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President calls for accelerating SEZ tender process

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein, who serves as the chairman of the Myanmar Special Economic Zone Central Working Body, has called on the body to speed up its efforts to announce the result of the tender for the development of the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone during the term of the current government.

At the meeting of the committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, the president urged the consulting firm, the preferred bidder and officials concerned to complete the process for announcement of the result of tender for development of Kyaukphyu SEZ so that the next government can continue to implement the project in easy way.

Special Economic Zone projects of Myanmar are important in terms of connectivity not only for Myanmar but also for the ASEAN as they are strategically located on international shipping routes in coastal regions, said President U Thein Sein, referring Thaliwa Special Economic Zone and Dawei Special Economic Zone which are also under implementation.



See page 3 >> A small-scale model of the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone. PHOTO: KYAUKPHYU SEZ

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UPMWC invites Wa leaders to attend political dialogue in January

THE Union Peace-making Work Committee has invited leaders of Wa Special Region 2 to attend union-level peace talks scheduled on 12 January.

Vice Chairman of the UPMWC U Thein Zaw, together with union ministers U Hla Tun and U Khin Maung Soe, Chief Minister of Shan State U Sao Aung Myat, Lt-Gen Yar Pyae of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and the commander of the Northeast Command, visited Wa Special Region 2 on 19 December and were welcomed by the special region's Vice Chairman U Shauk Min Hlian, along with Wa officials.

Later, at a meeting with Wa leaders, U Thein Zaw said the purpose of the visit was to explain the latest developments in the peace process, including the need to hold political dialogue to

secure the peaceful co-existence of armed groups. He invited Wa leaders to attend the union-level political dialogues scheduled for 12 January.

Lt-Gen Yar Pyae said at the

meeting that the door is always open to Myanmar's ethnic minorities to join the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.

Special region Vice Chairman U Shauk Min Hlian said

he welcomed the peace process initiated by the president and expressed the group's desire to cooperate with the Myanmar Defence Services.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Meeting between Union Peace-making Work Committee and leaders of Wa Special Region. PHOTO: MNA

Hluttaw

Hluttaw Round-ups

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Round-up

SPEAKER of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Union Parliament) U Shwe Mann sent a letter to President U Thein Sein, urging the government to report on the actions of the Ministry of Mines in response to landslide cases in Kachin State to the parliament. The ministry was tasked with responding to this year's landslides in Hpakant by an urgent proposal by parliament.

During the parliament session yesterday, the speaker offered clarifications about political pensions.

Meanwhile, the Joint Bill Committee discussed the disagreement between the two houses of parliament over amending the Legal Supports Bill.

Four MPs discussed the Condominium Bill.



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Round-up

THE Pyithu Hluttaw convened the 13th meeting of its last session yesterday. During the meeting, the Mercantile Canal Bill and the Banking and Financial Institutions bill, which were sent back from Amyotha Hluttaw, were designated to be discussed again in

the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.
Amyotha Hluttaw Round-up

THE Amyotha Hluttaw also convened the 13th meeting of its last session yesterday. During the meeting, Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry Daw Thet Thet Zin answered questions raised by MP U Khin Maung Htay of Mandalay

Region Constituency No. 10 over farmland issues in Nay Pyi Taw.

She said the ministry would remove more than 29,100 acres of farmland in two districts in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area from the list of protected forests in accordance with rules and regulations. In response to a proposal submitted by MP U Khet Htein Nan urging the Union Government to prevent fur-

ther deadly landslides in Hpakant, Kachin State, Deputy Minister for Mines U Than Tun Aung clarified that the ministries concerned, the Kachin State Government, the Tatmadaw and armed groups will work together to enforce the rule of law and security in jade-mining areas.

The deputy minister pledged that the ministry would scrutinise

the number of heavy machines in the at-risk area in order to conserve the environment and protect its resources.

He also said measures would be taken to implement the rules and regulations of the Myanmar Gems Law and to remove squatters working as migrant workers in Lonkhin and Hpakant from at-risk areas.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Blue plaque being seen at Maha Bandoola Park. PHOTO: TIN SOE

Blue Plaque unveiled at Maha Bandoola Park

MAHA Bandoola Park, which is located in Kyauktada Township between the Maha Bandoola Road and Merchant Road, received a Blue Plaque from the Yangon Heritage Trust yesterday in recognition of its importance as one of the city's architectural landmarks.

The Blue Plaque is the tenth that the Trust has granted in the city, following the Government Technical Institute (GTI) and the Lawkanat Building.

The park has played a critical role in the history of the city and is also important to residents. It is adjacent to the famous Sule Pagoda and faces Yangon City Hall.

The park has long been a venue for cultural performances and public gatherings. It has also been associated with political movements since colonial times.

National leaders, including Bogyoke Aung San, campaigned in the park for independence from the British Empire.

After Myanmar's independence, the site and the surrounding area were the epicentre of democratic movements such as the

8888 Uprising and Saffron Revolution in 2007.

When the British planned the city in 1852, the site was left vacant and known as Tank Square. In 1867-68, the swampy square was levelled and laid out as a public recreation ground.

It was named after Fytche Square, the Chief Commissioner of the British Crown Colony of Burma at the time. The park was redesigned in 2012 by the Yangon City Development Council. The Royal Phillips Corporation installed modern lighting fixtures in the park.

The entrance fee has dropped, and a much-needed children's playground has also been added. The park has become a popular destination for international visitors and city residents alike.

Other sites that have received Blue Plaques include the Government Central Press, the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank, the General Post Office, the Central Fire Station, the Armenian Church, the headquarters of AYA Bank and Yangon City Hall.—*GNLM*

MPT to bring light to monastic education schools

MPT held a Vanity Numbers Auction at the Park Royal Hotel on 19 December. All the revenue from the auction will be used for Panasonic Solar Storage units, to be donated to Monastic Education Centres through Phaung Daw Oo Monastic Education in Mandalay.

The highest price bid for a seven-repeater number was K22 million, the highest price bid for a six-repeater number was K9.4 million, and the highest price bid for the package was K7.5 million.

MPT earned about K292.8 million from the event, according to the the winning bidders on the day of the auction.—*Phoe Saint*

Diplomatic Course No. 5/2015 opens

MINISTRY of Foreign Affairs opened Diplomatic Course No. 5/2015 yesterday in Yangon.

The course was opened with an address by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Tin Oo Lwin. Thirteen employees of the ministry are participating in the 12-week course.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Finish on time

>> From page 1

President U Thein Sein also called for speedy implementation of Dawei SEZ as the partnership of Japan in the SEZ and related project would assist the project in speeding up the project.

Implementation of Dawei SEZ and its related projects would not only benefit Thailand and Myanmar but also regional countries, he added.

He also stressed the need to maintain the current momentum of implementation of Thilawa SEZ which attracted the investors of Japan, urging officials to complete the project phase by phase in time.

Then, Vice President U Nyan Tun, the vice chairman of the central working body, reported on implementation of Thilawa, Dawei and Kyaukphyu SEZs.

Thilawa SEZ, where 48 foreign companies have invested over US\$ 500 million, is the most successful one in Myanmar and initial projects for Dawei SEZ are being implemented by Roland Berger Company, according to the vice president.

The government is also seeking approval of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to announce 4,289 acres of land in Kyaukphyu, Rambye and Marnaung townships under the regional master plan developed by CPG Group.

Afterwards, chairmen of management committees of the SEZ reported on work being carried at the SEZs.



President U Thein Sein chairs meeting of Myanmar Special Economic Zone Central Working Body. PHOTO: MNA



Artist impression of Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone. PHOTO: KYAUKPHYU SEZ



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Lawkamarnaung Pagoda. PHOTO: MYAWADY

C-in-C attends merit-sharing ceremony at Lawkamarnaung Pagoda

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended a merit-sharing ceremony in honour of the renovation of a staircase at the Lawkamarnaung Pagoda in Aphauk, Taikkgyi Township, Yangon Region, on Sunday.

Present at the ceremony were the senior general's wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Chief Minister U Myint Swe of Yangon Region and his wife, Joint Chief of Military Staff and Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Khin Aung Myint and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice Admiral Tin Aung San and his

wife and senior officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army).

After opening the concrete path to the archway of the pagoda, the senior general and his party offered meals, flowers, water and lights to the Buddha image of the pagoda. The senior general and his party observed nine precepts from monks and presented offertories to them.

After the ceremony, the senior general and his entourage inspected the embankment of the Ayeyawady River and heard reports on its maintenance in Aphauk.—*Myawady*

Korea plans to establish new maritime training centre in Myanmar

KOREA plans to set up a training centre in Myanmar to help improve capacity of local seafarers, according to Dr Myat Lwin, rector of Myanmar Maritime University.

Opening of international-level

training centre is the main topic of the recent discussion held between Myanmar and Korea where both sides also discussed bilateral cooperation on maritime education including installation of simulator

classrooms.

He said, the country needs to fulfill many research equipments at any maritime universities, colleges and private institutes that is the main barrier to turn out skilled sea-

farers. Korean Professors made the two-month research programme on the country's maritime education and teaching system.

There are about 3,000 local maritime officers. Sixty per cent of

them have worked on international shipping lines including Korea. The remaining ship engineers are working for Japanese factories and Myanmar-Vietnam shipyards.—*Tin Soe (Myanma Alinn)*

Tamoatshinpin Shwegugyi Pagoda complex designated Ancient Monument Zone

THE Tamoatshinpin Shwegugyi Pagoda complex in Kyaukse Township, Mandalay Region, was designated an Ancient Monument Zone on 11 December by the Ministry of Culture. The zone is located in the township's Kyaungpankone Village Tract.

The designation was made according to Section 4(A) of the 1998 Cultural Sites Protection and Preservation Act, said an official from the Department of Archaeology and the National Museum's Mandalay office.

"We have sought the approval from the pagoda's Board of Trustees. The designation will accelerate the preservation and development of the religious area," he added.

The pagoda is one of the nine cave pagodas built by King

Anawrahta along the Panlong River in the early 11th century, during the early Bagan Period. In late 12th century, King Narapatisithu encased the original cave pagoda in a larger pagoda.

In 1322 AD, during the Pinya Period, King Usana again re-encased and enlarged the pagoda. But since then, the ancient cave pagoda has not been preserved for centuries. Severe weather deteriorated the pagoda, and the neglected 13.62-acre complex housing the pagoda has overgrown with bushes.

The pagoda was re-discovered in 1990 by Venerable Abbot Sandawbatha, while he was clearing the bushes. Under his supervision, the local community began preservation work of the pagoda.—*Min Htet Aung*



Ancient Buddha statues of Bagan Era at Shwegugyi Pagoda. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

Meikhtila rural health care team treats remote villagers

THE Makyeesu Village rural health team, led by health officer U Win Aung in Meikhtila Township, Mandalay Region, toured Shawphu Village on 19 December. At the village, the team provided free health-care to residents. The medical team was assisted by volunteer youths from the village.

The health team prioritizes tours to remote and impoverished villages, visiting one village every month. The health team treats people in 42 villages in the area. It provides free medical care, including vaccinations, to children, elder persons, pregnant women, mothers and all sick people.

The 12-member health team includes senior nurse Daw Hnin Hnin Khine.

"We appreciate the health team's visit and its health services," said a resident of Shawphu Village.—*Chantha*



Trainees of bamboo handicraft course at a practical session. PHOTO: SHWE WIN

Bamboo handicraft course opened

THE opening of a bamboo handicraft course jointly organized by Small-scale Industries Department of Bago Region, was held at Pyaungchaung village, Pauktaw village-tract, Toungoo District, on 15 December with the opening speech by District deputy-director U Aung Than Lwin of Department of Rural Area Development of Bago District.

Present at the opening were heads of township Department of Rural Development, the assistant-director of Small-scale Industries Department of Bago Region and teachers, the manager of Thiri Integrated Agricultural and Breeding Company and 20 attendees.

The course will last 15 days.—*Shwe Win*

Crime News

Man commits suicide by hanging in Mandalay

A MAN hanged himself in Aungmyaytharzan Township on 18 December, according to local police.

After receiving a report of the incident, police investigat-

ed the case, concluding that the deceased is Maung Aye, 33, a mason.

The body was sent to the local hospital for an autopsy.—*Maung Pyithu*

Fisherman drowned in Kyaikto

A FISHERMAN was drowned as he was tied to a net that was caught on a rock underwater. As Maung Soe, 27, dived into water to get the net, which was snagged on a rock in the Sittaung River, on 19 December in Kyaikto, Mon

State, he was drowned. When he did not emerge from the river, another man working on the boat with him reported the accident to police. The police confirmed that Maung Soe was drowned.—*Ye Kaung Oo*

Opium, heroin seized in Kachin state

AN ANTI-DRUG squad discovered 0.912 kilos of heroin in the possession of a passenger in a car en-route from Kutkai to Lashio on 19 December. In a separate incident, the squad discovered 0.403 kilos of heroin on a motorcycle driver traveling from Seikmu Village to Nanthmaw Village the same day.

Action has been taken against Ma Thin Thin Aung, the



Heroin seized on Kutkai-Lashio road. PHOTO: MYANMAR POLICE FORCE

passenger, and Mon Ban La, the motorcycle driver. La Aung, who was also riding on the motorcycle, is also being investigated.

Similarly, an anti-drug squad in Myitkyina seized 1.625 kilos of opium from a motorist on 18

December. The police stopped and searched the motorbike driven by Zaw Taung on the Waingmaw-Kampaiti Road in Waingmaw Township and discovered the drugs hidden in the vehicle.—*Myanmar Police Force*

SC says no power to extend sentence of Delhi gang rape convict

NEW DELHI — The Supreme Court said yesterday it had no power to detain the youngest of the men convicted of the 2012 gang rape of a woman on a bus in New Delhi in a case that shocked the nation, a day after he was released after three years in custody.

The attack turned a global spotlight on the treatment of women in India, where police say a rape is reported every 20 minutes, and the sentence for the young man sparked debate over whether the country is too soft on young offenders.

India's top court was hearing a petition from the Delhi Commission For Women demanding a longer sentence for the man, who was 17 at the time of the crime. He had received the maximum punishment of three years from the Juvenile Justice Board.

"Everything had happened in accordance with the law," the two judges said in their ruling. "We need legislative sanctions" to take any action, they said.

In 2012, the man and five adult companions lured the 23-year-old trainee physiotherapist and her male friend onto a



Demonstrators shout slogans as police detain others during a protest against the release of a juvenile rape convict, in New Delhi, India, on 20 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

bus in Delhi, where they repeatedly raped the woman and beat both with a metal bar before dumping them on a road.

The woman died two weeks later of her injuries. Four of the adults were sentenced to death while the fifth hanged himself in prison. The death sentences have not been carried out. Police accused the teenager of being violent, and said he pulled out part of

the woman's intestines with his hands.

Ashok Verma, one of his lawyers, declined to comment.

Swati Maliwal, the head of Delhi Commission For Women, told reporters outside the court that the national government let India down by failing to change the law under which anyone below the age of 18 can only be sentenced to three years.—Reuters

Philippines vows stronger military to back South China Sea claim

CLARK FIELD — Philippine President Benigno Aquino vowed yesterday to leave behind a stronger and a more capable armed forces to face maritime challenges in the South China Sea when he leaves office next year.

Aquino, ineligible to run for re-election under the constitution, promised to spend about 83.90 billion pesos (\$1.77 billion) in a five-year period until 2017 to strengthen the military as China asserts its claims to most of the waters.

The spending plan was only approved this year, meaning the bulk of that money will be spent in coming months.

"We're planning to acquire new frigates, strategic sealift vessels, long-range patrol and close air support aircraft and other equipment," Aquino said at the 80th anniversary of the armed forces.

He did not mention the South China Sea dispute specifically, but the equipment has been earmarked by the military to defend Philippine territorial rights.

"I have personally witnessed how the military grew stronger and more effective in preserving peace and stability, the key in building confidence in the Philippines."

The strategic sealift vessel, being built in an Indonesian shipyard, will be delivered early next year and the Israeli-made radar will be completed by 2017, the same time all the fighters from South Korea are delivered.

He said the United States and Japan were helping develop capacity and capability as "some countries" in Asia have been increasing defence spending amid rising tension in the South China Sea.

China has overlapping claims with Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei in the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year. The Philippines has challenged Beijing before the arbitration court in The Hague, a case Beijing has not recognised.—Reuters

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China's Shenzhen warned of waste problem a year before disaster

BEIJING — Over a year ago, a government-run newspaper warned that a boomtown in southern China would run out of space to dump the waste left behind from a building frenzy.

On Sunday, a mountain of mud and construction waste collapsed at an industrial park in Shenzhen, the rapidly growing town next to the border with Hong Kong, burying 33 buildings and leaving nearly 100 people missing.

Besides new buildings, a network of subway lines is being built in Shenzhen, and mounds of earth are being excavated and dumped at waste sites.

The official *Shenzhen Evening Post*, published by the city government, quoted an unnamed official as saying in October last year that choosing somewhere to locate these dumps was becoming "exceedingly difficult" and that it was "the only thing" on his mind.

"Shenzhen has 12 waste sites and they can only hold out until next year (2015)," the newspaper said.

The frequency of industrial accidents in China has raised questions about safety standards following three decades of breakneck growth in the world's second-largest economy.



Firefighters search for landslide survivors among debris of destroyed buildings in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, on 21 December.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Provincial authorities sent a team to investigate the Shenzhen mudslide, the Ministry of Land Resources said.

The amount of mud and waste at the site was immense and was stacked too steeply, "causing instability and collapse, resulting in the collapse of buildings", the ministry said in a statement.

Fan Xiao, a senior engineer at the government-linked Sichuan Geology and Mineral Bureau, said such risks from man-made mountains were prevalent

nationwide, especially as China also has many slag heaps from the mining industry.

"Shenzhen is a modern city after all; ultimately its management standards are pretty high. It is possible that some other cities have not reached Shenzhen's standards of management. Now that Shenzhen has this problem, you can't rule out a lot of other places having such risks," Fan said.

Shenzhen is supposed to be a model, modern city for China. Once a quiet fishing village, it

was chosen by Beijing three decades ago to help pioneer landmark economic reforms, and it has boomed ever since.

The waste site that collapsed on the industrial estate was only supposed to have had a lifespan of around a year and should have stopped operating in February this year, according to the Shenzhen government's online news portal.

But workers said it continued to take waste mud, the report added.

Shenzhen media has reported several times in the past few years that companies were illegally dumping construction waste as the legal dumps were all full.

The Shenzhen government did not respond to requests for comment.

Another local newspaper, the *Shenzhen Special Economic Zone Daily*, said companies were becoming so desperate that even old ponds once used to farm fish were being filled by building waste, though low-lying land and mountain hollows were preferred. Such dump sites were often forced through despite opposition by residents, media reports said. Environmental impact assessments were likely skipped, they said.—Reuters

China calls on John Kerry to respect China's core interests

BEIJING — The United States needs to respect China's core interests, including stopping selling weapons to Taiwan and ending military patrols close to islets controlled by China in the South China Sea, the country's foreign minister told his US counterpart.

In a telephone call with US Secretary of State John Kerry, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said the world is becoming a more challenging place, according to a Chinese Foreign Ministry statement released yesterday.

"As the US seeks cooperation with China, it ought to respect China's core interests and important matters of concern," the statement paraphrased Wang as saying.

Wang explained to Kerry China's position on Taiwan and the South China Sea, asking the United States to end arms sales to the self-ruled island and stop "shows of force" with ship and aircraft patrols close to Chinese-controlled island in the disputed South China Sea, the statement added.

The US angered China last week by approving a new round of weapons sales to Taiwan.

Defeated Nationalist forces fled to the island at the end of a civil war with the Communists in 1949 and Beijing has never re-



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi speaks to members of the Security Council at the United Nations Headquarters in Manhattan, New York, December 18, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

nounced the use of force to bring it under its control.

China has also been upset with what it sees as provocative US actions in the South China Sea, including the patrols.

The Pentagon said on Friday it was looking at Chinese complaints that a B-52 bomber

recently flew near a Chinese artificial island in the South China Sea, a sensitive issue because the two powers disagree over Beijing's territorial claims in the region.

China claims almost all of the energy-rich waters of the South China Sea, through which

more than \$5 trillion of maritime trade passes each year. The Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Malaysia and Taiwan have overlapping claims.

Wang and Kerry also discussed the crisis in Syria and the Iran nuclear deal, China's Foreign Ministry added.—Reuters

Brother of returnee criticizes Abe's policy on abduction issue

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's current policy on the issue of North Korea's abductions of Japanese citizens is ineffective in resolving the decades-old problem, Toru Hasuike, brother of abductee Kaoru Hasuike, said yesterday.

"Prime Minister Abe has risen to his post by depicting himself as a hard-liner toward North Korea but no progress has been made recently on the issue. He is merely using the issue politically," Hasuike told a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo. His brother Kaoru was repatriated in 2002 after being abducted by North Korea in 1978.

Hasuike, who recently published a book titled "Shinzo Abe and the Cold-Blooded People Who Abandoned the North Korea Abduction Victims to Die," said that although Abe repeatedly says Japan will "use every possible way" to solve the issue, "the Japanese government has no concrete strategy." Abe, who has been serving as prime minister for the second time since December 2012, has said that he would resolve the abduction issue while in office, and set up a special ministerial task force.

Japan officially lists 17 nationals as having been abducted by North Korean agents in the 1970s and 1980s, but suspects North Korea's involvement in many more disappearances. Five of the 17, including Kaoru, were repatriated in 2002, while Pyongyang claims eight have died and four others never entered the country.

Japan has been urging North Korea to report the outcome of its fresh probe into the whereabouts of all Japanese residing in the country, as stipulated under a bilateral agreement. But no tangible progress has been reported so far.

The abduction issue has prevented the two countries from normalizing diplomatic relations.

Hasuike added that to move the issue forward, Abe must define what exactly is meant by a true "resolution" — whether all 12 officially recognized abductees must be brought back to Japan or have their whereabouts confirmed, or whether the definition should be expanded to include nearly 900 people suspected of having been abducted by North Korea.

"Once the definition of the resolution is clarified, Japan can negotiate toward a true agreement with North Korea," said Hasuike, former vice representative of the Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea.

"With no progress made, I am worried that the issue will be forgotten in Japan. The abduction victims and their families are getting older and there is simply no more time left," said Hasuike.—Kyodo News

Indonesia warns countries to stay out of Papua issue

SYDNEY — Indonesia has given other countries a stern warning to respect its sovereignty and stay away from controversial issues surrounding its Papuan territory.

It is alleged the Indonesian authorities have committed numerous counts against the separatist movement since the country took control from the Dutch in 1963. Meanwhile the local population continually complain the wealth generated from the resource-rich region flows to the wealthy elite in Jakarta while Papuans remain poor.

West Papua hosts the world's largest gold and the third largest copper mine in the world in a joint venture between mining

giants Rio Tinto (40 percent) and US based Freeport-McMoRan Inc. The Grasberg mine is seeking to transition from open pit to underground mining in late 2017, ramping up production to process approximately 240,000 tonnes of ore daily if its contract extension with the Indonesian government is granted.

Indonesia's defence minister Ryamizard Ryacudu told reporters in Sydney yesterday that the island nation had never disputed claims made by other countries on their territorial sovereignty and expected the same regarding Papua.

"There are countries that are getting involved in the issue of

Papua. For us, Papua is (part) of the united Republic of Indonesia. The united Republic of Indonesia extends from Sabang (in Sumatra) to Papua. There is no other solution, that's it, that's the way it is," Ryacudu said in Sydney.

Ryacudu was in Sydney on Monday with Indonesian foreign minister Retno Marsud for a 2+2 bilateral meeting on defence, national security including counter terrorism and economic issues with Australian foreign minister Julie Bishop and defence minister Marise Payne.

Bishop confirmed the Papuan issue was raised in the meeting, along with a host of other regional issues, restating "as we have done

on many occasions, publicly and privately, our unconditional support and respect for Indonesia's sovereignty in this regards."

Bishop also insisted relations between Australia and Indonesia are in good shape following a diplomatic dispute between the two countries on the execution of convicted drug smugglers Andrew Chan and Myuran Sukumaran and the controversial boat turn back policy.

"We have shared common interests across a broad and diverse range of areas," Bishop told reporters at the end of the dialogue.

"There is room for us as two G20 economies to do a great deal more together."—Xinhua

Second man involved in Shangri-La shooting incident gets 7 year's jail, caning

SINGAPORE — One of the three men involved in Shangri-La shooting incident in May this year was given seven years' jail and three strokes of the cane for drug offences, local media reported yesterday.

Muhammad Syahid Mohamed Yasin admitted to abetting the rash act, and pleaded guilty to three drug-related charges.

Sitting at the rear left passen-

ger seat, the man instigated the driver, Mohammad Taufik Zahar, to do a rash act to endanger the personal safety of two police officers by shouting "Jalan! Jalan!" (Go! Go!) in Malay on the early morning of 31 May.

The car crashed into the concrete barrier beside the police car, pushed the barrier aside and drove through. Police opened fire on the vehicle, and the car later

came to a stop. Taufik died on the spot.

Syahid and the other passenger, Mohamed Ismail, were arrested at the scene on that day. The urine test results of both men later revealed they had also consumed drugs.

Ismail was sentenced to eight years' jail and three strokes of the cane for drug trafficking in June this year.

Syahid committed the present offences about a year after his release from drug supervision, and he had previous convictions for drug-related offences, said *the Straits Times*.

The Shangri-La Dialogue, a major security summit attended by defence ministers and security chiefs, was held on 31 May at the hotel, around which tight security net had been placed.—Xinhua

EU border agency warns of risks from fake passports

BERLIN — The head of the European Union's border agency has said the large number of refugees entering Europe poses a security risk, with civil war making it harder to check the authenticity of Syrian passports.

Hundreds of thousands of people fleeing war and poverty in countries such as Syria and Iraq have arrived in Europe this year. Since last month's attacks in Paris, concern has grown that Islamist militants could enter undetected among the influx.

"The big inflows of people who are currently entering Europe unchecked are of course a security risk," Frontex head Fabrice Leggeri told German newspaper *Welt am Sonntag*, though he also said it would be wrong to regard all refugees as "potential terrorists."

In Paris, a Syrian passport was found near the dead body of one of the attackers and his fingerprints matched those of a person registered as arriving in October in Greece, the main entry point for refugees and migrants.

Leggeri said that in a country going through civil war like Syria no one could guarantee that "the documents that look real are really issued by an official authority or are really being carried by their rightful owner."

Diplomats said earlier this month European countries have circulated a watch list of missing Syrian and Iraqi passports they fear could be filled with false data and used by people to travel to Europe and beyond. Such documents are harder to identify than outright fakes.

One diplomat said the list

contained serial numbers of thousands of genuine blank passports that were held in government offices in parts of Syria and Iraq that have since been captured by armed groups including Islamic State.

Welt am Sonntag said that according to Western intelligence services, Islamic State militants had probably procured tens of thousands of real passports after taking control of local authorities in parts of Syria, Iraq and Libya.

They may also have seized machines used to produce identity documents.

The newspaper said, without specifying its sources, that Islamic State was doing a brisk trade in the passports, which sell for between 1,000 and 1,500 dollars on the black market.—*Reuters*

German legal experts say refugee cap would be 'problematic'



Refugees walk to their camp at a hotel touted as the world's most northerly ski resort in Riksgransen, Sweden, on 15 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

BERLIN — Legal experts at Germany's lower house of parliament have serious doubts about the legality of introducing a cap on refugee numbers, according to a document obtained by German broadcaster ARD.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and their Bavarian allies, the Christian Social Union (CSU), have been embroiled in a dispute over the idea for weeks.

Merkel has resisted calls by some members of her party for an "Obergrenze", or cap on the number of refugees entering

Germany, and has said that the right to asylum for people suffering from political persecution cannot be limited.

But Horst Seehofer, leader of the CSU which governs the federal state of Bavaria where many refugees head, has called for limits to be placed on migrant inflows.

Legal experts at Germany's Bundestag lower house, who provide independent views, found that EU asylum and refugee laws did not provide for any numerical limit being placed on people seeking protection, the report said.

They said that on this issue EU legal guidelines generally override national laws.

A European-wide cap on the number of refugees would be "problematic" and would only be imaginable if the people granted refugee status under the Geneva Convention were sent to safe third countries upon being rejected, ARD said, citing the report.

But the legal experts said it was "extremely doubtful" whether deporting and rejecting refugees could be justified by saying a cap would otherwise be exceeded, ARD said.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Suicide bomber kills five in attack on US-Afghan patrol

KABUL — A suicide bomber on a motorbike attacked a joint US-Afghan patrol near Bagram air base in Afghanistan yesterday, killing five soldiers and wounding six, Bagram District Governor Abdul Shukur Qudusi said.

In a tweet, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility and said 19 US soldiers had been killed and a number wounded.

NATO headquarters in Kabul confirmed there had been a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack near Bagram Air Base and said it was under investigation.

The police chief of Parwan province said three Afghan police had been wounded in the attack. He said he was not authorized to give details on foreign troop casualties. Bagram, around 40 km (25 miles) to the north of the Afghan capital, Kabul, is one of the main bases for the 9,800 US troops left in Afghanistan after international troops ended combat operations last year.—*Reuters*

Chile's airports to resume normal operations as strike ends

SANTIAGO — Chile's Defence Minister said the government and workers tied to the civil aviation authority reached an agreement Sunday, ending a four-day strike that forced airlines to cancel hundreds of flights and left thousands of passengers stranded.

"We want say to all the Chileans who were affected (by the strike) that we deeply regret this situation, that we will go the extra mile together with the airlines, with all of our staff and also with workers from the civil aviation authority to reverse this situation," said Defence Minister Jose Antonio Gomez.

LAN, Chile's flagship airline and part of LATAM Airlines, had said earlier on Sunday that domestically, it was only flying from Chile's capital Santiago to Punta Arenas, Temuco and Calama, affecting 80 percent of its flights. "Due to the end of the strike, LAN will resume operation of all its flights within Chile in the coming hours," the carrier said.—*Reuters*

Forest fires sweep northern Spain despite winter rain

MADRID — Dozens of forest fires raged across northern Spain on Sunday after strong winds hindered efforts to keep them from spreading, forcing some homes to be evacuated in the worst-affected Asturias region.

More than 100 fires were still burning on Sunday morning in Asturias alone despite rain overnight in some areas, emergency services said.

Television pictures showed several rural houses destroyed by fire but officials said there had been no reports of casualties or damage to villages or towns. Some residents were told to leave their houses as a precaution.—*Reuters*

Slovenia rejects same-sex marriages in a referendum

LJUBLJANA — Slovenia rejected on Sunday a law that would give same-sex couples the right to marry and adopt children in its second vote on gay rights in four years.

About 63.4 per cent of voters rejected the law in a referendum while 36.6 per cent supported it, a preliminary result of the State Electoral Commission showed after 99 per cent of votes were counted.—*Reuters*

Gas explosion at Russian apartment block kills at least five

MOSCOW — At least five people died after a gas explosion ripped through an apartment block and set it ablaze in the southern Russian city of Volgograd on Sunday, Interfax news agency said, citing local authorities.

The Russian Investigative Committee, which reports directly to President Vladimir Putin, has said around 150 people lived in the affected section of the nine-storey building.

A local Emergency Ministry official was quoted as saying that 10 to 12 people could be trapped beneath the debris.

Local TV showed footage of firefighters trying to put out the fire, and of the building's heavily damaged facade.—*Reuters*

OPINION

The cost of turning enemies into friends

Myin Win Thein

THE idea of turning enemies into friends is exciting and plausible. It puts an end to animosity, preserving peace and harmony in society. Therefore, for some people, attempts to eradicate animosity in society means laying the foundation for societal peace and harmony.

As a result, people try to drive out animosity from their hearts and minds and learn to befriend their enemies. However, the root cause of animosity lies outside of individual people. In any community, what pits people against each other is conflicting class interests.

In turning enemies into friends, it is often necessary to make a bargain on class interests. Unfortunately, some interests of certain social classes are non-negotiable, and no one has the means to bargain on them. Therefore, people who try to bargain with the interests of different social classes are often accused of being traitors to their communities, with detractors claiming they betray the interests of their own social class and ally social classes.

Therefore, turning enemies into friends may

also lead to turning some friends into enemies. The most important point of all is not to turn the majority of people into one's foes and not to turn oneself into the enemy of one's friends.

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We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email thantunaungnlm@gmail.com with your name and title.

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.

MANY Chinese families take a mixture of raw honey with hot water during breakfast. They believe that honey can prevent various kinds of disease from breaking out. There are also other people who like to have honey with bread. What really is raw honey? It is a thick golden liquid produced by industrious bees, using the nectar collected from nearly two million of flowers from very far places. To make a pound of honey, they have to travel such a big distance tirelessly. But how do bees make honey? Bees using their long tube-shaped tongues to extract the juice from the flowers and when returning to the hive, passed the nectar to other bees by regurgitating the liquid into other bees' mouths. This regurgitation process repeated until the partial digested nectar are finally deposited into the honeycombs. Bees set to work by fanning the honeycombs with their wings in an effort to speed up the process of evaporation. When most of the nectar have evaporated from the honeycombs, the bees have sealed the combs with a secretion from their abdomens. They eventually hardened into wax, and thus the honey can be stored indefinitely.

The oldest bee fossil was discovered in Northern Myanmar dating back from 35 million to 45 million years ago. It was preserved in a piece of amber found in a mine, at a time when bees and wasps split into two different linkages. The fossilized insect appeared to have features both common to the bee and wasp, but was considered to be more bee than wasp. The fact that an ancestor of an important modern pollinator existed could have helped scientists to explain the rapid expansion of floral diversity in the early period to mid-Cretaceous period.

In ancient time, honey had fructose, glucose and water, sugar as well as enzyme, minerals, vitamins and amino acids in its composition. People had believed that honey contained medicinal qualities. This being so, people highly value honey. Egyptians used honey in religious rites and ceremonials and even used for preservation of corpses of pharaohs called [mummy] dating back to 5,000 years. Roman law declared that bees were the property of the man who had placed the hive there, not the person who owned the land. In the Muslim religion, Mohammad had said "Honey is the remedy for every illness and the Koran is the remedy for all the illness of the mind". Therefore, I recommend to you both remedies the "Koran and Honey". Among ancient civilization, honey was regarded more as medicine rather than food. In fact, as sugar become available in the sixteenth century, honey was the

Raw Honey

U Win Sein

world's principal sweetener. Honey's colour, taste, aroma and texture vary greatly depending on the types of flowers a bee frequents; for example, it has differed greatly from bees that frequented a lavender field.

Myanmar is going to export about 3500 tons of raw honey in the near future. The honey season in Myanmar is from September to May. In 2014-15, a total of 3551 tons was exported but 2013-14 witnessed and export of 2490 tons honey only. Export has increased since 2005. All these export are handled by 13-Myanmar companies which have owned about 120,000 hives in the country.

The division of labor can be learned from the honey bees because of their abilities to live in a colony with their sisters and queen. This type of social behavior is called eusociality. Eusociality exists in many other insects. Ants, bumble bees, paper wasp and termites are all examples of eusocial insects that live together in a colony comprising workers and queen. Within eusocial colonies there exist division of labor between multiple caste of workers. For instance, in honey bees there are two types of workers: nurse bees and forager bees. Honey bee division of labor is also age-dependent, where the youngest bees become nurses and the oldest bees become foragers. A worker bee will dedicate her entire life to the welfare of the hive. As soon as a honey bee emerges as an adult, her main duty is to clean the hive, feed the brood [larvae], receive food from foragers and build honeycombs.

Once a nurse bee is about 2 weeks old, she will switch tasks and begin to guard the colony entrance and clean out the deaths. When they are about 3 weeks old, they become foragers and begin to go out of

the hive in search of pollen, nectar and water. Foragers recruit other foragers and go to suitable flowers patches by performing waggle dances. At the end of their life cycle, forager bees are about 5 to 7 weeks old.

As mentioned before, honey bee workers dedicate their lives to the hive and make sure that their queen is well protected as she is the one that produced the workers. Without the queen, a honey bee colony cannot survive on its own. The queen will lay thousands of eggs and can live for up to 3 to 5 years but will mate only once. She is essential to the colony and honey bee workers will sacrifice their lives to protect her.

Honey has been valued for millennia since time immemorial. Its sweet taste is considered a gift from the God. It has a wide range of spiritual, cosmetic and me-

dicinal uses. Today raw honey is still popular, because of its many nutritional values as it includes high vitamin contents. Raw honey is nutritionally superior to processed honey because processing significantly reduced the material content. The followings are the main vitamin contents in raw honey:

Vitamin C. Raw honey is rich in vitamin C. Medicinal experts believe Vitamin C to be one of the most effective vitamin available to humans. It boosts up the immune system, helping to protect the body from infection and disease. Vitamin C is also good for skin and can be topically absorbed. It means that raw honey can be smoothed onto the skin as a face cleaner and can also ease topical system such as burns, rashes and dry skin.

Vitamin B6. Raw honey also has a high Vitamin B 6 content. This vitamin is important to human body and it is involved in chemical reaction that takes place each minute. Vitamin B 6 is actually of three different vitamins. Pyridoxamine, Pyridoxel and Pyridoxine. This combination works in tandem with enzymes within the body to ensure that your body's metabolism is functioning properly.

Vitamin B3. Vitamin B 3 or Niacin is also found in raw honey. Niacin can help reduce levels of bad cholesterol or LDL (low density of lipoprotein), and also increase levels of beneficial cholesterol or HDL (high density of lipoprotein).

Vitamin B2. Raw honey contains Vitamin B 2, also known as riboflavin. Riboflavin is a water soluble vitamin that helps to fuel the body's energy by converting carbohydrates into sugar, it also helps with the breakdown of fats and amino-acids.

Vitamin B1. Vitamin B 1 or thiamin is also present in raw honey. Thiamin helps breakdown carbohydrate to fuel the body. It also neutralizes free radical which can be compromise the immune system and speed up the aging process.

Vitamin B5. Raw honey contains vitamin B 5 also known as Pantothenic acid. Vitamin B 5 is present in your blood plasma where it maintains the balance of hormones and keeps nervous system in top condition.

As vitamins are essential to the health of the human body taking raw honey regularly is like injecting a full vitamins dose to the human body in order to supplement the imbalances of vitamin deficiency.



The European Union to provide additional EUR 70 million for food and nutrition security, rule of law and peace-building in Myanmar

THE European Union (EU) announced the release of additional EUR 70 million (almost 100 billion MMK) to help enhance food and nutrition security, improve the rule of law and establish peace in Myanmar.

“The new funds are directed at three key issues in Myanmar. Firstly, we will contribute to reducing poverty and improving food and nutrition security through a new aquaculture programme. Secondly, we will continue our support to the reform of the police in its transition into a modern police service. Last-

ly, we will increase our support for efforts to achieve a lasting peace.

Since the start of reforms in 2011, the EU has lifted sanctions, allocated substantial funding, initiated programmes, and encouraged further reforms. The additional funds are another strong signal of our long-term engagement in key areas of reform,” said Roland Kobia, EU Ambassador to Myanmar.

The Myanmar Sustainable Aquaculture Programme, or MYSAP, is a EUR 20 million commitment to reduce poverty and improve food security and

nutrition. Aquaculture remains underdeveloped despite its potential of generating greater food security and nutrition as well as creating sustainable livelihoods. MYSAP aims at scaling up sustainable freshwater aquaculture and supporting ecosystem-based practices of coastal shrimp farms, including mangrove reforestation. The programme will promote socially and environmentally responsible investments and focus on the participation of smallholders.

EUR 30 million is allocated to strengthen the rule of law and transform the Myanmar Police

Force into an effective, efficient and accountable police service which respects human rights and fundamental freedoms and applies international best practices. The programme builds on previous successful EU engagement with the police. The 5-year programme will strengthen institutional capacity, engage in modern practices of community policing and crowd management, improve police accountability and support the development of an improved legal framework regulating the work of the police. Platforms for engagement with the media and

civil society will be developed further to enhance mutual understanding and foster accurate and timely information sharing between the police and the public.

Peace Support in Myanmar, a EUR 20 million commitment, aims at further supporting the ongoing peace process. It will contribute to lasting peace, security and sustainable development by supporting the joint ceasefire monitoring mechanism, the national political dialogue, and mechanisms for socio-economic recovery in conflict-affected areas.—EU

People in rural areas gets free cleft lip, palate repair surgery

Between 6,000 and 8,000 children in Myanmar are born with cleft lip, palate or both each year



Surgeons perform operation on cleft lip and palate patient. PHOTO: KHING THANDA LWIN

Khaing Thanda Lwin

MORE than 100 children and youths will receive cleft lip and palate repair surgeries free of charge in late December in Bagan, Mandalay Region.

About 140 patients have already registered for the treatment, most of whom are from dry regions such as Monywa, Bagan, Pakokku and Yenangyaung.

Funded by a local family, the operations will be performed by a German medical team between 26 December and 6 January at the Bagan-Nyaung U District Hospital, with plans to conduct the programme every two years.

U Win Win, a member of the donor family, said: “This is

the 22nd time our family, in cooperation with German surgical experts, has organised the programme since 1996. The programme aims to create better future for patients with congenital cleft lip and cleft palate.”

“Our programme is also aimed at narrowing the treatment gap among people with this condition,” he told The Global New Light of Myanmar. “We have helped more than 4,000 patients receive cleft lip and palate repair surgery so far.”

Cleft lip and cleft palate are congenital defects affecting one in 700 people. More than 170,000 children worldwide are born with cleft lip, palate or both each year. The condition causes difficulties

in eating, breathing and speaking.

According to data collected by the Central Women’s Hospital, between 6,000 and 8,000 children in the country are born with cleft lip and cleft palate every year, said Dr Thiha Myint Wei.

“The treatment gap in cleft lip and palate is still high as there are not enough centres to cope with the birth rate of those patients,” he said. “The disease is commonly found in children from families with low socio-economic status, mostly from the country’s remote areas.”

People seeking to register for cleft lip or cleft palate surgery may contact 09 403 715 743 or 09 204 2463.

Wild boars destroy peanut farms in Yedashe

PEANUT farmers in Myaungtha Village in Yedashe Township have faced difficulties as wild boars destroyed their farm overnight recently.

“They came and ate peanuts fields at night. One male

boar can eat five baskets of peanuts per night,” one farmer said.

Deforestation has forced wild boars to look for food in the peanut farms, according to a local farmer.—Ko Lwin (Swar)

Thailand donates farming implements for Mrauk U

THE Government of Thailand donated hand tractors, rice seeds and fertilisers to farmers in Mrauk U, Rakhine State, yesterday.

H.E. Pisanu Suvanajata, the Ambassador of Thailand to Myanmar, handed over 28 complete sets of hand tractors, rice seeds and fertilisers to the farmers.

The director-general of the Agricultural Mechanisation Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, was also present at the ceremony.

The delivery of the hand tractors and agricultural supplies – the second batch of Thailand’s contribution of this kind – is part of the Royal Thai Government’s efforts to assist the Government of Myanmar in improving the situation in Rakhine State by fostering development in the area.

In early January 2015, another 40 sets of hand tractors were also delivered to farmers in Kyauktaw, Rakhine State, by the embassy.—GNLM



Hand tractors donated by Thailand to farmers in Mrauk U, Rakhine State. PHOTO: THAILAND EMBASSY

Suspected Russian warplanes kill scores in Syrian city

BEIRUT — Air strikes believed to have been carried out by Russian warplanes killed scores of people in the centre of the rebel-held city of Idlib in northwest Syria on Sunday, rescue workers and residents said.

They said at least six strikes had hit a busy market place in the heart of the city, several government buildings and residential areas. Rescue workers said they had confirmed 43 dead but that at least 30 more bodies had been retrieved that had still to be identified. Over 150 people were wounded with some of the serious cases sent to hospitals in Turkey.

“There are a lot of corpses under the rubble,” Yasser Hammo, a civil defence worker, said via an Internet messaging system, adding that volunteers and civil defence workers were still pulling bodies out.

Footage on social media and the pro-opposition Orient TV station showed makeshift ambulances rushing with injured civilians through an area where people were searching for sur-



People inspect a site hit by what activists said were airstrikes carried out by the Russian air force in Idlib city, Syria on 20 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

vivors among the debris of collapsed buildings.

One local resident, Sameh al-Muazin, said he had seen mangled bodies in the main Jalaa street of the city, adding that people

feared a further round of intensive bombing.

“Everyone is afraid that this is just the beginning,” he said.

Idlib, the capital of a northwestern province of the

same name, became an important centre for rebel-controlled northwest Syria after it was captured earlier this year by a coalition of Islamist insurgent groups known as Jaish al Fateh

which includes al Qaeda’s Syrian wing Nusra Front.

Russia began a major aerial campaign on Sept. 30 in support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, its ally, who earlier in the

year suffered a series of setbacks including the loss of Idlib province and other areas of crucial strategic importance.

Moscow says its air strikes target Islamic State militants but rebels and residents say they are causing hundreds of civilian casualties through indiscriminate bombing well away from the frontlines.

Residents say they distinguish Russian planes that fly at high altitudes in sorties from Syrian helicopters that mainly drop indiscriminate barrel bombs at much lower heights.

Idlib city been largely spared the intensified aerial bombing campaign witnessed in rural areas after a United Nations-brokered ceasefire deal was reached in September.

The deal allowed for the withdrawal of rebel fighters holed up in a border village near Lebanon in return for the evacuation of civilians from two Shi’ite towns of Kefraya and al-Foua under rebel siege in Idlib Province.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV XETHA BHUM VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV XETHA BHUM VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 20.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV GSS YANGON VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV GSS YANGON VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Clinton backs Obama’s Islamic State strategy in Democratic debate

MANCHESTER — US Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton backed elements of President Barack Obama’s strategy to fight Islamic State militants in a debate on Saturday, drawing criticism from all sides for saying “we now finally are where we need to be” in Syria.

Top rival Bernie Sanders accused Clinton of being too quick to push for regime change, while Republican candidate Carly Fiorina, said the former secretary of state was too willing to cede US policy to other countries.

The debate was the Democrats’ first since the deadly 2 December attack by a pair of radicalised Muslims in San Bernardino, California, which along with the November attacks in Paris elevated national security to the top of the campaign agenda.

Obama has relied heavily on US air strikes against Islamic State targets in Syria and Iraq, and has deployed dozens of special operations troops to northern Syria to advise opposition forces. In Iraq, about 3,500 US troops are assisting Iraqi forces.

Like Obama, Clinton backs the use of special forces but says a large deployment of US ground forces in the Middle East would be counterproductive.

“We now finally are where we need to be. We have a strategy and a commitment to go after ISIS,” she said, noting a UN Security Council resolution had brought “the world together to go after a political transition in Syria.”

That drew a quick response from Republican candidates, who seized the opportunity to tie Clinton

to a Syria strategy that has yielded few tangible gains to date.

Fiorina, a former technology executive, said Clinton is too willing to rely on UN resolutions rather than acting unilaterally. “It’s what ‘leading from behind’ is, I guess,” she said on “Fox News Sunday.”

“No, Hillary Clinton, we are not ‘where we need to be’ in fight against ISIS,” former Florida Governor Jeb Bush wrote on Twitter during the debate. Hours later, his campaign released a video contrasting her comments

with TV footage of the San Bernardino and Paris attacks.

Attacking from the other side, Sanders said the United States should focus on defeating Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, rather than also trying to remove Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from power.

“We could get rid of Assad tomorrow, but that would create another political vacuum that would benefit ISIS,” the Vermont senator said.

Since the start of the conflict in 2011, the Obama administration has applied diplomatic pressure to push Assad out of office but has stopped short of military attacks against his regime. Clinton backs that approach, but has struck a more hawkish tone in other areas. She has called for more airstrikes and a greater use of special-operations ground forces and supports setting up a no-fly zone. Obama says enforcing a no-fly zone would require aircraft and other assets that could be better deployed directly against Islamic State.—Reuters



Democratic US presidential candidate and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton looks over at US Senator Bernie Sanders as he is questioned about the campaign data breach scandal during the Democratic presidential candidates debate at St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire. PHOTO: REUTERS

Asia stocks rise on China surge, oil plunges to 11-year low

SINGAPORE — Chinese shares led Asian markets higher yesterday, defying a dive on Wall Street, while the price of Brent crude plummeted 11-year lows on renewed worries over a global oil glut.

European shares are unlikely to follow Asia's example, with spreadbetters expecting Britain's FTSE 100 and France's CAC40 to open down about 0.6 percent, and Germany's DAX to start the day 0.5 percent lower.

Brent crude futures slumped as low as \$36.17 a barrel, the lowest since 2004 as production around the world remained at or near record highs, and a strong dollar following last week's US rate increases weighed on demand.

They were 1.3 percent lower at \$36.41 as of 0620 GMT while US crude slid 24 cents to \$34.49 a barrel, close to Friday's 2015 lows.

Amid thin trading in a holiday-heavy week, MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan extended gains to 0.3 percent, as investors bid up modestly priced Chinese blue-chips.

China's CSI300 index surged 2.9 percent and the Shanghai Composite jumped 2 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng rode the Chinese market's coattails to

climb 0.4 percent.

"As we head into the final two weeks of the year, the limited year-end liquidity will be something to keep a watch on," Bernard Aw, market strategist at IG in Singapore, wrote in a note.

"Today, we have not much in the way of market-moving data for Asia, so market players will likely be sitting on the sidelines and trying to search for clarity."

Australia's main index ended the day little changed. Japan's Nikkei extended losses from Friday to close down 0.4 percent.

The market took a hit late Friday after the Bank of Japan announced some changes to its massive stimulus programme but stopped short of expanding the net amount of assets it buys, disappointing some who had hoped for a more aggressive move.

That in turn sent the yen broadly higher and caused some wild swings against the dollar. The dollar was down at 121.32 yen after touching 123.58 on Friday.

The dollar slipped 0.1 percent to 98.619 against a basket of currencies amid very light trade, and the euro rose 0.1 percent to \$1.0877.

Wall Street also had a volatile



A man holding an umbrella looks at an electronic stock quotation board outside a brokerage in Tokyo.

PHOTO: REUTERS

end to the week with the expiration of stock and index options contracts generating heavy trading volume.

The Dow ended Friday down 2.1 percent, while the S&P 500 lost 1.78 percent and the Nasdaq 1.59 percent. For the week, the Dow fell 0.8 percent, the S&P 500 0.3 percent and the Nasdaq 0.2 percent.

The flight from stocks was a boon for safe-haven bonds. Longer-dated Treasuries have been particularly popular as investors wager the Federal Reserve is well ahead of the curve on inflation after last week's rate hike.

Gold also benefited from the weakness in equity markets. The metal retained sharp gains from the

previous trading session, recouping some losses from last week's U.S. interest rate hike.

Spot gold climbed to 1,069.26, building on the 1.4 percent gain seen in the previous session.

Other commodities however didn't fare as well. London copper edged back as weak demand outweighed news that China's smelters are considering deeper production cuts.

Three-month copper was steady at \$4,682.50 a tonne, hovering near the 6 1/2 year lows seen in November.

The global background is one of disinflation given the weakness in oil and other commodity prices and the mounting spare capacity in

major exporters such as China.

Inflation expectations for five years ahead have taken a marked turn lower this month, dropping to 2.11 percent from a high of 2.24 percent.

The resulting rally in longer-dated Treasuries has flattened the yield curve with the gap between two-year and 10-year paper shrinking to 123 basis points, the smallest since early February.

A flatter curve is bad news for bank profits since they essentially make money from borrowing short and lending long, and could be one reason US bank stocks fell hard late last week. Financial stocks were the worst-performing S&P sector on Friday.—Reuters

Toshiba to cut 7,000 jobs in PC and TV units, sees full-year loss

TOKYO — Japan's Toshiba Corp said yesterday it will cut nearly 7,000 consumer electronics jobs after a \$1.3 billion accounting scandal, in an overhaul that will streamline the sprawling conglomerate into a company focused on chips and nuclear energy.

Toshiba also said it would sell its television manufacturing plant in Indonesia, and that eventual job cuts spanning the entire PC-to-nuclear company could be over 10,000 including previously announced cuts and those seeking voluntary early retirement.

Due to restructuring costs,

which include the sale of its Indonesian TV plant, Toshiba said it expected a net loss of around 550 billion yen (\$4.53 billion) in this fiscal year ending in March.

"By implementing this plan, we would like to regain the trust of all stakeholders including shareholders and transform ourselves into a robust business," it said in a statement.

Toshiba confirmed in August that it overstated profits going back to fiscal 2008/09 by 155 billion yen. It also reported a 37.8 billion yen net loss for the last financial year to reflect more costs

and conservative estimates on operations, including the South Texas Project, a US power plant project.

An independent accounting probe said in July that the company suffered from dysfunction in governance and a culture of discouraging employees from questioning their superiors.

Toshiba's stock has fallen about 40 percent since news of its accounting problems began to emerge in early April. The scandal and subsequent earnings restatements highlighted weaknesses in a range of Toshiba's businesses.

Analysts have said restructuring was long overdue. The company launched the world's first mass-market laptop in 1985 but has seen its consumer electronics business dwindle amid price competition with Asian rivals.

The change in fortune highlights the decline of the 140-year-old conglomerate, which remains highly influential in the Japanese business community. Over the years, its former executives often played key policy advisory roles in government.—Reuters

Ericsson and Apple sign patent license agreement, settle litigation

STOCKHOLM — Swedish telecom equipment maker Ericsson (ERICB.ST) on Monday said it has signed a patent license agreement with Apple Inc (AAPL.O) but did not specify how much it would earn from the deal.

Ericsson estimated however that its overall revenues from intellectual property rights in 2015 would hit 13-14 billion Swedish crowns (\$1.52-\$1.64 billion), including positive effects from the settlement with Apple, up from

9.9 billion in 2014.

Last January, Ericsson filed a complaint against Apple over mobile technology license payments, responding to a lawsuit from the iPhone maker earlier that month. Analysts had earlier estimated that if the dispute with Apple went Ericsson's way, the US firm would have to pay it between 2-6 billion Swedish crowns annually, based on estimates of levels of handset sales and royalty payments per phone.—Reuters

Flipkart denies media report of Accel selling \$100 million stake

MUMBAI — Flipkart yesterday denied a newspaper report that said venture capital firm Accel Partners had sold a small stake in India's biggest online marketplace to sovereign wealth fund Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) for \$100 million.

"This information is incorrect. There has been no such transaction," a Flipkart spokesman told Reuters in an emailed statement.

The Economic Times newspaper earlier on Monday reported

the deal, citing two people aware of the transaction, and said the deal valued the Indian online retailer at \$15 billion.

Accel, the first venture investor in Flipkart, remains the second-largest shareholder after New York-based hedge fund Tiger Global Management following the deal, the Economic Times reported.

Accel and Qatar Investment Authority did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.—Reuters



A man walks past a Toshiba Corp logo displayed on one of its television sets in Tokyo. PHOTO: REUTERS

Brazil Vale will appeal ruling to block assets for dam burst



Debris is pictured in Bento Rodrigues district which was covered with mud after a dam owned by Vale SA and BHP Billiton Ltd burst, in Mariana, Brazil. PHOTO: REUTERS

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil's Vale SA said on Sunday it will appeal a court decision to freeze some of it and BHP Billiton's Brazilian assets, saying the ruling, which declared the two mining companies responsible for a dam burst last month, was "inappropriate."

Vale said it had still not been officially notified of the decision, which was

issued late Friday, but understood the ruling banned it from extracting iron ore. It did not, the company said in a statement, prohibit it from performing other activities such as iron ore concentration, transportation or sales.

Friday's ruling judged that the Vale-BHP joint venture Samarco, which operated the mine where the dam breach occurred,

did not have the funds to pay for the 20 billion reais (\$5.03 billion) sought by the government in damages and subsequently the responsibility must be shared with its owners.

BHP said on Saturday it had not been notified of the decision. The consequences for the world's largest mining company are likely to be less far-reaching than for Vale, however,

as BHP does not have any assets in Brazil other than Samarco, whose operations have already been suspended due to the accident.

The dam burst, which turned into Brazil's worst ever environmental disaster, killed 16 people, left hundreds homeless and polluted a river 800 km (500-miles) long that flows across two states.

The federal judge behind the ruling, Marcelo Aguiar Machado, imposed a number of other requirements too. These include Samarco to make an initial deposit of 2 billion reais within 30 days to cover the clean-up process. If the deadline is missed, the companies will face a fine of 1.5 million reais for each day the balance remains unpaid. The companies must also map out an extensive clean-up plan and work out how to stop mud from contaminating sources of mineral water. Failure to meet deadlines on these requirements, and others listed in the judgment, face a daily fine of 150,000 reais.—Reuters

Driver plows onto Las Vegas Strip sidewalk 'like bowling ball', one dead

LAS VEGAS — One person was killed and dozens were injured on Sunday night when a woman deliberately drove her car onto a crowded sidewalk on the Las Vegas Strip, police said, near the hotel where the Miss Universe beauty pageant was being held.

The woman, who had a three-year-old in the car with her, was taken into custody and was expected to be charged on Monday, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department officials told reporters.

Rabia Qureshi, a tourist visiting from Wisconsin, told local broadcaster KSNV she saw victims "flying through the air" when the four-door sedan plowed into a throng of people.

"The car was like a bowling ball and the human bodies were like pins," she said. Police said the driver, who is in her 20s, had mounted the curb as many

as three times during the incident before fleeing the scene. Las Vegas Deputy Police Chief Brett Zimmerman gave no indications as to a motive but ruled out the possibility of terrorism.

The United States has been on high alert since 14 people were killed in a 2 December attack in San Bernardino, California, by two radicalized Muslims who opened fire at a holiday party. Las Vegas authorities gave injury tallies ranging from 26 to 36 people, and said six who were in critical condition were eventually stabilized. The toddler accompanying the driver was not hurt.

An 11-year-old was among the injured, along with visitors from Montreal, Canada, said University Medical Centre spokeswoman Danita Cohen. Representatives for the Canadian Consulate could not be immediately reached for comment.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV EVER APEX VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER APEX VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MCC SINGAPORE VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC SINGAPORE VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TOVE MAERSK VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TOVE MAERSK VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV WU GUI SHAN VOY NO (1511)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WU GUI SHAN VOY NO (1511) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING
LTD.

Phone No: 2301186

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV DYNAMIC OCEAN 27 VOY NO (53)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DYNAMIC OCEAN 27 VOY NO (53) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T-2 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S G-LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD.

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Miss Universe host announces wrong winner before Miss Philippines crowned

LAS VEGAS — The host of the Miss Universe pageant mistakenly announced the wrong winner on Sunday, who then had to give up the crown and hand it over to a 26-year-old actress and model from the Philippines.

It was the first edition of the annual beauty show since it was thrust into controversy when then co-owner and US presidential candidate, Donald Trump, made disparaging remarks about immigrants.

Host Steve Harvey incorrectly announced that Miss Colombia had won the 64th edition of the contest, broadcast live on the Fox television network.

The eventual winner, Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach, a Filipino-German actress and model born in Stuttgart and raised in Cagayan de Oro, was initially runner-up.

But then Harvey announced to the audience that he had made a gaffe.

Ariadna Gutierrez Arévalo, 21, of Sincelejo, Colombia, had already been crowned by Miss Universe of 2014, Paulina Vega of Barranquilla, Colombia, who was forced to remove the crown and give it to Miss Philippines. Olivia Jordan, 27, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, finished third.

"I'd like to apologize wholeheartedly to Miss Colombia and Miss Philippines for my huge mistake," Harvey said on Twitter. "I feel terrible."



Miss Universe 2014 Paulina Vega hugs winner Miss Philippines Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach as Miss Colombia Ariadna Gutierrez (L) stands by during the 2015 Miss Universe Pageant in Las Vegas, Nevada, on 20 December, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Wurtzbach appeared to take the blunder in her stride.

"It's a very non-traditional crowning moment," she said backstage afterward in a video clip of a conversation with Miss USA posted by the Miss Universe pageant on its Twitter feed. "It is very 2015."

Earlier, when asked why she wanted to be Miss Universe, Wurtzbach said: "I will use my voice to influence the youth and I would raise awareness to cer-

tain causes like HIV awareness, that is timely and relevant to my country."

It was the first Miss Universe title for a contestant from the Philippines in more than 40 years.

Minutes before the pageant ended, a vehicle drove up onto a sidewalk near the Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, where it was held and plowed into pedestrians, killing one person and injuring at

least 36, officials said.

Las Vegas authorities said they were trying to determine whether the driver, a woman who was detained, drove onto the sidewalk intentionally or due to impairment.

Among the notable moments of the pageant, Flora Coquerel of France, who was at the Paris stadium the night of the November attacks by militants, reached the final five and Ariana Miyamoto of Japan, whose father is Afri-

can-American, reached the last 10.

Miyamoto's height of 1.73 m (5.7 ft) and bronze skin are unusual in Japan and her selection to represent Japan created an online firestorm in her native country.

For the first time, viewers had a chance to vote on the winner, rating contestants in the swimwear, evening gown and interview competitions.

Until recently, the pageant was co-owned by Comcast Corp's NBCUniversal and Trump, who is leading national polls in the 2016 Republican presidential nomination race.

Earlier, Trump's remarks about Mexicans in announcing his presidential candidacy in June drew sharp criticism, and the Spanish-language network Univision pulled out of a deal to televise the pageant.

Trump, who has sued Univision for \$500 million, bought out NBC's stake in the Miss Universe Organisation, which produces both Sunday's pageant and the Miss USA contest. He sold the company in September.

The panel of judges included former National Football League great Emmitt Smith, celebrity blog mogul Perez Hilton and 2012 Miss Universe winner Olivia Culpo. Hilton said the two most important things about the pageant were the vastly larger audience and Trump was no longer owner.—Reuters

'Concussion' film stirs NFL brain injury debate



Actor Will Smith poses as he arrives for the New York premiere of the film 'Concussion' in the Manhattan borough of New York City, on 16 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

WASHINGTON — The film "Concussion," tracing a forensic pathologist's quest to expose the truth about brain injuries in the NFL, casts a spotlight on an issue that has roiled America's most popular sports league.

The movie also may give parents pause, according to the filmmakers and some former players, about allowing their sons to play the violent sport of foot-

ball.

"I love football. It's graceful. We have a lot of beautiful football in this film, purposefully," said Peter Landesman, the director and writer of the movie, due in US theaters on 25 December. "We're not trying to wag our finger and say, 'Don't do it.'"

Landesman added, "Sometimes the things that we love in life are the things that kill us.

We just have to make difficult decisions about what we do with that."

Rick Walker, who played nine seasons in the National Football League including on the Washington Redskins team that won Super Bowl XVII in January 1983, said he hopes women, particularly mothers, see "Concussion" because they have the ability at the grassroots level to make the sport safer.

"Dads have already been aware of the situation, and most men will play no matter what," said Walker, now a sports commentator in Washington. "When you're young, moms are taking you to Pee Wee and Pop Warner (youth leagues)."

"Mothers can be such a big influence. If they combine their forces, they have the power to bring about change. They will protect their babies. But with dads, it's always a macho issue," Walker added.

The movie tells the story of Dr. Bennet Omalu, played by Will Smith, who fought the NFL's campaign to conceal his

research on the brain damage suffered by football players who sustain blows to the head during games and practice.

Several dozen of the game's top players, including Hall of Famers Mike Webster and Junior Seau, have been diagnosed after they died with chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a progressive degenerative brain disease associated with repetitive blows to the head.

CTE currently is diagnosed only through brain examinations after death.

Jeff Miller, the NFL's senior vice president of health and safety policy, said he would be happy if the film spurs conversation on how to prevent brain injuries.

Miller said recent rules changes, such as penalizing helmet-to-helmet hits, have helped reduce the number of concussions in regular season games by 34 percent over the past three years.

"While that number does not represent success in our minds, it certainly is a trend in the right direction," Miller said.—Reuters

Jessica Simpson wants to star in sitcom

LONDON — Singer-actress Jessica Simpson reportedly wants to star in sitcom loosely based on her own life.

Simpson, who has daughter Maxwell, three, and two-year-old son Ace with husband Eric Johnson, is keen to appear in a comedy about a "harried married mom who runs a successful business", loosely based on her life, reported Female First.

"Jess really wants to get back into acting. She's been taking lessons for more than a year, and though she's been meeting with producers, no offers have come in. So she's taking matters into her own hands," an insider said. The 35-year-old star, who played Daisy Duke in the 2005 film remake of US TV series "The Dukes of Hazzard", is said to be planning to bankroll the sitcom herself and could even get her former NFL husband on board as a producer.—PTI

Entrepreneur aims for 'cacao revolution' on Indonesian island

TOKYO — Keiichi Yoshino, a financial analyst-turned-entrepreneur, never dreamed of becoming a chocolatier when he first became interested in Indonesian cacao at a coffeehouse while travelling in South Korea.

Looking at a map of cacao production areas in the world at the cafe in 2010, he wondered why Japan rarely imports cacao beans from Indonesia and largely depends on Ghana for making chocolate even though the Southeast Asian country is closer to Japan.

He later found out from Japanese government data that Indonesia accounted for only 0.3 percent of Japan's cacao bean imports in 2013, while 80.6 percent was shipped from Ghana.

The 34-year-old now operating chocolate shops in Kyoto, who was "a complete amateur" in farming back then, immediately flew to Sulawesi Island, where more than 70 percent of Indonesian cacao is produced, to find out about the reason.

The answer — cacao beans in Indonesia, one of the world's top three producers along with the Ivory Coast and Ghana, were not fit for high-quality chocolate production as they were shipped before being fermented.

"Fermentation would add value to cacao beans, but Sulawesi farmers did not bother to carry out the process as they wanted to earn cash soon," said Yoshino, who stayed with some farmers on the island and experimented in fermenting beans by covering them with banana leaves.

"As they said they won't ferment cacao beans because no buyers would pay higher price for them, I decided to become a buyer myself," he said.

In fact, many Indonesian cacao farmers had never tasted chocolate because their products were mainly shipped to extract butter and oil for industrial use such as cosmetics production, according to Yoshino.

Also, they did not benefit from sharp rises in cacao prices in international commodity markets over the last decade, as the price trend was set by speculative investors such as hedge funds and producers did not have any pricing power.

Determined to pitch Indonesian cacao in Japan, Yoshino personally imported about 600 kilograms of fermented cacao, which occupied most of his room space. But to his dismay, no major chocolate makers showed interest in the product.

"I knew the Indonesian cacao was of good quality, so I decided to become a chocolate maker myself. I gradually became enthusiastic as things got started," he recalled.

The alumnus of Kyoto University graduate school then managed to procure equipment for chocolate production such as a roaster and a mill, set up his own company, and opened a shop in the ancient Japanese capital in April 2011.

His company and shops are named "Dari K," with "dari" in Indonesian meaning "from" and K representing the shape of Sulawesi Island and also the initial of Kyoto.

As one chocolate piece at his shop costs 400 yen (about \$3.3), Yoshino targeted high-end consumers willing to pay for quality items. He convinced a Takashimaya department store official to accept a plan for Dari K to run a booth in November 2011, saying the store can "diversify" its lineup with chocolates made from Indonesian cacao.

"Business slowly got on track as the fact that our items are sold at a department store enhanced the Dari K brand," Yoshino said.

Transactions with the Kyoto company also helped raise pro-



Keiichi Yoshino, 34, chief executive officer of Dari K Co., the operator of chocolate shops in Kyoto featuring Indonesian cacao beans, shows a product in Tokyo's Minato Ward on 4 December.
PHOTO: REUTERS

ductivity and profits for Sulawesi cacao farmers, as it bought fermented cacao at higher prices than conventional buyers and Yoshino suggested they conduct "grafting" — a technique used to insert branches with a lot of fruit into the stock of a tree.

"As a result, cacao farmers' earnings increased up to 1.6-fold," the entrepreneur said. With his efforts recognized by locals, the

number of Sulawesi farmers supplying cacao to Dari K jumped from 40 to 6,000 by October 2015. The company will sell the amount unused by itself to other chocolate makers.

From late October to early November this year, Dari K ran a booth at the Salon du Chocolat in Paris, a major trade fair for the international chocolate industry, and its products were well received there, Yoshino said.

"We thought only shops with star patissiers would be invited to the fair, but our chocolates featuring the quality of Indonesian cacao were accepted," he said, adding "artisan" shops selecting specific cacao beans for chocolate production have been recently gaining attention in the industry.

Dari K also conducts annual study tours to Sulawesi Island to connect cacao producers with consumers in Japan. What surprised Yoshino was that the farmers became much more motivated after directly meeting with customers.

"They treated chocolate consumers as family members and asked whether they can produce cacao without chemical fertilizers" out of consideration for the health of eaters, he said.—*Kyodo News*

Japan's oldest water tunnel reborn as concert hall

KOBE — Minatogawa Zuido in Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan's oldest water tunnel, has been turned into a concert hall 15 years after being closed.

The tunnel was built in 1901 to change the course of the Minato River in the wake of a flood in 1896. With a height of 7.7 metres and width of 7.3 meters, it was one of the largest river tunnels in the world at that time.

The inside of the tunnel consists of some 4.5 million bricks laid in different ways for the side-wall and arch sections to enhance the durability of the structure, testifying to the advanced architectural skills already available then.

Minatogawa Zuido became unusable as a water tunnel after suffering damage in the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake, and it was replaced by a new tunnel in 2000. But it has been preserved as a highly valuable heritage of modern civil engineering technology.

"We hope visitors recognize the enthusiasm of builders more than 100 years ago from the large scale of the tunnel and from its inside wall adopting the most advanced construction methods of that time," said Junichi Ichinari, 67, secretary general of a civil group formed to preserve the structure.



A fantastical music concert is held with crystal singing bowls on 17 October, 2015, in Minatogawa Zuido, Japan's first full-fledged tunnel built under a river in Kobe, western Japan, during the Meiji period (1868-1912). PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

The tunnel was opened to the public on a regular basis in 2006 and music concerts were held from time to time. With concerts winning popularity, they began to be held regularly in 2009.

At present, the tunnel is opened to the public on the third Saturday of every month and a one-hour concert starts at 1:30pm. Concerts have been held by various musicians including the brass band of a local middle school.

Recently, a pair of players of crystal singing bowls took

advantage of the acoustics of the space, performing under orange lights set up some 100 meters from the entrance before an audience of some 140 people.

Yuko Nakano, 56, one of the players, said the echoing sound of the crystal singing bowls in the tunnel has a more "relaxing effect" than in other places.

"Regular visitors are increasing thanks to concerts," Ichinari said. "We expect them to find new aspects of the tunnel through repeated visits."—*Kyodo News*

mitv Myanmar International

(22-12-2015 07:00 am~ 23-12-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Bago: A City Of Famous Historic Pagoda
07:47	Am	Toddy Palm Product Shop
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Travelogue: A Tour in Korea (Ep-2)
08:40	Am	Civic Duty
08:53	Am	Myanmar Traditional Art Bronze Casting
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Culture Show: Abdication of King Thibaw
09:43	Am	Myanmar Puppet
09:50	Am	Today Myanmar
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	The Eel Business (Fisherman the eel culture)
10:41	Am	Arahat Footprint On Scared Kyauk-Tha-Lin Hill
10:54	Am	Colonial Buildings and a New Yangon

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Day Out With Sarah (EP-5)
07:52	Pm	Independent Filmmaker
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Discovering Tribes "Lisu: Their Life and Customs" (Part- II)
08:48	Pm	Life of Sea Urchin Diver

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Monday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

European roundup: Festive joy for Leicester, Real on fire

LONDON — Shock leaders Leicester City are certain to go into Christmas at the top of the table in England while champions Chelsea began the post-Jose Mourinho era with a 3-1 home win over Sunderland.

Bayern Munich, who announced Carlo Ancelotti would be replacing Pep Guardiola as coach in the summer, enter the Bundesliga's winter break with an eight-point lead. Real Madrid crushed nine-man Rayo Vallecano 10-2 to close the gap on joint leaders Barcelona and Atletico Madrid in Spain.

ENGLAND

Claudio Ranieri's Leicester City, bottom of the Premier League a year ago, will go into Christmas as leaders whatever happens in Monday's meeting of the two teams just below them, Arsenal and Manchester City.

A 3-2 win at Everton was Leicester's seventh victory in eight games on Saturday, the same day as champions Chelsea began the post-Jose Mourinho era with a 3-1 triumph over Sunderland at Stamford Bridge.

Louis van Gaal's Manchester United suffered a shock 2-1 home defeat by struggling Norwich City, losing their place in the top four to Tottenham Hotspur who won 2-0 at Southampton. On Sunday, Liverpool slumped to a 3-0 defeat by Watford who stayed above them in seventh place following a fourth successive win.

GERMANY

Champions Bayern Munich go into the winter break with an eight-point lead at the top of the Bundesliga after winning 1-0 at Hanover 96 but they will spend the second half of the season know-



Watford's Odion Ighalo scores their third goal during their Barclays Premier League at Vicarage Road on 20 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

ing that coach Pep Guardiola has decided to hand over the reins to Carlo Ancelotti in the summer.

Bayern, on track for a record fourth consecutive title, have 46 points with second-placed Borussia Dortmund stuck on 38 after conceding two late goals to slump to a 2-1 defeat at Cologne.

Surprise packages Hertha Berlin tightened their hold on third place with a 2-0 victory over Mainz 05, their fifth win in six matches.

SPAIN

Atletico Madrid missed a chance to seize top spot outright from Barcelona when they were beaten 1-0 at Malaga while chasing Real Madrid closed to within

two points of the leaders thanks to a 10-2 demolition of nine-man Rayo Vallecano.

Captain Gabi was sent off for Atletico 11 minutes into the second half and Malaga made the breakthrough three minutes from time. Real put hapless Rayo to the sword at the Bernabeu as Wales forward Gareth Bale helped himself to the first four-goal haul of his career, Karim Benzema netted a hat-trick and Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice.

Barca and Atletico have 35 points, with the Spanish and European champions having played one game fewer. Real are third on 33 while Celta Vigo and Villarreal stayed hard on their heels when

they each won 2-0, at Granada and Real Sociedad respectively.

ITALY

Inter Milan's lead was cut to one point as they lost 2-1 at home to Lazio, the home team's Felipe Melo giving away a penalty and being sent off.

Napoli and Fiorentina, in joint second position, both won to close the gap on Inter.

AS Roma eased the pressure on coach Rudi Garcia with their first win in eight games, beating Genoa 2-0. Champions Juventus registered their seventh straight victory, coming from behind to down Carpi 3-2 in the first ever Serie A meeting between the clubs.

Inter have 36 points, Napoli

and Fiorentina are on 35 and Juventus 33.

FRANCE

Paris St Germain sunk Caen 3-0 to head into the winter break with 51 points, breaking the record for the most amassed during the first half of the season set by Olympique Lyonnais in 2006. Lyon lost 2-1 at Ajaccio thanks to a Mohamed Wael Larbi double while Angers' good run came to an end with a 1-0 defeat at St Etienne.

PSG are 19 points clear of second-placed Monaco who have 32 after drawing 0-0 at 10-man Troyes. Angers, in third, have 31 and Caen are on 30. Tenth-placed Olympique Marseille drew 1-1 at Girondins Bordeaux.—Reuters

Blatter, Platini banned for 8 years

ZURICH — FIFA President Sepp Blatter and his lieutenant, Michel Platini have been banned for eight years by the governing body of world soccer yesterday.

FIFA's ethics committee ruled the two should be banned over a February 2011 payment of 2 million Swiss francs (roughly 240 million yen) from Platini to Blatter, who has announced his resignation. Platini had been a candidate to replace Blatter at the top of world soccer until Swiss authorities began their investigation into the payment in September.

Both Blatter and Platini had temporarily been suspended in October for 90 days and participated in hearings in the case last Thursday and Friday, when they denied any wrong doing had taken place.—Kyodo News

Fury makes apology as Murray lifts BBC award

LONDON — Tyson Fury, the boxer at the centre of controversy over comments about women and homosexuals, made an apology at the BBC Sports Personality of the Year awards in Belfast on Sunday.

Before tennis champion Andy Murray collected the prestigious award, an audience of 7,500 at the SSE arena applauded after world heavyweight champion Fury, 27, one of the 10 short-listed contenders, told them his remarks had been tongue-in-cheek.

Fury, whose homophobic and sexist comments had led to more than 130,000 people signing a petition calling for the BBC to remove him from its shortlist, told the crowd, featuring many of Britain's greatest sportsmen and women: "I've said a lot of stuff in the past, none of it with intentions to hurt anybody.

"It's all a bit tongue in cheek, it's all fun and games for me. I'm not really a serious type of person. Everything's happy go lucky with Tyson Fury.

"If I've said anything in the past that's hurt anybody, I apol-

ogise to anybody's who's been hurt out there. It's not my intention to do that."

Up to 30 gay and equal-rights campaigners held banners and chanted 'anti-woman, anti-gay, Tyson Fury go away' out-

side the arena before the Belfast ceremony.

Murray won the award for the second time in three years after his inspirational performances guided Britain to their first Davis Cup triumph in 79 years.

The 28-year-old, who joins boxer Henry Cooper and racing drivers Damon Hill and Nigel Mansell as the only double winners of the event, held up his 'Personality' award and joked: "I didn't expect this.

"A friend sent me a message the other day with an article saying 'Andy Murray is duller than a weekend in Worthing' which I thought was a bit harsh -- on Worthing," the Scot said of the southern England seaside resort.

Runner-up was rugby league player Kevin Sinfield and in third place was world heptathlon champion Jessica Ennis-Hill.—Reuters



Tyson Fury with his wife Paris Fury. PHOTO: REUTERS