

ASEAN-ROK Summit targets bilateral trade volume at \$200 billion by 2020

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec— The joint statement of ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit said Friday that the leaders of 10 Southeast Asian countries and the Republic of Korea have expected bilateral trade volume at US\$200 billion by 2020, while the two sides agreed on the cooperation in different sectors, including security, climate change and natural disaster, energy, economy and trade, crimes, as well as the East Asia Perspective.

The joint statement was issued at the end of the summit in Busan, which was held under the theme of “Building Trust, Bringing Happiness”, to mark the 25 anniversary of the establishment of the dialogue relationship.

In the joint statement, the leaders also agreed to maximize the use of their free trade agreement to achieve the 2020 target of US\$200 billion in two-way trade volume and continue to strengthen their multi-faceted strategic partnership. Both sides also promised to bolster cooperation in development, security



President U Thein Sein is welcomed back by vice presidents at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport on Saturday afternoon.—MNA

and other areas and reaffirmed their commitment to the early denuclearization of peninsula.

During a press conference with Myanmar President U Thein Sein, the rotating chair of ASEAN this year, ROK's President Park Geun-hye said: “Our leaders plan to set up the implementation plans for 2016 through 2020 after

fleshing out the statement on our future vision, which we adopted today, looking ahead into the future.”

She also said: “Through the conscientious enforcement of the plans, we would like to work together to further develop our relationship into a partnership of mutual trust and happiness.”

The joint statement

also said that the summit recalled with satisfaction that ASEAN-ROK relations have deepened and broadened over the past 25 years since the establishment of dialogue relations in 1989 and it became member of ASEAN Regional Forum-ARF in 1994, with acknowledging the achievement made in implementing the

2004 Declaration on Comprehensive Cooperation Partnership between the ASEAN and ROK and the 2010 Joint Declaration on ASEAN-ROK Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity and its Plan of Action 2011-2015.

The leaders agreed that the security of North-east Asia and Southeast Asia are closely interconnected by enforcing political-security cooperation to promote sustainable peace and stability in the region.

The statement also mentioned to strengthen cooperation in the area of Political-Security matters by further developing measures against security related issues such as traditional and non-traditional security challenges, including combatting terrorism and transnational crimes such as trafficking in persons, illicit drugs, money laundering, arms smuggling, sea piracy, international economic crimes and cybercrimes, as well as proliferation of Weapon of Mass Destruction.

On the economic front, the two sides agreed to

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while viewing some pictures of old buildings in Yangon.

“I have been to cities in Southeast Asia. Among them, Yangon is the nicest city with colonial buildings in the region as it has many more than others where many others have already disappeared”, she said.

Some of buildings should be renovated. I know it costs a lot of money, but Myanmar should think ahead and make sure to keep them alive, she added.

In a press release the Trust issued on Friday, Dr Thant Myint-U, YHT's founder and chairman, stated that this exhibition will play a part in recovering, remembering and celebrating the amazing history of this great city by reflecting on its heritage, threats to its heritage and imagining its future.

The exhibition will be open to public 9 am-5pm every day at the YHT office on Pansodan Street in Yangon until the end of March, 2015. — GNLM

IFC plans to boost Myanmar investment to \$1 Billion over next three years

YANGON, 13 Dec— International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private-investment arm of the World Bank Group, announced on Friday that it is looking to increase its investment in Myanmar to \$1 billion over the next three year with a focus on development of the country's private sector.

The IFC's press release said its total investment in Myanmar is expected to reach around \$400 million for 2015 FY, which ends 30 June, 2015, up from \$92 million as of November this year.

Building business-enabling infrastructure and expanding access to finance are critical to reviving Myanmar's private sector which will generate much-needed jobs and economic opportunities, said Vivek Pathak, IFC's director for Asia-Pacific.

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Dr Hset Aung to give talks on Financial Policy for SMEs

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec— Vice-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar Dr Hset Aung will give talks on Financial Policy for SMEs at SMEs Development Department (Yangon) at No 35-B15 on New University Avenue in Bahan Township, Yangon, from 1 to 3 pm on 20 December. Those interested may contact Dr Ei Shwesintun, phone numbers 01 8603826, 018603827 and Fax number 01 546051 or e-mail-sme.talks2014@gmail.com not later than 18 December as the number of the audience is limited to just 100.

MNA

Photography exhibit showcases Yangon's past, present and future

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 13 Dec— An exhibition displaying the collection of photographs on Yangon's past, present

and future has attracted visitors' attention, telling stories of the city's past and present that can help them to think about how it is important to the city's future.

Organized by Yangon Heritage Trust, a local organization dedicated to preserving Yangon's rich urban heritage, in partnership with Prudential, a United King-

dom-based life insurer, the event titled “Global City: Yangon's Past, Present and Future” is showcasing more than 120 photographs that reveal Yangon as the centre of key events in the history of Myanmar.

Photographs on display are a selection of about 3,000 collected through donations, archives, local newspapers and the internet, said Rupert Mann, senior programme officer of the Trust.

“It took about three months to bring them together and decide ones we want to show and which ones we don't and whether which have enough quality to be exhibited,” he added.

“It is very interesting to see photos of new and old of Yangon”, Lily, one of the exhibition goers from Switzerland, told The Global New Light of Myanmar



Tourists admire some photographs of old Yangon at a photography exhibition on Yangon's history on Saturday.—PHOTO: YE MYINT

New school building under construction in Myanaung Township

MYANAUNG, 13 Dec—A ceremony to drive stake for construction of new school building was held at Basic Education Primary School in Aing-mathe Village, Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region, on 12 December.

Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw representative U Aung Myo Nyunt and officials drove stakes at the designated places.

The Ministry of Education allotted a fund for construction of a 60by30 feet school building in 2014-15 fiscal year.

Win Bo (Myanaung Township IPRD)



Companies, farmers must apply for GAP certificates



NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec — The companies and farmers who have already received the good agricultural practices-GAP certificates will be allowed to export their agricultural produce as of 2015.

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec — A ceremony to inaugurate the asphalt entrance road to Kazun-in Village was held in Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on 12 December morning.

Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Than Htay, Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee members U Min Min Zaw and U Kyaw Myint and officials attended the ceremony.

Director (Engineer) U Aung Moe of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee reported on construction of the asphalt road.

After opening the repaved road, they strolled along the road.

Shwe Ye Yint

It was aimed at enabling the agricultural companies and farmers to get good prices over their products, according to the Agriculture Department.

A coordination meeting on issuance of GAP

certificate took place at the Agriculture Department in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 December.

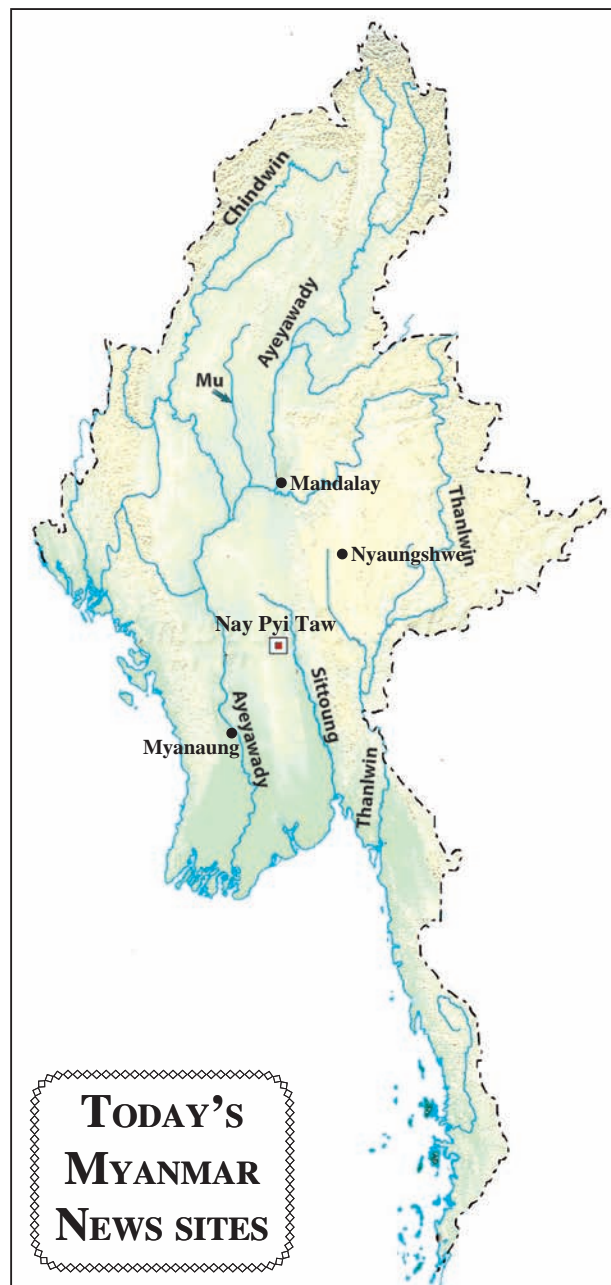
The Central GAP Implementation and Supervisory Committee, the GAP Certificate Issuance

Committee, the inspection committee, the educative knowledge dissemination committee and the lab committee will participate in issuance of the GAP certificates to the companies and farmers.

The Agriculture Department will inspect the soil and water samples of the cultivable lands of applicants. The GAP holders are to attend the GAP procedure course and pesticide usage course. Officials will make field trips to the GAP holders' farms to check cultivation of crops in line with the prescribed rules and regulations and production process at the packaging houses.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)

Pobbathiri Township gets new asphalt road in rural area



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Local farmers get quality crops for poppy-substitute cultivation



NYAUNGSHWE, 13 Dec — The poppy-substitute cultivation course was conducted in Nantet Village, Nyaungshwe Township, Shan State, on 11 December.

Officials gave lectures on horticulture, vegetable and fruits cultivation, protection of crops, technology on use of seeds, boosting production of crops, and selection of soil.

Authorities distributed quality saplings for cultivation of dragon fruits on 13.50 acres of farmlands in Banpyin Village and 1,040

kilos of Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds to local farmers in Banpyin, Sakar and Indan villages, said Head of Township Agriculture Department U Zaw Win Tun.

Shan State Hluttaw representative U Aung Kyi Win, Deputy head of Shan State Agriculture Department U Toe Wai and Township Administrator U Kyaw Zaw Hla presented Palethwe paddy seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and dragon fruit saplings to local growers.

Nay Myo Thurein

NATIONAL

ASEAN-ROK Summit targets...

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promote economic growth and development through further trade liberalization and regulatory improvements. The leaders also agreed to try harder to expand their trade volume to \$150 billion by 2015 and \$200 billion by 2020.

The two-way trade volume has jumped sixteen-fold to \$135 billion last year from only \$8.2 billion in 1989, the year the bilateral dialogue was first established.

For socio-cultural co-operation plans, the two sides decided to further promote people-to-people contacts, in the public and private sectors to deepen

mutual understanding and friendship, recognizing the importance of establishing and expanding a network for the future generation.

ASEAN also welcomed the ROK's initiative under the 'ASEAN-ROK Next-generation Opinion Leaders Programme'.

The joint statement also highlighted the importance of enhancing dialogue and creating necessary conditions for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks which would pave the way for the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization.

According to the statement, the World Wa-

ter Forum will take place in Daegu and Gyeongbuk, ROK in 2015.

In addition to the ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit, the first ASEAN-ROK Business Council Meeting was also held on 10 December.

This new council was formed at this summit after the proposal of ROK in 2013, and is composed of merchants and industrialists from both ASEAN countries and ROK to be able to implement the results from ASEAN-ROK Free Trade Agreement, to solve the difficulties of the agreement and to develop small-scaled enterprises in respective countries.

During his visit in ROK, President U Thein



Agricultural machinery factory of Daedong Industrial Co.,Ltd. in Daegu, ROK.—MNA



ASEAN-ROK Business Council held its first meeting on 10 December.

MNA

Sein also met the families of Myanmar mission there at the Paradise Hotel in Busan before looking around the agricultural machinery factory of Daedong Industrial Co.,Ltd. in Daegu. The 11th session of First Union Hluttaw has approved the purchase of agricultural machinery worth \$100 million with

installment from this industry. President U Thein Sein arrived back Nay Pyi Taw in Saturday afternoon.

MNA

IFC plans to boost Myanmar...

(from page 1)

We will continue to work with the government and the banking sector to enhance Myanmar's infrastructure and financial markets to boost sustainable growth that benefits more people, he added.

According to the statement, the IFC is set to scale up its support for in-

frastructure even more, with a focus on key sectors such as power, telecommunications and transport.

A focus during the current fiscal year is to support Myanmar's central bank in developing at least one credit bureau by June 2016, said the IFC in its press release.

"Improving the ease

of doing business will help attract more domestic and foreign investment which Myanmar very much needs to develop", Kumar said.

IFC, the largest global developmental institution, provided more than 22 billion in financing to improve lives in developing countries during this fiscal year.

GNLM

Vice President calls sanitation arrangements at Thilawa SEZ the first of its kind in the country

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec—Vice President U Nyan Tun, accompanied by union ministers, went on inspection tours of Taninthayi Region and Thilawa Special Economic Zone, Yangon on 11 December, sources said.

During his inspection tour, the vice president inspected the construction of a road linking Mawtaung

with Taninthayi in Myeik district. He also visited a palm oil plantation undertaken by a private company, where he heard briefings given by the regional chief minister and officials. Regional Chief Minister U Myat Ko and officials reported on the geographical location of the district, its population, town planning, transportation, electricity

supply and health care.

At the town hall in Myeik, the vice president told departmental officials and local people that Myanmar, as a nascent democracy, still needs to develop in the economic, political and social sectors. He urged development committees to keep in constant touch with the public while fulfilling their needs and accepting

their complaints. According to the vice president, development committees at various levels have been reformed, with more public-chosen representatives.

In the afternoon, Vice President U Nyan Tun went on a guided tour of the Thilawa Special Economic Zone-A, where he oversaw projects being implemented and heard

progress reports on earth work and the construction of a sewage plant and factories. At the meeting, local and foreign business firms briefed the vice president on the lines of commodities to be manufactured. Koyorad (Myanmar) Corporation Co Ltd, Lu Thai Textile Co Ltd, Thilawa Cement and Building Materials Ltd, Ball Asia Pacific (Yangon) Metal Container Ltd and Foster Electric (Thilawa) Co Ltd have been granted permission for business op-

erations at the zone.

According to the vice president, thirty companies have raced for permission to operate businesses at the zone. The five permitted companies are from Japan, China, France, the United States and Singapore.

The Thilawa SEZ is close to Yangon, with easy access to labour force, transportation and infrastructure. According to reports, the zone will include housing estates, condominiums, hotels, international schools and hospitals, supermarkets and recreation centres.

Vice President U Nyan Tun stated that the zone will boast sanitation measures, such as garbage and sewage disposals up to international standard of environmental conservation systems, which he said is the first of its kind in the country. He mentioned the importance of investment and trade in the early development of the country, calling for efforts to attract more foreign investments and create more job opportunities.—MNA



Vice President U Nyan Tun inspects construction projects at Thilawa Special Economic Zone, Yangon, on 11 December.—MNA



Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets employees, employers of Hlinethaya Industrial Zone

YANGON, 13 Dec — Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann met with employers and employees at Kanaung Hall in Hlinethaya Township, Yangon on Saturday.

Despite having achievement in political reform to a certain level, progress are not achieved yet on economic and social reforms as expected, the Speaker said in his speech.

He stressed the need of taking lessons from the past in dealing with challenges on the road to democracy and market economy, vowing to move forward however hard the patch.

He also highlighted the importance of employer-employee partnership for achieving economic



Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann greets locals in Hlinethaya Township.—MNA

success, thereby providing a satisfactory standard of living to workers.

In his conclusion, the Speaker called for negoti-

ation to create a situation based on the mutual understanding between employers and employees.

There are 918 fac-

tories and plants with employee population of 120,098 in Hlinethaya Industrial Zone.

MNA

Union Ministers coordinate regional development matters in Shwebo district

MONYWA, 13 Dec — Union Ministers at President Office U Soe Thane and U Tin Naing Thein held talks with members of development committees and townsenders on implementation of reforms in Shwebo on Thursday.

After hearing reports on the needs of the eight townships in Shwebo district, the Union ministers underlined the importance

of human resources development for development of the region; stressing the need of human capital plan for regional development.

Also present at the meeting were Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Tha Aye and Pyithu Hluttaw representatives, region ministers and representatives, departmental heads and officials.

Sagaing Region IPRD

Myanmar detainees in Malaysia pack for journey home

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec — A Malaysian court has pardoned 52 Myanmar nationals, following an appeal, sources said.

They were sentenced to one year's imprisonment on a count of holding fake entry visas to enter Malaysia.

Reports said that 45 Myanmar citizens are expected to return home on 15 December, while other seven are required to remain in Malaysia to act as government witnesses in a lawsuit against three agents.

On 8 July, 72 Myan-

mar citizens led by three agents were detained at the airport in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. Of the detainees, 14 people were with authentic documents.

According to media reports, the Malaysian immigration office charged 61 Myanmar people with fake visas, with an exception to eight people in consideration of their age.

The Myanmar Embassy in Malaysia has made a lot of efforts for the release of the Myanmar detainees through diplomatic channels.—MNA

Deputy Minister attends 2014 ASEAN-ROK Ministerial Meeting on Forestry



NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec — Environmental and forestry deputy minister U Aye Myint Maung attended the 2014 Special ASEAN-ROK Ministerial Meeting on Forestry in Busan, South Korea on 10 and 11 December.

Deputy minister delivered speech on forest conservation programmes of Myanmar at the ceremony.

He also discussed ways to strengthen cooperation on conservation and

the forestry between ASEAN members and ROK, the ASEAN-ROK Forest Cooperation (AFoCo) Ministerial Meeting, and the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization.

ASEAN and ROK signed the agreement of ASEAN-Korea Environmental Cooperation Project (AKECOP) in 2000, and the AFoCo in 2011.

U Aye Myint Muang said that these agreements perform key roles in hu-

man resource development in forestry and sustainable conservation of forest and natural resources to prevent climate change, desertification, decline in biodiversity, pollution in air, water and soil, shortage of drinking water and poverty.

The preliminary meeting of high-profile of forest ministers was held on December 10 to decide on the issues for the major meeting.

ASEAN and ROK

signed an MoU to cooperate in measures fight against climatic changes.

The deputy minister, along with ministers, deputy ministers and senior officials from ASEAN member countries, visited ASEAN-ROK Summit Exhibition in Busan on 11 December.—MNA

Union Border Affairs Minister inspects development of Mon State

NAY PYI TAW, 13 Dec — Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win together with the Mon State Chief Minister on Friday formally opened a concrete bridge in

Ye Township, Mon State.

The 375-ft long bridge was constructed spending rural area development funds allotted in 2013-2014 fiscal year.

The Union minister

visited People's Hospital and a basic education high school in Khawza Township in the state.

He also inspected building of bridges in the township.—MNA



Kabyawa bridge in Ye Township, Mon State.—MNA

M.V Azamara Quest cruise ship made second port of call to Myanmar

YANGON, 13 Dec — M.V Azamara Quest cruise ship, with 600 visitors on board, made its second port of call to Myanmar via India. They are scheduled to leave here for Thailand on Monday.

The managing director of Myanmar Voyages Co., said that they are planning Amazing evening party for their customers at the People's Square where the guests can enjoy Myan-

mar's traditional culture.

During the trip, the company arranged trips for the guests to visit significant places in Yangon, Bago and Bagan.

Khin Cho Win

REGIONAL

AEC starting point to connect ASEAN with neighbours: former Thai deputy PM

HONG KONG, 13 Dec — Thailand's former deputy prime minister Korn Dabbaransi said here Saturday that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries should not confine themselves within the boundary of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) as its community building process is scheduled to be accomplished in 2015.

As the AEC building goes ahead, the challenge for ASEAN is how to capitalize on the historical AEC inauguration which will be commenced next year, he said in a keynote speech at the first ASEAN Development Forum.

"This long-awaited AEC is simply a starting point to enhance ourselves to economically connect with China and India, the two economic powerhouses in the Asia-Pacific region," said Dabbaransi, currently chairman of the Thai-Chinese Friendship Association.

He called on all ASEAN members to harmonize the construction of road network projects to maximize transportation and utilization

so that regional border trade can be explored after 2015.

According to Dabbaransi, trade within the 10-member bloc has exceeded 60 percent of the total in the Asian region.

"The AEC of 10 nations with more convenient road network will elevate inter-Asian trade volume to an even higher level," he noted.

The AEC vision is defined by factors such as a single market and production base, a competitive economic region, equitable economic development and integration into the global economy.

Dabbaransi expressed the hope that ASEAN countries develop a mutually beneficial and prosperous region together with China and India.

The first ASEAN Development Forum in Hong Kong was attended by government officials, experts, scholars and business people from the 10 ASEAN countries as well as representatives of Hong Kong's business community and related experts and scholars from the Chinese mainland.

Xinhua

NANJING, 13 Dec — Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday deplored denials in Japan of the 1937 Nanjing Massacre in marking the first national observance of the tragedy, saying that acknowledgment of the two countries' troubled past is crucial to improving relations.

"Forgetting history means betrayal. Denying responsibility for a crime means repeating it," Xi said in an address on the 77th anniversary of the sacking of China's then capital by the Imperial Japanese Army.

Evidence of Japan's actions, Xi said, is "as tall as a mountain and iron clad," citing official Chinese estimates that more than 300,000 died during the six-week siege.

Historians in Japan have put the death toll at ranging from several tens of thousands to 200,000.

The commemoration, held at the newly renovated memorial hall of the victims of the massacre with more than 10,000 people attending, comes at a delicate moment for Sino-Japanese relations.



Chinese President Xi Jinping makes a speech to commemorate the 1937 Nanjing Massacre in Nanjing on 13 Dec, 2014. Xi called on the world never to forget the horrors visited on the city and "resolutely oppose" those who seek to downplay their significance.

KYODO NEWS

After two years of strained bilateral ties triggered by a territorial dispute in the East China Sea, Xi finally consented to meet with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Beijing last month. The meeting helped ease diplomatic tensions but disagreements over historical issues remain a major obstacle to closer bilateral

ties.

Despite the strong language, the ceremony's intent, Xi said, "is not to continue our enmity. The people of China and Japan should be friends through the ages."

"History," he said, "tells us that we must safeguard peace."

Abe angered China last December with a visit to Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, a memorial to Japan's war dead that includes the names of convicted war criminals.

In February, Chinese lawmakers approved three new national days of remembrance devoted to commemorating the war.

Beijing has since pushed hard to raise awareness of both Japanese war crimes and China's own role in defeating the Axis powers. State-run media has flooded the country with a seemingly endless stream of news stories about the occupation. This summer, a months-long series based on the confessions of Japanese war criminals served as a daily reminder of the two countries' unfinished business.

The efforts are intended in part to counter asser-

tions by some Japanese that China has exaggerated the massacre.

In February, best-selling novelist Naoki Hyakuta, who was appointed by Abe as a governor of Japanese national broadcaster NHK, called the incident a "fabrication." And in early 2012, Nanjing's sister city relationship with the Japanese city of Nagoya nearly foundered in the wake of similar comments by Mayor Takashi Kawamura.

But Beijing's increased focus on the war is also part of a strategy to encourage patriotism and cement the Communist Party's legitimacy. "The large amounts of state investment in these politics of memory...are very clearly intended to give the Chinese people who are its target a stronger sense of national identity," said Adam Cathcart, a specialist in Sino-Japanese relations at the University of Leeds.

As if to drive the point home, in preparation for the event the city decorated its streets with enormous banners urging the public to "Inscribe history in your memory" and "Never forget our national humiliation."

Kyodo News

At least 11 killed, about 100 missing in Indonesia landslides

JAKARTA, 13 Dec — At least 11 people died and about 100 are missing following landslides caused by heavy rain in Indonesia's Central Java Province on Friday, local government officials said on Saturday.

Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of the Jakarta-based National Disaster Mitigation Agency, said the landslides occurred just before dusk in the province's Banjarnegara Regency, about 342 kilometres east of the capital Jakarta.

According to Sutopo, the landslides buried 105 houses, forcing 379 people to evacuate and injuring four others.

"The condition on the field is bad and we need heavy machines to open the roads covered by the mudslides," the official said. Deforestation makes some areas in the country prone to landslides, particularly during the rainy season between October and April.

According to data issued last month by the disaster mitigation agency, as many as 1,136 floods, landslides and whirlwinds occurred this year. The disasters killed 355 people, displaced more than 1.7 million and damaged over 25,000 homes.

Kyodo News



Indonesian soldiers and rescue team members lift a cattle trapped in the mud after a landslide hit the village of Sampang in Banjarnegara on 13 Dec, 2014 in this photo taken by Antara Foto. The landslide destroyed a village in Indonesia, killing at least 11 people, an official said on Saturday, as rescuers used their bare hands to search through the rain and mud for 108 missing people.—REUTERS

Thailand crown prince's wife resigns from royal role

BANGKOK, 13 Dec — The wife of Thailand's Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, Srirasmi, has resigned her royal position, the palace has announced.

A statement said King Bhumibol Adulyadej had accepted Princess Srirasmi's written request.

Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn had asked the government to strip his wife's family of their royally bestowed name.

Seven of her relatives had been arrested in a purge of officials allegedly involved in corruption.

The palace statement, which appeared in the Royal Gazette, read: "Princess Srirasmi, wife of Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn... has written to respectfully resign from her status in the royal family and permission has been granted by His Majesty the King." Srirasmi is the crown prince's third wife, and the pair married in 2001. They have a son. He was already known to be estranged from the princess, although



Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn and then Princess Srirasmi in 2008 — BBC

they continued to attend official functions together.

There has been no official announcement of a divorce, but their separation is being seen as inevitable.

The princess's uncle, a police general, was arrested over accusations of amassing vast wealth through smuggling and gambling rackets.

Four of her siblings and two other relatives have also been held. Srirasmi would have been expected to become queen when the crown prince succeeded his father.

This is not the first time a wife of the crown prince

has been brought down in this very public way; his second wife was also discredited, then forced into exile 18 years ago. The world's longest-reigning monarch, King Bhumibol, a widely revered and unifying figure, has been on the throne in Thailand since 1946. The pivotal position of the monarchy in Thailand's political order makes the succession an extremely sensitive issue.

Many aspects still cannot be reported from inside the country. The strict lese majeste law criminalises any critical comment about the monarchy. — BBC

US seeks to defuse tensions over Israeli-Palestinian resolutions

BOGOTA, 13 Dec — US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Friday the United States was seeking to defuse tensions over proposed UN resolutions to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during talks in Europe next week.

Kerry will meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Rome on Monday and senior European officials to discuss possible resolutions, which would require a vote in the UN Security Council where the United States holds a veto.

“We’re trying to figure out a way to help defuse the tensions and reduce the potential for more conflict and we’re exploring various possibilities to that end,” Kerry told reporters in Bogota when asked whether there is a resolution the US could

support.

Jordan has circulated a Palestinian resolution to the 15-member council calling for Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory to end by November 2016. Western diplomats have said the proposal is “unbalanced.” France, Britain and Germany are in the process of drafting a proposal.

“There are a lot of different folks pushing in different directions out there, and the question is can we all pull in the same direction,” Kerry said. “That’s what we’re looking at.”

Some countries believe agreement on a resolution would be easier to achieve before Israeli elections in March. If the United States pushes the Europeans to wait until after Israel’s elections,



US Secretary of State John Kerry addresses a joint news conference with Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos after their meeting at the presidential palace in Bogota on 12 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

the Jordanians could put forward the Palestinian-drafted resolution for a vote in January that is likely to be vetoed by Washington.

Jordan’s UN Amba-

sador Dina Kavar said this month that she hoped a resolution could be put to a vote in December or January.

“Waiting until April and therefore probably fac-

ing a Palestinian draft in the Security Council in January, vetoed by the Americans, will just make the situation worse,” said a senior Western diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

“If there is a window of opportunity for a consensus resolution it might be this month,” the diplomat said.

Kerry met French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius on the sidelines of a climate conference in Peru on Thursday to talk about a European proposal.

He also called Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday to discuss “developments in Israel, the West Bank, Jerusalem and the region, as well as current initiatives at the UN,” a US official said.

Kerry and Lavrov will

meet in Rome on Monday to discuss the same issues, as well as Ukraine and Syria, State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said.

Later on Friday, Kerry talked to Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, the State Department said in a statement. Palestinians seek statehood in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and blockaded Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as their capital — lands captured by Israel in a 1967 war.

Israel accepts the idea of a “two-state solution” of an independent and democratic Palestinian state existing alongside Israel, but has not accepted the 1967 borders as the basis for final negotiations, citing security and other concerns.

Reuters

Russia’s Lavrov says peace talks in Ukraine needed swiftly



Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov speaks to media in a news conference during a meeting of foreign ministers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Basel on 5 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

MOSCOW, 13 Dec — Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reiterated on Friday Moscow’s calls to convene as soon as possible another round of peace talks on the conflict in east Ukraine’s Donbass region, TASS news agency reported. “A chance emerged to establish peace in Ukraine. With difficulties, but a ceasefire, a truce has been established,” TASS quoted him as telling a meeting with foreign policy experts.

“There is constructive base to move forward on... the economic restoration of Donbass, establishing political dialogue that should eventually lead to a constitutional reform.”—Reuters

Italy’s Renzi proposes tougher corruption laws amid Rome scandal

ROME, 13 Dec — Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi on Friday proposed tougher laws against corruption amid an investigation in Rome into a mafia-like group that offered bribes to officials in exchange for lucrative public contracts.

The government wants to prolong the minimum and maximum sentences for corruption by two years — to six and 10 respectively — which will extend the statute of limitations for the crime.

The measures, which will be inserted into a bill already being reviewed by parliament, will also make it easier to confiscate money and property from those convicted of corruption, the prime minister said.

“The central point is that who is convicted must pay for his crime, to the last day and to the last cent,” Renzi said.

Last week Rome prosecutors arrested 37 people and placed dozens of others under investigation, including a former mayor, for their involvement in a network of corruption allegedly run by a former right-wing extremist with long-standing ties to the capital’s underworld.

The 39-year-old Renzi, who took power in February, has moved to respond to the investigation in which several members of the ruling Democratic Party (PD) in the capital have been implicated.

Though no one with close ties to Renzi has

been touched by the scandal, it has undermined his efforts to portray his PD as a break with the often corrupt Italian politics of the past.

Under Italian law, the crime of corruption refers to paying a bribe to a public official and is always a custodial offence.

But currently, very few actually go to prison for the crime. Only 257 inmates out of 54,000 in Italian prisons, or 0.5 per cent, are serving time for corruption, Renzi said.

Those accused of corruption who plea bargain often do no jail time, and the statute of limitations often expires before a defendant exhausts Italy’s mandatory three appeals.

The new rules should



Italy’s Prime Minister Matteo Renzi

mean that even those who plea bargain will serve some jail time, and that there will be more time to complete the trial process before the statute of limitations runs out, Renzi said.

Reuters

Scottish Labour leader to swing Britain’s 2015 election

LONDON, 13 Dec — When the once mighty Scottish Labour party selects a new local boss on Saturday, national party chief Ed Miliband will be holding his breath: The decision could make or break his chances of winning power in wider Britain.

The winner of Scotland’s Labour crown will have to unite the divided party while attempting to tackle Scottish nationalists who have seen support surge since Scots voted not to quit the United Kingdom in a 18 September independence referendum.

At stake are precious Labour seats in the May 7 national election that polls indicate will be the closest in a generation.

If Labour stumbles in Scotland, it could scuttle Miliband’s hopes of unseating Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron or force Miliband to seek support from arch rivals in the Scottish National Party (SNP) to allow for a minority Labour government.

“Labour is plainly in trouble in Scotland,” Peter Kellner, president of polling firm YouGov, told Reuters. “If the SNP



Labour MP Jim Murphy addresses a crowd during his tour to promote the case for Scotland to remain part of the United Kingdom, in Edinburgh, Scotland on 8 Sept, 2014.—REUTERS

break through and take 20 or more Labour seats then it makes it very, very hard for Ed Miliband.”

An opinion poll in October showed the surge in support for the SNP could leave Labour with just four of Scotland’s 59 seats in Britain’s parliament, compared with the 41 they won in 2010.

The referendum, in which Labour joined forces with Cameron’s Conservatives in the fight to stop Scotland ending its 307-year union with England, exposed the cracks in Labour’s Scottish strong-

hold.

Labour’s failure was laid bare when it was left to former Labour prime minister Gordon Brown, rather than the local party, to rally fellow Scots against independence. Brown, 63, is now stepping back from frontline politics.

Enter Jim Murphy, a Glasgow-born 47-year old Labour lawmaker who Miliband once demoted. Murphy’s fiery speeches and sleeves-rolled-up style propelled him into the media spotlight during the pro-union campaign.

Reuters

WORLD

Cuba to attend first-ever Americas summit — Panama



Cuba's President Raul Castro

PANAMA CITY, 13 Dec — Cuba will attend the Washington-backed Summit of the Americas for the first time, host nation Panama said on Friday, edging two adversaries closer to a possible joint appearance by presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro.

The seventh Summit of the Americas, set for 10-11 April in Panama, presents the United States and Cuba an opportunity for detente.

Cuba has been shut

out of the previous six summits, sponsored by the Organization of American States, as it was expelled from the OAS in 1962 at the initiative of the United States. The 34-nation bloc invited Cuba to rejoin in 2009 but Cuba has declined.

“Cuba has confirmed that the highest level of government will attend the summit,” said Luis Martin, a spokesman for Panama’s Foreign Ministry, though he could not say if Cuban leader Raul Castro would headline the delegation.

At the previous summit in Colombia in 2012, Latin American countries threatened to boycott the next summit if Cuba were excluded, and in recent months Cuba’s participation has become widely expected.

Panama’s Foreign Ministry on Friday also listed Chile, Colombia,

Costa Rica and El Salvador among the attendees.

The United States is expected to attend but has not yet announced if Obama would lead the US delegation, a development that would stir protest from the influential anti-Castro lobby. Washington has said Cuba should be excluded but Secretary of State John Kerry indicated a softening of that position in a speech in Miami on Wednesday when he said, “We must get beyond the perennial debate about attendance — who comes — and focus on the substantive issues at the summit.”

Historically tense US-Cuban ties are further strained by the imprisonment of US foreign aid worker Alan Gross, who is serving a 15-year sentence for taking banned technology into Cuba to set up clandestine Internet service for Cuban Jews.—Reuters

After US torture report, Poland asks what its leaders knew

WARSAW, 13 Dec — The disclosure of details about the CIA’s brutal interrogation programme could provide new leads for Polish prosecutors investigating how much Poland’s leaders at the time knew about a secret jail the agency was running in a Polish forest.

Prompted by a US Senate report on the CIA’s “black sites” for interrogating al-Qaeda suspects, former Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, at a joint news conference with former Prime Minister Leszek Miller, said on Wednesday he knew about the facility in Poland.

He said the CIA had denied Polish officials access to the site, a villa on the grounds of a Polish intelligence training academy, so they did not know people inside were being tortured.

He said that while he

and Miller knew people were detained there, they were told the detainees were cooperating willingly with US intelligence and would be treated as prisoners of war.

Lawyers for former detainees say however that even if the detainees were treated as prisoners of war — which the lawyers dispute — it is illegal to detain anyone in secret, and Poland had a legal obligation to prevent this happening.

The report’s publication is giving rise to uncomfortable questions in countries that hosted the “black sites” and may complicate future security cooperation with the United States.

“Based on information in the media, the public statements from Mr Kwasniewski and Mr Miller suggest the prosecutors certainly have rea-

son to interview them,” said Mikolaj Pietrzak, a lawyer whose client, Adb al-Rahim al-Nashiri was held at the site.

“Statements they made recently indicate for the first time that they knew people were being held at the site,” Pietrzak said.

Reuters sent questions to Miller and Kwasniewski, via their staffs, asking if they knew the people being detained at the CIA site did not have the protections they were entitled to by law. Aides to both men said they had no comment.

The CIA declined all comment, including on Kwasniewski’s assertion that the agency had given assurances that detainees were cooperating willingly with US intelligence and would be treated as prisoners of war.

Reuters

Pacific storm triggers tornado, mudslides, floods in Southern California

LOS ANGELES, 13 Dec — A Pacific storm pounded Southern California with heavy rain and high winds on Friday, triggering a small tornado, flash floods and mudslides that prompted the evacuation of hundreds of homes, damaged dozens of others and disrupted passenger rail services along the coast.

One person was found dead on Friday in a rain-swollen flood-control channel in the Orange County town of Garden Grove, which could mark the third storm-related fatality on the West Coast since Thursday.

Separately, rescue teams saved two people after they were swept away in the fast-moving Los Ange-

les River near a homeless encampment, the Los Angeles Fire Department said in Twitter messages.

High winds tore down power lines throughout the region, leaving as many as 78,000 customers without electricity at one point after the storm moved in before dawn, utility officials reported.

In an unusual phenomenon for Southern California, a small tornado touched down in South Los Angeles, where it damaged the roofs of an apartment complex and two houses and ripped up a billboard, said National Weather Service Specialist Stuart Seto. The twister was an EF0, the smallest category possible, and no one was hurt, he



A parked automobile is surrounded by water as a winter storm brings rain and high winds to San Diego, California on 12 Dec, 2014.— REUTERS

said.

The tornado was the first in Los Angeles since 2004, according to USTornadoes.com which tracks

twisters. Weather Service meteorologists could not confirm that.

A water spout, which is like a tornado but occurs

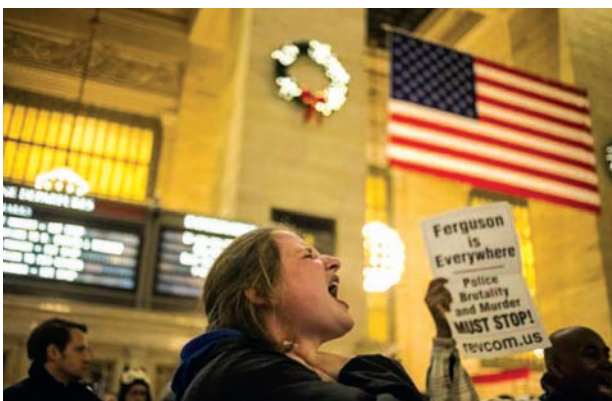
over water, was sighted over the ocean near Los Angeles International Airport on Friday morning, and another one formed 35

miles (56 kms) to the southeast off Newport Beach.

The severe weather, which included thunderstorms, was spawned by a storm system dubbed a “pineapple express,” a large low-pressure area that siphoned vast amounts of moisture from the tropical Pacific near the Hawaiian islands and dumped it on the West Coast as it moved over land, the National Weather Service said.

The same storm pummeled the Pacific Northwest and the northern half of California on Thursday with downpours and gale-force gusts that caused widespread power outages and disrupted commercial flights in San Francisco.

Reuters



An American flag is seen in the background as an activist, demanding justice for the death of Eric Garner, holds her hands to her throat while shouting, “I can’t breathe,” during a protest with dozens of others at Grand Central Terminal in the Manhattan borough of New York on 11 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

New York protesters ‘blow the whistle’ at police stations

NEW YORK, 13 Dec — Demonstrators staged mass “whistle-blowing” rallies outside police stations across New York City on Friday to start a second weekend of planned protests against the killing of an unarmed black man by a white patrolman.

In Harlem, about three dozen protesters marched past public housing projects where they say police abuse is particularly pervasive before rallying outside a local police station

house. There, the crowd blew metal whistles, piercing the cold air with the high-pitch shrill.

“We are here because out of this precinct, regularly, routinely, they abuse people in these housing projects,” organizer Kevin Lee, 59, told the throng of protesters.

The idea was to “literally blow the whistle on killer cops ... in the communities most affected by police brutality,” according to a statement by

Stop Mass Incarceration Network, which organized similar protests in the boroughs of Bronx and Queens to be held on Friday.

The whistle-blowing was part of a wave of protests that have swept the city since last week, when a grand jury decided not to indict Officer Daniel Pantaleo in the July chokehold death of Eric Garner.

While recent demonstrations have drawn fewer people, and the number of

arrests has dropped, a poll released on Friday shows that many New Yorkers agree that justice has not been served in the Garner case.

Nearly two-thirds of New York adults believe that the grand jury should have brought criminal charges against Pantaleo, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll released on Friday. The poll of 760 adults was conducted from 4-10 December.—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Sunday, 14 December, 2014

Employment opportunity is a core to reduce poverty

By Aung Khin

Job creation can lead to poverty reduction. The largest contributions for poverty alleviation include labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture, construction, and manufacturing sectors. And there is also evidence that higher levels of entrepreneurial activity correlate positively with poverty reduction.

Actually, an effective and accountable governance framework, in the form of operational institution, is a necessary precondition for sustainable poverty reduction. Global countries are now attracting

foreign investments with their own advantages. While some countries emphasize on tax incentives, some others with high-techs and workforces. Some Asian countries continue to reduce corporate income tax rates and introduce various tax incentives to attract and keep global investments.

As poverty reduction schemes cannot be carried out by local business firms only, more foreign investment are required in this matter. There are also some arguments that tax incentives are not necessary for attracting investments as investors will generally consider other factors that improve a country's investment climate as more important. They need better market potential, access to finance, reliable electricity supply and good infrastructure. For them, these are more crucial than extensive tax incentives.

Major challenges for this group include corruption in some government institutions and lack of cooperation between policy makers and administrators at the national and regional levels.

Unemployment and underemployment are under-

lying reasons for poverty. For the poor, job is often the only asset they can use to improve their well-being. Therefore, poverty reduction and sustainable economic and social development should be tackled with the creation of productive employment opportunities.

Nepotism or monopoly is a sort of bias that hinders decent job opportunities to secure income and empowerment for the poor, with serious impacts on women and younger people.

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POVERTY AND SLUMS

We can see slums in most of the big and crowded cities in the world. Even in the developed countries, there exist urban slum district in which the poor and destitute people live e.g. The U S A, India etc. We find the slums in the poverty-stricken countries most. A slum is an area or district of a city where poor people live and the buildings are in bad condition. No sewage, no drinking water and no electricity supply for the slum people. Their human settlement is awfully low and the dwellings are awesomely dirty. Due to lack of proper sanitation and unhygienic neighborhood, the slum people are prone to infection and epidemic such as cholera. This is the dreadful impact of slums areas in Metropolis. To be more precise, a slum is a thickly or densely populated, run-down, squalid part of a city, inhabited by poor people. It also refers to shanty town. These poor people live in improvised dwellings made from scrap materials- often plywood, corrugated metal, and sheets of plastic. How many people in the world live in slums? It is hard to figure out the total number of them as there are many poor people in the urban and rural areas in the world. The root cause is poverty and the poverty rate seems greater in the world. The issues of slums and poverty are closely intertwined. There is no guarantee that the lives of slum people will be upgraded. They are in utter despair and in miserable life, facing appalling hardship for their survival. The significant conditions of increasing slums are caused by population explosion, growing number of migration from rural areas to urban areas, unemployment problems, high cost of living in urban areas, mismanagement for upgrading the slum districts (e.g. Proper housing plans), lack of poverty alleviation program and lack of proper medical services, ineffectual governments, corrupt governments, unkind governments and lack of social security. These people are on low-income and their homes are substandard with no essential facilities installed for human dwelling.

The poor parents cannot send their children to schools and the governments concerned do not expand the state-owned schools and they do not provide free education ranging from primary level to secondary level. Their standard of living is extremely low and they are uneducated and some are even illiterate. So, they cannot expect their future prospect. They could merely survive and live on earth, but nothing more.

The movie named Slumdog Millionaire, directed by Director Danny Boyle, portrays the life of proletariat in slums in India, encountering hardship and hopeless conditions. The word 'A slumdog' is slang for a person that is poor or will never come upon wealth. The horrendous living conditions of people in the slums can be seen in some big cities of the big countries. Obviously, the alleviation of poverty is not an easy task both for big and small countries. Normally, rural people are poorer than urban people. As there is lack of job opportunity in rural areas, rural people cannot earn more money than the urbanites. So, they move

TOMMY PAUK

to towns or cities to seek odd jobs and stay in slum areas in big cities. Thus, they can barely eat, sleep and do the odd jobs as low-wage earners. The governments concerned are not able to upgrade their lives or livelihood. However much the governments have pledged to alleviate poverty in their countries, they cannot implement the schemes practically. The rural people and slum people still remain poor and hopeless for their future prospect.

When we do the case study for the causes of poverty based on some countries, we find the following circumstances. For examples; the country is big and the population is also great. As its economy is not developed, there exist slum districts and poverty. If a certain country's wealth is not proportionately shared for its citizens or if it is not exercising welfare-economics, poverty will prevail in that country. The country's economy is developed but, unfortunately, the government of a certain country is notoriously corrupt, ruthless and selfish. In that case, the poverty rate is greater in that country due to lack of government's support. If a country is poor and there are no favorable climatic conditions for growing crops and producing food, the people are starving and begging foods, aid and loans from the rich countries. So, this is the worst situation in the world. In some countries, the governments are clean, kind, and honest, but these countries are always hit by natural disasters. In that case, despite the rehabilitations, the poverty cannot be alleviated. No matter rich or poor country, when equality and justice are absent in a certain country, the poverty and slums can be vividly seen. Actually, they are local inhabitants who lose their rights to enjoy privileges in their own country. They are the human resources to develop their country's economy by participating in national tasks with their capacity. Unless they are allowed or trained to work for suitable occupations or employment, the certain country loses its human resources. The governments concerned must be clever enough to solve this problem. If the governments fail to tackle this problem, they will surely face the very disastrous consequences. The slum clearance schemes should be effectively implemented and the subsequent aid program for the inhabitants should be done properly.

As for Myanmar, the slum does not become an important issue to be mentioned. Actually, there is no significant slum both in rural and in urban areas. There are some squatters who illegally settled on a section of land in big cities or in new satellite towns. The regional or divisional governments evict the squatters from the occupied land and provide them a suitable settlement or estate. The eviction is a legal action and the poor must have legal right to settle on Myanmar soil since they are Myanmar citizens. However, poverty and impoverishment can still be seen in rural, remote and coastal areas in Myanmar. The present govern-

ment is striving to narrow the great gap between the rich and the poor. The Myanmar government is creating job opportunities in the huge plantation projects, factories, farm lands and mining projects in the areas where the local people inhabit. They can make their living in these areas and get some fringe benefits provided by the government. There was no one who died of starvation in Myanmar. This means that Myanmar has sufficient food to consume on daily basis and people are kind to donate who are homeless or starving. Besides that, we do not have food-shortage and fresh-water scarcity problems in Myanmar. According to geographic conditions, we have plenty of habitable lands. Very few derelicts, paupers and beggars with disabilities can be seen in the metropolis or in small towns in Myanmar. There is no huge challenge of slum settlements in Metropolis in Myanmar, but the government has planned to eliminate the poverty as quick as possible. It is an obligation for the government to stabilize the prices of commodities because they have been skyrocketing for a number of years. As a result, the cost of living in Metropolis in Myanmar is getting higher. This affects urbanites and rural people bitterly. At present, the standard of living in rural areas is improving as they can get access to electricity, telecommunications, internet connection and modern farming method and micro finance services. In addition, the farmers in rural areas can borrow money with low interest rates from micro finance services and cooperative banks for their livelihood. At the same time, the mechanization of farming makes the agricultural productivity increase and the farmers can also increase their income. Thus, they can upgrade their living standard properly. Myanmar is solving the issue of slum settlements and poverty with concerted efforts. The present government is making the relentless and serious efforts for alleviating poverty in Myanmar. Undoubtedly, Myanmar can reduce the poverty rate with this gaining momentum. This is the real situation in Myanmar and it is absolutely encouraging and impressive.

We should not neglect slum people as they lose the privileges and rights of the citizens. We need to help them and promote their lives with humanitarian aid while the respective governments are striving to alleviate the poverty within their own countries. If the country is very poor, UN and the donor countries should help the poor people relieve the pains and trouble of poverty to some degree. If the governments, capitalists, cronies, donors and philanthropists are in unison to support alleviating poverty and slums, we can lessen the slum areas and reduce the poverty rate on earth definitely. Wishing this noble service for mankind a great success!!!!

Tommy Pauk is the pseudonym of U Thein Swe, who is B.A (English) and (Registered Law) R.L.I. degrees holder. He has English Teaching experience at Yangon University English Department and Workers' college in Yangon, and now is working as freelance writer and English Teacher cum Translator/Interpreter for foreign firms.

ARTICLE

Towards pleasanter cities, towns, and villages

By Myo Myint

It is good news that Yangon City Development Council is giving serious attention to making the city a cleaner and pleasanter place. It is distributing garbage bins imported from abroad to its townships. Its workers are taking great pains to keep places where people come to relax, spick and span, such as the Inya bund on Pyay Road, which is very popular with both the young and old. It has announced that it would be giving an award to the cleanest township from amongst its townships every four months as incentive to sustain cleanliness. Moreover, parks and gardens in the city are also being re-designed to enhance their beauty and exercise facilities have been introduced. Roads and pavements too are being repaired for the convenience of Yangon's inhabitants and visitors. Unfortunately, because of the complacency, and lack of financial resources, law enforcement, foresight, good planning and effective management in the past, large tracts of cities, towns and villages including those in Yangon region still remain to be improved.

Yangon region has now set a good example to the rest of the regions in Myanmar in trying to tackle its problems creatively and others should study it.

Due to increase in migration from rural areas, the population of cities and towns are spiraling and challenging the capacity of authorities in expanding facilities and improving services. For success of any initiative taken to improve the conditions of cities, towns and villages, it is vital for the people living in them to bear some of the responsibilities and participate in the activities actively. In my view, there are four most basic, but key areas to which residents of a city, town or village can make contributions for its sustained development.

The first is matters concerning the promotion of cleanliness and tidiness of cities, towns and villages. Although it is a simple matter that does not require much effort to control, many people thoughtlessly throw rubbish and spit betel juice wherever they like, even in religious precincts and public parks. Furthermore, one can also see back lanes close to the main roads filled with mountains of rubbish, some even touching the win-

dows on the ground floor, thrown by tenants from the various floors of buildings. However, neither the people who live on the ground floor nor the local municipal authorities seem to be take note of, or bothered by the foul smell or the unpleasant sight. Similarly, there are houses, some belonging to government departments, whose gardens are overgrown with grass and weeds and the hedges are unkempt. In spite of this, no one seems to feel that these depressing sights warrant some kind of action. The apathy may be because people either have become so used to such sights, or else they may feel that they have no responsibility to maintain their surroundings. To counter this indifference regarding cleanliness and neatness that affects the image of the city, firstly, authorities concerned and social organizations need to educate people to value their surroundings, to bear their civic responsibilities and follow the existing laws by the. Secondly, from the very first day at school, children should be trained to refrain from littering and to take care of their surroundings, and the training should be reinforced throughout their years at school and university, and at work.

Thirdly, action needs to be taken in accordance with the law, if gentle persuasion and education do not work.

The second matter concerns the maintenance of houses and buildings. One of the reasons why our cities and towns look decrepit is because many of the houses and buildings have been left unrepaired and unpainted for many years. While it is understandable that those living in less affluent areas may not have the money to spare on the maintenance of their houses, one cannot understand why buildings are not well-maintained, or regularly painted in the more prosperous commercial areas, with the improvement in the economy and the vast amount of profits that traders and entrepreneurs are making these days. The shabby and unpleasant appearance of cities and towns creates a bad impression, and makes foreigners think that the country is more poverty-stricken than it actually is. Since it is one of the main responsibilities of the respective development councils to transform the city or town under their charge into a clean, green and pleasant place, it is necessary that the officials concerned are not reluctant to make people

living in affluent and commercial areas, who have the means for the upkeep their premises, to keep buildings well-maintained, especially to repaint them regularly in accordance with municipal laws.

The third matter concerns the "annexation" of pavements by shopkeepers to extend their shops, to open stalls, to place things like huge transformers, concrete seats, flower pots, and even to park cars. This not only makes the place look chaotic and filthy, but also forces pedestrians to use the road causing them great inconvenience and endangering their lives. In the evenings, in some areas in the city centre, vendors boldly encroach on the road and set up stalls causing unnecessary traffic congestions and delays. This public nuisance demands stricter action from municipal authorities as well as solutions. One answer is to provide alternative open space for pavement hawkers to sell the whole day, and to restrict them to the designated places, another answer is to close off some roads to traffic in the evenings and allow vendors to use them, like in many countries, and the third answer is to make pavement vendors strictly abide by

the laws and to educate them on the consequences of their actions and the need to develop self-discipline in the interest of all concerned.

The three problems highlighted are difficult to solve, both in urban as well as rural areas, and some of the reasons may be the long ingrained habits, low level of consideration for others, greed and selfishness. For urban and rural transformations to succeed, active participation and cooperation of the people living in cities, towns and villages, awareness building of civic responsibilities, promotion of appreciation of a clean and neat environment, and guidance from community leaders and social organizations will be important factors. At the same time, officials of development councils will need to strictly abide by and enforce laws, locate more funds, increase financial input, recruit more staff, study experiences of other countries facing similar problems, and use creative thinking, dedication and persistence in the effort to make cities, towns and villages a more pleasant, clean and safe place for people of all strata to live in, work, bring up their children and for them to be take pride in.

Subcommittee discusses successful holding of grand military review ceremony



NAY PYI TAW, 12 Dec—The information and public campaign subcommittee focused on successful holding of the grand military review ceremony at its second meeting at the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday.

Subcommittee members discussed arrangements for broadcast of songs on grand military review through MRTV, life broadcast of the ceremony, erection of posters on grand military review in Nay Pyi Taw Council

Area, preparations to put up the poster at Thabyegon roundabout, appearance of articles in newspapers, interview with persons who had experiences on the grand military review ceremonies and registration for local and foreign media.

Chairman of the subcommittee Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway and party viewed posters on the ceremony at Thabyegon roundabout, in front of Nay Pyi Taw city hall and Pyinmana.

MNA

Yangon, a city of 5 million inhabitants, thronged by tourists

Presented by Kyaw The-ein (MNA)

The 30 November issue of the Austrian daily Kurier wrote about the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon, the most important of Myanmar's sacred buildings. It noted how the pagoda not only offers space for believers to pray but also provides them with free wireless internet access. Modern technology, hotels and restaurants have long found their way into important historical sites in the country. The Su Taung Pyai Pagoda on Mandalay Hill, for instance, even has a moving staircase, the article pointed out. It said Yangon, the city of 5 million inhabitants that serves as the country's gateway, suffers from traffic conges-

tion, but has a lot to offer to travelers, such as the Sule Pagoda, Bogyoke Market and the legendary Strand hotel.

Tourism generates roughly EUR 1 million in Myanmar with around three million visitors in total in 2014, according to Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Htay Aung.

Tourist visas were extended from seven to 28 days and can now be obtained electronically. There are 1,585 tour operators, over 1,000 hotels, around 3,000 guides and roughly 308,000 citizens working in tourism. Furthermore, the government has plans to improve tourism infrastructure by 2020.

EU bans export of jet fuel used by Syrian air force



A warplane operated by forces of Syria's President Bashar Al-Assad carries out what activists said was an air raid around al-Tabqa military base at a government-controlled airport that is surrounded by militants, west of Raqqa city, on 21 Aug, 2014. —REUTERS

BRUSSELS, 13 Dec — European Union governments agreed on Friday to ban the export of jet fuel to Syria from Sunday, saying it was being used by the Syrian air force for indiscriminate attacks against civilians.

The ban also covers finance and insurance related to jet fuel exports to Syria.

However, fuel and additives exclusively used by non-Syrian civilian aircraft landing in Syria will be exempt, so these planes can continue their onward flights. Europe is heavily dependent on jet fuel imports from the Middle East and it was not immediately clear how much fuel the 28-nation bloc actually exported to Syria. The United Nations says at least 3.2 million people have fled Syria and 200,000 have been killed in the more than three-year-

old civil war, which broke out after protests against President Bashar al-Assad's government. EU ministers agreed in principle in October to ban jet fuel sales to Syria, but the details have only now been worked out. "A significant number of innocent civilians ... have died because the Assad regime's air force has deliberately dropped weapons, including barrel bombs," Britain's Middle East Minister Tobias Ellwood said in a statement. "This measure will ensure that no EU people or companies will be involved in jet fuel going to Syria. I urge all nations to ban jet fuel going to the Assad regime," he said. Legal texts with a detailed list of fuel types and additives covered by the ban will be published in the EU's Official Journal on Saturday. —Reuters

Syrian rebel 'hell cannons' kill 300 civilians

BEIRUT, 13 Dec — Syrian rebels using improvised mortar bombs made of cooking gas canisters killed 311 civilians between July and December this year, a monitoring group said on Friday, condemning the use of the wildly inaccurate

weapons. Two-thirds of the deaths, or 203 people, were in the northern city of Aleppo where the so-called "hell cannons" have been fired on government-held districts of Syria's second city.

The Britain-based

Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which tracks the violence using sources on both sides, said that 42 children and 25 women were among the dead in Aleppo. It said more than 700 people had also been wounded during that time.



A locally made shell is launched by rebel fighters towards forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad at the frontline in al-Breij district of Aleppo on 10 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

Palestinian wounds five Israelis in suspected acid attack

JERUSALEM, 13 Dec — A Palestinian man threw a chemical substance believed to be acid at an Israeli family in the occupied West Bank on Friday, injuring a man and four children, Israeli police and the military said.

The assailant was shot and wounded immediately after the attack, which took place at a checkpoint south of Jerusalem.

Police spokeswoman Luba Samri said the attacker had "poured an unknown substance suspected to be acid on a Jewish family." She said a civilian at the scene shot and wounded the assailant.

The Israeli military said the Israeli man had stopped to pick up the Palestinian as a hitchhiker and then the attack occurred.

The incident comes at a time of heightened tension between Palestinians and Israelis, particularly in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, territories Israel seized in a 1967 war and Palestinians want for an independent state, together with Gaza.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.

Over the past four months, 10 Israelis and a foreign visitor have been killed by Palestinians in knife or car-based attacks, while at least a dozen Pal-



An Israeli soldier stands at the scene where a Palestinian attacked civilians with a chemical substance near the West Bank Jewish settlement of Neve Daniel, part of the Gush Etzion bloc, on 12 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

estians have also been killed, including most of those who carried out the killings. On Wednesday, a Palestinian minister died shortly after a confrontation with an Israeli border policeman in the West Bank. The policeman grabbed the minister by the neck during a scuffle and minutes he collapsed with breathing problems.

An Israel official who attended the autopsy said the minister had died of a heart attack possibly brought on by stress, while the Palestinian pathologist concluded that the grab to the neck more directly led to heart failure.

In the Gaza Strip, tens of thousands marched in celebration of the 27th anniversary of the founding of the Islamist Hamas group, in the largest show of support for the organization there since a five-week war with Israel that ended in August.

In the hostilities, more than 2,100 Palestinians were killed, most of them civilians, Palestinian officials said. More than 70 Israelis were also killed, most of them soldiers.

Fathy Hammad, a former cabinet minister, saw the large turnout as showing Hamas remained popular despite the war's dev-

astation and the hardships of an Egyptian and Israeli blockade of the coastal territory.

"Once one road is blocked, another one opens," Hammad said.

But he cautioned against Palestinian frustration with what they see as a slow pace of efforts to rebuild homes and other property, warning this could bring about further confrontation. "We will extract reconstruction by our rifles, if there will be no rebuilding, there will be another explosion," Hammad told those gathered at a rally in Gaza's Jebalya refugee camp. —Reuters

Islamic State target of 27 strikes by US allies



An EA-18G Growler launches from the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) in this US Navy picture taken in the Arabian Gulf on 28 Oct, 2014. —REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 13 Dec — The United States and its allies carried out 27 airstrikes on Islamic State targets in Syria and Iraq in the past three days, US military officials said on Friday. Fighting positions, buildings and fortifications were hit in seven attacks near the Syrian cities of Kobani and Aleppo and on the border with Iraq, according to a statement from the Combined Joint Task Force for the coalition overseeing the operation.

Islamic State was hit with 20 strikes in Iraq near the cities of Ramadi, Ar Rutbah, Mosul, al-Qaim, Samarra, Rawah and al Asad, the statement said. —Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

S&P doubts UK deficit target, says more tax revenue may be needed

LONDON, 13 Dec — Ratings agency Standard & Poor's said on Friday Britain's public borrowing was likely to be higher than the government had forecast and the country might need to find ways to raise more tax revenue to balance the books.

Finance minister George Osborne has said he intends to balance Britain's budget over the coming years through spending cuts alone, a pledge which will be central to the campaign of Prime Minister David Cameron ahead of national elections in May.

But S&P, the only major ratings agency not to have cut Britain's AAA rating, said the tax base might eventually need to widen, whoever is in power after May.

"We expect that future consolidation may eventually look more to the revenue than the expenditure side," S&P said in a statement in which it confirmed it was maintaining a stable outlook for Britain's triple-A rating.

The ratings agency also said Britain's economy would suffer if it left the European Union, something Cameron has said he will put to a referendum in 2017 if his Conservative Party continues to hold power.

In its update on Brit-



A London bus crosses the River Thames on London Bridge during the evening rush hour with Tower Bridge seen behind in London on 18 Dec, 2013.—REUTERS

ain's credit rating on Friday, S&P questioned forecasts from the country's budget office, which last week said it expected the public finances to be back in balance by the 2018/19 financial year.

S&P said it expected the deficit to fall only slowly in the 2014 calendar year to 5.4 percent of gross domestic product and would decline towards 3 percent by 2017 when the government's forecast is for the shortfall to be around 1 percent.

Frank Gill, a director of European sovereign debt

at S&P, said the outlook for higher tax revenues looked uncertain, and not only because of the slow pace of recovery in pay, which has hurt income tax receipts.

"We are taking a very conservative view on the receipts side. It's not just the weak recovery so far in wage growth," he said in an interview.

Britain's big banking sector may not yield a windfall in tax revenues and its diminishing North Sea oil and gas industry was another potential source of weaker income, Gill said.

That could mean that whoever wins power in May has to consider new ways to boost tax revenue.

"We expect that whatever government is in power and whatever policy bias in terms of cutting the fiscal deficit they may have, they are likely to be flexible," Gill said.

Britain's opposition Labour Party has said it wants to deal with the deficit in a "fair way" and has said it will introduce new taxes on expensive properties and restore a 50 percent rate on income tax for top earners.—Reuters

Oil plunges to new 5-year lows after bearish IEA outlook

NEW YORK, 13 Dec — Crude oil markets fell 3 percent or more to plumb new five-year lows on Friday after the world's energy watchdog forecast even lower prices on weaker demand and larger supplies next year. Benchmark Brent oil settled at below \$62 a barrel and US crude slumped to under \$58 to extend Thursday's landmark fall below \$60.

Surging crude inventories in the United States and top oil exporter Saudi Arabia's reiteration that it will not cut production had roiled prices over the last two days despite data pointing to strong US economic recovery.

On Friday, the Paris-based International Energy Agency which coordinates the energy policies of industrialized countries, cut its outlook for demand growth in 2015, triggering another collapse.

The IEA slashed its outlook for global oil demand growth for 2015 by 230,000 barrels per day to 900,000

bpd on expectations of lower fuel consumption in Russia and other oil-exporting countries.

It predicted that oil-producing nations outside of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries will add to global supplies. It also expected prices to fall further. "That's just more bad news for the oil markets," said Andrew Lipow, president of Houston-based Lipow Oil Associates.

Brent LCOc1 settled down \$1.83, or nearly 3 percent, at \$61.85 per barrel. It fell to \$61.35 during the session, the lowest since July 2009.

US crude CLc1 finished down \$2.14, or 3.6 percent, at \$57.81. It fell earlier to \$57.34, its lowest since May 2009. On the week, Brent lost more than \$7, or about 11 percent. US crude tumbled over \$8, or 12 percent.

Both markets have lost about 46 percent of their value since their June highs, when Brent stood at above \$115 and US crude at around \$107.—Reuters



An attendant prepares to refuel a car at a petrol station in Rome 4 Jan, 2012.—REUTERS

Sierra Leone to ban Xmas parties, plans "surge" to curb Ebola spread



Medical staff working with Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF) prepare to bring food to patients kept in an isolation area at the MSF Ebola treatment centre in Kailahun on 20 July, 2014.—REUTERS

DAKAR / FREETOWN, 13 Dec — Sierra Leone plans to ban parties and other festivities over the Christmas and New Year's holidays and to launch a

"surge" to cut the risk of Ebola spreading further in the West African country now with the most infections, officials said on Friday.

Sierra Leone is struggling to reduce the spread of the viral hemorrhagic fever as the death toll in West Africa continues to rise, fueled in part by increasing infections in the country.

Figures from the World Health Organization on Friday showed 6,583 people have died from the disease in three states in West Africa — Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia — out of 18,188 cases.

"The government is planning to keep people indoors during Christmas through Boxing Day and New Year," said Jarrah Kawusu-Konte, a spokesman for Sierra Leone's president.

He told Reuters that

the government would deploy soldiers across the country to enforce the measure, which would include a ban on parties and other gatherings.

"When you have parties, the risks are very high. We are very anxious to break the chain of transmission through parties and gatherings," Kawusu-Konte said. He did not specify the date when the ban would take effect.

In addition to the ban on gatherings, Sierra Leonean authorities are also planning what they have called a "surge" in their response in and around the capital Freetown, aimed at stemming the increasing rise of Ebola infections.

For several weeks,

most of the new infections have been showing up in and around Freetown. At least more than five areas in the far west and far east of Freetown will be particularly targeted where epidemiologists say sick people still refuse to report to treatment centers.

Data published by WHO on Friday showed that there were some 8,086 cases in Sierra Leone, with nearly 1,900 deaths.

The month-long surge, which will start on Wednesday, is aimed at strengthening the country's response, especially in terms of tracing people who have contracted Ebola, according to Palo Conteh, the head of Sierra Leone's National Ebola

Response Centre (NERC).

"We want to get sick people out of their homes and take them to treatment centers, more of which we will be opening next week," Conteh said in Freetown.

NERC Coordinator Stephen Gaojia said there would be "door-to-door" visits as people were still dying at home because they were refusing to report to health facilities even when infected.

He added that 900 beds would be made available to take in the sick in order to reduce the transmission rate in the western area after New Year's Day and to ultimately stop transmission of Ebola.

Reuters



French President Francois Hollande (R) and former hostage Serge Lazarevic hug each other after delivering speeches at the Villacoublay military airport, near Paris on 10 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

Mali freed four militants in exchange for French hostage

DAKAR, 13 Dec — Mali freed four Islamist militants with ties to al-Qaeda in north Africa in exchange for the release of Serge Lazarevic, a French national who was being held by the group, Mali's justice minister said on Friday.

"Mali cannot deny that it freed them because it is a fact. Everyone knows, it serves no purpose to hide it, but Mali did it under a precise framework," Mohamed Ali Bathily, told French television channel *France24*.

The minister did not say what, if anything, Mali itself had gained from the deal that led to the release of Lazarevic, 51, on Tuesday.

"While we could do something to save Lazarevic, Mali had to play its own role," Bathily said in the interview. He said the west African nation had done the same

kind of deal to free about 30 of its nationals who were captured in the northern city of Kidal, a stronghold of Tuareg separatists.

Lazarevic was seized with another Frenchman, Philippe Verdon, in northern Mali in 2011. Verdon was killed by his captors last year.

The release of the militants sparked anger in the capital after it was revealed that Mahamed Aly Ag Wadoussene and an accomplice, who were suspected to have carried out the 2011 kidnapping, were part of the four released.

Bathily said legal proceedings against Ag Wadoussene were merely suspended and would continue even after his release. He is also facing charges over a jail break in June, during which a guard was killed.—*Reuters*

Three teens, man shot outside Portland, Oregon, high school

PORTLAND, (Ore), 13 Dec — Three teenagers and a 20-year-old man were shot and wounded on Friday outside a Portland, Oregon, high school when a gunman thought to have gang ties opened fire following a dispute, police said.

The suspect, believed to be in his late teens or early 20s, fled the scene with two other males following the shooting less than a block from Rosemary Anderson High School and all three remained at large hours later, said Pete Simpson of the Portland Police Bureau.

Taylor Zimmers, 16, was struck by the gunfire shortly after noon outside the school in north Portland where she was listed in critical condition, police said.

A 17-year-old boy and 20-year-old man were in fair condition at the same hospital and a 17-year-old female was treated and released after being grazed in the foot by a bullet, police

said. Simpson earlier said the female was 19.

Simpson said all of the victims were affiliated in some way with Rosemary Anderson and ran to the school following the shooting, where they received initial treatment as it was placed on lockdown.

The school reopened later on Friday afternoon. Nearby Jefferson High School and Portland Community College were also placed on lockdown for about two hours before resuming classes, and streets around Rosemary Anderson were blocked off.

Officers with search dogs combed nearby neighbourhoods for the suspect, Simpson said, adding that the area had a history of violence but hadn't seen a shooting with an injury in some four years.

The *Portland Oregonian* newspaper reported that FBI agents were on the scene to assist police. Parents were reunited with their children at a staging



Police investigate outside the Rosemary Anderson High School in Portland, Oregon on 12 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

area several blocks from the school. Aly Wright, who works at the Coffeehouse Five cafe near the school, told *Reuters* her customers heard several gunshots, followed by the quick arrival of police.

"This whole block is on lockdown," she said.

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales said the shooting represented a "bad day" for a neighbourhood that had worked to overcome a history of gang violence.

"We haven't entirely eliminated the gang problem, but we've made a lot of progress," Hales said.

Rosemary Anderson is a community-based alternative high school serving up to 190 "at-risk" students, many of whom are homeless or who had been expelled or dropped out of Portland's public high schools, according to its website.—*Reuters*

World powers, Iran to resume nuclear talks in Geneva

GENEVA, 13 Dec — World powers and Iran will resume talks here in Geneva on Teheran's nuclear programme next Wednesday, said a statement released by the European Union on Friday.

The political directors of the P5+1 group, namely China, France, Russia, Britain, the United States, plus Germany, and Iran will meet on 17 December in Geneva "for a one-day meeting to continue diplomatic efforts towards reaching a longterm, comprehensive solution," read the statement from EU.

According to reports from Iranian official *IRNA* news agency, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said that two days before the talks, preliminary bilateral talks will be held between Iran and P5+1 delegations. Araqchi told *IRNA* that all nuclear issues will be discussed in this round of talks. Iran and the world powers have agreed to extend the nuclear talks and the Geneva deal for another seven months after the talks failed to meet the deadline to reach a comprehensive nuclear agreement last month.

In the wake of the deal in November, US Secretary of State John Kerry said that sides would meet again in December to discuss the tough Iranian nuclear issue, and the expert-level meeting would start soon, aiming at a political deal within four months. Iran has been a target of UN sanctions due to its alleged attempts to build nuclear weapons. The West accuses Iran of developing nuclear weapons under the cover of civilian nuclear programmes, which Iran has denied, insisting that its nuclear programmes are for peaceful purposes only.—*Xinhua*

In desert suburb of Lima, poorest pay most for scarce water

NUEVO PACHACUTEC, (Peru), 13 Dec — On a desert hillside north of Lima, a worker with a hose splashes water from a truck into plastic containers in a dusty neighbourhood where the very poorest people pay most for water. Water will become scarcer in sprawling settlements such as Nuevo Pachacutec on the Pacific coast as the population of Peru's capital surges and global warming thaws Andean glaciers, reducing flows in coming decades as the ice disappears.

The world's environment ministers are meeting in Lima this week to work out ways to fight climate change but residents doubt a United Nations deal due in Paris next year will ease problems for 160,000 people

in this area. "We often feel a bit forgotten," said Danitza Cruz Navarro, 40, who lives on an unpaved street where trucks carrying water filtered from the River Chillón fill containers as the only source of water under a tropical sun.

"Mosquitoes breed in some of the containers. The children get a lot of illnesses," she said. She counts herself lucky because she has a 1,100 litre (290 US gallon) sealed tank, rather than just open-top plastic drums like many neighbours. Nearby, Ycella Bonilla, 36, says her family pays 80 soles (\$27) a month for water, far more than about 10 soles for richer people in the city connected to municipal pipes. The Lima talks are trying to cut greenhouse gas emissions and raise cash to help poor

nations cope with impacts such as those on water supplies. Two decades ago, Nuevo Pachacutec was empty desert. "When we got here there was just sand," Bo-

nilla said in her home with pumpkin plants growing in the yard. "Now there's electricity, Internet, water. It's not adequate but it's better." Daily water consumption in

Nuevo Pachacutec is estimated at 16 litres per capita, compared to a minimum of 50 litres per person set by the World Health Organization for basic needs.—*Reuters*



Rolly Hinojosa collects water from a container at Nuevo Pachacutec shantytown on the outskirts of Lima's port of Callao on 11 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**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.

<u>Sr.No</u>	<u>Tender No</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Remark</u>
(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.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph.+95 67-411097/411206

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV NINOS VOY NO (1026W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NINOS VOY NO (1026W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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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**Indonesia,
Italy reach deal
on industrial
cooperation**

JAKARTA, 13 Dec — The governments of Indonesia and Italy on Friday inked an agreement to ramp up cooperation in industry sector.

Indonesian Industry Minister Saleh Husin and Italian Ambassador to Indonesia Federico Failla signed the memorandum of understanding on the cooperation at the Indonesian Industry Ministry.

Director General of International Cooperation of Indonesian Industry Ministry Agus Tjahjana said the deal included a range of initiatives intended to step up public and private partnership and boost the quality of exports.

"We want to bring the bilateral cooperation on acceleration of development on industrial sector to a higher level based on mutual benefit and equality," he said at the industry ministry.

Agus said that among the industrial sector were the industries of textile, leather, engines and others.

Further discussion on the inclusion of the industrial sector would be determined by both sides later, he said.

Ambassador Failla said he would have a meeting with Italian businessmen on 15 December in Rome, according to a statement from the Indonesian industry ministry. The ambassador plans to encourage the business sector in his country to ramp up cooperation with their Indonesian counterparts, the statement said.

As the biggest economy in Southeast Asia, Indonesia aims to diversify its export markets. Indonesia is the world's top exporter of crude palm oil, thermal coal and refined tin. In October, Indonesia's export reached 15.35 billion US dollars, with a trade surplus of 20 million US dollars as non-oil and gas exports rose, according to the national statistics bureau.—Xinhua

No more drunken sailors: Canadian Navy bans drinking at sea

OTTAWA, 13 Dec — The Royal Canadian Navy on Friday imposed an almost total ban on sailors drinking at sea, after a warship had to be recalled from an international exercise because inebriated crew members got into trouble.

Sailors had hitherto been allowed to drink off duty. Now, they will only be able to sample alcohol on special occasions such as Christmas, if the captain gives permission.

In addition, beer vending machines will be removed from vessels. And in the rare instances when sailors are allowed to drink, they will have to pay more, since



Crew from the deck of the Canadian naval frigate HMCS St John's give three cheers to Queen Elizabeth II in Halifax harbour, Nova Scotia, on 29 June, 2010.

REUTERS

ships will hike the price of alcohol served in their on-board bars.

"The consumption of alcohol will be prohibited

while ships are at sea," Royal Navy Commander vice admiral Mark Norman told reporters. "Unfortunately alcohol does contribute to

misconduct and has done in the past and we just want to try and regulate that as best we can."

In July, Norman ordered the HMCS Whitehorse back to Canada from an exercise in the United States after three sailors were accused of sexual misconduct, shoplifting and drunkenness while the ship was in port.

Norman said the Whitehorse affair and several other unspecified "questionable incidents" involving drunken sailors had hurt his confidence in crews' ability to drink responsibly and behave properly while ashore.

"This is about a growing concern over a period

of a couple of years where we had growing indicators of misconduct across the navy," he said.

Norman expressed confidence the ban would not hurt morale, saying sailors would understand the need to clamp down.

The navies of Britain, Australia and New Zealand have similar procedures on drink, he added. "This is a very dangerous business and there's just no place for people having access to alcohol at sea," said Norman. The new rules will still not be as tough as those in the United States, where all ships are dry.

Reuters

Early warnings need to be 'accessible, understandable' to work

KATHMANDU, (Nepal) 13 Dec — Creating effective early warning systems about worsening flooding and landslide threats in South Asia's mountains will require involving local communities and using non-technical languages, experts say.

Such changes could help solve the current problem of disaster warnings being issued but people not effectively receiving or heeding them, they said.

"It must be ensured that early warning information is accessible, understandable, acceptable

and actionable (to get a timely response by communities and relevant government agencies," said Mandira Shrestha, a trans-boundary flood risk management specialist at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

"There is also a serious need for regional cooperation in data sharing to increase lead time and accuracy of forecasts," she said at an international gathering of climate and disaster management experts in Kathmandu.

The Hindu Kush and Himalaya region, which

encompasses countries such as India, China, Pakistan and Nepal, has seen a range of natural disasters that occurred after meteorological departments relayed warnings to government authorities which then failed to act, the experts said. In most cases, the problem was an inability to decode the warnings, or a delayed response by national disaster management agencies, they said.

Salmanuddin Shah, a disaster management specialist at Focus Humanitarian Assistance, a network of humanitarian aid groups, said in 2010

his group informed the provincial government of Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan about growing landslide risk above the Hunza river — nearly nine months before a landslide occurred there, claiming 19 lives.

A lake that formed as a result of the landslide submerged 30 km (20 miles) of the Karakorum Highway that connects Pakistan with China. Six bridges, hundreds of houses and other business infrastructures were destroyed, along with crops and thousands of fruit trees.

According to Shah, the failure to put in place

a disaster plan by the provincial disaster management authority and other government departments was partially responsible for the losses.—Reuters

WEATHER REPORT

SPECIAL FEATURES: According to the observations at (12:30)hrs MST today, the low pressure area over Southeast of Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam) becomes unimportant.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 14th December, 2014: Weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Chin States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Motama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong wind may reach (35) m.p.h. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

‘Spectre’ to be the most expensive Bond movie?

LOS ANGELES, 13 Dec— Latest Bond movie ‘Spectre’ is reportedly be the most expensive movie in Hollywood after sensitive documents got leaked in an e-mail.

The upcoming 24th James Bond film will cost more than USD 300 million and MGM studio is trying to cut down the costs, said *The Hollywood Reporter*.

MGM president Jonathan Glickman sent an internal memo in November stating the budget for the film ‘sits in the mid USD 300 million’.

Glickman said, “We recognise that this movie



MGM president Jonathan Glickman sent an internal memo in November stating the budget for the film ‘sits in the mid USD 300 million.—PTI

needs to build on the past few films and there are expectations we must meet for the audience. Still, we must find further cuts. This is not about ‘nickel-and-diming’ the production.”

The e-mail states that Glickman is trying to lower the expenditure, including shooting a night scene in London instead of Rome, using fewer carriages for a fight scene on a train.

The leaked information also includes a response from producer of the film Barbara Broccoli to Glickman, who refused to cut down on the number of train carriages and says she “cannot find the cemetery or villa in the UK”.

Sony was hacked on 24 November and it has resulted in the release of private emails, sensitive information about 47,000 current and former employees and financial data.

Spectre, which Sam Mendes is directing, began shooting in London’s Pinewood Studios on Monday.—PTI

I am not dating anyone: Selena Gomez



Singer-actress Selena Gomez

LOS ANGELES, 13 Dec — Singer-actress Selena Gomez has revealed that she is not dating anyone currently.

The ‘Heart Wants What It Wants’ hitmaker, who split from on-and-off boyfriend Justin Bieber, said she does not even know how to use dating applications, reported *Ace Showbiz*. Asked whether she’s currently dating anyone and interested in dating applications, Gomez said, “No, I’m not, actually. Oh, goodness no! I don’t even know how

to work it (dating application), to be honest.” Gomez, 22, said she still has respect for her former boyfriend.

“I definitely have so much respect and love for him. And going in the studio is just very therapeutic... It was my way of having it be a message more to people in general.

“People everywhere feel this feeling, and they should understand when anybody goes through that. They just can’t help what they want and (who) they love,” she said.—PTI

Epic ‘Exodus’ casts Christian Bale’s Moses as reluctant leader

NEW YORK, 13 Dec — With massive battle scenes, biblical plagues and a towering tidal wave, British director Ridley Scott’s “Exodus: Gods and Kings” is an epic historical drama and retelling of the story of Moses as a reluctant prophet.

Shot in 3D with striking visual effects, 20th Century Fox’s “Exodus” is the latest biblical-theme film to be released in 2014, dubbed the “year of the Bible.” It follows the success of Paramount Pictures’ “Noah,” which grossed more than \$360 million (£229.03 million) worldwide, and 20th Century Fox’s “Son of God,” which took in \$68 million worldwide. Scott’s big-budget epic, which opens in US theatres on Friday, is projected by BoxOffice.com to earn \$32 million in its opening weekend.

Oscar-winning actor Christian Bale plays Moses, a former Egyptian prince who rose up against the Pharaoh Ramses and



Cast member Christian Bale poses for photographs as he arrives for film world premiere of “Exodus: Gods and Kings” in Madrid, on 4 Dec, 2014. — REUTERS

initially was unsure about his role as a prophet.

“When he first meets with God, he says ‘No. This is not me. I don’t want to do this job,’” Bale told *Reuters*.

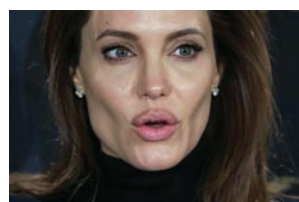
The 40-year-old actor is renowned for his physical transformation in a variety of roles — from

the emaciated insomniac in “The Machinist,” a sinewy former boxer in “The Fighter,” which won him an Oscar, to a pudgy con man with a comb-over in “American Hustle.”

As Moses, Bale delves into the emotional core of the man who led 600,000 slaves out of Egypt.

“He was a man of great passion, a great leader and a liberator, but he was somebody who also had incredible doubts and insecurities,” Bale explained. “I think that makes it so much more fascinating than I had ever realised. And also, in doing that, we are telling it in a new way.”—*Reuters*

Angelina Jolie gets chicken pox and cancels ‘Unbroken’ promotion



Director Angelina Jolie arrives to promote her film “Unbroken” in Berlin on 27 Nov, 2014.

REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 13 Dec — Filmmaker and actress Angelina Jolie said on Friday she has chicken pox

and will not be able to attend events for World War Two drama “Unbroken,” her second film as director.

“I just want to be clear and honest why I will be missing the ‘Unbroken’ events in the next few days, which is that I found out last night that I have chicken pox,” Jolie said in a video released by Universal Pictures on YouTube.

“Unbroken,” the harrowing survival story of prisoner of war and Olym-

pic runner Louis Zamperini, will have its US premiere in Los Angeles on Monday. It opens in theatres on 25 December.

On Thursday, the film failed to pick up any nominations for Golden Globe awards, one of the biggest events in the film awards season that ends with the Academy Awards in February “So I will be home, itching and missing everyone and I can’t believe it because this film means

so much to me. I just can’t believe it, but such is life,” said the 39-year-old mother of six and wife of Brad Pitt.

At the end of the 39-second video, she throws up her hands and then waves goodbye.

On Wednesday, Jolie attended Hollywood Reporter’s annual Women in Entertainment breakfast honouring the 100 most powerful women in the business.

Reuters

Mark Wahlberg lost USD 45,000 on single bet

LOS ANGELES, 13 Dec — Actor-producer Mark Wahlberg lost USD 45,000 on a single bet as he was preparing himself to play a role in his upcoming movie “The Gambler”.

The 43-year-old star will be playing the role of a gambling drug addict and as a part of his movie research he was in a casino in Macau, China, reported *Ace Showbiz*.

“I hit blackjack three times. Needless to say, I

won a lot of money. And like my character in the movie, I took every chip off the table and walked right over to the roulette wheel, put it all on black... And lost everything,” Wahlberg said.

“The Gambler” is directed by Rupert Wyatt and is a remake of the same 1974 movie which was written by James Toback and starred James Caa. The movie is set to be released on 25 December.

PTI



Actor-producer Mark Wahlberg lost USD 45,000 on a single bet as he was preparing himself to play a role in his upcoming movie ‘The Gambler’.—PTI

GENERAL

Mourinho backs Cech to stay ahead of Hull start

LONDON, 13 Dec — Out-of-favour goalkeeper Petr Cech will not leave Chelsea in January and has nothing to prove ahead of his first Premier League start of the season against Hull City, manager Jose Mourinho said.

The Czech international had been Chelsea's number one for the last 10 years before Thibaut Courtois, who returned from a loan at Atletico Madrid, took his place at the start of the season.

There has been mounting media speculation that Cech would leave Stamford Bridge during the January transfer window in search of first-team action.

Mourinho, however, wants Cech to stay and is

backing the 32-year-old who regains his position in place of the injured Courtois.

"I don't think it's possible (that Cech will leave)," Mourinho told a news conference on Friday. "I read a couple of weeks ago his agent saying there was no chance of him leaving Chelsea in January."

"That, plus the fact that I have no information about any offer to him, makes me believe 100 per cent that he's staying."

"We played Petr already in three Champions League matches and every game in the League Cup. He doesn't need to prove something. It's just a simple situation for him. Go and play, which is what he



Chelsea's manager Jose Mourinho speaks during a media conference in Cobham, southern England on 9 Dec, 2014.

REUTERS

wants to do.

"It's his natural habitat to be in goal, not on the bench. It's very comfortable for me, for the players, for the fans to know our goalkeeper on Saturday is Petr Cech," Mourinho added.

After suffering their first defeat of the season, 2-1 at Newcastle United

last weekend, Chelsea will also be without suspended playmaker Cesc Fabregas as they look to get back to winning ways at Stamford Bridge.

Mourinho, whose team lead the table by three points with 36 from 15 games, believes they will cope with the absences to continue their excellent form.

"Cesc (Fabregas) has been amazing for us but he's suspended for tomorrow so we don't think about him. We trust the other players," he said.

"We are playing very well in almost every game, there hasn't been one bad performance. We cannot do any more than we are doing."

Reuters

Milan will be great again, promises Inzaghi

MILAN, 13 Dec — Filippo Inzaghi has promised that seven-times European champions AC Milan will break away from their midtable mediocrity and become great again.

"We have alternated very good matches with others which have been less good, but I never claimed to have a magic wand," the AC Milan coach told reporters during an event organized by one of the club's sponsors on Thursday night.

"So many other teams are struggling, such as



AC Milan's coach Filippo Inzaghi gestures during their Italian Serie A soccer match against Udinese at the San Siro stadium in Milan on 30 Nov, 2014.

REUTERS

Napoli and Inter, and we need patience but I'm sure we will be great again soon.

"I hope this is Milan's moment."

Former Italy and Milan striker Inzaghi, who had no previous experience of coaching a senior team, took over before the start of the season hoping to improve on last season's modest eighth-place finish.

Milan have won five of their 14 Serie A games this season and are seventh with 21 points, five behind Genoa who are third in the Cham-

pions League playoff spot.

Inzaghi also praised Japanese attacking midfielder Keisuke Honda, who has scored six Serie A goals this season.

"He is doing some very good things," said Inzaghi. "He spoiled us with his six goals but he is also important when he doesn't score."

"He's one of those who are very useful to the team for the attitude and the great dedication."

Milan last won Serie A in 2011 under Massimiliano Allegri. — Reuters

Tajik athletes attend World Belt Wrestling Championship in Tatarstan

DUSHANBE, 13 Dec — Tajik athletes are participating in the World Belt Wrestling Championship that kicked off on Saturday in Tulyachi, Tatarstan,

Tajikistan's National Olympic Committee said.

The World Belt Wrestling Championship, running till Tuesday, is for athletes between 15 and 17. The four-

day event attracts athletes from Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, Serbia, Armenia, Georgia, Iran and other countries and regions.

Belt wrestling is one of the oldest historically recorded sports. It involves contestants aiming to knock each other over by grappling with a belt. — Xinhua

MYANMAR TV

(14-12-2014, Sunday)

6:00 am

* Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw

7:00 am

* News / Weather Report

7:20 am

* MRTV's Youth Programme

8:35 am

* Amazing World

9:30 am

* Documentary (ASEAN)

10:40 am

* Science and Technology Programme

11:10 am

* Gitadagale Phwintbarohn

12:00 noon

* News/ International News / Weather Report

12:30 pm

* Round up of The Week's International News

12:40 pm

* Myanmar Movies

2:30 pm

* Documentary (Road to Academy 2013 (Part - 3 & 4))

4:45 pm

* University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) —Third Year (Chemistry)

5:15 pm

* Sing & Enjoy

7:20 pm

* Weekly Entertainment News

8:00 pm

* News/ International News / Weather Report

8:35 pm

* Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society)

9:00 pm

* News
* Tamyethnar Takwetsar

MITV

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(14-12-14 07:00 am~ 15-12-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * Today Myanmar "Gold letter"
- * World News
- * Wholesale Fish
- * Local News
- * A Novitation Ceremony in a Rural Township
- * World News
- * Culture Shows: Theatrical Art
- * Local News
- * To The Land of Countless Temples
- * World News
- * Trishaw Man
- * Local News
- * Kayah Style
- * World News
- * In The Studio: Lann Sa (Part- II)
- * Local News
- * The Sacred Hair Relics Hailing Pagodas
- * World News
- * Porcelain and Glass
- * Local News
- * Unique & Motivating Chap Char Kut Festival
- * World News
- * Traditional Snacks
- * Local News
- * Those Who Never Give Up
- * World News
- * The Storytellers
- * Local News
- * Myanmar Masterclass "Caricature"
- * World News
- * Talented Musicians



Sand artist Sudarshan Pattnaik (C) gives the finishing touches on his sand sculpture on the eve of India and Pakistan's semi-final of the Hockey Champions Trophy at the Bay of Bengal Sea's eastern coast beach in Puri, 65 km away from the eastern Indian state Orissa's capital city Bhubaneswar, India, on 12 Dec, 2014. —XINHUA

Developing nations' donations to Green Fund "great sign": Germany

LIMA, 13 Dec — Developing nations' financial pledges to a global climate change fund is a "great sign," Germany's Federal Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks said on Friday.

At a Press conference during the 20th Conference of Parties (COP20) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Lima, Peru, Hendricks welcomed the increase in funds that will be available to combat global warming.

Hendricks especially underscored the contribu-

tions of developing countries to the Green Fund, which helped surpass the fund's initial target of 10 billion US dollars a year.

"It is a great achievement and success for the developing countries to form part of the donating countries," said Hendricks, adding "It is a great sign for the world, because it shows the commitment to fighting climate change."

Regarding the ongoing negotiations on a proposed draft agreement for united global climate action, the minister said European countries agreed to seek a

balance among the range of options provided for financing and for cutting greenhouse gases.

"I think it was wise of the presidency of the COP to provide various options, and we will find a point of equilibrium," said Hendricks.

The German government, said the official, has already approved a plan of action to cut its carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 40 percent by 2020, compared to 1990 levels. That goal is in keeping with the European Union's, but its deadline is set 10 years earlier, she said. —Xinhua

Ronaldo brace helps Real extend record win streak

MADRID, 13 Dec — Cristiano Ronaldo hit a late double as La Liga leaders Real Madrid thumped Almeria 4-1 to extend their Spanish record for consecutive victories in all competitions to 20 on Friday.

Ronaldo struck twice in the last 10 minutes to take his league tally to 25 after first-half goals from Isco and Gareth Bale had seen the visitors go in 2-1 ahead at halftime.

The Portugal winger had been left frustrated for most of the night but he burst into life late on when he knocked in a Karim Benzema cut back from close range before putting away an Isco pass from the centre of the penalty area to wrap up the victory.

Real lead the standings with 39 points from 15 games, five points more than Barcelona who visit Getafe on Saturday.

The European champions travel to Morocco next week for the Club World Cup with two more



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo (right) shoots during match against Almeria in Spanish League, on 12 Dec, 2014. Real Madrid beat Almeria 4-1.—XINHUA

wins than the previous best which was Barca's 18 victories from October 2005 to January 2006.

Real last failed to win when they were beaten 2-1 by city rivals Atletico Madrid in a La Liga game in September.

"Almeria caused problems for us throughout the game but in the

end our quality showed through and we deserved the win," Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told reporters. "We found it difficult to keep possession as we lacked the necessary composure on the ball and Almeria worked hard. "We are now in good form and there are a lot of positive signs ahead of the

Club World Cup."

Real have had to cope with injuries to Luka Modric, Sami Khedira and James Rodriguez which have allowed Isco to enjoy an extended run and he got his second La Liga goal of the season.

The midfielder put Real ahead with a superb curling effort from the

edge of the area after 34 minutes before Almeria drew level with a sweetly struck long-range volley by Verza. Bale then nodded in a cross by Toni Kroos to restore Real's lead.

Real's Iker Casillas kept them in front with an excellent penalty save to deny Verza midway through the second half, after Marcelo had fouled Edgar Mendez, before Ronaldo's late double gave the visitors a more flattering scoreline.

Almeria, who sacked Francisco Rodriguez last Tuesday and named Juan Ignacio Martinez to replace him following the Real game, started at a high-tempo unlike the display against Eibar last Monday when a 5-2 defeat cost the coach his job.

But the home side were eventually outclassed by Real, with the defeat keeping them in the relegation zone on 10 points.

Reuters

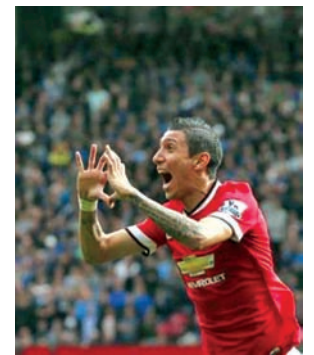
Di Maria misses Liverpool but United injuries easing

LONDON, 13 Dec — Manchester United record signing Angel Di Maria will miss the visit of bitter rivals Liverpool in the Premier League on Sunday but the Old Trafford injury crisis is easing, manager Louis van Gaal said on Friday.

The Argentina winger, signed for a British transfer fee record 59.7 million pounds (\$93.8 million) from Real Madrid, will miss his third consecutive game after failing to recover from a hamstring injury.

The 20-times English champions will also have to cope without injured defenders Luke Shaw and Chris Smalling as well as midfielder Daley Blind.

Reuters



Manchester United's Angel Di Maria celebrates after scoring a goal against Everton during their English Premier League soccer match at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England on 5 Oct, 2014.

REUTERS

ATP prize money to reach \$100 million in 2015

LONDON, 13 Dec — Prize money on the men's tennis tour will reach \$100 million (63.67 million pounds) for the first time in 2015, the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) said on Friday.

ATP World Tour purses will then climb even higher, to \$135 million by 2018, the ATP added in a news release.

The figures do not



include grand slam events, which are not run by the ATP. The biggest increases will be in the ATP Masters events, a series of nine

David Ferrer of Spain (foreground) returns the ball during his men's singles tennis match against Kei Nishikori of Japan at the ATP World Tour finals at the O2 Arena in London on 13 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

tournaments which are next in terms of prestige to the four grand slams, with prize money rising 14 percent annually through 2018. "The increases at ATP events are a testament to the sustained success of men's professional tennis, as well as demonstrating the ATP's confidence in the strength of its product and projected growth," the ATP added.—Reuters

Balotelli could return against United, says Rodgers

LONDON, 13 Dec — Mario Balotelli could return for Liverpool at Manchester United this weekend having returned to training after missing a month with a thigh injury, manager Brendan Rodgers said on Friday.

The Italian, who has yet to score a Premier League goal for Liverpool since arriving from AC Milan in the close season, has not figured since the Merseysiders' 2-1 defeat by Chelsea on 8 November.

"He's only just back into training, so it's something we'll assess," Rodgers told a news conference ahead of Sunday's clash.

"We've still got a bit of time, so we'll see what his fitness is like. He's been out for a little while now, but in the last couple

of days he's looked good in training.

"We'll give him every chance to see if he can come into the squad."

Balotelli has shown only glimpses of his talent since moving to Liverpool and his style of play has seemed ill-suited to the high-tempo pressing game that Rodgers has tried to instil.

In Balotelli's absence, Liverpool's league form has remained inconsistent.

His return to the side, however, is likely to be welcomed by fans who witnessed a dire 0-0 stalemate against Sunderland last weekend followed by a tepid 1-1 draw with Basel in the Champions League.

Centre back Kolo Toure could also return for the game at Old Trafford

having missed the Basel clash while Rodgers said midfielder Adam Lallana broke ribs in a recent 3-1 win over Leicester City but would be fit to face United.

Rodgers has faced increased speculation from British media that his job is under threat but said he remained in close contact with the club's owners about how they needed to move forward.

"I am more determined to succeed here. We almost unexpectedly won the title (last year), and now the team has gone through a change," he said.

Liverpool are ninth in the Premier League, 15 points behind leaders Chelsea and seven adrift of United, who are chasing a sixth successive win, in third.—Reuters



Liverpool's Mario Balotelli controls the ball during their English Premier League soccer match against Chelsea at Anfield in Liverpool, northern England, on 8 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS