmar's abundant resources, its growing domestic market and steadily improving business environment are attracting increasing interest from Norwegian companies, many of which are setting up operations there.

Another key area in our co-

operation with Asia is the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. We are united by a common interest in solving global challenges such as education, health and climate change. Norway is engaged in extensive cooperation with Indonesia on reducing deforestation through REDD+, and we have pledged USD 1 billion for these efforts. In Myanmar, Norway has a comprehensive bilateral cooperation programme with the Government in the environmental sector, as well as on natural resource management. Other areas where we can make a difference are the maritime sector and fisheries. World-leading Norwegian companies in these sectors have already invested in Asia. Drawing on the extensive experience of the Norwegian Government, we hope to stimulate green shipping and sustainable fisheries and fish farming in the region. Ensuring that the oceans are healthy and productive for future generations is a key priority for Norway's foreign policy, and we are currently working on a new government strategy to move this agenda forward, including in Asia.

A third broad area of interest in our cooperation with Asia is the promotion of peace and stability, international law and human rights. Norway has acted as facilitator in peace processes in a number of Asian countries, with particular focus at present on the Philippines, where formal



negotiations are now taking place. Norway has also been engaged in the peace process in Myanmar for several years, in close dialogue with the parties. From 2016 we have been providing funding for the Joint Peace Fund, the implementation of the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC), and a wide range of other initiatives related to the peace process. We are a strong defender of human rights, and earlier this year Norway hosted the sixth World Congress Against the Death Penalty, which was attended by representatives from over 80 countries.

Global change is profoundly affecting Asia – in terms of economic development, in the tectonic shifts of global politics, and in the increasingly serious impacts of climate change. We are part of the same international community, and are all affected by these developments. We therefore stand ready to work with Asian nations both directly and through regional arenas for cooperation to seek sustainable solutions and stable development in Asia.

Man Killed in Maungtaw in policeman's self-defense



Items including the empty bottle, two pipes used for snorting drugs seized from the home of Hammad Tusaung, 50, in Ducheertan Village (West). PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

A suspected drug trafficker was killed yesterday as a security policeman defended himself against a knife attack in Maungtaw, northern Rakhine.

Acting on a tip-off, a security force led by Police Major Kyaw Thiha, together with townsenders of the Ducheertan Village, searched a house owned by Hammad Tusaung, 50, in Ducheertan Village (West).

While the border guard po-

lice were carrying out the search, Hammad Tusaung attacked Private Sai Htet Lin Aung with a 15-inch long knife. The policeman suffered a knife wound in his arm and fell.

As the attacker tried to stab him, the police officer fired a shot at the attacker. During the search of the house, the police found items including two pipes used for snorting drugs. — Myanmar News Agency

Civilian injured by landmine

A landmine exploded as a trolley vehicle passed over it in Muse, injuring one civilian who was on his way to fetch firewood yesterday.

U San Min of Sonkha Village in Muse Township, together with a worker, was travelling on the vehicle when it hit a landmine at about 9am. He was in-

jured on the left knee and right shoulder by shrapnel from the landmine and is now receiving medical treatment at Muse Hospital. — Myanmar News Agency

Three suspects arrested in Maungtaw



Harmi Dusaung, Jamah Husaung and Abu Karsin. PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Acting on a tip-off, security forces arrested three locals on Saturday on suspicion of involvement in abducting a resident from Thawunchaung Village on 13 December.

While carrying out an area clearance operation near Thinbawgwe Village in Maungtaw township, security forces managed to arrest Harmi Dusaung, Jamah Husaung and Abu Karsin. A Hello mobile phone was confiscated. The three were reportedly involved in the abduction of Habi Rahman from Thawunchaung Village. Measures are being taken to expose the crime and to take action against those involved. — Myanmar News Agency

Cancer rising in Myanmar

Mark Angeles
Expatriate Consultant Editor

Dr. Soe Aung says the rising, troubling rate of cancer in Myanmar could be reversed in two simple steps – early detection and prevention, which includes a healthier lifestyle and vaccination.

Much too often in Myanmar, cancer patients are first seen by doctors only when the disease has already progressed to its end stages, when it is harder to treat and when the survival rate is low.

“Awareness is the key,” said Prof. Soe Aung, a Yangon oncologist and the president of the Myanmar Oncology Society, at a gathering of health professionals last month at Yangon General Hospital.

Awareness for the people of Myanmar include the dangers of tobacco and betel, early signs of cancers and the need to seek proper medical advice early.

“If you don't know about early warning signs, the value of early intervention or the risks of smoking or chewing betel, behaviour will not change”, Prof Soe Aung said.

Asia accounts for 60 per cent of the world population and half the global burden of cancer. The incidence of cancer cases is estimated to increase from 6.1 million in 2008 to 106 million in 2030. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), Myanmar faced an estimated 64,000 new cancer cases in 2012. Since that time, the figure has steadily increased. Cancer deaths are predicted to increase by



A group photo of attendees at the National Strategic Planning Workshop on Cancer Control held in Nay Pyi Taw from 12-14 December. The meeting concentrated on implementation of a National Cancer Control Plan.

over two thirds by 2030.

For Myanmar men, the most prevalent cancer is lung or oral cancer, which is linked to smoking and the chewing of betel. For the female population of Myanmar, the biggest cancer risks are cervical and breast cancer. Testing, annual screenings and early intervention for both types of cancers are currently inadequate, Prof Soe Aung said.

But there is good news about cancer, for the world and for Myanmar. Cancer research and treatment has progressed by leaps and bounds and now more people are beating cancer today than ever before. Survival has doubled in the last 40 years and half of people diagnosed will survive cancer for more than 10 years.

Vaccinations for women against the human papilloma virus (HPV), which is strongly linked to cervical cancer, are now widely available.

But how this progress can be shared in Myanmar is the next, critical step. Oncologists and cancer experts in Myanmar said

an important first step would be to create a comprehensive database of cancer incidence, cancer prevention and treatment programmes in Myanmar to share knowledge and prevent duplication of efforts.

There is currently no reliable nationwide data on cancer in Myanmar, only records kept by each hospital. But change is occurring in Myanmar. Health officials say the country's first National Cancer Control Plan will soon be implemented, which will include accurate results data on mortality rates. This and other topics were recently discussed at the National Strategic Planning Workshop on Cancer Control from 12-14 December 2016 in Nay Pyi Taw.

“The main objective of the workshop was to support the implementation of the National Cancer Control Plan focusing on priority activities identified by the Ministry of Health and Sports” said Dr. Maung Maung Lin, a National Professional Officer for the World Health Organization in Myanmar. “Through the devel-

opment of an integrated national action plan with specific activities supported by each partner, based on resources, organizational capacities and ongoing future activities planned in the country, we can maximise efforts in line with the respective mandates, priorities and areas of expertise of the partner and achieve better results for cancer prevention, care and control”.

Dr. Maung Maung Lin said priority areas include prevention, early detection and treatment, capacity building in terms of training adequate human resources for cancer control programmes, radiation safety and the establishment of a population-based cancer registry, which is essential for the future planning of the cancer control programme.

Another potentially big step in bringing Myanmar in line with the rest of the world is occurring now in Singapore, at the European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO) Asia Congress.

“We need to have a close collaboration with all partners, both national and international,

concerning prevention, creating awareness, early diagnosis and treatment of cancer”, said Dr. Maung Maung Lin.

The ESMO, which was formerly a European-centric organisation, is holding a major gathering for only the second time in Asia. Closer to home, some cancer specialists say an increased role by the government would help in the fight against cancer. According to the latest statistics, Myanmar spends roughly two percent of its GDP on healthcare.

“There are two main reasons for this inaction,” said Dr Soe Aung. “First, being a Low-Medium Income Country, the government has other competing priorities, like infectious diseases, maternal and newborn health, etc. Secondly, some are so used to an age-old mindset and find it difficult to get rid of a tendency to regard cancer as a “can't-do-much-and-not-worth-investing” issue. We are steadfastly persevering in our advocacy to overcome this”.

Dr Soe Aung said there are also challenges from the community side that include poverty and the stigma of cancer.

“Low socioeconomic status, communication difficulties because of rough geographical terrains in remote areas, language barriers among ethnic groups (there are more than 100 ethnic groups, each with their own dialect), insufficient media access, traditional taboos and stigma are hampering our efforts at oncological health education to all communities across the country” Prof Soe Aung said. “This leads to a lack of awareness, late presentation, and failure to seek proper treatment. Our society, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sports and various other stakeholders, is working hard to overcome these issues. It will take time.”

US electors expected to officially confirm Trump victory



US President-elect Donald Trump arrives to speak during a USA Thank You Tour event in Mobile, Alabama, US, on 17 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — The US Electoral College is expected on Monday to officially select Republican Donald Trump as the next president in a vote that is usually routine but takes place this year amid allegations of Russian hacking to try to influence the election.

At meetings scheduled in every state and the District of Columbia, the institution's 538 electors, generally chosen by state parties, will cast official ballots for president and vice president.

It is highly unlikely the vote will change the outcome of the 8 November election, which gave the White House to Trump after he won a majority of Electoral College votes. The popular vote

went to Democrat Hillary Clinton.

But the conclusion by US intelligence agencies that Russia hacked into the emails of the Democratic National Committee in an attempt to sway the election for Trump has prompted Democrats to urge some electors not to vote as directed by their state's popular ballot.

The leaked emails disclosed details of Clinton's paid speeches to Wall Street, party infighting and inside criticism about Clinton's use of a private server to send emails while US secretary of state.

The disclosures led to embarrassing media coverage and prompted some party officials to resign.

Trump and his team dismiss intelligence claims of Russian interference, accusing Democrats and their allies of trying to undermine the legitimacy of his election victory.

Russian officials have denied accusations of interfering in the election.

On Sunday, Clinton's campaign chairman, John Podesta, said it was an open question whether the Trump campaign colluded with Russia about the emails, an allegation that Trump's incoming White House chief of staff, Reince Priebus, denied. A bipartisan group of US senators called for a special committee probe of cyber attacks by Russia and other countries.—Reuters

UN Secretary-General's message on International Human Solidarity Day

20 December 2016

THE world has achieved significant progress in human development over the past two decades. The global poverty rate fell by more than half. People are living longer and healthier lives, and are better educated.

Despite these and other advances, prosperity has not been shared by all. Inequalities, extreme poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and environmental degradation continue to be prominent features of societies around the world. Discrimination and prejudice remain major barriers to building inclusive societies. Many vulnerable social groups find their situation worsening. The impacts of climate change will fall most heavily on those who did least to cause the problem.

Solidarity is essential to address these gaps in sustainable development.

Leaving no one behind, promoting prosperity and ensuring inclusiveness and equality are core principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders in September 2015, and of the Paris Agreement on climate change adopted in December of that same year. As nations strive to uphold their promises and to meet the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), mutual support will be crucial. Global problems require collective solutions. At a time of divisiveness on many key global issues, from armed conflict to forced migration, people need to turn toward each other in common cause, not away from each other in fear.

On International Human Solidarity Day, let us emphasize the role of human solidarity in building lives of dignity for all on a healthy planet. We must work together to achieve the SDGs and secure the future we want.—UNIC/Yangon

NEWS IN BRIEF

Norway, China normalise ties after Nobel Peace Prize row

OSLO — Norway and China on Monday normalised diplomatic and political ties, frozen since 2010 when Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Norwegian Foreign Minister Boerge Brende said the two countries would immediately resume negotiations on a free-trade deal. "Through meticulous and numerous conversations, the two sides have over the last years reached a level of trust that allows for resumption of a normal relationship," they said in a joint statement in Oslo. Liu, 59, a dissident involved in the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests crushed by the Chinese army, was jailed for 11 years in 2009 on subversion charges for organising a petition urging an end to one-party rule. He remains in prison.—Reuters

Emperor's year-end luncheon with PM cancelled due to cold

TOKYO — The Imperial Household Agency said Monday Emperor Akihito's annual year-end luncheon with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe slated for the afternoon has been cancelled because he still has symptoms of a cold. The emperor has been resting at his residence in the Imperial Palace since Friday due to symptoms of a cold and fever. He is recovering, but his doctor advised him to continue resting because he still has a mild fever, an agency official said. The emperor was scheduled to invite the prime minister and other senior government officials to the year-end luncheon at the palace, with Crown Prince Naruhito also in attendance.—Kyodo News

Twenty five die in Siberia after drinking bath oil for alcoholic kicks

MOSCOW — At least twenty-five residents of the Siberian city of Irkutsk have died after drinking bath oil, hoping it would give them the same sensation as alcohol, Russian investigators said on Monday.

Use of counterfeit or surrogate alcohol is rife in Russia's regions, where two years of economic pain have pushed more people below the poverty line, though the death toll from this latest incident is unusually high.

Investigators in Irkutsk, a city of around 6,000 people around 2,600 miles (4184.29 km) east of Moscow, said in a statement they had detained two people suspected of distributing the bath oil.

The product had a warning on its label saying it should not be swallowed, but investigators said people had ignored that and consumed it as if it was alcohol. The bath oil contained methylated spirit, they said.—Reuters

NATO seeks to allay concerns at meeting with Russia

BRUSSELS — NATO will seek to reassure Russia on Monday that its troop deployments to the Baltics and Poland next year are purely defensive, in a rare meeting of the alliance's envoys with those of the Kremlin that is unlikely to resolve long-standing grievances.

The NATO-Russia Council, the forum bringing together North Atlantic Treaty Organisation ambassadors and Russia's top diplomat dealing with the US-led alliance, will convene for only the third time this year with the crisis in Ukraine still the top concern for Brussels and Washington.

Russia says it is concerned about a NATO military build-up near its borders. "We count on having a frank discussion about the security situation in Europe

... including ... the consequences of NATO reinforcements on the eastern flank," Russia's ambassador to NATO, Alexander Grushko, said on Friday. With relations already at a low ebb, Russia's devastating bombing campaign in Aleppo, which is not expected to be formerly discussed, has provided a dark backdrop for the meeting, diplomats said.

However, NATO allies, particularly Germany, have been pushing for a meeting with Grushko to explain why they are sending four multinational battalions of up to 4,000 troops to the former Soviet states of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland from early 2017. NATO governments say the measures are modest compared with the 330,000 troops the alliance believes Russia has

amassed on its western flank near Moscow since May.

Allies say the four battalions, backed by additional US forces on rotation, are justified by Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea that alarmed the Baltics that they might be next. "The whole idea with re-enforcements is to prevent the conflict," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said earlier this month following a meeting with Estonia's president. "It's to send a clear message of deterrence." NATO's top commander Curtis Scaparrotti also said this month he wants the NATO-Russia Council to address the massive military exercises that Russia has often held, with very little warning given. "Russia has not been transparent," he told reporters.—Reuters

Aleppo evacuations resume after stand-off over villages

BEIRUT — Convoys of evacuees travelled from a rebel-held area of Aleppo and from two Shi'ite villages besieged by insurgents on Monday after a days-long stand-off.

Dozens of buses carrying thousands of people from Aleppo's tiny rebel zone reached insurgent areas of countryside to the west of the city, according to a United Nations official and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a monitoring group.

At the same time, 10 buses left the Shi'ite Muslim villages of al-Foua and Kefraya, north of Idlib, for government lines in Aleppo, the sources said.

The evacuation of civilians, including wounded people, from the two villages which have been besieged by rebels for years, was a condition for the Syrian army and its allies to allow thousands of fighters and civilians trapped in Aleppo to depart.

"First limited evacuations, finally, tonight from east Aleppo and Foua & Kefraya. Many thousands more are waiting to be evacuated soon," Jan Egeland, who chairs the United Nations aid task force in Syria, tweeted late on Sunday night. Syrian state TV and pro-Damascus stations showed the first four buses arriving in Aleppo from the besieged villages, accompanied by pick-up trucks and with people sitting on their roofs.

Later on Monday, the Security Council will vote in New York on a resolution to allow UN staff to monitor the evacuations.



A child reacts as evacuees from rebel-held east Aleppo arrive at the town of al-Rashideen, which is held by insurgents, Syria on 19 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

The draft resolution was the result of a compromise between Russia and France, and the United States said it was expected to pass unanimously.

On Sunday, some of the buses sent to al-Foua and Kefraya to carry evacuees out were attacked and torched by armed men, who shouted "God is greatest" and brandished their weapons in front of the burning vehicles, according to a video posted online.

That incident threatened to derail the evacuations, the result of intense negotiations between Russia — the main supporter of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad — and Turkey, which backs some large rebel groups.

At stake is the fate of thousands of people still stuck in the last rebel bastion in Aleppo after a series of sudden advances by the Syrian army and allied Shi'ite militias under an intense bombardment

that pulverised large sections of the city.

They have been waiting for the chance to leave Aleppo since the ceasefire and evacuation deal was agreed late last Tuesday, but have struggled to do so during days of hold-ups. The weather in Aleppo has been wet and very cold and there is little shelter and few services in the tiny rebel zone.

Assad is backed in the war by Russian air power and Shi'ite

militias including Lebanon's Hezbollah movement and Iraq's Harkat al-Nujaba. The mostly Sunni rebels include groups supported by Turkey, the United States and Gulf monarchies.

In the square in Aleppo's Sukari district, organisers gave every family a number to allow them access to buses.

"Everyone is waiting until they are evacuated. They just want to escape," said Salah al Attar, a former teacher with his five children, wife and mother.

Thousands of people were evacuated on Thursday, the first to leave under the ceasefire deal that ends fighting in the city where violence erupted in 2012, a year after the start of conflict in other parts of Syria.

They were taken to rebel-held districts of the countryside west of Aleppo. Turkey has said Aleppo evacuees could also be housed in a camp to be constructed in Syria near the Turkish border to the north. For four years the city was split between a rebel-held eastern sector and the government-held western districts. During the summer, the army and its allies managed to besiege the rebel sector before using intense bombardment and ground assaults to retake it in recent months.

A Reuters reporter who visited recaptured districts of Aleppo in recent days saw large swathes reduced to ruins, with rubble and other debris clogging the streets and sections of the famous Old City all but destroyed.—Reuters

Suicide bomber kills seven in Libyan city of Benghazi — officials

BENGHAZI (Libya) — At least seven people were killed and eight wounded when a suicide bomber targeted forces loyal to Libya's eastern government in Benghazi on Sunday, medical and security officials said.

Islamic State said it carried out the bombing, in the besieged district of Ganfouda. The area is one of the last pockets of resistance holding out against the Libyan National Army (LNA), a self-styled force loyal to eastern commander Khalifa Haftar.

Haftar has been waging a military campaign in Benghazi for more than two years against Islamists and other opponents. The fighting is part of a broader, low-intensity conflict in Libya, which splintered into multiple political and armed factions after the uprising that toppled Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. This year the LNA has made major gains in Benghazi, though fighting and attacks have continued in parts of the city. All those killed in Sunday's bombing were from

the LNA, a medical source from Benghazi's main hospital said.

The attack came after the latest advance on Saturday by the LNA, which said following heavy clashes that it had taken control of buildings along the seafront west of Ganfouda, encircling its opponents. At least three LNA troops were killed in Saturday's fighting, security and medical officials said. An LNA spokesman, Ahmed al-Masmari, said 13 fighters from "terrorist groups" had also been killed.

Recently there have been efforts to evacuate civilians trapped by the fighting in Ganfouda but only small numbers of women and children and foreign workers have left the area. Masmari said on Sunday that about 120 families remained inside Ganfouda.

Those fighting the LNA in Benghazi include the Benghazi Revolutionaries Shura Council (BRSC), a coalition of Islamists and self-proclaimed revolutionaries, as well as militants loyal to Islamic State.—Reuters

Israeli police detain prominent businessman on suspicion of bribery

TEL AVIV — Israeli police detained a prominent Israeli businessman on Monday on suspicion of bribing public officials in Guinea, a country with vast mineral deposits and mining operations, to promote his business interests there.

A police spokesman would not identify the businessman, but said Israeli investigators had worked with law enforcement agencies in the United States, Switzerland and Guinea before detaining him.

Guinea's former minister of mines, Mahmoud Thiam, was arrested in New York last week on charges he was involved in bribery payments linked to Guinea's mining industry.

The Israeli police said in a statement the businessman, along with other Israelis living abroad, were suspected of paying tens of millions of dollars to senior public officials in Guinea to advance their businesses.

Israeli media reported the businessman detained operates

in Africa in mining and diamond and that suspicions against him were raised after a company he is connected with received control of a large mine in Guinea at almost no cost.

The company later sold rights to the mine to a large mining company in South America for billions of dollars.

Israeli police said the suspect, who at this stage has been detained for questioning, may appear in court later on Monday.—Reuters

Russian military plane crashes in Siberia, injuring 32

MOSCOW — The Russian Defence Ministry said on Monday that one of its planes had crashed in northeast Siberia with 39 people on board as it tried to make an emergency landing near a Soviet-era military base.

Russian news agencies reported that nobody had been killed in the incident, but said 32 people had been airlifted to hospital, 16 of whom were in serious condition.

The Il-18 aircraft came down

around 30 kilometres (18.64 miles) from an airfield near the town of Tiksi in the Sakha Republic at 4:45 a.m. local time, the TASS news agency reported.

High winds may have forced the plane to make an emergency landing, Alexei Kolodeznikov, the deputy head of the regional government, was quoted as saying by the Interfax news agency.

The Defence Ministry said a team of military investigators had

been flown to the crash site.

The Il-18, a Soviet-era propeller plane whose design dates from the 1950s, had taken off from an air base in Kansk in western Siberia with 39 people on board, including seven crew. Tiksi, a coastal town of around 5,000 people inside the Arctic circle, hosts a Soviet-era military air base that has been renovated in recent years as part of President Vladimir Putin's drive to remilitarize the Arctic.—Reuters

Hundreds arrested in Venezuela cash chaos, vigilantes protect shops

CARACAS — Security forces have arrested more than 300 people during protests and looting over the elimination of Venezuela's largest currency bill, President Nicolas Maduro said on Sunday.

The socialist leader pulled the 100 bolivar note this week before new bills were in circulation, creating a national cash shortage on top of the brutal economic crisis overshadowing Venezuelans' Christmas and New Year holidays.

After two days of unrest over the measure — including one death and dozens of shops ransacked — Maduro on Saturday postponed the measure until 2 January.

That helped stem violence, though there were still reports of more looting in southern Ciudad Bolivar on Sunday. The detainees include leaders and members of the opposition Popular Will and Justice First parties,

Maduro said on state TV, accusing them of following US instructions to incite chaos.

"Don't come and tell me they are political prisoners ... They are the two parties of the 'gringos' in Venezuela," he added, accusing President Barack Obama of wanting to engineer a coup against socialism in Venezuela before leaving office.

From Venezuela's southern jungle and savannah to the Andean highlands in the west, groups of hundreds of protesters have been burning bolivar notes, cursing Maduro and decrying scarcities of food and medicines. The worst looting was on Friday and Saturday, especially in El Callao and Ciudad Bolivar in the southern state of Bolivar, and police have used teargas to control crowds in some places.

Chinese-run shops have been particularly targeted, witnesses say, and a 14-year-old boy was shot dead in El

Callao on Friday.

The governor of Bolivar state said there were 262 arrests there, with looting from food shops to science laboratories. The local business group said 350 businesses had been ransacked in Ciudad Bolivar, including 90 per cent of food outlets.

In Santa Elena de Uairen, near the border with Brazil, shopkeepers and inhabitants formed vigilante groups to join police and soldiers after six shops were ransacked on Saturday.

"We're not lowering our guard, we're forming protection brigades," said local business group leader Gilmer Poma.

Food prices were reduced in some establishments in Santa Elena as a way to defuse tensions.

Maduro, a 54-year-old former bus driver and foreign minister who replaced Hugo Chavez in 2013, has seen his popularity plunge during a



People carry goods taken from a food wholesaler after it was broken into, in La Fria, Venezuela on 17 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

three-year recession. He justified the currency measure as a way of suffocating mafia on Venezuela's borders. But opponents say it is further evidence of disastrous economic policy in a nation reeling from runaway prices and shortages of basics. They want him to resign.

"The only person guilty of the chaos and violence

of recent days is Nicolas Maduro," the Justice First party said, accusing intelligence agents of taking advantage of the situation to frame opposition leaders with false evidence. With the 100 bolivar bill originally out of circulation from Friday, many Venezuelans had found themselves unable to purchase food or fill

up cars in the busy run-up to Christmas. "As if we don't have enough to cope with anyway, now they inflict this craziness on us," said a grandmother in Caracas, Zoraida Gutierrez, 74, who spent a day lining up under the sun to deposit cash she had under her bed.

"It's like a cruel joke."

Despite Maduro's suspension of the measure on Saturday, some businesses were still refusing the notes on Sunday.

Maduro has been urging Venezuelans to use electronic transactions instead of cash where possible, but 40 per cent of the country's 30 million people are without bank accounts.

State TV showed a plane arriving on Sunday afternoon with a first batch of new currency notes. Central Bank Vice President Jose Khan said they were 13.5 million 500 bolivar bills. — Reuters



Protesters hold up signs during a march and rally against the United States President-elect Donald Trump in Los Angeles, California, US, on 18 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

California marchers protest against Trump as Democrats vow policy fight

LOS ANGELES — About 2,000 people protesting against the rhetoric and proposals of US President-elect Donald Trump marched peacefully through downtown Los Angeles on Sunday in advance of Monday's planned Electoral College vote to formally choose him as leader.

Trump, a Republican businessman who campaigned against illegal immigration and threatened to imprison Democratic rival Hillary Clinton if elected, lost the popular vote in the 8 November US election but won the contest for the electoral college, which is calculated on a

state-by-state basis.

"I want to tell Mr. Trump that we are immigrants, we help this economy grow, we don't want nothing for free," said marcher Horalia Jauregui.

In addition to marking the day before the Electoral College is set to vote, the march took place on International Migrants Day, designated by the United Nations to draw attention to the plight of refugees.

Marchers in Los Angeles carried signs with phrases such as "Stop Trump," "Refugees Welcome," and "Make America Think Again," a play on Trump's "Make America Great Again" campaign

slogan. Heavily Democratic California voted overwhelmingly for Clinton in the election, and its leaders have begun positioning the most populous US state to fight the incoming Trump administration on any challenges to its progressive policies on issues such as immigration, the environment and health-care.

On Sunday, state Senate leader Kevin de Leon, a Democrat from Los Angeles, said he would fight any moves by Trump that conflict with what he called California's values.

There were no obvious pro-Trump protesters at the event. — Reuters

NOTICE FOR 22nd ANNIVERSARY MEMBERS' GOLF TOURNAMENT OF THE CITY GOLF RESORT

The 22nd anniversary golf tournament for the members of the City Golf Resort is scheduled to be celebrated on 14-1-2017 (Saturday), and the games are to be played on the basis of handicaps in three levels- Gold Level (H'Cap 0 to 12), Silver Level (H'Cap 13 to 18) and Bronze Level (H'cap 19 to 24). Prizes shall be worthily awarded to winners in every level of competition, and so our members are hereby intimated to declare your handicaps at the Reception Counter, together with K.5000 as a payment for entrance fees, not later than 16:00 hours of 8-1-2017 (Sunday).

General Manager
City Golf Resort

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY 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 Allison 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 19th December, 2016 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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

Jordan declares end of castle siege, says four gunmen killed

AMMAN — Jordanian security forces said they killed four “terrorist outlaws” after flushing them out of a castle in the southern city of Karak where they had holed up after a shoot-out that killed nine people.

An official statement said the four assailants, who shot at police targets in the town before heading to the Crusader-era castle, carried automatic weapons. Large quantities of explosives, weapons and suicide belts were seized in a hideout, the statement said.

It made no mention of their identity or whether they belonged to any militant group, raising speculation they could have been tribal outlaws with a vengeance against the state rather than Islamic State fighters, who control parts of neighbouring Syria and Iraq.

A Canadian woman, three other civilians and five police officers were among the nine killed during the exchange of gunfire between the assailants

and security forces.

At least 29 people were hospitalised, some with serious injuries.

Earlier, government spokesman Mohammad al-Momani said a manhunt to “eliminate” the gunmen had entered its final phase.

Jordan’s position made it vulnerable to spillover of violence, Momani said.

“When we are in a region engulfed with fire from every side you expect that such events happen,” the official said.

Witnesses said exchanges of fire continued for several hours between the gunmen and security forces. Police said earlier they had rescued 10 tourists and trapped inside the historic site when the gunmen went into the castle.

A former government minister from Karak city, Sameeh Maaytah, said there were signs Islamist militants may have been behind the attack.

“This was a group that was plotting certain operations inside Jordan,” Maaytah told pan-Arab



Ambulances are seen in front of the Italian hospital where some of the injured were evacuated to after an attack, in the city of Karak, Jordan, on 18 December, 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

news channel al-Hadath.

Video footage on social media showed security forces taking groups of young Asian tourists up the castle’s steep steps to its main entrance as gunshots were heard overhead.

The castle is one of Jordan’s most popular tourist attractions.

Prime Minister Hani

al Mulki told parliament “a number of security personnel” had been killed and that security forces were laying siege to the castle. The Canadian government confirmed one of its nationals had been killed.

Police and witnesses said gunmen had earlier gone on a shooting spree aimed at officers patrolling

the town before entering the castle, perched on top of a hill. They used one of the castle’s towers to fire at a nearby police station.

Police said the gunmen had arrived from the desert town of Qatranah nearly 30 km northeast of Karak city, a desert outpost known for smuggling, where many tribal resi-

dents are heavily armed and have long resisted state authority.

They had fled to Karak after an exchange of fire with the police at a residential building, security forces said.

Jordan is one of the few Arab states that have taken part in a US-led air campaign against Islamic State in Syria.

But many Jordanians oppose their country’s involvement, saying it has led to the killing of fellow Muslims and raised security threats inside Jordan.

Several incidents over the past year have jolted the Arab kingdom, which has been relatively unscathed by the uprisings, civil wars and Islamist militancy that have swept the Middle East since 2011. Last November three US military trainers were shot dead when their car failed to stop at the gate of a military base and was fired on by a Jordanian army member in an incident which Washington did not rule out political motives.—*Reuters*

Human-induced climate change worsened 2015 heatwave in India

NEW DELHI — The deadly heat waves that killed nearly 2,500 people in India and 2,000 people in Pakistan last year were exacerbated by human-induced climate change, scientists including those from IIT-Delhi have found. Researchers examined observational and simulated temperature and heat indexes and found that the heat waves in the two countries “were exacerbated by anthropogenic climate change.”

While the two countries typically experience severe heat in the summer, the 2015 heat waves — which occurred in late May/early June in India and in late June/early July in Pakistan — have been linked to the deaths of nearly 2,500 people in India and 2,000 in Pakistan.

Researchers used “factual” simulations of the world and compared them to “counterfactual” simulations of the world that might have been had humans not changed the composition of the atmosphere by emitting large amounts of carbon dioxide,

said Daithi Stone from the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (Berkeley Lab) in US.

“It is relatively common to run one or a few simulations of a climate model within a certain set of conditions, with each simulation differing just in the precise weather on the first day of the simulation; this difference in the first day propagates through time, providing different realisations of what the weather ‘could have been,’” said Stone. “The special thing about the simulations used here is that we ran a rather large number of them. This was important for studying a rare event; if it is rare, then you need a large amount of data in order to have it occurring frequently enough that you can understand it,” Stone added. Researchers, including those from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, examined both observational and simulated temperature alone as well as the heat index, a measure incorporating both temperature and humidity effects. —PTI

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HARTA VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T/M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV ARIETTA VOY. NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ARIETTA VOY. NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIPL where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S HALIO INT’L SERVICES PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MASTRO NIKOLAS VOY. NO (-)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MASTRO NIKOLAS VOY. NO (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-2 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S PACMAR SHIPPING PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

Miss Puerto Rico crowned Miss World 2016



Winner of Miss World Miss Puerto Rico Stephanie Del Valle (C) stands with first runner up Miss Dominican Republic Yaritza Miguelina Reyes Ramirez (L) and second runner up Miss Indonesia Natasha Mannuela during the Miss World 2016 Competition in Oxen Hill, Maryland, US, on 18 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — Puerto Rico's Stephanie Del Valle was crowned Miss World 2016 on Sunday, winning the top prize in the 66th edition of the pageant held this year in the United States.

The 19-year-old law and communications student said it

was an "honor and a great responsibility" to represent her country.

The first runner-up was Yaritza Miguelina Reyes Ramirez of the Dominican Republic, followed by second runner-up Natasha Mannuela from Indonesia.

The top five finalists also included Evelyn Njambi Thungu from Kenya, and Catriona Elisa Gray from the Philippines.

Contestants from more than 100 countries took part in the Miss World beauty pageant, held at National Harbor near Washington, D.C.—Reuters

Actress Zsa Zsa Gabor dies at age 99

NEW YORK — Actress Zsa Zsa Gabor, who parlayed beauty, diamond-studded glamor and nine marriages into a long celebrity career, died on Sunday. She was 99.

Edward Lozzi, who was a longtime publicist for Gabor, said the Hungarian-born actress passed away at her Los Angeles home after years of decline and illness. She would have turned 100 in February.

Gabor, by most accounts, had a personality that generally outshone her acting skills. Her bubbly demeanor and looks helped land her a string of wealthy husbands. She had a penchant for calling everyone "dah-ling" in her thick Hungarian accent. Along with her two sisters, Eva and Magda, she became a fixture on Hollywood's social circuit in her prime.

She was once branded "the most expensive courtesan since Madame de Pompadour," but Gabor insisted that only her marriage to husband No. 2, hotel mogul Conrad Hilton, was financially motivated.

In fact, marriage could have been the Gabor family business and Zsa Zsa, the company's CEO. Her nine marriages topped the five by Eva, who starred in the 1960s sitcom "Green Acres," and the six of Magda, whose Hollywood career was mostly based on being the third Gabor sister.

While her acting skills were



Actress Zsa Zsa Gabor reads a statement at her home in Beverly Hills, California, US on 13 November 1992. PHOTO: REUTERS

rarely lauded, Zsa Zsa Gabor carved out a career in her early days in Hollywood. Her finest film roles came with "Moulin Rouge," where she earned good reviews, in 1952 and "Lili" in 1953.

She appeared in more than 30 movies and by the 1970s she began to reject smaller roles, saying: "I may be a character but I do not want to be a character actress."

Gabor eventually ended up in low-budget films with such titles as "Queen of Outer Space" and "Picture Mommy Dead."

Greater success came with nightclub and TV appearances where she disclosed she called everyone "dah-ling" because

she could not remember names well, and she relied on self-parodying jokes based on her marriages, haughty demeanor and taste for opulence.

"I am a marvelous housekeeper. Every time I leave a man, I keep his house," she was quoted as saying.

In the final episode of the 1960s television series "Batman," Gabor played the guest villainess, Minerva, who used hair dryers to steal information from men's brains.

Gabor, one of the last stars of Hollywood's golden age, was not seen in public in her final years as she struggled with her health, including broken bones and cuts from a car accident. She also suffered a stroke and a broken hip, enduring complications from hip replacement surgery. She had much of her right leg amputated in 2011 because of an infection.

Gabor's most recent stint at the hospital came just days after her 99th birthday last February for breathing difficulties.

Born Sari Gabor into a wealthy family, she was named Miss Hungary in the 1930s. When World War Two approached, Zsa Zsa and her sisters headed for the United States, leaving behind her first husband, Burhan Belge, a Turkish diplomat.—Reuters

'Rogue One' scores massive \$155 million debut as Star Wars fans flock to theaters

LOS ANGELES — "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" sold out multiplexes around the country and brought fanboys and fangirls out in force over the weekend. The "Star Wars" prequel scored the second largest December opening in history, the second largest launch of the year, and one of the top debuts in history, opening to a massive \$155 million.

Globally, the film has earned \$290.5 million, after touching down in nearly every major foreign market save for China and South Korea.

Disney, which shelled out \$4 billion to buy "Star Wars" creator LucasFilm in 2012, had been trying to downplay expectations for "Rogue One." Executives noted that the film is the first "Star Wars" movie to exist outside of the main Skywalker clan storyline. It's also a darker, war-themed tale; one that has an unusually high body count for a popcorn flick.

But the "Star Wars" pedigree proved irresistible to audiences, and the film seems positioned to play well through the holidays. Disney is planning to do more "Rogue One"-style spinoffs. The company is already working on a film about the early years of Han Solo that will star Alden Ehrenreich.

Most studios steered clear of

"Rogue One," but Warner Bros. and New Line offered up "Collateral Beauty" as counter-programming for audiences unmoved by tales of Jedi warriors. The drama about a grieving ad executive (Will Smith) was savaged by critics, and only managed to eke out a paltry \$7 million debut for a fourth place finish. That's a rough start for the picture and continues Smith's bumpy period at the box office.

The actor scored with last summer's "Suicide Squad," but struck out with the likes of "Focus," "After Earth," and "Concussion." "Collateral Beauty" cost \$36 million to produce.

Village Roadshow also backed the picture. The opening weekend crowd skewed female and older, with women comprising 59% of the audience and 58% of ticket buyers clocking in over the age of 35. Jeff Goldstein, Warner Bros. domestic distribution president, acknowledged that the poor reviews hurt the film, but stressed that its A-minus CinemaScore indicated that audiences were enjoying "Collateral Beauty."

"I'm disappointed," he said. "But the film plays well with an older audience, and we hope that over Christmas, they'll have more free time available to go out and discover it."—Reuters

Celebrities toast tradition, getting 'love going' in Christmas wishes

LONDON — From hoping the world can "get it together" in 2017 to reminiscing about Christmases filled with food and gifts, celebrities sent holiday greetings to fans as the festive season kicked into high gear.

Speaking to Reuters, actors and singers shared their seasonal thoughts.

"Happy holidays ... 2016 was an interesting, potentially difficult year, so let's just get it together, let's get some love going for 2017," Hollywood star Will Smith said.

His "Collateral Beauty" co-star Helen Mirren said: "Be full, be happy and hopefully be peaceful and let's all work towards peace in the new year because, honestly, it's time."

Canadian singer Shania Twain said she liked to be surrounded by snow for the festivities. "I come from a very cold part of Canada, so there's always snow. I like traditional Christmases ... so I go for a pretty quiet low-key traditional Christmas environment."

Actor Liam Neeson said he also favored tradition: "We celebrate Christmas, myself and my two sons very, very traditionally. Lots of food, maybe too much

food, a few gifts and a few prayers too with thanks, certainly with thanks ... It's a very important time of the year."

However at this month's 2016 Fashion Awards in London, rocker Marilyn Manson said he "hates Christmas".

"I've spent every Christmas without a Christmas tree ... since some while, I'm like Charlie Brown's Christmas - the sad tree, the Grinch," he said.—Reuters



Will Smith arrives at the European Premiere of Collateral Beauty in London, Britain, on 15 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Artist Liu Bolin live streams Beijing smog to raise awareness



Artist Liu Bolin wearing a vest with 24 mobile phones walks in smog as he live broadcasts air pollution in the city on the fourth day after a red alert was issued for heavy air pollution in Beijing, China, on 19 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BEIJING — Chinese artist Liu Bolin, known as “the invisible man” for using painted-on camouflage to blend into the backdrops of his photographs, says his latest project aims to put the spotlight on China’s air pollution problem.

As north China battled with poor air quality for a third straight day on Monday, Liu said the recent pollution warnings inspired him to show live video of the smog in the capital, Beijing.

To do that, Liu walks around wearing an orange vest with 24 smartphones attached on the front and back, live-streaming scenes of smog which he calls “a disaster”.

“As an artist, to dis-

cuss it with images is what I think we should do,” Liu told Reuters Television.

The artist, who is also a sculptor, has won international recognition with exhibitions in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, the United States and Latin America.

Liu’s previous “Hiding in the City” series featured him hidden in plain sight against monuments, murals, buildings and scenes of daily life in Beijing, Venice, New York and elsewhere.

The invisibility theme was done as a protest against the demolition of Liu’s studio when authorities razed an artists’ village in Beijing. But then he fell in love with this way of presenting his ideas.

His latest work is titled “Today Even Numbers Banned”, a reference to Beijing’s odd-even license plate system for restricting the number of vehicles on roads when pollution levels are high.

China’s environmental watchdog issued a five-day warning on Friday about choking smog spreading across the north and ordered factories to close, recommended residents stay indoors and curbed traffic and construction work.

Some Beijing residents were puzzled by the sight of Liu and his orange smartphone vest, but they approved of his efforts to raise awareness of the smog problem.—Reuters

Cambodia seizes elephant tusks, tiger bones, pangolin scales at dry port

PHNOM PENH — A haul of elephant ivory, tiger bones and pangolin scales was found at a dry port on the western outskirts of Phnom Penh on Saturday in hollowed-out logs imported from Africa, a senior official confirmed on Monday.

Un Vannarith, deputy chief of the Phnom Penh Forestry Administration

cantonment, said the animal parts, weighed about one ton, were discovered at the Royal Railway Phnom Penh dry port hidden inside three pieces of timber.

“We have found elephant tusks, elephant tails, tiger bones and pangolin scales stuffed inside three logs which were imported from the southern African

nation of Mozambique,” he told Xinhua, adding that the raid was made following a tip-off from the NGO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office of the World Customs Organisation. He said the intended destination of the haul was unknown as an investigation was underway to find out the smugglers. In August, some 613 kg

of elephant tusks shipped from Africa were found concealed inside a corn container at the Si-hanoukville Autonomous Port in southwestern Cambodia’s Preah Sihanouk province.—Xinhua

NEC to develop cancer drugs using artificial intelligence

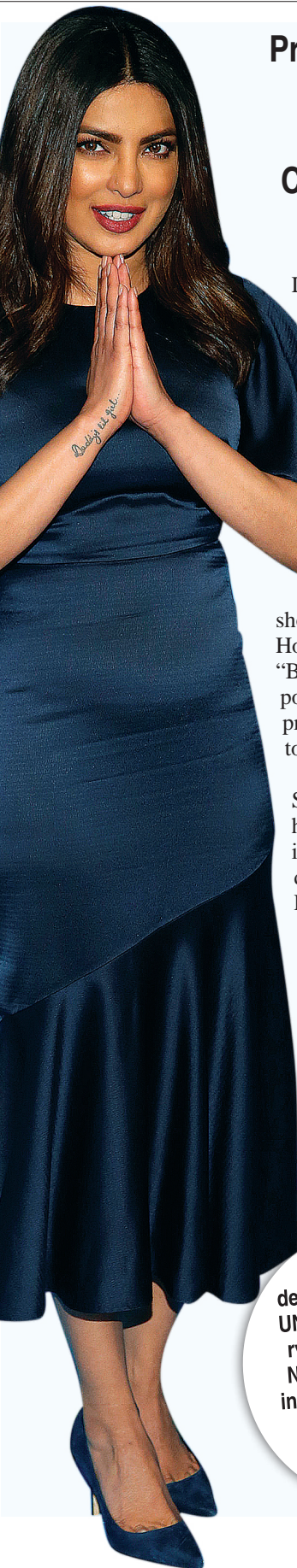
TOKYO — NEC Corp. said Monday that it will develop cancer drugs using artificial intelligence, aiming to put new vaccines using peptides into practical use within the next eight years as key substances in next generation immunotherapy.

A peptide is a short chain of amino acids with

an enormous number of variations and helps increase cells that attack cancer. Whether a pattern works depends on the patient’s leukocyte group, so NEC will use its AI technology to quickly choose the right type of peptide, it said. Under joint research with Yamaguchi and Kochi universities, NEC has al-

ready discovered a peptide the developers hope will be effective for liver cell and esophageal cancer. A new company established for the project, Cytlimic Inc., plans to commercialize effective peptide vaccines in cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, NEC said. NEC has jointly launched Cytlimic in To-

kyo with such firms as a group firm of Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp. With minimal physical burdens on the patient, peptides are widely considered as a “fourth” cancer therapy, following surgery, radiation treatment and conventional cancer drugs.—Kyodo News



Priyanka Chopra flies home to celebrate Christmas with family

LOS ANGELES — Actress Priyanka Chopra is heading to Mumbai to celebrate Christmas and New Years with her family and friends.

The 34-year-old star, who had a busy year working for her American TV show “Quantico” and Hollywood debut project “Baywatch”, shared a post on social media, expressing her excitement to be going back to India.

“Mumbai calling! So excited to be going home... #airplanereading #flyfly #happyholidays #kickbacknrelax,” Priyanka wrote.

The actress is in complete festive mood as she recently celebrated Christmas on the sets of “Quantico”.

“Thank you post team of #Quantico for our CIA FBI integrated Christmas scarves. We love it...,” she tweeted.—PTI

Priyanka Chopra delivers remarks at the UNICEF 70th anniversary event at the United Nations Headquarters in Manhattan, New York City, US, on 12 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(20-12-2016 07:00 AM ~ 21-12-2016 07:00 AM) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Herbal Medicine By Thurein (Ta Bin Dine Mya Nan)(Vitis)
07:56	Am	Scented Buddha Images
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Myanmar Masterclass: Kyaw Phyu San
08:41	Am	Htan Taw Drums (Part-I) “Osi”
08:54	Am	Moe La Win’s Piano Melody 4 (Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer by Johnny Marks)
09:27	Am	Culture Show: Abdication of King Thibaw
09:44	Am	Modifying Natural Thanakha Bark into Ready-Made Skin Care Product
09:50	Am	Today Myanmar: Yangon Night Market

10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Caves of Myanmar
10:51	Am	Distinguished Myanmar Ladies “Tin Moe Lwin”

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Day Out With Sarah (Ep-3)
07:50	Pm	Indian Footsteps
08:03	Pm	News
08:25	Pm	Taste of Myanmar (Fried Flat Noodle)
08:48	Pm	Diary of a Fisherman

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

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

Unique Messi dazzles Espanyol with derby exhibition

BARCELONA — Lionel Messi proved his ability to excite has no foreseeable expiry date by producing a virtuoso display as Barcelona thrashed Espanyol 4-1 in a local derby on Sunday and team mates and opponents were equally enthralled by his magic.

The five-time world player of the year produced two exhilarating solo runs in the space of a minute in the second half which lead to Luis Suarez and Jordi Alba scoring and capped his stunning display with a deserved goal late on.

"In the second half we saw the most spectacular version of our attacking players, particularly Messi, and we should never stop praising him," said Barca coach Luis Enrique.

"It looks routine but we should not get used to it because it's something unique."

Messi's brilliance inflicted the heaviest defeat since August on Espanyol, who went into the game boasting the most in-form La Liga defence, having conceded once in their previous six games.

After the Argentinian was finished with them, they had shipped as many goals as they had in their last nine games.

"Messi is capable of constantly changing every game he plays in, he's the only player you could imagine scoring a hat-trick in every game," said Espanyol coach Quique Sanchez Flores, who approached the forward after the game.

"I congratulated him for his humility, he never complains, he gets kicked, he gets thrown to the floor, it's amazing. We have a good relationship, I've lost count of how many times

people have asked me to get hold of his shirt."

Messi, 29, will return to Argentina on Monday after Luis Enrique gave permission to his maestro plus Suarez, Neymar and Gerard Pique, to miss Wednesday's King's Cup, last 32 second leg at home to Hercules so they can travel to South America.

The first leg against the third-tier side finished 1-1.

Suarez laid on the pass for Messi's late goal and said he felt guilty about scoring the second, which was created by his strike partner's mesmeric run past five defenders.

"I would have preferred for him to have completed his amazing move rather than me scoring it, it was like a PlayStation move," he said. "Messi is a unique player."—Reuters



Barcelona's Luis Suarez and Lionel Messi celebrate a goal during Spanish La Liga Santander at Camp Nou stadium, Barcelona, Spain. PHOTO: REUTERS



Manchester City's Leroy Sane has a shot saved by Arsenal's Petr Cech during Premier League at Etihad Stadium on 18 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Manchester City see off Arsenal with stirring comeback

MELBOURNE — Second-half goals from Leroy Sane and Raheem Sterling stunned Arsenal at the Etihad Stadium on Sunday as Manchester City came from behind to win 2-1 and move seven points behind leaders Chelsea.

The result capped a miserable week for Arsenal who lost the lead — and all three points — for the second time in five days, having also gone down at Everton on Tuesday.

Coming away with nothing again had seemed inconceivable after an opening 45 minutes which Arsenal dominated, taking the lead on five minutes when Theo Walcott seized on Alexis

Sanchez's weighted pass to round off a thrilling three-man move.

City almost equalised immediately when Sterling headed just wide but they looked strangely hesitant going forward and could have fallen further behind as Arsenal played with confidence and menace.

City came out for the second half completely transformed, hitting back almost immediately as David Silva found Sane with a precision pass that allowed the German to score his first goal since his 46-million-pound (\$57.49-million) move from Schalke.

Arsenal wilted alarmingly

and frequently came off second best in the physical contest. It was no real surprise when City went further ahead after Kevin de Bruyne supplied Sterling with a raking crossfield pass on 71 minutes.

Sterling cut inside on his left foot and beat Petr Cech at his near post with a low shot. It was the first time since 2012 that City had won at the Etihad after trailing at the interval.

"It was good to get on the scoresheet," said Sterling. "We stayed in the game and got the winner."

The result dropped Arsenal to fourth place.—Reuters

Murray wins record third BBC sports award

LONDON — Britain's world number one men's tennis player Andy Murray won a record third BBC Sports Personality of the Year award on Sunday after claiming his second Wimbledon title and first ATP World Tour crown in a stellar 2016 season.

Murray, who also retained his Olympic men's singles title in Rio de Janeiro, picked up the BBC trophy again after claiming it in 2013, when he won Wimbledon for the first time, and in 2015.

"It's been a great year for British sport and I am so proud to have been a part of it," Murray, who led Britain to the Davis Cup semi-finals after their first triumph for 79 years in 2015, said via a video link from his training camp in Miami.

The 29-year-old Scot, who joined boxer Henry Cooper and racing drivers Damon Hill and Nigel Mansell as the only double winners of the event last year, is now out on his own after a year in which he also reached the Australian and French Open finals.

Although Murray lost to Novak Djokovic at Roland Garros, he became the first British man to reach the French Open final since Bunny Austin in 1937. He also lost to Serbian Djokovic at the Australian Open but finished the year as world number one.

Triathlete Alistair Brownlee was runner-up and show jumper Nick Skelton third in the annual BBC awards.

Brownlee, 28, became the

first man to retain the Olympic triathlon title when he took gold in Rio, finishing ahead of brother Jonny, who claimed the silver.

Skelton, 58, won the individual show jumping title in Rio 2016, becoming Britain's second-oldest Olympic gold medalist, 16 years after retiring with a broken neck in two places.

In his acceptance speech, a delighted Murray revealed to much laughter that his wife Kim, who gave birth to their first child, daughter Sophia, in February, had voted for Skelton.

"A huge thanks to my wife and my daughter — she won't know what this means yet but maybe in a few years she will.

"Actually, I've got a bone to pick with my wife because about an hour ago she told me she'd voted for Nick Skelton. Not smart from her with Christmas coming up," he said.—Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS