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Funds for peace process to be allocated into four sectors

A MEETING on the formation of the Joint Coordinating Body for Peace Process Funding was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, reaching an agreement on the selection of four sectors to which funds will be allocated for peace provided by international donors.

The four sectors are the Ceasefire Sector, the Negotiation and Dialogue Sector, the Peace Supporting Development Sector and Peace making process of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre-NPRC Sector.

Speaking at the meeting, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and State Counsellor, pledged to be fair and effective when the Joint Coordinating Body (JCB) carries out peace process plans.

She also stressed the need to take a pragmatic approach when drawing up plans and to coordinate with donors so that they can continue their contributions to the necessary sectors.

Regarding the seeking of funds and assistance, which is considered the second priority following setting of first priority sectors, the State Counsellor suggested taking the local donors into consideration apart from international donors.

The State Counsellor stressed the importance of ensuring transparency and minimising losses and wastages when the JCB manages the international assistance.

The JCB will be headed by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi with eight representatives including herself from the government and eight representatives from both signatories and non-signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

“The State Counsellor stressed the importance of ensuring transparency and minimising losses and wastages”

The meeting was attended by Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe, Chairman of the Peace Commission Dr Tin Myo Win, Lt-Gen Yar Pyai, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, Chairperson of the Ethnic Affairs Committee of Amyotha Hluttaw Daw Shilar Nan Taung, MP U Saw Tin Win and representatives of the signatories to the NCA Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win, Khun Okka, Sai Hlyan, Salai Htalar Hay, U Myo Win while representatives of the non-signatories to the NCA Naing Aung Ma Ngay, U Tun Zaw, Naing Banyan Mon, U San Law and U Kham Maung also attended the meeting.

— Myanmar News Agency



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addresses the meeting of the Joint Coordinating Body for Peace Process Funding in Nay Pyi Taw to discuss the allocation of international funding. PHOTO: MNA

Earthquake Monitoring Committee to be formed in Yangon

YANGON Region Government is forming an earthquake monitoring committee in order to reduce damages and to carry out rehabilitation activities, according to Yangon Region Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Department.

The committee has to be formed as Yangon Region has

more and more buildings and its population has been rapidly increasing, proponents said.

U Win Shwe, Regional Officer of Yangon Region Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Department, said that the committee will be responsible for promotion of public awareness of

earthquakes and development of earthquake preparedness and response plans, emergency medical preparedness and response plans and recovery and reconstruction plans.

In addition to the committee, the regional government will also form a technical working group

made up of local and foreign experts and NGOs.

“The population and the number of buildings in Yangon are rapidly increasing. So we are forming the committee within six months to reduce damage in accordance with the decisions made at a workshop held in September,”

said Dr Win Oo, an expert on reduction of impacts of natural disasters. Yangon City Development Committee, in cooperation with the Myanmar Engineering Society and the UN-Habitat, will also conduct seismic diagnosis tests on public buildings.

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

2nd Pyidaungsu Hluttaw 3rd regular session successfully comes to a close

THE 2nd Pyidaungsu Hluttaw 3rd Regular Session's 10th Meeting held on Tuesday decided to approve the matter of borrowing US\$56.8 million from the Agricultural Fund for Agricultural Development to implement the Project of Agro-Economical Development in the eastern states of the country for the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Breeding and Irrigation.

Following clarifications by Dr Aung Thu, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock Breeding and Irrigation and U Maung Maung Win, deputy minister for Planning and Finance, the Py-

idaungsu Hluttaw decided to approve the proposal for the loan.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw also decided to put on record the matter of making several invalid laws nationwide valid, which was clarified by U Khin Maung Win, a member of the Commission for Study and Assessment on Special Cases.

In addition, the parliamentarians discussed in favour of Myanmar's signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of a Tourism Industry Coordination Office among the members of Greater Mekong Sub-region, which was sent by the President

of the State.

"Myanmar's signing of the agreement will attract an influx of tourists from across the world, including neighbouring countries, and thus the country needs to be prepared for it, especially in security matters. With the development of the tourism industry, the country will achieve the economic development and create job opportunities more than ever. Concurrently, it needs to pay attention not to harm the country's cultural heritages," said U Han Win Thein of constituency 4, Tanintharyi Region.

Similarly, U Maung Maung

Latt of constituency 9 in Sagaing Region, U Zaw Thein of Wake-ma constituency, U Kyaw Swe of Magwe Region constituency, U Saw Tun Mya Aung of Phapun constituency, Dr San Shwe Win of Yaygyi constituency and U Myint Lwin of Twante constituency made statements in favor of the agreement.

The Hluttaw decided to approve it after clarification from U Ohn Maung, Union Minister.

Afterward, Major General Aung Soe, the deputy minister for Home Affairs, and U Maung Maung Win, deputy minister for Planning and Finance, made re-

ports concerning a loan of 50 million euros from the government of Poland.

Also, the Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw replied to a motion submitted by U Win Htoo at length, concerning the participation of all ethnic armed groups in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement under the sponsorship of National Reconciliation and Peace Committee's Chairman.

The Hluttaw Speaker warned parliamentarians not to take any action which would damage the image of the Hluttaw. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Pyithu Hluttaw

2nd Pyithu Hluttaw 3rd regular session's 18th meeting held

THE matter of whether U Wisara Road was actually repaired and a reprimand for one MP who was reading a journal while the parliament is in session were among the issues discussed at the latest meeting of the Pyithu Hluttaw on Tuesday.

U Win Khaing, Union Minister for Construction, made remarks to the Hluttaw in regard to a question raised by Dr Khin Maung Maung, constituency of Dagon Myothit (North), to wit: "U Wisara Road in Dagon Myothit (North) is a 1.1-mile long concrete road with 16 feet in width. It is learnt that it will take 40 tonnes of tar provided that a one-inch layer is surfaced further on the concrete road. It is true that in some parts of the concrete road, potholes were refilled with concrete, but 60 per cent of the



U Win Khaing, Union Minister for Construction. PHOTO: MNA

road was found in the original state."

Afterward, Dr Khin Maung Maung submitted to the Hluttaw another question: "I have never found the above-said concrete

road refilled with 170 tonnes of concrete. I would like to know where 170 tonnes of concrete have gone."

In reply to this question, U Win Khaing, Union Minister for Construction, clarified on behalf of the Yangon Region Cabinet: "On the matter of refilling the road with 170 tonnes of concrete, which started to have been repaired in the year of 2015, there was, on 2 November of 2016 at the office of Dagon Myothit (North) township development committee, a meeting with responsible persons including U Myint Oo, deputy head of Engineering department, assistant head U Kyin Ohn, U Aung Soe of branch head of Engineering department's road and bridge section, U Myat Maw Oo, head of township development com-

mittee, Dagon Myothit (North), U Thet Naung, U Soe Thiha Lin, U Hla Tun, U Soe Naing Aung, U Khin Maung Si, U Ko Ko Gyi and U Zaw Naing. In the meeting all participants including ward administrative committee members said that the work of refilling potholes of the road was true and they themselves helped in the work."

After the answer by the Union Minister, Dr Khin Maung Maung added, "Is it an acceptable matter whether 170 tonnes of concrete had been used to refill the potholes? Until now, there were not answers as to whether the present case was examined by forming a particular committee or something. The responsible persons invited only those who would easily accept their submissions to the meeting. I

want to know whether there is still an arrangement to examine the matter by inviting trustworthy persons such as chairman of Mahamyaing Market, chairman of Mahamyaing Development Committee and chairman of Taw Win Ayar Development Committee."

The Union Minister replied that he would hand over the matter to Yangon Region Cabinet, and their reply will be answered via the Speaker of the Hluttaw.

In addition, U Win Khaing, Union Minister, replied to questions raised by U Lar Mar Lay of Saut Law constituency and U Toe Thauang of Moe Meik constituency. At yesterday's sitting, the Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw gave a warning to a parliamentarian who was reading a journal at the time of the Assembly. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Re-entry of displaced people into Mongko accepted after scrutiny

VILLAGERS who were displaced after attacks in northern Shan State by combined armed groups from the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the Ta'an National Liberation Army (TNLA), the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDA) and the Arakan Army (AA) have begun to return to the Mongko region.

The displaced people began to re-enter Mongko starting on December 9 and were received by combined teams comprising Tatmadawmen, Myanmar Police Force, township administrative



Internally displaced persons receive checks as they return to Mongko as the situation is returning to normalcy. PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

department staff and departmental personnel after a process of scrutiny, it is learnt.

According to the receiving teams, there are 2,247 households comprising 4,821 males and 5,052 females -- 9,873 in

total, including the locals who were received today. Eighty-nine households comprising 273 males and 234 females -- 507 -- altogether underwent the process of scrutiny. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Food, clothing and commodities donated to fire victims

At about 2am on the morning of December 15, a fire broke out at the house of Korbi Ramauk in the village of Phonnyoleik in Buthitaung township, killing two of his sons and destroying nine shops and eight other houses.

The fire victims — 50 people from 8 households — were provided with food, clothing and other commodities worth Ks. 2,629,000 by police forces and well-wishers on December 17, it is learnt. — *Myanmar News Agency*



Officials and volunteers deliver aid to fire victims in Phonnyoleik Village. PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Families of multi-ethnic representatives pray for State Counsellor

FAMILIES of multiethnic representatives of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw prayed for State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at her house in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

First, the families greeted the State Counsellor and presented her with Christmas flowers and sang Christmas songs marking the birth of Christ.

Pyithu Hluttaw Represent-

ative Dr Daw Shwe Hmon from Bago Constituency read verses from the Bible and Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Sein Aung of Paletwa Constituency prayed for the State Counsellor. Then the families sang hymns for the State Counsellor. Later, the State Counsellor presented Christmas gifts to the families and posed for documentary photos.

— Myanmar News Agency



Families of multiethnic representatives of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw pose for photo with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi after singing hymns for the State Counsellor at her residence. PHOTO: MNA

U Kyaw Soe Win appointed as Ambassador to Viet Nam

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Kyaw Soe Win, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw
Date. 21 December 2016

Earthquake Monitoring Committee to be formed...



High rise buildings are seen in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

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Yangon Region is located about 35 km from the Sagiang Fault and is vulnerable to earthquakes due to movements of the fault. The Myanmar Earthquake Committee has issued warning for preparedness.

Other cities along the fault line include Myitkyina, Tagaung, Thabeikkyin, Sagaing, Mandalay, Naypyitaw, Toungoo, Pyu and Bago. All are vulnerable to earthquakes at any time.

The Myanmar Earthquake Commission has already conducted tests along the fault in Bago and Pyu, but it has yet to do so for other sections. Plans are also underway to conduct seismic tests in other areas in cooperation with international organisations, it is learnt.

Myanmar suffered from 15

earthquakes of a magnitude of 7 or more on the Richter Scale during the past century, including the Bago Earthquake in 1930, the Yangon Earthquake in 1970 and the Bagan Earthquake in 1975.

Myanmar also lies on other smaller faults such as the Kabaw Fault, the Hpapon Fault, the Kyaukkyaw Fault and many others. The most recent earthquake in Myanmar was the one that damaged many pagodas and the murals inside them dating back to 10th and 11th centuries in Bagan on 24 August. A total of 396 pagodas were damaged by the August earthquake.

Thabeikkyin Earthquake on 11 November, 2012 claimed 26 lives and destroyed 462 buildings, while the Tarley Earthquake brought down 1,229 buildings and killed 76 people. —Ko Moe

Vice President U Myint Swe attends Independence Day Organizing c'tee meeting



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the third coordination meeting to organise the 69th anniversary of Independence Day. PHOTO: MNA

THE third coordination meeting organise the 69th anniversary Independence Day was held at the President's Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Chairman of the central organising committee Vice President U Myint Swe said that eight sub-committees are trying their best to celebrate the event in ac-

cordance with its four objectives and urged all to achieve success as it will be the first Independence Day Ceremony during the term of the new government.

Afterwards, chairmen of sub-committees and officials reported to the vice president on arrangements for the events.

The meeting concluded

with remarks by the vice president.

It was attended by union ministers who served as chairmen of sub-committee, the chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, the commander of the Nay Pyi Taw Command, deputy ministers and officials. —Myanmar News Agency

Independent journalists in conflict areas in Rakhine

A group of independent journalists including local and foreign media toured Buthidaung and Maungtaung, Rakhine State, yesterday, meeting and interviewing members of local communities.

Among the stops the journalists made was Buthidaung People's Hospital, where Buthidaung Township Medical Officer Dr Than Tun Kyaw and officials answered their questions.

Afterwards, they visited the Basic Education High School where students have returned and are reportedly learning in a peaceful environment.

The reporters also interviewed peoples from both communities at Myoma Market, where they inquired of the peaceful coexistence between the two communities.

The media team also went to Thabeiktaung Rural Health Centre, located to the south of Buthidaung, and collected information on the free mobile health care services in 85 villages in the township.

The group then proceed-



Journalists talk to leaders of Muslim community in Maungtaung. PHOTO: MNA

ed to Maungtaung and met with townsmen and religious leaders of the Muslim community.

The journalists interviewed the elders and religious leaders about the attacks on the border outposts and the conflicts that occurred after the initial 9 October attack. The media team includes journalists from the Myanmar News Media Council, the Central News Bureau, the Mizzima Media Group, the Myanmar Times, the

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

The reporters and photojournalists arrived in Sittwe on Monday, the first day of a three-day visit. The journalists will be escorted by security forces today as they travel to a secure area where the attacks occurred, said the government's spokesman U Zaw Htay. —Myanmar News Agency

22,982 tourists enter via Tachilek border entrance

THE number of tourists from Thailand, China and Malaysia who entered the country this year through the Tachilek land border entrance via Mae Sai of Thailand reached 22,982. From January until 15 December they visited Tarlor Bazaar, Bayintnaung Statue, Maha Muni Pagoda, Shwedagon Pagoda, National Races Village, Ahkhar Bazaar and the Chinese Temple in Tachilek.

Mongphyat and Kengtung were visited by 7,873 tourists, most of them being Chinese and Thai. Monglar was visited by 3,116 tourists, most of them being Thai. Taunggyi, Innlay, Bagan, Mandalay, Kyaikhtiyo and Yangon were visited by 9,602 travelers — most of them being Thai and Chinese — via Tachilek.

Popular destinations for visitors included Zaydangyi Pagoda in Mongphyat, Stupa of Buddha foot-

print, Maha Muni in Kengtung, Hokho Temple, Wutinn temple and other Chinese temples. Also popular are the Suntaung stupa and the Buddha standing statue in Kengtung.

Foreign tourists also visited to see the views of Myanmar's natural landscape and to observe different traditional customs and lifestyles in various places and to observe ethnic minority communities and their cultures. On 12 December, under the arrangements of Marvellous Travels & Tours Co., Ltd, 43 Malaysian tourists entered Tachilek through Mae Sai of Thailand, and visited limited areas — Tachilek, Kengtung, Inle, Mandalay, Bagan, Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mawlamyine and Myawady — in their own cars, and then returned to Thailand via the Myawady border entrance on 20 December. —*Myanmar News Agency*



Tourists being seen at the Tachilek border entrance. PHOTO: MNA

Day trip travellers on the rise

THE number of day travellers in Myanmar is on the increase, it is learnt.

Most of the local travellers visit the Moe Yun Gyi bird sanctuary, famous pagodas, the Kanbawzathadi Palace in Bago region, and the Sein Lei Tin Natural Resort in Mon state.

"Moe Yun Gyi Inn is the best place to watch the nature of the birds. The tour companies are

also arranging day-return trips to attract the time-conscious visitors. Most people want to relax by travelling," said an official from Jovago. Jovago, the online hotel booking company, offers accommodation booking services through its website. It has over 900 local hotel listings in Myanmar, promoting the tourism sector in Myanmar.

Moreover, people also go on

day trips to Inwa, Pyin Oo Lwin (also known as Pan Myo Daw), Di Dot Blue Lake, Sunye Inn in Kyaukse, and Akauk Taung Mountain in the Bago region.

"I invariably go on trip every year to ease the stress. This year, I plan to go to the Akauk Taung Mountain in Bago region with my friends, said U Kyaw Soe, an engineer. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Chin State government prepares to take legal action against Myanmar Ahla Construction

THE Chin State government is preparing to take legal action against Myanmar Ahla construction company, which is building the river water pumping station project at Haka, Chin state for failing to meet the deadline as well as for violation of the contract terms and conditions, it is learnt from the Chin State Ministry of Electricity and Industry.

Myanmar Ahla Construction Company started the river water pumping station project during the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Although the river water pumping

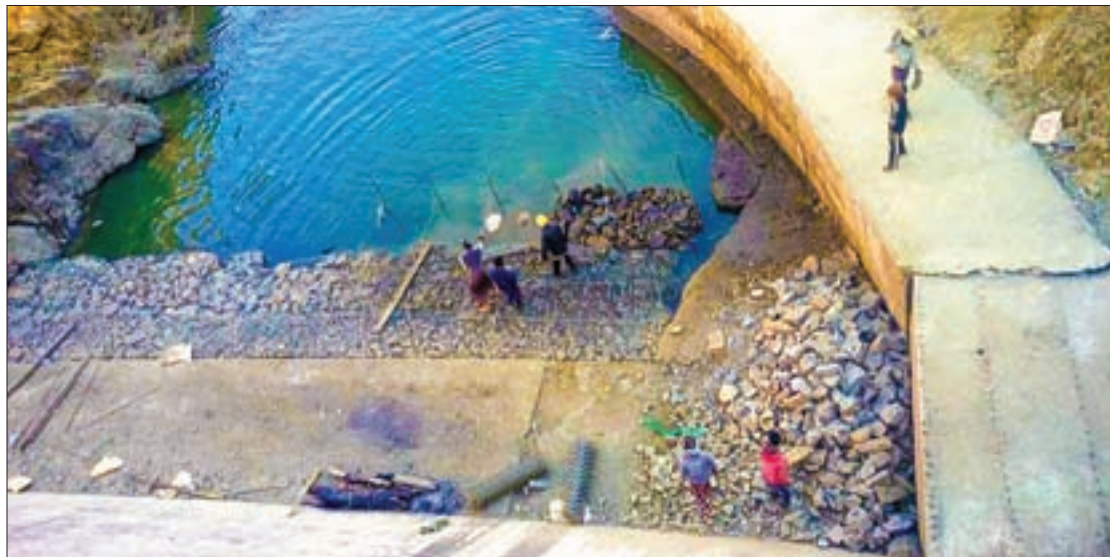
station's soft opening ceremony was held in February, the project is still not fully completed. The company cannot hand over the pumping station to the government even after the construction deadline, it is learnt.

"We found 34 points for necessary repair when we checked the project. The Chin government also informed the company of the necessary repairs. If the company does not repair the pumping station within the prescribed time period, the Chin government will take legal

action against the company," said Salai Isaac Khin, the Chin State Minister for Electricity and Industry.

"Currently, we are repairing some parts of the river water pumping station destroyed by the rough weather. Also, we have to change the existing water pumping machines with a higher power machine," said an official from Myanmar Ahla company.

The project spent Ks8,800 million from the Union budget. —*Myitmakha News Agency*



The river water pumping station being inspected by authorities. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

Myanmar Insurance pays over Ks118 million for grievances

MYANMA Insurance paid out over Ks118 million this year for deaths and losses of goods and vehicles on Monday at their Yangon office, it is learnt.

"Previously, we paid compensation to the sailors' families if we could not find the corpse in three years' time. But now, we pay compensation after two years, regardless of whether we find a corpse or not. The people buying property insurance means helping the country," said U Aye Min Thein, managing director from Myanmar Insurance.

Myanmar Insurance compensated Ks5 million each to the five sailors' families for life insurance, Ks16.200 million for three damaged vehicles as comprehensive motor insurance and Ks77.27,198,939 million to Consumer Goods Myanmar Company for damage to their insured goods in Sagaing region on 22 October.

Myanmar Insurance paid out Ks232.830 million to 2,854 people for life insurance from 28

September to 15 December in the current fiscal year.

Moreover, Myanmar Insurance gave compensation of Ks347,127,418 million to 255 vehicle owners for comprehensive motor insurance from 1st April to 15 December.

In addition to Myanmar Insurance, there are 11 local private insurance companies, which have been operating the insurance service since 2013, while 3 Japanese insurance companies have been allowed to offer insurance services in the Thilawa Special Economic zone in partnership with Myanmar Insurance.

There are about 48 types of insurance policies available in Myanmar Insurance, whereas 11 local private insurance companies are now offering eight types of insurance: life insurance, fire insurance, comprehensive motor insurance, cash-in-safe insurance, goods insurance, highway traffic insurance, health insurance and integrity insurance. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Crime NEWS

Raw opium seized in Namkham

MEMBERS of Namkham Police Force searched a motorbike driven by Yanchauk Ku, 20, on Nankham-Mantnaung Kudoseik road on 18 December.

Police seized 2.5 kilos of raw opium from him.

Police have filed charges against the suspect under the Anti Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. —*Myanmar News Agency*



Yanchauk Ku. PHOTO: MNA

LOCAL Business

Twelve local and foreign enterprises permitted to invest US\$86.531million

A TOTAL of 12 local and foreign enterprises have received permission to invest US\$86.531million in Myanmar, according to a meeting held by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) on 17th December.

Six local investment businesses and six foreign businesses were permitted to make investments in Myanmar, according to a Myanmar Investment Commission meeting held on 19th December.

Out of 12 permitted enterprises, most of them will invest in garment enterprises. The foreign investments are from China, Hong Kong and South Korea, said U Aung Naing Oo, the director-general of DICA.

The permitted six foreign enterprises will make investments of US\$24.560million in the industrial enterprises, creating 4,201 job opportunities, it is learnt.

Meanwhile, six local enterprises are permitted to invest US\$61.971million in two industrial enterprises, one real estate development project, two hotels and tourism projects and one service



Workers seen on a production line at a garment factory in Hlinethaya. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

business, creating 1,195 jobs.

Myanmar Investment Commission approves the investments proposals only after making assessments of the proposals to check if they meet the set criteria: creating job opportunities,

increasing revenue, ensuring prevention from environmental impact etc.

There are a total of 78 foreign enterprises with investments

of US\$2,146.934million and 37 Myanmar Citizen investment projects with investments of US\$518.506million as of 19th December in this fiscal year.—*Myitmakha News agency*

Eden group planning to develop low-cost apartments

EDEN Group is planning to develop low-cost apartments in rural areas, according to a spokesman.

The group aims to provide the apartments at a favourable price to the public, with rural areas prioritised in the project. he continued.

Additionally, Myanmar Apex Bank under the Eden Group will offer long-term loans so that public can afford to buy the apartments. The bank is currently under discussion with the Central Bank of Myanmar concerning the long-term loan plan.

Eden Group is one of Myanmar's largest and most successful conglomerates, with a business portfolio that includes restaurants, a construction company, tourist resorts, coal mines, a private bank, a petroleum company, agriculture companies, electronics manufacturing, trading and a few other businesses based in Singapore and Thailand.—200

Producing finished products from petrified wood faced with difficulties

MANUFACTURING of finished products from petrified wood are being faced with difficulties and so, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation is granting relief for the materials in exporting to the foreign countries.

Union Minister U Ohn Win for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation replied to a question raised by U Naing Htoo Aung, Nahtogyi constituency at third regular session

of 2nd Pyithu Hluttaw that the ministry grants relief for petrified wood to be able to export because producing the finished products are being faced with the difficulties: lack of technique, heavy capital and rare local demand. Additionally, the market is only dependent on the foreign demand.

No. 1 Mining Enterprise under the Natural Resource and Environmental Conservation Ministry is supervising the internal transport and scrutinising the

exports in cooperation with the affiliated petrified wood association, it is learnt.

U Aung Naing Htoo raised a question as to how to deal with the export of the products and how to create a market. The government let the entrepreneurs concerned organise the association in compliance with the rules and regulations in a bid to have a legitimate trade of petrified wood, not to lower the revenue.—*Myitmakha News agency*

Telecom sector attracts most foreign investment in Myanmar in 2016

TELECOM sector topped the foreign investment line-up of Myanmar with 47.07 percent of the total investment flowing into the country in the fiscal year 2016-2017, according to the statistics of Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) Tuesday.

The telecom sector was followed by industrial sector with 25.5 percent and the rest went to power, hotel and construction sectors. The country received a total foreign investment of 3.46 billion U. S. dollars as of Dec. 17. Singapore stands as the largest foreign investor of Myanmar.

However, the total foreign investment in this fiscal year was down by over 1 billion U.S. dollar as compared with that of the same period of last fiscal year, failing to attain the targeted investment amount, said U Aung Naing Oo, Secretary of MIC and Director General of Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

It was attributed to the watch-and-see attitude on new laws and regulations by foreign investors and policies of the new government. But in next year, more foreign investments are expected to enter the country, he added.

Myanmar's new Investment Law, endorsed on Oct. 18 with the approval of both Houses, was drafted in 2013 based on suggestions from experts and businessmen with the help of International Finance Corporation (IFC). It combines the Foreign Investment Law drafted in 2012 and the Citizens' Investment Law drafted in 2013.

MIC announced in November the detailed investment policy in support of the government's 12-point economic policy introduced in July this year, highlighting the government's promises to attract foreign investment and promote sectoral investment.

The new investment law will take effect on April 1 next year, according to the DICA.—*Xinhua*

45 Aircon Bus Line to go public

THE 45 Aircon Bus Line will turn into a public bus line in early 2017, said Ko Ta Yoke Lay, a 45 aircon bus owner.

Power Eleven Public Co., Ltd was organised to operate a public bus line under the guidance of Yangon Region government. The company will extend up to 50 more vehicles in early

2017, it is reported.

A proposal to operate Insein-Danyingon-Sule route has been submitted to Yangon Region government office in August. They will run the bus line depending on the commuters and the regional government's guidance, it is learnt.

There is a stock trading plan

for the public to participate in public bus line system. The public are encouraged to take part in the bus line system by purchasing a share, according to Power Eleven Public Co., Ltd.

This bus line was launched in 2015. Currently, there are 25 aircon buses in No 45 bus line, it is learnt.—200

South Korean court to hold first impeachment hearing on Thursday

SEOUL — South Korea's Constitutional Court will hold its first hearing in the impeachment case of President Park Geun-hye on Thursday with initial opinions from both sides, an official said on Tuesday.

The court is reviewing the impeachment vote passed by parliament on 9 December. Park is accused of colluding with a friend to pressure big businesses into making financial contributions to non-profit foundations and violating her constitutional duty.

The court's nine judges are entrusted with ruling on the vote to impeach Park, whose powers have been suspended. A majority opinion of six judges will uphold the parliament's motion and oust Park or overturn it and

reinstate her.

The court has up to 180 days from the day of the impeachment vote to decide if Park becomes South Korea's first democratically elected leader to be ousted from office.

If she is removed, a new election has to be held in 60 days to pick a new president who will serve a full five-year term.

Park's lawyers submitted legal opinion last week saying the impeachment had no legal basis and was also procedurally flawed and therefore should be thrown out. Park has described the friend, Choi Soon-sil, as someone she had turned to at difficult times and apologised for carelessness in her ties, but denied any legal wrongdoing.—*Reuters*

Abe eyes Russia trip early next year to advance peace treaty issue

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Tuesday he wants to visit Russia at an early date next year to “accelerate momentum” built with Russian President Vladimir Putin last week on resolving a territorial row and signing a post-World War II peace treaty.

In a speech in Tokyo, Abe hit back at criticism that he made little headway in the talks with Putin, saying Japanese people could again live on Russian-held islands at the centre of the territorial dispute as a result of joint economic activities.

“(I find it) profoundly moving that we were able to take an important step toward the conclusion of

the peace treaty as the result of our talks,” Abe said.

During their summit on Thursday and Friday, the leaders failed to overcome differences over the sovereignty of the Russian-held islands off Hokkaido that are claimed by Japan, which were seized by the Soviet Union after Japan's surrender in 1945.

Abe defended the progress made by the leaders, including an agreement to consider “internationally unprecedented” joint economic activities on the islands under a system that does not compromise either country's legal stance.

“The enhancement of economic ties might look like it will take time, but it's a shortcut to signing

the peace treaty,” Abe said.

“If (the joint activities are) realised, Japanese people could make many visits to the islands and live there, and with trust, we can make the islands (a place of) coexistence rather than of confrontation,” Abe said.

“There is no way (to resolve the islands issue) except by envisioning a future in which the people of both Japan and Russia advance together,” he added.

In a *Kyodo News* poll released Sunday, 54.3 per cent of respondents nationwide viewed the outcome of the talks negatively, while 38.7 per cent were positive.

Abe also said his upcoming visit with outgo-

ing US President Barack Obama to Pearl Harbor, the site of the 1941 Japanese surprise attack that drew the United States into World War II, will “show the great power of reconciliation to the world.”

Abe is scheduled to visit the site and hold his last summit with Obama during a two-day trip to Hawaii next week.

Asked after his speech about the prospects for legislation to allow the possible abdication of Emperor Akihito, Abe said the issue “must not be used for political advantage.”

A government panel is currently considering how to respond to the emperor's concern that his advancing age may prevent him from fully executing his duties.

Addressing speculation that he might dissolve the House of Representatives for a snap election in the near future, the prime minister said he “is not thinking at all” of doing so.

Abe said he told a meeting of heavyweights from his Liberal Democratic Party on Tuesday morning to “rest and relax for the time being, and that next year, I want them to keep alert and not forget to be prepared for battle at all times,” he said.

LDP Secretary General Toshihiro Nikai told reporters after that meeting that the party's lawmakers “won't be welcoming the new year with idleness.”—*Kyodo News*



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe review the guard of honour during a meeting in Tokyo, Japan, on 16 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Investigators recommend extending search for missing Malaysia Airlines flight

SYDNEY/KUALA LUMPUR — Investigators searching for missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 have recommended extending the search by an additional 25,000 sq km (9,650 sq miles), to an area further north in the Indian Ocean, after conceding for the first time they were probably looking in the wrong spot.

Australia, one of three search countries, rejected the recommendation citing a lack of “credible evidence” to extend the search, leaving it unclear whether Chinese and Malaysian search teams will finance a prolonged search.

“The report does not give a specific location for the missing aircraft and so we need credible evidence

that identifies the specific location of the aircraft to extend the search,” a spokeswoman for Australia's Infrastructure and Transport minister Darren Chester told Reuters by telephone.

Malaysian transport minister Liow Tiong Lai said it remains to be seen how the investigators' report could help identify the specific location of the aircraft. He did not make a statement on funding.

The current 120,000 sq km (46,330 sq miles) underwater search area west of Australia in the Indian Ocean is due to be completed in January, with no sign of the missing jet.

Flight MH370 disappeared in March 2014 with 239 passengers and crew

on board, most of them Chinese, en route to Beijing from the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur. Its whereabouts have become one of the world's greatest aviation mysteries.

The recommendation to extend the search followed a meeting in November between crash investigators, satellite communication and aviation experts including Boeing (BA.N) and government representatives from Malaysia, China and Australia.

The search coordinator, the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB), issued advice on Tuesday that new evidence derived from ocean drift modelling and further analysis of satellite communications with the aircraft and washed-up

debris helped determine the new area. “There is a high degree of confidence that the previously identified underwater area searched to date does not contain the missing aircraft,” the ATSB report said.

“Given the elimination of this area, the experts identified an area of approximately 25,000 sq km as the area with the highest probability of containing the wreckage of the aircraft.”

The proposed new search area is north of the current search zone that has been the focus of the A\$200 million (\$145 million) search so far. It would represent the second time the search has been extended if funding was forthcoming.—*Reuters*

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China says it has handed over US drone taken in South China Sea

BEIJING — China has returned a US underwater drone taken by a Chinese naval vessel in the disputed South China Sea last week after what China's Defence Ministry said were "friendly" talks between the two countries.

The United States acknowledged receipt of the unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) and criticized China for the seizure, saying it was "inconsistent with both international law and standards of professionalism for conduct between navies at sea."

China's capture of the drone triggered a diplomatic protest and speculation about whether it will strengthen US President-elect Donald Trump's hand as he seeks a tougher line with Beijing.

A Chinese naval ship took the drone, which the Pentagon says uses unclassified, commercially available technology to collect oceanographic data, on Thursday about 50 nautical miles northwest of Subic Bay in the Philippines.

In a brief statement, China's Defence Ministry said the drone had been given back to the United States.

"After friendly consultations between the Chinese and US sides, the handover work for the US underwater drone was smoothly completed in relevant waters in the South China Sea at midday on 20 December," the ministry said in a short statement.

The defence ministry did not immediately respond to a request for more

details about the handover.

The Pentagon said the vehicle had been handed over to the guided missile destroyer USMustin near where it had been "unlawfully seized". It called on China to comply with international law and refrain from further efforts to impede lawful US activities.

"The US remains committed to upholding the accepted principles and norms of international law and freedom of navigation and overflight and will continue to fly, sail, and operate in the South China Sea wherever international law allows," Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook said in a statement.

The seizure has added to US concerns about China's growing military presence and aggressive posture

in the disputed South China Sea, including its militarization of maritime outposts.

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 US Navy has about 130 such underwater drones, made by Teledyne Webb, each weighing about 60 kg (130 pounds) and able to stay underwater for up to five months. They are used to collect unclassified data about oceans, including temperature and depth. They are used around the world, but it is unclear how many are used in the South China Sea.—Reuters

China offers \$14 million arms package to the Philippines: Manila's defence minister

MANILA — China has offered to provide \$14 million worth of small arms and fast boats to the Philippines for free, aiding President Rodrigo Duterte's war on drugs and fighting terrorism, Manila's defence minister said on Tuesday.

The offer was made by China's ambassador Zhao Jianhua during a meeting with Duterte late on Monday night at the presidential palace, Delfin Lorenzana said, adding Beijing has also made available \$500 million long-term soft loan for other equipment.

"China has given us a list of military equipment and we will go through it to find out what we really need," Lorenzana told reporters after giving out Christmas gifts to wounded soldiers at an army hospital in Manila.

"We might get some small arms, fast boats and night vision goggles because \$14.4 million is not that much. We will finalise the deal before the end of the year and a technical working team will soon go there to look at the equipment."

Lorenzana said they hope to get the Chinese armaments by the second quarter next year. "The Chinese ambassador last night told the president, I know your problem in drugs so we would like to help you," he added.

Just six months ago, Manila and Beijing's relations were very frosty after the Philippines filed an arbitration case in The Hague, questioning China's extensive nine-dash line claims on the South China Sea.

But, Duterte, who came into power on 1 July, reversed the country's foreign policy, distancing from Washington to pivot to Beijing and winning about \$24 billion in trade and investment pledges after an October visit to China.

China's arms offer came after a US senator has said he would block the sale of 26,000 M4 rifles to the Philippine police due to human rights concern. Early this month, executives from China's arms maker, Norinco, also met with Duterte.

Washington, the former colonial master and security partner, has been providing second-hand weapon systems to the Manila for nearly two decades since the return of US forces for training and exercises.

From 2002, the United States has provided nearly \$800 million worth of second-hand small arms, ships and helicopters, and radios, armor vests, night fighting equipment and coastal radars. Last year, Manila got its biggest military aid at \$82 million.—Reuters

Top court rules in favour of US base relocation in Okinawa

TOKYO — Japan's top court on Tuesday ruled in favour of the central government in its dispute with Okinawa over the relocation of a US air base within the southern island prefecture, prompting a pledge from the government to resume the controversial construction work.

Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga, for his part, plans to withdraw an action he took in 2015 to block the relocation of US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, a prefectural government source said. But the standoff between Tokyo and Okinawa is likely to drag on as the governor may try other methods to thwart the project.

Although expected, the Supreme Court decision was another slap in the face for the Okinawa government, whose strong demand that the US military's Osprey aircraft remain grounded had fallen on deaf ears as their flights were resumed Monday, less than a week after one crash-landed off Okinawa.

In the ruling handed down by the No. 2 Petty Bench of the Supreme Court, Presiding Justice Kaoru Onimaru said it was illegal for Onaga to revoke his predecessor's approval for landfill work required for the plan to move the Marine base from a crowded residential area in Ginowan to the less populated Henoko coastal area of Nago. The judgment was in



Judges of the Supreme Court's No. 2 Petty Bench sit in a courtroom in Tokyo, on 20 December 2016, before handing down a ruling on a dispute between the central government and Okinawa prefectural government over the relocation of a US Marine Corps air base within the southern island prefecture. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

line with a high court ruling issued in September, which the Okinawa government had appealed.

Top government spokesman Yoshihide Suga welcomed the decision, saying the Supreme Court "fully accepted" the central government's arguments and added that the government is willing to "cooperate" with Okinawa Prefecture over the relocation plan based on the ruling.

Defence Minister Tomomi Inada said in a statement that the Defence Ministry plans to "swiftly resume" the landfill work, which has been suspended amid the intensifying dispute, once Onaga retracts his revocation.

After decades of hosting the bulk of US military facilities in Japan,

many people in Okinawa want the Futenma base to be relocated outside the prefecture. They are frustrated with noise, crimes and accidents linked to the US bases, and safety concerns were reignited in the wake of the 13 December crash-landing of an MV-22 Osprey aircraft off Nago.

The central government has maintained that the current relocation plan, crafted under an accord with the United States, is "the only solution" for removing the dangers posed by the Futenma base without undermining the perceived deterrence provided by the Japan-US alliance.

In September, the Naha branch of the Fukuoka High Court, acknowledging that the danger and noise problems posed by the Futenma base are

"serious," said in its ruling that the relocation plan will reduce the "overall" burden shouldered by people in Okinawa in accommodating the US bases.

It also said the benefits to be accrued from the relocation exceed disadvantages, rejecting the Okinawa government's concerns over potential damage to the environment of the Henoko area. It thus determined that it was "illegal" for Onaga to revoke the landfill work permission given by his predecessor.

The Henoko sea area, where a V-shaped runway is to be constructed through land reclamation to accommodate a Marine air base, is known as a marine habitat for coral reefs and endangered dugong.

The Japanese and US governments struck an accord in 1996 on the return of the land used for the Futenma base after public anger was fueled over the 1995 rape of a local girl by three American servicemen. After years of wrangling, the Henoko area was eventually picked as the relocation site.

In 2013, then Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima approved the central government's request for the landfill work at the coastal area. But Onaga, who was elected in 2014 on a pledge to oppose the Futenma relocation within Okinawa, revoked the approval in October 2015.—Kyodo News

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Opinion

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Righteous men are none the worse for any criticism

Khin Maung Oo

THERE seems to be an element of hyperbole in such a claim that dishonest or morally corrupted persons are getting on in life and doing well in our world. Yes, it is completely right. Crimes are increasing more and more. Our surroundings are full of thieves, robbers and merciless killers. What is worse, we are living in the immediate vicinity of enemies of mass destruction. An enemy—small or big, is dangerous. Undeniably, we cannot live under the full guarantee of protection of the law yet. As said by many, rule of law plays an important role in helping us reach a state of peace and stability.

Some will say that as we have had authorities and responsible personnel to administer justice and the law by exercising power vested in them, we need not concern ourselves about it. Quite wrong in saying so! We are all responsible for it. The above-said authorities are performing duties assigned by the law legislated by the parliamentarians whom we

have chosen. Thus, we are required to closely monitor the assigned public officials in the performance of their duties in the right way and to ensure that laws and rules are in sync with current situations. Power can destroy a person and absolute power can cause a complete destruction of the whole human society, if used wrongly. We need to call selected representatives back, if they were found to be using their power and authority in the wrong way. We must keep in our mind that money is not power but it is a powerful weapon, especially for those who would like to ruin our society.

As known to all, our country is facing many difficulties and problems—sky-rocketing commodity prices, increasing unemployment rate, bribery and corruption, a threatening danger of narcotic drugs, payment of foreign debts—a legacy left by the previous regime, and so on. The incumbent government does not have a miraculous power of heal-

ing all these problems. Every individual of wisdom or common sense knows that it will take time to remove these problems accumulated during several decades, or rather half a century. Of all these problems, bribery & corruption, dangers of narcotic drugs, creation of racial & religious conflicts and attempts to wage aggression by armed groups are the biggest ones. Some media which are void of media ethics are sparking conflicts by spreading invented stories, to arouse misunderstanding in the international community. Failure to describe attacks and aggressions of armed groups and lack of expression of policemen and government troops being killed in their armed attacks depict that their news and information are ex parte ones. Our troops are launching just and fair battles to safeguard the sovereignty of the State. Tatmataw troops and police forces have been performing their duties bravely. We are well convinced that they will never ever yield to

any aggressions of enemies, with arms akimbo. Simultaneously, the government is trying to solve the problem by having a report on Rakhine Affairs submitted by the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State led by Mr Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General who is a globally respected person.

Destructive elements from home and abroad will be making subversive activities all the time. With concerted efforts, we will conquer difficulties and reach a modernized federal democratic Union, in 20 years to come as said by our State Counsellor, on one condition that the Government, the Tatmataw and the People work together for the good of the country. We will try to be the best, by co-existing peacefully with all countries, and by amending necessary things on the way to our destination. To sum up, righteous men are none the worse for any criticism, accusations and allegations as long as we hold and practice right attitudes and deeds.

YU students' union building – let's think big!

(Phoeblaing)

BECAUSE of its historical imprint, the YU students' union building is a national heritage that must be rebuilt and preserved for posterity. Once reconstructed, it will stand as a national edifice.

The building which once housed the Yangon University students' union, the haunt of the nation's future leaders, Ko Aung San, Ko Nu and others, was blown down in 1962, not in the heat of military combat, but in a calm morning in a peaceful suburb of the capital. It took an evening of thought at the highest military levels, and a whole night's preparation to reach a split second blow up. Simply an act to demonstrate their attitude of 'nga do go bar hmat tha lai' (what do you think of us?), their rude impulse gravely offended generations of citizens.

The nation got pained in the heart. The empty plot where the students' union building once stood now stands a reminder of 'an insult by a few against a whole'. The negative impact on national politics of the bare plot has been shown in ages to be persistent, especially with regard to the relation between the Tatmadaw, the defense services, and students. And when we say students let us all be reminded of the whole population who support them.



The union building seen in 1962 before being blown down.

Rebuilding the Union Building

Some days ago, replying to a formal query by an MP, the deputy minister for education confirmed in the Hluttaw that the Yangon University Students' Union building will be rebuilt, and that budget allotment has been planned for next year.

This is good and welcome news. But how the planning and execution of the project will be carried out remains unclear. Will the MOE care to consult interested parties - students, interest groups, organizations - the citizens in general? Or does MOE consider the

project its exclusive concern, just like the construction of a building for a university elsewhere in the country, a procedure they used to say regular?

Many tanks and no think

Recently a prominent person, a former presidential advisor, remarked to me that there are 'too many tanks in the country, but with no think.' He was referring to so called think tanks. In the case of rebuilding YU students' union building, it is not known who has done the thinking. Is it an individual, or a group, or a committee entrusted with the task? Or, was it

merely an instruction from above? Visibility of the process is not there.

No ordinary building, no ordinary business

How should we envisage the building design? Remember we are rebuilding a consecrated building, on hallowed ground. It's not we, but the young student leaders who had ennobled the site and the building to be rebuilt there. So the new building should and must encompass the old to the maximum possible extent.

But times have changed; over half-a-century have gone by.

Land in Yangon is now hyper-expensive; the site of the union building, for its location, is hyper-hyper-expensive than elsewhere in the city. So we must make the most of the land area available. In addition to the sentimental or cherished value we attach to the building, we need to generate real values from it as well.

The case for a big, big union building

There are new requirements for a modern university, such as theatre, auditorium, arts and culture center, staff and student refectory, convention halls, gymnasium, banks and shops, guest accommodation – all in addition to office and meeting rooms for the students union.

The dimensions of the former building would measure far too small for today's requirements. We must consider a big one, a building which Yangon city, as well as the nation, not just YU, can be proud of. Site area is available for lawns and garden as well as the extension of building area. In addition, the new union building can demonstrate the use of underground space. There is ample sub-surface space to put to use. In addition to the area directly beneath the building, the earth below the broad Chancellor Road can be dug out to make room for parking, pedestrian path etc. Not an impossibility! For, there is the technology.

See page 9 >>

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing tours Rakhine State



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing greeting. PHOTO: MNA

THE Tatmadaw will always protect every inch of the territory of a sovereign country and urged national races to cooperate with the Tatmadaw, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing told residents and people's militia of Bandoola and neighbouring villages in Maung-taw yesterday.

The commander-in-chief of the Defence Services was visiting the area to meet the locals.

Afterwards, the chief minister of Rakhine State joined the senior general in greeting local residents. The senior general and wife and the chief minister then presented food for the residents.

Afterwards, the senior general and party toured the village before paying homage and donating cash and offertories to the Sayad-aw of the Aungmyay Monastery.

In the afternoon, the senior general and party visited No. 1 Border Guard Police Command Centre and met with the police and their families.

He urged the police to cooperate with the local community for the security of the country and its nationals, and the Tatmadaw is performing its duties in accordance with the requirements of international and political situations.

After the meeting, the senior general presented food for the families and Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, the wife of the senior general, presented cash for the maternal and child welfare associations of the border guard police command centre.

Later, the senior general and party proceeded to Buthidaung and met with troops and their families at Warkhokechaung Station Hall. The senior general presented food and his wife presented cash donations for the maternal and child welfare association of the command centre. — *Myanmar News Agency*

POEM:

Consumer Protection

- * Since the nineteen nineties in Myanmar 'Market Oriented Economy' became popular. There was a rush by some enterprising persons to set up business that provided quick returns as is usual, many other persons followed suit in the quest for wealth and fame to boot, and soon unbridled commercialism, sans ethic took hold of many businesses and the public.
- * Using harmful chemicals for food preservation and colouring of food for consumer attraction, producing imitation products of renown brands, distributing the products through 'middle' hands. Making imitation medicines, a risk to health but the source of the product maker's wealth. Some in the private 'Education Business' investing with promises of 'quality education' offering.
- * Advertising, for promotion of product or services has been the vehicle of choice for many enterprises. Some vying for market niches resorting to 'lottery' raising doubts if it is their business priority. Enterprises, the print and the broadcast media using, some advertisements though lengthy but amusing, some advertisements being unfortunately, boring taking up much time in television broadcasting.
- * Unbridled commercialism resulted in twenty fourteen, enactment of the Law regarding Consumer Protection to redress consumer complaints of products and services and responsibilities to consumers by the 'enterprises'.
- * One provision of the law is the 'Guaranty' by the seller regarding products or services purchased by the buyer. Alas, in case any valid claim against the 'Guaranty' arises the buyer, by some enterprises, are given many excuses for not keeping to the terms of the valid 'Guaranty,' often leaving the buyer frustrated and angry.
- * Both consumers and 'enterprises' should be made aware, the provisions of the Consumer Protection Law to bear. So as to be in the know of the actions that can be taken in matters relating to ensuring consumer protection.

Lokethar

YU students' union building – let's think big!

>> from page 8

Ultra- modern multi-purpose center

I am presenting the case for an ultra-modern multi-purpose center. I would like to see the building host international meetings and seminars or conventions, with most modern facilities in Yangon; a grand ball room, where graduates or non-graduate students get married and hold reception; or staff and old students hire room and service for social occasions, at concession rates. Recently we learnt the report that the State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, met with Singapore resident Myanmar citizens in a big, big hall that accommodates seven thousand people! Let's think of an auditorium with 3000 seats.

How nice it would be if the basement and lower levels accommodate a thriving shopping mall, where students and staff, as well as old students, would be re-funded 10 percent on their pur-

chase, when they show their ID. I am reminded of the successful University Co-op Shop in Bogyoke market which U Ne Win nationalized in 1964. Now, such an enterprise, a bigger one indeed, is proposed to be located in the multi-storied students' union building.

A tall structure and architecture

And we need to go higher up. The old union building is two storied. The new one should be multi-storied – 12 levels, 15 levels! And it should include basement levels for car parking, and shops. Stretch the imagination: the universities' hospital, just across University Avenue, raised 15 stories high, promoted to world class medical teaching and research center! The National University of Singapore has a hospital (NUSH), its admirable teaching hospital, with food courts and shops and subway access to MRT station, and it is earning big income treating patients including

foreigners. Yes, we need to envision a big teaching hospital in the vicinity of students union building. There is ample space.

How to retain the original union building as the main part of the big building is the job of architects. Similar projects, adding new structure while maintaining the heritage, have been carried out in many countries, particularly for great universities. Reputable architectural firms should be contracted to produce the blueprint.

Is the author dreaming?

Some readers may think the author is dreaming. Yes I am, at this stage; but I quote words from Abdul Kalam, India's famous pioneer of defense research, and great social reformer, who rose to become the country's president:

Dream, dream, dream;
Dreams transform into thoughts;
And thoughts, into action.

(A.P.J. Kalam)
Phoehlaing

KIA makes aerial reconnaissance through unmanned aerial vehicles



An unmanned aerial newnnaisance vehicle being seen damaged.

PHOTO: MNA

GOVERNMENT troops fired on unmanned aerial vehicles controlled by Kachin Independence Army (KIA) armed groups that were making aerial reconnaissance near the Tatmataw camp stationed in the township of Waimaw in Kachin State on Monday.

The unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) made aerial reconnaissance over the Tatmataw camp from 10am to 1:30 pm

until government troops opened fire, causing three UAVs to explode in the air and another to fall onto the ground.

Upon examining the undamaged UAV, it was found to have been fastened with TNT explosives and equipped with three batteries, one automatic flying system, one camera, five motors, one GPS and one Auto Pilot Sensor (APS). — *Myanmar News Agency*

Berlin police assume truck was deliberately driven into Christmas market



Rescue workers are seen at the scene where a truck ploughed through a crowd at a Christmas market on Breitscheidplatz square in Berlin, Germany, December 20, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BERLIN — Berlin police said on Tuesday that investigators assume the driver of a truck that plowed into a crowd at a Berlin Christmas market, killing 12 people and injuring 48 others, did so intentionally in a suspected terrorist attack.

The truck crashed into people gathered around wooden huts serving mulled wine and sausages at the foot of the Kaiser Wilhelm memorial church, which was left as a ruin after World War II, in the heart of former West Berlin on Monday evening.

“Our investigators assume that the truck was deliberately steered into the crowd at the Christmas market at Breitscheidplatz,” police said on Twitter.

“All police measures related to the suspected terrorist attack at Breitscheidplatz are progressing at full steam and with the necessary diligence,” police said.

The incident evoked memories of an attack in Nice, France in July when a Tunisian-born man drove a 19-tonne truck along the beach front, mowing down people who had gathered to watch the fireworks on Bastille Day, killing 86 people. That attack was claimed by Islamic State.

Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere had previously said there were indications that the incident in Berlin was an attack.

Police said that the man found dead in the truck was a Polish citizen but added he was not in control of the vehicle. The nationality of the suspected driver, who fled the crash scene and was later arrested, was unclear, they said. German media cited local security sources as saying that there was evidence suggesting the arrested suspect was from Afghanistan or Pakistan and had entered Germany in February as

a refugee.

Local broadcaster rbb cited security sources as saying the arrested truck driver came to Germany via Passau, a city on the Austrian border, on 31 December, 2015. It cited the sources as saying the man was born on 1 January, 1993 in Pakistan and was already known to police for minor offences.

If that is confirmed, it could further worsen sentiment toward migrants in Germany, where more than a million people fleeing conflict and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere have arrived this year and last.

The record influx has hit Chancellor Angela Merkel’s popularity ratings and boosted support for the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD). Senior AfD member Marcus Pretzell blamed Merkel for the attack on Twitter.—Reuters

US, Iran close Turkish missions after firearm incident, Russian envoy killing

ISTANBUL — The United States embassy in Ankara and its consulates in Istanbul and Adana will be closed for normal operations on Tuesday after an individual approached the embassy and discharged a firearm, the embassy

said. It said the individual, who opened fire at 3:50 am (0050 GMT), was in police custody and there were no reported injuries in the incident which occurred hours after Russia’s ambassador was shot dead nearby by an off-duty

policeman. The Iranian embassy in Ankara announced that its consulates in the three Turkish cities of Istanbul, Trabzon and Erzurum will be closed on Tuesday after the Russian envoy’s killing.

“All consular services in Iranian consulates in Istanbul, Trabzon and Erzurum will be closed on Tuesday, 20 December. We urge all Iranians to avoid visiting these locations,” the embassy said in a statement on its website.

Russia and Iran are the main supporters of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and the assailant who killed the Russian envoy shouted “Don’t forget Aleppo” when he shot him. Officials from the French and German embassies in Ankara told Reuters their operations were continuing normally for the time being.—Reuters



General view of the US Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, on 20 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Death toll in Siberian mass alcohol poisoning case rises to 52

MOSCOW — Siberian authorities on Tuesday revised upwards the number of Russians who have died after drinking contaminated bath oil to 52 from 41, the Irkutsk region’s health ministry told Reuters.

A further 29 people are in hospital, some of whom are in a serious condition and may die, a spokeswoman for the ministry said.

The poisoning in Irkutsk, a hard scrabble city around 2,600 miles (4,000 km) east of Moscow, is one of the worst such cases in recent years in a country where up to 12 million people use cheap surrogate spirits.—Reuters

Police storm Berlin’s former airport used as refugee home: media

BERLIN — German magazine *Focus* said on Tuesday that police special forces were storming a hangar at Berlin’s defunct Tempelhof airport, which now houses a refugee accommodation centre.

On Monday evening a truck plowed into a crowd at a Berlin Christmas market, killing 12 people and injuring 48 others. Police say they suspect it was a terrorist attack.

German media cited local security sources as saying that there was evidence suggesting the arrested suspect was from Afghanistan or Pakistan and had entered Germany as a refugee.

Neither police nor prosecutors were immediately available for comment.—Reuters

Macron moves ahead of Fillon in French popularity poll

PARIS — Centrist former minister Emmanuel Macron is for the first time more popular than his conservative rival for the French presidency, Francois Fillon, according to an Odoxa poll of approval ratings for *L’Express* magazine and France Inter.

Macron was economy minister under Socialist president Francois Hollande until he resigned this year to create his own political movement and stand as an independent candidate for next year’s presidential election.

In the poll released on Tuesday, he became the most popular of 25 leading French politicians on a 35 per cent approval rating, unchanged from a month ago.

That put him ahead of second-placed Alain Juppe, down 4 points at 33 per cent, and ahead of Fillon, who lost 6 percentage points of popularity to stand at 31 per cent.—Reuters

Serbia wants to boost IT exports to 1.5 bln euros per year

BELGRADE — Serbia should boost its net IT exports from 400 mln euros to 1.5 bln euros over the next five years, envisions the national action plan for the IT sector, due to be adopted by the government by the end of the year.

The action plan, developed by a ministerial council headed by Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government Ana Brnabic, will be among the three government priorities over the next five years, the Blic daily reports.

The document is aimed at boosting the capacities of Serbia’s IT industry and creating the IT professionals the country is lacking.

An estimated 1,500 IT professionals appear on the market every year, but the figure must be increased at least five-fold, to over 7,000, to enable the country to meet its export goals.—Tanjug

Magnitude 6.7 earthquake strikes off Solomon islands: USGS

SYDNEY — An earthquake with a magnitude of 6.7 struck off the Solomon Islands on Tuesday, according to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the second powerful tremor in the islands to Australia’s north in less than two weeks.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) said the quake, which was centered some 120 km (70 miles) northwest of Kira Kira at a depth of 44 km, had not triggered any tsunami threat.

It came less than two weeks after a powerful 7.8 earthquake struck off the Solomons, perched on the geologically active “Pacific Ring of Fire”, triggering a tsunami warning for a wide swath of the South Pacific that sent hundreds of villagers rushing to higher ground.—Reuters

Syrian army says it will enter Aleppo enclave—Hezbollah news service

BEIRUT — Syria's army broadcast messages into the last rebel enclave of Aleppo saying it would enter the area on Tuesday, a military media unit run by the government's ally Hezbollah reported, urging insurgents to speed up their evacuation of the city.

A rebel official based in Turkey told Reuters that only about half of the civilians who wanted to leave Aleppo had done so after the departure of thousands of people on Monday.

The insurgents would only leave once all the civilians who wanted to had done so, the rebel said. The ceasefire and evacuation agreement allows them to carry personal weapons but not heavier arms.

Late on Monday, Turkey said 20,000 people had left the rebel-held pocket in the south of Aleppo in evacuations on Thursday and Monday. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a war monitor, said 15,000 had gone.

Estimates of the number of people still waiting for evacuation on convoys of buses range from a few thousand to tens of thousands. The route out of Aleppo runs 5 km (3 miles) to the rebel-held district of al-Rashideen, just beyond the city's southwestern limit.

Civilians are also being evacuated from two mostly Shi'ite Muslim villages near Idlib that have been besieged by rebels



Rebel fighters and civilians walk in a rebel-held sector of eastern Aleppo, Syria on 18 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

for years and taken to Aleppo as part of the deal that allowed the departure of insurgents from the city.

The Hezbollah military media unit reported that eight more buses of evacuees from al-Foua

and Kefraya departed at dawn on Tuesday. The rebel withdrawal from Aleppo after a series of rapid advances by the army and allied Shi'ite militias including Hezbollah since late November has brought President Bashar

al-Assad his biggest victory of the civil war.

However, despite the capture of Aleppo and progress against insurgents near Damascus, the fighting is still far from over, with large areas remaining in re-

bel control in the northwestern countryside and in the far south.

The jihadist group Islamic State also controls swathes of territory in the deserts and Euphrates river basin in eastern Syria.—*Reuters*

Turkish police detain six people over the killing of Russian ambassador Andrei Karlov

ANKARA — Turkish police detained six people over the killing of the Russian ambassador, state media said on Tuesday, widening a probe to relatives of the off-duty policeman who shouted "Don't forget Aleppo!" as he gunned the envoy down.

Both countries cast Monday's attack, which occurred at an art gallery in the capital Ankara, as an attempt to undermine a recent thawing of ties that have been strained by Syria's civil war, where they back opposing sides.

The war, which has killed more than 300,000 people and created a power vacuum exploited by Islamic State, reached a potential turning point last week when Syrian forces ended rebel resistance in the northern city of Aleppo. Russia, an ally of President Bashar al-Assad, supported that advance with air strikes.

Turkey identified the killer as 22-year-old Mevlut Mert Altintas, who had worked for the Ankara riot police for 2-1/2 years. Altintas, who also shouted slogans associated with Islamist militancy after shooting ambassador Andrey Karlov, was killed minutes later by members of Turkey's special forces. His



Russian Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Karlov lies on the ground after he was shot by unidentified man at an art gallery in Ankara, Turkey, on 19 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

mother, father, sister and two other relatives were held in the western province of Aydin, while his flatmate in Ankara was also detained, the state-run Anadolu agency said.

One senior Turkish security official said investigators were focusing on whether Altintas had links to the US-based Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen, who Ankara blames for a failed July coup. Gulen has denied responsibility for the coup and Monday's

attack and has condemned both events.

The slogans that Altintas shouted, which were captured on video and circulated widely on social media, suggested he was aligned to a radical Islamist ideology, rather than that of Gulen, who preaches a message of inter-faith dialogue.

"Don't forget Aleppo, don't forget Syria. You will not be able to feel safe for as long as our districts are not safe. Only death can

take me from here," he shouted in Turkish.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday he and Russia's Vladimir Putin had agreed in a telephone call that their cooperation in fighting terrorism should be even stronger after the killing.

Putin said it was aimed at derailing Russia's attempts to find, with Iran and Turkey, a solution for the Syria crisis.

The countries' foreign ministers were meeting on Tuesday.

Turkey faces multiple security threats, including from Islamic State. Earlier this month a spokesman for the hardline Sunni Muslim group urged global sympathisers to carry out new attacks, singling out Turkish diplomatic, military and financial interests as preferred targets.

Altintas also shouted "We are the ones who swore allegiance to Mohammed for the jihad!", which the mass circulation Hurriyet newspaper said that was a slogan commonly used in propaganda videos of the group formerly allied to al Qaeda in Syria.—*Reuters*

Gunman in Zurich mosque shooting dead — police

ZURICH — A man who shot three people at a Zurich mosque on Monday is dead, police said on Tuesday, confirming that a body found near the scene was that of the assailant.

Zurich cantonal police said authorities had identified the suspect, but gave no details. A news conference was scheduled for 1300 GMT. The gunman had stormed into the Islamic centre and opened fire on worshippers.

"The dead man found around 300 metres (yards) from the scene of the crime after the shooting in the mosque is the suspect," a statement on a police website said.

Two of the three victims — aged 30, 35 and 56 — were seriously injured in the attack, which took place shortly after 5:30 p.m. (1630 GMT) near the main train station in Switzerland's financial capital. A third sustained less severe injuries.

Police had identified the suspect only as a man around 30 years old wearing dark clothing and a dark woollen cap who fled the mosque after the attack.—*Reuters*

Polish police force protesters away from parliament, put up barriers

WARSAW — Polish erected metal barriers around parliament early on Tuesday, forcing demonstrators away from the building where they were protesting against government plans to restrict media access to the debating chamber.

The protests began on Friday after the parliamentary speaker announced the plans and opposition lawmakers occupied the podium in the chamber. That sit-in continued on Tuesday.

A small crowd continued the vigil outside the building into a fifth day but police, saying the gathering was illegal, grabbed or escorted them to the other side of the street overnight before putting up the barriers, footage from broadcaster TVN24 showed.

The protesters had earlier set up a few tents on the



Policemen stand guard during the third day of a protest outside the Parliament building in Warsaw, Poland on 18 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

other side of the street.

The nationalist-minded, eurosceptic PiS government has already put state media under its direct control, passed legislation

that weakened the constitutional court and approved a bill that critics say will infringe on the freedom of assembly.

The measures have

brought hundreds of thousands of protesters onto the streets over the past year and raised concerns among Poland's European partners.—Reuters

Earthquake along Ecuador's coast kills two, halts refinery

QUITO — A 5.8-magnitude earthquake shook Ecuador's Pacific coast early on Monday, killing at least two people, injuring 15 others and halting production at the Esmeraldas oil refinery, officials said.

The country's geological institute recorded the quake off the coast of Atacames in Esmeraldas province, northwest of Quito, the capital. The quake was followed by 15 lesser-magnitude aftershocks.

President Rafael Correa was meeting with local officials in the area, which earlier this year was devastated by a 7.8-magnitude quake that killed about 670 people, displaced thousands and caused millions of dollars in damage.

"We regret that a

75-year-old woman suffered a heart attack because of the quake," National Risk Management Secretary Susana Duenas told local radio. There were no immediate details on the second person killed.

The Esmeraldas refinery, which has a 110,000-barrel-per-day capacity, was halted as a precaution, Pedro Merizalde, head of state oil company Petroecuador, told Reuters.

Merizalde said refinery infrastructure would be checked over and that the stoppage would last about two days.

Authorities said three hotels in the area, a popular tourist destination, were destroyed, and other buildings sustained substantial damage.—Reuters

Peru's president, opposition leader vow cooperation after political tension

LIMA — Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski and right-wing opposition leader Keiko Fujimori promised on Monday to work together for the good of the country following their first meeting since facing off in a divisive election in June.

The hour-long meeting, proposed and mediated by Catholic Cardinal Juan Luis Cipriani, aimed at seeking

a political truce after Fujimori's party pushed a motion through Congress last week ousting Kuczynski's education minister despite his pleas to spare him.

Kuczynski's defeat in that battle so early in his government spotlighted the power that Fujimori wields as the president of the Popular Force party that holds an absolute majority of seats

in the single-chamber Congress.

Standing in front of Cipriani's home following the meeting, Fujimori noted that her party supported Kuczynski's initial series of reforms and approved his 2017 budget despite political differences with his government.

"But those differences are put aside and we're go-

ing to put Peru first as we always have," Fujimori told journalists in a rare public appearance since she lost her second presidential bid by just tens of thousands of votes.

Fujimori, a former congresswoman and the eldest daughter of imprisoned former authoritarian President Alberto Fujimori, said Popular Force would remain a

force for "constructive opposition" in Kuczynski's five-year term.

Fujimori and Kuczynski, a 78-year-old former Wall Street banker, smiled as they shook hands for the cameras. Cipriani's office released a photo of the two praying with him before an altar.

"There will always be some difference here and

there, but I have no doubt we can work together to promote a Peru that reaches 2021 with prosperity and modernity," Kuczynski said.

The gestures could help ease concerns over the possibility of increasing political instability in Kuczynski's government as he seeks to shore up investments that have slumped for three straight years.—Reuters

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 Allision Transmission Ex KB-150 Well Servicing Truck (32) Items	Ks
(8)	DMP/L-017(16-17)	Spares for MWM D 226-4 1/Set Engine Ex MTBN-3 River Craft (30) Items	Ks
(9)	DMP/L-018(16-17)	Steel Wire Rope (2) Items	Ks
(10)	DMP/L-019(16-17)	Mud Testing Equipments (6) Items	Ks

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

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 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

Thousands of Fijians shelter in evacuation centres from floods, landslides

SYDNEY — Thousands of Fijians sheltered in evacuation centres and tents on Tuesday as heavy rain and floods cut roads, covered sugarcane fields and caused landslides, said the South Pacific nation's disaster office.

Across the archipelago nation 1,716 people sought refuge in 46 evacuation centres and another 1,817 were living in tents, said the national disaster management office director, Akapusi Tuifagalele, in a video statement posted on the Fijian government's YouTube account.

"There are no reports of fatalities or serious injuries," he said, but added that the township of Rakiraki, in the north of the country's largest island, had suffered major flooding and that

many roads and fields were under water nationwide.

The main road joining the capital, Suva, with Fiji's international airport at Nadi, was cut by floodwaters a spokeswoman at Suva police station told Reuters.

Another video posted Tuesday showed Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama visiting the Navua district in the east of Fiji's largest island, Viti Levu.

"To those suffering in the aftermath of the recent TD04, I want to assure all of you that my Government is working overtime to reach you," he said on Twitter, referring to the storm by the number it was assigned by Fiji's weather bureau.

Fiji's Meteorological Service said in a bulletin

that the tropical depression driving the rain was now weakening.

The worst-hit areas in western Fiji were still recovering from February's devastating Cyclone Winston, aid worker Peter Egesa, CARE Australia's emergency response manager. Winston was the worst storm ever recorded in the southern hemisphere. It killed 43 people in Fiji and left tens of thousands of people homeless.

Cyclones typically sweep through the tropical Pacific between November and April, with the peak season between January and March. This season Fiji's weather bureau expects "elevated" cyclone activity in the region, and predicts three cyclones to hit the archipelago.—Reuters

Japan's Shinwa Real Estate taps Thai market for overseas expansion

BANGKOK — Japanese property developer Shinwa Real Estate Co. is moving into Thailand in a bid to extend its reach in Southeast Asia by establishing its first overseas joint venture.

Osaka-based Shinwa recently set up a joint venture called W-Shinwa Co. with Woraluk Property Public Co. to develop Japanese-standard property projects in the Thai market. Capitalized at 275 million baht (\$7.74 million), the joint venture is owned 51 per cent by Shinwa and its subsidiary and the remaining 49 per cent by the Thai firm.

"This is the first overseas joint venture for Shinwa Group and we see business opportunities with

strong confidence in the Thai market," W-Shinwa co-chief executive officer Tomoyasu Yamabe said in a press release.

Yamabe expressed hope that the new investment in strategically important Thailand will help Shinwa expand its operations in other Southeast Asian countries in the future.

Wichai Chula-Olarnkun, Thai co-chief executive officer, told NNA in an interview that the joint venture will plan to initially develop a Japanese-style residential project in Bangkok's central business district by utilizing Shinwa's construction and design innovation under the Runesu brand.—*Kyodo News*

Culling of chickens begins at Miyazaki farm after bird flu outbreak

MIYAZAKI, (Japan) — The government of Miyazaki Prefecture in southwestern Japan on Tuesday started culling about 122,000 chickens at a poultry farm after a highly virulent strain of bird flu was detected.

Miyazaki has the largest number of broiler chickens among Japan's 47 prefectures with about 27.4 million as of February, according to the prefectural government.

The farm had reported to a local livestock hygiene service centre Monday afternoon that some 100 chickens had been found dead. Five of the dead and two live chickens tested positive for bird flu in a preliminary examination.

Some of the dead chickens later tested positive for a highly virulent

strain of avian influenza virus.

The prefectural government banned poultry farms within 3 kilometres from the farm where the virus was detected from moving chickens or eggs based on a law to prevent livestock infections. Nearly 30 poultry farms keep a combined 960,000 chickens in the radius.

Cases of the highly pathogenic H5 virus at poultry farms have been found in Niigata and Aomori prefectures as well as in Hokkaido since November. The Hokkaido government said on Tuesday that work to cull and bury all 280,000 chickens at a farm in the town of Shimizu has been completed after a virus outbreak was detected there.—*Kyodo News*



Officials of Miyazaki Prefecture in southwestern Japan head to a poultry farm in the town of Kawaminami on 20 December 2016 to cull about 122,000 chickens after a highly virulent strain of bird flu was detected. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Lagarde keeps IMF job, escapes penalty after negligence conviction in France

PARIS/WASHINGTON — International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde escaped punishment and kept her job on Monday despite a conviction on negligence charges over a state payout made while she served as France's finance minister in 2008.

The executive board representing the IMF's 189 member countries reaffirmed its full confidence in Lagarde's ability to lead the crisis lender, hours after the verdict was issued by a panel of judges in Paris with no fine or jail term.

Lagarde told reporters at IMF headquarters that she would not appeal the decision after vigorously fighting the charge since she took the IMF's helm in 2011.

"I have been held negligent, but without penalty, without sanction, without registration of the decision," she said. "I am not satisfied with it, but



Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Christine Lagarde reacts before the start of her trial about a state payout in 2008 to a French businessman, at the courts in Paris, France, on 12 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

there's a point in time when one has to just stop, turn the page and move on and continue to work with those who have put their trust in me."

In Monday's ruling, the judges did not find negligence in Lagarde's decision to seek an out-of-court settlement with tycoon Bernard Tapie, but they said her failure to contest the award to him of about 400 million euros (\$417 mil-

lion) was negligent and led to a misuse of public funds.

The lead judge on the case, Martine Ract Madoux, explained the absence of any sentence by citing Lagarde's preoccupation with the 2008-09 financial crisis that was raging at the time of the payout as well as her strong international reputation. The charge could have carried a maximum one-year prison sentence.

US Treasury Secretary Jack Lew called Lagarde a "strong leader," adding: "We have every confidence in her ability to guide the fund at a critical time for the global economy."

But the conviction may still work against Lagarde in her campaign to push back against a wave of protectionist sentiment and populist mistrust of public officials. She has called on IMF member countries to better promote the benefits of trade and globalisation and adopt policies that combat growing inequality.

Reappointed to a five-year term in February, Lagarde said on Monday that she would now "focus all my attention, all my time, all my efforts, all my energy and enthusiasm to my mission as head of the IMF." Lagarde, 60, who described the case as a five-year-long ordeal, argued in the trial last week that she had acted in good faith and with the public interest in mind.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV PACAO VOY. NO (034N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACAO VOY. NO (034N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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 YANG MING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV FSL SANTOS VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV FSL SANTOS VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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 NEW GOLDEN SEA PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV INLE STAR VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV INLE STAR VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.12.2016 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 X-PRESS FEEDERS PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY. NO (158)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY. NO (158) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S YANG MING LINE
Phone No: 2301185

Sci-fi, sex and celebs, yet 'Passengers' disappoints critics

LOS ANGELES — It seemed like a match made in heaven having two of the hottest young Hollywood stars, Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt, working together.

However, reviews for their sci-fi romance "Passengers," which opens in US movie theaters on Wednesday, have not been kind.

"Passengers" is the story of two people on a spaceship headed to a distant colony who wake up 90 years early. There is no way to go back to deep sleep, so they try to find ways to entertain themselves. Oscar-winner Lawrence, 26, who last year publicly attacked Hollywood's female pay gap, was paid some \$20 million for the movie, according to Hollywood trade publications, double that of Pratt, who has starred in action movies "Jurassic World" and "Guardians of the Galaxy."

"Passengers" also marks Lawrence's first-ever sex scene - a prospect that made her so nervous that she told The Hollywood Reporter last year that she got "really, really drunk" before shooting it.

"I found the build-up to the sex scene awkward," Lawrence told Reuters in promotions this month for the movie.

"Then when I got there I realized how un-sexual sex scenes are. You're sitting there with everyone that you work with and you're like 'OK, so I guess my leg will go there' so it was a lot of build-up for



Cast members (L-R) Michael Sheen, Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt pose at the premiere of "Passengers" in Los Angeles, California US, on 14 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

nothing."

Film critics are feeling similarly let down by the movie overall. "Passengers" has a 30-per cent approval rating on review aggregator RottenTomatoes.com and has so far been overlooked in Hollywood's awards season.

Entertainment Weekly gave the movie a D+, saying "The signs to be hopeful were all there: A pair of dependable movie stars, a bullish Oscar-season spot on the release calendar, a director (Morten Tyldum) hot off of an Oscar-nominated film. But alas, 'Passengers' is not very good. In fact, it's pretty bad."—Reuters

Girl group Fifth Harmony down to four as Cabello goes solo

NEW YORK — Girl group Fifth Harmony has become four.

The pop group formed out of US talent show "The X Factor" in 2012 said on Monday that Camila Cabello was leaving the quintet but that the band would be moving ahead.

Cabello, 19, said she was launching a solo career, a move she had discussed at length with the other four young women.

"After four and a half years of being together, we have been informed via her representatives

that Camila has decided to leave Fifth Harmony. We wish her well," the remaining members of the group said in a posting on Instagram.

"We are excited to announce that we will be moving forward with the four of us — Ally Brooke, Normani Kordei, Dinah Jane and Lauren Jauregui — for our fans, " the statement added, saying the name of the band would remain the same.

Cabello's departure followed Fifth Harmony's last scheduled performance of the year at the iHeart Radio Jingle Ball tour in Florida on Sunday.

Like British boy band One Direction, Fifth Harmony was put together by record producer Simon Cowell after each girl auditioned as solo artists for his TV talent show "The X Factor."

Although they didn't win, they went on to become the show's most successful product, with hits like "Worth It" and "Work from Home" that led to 10 million in record sales and accolades that included three MTV Video Music Awards, an American Music award and seven Teen Choice Awards.

Cuban-American Cabello said in an Instagram posting for fans on Monday that she was sad to see her time with Fifth Harmony ending, but added: "Next year I will be working on my own music and giving you a big chunk of my heart."

"As scary as it is to take the leap, I am excited and full of joy because I know that no matter what happens, I am following my heart."—Reuters



Fifth Harmony performs "That's My Girl" at the 2016 American Music Awards in Los Angeles, California, US, on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Actress Keira Knightley. PHOTO: REUTERS

Keira Knightley may return to 'Pirates of the Caribbean 5'

LONDON — Actress Keira Knightley will reportedly make a surprise return to "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales".

The 31-year-old star is said to have secretly filmed scenes for the fifth installment in the Pirates of the Caribbean film series, reported Digital Spy.

"The top-secret one-day shoot took place in November and the set was in lock-down. Keira was really excited to reprise the character (Elizabeth Swann) that made her famous and get into her wigs and costume again," a source said.

"Her role will be only make a small return during the end credits to delivering killer lines hinting at a possible bigger part in sixth movie." The film, which stars Johnny Depp, Javier Bardem, Brenton Thwaites, Kaya Scodelario and Geoffrey Rush, will hit the US theatres on May 2017.—PTI

Shah Rukh Khan chosen for Yash Chopra Memorial Award

MUMBAI — Superstar Shah Rukh Khan featured in some of the biggest hits helmed by filmmaker Yash Chopra and now he has been selected for an award instituted in the memory of late Bollywood legend.

The 'Badshah of Bollywood' will receive the fourth National Yash Chopra Memorial Award, the award jury, comprising Chopra's wife Pamela, filmmaker Boney Kapoor, Simi Garewal, Padmini Kohlapuri, Subbarami Reddy, Any and Shashi Ranjan, announced today. The award - whose previous recipients were Lata Mangeshkar, Amitabh Bachchan and Rekha - will be presented on 25 February.

Pamela said the two biggest reasons why the 51-year-old ac-

tor was chosen are that he was extremely close to Chopra — he did four films with Shah Rukh, which were all big hits - and also because of the iconic status that SRK enjoys. "The award is given to those who are icons, who we know are legends like we gave to Lata Mangeshkar and Amitabh Bachchan. Last year, it was Rekha, who will be a legend tomorrow and same is the case with Shah Rukh. Also, Yash was very close to Shah Rukh and they both were extremely fond of each other," Pamela told reporters here.

Padmini said she could only think of Shah Rukh for the award as he is not just a fantastic actor but also an extremely humble person despite attaining stardom.—PTI

Amid Middle East gloom, Christmas brings some cheer in Bethlehem

BETHLEHEM (West Bank) — This Christmas, for once, Bethlehem really can boast again that there is no room at the inn, as relative calm in the Israeli-occupied West Bank brings pilgrims and tourists flocking to the town of Jesus’s birth.

Elias Al-Arja of the Bethlehem hoteliers’ association said the troubles of the surrounding region had boosted numbers in the biblical Holy Land, and bookings were up on last year.

Tourism is a major source of revenue for the Palestinian economy — and provides livelihoods for about 5,000 families in Bethlehem, which has

some 5,000 rooms in 46 hotels. “Hopefully all will go well, and there’s full occupancy in all Bethlehem hotels on the 23rd, 24th and 25th of December,” Arja said.

Israeli-Palestinian violence has driven tourists away in the past, especially during the 2000-2005 Palestinian uprising when Bethlehem was a particularly lonely place.

While the security situation is more relaxed now, Israeli roadblocks and a six-metre (20-foot) Israeli-built concrete separation barrier snaking through the landscape are still part of the Bethlehem vista.

Palestinian Tourism Minister Rula Ma’ayah

said 2.3 million tourists have visited the Palestinian territories this year, slightly more than last.

The main attractions in Bethlehem are the 4th-century Church of the Nativity, built over a grotto where Christian tradition says Jesus was born, and the Christmas tree in Manger Square, where choirs sing carols during the holiday.

The church, on UNESCO’s list of endangered World Heritage sites, is currently undergoing its first comprehensive renovation since it was completed 1,700 years ago.

On Christmas Eve, the acting Latin patriarch of Jerusalem will lead

an annual procession to Bethlehem and then celebrate Midnight Mass in the church.

Many of the pilgrims’ Holy Land itineraries include nearby Jerusalem and Jesus’s boyhood town of Nazareth in the Galilee, now the largest Arab city in Israel.

Checking into her hotel, Evana, a tourist from Poland, summed it up: “Very nice place, very historical — and we came to see everything: Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem.”

Bethlehem’s Christmas season lasts through the Eastern Orthodox celebration on 7 January to Armenian Christmas on 18 January.—*Reuters*



Fireworks explode during a Christmas tree lighting ceremony outside the Church of the Nativity in the West Bank town of Bethlehem on 3 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



Liu Qibao (2nd R), the visiting member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and head of the CPC Central Committee’s Publicity Department, and Nepalese Deputy Prime Minister Krishna Bahadur Mahara (2nd L) attend a signing ceremony in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 19 December 2016. Nepal and China on Monday signed various agreements in the areas of publication and television. PHOTO: XINHUA

7th China Festival, 2nd Kathmandu Cultural Forum kick off in Nepal

KATHMANDU —The 7th China Festival has kicked off in Nepal’s capital city on Monday.

The event was jointly inaugurated by visiting member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Head of the CPC Central Committee’s Publicity Department Liu Qibao, and Nepalese Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Krishna Bahadur Mahara.

The three-day event has been organised reflecting synergy and joint commitment of China and Nepal for cooperation and expertise sharing in safeguarding, promoting and managing cultural heritages.

“The perfect example of friendship between any two neighbours can be found in friendship of Nepal and China. And these sorts of event are helpful in strengthening our partnership,” Indra Bahadur Baniya, state minister for Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation said while addressing the event.

The festival features various cultural performances by Chinese artists. Artists from Department of Culture of China’s Jiangsu province, Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage, Chinese Culture Promotion Society are performing in the fiesta.

The event also marks the beginning of the two-day 2nd Kathmandu Cultural Forum. Representatives from Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives and China attended the forum that will end on Tuesday issuing a Kathmandu declaration.

Addressing the event, Liu Yuzhu, head of China’s State Administration of Cultural Heritage, said “this event is an important platform to discuss and enhance the cultural ties between China and South Asia.”

Meanwhile, Nepal and China on Monday signed various agreements in the areas of publication and television. The 7th China Festival will conclude on Wednesday. —*Xinhua*

Aussie woman shocked to find snake wrapped around her Christmas tree

CANBERRA — Lights, baubles and other decorations are often dressed around Australian Christmas trees during the festive season, but one local woman was shocked to find a tiger snake playing the part of the tinsel.

After spotting the stowaway snake wrapped around the tree in her home on Sunday evening, the woman called a professional snake handler Barry Goldsmith who happily relocated the ‘moving decoration’.

Goldsmith, whose photo of the slippery critter went viral on social media overnight, told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) he’d never seen anything quite like it. “Although I have found them around the base of a Christmas tree in amongst the presents in the past, I’ve never found one up inside a Christmas tree,” Goldsmith said on Monday.—*Xinhua*

(21-12-2016 07:00 AM ~ 22-12-2016 07:00 AM) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	SHWE SETTAW (Minbu)
07:45	Am	Myanmar Traditional Toys
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Mogok: The Colourful Land of Rubies
08:41	Am	Safari World
08:53	Am	Art Students: Theatrical Art
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Myanmar Distinguished Lady: Ma Myint Zu
09:35	Am	Myanma Pottery
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Lawka Nandar Wildlife Sanctuary And Its Rare Star Tortoises

10:50	Am	Colourful Threads
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(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)- Tuesday 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	To The Land Of Countless Temples - Bagan Trip (Ep-1)
07:53	Pm	Inspiration
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Mosaic Painting (Precious Stones & Gems)
08:42	Pm	A Girl Guide
08:49	Pm	Director: Kyi Phyu Shin

(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)- Tuesday 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)

Leicester appeal against Vardy red card at Stoke

LONDON — Leicester City have appealed to the Football Association (FA) against the referee's decision to dismiss striker Jamie Vardy during Saturday's 2-2 draw with Stoke City in the Premier League.

The 29-year-old, who was the club's top-scorer last season, was shown a straight red card in the 28th minute by Craig Pawson for a two-footed tackle on Mame Diouf.

"The Club has subsequently made its case for an instance of wrongful dismissal and expects to hear the outcome of the appeal in the coming days," Premier League champions Leicester said on their website. (www.lcfc.com)

Leicester, currently 15th in the table, host Everton on 26 December and West Ham United on 31 December, before visiting Middlesbrough on 2 January, with Vardy set to miss all three fixtures if he loses the appeal.—Reuters

Tiger's return excites players and fans

LONDON — Tiger Woods appeared in only one tournament all season but the year ended with the name of the 14-times major champion on the lips of most golf followers around the world.

Back in action after an absence of almost 16 months caused by chronic back problems, the 40-year-old American made everyone sit up and take notice with a roller-coaster display as he finished 15th at the Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas in December.

Pure box office, as ever, Woods reeled off a tournament-high 24 birdies to offer fans hope that he can rediscover former glories but also looked vulnerable as he made several errors of judgment over the four days.

Compatriot Jordan Spieth expressed the views of many in the elite 17-man field with a positive assessment of the tournament host's return to competition.

"What looks like is happening is he's being patient, he's making a return, he's confident in his game," twice major winner Spieth told reporters. "That's really exciting for us and for golf."

"He's a guy that can continue to have an influence on the golf course for players ... he can truly help get the numbers back up in golf."—Reuters



Liverpool's Sadio Mane in action with Everton's Joel Robles before scoring their first goal at Goodison Park on 19 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

Mane the main man as last-gasp Liverpool triumph

LONDON — Sadio Mane struck four minutes into stoppage time to give Liverpool a last-gasp 1-0 win over derby rivals Everton that lifted them into second place in the Premier League on Monday.

Substitute Daniel Sturridge hit the post with a low, left-footed drive from 20 metres and Senegal forward Mane was quickest to the rebound, sliding in to convert from close range.

The victory pushed Juergen Klopp's Liverpool side within six points of leaders Chelsea who won 1-0 at Crystal Palace on Saturday.

"We didn't give one chance away and that's very important against an opponent that only wants to disturb your game," said Klopp.

"The plan of Everton was wild football. They were chasing us everywhere, it is really difficult to play against this ... it's a wonderful feeling to win."

In a match with few chances, Everton lost goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg because of a leg injury after an hour and understudy Joel Robles had to make a fine, diving save from Roberto Firmino with 10 minutes to go.

Stekelenburg had denied Firmino in the 50th minute as Liverpool dominated, palming the ball away while Nathaniel Clyne's effort from the rebound was blocked.

Firmino also attempted a scissors kick from a Clyne cross but his effort sailed over.

Tempers flared when Liverpool midfielder Jordan Henderson was caught on the ankle by a late tackle from Ross Barkley in the second half.

There was scuffling among players from both sides before Barkley and team mate Seamus

Coleman were booked by referee Mike Dean.

Earlier, the first half turned into a stalemate with both keepers seriously under employed.

Divock Origi missed a chance in front of Everton's goal following a Clyne cross and Ramiro Funes Mori headed narrowly wide at the other end.

Liverpool then pushed back Everton, who have now gone 12 Merseyside derbies without a win and 20 with only one victory, in the second half and were ultimately worthy winners.—Reuters

Murray and Kerber seize power and eye domination

LONDON — Audacious coups by Andy Murray and Angelique Kerber have transformed the tennis landscape and they will begin 2017 eyeing the kind of domination that few would have thought possible at the start of a seismic year.

With the so-called big four in men's tennis crumbling, the 29-year-old Murray emerged to seize power, winning the Wimbledon title and the Olympic gold medal before a relentless late-season charge toppled Novak Djokovic from his pedestal.

Kerber loosened Serena Williams' grip on the women's game, reaching three grand slam finals and winning two of them, beginning against Williams at the Australian Open when she became Germany's first major winner since Steffi Graf in 1999.

Both Murray and Kerber ended 2016 as world number ones. Yet back in January Djokovic and Williams looked im-

Great Britain's Andy Murray celebrates with the Year-End No. 1 Trophy on 20 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS



movable.

Djokovic trounced Murray in three sets to win the Australian Open — emulating Roy Emerson's six titles in the process.

"I feel like I've been here before," Murray quipped after a fourth defeat in a Melbourne final to Djokovic.

Djokovic downed Murray again to win a rain-lashed French Open in June, taking his haul of majors to 12 and meaning he held all the sport's crown jewels simultaneously.

What is more, with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal nursing injuries and Murray seem-

ingly under his spell Djokovic's path to the first calendar-year grand slam since Rod Laver in 1969 looked inviting.

But the wheels fell off at Wimbledon.

Big-serving American Sam Querrey ambushed Djokovic in the third round — snapping his run of 30 consecutive wins in slams.

It opened the door for Murray and when Milos Raonic outlasted Federer in the semi-final it meant the Briton would start his 11th grand slam final as favourite. Raonic, the first Canadian man to reach a major final, brought his huge power game to Centre Court but Murray shrugged him off with a classy straight sets victory.

Afterwards Murray spoke of his aim to dethrone Djokovic in the rankings — something that had seemed nigh on impossible when he trailed by 8,000 points in the Spring.—Reuters