

President urges leaders of armed ethnic groups to sign ceasefire agreement on Union Day



President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with leaders of 12 armed ethnic groups at Myanmar International Convention Centre-II.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan — President U Thein Sein urged leaders of the 12 armed ethnic groups who attended the 67th Anniversary Independence Day Ceremony and Grand Military Review Parade to make concerted

efforts to sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement on the next coming Union Day which falls on 12 February at his meeting with them on Monday at Myanmar International Convention Centre (2) in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, the president said he was glad to learn the ethnic leaders attended the ceremony and the parade with all seriousness and the Independence Day is concerned with all national people and ethnic

national races, but it has been 53 years since the ceremony was held in a grand scale.

As the parade was a tradition of the democratic system adopted after independence was regained in

1948, it has been revived in a grand scale during the term of the government as a symbol of the adoption of a democratic system again, according to the president, who also thanked the ethnic leaders for attending the

ceremony and the parade by trusting him.

The president also pointed out that internal peace plays a major role in democratic transition and the only means to restore (See page 3)

Prisoners of conscience affairs committee reconstituted

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan — “The committee for scrutinizing the remaining prisoners of conscience” formed under Notification No. (43/2013) of the President Office dated 8 May 2013 has been reconstituted as “the prisoners of conscience affairs committee” with 28 members under Notification No. (18/2015) of the President Office dated 5 January 2015 with the aim of promptly carrying out prisoners of conscience affairs at the grassroots level.

Health Ministry holds five-day 43rd Myanmar Health Research Congress

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 5 Jan — The Ministry of Health is holding its 43rd Myanmar Health Research Congress from 5 to 9 January at the Department of Medical Research (Lower Myanmar), aiming at offering applicable research results to end-users via paper-reading sessions.

More than 100 papers are scheduled to be presented in the sessions and 32 papers are being displayed

as posters at the five-day congress. The organizing body has arranged to conduct 11 symposia and two scientific talks on current health problems during the congress.

“The real applicability of research findings is essential in achieving cost effectiveness and equal access to public health,” said Deputy Health Minister Dr Win Myint at the (See page 2)

150 die, 800 injured in 400 traffic accidents on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway in 2014

YANGON, 5 Jan — More than 400 vehicle crashes on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway in 2014 left 150 dead and more than 800 injured, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

The number of traffic accidents and fatalities on the road in 2014 topped the numbers in 2013 when 103 people died and 622 were hurt in 259 accidents.

The number of vehicles using the expressway in 2014 reached more than

9.5 million in 2014, more nearly triple the 3.7 million in 2013.

The rise in the number of traffic accidents outstripped the rise in the number of road users in 2014, but the number of deaths and injuries was lower in proportion to the number of accidents in 2014 than in 2013, an official of the Ministry of Construction said.

The Ministry of Construction invited expressions of interest from local and

foreign companies last week for a project to upgrade the 589-kilometer (366-mile) highway under a build-operate-transfer-system.

The ministry has urged investors to submit interest forms by Jan. 30 and the winning bidder will be required to extend the existing four-lane road to an eight-lane road, install CCTV cameras, lay guard rail and concrete barriers and construct roadside fencing.

GNLM



Skilled workers and engineers upgrading Yangon-Mandalay Expressway. CONSTRUCTION MINISTRY

INSIDE

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets armed ethnic groups, border guard forces and people militia

PAGE-3

Committee for implementing Latpadaungtaung copper mine investigation report calls on people for being aware of instigations not to happen undesirable accidents

PAGE-3

Breathing with others' noses

PAGE-8

Union Home Affairs Minister holds talks with EU Ambassador

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko received Ambassador of the European Union Office in Yangon Mr Roland Kobia at the ministry, here, on Monday morning to hold talks on cooperation matters.

Also present at the call were officials of the Myanmar Police Force.

MNA



Well-wishers donate new building for Sangha to Masoeyein Taikthit monastery in Zabuthiri Tsp

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—A ceremony to share merits for construction of Dhamma Mudita Yaungchi building was held at Pasoeysin Taikthit monastery in Thabyegon Ward, Zabuthiri Township,

on 4 January.

Wellwisher U Maung Maung Lay, wife Daw Myint Myint Khaing and family donated offertories to 35 newly-ordained monks.

Union Minister for Re-

ligious Affairs U Soe Win and wife, well-wishers and officials of the ministry offered provisions to members of the Sangha. The well-wisher family donated the new building for Sang-

ha to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Aggadhama of Masoeyein Taikthit monastery.—MNA

Deputy Information Minister receives THAICOM Public Co., Ltd. officials



Deputy Minister for Information U Pike Htway receives Mr Suparoek Santawee of THAICOM Public Company Ltd.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan—A delegation led by Mr Suparoek Santawee of THAICOM Public Company Ltd called on Deputy Minister for Information U

Pike Htway at the ministry, here, on Monday.

They discussed broadcast of TV, and broadcasting machinery for new channels to be extended by

MRTV. It was also attended by Director-General U Tint Swe of Myanma Radio and Television, the chief engineer, deputy chief engineer and officials.—MNA



Participants of Myanmar Health Research Congress view round documentary photos and research notes at the exhibition.—PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Announcement for 2015 general elections

1. The general elections will be held in late October/early November 2015.
2. A correct and accurate voter list needs to successfully hold the elections.
3. The Union Election Commission is compiling the basic voter list for the 2015 general elections.
4. Every citizen has rights to cast vote for elections. Not to lose the rights, they have to be included in the voter list. Citizens should check voter lists for casting votes.
5. Citizens may request the respective sub-commission to insert their names into the voter list through form No 3 if their names are not included in the voter list. They may request to correct the wrong facts through form No 4-C. They may object participation of those who do not have rights to cast votes, through form No 4.
6. When you settled from one township to another, if you do not change household form 66/6, your name will include in voter list of previous township.

Myanmar hands over ASEAN Chairmanship to Malaysia

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan — A handing over of ASEAN Chairmanship from Myanmar to Malaysian was held at Hotel Max in Nay Pyi Taw on 5 January 2015. Myanmar took the ASEAN chairmanship from 1st January to 31st December 2014. The ceremony was attended by U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs, deputy ministers, directors-general including senior officers from three pillars of ASEAN Community in Myanmar, ambassadors and heads of mission of ASEAN member states and diplomats.

During the ceremony, the Union Minister delivered a keynote address. Afterwards, U Aung Lynn, Myanmar SOM leader and director-general also made the handing over speech and handed over ASEAN Chairmanship and hand-

ing over notes to Mr Mohd Haniff Abdul Rahman, Ambassador designate, as incoming chair for ASEAN

for 2015. Then, ambassador designate made an acceptance speech followed by dinner.—MNA



U Aung Lynn, director-general of Ministry of Foreign Affairs hands over ASEAN Chairmanship and notes to Mr Mohd Haniff Abdul Rahman, Ambassador designate of Malaysia.—MNA

Health Ministry holds ...

(from page 1)

opening ceremony, urging researchers to accelerate their studies in cooperation with international ones to reduce disease outbreaks and the mortality rate in the country.

He said the government places emphasis on improving evidence-based traditional medicine to use widely in clinical practices, including the distribution of research ethics to private

medical practitioners.

A research agenda is urgently needed to improve three kinds of current health research — basic health research, applied health research and health system research, the deputy health minister said.

Best paper, poster and youth researcher awards will be presented on the last day of the Myanmar Health Research Congress.

At the 42nd Congress

in 2014, 97 papers were read in the sessions, 33 posters were displayed and nine symposia were conducted by the health ministry.—GNLMBest paper, poster and youth researcher awards will be presented on the last day of the Myanmar Health Research Congress.

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NATIONAL

President urges leaders . . .

(from page 1)

peace is the political dialogue as only sound political agreements can guarantee sustainable peace, adding it is necessary to end the armed conflicts of 60 years so that the political dialogue can be held.

If armed conflicts cannot be controlled while the political dialogue is going on, the political dialogue will be dragged back, the president continued, urging the ethnic leaders to form monitoring teams to end and prevent armed conflicts.

The president said it is necessary to lay a firm foundation for the peace process introduced by the incumbent government so future governments can continue to implement it, urging the ethnic leaders to help to successfully hold free and fair elections in 2015 in their areas as it is one of the important factors for the democratic transition of Myanmar.

The president also promised to spend state budget on the requirements of local people after the ceasefire.

After the president's speech, Chairman of the Karen National Union General Mutu Sae Po said he was proud the ethnic leaders were invited to the ceremony and the parade, adding that the ceasefire agreement is essential for peace and an end to armed conflicts while it is necessary to solve political issues through dialogues.

Only when political solutions have been sought, will the federal system based on democratic rule be built, the KNU chairman said. Leaders of other ethnic armed groups also took part in the discussions on a nationwide ceasefire.

After the discussions, the president thanked the ethnic leaders for their frank discussions, saying that international peace is essential to fulfill the two wishes of the people, stability and socioeconomic development.

It is also necessary for all to find a common ground and cooperate while recognizing the differences as it is impossible to pressure others for one's wish and it has been clear to all that no one wins in armed conflicts, the president said, urging the ethnic leaders to make concerted efforts to sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement on Union

Day, 12 February.

Present at the meeting were Union Ministers U Soe Thane, U Aung Min, Lt-Gen Thet Naing Win, U Ohn Myint, U Khin Maung Soe, U Khin Yi, U Zeyar Aung, U Win Myint, U Than Htay, U Ye Htut, Vice Chairman of the Union Peace-making Work Committee U Thein Zaw and leaders of armed ethnic groups including KNU Chairman General Mutu Sae Po, Central Committee Member of Special Region-2 (UWSA-2) U Pao Yu Yi, Vice Chairman of Shan State (East) Special Region-4 (NDAA) U San Pae, KNU/KNLA(PC) Ad-

utant-General and Quartermaster-General Maj-Gen Saw Yin Nu, Deputy Chief of Staff of DKBA Maj-Gen Saw Moshe, Central Committee Member of NMSP Naing Han Thar-Bon Khaing, Chairman of ABSDF Yebaw Than Khe, Patron of SSPP/SSA U Hsay Htin, RCSS/SSA Central Committee Member Col Sai Hla, ALP Central Executive Committee Member Daw Saw Mya Yazar Lin, PNLO Patron Khun Okkar, NSCN (K) Central Committee Member U En Kam and responsible persons from Myanmar Peace Council.

MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets armed ethnic groups, border guard forces and people militia

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan — Being a union made up of states and regions, all national races are responsible to make Myanmar a prestigious country among world's nation, said Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at a meeting with ethnic armed groups who attended the 67th Anniversary Independence Day Ceremony and Grand Military Review Parade at Bayintnaung Yeiktha in Nay Pyi Taw on Monday morning, adding that all are required to move forward with the multi-party democracy system which has been chosen not by the defence services but by the people.

The senior general also told them that those who do not move forward with the democratic system will be left behind and legal action will be taken against those who do not accept the system and lag behind others, saying that as they have known the objectives and aims of way forward, they should go on with correct

mentality.

At the meeting, the senior general cordially greeted the ethnic armed groups, saying that national races are required to avoid deeds that will harm one another as the country is made up of different national races who are enjoying equal rights.

In conclusion, the senior general said that the Tatmadaw has neither launched military operations nor attacked recognized military posts since the start of the peace process.

Present at the meeting were Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and KNU Chairman Saw Mutu Sae Po, Central Committee Member of Special Region-2 (UWSA-2) U Pao Yu Yi, Vice Chairman of Shan State (East) Special Region-4 (NDAA) U San Pae, Saw Yin Nu of KNU/KNLA(PC), Saw Moshe of



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing poses for documentary photo with leaders of armed ethnic groups.—MYAWADY

of DKBA, Central Committee Member of NMSP Naing Han Thar Bon Khaing, Chairman of ABSDF U Than Khe, Patron of SSPP/SSA U Hsay Htin, RCSS/SSA Central Committee Member U Sai Hla, ALP Central Executive Committee Member Daw Saw Mya Yazar Lin, PNLO Patron Khun Okkar and NSCN (K) Central Committee Member U En Kam

In the afternoon, the senior general met with

honorary officers from border guard forces and people's militia forces who attended the ceremony and the parade at the same venue.

At the meeting, the senior general said that he was proud of border guard forces and people's militia force who attended the ceremony and parade which were held in a grand scale for the first time in over 50 years for armed forces are defence organizations, government

employees, representatives of states and regions and social organizations to pay respect to the head of state.

Present at the meeting were Vice-Senior General Soe Win, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, four honorary officers from border guard forces and 26 officers from people militia forces from the Northeast Command, Eastern Command, Southeast Command and Southern Command.

Earlier in the morning, the senior general received Ambassador of France to Myanmar HE Mr Thierry Mathou and Military Attaché Lt-Col Thierry Poignant in Nay Pyi Taw and held discussions on constitutional amendment and the peace process.

The French ambassador said that the grand military review parade showed the respect and admiration of armed forces for the government.—Myawady

Committee for implementing Latpadaungtaung copper mine investigation report calls on people for being aware of instigations to prevent undesirable accidents

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan — The committee which implements the report of the investigation commission for Latpadaungtaung Copper Mine Project released a statement on Monday, urging the people to be on alert to instigations in order to prevent undesirable incidents.

The Latpadaungtaung Copper Mine project is a foreign investment one and the project benefits the State, the local people and future generations. The project is considered as a model and long-term project meeting the international standard as success of the project would help

the country gain confidence from international investors, the statement said.

The statement also said that while majority of the local people in the project area are hoping to launch the production of the copper mine project as soon as possible and to get job opportunities, a handful

of people who are on utter destructive course with the project have confused with the project and have created hindrances to systematic implementation of the project due to instigators.

As the area has seen development and improvements in education, health, transportation, power sup-

ply, safe drinking water supply and social sectors than other areas, majority of local people have come to understand the project and drew compensation and discount salaries satisfactorily while they are waiting for jobs, the statement said.

Over 1990 people have found jobs at the project currently and when the project launches its production, it can create further about 1,900 job opportunities for local people, according to the statement.

Besides, Nyaungpingyi River Water Pumping station has been constructed at a cost of more than K366 million in the area and it can irrigate about 2,400 acres.

Draft of the Environment and Social Impact Assessment- ESIA report for the project is available in English and Myanmar languages on the website of the Ministry of Forestry and Environmental Conservation, according to the statement.

GNLM

Enthusiasts take part in chess contest in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 5 Jan—Mandalay Region Chess Subcommittee and San-Par-Be chess club of Amrapura Township jointly organized the Independence Day commemorative chess contest at the office near Bahtoo Gymnasium from 1 to 4 January.

Altogether 30 contestants from chess clubs participated in the contest.

Officials presented the first prize to Myo Win Zaw of Chanmyathazi Township, Aung Lwin Soe of San-Par-Be chess club and Zaw Lin of Shwe Tharaphu chess club.—*Tin Maung (Mandalay)*



Students join School Family Day of Chin State for 2014-15 academic year



HAKA, 5 Jan — The school family day for 2014-15 academic year of Chin State was held at Bo Taik Chun Hall of No 1 Basic Education High School in Haka, Chin State, on 3 January.

Chief Minister of the state U Hong Ngai delivered an address, saying that education sector plays a key role in development of human resources.

Chin State Education Officer Daw Win Kyi explained the purpose of organizing the school family day of Chin State.

The chief minister, Speaker of Chin State High Court U Hau Khin Kham and officials presented outstanding education officers at district and township levels, outstanding students, schools with best pass rate and outstanding school heads. The chief minister formally opened the school family day ceremony and visited the booths in commemoration of the school family day. Students performed variety of dances.

Chin State Education Officer Daw Win Kyi explained the purpose of organizing the school family day of Chin State.

Chin State (IPRD)

Children of service personnel enjoy sports events

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Jan — Funfairs and sports contests in commemoration of the 67th Anniversary Independence Day

were held across the nation on 4 January.

Children of service personnel took part in the sports contests in

Wanatheikdi Ward, Zathuthiri Township, on 4 January.

Ko Pauk (Okkar Myay)



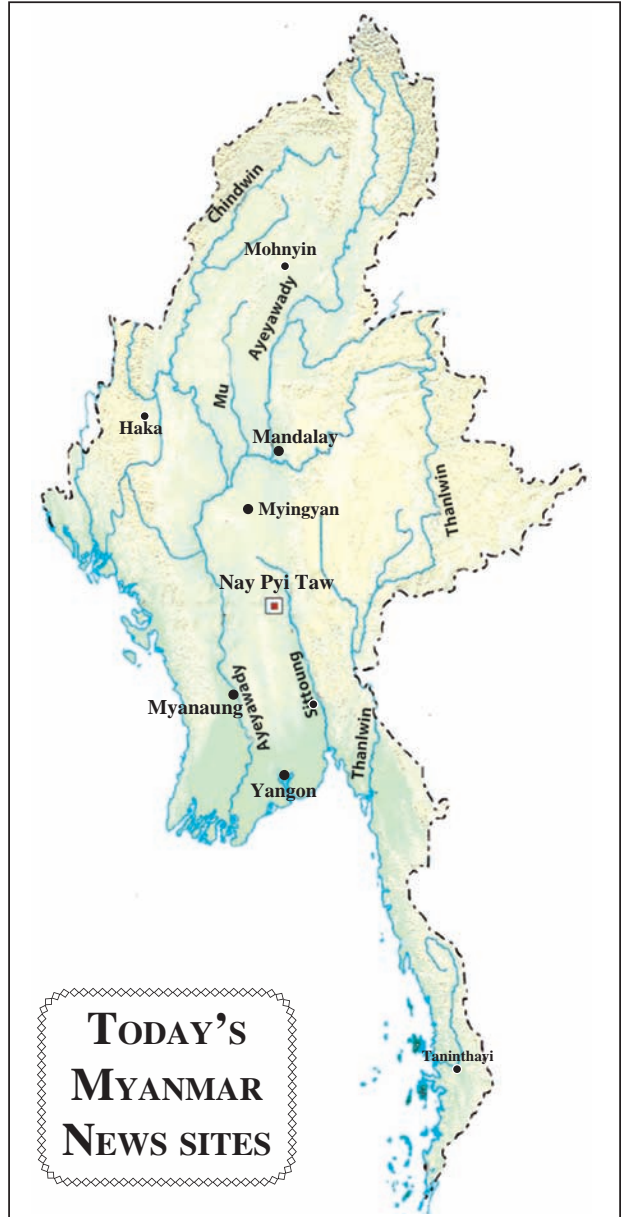
Kanbawza Bank Ltd recruits new staff for its branch in Natogyi

MYINGYAN, 5 Jan — As private bank branches will be opened in 2015 in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region, Kanbawza Bank Ltd made interviews with about 200 applicants for choosing staff.

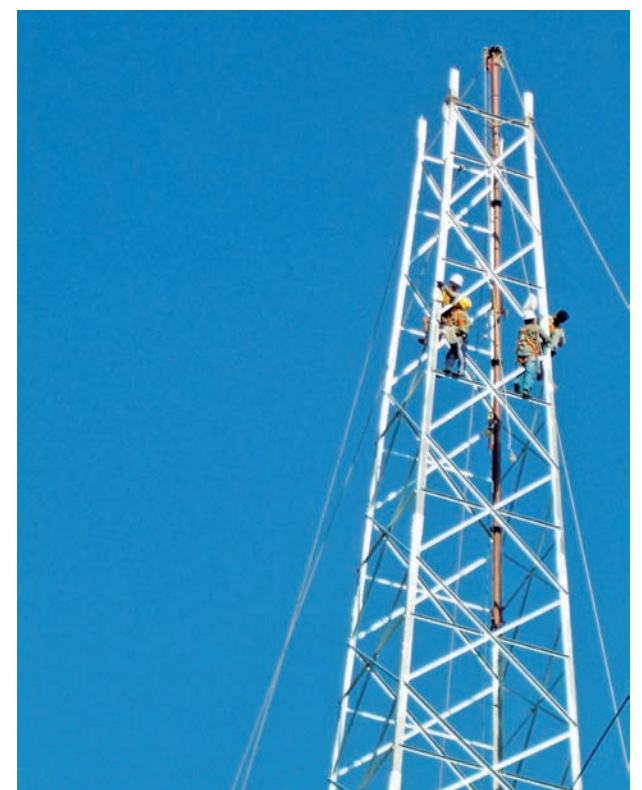
The bank branch recruited new staff for the banking services. Graduate youths and those who passed matriculation examination from Natogyi, Myingyan, Taungtha and PyinOoLwin townships joined the interviews for the bank branch.

Thanks to development of private companies in Natogyi Township, local people can grasp the job opportunities for their livelihoods.

Htay Myint Maung



Communication companies erect towers one after another in Natogyi



MYINGYAN, 5 Jan — (Myanmar) five towers, Yin Telenor (Myanmar) erected its seventh tower near Kyaungthit monastery in Ward 5 of Natogyi in Mandalay Region, on 1 January.

So far, Myanma Posts and Telecommunications has erected five communication towers, Telenor (Myanmar) seven towers, Ooredoo

(Myanmar) five towers, Yin Telenor (Myanmar) erected its seventh tower near Kyaungthit monastery in Ward 5 of Natogyi in Mandalay Region, on 1 January. The towers in Natogyi Township give better telecommunication services to the local people.

Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)

REGIONAL

Return to old party is to reunite royalists, Sihanoukists: Cambodian Prince Ranariddh



Cambodian Prince Norodom Ranariddh, son of late King Norodom Sihanouk, speaks at a Press conference in Phnom Penh on 5 Jan, 2015. Ranariddh said on Monday that his return to the Presidency of the royalist Funcinpec Party is to reunite the royalists and Sihanoukists, adding that the party will work closely with Prime Minister Hun Sen's ruling party.—XINHUA

PHNOM PENH, 5 Jan— Cambodian Prince Norodom Ranariddh, a son of late King Norodom Sihanouk, said on Monday that his return to be the president of the royalist Funcinpec Party is to reunite the royalists and Sihanoukists.

The prince also said that the party will work closely with Prime Minister Hun Sen's ruling party.

"My return to Funcinpec is a milestone, not only for myself, but also for the royalists and Sihanoukists," he said at a Press conference. "My big goal is to reunite the royalists and Sihanoukists, who have been split due to the party's internal rifts."

Ranariddh, who led Funcinpec to victory in the 1993 UN-run election, will be officially announced as the party's president again on 19 January, eight years after being ousted from the party following allegations that he embezzled funds from the sale of the party's headquarters.

The 71-year-old prince said Funcinpec would work closely with the ruling Cambodian People's Party

(CPP) to develop the nation and eliminate poverty.

"My father (late King Norodom Sihanouk) advised me to work together with the CPP led by Prime Minister Hun Sen to settle national issues, including poverty fight," he said. "The sustainability of the monarchy regime in Cambodia is currently supported by two parties, the CPP and the royalist Funcinpec."

He expressed his confidence that Funcinpec will win seats (in the 2018 general election), but cannot foresee how many seats it will get.

Ranariddh was former co-prime minister from 1993 to 1997 and ex-president of the National Assembly from 1998 to 2006. He is currently the head of the Supreme Privy Advisory Council to King

Norodom Sihamoni, his half-brother.

His return to the party came after his half-sister and party's current president Princess Norodom Arun Rasmey and party's secretary general Nhek Bun Chhay requested him to return to lead the party.

Funcinpec was founded in 1981 by late King Norodom Sihanouk. It was once the country's largest political party, but its popularity has gradually diminished from one mandate to another due to internal rifts and the party failed to win a single seat in the 2013 general election.

In the 2013 election, the CPP won 68 seats in the 123-seat parliament as the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party, led by Sam Rainsy, gained the remaining 55 seats.

Xinhua

Indonesia naval captain says may have located missing plane's tail section

PANGKALAN BUN, 5 Jan — An Indonesian naval patrol vessel found on Monday what the captain said could be the tail of a missing AirAsia jet, the section where the crucial black box voice and flight data recorders are located.

Ships and aircraft seeking debris and bodies from the Airbus A320-200 widened their search area to allow for currents eight days after Flight QZ8501 plunged into the water en route from Indonesia's second-biggest city Surabaya to Singapore with 162 people on board.

"We found what has a high probability of being the tail of the plane," Yayan Sofyan, captain of the patrol vessel, told reporters. However, the Indonesian search and rescue agency is yet to confirm the discovery.

Indonesia's meteorological agency has said seasonal tropical storms probably contributed to the 28 December crash and the weather has persistently hampered efforts to recover bodies and find the cockpit voice and flight data recorders that should explain why the plane crashed into the sea.

The main focus of the search is about 90 nautical miles off the coast of Borneo island, where five large objects believed to be parts of the plane — the largest

about 18 metres (59 feet) long — have been pinpointed in shallow waters by ships using sonar.

Peter Marosszky, a senior aviation research fellow at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, said the weather was squarely to blame for the delay in finding the black box recorders, which are designed to emit pings that can be detected by sonar for a month after a crash.

"The seas haven't been very friendly, but the black boxes have a 30-day life and they will be able to find them, particularly in the shallow waters," he said. "It's the weather that is causing the delay."

Indonesia AirAsia, which is 49 percent owned

by Malaysia-based budget carrier AirAsia, has come under pressure from authorities who have suspended its Surabaya-Singapore license, saying the carrier only had permission to fly the route on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

Flight QZ8501 took off on a Sunday.

It was not immediately clear what difference, if any, the day of the week had on the 28 December flight, and Djoko Murjatmodjo, acting director general of air transportation, made clear that the investigations of the route and the crash were separate.

"Please differentiate between the probe into flight licenses and the air

crash investigation," he said, adding, however, that any other airline that flew on a day it did not have permission to do so would have its license frozen.

"AirAsia is clearly wrong because they didn't fly at a time and schedule that was already determined," Murjatmodjo told reporters. "...we hope to finish investigation soon on whether anything went wrong."

A joint statement from Singapore's civil aviation authority and Changi Airport Group said that AirAsia had the necessary approvals to operate a daily flight between Surabaya and Singapore.

Nine ships from four countries have converged on the crash site area, with teams of divers including seven Russian experts standing ready, but strong winds and four-metre high waves have kept progress agonizingly slow.

Thirty-four bodies of the mostly Indonesian passengers and crew have so far been recovered, including some still strapped in their seats. Many more may be still trapped in the body of the aircraft.

The crash was the first fatal accident suffered by the AirAsia budget group, whose Indonesian affiliate flies from at least 15 destinations across the sprawling archipelago.—Reuters



The body of an AirAsia QZ8501 passenger, recovered from the Java Sea, is placed on a stretcher after it was transported by an Indonesia Search and Rescue helicopter at an airbase Pangkalan Bun, Central Kalimantan on 5 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

New Year flower arranging ceremony



Dressed in kimono, students of the Ikenobo school of Japanese flower arrangement participate in a New Year flower arranging ceremony in Kyoto, western Japan, on 5 Jan, 2015.—KYODO NEWS

India says 4 men on board Pakistani boat 'suspected terrorists'

NEW DELHI, 5 Jan — India Monday said that the four men who blew themselves up after their Pakistani-origin boat was intercepted by marine guards off the coast of the western state of Gujarat on New Year's eve were "suspected terrorists."

"The vessel had been under air surveillance for more than 12 hours. I think they were suspected terrorists as they committed suicide, a normal boat even carrying drugs can surrender," Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar told the media in the national capital.

Hailing the Indian coast guard for doing "the right job at the right time based

on intelligence inputs," the minister dismissed reports that the vessel was a fishing boat or a vessel which was used by smugglers.

"The location was not the normal sea route for fishing boats, even the smugglers normally take the busy route so that they can mingle with boats. This was an isolated location," the minister said, asking, "Why would smugglers commit suicide?"

India had on Friday claimed that its Coast Guard had intercepted the Pakistani boat off the coast of Gujarat on New Year's eve, but four men on board the vessel ignored warnings and blew themselves up.

Xinhua

First batch of Chinese-made locomotives delivered to Thailand

BANGKOK, 5 Jan — A couple of Chinese-made locomotives were delivered to Thailand on Sunday, confirmed officials of the State Railway of Thailand on Monday.

The two locomotives, shipped from southwest China to Laem Chabang port in Chonburi Province, were the first consignment of a fleet of 20 locomotives, the rest of which will be gradually shipped to the Thai railway firm.

The locomotives, manufactured by China's CSR Corp, were designed for cargo trains with an axle load of 20 tons and a maximum speed of 120 kilometres per hour, according to the SRT officials.

The CSR locomotives were purchased to replace the General Electric locomotives which have hauled Thai cargo trains since 1995. No other locomotives had been bought since.

Compared to the relatively modern CSR locomotives, the old GE locomotives have an axle load of 14 tons and a maximum speed of 100 kilometres per hour.

The other 18 new locomotives are yet to be delivered from Sichuan province in China where they are being manufactured by CSR Corp, the officials said.

In another development, China recently agreed to build a medium-

speed rail system for Thailand as part of a joint effort to promote land traffic throughout the Southeast Asian region.

The Chinese medium-speed rail project is designed to run from Yunnan Province in southern China to northeastern Thailand via northern Laos.

The rail system will pass Nong Khai Province in northeastern Thailand, from across the Lao capital of Vientiane, and Saraburi Province in the central region of Thailand with destinations in Bangkok and Maptaput port in the eastern part of the country.

The medium-speed train will not only carry passengers but also cargoes to Thailand which is joining an ASEAN Economic Community, scheduled to open later this year.

Thailand has planned to become core of the AEC bloc in following years, regarding land-based logistics, rail systems and road traffic linking the Southeast Asian country with its neighbour states including Cambodia, Myanmar, Malaysia and Laos.

Besides the expanding rail systems, six-lane motorways will be built to connect Kanchanaburi Province in western Thailand with Dawei special economic zone in southern Myanmar and to link eastern Thailand with north-west Cambodia, among others.—Xinhua

Rouhani urges end to Iran's isolation

DUBAI, 5 Jan — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani called for curbs on the state's involvement in business and an end to Teheran's international isolation on Sunday to help rescue an economy hurt by sanctions, corruption and mismanagement.

His appeal in a speech to 1,500 economists appeared to be critical of hardliners who oppose his efforts to deliver Iran from years of erratic economic management by the previous administration of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"Our economy will not prosper as long as it is monopolised (by the government). The economy must be rid of monopoly and see competition," he said.

"It must be freed of insider speculation, be transparent, all people must be aware of the statistics. If we can bring transparency to our economy, we can fight corruption."

He added: "Our political life has shown we can't have sustainable growth while we are isolated."

Rouhani, a pragmatist elected in 2013 on pledges to resolve a nuclear standoff with world powers and end crippling sanctions,

said he would like some economic reforms to be passed by referendum as opposed to the parliament, currently dominated by conservatives.

Powerful anti-Western hawks in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), who report to the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have been wary of the nuclear negotiations and some preside over companies whose grip on the economy had grown during sanctions.

Rouhani's call is in line with his preference for a greater public say on strategic matters, traditionally vested with Khamenei.

Last month, Rouhani presented a "cautious, tight" budget in response to falling oil prices, which have fallen to just above \$50 a barrel. Iran's budget ending March 2015 is based on a price of a \$100 a barrel.

Proposed spending for that same budget was 6 percent above the previous year, but this was a cut in real terms due to inflation of 20 percent. The government hopes to meet the deficit through more efficient taxation and non-oil exports.



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani addresses the 69th United Nations General Assembly at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on 25 Sept, 2014.—REUTERS

"As the enforcer of our constitution, I would like, even for once, to see conditions ripe to implement a tenet of the common law calling for major issues — economic, social, political and cultural — to be put to public referendum rather than parliamentary vote," the president said to applause. "Some 36 years have passed now and this article has not been enforced even once."

Rouhani appealed to the economists for solutions on how to improve the state's handling of subsidies, taxes, debt and the financial system.

He also suggested he supported a resolution passed by parliament in December to tax organizations

overseen by Khamenei and the armed forces, an unusual move by the legislature to regulate areas dominated by the most powerful figures in the country.

"We are trying to tax everyone across the board, but as soon as we touch this or that institution, they make such a stink about it," Rouhani said, apparently referring to the resolution, which has been opposed by Islamic hardliners.

"Of course this government will do what it deems in people's interest," he said. He added without elaborating: "Just be aware that in some cases, the domestic political lobby is very strong, very strong, more than you think."

Reuters

Traffic death toll in Japan down for 14th year in row

TOKYO, 5 Jan — Japan's traffic death toll in 2014 declined for the 14th consecutive year, down 5.9 percent from the previous year to 4,113, the National Police Agency said on Monday.

Though the number of fatalities of elderly people 65 or older resulting from traffic accidents was down 4.8 percent at 2,193, it accounted for 53.3 percent of the total deaths, the highest since such data

became available in 1967, according to the agency.

"There is a high probability of accidents involving the elderly resulting in death," an agency official said, adding the police will strength-

en measures specifically aimed at reducing such accidents.

The total traffic deaths were the third lowest since comparable data became available in 1948.

Kyodo News

Greek-operated oil tanker bombed at Libyan port, two dead

ATHENS, 5 Jan — Two crew members were killed when unidentified military aircraft bombed a Greek-operated oil tanker anchored at the Libyan port of Derna, the Greek coastguard said on Monday.

The Liberian-flagged ARAEVO was carrying 12,600 tons of crude oil and had 26 crew members on board. Two other crew members were wounded, the coastguard said.

Athens-based Aegean Shipping Enterprises Co, which operates the vessel, said no oil had spilled as a result of the attack. The vessel, chartered by Libya's national oil company NOC, had been loaded at Brega port for transport to Derna.

"Yesterday at 13:30 local time, a war plane bombed the front part of the ship, causing damage and injuring four crew members, of whom two died," said Elias Syros, the company's safety manager. "There is no oil leakage, the ship's integrity was not compromised. Damages are being assessed."

An industry source said the vessel was delivering gasoil to power generators that supply the cities of Derna, Khoms, Benghazi and Misrata.

Forces loyal to Libya's internationally recognised government have been carrying out air strikes on targets controlled by a rival government set up by Libya Dawn forces that have taken

over the capital Tripoli.

Oil ports have become part of the battle between the rival factions for control of Libya.

A spokesman for chief of staff for the internationally recognised government said the tanker had been bringing Islamist militant fighters into Derna.

"We had warned any ship not to dock at the port without prior permission," Ahmed Mesmari said.

The self-declared government in Tripoli and the internationally recognised government have appointed rival officials in the oil ministry and NOC, leading to competing claims over control of the OPEC nation's petroleum assets.—Reuters



Nepalese Hindu women cross the holy Shalinadi River on the first day of Madhav Narayan festival at Sankhu in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 5 Jan, 2015. Nepalese Hindu devotees fast and pray to Goddess Swasthani for longevity and prosperity of their friends, families and relatives during the month-long festival.—XINHUA

WORLD

Venezuela's Maduro would free Lopez if US freed Puerto Rican



Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro at the Planalto Palace in Brasilia on 2 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

CARACAS, 5 Jan — Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said on Sunday he would only seek the release of jailed opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez if the United States agreed to release a Puerto Rican nationalist currently held in a US prison.

Lopez was arrested in February after he helped launch a three-month wave of opposition demonstrations seeking Maduro's resignation, an effort government critics called free protest but the government said was meant to spark a coup.

Maduro suggested he could send Lopez to the

United States if Washington secured the release of Oscar Lopez Rivera, who was convicted in 1981 of seditious conspiracy along with other militants who sought to secure Puerto Rican independence.

"The only way I would use (presidential) powers would be to put (Leopoldo Lopez) on a plane, so he can go to the United States and stay there, and they would give me Oscar Lopez Rivera — man for man," Maduro said during a televised broadcast.

A spokesman for the US Embassy in Caracas said he had no immediate comment on the issue.

US government officials including President Barack Obama have called for the release of Lopez, describing him as a political prisoner, a term Maduro says is more appropriate for Lopez Rivera.

In 1999, Lopez Rivera turned down an offer of conditional clemency by then President Bill Clinton, according to media reports.—Reuters

Germany's Gabriel says Berlin wants Greece to stay in euro zone

BERLIN, 5 Jan — The German government wants Greece to stay in the euro zone and there are no contingency plans to the contrary, Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel said on Sunday, responding to a media report that Berlin believes the currency union could cope without Greece.

Gabriel, the Economy Minister and leader of the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD), also told the Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung that the euro zone had become more resilient in recent years and could not be "blackmailed".

"The goal of the German government, the European Union and even the government in Athens itself is to keep Greece in the euro zone," Gabriel said in the interview to appear on Monday.

"There were no and there are no other plans to the contrary," he said, and noted the euro zone had become far more stable in recent years.

"That's why we can't be blackmailed and why we expect the Greece gov-

ernment, no matter who leads it, to abide by the agreements made with the EU," he said referring to the 25 January Greek election and possible change of government.

Earlier a spokesman for Chancellor Angela Merkel, Georg Streiter, said the German government expects Greece to stick to the terms of its 240-billion euro EU/IMF bailout agreement.

Streiter declined to comment on a report in *Der Spiegel* magazine on Saturday that said Berlin had shifted its view and now believed the euro zone would be able to cope with a Greek exit, or "Grexit", if necessary.

Der Spiegel reported that Berlin considers "Grexit" almost unavoidable if the left-wing Syriza opposition party, narrowly ahead in opinion polls, wins Greece's election. Syriza wants to cancel austerity measures and a chunk of Greek debt.

But the report said that both Merkel and Finance Minister Wolfgang



Sigmar Gabriel and Angela Merkel attend a cabinet meeting in the Chancellery in Berlin, on 3 Dec, 2014.

REUTERS

Schaeuble now believe the euro zone has implemented enough reforms since the height of its debt crisis in 2012 to make a potential Greek exit manageable.

In addition, the euro zone now has an "effective" bailout fund, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), another source added. Major banks would be protected by the banking union.

As the euro zone's paymaster, Germany is insisting that Greece must stick to a course of austerity and not backtrack on

its bailout commitments — especially as it does not want to open the door for other struggling euro zone members to relax their reform efforts.

Peter Bofinger, on the "wise men" council of economic advisers to the German government, warned against "Grexit".

"There would be many high risks for the stability of the euro zone with such a step," he told *Welt am Sonntag*. "It would let a genie out of the bottle that would be hard to control."—Reuters

Hundreds of police turn backs on NYC mayor at slain officer's funeral

NEW YORK, 5 Jan — New York City police turned out in their thousands on Sunday for the funeral of the second of two officers murdered last month, but in a sign of persistent tensions with Mayor Bill de Blasio, hundreds turned their backs when he delivered his eulogy.

Politicians, police leaders and other mourners joined family members inside a Brooklyn funeral home to honour Wenjian Liu, who was killed in an ambush that led to accusations the mayor had contributed to an anti-police climate.

Outside, the throng of officers gathered to pay their respects to Liu stretched for nearly a mile along an avenue in the borough's Bensonhurst neighbourhood. When de Blasio began his speech, hundreds of them turned their backs to screens showing his image, despite earlier entreaties by City Police Commissioner Bill Bratton to mourners to show restraint.

The back-turning gesture has become symbolic of the anger many officers feel for de Blasio over what they see as his failure to support them during a wave of anti-police protests.

De Blasio used the eulogy to call for reconciliation and after a



Law enforcement officers stand, with some turning their backs, as New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio speaks on a monitor outside the funeral for NYPD officer Wenjian Liu in the Brooklyn borough of New York on 4 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

wrenching year for the city.

"New York has been from its earliest days a most tolerant of cities ... but there have always been times when that harmony has been challenged," de Blasio said at Liu's funeral, one of the largest in NYPD history.

"Let us rededicate ourselves to those great New York traditions of mutual understanding and living in harmony."

Liu, 32, and Rafael Ramos, 40, were ambushed and fatally shot on 20 December by a killer

who said he wanted to avenge the deaths of two unarmed black men this summer in encounters with white officers in Ferguson, Missouri, and New York City.

Those deaths, and decisions by grand juries in November and December to return no charges against the police officers involved, triggered weeks of protests around the country against police treatment of African Americans and other minorities.

The crowd that turned out to honour Liu, believed to be

the New York Police Department's first Chinese-American officer killed in the line of duty, appeared nearly equal to the estimated 25,000 who came to Ramos' funeral.

Liu's wife paid a tearful tribute to the officer as a devoted husband and son. "Wenjian is my hero," said Pei Xia Chen. "We can always count on him."

Later, as pall bearers carried the casket draped in the NYPD flag to the hearse, helicopters flew at low altitude over mourners in a manoeuvre known as a "missing man formation," an NYPD tradition.

To be sure, a majority of the officers outside the funeral home faced toward de Blasio when he spoke, especially in the front ranks. But further down the avenue, hundreds were seen turning away, much like at last week's services for Ramos.

After the ceremony, Patrick Lynch, the head of the largest police union, said officers were going through a difficult, emotional time.

"They feel that City Hall has turned their back on them and they have a right to have their opinion heard and they did it respectfully in the street, not inside the church," said Lynch.

The union leader had said immediately after the ambush on Liu and Ramos that the mayor had contributed to the political climate that led to their deaths.

De Blasio offered qualified support for protesters after the grand jury decision not to charge the officer involved in the chokehold death of Eric Garner in New York. The mayor said he had talked to his bi-racial son, Dante, about being wary in dealing with police.

Relations between the police and de Blasio had begun to fray before that. During his 2013 campaign for office, the mayor criticized some NYPD tactics, including a "stop-and-frisk" policy that critics said was used to harass African-Americans and other minority groups.

Many of the tens of thousands of mourners crowded along the sidewalk outside Sunday's services were Asian.

Caiyao Chen, 32, who emigrated from China in 2000, said he didn't know the slain officer but he said he was particularly saddened because Liu was his parents' only son.

"In Chinese tradition, the son carries the blood of the family," he said. "The family is broken now."—Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday, 6 January, 2015

Breathing with others' nosesBy *Myint Win Thein*

It doesn't matter how great we think we are, we are still breathing with other people's noses by living at their expense. Our world still fails to provide basic needs of the majority of its members as much as they are entitled to. Let alone

developing and poor countries, even the most advanced country such as the United States could not raise the minimum wage as much as its workers have sought despite technological advances.

Workers in the US have been seeking the minimum wage of \$15 per hour, but the highest minimum wage in the US reached only \$ 9.45 per hour just a few days ago in Washington State. Why are minimum wages restricted elsewhere? The obvious answer to the question is that businesses are thriving on low or insufficient wages -- the cheaper the labour, the greater the profit.

We are still exploiting the vast majority of people in the world as has been done for thousands of years despite various achievements in human history. We still should be ashamed of ourselves

no matter how much we have learnt from our history. What we should bear in mind is that as long as the majority of the world's people are suffering, we are still as barbarous as slave owners, although we may think we are great.

Write for us

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

Walking: an invigorating effect on mind and bodyBy *Arakan Sein*

What else could be easier than walking? What could be easier and cheaper than that in terms of costs of coats of being fit and healthy? Walking is as simple as it gets for exercise. Walking is a great, natural way to achieve a daily physical activity amount recommended for good health. After all, it is an indicator for how well the heart, lungs, joints and muscles are functioning well in your body. Scientific studies have also shown that walking, besides its physical benefits, is also beneficial for the mind, improving memory skills, learning ability, concentration and abstract reasoning, as well as reducing stress and lifting spirits.

Thus, it has an enormous invigorating effect on mind and body. If so, what do you need to start a walking program? Actually, you don't need special equipment or training. All you need is a good, supportive pair of walking shoes. But at the same time you need to set to achieve goals—a short term and long term one. To stay motivated, you are advised to find a walking partner, such as a family member, friend or co-worker. It is easy to find them in our Myanmar community where our people make friends with one another just when they usually meet and smile at each other possibly because they happen to meet at their leisure rather than at a time of going about their daily business.

There are many areas of scenic beauty in Yangon—the Inya Lake, the Kandawgyi, Maha Bando Park in down-

town Yangon, the Strand Road and so on. But the Kandawgyi is my favorite since my apartment is very near and I have been using it for more than a decade. I would say it is an ideal place or all city dwellers to come and just sit or do some sorts of exercises. It is easily accessible for all inhabitants far and near because it happens to be in the middle of the commercial city of Yangon. A wooden walkway inside the Lake has already been in place; the Golden Shwedagon and the Karaweik barge are visibly from all directions and they shine as the sun hits them. Wows! There are hundreds of morning walkers on the wooden walkway on every Saturday and Sunday in December.

Governments around the world recognize the benefits of walking for mental and physical health and are encouraging it. In this regard, our government gets actively involved in mass walking movements with high-ranking government officials leading the crowds during weekend holidays of December and January. In this regard, I would like to share my beneficial experiences of walking which I have tried to develop as a habit since I was struck down with a heart attack more than a decade ago. A Singaporean doctor advised me to undergo a bypass surgery; a Myanmar doctor recommended a regular walking practice as I was unable to support an open-heart surgery both financially and physically. Now I am alive and no need to worry about heart illness or whatever because of a regular walking.

Every morning, rain or sun-

shine, I go out for a walk; I keep on walking all the year round and I stick to the instructions strictly: taking drugs regularly; doing some sorts of light exercises; going to bed before ten and getting up early to start a day by walking. One may ask what the results are from a regular walking for such a long time.

A few benefits should be mentioned: developing a long-lasting friendship with different types of people; enjoying a healthy lifestyle; and sharing knowledge with one another on social, political, local and international issues. Now I am a member of a youthful oldie's club whose members are mostly baby-boomers with contemporary background knowledge. Every morning, my strong urge to go out and meet them is unstoppable. There is no doubt that the Kandawgyi is one of the best scenic spots in Yangon. But at the same time I would like to mention something in passing about two defects: toilets and the wooden walkway. There are virtually no toilets accessible nearby, the latter will, I hope, fail the walkability test because I hear a series of creaks and groans when brisk walkers and joggers tread on the loose planks with protruding nails and hooks. I hope authorities concerned will take a prompt action and get them repaired in time. Well, folks, do come and join us early in the morning to walk or jog on the wooden path inside the Kandawgyi. Shrug your shoulders and relax them. Keep your head up and your eyes either towards or the Shwedagon or the Karaweik and have deep breathing. Once you come out and enjoy idyllic surrounds near the Lake, I am sure you can't stop coming to the Lake again.

Linking Banks and Economics GrowthBy *Kyaw Win Tin*

Economic growth is usually associated with technological changes and an increase in the capacity of an economy to produce goods and services, compared from one period of time to another. We should study last year's Financial Statements. Economic growth can be measured in normal terms including inflation and adjusting for inflation. Economic growth can also be defined as an increase in a nation's output which is most commonly measured by GDP. The health banks and the health of economy are inseparable; we can say otherwise that the financial is a cornerstone of the nation's economic resilience.

It is envisioned that the financial system will develop to become a stable, sound and market-based financial system that would support efficient mobilization and allocation of resources necessary for economic diversification, sustainable growth and poverty reduction. The banking industry plays a vital role in the state economy. Beyond providing a range of important financial services the banking industry is a major contributor to gross domestic product (GDP), employment and information and technology (IT) investment. Additionally the banking industry supports to the state by paying tax and dividends each year.

Strong economic growth has benefits for both the general community and for banks. To achieve economic growth two options are available: using resources extensively (that is producing more by using more of the available resources) or intensively (that is producing more while using the same amount of available resources). However, the key to sustainable economic growth is to use resources intensively that is to realize productive gains. Productivity gains can be made at both the micro and macro level.

Due to the types of functions carried out by banks they are affected differently by economic growth than other industries. Firstly economic growth can lead to increased lending by banks. As business with increased profits and confidence looks to expand, their demand for (and ability to service) lending increase. Secondly, asset quality as measured, for example by banks' loan provisioning or non-performing loan rates, will generally improve as unemployment falls. Thirdly, economic growth can lead to improve access to funding for banks. As foreign investors confidence grows so too does their willingness to invest.

In this regard key objectives that should be achieved in pursuance of the vision for the financial system including as deepen the financial market to enable banks and other firms with the means for effective liquidity management, price discovery, cost reduction and enhance capital formation, have a viable pro-poor and effective rural finance system for providing affordable financial services to enable the poor to enhance income and reduce poverty, strengthen that credit culture, put in place ways and means of ensuring that proper mechanism is put in place to prevent and detect money-laundering activities through market discipline and transparency in the conduct of financial services business and enhance legal, accounting and auditing systems that promote the rule of law in commercial and financial transactions and support good governance by promoting transparency, accountability and predictability.

Reference: 1. Background to the Financial sector Development Plan (African continent)
2. ABA Occasional Paper (Brendon Harper, Senior Policy Analyst)

LOCAL NEWS

Mohnyin Degree College admits students at hostels



A three-storey new student hostel is ready to admit students at Mohnyin Degree College, Kachin State, for convenience of students in accommodation.

students for hostels as of 2013-14 academic year. In 2014-15 academic year, the school officials admitted students except Mohnyin to stay at the hostels.

In the past, college students stayed at the private hostels, spending expensive costs.

“The students who had experiences of staying at hostels four years would enjoy life of university students. Those from private hostels at public areas are different from those of college hostels. Only learning education is not perfect for the university students. They should participate in sports, literature, social and other fields to have experiences,” said a parent of student.

MOHNYIN, 5 Jan — Officials of Mohnyin Degree College manage construction of student hotels and lecture halls yearly.

The degree college has admitted first year

GNLM-001

Blood donation marks Mother’s Day in Mandalay



MANDALAY, 5 Jan—In commemoration of the 67th Anniversary Independence Day, Karuna Lwinbyin blood donors association donated blood at Children’s Hospital (550-bed) in Mandalay on 4 January.

A total of 100 members of the association participated in the blood donation.

In-charge of the association Daw Naw Htwe Htwe said that members of the association donated blood on the Mother’s Day which falls on Fullmoon Day of Pyatho this year.

She said, “I have donated blood for 98th time to be able to save life of humans. So, the government has awarded me title of Excellent Performance of Social Field (First Class). The association was formed in 2009 to donate blood to needy persons. So far, the association has donated about 3,000 bottles of blood.”

Medical officers and staff of the hospital provided assistance for the blood donors.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)

Thaton District IPRD introduces advantages of reading to students

THATON, 5 Jan — Thaton District Information and Public Relations Department organized the reading sessions for students at Basic Education High School Branch in Kathapha of Naungbo Village in Thaton Township, Mon State, on 3 January.

Township Administrator U Tun Tun Naing opened the ceremony of reading session with a speech.

Headmistress Daw Naw Mya Yi explained

facts about Independence Day. Head of Township IPRD Daw Thuza Aung gave talks on advantages of reading and U Saw Myat Myat Ko of Phungon Yadana new generation readers association, talks on reading skills of youths.

The Township IPRD donated books and publications to students for raising reading skills. After the ceremony, students borrowed books from the school library.—*Thaton District IPRD*



Myawady District’s deputy commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo reads the message on 67th Anniversary Independence Day 2015 sent by President U Thein Sein at Mya Sandi Park in Myawady Township on 4 January. Departmental officials awarded prize winners in the essay and poem contests.

TUN TUN OO (MYAWADY TOWN)

Mandalay Region kicks off School Family Day

MANDALAY, 5 Jan — Mandalay Region opened a School Family Day for 2014-15 academic year at Mandalar Thiri Stadium in Mandalay on 3 January, attended by Chief Minister of Mandalay Region U Ye Myint.

The ceremony was launched by Ma Ohnmar Lay (CAE Private High School) who stood fourth in the matriculation examination the whole Myanmar, Ma Thiri Moe Thet of

CAE Private High School who stood fifth and Maung Zin Htet Paing (Taungtha BEHS) who stood first (arts) in the region.

Students performed dances and songs to the audiences.

The chief minister delivered an address and presented prizes to outstanding students, teachers, school heads and schools.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)



Afghan president says US might want to 're-examine' pullout deadline



Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani speaks during a event in Kabul on 1 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 5 Jan — Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said in an interview broadcast on Sunday that the United States might want to "re-examine" the timetable for removing the remaining US-led coalition troops in the country by the end of 2016.

"Deadlines concentrate the mind. But deadlines should not be dog-

mas," Ghani told the CBS programme "60 Minutes" when asked about the issue.

"If both parties, or, in this case, multiple partners, have done their best to achieve the objectives and progress is very real, then there should be willingness to re-examine a deadline," added Ghani, who was elected last year.

Asked if he had told

that to US President Barack Obama, Ghani said: "President Obama knows me. We don't need to — to tell each other."

The White House National Security Council, the State Department and the Pentagon had no immediate comment. Afghanistan assumed full responsibility on Thursday for security from departing foreign combat troops, in a test of the readiness of 350,000 Afghan forces who will bear responsibility for fighting Taliban insurgents.

The US-led coalition troops formally ended their combat mission more than 13 years after the Islamist Taliban government was toppled in late 2001 for sheltering the planners of the 11 September, 2001, attacks on the United States.

About 13,000 foreign troops, mostly Americans, will remain in the country under a two-year mission

named "Resolute Support" to train Afghan troops.

At least 3,188 Afghan civilians were killed in the intensifying war with Taliban insurgents in 2014, making it the deadliest year on record for non-combatants, the United Nations said in a recent report.

Ghani added that he was concerned about the Islamic State militant group and its potential threat to Afghanistan "because the past has shown us that threats, that networks change their form." The group has taken over parts of Iraq and Syria.

But US General John Campbell, who leads the remaining coalition forces in Afghanistan, said in an interview on the same program he did not see Islamic State "coming into Afghanistan like they did into Iraq. The Afghan Security Forces would not allow that."

Reuters

UN-brokered Libya dialogue delayed again: diplomatic sources

UNITED NATIONS, 5 Jan — A new round of UN-brokered peace talks aimed at ending the escalating political crisis in Libya has been delayed once again and will not take place early this week as originally planned, diplomatic sources said on Sunday.

The United Nations had planned to hold a second round of talks on Monday to end a confrontation between two rival governments and parliaments. It has been working for months to organize Libyan peace talks but has said previously that a military escalation was undermining its efforts.

"Consultations to hold the second round of dialogue continue with the parties to reach agreement on the timing and venue. So, not tomorrow," one diplomatic source told Reuters on condition of anonymity. Another diplomatic source confirmed the remarks.

It was not clear when, and if, the new dialogue would take place.

The new talks have been repeatedly delayed due to difficulties getting the parties to agree to meet. UN special envoy to Libya Bernardino Leon told the Security Council last month that the parties involved had agreed in principle to meet on 5 January.

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

World powers fear the Libyan conflict will lead to civil war as former rebel groups that helped oust the country's former leader, the late Muammar Gaddafi, in 2011 fight for power and a share of its vast oil reserves.

Leon has said that the Libya dialogue would include members of the General National Congress, the country's previous assembly reinstated by the new rulers in the capital Tripoli.

Hundreds of civilians in Libya have been killed in fighting since late August, the United Nations has said, warning commanders of armed groups that they could face prosecution for possible war crimes, including executions and torture.

The conflict has driven at least 120,000 people from their homes, according to a joint report by the UN human rights office and UN Support Mission in Libya that also documents shelling of civilian areas.—Reuters

Abbas seeks to re-submit statehood bid to UN Security Council

RAMALLAH, 5 Jan — Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said on Sunday he was discussing with Jordan plans to re-submit to the United Nations Security Council a resolution calling for the establishment of a Palestinian state that failed to win enough votes last week.

Jordan remains a member of the Security Council while several other countries with revolving membership were replaced over the New Year.

The Palestinians hope these states will be more sympathetic to their resolution demanding an Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and independence by 2017, although the veto-wielding United States would be all but certain to vote 'No' again, as it did on 30 December.

"We didn't fail, the UN Security Council failed us. We'll go again to the Security Council, why not?"

Perhaps after a week," Abbas told officials at a cultural conference in the West Bank city of Ramallah, the Palestinian seat of self-rule government.

"We are studying it, and we will study this with our allies and especially Jordan ... to submit the resolution again, a third time or even a fourth time."

In the UN vote on Tuesday, the Palestinian draft received eight votes in favor, including France, Russia and China, two against and five abstentions, among them Britain. Australia joined the United States in voting against the measure. But any resubmission would face almost certain failure. The US has veto power as one of the council's five permanent members and has pledged to block Abbas's plan, calling it one-sided and unproductive.

Abbas signed onto 20 international conventions the next day, including the



Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas shows a picture of Palestinian minister Ziad Abu Ein as he is grabbed by an Israeli border policeman, during a meeting with the Palestinian leadership in the West Bank city of Ramallah on 10 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, giving the court jurisdiction over crimes committed on Palestinian lands and opening up an unprecedented confrontation between the veteran peace negotiator and Israel. In retaliation for the move to the ICC, Israel announced on Saturday that it would withhold 500 mil-

lion shekels (\$125 million) in monthly tax funds that it collects on the Palestinians' behalf, in a blow to Abbas's cash-strapped government.

"Now there are sanctions — that's fine. There's an escalation — that's fine ... but we're pushing forward," Abbas said.

Reuters



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

Car bomb targeting Somali security forces kills four civilians

MOGADISHU, 5 Jan — A car bomb targeting security officials killed four civilians in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Sunday, a government official said.

Al-Qaeda-linked al Shabaab claimed responsibility for the blast, saying it was targeting "pro-US forces" and that it had killed a

number of government soldiers. "The suicide car bomb killed four civilians and injured several others," Mohamed Yusuf, the spokesman for the security ministry, was quoted as saying on state-run radio.

"The intelligence forces got the information in advance and they were about to

capture the car bomb. However, as they pursued, the suicide car bomb hit a civilian car." Residents said shooting followed the blast and they could see smoke and dust rising into the air after the explosion.

Al Shabaab is seeking to topple the Western-backed Mogadishu government and

impose its own strict version of Islamic law in the country.

Sunday's attack showed the group was still capable of carrying out raids in the capital even as it is losing territory in rural areas to AU peacekeepers who launched two major offensives in 2014.

"We were behind the attack. We targeted the forces

that work for the US and we killed a number of them," Sheikh Abdiasis Abu Musab, al Shabaab's military operations spokesman told Reuters.

In the past, al Shabaab has exaggerated the number of soldiers it has killed, while officials have played down losses.—Reuters

Euro slides to nine-year low; Asia shares and oil wobble

TOKYO, 5 Jan — The euro hit a nearly nine-year low versus the dollar on Monday as investors bet on quantitative easing by the European Central Bank while soft manufacturing surveys pushed down shares and sent oil prices to 5 1/2-year lows.

European shares are expected to dip, with Britain's FTSE seen falling by up to 0.4 percent. Germany's DAX and France's CAC are both seen falling as much as 0.2 percent.

The euro fell to as low as \$1.18605, its weakest level since March 2006, having fallen below an important support at \$1.20. The common currency last traded at \$1.1926, down 0.6 percent from late US trade on Friday.

In an interview with German financial daily

Handelsblatt published on Friday, ECB President Mario Draghi said the risk of the central bank not fulfilling its mandate of preserving price stability was higher now than half a year ago.

"The market took his comments to mean that he is ready to adopt quantitative easing," said Shin Kadota, chief forex strategist at Barclays in Tokyo.

Economists forecast that Wednesday's euro zone inflation data will show that in December prices fell 0.1 percent, the first decline since 2009.

That should fan expectations the ECB could ease its policy as soon as 22 January, when it holds its first policy meeting this year.

Also underscoring the pressure on central banks to implement more stimulus,



Euro notes are pictured at a bank in this photo illustration taken in Seoul on 18 June, 2012.—REUTERS

business surveys last week showed factories struggled to maintain growth across Europe and Asia.

Even in the United States, which is seen as one bright spot in the global economy, the pace of manufacturing growth slowed more than expected in December.

That sapped investor

appetite for stocks, with Wall Street shares ending mostly flat on the first day of trade in 2015 on Friday, after stellar gains of 11.4 percent in the S&P500 index last year.

S&P futures dipped 0.1 percent in early Asian trade on Monday while MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside

Japan dropped 0.6 percent.

Japan's Nikkei fell 0.2 percent on the first trading day of the year.

Chinese shares, however, maintained their bullish tone since last year on hopes of more stimulus, as property shares jumped on local media reports saying mortgage restrictions had been loosened.

The CSI300 index, hitting a five-year high, added more than 3 percent on the first trading day of 2015. It rallied 52 percent last year.

Oil prices, whose decline of more than 50 percent from peaks in June last year rattled many energy producers, hit a 5-1/2-year low as global growth concerns fanned fears of a supply glut.

Brent crude futures dropped as low as \$55.36 a barrel, also its lowest since

May 2009, before edging back to \$55.42, still down a dollar.

"Oil demand is unlikely to be robust this year when we look at the state of economies in China, Japan and Europe," said Yusuke Seta, a commodity sales manager at Newedge Japan.

That did not help commodity currencies such as the Canadian dollar, which fell to C\$1.1843 to the US currency, its lowest level since mid-2009.

The Australian dollar likewise dropped to a 5-1/2-year low of \$0.8036.

The US dollar also surged against the Swiss franc and sterling, extending a recent bull run as markets wagered a relatively healthy US economy will lead the Federal Reserve to raise rates in the middle of this year.—Reuters

China lifts price controls on 24 commodities, services

BEIJING, 5 Jan — China will lift controls on prices of 24 commodities and services, said the National Development and Reform Commission on Sunday.

Market will decide the price of tobacco leaves, the last agricultural product to be freed from government price control, but a minimum price will be set to protect farmers, said a

statement on the commission website.

Prices of railway bulk cargo, parcels and privately funded cargo and passenger transport will also be allowed to float. Railway passenger and cargo prices have been decided by the government, but lag far behind changes of road and water transportation prices, which has impeded the

development of the railway sector, said Sun Zhang, a professor with Tongji University.

Prices of domestic air cargo will be freed, as well as prices of passenger transport of some airlines.

Wu Tongshui, deputy director of China Air Transport Association, said the move will help activate the market, attract more private investment and enhance the competitive edges of carriers.

Limits will be removed on port service fees, including fees on container loading, ship rubbish treatment and water supply.

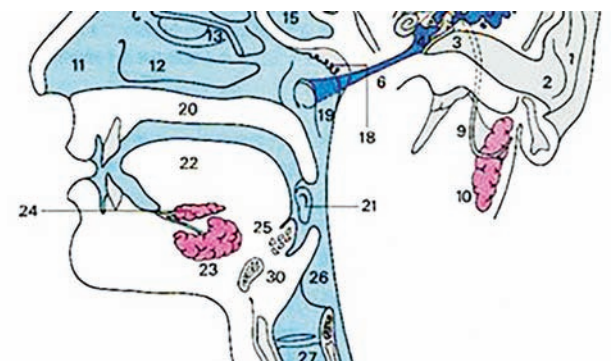
Limits will be removed on factory prices of explosives for civil use.

Xinhua

BEIJING, 5 Jan — Chinese and international scientists have for the first time identified the three gene loci susceptible to laryngeal squamous cell carcinoma (LSCC), according to a statement from the Chinese PLA General Hospital on Wednesday.

The scientists used the method of genome-wide association study (GWAS) to determine the locus. This is the first time GWAS has been applied to laryngeal cancer research, and the successful result was published on the tenth issue of the international journal *Nature Genetics* in October.

The expert team includes top Otolaryngol-



ogy-head and neck surgery-practitioners from China and abroad.

From the Chinese side are Doctor Liu Mingbo, Wang Jialing and Yang Shiming from the Chinese PLA General Hospital, Doctor Lin Dongxin, Wuchen from Chinese Academy of Medical

Sciences and Doctor Wei Qingyi from Shanghai Medical College of Fudan University.

The team carried out GWAS on 993 laryngeal cancer patients. The study will help early diagnosis and molecular targeting treatment for laryngeal cancer.—Xinhua



BMW agrees to pay 537 million pounds subsidies to China dealers

SHANGHAI, 5 Jan — German premium carmaker BMW has agreed to pay 5.1 billion yuan (537 million pounds) worth of subsidies to its dealers in China to help cover their losses accrued last year, the country's main car dealer association said on Monday.

The agreement came after negotiations between

BMW and its dealers, according to Song Tao, deputy secretary general of the China Automobile Dealers Association.

BMW said in a statement it had reached an agreement with its China-based dealers but declined to give further details or confirm the subsidy amount.

Reuters

Fukushima rice passes radiation tests for first time since disaster

TOKYO, 5 Jan — Fukushima rice passed Japan's radiation checks for the first time since the 2011 nuclear disaster that prompted international alarm over the region's produce, a prefectural official said.

Fukushima official Tsuneaki Oonami said about 360,000 tonnes of rice, nearly all of last year's harvest, had been checked and none had tested above the 100 becquerels per kilo-

gram limit set by the government.

"The fact that the amount of rice that does not pass our checks has steadily reduced in the last three years indicates that we're taking the right steps," said Oonami, who heads the department that oversees Fukushima rice farming.

Minuscule amounts of rice produced in 2012 and 2013 failed to pass radiation checks and had to be

destroyed.

Farmers and fishermen in Fukushima were hit hardest by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that set off meltdowns at Tokyo Electric Power Co's nuclear plant and forced Japan to suspend some agricultural and fisheries exports.

Japan has since lifted export restrictions, although repeated contaminated water leaks at the Fukushima Daiichi plant prompted

South Korea to ban imports from eight regions including Fukushima prefecture in 2013.

South Korean experts visited the Fukushima nuclear plant and Japan's radiation testing facilities last month as Seoul considers resuming imports. Japan's fisheries agency said on Monday the South Korean experts were planning to return this month for additional inspections.—Reuters



Photo taken on 4 Jan, 2015 shows a view of the Erhai Lake in Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, southwest China's Yunnan Province. The Erhai Lake, covering 253 square kilometres and being the second largest fresh water lake in Yunnan Province, is named as the "mother lake" by local people. Two major outbreaks of blue algae in the Erhai Lake between 1996 and 2003 triggered problems in drinking water supply. Thanks to the efforts of local government in controlling pollution in the famous plateau lake and improving the local environment, the water quality of the lake has been improved. — XINHUA



Photo taken on 2 Jan, 2015 shows a wind power plant in Xuanhua County of Zhangjiakou City, north China's Hebei Province. — XINHUA

Students from Serbia among world's top speakers

BELGRADE, 5 Jan — Students of the Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Belgrade, Helena Ivanov and Stefan Siridzanski have been named the world's third and fourth top speakers in the English as the second language category at the World Universities Debating Championship in Malaysia.

Viktor Prlja, a student of the Belgrade Faculty of Organizational Sciences, was declared the seventh best speaker of the world, the Open Communications organization has announced.

More than 800 students from 93 countries took part in the competition, and in addition to Helena Ivanov and Stefan Siridzanski, Serbia was also represented by two teams — Marija Simic and Viktor Prlja of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences and Djordje Jovicevic, a student of Belgrade Faculty of Political Sciences, and Jovan Petronijevic of the Belgrade College of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship. One of the judges in the competition was Marko Cirovic, an assistant at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences. Helena Ivanov and Stefan Siridzanski made a historic success by reaching the semifinals of the open category, where they were the only team from continental Europe, which competed against students from Harvard, Sydney and Melbourne universities.

They started the competition in a lower category of the English as the second language, but after defeating the teams from Oxford, Columbia, Harvard and others, for the first time in the history of contests, they managed to enter the open category semifinals. Although they have not reached the finals, this achievement is an important incentive for all speakers in the world where English is not the native tongue to believe that they can compete with students from the best universities. Open Communications is an organization that focuses on promotion of the culture of public dialogue. It was founded by professors and students of the University of Belgrade in 1997 and organized after the debate clubs of prestigious European university centres.—Tanjug

Cameron will move EU referendum forward if possible

LONDON, 5 Jan — Prime Minister David Cameron said on Sunday he would like to bring forward a planned referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union from 2017 if possible.

Under pressure from Eurosceptic members of his own party and the rise in popularity of the anti-EU UK Independence Party (UKIP), Cameron has pledged to renegotiate Britain's ties with the 28-nation bloc and try to claw back powers to London.

He has said he will hold a referendum in 2017 if his Conservatives win a national election on 7 May.

"If I think we could do that earlier I would be delighted. The sooner I can deliver on this commitment of a renegotiation and a referendum ... the better," he told the BBC.

Cameron is set to discuss his reform plans, which include restricting

EU migrants' access to welfare payments, with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in London on Wednesday. He has said they will require treaty change but Merkel has made clear she will not allow the EU's rules on workers' freedom of movement to be diluted.

UKIP leader Nigel Farage told Sky News that under Cameron's plans the referendum had

been "kicked into the long grass" and said his renegotiation looked "highly improbable".

The May election looks set to be one of the most closely fought in modern British history. While the Conservatives are narrowly trailing the opposition Labour party in most opinion polls, many analysts predict neither will win a majority, possibly resulting in an-

other coalition of two or more parties.

Cameron, whose centre-right Conservatives have governed Britain in coalition with the centre-left Liberal Democrats since 2010, traded blows with Labour on Sunday over the economy and healthcare.

Labour says the Conservatives have borrowed much more than planned and now aim to cut the budget deficit too fast and too deeply for purely ideological reasons.

Cameron's supporters note that Britain's \$2.5 trillion economy has emerged from its deepest downturn since World War Two to enjoy now the fastest growth rate of any major advanced economy.

"The real concern I have is if we turn back now, if we go back to the bad ways of more borrowing, more spending, more debt ... we will go right back to start and really threaten the economic recovery," said Cameron.



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron speaks during a television program at the BBC in London, on 4 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

Two killed, nine injured in southern Afghan suicide bombing

QALAT, (Afghanistan), 5 Jan — Two civilians were killed while nine people wounded after a suicide car bomber targeted a police convoy in Qalat city, the provincial capital of southern Afghan province of Zabul on Monday, police said.

"The car bomb was

detonated at around 10:00 am local time (0530 GMT) close to provincial police station. The likely target of the attack was deputy provincial police chief General Ghulam Jilani Khan. Luckily Khan escaped unhurt," provincial police chief General Ghulam Sakhi Rough Liwani told Xinhua.

Two civilians passing by died on the spot along the attacker, the source said, adding "the injured included four civilians and five policemen of the convoy."

The injured were shifted to nearby hospitals by ambulances and police vehicles. Several vehicles and shops were damaged as a

result of the explosion in the city, 340 km south of Afghan capital of Kabul.

No group has claimed responsibility yet for the attack, but the Taliban routinely claim responsibility for such attacks.

The Taliban has intensified attacks over the past couple of months as the Af-

ghan forces are taking over the responsibility for security in the country.

Last Thursday, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) assumed the full security charges from NATO-led troops after a four-year security transition.

Xinhua

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**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KULTHARA VOY NO (07/14)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULTHARA VOY NO (07/14) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W(7) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S KULNATEE CO**

Phone No: 2301186

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU423)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU423) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV MEKONG RIVER VOY NO (002N)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MEKONG RIVER VOY NO (002N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

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

(23/2014)

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-123(14-15)	Skid Mounted Double Pump Cementing Unit with Complete Accessories (Silo, Cutting Pot, Power Pack, Dryer & Compressor) (1) Lot	US\$
(2)	IFB-124(14-15)	6" x 8" R Mixing Pump with 50HP Motor (2) Lots	US\$
(3)	IFB-125(14-15)	Mud Agitator Unit with Motor (2) Lots	US\$
(4)	IFB-126(14-15)	4" Dia Steel Line Pipe (3,000) Meter	US\$
(5)	IFB-127(14-15)	Spares for Metering System (CNG Filling Station) (5) Items	US\$
(6)	IFB-128(14-15)	Komatsu (D 39 E x 22) or Caterpillar (D40A, P-3) Bulldozer (1) Unit	US\$
(7)	IFB-129(14-15)	Spares for Kenworth Truck (14) Items	US\$
(8)	IFB-130(14-15)	Data Acquisition Sercel 428 Telemetry System (4) Items	US\$
(9)	IFB-131(14-15)	Interpretation Workstation (1) Item	US\$
(10)	IFB-132(14-15)	Electrical spares for D3 T2 Drilling Rigs (15) Items	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time - 2-2-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 5th January, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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

Bluefin tuna fetches 4.5 million yen at Tokyo auction

TOKYO, 5 Jan — A bluefin tuna fetched 4.51 million yen, or 25,000 yen per kilogram, in the first auction of the year at the Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo on Monday. The winning bidder for the 180-kg tuna from Oma, Aomori Prefecture, was Tokyo-based sushi restaurant chain operator Kiyomura Co, which also made a suc-

cessful bid on the same occasion last year. The price of the tuna the previous year had settled at 7.36 million yen, far lower than a record 155.4 million yen in 2013, which was also paid by Kiyomura, as competitors avoided costly races. Kiyoshi Kimura, president of Kiyomura, noted that the volume of tuna on the market was greater

this year. But "I thought the price could be a little higher," he said. The company plans to offer the tuna at its restaurants nationwide. A market source said this year's price was somewhat lower than usual and reasonable, adding that the bidding in 2013 was extraordinarily overheated and is unlikely to take place again.—*Kyodo News*



The first auction of 2015 of bluefin tuna is held at the Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo on 5 Jan, 2015. Tokyo-based sushi restaurant chain operator Kiyomura Co made a successful bid for a 180-kg tuna for 4.51 million yen, or 25,000 yen per kilogram. KYODO NEWS

WEATHER REPORT

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 6th January, 2015: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Kachin State, weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing and Tainthayi Regions, Northern Shan State and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Generally fair in the whole country.

Thai couple goes on trial for murder of Japanese man

BANGKOK, 5 Jan — Trial proceedings began on Monday for a Thai couple accused of murdering a 79-year-old Japanese man in September last year.

According to officials, the defendants, Phornchanok Chaipayap and her common-law husband Somchai Kaewbangyang, both 47, denied the charges against them.

Somchai admitted to the charges at the investigation stage, but later recanted. The next court date is set for 9 March.

Phornchanok and Somchai were arrested in October over the disappearance of Yoshinori Shimato, a Japanese language teacher.

According to investigations, the pair murdered

Shimato at Phornchanok's house in a Bangkok suburb, chopped up his body and then tossed the pieces into a nearby canal.

The pair are also suspected of killing a 56-year-old Japanese man, Katsutoshi Tanaka, in 2003. Tanaka's death in a Bangkok suburb had previously been ruled an accident.

Kyodo News

Three killed after landslide covers expressway in SW China

BEIJING, 5 Jan — At least three people have been killed after a landslide in southwest China's Guizhou Province. Local authorities said the incident occurred on Sunday afternoon in the city of Zun-yi's Xi-shui County. Landslide debris covered four vehicles on an expressway.

More than 30 soldiers and three fire-fighting teams are at the site, searching for survivors. Ten excavators have been used to clear the debris. Authorities are also exercising traffic control measures in surrounding areas.

Xinhua

Blast kills five at boys' volleyball match in Pakistan

BEIJING, 5 Jan — At least five people have been killed, and eight wounded in an explosion at a volleyball match in Pakistan's northwest tribal area of Lower Orakzai.

Officials say explosives had been planted in the ground, and were detonated by remote control. The players were boys aged between 14 and 18, and three were among the dead. The wounded were taken to hospital. The playground is owned by the local Shiite community.

No one has claimed responsibility, but militants linked to the Taleban and Al-Qaeda have targeted the country's Shiite minority in the past.—*Xinhua*

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I can't even cook basic spaghetti: Angelina Jolie

LONDON, 5 Jan — Actress-director Angelina Jolie has admitted that she cannot even cook the most basic dishes. The mother of six said she can sometime knock up fairly elaborate dishes but finds it difficult to cook basic ones, reported *Daily Mirror*.

"I'm one of those people, I can learn this random exotic meal... A really interesting Afghan dish with eggplant but I don't know how to make basic spaghetti," she said.

Jolie, 39, insisted 11-year-old son, Pax, is a better cook than her.

"Now that I'm officially a wife, I said to Brad that I was going to try to learn to cook properly. He said, 'Don't bother'... he's tasted my cooking! I'm not the best cook. Pax is a better cook than me. Pax likes to cook. But I try to when I can. Any house that we're in, we all chip in.

"But the kids are very sweet... So enthusiastic anytime I cook. Especial-Maddox, he's just this little man that's supportive of me — it's like he's raised a bit. So I cooked them all breakfast school this morning, and he has that 'Thanks, Mom! Good job!'" —PTI



Alleged new Rihanna track 'World Peace' leaks online

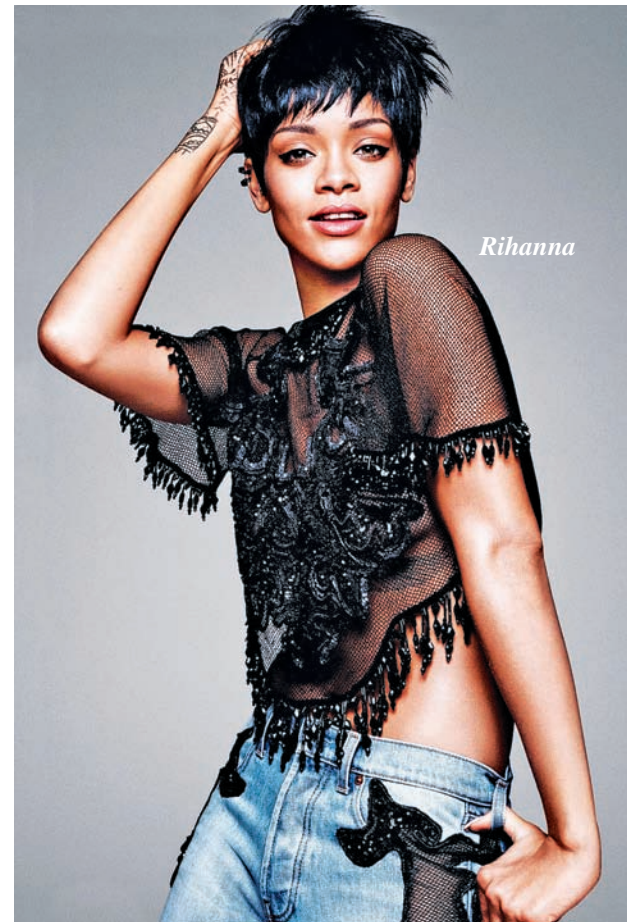
LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan — An alleged new song by R&B star Rihanna has surfaced online. The track called 'World Peace' was presumably recorded by the Bajan beauty for her highly-anticipated new album, which she has been referring to as R8, reported *Ace Showbiz*.

There's still no official word from Rihanna, 26, regarding the legitimacy of the leak. However, the vocals featured on it do sound similar to hers.

"We'll dance in the rain in spite of all the pain," she sings the club-friendly track. "What the world really needs is to feel love again.

Rihanna's eighth studio album, R8 is currently still in the works. No official title and release date for the follow-up to 2012's *Unapologetic* have been announced yet.

PTI



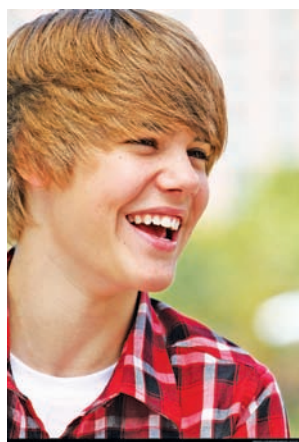
Rihanna

Justin Bieber teams up with Lil Twist for new song

LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan — Pop star Justin Bieber has returned with brand new music for rapper friend Lil Twist. The Canadian heart-throb reunited with Twist on a collaboration called 'Intertwine' from the rapper's upcoming mixtape *The Golden Child 2*, reported *Ace Showbiz*.

Bieber, 20, assisted him on the chorus, showing off his maturer vocals as he sings, "What's the use of being lonely?/ When I'm offering my company/ You could be my lover, hold me/ I'll give you attention all night, all day." The 'Baby' hitmaker recently hinted in a Twitter exchange that he'd come with a new album this year.

PTI



'Fifty Shades of Grey' actor Jamie Dornan fears his daughter won't recognize him

Jamie Dornan says he barely recognizes his 13-month-old daughter after spending weeks away for work.

REUTERS

LONDON, 5 Jan — Actor Jamie Dornan says he barely recognizes his 13-month-old daughter after spending weeks away for work.

The 'Fifty Shades of Grey' actor, who recently shot the movie adaptation for the EL James erot-



ic-fest in Vancouver, said he has to win back her trust as sometimes his little can't even recognize him, reported *Daily Mirror*.

"I've had to be away the last couple of weekends, and I come back and I barely recognize her, and it's awful; she changes so

much. And then I have this huge fear that she won't recognize me.

"The beard helps, but I had to shave it off a couple of times, so she's been shocked for the first few hours. She looks at me like, 'Do I love you? I think I love you.' I have to win back her trust," he said.

The 32-year-old actor has 13-month-old girl with wife Amelia Warner. In the erotic thriller 'Fifty Shades of Grey', Dornan plays the lead role of Christian Grey. The film is slated to release on 14 February.

PTI

Madonna defends posting pictures of Mandela, Luther King



LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan — Pop diva Madonna has sparked controversy after she posted altered images of Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela on her Instagram account.

The 56-year-old singer now took to Facebook to defend her action and said those pics were never intended to insult anyone, reported *TMZ*.

Madonna posted a series of black-and-white pictures on her page on 2 January, showing the faces of Mandela, Luther King and various icons bound with black string.

"This is neither a crime or an insult or racist," she posted on the social-networking site. "I'm saying they are Rebel Hearts too," she added. —PTI

Selena Gomez spotted with new guy in Dubai

LOS ANGELES, 5 Jan — Pop star Selena Gomez was seen bonding with a businessman during a holiday in Dubai, and has reportedly fallen for the hunk. The 22-year-old singer has been holidaying in the United Arab Emirates with friends over the past week and is believed to have fallen for Harith Bukhash, 29, reported *Hollywood Life*. "She is having the best time of her life in Dubai. She really bonded with Harith. He has helped show Selena how she really deserves to be treated, like a princess. Plus, he makes her laugh and that's all they have been doing while in Dubai, laughing and having fun," a source said.

Bukhash, who is the co-founder of boutique talent agency Bukhash Brothers, planned the 'Come and Get It' singer's trip to the city — on which she has been accompanied by Kendall Jenner, Gigi Hadid, Cody Simpson and Shay Mitchell amongst others — and has helped her get over her former on/off boyfriend, Justin Bieber.

"Selena is having the time of her life in Dubai. She's been spending time with Harith Bukhash, who has been spoiling her and treating her like an absolute princess. It's like, Justin Bieber who? Selena is loving all the attention and is so grateful that her friends convinced her to go to Dubai," the source added. —PTI



Real's record run ends as Barca also lose

BARCELONA, 5 Jan — Real Madrid's Spanish record 22-match winning streak ended in a 2-1 defeat at Valencia but they remained top of La Liga after a depleted Barcelona crashed 1-0 away to Real Sociedad on Sunday.

Real, who last dropped points against champions Atletico Madrid in mid-September, remain a point clear of Barcelona and have a game in hand.

Jordi Alba headed into his own net in the second minute to give Sociedad the lead against a Barca side with Lionel Messi and Neymar on the bench having only returned on Friday from their Christmas break.

Barca failed to link up well in attack and it was David Moyes' side that carried the greater threat

on the counter for much of the game.

In the final stages, with Messi and Neymar on, Barca did begin to press but the San Sebastian hosts were resolute at the back.

"There is no point in saying what might have happened if they (Messi and Neymar) had started the game," Barca coach Luis Enrique told a news conference.

"I thought it was the right decision as I didn't want to take a risk with the players who had just returned from holiday and a long trip less than two days before. I decided to put them on in the second half.

"I don't think the result was just as we didn't deserve to lose but this is football and it can happen that you don't get the luck

when you need it."

It was a memorable victory for former Manchester United manager Moyes, who has been Sociedad coach for less than two months and now sees his team move up to 13th with 18 points.

Real Madrid took the lead against Valencia after Alvaro Negredo handled a Toni Kroos free kick in the penalty area and Cristiano Ronaldo coolly placed the spot kick into the corner with 14 minutes played.

An Andres Gomes shot deflected off Dani Carvajal and hit a post in first-half stoppage time as Valencia battled back and Antonio Barragan then saw a shot deflect in off Pepe in the 52nd before Nicolas Otamendi nodded home a corner after 65 minutes.



Valencia's players celebrate their victory over Real Madrid after their Spanish first division soccer match at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia, on 4 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

"We have to give credit to Valencia. It's sad that we have dropped three points and our run has come to an end but the league is long," Real de-

fender Sergio Ramos told reporters.

"Before we didn't say that we had it won and in no way are we now going to say we have lost the league.

"Valencia played their way and did very well. They packed players in the middle of the pitch and took the points."

It all looked good for Real early on with their lethal counter-attacking putting them ahead. Gareth Bale was brought down by Lucas Orban and from the resulting free kick, Real won the penalty.

The game, though, became feisty with plenty of chances for both sides and it was Valencia's greater drive that allowed them to turn the game around in the second half.

It was a poor start to the New Year for Real, who picked up their fourth piece of silverware in 2014 when they won the Club World Cup last month.

Reuters

Takanashi wins Megmilk Snow Brand meet

SAPPORO, 5 Jan — Ski jumper Sara Takanashi came from behind to win the Megmilk Snow Brand competition for the first time in four years on Sunday.

Takanashi, who came fourth at the inaugural women's competition at the Sochi Olympics last year, had a leap of 90 metres to move into second on her first attempt before a 94-metre effort on her second run placed her in first with 230.0 points at

Miyanomori Ski Jump Stadium.

Yuka Seto, who had the day's longest jump of 95 meters on her first attempt on the K-90 hill, came second with 220.0, while Yuki Ito managed third.

Shohei Tochimoto, who jumped 96 and 92.5 metres in the men's competition, claimed his first victory in three years in a field missing the world's top ski jumpers who are competing overseas.

Kyodo News

Japan's Sara Takanashi soars through the air during the women's ski jumping at the Megmilk Snow Brand competition at Miyanomori Ski Jump Stadium in the northern Japan city of Sapporo on 4 Jan, 2015. Takanashi won the competition with 230.0 points.

KYODO NEWS



Moyes praises Sociedad defence after Barca win



Real Sociedad coach David Moyes reacts during their Spanish first division soccer match against Barcelona at Anoeta stadium in San Sebastian on 4 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

BARCELONA, 5 Jan — Real Sociedad coach David Moyes praised his side's determined defending after their 1-0 victory over Barcelona on Sunday.

Moyes has had little to cheer about over the last year but was all smiles after his side held on to beat Barca after taking the lead in

the second minute through an own-goal by Jordi Alba.

The Scotsman lasted less than a season at the helm of Manchester United before being sacked last April and took on a tough task when he agreed to take over a Sociedad side fighting relegation in November.

There were plenty of

doubts in the local media over his lack of experience of Spanish football, and his inability to speak the language, but he has made a solid start, building from the back and they have lost only one game so far.

"I am very happy to get the result, it was a very important and it was a very hard game," Moyes told a news conference.

"We worked hard defensively and defending is a big part of football. You don't win games if you don't defend well. The way that we played at the back gave us the chance to win this game.

"I always hope that we have the ball in all our matches but against Barcelona you know that this is difficult.

"This is something that we can improve on but I would like to emphasize

the spirit of the team and the way we worked hard together."

Sociedad's task was arguably made easier with both Lionel Messi and Neymar left on the bench in the first half having only returned last Friday from their Christmas break and Moyes said he was not surprised by Barca coach Luis Enrique's team selection.

"I wouldn't say that it was more straightforward as Barcelona have a strong squad with great players," he said. "They have top players though and they can't always be at their best in all games.

"The most important games for Barcelona will come later in the season and I think Luis Enrique made a sensible decision. I thought something like this would happen and we were prepared for it."—Reuters

MRTV
Entertainment Channel

(6-1-2015, Tuesday)

6:00 am

- Travelogue Programme

6:30 am

- Honour Song of Alinka Kyaw Swar Myoma Nyein

6:50 am

- TV Drama Series

7:20 am

- Kyae Pwint Myaye Yin Khone Than

7:40 am

- TV Drama Series

8:25 am

- TV Drama Series

9:10 am

- Musical Programme

9:25 am

- Asean — China Cultural

9:45 am

- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

10:00 am

- Myanmar Video

12:00 am

- Close Down

MITV
MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(6-1-15 07:00 am~
7-1-15 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * Insight Myanmar "Overview of Child Protection Program"
- * World News
- * Myanmar Masterclass: Still Life (Glass)
- * Local News
- * Cruising To Precious Islands (Part-2)
- * World News
- * The Storytellers
- * Local News
- * Myanmar Performing Arts-Puppet
- * World News
- * Lawka Nandar Wildlife Sanctuary
- * Local News
- * Food Trip (Ep-3)
- * World News

- * Next Weekend
- * Local News
- * Bagan arts and handicrafts
- * World News
- * Colonial Buildings and a New Yangon
- * Local News
- * Cruising To Precious Islands (Part-1)
- * World News
- * Distinguished Myanmar Ladies "Ma Myint Zu"
- * Local News
- * Myanmar Chef (Japanese)
- * World News
- * The Pride of Myanmar "Traditional Handicraft"
- * Local News
- * YUFL
- * World News
- * In The Studio "Hseng Sam"

Torres in line for Atletico return in Madrid derby

BARCELONA, 5 Jan — Atletico Madrid's prodigal son Fernando Torres could make his return in a heated derby with Real Madrid on Wednesday in the last 16 of the King's Cup if he looks sharp in training, coach Diego Simeone has said.

The former Atletico captain, who played 244 games for his home-town club where he debuted aged 17, has signed an 18-month loan deal from AC Milan which will become effective when the Italian transfer market opens on Monday.

"He will train with us, play a bit of football and we will see how he is," Simeone told a news conference.

Torres, nicknamed El Nino (The Kid), was an Atletico emblem who left the stuttering club in 2007 to seek his fortune at Liv-



Spain forward Fernando Torres (C) poses with his new jersey with Atletico Madrid's President Enrique Cerezo (L) and the club's Sports Director Jose Luis Perez Caminero during his presentation ceremony at Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid, on 4 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

erpool and Chelsea and has now returned to a side that broke the monopoly of Real and Barcelona by

winning La Liga last season.

The success under Simeone

has brought a new perspective to the Madrid derby which Real had become used to winning at a canter.

Last season Atletico suffered an excruciating extra-time defeat in the Champions League final but beat their city rivals in the Spanish Super Cup, this season's curtain raiser.

Atletico have reacted well to the loss of key personnel ahead of this season and lie third in La Liga but face a stern test of their mettle this week.

First they have the first-leg visit of Real, whose Spanish record 22-match winning streak was ended in a La Liga defeat at Valencia on Sunday, followed by a trip to Barcelona in the league next weekend.

"We are calm having got the victory and now we will prepare for the cup game which is very important for us," Simeone said after Saturday's 3-1 victory over Levante in La Liga.

"Then we will start thinking about Barcelona but with the same mentality as ever."

Real also have a testing run of games which started with the Valencia reverse but coach Carlo Ancelotti has said he will give equal importance to the league and cup.

"We don't have a priority. We will concentrate on the next game and we will put out the best team possible," Ancelotti told a news conference, while acknowledging there might still be rotation.

"It will be necessary to rest players so as to avoid injuries and have the squad more motivated."

Elsewhere, Barcelona have a seemingly easier passage into the next round of the cup against La Liga bottom side Elche, with the first leg on Thursday.

Reuters

Walcott back and happy alongside 'special' Sanchez

LONDON, 5 Jan — Theo Walcott was thrilled to be back in business for Arsenal in their FA Cup third round win on Sunday as he declared his delight at playing alongside "special player" Alexis Sanchez.

Walcott played 76 minutes of Arsenal's 2-0 victory over Hull City at the Emirates Stadium, enjoying his first start in exactly a year since suffering the knee injury which kept him out of England's World Cup plans.

It was a quiet but encouraging return which prompted the 25-year-old to tell the BBC: "It was nice for me personally to blow the cobwebs away after being out for a year to the day. It was nice to get involved and get a few chances. I wanted to put them away and it wasn't to be."

Yet the man who says he is still determined to end his career as "an Arsenal legend" suspected he may be watching another in the shape of Sanchez, who was brilliant the entire match before scoring Arsenal's decisive second after 82 minutes.

"Alexis Sanchez is a special player and it was nice to get on the pitch with him finally. I'm looking forward to plenty more," said Walcott.

His return spells good news for England as well as Arsenal, the FA Cup holders who are seeking to improve in the second half of the season after dropping to sixth in the Premier League.

Walcott said it felt good to be back after the sometimes solitary slog to recover fitness.

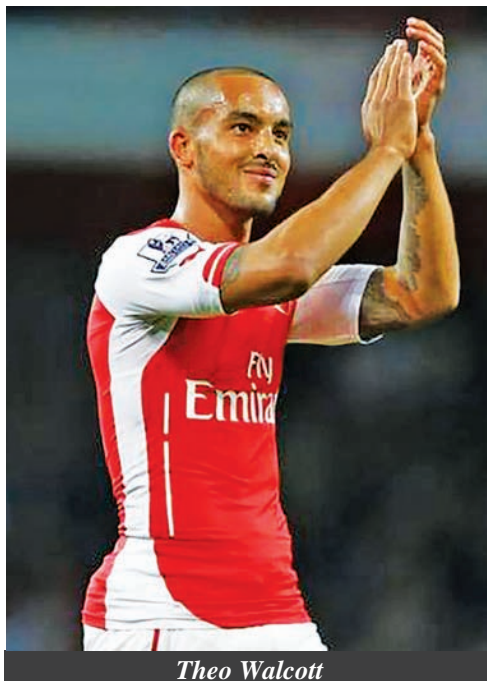
"I think mentally it is very

hard when you are in the treatment room alone, when your team mates are going out to train or going to the World Cup," said the player, who ruptured his anterior cruciate ligament.

"But I had a lot going on in my life off the field which helped me keep going."

Walcott showed he had not lost his electric pace but his finishing, as he miscued one glaring opportunity, demonstrated some rustiness.

Reuters



Theo Walcott

Newcastle terminate Ben Arfa's contract

LONDON, 5 Jan — Newcastle United terminated France midfielder Hatem Ben Arfa's contract on Sunday ahead of his imminent move to French Ligue 1 side Nice. "Newcastle United can today confirm that Hatem Ben Arfa and the Club have reached an agreement to terminate the contract between both parties with immediate effect by mutual consent," the Premier League club said on their website.

"Newcastle United wishes Hatem all the best for his future."

Nice said on Saturday that Ben Arfa would have a medical on Monday.

The player, who has 13 caps and scored two goals for France,



Hatem Ben Arfa celebrates during an English Premier League soccer match at St James' Stadium in Newcastle, northern England, on 31 Aug, 2013. REUTERS

joined Newcastle from Olympique de Marseille in 2010 but fell out of favour at St James' Park after former manager Alan Pardew raised questions about his fitness and work ethic.

Ben Arfa moved on loan to Hull City at the start of the season but that deal was terminated last month following a disagreement with manager Steve Bruce.—Reuters

Williams wins Hopman Cup opener after coffee and bagel

PERTH, 5 Jan — World number one Serena Williams credited an on-court coffee for her recovery after she stormed back from a first set bagel to beat Italy's Flavia Pennetta in her opening match of the year at the Hopman Cup on Monday.

The 33-year-old American looked all at sea during the opening stages of the early morning match in a sweltering Perth but the caffeine hit did just the trick as her serve clicked into gear for a 0-6, 6-3, 6-0 win. "I'm so jet lagged and Flavia played really, really well and yeah, everyone needs coffee every now and then. I needed coffee to get my feet moving," Williams said in an on court interview to roars of appreciation from the crowd. "I wanted coffee with my bagel and whatever coffee it was, it was really good." The 18-times grand slams singles champion is aiming for a sixth Australian Open in Melbourne later this month and is using the round robin mixed team event as preparation for the year's first grand slam. Compatriot John Isner was taking on Fabio Fognini following Williams's win with the big-serving American duo teaming up for the mixed doubles against the Italian pair later on Monday. The Australian Open runs from 19 January - 1 February with Williams aiming for a first singles title in Melbourne since 2010 after early exits in recent years. "Its been too long," she said. "Hopefully I will at least get past the quarters."—Reuters



Serena Williams of the US reacts after winning a shot against Flavia Pennetta of Italy during their women's singles tennis match at the 2015 Hopman Cup in Perth, on 5 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS