

National land resource management committee holds first collaboration meeting



Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers address at meeting of National Land Resource Management Central Committee.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec—The National Land Resource Management Central Committee held its first collaboration meeting here Tuesday, with an opening speech by Vice President U Nyan Tun.

The event happened at

the headquarters of Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry attended by ministers from states and regions.

The vice president noted, quoting the speech of President U Thein Sein in August, that the impor-

tance of conservation of forests, the environment and water resources to meet higher demand resulting from the increasing population.

U Nyan Tun also acknowledged that existing land policies have some

flaws, which have complicated the process of land management and led to disputes on land utilization.

He remarked that these problems have caused the property market to rise unreasonably, depriving
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A Shared Vision for the Future of Korea and ASEAN—Partnership for Trust and Happiness—

YANGON, 10 Dec—*The following is an article sent from the embassy of the Republic of Korea.—Ed*

The 2014 ASEAN-Republic of Korea Commemorative Summit will be held from December 11 for two days in Busan, Korea. It will be an opportunity for me to get together with the heads of state or government from the 10 ASEAN member states, looking back over the past 25 years of friendship and laying out a blueprint for the promotion of forward-looking relations.

Over these long 25 years, Korea and ASEAN have written an invaluable history.

In 1989, Korea became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner with ASEAN, the first developing country to do so. Korea and the ASEAN members, as developing nations, were able to better understand one another, and building on this common denominator, relations have developed remarkably.

Cooperation between the two sides began with trade, investment and tourism. In just 25 years, ASE-

AN has become Korea's second largest trading partner, third biggest investment destination and the number one destination for Korean travelers, attracting approximately 4.6 million visitors each year. Since Korea was accorded full Dialogue Partner status in 1991, development cooperation with ASEAN has gone into full swing. From that point on, Korea has steadily concentrated 30 percent of its total official development assistance in the ASEAN region.

Korea has also continued to share with the ASEAN members its experience with Saemaul Undong, a comprehensive rural development campaign that played a great role in Korea's achievement of the "Miracle on the Han River," contributing to its rise from one of the poorest countries. Today, Korea and ASEAN are envisioning together a "Miracle on the Mekong River."

In addition, Korea and ASEAN member states have the common historic

memory of the suffering inflicted by imperialist colonial rule and the ideological confrontation of the Cold War era. Still not unified, Korea will mark the 70th year of division next year.

As ASEAN member states have well understood such wounds of history suffered by the Korean people and are maintaining diplomatic relations with both Koreas, they will be of great help in bringing about peace on the Korean Peninsula and eventual reunification.

As of now, the Korean Government is making continued efforts to ease tensions, settle peace and lay the groundwork for peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula. Peace on the Korean Peninsula and ultimate reunification are important stepping stones as well as prerequisites for realizing peace throughout the East Asian region as well. I look forward to a greater role by ASEAN in ensuring that the North abandons its nuclear program and becomes a responsible member of the in-

ternational community, which will help peace take a firm root on the Korean Peninsula and unification be realized.

The affinity between Korea and ASEAN further deepened with Korea's pop culture spreading throughout ASEAN starting in the late 1990s. Interest in Korea increased in the region thanks to Hallyu, or the Korean Wave, and thus mutual understanding has been enhanced, which has led to the further promotion of people-to-people exchanges.

As of now, there are about 80,000 immigrants from ASEAN, who have married Koreans and are making their home in Korea, playing the role of a bridge that links people from both sides together. Korea and some ASEAN nations are nurturing close ties comparable to those between reliable family members so that these relationships are often
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Republic of the Union of Myanmar President Office

(Order No. 27/2014)

3rd Waning Day of Nadaw, 1376 ME
(9 December, 2014)

Appointment of Chief Justice of Sagaing Region High Court

Under para (iv), Sub-section (b) of Section 308 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Sub-section (b) of Section 82 of the Union Government Law, Section 50 of the Union Judicial Law and Sub-section (d) of the Section 17 of the Region or State Government Law, Justice U Win Myint of Sagaing Region High Court has been appointed as Chief Justice of Sagaing Region High Court.

Sd/Thein Sein

President

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

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European Union to provide USD 900 million to Myanmar over 7 years

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Envy and pride blind us to reality

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Myanmar, 3 other GMS countries to get assistance from ADB-Australia fund of USD10.5 million for private sector development

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 9 Dec—The Asian Development Bank is looking to equally distribute a private sector development fund of \$10.5 million to four Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) countries including Myanmar, Peter Brimble, ADB's principal country specialist

in Myanmar, said Tuesday.

The ADB announced last week that its technical assistance grant of \$500,000 and co-financing of \$10-million from the Australian government will support the Mekong Business Initiative for private sector development in four GMS countries, which also
(See page 2)



Photo shows a group of rural woman peeling betel nut. The Asian Development Bank and Government of Australia pledge to provide combined assistance of \$10.5 million to promote private sector development in four Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) counties including Myanmar. —PHOTO PROVIDED/ADB MYANMAR

Union FM attends high-level roundtable for Myanmar's graduation from LDC category



Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin speaking at high-level roundtable for Myanmar's graduation from LDC category.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec — A high-level roundtable for Myanmar's graduation from LDC category was held at Kampinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on 9 December 2014 morning chaired by Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, U Wunna Maung Lwin,

Chairman of the United Nations and International Organizations Relations Sub-committee.

Present at the meeting

were the Directors-General of National Planning and Economic Development and Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and High Representative of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States and UNDP. The discussion was focused on how Myanmar could speed up progress towards sustainable development and reach the criteria for graduation and what external support will be needed for rapid progress.

MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Nay Pyi Taw Announcement No. (43/2014)

3rd Waning Day of Nadaw, 1376 ME
(9 December, 2014)

Myanmar Peasant, Worker, People's Party allowed to register as political party

The Myanmar Peasant, Worker, People's Party allowed to register as political party that headquarters at No 2 on Tagaung Pagoda Road in Ward 4, Patheingyi, Ayeeyawady Region, was allowed to register at the Union Election Commission under the Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law as of 9 December 2014. Its registration number is 79.

By order,

(Tin Tun)
Secretary

Union Election Commission

More training schools planned to satisfy demand

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec — A meeting took place at the Ministry of Science and Technology here on Tuesday to discuss matters related to the opening of more technical and vocational training schools as part of an attempt to satisfy rising demand in regions and states.

U Tin Naing Thein, Union Minister at the President Office, told the meeting that the need to produce more technicians and skilled workers has become

central to coping with the fast pace of development in all the sectors of the country.

According to him, Myanmar, like other countries, has witnessed a rise in the number of people turning to vocational training despite free education at primary and middle school.

The union minister urged officials to work on plans for the development of human resources for national development.

MNA

Israeli Orto-Da Theatre Group: Stones



YANGON, 9 Dec — As part of the cooperation in the framework of culture agreement between Israel and Myanmar: the Embassy of Israel in Yangon will organize the following two events: (1) Workshop with students and teachers from "National University of Arts & Culture in Yangon" on 15 December 2014 and (2) performance of "Israeli Orto-Da Theatre Group: Stones" at Kokkine Swimming Club, Bahan, Yangon, at 6 p.m. on 16 December 2014 (Tuesday).

"Orto-Da" Theatre Group, led by an Israeli artistic director Yinon Tzafrir, had won so many

international theatre prizes since it was established in 1996 in Israel. Now the Embassy is bringing them to Myanmar audience to experience their outstanding talent of creating unique theatre events.

"Stone" is a visual poetic event, created by Yinon Tzafrir. This performance is inspired by "The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Movement" by Nathan Rapoport (1911-1987). "Stone" tells a story through the eyes of a sculpture that comes to life; this is an ironic journey through the twentieth century, a journey among spirits and memories. "Stones" is an original and surprising performance, full of strong images. A bitter-sweet event,

specific companies.

"We will support business associations to advocate for SME-friendly policies and programs," he said.

The ADB-Australia's Mekong Business Initiative, which is set to run from this December to November of 2017, aims to ensure an increase in the number of new private companies registered in the four countries and a rise in the number of SMEs that export.

The initiative in Myanmar will be coordinated from the ADB Resident Mission, in close cooperation with relevant government agencies and private sector business associations, said the ADB.

GNLM

Myanmar, 3 other GMS countries . . .

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include Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

Myanmar is expected to see new opportunities with the start-up of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, but its private sector "is facing a number of challenges to improve productivity and competitiveness", said Winfried Wicklein, ADB's country director in Myanmar.

Myanmar has more than 120,000 small-and-medium enterprises that make up over 90 percent of all businesses and nearly 80 percent of employment. The government is there-

fore placing more emphasis on development of SMEs, which are pivotal to ensuring inclusive economic growth in the country.

In its press release, the ADB stressed the need for a strong and fair regulatory environment for SMEs in the four GMS countries, noting that they often struggle to obtain access to finance and other support services.

Countries that show reform progress can more rapidly utilize available funds, Brimble told the Global New Light of Myanmar, adding that funds are for business environment reforms rather than

A Shared Vision. . .

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likened to the "relationship of in-laws."

Now is high time for the two sides to go beyond the strategic relationships forged between nations and foster deeper friendly ties among their peoples, building on deepening mutual understanding and empathy. In recognition of this, I put forth a vision of Partnership for Trust and Happiness at the 16th ASEAN-ROK Summit held in Brunei last year.

In the same way that the ASEAN Community, to be established next year, seeks to be a people-centered, sharing and caring community, I hope Korea and ASEAN, with the aim of enhancing the quality of life and happiness of every citizen, will build a more balanced and mutually beneficial relationship.

In such a context, the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit has made its focus the advancement of people-to-people relations.

First, we will launch the ASEAN-ROK Business Council to encourage networking between SMEs, which are fundamental to economic growth in both Korea and the ASEAN region.

Second, we will open an ASEAN culture plaza in Korea that will bring the splendid cultures of Southeast Asia to the Korean people.

Third, in order to enable a greater number of people from ASEAN countries to visit Korea more easily, we will explore measures for simplifying visa procedures, and going further, we will work to create a network of next-generation leaders to form the basis for a more forward-looking relationship.

By producing substantive outcomes that can be felt directly by all of our citizens, we will seek to usher in a time of greater happiness for the people.

Next year will see the launch of the ASEAN Community, the fruit of a half-century of cooperation in the region. It will be a historic accomplishment for ASEAN member states in their pursuit of common goals of economic development and improved quality of life on a foundation of tolerance and understanding.

ASEAN's transformation and growth has captured the world's attention, and the spirit of integration it has demonstrated is something Korea hopes to realize as well, not only in Korea-ASEAN relations but also in Northeast Asia.

Together, let us open a new era of trust and happiness.

NATIONAL

National land resource...

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small and medium scale entrepreneurs of opportunities to expand their businesses.

He then suggested the land resource management process be clear and effective, focusing on easy accessibility to the public.

The vice president confirmed that challenges in land resource management include lack of statistics, funds and experts at the respective committees in this sector, as well as ineffective technologies and systems to collect data and information.

He also suggested the committee should prioritize on effective utilization of land for all citizens, ensure legal protection of land ownership rights, and promote investment that

encourages the sustainable use of natural resources.

Union Minister U Win Tun for Environmental Conservation and Forestry said that in drawing the national land utilization policy, the committee is working closely with relevant departments, as well as experts and consultants from USAID, EU- International Management Group (IMG) and Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation.

Vice President U Nyan Tun received Mr Gyan Chandra Acharya, U.N. Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small island Developing States (UN-OHRLS) at the Cre-



Vice President U Nyan Tun receives Mr Gyan Chandra Acharya, U.N. Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small island Developing States and party.—MNA

dentials Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday.

They discussed technical assistance for Myanmar to graduate from Least De-

veloped Countries status.

Also present at the call were deputy ministers U

Tin Oo Lwin, U Tin Ngwe, Dr Zaw Min Aung and Daw Lei Lei Thein.—MNA

U Soe Nwe presents credentials to Estonian President

NAY PYI TAW, 10 Dec—U Soe Nwe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Estonia, presented his Credentials to His Excellency Mr Toomas Hendrik Ilves, President of the Republic of Estonia, on 4 December 2014 in Tallinn.—MNA

Sri Kestra inscribed on World Heritage List

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec—A pillar was erected in Pyay, Bago Region, on Tuesday to mark the inclusion of Sri Kestra on the World Heritage List, sources said.

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister at the President Office U Hla Tun, Bagon Region Chief Minister U Nyan Win, Deputy Minister for Culture Daw Sanda Khin, Mr Sandar Umar Alam of

UNESCO (Myanmar), and members of social organizations.

Speaking at the ceremony, U Nyan Win said that three of Pyu's city states—Hanlin, Beikthano and Sri Kestra—were inscribed on the World Heritage List in June this year, calling for officials and locals to join hands with the ministry for preservation of the cultural heritage.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec—Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Mya Thein received a Japanese delegation led by Mr Aikyo Masanori, a vice president of Nagoya University of Japan, at the hall of Constitutional Tribunal of the Union here on Tuesday.

They exchanged views on a submission decided by the tribunal, amendments of Constitutional Tribunal of the Union Law, and co-operation in legal affairs between Myanmar and Japan.

Also present at the call were tribunal members Daw Hla Myo Nwe, U Mya Thein, U Myo Chit and officials.—MNA

Yangon region Hluttaw to debate proposal for 12-party talks

YANGON, 9 Dec—Yangon region Hluttaw will debate a proposal for a 12-party talks to proceed to the Union Government Wednesday.

U Saw Htun Aung Myint, Kayin National Race Affairs Minister in Yangon Region, submitted

the proposal to the regional Hluttaw session Tuesday.

His proposal said that instead of ethnic representatives in the six-party talks approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, each representative from the ethnics of Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine and

Shan should include in the talks, leading to form the 12-party-talks.

He also requested his proposal to the Union Government through Yangon region government.

U Saw Htun Aung Myint said: "I do not mean to object the approval for the

six-party talks, but to reveal my idea which I believed it is also the expectation of ethnic groups. I am very hopeful it would be a very supportive scenario for the peace-making plans in the country.

Ye Khaung Nyunt, Myat Thanda Maung

Parliamentary delegation headed by speaker heads for the Philippines

YANGON, 9 Dec—Myanmar's Hluttaw speaker Thura U Shwe Mann departed for the Philippines on Tuesday morning to pay a visit.

Thura U Shwe Mann, who is speaker of the bi-

cameral Pyidaungsu and lower house, the Pyithu Hluttaw, was seen off at Yangon International Airport by various officials as well as the ambassador of the Philippines.

His delegation in-

cludes Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw National Race Affairs, Rural Living Standard Enhancement and Internal Peace Working Committee U Thein Zaw, Chairman of International Relations Committee U

Hla Myint Oo, Chairman of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Development Committee U Soe Naing and Defence Services Personnel Representative of Pyithu Hluttaw Brig-Gen Than Htut Thein.—MNA

Constitutional Tribunal chairman holds talks with Japanese university's vice president



Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Mya Thein poses for documentary photo with Mr Aikyo Masanori, a vice president of Nagoya University of Japan and party.—MNA

Voter list computerization course kicks off in Mandalay

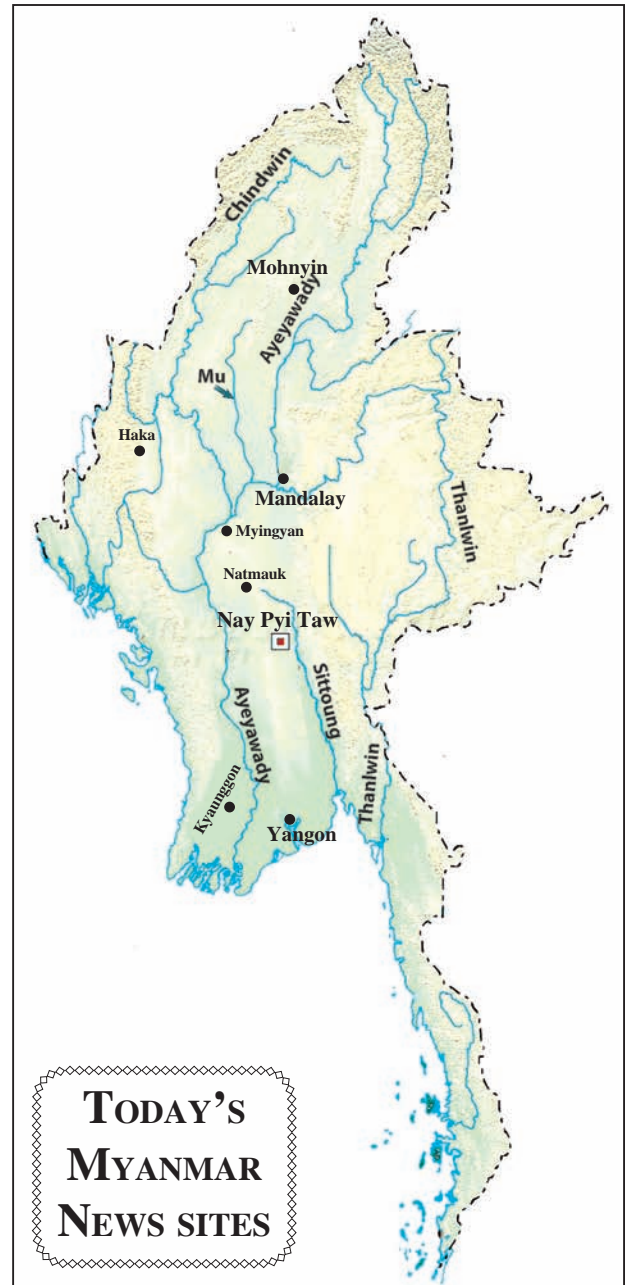


MANDALAY, 9 Dec — Mandalay Region Election Sub-commission opened a voter list computerization course at the hall of the Mandalay Region government office on 8 December.

U Aung Htut, the sub-commission's chairman, delivered a speech, and an official explained the duty of staff in listing voters.

Officials demonstrated the use of the voter list system through a computerization process.

Officials of the sub-commission gave lectures to the trainees in the two-day course on 9 and 10 December.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)



Enthusiasts attend fruit-based foodstuff production course

MANDALAY, 9 Dec — The Mandalay Region's Trade Promotion Department and Small-scale Industries Department jointly organized the opening of a fruit-based foodstuff production course at the Trade Promotion Department's hall at the corner of 35th and 65th streets in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay, on 8 December.

The head of Small-scale Industries Department, U Htay Lwin, explained about the training course.

Altogether 30 trainees from Myingyan, Meiktila and Kyaukse districts and Madaya and Patheingyi townships are attending the course up to 12 December.

Trainees are studying the practical works of the course in making 18 types of foodstuff productions.

The training course was aimed at developing the small-scale industries and improving production technology of entrepreneurs in the rural areas.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Chin damsels attend midwifery course

HAKA, 9 Dec — With the assistance of the Chin State government, a midwifery course, jointly organized by the Health Department and the Chin State Maternal and Child Welfare Supervisory Committee, kicked off at the hall of Chin State General Hospital in Haka on 8 December.

On behalf of the state's chief minister, state minister for finance U Nan Zamon delivered an address. The head of the state's Health Department, Dr Soe Oo, explained the purpose of conducting the training course, while the chairperson of



Chin State MCWSC, Daw Ohnma Swe, detailed her committee's plans to pro-

vide necessary assistance for the training.

A total of 17 trainees

are attending the six-month course.

Chin State IPRD

People in Kyaunggon to get rural gravel road

KYAUNGKON, 9 Dec —Kyaunggon Township Rural Development Department in Ayeyawady Region has assigned Lab Moe The Company to construct a rural road in the 2014-15 fiscal year. The company has been placing gravel along the three-mile rural road linking Kyaunggon urban area and Yaykhaloke village.

On 7 December, U Myint Aung, head of the township's Rural Development Department, and other officials inspected progress of construction tasks.

Thanks to the rural road, local people in Kyaunggon will have easy access to Yangon-Pathein Road and Patheingyi, Einme and Myaungmya townships.—David-Kyaunggon

Natmauk to get one more private bank branch

NATMAUK, 9 Dec — Private banks were allowed to open in major cities of regions and states so as to give monetary and banking services to local customers in line with the market-oriented economic system adopted by the government.

Kanbawza Bank Ltd opened its branch in Natmauk, Magway Region, in February 2014. Myanmar Apex Bank plans to open

its branch in the township, said a local entrepreneur.

"Thanks to the branch of Kanbawza Bank, local people enjoy banking services in monetary affairs. In the past, they went to Magway, the capital of Magway Region, to do monetary affairs at private bank branches. After Kanbawza Bank Ltd has opened its branch in Natmauk, local people save time and cost. At present, Myanmar Apex

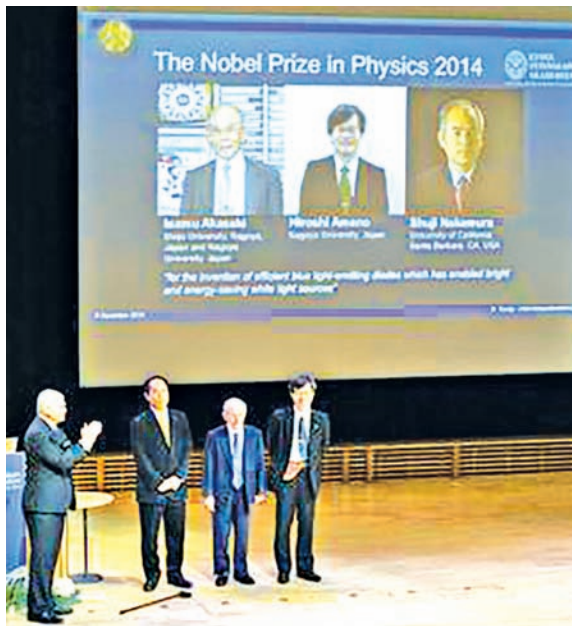
Bank constructs its branch building in Natmauk. If the township has two bank branches, the local people will have better choice for monetary affairs," a merchant said.

Myanmar Apex Bank purchased a land plot worth K235 million, in the west of Magway-Natmauk Road. The building is under construction.

Hla Win (Township IPRD)



REGIONAL



Three Nobel laureates make commemorative speeches (From R) Hiroshi Amano, a professor at Japan's Nagoya University, Isamu Akasaki, a professor at Japan's Meijo University, and Shuji Nakamura, a professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, receive applause after making commemorative speeches for the year's Nobel Prize in Physics in Stockholm, Sweden, on 8 Dec, 2014, prior to the 10 December award ceremony. — KYODO NEWS

Indonesia police reportedly open fire on protesters in Papua, four killed

JAKARTA, 9 Dec — At least four people were killed when police reportedly opened fire on protesters in the restive, eastern-most Indonesian province of Papua on Monday.

"We received information from the people that four civilians were killed, but we still don't know the real reason behind the incident," Papua Police Spokesman Sulisty Pudjo said.

There have been conflicting figures about the death toll, however, with local people claiming five were killed, while the government-sanctioned National Commission on Human Rights said that eight lost their lives.

According to Pudjo, the incident followed a clash between groups of villagers in the town of Enarotali in Paniai Regency late on Sunday. It led to hundreds of people armed with arrows, machetes and stones attacking the local police and military headquarters on Monday morning.

"Three police officers and three military soldiers were injured," Pudjo said.

Local Papuan leader

Jhon Gobay claimed that police had opened fire on the protesters, killing five villagers.

Pudjo said that police and military personnel had fired into the air to disperse the crowds, but did not shoot at the protesters.

Police and the military, according to Pudjo, have not been able to verify the death toll because the Paniai General Hospital, where all the victims were sent is surrounded by protesters.

Indonesian Defence Force Spokesman Maj. Gen Fuad Basya has declared a top alert security status in Paniai following the incident.

Indonesia took over the western half of New Guinea Island from Dutch colonialists in 1963 and incorporated the territory into Indonesia after a 1969 UN-sanctioned plebiscite.

Rebels of the Free Papua Movement, who are fighting for independence, have in the past kidnapped local citizens and foreigners and attacked government security personnel in an effort to gain international attention.

Kyodo News

Talks on for foreign ministers' meeting with Japan, China: S Korea

SEOUL, 9 Dec — South Korea said on Tuesday discussions are ongoing to arrange tripartite foreign ministers' talks with China and Japan.

"Talks with related countries are under way to hold the foreign ministers' talks with South Korea, Japan and China at an earliest possible date," South Korea's Foreign Ministry

spokesman Noh Kwang Il said at a press briefing.

He made the remarks when asked if a trilateral meeting could be held this month.

Japan, China and South Korea have agreed to hold foreign ministerial talks in Seoul by the end of the year.

The meeting, which would be the first since April 2012, is expected to

set the stage for Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and South Korean President Park Geun Hye to meet in the first half of next year, diplomatic sources said.

Since taking office in December 2012, Abe has not held a trilateral summit with the leaders of China and South Korea as Tokyo

remains at odds with Beijing over the sovereignty of the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea that are claimed by China, which calls them Diaoyu. Tokyo and Seoul are involved in a dispute over the sovereignty of the Dokdo islets, which are controlled by South Korea. Japan refers to the islets as Takeshima.—Kyodo News

Typhoon Hagupit weakens as Philippines clear up operation begins

DOLORES, 9 Dec — Typhoon Hagupit weakened further on Tuesday as the storm crawled across the central Philippines, while rescue workers struggled in its aftermath to reach towns in central provinces where thousands of homes were wrecked and at least 27 people killed.

Nearly 13,000 houses were crushed and more than 22,300 were partially damaged in Eastern Samar province, where Hagupit first hit land as a category 3 typhoon on Saturday, local officials said.

"Access is very difficult, roads are spotty. There are landslides, some are one-lane roads. In the inner barangays (villages), many of them are washed out by flash floods," Richard Gordon, chairman of the Philippine Red Cross, told Reuters.

The typhoon weakened to a tropical depression on Tuesday with maximum winds of 60 kph (37 mph) near its centre, as it made a fifth landfall over the Lubang islands, 150 km (93 miles) southwest of capital Manila. It is now moving west towards the South China Sea at 13 kph (8 mph).

More than 2 million people so far have felt the



An aerial view of houses destroyed by typhoon Hagupit at a village in Dolores, Eastern Samar, central Philippines on 9 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

impact of Hagupit, which is Filipino for lash, with nearly 1.7 million fleeing to relatives' homes on safer ground or packing in to evacuation centres across the central Philippines and south of the main Luzon island, the national disaster agency said. The 27 people reported killed died in Iloilo province and on Samar island, including 12 residents in Borongan town in Eastern Samar who were swept away by raging waters and flash floods, the Red Cross's Gordon said, citing initial

reports from his field staff.

"A detailed assessment is now ongoing...It's a long trek (to the villages), it's like Yolanda all over again," Gordon said, referring to the local name of super typhoon Haiyan, which last year killed thousands of people in the same areas of central Philippines.

The death toll monitored by the Red Cross is way above the official count of the national disaster agency which counted three dead so far. Bank employee Arnalyn Bula told Reuters how

howling winds had pounded the walls of her aunt's two-storey concrete home in Dolores town in Eastern Samar, where her family sought shelter. "Our kitchen was wrecked. Around us, our neighbours' homes were flattened like folded paper," said Bula, 27.

The privately run National Grid Corp, which operates the country's main transmission lines, said nearly 2 million homes across central Philippines and southern Luzon remain without power. —Reuters



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses his supporters during an election campaign rally in Srinagar, the summer capital of Indian-controlled Kashmir, on 8 Dec, 2014.—XINHUA

Russian-US relations see rerun of Cold War — lawmaker



Alexey Pushkov

MOSCOW, 9 Dec — A senior Russian legislator has described the current state of affairs in Russian-US relations as a rerun of the Cold War. “The way I see it, it would be appropriate to describe these relations as another edition of the Cold War,” Alexey Pushkov, chairman of the State Duma’s International Affairs Committee, said in Monday’s parliamentary hearings.

“The more so, since a far higher emotional strain is a characteristic feature of the current situation, and that strain, to my mind, is greater than it was during the Cold War years,” he said.

Pushkov pointed to the complete freeze in inter-parliamentary ties between the two countries. “I can confirm that inter-parliamentary contacts are totally absent,” he said.

“Back six months ago, when we proposed a trip for a discussion of the Syrian crisis, the US Congress in fact declared that it was not interested in cooperation with Russia,” Pushkov recalled. “The casual meetings that have been taking place — on the sidelines of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) or elsewhere — do not change the situation,” Pushkov said.

Itar-Tass

Obama says peaceful protests vital in bringing change

WASHINGTON, 9 Dec — President Barack Obama defended the importance of peaceful protests during an interview broadcast on Monday, saying they were necessary to help bring about social change.

Obama’s comments on BET, a black-oriented television network, came as protests continued across the country following decisions by grand juries in Missouri and New York not to indict white police officers in the deaths of unarmed black men.

“I think as long as they’re peaceful, I think they’re necessary,” Obama said of the protests. “When they turn violent, then they’re counterproductive.”

The chokehold death of Eric Garner in New York and the fatal shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, this past summer have highlighted the strained relations between police and the black community and rekindled a national debate over US race relations.

Obama, who said he had met at the White House with some of the protest organizers, said: “A country’s conscience sometimes has to be triggered by some inconvenience, because I think a lot of people who saw the Eric Garner video are troubled, even if they haven’t had that same experience themselves. Even if they’re not African-American or Latino.”



US President Barack Obama (L) appears on The Colbert Report with Stephen Colbert at the Lisner Auditorium at George Washington University in Washington on 8 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

Saying that change took time, Obama said attention often moved on to other issues “and change doesn’t really occur.”

“The value of peaceful protests, activism, organizing is it reminds the society this is not yet done,” he said.

America’s first black

president said the issue was not just personal for him and his family, “but as president, I consider this to be one of the most important issues we face. Because America works when everybody feels as if they are being treated fairly and that they’ve got a fair shot.”—Reuters

Vucic, Medvedev discuss South Stream



Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev and Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic.—TANJUG

BELGRADE, 9 Dec — Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic discussed the South Stream gas pipeline project with Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev over the phone on Monday.

Vucic told the Russian prime minister that Serbia had taken the news about the decision to drop the project very hard.

Medvedev said the

reason behind the decision was insufficient cooperation on the part of European Union countries, the Serbian government’s media relations office said in a release.

Vucic and Medvedev talked about ways to improve the chemical and agro-food production in Serbia and opportunities to promote trade between the two countries, the release said.—Tanjug

NBA players in New York add voices to protests over police killings

NEW YORK / BERKELEY, 9 Dec — Protesters blocked a freeway in California and basketball stars in New York wore shirts invoking the last words of Eric Garner, a black man who died after a police chokehold, amid racially charged protests on Monday over a grand jury’s failure to indict the white officer involved.

Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James and other players wore T-shirts emblazoned with the words

“I CAN’T BREATHE” in pre-game warmups at the Barclays Centre in Brooklyn, where Prince William and his wife Kate were among thousands who came to see the team play the Brooklyn Nets.

Also on Monday, New York State’s top prosecutor sought the power to probe all police killings of unarmed civilians in his state, following sometimes violent US protests after two grand juries declined to indict of-

ficers in the deaths of unarmed black men.

“The horrible events surrounding the death of Eric Garner have revealed a deep crisis of confidence in some of the fundamental elements of our criminal justice system,” New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said in a statement. “Nothing could be more critical for both the public and the police officers who work tirelessly to keep our communities safe than acting immediately to restore trust.”

Cities across the United States have seen large protests in recent nights following the failure to indict anyone over the death in July of Garner, an unarmed black father of six, which happened after police put him in a banned chokehold.

The decision in the Garner case came little more than a week after a Missouri grand jury cleared an officer in the fatal August shooting of an unarmed black teen, Michael Brown.

In the California college town of Berkeley, near San Francisco, businesses

closed early and officials at the University of California urged calm a day after protesters hurled rocks and other objects at police who responded with tear gas. The student advocate’s office at the University of California, Berkeley, said on Twitter it would distribute kits including water, disinfectant wipes, masks and gauze in advance of more protests scheduled for Monday night.

Several hundred protesters roamed Berkeley streets on Monday night, intermittently blocking roads and a freeway.

Outside Barclays Centre, a group of about 300 protesters blocked streets and chanted, “I can’t breathe,” in memory of Garner, and “Hands up, don’t shoot,” a reference to Brown’s death in the St Louis suburb of Ferguson.

Some in the crowd rushed to the barricades in front of Barclays Centre as ticket-holders waited to go in. A small group entered a Target store, but left after police officers moved in.

It remained unclear

whether New York Governor Andrew Cuomo would grant Schneiderman the powers he is seeking. Like the Democratic mayor of New York, Cuomo has tried to walk a fine line between expressing concern about a grand jury’s decision not to charge a police officer in the death of Garner without alienating police.

“We are reviewing the attorney general’s proposal,” said Cuomo spokeswoman Melissa DeRosa, adding that the governor plans a “top to bottom review” of the system. The order, if signed, would only affect new cases of unarmed civilians killed by police, not Garner or Akai Gurley, 28, whom a police officer shot dead in the dark stairway of a Brooklyn apartment building last month.

US Attorney General Eric Holder, whose office is investigating the Garner case, on Monday unveiled a set of changes to federal law enforcement guidelines intended to set an example for local police, according to a Justice Department official.

Several members of the New York City Council joined in the protests on Monday, when they staged a “die-in” on the steps of City Hall, over the decision not to indict Garner. In Cleveland, where the US Justice Department last week said police routinely use excessive force, Samaria Rice, the mother of a 12-year-old African-American boy shot dead by police in November, spoke to the media on Monday for the first time since her son’s death.

Rice’s son, Tamir Rice, was shot near a recreation centre while carrying a pellet gun that was a replica of a real gun. The boy’s family has filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the city and the two officers involved, one who shot Rice on 22 November and one who was driving the police car.

“I’m actually looking for conviction,” Rice told reporters. “Tamir was a bright child, he had a promising future and he was very talented in all sports: soccer, basketball, football. He was my baby.”—Reuters



Protesters stage a “Die-In” as they gather outside the Barclays Centre where the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Prince William and his wife Catherine, are attending a basketball game between the Brooklyn Nets and the Cleveland Cavaliers in the Brooklyn Borough of New York on 8 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

WORLD

Merkel suffers dizzy spell but recovers for TV interviews

COLOGNE (Germany), 9 Dec — Chancellor Angela Merkel suffered a dizzy spell and had to interrupt a television interview on Monday evening but later carried on to finish that and other interviews, her spokesman said.

Merkel was in the midst of an interview with ZDF television, one of a series of media interviews held before Tuesday's congress of her conservative party, when she suddenly felt unwell and needed a break, spokesman Steffen Seibert said.

"The chancellor was feeling unwell for a moment — then had something to eat and drink before continuing with the interview after that," Seibert said in response to a report in the Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung. Merkel, 60 and in her 10th year as chancellor, later took part in the annual get-together with the media after finishing her series of interviews.—Reuters



German Chancellor and Christian Democratic Union party (CDU) leader Angela Merkel inspects the CDU party convention hall in Cologne on 8 Dec, 2014. REUTERS

Syria calls for UN sanctions on Israel over air strikes

UNITED NATIONS, 9 Dec — Syria asked the United Nations Security Council on Monday to impose sanctions on neighbouring Israel, a day after accusing the Jewish state of bombing areas near Damascus international airport and in the town of Dimas, near the border with Lebanon.

Israel has struck Syria several times since the start of the three-year conflict, mostly destroying weaponry such as missiles that Israeli officials said were destined for their long-time foe Hezbollah in Lebanon.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Chad, Security Council president for December, Syria said that "such aggressions will not stop it from fighting terrorism in all its forms and manifestation across the entire territory of Syria."

"At the same time, the Syrian Arab Republic calls on the international community and the Security Council to shoulder their responsibility and forcefully condemn this brutal attack and to cease covering it up under any pretext," the letter read.

"Syria also calls for the

imposition of stern sanctions against Israel ... and requests that all measures prescribed under the Charter of the United Nations should be taken to prevent Israel from again committing such aggressions," it said.

Israel has avoided taking sides in Syria's civil war and does not publicly confirm bombing missions, a policy it sees as aimed at avoiding provoking reprisals.

Syria also accused Israel of carrying out the air strikes to "cover up internal Israeli divisions and draw attention away from the collapse of the Israeli coalition Government and Israel's extreme policies, particularly its continued occupation of Arab territory."

A US-led coalition is also bombing in Syria to target the Islamic State militant group, one of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's biggest foes.

Syria's war started with a pro-democracy movement which grew into an armed uprising and has inflamed regional confrontations. Some 200,000 people have died, the United Nations said.—Reuters

Japan, Russia eye vice minister-level talks in February

MOSCOW, 9 Dec — Japan and Russia are planning vice-ministerial talks in February, RIA Novosti news agency reported on Monday, quoting a Russian official after a meeting with Japanese officials in Tokyo.

According to Andrey Tatarinov, director of the Third Asian Department of Russia's Foreign Ministry, a vice ministerial meeting on political issues is being

planned in Moscow, and an economic dialogue in Tokyo, the report said.

Russia had put off vice ministerial talks after Japan imposed sanctions on Russia following its annexation of Crimea in March.

Foreign ministry officials from the two countries are expected to explore the possibility of a visit to Russia by Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida

that has been postponed by Japan after Moscow's Crimea annexation. Monday's director-level bilateral talks were held as part of efforts to realize a visit to Japan by Russian President Vladimir Putin next year.

Hajime Hayashi, director general of the European Affairs Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, took part in the meeting.

The director-level officials also discussed a range of other issues including the Ukraine situation and economic cooperation, the news agency said.

In a meeting on 9 November in Beijing, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Putin agreed to start preparations for a visit to Japan by Putin at "an appropriate time next year."

Kyodo News

Israel's parliament votes to dissolve itself and set 17 March election



Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu attends a Likud party meeting at parliament in Jerusalem on 8 Dec, 2014. REUTERS

JERUSALEM, 9 Dec — Israel's parliament voted on Monday to dissolve itself in preparation for an early general election on 17 March, after a crisis set in motion by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's dismissal of two ministers.

The parliament's vote of 93 to 0 formalized a decision to move forward an election that had not been

expected until 2017, in the aftermath of Netanyahu's 2 December firing of Yair Lapid as finance minister and Tzipi Livni as justice minister.

Most opinion polls show Netanyahu being reelected as prime minister, with many Israelis backing his tough stance on the conflict with the Palestinians and other security issues.

Though his Likud party is expected to win the most seats, Netanyahu would need to align with other parties to form a government with majority support in the 120-member parliament.

Netanyahu launched his re-election campaign on Monday with a promise to cancel value added tax on basic foods, at a business conference in Tel Aviv.

He called the plan a blueprint for "social justice", in what was seen as a critical nod to middle-class Israelis and ultra-Orthodox parties whose support he may need to head the next government.

Just before the dissolution vote, lawmakers voted 47 to 23 to pass a government-backed amendment to keep open a detention centre for African migrants despite a high court order to shut it by 22 December.

The court found in September that holding some 2,000 migrants, under a law passed in 2013 that permitted them to be held without trial, violated rights to freedom and dignity.

The amendment passed on Tuesday set a 20-month limit to detentions at the Holot facility.

More than 40,000 Eritreans and Sudanese are in Israel, human rights groups say. Many entered illegally across the border with Egypt.

"In a democracy you cannot jail people without trial. The court will reject it, again," lawmaker Nitzan Horowitz of the left-wing Meretz party said, in protest against the vote.

Hotline for Refugees and Migrants, an advocacy group for the migrants, said it would appeal again to the court, saying parliament had voted "to waste taxpayers' money on wrong solutions."—Reuters

Russia condemns terrorist act in Jammu and Kashmir — Foreign Ministry

MOSCOW, 9 Dec — India and Pakistan should coordinate efforts to fight international terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the Russian Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

"Moscow condemns the terrorist act, which was committed in the town of Uri, the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, on 5 December. Servicemen, policemen and civilians were killed as a result of the terrorist act," the ministry said.

"It is evident that the crime is aimed at undermining the upcoming elections to the state's legislative assembly and the efforts by India and local authorities to establish peace and calm," it said.—Itar-Tass



Russian Foreign Ministry

PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday, 10 December, 2014

Envy and pride blind us to reality

By Kyaw Thura

Institutions fail for many reasons, especially those that are too stubborn to change with the times. Their first illusion is that they think everything is going fine with their choices only soon to find themselves incapable of getting out of their own way.

All leaders have advisors to help them with their responsibilities. It would not be far wrong to say that what has made most leaders go astray is mainly the people around them. The number one

cause of leadership failure results from mistaking flatterers for advisors. Leaders are supposed to do right things rather than making things right.

Dave Anderson, president of the Dave Anderson's Learn To Lead training and consulting company and LearnToLead.com, blames pride for all causes for management failure, stressing that pride is so devastating that it inflates our sense of self-worth and distorts our perspective of reality. Similarly, famous American self-help author John Maxwell points out that envy is the deadly sin that comes from feelings of inferiority while the deadly sin of pride comes from feelings of superiority.

Envy and pride lead us to a loss of desire to learn and an unwillingness to change. In addition, the two sins not only prevent us from admitting mistakes but also blind us to new ideas and feedback.

As Stephen Covey, an American author, comments, "It takes humility to seek feedback. It

takes wisdom to understand it, analyze it and appropriately act on it."

What matters most to all of us is to adapt ourselves to learnability and teachability. It is worth remembering that the greatest enemy of learning is that we think we know better. All in all, the goal of all learning is action rather than knowledge. It is time for us to give a second thought to the destruction of envy and pride of our own.

Write for us

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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.

European Union to provide USD 900 million to Myanmar over 7 years



Photo shows the European Commission headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 9 Dec — The European Union announced on Monday it will provide

EUR 688 million (USD 900) to Myanmar over the period 2014-2020 to reinforce its support to the country's multiple transition.

The EU said in a press

release that the funds will help to develop rural areas and agriculture, improve food and nutrition security, governance and the rule of law, support education and

contribute to peacebuilding, reflecting the new partnership the EU and Myanmar have been building since 2011.

According to the press

release that underlines the EU's full commitment to boost the four focal areas of its cooperation, Myanmar will receive EUR 241 million each in the education sector and the area of rural development, agriculture and food and nutrition security. In support of democratic and institutional reforms, the EU plans to provide the country's sector of governance, rule of law and state capacity-building with EUR 96 million. Up to EUR 103 million has been allocated for helping promote lasting peace, security and stability in Myanmar, it said.

"With this support over the next seven years, the EU will build on its ongoing initiatives and continue to promote peace, inclusive growth, sustainable development and democratic governance for the benefit of all people in Myanmar," the press release added.

In 2013, EU sanctions against Myanmar were lifted and the EU representative office opened here following the historic visits of President U Thein Sein to five EU member countries: Norway, Finland, Austria, Belgium and Italy.

GNLM

Delegates participate in ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regional Technical Consultation

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec — Entrepreneurs need to reduce damages to the ecosystem in the fishery sector and beef up seeking aquaculture feed formulation to

substitute fish meal, Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint said at a meeting of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Regional Technical Consultation on Development and Use of Alternative Dietary Ingredients or Fish Meal Substitutes in Aquaculture Feed Formulation on 9 December. The General Secretary of SEA Fisheries Development Centre discussed substitution of ingredients in the meal to be used in fish breeding sector.

Delegates from Myanmar Aquafeed Producers Association and FAO office, SEAFDEC, ASEAN countries and Japan participated in the discussions on improvement of ingredients in aquaculture feed formulation in respective countries. The consultation will continue tomorrow.

MNA

Information Ministry's MCWA provides assistance to pregnant women

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec — Daw Khin Sanda Tun, wife of the Union Minister for Information and Daw Khin Myo Htay, wife of the Deputy Minister, who are patrons of the Ministry of Information Maternal and Child Welfare Association, presented nutritious foods to pregnant women at Myitta Sanyay clinic and babies and mothers at the maternity ward of the clinic in Nay Pyi Taw on 8 December.

Officials of the association also gave the nutritious foods to the patients at

the clinic.

"The association has been providing nutritious foods to both pregnant women and babies' mothers for over one year. We give medical checkups to patients every Monday and Tuesday. Moreover, we share health knowledge with the patients so they can give birth of healthy babies," Dr San San Hlaing of the clinic told the reporter. So far, the association has provided assistance to 80 patients at the clinic.

MNA



LOCAL NEWS

Students take part in school library development and reading skill activities

NAY PYI TAW, 9 Dec — With the assistance of Myanmar Libraries Foundation, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area Information and Public Relations Department and Education Department jointly organized the school libraries development and raising reading skill festival at No 14 Basic Education

High School in Zabuthiri Township on Monday.

Deputy Director-General of IPRD CEC of Myanmar Libraries Foundation Dr Daw Thida Tin, Deputy Director of Nay Pyi Taw IPRD Daw Thin Thin Zin and officials attended the ceremony.

The deputy direc-

tor-general and Deputy Commissioner of the district U Zaw Lwin Oo explained the advantages of reading.

After the opening ceremony, officials viewed round books donated by MLF and a wall magazine displayed by Nay Pyi Taw IPRD.—*Shwe Kokko*



Buddhist cultural instructor course wraps up in Mohnyin



MOHNYIN, 9 Dec — Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) MP U Sai Tin Aung of Kachin State Constituency No 5 attended the concluding ceremony of a Buddhist cultural instructor course at Htilin Sasana Beikman in Mohnyin,

Kachin State, on 4 December and donated K100,000 to the training course's fund.

A total of 600 trainees from townships in Mohnyin District attended the five-day course.

The Buddhist cultural

courses were conducted at monasteries every Sunday. But the cultural instructor course lectured by Buddhist monks of Yedaguntaung Dhamma Monastery in Mandalay was conducted for the first time in Mohnyin.—*GNLM-001*

Thriving tobacco plantations contribute to livelihoods of local farmers

MYINGYAN, 9 Dec — Farmers in Hsimeekhon Village, Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, are engaged in cultivation of tobacco on plantations.

"Tobacco plants can be grown in September and harvested in February and March. The leaves must be dried up for sale in June and July. Farmers can earn about K200,000 per 100 viss (160 kilos)," said a local farmer.

"Over 7,000 plants per acre can be cultivated on the farmland. One acre plot of plantation can yield over 700 viss (840 kilos) of tobacco. Dried tobacco leaves are transported to the market in Mandalay. Sometimes, brokers from Shwebo arrive in the village to purchase the tobacco leaves. Yield and quality depend on species of tobacco and

growing technique. Quality tobacco leaves can fetch K200,000 per 1.6 kilos," he added.

Over 200 farmers are residing in Hsimeekhon Village. They put 600 acres of farmland under tobacco plantations to earn family income.

"Local people grow tobacco on plantations as their traditional farming works. The tobacco leaves produced from Hsimeekhon Village are marketable. Thanks to tobacco plantations, I supported four sons and daughters to graduate from university," said local farmer U Myint. Despite residing in rural areas, the local farmers have adequate knowledge about the Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Product Law.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)



Mandalarians get opportunities to study advanced photographic course

MANDALAY, 9 Dec — The advanced photographic

course was opened at the French Centre Hall on 80th

street between 24th and 25th streets in Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay, on 8 December.

French photographer Christophe Loviny shared his experiences on taking photographs, organizing photo galleries and technology for photo essay works.

French photographer Christophe Loviny explains photography skills.

The training course was aimed at enhancing the capacity of photo journalists. In February 2015, the Yangon Photo Festival will be organized by the French Embassy to choose the best works from the entries. Officials will award the outstanding photographers.

Over 20 trainees are studying the photographic technology up to 17 December.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



UN to widen Libya peace talks by including rival parliament

TRIPOLI, 9 Dec — The United Nations will widen a new round of talks aimed at ending Libya's escalating political crisis by including a rival assembly challenging the recognized government, its special envoy said on Monday.

Libya has had two governments and parliaments competing for legitimacy since a group called Libya Dawn seized Tripoli in August, installing its cabinet and forcing the recognized Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni to the east.

World powers fear the conflict will lead to civil war as former rebel groups that helped oust Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 now fight for power and a share of the vast oil reserves.

The United Nations had launched a first round of talks in September bringing together the elected

House of Representatives and members from the city of Misrata linked to Libya Dawn who had boycotted the assembly.

A second round of talks was meant to start on Tuesday after the first produced no progress. UN Special Envoy Bernardino Leon said during a visit to Tripoli that they would be postponed until the beginning of next week to give more time to work out details.

Leon said the dialogue would include members of a rival assembly in Tripoli, the General National Congress (GNC), the country's previous assembly reinstated by the new rulers in the capital.

"So this dialogue should be based on respect. And we have agreed tonight that this respect will mean that the repre-

sentatives from this house will be attending the dialogue considering themselves representatives of the GNC," Leon said after meeting GNC President Nouri Abu Sahmain.

"But they will accept that these talks will have different views," he said, standing in a GNC building behind a banner saying "State of Libya. Presidency of the General National Congress."

Leon might find it hard to sell the inclusion of the GNC to the House or Representatives when he visits its members based in the remote eastern city of Tobruk on Tuesday.

He dodged a question whether his plans means the UN drops its position that the house is the sole legitimate assembly, a view shared so far also by global powers.



Nouri Abusahmain, the head of Libya's General National Congress (GNC) (R) meets with Bernardino Leon (L) Special Representative United Nations (UN) for Libya in Tripoli on 8 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

He only said a recent Supreme Court ruling invalidating the House of Representatives had changed the situation though some critics say the judges were hardly free since they are based in

Tripoli.

"We all agreed that the ruling of the court implied changes in the country," he said. "What is important is to have a dialogue where each one has its view and they accept the views of

the others," he said. He said talks were focusing on forming eventually a national unity government but reaching smaller steps such as local ceasefire were key to start a broader dialogue.—Reuters

US allies to send about 1,500 troops to Iraq — commander

KUWAIT CITY, 9 Dec — US allies have committed to send about 1,500 forces to Iraq to help train and advise Iraqi and Kurdish soldiers battling the Islamic State, which increasingly appears on the defensive, the top US commander guiding the coalition effort said on Monday.

Lieutenant General James Terry, commander of Operation Inherent Resolve targeting the militants in Iraq and Syria, said the forces would come on top of the up to 3,100 troops US President Barack Obama has authorized to deploy to Iraq.

The allies' commitments were made during a conference among coalition members on 2-3 December.

"When you start now to balance the different capabilities out across the coalition, I think we're doing pretty well in terms of boots on the ground," Terry told reporters travelling with Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel in Kuwait.

Since Islamic State's June offensive, the Sunni militants have had little success breaking beyond the solidly Sunni Muslim provinces of Anbar in the west and Salahuddin north of Baghdad, as well as the strongly Sunni province of



US troops stand at attention next to an Abrams tank as they wait for the arrival of US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel at Camp Buehring, Kuwait on 8 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

Nineveh, home to the city of Mosul which the Islamists overran in June.

At the same time, the Iraqi and Kurdish forces have been able to tout important gains, including securing Mosul dam.

Although the Islamic State still conducted limited attacks, the group appeared broadly "on the defensive, trying to hold what they have gained," Terry said.

"When you look at some places out in Anbar, it's a little bit stalemated

out there. And we've got some work to do. And I think it's do-able," Terry said.

Hagel, speaking to reporters after the Pentagon chief visited US troops in Kuwait, said he wasn't ready to say the Islamic State was "on the ropes." But he noted recent gains had given Iraqi and Kurdish forces new momentum.

Terry declined to say which countries would contribute the roughly 1,500 troops — the final number was still being determined

— but added most would be involved with training.

He said the troops would represent a broad mix from an anti-Islamic State coalition that, on the military side, now included nearly 40 countries. The US-led coalition has also carried out air strikes in Iraq since August.

Asked about Obama's critics in Washington who say more US forces are needed, Terry said: "I'm comfortable with the boots on the ground that I have right now."—Reuters

Suicide attacks kill five in eastern Yemen army base

ADEN, 9 Dec — Two suicide car bombs exploded at an army headquarters in eastern Yemen on Tuesday, killing five people, security sources said.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which operates in eastern Yemen, claimed responsibility for the attack, saying on its Twitter account that it had killed and wounded dozens. Gunshots rang out amid the blasts at the compound in Seyoun, the second largest city in Hadramout province, said officials. Witnesses saw plumes of smoke rising into the air.

Security officials said the bombers' cars detonated

before they could enter the compound and the defence ministry sent out a text message saying soldiers had foiled the attack.

Eight people were wounded in the assault on the First Military Command base, the security sources told Reuters.

Western and Gulf Arab countries are worried that instability in Yemen could strengthen AQAP, considered the most dangerous branch of the global militant group, which has also mounted attacks against top oil exporter Saudi Arabia and has plotted to bring down international airliners.—Reuters

Hagel arrives in Baghdad as US touts momentum against Islamic State

BAGHDAD, 9 Dec — US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel arrived in Baghdad on an unannounced visit on Tuesday, as the United States expands its presence and touts momentum against Islamic State militants four months after starting a campaign of air strikes in Iraq.

"This is a long term effort. It's difficult. There will be setbacks. There will be victories. So I think that's where we are and I look forward to getting some first-



US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel speaks to members of the media after visiting with US troops at Camp Buehring, Kuwait on 8 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

hand assessments," he told reporters on Monday before his visit. —Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Oil reaches new depths, rush to safety rescues yen

SYDNEY, 9 Dec — Oil prices skidded to fresh five-year lows on Tuesday, pressuring commodity-linked currencies and most Asian shares as a bout of risk aversion rippled through world markets.

The urge for safety gave a rare boost to the Japanese yen which notched up particularly large gains on the beleaguered Australian and New Zealand dollars.

Much of the action was in oil where a glut of supply has seen prices fall for almost six months now, so pressuring energy stocks and commodity-related assets globally.

Brent crude shed 70 cents to \$65.49 a barrel, while US crude futures lost another 46 cents to \$62.59. Both had already tumbled more than 4 percent on Monday on expectations that a deepening oil glut would keep prices under pressure into the new year.

Prices are likely to remain around \$65 a barrel for the next six to seven



Traders are pictured at their desks in front of the German share price index DAX board at the Frankfurt stock exchange on 5 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

months until the global economy recovers or OPEC changes its production policy, the head of Kuwait's state oil company said.

While falling energy prices are a boon for consumer spending power in much of the world, it was bad news for resource stocks like Australia's Santos which shed almost 8 percent.

The pain spread across the main Australian share

index which skidded 1.7 percent, while MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan fell 0.8 percent to a seven-week trough.

Spread betters predicted the FTSE, DAX and CAC 40 would all open around 0.4 percent lower.

Japan's Nikkei eased 0.8 percent, but that follows a run of hefty gains which took it to the highest since mid-2007.

Chinese shares have

also been on a tear and Tuesday was no exception as the CSI300 index powered up another 3 percent to peaks last visited in April 2011. It has now climbed by a third in just three weeks.

In currency markets, the yen benefited as nervous speculators cut back on short positions. The dollar faded to 120.15 yen, and away from Monday's high of 121.86, while the euro retreated to 148.00.

The Australian dollar was a major loser, reflecting the country's position as a major commodity exporter, and slid a full yen to 99.04.

The selling spread to the Chinese yuan which was heading for its largest one-day drop since 2008 as corporates bailed out on expectations of further monetary easing.

Spot yuan slid nearly half a percent to 6.2007 per dollar, accelerating a decline that began when China's central bank surprised markets last month by cut-

ting interest rates.

Not helping risk appetite was a *Wall Street Journal* report that Fed officials were seriously considering dropping an assurance that short-term interest rates will stay near zero for a "considerable time".

Such a move would be taken as a sign the central bank was on target to start raising interest rates around the middle of next year, a view that has gained great traction since last week's surprisingly strong payrolls report.

Yields on two-year Treasury debt has spiked to highs not seen since April 2011 while the whole yield curve has flattened markedly as investors wager Fed action will keep inflation low over the long run.

The lack of inflationary pressure combined with a rising US dollar kept gold on the back foot. Spot prices were stuck at \$1,200 on Tuesday after shedding a couple of bucks the previous session.

Reuters

Malaria death rates fall, Ebola threatens W Africa progress

LONDON, 9 Dec — Malaria deaths have dropped dramatically since 2000 and cases are falling steadily thanks to more people being diagnosed and treated and more getting bed nets, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday.

Yet progress against the mosquito-borne infection remains fragile and West African countries suffering an unprecedented epidemic of Ebola are particularly at risk of seeing a resurgence of malaria, the United Nations health agency said.

In its annual report on the disease, the WHO said the malaria death rate fell by 47 percent worldwide between 2000 and 2013 and by 54 percent in Africa, where about 90 percent of all malaria deaths occur.

In an analysis of malaria's impact across sub-Saharan Africa, it also found that despite a 43 percent increase in population, fewer people in the region are infected every year.

"The next few years are going to be critical to show that we can maintain momentum and build on the gains," said Pedro Alonso, director of the WHO's global malaria programme. In West Africa, the report said, the deadly Ebola outbreak has had a "devastating impact" on malaria treatment and the roll-out of malaria control programmes.

In Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia — all severely hit by the Ebola epidemic — many inpatient clinics are closed and attendance at outpatient facilities is a fraction of rates seen before the outbreak, it said.—Reuters

'Black Friday' discounts boost retail sales in November

LONDON, 9 Dec — A "Black Friday" shopping spree pushed British retail sales growth to a three-month high in November as shoppers splashed out on household goods and furniture, according to an industry survey on Tuesday.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) said total retail spending was 2.2 percent higher in November compared with the same month a year ago and compared with 1.4 percent growth in the year to October.

On a like-for-like basis — a measure that strips out changes in floor space and is preferred by equity analysts — retail sales rose 0.9 percent, after no change in October.

Britain's economic

recovery has been driven mostly by spending by consumers. Wages have grown slowly since the financial crisis, but a fall in inflation to its lowest levels in five years has helped restore some lost purchasing power.

For the first time, most British retailers fully embraced US-style Black Friday promotions this year, helping to kick off trading early in the key Christmas period.

BRC Director General Helen Dickinson said even retailers that didn't discount for Black Friday saw sales increase last month.

"These are encouraging signs in the run-up to Christmas, when consumers will likely want to push the boat out even more,"



Dickinson said. Spending on food again fell during November, albeit at a slower pace — down 1.2 percent year-on-year compared with a 1.4 percent decline in October.

British supermarkets are in the midst of a price war as established retailers

such as Tesco TSCO.L and Wal-Mart's Asda WMT.N try to fend off German discount chains Aldi and Lidl, which have increased their market share recently.

A survey commissioned by Barclays found that 65 percent of British retailers that sell both on-

line and in stores planned Black Friday promotions.

Police were called in to control crowds that had gathered overnight in London, Manchester, Cardiff and Glasgow, drawn by cheap televisions, kitchen goods and clothes.

Reuters

Shoppers queue to purchase retail items on "Black Friday" at an Asda superstore in Wembley, north London on 28 Nov, 2014. REUTERS

Scientists find brain mechanism behind glucose greed

LONDON, 9 Dec — British scientists have found a brain mechanism they think may drive our desire for glucose-rich food and say the discovery could one day lead to better treatments for obesity.

In experiments using rats, researchers at Imperial College London found a mechanism that appears to sense how much glucose is reaching the brain and

prompts animals to seek more if it detects a shortfall. In people, the scientists said, it may play a role in driving our preference for sweet and starchy foods. Glucose, a component of carbohydrates, is the main energy source used by brain cells.

"Our brains rely heavily on glucose for energy, but in our evolutionary past it would have been hard to come by. So we have a

deep-rooted preference for glucose-rich foods and seek them out," said James Gardiner, who led the study and published its findings in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation* on Monday.

Gardiner's team started with a hypothesis that an enzyme called glucokinase, involved in sensing glucose in the liver and pancreas, might play a role in driving glucose desire. Glucokinase is found

in part of the brain called the hypothalamus, which regulates various functions including food intake.

In their experiments they first found that when rats go 24 hours without eating, glucokinase activity in an appetite-regulating center in the hypothalamus increases sharply. The rats were given access to a glucose solution as well as their normal food pellets, called chow. When

the researchers increased the activity of glucokinase in the hypothalamus using a virus, rats consumed more glucose in preference to chow. When glucokinase activity was reduced, they consumed less glucose.

Gardiner suggested that in people it might be possible to reduce glucose cravings by changing the diet, and said a drug that could act on this system may poten-

tially prevent obesity.

"People are likely to have different levels of this enzyme, so different things will work for different people," he said in a statement about the study.

"For some people, eating more starchy foods at the start of a meal might be a way to feel full more quickly by targeting this system, meaning they eat less overall."—Reuters

Lava flows toward Hawaii village, threatens major intersection

PAHOA, (Hawaii) 9 Dec — Slow-moving lava from an erupting volcano on Hawaii's Big Island continued to flow toward a small village, advancing about 250 yards on Monday, and threatened to reach a major traffic intersection before year's end.

While the main flow from Kilauea's June 27th eruption has stalled yards from the main road through Pahoa Village and just feet from a recycling transfer station, the breakout upslope is active and lava is crawling toward the area, the US Geological Survey said.

The flow front is 2.3 miles upslope and does not pose an immediate threat to the community, Hawaii County Civil Defence Director Darryl Oliveira said.

Last month, the river of lava incinerated a house, the only home devoured by the stream of molten rock.

Officials declared the new outbreak to be the leading edge of the flow on 1 December and have been monitoring it closely as it moves 100-400 yards in a northerly direction each day.

If lava reaches the intersection, where a grocery store and dozens of other businesses line the road, it will sever the main thoroughfare for nearly 10,000 residents who live in the southern district of the island.

County officials moved quickly this summer to ready two roads further east of the highway, although they won't be open to the public until the



Janet Babb, a spokeswoman from the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory, points to a power pole that was destroyed by lava flow from the Kilauea volcano, while lava upslope creeps towards the village of Pahoa on Hawaii's Big Island on 8 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

highway is overrun.

On Monday, county officials began ferrying in students from Keonepoko Elementary School, which was closed in October ahead of the advancing flow. Those students now attend classes at two other area schools. "This lava flow has changed the lives of many people in Puna, and we wanted to make sure our school children who were most directly affected by the lava were among the first members of the public to visit the flow and see it up close," said Mayor Billy Kenoi. More than 1,000 students are expected to tour the transfer station and get a first-hand look at the flow this week. Monday's group included many of the students who were displaced.—Reuters

Russian plane detained in Nigeria on Saturday takes off from Kano airport

RABAT, 9 Dec — Russian cargo plane that was detained in Nigeria on Saturday has been allowed by the local authorities to leave the country and took off from the airport in the town of Kano in northern Nigeria, a spokesman for the Russian embassy in Nigeria told TASS on Monday.

"Having obtained a permit from the Nigerian authorities, the plane took off from the airport in Kano and is flying to its original destination," Artyom Romanov said.

The Russian An-124 cargo plane that was trans-

porting military cargo from the Central African Republic to Chad was detained by the Nigerian authorities after it had made an emergency landing in Kano.

The Russian embassy told TASS earlier that although the detained plane was Russian, the cargo on-board — military equipment — belonged to the French peacemaking mission in Chad. "The Russian cargo plane that was detained in Nigeria on Saturday had been chartered by the French peacekeeping mission in Chad," the embassy spokesman said.—Itar-Tass



"Having obtained a permit from the Nigerian authorities, the plane took off from the airport in Kano and is flying to its original destination," Artyom Romanov said.—ITAR-TASS

China's stealth fighter could 'take down' foreign rival

BEIJING, 9 Dec — China's new stealth fighter could certainly "take down" its opponent in the sky, the president of China's top aircraft maker said on Tuesday, referring to its US-made counterpart.

Lin Zuoming, president of Aviation Industry Corp of China (Avic), which developed the J-31 stealth fighter, made the remarks in

an interview on state broadcaster China Central Television (CCTV).

"When it takes to the sky, it can definitely take it down," he said, in a reference to the US-made F-35. "That's a certainty."

Lin also emphasised the company's desire to compete with the United States in new markets, particularly countries the US

will not sell military equipment to as well as countries that cannot afford the pricier F-35.

"The next-generation air forces that are unable to buy the F-35 have no way to build themselves up. We don't believe the situation should be that way," he said. "This world should be balanced," Lin added. "Good things shouldn't all

be pushed to one party."

China unveiled the highly anticipated twin-engine fighter jet at an air show last month, a show of muscle during a visit to the country by US President Barack Obama.

Stealth aircraft are key to China developing the ability to carry out both offensive and defensive operations, the Pentagon said in

a report about developments in China's military.

The J-31 is China's second domestically produced stealth fighter jet.

President Xi Jinping has pushed to toughen the country's 2.3 million-strong armed forces as China takes a more assertive stance in the region, particularly in the South China and East China seas.—Reuters



Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott

Despite significant accomplishments this year — concluding free trade deals with Japan, South Korea and China, and hosting the G20 leaders summit — the Labour Party opposition has surged ahead of the government by a margin of 55 percent to 45 percent in the latest Newspoll released on 18 November.—Reuters



A J-31 stealth fighter of Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force is seen during a test flight ahead of the 10th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition in Zhuhai, Guangdong province, on 10 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV UBC CYPRUS VOY NO (51) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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BHD**

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (131)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGKACHAI VOY NO (131) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(4) 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 Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

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

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AGENT FOR: M/S WONGSAMUT OCEAN
SHIPPING CO LTD.**

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

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

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For Geneve Holdings Sdn Bhd.
Care of Khine Khine U, Advocate
LL.B, D.B.L, LL.M (UK)
#205/5, Thirimingalar Housing, Strand Rd., Yangon.
Date: 10 December 2014

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(21/2014)**

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-103(14-15)	Telecommunication Equipment (3) Items	US\$
(2)	IFB-104(14-15)	160D-173-74 Type Pumping Units & Spares (5) Sets	US\$
(3)	IFB-105(14-15)	114D-119-86 Type Pumping Units & Spares (12) Sets	US\$
(4)	IFB-106(14-15)	80D-133-54 Type Pumping Units & Spares (8) Sets	US\$
(5)	IFB-107(14-15)	6 1/2" & 7 3/4" Spiral Drill Collars (2) Items	US\$
(6)	IFB-108(14-15)	5" Drill Pipe (1,000) Mtr	US\$
(7)	IFB-109(14-15)	Skid Mounted Water Transfer Pump with Motor (700 GPM x 700 Ft HD) (3) Units	US\$
(8)	IFB-110(14-15)	Skid Mounted Crude Transfer Pump with Motor (200 GPM x 350 Ft HD) (2) Units	US\$
(9)	IFB-111(14-15)	Skid Mounted Crude Transfer Pump with Motor (400 GPM x 400 Ft HD) (2) Units	US\$
(10)	IFB-112(14-15)	Mobile Type Welding Machine (Engine Driven) (400 AMP) (5) Units	US\$
(11)	IFB-113(14-15)	Portable Welding Machine and Accessories (200 AMP) (3) Units	US\$
(12)	IFB-114(14-15)	5 Ton Air Winch (2) Nos	US\$
(13)	IFB-115(14-15)	Rig Alignment Jack (4) Nos	US\$
(14)	IFB-116(14-15)	Choke and Manifold (2) Items	US\$
(15)	IFB-117(14-15)	2 3/8" & 2 7/8" Tubing (2) Items	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time – 7-1-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 10th December, 2014 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 10th December, 2014: Isolated light rain are likely in Yangon and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State, weather will be generally fair in Lower Sagaing, Magway and Bago Regions, Shan State and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of night temperature in the Southern Myanmar Areas.

Executive plane crashes into Maryland house, kills six

Emergency personnel work on scene after a small plane crashed in to a home in Gaithersburg, Maryland, in this handout photo provided by the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service, on 8 Dec, 2014.

REUTERS

GAITHERSBURG, (Maryland), 9 Dec — An executive jet crashed into a Maryland house on Monday, killing all three people aboard the plane and a mother and two children inside the house, a fire official said.

The pilot of the jet who died in the crash had previously crashed a plane destined for the same airport in 2010, according to records.

The Embraer SA twin-engine Phenom 100 crashed into a home about one mile (1.6 km) from the Montgomery County Airpark in Gaithersburg, a Washington suburb.

According to the Federal Aviation Admin-

istration, the plane was registered to Michael Rosenberg, an adjunct professor of epidemiology at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and CEO of clinical research company Health Decisions, Inc.

In 2010, Rosenberg crashed another airplane near Monday's wreck site, although there were no injuries in that crash, according to National Transportation Safety Board records. The 2010 accident occurred at the Montgomery County Airpark, also Rosenberg's destination on Monday, when he lost control while landing and crashed into trees, according to records.

Monday's crash killed Rosenberg who was piloting the aircraft and the two other people on board, as well as a mother and two children in the home, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue spokesman Pete Piringer said on Twitter.

The crash sparked a fire that destroyed two homes, and three others were damaged. Piringer said crews had contained the fires but some jet fuel had leaked into a stream.

The plane had departed from an airport on the Chapel Hill campus at 9:30 am, an NTSB spokesman told a news conference on Monday night.

Investigators, who

were expected to be on the scene for up to seven days, will examine the experience and training of the pilot, weather factors, engine condition and interview the aircraft controller who handled the attempted landing, NTSB spokesman Robert Sumwalt said. They will also look into a possible bird strike.

"Our mission is to find out what happened and why it happened so it will never happen again," Sumwalt told the news conference.

Witnesses told local media that the plane had been circling with the wheels down, and looked as if it was struggling for control.—Reuters

Minami Takahashi says to leave all-girl pop group AKB48 next year

TOKYO, 9 Dec — Minami Takahashi, one of the best-known members of Japanese all-girl pop group AKB48, said on Monday she is planning to leave the group in one year on 8 Dec, 2015, the 10th anniversary of the group's formation.

Takahashi, 23, made the announcement during an anniversary show in Tokyo, according to its management. The group debuted on stage on 8 Dec, 2005.

Takahashi was one of the group's original members along with Atsuko Maeda, 23, who left in 2012.

Kyodo News



Minami Takahashi

Peter Jackson honoured with star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

LOS ANGELES, 9 Dec — Filmmaker Peter Jackson was awarded with the 2,538th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The 53-year-old movie director was supported by his wife Fran Walsh and "The Hobbit" stars like Andy Serkis, Evangeline Lilly, Orlando Bloom, Elijah Wood, Lee Pace and Richard Armitage at the unveiling which took place at the Hollywood Boulevard in Los Angeles, reported Ace Showbiz.

"This street here — the first time I ever saw it was when I was 12 years old in 1974 when my mum and dad brought me here on a trip. "I had been making movies in New Zealand on my Super 8 camera for three or four years and I walked down the street and I looked at these stars and I never ever in my wildest dreams thought I'd be here



New Zealand director Peter Jackson (front C) attends the ceremony honouring him with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, in Hollywood, California, the United States, on 8 Dec, 2014. Oscar-winning New Zealand director Peter Jackson was honoured with the 2,538th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on Monday.—XINHUA

today," he said after accepting the honour. Jackson's upcoming movie "The

Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies", which is the third and final instalment

of "The Hobbit" trilogy, is scheduled to hit theaters on 17 December.—PTI

'Birdman,' 'Boyhood' 'Unbroken' among AFI's top 2014 films

LOS ANGELES, 9 Dec — From "Birdman" to "Unbroken," the American Film Institute (AFI) selected an eclectic range of films already gaining momentum in the Hollywood awards race as its top picks for 2014, the organization said on Monday.

Breaking the traditional selection of 10 films for the first time, the annual AFI list compiled 11 picks, including "American Sniper," "Boyhood," "Foxcatcher," "The Imitation Game," "Interstellar," "Into the Woods," "Nightcrawler," "Selma" and "Whiplash."

"Unbroken," based on the life of Olympian Louis Zamperini and directed by Angelina Jolie, earned its first notable awards mention, as well as Disney's upcoming musical "Into the Woods" and Christo-

pher Nolan's space fantasy "Interstellar."

Richard Linklater's "Boyhood," filmed over 12 years and following a boy's coming-of-age tale, was awarded best picture by the Los Angeles Film Critics Association over the weekend and won best film, director and supporting actress at the New York Film Critics Circle Awards last week.

The AFI selections, made by a jury of AFI members, scholars, TV and film artists and critics, come ahead of the Screen Actors Guild and Golden Globe nominations this week.

The three sets of picks often indicate the frontrunners for February's Oscars top categories.

The 2015 Oscar nominations will be announced on 15 January.



(L-R) Cast members Patricia Arquette, Ellar Coltrane and Lorelei Linklater, and director, screenwriter and producer Richard Linklater arrive on the red carpet to promote the movie "Boyhood" during the 64th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin on 13 Feb, 2014.—REUTERS

"This is the first time in AFI awards history that the voting procedure — in-

cluding tiebreakers — has resulted in the inclusion of 11 motion picture hon-

ourees," the organization said.

The AFI also selected

10 television programmes for its top 2014 picks, including AMC's advertising period drama "Mad Men," which extended its record into a seventh year on the list.

HBO's fantasy epic "Game of Thrones," FX Networks' Cold War spy drama "The Americans" and Netflix's prison comedy "Orange Is the New Black" also returned to the list this year.

New additions rounding out the picks were FX's dark comedy "Fargo," HBO's tech comedy "Silicon Valley," ABC's legal thriller "How to Get Away with Murder," The CW's coming of age comedy "Jane the Virgin," Cinemax's period doctor drama "The Knick" and Amazon Studios' LGBT comedy "Transparent."

Reuters



Sam Smith is nominated for Album of the Year, Record of the Year, Song of the Year, Best New Artist, Best Pop Vocal Album and Best Pop Solo Performance.—PTI

Sam Smith celebrates Grammy nominations with sparkling water

LONDON, 9 Dec — 'Stay With Me' singer Sam Smith celebrated his Grammy-award nominations with a bottle of fizzy water along with his fellow singer and nominated pal, Ed Sheeran.

The 22-year-old singer did not go wild after discovering he had been put

forward for six awards, reported Contactmusic. "I was with Ed on the day it happened. We went for lunch and had sushi. But no drink was involved so it wasn't a proper celebration," he said.

The 'In The Lonely Hour' hitmaker said, later he grabbed a bottle of

champagne and celebrated the nods in solitude. "I had one glass of champagne in bed, by myself. It really was 'in the lonely hour'. There was no one with me, I had to make the most of my three hours' sleep. But tonight I'll have a bottle of wine in my room with my make-up artist," Smith said.

Smith is nominated for Album of the Year, Record of the Year, Song of the Year, Best New Artist, Best Pop Vocal Album and Best Pop Solo Performance.

The 57th Annual Grammy Awards will be held on 8 February, 2015 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.—PTI

Brazil football legend Pele to leave hospital on Tuesday



General view of Albert Einstein Hospital where Brazilian soccer legend Pele is in the intensive care unit in Sao Paulo on 28 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

SAO PAULO, 9 Dec — Brazilian football legend Pele has overcome a urinary tract infection and will be discharged from the hospital where he had kidney stones removed three weeks ago, his doctors said on Monday.

“Considering his good recovery, the medical team programmed his release for tomorrow,” the doctors at Sao Paulo’s Albert Einstein hospital said in a statement.

The three-time World Cup champion underwent surgery to remove kidney

stones on 13 November, but was readmitted 10 days later with a urinary tract infection that required dialysis. At one point, he was moved into a hospital wing used for more intensive care.

The 74-year-old Pele, who is often called the greatest football player in history, assured fans that he had recovered in a video released on Friday that showed him smiling and strumming a guitar with family members by his side.

Reuters

Deforestation cuts into climate change goals: TRFN

ROME, 9 Dec — Mines, palm oil plantations, large farms and mining projects are contributing to an alarming pace of forest destruction, a new report has found, hampering efforts to curb global warming.

Satellite imagery indicates that more than 30,000 hectares of forest are lost daily, said the report “Securing Forests, Securing Rights”, launched in Peru on Monday by a coalition of rights groups during international climate change talks.

Forests play a key role in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere; chopping them down worsens global warming.

Over the last decade an average total of 13 million hectares of forest have been cleared annually, with tropical forests particularly affected.

“The expansion of industries like mining, palm oil and agribusiness are the hidden drivers of deforestation,” Helen Tugendhat, a coordinator with the Forest Peoples Programme, one of the groups who researched the report, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The report aims to show that indigenous communities who live in the world’s forests are often the best custodians of the land for maintaining trees and slowing climate change.

But governments looking to spur economic growth are keen to exploit resources from forested areas, Tugendhat said, often triggering the displacement of indigenous communities.

Reuters

MITV MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(10-12-14 07:00 am~11-12-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * Myanmar Traditional Toys
- * World News
- * Today Myanmar (Seafood Export)
- * Local News
- * Myanmar Music Icon “Ko Nay Win” (Part-I)
- * World News
- * Fortune Teller: “Yan Moe Aung”
- * Local News
- * Myanma Pioneer Female Bodybuilder
- * World News
- * Green Grocer
- * Local News
- * International Buddhist Academy (Part- II)
- * World News
- * In The Studio: Ah Moon
- * Local News
- * Product of Myanmar - Stone of The Heavens
- * World News
- * Temple Stalls
- * Local News
- * U Kyaw Thu: From Artist to Philanthropist (Part-II)
- * World News
- * Philatelic Pleasure
- * Local News
- * Yu Suk Dance of Chin National
- * World News
- * Ready-Made Skin Care Product
- * Local News
- * Food Trip-(EP-6)
- * World News
- * Myanmar Movie Review “Thet Tan Thit”

Rio 2016 late swimming final plans come under fire

LONDON, 9 Dec — Plans to hold late night swimming finals at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics are “outrageous”, says England swimming’s head coach Jon Rudd, joining a growing campaign opposing the plan.

A final competition schedule has yet to be officially approved by the International Olympic Committee but they said on Friday that a proposal to hold later medal races to fit mainly with American television had been accepted.

The plans, which would see some finals start as late as 2200 local time to maximise audiences in the United States, have already drawn criticism from Australia Olympic Committee President John Coates, who said it would place an “unreasonable demand” on athletes.

Rudd has now added his voice to the ‘Say No to Night Swimming’ campaign that is gathering pace among competitors and coaches across the world.

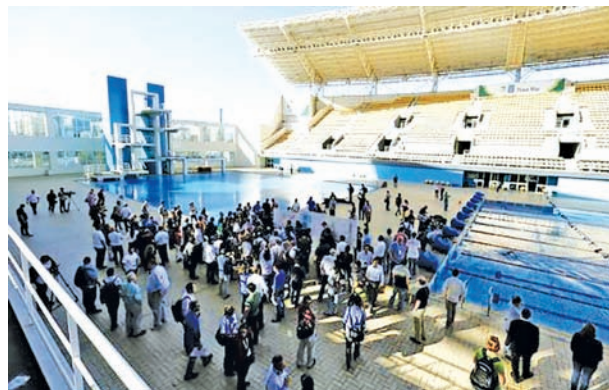
“It’s outrageous. The best way to describe it is disrespectful to athletes, disrespectful to the event and what the Olympics means,” he told website swimvortex.com.

Rudd, who also mentors Lithuania’s Ruta Meilutyte, the Olympic 100 metres breaststroke champion, said there would be serious issues caused by the late night finals because swimmers would not finish until the early hours of the morning after they had warmed down and faced the media.

“If you are asking me is it the right decision and were the swimmers consulted and were the swimmers’ performances thought about in that decision then, no,” Rudd said.

“Now we’ll get on with it but it’s a shame that that is the decision we’ve come to as a sport.

“It’s a really disappointing outcome. There also seems to be a lot of smoke and mirrors: IOC



Members of the media visit the Maria Lenk Aquatic Centre, which will undergo renovation to stage diving and synchronised swimming competitions during the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, during the 2nd world press briefing for the games in Rio de Janeiro on 6 Aug, 2014.—REUTERS

saying it’s FINA, FINA saying it’s IOC and then both saying the athletes are fine with it when they are clearly not. It’s a shame.

“For a lot of guys it will be the pinnacle of their careers and they don’t get the right environment to maybe produce the performances you’d hope they’d produce,” he added.

This is not the first time

the timing of the swimming finals at the Olympics has been criticised, with the Beijing 2008 Games switching finals to the morning to coincide with prime-time viewing in the US despite some complaints from athletes.

Medal races at the 2012 Games in London started no later than 2100 local time.

Reuters

Delhi to ban all internet taxi firms after Uber rape claim

NEW DELHI, 9 Dec — India’s capital has decided to ban all internet-based taxi firms after a female

passenger reported she was raped by a driver contracted to US online cab company Uber, a government official



Policemen escort driver Shiv Kumar Yadav (C in black jacket) who is accused of a rape outside a court in New Delhi on 8 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

said on Tuesday. The Delhi transport department issued a public notice in a national daily stating that only six registered radio taxi companies are allowed to operate in New Delhi.

“We have banned Uber. Another public notice will be issued tomorrow for banning all non-registered cab service providers. It’s almost done,” said Kuldeep Singh Gangar, spokesman of the Delhi’s transport department.

Uber was blacklisted in New Delhi on Monday after police said it had failed to run background checks on the driver, who was arrested three years ago in a similar

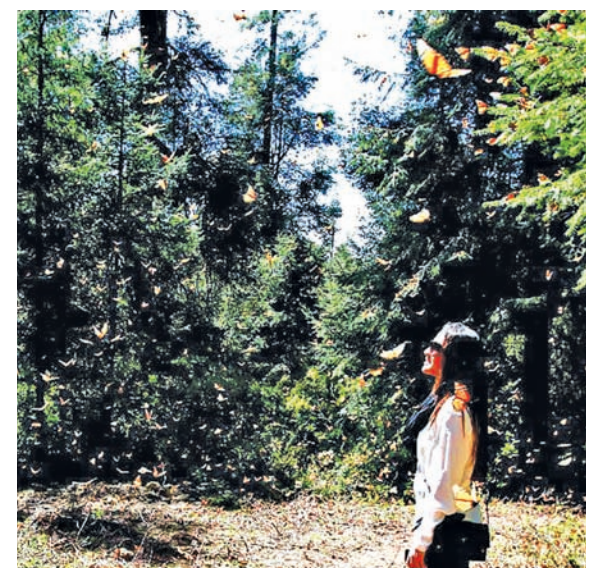
case but later acquitted.

Home Minister Rajnath Singh may issue a statement to parliament calling on India’s federal states and union territories to ban Uber, the Indian Express newspaper reported.

The company operates in around 10 Indian cities.

A representative for Uber said the company had not been officially notified of any ban in New Delhi and would issue a statement later on Tuesday.

It was still possible to hail an Uber taxi in the Indian capital using the company’s smartphone application on Tuesday.— Reuters



A visitor observes monarch butterflies in a sacred fir forest, in Morelia, of Michoacan State, Mexico, on 7 Dec, 2014.—XINHUA



Manchester United's Robin van Persie (R) scores his team's second goal during their English Premier League soccer match against Southampton at St Mary's Stadium in Southampton, southern England on 8 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

Van Persie brace lifts United to third

LONDON, 9 Dec — Robin van Persie scored twice as Manchester United won 2-1 at Southampton to continue their recent resurgence and climb to third in the Premier League on Monday. The Dutchman scored in each half as United, who were distinctly second best for much of the game, secured their fifth successive Premier League victory.

Graziano Pelle ended a personal goal drought dating back to October by equalising but Southampton have now lost three successive Premier League games and are without a league victory since a 1-0 victory against struggling Leicester

City on 8 November.

Manchester United have 28 points, five behind rivals Man City in second and eight less than leaders Chelsea while Southampton have dropped to fifth on 26 points, one point behind fourth-placed West Ham United. Monday's game was the first Premier League meeting between Dutch managers Louis van Gaal and Ronald Koeman.

The pair fell out during their time at Ajax Amsterdam in 2004 as a result of their differing characters and have endured a frosty relationship since. After a patient start on the south coast Southampton gifted

the visitors the lead when captain Jose Fonte's weak back pass was seized upon by van Persie who rounded goalkeeper Fraser Forster before rolling the ball home in the 12th minute.

Van Gaal's side had won their previous four Premier League games before their visit to St Mary's and their array of attacking players were slick and eye-catching in possession.

However, not for the first time this season their shaky defence, reverted to a back three, looked vulnerable in the face of Southampton's creative passing and movement.

Reuters

Calculators out for Roma-City decider

ROME, 9 Dec — The calculators will be out in force as AS Roma and Manchester City clash for a place in the last 16 of the Champions League on Wednesday with outsiders CSKA Moscow lurking in the background.

The head-to-head rule which UEFA use to separate teams who are level on points means that all sorts of complex connotations are possible as the three sides bid to follow runaway Group E leaders Bayern Munich into the next round.

Manchester City have never won a competitive match in Italy in four previous attempts and, even if they break that taboo, could still suffer another premature group stage exit.

Roma's fate is in their own hands as a win will be enough for them while a draw, paradoxically, could send either themselves or City through, depending on CSKA's performance.

"City are obliged to win. They have all the pressure. Not Roma. City are in the same period that Chel-

sea used to be before they won it. It becomes complex until you win the trophy," Roma's Ivorian striker Gervinho told British media.

Roma, City and CSKA all have five points from five games after mediocre campaigns in a group dominated by Bayern.

A win for Roma, still in the hunt despite losing 7-1 at home to the Bavarians, will guarantee them a second place finish, even if CSKA also win, as the Serie A side would have the better head-to-head record against the Russians. CSKA can only qualify if they win in Munich and Roma fail to beat City while City will qualify if they win and CSKA do not. The rule fun begins if Roma and City draw. If CSKA also draw, Roma would go through, and if the Russians lose, it would come down to the head-to-head record between the Serie A and English side. A goalless draw would favour Roma and a score draw would do for City.—Reuters



Manchester City's Sergio Aguero (L) scores a penalty against AS Roma during their Champions League soccer match at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, northern England on 30 Sept, 2014.—REUTERS

New crop threatens 'Big Four' hegemony, says Djokovic

NEW DELHI, 9 Dec — With a crop of talented young players such as Kei Nishikori and Milos Raonic knocking on the door of the exclusive men's grand slam club, the "Big Four" hegemony over the game's top tournaments may be coming to a close, said Novak Djokovic.

World number one Djokovic, Roger Federer, Rafa Nadal and Andy Murray have shared 36 of the last 39 grand slam titles.

When Croatia's Marin Cilic beat Japan's Nishikori in this year's US Open final, it was the first time since the 2005 Australian Open that a men's grand slam final did not feature either Djokovic, Nadal or Federer.

Djokovic expects the upcoming season to be even more competitive than 2014, a year that saw four different grand slam winners including first-time champions Cilic and Stanislas Wawrinka.

"It's really unpredictable, it's going to be hard to say who are the clear favourites to win the grand slams," the Serb told reporters late on Monday after playing in the India leg of the International Premier Tennis League (IPTL).



Tomas Berdych (R) takes a 'selfie' with fellow tennis players (L to R) Roger Federer, Stan Wawrinka, Novak Djokovic, Kei Nishikori, Andy Murray, Milos Raonic and Marin Cilic at the O2 Arena in London 7 Nov, 2014. —REUTERS

"Obviously Cilic, Wawrinka and some new names who have been winning grand slam titles and challenging the best and winning against the best in the big events, they have proven to everybody that it is possible.

"The dominance of first of all Roger and Rafa over the years was fantastic. Then Andy Murray and myself, we got into the mix and us four have been winning most of the big events

in the last six, seven, eight years," Djokovic said.

"Now it's normal to expect that there is a new generation of players, younger players that are right at the top like Nishikori, Raonic, (Grigor) Dimitrov who have the quality to win against the best and they have done that.

"It's definitely going to be an interesting year."

Bulgarian world number 11 Dimitrov has also impressed Pete Sampras

but the American great felt in the end, the trio of Djokovic, Federer and Nadal might still dominate grand slams.

"Novak is the obvious choice," the 14-time grand slam champion, one of the past champions playing IPTL, said.

"Roger is very motivated to get to number one, Rafa is uncertain with his health but I feel once he is healthy, he will be in the mix.—Reuters

Chinese footballer Zhang expected to sign with Wolfsburg, report

BEIJING, 9 DEC — China's rising football star Zhang Xizhe is expected to sign German Bundesliga club Wolfsburg in about a week's time, according to reports here on Tuesday.

The Beijing Guo'an

midfielder will be transferred to the German club in mid-December, Chinese portal Sina.com said.

It said if Zhang spends too much time on the bench in Wolfsburg, Guo'an will welcome the 23-year-old

back to the Chinese Super League powerhouse.

If Zhang inks the deal, he will become the fourth Chinese player in the Bundesliga after Yang Chen, Shao Jiayi and Hao Junmin.

Zhang was named the

Best New Football Player of Chinese Super League in 2012. But he did not make the 31-man roster for Asian Cup recently unveiled by national team coach Alain Perrin.

Xinhua