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# NO DEATHS CONFIRMED

## No bodies found under soil of Hpakant landslide yet

Aye Min Soe

**F**OLLOWING second-day rescue efforts, authorities said yesterday that no bodies were found under the dumped soil of the landslide which occurred last Friday in Hpakant.

Until searching ended for the second day yesterday, authorities and volunteers did not find any bodies under the soil.

“We are also searching for three miners who are reportedly missing since the landslide happened,” said U Tin Swe Myint, the head of the Hpakant Township Administration Office to The Global New Light of Myanmar over the phone.

The three miners are Zaw Htwe, 21, Maung Htwe, 21, and Thein Zaw, 28, from Seikmu Village in Hpakant Township.

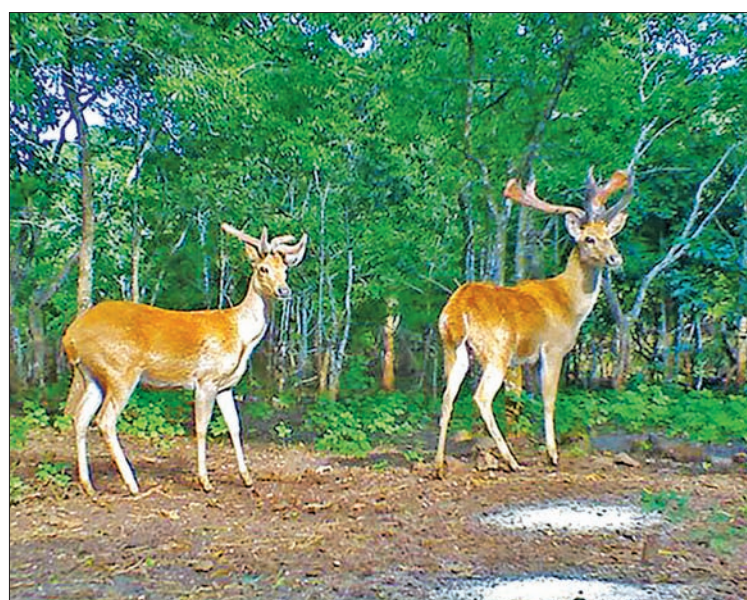
With the use of backhoes, members of the Tatmadaw, firemen, local authorities and volunteers a rescue effort has been carried out on site. Authorities refuted media reports on the death toll of a landslide in Hpakant around 5pm on Friday, saying they were informed that just three people were missing.

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Rescuers searching for under dumped soil of the landslide in Hpakant. PHOTO: MNA

## Golden deer population falling at Chutthin Sanctuary



Goldern deers are seen at Chutthin Sanctuary. PHOTO: STRINGER/KYEMON

MYANMAR environmental conservation and forestry organisations, along with local residents, are advocating for the prevention of the extinction of golden deer at the Chutthin Wildlife Sanctuary. The sanctuary is located between Kantbalu and Kawlin townships in Sagaing Region.

The deer, which live in groups, are being over-hunted by deer hunters.

The sanctuary in upper Myanmar was established in 1940, when about 1,000 deers lived in the area. The sanctuary is now on a 66,273-acre forest reserve operated by the Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry.

There were about 3,000 deer in the sanctuary in 1995 and

1996, when the Population was tracked using radio signals.

The vegetarian mammal’s scientific name is *Cervus Eldith-amin*.

The sanctuary is also populated by 360 other species of mammals, including barking deers, wild cats and wild boars, 1,235 species of birds and 360 species of reptiles.

“Now there are just over 1,500 golden deer left in the sanctuary,” said a ranger in the sanctuary. He added that many of the deer are hunted by people who forage in the forest for any of its 70 medicinal herbs.

Local residents have said the hunting of the deer should especially be avoided during their

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## Tipitakadhara and Tipitakakovida selection exam starts in Yangon

THE Ministry of Religious Affairs yesterday organised a selection exam for Tipitakadhara and Tipitakakovida at the Wizaya Mingala Dhamma Hall on Kaba Aye Hillock, Yangon Region.

Tipitakadhara Selection Board's Adviser Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Panjinsarabhivamsa administered the Five Precepts to the congregation.

According to Union Minister U Soe Win, the Tipitakadhara and Tipitakakovida selection exam has been organised since 1948, when the country restored its independence from colonial rule.

The country has made earnest efforts since the pre-independence times to hold a Bud-

dhist General Synod, which drew criticisms from other Buddhist countries complaining that the holding of a general synod requires the presence of monks well-versed in all three Tipitakas in both oral and written discourse. The selection exam will last from 27 December 2015 to 28 January 2016, with 235 monks having enrolled in the oral exam and 152 in the written exam.

In 50 years from 1948 to 1998, the Tipitakakovida title has been conferred on eight scholar monks. Another significant Buddhist title called Tipitakadhara Dhammabhanda Garika is conferred on scholar monks who have won Tipitakakovida title for five years.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## Golden deer population falling at Chutthin...

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Hunters can sell a deer for K700,000 to K800,000 because of their distinctive gold-coloured hair, said the ranger. Other golden deer populations also inhabit the Bagan Lawkananda Sanctuary in Mandalay Region—*Myan Gon Saung*

Hunters can sell a deer for K700,000 to K800,000 because of their distinctive gold-coloured hair, said the ranger.

Other golden deer populations also inhabit the Bagan Lawkananda Sanctuary in Mandalay Region—*Myan Gon Saung*

## Mandalay Hill Bike Challenge attracts 327 cyclists



Cyclists participate in Mandalay Hill Bike Challenge-2015. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

LOCAL and foreign cyclists participated in the Mandalay Hill Bike Challenge 2015, organised by the Myanmar Bicycle Federation and Mandalay Free Rider on Sunday.

A total of 327 bikers took part in the four events of the bicycle race, designated for participants under the age of 25, under 35, under 45 and above 60.

The route began in downtown Mandalay and continued around the moat and Shwe Mann

Taung Golf Club to Mandalay Hill.

The bicycle race was organised with the aim of promoting the use of bicycles, which can alleviate air pollution and traffic congestion, as well as contribute to personal health.

The race has been organised annually since 2012. Participants ranged between the ages of 9 and 78.

A Canadian tourist who participated in the above-60 cate-

gory said it was his first visit to Myanmar and that he joined the race after seeing a poster advertising it. He said he looked forward to returning to Mandalay to participate in future races. After the races, winners were presented with cash prizes ranging from K300,000 to K30,000. The 17 participants who took part in the above-60 category and 13 female participants were awarded honorary gifts before a BMW bicycle was given away in a lottery.

## Cruise liner enters MIPL harbour



Tourists are being welcomed by Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Sai Kyaw Ohn. PHOTO: MNA

A CRUISE liner from Phuket, Thailand, docked at the Myanmar Integrated Port Ltd (MIPL) in Yangon on 26 December, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

The arrival of the MV Silver

Shadow in Yangon was arranged by Myanmar Voyages International Tourism Co Ltd that afternoon, with Deputy Minister Dr Sai Kyaw Ohn saying the cruise liner carried 330 tourists and 290

crew members on board.

The tourists will visit Bagan, Mandalay, Yangon, Bago and Thanlyin and leave for India on 29 December.—*Myanmar News Agency*

## No bodies found under soil ...

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After the incident, relatives of the three missing people informed the local authorities that their loved ones had not yet returned home since the accident.

"The accident happened at a time when migrant workers were returning home.

There were no squatter huts in the area. This mound of dump soil is not as high and big as that of the previous accident. So it is impossible that 40 or 50 migrant workers are dead,"

he added.

Shortcomings in the following of safety regulations by both mining companies and migrant squatters pose great challenges to local authorities in preventing future landslides around jade mines in Kachin State.

To prevent landslides, local authorities have suggested that migrant miners squatting in at-risk areas be relocated to safer areas and that mining companies dump their waste soil in accordance with technical safety rules.

## Two missing girls from Yangon found in border town

TWO lost young girls who disappeared from their homes in Yangon in September were discovered working as housemaids in Lweje in Kachin State.

U Maung Si, the employer of the two girls, reported to the police that the two girls working at his house were likely to be the lost girls from Yangon posted on the Facebook, and a combined team of police Special Branch

and Human Trafficking Police Unit looked into the matter. They found out that the two girls were grade 11 students who ran away from their homes because they did not do well in their school exams.

The police has informed the parents of the two girls while they were kept at the house of a female clerk from the township administration office.—*Police Information*



## Residents decry damaged roads, bridges in Hpakant

FOLLOWING the arrival of a government-appointed investigation team in Hpakant on 21 December to inspect the use of heavy machinery in jade-mining areas, local residents have complained about the destruction of roads and bridges by the heavy machinery.

“The overloaded machinery destroyed roads and bridges built with funds from the government. They also cause traffic congestion along the Moekauing-Hpakant Road,” said U Hla Than from Mawwon Ward in Hpakant.

The investigation is team

led by Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry U Win Tun and comprises deputy ministers from the ministries of home affairs, commerce and rail transportation. The team will probe into the issue of heavy machinery entering Myanmar through the border crossing at Kampaiti, Kachin State. The Ministry of Commerce announced last week that it is planning to investigate whether heavy machinery in Hpakant was imported legally or not. The import of vehicles has been suspended at the Kampaiti Border Trade Post.—*Mang Ngai*

## Shan State police attend capacity building course

A CAPACITY building training course for police members was launched on Friday in Taunggyi of Shan State with the aim of providing better police protection.

The training will help police members reduce the risk

of injury in catching suspects, increase their skills in undertaking the imposition of the rule of law in the region and gain the trust of public. Roughly 100 trainees, trainers and police officers attended the opening ceremony.—*Zaw Myo Naing*

## Dawei's high school celebrated its centenary

A GOVERNMENT school in Dawei celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding on Saturday with a variety of events.

Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko attended the celebration to deliver speeches and award the winners of article, poetry and essay

writing competitions, painting and cartoon drawing contests and sit in on talks being held by the school committee.

To mark the centennial of the school, Headmistress Daw Lwin Lwin Oo together with a student cultivated teak saplings.—*Pho Shwe Thun (Dawei)*

## Seminar focuses on developing country's economic status

AN EDUCATIVE talk entitled “Better Future Better Myanmar 2015” took place at the National Theater in Mandalay Region on Saturday.

The main purpose of the seminar was to educate on how to successfully expand businesses both in national and in international markets.

Organised by Hub Myanmar Co., Ltd, President's Eco-

nomical Advisor Prof Aung Tun Thet, U Tin Zan Kyaw, Daw Than Than Swe, U Pyae Wa Tun and Dr Tun Thura Thet shared their knowledge and experience.

Conducting market research survey plays an important step in expanding one's business from the national to international market, a panelist said.—*Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)*

## Police mark 68<sup>th</sup> anniversary Independence Day

TO mark the 68th anniversary Independence Day (which falls on 4 January) police carried out sanitation works at a school in PyinOoLwin on Saturday.

Altogether 150 police members from Police Officer Train-

ing Institute in PyinOoLwin in Mandalay Region participated in the collecting and picking up of garbage within the compound of basic education high school (Zebingyi) in the region.—*Police IPRD*

## Cucumber growers in ChaungU Township see good sales

CUCUMBER growers in ChaungU Township, Monywa District have seen greater benefits from this year's cucumber harvest than last year as they have used popular cultivation method for watermelon, Cultivator U Soe Lwin said.

Cultivators mainly export their cucumbers from the region to the Muse border trade area. As a result of higher production, cucumber prices have increased from 4 to 7 Chinese

Yuan (US\$1.08) as of the second week of December.

The use of new technology in cucumber harvesting this year is the main reason why the growers have seen such a bountiful reaping. Cucumbers have been grown on over 10,000 acres of farmlands in ChaungU District this year. Growers have expanded their plantations from the region to Myinmu and Butalin townships to fulfil consumer demand.—*Myo Win Tun (Monywa)*



The modern cultivation of method of watermelon is being used by cucumber growers in upper Myanmar.  
PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

## Japan, S Korea prepare for possible 'comfort women' deal



Kimihiko Ishikane, director general of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, leaves the South Korean Foreign Ministry in Seoul on 27 December 2015, after talks with Lee Sang Deok, director general of the Northeast Asian Affairs Bureau of the South Korean Foreign Ministry, held in preparation for a foreign ministerial meeting the following day. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

SEOUL — Japan and South Korea held talks yesterday afternoon in Seoul in preparation for a foreign ministerial meeting the following day at which the two sides will try to resolve the protracted dispute over Korean women forced into wartime Japanese brothels.

Senior government officials from Tokyo and Seoul are expected to discuss details about a new fund for the so-called "comfort women" which Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida plans to propose in a meeting with his South Korean counterpart Yun Byung Se, according to sources familiar with bilateral relations.

One source said Japan is considering providing about 100 million yen (about \$830,000) for the humanitarian fund.

The officials are also expected to exchange views on a Japanese plan for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to send letters to former comfort women.

In return, Japan is calling for South Korea's assurance that once they reach an agreement, the comfort women issue, which has

long hampered bilateral relations, is resolved once and for all and that Seoul will never raise the issue again.

Japan is also demanding South Korea remove a statue of a girl symbolising victims that stands just outside the Japanese Embassy in Seoul.

The working-level meeting involves Kimihiko Ishikane, director general of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and Lee Sang Deok, director general of the Northeast Asian Affairs Bureau of the South Korean Foreign Ministry.

The South Korean Foreign Ministry said yesterday the foreign ministerial talks will be followed by a joint press conference, which is scheduled to be held 75 minutes after the start of the Kishida-Yun meeting at 2 pm. The two ministers may attend a dinner together after the talks.

South Korea has demanded Japan settle the issue in a way that is acceptable to the surviving victims, through such measures as an apology and com-

penation. Japan maintains the issue has already been settled legally. Tokyo argues the issue of compensation was resolved under the 1965 Japan-South Korea basic treaty and an attached agreement, which says the issue of property and claim rights between the two countries "is settled completely and finally."

The Korean Peninsula was under Japanese colonial rule from 1910 to 1945.

In their first one-on-one meeting on 2 November, Abe and South Korean President Park Geun-hye instructed their respective governments to speed up negotiations for addressing the comfort women issue, taking into account that this year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Park has said her government wants to resolve the issue by the end of this year.

Calling the issue "the biggest obstacle to efforts to improve bilateral ties," Park demanded that it be solved "in a way that our people can accept."—*Kyodo News*

## China province to probe all waste sites after landslide disaster

BEIJING — China's southern province of Guangdong, one of the country's biggest industrial bases, will check all construction waste sites in the wake of a deadly landslide to ensure none are in dangerous locations or poorly managed, state media said yesterday.

The 20 December landslide in the Guangdong boom town of Shenzhen buried more than 30 buildings in an industrial park and has left around 70 people missing, with only a handful of bodies found so far.

The central government on Friday labelled the landslide a man-made disaster, and is looking at whether criminal malpractice is to blame.

The Guangdong government said there were many problems with the management of building waste sites, including safety issues, Xinhua reported.

Sites found operating in "forbidden zones" such as close to hospitals, residential neighbourhoods, kindergartens and rail lines will need to be moved immediately, with cities responsible for moving them, Xinhua added.

Those found responsible for illegal or poorly managed sites will be prosecuted, while efforts need to be made to speed up development of a risk management system, it said.

The company managing the dump site in Shenzhen that had the landslide, Yixianglong, was urged to stop work four days before the disaster, an executive with a government-appointed monitoring agency said on Thursday.

Xinhua earlier reported the dump was being used 10 months after it was supposed to have stopped taking waste, earning Yixianglong some 7.5 million yuan (\$1.16 million) in fees.—*Reuters*

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### PICTURE OF THE DAY



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen (R) and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung unveil a border marker situated between Cambodia's Rattanakiri Province and Vietnam's Gia Lai Province, on 26 December 2015. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen and his Vietnamese counterpart Nguyen Tan Dung inaugurated two border pillars on Saturday, announcing that 83.2 per cent of the shared border has been demarcated. PHOTO: XINHUA

## Bangladesh police raid militant hideout, explosives found

DHAKA — Police said yesterday they had detained three suspected members of a banned militant group and found a sniper rifle, ammunition, explosives and military suits in a hideout in southeastern Bangladesh.

The raid came days after police busted a militant hideout in the capital Dhaka as security forces stepped up a hunt for Islamist militants behind a spate of recent attacks in the Muslim-ma-

majority nation.

Police searched an apartment in the port city of Chittagong based on information from the three members of the banned Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen organisation who were caught in an earlier raid, Chittagong city police commissioner Mohammad Abdul Jalil Mondal said.

"A sniper rifle, ammunition, explosives, detonators, army uniforms and bomb-making materials

were found in the apartment," he told a news conference.

The group was believed to be behind a series of recent attacks, including bombings of a Shi'ite shrine and the shooting of three foreigners, two of whom have died.

Bangladesh has suffered a wave of Islamist militant violence in recent months, including a series of attacks on mosques, Christian priests and Hindu temples.

Islamic State has claimed re-

sponsibility for some of the attacks, including a bomb attack at a mosque of the minority Ahmadiya Muslim community during prayers on Friday. Police have confirmed the person killed was the bomber himself.

The government has denied that Islamic State has a presence in the country of 160 million people. It blames Islamist political opponents for instigating the violence.—*Reuters*

# Behind the scenes, Pakistan's military helped revive talks with India

ISLAMABAD — The quiet involvement of Pakistan's powerful military in its foreign policy this year paved the way for reviving a stalled dialogue with India, officials said, a thaw leading to the first visit to Pakistan by an Indian premier in almost 12 years.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's surprise trip to meet Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif on Friday raised hopes that stop-and-start negotiations between the nuclear-armed neighbours might finally mean progress after more than 65 years of hostility.

Aides say the meeting was arranged directly between the two prime ministers on just a few hours' notice when Modi called to wish 66-year-old Sharif a happy birthday.

But even before Modi arrived in Lahore, relations between the nuclear-armed rivals had begun to thaw, with a resumption of dialogue already in the offing.

On Friday, Modi and Sharif agreed that their foreign secretaries would meet in mid-January to restart talks.

Pakistani officials say "ownership" of peace talks by the military and the appointment of a recently retired general as the national security adviser have given Pakistan renewed confidence to restart dialogue with In-



Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (R) talks with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi in Lahore, Pakistan on 25 December 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

dia, including speaking about the thorny issue of terrorism.

"This round is different because there is backing from the top where it matters ... the army chief is himself on board," a top diplomat said before the visit.

Army chief Gen. Raheel Sharif is said to be close to the new national security adviser, recently retired general Naseer Khan Janjua, who in October replaced civilian Sartaj Aziz, an ally of the prime minister.

Many saw the move as

strengthening the army's hand in talks with India, with the military remaining wary of a civilian government giving too much away.

"General Janjua has immense experience in these matters. He's the best man for the job and he has already proven to be an asset to this (peace) process," one member of Nawaz Sharif's cabinet said earlier in December.

"It's only an added benefit that he has a direct line to the (army) chief," he added.

A senior Indian official in

New Delhi also said military backing for peace talks marked a major change, with Janjua's involvement as national security advisor a key sign that Gen. Sharif supports resuming the dialogue.

Direct contact between the two prime ministers is a major factor in thawing relations — they met on the sidelines of the Paris climate change summit last month. However Pakistani officials said that true change only became possible after Janjua's

appointment.

Earlier this month, the national security advisers of both countries met in Bangkok, paving the way for Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj's visit to Pakistan for the Heart of Asia summit where she agreed to re-open dialogue with Pakistan, thereby resuming a process broken off since 2012.

Previous attempts to resume talks have been postponed time after time, mostly due to the Indian government's insistence that the focus of discussion must be, first and foremost, about terrorism. India accuses Pakistan-based militants for masterminding the 2008 Mumbai attacks that left 166 dead.

By contrast, Pakistan says the disputed territory of Kashmir is the paramount topic.

With a military man having a greater say in the process, there is more confidence about discussing such sensitive topics, several officials said.

"I think in the past there was a hesitation from Pakistan, understandably, to talk about terrorism [with India] but that may have changed," the diplomat told Reuters.

"There is better division of labour. The real decision-making is happening behind the scenes. The rest is just optics."—Reuters

## Junta leader writes new song, leaving Thais to face the music

BANGKOK — Thailand's junta leader released the lyrics to a new patriotic ballad on Tuesday, the second song he has written since seizing power in 2014.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who as army chief led the May 2014 coup, first wrote the song "Return Happiness to Thailand", which is played constantly on television and radio stations as part of a public relations campaign by the junta to win over Thais.

The tune has racked up more than one million views on YouTube but has been mocked by critics of the junta.

His second song, "Because You Are Thailand", includes lyrics like "If we join hands ... the day we hope for is not far away" and "Because you are Thailand, you will not let anyone destroy you."

Prayuth told reporters the song was his New Year present to the Thai people.

The junta, or National Council for Peace and Order, overthrew an elected govern-



Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha . PHOTO: REUTERS

ment, putting an end to months of protests in Bangkok led by the middle class and elite who wanted to get rid of the civilian government of populist Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra.

A military government installed after the coup has largely stifled dissent and has gone hard after critics of the junta and monarchy by using a harsh royal insult law to detain dozens

of people, prompting stern criticism from rights groups, the UN and some Western governments.

The junta has repeatedly delayed planned elections, claiming the country is not yet stable enough to hold a poll.

Prayuth comes from a musical family. His daughters enjoyed brief fame in Thailand as a pop duo called BADZ. —Reuters

## LDP panel to seek establishment of new intelligence body

TOKYO — A Liberal Democratic Party project team plans to call on the government to set up a new body for expanded information gathering abroad to combat terrorism, party sources said yesterday.

The move comes amid growing concern about terrorism ahead of a Group of Seven summit in Japan next May. Japan will also host the Rugby World Cup in 2019 and the Olympics and Paralympics in 2020. The government launched the Counterterrorism Unit-Japan within the Foreign Ministry earlier this month to collect information on international terrorism. Some government officials have floated the idea of upgrading the unit to the level of an intelligence organization such as the US Central Intelligence Agency and Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, known as MI6.

But the ruling party project team pointed out that such an upgrade could be linked in people's minds to Japan's wartime Special Higher Police, or Tokko, which was in charge of investigating political groups and ideol-

ogies that were deemed to be a threat to public order, the sources said.

Some within the government believe creating such an intelligence organisation could negatively impact the ruling camp, including the LDP's junior coalition partner the Komeito party, at the upper house election next summer.

In the circumstances, the LDP project team plans to keep the envisioned intelligence agency under strict Diet supervision, by extending the authority of existing parliamentary functions for fair implementation of secrecy legislation that came into effect a year ago to enable the government to designate state secrets.

The project team is planning to submit the proposal after taking into account how expanded intelligence activities are viewed by the public, the sources said.

The project team decided to start discussions on a new intelligence entity in February in the wake of the killing of two Japanese hostages by Islamic State militants in Syria.—Kyodo News

# Chicago police officer shoots, kills two, one by mistake



Two people were shot early Saturday morning during a police-involved incident in Chicago's West Garfield Park neighbourhood. PHOTO: REUTERS

CHICAGO — In a city troubled by allegations of police misuse of force, a Chicago officer early on Saturday shot and killed a male college student and a mother of five, both black, and the police department later said the woman's death was both accidental and tragic.

Hours later police shot another person at a separate location. "Officers were confronted by a combative subject resulting in the discharging of the officer's weapon which fatally wounded two individuals," the police department said in a statement.

A woman, 55, "was accidentally struck and tragically killed," it said, adding "the department extends its deepest condolences to the victim's family and friends."

It said the shootings were being investigated by the Independent Police Review Authority.

The police department of the nation's third-largest city is under a federal civil rights investigation for its use of deadly force and officer discipline.

A recently released video of the shooting death of a black teenager by a white officer in 2014 has sparked protests, with activists calling for Mayor Rahm

Emanuel's resignation.

The fatal shootings happened in the West Garfield Park neighborhood on the city's west side.

The Cook County Medical Examiner's office identified the dead as Bettie Jones and Quintonio Legrier, 19.

Family members of Jones said that Legrier, a sophomore at Northern Illinois University, was home for Christmas and visiting his father, landlord of the two-story wooden frame building where the shooting occurred.

Family members said police were called after Legrier threatened his father with a metal baseball bat. Jones, who lived in the first-floor apartment, was shot through the door, according to her cousin, Evelyn Glover.

There was a single bullet hole in the wooden door. Blood stained the walls and carpet of the tidy apartment, which was decorated for Christmas. Relatives, including children of Bettie Jones, who was a grandmother of 10, were at the building crying and embracing each other.

"This is a wrongful death. How are you just going to fire through the door?" asked Glover, who added that Jones was recov-

ering from ovarian cancer.

Janet Cooksey, Legrier's mother, told local news channel CLTV her son had recently been suffering from mental illness.

"You call for help and you lose someone," she said. "That has to stop." In a separate shooting, police responded to an assault in the city's Washington Heights neighbourhood, in the far south side, around 1:30 pm (1930 GMT).

The department provided scant information, saying only that no officers were injured and a weapon of some type was recovered. The Chicago Tribune reported that the person was taken to the hospital in serious to critical condition.

The Independent Police Review Authority, which reviews police conduct, is also investigating that shooting. Emanuel recently replaced the authority's chief official in response to complaints about the agency's effectiveness. High-profile killings of black men by police officers since mid-2014 have triggered waves of angry protest across the country and fueled a renewed civil rights movement under the name Black Lives Matter.—Reuters

# Russia says air force has not hit civilian targets in Syria

MOSCOW — Russian air forces have not hit civilian targets since they started a bombing campaign in Syria nearly three months ago, a senior Russian officer said in an interview with Rossiya 24 television.

London-based rights group Amnesty International said this week that Russia's bombing of Syria had killed many civilians and could amount to a war crime. Russia's Defence Ministry strongly rejected the allegations.

"The Military Space Forces

have never hit civilian targets in Syria," said Viktor Bondarev, Colonel General and commander-in-chief of Russia's Aerospace Forces. Pilots are well-trained and "have never missed their targets, have never hit ... so-called sensitive places: schools, hospitals, mosques," he said. The Kremlin began its campaign of air strikes in Syria on 30 September, saying it wanted to help Moscow's main Middle East ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, defeat Islamic State and other militant groups.

Bondarev also said that the supply of Russian surface-to-air S-400 system to Syria had helped to "set the (Syrian) air space in order."

A new message purporting to come from the leader of Islamic State said on Saturday air strikes by Russia and a US-led coalition had failed to weaken the group. The United Nations currently aims to bring together Syria's warring parties on 25 January in Geneva to begin talks to try to end nearly five years of civil war.—Reuters

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Russia's Putin orders several counter-terrorism units to be set up on coasts

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered counter-terrorism operational headquarters to be set up in several coastal areas, the state-run RIA news agency quoted the Kremlin as saying on Saturday.

The units are to be set in Kaspisk on the Caspian Sea, Murmansk in Russia's north-west and in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk on Russia's eastern coast, Interfax news agency said.

Putin also ordered a similar operation to be set up in Crimea's capital of Simferopol — the peninsula Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014.—Reuters

### China adopts first counter-terrorism law

BEIJING — China's top legislature yesterday adopted the country's first counter-terrorism law in the latest attempt to address terrorism at home and help maintain world security.

Lawmakers approved the legislation yesterday afternoon at the end of a week-long bimonthly session of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee. Of the 158 legislators present, 157 voted for the law.—Xinhua

### Serbia arrests 79 in anti-corruption sweep, including ex-minister

BELGRADE — Serbian police arrested 79 people including a former minister on corruption charges including abuse of office, money laundering and financial crime, the interior minister said.

Saturday's sweep marks the country's biggest anti-corruption investigation in decades and concerns alleged offences dating back to 2004, Nebojsa Stefanovic said.

Several executives of state-owned companies, two former interior ministry officials and several mayors were also among those arrested, who are accused of embezzling a combined 7.8 billion dinars (\$70 million), he told a news conference.

Authorities in Serbia, which on 14 December opened accession talks with the European Union, are working to root out a legacy of corruption and organised crime that gained a strong foothold during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s.

The ex-minister arrested was Slobodan Milosavljevic of the opposition Democratic Party, who held the Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management portfolio from May 2007 to July 2008, Stefanovic said.

He said police were searching for five more suspects.

In June, authorities charged more than three dozen police and customs officers with corruption.—Reuters

### Jetliner evacuated in New York after smoke reported

NEW YORK — Passengers and crew on a Spirit Airlines jetliner parked at a gate at New York's LaGuardia Airport in preparation for a flight to Florida were evacuated on Saturday after a report of possible smoke in the aircraft, an airports authority spokeswoman said.

Firefighters responding to a call from the pilot found no visible smoke, said Cheryl Albiez, spokeswoman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

"Everyone was accounted for, there were no injuries nor further incidents," Albiez said.

The plane, Flight 197 to the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, had 228 passengers and seven crew members and never left the gate for its scheduled 10:59 am (1559 GMT) departure, Albiez said.

Spirit Airlines spokesman Stephen Schuler said in a statement that there were reported sparks in the plane's auxiliary power unit, a generator that provides electricity to the plane while on the ground. The unit automatically detected the problem and turned itself off, Schuler said. A maintenance crew was doing safety checks before clearing the plane for takeoff, he said.

Passengers were being accommodated on other aircraft if they preferred, he said.—Reuters

# US-backed alliance captures key dam from Islamic State

BEIRUT — A US-backed alliance of Syrian Kurds and Arab rebel groups, supported by US coalition planes, captured a dam on Saturday from Islamic State, cutting one of its main supply routes across the Euphrates, an alliance spokesman said.

Colonel Talal Selo said the seizure of the Tishrin dam helps isolate the militants' strongholds in northern Aleppo from their territories east of the Euphrates river, where Raqqa city, their de facto capital, is located.

Selo said the rapid advance overnight by thousands of troops from the Democratic Forces of Syria had brought the dam upstream from Raqqa under their control on Saturday afternoon.

Since the US-backed alliance was formed last October, its fighters have opened several major offensives against Islamic State with the ultimate goal of capturing Raqqa.

Selo said the alliance troops had cut one main IS supply line from the towns of Bab and Minbij in the northern Aleppo coun-



Smoke rises during an air strike in Ramadi city, on 26 December 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

tryside held by the militants on the road to Raqqa city, he added.

The intensive aerial bombing by a US-led coalition was instrumental in the rapid advances since the campaign started four days ago, he said.

"The coalition jets partici-

pated in the previous campaigns and this one and future ones, too. We have a strategic partnership in which they provide the air cover and we provide the troops," he told Reuters.

Selo said the militants suffered heavy casualties in the lat-

est round of fighting which involved several thousand fighters from the Democratic Forces of Syria with heavy armour.

The alliance troops includes the Kurdish YPG militia, various Arab groups including Jaysh al-Thuwwar (Army of Rebels

and the Arab tribal Jaysh al-Sana'eed, and an Assyrian Christian group.

They secured a stretch of territory that extended at least 20kms with scores of villages seized, he added.

"We no longer think as we did before that Daesh cannot be defeated," the spokesman said, using a derogatory Arab name used for Islamic State.

He did not say when a major assault on Raqqa would begin.

Washington's strategy in Syria has shifted this year from trying to train thousands of fighters outside the country to supplying groups headed by US-vetted commanders.

US officials said delivery of weapons since the alliance was set up would help the fighters push further south into Islamic State-held territory.

The US military estimates the Democratic Forces of Syria has captured around 1,000 square kilometres of terrain in the past six weeks or so, bolstered by coalition air strikes.—Reuters

## Saudi Arabia intercepts ballistic missile from Yemen

DUBAI — Saudi Arabia said it intercepted a Scud ballistic missile fired from Yemen on Saturday, according to a statement on the Saudi state news agency SPA, an attack which threatens a fragile ceasefire ahead of renewed UN-backed peace talks next month.

"Saudi Air Defence Forces intercepted at about 11 PM (2000 GMT) yesterday a Scud missile launched from Sanaa, in Yemeni territory, towards the city of Najran ... the air force immediately destroyed the rocket launch platform," the Saudi statement said.

Yemen's state news agency said the target was a Saudi national guard base. The attack is the latest of several ballistic missile strikes by Yemeni forces on its northern neighbour, none of which have caused any reported casualties. A military alliance of mostly Gulf Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia in March began bombing Yemen's Houthi movement, an ally of Iran, to try to restore the government of president Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

The conflict has killed nearly 6,000 people and plunged the impoverished country into a humanitarian crisis, but a ceasefire coinciding with United Nations-backed talks began on 15 December. Though Saudi Arabia and the Houthis have accused each other of many violations of the ceasefire, it has significantly reduced the fighting and allowed for deliveries of small amounts of aid to the war zones. Yemen's warring parties agreed to resume talks on 14 January.—Reuters

## Austrian police say European capitals have been warned of possible attack

VIENNA — Vienna police said on Saturday a "friendly" intelligence service had warned European capitals of the possibility of a shooting or bomb attack before New Year, prompting police across the continent to increase security measures.

"Several possible names of potential attackers were mentioned, which were checked, and the investigation based on (these checks) has so far yielded no con-

crete results," Vienna police said in a statement, some six weeks after 130 people were killed in Islamist bombing and shooting attacks in Paris.

"In the days before Christmas a warning was sent out by a friendly (intelligence) service to numerous European capitals, saying that it could come to an attack involving explosives or a shooting between Christmas and the New Year in crowded spaces."

The police asked Austrians for their understanding of the need for more security controls.

Extra steps include surveillance in crowded spaces, "especially at events and traffic hubs" as well as intensive identity checks and higher alertness for objects which could carry explosives such as bags or "bicycle frames", it said.

Vienna police were not im-

mediately available for further comment.

A spokesman for the German Interior Ministry said it did not comment on particular situations for operational reasons.

"Germany is still in the crosshairs of Jihadist terrorism," he said, adding the country had reviewed and adapted its security measures, where necessary, following the Paris attacks.—Reuters

## Belgian college's concerns over Paris attacker ignored

BRUSSELS — A police commission is interviewing staff at a Brussels college after education authorities failed to act on concerns that a student who later became one of the Paris suicide bombers had been radicalised, two Belgian newspapers said on Saturday.

Bilal Hadfi, 20, named as one of the attackers who detonated a suicide bomb outside the Stade de France in Paris on 13 November, attended the Anneesens-Funck college in Brussels until he dropped out in February to travel to Syria.

The two Belgian Dutch-language newspapers, *De Morgen* and *Het Laatste Nieuws*, cited documents they said showed staff were seriously concerned about Hadfi's extremist views, which

were evident in the classroom.

The reports did not elaborate on the exact nature of the documents but said they showed the college director informed the Brussels education board in April that Hadfi, a French national, had travelled to Syria.

"Committee P" (le Comité Permanent de Contrôle des Services de Police), as the Belgian police oversight authority is known, is investigating why the information was not passed on to police, the newspapers said.

Neither the college, Committee P nor the Brussels education board were immediately available for comment.

While there has been little hard evidence of intelligence and tip-offs falling between the cracks before the Paris attacks,



Belgian soldiers patrol along "Winter Wonders", a Christmas market in central Brussels, Belgium, on 24 December 2015, following tight security measures linked to the fatal attacks in Paris. PHOTO: REUTERS

Belgium has faced international accusations that underfunding and political in-fighting had left its security services the weakest link in Europe's counter-terrorism defences.

It was not clear when Belgian security officials became

aware that Hadfi has travelled to Syria.

But on his return to Europe he evaded the intelligence services. They bugged the apartment he had been registered at, but he failed to show up, so could not be traced.—Reuters

## OPINION

# Why migrate in search of work?

Kyaw Thura

“There’s no place like home”

**I**S a line from a popular song “Home sweet home” written by J H Payne and sung by Henry Rowley Bishop.

It is not an easy task to leave one’s place for good, because migration involves making a once-in-a-lifetime decision to uproot and start from scratch in an alien place in the hope of finding better job opportunities far away.

People migrate for different reasons. Re-

searchers have identified these reasons as economical, political, social and environmental and divided them into two separate categories: pull factors and push factors.

The push and pull factors account for the mass migrations of today. The push factors includes situations that make it hard for people to remain where they are and as a result choose to migrate, whereas the pull factors comprise reasons why people move to a particular place.

For example, some economic causes of migration include lack of employment opportunities and basic amenities, while social migration is related to lack of services and high crime rates due to poor security. Instability, persecution and armed conflict are prime examples of political migration. And environmental causes of migration are due to crop failure, drought, flooding and natural hazards.

Nobody in their right minds would ever mi-

grate from a place where higher employment, better services, a better quality of life, greater safety and security, political stability and fertile land with lower risk from natural disasters are concentrated.

It is time for the government to pay undivided attention to the push factors and seek ways to overcome them so as to ensure a more attractive quality of life at home.

## Write for us

*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](mailto: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.*

# Towards a new generation of archaeologists

Maung Tha (Archaeology)

**W**E were in Pyay, Bago Region, on 26 November to mark the 10th anniversary of the Archaeological Technology Training School there.

Our team comprised member of the Myanmar Historical Commission Dr Toe Hla, former director general at the National Archives Department U Kyaw Win (Anthropologist Kyaw Win) and U San Win, and deputy director general U Sein Win.

Just five miles away from Pyay, the school is located in the north of Srihethra, one of three ancient cities of Pyu Period inscribed on World Heritage List.

Archaeologist U MyintAung defined the term ‘archaeology’ as “the study of traditions, cultures and urbanisation of the Stone, Bronze and Iron ages by observing the remains of objects of personal use and religious edifices as well as old cemeteries.”

Scholars divided the study of a country’s history into prehistoric and post-historic times. It is easy to study the post-historic times as information can be interpreted through ancient forms of writing recorded on various writing materials such as stone slabs, pots and bells. However, the prehistoric time is a different story. It is through archaeological excavations that the prehistoric times can be understood. It is, therefore, important to produce new generations of archaeologists simply because they

play a vital role in exploring and preserving the cultural heritage. In addition, it is necessary to train them how to apply the new technology to their research of cultural heritage.

To fulfill that requirement, the University of Yangon established the Department of Archaeological Research in 1994-95 academic year, conducting post-graduate courses to breed a new generation of archaeologists. The course continues up to this date in the country’s oldest university. Now, Dagon University and Yadanabon University run their own archaeological courses.

To assist the Ministry of Education with its efforts to produce archaeologists, the Archaeological Research and National Museum Department under the Ministry of Culture is now engaged in the excavation and conservation activities. In addition, the department constructed its Archaeological Technology Training School in Pyay on 1 July 2004 and opened it on 7 November 2005. The training school, in partnership with the National University of Culture and Fine Arts (Yangon), now conducts post-graduate courses on archaeological research.

In the past 10 years, the training school has turned out 246 archaeologists and provided six batches of in-house training to 87 departmental officials.

The training school in Pyay has its one-year post-graduate course in ap-



Archaeologists study remains of objects used by ancient people.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY MINISTRY OF CULTURE

plied archaeological research open to any graduate. A Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Archaeology will be conferred on trainees who have successfully completed the course. Yangon University now offers master’s degrees and doctorates.

The modules covers field excavations, archaeo-

logical science, the archaeology of prehistoric and post-historic times, early research, ancient arts, the study of stone inscriptions and ancient coins, maintenance of edifices and the protection and preservation of national cultural objects.

The 10th anniversary of the Archaeological Technology Training

School was accompanied by a paper-reading session, followed by rounds of discussions regarding further development of archaeological research.

The paper-reading session and the dinner drew Deputy Culture Minister DawSandarKhin and departmental officials. We all had a memorable experience amid showers.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear

The recent divorce dilemma of Mr. Imran Khan, the famous cricketer turned politician of Pakistan with huge fan following; and believed to be the highly probable next Prime Minister of the nation has portrayed him in poor light and damaged his long term political aspirations. Mr. Khan being a prominent public figure, celebrity and ace politician of Pakistan with millions of dedicated followers; has miserably failed in guarding his personal life from being nakedly exposed to the public and media, adding daily uncalled controversies. The regular volley of undesirable and highly commendable fiery exchange of objectionable comments between Mr. Khan’s family and close party aides; and his ex wifeMs, Reham Khan has only contributed to further tarnishing his public image and damaging his reputation as a responsible politician aspiring to occupy the coveted chair of Prime Minister of Pakistan in the future. He needs to take control of the situation and prevent his close aids in making inappropriate statements and comments to the media and the public. An individual of his capability and stature, if fails to simply deal with family matters; how could people trust him with the responsibility of managing a nation plagued with multiple complex issues in the near future is a million dollar question.

Thanking you  
Sincerely yours  
Saikat Kumar Basu



## Construction of traditional medicine hospital in Kalay at 50 % completion

CONSTRUCTION of a new 25-bed Traditional Medicine Hospital in Kalay, Sagaing Region which began in early October is now at 50 per cent completion.

The 124 ft by 64 ft one-story hospital and the 80ft by 40ft four-unit four-story staff quarters building are expected to be completed by February 2016.

The K 157 -million hospital and the K 277.64- million staff quarters are being funded by the Union Government budget for the 2015-2016 financial year. The tenders for construction were won by

the Mann Myosethit and Phone Myat Pho construction companies.

“There is only a District Traditional Medicine Office and a traditional medicine clinic in Kalay at present. After the hospital is opened we will be able to provide traditional medical health services to not only locals of Kalay and Tamu districts in Sagaing Region, but to locals of Gatgaw District in Magwe Region and Phalam District of north Chin State”, said Kalay District Traditional Medicine officer Daw Mya MyaKhine.

In the process of upgrading the

traditional medicine sector, the Union Government during the 2014-2015 financial year has opened a 100-bed traditional medicine hospital in Nay Pyi Taw, a 50-bed traditional medicine hospital, four 25-bed traditional medicine hospitals, ten 16-bed traditional medicine hospitals, two township traditional medicine clinics and four district traditional medicine offices across the country, according to the official. She added that five 16-bed hospitals were also upgraded to become 50-bedded hospitals.—(PonLun -IPRD)



Traditional Medicine Hospital in Kalay is under construction. PHOTO: PON LUN-IPRD)

## Wild elephants destroy crops in Magway

A GROUP of wild elephants ate crops and destroyed plantations in Kwinyi Village, Myothit township, Magway region, according to a local resident.

On 21 December, the wild elephants entered the plantations and ate bananas, beans and corn in Kwinyi, Einma and Thonesint villages.

The wild elephants live in a nearby gorge. They trampled through fields in search of food

during the night, one U Bo Kyi, a local farmer.

Such incidents have happened frequently since November.

A team of staff from the Forestry Department of Myothit Township, police officers and local residents have alerted other villagers of the wild elephants.

They drove 12 wild elephants in Thonesint village back to their grazing fields.—Kyaw Zayya

## Green village project sees success

THE green village project has seen a successful outcome in Bawga Village, Monywa where residents mainly run agricultural businesses.

The green village project is implemented by the Department of Rural Region Development. “Now, I have achieved success in my own weaving firm. I borrowed K200,000(US\$153) from the main funds of the pro-

ject to buy a weaving machine and started my small business,”-said Daw Mala Win. “In the past, I was only a worker for a weaving firm in the village.”

There are 124 villagers who received loans from the project. Eighty of them established agricultural business while 38 people work as breeders and six people in production.—Pho Chan(Monywa)

### Crime News

## Two arrested for illegal weapons possession

POLICE have filed charges against Myo Min Oo, 23, and Htein Lin Aung (aka Htein Gyi), 21, for allegedly keeping weapon in a car on 24 December in

Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay.

The suspects have been charged under the law by police.—Police IPRD

## Man charged under suspicion of theft

POLICE have brought charges against a man on suspicion of theft as he failed to identify an iPhone and a fake gold ring he claimed belonged to him.

The police stopped Soe Naing Tun (aka Aung Naing), 24, near Thakontaing Market, Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay, on 24 December and charged him.—Police IPRD

## Woman murdered in Pazundaung

A MAN was arrested on suspicion of murdering his wife, according to the police from the Pazundaung Police Station, Yangon Region. Zayyar Thein, 26, is suspected of killing his

wife May Thu Naing, 22, near the 56th Street bus station in Pazundaung Township.

Police failed to bring charges against the suspect.—Police IPRD

## Fire destroys five houses in Sagaing

AN electrical fire has destroyed five houses in Hnein Shaung village, Lahae Township, Sagaing Region, on 23 December.

According to the police in-

vestigation, the fire broke out when solar panels on the roof of a house owned by U Ah Kaung, 35, malfunctioned.

The fire quickly grew out of

control and spread to neighbouring houses. Local villagers put out the blaze. Local police have filed charges against the homeowner.—Police IPRD

## Police arrest gamblers in Mandalay

POLICE arrested a woman who has allegedly been running an illegal two-digit lottery in Winzun Ward, Meiktila Township, Mandalay, on 24 December. Police searched the house owned by Than Than Aye, 36, discovering K12,800 and items related to illegal gambling.

Local police filed charges against her.

Similarly, the police seized K117,950 and lottery items from the house owned by Kyaw Naing, 50, in Wantwin Township, Mandalay. He has also been charged by police.—Police IPRD



A bus crashed into a tricycle-motorized vehicle and ran over three people in Taikkyi, on its en route from Yangon to Pyay on 24 December, killed three pedestrians on the spot and leaving another one in serious condition. The police are in hot pursuit of the driver of the bus who fled the scene after the accident.

Photo: Tun Hlaing (Myaing)

## China industrial profits fall for sixth straight month

BEIJING — Profits earned by Chinese industrial companies in November fell 1.4 per cent from a year earlier, marking a sixth consecutive month of decline, statistics bureau data showed yesterday.

Industrial profits — which cover large enterprises with annual revenue of more than 20 million yuan (2 million pounds) from their main operations — fell 1.9 per cent in the first 11 months of the year compared with the same period a year earlier, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said on its website.

The November profits of industrial firms have seen some improvement from the previous month. In October, profits fell 4.6 per cent from a year earlier.

“The November industrial profit data matched earlier output data and they showed some signs of stabilising, which are in line with recent data from other Asian countries,” said Zhou Hao, China economist at Commerzbank in Singapore, adding the figures were slightly better than market expectations.

The NBS said investment returns for industrial companies in November increased from a year earlier by 9.25 billion yuan.

The jump in November profits from the auto manufacturing and electricity sectors, up 35 per cent and 51 per cent from a year earlier, respectively, helped narrow overall declines, the statistics bureau said.



Employees work along a production line at a factory of Dongfeng Nissan Passenger Vehicle Co. in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China, on 12 November 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

“Declines in industrial profits narrowed in November, but uncertainties still exist,” said He Ping, an official of the Industry Department at NBS. He added that inventory of finished goods grew at a faster pace last month.

Profits of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) among major industrial firms saw a 23 per cent slump in the first 11 months this year from the same period in 2014. Mining remained the laggard sector, with profits falling 56.5 per cent in the same period.

Aluminium producer China Hongqiao Group (1378.HK) said in early December it would cut annual capacity by 250,000 tonnes immediately to curb supplies.

Eight Chinese nickel producers including state-owned Jinchuan Group Co Ltd [JCGRP.UL], said they would cut production by 15,000 tonnes of metal in December and reduce output next year by at least 20 per cent from this year, in a bid to lift prices from their worst slump in over a decade.

China’s producer prices have been in negative territory for nearly four years due to weak domestic demand and overcapacity. The country’s top leader last week outlined main economic targets for next year after they held the annual Central Economic Work Conference, where it said the government will push forward “supply-side reform” to help generate new growth engines in the world’s second-largest economy while tackling factory overcapacity and property inventories.—Reuters

## Chinese products account for 28.8% of Vietnam’s imports in 2015

HANOI — Imports from China accounted for some 28.8 per cent of Vietnam’s total import revenue in 2015, according to Vietnam’s General Statistics Office (GSO) on Saturday.

Specifically, in 2015, Vietnam spent some 49.3 billion US dollars to import products from China, an increase of 12.9 per cent year-on-year, the GSO said in a report on socio-economic development situation in 2015 posted on its website. China remains the top supplier of commodities to Vietnam. Imports of machinery, tools and spare parts are estimated to post an increase of 11.5 per cent year-on-year, while that of computer and spare parts is expected to grow by 15.2 per cent, said the GSO. Regarding exports, in 2015, Vietnam sold some 17 billion US dollars worth of products to China, an increase of 13.7 per cent year-on-year, said the Vietnamese statistics office.

Exports of vegetables and fruits to China are likely to see an increase of 179 per cent during the year, while exports of textile and garment are expected to go up by 41.5 per cent, and footwear 48 per cent year-on-year.

In total, Vietnam is estimated to register some 328 billion US dollars in trade revenue with its foreign partners, of which imports post 165.6 billion US dollars (up 12 per cent) and exports 162.4 billion US dollars (up 8.1 per cent). Trade revenue of the domestic sector reaches 114.9 billion US dollars while that of the foreign-invested sector reaches 213.1 billion US dollars, said the GSO.—Xinhua

## Samsung SDI to sell 5 million Samsung C&T shares after ruling

SEOUL — South Korean conglomerate Samsung Group said on Sunday its battery-making arm Samsung SDI Co Ltd (006400.KS) will sell \$622 million (419 million pounds) worth of shares in sister firm Samsung C&T Corp (028260.KS) to comply with regulatory requirements.

South Korea’s Fair Trade Commission (FTC) had said earlier in the day that Samsung Group must weaken or break three of its circular shareholding chains that it deemed had been strengthened by the all-stock merger in September.

The ruling concerns Samsung SDI’s stake in Samsung C&T Corp (028260.KS), which was formerly known as Cheil Industries Inc before it took the name of a sister construction firm it merged with. SDI held stakes in both firms prior to the deal, and the FTC said the deal added shares held by SDI in three chains — two involving SDI and Cheil and another involving SDI and the construction arm. This is against South Korean laws.

Samsung Group has until 1 March, 2016 to either have Sam-

sung SDI sell a 2.6 per cent stake in Samsung C&T, worth 727.5 billion won (419 million pounds) based on Thursday’s closing price, or break the three chains completely. SDI currently holds a 4.7 per cent stake in C&T.

The ruling could weigh on Samsung C&T’s share price but will not endanger the founder Lee family’s hold over the firm or the larger electronics-to-fashion conglomerate. De facto leader Jay Y. Lee and his siblings control nearly 40 per cent of the firm through direct stakes and shares held by other related parties, including affiliates. Samsung C&T is considered a key vehicle through which the Lees control top affiliates such as Samsung Electronics Co Ltd (005930.KS) and Samsung Life Insurance Co Ltd (032830.KS). A Samsung Group spokeswoman said SDI would comply by disposing the 5 million Samsung C&T shares and consider options to minimise the potential market impact from selling the shares. She did not elaborate on when or how the shares would be sold.—Reuters

## Retailer John Lewis sees 10.7 per cent rise in Christmas Day website orders

LONDON — Britain’s biggest department store chain, John Lewis, said on Saturday it had seen a 10.7 per cent year-on-year increase in clearance online orders on Christmas Day and a rise of 11 per cent in traffic to its website.

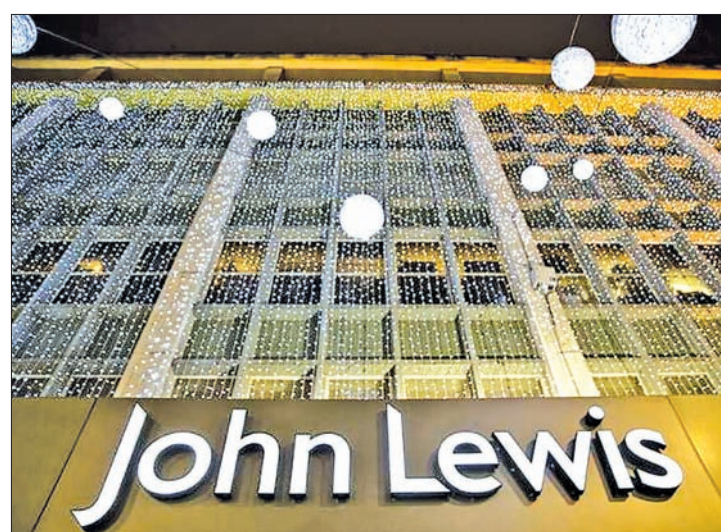
John Lewis is the only major British retailer to publish weekly sales data, providing the most up-to-date snapshot of shopping trends.

It has outperformed rivals for the last six years, helped by a strong online offering, modern stores and bias to the more prosperous southeast of England.

The company said in a statement there had been a 17.7 per cent annual rise in orders in the first full hour of clearance starting on Christmas Eve.

Clearance shopping on Christmas Day continued, with 75 per cent of traffic coming from mobile devices like smartphones and tablets.

British consumers have driven the country’s economic



The John Lewis store on Oxford Street is seen in central London on 15 December 2013. PHOTO: REUTERS

recovery over the past two years, helped by a plunge in inflation to around zero. But wage growth remains weak and has not recovered its levels of before the financial crisis.

British retail sales grew slightly less than expected in the run-up to Christmas and the out-

look for January was weak, according to a survey this week by the employers’ group, the Confederation of British Industry.

No figures were immediately available on how John Lewis’s Christmas Day sales in 2014 had compared with the previous year.—Reuters

# 3D printing comes to help children with disabilities



Rychard Barbosa, 5, looks at his physical therapist during a session at the Association for the Aid of Disabled Children (AACD) in Sao Paulo on 19 March. PHOTO: REUTERS

BEIJING — It's estimated that up to 100 million people across the world could need orthotic supports - braces that help with posture and walking.

And the number keeps on

growing at 6 per cent per year.

But traditional basic methods of making them have create a whole set of problems, which can make the process traumatic for the patient.

A British couple now reckon they've found a way to revolutionise the industry using 3D printing.

CRI's Fei Fei reports. Andiamo's co-founder Naveed Parvez introduces their innovation using 3D printing that is a simpler and more comfortable solution to making braces and supports instead of the old plastic molds.

"The process that people go through in the Andiamo service is you get 3D scanned, which takes anywhere from 30 to 60 seconds, and that gets a 3D image that's accurate to under a millimetre, and that 3D image is turned into a medical device using a computer edited design, and then that's sent to a 3D printer, that's fitted and then you're sent away. So rather than taking six months and a very distressing process it can take less than a week."

The current 3D technology in orthotic care mostly concentrates on orthopaedic wear, namely shoes and related foot supports.

The London-based company feels they can fill the gap by making orthotic supports for people with disabilities, especially children.

The other co-founder Samiya Parvez explains.

"We're talking about back braces, hand splints, leg splints anything that supports your pos-

ture, helps you to walk or even helps you to sit up straight so you can concentrate on your head if you've got very low head control. So things that would help you maintain good posture and hopefully reduce the need for surgery later or help you to get to a point where surgery would be more successful."

The Parvez's thought of the idea after losing their nine-year-old son Diamo in 2012.

Diamo had cerebral palsy and needed constant care and orthotic support.

Taking care of Diamo was a tough task, while the process of fitting and using traditional orthotics made it even more difficult and cumbersome, as explained in a promotion video for Andiamo.

Going one step further, the pair has also set up an online platform so that clinicians can track the design and progress of orthotics.

The big data gathered would also deliver better communication between clinicians and families, as well as future research and treatments.

The couple is also looking to open their own clinic, privately at first, and then later work with the UK's National Health Service.

Ultimately they hope to serve a thousand families by the end of 2017, and 100 thousand by the end of 2020.—*Xinhua*

## Japanese doctor gives hope to disabled children in Kenya

TOKYO — Japanese pediatrician Kazuko Kumon works to provide support for children with disabilities and their families in Kenya.

At "The Garden of Siloam," a facility Kumon established on the outskirts of the East African country's capital Nairobi, handicapped children receive a range of support from high quality education to personalised health care.

Kumon, a 47-year-old Christian and a native of western Japan's Wakayama Prefecture, said she was motivated by her experiences in Sierra Leone some 15 years earlier.

When she visited the civil war-stricken West African country in 2001, she saw children dying every day, leaving her asking herself how she could live a meaningful life and make a difference in the world.

After working at a hospital in Cambodia, the doctor moved to Kenya where she found a job at a clinic in 2002.

As she continued to ask herself the same question about life for more than 10 years in Kenya, Kumon came to think about what she could do specifically for children with disabilities.

In Africa, like many other regions, disabled people struggle to receive sufficient support amid persistent prejudice and discrimination.

Many children with disabilities in Kenya are also left without proper medical care and education in poverty.

"I thought that giving my whole mind to the life of each child would lead to saving many lives," Kumon said, referring to her motives for establishing the facility.

Managing "The Garden on Siloam" is not easy as it mainly relies on donations from Japan. It is also difficult to find qualified staff members, the doctor said.

Still, the facility has accepted nearly 30 children so far. "I can see the children and their families look happier after spending a short period of time" at the facility, said Kumon, smiling.

Kenya has seen its economy continue to grow in recent years. Kumon believes that "it is important to create a society, in which the disabled and others can coexist."—*Kyodo News*

# NPC committee suggests deleting draft ban on surrogate pregnancy

BEIJING — The Law Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) has suggested to delete a controversial provision on banning surrogate pregnancy in a draft law amendment.

Lawmakers have quite different opinions over this provision, according to a statement issued after a chairpersons' meeting of the NPC Standing Committee on Saturday.

The draft amendment to the the family planning law, which was submitted for review at the bi-monthly session of the NPC Standing Committee that opened on Monday, allows couples to have two children.

If adopted, the draft, which came after the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee's decision in October on the universal two-child proposal, will replace the decades-long "one

couple, one child" policy.

However, the draft stipulated that trade of sperm, eggs, fertilized eggs and embryos is forbidden. Surrogate pregnancy in any form is not allowed.

Some legislators argued during discussion that the amendment should focus on the two-child proposal while the surrogate pregnancy issue is least relevant, according to the statement. Also, they believed that such issue needs to be further studied and discussed.

The NPC Law Committee suggested to adopt these opinions, delete the drafted ban and take away another provision on the punishment for violations of the ban. The committee also suggested that the amendment spell out that benefits received by the older generation who abided by the current family planning law and had only one child should not

be affected. More support should be provided for parents whose only child is disabled or deceased.

According to Saturday's statement, the NPC Law Committee also suggested to submit the draft amendments to the education law and the law on higher education to the top legislature for voting and leave another draft amendment to the law on private education for further improvement.—*Xinhua*

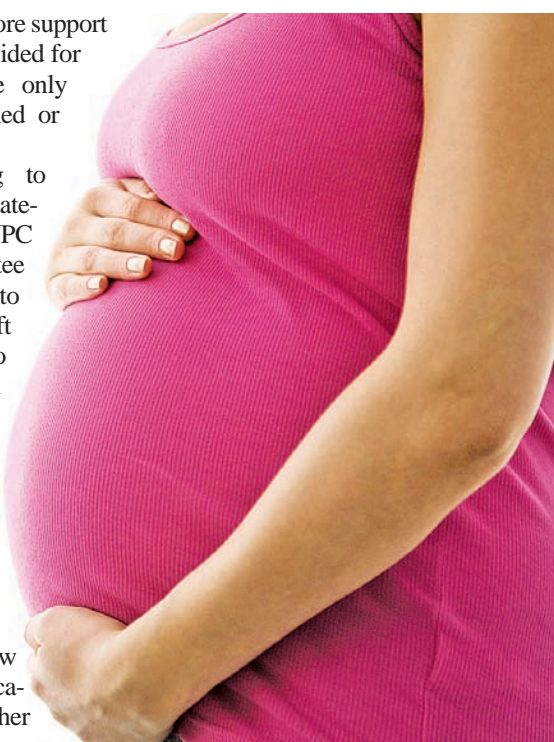


PHOTO: REUTERS

## Wildfire burns 1,200 acres outside Los Angeles, closes highway

VENTURA — Firefighters on Saturday gained the upper hand on a wildfire northwest of Los Angeles that burned about 1,240 acres of land, forced the closure of parts of a major highway and led to evacu-

ations, fire officials said. Hundreds of firefighters battled the blaze in the Solimar Beach area of Ventura County and were able to draw containment lines around 60 per cent of the conflagration by Saturday

evening, county fire officials said.

The flames triggered the closure of parts of US Highway 101, though both northbound and southbound lanes of the major roadway had reopened to traffic by late af-

ternoon, officials said.

Two firefighters suffered minor injuries, they said, and there were no reports of damage to structures.

Officials have said it could

take at least three days to get the fire fully under control. The cause of the fire was still under investigation. "Even if we do open up the roadways, it's still not a contained fire," Ventura County Fire Department Chief Norm Plott told reporters earlier in the day. "It's a very dynamic fire. We're not quite out of the woods yet."

The fire started at around 11 pm local time on Friday near Ventura, which is about 65 miles (105 km) northwest of Los Angeles, and strong winds as high as 50 miles per hour and dry vegetation caused it to grow rapidly, fire officials said.

At around 2 am local time on Saturday in a video posted on Facebook, Ventura County Fire Department Captain Steve Kaufman said the fire was near the beach, "bumping up against the roadway. We're getting a bunch of embers in Solimar east."

The Solimar Beach community, with 50 to 60 homes, and a nearby campground were under a mandatory evacuation order, while a voluntary one had been issued for the nearby Faria Beach community, where there are 30 to 40 homes, fire officials said. Officials had canceled the evacuations by Saturday evening.—Reuters



The Solimar brush fire that started early Saturday morning burns in Ventura County, California on 26 December 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

## India may ink defence deal with France to acquire 36 combat jets next month

NEW DELHI — India may sign a major defence pact with France during French President Francois Hollande's visit in January next year, sources said yesterday.

"A defence deal between the two countries could be inked for 36 Rafale fighter jets," the sources said, adding though the Defence Ministry is yet to spell out the nitty gritty.

India has already expressed its intention to buy the

jets from France during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Paris in April this year.

Even Indian Air Force head Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha said in October he was optimistic that the deal would be finalised by this yearend.

According to sources, the French president will be in India as the chief guest at India's Republic Day celebrations in the national capital on 26 January.—Xinhua

## Comedian arrested on suspicion of stealing schoolgirl uniforms

TOKYO — Police arrested a popular comedian Saturday on suspicion of stealing dozens of girls' uniforms from a Tokyo high school.

Kenichi Takahashi, 44, from the comedy duo King of Comedy was quoted by police as saying that he has committed similar thefts over 20 years to fulfill his sexual desires. The police have confiscated about 70 large plastic bags containing uniforms and other items from the suspect's home in Tokyo.

Takahashi allegedly broke into a high school in the capital's Setagaya Ward on 25 April and took 24 items including girls' blaz-

ers and skirts, according to the police. A security camera captured an image of a man in a truck when girls' uniforms were stolen from a high school in Koto Ward in December. The police later found the truck belongs to Takahashi.

The King of Comedy duo, in which Hiroki Konno is the other member, won the annual national comedy skit performance contest "King of Conte" in 2010.

After Takahashi's arrest, his management office said Takahashi and the duo will refrain from appearing on TV programmes during the New Year's holidays.—Kyodo News



Popular comedian Kenichi Takahashi. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia say committed to reaching understandings on Nile dam

KHARTOUM — Foreign Ministers of Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia yesterday reiterated commitment to reach understandings regarding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

Foreign and Water ministers of the three countries yesterday began meetings in the Sudanese capital Khartoum in completion of the meetings that were suspended here on 12 December.

Khartoum's meetings came at directives by the three countries' leaders to prepare a tripartite agreement on the GERD to ensure maximum benefit from the dam and

lessen its negative impact without harming the right of any country at the interest of the other.

"This meeting comes in continuation of the previous meetings. The three delegations are aware of the importance of these meetings which are concerned with an issue of national security for the three countries," Ibrahim Ghandour, Sudan's Foreign Minister, said when addressing the opening siting of the meetings. "Our leaders and peoples are waiting for us today to reach agreements to utilize the Nile which is God's gift. We will do our best to reach agreements

and understandings," he added. Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, for his part, expressed Egypt's willingness to enhance its ties with Ethiopia, saying "We are aware of the importance of reactivating the relationship with Ethiopia with which we share common human heritage. We are also aware of the importance of achieving welfare and development for the three countries and building positive ties that achieve the interests of the three countries in an equitable manner." Ethiopian Foreign Minister Tedros Adhanom, meanwhile, reiterated Ethiopia's commitment

to enhance cooperation with Egypt and Sudan, urging for transparency and openness to reach understandings. "We are meeting here for the second time in two weeks. This shows our commitment to our partnership and brotherhood. We have a long and historic partnership and tied with the Nile with a common destiny," said Adhanom.

"Ethiopia, I assure you, is genuinely committed to promote cooperation among our three sisterly countries, and we believe that to reach a common understanding on the issue of the GERD, we have to be open and transparent," he noted.

Last March, the leaders of Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia signed an initial cooperation deal on sharing the Nile River and the construction of the GERD. The GERD worries Egypt which fears that the construction of the dam would affect its share in the Nile water, which amounts to 55.5 billion cubic meter, while Ethiopia reiterates that the dam is likely to make a shift in its wealth, namely in the field of electricity. The GERD, extending on an area of 1,800 square km, is scheduled to be completed in three years at a cost of 4.7 billion US dollars.—Xinhua

## Torrential rain brings flooding to northern England

LONDON — Britain's Meteorological Office issued two of its most severe weather warnings on Saturday after days of torrential rain in northern England caused rivers to burst their banks and flood several villages. The rare "red" warnings of potential danger to life apply to the counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and more than 300 other flood warnings were in place across the country.

Prime Minister David Cameron and heir to the throne Prince Charles have visited areas of Cumbria, northwest England, where the floods first struck earlier this month and troops have been helping reinforce defences against rising water levels. Dozens of people have been forced to leave their homes in the worst-hit areas and hundreds more have lost electrical power as up to a month's worth of rain

has fallen in just days from a succession of storm fronts sweeping in from the Atlantic. "Certainly what we've seen is rainfall levels that nobody's ever seen before," Floods Minister Rory Stewart told BBC Radio.

Forecasts for the area called for the rain to ease over the coming days before more downpours arrive next week. "Very severe weather conditions are expected," the Met Office said in its red warnings. "Take action to remain safe and protect property. Widespread flooding will lead to severe disruption to travel and danger to life." Flooding in the western half of England is becoming a regular winter event, and Cameron's critics have accused the government of cutting back or delaying flood defence programmes as it tries to bring down the country's budget deficit.—Reuters

## Benin prime minister unharmed after helicopter crash-landing

COTONOU — Benin's Prime Minister Lionel Zinsou walked away unharmed after the helicopter he was travelling in crash-landed in the north of the West African nation on Saturday, his daughter said.

It was not immediately known why Zinsou's helicopter made the forced landing in the town of Djougou, where he had been due to meet local people.

"My father is fine. There were no victims in

the helicopter accident in Djougou," Marie-Cecile Zinsou, who is also a member of her father's communications team, wrote on her Twitter feed. "He is safe and sound as are all the other passengers." Zinsou, an economist and former investment banker, confirmed this month that he will stand for president as the candidate of the ruling Cowry Forces for an Emerging Benin (FCBE) party in elections next year.—Reuters

## Eight killed in Dallas area amid tornadoes, flooding



Damage caused by a tornado is seen in a neighbourhood in Birmingham, Alabama, on 26 December 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

DALLAS — Eight people died in the greater Dallas area as a storm system brought tornadoes and flooding on Saturday, increasing the death toll from harsh weather in the southern United States this week to 26, according to officials and local media.

Authorities in Garland confirmed that five people died after a tornado struck the city, some 15 miles (24 km) northeast of downtown Dallas. Homes, apartments and vehicles were also damaged, police said, but it was not clear how many people were hurt. The five deaths were believed to have been related to vehicles having been struck by a tornado near State Highway 190 and Interstate 30. Two other people were found dead at a gas station in the city of Copeville, another 20 miles (32 km) to the northeast, said Lt. Chris Havey, spokesman for the Collin County Sheriff's Office, and an infant had died in Blue Ridge.

The National Weather

Service confirmed tornadoes hit multiple cities in the greater Dallas area on Saturday evening, and there were reports of widespread damage and flooding. NWS meteorologist Steve Fano said roughly eight tornadoes may have touched down across seven counties, though preliminary reports could not be confirmed. The Weather Service said at least one tornado struck south of Dallas in Ellis County, where Emergency Management Coordinator Stephanie Parker said: "We have destroyed and damaged homes."

Weather officials also confirmed tornadoes hitting the towns of Ovilla, Farmersville and Rowlett. Images uploaded to social media showed a massive tornado near Rowlett, as well as devastated houses and vehicles.

The Weather Service said there were reports of debris falling from the sky onto a highway in nearby DeSoto. Fano said that while the tornado threat had dissipated for the region, flash

flood watches would extend through the night.

Power was out for some 30,000 customers in the region as of Saturday night, according to energy company Oncor. Officials in Benton County, Mississippi, on Saturday found the bodies of a man and woman who were missing since being caught in a tornado on Wednesday, said Greg Flynn, spokesman for Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.

The cause of their deaths was not disclosed, but they brought the total dead from tornadoes in Mississippi to 10, in addition to 56 people injured, officials said.

The tornado damaged 403 homes over a seven-county area in the state, Flynn said. In addition, flooding left 50 homes uninhabitable and closed 40 roads in Monroe County, which got 10 to 12 inches (about 25 to 30 cm) of rain, he said. The tornadoes also killed six people in Tennessee and one each in Arkansas and Alabama, bringing

the three-state total to 18.

State authorities told local broadcaster WTVY that they had recovered the body of a 5-year-old boy who drowned when the car he was in was swept into floodwaters on Friday. A 22-year-old man who was in the car remains missing, the station said. US post-holiday travelers can expect a mix of stormy weather during the remainder of the weekend, with blizzard conditions in New Mexico and western Texas and flooding rain in the southern plains from south Texas through Indiana, forecasters said. In California, high winds fanned a wildfire that closed parts of the much-traveled US Highway 101 northwest of Los Angeles and forced evacuations, fire officials said.

The wet and snowy conditions come after a Christmas Day of unseasonable warmth on the East Coast, with record-high temperatures set or tied in several cities, including New York.—Reuters

### INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER (TENDER NO. 5(T) MPE/CONDENSATE (1) / 2015-2016)

1. Open Tender is invited for the Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise, the Ministry of Energy for the Conveyance of Yetagun Condensate 1.05 Million Barrels (±5%) from Yetagun Marine Terminal Offshore to No.(1) Refinery (Thanlyin).
2. Tender Closing Date: 28-1-2016 at (12:00) noon.
3. Tender Opening Date: 28-1-2016 at (13:00) hrs.
4. Delivery Time: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017
5. Tender Documents and details information are available at the Department of Finance, Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise, Nay Pyi Taw, during office hours commencing 30-12-2015 on payment of the Myanmar Kyat One Hundred Thousand (Kyat 100,000) per set.
6. Only bid from tenderer who has purchased tender document officially from Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise will be accepted for evaluation.

Managing Director  
Myanmar Petrochemical Enterprise  
Contact Phone no. 067-411108/411193

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## 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' to top \$1bn in ticket sales by Sunday

LOS ANGELES — The Force remains strong with the new "Star Wars" movie, which is on track to top \$1 billion in global ticket sales this weekend, making it the fastest-ever film to reach that level.

Walt Disney Co said in a statement on Saturday that "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" had generated box office receipts of \$890.3 million globally through 25 December and would pass \$1 billion this weekend.

The movie, the seventh installment in the newly rebooted Star Wars franchise, opened in some international markets on 16 December before rolling out in North America the following day. It is set to hit the \$1 billion mark no later than Sunday, its 12<sup>th</sup> day in theaters, according to

industry research firm Rentrak.

The current record holder for being the fastest to gross \$1 billion is Comcast Corp-owned Universal Pictures' "Jurassic World," which took 13 days after its release earlier this year, Rentrak said.

The new "Star Wars" movie had already topped "Jurassic World" for the biggest opening weekend ever with \$529 million globally.

Disney said "Star Wars" has rung up \$440.4 million in US and Canada ticket sales and \$449.9 million internationally, and it is set to open in China, the world's No. 2 movie market, on 9 January. China is crucial if Disney's first foray into the world of Jedi knights is to earn a spot among the top-grossing films of all time.

On Friday, "The Force Awakens" set a US and Canadian record for largest box office on Christmas day with \$49.3 million, Disney said. That topped the previous record of \$24.6 million set by "Sherlock Holmes" in 2009.

Disney purchased the "Star Wars" franchise from George Lucas' Lucasfilm in 2012 for \$4.05 billion, and has planned for a new trilogy of films as well as standalone installments through 2019.

The franchise will also be incorporated at US Disney theme parks, bringing to life the droids, spaceships and otherworldly creatures of the universe that Lucas created in 1977 and is set in a galaxy far, far away. —Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS

## Miley Cyrus releases new track

LOS ANGELES — Pop star Miley Cyrus has dropped new music in honour of the holidays, for her fans to enjoy. The track is titled as "My Sad Christmas Song". She posted a series of selfies with her pets on Instagram while wearing an array of Christmas sweaters, reported Ace-showbiz. The singer, 23, had hit the road with several of her musician friends back in November and performed eight shows around the country. —PTI

## Miss Universe Pia Wurtzbach sends love to Miss Colombia



PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Miss Universe Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach in a touching message, shared kind words for Miss Colombia Ariadna Gutierrez, who was wrongly crowned at the glitzy beauty pageant's 20 December ceremony. Wurtzbach, 26, commended the runner-up on Instagram.

"To Ariadna, you are an amazing woman and we are now bonded together forever by a unique experience. In the last 3 weeks we were together, I saw how strong and beautiful you are inside and out. "You represented your country with honour and I know how proud everyone must be of you. Fate has a plan for you, and I'm excited to see what's ahead," Wurtzbach wrote. She also posted a picture of herself on Miss Universe Instagram account to thank several people. "Wow. Words can't describe how grateful I am for this. It was quite a journey getting here with 3 attempts at winning Miss Philippines. Now, I finally got the best Christmas gift ever and not just for me, for my country. I'd like to say thank you to everyone who believed in my potential and those who supported me from the beginning. To everyone who voted for me, especially to my fellow countrymen, thank you. —PTI

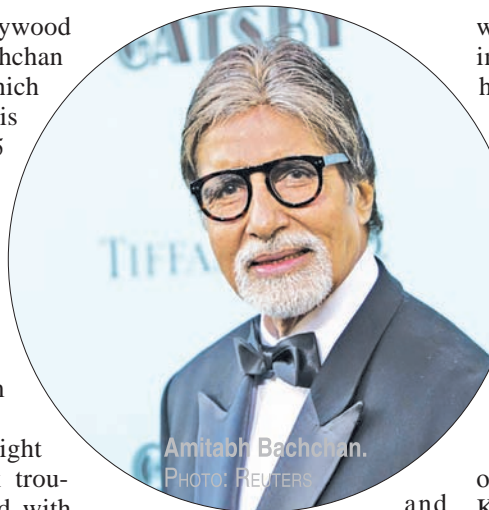
## Ready to accept new challenging roles: Amitabh Bachchan

KOLKATA — Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan is ready to play roles, which he has not done yet in his career spanning over 45 years.

"I would love to do roles that I have not done. I will accept this as a challenge," Bachchan said at the pre-release press conference for his upcoming film Wazir.

Bachchan, clad in a light brown jacket and black trousers, said he had worked with actors of his time like Shashi Kapoor, Dharmendra and Vinod Khanna among others.

"But working with new generation actors and directors is definitely a learning experience



Amitabh Bachchan. PHOTO: REUTERS

and which I love to do," he said.

"I consider myself fortunate to act with young actors and acting with them makes me learn a lot. I am fortunate to get

work and hope to get them. The industry has tolerated me a lot," he said.

The younger generation has a different way of thinking with a different viewpoint, Bachchan said.

Wazir, produced by Vidhu Vinod Chopra and directed by Bijoy Nambiar, has a cast comprising Big B, Farhan Akhtar, Aditi Rao Hydari and Neil Nitin Mukesh.

Asked to comment on various actors like SRK and Aamir Khan speaking on social issues and then getting into controversy, Bachchan said, "We are the same people like before. Now I am involved with many social causes, which I will like to keep it to myself. —PTI

## Jennifer Lawrence calls Joy director a 'mad-scientist genius'

LONDON — Actress Jennifer Lawrence says her filmmaker David O Russell, who has directed her in "Joy", is a mad-scientist genius.

After winning an Oscar for "Silver Linings Playbook" and being nominated the next year for "American Hustle", Lawrence has reunited with filmmaker Russell for a third time on the biopic "Joy", reported Contactmusic.

"It's fascinating and terri-

fyng working for him because he's a mad-scientist genius. I always see the wide eyes of people who've never worked with him before."

"Working on his sets is like the Olympics of acting. Everything moves so fast. It's like watching someone do a giant abstract painting or sculpture and you go, 'Where is this going?' And then all of a sudden you're like, 'Oh, it's a pe-gasus. —PTI



Jennifer Lawrence. PHOTO: REUTERS

**Asleep in Jesus  
Saw Lambert (74)**

**Retired High School Principal**

Son of (Stephen Whoi Taik- Naw Ohn Thin) of No. 4/1039, Htaw Mwi Bar Qt, Hpa an, Son in law of (Dr Saw Aye Tan- Dr Naw Saw Khin), beloved husband of Naw Htay Htay, father of Naw Thanomoo, Saw Doe Soe, Naw Eimar Lin, brother of Naw Celia, (Saw Robert)- Naw Sein Nu, Naw Zenobia, Naw Hannah - Saw Samuel Hlaing, Coreen Hudson- Aubrey Hudson (Australia), had expired on 22-12-2015 (Tuesday) at 3:15 am, and funeral service was held at St. Peter's Cathedral on 24-12-2015 (Thursday) at 10 am before burial.

**Bereaved Family**



**Entertainment Channel**

(28-12-2015, Monday)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>6:00 am</b><br>• Alinka Wut Yee Music Troupe | <b>8:35 am</b><br>• Golden Music of Old Stars  |
| <b>6:20 am</b><br>• Pyi Thu Ni Ti               | <b>8:50 am</b><br>• Myanmar Video              |
| <b>6:40 am</b><br>• Fashion Show                | <b>9:55 am</b><br>• Musical Programme          |
| <b>6:50 am</b><br>• Musical Programme           | <b>10:05 am</b><br>• ASEAN Cultural Show China |
| <b>7:50 am</b><br>• TV Drama Series             | <b>10:20 am</b><br>• Myanmar Video             |



**News Channel in Brief**

(28-12-2015, Monday)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>6:00 am</b><br>• Paritta By Hilly Region Missionary Sayadaw | <b>3:35 pm</b><br>• People's Talk  |
| <b>7:35 am</b><br>• People's Talks                             | <b>5:15 pm</b><br>• Documentary (Colour of ASEAN (4)) (Cambodia & Myanmar) |
| <b>8:35 am</b><br>• Documentary (Women in Myanmar Society)     | <b>5:35 pm</b><br>• Socio Economic Scenes                                  |
| <b>9:35 am</b><br>• Documentary (ASEAN)                        | <b>6:35 pm</b><br>• Documentary  |
| <b>9:55 am</b><br>• Documentary                                | <b>6:45 pm</b><br>• Documentary  |
| <b>10:35 am</b><br>• Weekly Entertainment                      | <b>7:15 pm</b><br>• TV Drama Series  |
| <b>11:15 am</b><br>• Documentary                               | <b>8:00 pm</b><br>• News/International Weather Report                      |
| <b>11:35 am</b><br>• MRTV's Youth Programme                    | <b>8:35 pm</b><br>• Documentary (Thilawa SEZ)                              |
| <b>12:35 pm</b><br>• TV Drama Series                           | <b>9:00 pm</b><br>• News   |
| <b>1:20 pm</b><br>• Tasty Trip                                 |  |
| <b>1:50 pm</b><br>• Gitadagale Phwintbarohn                    |  |

**Note/ Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)**

# French-style township in SW China draws cosers and runners

BEIJING — On Saturday, a cosplay show held in a French-style township named Bailu in Pengzhou, Chengdu, saw dozens of people dressed as characters from all lifes on the pop-culture fantasy.

The cosplay participants also acted as cheerleaders for a small marathon race taking place around the same time.

Lingche, president of T. vof, a cosplay society in Chengdu, said her society organised the show in Bailu to create more opportunities for members to experience the charm of cosplay.

Qingmu, a cosplay participant, said he had a lot of fun during the activity. "Bailu is so beautiful, and surrounded by green hills. Playing cosplay at the French-style Township is a brand new experience for us,"



**Cosers show up at the Bailu township in Pengzhou, Chengdu, Sichuan Province on 26 December. PHOTO: XINHUA**

Qingmu said.

A marathon runner surnamed Zhang said she was amazed by the cosplay cheerleaders.

"I have participated in many marathon races, but this is the first time

to see people dressed in cosplay cheering for us," she said. Bailu is an old town in the northwest of the Chengdu plain where French missionaries came more than 100 year ago and built a range of

French-style buildings. The town was severely struck by an 8.0 magnitude earthquake in 2008. After the earthquake, the local government rebuilt it into a complete French-style town.—Xinhua

# Ex-soccer player turns cafe owner to encourage customers' dreams

SAPPORO — Haruyuki Ogawa achieved his dream of becoming a professional soccer player despite having hardly played the sport until age 22.

His life as an athlete, however, lasted less than a year. But he soon decided to follow another dream: to open a cafe, despite little knowledge of cooking.

Ogawa, 35, became interested in soccer while watching the 2002 World Cup soccer finals co-hosted by Japan and South Korea.

He first started practicing the basics in a park.

Continuing his training with a local team in Sasebo in southwestern Japan's Nagasaki Prefecture and an amateur team of the J-League club Urawa Reds in his native Saitama Prefecture, he began aspiring to reach the professional ranks.

In 2005, Ogawa went to Argentina to continue his training, sometimes struggling to communicate in Spanish and adapt to a different cultural environment.

His dream came true in June 2007 when he became a professional as a member of Cambaceres, a

third-tier team in the country.

However, Ogawa did not get a chance to play in an official game and retired from professional soccer in March 2008.

After he came back to Japan, he decided to take a completely new path: to learn how to cook at a cafe in Tokyo for 10 months.

Finally in June 2009, the former soccer player opened a cafe in Sapporo in the northernmost prefecture of Hokkaido with wife Namiko, 30, a Sapporo native.

At the cafe, named "amor," Ogawa mainly

serves waffles and fried chicken. He has also acquired the skill of "latte art," which is a method of drawing patterns on the surface of a latte by pouring steamed milk, and he can now draw more than 30 patterns.

Being a hard worker, Ogawa also encourages people who visit his cafe to "move a step forward with courage to open the door to a possibility."

"I will make more efforts to make customers smile, and make this cafe a place where they feel like coming home," said Ogawa.—Kyodo News



**Myanmar International**

(28-12-2015 07:00 am~ 29-12-2015 07:00 am) MST

**Today Fresh**

- 07:03 Am News
- 07:26 Am Myanmar Delicate Artistic Creations- Gem Stone Painting
- 07:46 Am "Moe Hnyin Than Buddha", The Unique Pagoda In Monywa
- 08:03 Am News

- 08:26 Am Back To A Paradise (Ep-1)
- 09:03 Am News
- 09:26 Am Yangon Markets: Nyaung Pin Lay Market
- 09:33 Am Myanmar Traditional Instruments - Myanma Harp (Episode-2)
- 10:03 Am News
- 10:26 Am A Visit to Htam Hsan Cave: A Miraculous Place
- 10:54 Am Talented Musicians
- (11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Sunday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - TodayRepeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

**Prime Time**

- 07:03 Pm News
- 07:26 Pm Food Trip (Ep-5) (Part-2)
- 07:53 Pm Porcelain and Glass
- 08:03 Pm News
- 08:26 Pm Taste Of Myanmar (Rice Salad with Vegetables)
- 08:45 Pm Chef Life "Thit Htoo"
- (09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - TodayRepeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Sunday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - TodayRepeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
- (For Detailed Schedule - www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

# Boxing Day blues for Leicester, United, Arsenal

LONDON — Leicester City were given a reality check when the unlikely leaders lost 1-0 at Liverpool on Saturday while Manchester United slumped to a third straight Premier League defeat to pile the pressure on Louis van Gaal.

Arsenal wasted a Boxing Day opportunity to knock Leicester off the top of the table when they were out-thought, out-muscled and outplayed as Shane Long scored twice in a shock 4-0 romp for mid-table Southampton. Christian Benteke's second-half goal sealed the points at Anfield as Leicester were handed their first league defeat since September, and only their second of the season.

Manchester City, in third place, crushed lowly Sunderland 4-1 but suffered a blow when captain Vincent Kompany limped off with a calf injury, having come on as a substitute following an eight-match absence. Tottenham Hotspur consolidated fourth spot as Harry Kane netted twice in a 3-0 home victory over Norwich City to take his league tally for the calendar year to 27, a club record. Leicester, who failed to score for the first time this season, have 38 points from 18 matches with Arsenal on 36, Manchester City 35 and Tottenham 32.

All eyes were on United manager Van Gaal in the first game of a hectic holiday period



Stoke's Philipp Wollscheid in action with Manchester United's Wayne Rooney.  
PHOTO: REUTERS

and mid-table Stoke won 2-0 at the Britannia Stadium.

Goals from forwards Bojan Krkic and Marko Arnautovic left United in sixth place as they lost four consecutive matches in all competitions in a single season for the first time since 1961.

Van Gaal left out captain Wayne Rooney for tactical reasons and by the time the England striker was introduced as a second-half substitute, United were already in deep trouble.

The frosty Dutchman hinted later his days in the Old Trafford hot seat might be numbered and said his players had "not dared to play" in the first half.

"The club doesn't have to fire or sack me, sometimes I do it by myself," he told reporters.

Asked whether he would be in charge of United's home match with Chelsea on Monday, he said: "We will have to wait and see".

Leicester topped the table at Christmas, a year after being rooted to the bottom, but they were not at their best against eighth-placed Liverpool who had gone four matches without a win. Benteke struck in the 63<sup>rd</sup> minute, steering in Roberto Firmino's pull-back.

"We started too late to play our football," said Leicester manager Claudio Ranieri. "Now we have to restart."

Southampton took a 19<sup>th</sup>-minute lead against Arsenal when Curacao defender Cuco Martina

delivered a majestic strike from 25 metres, the ball starting well outside the right post and curving perfectly before nestling in the bottom corner of the net. Long then beat keeper Petr Cech from eight metres in the 55<sup>th</sup> minute. Captain Jose Fonte added the third goal with a towering close-range header from Ryan Bertrand's right-wing corner before Long made it 4-0 in stoppage time.

Guus Hiddink's second spell as Chelsea's interim manager began with a 2-2 draw at home to Watford. Brazilian Oscar spurned the chance to secure victory when he missed a late penalty as the champions remained sixth from bottom. Spain striker Diego Costa scored twice but Watford had led 2-1 through Troy Deeney's first-half penalty and Odion Ighalo's deflected shot in the 56<sup>th</sup> minute.

Oscar's 80<sup>th</sup>-minute blunder means Chelsea are two points above the relegation zone. Crystal Palace drew 0-0 at Bournemouth, moving above Manchester United into fifth spot. Bottom club Aston Villa drew 1-1 at home to West Ham United thanks to Jordan Ayew's penalty, leaving manager Remi Garde still awaiting a first win since taking over from Tim Sherwood. Managerless Swansea City won for the first time since October, Ki Sung-yeung scoring the only goal against visiting West Bromwich Albion.—Reuters

## Spieth will find it tough to match 2015 feats: McIlroy

LONDON — Rory McIlroy has warned rival Jordan Spieth that "self-inflicted pressure" will make it difficult for the American to follow up his blockbuster 2015 season with an equally successful 2016 campaign.

World number three McIlroy knows how tough it is to maintain peak form for a sustained spell.

The Northern Irishman won two majors in 2014 and was considered the man to beat in 2015, only to get derailed by a slowish start to the season at the big tournaments and an ankle injury that kept him out of the British Open in July.

Spieth took over as world number one, producing a magnificent season as he captured the US Masters and US Open titles and came perilously

close to winning the British Open and US PGA Championship.

"It will feel completely different for Jordan (in 2016)," McIlroy told the Daily Telegraph. "If you look at the stats at how those who have had a double-major season have performed the next year ... it's hard to back up."

"There's so much expectation, so much attention and focus. And I think it is more self-inflicted pressure really as your expectations are so high."

McIlroy recalled that 12 months ago he was preparing for 2015 with high expectations of adding to his tally of four major victories.

"This time last year mine were through the roof coming off a great season, winning those back-to-back majors and although I started well I never

felt I really got into my stride with the injuries and stuff," he said.

McIlroy ended 2015 on a high note, winning the European Tour's season-ending event in Dubai where he felt he finally got the "speed" back in his swing.

He has vowed to be tournament-ready by the time the Masters comes around in April.

"It just sort of all came together in Dubai and it makes me excited about next year," said McIlroy.

"I'm not saying I was undercooked this year but I definitely won't be next year. I'm playing (the Northern Trust Open at) Riviera (in California) for the first time and with the WGC-Matchplay moving dates, Augusta will be my eighth event."—Reuters

## Man City victory overshadowed by Kompany injury

LONDON — Manchester City crushed Sunderland 4-1 but their Premier League title aspirations suffered a major blow as skipper and defensive lynch-pin Vincent Kompany hobbled off with a calf injury.

The Belgian had come on as a second-half substitute for Nicolas Otamendi, his first appearance after an eight-game spell on the sidelines with a similar injury, but lasted only eight minutes.

"Yes, it is a calf. Nobody understands (how it happened)," City boss Manuel Pellegrini said. "He had a good warm-up, he was working during the week with normality."

"It is difficult to understand. The most important thing is to understand why this happens. That is the most important to focus on now." Kompany's importance to City is such that even an impressive display was overshadowed by the prospect of him spending more time in the treatment room.

Raheem Sterling gave City the lead with a header from Kevin

de Bruyne's cross before Yaya Toure's low drive and another header from Wilfried Bony made it 3-0 before halftime.

The influential De Bruyne added a fourth with a cool finish before Fabio Borini's consolation for a Sunderland side who have conceded more goals (37) than any other top-flight team.

Pellegrini said his team, who suffered a fifth defeat of the season against title rivals Arsenal on Monday, should have scored more goals.

"I don't think the score reflected the difference between the two teams," he said.

"I am happy that the performance was very good, we played attacking football, and I am happy with the individual performances. The only pity was Vincent Kompany's injury." City face Leicester City, the surprise Christmas leaders, on Monday when they will have a chance to climb above the Foxes, having moved to within three points of them on Saturday.—Reuters