President U Thein Sein sends messages of felicitations to Qatar

Nay Pyi Taw, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, and His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the State of Qatar, on the occasion of the anniversary of the National Day of the State of Qatar, which falls on 18 December 2014.—MNA

President U Thein Sein inspects multipurpose dam projects

Nay Pyi Taw, 17 Dec—President U Thein Sein on Wednesday inspected the sites of two multipurpose dam projects being constructed in the Sagaing Region, urging that the projects be completed on schedule and that efforts be made to improve the livelihoods of local people.

The president visited the sites in Kalay Township together with Union Ministers U Myint Hlaing, U Ohn Myint, Dr Than Aung, U Kyaw Lwin, Dr Ko Ko Oo and Lt-Gen Myint Soe of the Office of the Command-in-Chief (Army).

He and his party were welcomed upon arrival at Kalay Airport in the morning by Chief Minister of Sagaing Region U Tha Aye, the commander of North-West Command, members of Sagaing Region Government, town elders and cultural groups of the locals.

They then left for the Myittha Multipurpose Dam Project site where they were welcomed by Chief Minister of Magway Region U Phone Maw Shwe and representatives. While there, the president inspected the completion of water storage facilities and the power station.

Afterwards, at a briefing hall, Union Minister U Myint Hlaing and Director-General U Kyaw Myint Hlaing briefed him on salient points of the project and how construction tasks are progressing.

The president said the dam will help boost incomes of local people as they will be able to grow double crops, while it will also supply electricity to small industries including finished wood products and help raise living standards. He urged officials to exert efforts to complete the project in the 2015-16 fiscal year including housing and a school for four villages that were displaced by the dam. Arrangements are ongoing.

(Myanmar text is not included in this excerpt.)

Myanmar textile industry to mass produce quality cotton wear at fair price in future

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

Yangon, 17 Dec—Traditional cotton wears are in high demand at a time when the country’s textile industry sees less production, a local entrepreneur said, expecting that the industry will mass produce quality cotton wear at a fair price in the future.

Low production level, rising prices of raw materials, poor transportation and labour scarcity are reasons why cotton wear prices are high, Ma Phyu Ei Thein, a textile Artist from Sunflowers Group, told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

She added that although traditional textile prices are up for trading, the industry generated more profits than last year. It is expected to witness a further boom in the future.

Technician U Than Tun, an owner of Pyitdinehtuang natural dyework in Kalay Township, said efforts be made to improve the livelihoods of local people.

By Ye Myint

Yangon, 17 Dec—Myanmar’s preliminary population size of 51.4 million has increased by more than 230,000 over the April to October period, thanks to the excess of births to deaths.

Photo shows the visit of census enumerator to a house in Myanmar where the 2014 Population and Housing Census of Myanmar took place between 30 March and 10 April. —Credit to UNFPA Myanmar

(Myanmar population is not included in this excerpt.)
Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets Thai General

NAI PYI TAW, 17 December—Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win received Commander-in-Chief of Royal Thai Army General Udomdej Sitabutr at the Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw on Wednesday morning.

First, the vice senior general and the Thai army chief took the salute of Guard of Honour and the Thai army chief inspected the Guards of Honour.

Then, the vice senior general and the Thai army chief held discussions on promotion of relations between the two armies, stability of border areas, drug trafficking, further cooperation in territorial affairs, medical science, agriculture, livestock breeding and learning of Thai and Myanmar languages.

Also present were Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) Gen Hla Huy Win, senior officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, the commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, Myanmar military attaché to Thailand Brig-Gen Chit Swe, senior officers from Royal Army of Thailand, the military attaché of Thailand to Myanmar.

After the talks, they exchanged insignias.

Union Religious Affairs Minister attends paper reading session of Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence

NAI PYI TAW, 17 December—Union Minister for Religious Affairs U Soe Win attended the religious paper reading session in ancient cultural city Bagan Wednesday.

The two-day event was organized by the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University with the title of ‘The Future Development of Buddha Dhamma and Cultivating the Right Thought for Peace and Harmony of Human Beings’, marking the 60th anniversary of signing the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence among Myanmar, China and India, where the Buddhism is flourishing with a great momentum.

The trio signed the treaty in 1954 to cooperate in regional affairs that cover mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs; equality and cooperation for mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence.

At the opening of paper reading session, Union Minister U Soe Win said that the commemoration ceremony of the 60th anniversary of this treaty was also held in China July this year, with President U Thein Sein hoisting the golden sacred umbrella at the Maha Cinapabha Pagoda, a replica of Shwedagon Pagoda, at Louchang, Henan Province. U Soe Win said that the paper reading session for Buddhism is ducers and endeavor to stabilize prices, both measures that would play a vital role in making domestic products more cost-competitive as those producers are struggling to compete in the face of cheap foreign imports. As for locals, foreign-made clothes are more attractive than local ones because of their cheaper prices.

Myanmar textile industry will... (from page 1)

Mandalay, expressed his view that the prices of traditional textile may be likely to fall in the future due to the developing of local entrepreneurs in the industry.

A trainer of a state-owned weaving school said that the country sees a higher number of interested young people who want to pursue dyeing and weaving subjects at the schools.

So far, the government has opened 14 weaving and vocational training schools where six or twelve month long diploma courses on weaving, dyeing and cotton-related designs have been provided by the skilled trainers. But there is a shortage of trainers at those schools as they are moved to administrative bodies.

Phys Ei Thet said that in her view, the government should consider establishing more training schools to produce more skilled labourers and offering master’s degrees to produce more entrepreneurs. For the country as a whole, people who run natural dyeing works number no more than 10.

She also urged the government to provide more tax exemptions for small producers of organic material dyed products such as mango tree, Sappen Wood, gooseberry and onion skins are being displayed at an exhibition in Yangon.—PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

Union Election Commission Chairman U Tin Aye meets officials of London-based The Elders.—MNA

NAI PYI TAW, 17 December—Chairman U Tin Aye of Union Election Commission (UEC) and Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, Mr Martti Ahtisaari, Mr Lakhdar Brahimi and party of London-based The Elders, an independent group for peace and human rights, on Wednesday discussed arrangement for Myanmar’s upcoming election.

During the discussion, U Tin Aye said that the UEC will hold a transparent, free and fair election in 2015, making a clarification on process of gathering voting list, educative campaigns and cooperation among media, social organizations and political parties.

Local and overseas observers will be invited to monitor the election, he added. The chairman of UEC replied to queries raised by the Elders. Member of the commission Dr Daw Myint Kyi discussed gender process.—MNA

Union FM sends message of felicitations to Qatar

NAI PYI TAW, 18 December—U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to H.E. Dr. Khalid bin Mohamed Al-Attyiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, on the occasion of the anniversary of the National Day of the State of Qatar, which falls on 18 December 2014.

Myanmar population increases... (from page 1)

Birth and death data compiled during the seven-month period, indicates that the birthrate is greater than the death rate, resulting in an increase in the country’s population size based on the provisional results of the 2014 population and household census. The information was revealed at the second forum on birth registration in Myanmar on Monday.

According to the Ministry of Immigration and Population, the country’s natural population growth, or excess of births to deaths, was 237,975 as the birth rate of 375,763 exceeded the death rate of 137,788.

Records acquired from the registration of births and deaths, which was launched on 1 April, showed there were approximately 191,279 males and 184,484 females born during the seven-month period while 78,758 males and 59,030 females died.

For ensuring coverage of birth and death registration in Myanmar, the central committee for birth and death registration statistics coordination was formed in January, said the ministry.

In cooperation with parties concerned, including UNICEF Myanmar that has received funding from the European Union, the ministry conducted birth registration week in October, with the result that more than 120,000 children under the age of 5 in Chin and Mon States and Magway Region got registered and received birth certificates, added the ministry.

The provisional results of the first nationwide census Myanmar undertook in more than 30 years were released on 30 August. The main results of the census will be announced in May next year.—GNLM

Textile products dyed with the use of organic materials including bark of mango tree, Sappen Wood, gooseberry and onion skins are being displayed at an exhibition in Yangon.—PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN
President U Thein Sein inspects . . .

(from page 1)

under way to develop farmland for the locals and to provide rice while until their farmland is ready to grow crops.

At the project area, the president visited a monastery in Simpon Village built by the project and paid homage to the monks. He also met warmly with the local people and discussed education, health and economic conditions of the area with them.

Afterwards, the president and party continued to Yazagyo Multipurpose Dam Project near Yazagyo village in Kalay Township.

Union Minister U Myint Hlaing and officials reported to the president on completion of the project, development of farmland and generation of electricity.

The president said that it is necessary to introduce double crops with the water from the dam, to build a rice mill run with electricity from the dam and to export rice after maintaining rice sufficiency in the region.

MNA

Myanmar, Chinese vice presidents attend closing ceremony of ASEAN-China Cultural Exchange Year

NAV PYI TAW, 17 Dec

— Vice-President U Nyan Tun and Chinese Vice President Mr Li Yuanchao attended the closing ceremony of the ASEAN-China Cultural Exchange Year 2014 held at Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 in Nay Pyi Taw on Tuesday evening.

In his speech at the ceremony, Vice President U Nyan Tun said that people in ASEAN countries and China were able to appreciate their different cultures and promote the existing friendship between the ASEAN and China through cultural exchange programmes during the ASEAN-China Cultural Exchange Year, adding that this will help people to understand more opportunities in the region.

Significant events of the ASEAN-China Cultural Exchange Year 2014 included the opening and closing ceremonies that were held in accordance with the motto “Our Culture, Our Future” which is in line with Post 2015 vision of the ASEAN and strengthens the people-to-people relations, the vice president said.

The vice president continued that 2014 is a milestone in the ASEAN-China relations which is advancing on the positive path that covers economic, social and cultural cooperation.

In conclusion, the vice president said that the ASEAN always welcomes the support of dialogue partners including China in building the politically united, economically integrated and socially responsible people-centred rule-based ASEAN.

Chinese Vice President Mr Li Yuanchao made a speech at the ceremony, saying that cultural exchange programs were carried out with the aim of strengthening the cultural cooperation between the people during the ASEAN-China Cultural Exchange Year and promised to cooperate with the ASEAN in stability, development and establishing the ASEAN Economic Community.

Afterwards, artists from Myanmar and other ASEAN countries and China performed traditional dances and the dance depicting Our Culture, Our Future.

Then, the two vice presidents presented the artists with floral baskets and posed for a documentary photo with them.

Present at the ceremony were union ministers, ministers of culture from ASEAN countries, deputy ministers, high level delegations, officials and guests.—MNA

Commander-in-Chief receives Thai military delegation, The Elders

MNA

NAV PYI TAW, 17 Dec

— Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received military delegation of Thailand and representatives of The Elders, a London-based international non-governmental organization of public figures here Wednesday.

While meeting with Commander-in-Chief of Royal Thai Army General Udomdej Sitabutr and his senior military officers, the Senior General said that the militaries of the two neighbouring are in good relations, exchanging different views and sharing various experiences, to protect the prosperity of people from both countries.

The meeting discussed security of border areas, anti-terrorism measures and fight against illegal trades.

In the afternoon, the Commander-in-Chief also met with the representatives of The Elders, led by Dr Mrs Gro Harlem Brundtland, the former premier of Norway, and Mr Martt Ahitsaari, the Noble laureate and former president of Finland.

At the meeting with The Elders, the Senior General said that Tatmadaw is striving for nationwide cease fire agreement and lasting peace with the ethnic groups amidst some challenging democratic re-form processes.

Gro Harlem Brundtland and Mr Martt Ahitsaari said that The Elders understand some complications Myanmar is facing, and noted no federal union army in the world.

Senior military officials of Myanmar and the former global leaders then discussed about peace-making process, the role of Tatmadaw in the elections and ethnic affairs.—Myawady

Vice President U Nyan Tun and Chinese Vice President Mr Li Yuanchao enjoy entertainment at closing of the ASEAN-China Cultural Exchange Year 2014.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker meets Vice President of PRC

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann cordially greets Chinese Vice President Mr Li Yuanchao.—MNA

NAV PYI TAW, 17 Dec

— Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann held high level delegations of the People’s Republic of China to meet with Vice President of the People’s Republic of China Mr Li Yuanchao and party at his office here to discuss further strengthening relations between the two nations.

At the call, they discussed promotion of collaboration between the two parliaments, governments and peoples, and action plans for implementation of Myanmar-China comprehensive strategic cooperator partnership.

Also present at the meeting were chairpersons and members of the Hluttaw. The Vice President was accompanied by Mr Yang Houlun, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar.—MNA
Skilled workers harvest rice crop by agricultural machinery

Myingyan, 17 Dec—Rice crop was harvested from paddies of Jokpin village in Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, on 15 December. At a ceremony, Head of District Agricultural Mechanization Department U Myint Lwin explained that workers of the township AMD were helping local farmers harvest the rice with the use of India-made KS9300 combine harvesters, due to shortage of manpower. Workers ploughed the farmlands by tractor.

The ceremony was attended by district and township level officials and local farmers.—Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)

Writers lecture raising reading skills in Mohnyin

Mohnyin, 17 Dec—With the assistance of Myanmar Libraries Foundation, Department of Information and Public Relations and Basic Education Department jointly organized the educative talks for development of school libraries and raising reading skills at No. 2 Basic Education High School in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, on 15 December.

Head of Kachin State IPRD U Htein Lin Aung delivered a speech at the talk.

Three writers from Township Writers Association shared knowledge about techniques for development of school libraries and raising the reading skills of students.

Officials presented prizes to winners in the poem recitation, essay, extempore talks and reading skill contests.

The event was attended by Mohnyin District’s deputy commissioner U Aung Soe Moe and departmental officials, District Education Officer U La Roi, Township Education Officer Daw Khin Khin Nwe, teachers and students, totalling more than 500.—GNLM-001

Specialists give free healthcare services to locals

Natogyi, 17 Dec—Under the arrangements of Mandalay Region Pyithu Hluttaw representatives U Kyi Pe and U Aye Thant Swe, a specialist team gave free medical treatment to local people at Basic Education High School in Natogyi, Mandalay Region, on 13 December.

The specialists led by the head of Mandalay Region Health Department gave medical checkups to 3,233 patients.

Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Zaw Myint Pe, Mandalay Region Hluttaw representatives U Kyi Pe and U Aye Thant Swe provided necessary assistance to the specialist team.

Mdy High Court presents uniforms to staff

Mandalay, 17 Dec—As staff welfare activity, a ceremony to provide uniforms to judicial officers and staff was held at Mandalay Region High Court on 15 December.

After giving a speech, Chief Justice of Mandalay Region U Soe Thein presented uniforms to judicial officers and staff for 2014.
Philippines beefs up military’s naval capabilities

MANILA, 17 Dec — The Philippines is beefing up its military’s naval assets and capabilities with the projected acquisition of frigates, antisubmarine helicopters and strategic sealift vessels, among others, within the next five years, officials said on Wednesday.

“The modernization is triggered by our mandate to protect our territory and, of course, to safeguard our sovereignty. The events in the West Philippine Sea actually did give some urgency in the acquisition,” Philippine Navy vice commander Rear Adm Caesar Taccad said at a press briefing aboard one of the navy’s two US-acquired Hamilton-class cutters.

Taccad admits the Philippine Navy lags behind the navies of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam in terms of assets and capabilities, with only a few more than 100 vessels in its inventory, of which, only two-thirds are operational.

“(Modernizing our assets and capabilities) has been urgent with us for a long time. But because of the events (in the West Philippine Sea), it became urgent to the Filipino people,” Taccad said.

With a 28 billion peso ($626 million) allotment from the national government, the Philippine Navy acquired from 2011 the two Hamilton-class cutters, at least three AW109 naval helicopters, with two more due for delivery next year, and several weapons for the Marines, including assault rifles and grenade launchers.

Next year, the navy hopes to seal a contract for the purchase of two frigates and two antisubmarine helicopters, which it expects to be delivered three to four years later.

“With its multirole capabilities such as anti-air warfare, antisurface warfare, anti-submarine warfare and anti-electronic warfare, the frigate shall provide a well-balanced and effective capability to address the current needs of the Philippine Navy...for territorial defence operations, internal security operations, naval defence and even support to other government agencies such as humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations,” Taccad said.

The strategic sealift vessels, a multipurpose vessel and another two off Taccad’s description, are being sourced from Indonesia, are expected to be delivered in 2016 and 2017.

The other items that are in the pipeline are multipurpose attack craft, amphibious assault vehicles, a maritime situation awareness system, an imagery and targeting system using an unmanned aerial vehicle and other combat and communications equipment.

The navy is also upgrading some of its patrol vessels to boost their operational readiness.

“Taccad said the navy is also studying acquiring a submarine.

“We don’t need to overtake their capability. We just need to be able to approximate their capability, and use proficiently our capability in the sense that you will be able to hurt him where it hurts most, and more or less, they feel you, your presence,” Taccad said.

“We just have to attain that credibility. If you have forces credible enough, then you have enough deterrence to stop him from doing what is threatening.”

Kyodo News

Vietnam races to rescue trapped workers as water levels rise

HANOI, 17 Dec — Vietnamese rescuers battled on Wednesday to free 12 workers trapped in a tunnel that collapsed during construction of a hydro-electricity project and said it could take days to get past entrenched mud, sand and debris as water levels rose.

The rescue involves hundreds of firefighters and members of the security forces. They managed late on Tuesday to ram a pipe through the rubble to supply air to the workers as oxygen dropped to a critical level eight hours after the accident.

But bad weather and the complicated geology of the site in the Central Highlands province of Lam Dong were hampering the effort and authorities had a race against time to drain out water after levels rose to one metre.

They dug small tunnels and reinforced the site with tree trunks to pull out sand during a mission that has dominated television networks and the front pages.

“Not only there’s only one tube to send food and oxygen inside, while water is rising,” Dang Quang Dat, director of Song Da 505, the workers’ firm, told Vietnam Television.

“We can’t just dig when we want.”

Kyodo News

Stormy weather hits wide areas of Japan, causes death, injuries

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A local resident works to remove snow on a road during a snowstorm on 17 Dec, 2014, in Kitami in Japan’s northernmost prefecture of Hokkaido. The weather agency warned of strong winds with heavy snow across the coastal areas of northern to western Japan the same day.—KYODO NEWS

Tokyo, 17 Dec — Snow, strong winds and high waves hit wide areas of Japan on Wednesday, with the stormy weather resulting in the death of a man in a skidding accident and injuries to airplane passengers caught in turbulence.

Railway services and air traffic were disrupted particularly on Japan’s northernmost main island Hokkaido and northeastern Japan due to the adverse impact of a growing low-pressure system near Hokkaido.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said stormy weather will continue through Thursday especially for Hokkaido and other parts of northern Japan, and warned against snowstorms, tidal waves and snow avalanches.

In Okayama, Hiroshima Prefecture, a man died after a truck skidded and hit a car, and he was wedged between the car and his own truck, local police said. The road was covered with snow at the time.

On Tuesday night, 12 people aboard an American Airlines flight bound for Dallas, Texas, were injured after the plane encountered severe turbulence and made an emergency landing at Narita International Airport near Tokyo.

Hokkaido Railway Co said 349 train services including commuter and limited express trains were halted in routes connecting areas such as Sapporo, Hakodate, Kushiro and Wakkanai.

East Japan Railway Co said four bullet train services on its Akiha Shinkansen Line were halted due to strong wind.

The Sanyo Shinkansen Line operated its train services between Mihara and Kokura on reduced speed due to snowfall, while limited express trains were canceled due to strong winds especially in the Hokuriku region in central Japan and areas in Tohoku facing the Sea of Japan.

Some highway sections in Hokkaido were closed due to the snowstorm, and air traffic was also affected.

All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines Co cancelled more than 280 domestic flights, affecting about 17,000 passengers. The two airlines also cancelled some of their international flights including ANA’s Chubu-Hong Kong and JAL’s Shang- hai-Narita routes.

In Hokkaido, 4,824 houses suffered blackouts in 20 municipalities including Nemuro, where a maximum wind speed of 143.64 kilometres per hour was recorded on Wednesday. Some residents who may be affected by tidal waves evacuated, while many kindergartens as well as elementary, junior high and senior high schools were also closed.

Kyodo News

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Kyodo News
Pakistan in mourning as parents bury children after school attack

PESHAWAR, (Pakistan), 17 Dec — Pakistan woke up to a day of mourning on Wednesday after Taleban militants killed 132 students at a school in the city of Peshawar in a grisly attack which shocked the nation and put pressure on the government to do more to tackle the insurgency.

People around the country lit candles and staged overnight vigils as parents prepared to bury their children during mass funerals in and around Peshawar — a big, volatile city on the edge of Pakistan’s lawless tribal belt. Pakistanis may be used to almost daily militant attacks against the security forces but an outright assault on children stunned the country, prompting commentators to call for a tough military response.

In Peshawar, the vast grounds of the military-run Army Public School were all but deserted, with a handful of snipers manning the roofs of its pink brick-and-stone buildings.

Army vehicles and soldiers wearing face masks and carrying automatic rifles were deployed by the entrance. A day after the attack, Peshawar appeared subdued and many were still in shock, recalling the gruesome events and trying to soothe each other. More details of the well-organized attack emerged as witnesses came forward with their stories.

The government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has announced a three-day mourning period but people’s anxiety focussed on what the Taliban can do to protect the country.

Sharif called for a year-long promise to negotiate peace with the Pakistani Taleban — but those efforts failed this year, weakening his position and prompting the army to launch an air-and-ground operation against insurgents along the Afghan border. The military staged more air strikes against Taleban positions there late on Tuesday, a security source said, but it was unclear whether it was done in response to the school attack. — Reuters

Iran says sees more steps ahead in nuclear talks

TEHRAN, 17 Dec — Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said on Wednesday nuclear talks with major powers facing us, like the threat to security agencies and the country with a floral tribute near the cafe.

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif

Iran, the United States, France, Germany, Britain, China and Russia failed to agree on a self-imposed 24 November deadline, so extended the talks for seven more months to address what they call complex technical details. — Reuters

Australian PM and community seek answers to Sydney cafe siege

SYDNEY, 17 Dec — Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott acknowledged on Wednesday authorities cannot monitor “every- one all the time,” as the country seeks answers for the cafe siege in Sydney in which three people died, including the attacker.

“In the country, our priority is to ensure the rights of everyone and maintain a good environment for everyone,” said Paul Grace. Paul Grace is a local radio host.

The annual drill was the eighth in a series that began in 2007. The George Washington has been based at Yokosuka, southwest of Tokyo, since 2008. — Kyodo News


Australia’s Prime Minister Tony Abbott and his wife Margie prepare to place floral tributes near the cafe in central Sydney on 16 Dec, 2014 where hostages were held for over 16-hours. — REUTERS


Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott and his wife Margie prepare to place floral tributes near the cafe in central Sydney on 16 Dec, 2014 where hostages were held for over 16-hours. — REUTERS

Women mourn their relative Mohammed Ali Khan, 15, a student who was killed during an attack by Taleban gunmen on the Army Public School, at his house in Peshawar on 16 Dec, 2014. — REUTERS

Women mourn their relative Mohammed Ali Khan, 15, a student who was killed during an attack by Taleban gunmen on the Army Public School, at his house in Peshawar on 16 Dec, 2014. — REUTERS
Putin in talks by phone with Merkel, Hollande, Poroshenko discusses Ukraine crisis

The four leaders underscored the necessity to ensure a stable ceasefire in Donbass, the press service said. They noted it was important to hold a meeting of the Contact Group as soon as possible for the implementation of the Minsk agreements and establish a dialogue between Kiev and the southeast. Among priorities are exchange of captives and withdrawal of heavy weapons from the confrontation line, they said. The four leaders also discussed economic restoration of the eastern regions and humanitarian and social support for the population. They agreed to continue telephone contacts in the “Norman format”, the Kremlin press service said.

Obama signs bill $1.1 trillion government spending bill

North Waziristan. Fazlullah is known to have camped in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan bordering Pakistan. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has approved an end to the moratorium on capital punishment in terrorism-related cases, an official in the Prime Minister House said. The moratorium has been in place since 2008.

Pakistan army chief visits Kabul to seek cooperation against militants

US rejects Manila’s bid for custody of US Marine accused of murder

Activists participate in a protest to seek justice for a Filipino transgender Jeffrey Laude, who also goes by the name Jennifer, outside a Justice Hall where a preliminary investigation was held at Olongapo City, north of Manila on 7 Oct, 2014. — Reuters

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Speed limits for a safe society

By Aung Khin

Every major highway has signposts with speed limits, even though they are nearly perfect, straight and smooth. On many highways there will be some crossroads or junctions with open spaces or obstacles that obscure the view.

Speed limitation is needed as the highways are not for reckless driving. Dangerous driving with unlimited speed can cause fatalities. Therefore, each country or territory sets different limits for vehicles such as cars and trucks.

No highway is 100 percent safe because there can be infrastructural flaws or traffic accidents. A driver may be very clever at driving or the vehicle may be equipped with the latest technologies, however, life-threatening accidents can still happen at any time if there is uncontrolled driving.

Some jurisdictions set lower speed limits for large commercial vehicles like heavy trucks and buses, which do not apply to light trucks or private cars. Speed limits also depend on the type of vehicle, in addition to the areas where they are being driven.

‘Freedom’ is like a smooth highway with less hurdles or obstacles. However, when we the people are going along the highway of freedom, we need to respect certain limits to be able to enjoy it. When freedom is abused with reckless abandon, the consequences and impacts will affect both the individual and the whole society.

Freedom is needed for an open society. However, with freedom comes responsibility. People should not use it recklessly. Drive safely on the roads. Enjoy freedom with limits for a safe and peaceful society.

FIH SERIES CO-MANAGEMENT IN THE AYEYAWADY REGION

The FAO Project “Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture Livelihoods in Coastal Mangrove Ecosystems” held at the Ayeyawady Shwe Gaw Hall in Pathein on the 12th December 2014, Ayeyawady Region, the 17th Fisheries Co-management Workshop, with the participation of regional authorities, regional, district and township fishery officers, the Italian NGO OIKOS, and FAO staff of the “Environmentally Sustainable Food Security Programme”. His Excellency, U San Maung, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Breeding, Ayeyawady Region, made the closing remarks of the workshop.

The author of this article and also the Chief Technical Advisor, explained that the project “Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture Livelihoods in Coastal Mangrove Ecosystems”, funded by the Government of Italy, is a pilot initiative, that explores the potential and modalities of working with village fishing communities to better manage fisheries activities and resources in their fishing area. It is expected that the experiences and lessons learned through the pilot project will result in a proper set of policies guidelines in fisheries co-management and that successful approaches would be expanded on a wider scale in future. The Village Fisheries Societies (VFS), supported by their Village Fisheries Management Committees (VFMC) are the drivers for management changes in the freshwater fishery within 20 villages along the main branch of the Bogale River in the Ayeyawady Delta. The results of the initiative is the transfer of sustainable fishing rights [Tender Lotes] to the VFS, composed by small-scale fishers and other members involved in fishery related activities.

Through the project, the management responsibility for freshwater fisheries has been transferred for the first time in Myanmar, from the Government to these local Village Fisheries Societies (VFS) and twenty villages have the right to manage the resources within their own village boundaries and fisheries management area. More effective management arrangements have been developed to limit fishing pressure, to manage resources effectively and ensure greater compliance by fishers through the village fisheries co-management plan. This innovative approach has therefore enabled local fisher communities to manage the fishery resources, promoting their long-term sustainability and thereby improving livelihoods through the management of Tender Lots in open waters.

Methodology and Intervention

The Village-Based Freshwater Fisheries Co-management Approach is based on the following principles:

- meeting the livelihood needs of the fishing village;
- effective village and stakeholder institutions;
- establishment of VFS and VFMC, governed by a set of by-laws, for the implementation of a Fisheries Co-management Plan to manage the fishing tender lots in a sustainable manner, creating benefits for the largest number of villagers involved in fisheries;
- effective partnership arrangements with stakeholders [e.g. regional, district and township fisheries officers, NGO and concerned institutions];
- participatory processes for consultation and decision making;
- a policy framework and legal framework;
- best available information and continuous improvement; and
- including the ecosystem approach to fisheries co-management.

Village-based freshwater fisheries co-management is a formal partnership arrangement where the stakeholders jointly manage the fisheries resources using local formal/informal traditional/customary practices supported by legislation and the regional and district fisheries government systems. For clarity, the definition of fisheries Co-Management is: ‘a partnership arrangement in which government, the community of local resource users and external agents (e.g. NGOs, academic and research institutions), and other resource stakeholders share the responsibility and authority for the management of a resource which covers various partnership arrangements and degrees of power sharing and integration of local informal/traditional/customary practices and centralized government systems.’

Under the Project’s interventions, the fishing rights became stronger, fisher incomes increased, cost of operations decreased, small fishers selling to highest bidder, reduction of pressure on natural resources through reduction in use of fishing gear and reduction in inequalities, tensions and conflicts.

The benefits derived during the Pilot Project from the application of a Co-management approach include:

- improve fisheries livelihood;
- enhance socio-economic life of the small-scale fishers;
- sustain fisheries resources in line with reducing negative impact;
- reduce pressure on village fisheries resources;
- less fishing gears used;
- less cost for stow-net fisher to access Tender Lot areas;
- greater returns from higher prices for small scale fishers;
- reduction in inequalities and conflict;
- building capacity of fishers and stakeholders;
- higher levels of compliance with fisheries rules [reduced illegal fishing];
- improved small scale infrastructure [e.g. roads and jetties]; and
- improved relationship with Township Fisheries Officer.

Conclusion

This is the first time that the management responsibility for Tender Lot fisheries has been shared by a village community in Myanmar and reflects the longer term vision of Department of Fisheries to develop more effective co-management arrangements whereby measures to increase livelihoods and limit fishing pressure, manage resources more effectively and ensure greater compliance can be achieved.

The key outcome of the Project was the move towards sustainability within the village communities. For example:

- Environmental-reduction in the number of stow-nets in each Tender Lot, reduction of overfishing, agreements for reducing net mesh sizes;
- Social-increased cohesion and mutual trust in the communities, fishers empowered and with an active role in the communities; and
- Economical-immediate return for VFS, increased incomes for the fishers and stability of income to Fisheries Department.

Giuseppe Romalli
Chief Technical Advisor, ESFSP

GOLD PRICE, FE RATE (17-12-2014)

Yangon Gold Price
Buying K666,500 per tical: Selling K667,500
Mandalay Gold Price
Buying K666,500 per tical: Selling K667,500

FE RATE
USD Buying K 1033: Selling K----
SGD Buying K 785: Selling K795
Euro Buying K1,280: Selling K1,300
Nay Pyi Taw Council Area gets small- and medium-scale industrial zone

— A ceremony to inaugurate a small- and medium-scale industrial zone was held in Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, on Wednesday morning.

Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Dekkhinathiri Small- and Medium-scale Industrial Zone Allotment Committee and Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Myint Swe opened the signboard of the zone.

Members of Nay Pyi Taw Council and officials attended the inauguration ceremony of Mann Shin gas plant in the industrial zone.

The zone is located on 385 acres of land, facilitated with one power station for electrification round the clock. Concrete roads have been constructed in the zone for smooth transport of entrepreneurs. It is 20th industrial zone of its kind in the nation and the 1st zone in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

Land reclamation is being undertaken for the second industrial zone in Tatkon Township.

Shwe Kokko

Myanmar, China show off better trade relations

— The Myanmar-China border trade fair successfully concluded at 105-Mile Trade Zone in Muse, northern Shan State, on 13 December.

Myanmar entrepreneurs showcased their products at 88 booths and the Chinese businessmen at 124 booths.

Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan and Chinese officials attended the trade fair.

At the meeting hall of the trade zone, officials of both sides discussed trade promotion between two countries, establishment of Muse-Ruili economic zone, export of Myanmar’s agricultural produce to China, tax exemption of Myanmar’s products based on bilateral relations of two countries, participation of Myanmar entrepreneurs in the 3rd South Asia Expo and the 23rd Kunming Expo.

In the afternoon, the border trade coordination committee held a meeting at Muse-Namkham trade zone.

NLM-018

People visit Myanmar-China border trade fair at 105th-Mile Trade Zone in Muse.

Medical staff vaccinate people against elephantiasis disease

— A medical team led by Head of Nay Pyi Taw Health Department Dr Hla Hla Kyi made a trip to staff quarters in Wunna Theikdi Ward in Zabuthiri Township on 15 December to vaccinate people against elephantiasis disease.

Deputy Head of Nay Pyi Taw Health Department Dr Htin Lin explained: “The vaccine is being given to the people across the nation as part of implementing a plan to prevent elephantiasis disease. Emphasis is being placed on giving the vaccine in 203 townships from 45 districts. The government has set an aim of enabling Myanmar to be free from elephantiasis disease in 2020. This activity of vaccination will last up to 24 December.”

Local authorities and members of Maternal and Child Welfare Association cooperated with the medical team in vaccinating the people.

Ko Pauk
(Okkar Myay)
Libya rivals clash over oil ports as EU considers sanctions

**Tripoli, 17 Dec** — Forces allied to Libya’s conflict parties clashed with heavy weapons on Tuesday over control of the country’s biggest oil ports in the east as the European Union was considering sanctions on people obstructing UN-brokered peace talks.

The United Nations had planned to hold this week a second round of talks to end a confrontation between two rival governments and parliaments but said a military escalation was undermining its efforts.

On Monday, a force allied to the rival assembly based in Tripoli, the General National Congress (GNC), moved to the east to try seize the Es Sider and Ras Lanuf oil ports. Both terminals have closed, drying exports of Sider and Ras Lanuf oil.

The European Union was considering sanctions against a political solution, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said.

“Their campaign will continue,” Shukri told reporters, adding that oil facilities would not be harmed.

GNC spokesman Omar al-Shukri denied this.

The UN had held a first round of talks in September in the southern city of Ghadames by inviting the House of Representatives and members from Misrata, linked to Libya Dawn, which has boycotted sessions.

UN Special Envoy Bernardino Leon said last week the next round would include GNC members. The UN has not given a date or venue, saying on Monday only talks would hopefully start “soon”.

The European Union is ready to consider sanctions on people obstructing a political solution, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said.

“They must face consequences for their actions. The EU remains ready to consider further actions, including restrictive measures, should circumstances so require,” she said in a statement.

Separately on Tuesday, African leaders meeting in Dakar called on western nations to act to resolve the crisis in Libya, which has sent shock waves across the vast arid Sahel band and threatened to destabilise fragile regional governments.

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**Inquiry clears British soldiers of murder and torture of Iraqis**

**London, 17 Dec** — Allegations that British troops killed captured Iraqi prisoners and tortured them were unfounded, the inquiry concluded on Wednesday.

The Al-Sweady inquiry, which has lasted five years and has cost around 30 million pounds ($47 million), was charged with examining allegations made by Iraqis that British soldiers captured alive and then murdered up to 20 men during and after the battle in southern Iraq.

Iraqi witnesses told the inquiry that British soldiers killed the men at the Abu Naji army camp in May 2004 and separately that they mistreated nine detainees, whereas the troops said the men died fighting on the battlefield and denied mistreatment.

Wrapping up the inquiry, which heard allegations of multiple murders, torture, and mutilation, Chairman Thayne Forbes said all the gravest allegations had turned out to be false and criticized Iraq testimony.

“I have come to the firm conclusion that the vast majority of the allegations made against the British military...including, without exception, all the most serious allegations, were wholly and entirely without merit or justification,” he said.

“Very many of those baseless allegations were the product of deliberate and calculated lies on the part of those who made them,” Forbes said.

However Forbes did recommend changes to the way the British army treats detainees and said that some behavior amounted to “actual or possible ill-treatment”, proposing to hold the next round in the southern town of Hun.

Thayne Forbes, Chairman of the Al-Sweady Inquiry arrives on the first day of the public inquiry, in central London, on 4 March, 2013.—Reuters

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**EU court annuls keeping of Hamas on terrorist list**

**Brussels, 17 Dec** — The European Union’s second highest court annulled on Wednesday the bloc’s decision to keep Hamas on a list of terrorist organizations, but temporarily maintained the measures for a period of three months or until an appeal was closed.

The General Court of the European Union said the contested measures were not based on an examination of Hamas’s acts but on imputations derived from the media and the Internet.

The court said it was nevertheless maintaining the effects of the measures in order to ensure that any possible future freezing of funds would be effective.

Palestinian members of al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Hamas movement, take part in a military parade marking the 27th anniversary of Hamas’ founding, in Gaza City on 14 Dec, 2014.—Reuters

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**Drone strike in Afghanistan kills four Pakistani Taleban**

**Jalalabad, 17 Dec** — A US drone strike in eastern Afghanistan killed four Pakistani Taleban members and seven other insurgents, a district government official said on Wednesday.

The drone’s missiles killed the militants on Tuesday afternoon as members of the Pakistani Taleban were attacking a school in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, near the Afghan border, said Mahinem Mashuq, the governor of Sherzad district in Nangarhar province.

“The基于 our findings, 11 insurgents, four of them Pakistani Taleban, were travelling in a pickup truck that was hit by a drone strike, killing all of them,” Mashuq said. The Pakistani and Afghan branches of the hard-line Islamist Taleban are loosely allied and operate across the porous border between the countries.

Both are dedicated to overthrowing their countries’ governments and establishing rule by strict interpretation of Islamic law. The Afghan Taleban, now in a political process, was issued a statement condemning Tuesday’s Pakistani Taleban attack on the school in Peshawar that killed 141 people.—Reuters

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**Suicide bomb, gunfire at Afghan bank, civilians inside**

**Lashkar Gah, (Afghanistan), 17 Dec** — Suspected Taleban militants detonated a suicide bomb then stormed a bank branch in the southern Afghan province of Helmand on Wednesday, engaging in a firefight with security forces while an unknown number of civilians were inside, police said.

A Reuters witness at the scene heard the blast and the gunfire. Employees who escaped said that when the attack happened, the bank was busy with government workers who had come to collect their salaries.

“According to our information, there were four Taleban, one of them destroyed his explosives and three are fighting with security forces,” said Farid Ahmad Obaid, spokesman for Helmand’s police chief.—Reuters
Brent drops below $60 as OPEC, Russia keep output steady amid glut

SINGAPORE, 17 Dec — Brent futures fell more than 1 percent on Wednesday, down for a sixth straight session, with persistent worries of a supply glut keeping prices near a 5-1/2 year low under $60 ($38.15) a barrel.

Oil prices skidded in recent weeks, with Brent down nearly $20 since the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) decided to keep output steady in late November.

Non-OPEC member Russia, one of the world’s top producers, has also indicated that it does not plan to cut output despite a glut in the world market.

Brent for February delivery LCOC1 fell 62 cents to $59.39 a barrel by 0601 GMT.

The January contract, which expired in the prior session, hit a low of $58.50 on Tuesday — the weakest since May 2009 and off this year’s high above $115 reached in June.

US crude CLc1 dropped $1.12 to $54.81 a barrel after touching the lowest since May 2009 at $53.60 on Tuesday.

“The story is still the same. Europe is weak, China is weak, and the US economy is growing by a bit. It’s a supply story,” said Avtar Sandu, senior manager for commodities at Phillip Futures in Singapore.

“The only thing is that the markets are very oversold and oil is extremely cheap at these levels,” he added.

Core Gulf OPEC members that declined to cut output at a 27 November meeting signalled this week they are prepared to wait as long as six months to a year to see the market stabilise.

Saudi Arabia’s relinquishing of its role as oil price anchor has caused a catastrophic drop in the demand for inventory which has resulted in oil prices collapsing, said PJTA Energy Group.

Kuwait’s oil minister said they were 1.8 million barrels a day of excess oil in the market currently and prices could pick up in the second half of 2015.

US Energy Minister Alexander Novaik has said that Moscow would not cut output in 2015, even if pressure on its finances were to show signs of a severe stress.

The rouble hard, prompting Russia’s central bank to rush in to hike interest rates to halt a collapse in the currency.

In the United States, crude inventories rose by 1.9 million barrels last week, compared with analysts’ expectations for a decrease of 2.4 million barrels, data from the American Petroleum Institute showed late on Tuesday.—Reuters

Asian business sentiment rebounds in fourth quarter with India most optimistic

NEW DELHI, 17 Dec — Business sentiment among Asia’s top companies rebounded in the fourth quarter to the second-highest level in almost three years, a Thomson Reuters/INSEAD survey showed, helped by a stronger US economy and a plunge in oil prices.

The Thomson Reuters/INSEAD Asian Business Sentiment Index RACSI increased to 72 in the fourth quarter from 66 in the previous three months. The result was only slightly below the 74 reading of the second quarter which was the highest since early 2012. A reading above 50 indicates an overall positive outlook.

Indian businesses provided the biggest boost to the index, with companies reporting a maximum score of 100 for the third consecutive quarter as they look to new Prime Minister Narendra Modi to speed up economic recovery.

Corporations in China, where worries about a slowdown in economic growth persist, were among the least positive with a reading of 50, coming in below Japan, which is stuck in recession, at 56.

US unemployment fell to a six-year low in November, a signal that the world’s biggest economy and a key export destination for Asian companies is healthier and its consumers are growing in confidence.

“The US’s economic leadership is influencing expectations across the world, and the US is really becoming stronger,” said Antonio Fatas, a Singapore-based economics professor at INSEAD.

“Africa is a region where there is not massive uncertainty related to political risk. This is a region that grows with the world.”

A gas price sign is seen at a Phillips 66 station on Westheimer Road in Houston, Texas on 16 Dec, 2014. According to gasbuddy, the prices shown in the picture are the lowest in Houston.

A worker operates a lathe machine as he makes a steel cutter at a manufacturing unit in Noida, on the outskirts of New Delhi in this 3 Nov, 2014 file photo.

The rosier picture in the United States coincided with oil prices falling to five-year lows, boosting Asian economies dependent on imports of crude.

Fatias cautioned that uncertainty remained, not least in China where investors and companies are “sitting and waiting for data” to indicate how dramatically growth in Asia’s largest economy is slowing.

Global economic uncertainty remained the biggest concern for Asian businesses during the quarter, the survey showed, as well as rising costs and other risks such as regulatory change.

“I am surprised that the US and oil prices seem to have outweighed concerns about China and Europe. The downside risks to China’s growth are significant, especially related to real estate and shadow banking,” said Dariusz Kowalczyk, a senior economist at Credit Agricole.

Companies participating in the survey included Japanese drugs maker Daiichi Sankyo Co Ltd (4568.T), South Korea’s Hyundai Heavy Industries Co Ltd (009540.KS) and Indian real estate developer DLF Ltd (DLF.NS).

The poll, by Thomson Reuters in association with INSEAD, a global management and business school, was conducted from 1-13 December.

Avtar Sandu, senior manager for Asia at INSEAD, a global management and business school, said in an emailed comment: “In an international exclusive interview that the safety of all foodstuffs, including organic food, remains a global priority.”

“It means that food should be safe and free from chemical and microbiological contaminants. And the nature of food supplies these days means that it’s an international issue,” she said. “For example, the world trade in food means that food produced in Uganda might go to supermarkets in Europe or Asia. So there needs to be rigorous national and international regulations and procedures,” she said.

FAO says that food safety threats must be taken with the utmost seriousness because they can cause major economic damage, add extra burdens to struggling health systems and threaten food security.

London, 17 Dec — Evidence suggests e-cigarettes help smokers quit, but more research is needed to confirm this and find out if “vaping” nicotine is ple more popular than using patches or gum, scientists said on Wednesday.

In an international review of available evidence, researchers found a paucity of robust scientific studies on e-cigarettes and their capacity to help people stop smoking, but said data so far pointed at likely benefits.

“Although our confidence in the effects of electronic cigarettes as smoking cessation interventions is limited because of the small number of trials available, we are encouraged,” said Peter Hajek, a professor of clinical psychology and a member of the research team at the Cochrane Review, a respected research network that determines relative effectiveness of different health interventions.

The uptake of e-cigarettes, which use battery-powered cartridges to produce a nicotine-laced vapor, has rocketed in the past two years, but there is fierce debate about their safety.

Because they are relatively new, there is a lack of longitudinal scientific evidence on their safety. Some experts fear they could be a gateway to tobacco smoking, while others say they have enormous potential to help millions of smokers around the world kick their deadly habit.

The Cochrane Review’s study, a so-called meta-analysis, drew on two randomized trials covering 662 smokers, and also considered evidence from 11 observational studies comparing e-cigarettes’ quit success rate with patches, and this suggested they were about equal.

Robert West, director of tobacco research at University College London, said in an emailed comment that the findings suggested e-cigarettes could be a valuable public health tool.

“It’s early days but so far it seems that these devices are already helping tens of thousands of smokers to stop each year.”

Food safety remains priority in age of organic food

ROME, 17 Dec — Even in an age when the consumption of organic food is booming, strict global food safety standards are needed to protect the consumer, a leading expert at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said.

Mary Kenny, officer of FAO’s Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department, told Xinhua in an exclusive interview that the safety of all foodstuffs, including organic food, remains a global priority.

“It means that food should be safe and free from chemical and microbiological contaminants. And the nature of food supplies these days means that it’s an international issue,” she said. “For example, the world trade in food means that food produced in Uganda might go to supermarkets in Europe or Asia. So there needs to be rigorous national and international regulations and procedures,” she said.

FAO says that food safety threats must be taken with the utmost seriousness because they can cause major economic damage, add extra burdens to struggling health systems and threaten food security.

The results showed about 9 percent of smokers who used e-cigarettes were able to stop smoking at up to one year, compared with around 4 percent who used placebo e-cigarettes.

Data on reducing smoking in people who did not quit showed that 36 percent of e-cigarette users halved the number of conventional cigarettes they smoked, compared with 28 percent of placebo users.

Only one of the trials compared e-cigarettes’ quit success rate with patches, and this suggested they were about equal.

Robert West, director of tobacco research at University College London, said in an emailed comment that the findings suggested e-cigarettes could be a valuable public health tool.

“It’s early days but so far it seems that these devices are already helping tens of thousands of smokers to stop each year.”

Xinhua
Prosecutors summon former Korean Air exec over nut rage incident

Choi Hyun Ah, former vice president of Korean Air, bows her head in apology in front of reporters in Seoul, South Korea on 17 Dec, 2014.—Kyodo News

Cho Hyun Ah, 40, who was called into the Seoul Western Prosecutors’ Office, ignited public outrage after she had the airplane that was on the taxiway returned to the gate and delayed the departure of the plane with 250 passengers aboard for 11 minutes on 5 December.

Cho, eldest daughter of Korean Air chairman Cho Yang Ho, flew into a rage after she was served macadamia nuts in a packet rather than in a bowl in the first-class cabin and ordered the flight to return to the gate so the chief flight attendant could be removed.

She resigned last week after her conduct prompted a storm of criticism against her and the air carrier.

The transportation ministry said Tuesday it would file a formal complaint with prosecutors over the conduct of the former executive and take disciplinary measures against the carrier.

“Statements from some flight attendants and passengers confirmed her abusive language and yelling,” a statement by the ministry said, adding she might have violated a clause of a related law that obliges passengers to cooperate for flight safety.

It would also take disciplinary measures against Korean Air over the captain’s failure to command and supervise flight crew members for the safe operation of the flight. Reports said initial investigation showed Cho cursed flight attendants and hit one of them with the company’s service guidebook.

Korean Air carried a statement in the front page of major newspapers Tuesday and apologized for the incident.

“We are keenly aware any words of apology are not enough,” the statement said.—Kyodo News

US company to buy billion dollars worth of rocket engines from Russia

Russia’s Energomash will deliver 60 engines to the US Orbital Sciences corporation.—Itar-Tass

Izvestia newspaper said on Wednesday. The engines will be used for the first stage of Antares rockets beginning 2015.

Energomash will deliver 60 engines to the US corporation, the newspaper cited a high-ranking Roscosmos source as saying. There is a contract to supply 20 engines, and the work has already started to deliver the first two units in June, and there are two more options, each for 20 units.

The contract is concluded directly between Orbital Sciences and Energomash.

The contract costs about one billion dollars. It includes the cost of engines and services — flight preparations, the installation of an engine on a rocket and tests.

The Russian space agency source said the RD-181 engine was developed specially for the Antares. The development was based on the Angara RD-191, he added.

Energomash and Orbital Sciences gave no comments. It was the second big contract concluded between Energomash and the US company, the newspaper said.

In late 1990, the Russian scientific centre situated in Khimki near Moscow won a contract to supply RD-180 engines to the US United Launch Alliance company for Atlas rockets. The Alliance is a joint company of Boeing and Lockheed Martin.

As PAA reported earlier, a draft law on allocations for military needs for the fiscal year of 2015 passed by the Senate of the Congress on 12 December had an amendment banning further purchases of Russian RD-180 engines for American Atlas rockets. The document specifies that $220 million would be provided for development of an American rocket engine to replace Russian RD180s.

The Pentagon must develop such a new engine by the end of 2018.

—Itar-Tass

Cuba sets new policies for wages paid by foreign investors

HAVANA, 17 Dec — Cuba’s government has approved new wage guidelines for nationals working for foreign firms in the country, state daily Granma reported on Tuesday.

The new rules, covering wages and social security payments, were published in a government gazette.

Cuba’s state-run employment agencies will be responsible for negotiating wages on behalf of workers and paying their salaries, as well as hiring, training and protecting workers’ rights.

According to government statistics, Granma said, the average salary in Cuba in 2013 was 471 pesos, around 19 US dollars, so wages cannot be any lower than that, including for those who have been earning Cuba’s minimum salary of 225 pesos.

The rise in wages is expected to help spur productivity, especially in industry.

More than 40,000 Cubans are expected to benefit from the higher wages as employees of joint-venture companies or wholly foreign-owned firms.

Cuba’s new Foreign Investment Law took effect in June and the country is preparing for an influx of foreign capital and businesses.

The country hopes to attract at least 2 billion dollars a year in fresh capital to revitalize the economy and push its economic growth to over 5 percent.
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WEATHER REPORT
BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 18th December, 2014: Isolated light rain are likely in Shan State, weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Kachin and Kayah States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV JOSCO FUZHOU VOY NO (13)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV JOSCO FUZHOU VOY NO (13) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18.12.2014 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE, Building No.(41), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Tender Document Shall be available during office hours commencing from 19th, December, 2014 at the Steel Mills Supervision Department, No.(1 ) Heavy Industries Enterprise, Building No.(41), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. Steel Mills Supervision Department Ph +9567-408345

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 19th, December, 2014 at the Steel Mills Supervision Department, No.(1 ) Heavy Industries Enterprise, Building No.(41), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. Steel Mills Supervision Department Ph +9567-408345

MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION
MYANMA RAILWAYS
INVIATION TO OPEN TENDER

1. Open Tenders are invited for supply of the following items in Euro:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr No</th>
<th>Tender No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>12(T)47/MI/ML(ISN)</td>
<td>Ball Bearing &amp; Roller Bearing for DET (23) Items</td>
<td>2014-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>12(T)49/MI/ML(ISN)</td>
<td>Main Components Required for Repowering of DET (12) Items</td>
<td>2014-2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tender Closing Date & Time: - 16.1.2015 (Friday)(12:30) Hour.

Tender Documents are available at our office starting from 19.12.2014 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Deputy General Manager Supply Dept, Myanmar Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botataung, Yangon. Phone: 95-1-291985, 291994.

Advertisement & general

Rice expert wins award for promoting cultivation in Africa

NIIGATA, (Japan), 17 Dec — Tatsuaki Tsuibo, a rice cultivation expert, has spent a lifetime promoting rice production in Africa, a continent that suffers from chronic food shortages. His efforts to combat food shortages and to boost economic growth in Africa led to his winning this year’s Niigata International Food Award, a biannual prize that honors people or groups for their contributions to solving food problems.

Ever since graduating from the University of Tokyo, now 65, has been engaged in international cooperation activities and has taught rice cultivation to people in Asia and Africa for over three decades. During the 1990s, he encountered a variety rice called “Nerica” (New Rice for Africa), which grows quickly, is resistant to insects and desiccation, and needs no large-scale irrigation facility.

“The doors before me opened at a stretch,” he said.

Since 2004, Tsuibo has studied Nerica cultivation methods and helped grow the variety mainly in Uganda, together with local farmers and Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, serving as a senior technical adviser to the Japan International Cooperation Agency. About 14,000 Africans have received instruction from Tsuibo.

Rice is not a staple food in Uganda, rather an upscale foodstuff for wealthy families. But rice farmers can not only feed their families but also improve their quality of life by selling rice.

“Since the climate in Africa is relatively warm and farming has long been widely practiced, I thought rice could be planted year after year,” Tsuibo said.

He said that the 2008 Tokyo International Conference on African Development’s goal of doubling the year’s 14 million tons of rice production in Africa in a decade is coming into sight.

Moscow State University tops emerging Europe, Central Asia ranking

MOSCOW, 17 Dec — The Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) tops the emerging Europe and Central Asia universities ranking published by the UK-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) on Wednesday.

The Novosibirsk State University, the second in the ranking for 2014/2015 with the Czech Charles University in Prague, while the Ste Petersburg State University is ranked seventh.

The list published by the world’s most renowned ranking agency also includes the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology (17) and the Bauman Moscow State Technical University (21). The rankings are compiled in consultation with the QS Global Academic Advisory Board and are widely used by applicants and students as well as university specialists and governments around the world.

The Moscow State University was ranked in the top five of the 2015 BRICS and emerging-economies university rankings unveiled by the Times Higher Education magazine on 4 December. The top-100 list also includes seven Russian universities.
Puma names Rihanna as women’s creative director

BERLIN, 17 Dec — Germany’s Puma named pop star Rihanna as its women’s creative director on Tuesday, the latest move by a sportswear firm to tap into the booming market for female leisure gear.

Puma said in a statement that the multi-year deal starting in January would involve Rihanna becoming the face of the women’s training category, joining celebrities like Olympic champion sprinter Usain Bolt as brand ambassador. Puma has been spending heavily on marketing — including a kit deal with English soccer team Arsenal and a big advertising drive — as it seeks to make up ground lost in recent years to market leader Nike and German rival Adidas.

Puma Chief Executive Bjorn Gulden said finding a top name for women’s training was important to complement the brand’s strength in football, running and motorsport. “Rihanna was a natural choice for us,” Gulden said. “Her global profile, her charisma and individuality, her ambition, all these things make her a perfect ambassador for our brand.”

New ‘Annie’ movie less about ‘Tomorrow’ and all about today

NEW YORK, 17 Dec — The hit musical “Annie” moves firmly into the 21st century in a new film version where the star is a street-smart African-American foster kid who rides New York buses, and her saviour is a black cell phone billionaire who will stop at nothing to become mayor.

“Tomorrow” is still the signature song, but the “Annie,” produced by a team that includes rapper Jay-Z and actor Will Smith, is all about today.

Quvenzhane Wallis, 11, who two years ago became the youngest person to win a Best Actress Oscar nomination, plays the foster kid living a hard-knock life in the multietnic version of the Tony-winning 1977 Broadway musical that opens in US movie theatres on Friday.

Oliver “Daddy” Warbucks is transformed from a 1930s industrialist into the workaholic telecoms tycoon Will Stacks, (Jamie Foxx), while actor Bobby Cannavale adds a topical, satirical edge as his scheming political campaign adviser.

The musical’s famous songs get a pop music make-over, sprinkled with the sounds of street jackhammers and trash can lids, and Annie’s fake parents are found in mass reality TV-style auditions.

Cannavale said the updates bring the beloved musical “to a contemporary audience which is one of many different colours, shapes, sizes and ethnicities.”

“It is really exciting that kids can go and see themselves now in this movie in a way they were not able to before,” Cannavale told Reuters.

Cameron Diaz plays mean foster mother Miss Hannigan, as a pimpling, failed pop star.

“Interstellar” earns USD 100 million in Imax

LOS ANGELES, 17 Dec — Christopher Nolan’s stunning space adventure ‘Interstellar’ has earned USD 100 million in Imax theatres worldwide since its release on 5 November. ‘Interstellar’ became the fourth film to achieve the mark following ‘Avatar’, ‘Gravity’ and Nolan’s last Batman outing ‘The Dark Knight Rises’. Nolan used Imax cameras for more than an hour of ‘Interstellar’ and sequences shot in 35mm film have been digitally remastered with Imax technology, reported Variety.

The film has grossed more than USD 621 million at the worldwide box office with the domestic figure standing at USD 166 million while the international collection stood at USD 455 million.—PTI

Korean stars shine at music festival in Hong Kong

BEIJING, 17 Dec — The two most popular K-pop bands in Asia, Big Bang and EXO didn’t let down their fans as they took home the biggest awards at the 2014 Mnet Asia Music Awards (2014 MAMA), which was held in Hong Kong on 3 December.

The Mnet Asia Music Awards is one of the major K-pop music celebrations held annually by CJ E&M, one of the largest entertainment companies in Korea, through its music channel Mnet.

It had been held in Seoul annually from 1999 to 2008. Hong Kong has been the host city since 2012. The event has attracted a broad audience from East and Southeast Asia.

Stars from China, Korea and other Asian countries, such as Andy Lau, Choi Ji-woo and Song Seung Hun, attended this year’s celebration in Hong Kong.

The three major awards, including Song of the Year, Album of the Year and Artist of the Year in Asia, went to Big Bang’s Taeang and EXO. Taeyang also won the award for Best Male Vocal Performance.

The event offers 18 awards, including Best Male/ Female Group, Best Global Group — Male/Female, Best Male/Female Artist, Best Dance Performance for Male/ Female Groups, Best New Male Artist, Best New Female Artist, Best Band Performance, Best Rap Performance, Best Vocal Performance Solo, Best Vocal Performance Group, Best Music Video, Artist of the Year, Song of the Year and Album of the Year.
Asia to become world’s largest e-commerce market

Beijing, 17 Dec — Asia is set to surpass North America and Europe to become the world’s largest e-commerce market this year, said the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

According to a report published on Tuesday in Beijing by the EIU, an advisory company under the Economist Group, it is estimated that retail sales in Asia will grow by an average 4.6 percent on a volume basis to 7.6 trillion US dollars, compared with 2.5 percent in North America and 0.8 percent in Europe in 2015.

Report editor Laurel West said that the Asian consumer market was largely driven by the rising independence and economic power of Asia’s women and female consumers in Asia are showing an unprecedented enthusiasm for online shopping.

The report is based on a survey of 5,500 women across major cities on the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao, as well as countries including India, Japan, Singapore and the Republic of Korea. Among the survey respondents, 43 percent were in managerial, executive or professional services jobs.

Nearly half of the women agreed or strongly agreed that they preferred online to in-store shopping.

Xinhua

Infection from pregnancy killed endangered orca off Canada’s Pacific coast

Seattle, 17 Dec — A pregnant killer whale from an endangered population in the US Pacific Northwest that was found floating dead near Canada died of an infection linked to a nearby full-term fetus, according to preliminary necropsy results.

The body of the orca, an 18-year-old female known as J32 and named Rhapsody, was found floating in the Strait of Georgia, between Vancouver Island and mainland Canada, in early December, experts said. She was hauled to shore, and a necropsy performed 6 December, concluded that Rhapsody had been close to giving birth to a female calf, but suffered “in utero fetal loss with secondary bacterial involvement,” according to Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

“The fetus caused an infection that became systemic, and ultimately fatal,” the report said.

The death brought to 77 the number of orcas in the southern resident Orca population, comprised of three pods of killer whales who live in the Puget Sound off the coast of Washington state and are endangered under both US and Canadian law.

The Washington-based Centre for Whale Research said it was not uncommon for southern resident orcas to venture north into the Strait of Georgia looking for their primary food source, Chum salmon, which has been depleted due to overfishing. The orcas also face severe environmental threats linked to pollution, said Ken Balcomb, the center’s executive director.

“Environmental contamination is a serious issue for these whales, and it is exacerbated during times of nutritional stress when their toxic blubber is metabolized to maintain body functions,” he said.—Reuters

3D printing points way to smarter cancer treatment

London, 17 Dec — British scientists have developed a new use for 3D printing, putting it to work to create personalized replica models of cancerous portions of the body to allow doctors to target tumors more precisely.

The initiative is the latest example of medicine harnessing the rapidly emerging technology, which has already been used to manufacture some medical implants.

3D printing makes products by layering material until a three-dimensional object is created. Automotive and aerospace companies use it for producing prototypes as well as creating specialized tools, moldings and some end-use parts.

In healthcare, 3D print-ers are used by dentists to create replicas of jaws and teeth, as well as some finished dental implants, while orthopedic surgeons have tested them to make customized hip replacements.

And last year US scientists grew human ears from cow cells with the help of a 3D printer.

The new cancer work involves printing 3D “phantoms” of tumours and organs based on CT scans taken of patients during treatment. These plastic moulds can be filled with liquid, allowing experts see in detail the flow of so-called radiopharmaceuticals.—Reuters

I have never been involved in fixing, says Herrera

London, 17 Dec — Manchester United midfielder Ander Herrera has said he has never been involved in manipulating the results of games after being named among 41 people in a match-fixing probe in Spain.

“In an ongoing legal process involving Real Zaragoza, the job I was honoured to play from 12 until 22 years of age, there are 41 people cited as possible witnesses, of which I am one,” the 25-year-old Spaniard said on Facebook on Tuesday.

“I have never had and will never have anything to do with manipulating match results. If I am ever called to testify in any judicial hearing, I’ll be happy to attend, as my conscience is totally clear.”

“I love football and I believe in fair play, both on and off the pitch.”

Herrera joined United from Athletic Bilbao for $36 million (22.92 million pounds) this year.

Reuters

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Real Madrid’s assistant coach Zinedine Zidane

Paris, 17 Dec — French soccer legend Zinedine Zidane has shown interests in leading a side in England.

“42-year-old told Canal+ on Tuesday that he’s keen to take the next step in his coaching career and he’d be tempted by a top job in England.

“The future is certainly to be able to do something else and to be able to take the reins of a team,” said the Frenchman who’s currently in charge of Real Madrid’s B team.

Zidane had previously been Carlo Ancelotti’s first-team assistant last season, before he’s troubled by the Spanish football association for leading Castilla without a license.

“With I will first think of this season, finish it well, get promoted because that is the aim of the team, to ascend to the second division. Next year we will see.”

As a player I was not tempted by England,” he said. “But as a manager, why not? It is a league where the English type of manager has most of the power, and that would please me.”

Xinhua

Zidane interested in managerial job in England Premier League

Tokyo, 17 Dec — Fuku-shima Gov Masao Uchibori on Tuesday told the Tokyo metropolitan government that the northeastern prefecture hopes to host some of the preliminary events for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics to showcase its recovery from the 2011 nuclear accident.

“We need to set a goal so that we can show how much Fukushima has recovered” from the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident, Uchibori told reporters after holding talks with Tokyo Gov Yoichi Masuzoe. Uchibori said existing facilities are expected to be used for the preliminary events, but did not elaborate on which sports the prefecture wants to host.

Masuzoe told a Press conference the same day that holding some events in Fukushima or other areas in northeastern Japan are possible options, apparently bearing in mind sports that have preliminary rounds such as soccer.—Kyodo News

Fukushima proposing hosting preliminaries for 2020 Tokyo Olympics

File photo of Manchester United’s Ander Herrera celebrating a goal against Queens Park Rangers during an English Premier League soccer match at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England on 14 Sept, 2014. Reuters

London, 17 Dec — British scientists have developed a new use for 3D printing, putting it to work to create personalized replica models of cancerous portions of the body to allow doctors to target tumors more precisely.

The initiative is the latest example of medicine harnessing the rapidly emerging technology, which has already been used to manufacture some medical implants.

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Reuters
Real sail into Club World Cup final with 4-0 romp

MARRAKECH, (Moroc-co), 17 Dec — European champions Real Madrid turned on the party tricks as they sailed into the Club World Cup final by crushing Cruz Azul 4-0 on Tuesday. The Mexican side, with far more limited resources than the Spanish giants, did their best to make a game of it and missed a first-half penalty but were chasing shadows from the moment Gareth Bale headed the third goal five minutes into the sec- ond half.

Alvaro Arbeloa and Karim Benzema were on target in the opening half before Bale and Isco com- pleted the scoring as Real received fanatical backing from the Marrakech crowd. Cristiano Ronaldo failed to get on the score- sheet but had the crowd in raptures in the second pe- riod when he met a cross on the half volley with a ‘rabona’ effort that goal- keeper Jose Corona did well to save.

Real, however, left themselves open to criti- cism for excessive show- boating and even the initial enthusiasm of the fans died down. “We were open,” said Zinedine Zidane, who took charge of Real when the Frenchman retired in 2011.

They next meet South American champions San Lorenzo or Oceania champions Auckland City, who face each other on Wednesday, in Saturday’s final in Marrakech.

“The game was still open at 2-0 with the pen- alty but we didn’t concede and it was an efficient performance from us,” Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told Spanish television.

“Ronaldo didn’t score but he is always there helping the team and creating chances.”

Real quickly took control against the CON- CAF champions and an early goal was on the cards.

Ronaldo was denied at point-blank range by Coro- rona and Benzema shaved the post before the keeper misjudged a Tomi Kroos free kick and Ramos headed home.

Cruz Azul responded well but failed to make the most of their openings.

Ramos denied a late charge was cur- tailed by a VAR call before finding a break- through for the final when he met a cross over a shot, then Rojas and Mariano Pavone got in each other’s way after Christian Gimenez’s in- cessive pass opened up the Real defence.

Benzema added the second goal in the 35th minute before Cruz Azul were awarded a penalty when Pavone went down under a challenge by Ramos, the Real defender appearing to grab his op- ponent’s hair.—Reuters

Southampton cut down by Blades as Chelsea march on

LONDON, 17 Dec — Southampton suffered an embarrassing 1-0 League Cup quarter-final defeat at third tier Sheffield United on Tuesday when Chelsea powered through with a 3-1 win at Derby County.

The sparkling car- ly-season form shown by Southampton now seems but a distant memory after a second-half goal from Mark McNulty inflicted a fifth straight defeat on the Premier League club who were reduced to 10 men late on when Florian Gar- dos was sent off.

It was a much more relaxed evening for league leaders Chelsea who went 2-0 up with a goal from Eden Hazard and a stun- ning free kick by Filipe Luis before second tier Derby pulled one back through Craig Bryson.

A late charge was cur- tailed, however, when the home side’s Jake Buxton was sent off for a profes- sional foul on Loic Remy and Andre Schuerrle ensured there were no late jitters when he slotted home a Chelsea rebound from close range in the 82nd minute.

The confidence seems to have drained from Southampton whose early surge up the league on the back of some favourable fixtures has turned into a widely predicted slump.

United, managed by former Liverpool forward Nigel Clough, were not going to prove accom- modating opponents for the Saints to regain some much-needed confidence. While boasting the usual battling traits of a lower-league side when facing top-flight oppo- sition, the club known as The Blades also came with an impressive cup pedigree.

United had lost only two of their previous 17 cup clashes and had ousted three Premier League teams from knockout competi- tions the last two seasons.

They did their best to unsettle Southampton from the start and shad- ed the first half chances before finding a break- through after half-time.

When Southampton keeper Fraser Forster fumbled a free kick, McNulty was there to force the ball over the line.

BERLIN, 17 Dec — Arjen Robben grabbed his 100th goal for the club as undefeated Bayern Munich outclassed Freiburg 2-0 on Tuesday to extend their lead at the top of the table to 12 points and create a Bun- desliga defensive record.

Despite losing Xabi Alonso, Mehdi Benatia and Robert Lewandowski to inju- ry during the match, Bay- ern claimed an 11th win in 12 league outings and their powerful back line prevent- ed Freiburg producing an effort for the opening 75 minutes.

The Bavarians have let in just three goals in 16 league matches this season, a new record that improves on VfB Stuttgart’s mark from season 2003-04.

“We did really well today,” Robben told report- ers. “We worked hard for our chances and could have scored one or two more goals.”

It was one-way traffic from the start as Bayern, in their last home game before the start of the winter break next week, had a staggering 80 percent possession of the ball and Freiburg keeper Roman Buerki had to be at his best to keep the score- line respectable.

The Swiss, who have been in good form in his first Bundesliga season, pulled off a spectacular save to thwart a Mario Goetze effort from seven metres.

Buerki denied Bay- ern several more times but could do nothing to stop them going in front when Franck Ribery nodded in an Alonso cross for Robben and the Dutchman scored with a diving header in the 41st minute.

Thomas Mueller al- most made it 2-0 before the break when he hit the post.

The German forward made amends three minutes after the restart, heading in after a Juan Bernat shot came back off the bar.

Spanish Bernat forced another brilliant save from Buerki as Bayern carved out a plethora of chances and had a season-best 31 shots on goal.

Elsewhere, Stuttgart beat fellow strug- glers Hamburger SV 1-0 to climb off the foot of the ta- ble.—Reuters

Robben landmark as Bayern set new record

In a corner against Cruz Azul during their semi-final soccer match in FIFA

Club World Cup at Marrakech stadium on 16 Dec, 2014.—Reuters

Bayern Munich’s Arjen Robben (L) fights for the ball with Freiburg’s Pavel Kramar during their first division Bundesliga soccer match in Munich on 16 Dec, 2014. REUTERS

France great Henry announces retirement

LONDON, 17 Dec — For- mer World Cup winner and Arsenal’s record goal-scorer Thierry Henry announced his retirement from football on Tuesday, bringing an end to his glittering 20- year career. The 37-year-old Français scored 51 goals in 123 appearances for his country and helped them win the 1998 World Cup and European Championships in 2000, while picking up trophies with Monaco, Arsenal, Barcelona and New York Red Bulls in a success-laden club career.

“It has been an incred- ible journey and I would like to thank all the fans, team mates and individuals involved with AS Monaco, Juventus, Arsenal FC, FC Barcelona, the New York Red Bulls and of course the French National Team that have made my time in the game so special,” he said in a statement. “It is now time for a different career path. I have had some amazing moments (mostly good!) and a wonderful expe- rience. I hope you have enjoyed watching as much as I have enjoyed taking part.”

He left the Red Bulls earlier this month at the end of his four-year contract in Major League Soccer, say- ing he needed time to con- template his next move. On Tuesday Henry said he had taken up a role as a televi- sion pundit with Sky Sports in Britain starting next year.

The speedy winger made his name in England where he became one of Eu- rope’s most feared strikers after Arsenal coach Arsene Wenger switched him to a central role following his ar- rival from Juventus.

He scored 228 goals for the Londoners in two spells, winning two English Premier League titles before moving to Spanish giants Barcelona where he won a pair of La Liga crowns and the Champions League in 2009.—Reuters