

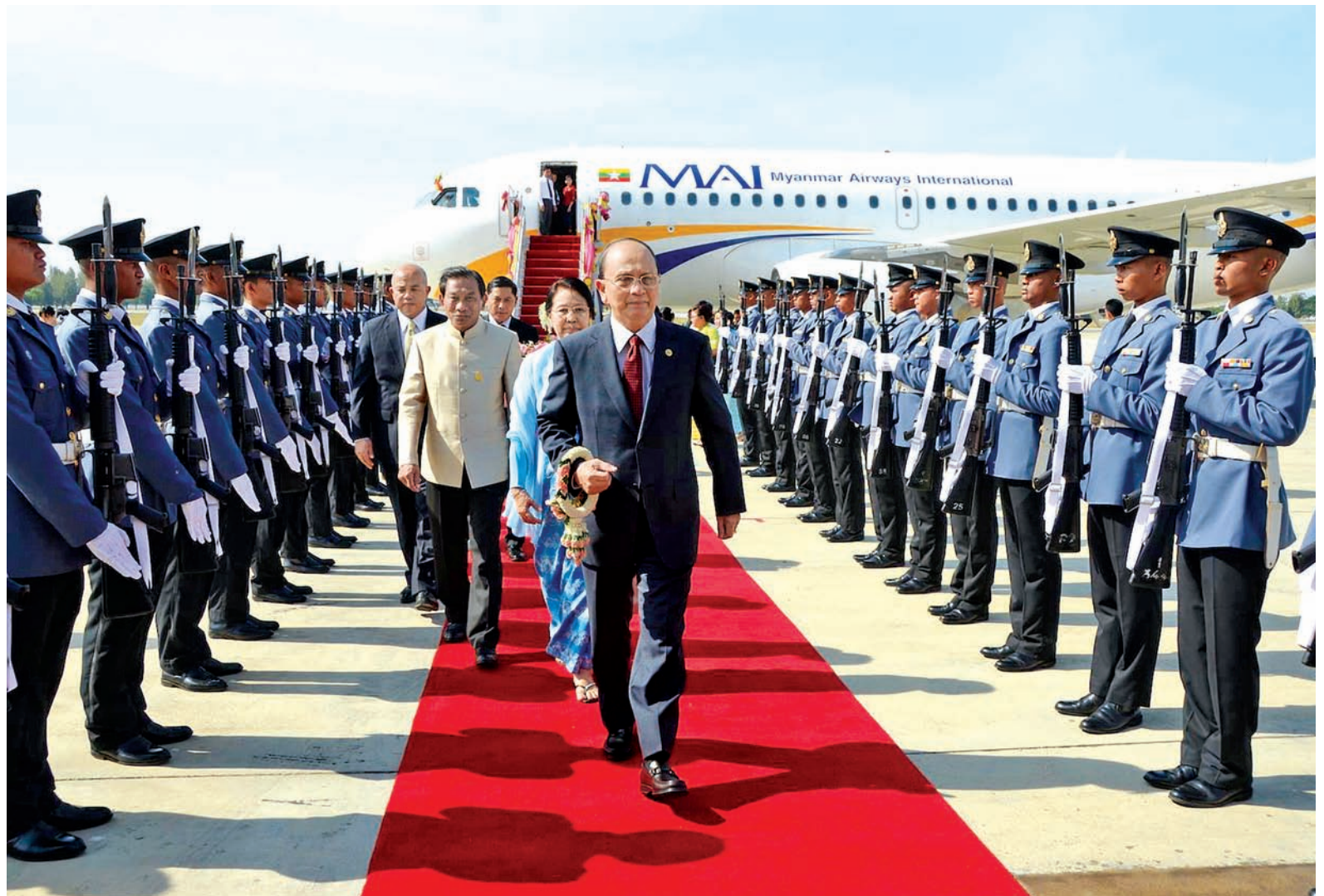
President U Thein Sein leaves for Thailand to attend 5th Greater Mekong Subregion Summit

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Dec—At the invitation of Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, a delegation led by President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win left Nay Pyi Taw International Airport around noon Friday to attend the 5th Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) plenary meeting and the GMS Summit being held in Bangkok through Saturday.

The President, wife and party were seen off at the airport by his two vice presidents, Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, as well as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, union ministers and officials of the Thai Embassy in Myanmar.

The president's delegation includes Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Maung, U Myint Hlaing, U Ohn Myint, U Khin Maung Soe, Dr Kan Zaw, U Kyaw Lwin and U Ye Htut and Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army).

The president, his wife and party arrived in Bangkok at 2 pm local



President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win being welcomed by the Guard of Honour at Don Muang Airport in Bangkok.—MNA

standard time. The president and wife were welcomed at Don Muang Airport by Thai Minis-

ter of Commerce General Chatchai Sarikalya, the Thai Ambassador to Myanmar and officials of

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Myanmar Ambassador U Win Maung and wife, Military

Attaché Brig-Gen Chit Swe and wife.

The president was welcomed by the Guard of

Honour. Then, the president and party proceeded to Madarin Oriental Hotel.

(See page 3)

3rd App Expo in Feb. to help software and mobile app developers secure investment

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 19 Dec—Media and business solution company Yangon Hertz will organize its third App Expo, a tech exhibition for Myanmar software and mobile applications, on 19 and 20 February at MICT Park here, aiming to develop the country's software industry and create business opportunities for local developers.

The organizer said he hopes the expo will enable participants "to get more knowledge for software industry promotion and understanding." It will feature product presentations and network game competitions. Some new applications will be introduced

along with explanations on how to use them.

Myanmar Information Technology Pte Ltd (MIT), one of event partners, said the company will demonstrate its innovative mobility products—Wartee, mPOS Suite, Hotelia, mBanking and ezbook apps—during the event.

On the last day of the expo, the organizing body, said, it will award a US\$500 prize for best app to the winner selected by judges from among participant innovators.

Zaw Zaw Myo Lwin, CEO of Yangon Hertz, said the exhibition is expected to attract more (See page 2)

The Elders call for immediate end to conflict in Myanmar, serious talks on country's future

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 19 Dec—The Elders, an independent group of former leaders who work to promote peace and human rights, ended their five-day visit to Myanmar with a call for an immediate end to armed conflicts in the country and for the start of talks for the betterment of the country.

At a press conference at the Sedona Hotel in Yangon on Thursday, former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, who is the deputy chair of the The Elders, said she was very pleased to hear that negotiations on a national ceasefire accord are expected to resume in the coming days and ex-

pressed her hope that the national agreement can be concluded soon.

The delegation leader, making her third visit to Myanmar in the last 15 months, also said the country's people have an amazing opportunity to build a new state, one in which all groups live harmoniously together on the basis of equality.

She said the most important thing is to start the talks seriously, be it the talks among four, six, 12 or 14 parties.

Speaking about the future of the military in the new Myanmar, The Elders said it is only natural for a country to have a single army to defend its entire territory, not separate ones in the different parts of the

country.

In a statement delivered to local media before the start of the press conference, the delegation said its visit marks a continuation of efforts to encourage Myanmar towards a democratic and just so-

ciety that reflects the full diversity and talents of its people.

According to the statement, The Elders delegation, which paid a two-day visit Thailand before coming to Myanmar, met in (See page 2)



Gro Harlem Brundtland, deputy chair of The Elders, together with fellow delegation member Lakhdar Brahimi, meets local media at Sedona Hotel in Yangon on Thursday.—GNLM

Union Minister views thriving vegetable plants at research farm



Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing views thriving vegetable farms on 900-acre farmland.—MNA

Korean expert Dr Hyun Seok Lee viewed arrival of laboratory equipment at the research farm of Soil Complex Micro-Organism Test Field being conducted by Myanmar's Agriculture Department and Korea's Agricultural Research Department on 900-acre farm in Ottarathiri Township on Friday.

The union minister inspected thriving vegetable plants at the research farms, and a green house.

In meeting with agricultural staff at the farms, the Union minister granted them to be sent abroad including the Republic of Korea for their further studies.

MNA

Myanmar wins Best in Travel-AEC Country award

YANGON, 19 Dec — Myanmar won the Best in Travel-AEC Country of the Lonely Planet Traveller Destination Awards 2014 presented by Lonely Planet Traveller magazine in Bangkok, Thailand, on 18 November.

The selection of winners was based on online

readers from July to September 2014. The magazine's awards nine genres of prizes under the title of Destination Awards-International and ten types under the Destination Awards for Thailand. Myanmar's award was under the title of Destination Award-International.—MOHT

Electricity supply in Yangon unaffected by repairs of equipment at Yadana Project

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Dec — Local gas supply from Yadana Project of the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise of the Ministry of Energy will be temporarily suspended from 30-12-2014 to 31-12-2014 due to repairs of equipment on the production platform.

Arrangements have been made with the Ministry of Electric Power to supply natural gas from Zawtika Project to gas-fired generators in Yangon Region during the period in order to supply electricity without interruption in the region.—MNA

Schedules to temporarily close roads

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Dec — Fully-dressed rehearsals for the parade of 67th Anniversary Independence Day's Grand Military Review will be held from 4 am to 10 am on 24, 26, 27, 29 and 30 December 2014 and 1 January 2016.

The security committee urged staff ferries, private cars, buses and worksite vehicles to use

Razathingaha, Pandita and Zawana roads while Razahtani Road passing Office No 27, Ministry of Finance, Office No 28, Office No 5, Ministry of Transport and Office No 38 and between Kumudra Lotus roundabout and Lotus Roundabout in Nay Pyi Taw will be closed temporarily.

Security Committee

3rd App Expo in Feb. to . . .

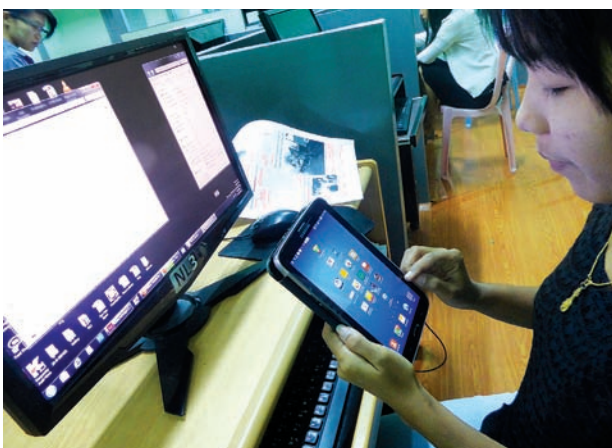
(from page 1)

investment partners for local developers, adding that previous events provided many opportunities for small-scale businesses to upgrade themselves.

But the sector needs an intellectual property law to protect developers' ideas from theft and to attract more foreign investment in

the sector. "The government should put much emphasis on establishing the IP law as soon as possible," he added.

Event-related information will be updated at a conference in mid-January and disseminated through the media. Enthusiasts may also visit www.apexpo-2015.com for details.—GNLM



A girl is browsing applications created by local developers through her device.

PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

New railway overpass to ease daily traffic congestion



Union Minister U Than Htay and Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe attend stake driving ceremony for construction of overpass.—MNA

YANGON, 19 Dec — The stake driving ceremony was held for construction of an railway overpass in Insein Township, Yangon, on Friday.

Union Minister for

Rail Transportation U Than Htay, Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe and officials drove stakes for the overpass.

The new overpass will be built in parallel with

the existing Insein railway overpass. The 1,557 feet long new one will have a 28-foot motorway. It will have 19.4 feet high clearance. Construction of the overpass will be completed

in May 2015.

Myanma Railways and Myanmar Golden Crown Construction Company will jointly build the overpass to ease daily traffic congestion.—MNA

The Elders call for immediate end to conflict . . .

(from page 1)

that country's northern city of Chiang Mai with representatives of different ethnic organizations and civil society to learn about their current concerns.

The four-member delegation, which also included former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, former Algerian Foreign Minister and U.N. envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, and Hina Jilani, a Supreme Court advocate and human rights defender from Pakistan, had substantive

discussions with President U Thein Sein, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye and Union Minister U Aung Min on progress made in moving towards a more democratic society and the many challenges that still lie ahead.

Brundtland told reporters her delegation was told by the Commander-in-Chief that the Tatmadaw "also want a peace

agreement", while she added that other Myanmar leaders they met also showed support for peace process and ceasefire.

The former Norwegian prime minister concluded by saying The Elders will continue to support all the people of Myanmar as they continue their journey towards a democratic society.

The delegation also spoke with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who chairs the National League for Democracy, in Yangon about the benefits of national di-

ologue among all the key actors and about the importance of national reconciliation.

The Elders, which was founded in 2007 by former South African President and Nobel Peace Laureate Nelson Mandela, is chaired by former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and also includes former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. It made its first visit to Myanmar in September 2013 and its second one in March 2014.

GNLM

NATIONAL

President U Thein Sein leaves for Thailand to attend 5th Greater Mekong Subregion Summit...

(from page 1)

The GMS scheme, involving Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, was launched in 1992 with the assistance of the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB). The six members host the summit in alphabetical order once every three years. The last one was held in 2011 in

Myanmar.

The summits are aimed at developing GMS member countries, lifting living standards of their people, seeking opportunities for cooperation in trade and investment, and promoting regional cooperation in infrastructural development projects and industrial and agricultural sectors.—MNA

President U Thein Sein and wife Daw Khin Khin Win being seen off at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Vice Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun and party.

MNA



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing urges military medical staff to care for national races



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents silver swords to Best Cadet Naing Win Tun.

MYAWADY

Invitation to donation of documents on grand military review ceremony

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Dec—The Independence Day 2015 flag hoisting ceremony will be held in conjunction with the Grand Military Review ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw on 4 January.

As the grand military review ceremony will be presented on a wider scale through newspapers and TV programmes, people may donate documentary photos, sound files, doc-

umentary films and other documents on the ceremonies of grand military review from 1950 to 1962 to Secretary of the Grand Military Review Information and Public Campaign Subcommittee Director-General U Ye Tint, Tel: 067-412242, email: myintkyaw103@gmail.com.

Grand Military Review Information and Public Campaign Subcommittee

NAY PYI TAW, 19 Dec—Military medical staff are required not only to give medical care to defence services personnel and their families but also to provide healthcare services to the national races in far-flung areas, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said at a graduation ceremony of the 16th Intake of the Defence Services Medical Academy in Yangon on Friday morning.

Present at the ceremony were Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Myint Swe, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Thura Thet Swe, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Khin Aung Myint, senior officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, commanders

and families of the graduating cadets.

After receiving the salute of the cadet company, the senior general inspected it and presented prizes to outstanding cadets including Cadet Naing Win Tun who won the best cadet award.

In his speech, the senior general said that defence services medical staff must abide by medical ethics in providing treatment based on goodwill, kindness, sympathy and commiseration.

Defence services personnel participated in the rescue, health and resettlement operations during floods and landslides in the last rainy season in cooperation with local governments, as it has been internationally recognized that

armed forces are the only organizations that can respond to natural disasters properly, effectively and timely, the senior general added, urging they be prepared for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations with armed forces of other countries.

The senior general continued to say that defence services medical staff are required to conduct medical research and to test new treatments as the Ebola virus is a global threat, even though the outbreaks of the disease are only being found in Africa at present.

Defence services medical personnel also need to anticipate treatments and protective measures against attacks of chemical and biological weapons as conventional as well as weapons of mass destruction are used in modern warfare, he said.

In conclusion, the senior general urged the graduating cadets to abide by the military code of conduct and to uphold the three main national causes so that they become leaders of the defence services.

After the ceremony, he met three outstanding cadets and their parents and praised them.

Afterwards, the senior general, before signing in the visitors' book at the academy, inspected an exhibition at the academy and instructed officers to effectively use medical equipment and medicines and to disseminate medical knowledge to the public through the media.

In the afternoon, the senior general and party attended the graduation dinner of the graduate officers and cordially greeted them before enjoying the dinner.

Myawady

Puma Energy wins tender to import and distribute aviation fuel with MPPE

companies were allowed to submit the tender forms. On the final day, Bangkok Aviation Fuel Services Public Co Ltd, PTT Public Co Ltd, Puma Energy Group Pte Ltd and Singapore Petroleum Co Ltd submitted tender proposals to the ministry.

The ministerial level supervisory central committee selected Puma Energy Group Pte Ltd as tender winner and PTT Public Co Ltd as a reserve company. MPPE will soonest sign an agreement of the tender winner.

Plans are underway to undertake joint venture tasks on import and distri-

bution of aviation fuel at remaining domestic airports.—MNA



An airplane of Myanmar Airways International being fueled at Yangon International Airport.

MNA

MWAF officials on tour of townships in Shan, Kayah states

LOIKAW, 19 Dec — Patrons, the president and CEC members of Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation held a meeting with members of district and township women's affairs organizations at the hall of Kayah State WAO hall in Loikaw on 18 December.

The MWAF donated 50 sets of solar panels for village reading sessions.

Responsible persons of the federation comforted patients and presented them with cash and food. They also donated cash, food, clothes, blankets and stationery to support education of monks at the Taungmaw monastery in Kontha Village, Loikaw Township.



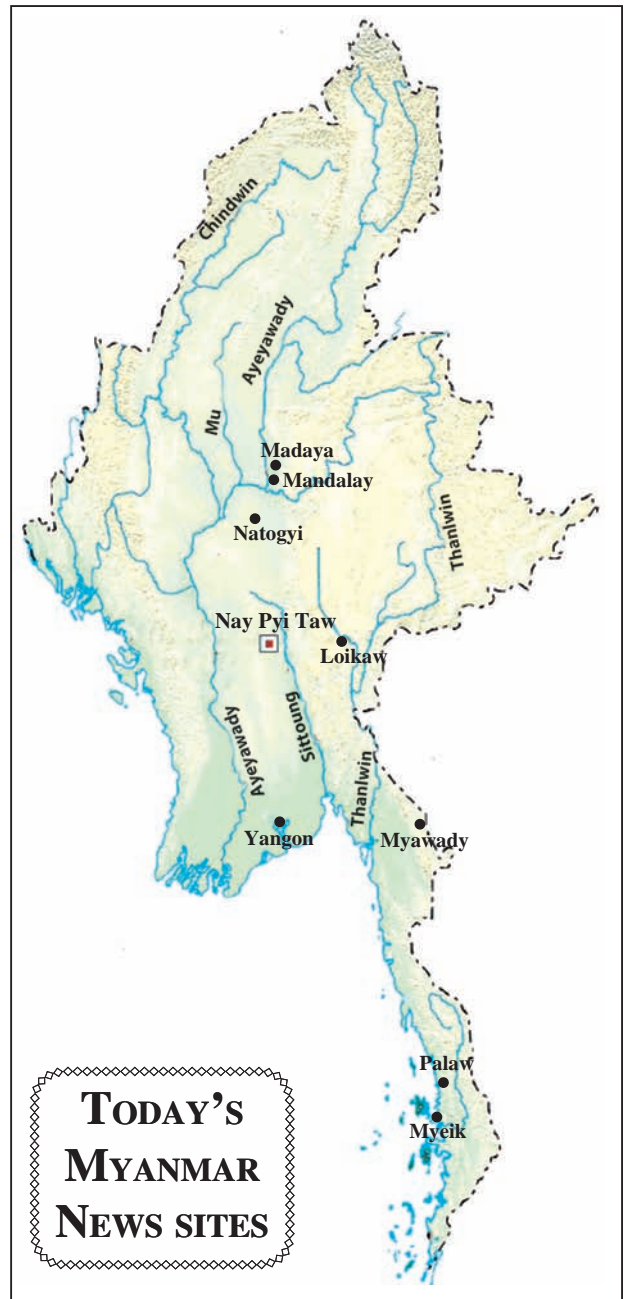
On 17 December, they met with ethnic women in Dimawhso Township and donated food and clothes to them. In Loikaw, they similarly made donations to the Kayah State Home for the Aged and Maha Dhamma Wihari nunnery and inspected weaving,

agriculture and small-scale industries.

While in Pinlaung and Phekon townships, southern Shan State on 16 December, they made donations to women's affairs organization members.

During the trips, patrons of the MWAF, President Dr Daw Khin Mar Tun and officials donated cash and kind worth K15 million to locals.

Kayah State IPRD



Onion growers in Mandalay Region to get loans

MANDALAY, 19 Dec — A meeting on disbursement of loans to onion growers from townships of Mandalay Region was held at a hall of the Trade Promotion Department under the Ministry of Commerce in Mandalay on 18 December.

The head of Mandalay Region Trade Promotion Department explained about cultivation and production of onion in the region, cultivation cost per acre, benefits of growers, lowest and highest prices per month, export of onion and a plan to disburse loans to the farmers for the fourth time.

"The loan disbursement to onion growers is good news, but effectiveness of disbursement needs to be considered. In fact, departmental officials should provide technical assistance to the growers to boost production and improve quality of products. Moreover, they should assist in reducing production cost for farmers," Shwe Mann Hla onion broker U Win Myint told media.

Chairman of Meiktila Township Onion Producers Association U Myint Thein said, "Loans should be delivered to the farmers through the Township Onion Producers Association. Members of the association will get the loans depending on their farmland areas. Loans should be delivered to the farmers as quickly as possible."

"It costs us about K500,000 per acre to cultivate onion. Departments concerned should provide us with technical assistance for growing organic onion plants. Moreover, the interest rate should be kept in the range of K0.5 to K0.7 per K100," said a local onion grower from Myingyan Township.

Myingyan, Taungtha, Mahlaing, Meiktila, Myittha and Ngazun townships are the top onion producing townships in Mandalay Region. Local farmers can produce at least 3,200 kilos of onion per acre. At present, brokers purchase onion at K500 per 1.6 kilo.

Min Htet Aung

(Mandalay Sub-printing House)

Well-wishers donate equipment to Palaw Township Hospital

PALAW, 19 Dec — A ceremony for donation of an electrocardiograph and a delivery bed was held at Palaw Township People's Hospital in Taninthayi Region on 18 December.

Head of Township Health Department Dr Zaw Min Htoo thanked the well-wishers for their donations.

Township level officials presented certificates of honour to delivery bed donor U Taryar and his wife Daw Myint Myint Wai and ECG donor U Myo Win and his



wife Daw Aye Aye Mar.

The well-wishers donated the Maquet brand delivery bed and Nihon Kohden

brand ECG to the hospital for providing healthcare services to the people.

Palaw IPRD

Natogyi to install 4 power lines to supply electricity to rural people



NATOGYI, 19 Dec — According to the rural electrification plans in Natogyi Township, concrete lamp-posts arrived at Natogyi Township electrical engineer's office in Mandalay Region on 18 December.

A plan is underway to erect 12,000 concrete lamp-posts while installing four power lines in the township.

With the assistance of Union Min-

ister for Transport U Nyan Tun Aung, power lines will be installed along the Thamandaw-Ohpontaw, Ywagyi-Sein-pankyin, Natogyi-Nyaungzin and Htanaungbinle-Magyikan lines in 2014-15 fiscal year.

Four power lines will benefit 33 villages in the township round the clock, the Township Administrator told media.

Htay Myint Maung

REGIONAL

Nine injured, one missing after volcano erupts in eastern Indonesia

JAKARTA, 19 Dec — At least one person went missing and nine others were injured, four of them seriously, after a volcano in eastern Indonesia erupted late Thursday, a government official said on Friday.

Mt Gamalama in the North Maluku provincial capital of Ternate erupted at 10:41 pm local time, spewing volcanic ash up to 2,000 meters into the air. Ternate is located about 2,400 kilometres northeast of Jakarta.

"All of the victims are mountain climbers who were ascending the mountain when the eruption occurred," said Sutopo Purwo Nugroho, spokesman of the Jakarta-based National Disaster Mitigation Agency.

The Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation Centre has raised the alert status of the 1,715-metre volcano from level 2 to level 3. Level 4 is the top alert status.

According to Sutopo, Sultan Babullah Airport in Ternate has been temporarily closed.

However, he added that the condition in the town is "normal with activities ongoing as usual and no evacuation of residents was taken."

In December 2011, at least four people were killed and dozens injured due to cold lava flowing down the volcano's slopes after heavy rains about a month after it erupted. In 1775, the volcano's eruption claimed about 1,300 lives.

Indonesia sits in one of the most active seismic regions in the world, the Pacific Ring of Fire, an area in which a large number of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur.

Kyodo News

Chinese premier arrives in Thailand for GMS meeting

BANGKOK, 19 Dec — Chinese Premier Li Keqiang arrived here on Friday to attend the fifth summit of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Cooperation.

It will be the first time for Li to attend the summit.

Regional leaders at the meeting are expected to discuss inclusive and sustainable development in the region and work for deepening partnership.

Li said after arrival that the GMS Economic Cooperation has made great achievements in promoting subregional cooperation and regional economic integration since its inception.

The premier said he is looking forward to having extensive exchange of

views with all parties on deepening regional trade and economic cooperation, enhancing interconnectivity and innovating industrial cooperation.

He also expects to jointly advance the construction of an open, inclusive and cooperative economic pattern, forge a mutually beneficial and win-win subregional partnership, and make concerted efforts to safeguard regional peace, stability and prosperity.

During his stay in Bangkok, Li is scheduled to meet Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha and the two sides will sign bilateral cooperation documents.

The GMS Economic Cooperation Programme, which was started in 1992



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (L, front) is greeted upon his arrival in Bangkok, Thailand, on 19 Dec, 2014. Li arrived here Friday to attend the fifth summit of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Economic Cooperation.—XINHUA

by six countries along the Mekong River — Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vi-

etnam, aims to link these countries through improving infrastructure, promoting trade and investment

and stimulating economic growth.

The upcoming summit will provide a strong impetus for subregional cooperation by identifying 92 priority investment projects and passing an investment framework plan from 2014 to 2018, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wang Chao said ahead of Li's trip.

Thailand is the last stop of Li's ongoing three-nation Eurasia tour. Before arriving in Bangkok, he was in Kazakhstan for an official visit and a prime ministers' meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and later visited Serbia and attended the leaders' meeting of China and Central and Eastern European countries.

Xinhua

Cambodian parliament amends rules to recognize minority leader

PHNOM PENH, 19 Dec — The Cambodia's National Assembly on Friday amended its internal rules to formally recognize a parliamentary minority leader "with a rank equal to the prime minister".

A total of 102 lawmakers present at the session unanimously approved the amendment.

Ruling Cambodian

People's Party (CPP)'s lawmaker Pen Panha, chairman of the assembly's commission on legislation and justice, said the head of any opposition party, holding at least 25 percent of the parliamentary seats, will be formally recognized as a "minority leader" in the parliament.

"The minority leader will be the dialogue partner

of the head of government on the issues of national interest," he said during the assembly session. "The minority leader has a rank equal to the prime minister."

Prime Minister Hun Sen did not appear at the session on Friday, but he said early this month that the minority leader will not have the same powers that he has as Cambodia's head of government. "The minority leader cannot order the armed forces, administration, and other government affairs," he said during a university graduation ceremony, adding that the formal recognition of the minority leader is aimed at creating the culture of dialogue between the heads of the ruling and opposition parties.

Cambodian parliament comprises 123 lawmakers, including 68 from Prime

Minister Hun Sen's ruling CPP and 55 from the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) led by Sam Rainsy.

Sam Rainsy, who will become the minority leader, said the formula of formally recognizing a minority leader in Cambodia is similar to the US system. "This is a turning point in Cambodia's politics. Now, there is the formal recognition of the roles, duties, and rights of the opposition parties," he told reporters after the assembly session.

He said the recognition of the minority leader would create the culture of dialogue between the government party and the outside-the-government party. "This shows the spirit of national unification and is an important step towards the enhancing of democracy," he said.

Xinhua



Sam Rainsy (C), president of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), speaks to journalists at the National Assembly in Phnom Penh on 19 Dec, 2014.

REUTERS

Eight children killed in Australia in suspected mass stabbing

SYDNEY, 19 Dec — Eight children were found dead on Friday at a home in Australia's northeastern city of Cairns, according to local police.

"As it stands at the moment, there is no need for the public to be concerned about this," Detective Inspector Bruno Asnicar told reporters. "The situation is well controlled."

The police located the bodies of the children aged

between 18 months and 15 years at a residence in the Cairns suburb of Manoora following reports of a woman being found with serious injuries at around 11:20 a.m.

The woman, 34, is believed to be a stable condition, according to Asnicar.

Asnicar added that it is too early to establish the relationship between the women and children, but local media have reported she is the mother of the

A police officer walks near police tape at the crime scene where a mass stabbing took place, in the suburb of Manoora in Cairns in this 19 Dec, 2014 still image taken from video provided by Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

REUTERS



children.

The exact details of the case are still unclear

but local media have reported the case as a mass stabbing.

An investigation is currently underway.

Kyodo News

Japan, China agree to boost steps against coral poaching in Japan waters

Tokyo, 19 Dec — Japan and China agreed on Thursday to boost measures to prevent coral poaching by Chinese vessels in Japanese territorial waters, Japan's Fisheries Agency said.

Representatives of the two governments, meeting in Dalian, northeastern China, struck a deal to continue enforcing a stricter crackdown and impose severe punishments on offenders, the agency said.

The agreement comes as many ships suspected to have come from China have been observed poaching red coral, which is highly prized in China for jewelry, in waters around the Ogasawara and Izu islands south of Tokyo, stirring calls for tougher punitive measures.

Japan and China also agreed to set up a hot line to improve communications between relevant authorities in cracking down on poachers, while strengthening cooperation to discover how poached coral is sold, the agency said.

Under the agreement, the number of Chinese vessels operating in Japan's exclusive economic zone, as well as Japanese fishing vessels in China's EEZ for the 2014 season will total 303 respectively, down 18 from a year earlier. The catch quota for each country's vessels will be reduced by 373 tons to 9,441 tons.

Kyodo News

As US eases hostilities, Cuba faces new challenge

HAVANA, 19 Dec — For decades, it was Cuba's first response to criticism.

Poor economic performance? An obvious effect of a US trade embargo that amounted to a blockade of the island nation by a bullying superpower.

Arrests of dissidents? A legitimate act of self-defence against mercenaries working for the world's richest nation, which backed the failed Bay of Pigs invasion and plots to assassinate revolutionary leader Fidel Castro.

Now, though, with Washington agreeing to restore full diplomatic ties that were cut in the early 1960s, Cuba's communist government may not be able to blame its old Cold War nemesis so readily.

"The big bad wolf of Yankee imperialism is softening its teeth — so they won't have that ready-made scapegoat any more for things that are wrong on the island," said a Latin American diplomat who used to live in Cuba and still tracks events there.

Cuba has repeatedly sought to dispel the idea that it secretly wanted the embargo in place, saying if the Americans believed that they should challenge

Cuba by lifting it.

With that now a greater possibility, however, there are risks.

Latin American countries and others that supported Cuba in its long battle against the United States may become less tolerant of its one-party rule, repression of dissidents and strict controls over the economy and the media if the US threat disappears.

"There wouldn't be

any justification that we're in a state of war because the Americans are constantly attacking us.

They won't be able to justify it, at least not to their friends," said Jose Daniel Ferrer, leader of the Cuban Patriotic Union (UNPACU), Cuba's largest dissident organization.

US President Barack Obama has made clear he expects improved human rights in Cuba as part of

the deal to restore full relations. The US government called it "a critical focus of our increased engagement."

The rapprochement announced on Wednesday included a prisoner swap — US citizen Alan Gross and a Cuban who spied for the United States were freed in exchange for three Cuban agents who were serving time in US prison.

Reuters



Image provided by Estudios Revolucion on 18 Dec, 2014 shows Cuban President Raul Castro (1st R) talking with Gerardo Hernandez (1st L), Ramon Labanino (2nd L) and Antonio Gonzalez (2nd R), three of the Cuban agents called The Five, released by the United States of America, in Havana, Cuba. The United States and Cuba announced on Wednesday that they have agreed to restore diplomatic relations, in a move to end more than half a century of estrangement between the two countries.—XINHUA

Putin says Russian economic crisis could last for 2 years

MOSCOW, 19 Dec — Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday the country's economic crisis could last two years under the most unfavorable external economic scenario.

Speaking at his annual Press conference, Putin said the ruble's recent plunge has been provoked by external factors, suggesting the sharp fall in crude oil prices and economic sanctions imposed by Western nations over

the crisis in Ukraine are the main causes.

Western sanctions are responsible for 25 to 30 percent of Russian economic issues, he added.

Putin said Russia's central bank had generally handled the economic crisis appropriately, including the recent decision to raise its key interest rate to 17.0 percent from 10.5 percent, while indicating some of its action was belated.

Kyodo News

Obama signs Russia sanctions bill, says no new penalties planned

WASHINGTON, 19 Dec — President Barack Obama said on Thursday he had signed into law a new Russian sanctions bill passed by Congress but did not intend to impose further sanctions against Moscow for now. "My administration will continue to work closely with allies and partners in Europe and internationally to respond to developments in Ukraine and will continue to review and calibrate our sanctions to respond to Russia's actions," Obama said in a



US President Barack Obama

statement.

"We remain prepared to roll back sanctions should Russia take the necessary steps."—Reuters

EU leaders ready long confrontation with Russia

BRUSSELS, 19 Dec — European Union leaders warned Moscow they were ready exercise their combined muscle over the long haul in a confrontation with an economically wounded Russia if President Vladimir Putin refused to pull back from Ukraine.

"We must go beyond being reactive and defensive. As Europeans we must regain our self-confidence and realise our own strengths," said Donald Tusk, the former Polish premier who chaired a brief EU summit in Brussels on Thursday. In comments that were part warning to Russia, where falling oil prices and Western trade sanctions have brought financial havoc, and part exhortation to an EU bloc divided between hawks and doves, Tusk said a united European front was vital. "It is obvious we will not find a long-term perspective for Ukraine without an adequate, consistent and united European strategy towards Russia," he added,



European Council President Donald Tusk addresses a news conference following a European Union leaders summit in Brussels on 18 Dec, 2014. REUTERS

his remarks bringing a briskly opinionated new style to the first such meeting he has chaired as president of the leaders' European Council.

"Today we are maybe not too optimistic. But we have to be realistic, not optimistic." Meeting on a day when Putin mounted a wordy defence of policies on Ukraine and the economy, then leaders of the 28 EU states conferred on how to handle their giant eastern neighbour longer term after a year of crisis and mutu-

al trade sanctions that have brought warnings of a return to Cold War. Some in the EU have said they should switch their focus away from supporting Ukraine to seeking a detente with Moscow. That might be in the longer term interests of businesses, which have suffered loss of trade and fear a spillover from the Russian financial crisis. But for all their differences in attitudes to Russia, leaders made clear their determination to stick together as they have over the past year, while offering Putin both the threat of stick and the carrot of mutually beneficial commerce.

They agreed to keep up financial aid to help Ukraine carry out reforms to its post-Soviet political and economic systems.

"Russia is today our strategic problem, not Ukraine," said Tusk, who as Polish prime minister was among the hawks from Moscow's former communist satellites who pushed for sanctions.—Reuters

Japan, US announce delay in revising defence guidelines

TOKYO, 19 Dec — Japan and the United States said on Friday they will put off until the first half of 2015 a planned revision of their defence cooperation guidelines, keeping in step with Tokyo's efforts to legislate the use of the right to collective self-defence.

The updating of the guidelines, originally planned for the end of this year, will likely come in May or thereafter, a Japanese official said, given that the government is expected to submit relevant security legislation to a regular Diet session after nationwide local elections scheduled for April. In a joint statement issued by their foreign and defence ministers, Japan and the United States vowed to ensure that the upcoming revision will have substance and strengthen the long-standing bilateral alliance to enhance deterrence.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters that the statement represents



Japanese Defence Minister Akinori Eto attends a Press conference at his ministry in Tokyo on 19 Dec, 2014, as Japan and the United States announced that they will put off until the first half of 2015 a planned revision of their defence cooperation guidelines, keeping in step with Tokyo's efforts to legislate the use of the right to collective self-defence. KYODO NEWS

the two governments' determination to "strengthen the Japan-US alliance and bolster deterrence." Tokyo and Washington will "make positive contributions to

peace and security in Japan and a broader area through the revision of the guidelines," he said.

Defence Minister Akinori Eto said separately that there will be no further delay in the planned revision beyond the given period, and that he has instructed officials to work harder in line with Friday's statement. In October 2013, Japan and the United States agreed to revise their defence cooperation guidelines, which define the role and mission of the Self-Defence Forces and the US military. The new guidelines are expected to include peacekeeping operations, logistics support, and maritime security, as areas of bilateral cooperation. In an interim report released in October, Japan and the United States said they aim to expand the scope of cooperation between their forces by removing existing geographical limits and to ensure a "seamless" response amid the changing environment.—Kyodo News

In dealings with the West, Erdogan holds all the cards

ISTANBUL, 19 Dec — President Tayyip Erdogan's tightening grip on power is likely to meet little more than symbolic resistance from the West next year, as Turkey's G20 presidency and the fight against Islamic State trump concerns about a slide towards authoritarianism.

Critics at home and abroad see Erdogan as an increasingly unpredictable leader, bent on a more powerful presidency and revenge on his political enemies. They fear he is taking Turkey ever further from Western standards on rule of law and free speech.

Supporters say he is returning Turkey to its former glory, restoring its Ottoman and Islamic heritage after nine decades of rule by a secular elite. They welcome this new assertive approach.

Turkey assumed the rotating leadership of the group of 20 biggest developing and advanced

economies on 1 December and aims to use the role to bolster the voice of low income nations and promote itself as a trade and diplomatic power.

Erdogan's list of visitors in recent weeks, including Vladimir Putin and the pope, the US vice president and the EU's foreign policy chief, underscores Turkey's importance on issues including energy security and containing the wars in neighbouring Syria and Iraq.

Yet behind the handshakes and pledges of co-operation, Turkey's record on freedoms appears to be deteriorating.

The past week has seen police raids on media outlets close to Erdogan's political enemies and the trial of football fans accused of coup plotting during anti-government protests last year.

"Turkey's strategic geography dictates that its allies continue giving it some



Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan speaks during the opening of an extension to an oil refinery near Istanbul on 15 Dec, 2014.
REUTERS

leeway ... People simply can't afford to ignore Turkey, whatever the policies of President Erdogan," said Fadi Hakura, Turkey analyst at London think-tank Chatham House.

The media raids drew a rebuke from Brussels. Erdogan responded by telling the European Union, of which Turkey aspires to be a member, to mind its own business.

The raids, he said, were a necessary response to "dirty operations" by his enemies and had nothing to do with press freedom.

An EU source involved in relations with Turkey said he expected authoritarian steps to esca-

late in the run-up to a general election next June. But he acknowledged the EU's need for cooperation on issues from Syria to Cyprus tied its hands.

Erdogan's critics say he has waged a systematic war on all forms of dissent since founding the Islamist-rooted AK Party and becoming prime minister just over a decade ago.

Putting a secularist military that had toppled four governments since 1960 firmly under civilian control won praise, but institutions from the courts and police to the media and schools have also been brought under Erdogan's ideological umbrella. The

message of Erdogan's AK Party has become "focussed on a romanticised notion of Ottoman Sunni brotherhood," according to Jenny White, a Boston University anthropology professor.

"Erdogan (presents himself as) the patriarchal father protecting the honour of his national family and keeping the dangerous chaos of liberalism at bay," she wrote in the periodical Current History this month.

His majoritarian view of democracy — telling critics to beat him at the ballot box — means he rules in the interest of the 52 percent who voted for him while ignoring the rest, critics say.

His drive for more religious schooling and plans to make lessons in Ottoman Turkish mandatory are seen by some as little short of social engineering, an effort to impose a homogenous vision of modern Turkish identity.—Reuters

Asia-Pacific disaster-related deaths rise 3-fold in past decade

BANGKOK, 19 Dec — Disaster-induced deaths in the Asia-Pacific region rose more than three-fold between 1994-2003 and 2004-2013, largely due to a handful of extreme disasters, said an annual United Nations (UN) statistics publication released on Thursday. Asia and the Pacific remains the region with the highest number of natural disasters, according to the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2014, which was published by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

During the 1994-2013 period, over 40 percent of the world's reported natural disasters occurred in the region, it said.

Among the Asia-Pacific subregions, "South-East Asia, predominantly Indonesia and the Philippines, was hardest hit by natural disasters with the total report of 527 incidences and 354, 293 deaths between 2004 and 2013," the yearbook said. During the same period, the number of natural disasters occurring in China alone was more than twice as high as that in the whole North and Central Asia, part of the largest subregion in Asia and the Pacific in terms of the total area covered, it showed.

Some 28 upper-middle-income and high-income economies accounted for 85.5 percent of the total economic damage from natural disasters between 2004 and 2013. However, in terms of GDP, low-income economies suffered more from natural disasters.

The region continues to drive the global economic recovery, but its growth rate still remains below its pre-crisis level, the yearbook also noted, comparing a growth rate of 3.9 percent between 2008 and 2012 with that of 5.2 percent between 2001 and 2007.

Although one billion people have escaped extreme poverty since 1990 in Asia and the Pacific, with the prevalence of undernourishment down from 22 percent to 13 percent, over 700 million people in the region still remain in extreme poverty, according to the ESCAP.—Xinhua

US Marine in Philippine murder case makes first court appearance

OLONGAPO CITY, (Philippines), 19 Dec — A United States Marine accused of killing a transgender Filipino appeared in a Philippine court for the first time on Friday, as his lawyers sought the suspension of the trial, in a case that could test the strength of security ties between the two allies.

The Marine, Joseph Scott Pemberton, who is being held at a US facility at the main Philippine army base, was charged with the murder of Jeffrey Laude, who was found dead on 11 October in a hotel in Olongapo City, northwest of Manila. A handcuffed Pemberton appeared in court wearing a black suit and striped tie. He sat quietly,

flanked by US security officers, as his lawyers asked the court to suspend proceedings, in a standard trial tactic.

Laude's sister, Marilou, had mixed emotions on seeing Pemberton for the first time. "I wanted to ask him why he killed my brother," she told Reuters. "I wanted to bang his head against the wall. I wanted to be angry, but I am also afraid."

The lawyers argued that the justice department should first decide on their appeal to reverse the decision to indict Pemberton. Authorities will need time to resolve the issue, but the court will decide on the defence bid at a hearing on Monday.—Reuters



Marilou, sister of slain Filipino transgender Jeffrey Laude (also known as Jennifer), shows a picture she took of US Marine Joseph Pemberton (R in the mobile phone image) during his court appearance in Olongapo city northwest of Manila on 19 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

Russian sailors leave French port, Mistral deal still uncertain

SAINT-NAZAIRE, (France), 19 Dec — A ship carrying the Russian sailors who have been training for months on a French-built Mistral helicopter carrier left the French port of Saint-Nazaire on Thursday, with it still unclear whether Paris will finally deliver the ship to Moscow.

A Reuters reporter saw their ship, the *Smolny*, leave the Atlantic Ocean port and head out to sea. French media reported this week how many of the 400 sailors had been stocking up with parcels of purchases at local retailers.

"This is not a departure for good in the sense that the decision on whether to supply the ship has not been taken," a spokesman for French naval and defence group DCNS said.

The sailors arrived in late June at the shipyard to begin training on a first carrier, named *Vladivostok*, which France was due to deliver to Russia by the last quarter of 2014.

Tensions between the West and Russia over Ukraine have cast doubt on a 1.2 billion euro (953.42 million pounds) deal to supply two French



Russian sailors wave from the deck of the Russian Navy frigate *Smolny* as they leave the STX Les Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard site in Saint-Nazaire, western France, on 18 Dec, 2014.
REUTERS

warships to Russia, Moscow's first major foreign arms purchase in the two decades since the fall of the Soviet Union.

French President Francois Hollande, who this month became the first Western leader to meet Russia's Vladimir Putin in Moscow since the stand-off, has said the situation in eastern Ukraine did not permit the delivery of the *Vladivostok*.

The DCNS spokesman said work on the second carrier was continu-

ing. Last week, a Kremlin foreign policy aide said Russia would accept either money or the delivery of the two helicopter carriers to resolve the dispute.

France faces pressure from Western allies to scrap the deal, but it faces potential compensation claims if it breaches terms. Moreover, suspension of contracts is a sensitive issue as France finalises other military deals. The contract has also created about 1,000 jobs in France.—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, 20 December, 2014

Better children for a better tomorrow

By Kyaw Thura

All students in the country should be introduced to a new primary education system that can provide a coherent set of learning experiences, which serves the basis for all later academic success.

This means that all teachers must take a decisive step to ensure that all children enjoy the opportunity to experience high-quality education as part of the national education system,

which is soon to be transformed in line with the National Education Law.

One of their main responsibilities is to create an educational environment that helps children to apply their full potential in their daily life. Otherwise, children are sure to be trapped in frustration and desperation that result from inadequate academic competency.

This commitment calls for a paradigm shift in the education system, which is no more than a skill-drill method. That teaching system must end, given the fact that graduates today are less likely to be educated than their grandparents and parents were.

The recent history of our country has clearly convinced us that we have lost a few generations of children to underachievement as a result of our failure to provide young children with opportunities to experience a quality education. It is worth

noting that every child counts.

Now is the time for all educators to make a 100 per cent commitment to changing their attitude as to what good education means to children. They should have high aspirations for children's futures. Any delay will imply that we are doing them and our country a great disservice. If we commit the same mistake again, it will be nothing less than a national scandal.

Write for us

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

Second last old capital city "Amarapura" VI

Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja
Sithu Dr Khin Maung Nyunt

(Continued from previous article on 22-11-2014)

(15) Barges, *Kattu*, *Lwan Kyin* and other boats carrying the green standard of the *Let Ya Win Taw*, war drums, war gongs, 6 big cannons, gold shields, gold *hlwars*, gold *kas*, *Mone* Lancers, *Kaung Han* troopers, *Natsu Let wei* gunners, *Let Ya Win Phone Taw* Pyit gunners, totaling over one thousand in strength, with *Mingyi Maha Min Hla Htin* the commander of *Letya Win Taw* in charge, *Win Sachi Nay Myo Ye Htin Kyaw* as *Sitke*, *Win Sayay Shwe Taung Ye Htin* as *Na Khan*, *Daing Sayay Shwe Taung Ye Thu* and *Shwe Taung Kyaw Htin* as *Tatyays*.

(16) Barges, *Kattu*, *Lwan Kyin* and other boats carrying *Hluttaw* Troops with *Win Shin Taw*, *Yaw Myosa*, *Wungyi Thado Min Gyi Maha Min Khaung*, *Kaung Tong Myosa Wungyi Thado Atula Mingyi Bandu Kyaw*, *Myawaddy Myosa Wungyi Thado Min Hla Min Khaung*, *Wundauk Thoneze Kinsa Min Gyi Min Hla Thiha Thu*, *Mingyi Maha Thiha Thu*, *Na Khan*, *Sayeygyi Ameinttaw yey*, *Ahmartaw yey*, *Athone Sayey*, *Away Yauk Hluttaw* officers.

(17) Barges, *Kattu*, *Lwan Kyin* and other boats carrying *Thuye Gyi* standard, *Ye Takhun* standard, *Win Hmat* standard, war drums, war gongs, gold shields, gold *hlwars*, gold *kas*, *Thwe Thauk Lat*, Inner and outer, *Lay Se Taw*, *Nga Se Taw*, *Thwe Thauk Su* with *Thu Ye Gyi Nay Myo Ye Htin Kyaw Thu* as *Tathmu*, *Nay Myo Thiha Kyaw Thu* as *Sitke*.

(18) Barges, rafts, and boats carrying gold ribboned canes of lictors, gold bows, *Mogyo* swordsmen, *Min Wun Kalupyo* warriors, *Shwe pan* gold swordsmen, *Mingalar* drum, *Han Lin* drum, attendants of royal elephant, two royal elephants and attendants, *Ney Myo Zeya Nawrahta*, royal steed, the horses of the royal carriage, officers in the charge of *Ney Myo Thiri Kyaw Htin*, equerries *Ney Myo Let Wei Patey*, *Ney Myo Letya Patey*, the spired royal coach, the royal coach with white umbrella and attendants.

(19) Sampans and barges carrying inner body guards with clubs and guns, *Thint Seint Banyunna* gunners, 4 *Htee Lin*, 4 *Min Ywa*, *Natsu Letya* gunners, Left Line gunners, Right Line gunners, *Lin Zin* gunners, Left and Right gold lancers, *Alone Reserve* gunners, Rear gunners, North *Marabin* gunners, South 150 gunners, North 150 gunners, *Alone South Dawei* gunners, *Alone North Dawei* gunners, *Bigyet Let Swe*, *Paline Letswe*, *Nan U* gunners, officers in the charge of Minister of Gunnery *Mingyi Maha Zeya Thura* as *Tathmu*, *Ney Myo Thu Rein* as *Sitke*, *Nay Myo Bala Kyaw Thu* as *Na Khan*, *Ye Htin Aung* and *Ye Khaung Nawrahta* as *Tatyays*.

(20) Four royal boats rowed with gold oars, namely *Thara Beikman*, *Tharaka*, *E-kin*, *Kama-kaw* carrying pioneer royal drums, vanguarded *Royal Ratana Barge*.

(21) Three *Hlaw Ka Taw Gyi* boats namely *Pyi Lone Aunt*, *Ywe Gyi* and *Let Thit* each with a golden spired pavilion and a white umbrella followed behind the *Royal Barge*.

(22) *Let Ywe Gyi Hlaw Ka Taw* boats carrying *Ratana Palanquin* with a white umbrella and *Yetma* fan pioneered the *Royal Barge*.

(23) *Lin Zin Hlaw Ka Taw* boats carrying musical instruments and instrumentalists.

(24) On either side of *Royal Ratana gold Barge* are *Hlaw Ka Taw* boats carrying *Maha Thataru Zeya* cannons, and *Khant Taing Yauk* cannons.

(25) The *Royal Ratana gold Barge "Pyi Kyi Mun"* bearing His Majesty King *Thayawaddy*, 8 royal gold boats pulled it. The royal heralds and *Atwin Wuns* were in charge.

(26) *Karaweik* royal gold Barge, bearing the chief queen. Six *Ywe Taw Let Pyi* boats pulled it.

(27) The barge carrying the chief queen's treasures and paraphernalia.

(28) *Royal Sampan* bearing royal daughter Princess *Thiripawaratiloka Ratana Mingala Dewi* and the barge carrying her treasures and paraphernalia.

(29) *Royal Sampan* bearing sister princess *Pathein* and the barge carrying her treasure and paraphernalia.

(30) *Sampan* bearing royal sister Princess *Yamethin* and the barge carrying her treasure and paraphernalia.

(31) *Royal Sampan* bearing Queen of the North Palace and the barge carrying her treasure and paraphernalia.

(32) *Royal Sampan* bearing Queen of the Middle Palace and the barge carrying her treasure and paraphernalia.

(33) *Royal Sampan* bearing Queen of the West Palace and the daughter princess *Hlaing* and the barge carrying their treasures and paraphernalia.

(34) *Royal Sampan* bearing Princess *Min Khin* and the barge carrying her treasures and paraphernalia.

(35) *Royal Sampan* bearing Princess *Bhamaw*, and the barge carrying her treasures and paraphernalia.

(36) *Royal Sampan* bearing the Queen of the South Apartment, *Myosa of Kyauk Maw*, and the barge carrying her treasures and paraphernalia.

(37) *Royal Sampan* bearing the Queen of the North Apartment, *Myosa of Ka-naung*, and the daughters Princess *Pintale* and Princess *Yin Ke* and the barge carrying their treasures and paraphernalia.

(38) The barges and boats bearing concubine, artists and dancers.

(39) Barges, boats and *Kattus* bearing *Anauk Wun Minister Maha Min Hla Thu Rein*, *Maha Min Hla Kyaw* and officials of the *Anauk Yon Taw*.

(40) *Royal ships* carrying treasures of *Royal Jail*,

Kathaung Myaung Taik boat, boat to carry royal gifts, sampan bearing weapons from the royal armoury and boats bearing officials in charge of them.

(41) Boats and barges carrying *Letwei Win* yellow standard, war drums, war gongs, 6 cannons, gold shields, gold *hlwars*, gold *kas*, *Mone* lancers, *Kaung Han* troopers, *Letwei Win Phonetaw phyt* gunners, totaling over one thousand in strength with *Mingyi Min Hla Maha Min Htin* as *Tat Hmu*, *Thu Ye Wun Min Gyi Kyaw Htin* as *Sitke*, *Win Sachi Ney Myo Ye Kyaw* as *Nakhan*, *Win Sayey Shwe taung Bala*, *Bala Kyaw Thu*, *Daing Sayey Shwe Taung Bala Ye Htin* in charge.

(42) *Hlaw Ka* boats and war boats bearing *Hmutaw* and *Mattaw* high officials.

(43) Barges, boats, *Kattu*, *Lwan Kyin* and other boats carrying *Anauk Wun* blue standard, war drums, war gongs, 6 cannons, gold shields, gold *hlwars*, gold *kas*, *Kaung Han* warriors, *Nat-shin Ywe* gunners, *Kala-pyo* gunners, totaling over one thousand gunners, and *Anauk Winhmu Gyi Min Khaung* as *Tat Hmu*, *Win Sachi Ney Myo Kyaw Htin Nawrahta* as *Sitke*, *Bala Phyanhci* as *Na Khan*, *Daing Sayey Bala Yang Aung* as *Tat-yey* taking charge.

(44) War boats, *Hlaw Ka Taw* boats, and barges bearing battalion of Prince *Bagan*, battalion of Prince *Mekhaya*, battalion of Prince *Shwetaung*, battalion of Prince *Mindon*, battalion of Prince *Ba Htein*, and battalion of Prince *Min Tat*.

(45) Boats bearing royal relatives.

(46) Barges and boats bearing *Sawbwas* and *Myosas* of nine *Shan* states, gunners of *Pakhan-Gyi* town and villages, gunners of *Mye-du* town totaling over one thousand in strength, with *Mone Bo Hmu* Prince *Pakhan Thiri Thiha Thura Maha Dhamma Yaza* as the commander of the rear army.

In the infantry were 320 war elephants, royal elephants fully caparisoned with officers in charge and the attendants and caparisoned elephants and horses belonging to the queen, princes, princesses, royal sons, and daughters. The elephant *Wundauk Ney Myo Nawrahta* and *Ney Myo Yan Aung* and *Hsin Sachi Yan Aung Nawrahta* were incharge.

On the 6th Waning moon of Tawthalin in the Saka-rit year 1203 ME at the auspicious hour, troops and fleets were formed in the front, at the rear, on the left and on the right. There were 6 battalions in the front, and 6 battalions in the rear. In the middle Their Majesties were borne on the royal *Ratana* gold palanquin to the riverside palaces where one night was spent. In the morning of the 7th Waning moon, at the most auspicious hour when the report of the ceremonial *Mingala Cannon* was heard, the "Pyi Kyi Mun" *Royal Ratana* gold barge with seven tiered spire bearing His Majesty King *Thayawaddy* began to take off the shore, with pomp and ceremony. The rowers on the royal barge displayed their skill in 37 different modes of oarsmanship. And so *King Thayawaddy's* flotilla advanced to *Hanthawaddy Dagon*.

(To be continued)



Myeik Township kicks off Kayin New Year Day festival 2014

MYEIK, 19 Dec — A festival to mark the Kayin New Year Day 2014 was launched at the Myoma sports ground in Myeik, capital of Taninthayi Region, on 18 December.

Kayin national race affairs minister U Saw Harvey of Taninthayi Region hoisted the State Flag, and those present saluted it.

A dance troupe from Thayetchaung Township performed a traditional

Don dance for the audience. The minister made an opening speech.

During the festival period, a Don dance contest, song contest, festivities and lucky draw programmes will be held at the sports ground on a grand scale.

The Kayin New Year Day will be observed at the same venue on 21 December morning, sources said.

Khaing Htoo (Myeik District IPRD)

Departmental officials share knowledge about consumer protection

MADAYA, 19 Dec — A departmental team led by officers of Mandalay Region Commercial and Consumer Affairs Department gave talks on consumer protection to the families of Myoma market in Madaya, Mandalay Region on 18 December.

An official of Commercial and Consumer Af-

airs Department of Mandalay Region explained provisions in the consumer protection law, and danger of dyes in foodstuffs.

Members of the team checked foodstuffs at the market and took sample foods to be tested at the laboratory.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

MCDC to organize mini-marathon on 10 January 2015



MANDALAY, 19 Dec — The Mandalay Mayor's trophy mini-marathon race will be held on 10 January 2015, sources said.

The race will include men's and women's open events and a novice event.

Participants will start the race from Mandalay City Development Committee Office and run to Bahtoo Stadium along a 12.5 miles long route passing 26th street, 80th street, 12th street, 62nd street, Theikpan street, 78th street

and 30th street.

The first prize winners will bag K1 million each in the men's and women's open events and K1.5 million in the novice event.

Enthusiasts may purchase K300 per application form for the race at township development affairs committee offices, Bahtoo Stadium and YCDC office from 15 December to 5 January. Jerseys will be issued to the participants from 1 to 8 January.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)

Authorities prepare to shape Mandalay City as green city

MANDALAY, 19 Dec — Mandalay Region government is making strenuous efforts for creation of a healthy environment for the dwellers, Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint told a meeting to build Mandalay City as green city on 18 December.

Speaking at city hall, the chief minister said municipal officials should prioritize environmental conservation while pursuing urban development projects. He stressed the need to conserve Mandalay as the country's cultural capital while carrying out systematic utilization of natural resources, development



of transport systems, recycling of sewerage water, underground water tapping, and construction of disaster shelters in the region.

Mandalay City Devel-

opment Committee member U Tun Kyi, Deputy Professor Dr Than Htay Oo of Mandalay Technological University and officials discussed the greening of

the city, easing traffic congestion, preserving cultural heritage amid urbanization, and proper flow of water at drains.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Myawady Township gives shelter to human trafficked victims



MYAWADY, 19 Dec — A ceremony to put up a temporary home for victims of human trafficking was held at its office in Myawady, a border town in Kayin State, on Friday.

On behalf of the Central Committee for Prevention against Trafficking in Persons, Chief of Police Staff Police Brig-Gen Win Khaung made a speech.

First Secretary Akinori Takashima of the Japanese Embassy in Myanmar explained the purpose of building the house.

Police Brig-Gen Win Khaung, Secretary of Kayin State government and secretary of Kayin State Committee for prevention against trafficking in persons U Myo Aung Htay, Social Affairs Minister U Chit Hlaing of Kayin State and the first secretary of Japanese embassy formally opened the home and visited there.

Thuzar (Myawady Town)

Iraqi Kurds liberate besieged Sinjar mountain, freeing hundreds

ZUMAR, (Iraq), 19 Dec — Kurdish peshmerga fighters have fought their way to Iraq's Sinjar mountain and freed hundreds of people trapped there by Islamic State fighters, a Kurdish leader said on Thursday.

"The peshmerga have managed to reach the mountain. A vast area has been liberated," said Masrour Barzani, head of the Iraqi Kurdish region's national security council, adding that 100 Islamic State fighters had been killed. "Now a corridor is open and hopefully the rest of the (Sinjar) region will be freed from Islamic State."

The assault, backed by US air strikes, ended the months-long ordeal of hundreds of people from Iraq's Yazidi religious minority, who had been besieged on



Kurdish Peshmerga forces stand guard near the town of Makhmur, south of Erbil, capital of Iraqi Kurdistan after Islamic State fighters withdrew, on 18 Aug, 2014. — REUTERS

the mountain since Islamic State stormed Sinjar and other Kurdish-controlled parts of northern Iraq in August.

"All those Yazidis that were trapped on the mountain are now free," Barzani said. The peshmerga had not yet begun to evacuate

them, he added.

Kurdish peshmerga soldiers began their offensive on Wednesday to break the jihadists' siege of

the mountain and the town of Sinjar.

The peshmerga advanced from Zumar, east of Sinjar, capturing back 700 square km (270 square miles) over two days. US fighter planes carried out 45 strikes in support of Kurdish fighters on Wednesday, in addition to two strikes near Sinjar.

The impact of the air strikes was evident on Thursday. In one village called Little Koban, the bodies of five militants lay in a wadi. The peshmerga said the Islamic State fighters had been trying to take cover from the air strikes.

"It's the best feeling to kill the enemy," said a peshmerga who took a photo of himself with a corpse in the background on his cell phone. "Look at his beard, the son of a bitch."

The words "Property

of Islamic State" had been sprayed on houses in a nearby village.

The Kurds have yet to take back the actual town of Sinjar, but the freeing of the Yazidis from the mountain is a victory for the Kurds after Islamic State's routing of peshmerga fighters this summer.

The August spectacle of Islamic State fighters racing towards Arbil and the pleas of Yazidis trapped on Sinjar mountain, with thousands of others captured or killed, galvanized US President Barack Obama to military action.

Since then, Kurdish peshmerga forces have regained most of the ground they lost to Islamic State in northern Iraq, but Sinjar's awkward geography, out on a limb to the west, has made it difficult to penetrate. —Reuters

Armed groups recruit 10,000 child soldiers in Central African Republic – NGO

DAKAR, 19 Dec — Up to 10,000 children have been recruited by armed groups during the conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR) despite a UN-backed peacekeeping presence, the number rising sharply in the past two years, Save the Children said on Thursday.

Some children were abducted or forced to join such groups, while others signed up for food, clothing, money and protection, the international children's charity said in a news release.

Many joined up under pressure from peers or parents, to protect their community or avenge dead relatives, it said.

"Every morning we trained hard, crawling

through the mud. The soldiers wanted to make us mean, unforgiving," it quoted Grâce à Dieu, who joined an armed group in December 2012 at the age of 15, as saying.

"When we fought, it was us, the children, who were often sent to the frontline. Others stayed further behind. I saw many of my brothers-in-arms killed while we were fighting," said Dieu, whose real name has been changed for his protection.

Julie Bodin, Save the Children's child protection manager in CAR, said the CAR government, UN peacekeepers and agencies, donors and nations contributing troops all had to try harder to prevent child recruitment and de-

mobilise child fighters.

"They need to explain to armed groups why it is important to protect children. However, there are a lot of armed groups in CAR and each has a unique command structure, so there is a lot of work to undertake," Bodin told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by telephone from Bangui.

The CAR government was not immediately available for comment.

CAR was plunged into chaos when northern, mostly Muslim Seleka rebels seized control of the majority Christian country in March 2013, prompting a backlash by the largely Christian 'anti-balaka' militia.

More than 3,000 people have been killed since December 2013.

The UN estimates 2.5 million, over half the population, need shelter, food and water, basic healthcare and education.

Children have borne the brunt of the violence - 80 percent of those who have had to flee their homes are women and children. Two out of 5 children in CAR lack vital humanitarian aid, according to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Reuters



An Anti-balaka child soldier wears lucky charms around his neck while he poses for a picture in Ouengo district, 7th arrondissement in Bangui, on 12 Jan, 2014. —REUTERS

UN appeals for \$8.4 billion for humanitarian relief to Syrians



Syrian refugees walk at the Al Zaatari refugee camp in the Jordanian city of Mafraq, near the border with Syria, on 7 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

BERLIN, 19 Dec — The United Nations launched its biggest ever humanitarian appeal for Syria on Thursday, seeking \$8.4 billion (5.36 billion pounds) after only securing about half the funding it asked for in 2014.

The aid is desperately needed to provide help to 18 million people in both Syria and scattered through the region, as well as the countries and communities struggling to host them, UN officials told a donors' meeting in Germany.

Some 200,000 people have died and nearly half the Syrian population has been displaced by the conflict that began with anti-government protests in 2011 and spiralled into full-scale civil

war. The number of people needing humanitarian aid has increased by 2.9 million in just 10 months.

"We need a new aid architecture," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres.

"Syria's war is still escalating and the humanitarian situation is becoming protracted. Refugees and internally displaced people have exhausted their savings and resources and host countries are at breaking point."

Syria's neighbours Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq have been cutting back sharply on the number of Syrian refugees they allow to cross their borders as they can no longer cope

with the influx, according to humanitarian agencies.

The UN requested \$2.28 billion to provide relief to Syrians within Syria in 2014 but received only 46 percent of the amount. It also asked for \$3.74 billion for refugees and received just 57 percent of that sum.

"It is unacceptable that we have to ask the international community month after month to do their part so that people don't have to die in the refugee camps in Jordan, Syria and Iraq," said Germany's Development Minister Gerd Mueller.

Europe had to do more and should provide an extra billion euros, he said in Berlin, where the UN launched its appeal. —Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH

Consumer confidence slides to nine-month low in December — GfK

LONDON, 19 Dec — British consumer morale edged down in December to reach its weakest level since March as optimism about the economy hit a 17-month low, a survey by polling company GfK showed on Friday.

Its headline consumer confidence index fell to -4 in December, down from -2 in November and slipping below all forecasts in a Reuters poll of economists that predicted a slight rise to -1.



A shopper walks past an empty retail unit in Nottingham, central England, on 6 June, 2013.

REUTERS

While the index was still well above its long-run average of -9, prospects for the coming year dimmed as GfK's measure of economic optimism slipped to its lowest level since July 2013.

Britain's rapid economic recovery looks set to slow only slightly in the coming months, but worries about the health of the euro zone economy and geopolitical turmoil this year has likely curbed consumer morale.

"After seven months of flatlining within two points either side of -1, the index has finally moved just out of this range, and the bad news for the government is that it has moved downward," said Nick Moon, managing director of social research at

GfK.

The ruling Conservative Party hopes Britain's strong economic growth will persuade voters to return it to power in May's national election. The opposition Labour party says years of stagnant wages and rising prices have left many Britons with a cost-of-living crisis.

A separate survey on Friday from forecaster CEBR and polling company YouGov also showed

consumer confidence fell in December, to the second lowest level in 2014.

It too showed waning optimism about the economy next year, with people feeling less certain about their employment prospects next year and expectations for household finances dropping off slightly.

Still, the most recent official data show Britons have been confident in splashing out on big-ticket items.

British retail sales surged at their fastest annual rate in more than a decade last month, as US-style "Black Friday" discounts drove record sales growth at electrical and department stores.

Reuters

Sierra Leone's leading doctor dies of Ebola

FREETOWN, 19 Dec — Sierra Leone's leading doctor died of Ebola on Thursday, hours after the arrival in the country of an experimental drug that could have been used to treat him, the government's chief medical officer said.

Victor Willoughby was diagnosed with Ebola last week after he treated a man with organ-related problems. The patient, a senior banker, was later diagnosed with Ebola and has since died.

The drug, ZMab, was transported in frozen form on a Brussels Airlines flight that arrived overnight. Before it could thaw, Willoughby's condition deteriorated, said chief medical officer Brima Kargbo.

His death brings to 12 the number of Sierra Leone doctors to have contracted the virus. Eleven have died. In all, 142 health workers have been infected with the disease in the West African

country and 109 have died, according to World Health Organization figures.

Sierra Leone, neighbouring Guinea and Liberia are at the heart of the world's worst recorded outbreak of Ebola. Rates of infection are rising fastest in Sierra Leone, which now accounts for more than half of the 18,603 confirmed cases of the virus.

The overall death toll from the epidemic has risen to 6,915 as of 14 December, the WHO said on Wednesday, adding that the increase in cases in Sierra Leone appeared to have slowed.

Kargbo said Willoughby's death was one of the most tragic to hit the country since the passing, in July, of its only virologist and Ebola specialist, Dr Shek Humar Khan.

"We all looked up to Dr Willoughby and would consult him on many issues relating to our medical profession," Kargbo



Health workers carry the body of an Ebola victim for burial at a cemetery in Freetown on 17 Dec, 2014.

REUTERS

said.

Ebola centres in Sierra Leone overflowed on Wednesday as health workers combed the streets of the capital Freetown for patients, after the government launched a major operation to contain the epidemic.

Dr M' Baimba Baryoh, a surgeon at Connaught hospital Freetown who described Dr Willoughby as a "very good friend", said Sierra Leone had desper-

ate need of more foreign healthcare workers as local staff were overstretched.

"We've lost personal friends and colleagues we've worked with. It's extremely depressing and frustrating. You can talk to someone today and tomorrow they are Ebola-infected," he said.

"The tension, the depression, it's a lot of pressure. You start having nightmares because of Ebola."—Reuters

Roche drops Alzheimer's drug trial; mixed results in breast cancer study

ZURICH, 19 Dec — Swiss pharma group Roche said it would discontinue a late-stage study of investigational anti-amyloid medicine in pre-dementia Alzheimer's disease, following a

pre-planned futility analysis and recommendation by the independent Data Monitoring Committee.

The company also said a late-stage study in people with previously untreated advanced HER2-positive

breast cancer showed three of its treatments helped people live without their disease worsening, meeting its non-inferiority endpoint.

However, the two treatment arms contain-

ing Kadcylla did not significantly improve progression-free survival compared to the third one, with Herceptin and chemotherapy, Roche said.

Reuters

Eli Lilly and Adocia agree to develop ultra-rapid insulin

PARIS, 19 Dec — US drugmaker Eli Lilly and French biotech Adocia said on Friday they agreed a worldwide licensing

partnership to develop ultra-rapid insulin to treat patients with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes.

Under the deal, Adocia

will receive an upfront fee of \$50 million, potential future payments of up to \$280 million if BioChaperone Lispro reaches certain

development and regulatory milestones, and sales milestones up to \$240 million, the companies said in a statement.— Reuters

Asia stocks boast biggest rise in 15 months, BOJ brightens

SYDNEY, 19 Dec — Asian shares enjoyed their best day in 15 months on Friday, after Wall Street boasted its biggest two-day advance since late 2011 amid relief the Federal Reserve was in no rush to withdraw stimulus from the US economy.

The gains came even as oil stayed under pressure, suggesting equity investors were beginning to see the positives in lower fuel costs and increased consumer spending power.

Japan's Nikkei JN1 climbed 2.0 percent to erase most of its recent

losses, while Australia's main index romped ahead by 2.1 percent. AXJO.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan .MIAPJ0000PUS put on 1.5 percent, the steepest daily rise since September last year. Shares in Shanghai hit their highest in four years .SSEC before running into profit taking.

"Risk sentiment is ending the week on a stronger footing after a poor start," said analysts at Barclays. "Market expectations for ECB QE add to the Fed's upbeat message on US



Traders are pictured at their desks in front of the German share price index DAX board at the Frankfurt stock exchange on 17 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

growth and stabilization in Russia."

Extending Asia's bound, spreadbetter expect

European markets to open between 0.6 percent and 0.7 percent.

Earlier, the Bank of Japan ended its last policy meeting of the year by recommitting to a massive stimulus campaign, printing yen to buy significant amounts of government bonds. It also offered a brighter view of the economy in a sign of confidence Japan can weather global market turbulence and the financial crisis in Russia.

BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda will likely repeat calls for firms to increase wages at his

post-meeting news conference, as well as urge Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to press ahead with fiscal and structural reforms.

On Wall Street, investors were still celebrating the Fed's pledge to be patient in raising rates. The Dow .DJI surged 2.43 percent, while the S&P 500 .SPX gained 2.4 percent and the Nasdaq .IXIC 2.24 percent.

That was the biggest daily rise for the S&P since January 2013 and left it up 4.5 percent in just two sessions.

Reuters

**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(22/2014)**

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-118(14-15)	Geological Instruments for Applied Research Centre, Geology Workstation & Mud Logging Unit (1) Lot	US\$
(2)	IFB-119(14-15)	Retest Factory for CNG Type.1 (150 Cylinder / Day) (1) Unit	US\$
(3)	IFB-120(14-15)	CNG Compressor Driven Motor with Complete Package (2) Units	US\$
(4)	IFB-121(14-15)	CNG Compressor Driven Electric Motor with Complete Package & Accessories (1) Unit	US\$
(5)	IFB-122(14-15)	Cummins Engine with Gear Box (1) Set	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time — 14-1-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 17th 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

China jails captain for deadly plane crash



The wreckage of a crashed passenger plane is seen in Yichun, northeast China's Heilongjiang Province on 25 August, 2010.
REUTERS

Gov't to impose consumption tax on contents downloaded from abroad

TOKYO, 19 Dec — The Japanese government and the ruling coalition decided on Friday to start imposing consumption tax on digital books and music downloaded by consumers in Japan from abroad in October 2015, government sources said.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its

junior coalition partner, Komeito, have agreed to include the measure in a set of tax system revisions for fiscal 2015 to be adopted on 30 December.

Currently, the 8 percent consumption tax is imposed on digital contents delivered domestically but not on those downloaded from abroad such as from

Amazon.com Inc of the United States. The change is intended to treat distributors in Japan and abroad equally in taxation.

The new measure will apply to companies based abroad with annual sales in Japan of more than 10 million yen (about \$84,000), the sources said.

Kyodo News

BEIJING, 19 Dec — A Chinese court has jailed for three years the captain of a plane that crashed four years ago killing 44 people after finding him guilty of negligence, state media reported on Friday. Qi Quanjun, in charge of the fatal Henan Airlines flight, was charged with failing to observe safety rules for landing and leaving the aircraft after the crash, ignoring passengers trapped in the wreckage, the official *People's Daily* said on its website.

The ERJ-190 regional jet, built by Brazil's Embraer, was attempting to land at Yichun in the remote northeast of China with 91 passengers and five crew on board. But it overshot the runway and burst into flames, in the nation's worst air disaster since 2004.

The accident was a jolt for China's fast-growing aviation sector, which had no major accident for some years, thanks to stricter safety rules, better training and relatively young fleets of

mainly Western-made aircraft following a string of crashes in the early 2000s and 1990s. Small regional carrier Henan Airlines, previously known as Kunpeng Airlines, was ordered to change its name back to Kunpeng Airlines following the crash. Kunpeng Airlines no longer exists. Repeated calls to Shenzhen Airlines, which controlled Kunpeng Airlines, went unanswered. Shenzhen Airlines is partly-owned by Air China.

Reuters

Pakistani military says it kills 32 militants in ambush

PESHAWAR, 19 Dec — The Pakistani army killed 32 militants in an ambush in a remote valley near the Afghan border, the military said on Friday, and 27 in other clashes, four days after a Taliban massacre of children at a school.

The ambush took place overnight in the northwestern Tirah valley in the Khyber agency, one of the main smuggling routes for arms and insurgents crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"Security forces ambushed (the) moving group ... Fleeing terrorists left behind bodies of their accomplices," the military said in a statement.

There was no independent verification of the fighting. The army is fighting offensives against Pakistani Taliban insurgents in Khyber as well as the North Waziristan region, which is also on the Afghan border.

But the pace of operations has picked up since Pakistani Taliban suicide

attackers killed 131 school children, nine teachers and a soldier at a military-run high school in the northwestern city of Peshawar on Tuesday.

The assault was the deadliest militant attack ever in Pakistan. Footage of terrified children and classrooms awash with blood has provoked a wave of revulsion in a country mostly inured to daily violence.

The Pakistani Taliban, who are allied with but separate from the Afghan Tale-

ban, said the school attack was revenge for the offensive against them and they accused the military of killing civilians in remote areas where journalists are forbidden to go.

Since the bloodshed at the school, the government has promised that Pakistan would not discriminate between different militant factions, trying to draw a line under years of support for some groups seen as useful in Pakistan's confrontation with India and in achieving

Pakistan's aims in Afghanistan.

The government has also announced that it would rescind an unofficial moratorium on the death penalty.

Late on Thursday, the military announced it would sign death warrants for six militants, although it did not disclose their identities or say whether they were in custody. The military also said late on Thursday that 17 militants were killed in air strikes in Khyber and 10 in ground fighting. —*Reuters*

Int'l tourists on track to reach record 1.1 billion in 2014

GENEVA, 19 Dec — The number of international tourists is expected to reach a new record of over 1.1 billion in 2014, the UN World Tourism Organization said on Thursday.

International tourists in the January-October period reached 978 million, up 4.7 percent from the same period last year, according to the organization.

"These are remarkable results considering that different parts of the world continue to face significant geopolitical and health challenges" such as the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and civil war in Syria, UNWTO Secretary General Taleb Rifai said in a statement.

By region, arrivals of international travellers in North America grew 9 percent in the first 10 months of 2014 and those in the Asia-Pacific region rose 5 percent. Africa posted a 3 percent increase.

Kyodo News



Employees work at the site where a train of Metro Public Transport System knocked down a wall and hung suspended in the final zone of the Rosario Workshop, in Mexico City, capital of Mexico, on 18 Dec, 2014. The Metro train carried out maneuvers in the final zone of the Rosario Workshop, not brake appropriately and knocked down a wall and was suspended, no injuring were reported, according to information from the Metro Public Transport System. —XINHUA

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY NO (1450)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MALTE RAMBOW VOY NO (1450) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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.

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV JI XIANG SONG VOY NO (016)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV JI XIANG SONG VOY NO (016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S COSCO SHIPPING CO
LTD.**

Phone No: 2301186

Consultations on the Reform of the Myanmar Companies Act 1914

In order to modernise the Myanmar Companies Act 1914, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) is currently preparing a new Companies Law with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The draft Companies Law will be published on DICA's website (www.dica.gov.mm) in English and Myanmar languages as they become available.

Interested parties are invited to provide any comments and feedback on the draft law by email at lawreform.dica.mm@gmail.com, by post or fax at the details set out below.

Yangon Office : No. 1, Thitsar Road, Yankin Township, Yangon
Fax No.: 01-658135

Nay Pyi Taw Office : Office No. 32, Nay Pyi Taw
Fax No.: 067-406306

Mandalay Office : Corner of 26th and 84th Street, East ZayCho Market, 2nd floor, Chan Aye Thar Zan Township, Mandalay, Mandalay Region

Shan State Office : No. 139, Sat San Tun Road, Zay Pine Yut, Taunggyi, Shan State

Mon State Office : No. 401, Toe Chae Kan Nar Road, Mayangone Quarter, Mawlamyine Township, Mon State

Directorate of Investment and Company Administration

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 20th December, 2014: Weather will be partly cloudy in Taninthayi Region, Shan and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1026W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1026W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2014 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV YANTRA BHUM VOY NO (945N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANTRA BHUM VOY NO (945N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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.

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

Phone No: 2301185

Ministry of Construction Public Works

(Invitation For Open Tender)

1. Open tender applying prequalification method is invited by Public Works, Ministry of Construction, Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for upgrading projects with the part of proceeds of the Regional Development Project for Poverty Reduction under JICA ODA Loan, Japan.

Sr.	Name of Work	Type of Work
1.	Thayet-Minhla Road (Magway Region) (13 miles)	Bituminous Road
2.	DaikU-Sittaung Road (Bago Region) (21 miles 2 furlongs)	Bituminous Road
3.	Monywa-Ayataw-Shwe Bo Road (Sagaing Region) (7 miles)	Bituminous Road
4.	Mandalay-Phottaw-Mogok Road (Mandalay Region) (8 miles)	Bituminous Road
5.	Yangon-KyaukPhyu Road (Rakhine State) (19 miles 4 furlongs + 6 bridges)	Bituminous Road

2. Distribution period - (22.12.2014) to (29.12.2014) of Tender Documents

3. Last Submission Date - 12:00 noon on 22.1.2015 of Tender Documents

6. Opening date of Tender - 13:00 hours on 10.2.2015

7. Tender Documents can be purchased with fifty thousand kyats (50000 Ks.) at the following address and for the detail information, please contact the office within office hours.

**Tender Selection Committee, Public Works
Road Department Office No.(11), Nay Pyi Taw
Tel: 067-407468, 407578, 407603, 407583, 407380**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (113W)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (113W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORINET OVERSEAS
CONTAINER LINES**

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (037N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PANJA BHUM VOY NO (037N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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.

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WAN HAI LINES PTE LTD**

Phone No: 2301185

New Zealand navy sells helicopters, missiles to Peru

WELLINGTON, 19 Dec — The Royal New Zealand Navy has sold five of its aging Seasprite helicopters to Peru for 30 million NZ dollars (23.36 million US dollars), New Zealand Defence Minister Gerry Brownlee said on Friday. "Our recent purchase of eight new, more sophisticated Seasprite helicopters meant the older model Seasprites were available for sale and a deal has been struck with the Peruvian government for them to buy them for their navy," Brownlee said in a statement. Spare parts and the Maverick missiles that were used with the helicopters were included in the deal. Brownlee said New Zealand had worked closely with the Canadian government's Canadian Commercial Corporation, which acted as agent for the Peruvian government, and the US government, which had to approve the export of the US manufactured helicopters and missiles.—Xinhua



A man shows the Zimbabwean bond coins he withdraws from a bank in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, on 18 Dec, 2014. The bond coins, worth 10 million US dollars, began circulating on Thursday as part of central bank efforts to ease the problem of small change which has been experienced since the country adopted multiple currencies in 2009.—XINHUA

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Robert Pattinson to buy a new house?

NEW YORK, 19 Dec — ‘Twilight’ star Robert Pattinson is reportedly planning to buy a new house in Brooklyn, New York.

The 28-year-old actor, who has been been splitting his time between California, New York and London, is looking for a four-bedroom, three-bathroom townhouse in Brooklyn’s Vinegar Hill neighbourhood, reported *Us* magazine.

“He doesn’t want to be bothered by people constantly but he also doesn’t want to be away from all the fun of the city,” a friend close to the actor said about his preference for Brooklyn. The actor may be looking to settle on the East Coast as his relationship with his girlfriend and singer FKA Twigs has become more serious in recent weeks, a source said.

Pattinson and Twigs, 26, started dating in September this year.—PTI



Robert Pattinson may be looking to settle on the East Coast as his relationship with FKA Twigs has become more serious in recent weeks.—PTI

I was kidnapped by Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt: Chris Martin

LOS ANGELES, 19 Dec — Singer Chris Martin joked that he was kidnapped by Angelina Jolie and her husband Brad Pitt to write a song for her upcoming movie ‘Unbroken’. The 37-year-old singer narrated a long tale about how he wrote a song for Jolie’s upcoming movie, reported *E!* Online. “I got a message that said, ‘Meet in this undisclosed location. You’ll be blindfolded and picked up by seven ex-Navy SEALs. So they kidnapped me, hit me over the head, and sprayed me with Mace. When I woke up, I was in an office, and Brad Pitt was doing push-ups as Angelina Jolie was just sitting there with her crown on.”

“There was also a guy holding a knife to my throat, and she said, ‘Write me a song or else.’ And Brad Pitt

said, ‘Yeah. What she said’.

“We wrote a song and then she said, ‘It’s through to the final eight,’ and then we had live eliminations at her house. We came in second, but the main guy chickened out,” Martin narrated. However, the ‘Coldplay’ frontman said it was great working with the duo. “I find that a little bit of limitation is really helpful when you’re trying to create... It’s the same way when someone says to me, ‘Here’s the film and the book. Write something about that.’ It’s really nice to have those limitations because otherwise, where do you start?,” Martin said. ‘Unbroken’ is a movie based on the life of World War II survivor and Olympic athlete Louis Zamperini directed by Jolie, 39. The film will release on 25 December.—PTI



Chris Martin joked that he was kidnapped by Angelina Jolie and her husband Brad Pitt to write a song for ‘Unbroken’.
PTI

Stars fill the stage as Stephen Colbert closes his ‘Report’

NEW YORK, 19 Dec — Stephen Colbert filed his final “Colbert Report” on Thursday, bidding farewell to his popular cable television show with the help of scores of celebrities who crowded onto the stage for a rousing sendoff to the tune of “We’ll Meet Again.”

Colbert, 50, ended his show’s nine-year run on the cable channel Comedy Central without any guests, until the show’s final moments when he broke into song and was joined by Jon Stewart, on whose show Colbert first popularized his persona of an egocentric, bombastic conservative pundit.

The singing comedians were soon joined by famous personalities from the worlds of entertainment, politics and sports including Randy Newman, Willie Nelson, Bryan Cranston, Tom Brokaw, Katie Couric, George Lu-



Stephen Colbert from Comedy Centrals Variety Show ‘The Colbert Report’ poses backstage with his awards for Outstanding Variety Series and Outstanding Writing For A Variety Series at the 65th Primetime Emmy Awards in Los Angeles on 23 Sept, 2013.—REUTERS

cas and “Sesame Street”’s Big Bird. Among many others on hand were James Franco, Gloria Steinem, Sam Waterston, Jeff Daniels, Charlie Rose, Barry Manilow, Alan Alda, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Before the starry send-

off, Colbert told any new viewers: “If this is your first time tuning in to ‘The Colbert Report’ I have some terrible news. This is in fact your last time tuning in to ‘The Colbert Report’ — until 10 years from now when they reboot it directed by (the latest “Star Wars” director) JJ Abrams.”

Colbert stuck to regular segments, including his satiric commentary, “The Word” replete with references to his trademark “truthiness” and other catch phrases, before accidentally killing off the recurring grim reaper character, Grimmy, exclaiming “I just killed death. That means I am immortal.” In a final bit, he was picked up from the roof by Santa’s sleigh, joined by “Jeopardy” host Alex Trebek.

“That was fun. OK, OK, that’s the show,” he commented, concluding “From eternity, I’m Stephen Colbert. John,” handing back to Stewart.

Colbert is set to take over CBS flagship late night talk show “The Late Show” after current longtime host David Letterman leaves in May. CBS recently announced that the show will remain in New York. —Reuters

Drew Barrymore says acting not at the fore-front



LOS ANGELES, 19 Dec — Actress Drew Barrymore says family is her top-most priority right now and work is taking a back-seat as it is time consuming.

Barrymore, 39, and husband Will Kopelman welcomed daughter Frankie in April. The couple’s baby girl joined older sister Olive, 2 and the actress

said her family is her driving force, reported *People* magazine.

“It’s amazing. It’s the driving force behind how I live my life. The acting has to be less and less because it’s to time-consuming. I love it and I don’t want to abandon it, but it can’t be at the forefront right now,” she said.—PTI

Victoria Beckham likes no-makeup look

LOS ANGELES, 19 Dec — Singer-designer Victoria Beckham, known for her style, says she prefers to have a simple no-makeup look. The 40-year-old wife of ace footballer David Beckham said for her a good day is when she is at home in her comfortable clothes, reading her favourite book, reported *Us* magazine.

“I do quite like to have a day where I’m just hanging out in the house, in comfy clothes, catching up on books that I’ve wanted to read. That’s a real treat for me. Just going about with no makeup on,” she said.

Beckham said she loves her long hair as she can experiment with different hairstyles. “I loved my hair short, but the great thing about having long hair is you can do so much more with it. It’s a lot easier! Maybe one day (I’ll cut it again), but for the moment I’m enjoying the fact that it’s actually a lot easier to have the long hair— it’s just effortless,” she said.—PTI



GENERAL

Peru's waste recyclers win bottle ban battle

LIMA, 19 Dec — Just a few years ago, waste recycler Genaro Jorge Durán Contreras and his colleagues were branded “nut cases” and drug addicts, picked up by police or chased away from their foraging for recyclables.

“But now we have a permit to work. The abuse is over,” said the 49-year-old father of six at the Lima office of Ciudad Saludable (Healthy City), a Peruvian organization that helps waste pickers set up formal groups and micro-enterprises.

Durán who heads a 17-member association operating in the smart Miraflores district of Peru's capital, explained how the country's 2009 “Law of the Recycler” — the first of its kind in the world — transformed his job into a respected trade.

“We made a presentation in Congress, and the

president told us ‘you are important’,” he said. “When he spoke to us, it was a moral boost for us all.”

Peru now has 205 schemes supporting organized recyclers across its towns and cities. The initiative is bringing marginalized waste pickers out of poverty, while making a start on reducing garbage and its emissions of climate-changing gases.

Organized recyclers earn \$12 or \$13 a day thanks to their steady supply of materials and ability to negotiate better prices as a group, according to Ciudad Saludable founder Albina Ruiz Ríos. Informal waste pickers bring in only \$2 to \$3 daily.

“Now we can work and earn enough money to educate our children,” said Durán, wiping away tears. His son attends a prestigious technical school, and his daughter plans to study

international business.

Durán's team picks up recyclable materials — including metal, PET bottles, Tetra Pak cartons, paper and hardboard — from participating households, and take them to a center where they are sorted and sold to companies for processing. The association took out loans to buy two trucks to transport the rubbish.

One development that is expected to provide a big boost to the recycling industry in Peru is a new law, approved on Thursday, that will allow plastic bottles to be recycled into new ones, as in other Latin American countries.

Peru imports some 92,000 tonnes of PET (polyethylene terephthalate) resin, derived from crude oil and natural gas, to make bottles each year. Less than half is recovered, with the rest ending up in landfills and dumps, Ruiz said.

During this month's climate talks in Lima, 400 uniformed recyclers got out their brooms and swept one of the city's biggest parks in an action aimed at pressing ministers to sign the bottle recycling law.

Ruiz and her colleagues pushed hard to get the ban lifted, stressing the social and environmental benefits.

With four companies already lined up to start manufacturing recycled PET bottles, the move would likely create jobs and boost the price of the recycled material, generating a better income for those who gather it, Ruiz said.

It should also help Peru become greener. “We (will) not be buying so much oil resin from a non-renewable resource. And when manufacturing with raw materials, you use a lot more energy and water,” she explained.

Reuters

Warrior spirit leads Nishikori to new heights

LONDON, 19 Dec — There comes a moment in all great sporting careers when the puzzle fits together and for Kei Nishikori it arrived on a sweltering early September afternoon in New York.

It was there that the young kohai (Japanese for protege) humbled the master, in this case Novak Djokovic. Nishikori beat Roger Federer in Miami and had Rafa Nadal on the ropes in Madrid early in the season, but this was against the ruthless world number one in the US Open semi-final, having just played back-to-back five-setters.

Undaunted, the 24-year-old showed Djokovic scant respect, rocking

the Serb with the force and relentless warrior-like spirit of his play to claim a four-set victory.

In doing so he became the first Japanese man, and the first from an Asian country, to reach a grand slam singles final. Croat Marin Cilic cut Nishikori down to size in the final but, providing the Japanese stays clear of the injuries that haunt all top athletes, there seems little doubt he will contest more grand slam finals.

Japan has produced few male players to be taken seriously and until Nishikori, Shuzo Matsuoka had been their benchmark in the professional era, having reached 46th in the rankings.—Reuters



Kei Nishikori of Japan serves during his men's singles tennis match against David Ferrer of Spain at the ATP World Tour Finals at the O2 Arena in London on 13 Nov, 2014. Picture taken with in-camera multiple exposure. —REUTERS

Balotelli fined 25,000 pounds and banned for one game



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

REUTERS

LONDON, 19 Dec — Controversial Liverpool forward Mario Balotelli was suspended for one match by the FA on Thursday and fined 25,000 pounds (\$39,152) after posting an offensive message on social media.

Earlier this month, the Italian showed a picture on his Instagram account containing racist and anti-Semitic connotations.

“Mario Balotelli has been fined 25,000 pounds, suspended for one match with immediate effect, subject to appeal, and warned as to his future conduct after he admitted breaching FA rules in re-

lation to social media,” the FA said in a statement.

“The charge was that an image the Liverpool player posted on social media was abusive and/or insulting and/or improper.

“The posting was considered to be an ‘aggravated breach’ as defined in FA Rule E3 (2) in that it included a reference to ethnic origin and/or colour and/or race and/or nationality and/or religion or belief.”

Balotelli, who quickly removed the picture and later apologized, has also been ordered to attend an educational programme.

“Following the recent events related to my ‘Super

Mario’ post, the FA decision has made it clear that it was wrong,” he said on his Twitter account on Thursday.

“I am sorry my teammates and supporters of Liverpool FC have to be penalised for something I did and now come to regret.

It is my intention to comply with the decision of the FA and make sure it never happens again.”

The 24-year-old Balotelli, who has a history of on and off-the-field misdemeanours, joined Liverpool from AC Milan in August but has managed just two goals in 15 games for the Premier League club.

Reuters

MYANMAR TV

(20-12-2014, Saturday)

- 6:00 am**
- * Paritta by Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw
- 6:35 am**
- * Nice & Sweet Song
- 7:00 am**
- * News / Weather Report
- 7:40 am**
- * Hyper Sports
- 8:35 am**
- * TV Drama Series
- 9:00 am**
- * News/ International News
- 10:20 am**
- * Documentary (Road to Academy 2013) (Part- 3 & 4)
- 11:05 am**
- * Joint Performance by State Orchestra and Traditional Orchestra
- 12:00 noon**
- * News/ International News / Weather Report
- 12:30 pm**
- * Round up of The Week's TV Local News
- 2:40 pm**
- * Business News
- 3:50 pm**
- * Cultural Dance
- 4:15 pm**
- * University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Third Year (Botany)
- 5:15 pm**
- * Game for Children
- 6:20 pm**
- * MRTV's Youth Programme
- 7:00 pm**
- * News
- 7:20 pm**
- * Teleplay
- 8:00 pm**
- * News International News / Weather Report
- 8:35 pm**
- * Business News
- 9:00 pm**
- * News Myanmar Series Gitadagale Phwintbarohn

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MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(20-12-14 07:00 am~ 21-12-14 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * Discovering Tribes (MUUN) EPISODE-1
- * World News
- * Chef Life : Cho Wut Yee
- * Local News
- * Taung Byone Nat Festival (Ep-V)
- * World News
- * Independent Filmmaker
- * Local News
- * Rakhine Traditional Wedding Ceremony
- * World News
- * Amazing May Phoo Han
- * Local News
- * Herbal Medicine By Thurein
- * World News
- * A Nun's Creation in Fruit Carving
- * Local News
- * A Real Dream of Accidental Gift
- * World News
- * Crocodile Keeper
- * Local News
- * Taung Byone Nat Festival (Ep-IV)
- * World News
- * Dhamma School
- * Local News
- * Myanmar Maga Factory - (Ep-3)
- * World News
- * A Person with Faith
- * Local News
- * A Diary of a Fisherman
- * World News
- * In the Studio: Aw Thada

China's smartphone users to top 500 mln by 2014

BEIJING, 19 Dec — China will boast more than half a billion smartphone users by the end of this year, an official with the State Internet Information Office (SIIO) said.

The country has 1.3 billion cellphone users, said Wang Xiangrong, deputy director of the website information broadcasting department under SIIO, China's Web regulator.

With smartphones becoming more affordable and improved telecommunication services, by the end of 2014 three of every 10 smartphone users in the world will be Chinese, Wang said on Thursday at an Internet industry conference held in Beijing.

“More than 40 percent of China's citizens will access the Internet through their cellphones next year,” he predicted.

“In the last 20 years, the Internet in China has created a fertile market with limitless potential. The Internet has also facilitated new technological advances, products and business models as well as millions of jobs,” Wang added.—Xinhua

Germany end title drought with sparkling run in Brazil

BERLIN, 19 Dec — It had been 18 years since Germany last won an international title and the pressure on the football powerhouse to finally deliver on promises was immense at the World Cup in Brazil.

The Germans could not have scripted a better scenario for their fourth World Cup victory in July, soaking up setbacks and injury bad luck along the way to crown a decade of unsuccessful attempts with the most important silverware of all.

Semi-finalists at the 2006 and 2010 World Cups, runners-up at Euro 2008 and in the last four again at Euro 2012, the Germans had long been knocking on the door of success.

But for different reasons, it always eluded them with critics saying coach Joachim Loew's team was brimming with talent but lacked the character to take that last decisive step.

They also lacked,



Germany's players pose for pictures as they celebrate with their World Cup trophy after winning their 2014 World Cup final against Argentina at the Maracana stadium in Rio de Janeiro on 13 July, 2014. —REUTERS

some said, a strong personality on the pitch, a natural leader in the mould of Franz Beckenbauer, Lothar Matthaeus or Michael Ballack.

A day before leaving for Brazil, Germany suffered another blow with in-form winger Marco Reus being ruled out with an injury in their last warmup game.

Instead of choking again, Germany rose to the occasion in style, becoming the first European team to win the World Cup on American soil.

The Germans got off to a superb start, firing four goals past Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal but their campaign then started to stutter. A 2-2 draw against Ghana was followed by a

nervous 1-0 win over the United States as they advanced to the knockout stage.

Right back Philipp Lahm had started the first four games in a new holding midfield position but the captain had failed to impress as he had done for about a decade in his defensive role.

Only late in their 2-1

extra-time win over Algeria in the last 16 did Loew what most Germans had been demanding since the start of the tournament, switching Lahm back to the fullback position.

The Germans were transformed instantly into the team who had won over scores of fans in the past years: the quick, attacking team who ripped apart Argentina and England in the previous tournament, firing four goals past each of them.

The Germans were never really troubled by France in their 1-0 quarter-final win, setting the stage for a mouth-watering semi-final with hosts and five-time winners Brazil.

The game on 8 July in Belo Horizonte's Mineirao stadium will long remain in the collective memory of football fans over the world as Germany tore up the record books with a 7-1 annihilation of the hosts.

With four goals in six minutes and a 5-0 lead after only 29, the Germans played the perfect game as

Miroslav Klose also edged past former Brazil striker Ronaldo to become the World Cup's all-time top scorer with 16 goals.

Mario Goetze's extra-time winner in their 1-0 final victory against Lionel Messi's Argentina seemed merely to be the logical consequence of the events that preceded the final in the Rio de Janeiro's Maracana.

The Germans never lost focus of their goal even when Sami Khedira was ruled out moments before the start of the final with a warmup injury and when his replacement Christoph Kramer was taken off after only half an hour with a hit to the head.

Impressive depth in their hugely talented squad and their unwavering team spirit carried them to the deserved title.

The Germans returned home to a heroes' welcome, with more than half a million fans pouring onto the Berlin streets, their title thirst finally quenched.

Reuters

McIlroy and Wust take top Reuters awards

LONDON, 19 Dec — Double major golf winner Rory McIlroy and prolific Olympic Dutch speed skater Irene Wust have been named *Reuters* sportsman and sportswoman of the year after a poll of the news agency's sports journalists from around the world.

Soccer World Cup winners Germany were voted team of the year, Atletico Madrid's Diego Simeone coach of the year, the comeback of the year went to speed skater Victor Ahn and Kei Nishikori took the breakthrough award.

After off-course issues contributed to a thin 2013, McIlroy roared back this year by winning the British Open and the US PGA to double his career major tally.

He then produced one of the most dominant singles displays for years to crush Rickie Fowler and set the tone for Europe's march to another Ryder Cup triumph.

The year ended with McIlroy top of the world rankings and money list and undisputedly the best player in the game.

The battle for the women's title was a close-

er affair, with many voters swayed by Serena Williams' age-defying achievements.

However, in Olympic year, Wust took dominance to a new level. Her five medals — gold in the 3,000m and team pursuit and silver in the 1,000, 1,500 and 5,000m - matched the individual record at any Winter Games. It also took her career tally to eight, including four golds, making her the most successful Dutch Olympian of all time.

Sochi was also the site for Ahn's remarkable return to the Olympic ice.

Eight years after winning three golds for South Korea then switching nationalities to Russia after falling out with his federation, Ahn stormed to three more golds for his adopted nation, the most by any athlete in Sochi.

Japan's Nishikori became the first male player from Asia to reach a tennis grand slam final after a stunning US Open run that included victory over world number one Novak Djokovic before he lost in the final to Croatian Marin Cilic. Simeone's place in Atletico Madrid's Hall of Fame was secured when he led the

city's "second team" to their first Spanish League title for 18 years. He was within seconds of adding the Champions League title too before losing out to Real Madrid after extra time in the final.

Soccer also produced the *Reuters* flop of the year in the shape of the Brazilian national team.

After scuffing their way to the semi-finals in their own tournament they were blown away 7-1 by eventual champions Germany in one of the most seismic results in the history of the world's most popular sport.

Reuters



Ireen Wust of the Netherlands skates during the women's 1000m event at the ISU World Cup speed skating competition in Heerenveen on 13 Dec, 2014. REUTERS

Djokovic, Serena Williams named World Champions for 2014



Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates with his trophy during the awarding ceremony for the men's singles of the China Open tennis tournament in Beijing, China, 5 Oct, 2014. Novak Djokovic defeated Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic by 2-0 in the final to claim the champion. —XINHUA

PARIS, 19 Dec — Novak Djokovic and Serena Williams were titled the men's and women's World Champions for 2014 by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) on Thursday.

In 2014, the 27-year-old Djokovic has won Wimbledon, the ATP World Tour finals and finished the year ranked number one in the world by the ATP.

The 33-year-old Williams, the oldest player ever to be named an ITF Singles World Champion, won the US Open, the 18th Grand Slam title of her career, the ATP Tour Championship and was also ranked number one by the WTA.

Americans Bob and Mike Bryan were named men's doubles World Champions for the 11th time in 12 years, while Sara Errani and Roberta Vinci of Italy became women's doubles World Champions for the third successive year.—Xinhua