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Civic organizations organize workshop in Myaunaung

Myaunaung, 6 Jan — Shaechaung Philanthropic Youth civic organization held a workshop in Kyauktawng Village, Myaunaung Township, Ayeyawady Region on 4 January.

Patron of Ayeyawady Social Development Group U Aung Win Shwe made a speech. The secretary of the association explained the programmes of the workshop.

The workshop focused on establishment of civic organizations by recruiting youths, enhancing capacity of youths and civic organizations thereby providing volunteer services by youths and civic organizations in the society.

Nay Win Zaw
(Myaunaung)

Community forest founders meet in Mohnyin

Mohnyin, 6 Jan —The Nature Greening Development Association held a workshop on establishment of community forests at the Dhammayon monastery in Kwingyi Village, Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, on 4 January, attended by 100 founders of community forests.

Assistant Community Forest officer U Saw Tauk Tun gave talks about an important role of public participation in biodiversity conservation in Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Sawlaw and Mohnyin townships of Kachin State, technological assistance for establishment of community forests, disbursement of small loans to the founders and production of energy-saved stoves.

Member of National Greening Development Association U Thauk Kyar recounted his experiences on study tour to Indonesia and community forest founders in Mohnyin Township, their experiences in group and challenges.

A total of 25 groups of forest founders have planted over 4,000 acres of forests in Mohnyin Township.

GNLM-001

Health care association holds annual meeting

Mogaung, 6 Jan — Thukha Chantha health care association which is reliable medical care team for local people in health care services held its first annual meeting at Thenadow monastery in Nalogyi, Mandalay Region, on 5 January.

Mandalay Region Health Care Administrator U Kyaw Naing and township administrator U Kyaw Naing and chairman of the association U Aye Lwin (Thazin Press) submitted an annual report in providing health care services to the local people and audit of the association U Than Htay Aung (Sibin), an audit report.

The meeting was attended by departmental officials, townswelders and members, totalling about 100.—Htay Myint Maung

Mandalay Region Health Care Association
(Mandalay Region)

Dawei Township inaugurates two asphalted roads

Myeik, 6 Jan — A ceremony to inaugurate Thahaya asphalted road was held in Zaydan Ward, Myeik, Taninthayi Region, on 3 January.

The local people, Township Development Affairs Committee and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw funded K12.4 million for construction of a 650 feet long and 12 feet wide road.

Senior Engineer U Nay Myo of Township Development Affairs Committee explained facts about construction of the asphalted road.

Myeik District’s deputy commissioner U Aung Kyaw Tun and officials formally opened the newly-repaved road and strolled along it.

Likewise, Yuzana asphalted road was also opened in Dawei Kan Ward, Myeik, on 3 January.

The new road is 630 feet long and 18 feet wide. Local people and Development Affairs Committee K16.1 million for the construction of the road.

Zaw Myo Naung
(Myeik District IPRD)

Local authorities formally inaugurate asphalted Thahaya road in Myeik.
Majority of ethnic armed...

(from page 1) saying that it was critical to the future of the country as it would add new momentum to democratic reform.

“The change we need will not become a reality unless fighting stops,” she said, adding all stakeholders share the view that a political issue demands a political approach.

“Peace cannot be achieved through the one-sided approach. It requires the involvement of all stakeholders as well as public support.”

U Khun Okkar, patron of the Pa-O National Liberation Organization, expressed his view that the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT) and the Union Peace-making Working Committee (UPWC) are negotiating for nationwide ceasefire and that an agreement is imminent within reach.

Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win, general secretary of the Karen National Union, said he hopes for signing of the nationwide ceasefire agreement. According to the union minister, the government invited all 16 ethnic armed groups to the flag-hoisting ceremony and the grand military review, but four groups did not show up. Their reasons ranged from lack of time to long distances and their leaders already on trips.

The four groups were the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the Ta’ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), the Karen National Progressive Party (KNPP) and the Chin National Front (CNF).

Navy Pyi Taw, 6 Jan — Tatmadaw columns continued combing areas in Manwein, Mantaung and Lawkunyang regions in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State on 5 January. They seized eight 10-wheeled vehicles, three 6-wheeled vehicles, one Dongfeng vehicle, three backhoes and two crane carriers totalling 17, 240 logs and 17 men of other country.

From 2 to 5 January, the Tatmadaw columns seized one Dozer, three backhoes, four Pajeros, four Beijing Jeeps, three trailers, two doubled cabs, 447 timber trucks, four Dongfeng vehicles, four crane carriers, totalling 472 vehicles including 14 trucks with timbers, nine motorcycles, four men and 16 women of Myanmar, 114 men and five women of other country, totalling 139, two chainsaws, 10 beds, one solar panel, one battery, one telephone antenna, 680 stimulant tablets, six packets of raw opium, 20 ticals of opium, 12,000 Chinese yuan and documents signed by Brig. Gen Zaw Boke Htan, economic in-charge of KIA.

The seized illegal vehicles, timbers, men and equipment are handed over to departments concerned.

Tatmadaw columns seize illegal vehicles, arrest the other country’s citizens

Myanmar faces . . .

(from page 1) for US$5451.221 million, while border trade made up US$10,585.690 million.

For the total import, normal trade accounted for US$10,585.690 million, while border trade standing at US$1,675.343 million.

Myanmar mostly exports agricultural produce, animal by-products, fishery products, mine and forest products while it imports consumers products, raw materials and investment goods.

GNLM

A container vessel of Singapore.

Photo: Aye Min Soe

Public announcement for remonstration

Mro National Democracy Party headquartered at No. 144, Buddha Gaya Street in Myothit area, Aungtaw Ward, Mrauk-U, Rakhine State, as a political party under the Article 5 of Political Parties Registration Law, has submitted an application to register at the Union Election Commission on 6-1-2015 and applied for use of following party name, flag and seal.

It is hereby announced in accord with the Political Parties Registration Rules 14 (d) that if there is anyone who wants to remonstrate the name, flag and seal of the party, they may do so with the Union Election Commission with firm evidence within seven days from the date of the announcement.

Union Election Commission

Role numbers and list of candidates announced for President’s scholarship award

Navy Pyi Taw, 7 Jan — Role numbers and list of 412 candidates, who are included in the first batch of 2,773 candidates in the examination for President’s scholarship award, to have an interview, have been announced at the website of the Ministry of Education www.myanmar-education.edu.mm, the education channel of Sky Net and newspapers.

A timetable and schedules for the interview will be announced, according to the Ministry of Education.

MNA

Myanmar Catholic Archbishop named as Cardinal

Roman Catholic cardinal in 500 years of the Catholic faith in Myanmar. Pope Francis announced his appointment on Monday.

Newly appointed Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, speaking to the Myanmar News Agency, said that the world should help his country with its transition to democracy. According to him, the number of Catholic followers stands at around 800,000 in Myanmar. Cardinal Bo continued that all newly elected cardinals will receive guidance on philanthropic work from the Pope after a meeting scheduled on 12 and 13 February.

Moe Thuzar Soe
Medical team of Suksawat Hospital provides healthcare to patients

YANGON, 6 Jan — A medical team from Suksawat Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand gave medical care to patients recently at Leikpyakan Monastery in the compound of Nandar Aung Myay Monastery on Shwegondine Road in Yangon.

More than 300 patients including monks and nuns received medical care during a three-day medical care programme launched on Jan. 4 2015.

The team was led by Dr Anawat Sermswan, Cardiologist, Dr Prasit Singhaviranon, Cardiologist Consultant and Dr Disatat Sriphrapradang, Orthopaedic Surgeon.—GNLM

Physicians giving medical treatment to a Buddhist monk.

Myawady to vaccinate people against measles, German measles diseases

In his speech, Deputy Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo urged the people to participate in control of measles and German measles. Head of District Health Department Dr Aung Myint explained vaccination of measles and German measles at schools from 19 to 27 January and at the public from 19 to 28 February.

Township Administrator U Khin Maung Zaw, departmental heads and members of social organizations participated in discussions of vaccination programme. Hein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Kayah State government hands over fire trucks, water bowser to townships

On the occasion, Kayah state Chief Minister U Khin Maung Oo urged local peoples to cooperate with a fire brigade in taking fire preventive measures. State Minister of Security and Border Affairs Col Zaw Myo Tin handed over documents related to fire trucks to deputy commissioners of Loikaw and Bawlakhe districts. Chairman of Kayah State Fire Prevention Committee State Minister U Koe Rei made a speech.

The chief minister and party viewed drill of fire trucks and water bowser. Kayah State government spent K753.53 million on purchase of eight fire trucks, eight water bowser, fire extinguishers and rescue equipment. Head of Kayah State Fire Services Department U Saw Tun told media. Township IPRD

Pilgrims to visit Moebaw Creek waterfall near Kyaiktiyoey Hill

KYAIKTO, 6 Jan — Moebaw Creek Waterfall near Kyaiktiyoey Hill attracts local and foreign tourists to take a rest while making pilgrimage visits to Kyaiktiyoey Pagoda.

Seven concrete bridges across ravines along the route to the waterfall are being built for smooth transport of people, said an official. One of seven bridges has been completed by cent per cent. The route to Moebaw Creek waterfall was launched on 3 December 2014. Hilly transport buses are being run to the waterfall. Chairman of the bus line U Wi Tin told media. Yoe Yoe Lay Company and Mizine Taung Company jointly build the bridges and an earthen road along the route to the waterfall, U Nay Htet Thein Naing of Yoe Yoe Lay Company told media. —U Khin Maung Myint (Zabuthiri); Photo U Sein Hlaung (IPRD)
Thousands flee intensifying India-Pakistan clashes

Shimla, 6 Jan — Thousands of Indians have fled from their homes as fighting between India and Pakistan spread along a 200-km (124 mile) stretch of the border in the disputed region of Kashmir.

Tension between the nuclear-armed rivals has risen since Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi called off peace talks in August and clashes along stretches of their border have been erupting intermittently since October. At least 10 Indian and Pakistani soldiers and civilians have been killed in fighting over the past week.

About 6,000 civilians in Indian-controlled Kashmir fled from their homes late on Monday as fighting moved to civilian areas, said Shantamani, the divisional commissioner of Jammu region. About 4,000 left after fighting began last week.

“We had a narrow escape and there is a war-like situation,” Shun Kumar, 54, from Sherpur village told Reuters. “Pakistanis troops are using long-range weapons. It is the first time we have seen such intense shelling.”

The violence comes days before US Secretary of State John Kerry is due to visit India. President Barack Obama is also due to visit India later this month.

The United States has for years been trying to push the South Asian rivals to build better relations. Mistrust between India and Pakistan is a factor behind conflict in various parts of the region, including Afghanistan.

Kumar said he left his village after a shell landed in a school about 3.5 km (2 miles) from the border. Indian and Pakistani forces again exchanged gunfire and mortar bombs across parts of their border on Tuesday, an Indian Border Security Force official said.

“The firing is going on and we are giving befitting reply to Pakistani shelling,” the official said. Pakistani officials were not immediately available for comment.

The rivals, who have fought two wars over Muslim-majority Kashmir, blame each other for the upsurge in clashes since October. —Reuters

Tension rises in Bangladesh as polls anniversary protests turn violent

Dhaka, 6 Jan — Four protesters were killed in clashes between activists of Bangladesh’s ruling party and opposition supporters on Monday and authorities cut off transport into Dhaka on the first anniversary of national polls themselves fraught by violence.

Despite police warnings, opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia refused to cancel Dhaka rallies planned to mark what her Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has dubbed “democracy killing day”.

Khaleda, a former prime minister herself, has demanded fresh polls under a neutral administration, calling Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s government “undemocratic and illegal”.

The normally clogged streets of Dhaka were nearly empty on Monday afternoon, as authorities cut off buses, rail and ferry services into the city. Thousands of riot police were deployed in anticipation of more unrest.

“Security has been ramped up across the country, including Dhaka, to thwart any untoward incidents,” Dhaka district police chief Habibur Rahman told Reuters.

Bangladesh has been in a state of political uncertainty since last January, when Prime Minister Hasina’s Awami League came to power for a second consecutive term after a parliamentary election campaign marked by bloodshed. The polls had been boycotted by the BNP and deemed flawed by international observers.

Police said two protesters in their 20s were shot dead in Natore district during clashes between ruling and opposition party activists. The opposition said the victims were BNP activists, though police have not confirmed their identity.

Two more protesters were killed during separate clashes involving opposition and ruling party activists and security forces in the northwest part of the country.

The opposition leader said she has been confined to her office in Dhaka’s diplomatic enclave since Saturday, according to BNP party officials, with armoured vehicles equipped with water cannon.

In protest, Khaleda called for an indefinite nationwide blockade of roads, railways and waterways.

“The government has turned the whole country into a prison,” Khaleda told reporters.

The government declared Khaleda was being held against her will, and says it has deployed extra security at her office for her protection. “Who has confined her?” media quoted Hasina as asking at a party meeting on Sunday. “She can go to her residence any time.”

Hasina and Khaleda, both related to former national leaders, have nursed a long and bitter rivalry, and have dominated politics in Bangladesh for more than two decades.

BNP officials said hundreds of their supporters had been detained since Saturday. Scores of protesters have been injured in clashes in Dhaka, the port city of Chittagong and elsewhere. —Reuters

Divers join AirAsia wreck search as bad weather relents

Pangkalban Bun / Jakarta, Indonesia, 6 Jan — Search teams including divers took advantage of a let-up in bad weather on Tuesday to try to reach the wreckage of an AirAsia jet that crashed nine days ago, and to recover bodies and find its black box flight recorders.

Indonesian officials believe they may have located the tail and parts of the fuselage of the Airbus (AIRC,PA) A320-200 at the bottom of the Java Sea, but strong currents, high winds and big waves have hindered attempts to investigate the debris.

Flight QZ8501 plunged into the water off Borneo island on 28 December, about 40 minutes into a two-hour flight from Indonesia’s second-biggest city of Surabaya to Singapore. There were no survivors among the 162 people on board.

Jakarta has launched a crackdown on its fast-growing aviation sector since the crash, reassigning some officials, and tightening rules on pre-flight procedures in a country with a patchy reputation for air safety.

“Today’s weather is friendly, the team can work,” the head of Indonesia’s search and rescue agency, Franiskus Bambang Soelistyo, told a news conference in Jakarta.

Soelistyo said the multinational air and sea operation had two objectives: to recover bodies and wreckage floating in an ever-widening search area in the northern Java Sea, and to find wreckage and the plane’s black box on the ocean floor.

The latter effort is focused on an area about 90 nautical miles off Borneo, where ships using sonar have located five large objects believed to be parts of the plane — the largest about 18 metres (59 feet) long — in shallow water.

The captain of an Indonesian navy patrol vessel said on Monday his ship had found what was believed to be the tail — a key find since that section of the aircraft houses the cockpit voice and flight data recorders — but Soelistyo said that could not be confirmed.

Only 37 bodies of the mostly Indonesian passengers and crew have been recovered. Many more could still be trapped in the fuselage of the aircraft.

“We are trying to search the big parts of wreckage? Because there might be the possibility that there are still victims in the body of the plane,” said Soelistyo.

Some divers were in action, and the ships were scouring the sea floor with acoustic “pinger” detectors designed to pick up signals emitted by the black box, he said. —Reuters
Australia battles to contain worst wildfires in 30 years

Sydney, 6 Jan — Hundreds of firefighters were battling on Tuesday to contain Australia’s worst wildfires in 30 years which have already swept across more than 12,000 hectares outside the southern city of Adelaide and destroyed at least 26 homes.

The fires, which are burning across a 240-km (150-mile) perimeter in the state of South Australia, come as the Australian Bureau of Meteorology said on Tuesday that 2014 had been the country’s third warmest year on record. That has raised questions about whether the blaze is the result of climate change and a possible sign of worse to come.

“We understand the fires have continued to burn more heat waves and bush fires as in 2014,” David Karoly, a professor of Atmospheric Science at the University of Melbourne, said in a statement.

At least 20 people have been injured or taken to hospital but no deaths have been reported.

The fires are the worst in terms of scale and intensity since the Ash Wednesday fires of 1983 which killed 75 people and destroyed more than 2,000 homes.

Country Fire Service state coordinator Berton Eden said the next 48 hours were critical to firefighting efforts because of higher forecast temperatures and changing winds.

“Today we will see easterly winds coming through and by mid-afternoon, 4 pm, we’re going to be back to 36 degrees Celsius (96.8 degrees Fahrenheit),” Eden said.

“We’ve got to get through on Tuesday and Wednesday and see no increase in the perimeter of this fire.”

Hundreds of families have been evacuated and firefighters have rescued scores of koalas in the fire that is raging through the Adelaide Hills, just outside the state capital.

Wildfires are a natural annual event in Australia, but some scientists say climate change is increasing both the fire season and intensity.

The heat caused different problems in the West Australian capital of Perth where thousands of iiNet Ltd internet customers found themselves offline for hours after the company shut down some of its systems. The temperature in Perth reached a maximum of 44.4 degrees Celsius on Monday, the hottest January day since 1991 when it reached 45.8 degrees.

“Due to record breaking temperatures, iiNet Toolbox, Email and our corporate websites are unavailable. Apologies for any inconvenience caused,” iiNet tweeted.

The Bureau of Meteorology said on Tuesday that South Australia was likely to experience more heat waves and bushfires because of climate change.

Japan, China to resume talks on maritime crisis management next week

Tokyo, 6 Jan — Japan and China have agreed to resume talks as early as next week to launch a maritime crisis management mechanism in 2015, several Japanese government sources said on Tuesday.

Arrangements are being made for working-level talks around on Tuesday in Tokyo as both countries work to avert unwanted clashes around the Senaku Islands in the East China Sea — uninhabited islets controlled by Japan but claimed by China — the sources added.

Japan had sounded out China about resuming talks by the end of January on the establishment of some mechanism that would enable their defence authorities to contact each other in emergencies. Beijing responded by saying that they could be held in the middle of the month, according to the sources.

During their first summit talks in November, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to ease tensions over the sovereignty of the islands and establish the crisis management mechanism.

The upcoming talks would include officials from Japan’s Defence Ministry and the Maritime Self-Defence Force, and China’s Defence Ministry. In 2012, Japanese and Chinese defence authorities reached a basic agreement to set up a hotline, and use a common radio frequency for their ships and planes around the Senakus.

Firefighters’ New Year parade

Bangkok, 6 Jan — Thai police have arrested a man convicted of involvement in a bomb attack in India two decades ago that killed 18 people, including the then-chief minister of the northern state of Punjab, a spokesman said on Tuesday.

Gurmeet Singh, also known as Jagtar Singh Tara, a former member of the Babbar Khalsa International Sikh separatist group, was jailed for life in 2007 for his involvement in the 1995 attack outside a government complex in Chandigarh.

A bomb planted in then-Chief Minister Beant Singh’s car exploded killing Singh, the state’s high

The remains of a house and car can be seen after a bushfire destroyed them at Cadlee Creek in South Australia in this picture taken on 3 Jan, 2015. — Reuters

Political officers escort Gurmeet Singh, also known as Jagtar Singh Tara, from India, as they arrive at the criminal court in Bangkok on 6 Jan, 2015. — Reuters

Thai police arrest fugitive convicted of 1995 India bombing

Police officers escort Gurmeet Singh, also known as Jagtar Singh Tara, from India, as they arrive at the criminal court in Bangkok on 6 Jan, 2015. — Reuters

for his involvement in the Babbar Khalsa International Sikh separatist group, which was blamed for the blast.

Singh was one of six militants convicted in connection with the blast.

He and three others escaped a high-security prison in India in 2004. Singh entered Thailand in October, police said, and was arrested in the seaside town of Pattaya, east of the capital Bangkok, on Monday.

“We arrested fugitive convict Mr Gurmeet Singh in Pattaya after monitoring his movements for several months and with the help of police in India,” Royal Thai Police spokesman Police Lieutenant General Prawut Thavornsiri told Reuters.

Police were seeking permission from Thailand’s Supreme Court to extradite Singh, he added.

“The plan is to send him back to India,” Beant Singh became chief minister of Punjab, home to most Indian Sikhs, in 1992.

US urges Abe to resolve historical perception issue with neighbours

Washington, 6 Jan — The United States hopes Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will try to resolve disagreements over perceptions of history with neighbouring nations in a statement to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, the US State Department said on Monday.

“We encourage Japan to continue to work with its neighbours to resolve concerns over history in an amicable way through dialogue,” State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told a press briefing when asked to comment on Abe’s planned statement.

At his first press conference of the year on Monday, Abe said he will express remorse for Japan’s past actions and uphold the 1995 apology given by then premier Tomichi Murayama in his expected statement.

Abe is expected to visit the United States in April or May before the release of the statement.

On the 50th anniversary of the war’s end on 15 August, 1995, Murayama said Japan caused “tremendous damage and suffering” to the people of Asia and other countries through its colonial rule and aggression.

Neighbouring Asian nations, particularly China and South Korea, are paying attention to whether Abe will maintain the apology.

“We view that the apologies extended by previous Prime Minister Murayama and former Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono marked important chapters in Japan’s effort to improve relations with its neighbours,” Psaki said.

In a separate statement in 1993 issued by then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono, the government apologized for its military’s involvement in establishing wartime “comfort stations” where women, including those from the Korean Peninsula, provided sex for Japanese soldiers.—Kyodo News

Wildfires are a natural event in Australia, and China have agreed to launch a maritime crisis management mechanism in 2015, several Japanese government sources said on Tuesday.

Arrangements are being made for working-level talks around on Tuesday in Tokyo as both countries work to avert unwanted clashes around the Senaku Islands in the East China Sea — uninhabited islets controlled by Japan but claimed by China — the sources added.

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During their first summit talks in November, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to ease tensions over the sovereignty of the islands and establish the crisis management mechanism.
Turkish parliament commission votes against graft trial for ex-ministers

ANKARA, 6 Jan — A Turkish parliamentary commission voted on Monday not to commit for trial four former ministers accused in a corruption investigation, effectively backing President Tayyip Erdogan after a scandal that rattled his inner circle.

Erdogan has cast the corruption scandal, which erupted in December 2013 when he was prime minister, as a plot to unseat him by his political enemies. The affair led to the resignation of the ministers of the economy, the interior and urbanization, while European Union Affairs Minister Egemen Bagis lost his post in a subsequent reshuffle. All four have denied wrongdoing.

The 14-member parliamentary commission, including nine members of Erdogan’s ruling AK Party, was set up in May to study prosecutors’ files alleging wrongdoing by the four ex-ministers.

A member of the commission from Turkey’s main opposition party CHP branded the decision not to send the ministers to the Supreme Court for trial as a cover-up.

“We’ve witnessed today in parliament how the biggest corruption scandal in Turkey’s history has been covered up on the orders of the AK Party and the president. The outcome is saddening,” CHP deputy Levent Gok told reporters.

Erdogan portrayed the corruption scandal, which posed one of the biggest challenges to his more than decade-long leadership, as a coup attempt orchestrated by his former ally, US-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, to undermine his rule.

He reacted with a purge of the state apparatus, reassigning thousands of police and hundreds of judges and prosecutors loyal to Gulen in what his supporters said was a cleansing of the clerical influence.

Speaking over the weekend, Health Minister Mehmet Muezzinoglu questioned the impartiality of the Supreme Court, highlighting the tension between government and the judiciary.

“The AK Party will clean up the its own rotten ones, with its own values,” Erdogan said.

Nobody should doubt this. But it will not submit itself to a system with ill intentions,” he said in an interview with the Hurriyat newspaper.

Ankara’s Western allies have reacted with alarm to what they see as signs of erosion of the rule of law, with four prosecutors who initiated the corruption investigation suspended last month, cases dropped and government influence over the judiciary tightened.

The commission’s decision must be debated by 30 January by the parliament in full session, which will have the final say on whether the ministers are tried in the Supreme Court.

Turkey’s immunity rules mean they can only face trial if parliament, where the AK Party has a large majority, agrees. — Reuters

Two New York City police officers shot and wounded

NEW YORK, 6 Jan — Two New York City police officers were shot and taken to a local hospital, police said on Monday night.

The New York Police Department said the officers were responding to a reported robbery in the Bronx when the shooting occurred.

The conditions of the policemen were unknown. No suspect had been taken into custody, police said.

Further details were not immediately available.

Local broadcaster NBC New York reported that the officers suffered non-life-threatening wounds.

The shooting comes just weeks after NYPD officers Wenjian 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 in encounters with white officers in Ferguson, Missouri, and New York City this summer.

Reuters

NY Times reporter questioned in court in CIA leak case

ALEXANDRIA, 6 Jan — New York Times reporter James Risen refused on Monday to answer all but a few basic questions in court about his book detailing a failed CIA effort to undermine Iran’s nuclear weapons program, in a case that has become a flashpoint for press freedom.

Risen, appearing under oath on the witness stand for the first time, declined to identify what information confidential sources provided for his book, where or when he met with unnamed sources, or who had not served as a source.

The terse, and at times combative, testimony prompted a lawyer for Sterling to question whether prosecutors could even proceed with their case.

There are many unequivocal statements the government cannot prove without Risen, said Edward MacMahon, a lawyer for Sterling. Sterling was indicted on unauthorized disclosure of national defense information and other charges in 2010.

Risen sought to quash an earlier subpoena requiring him to testify, but an appeals court ruled against him and the Supreme Court last year declined to take up his case.

In mid-December, after a decision from former Attorney General Eric Holder, prosecutors said they planned to limit the questions they asked Risen, and would not ask him to name any individuals who provided anonymous information for his 2006 book “State of War.”

On Monday, Risen said he did not want to provide any information to the government that it might be able to use as a “building block” to prove or disprove a “mosaic” it was trying to make. He made the comments just days before Sterling is scheduled to begin trial on 12 January.

The case is USA v Sterling 10-00485 in the Eastern District of Virginia. — Reuters

Turkish Airlines suspends all Libya flights amid security concerns

ISTANBUL, 6 Jan — Turkish Airlines, the last foreign airline operating in Libya, said on Tuesday it was suspending all flights to the north African country over concerns about worsening security.

Turkey’s flag carrier suspended all Missrata flights on Monday, and on Tuesday it said it would no longer fly to its other Libya destinations - Bengazi, Tripoli or Sebha. Three years after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi, Libya is mired in a violent power struggle between two rival factions of former rebels who have established competing governments, both claiming legitimacy and control of vast oil resources. — Reuters

El Nino indicators ease over recent weeks: Australia weather bureau

SYDNEY, 6 Jan — Pacific Ocean temperatures have cooled over the last two weeks, easing away from El Nino thresholds, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) said on Tuesday.

Ocean temperatures have oscillated near El Nino thresholds for several months but over recent weeks have again eased, the Australian weather agency said.

Summer-like surface temperature anomalies have cooled by around 0.4 degrees in the parts of central to eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, the BOM said.

However, temperatures remain above average along much of the equator, the Australian weather agency said.

Despite the cooling indicators, the BOM said its climate models continue to show warmer-than-average sea temperatures persisting over the next two-to-three months. Japan in December declared an El Nino, marking the first declaration by a major meteorological bureau of the much-feared weather phenomenon, which had been widely expected to emerge this year. — Reuters

Cuba to hold partial elections in April

HAVANA, 6 Jan — Cuba’s State Council convened about eight million voters for partial elections in April to choose the delegates for a two-and-a-half-year term to the 16th municipal assemblies of the People’s Power, the daily Granma reported on Monday.

This first round of the elections is scheduled for 19 April, and the second will be held on 26 April in those constituencies where no candidates obtain over 50 percent of the valid votes, according to an official release published by the newspaper.

Cuban electoral law establishes that if there is a tie in any constituency, a third round or more will be necessary to define an electoral winner.

This is the 16th electoral process on the island since the establishment of the People’s Power, the country’s national parliament, in 1976.

Cuba’s last legislative elections were held in October 2012. — Xinhua
Perspectives

Wednesday, 7 January, 2015

Learning soft skills is important in education

By Aung Khin

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chicle in various sectors such as human resources and skills, focus on competences becomes a vital drive for Myanmar. An academic education should be a good foundation for the country. However, life competences, soft skills, must also be taught at schools and universities.

Soft skills include the ability to communicate, IT literacy, numerical and statistical skills, high-level thinking and social competence, while good physical and mental health are crucial for ideal graduates. These skills are fundamentals for producing quality and valuable citizens who will face this highly competitive global community.

The world is now a global village and communication becomes the highest priority in international relations. The lack of abilities to read, write, listen and speak fluently and effectively in different circumstances cannot produce a society with skillful human resources.

In addition to global languages, proficiency in languages of ASEAN countries will be advantageous for graduates. Myanmar students need more IT literacy. The ability for effective use of IT is a necessity for the new generation. Moreover, numerical and statistical competency must be developed in non-science students.

Teachers at basic education schools and academics at universities and colleges must equip themselves with up-to-date knowledge to share with their students. Genuine education should be focused on developing life-long learners with inquiring minds.

Good Samaritans working on Christmas Holidays for eye patients in Sagaing Hills

By Sayar Mya

Eght-Passenger Light Van pulled over right in front of the Wachet Jivitaddana Sangha Hospital in Sagaing Hills. It was cool soft winter Sunday morning on 21 December 2014 and the thin fog enveloped the surrounding and its environment and also over the large green trees. The Wachet Hospital is situated on the western bank of the Mighty Ayeyawady in Sagaing Region of Upper Myanmar.

We travelled from Yangon to Sagaing by public transport express bus on Saturday night and arrived at Sagaing bus terminal the following morning. A light van from the hospital was waiting and carried us to the destination.

The Wachet Hospital was first established as a dispensary for the local villagers in 1984 getting up and standing high out of a dilapidated and collapsed Zayat — wayside public rest house built on a sacred premise — by venerable monk of Kyawsaw Religious Retreat Dr. Ashin Lakkhana through the collective efforts of well-wishers. A very small dispensary in the remote hills has developed into a modest hospital due to the ardent and tireless efforts of the Buddhist monks, doctors, well-wishers and the local populace.

The hospital is treating patients from all walks of life especially the marginalized, vulnerable and poor patients. The hospital charges a nominal fee to those who could afford, and treated free of charge to poor patients. The hospital is funded by well-wishers across the country and managed by two committees namely the Lower Myanmar Wachet Hospital Supervisory and Logistic Committee and the Upper Myanmar WHS and LC. Retired Director of Finance and Revenue Daw Myint Myint Kyi of Yangon is working as dynamic Honorary Secretary for the hospital.

By Aung Khin

The hospital is treating patients from all walks of life especially the marginalized, vulnerable and poor patients. The medical and hospital staff are dedicated to serve the patients.

The good Samaritans working on Christmas for the eye patients in Sagaing Hills.

Dr. H. Kwon Kang, Vitreoretinal Surgeon of Sydney.

Staying in quest of eye treatment in August 2013. At this juncture, it is my honour to introduce Dr. Kwon. His full name is Dr. Hyong Kwon Kang, MBBS, B.Sc. FRANZCO MEDICAL & SURGICAL RETINA. Dr. Kang attended medical school at the University of Sydney, where he also attained a Bachelor of Science degree with the University Medal. He completed ophthalmology training at Prince of Wales Hospital and pursued a fellowship in vitreoretinal surgery and medical retina at Southampton University Hospital in UK, where he also worked as a consultant in 2005 and 2006. Dr. Kang has been active in research into retinal vein occlusion, macular degeneration and macular hole, and published numerous papers in major international journals. He routinely performs surgery for retinal detachment, macular hole, epiretinal membrane and diabetic retinopathy. He participates in rural ophthalmology as a visiting consultant at Broken Hill Base Hospital. He has been involved in a volunteer ophthalmology programme in Myanmar since 2003.

Later, I learnt that Dr. Kwon is visiting twice a year to WJSH since 2003 and visited three times each in 2013 and 2014. Immediately after arrival, Dr. Kwon inspected and recently renovated Operation Theatre-2 and Operation Theatre-3. He said that he preferred the renovation of OT-2 being revamped at the cost of Myanmar kyats 25 million.

He is the lone foreign ophthalmologist at this recent trip for 22-27 December which was assisted by Professor Dr. Daw Yee Yee Aung and Dr. U Saw Hho Set, both from Mandalay Eye Hospital. Professor Dr. Daw Yee Yee Aung joined the Wachet Hospital in early 2013 and has a host of eye patients as she is a very kind hearted doctor. Dr. U Saw Hho Set has been working for the Wachet Hospital since 2004 dedicated his heart and soul for the eye patients, especially for the poor.

Over the years, the month of December is allocated for the team that undertakes Myanmar Eye Care Program (MECP) with the coordinator Dr. Geoff Cohn. The Myanmar Eye Care Program (MECP) is led by Sydney-based ophthalmologist Dr. Geoff Cohn. Every couple of months or three to four trips each year, Dr Cohn and a dedicated team of about 40 Australian medical eye specialists, technicians and support staff, self-fund their trips to Myanmar and volunteer their time to provide treatment to 30,000 people each year. They treat eye diseases such as cataract and glaucoma and provide essential equipment for ophthalmic surgery. Importantly, the program helps train native ophthalmic personnel to operate independently, which enables them to continue the work when the Australian team returns home. The aim of the MECP is to reduce the prevalence of preventable
Non-collateral loan, up to K10 million, available for every...

in Myanmar, allowing them to get up to K10 million from SMIDB, said the chairman.

“The bank the borrowers are covered by credit guarantee insurance being sold by Myanma Insur-
ance, and we can lend to CGI holders only,” the chairman added.

The country’s first in-
surance service went on sale last June, but it has been described as a hard sell.

It is aimed at improving the access to finance for SMEs, said the state-
owned insurer at the press conference on the launch of the new service last year.

With different pre-
mium rates for two types of loans, credit guarantee insurance for a loan with collateral is set with a pre-
mium rate of 2 kyats per 100 kyat for first year, 1.5 kyat for second year and 1 kyat for third year while a non-collateral loan with a premium rate of 3 kyats for first year, 2 kyats for second year and 1 kyat for third year and next.

MI guarantees to im-
burse for a loss up to 60 per-
cent of the amount in the event of a loan default, the SMIDB chairman said.

“We are ready to loan money to every SME who bought credit guarantee insurance. To research performance of businesses seeking loans from us is the MI responsibility, not that of us,” he added.

Statistical boards show there are 126,237 registered SMEs in Myanmar, ac-
counting for 99.4% of overall industries across the country. Sources said most SMEs with finan-
cial needs are struggling to grow their businesses at the advent of the ASEAN Economic Community.

Local businessmen welcome the loan program, saying it is good for SMEs wanting to get a small busi-

Good Samaritans working on Christmas Holidays...

and avoidable blindness in the rural part of Myanmar by developing a high quali-
ty, locally staffed, self-sus-
taining and efficient eye care health system by 2020.

It was learnt that Dr. Coha is actively involved in the earlier commitment of Cambodia visit at this time of the year. With a view to filling the wide open space of December in 2014, Dr. Kwon alone rushed in to treat the eye patients, who were in dire need of foreign ophthalmologist.

Aim and objective of his visit was (1) Assess-
ment of Sterilization and (2) Supervision of Vitreo-
etinal Surgery. Sterilization of the operation theaters is an important protocol to improve the sanitary stand-
ards in the hospital and to prevent surgical infections.

The eye treatment pro-
gram for December 2014 was not publicized to the public as many eye patients were already registered.

Those were the patients who have not been treated during previous visits of Surgery and Vitreoretinal Disease Treatment. Certain number of eye patients from Mandalay Eye Hosp-
tal was also in the waiting list.

Working in a straight long stretch, Dr. Kwon, Professor Dr. Daw Yee Aung and Dr. U Saw Htoo Sett stepped into the Out Patient Department (Eye) at the ground floor in the afternoon of 21 December and examined the patients who were waiting in the long queue. The three surgeons assisted by skilled nurses quickly but careful-
ly examined the eye pa-
tients to diagnose the dis-
ese and serializing for priority during the 22-26 December working days.

Ideally, the eye exami-
nation consists of an exter-
nal examination, followed by specific tests for visual acuity, pupil function, extra ocular muscle motility, visual fields, intraocular pressure and ophthalmo-
scope through a dilated pup-

A minimal eye exami-
nation consists of tests for visual acuity, pupil func-
tion, and extra ocular mus-
cle motility, as well as di-
rect ophthalmoscope through an undilated pupil.

On the first day, 21 December 2014, there was no eye operation. The ex-
amination of (87) vitreoret-
inal eye patients was car-
rried out and the voluminous task ended at 9:00 pm.

The team members in small groups came up one after another from the ground floor to the third floor towards the dining hall passing through the corridor facing the Marker Ayeyawady. The cool winter breeze was blowing from across the water with no moon in the sky on the 13th day of the year, month “Pyu Tho”, and the dark blue sky hovered all over the area.

The three ophthal-
omologists, skilled nurses and other staff members seemed exhausted physi-
cally, but their facial ex-
pression was fresh as a dai-
sy under the bright neon light on the third floor.

They exchanged views over the dining table and called it the day, as the first day’s work has been com-

Non-stop work contin-
ued the following day.

On 22 December, the team examined (36) pa-
tients and operated (5) cas-
es.

On 23 December, the ophthalmologists checked (17) cases and treated (6) patients.

On 24 December, the eye surgeons looked over (13) men and women. They handled (7) cases through operation.

On 25 December, the Happy Holiday of Merry Christmas, the Good Sa-
amitaris did not carry out. Initially, five patients were called in for last day operation. Two patients were alerted to be called in for operation if the cases of five patients were completed on time. The op-
eration of five patients was completed at 7:20 pm en-
tering into night.

Even at 7:20 pm night time, Dr. Kwon called in two times for eye pa-
tients for operation. The mis-

Monday of Good Samari-
tans did not carry out. Initially, five patients were called in for last day operation. Two patients were alerted to be called in for operation if the cases of five patients were completed on time. The op-

US stands by plan to pull troops from Afghanistan

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan — The United States on Monday stood by plans to halve the number of its troops in Afghanistan this year and reduce them further in 2016 following Afghan President Ashraf Ghani’s suggestion that President Barack Obama review his deadline.

But Ghani’s comment adds to a growing debate over whether the White House will stick to its plans, already amended twice, of cutting US forces to about 5,000 by the end of this year and drawing down to a “normal” US embassy presence. The latest proposal, made at the end of 2016, Ghani may have also given political cover to Obama should the president decide he needs to renege on his withdrawal pledge to preserve shaky gains made over 13 years of war and to avoid a collapse of local forces that Iraq witnessed last year.

“My guess is that he probably will re-evaluate these decisions in due course,” said James Dobkins, who was Obama’s special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan until July. Among the factors at play are the course of the war itself; reconciliation efforts between the government and Taliban; US public opinion and the 2016 US presidential debate.

If Obama decides to change course, he may find a more receptive domestic audience. American skepticism about the Afghan war seems to be moderating in the face of the rise of Islamic State fighters who have seized swathes of Iraqi and Syrian territory following the US withdrawal from Iraq in 2011. According to a Washington Post-ABC poll published on Monday, support for the war in Afghanistan has risen since 2013. A 56 percent majority says it has not been worth fighting, but 38 percent said the war was worth the costs, up 10 percentage points from when the record low in July 2013.

Speaking in a television interview on Sunday, Ghani made his case for a greater US presence in an understated manner. “Deadlines concentrate the mind. But deadlines should not be dogmas,” Ghani told the “60 Minutes” program on CBS. “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.”

Asked about Ghani’s comments, Army Colonel Steve Warren, a Pentagon spokesman, said, “The drawdown plan remains in effect and there have been no changes to the drawdown timeline.”

US troopers training Iraqi military at bases in Anbar, Taji

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan — US troops have started training Iraqi military forces at two bases in Iraq as they work to build a force that can take the offensive against Islamic State militants who overran part of the country last year.

The decision came at the recommendation of US military assessment teams deployed to Iraq to evaluate conditions and needs after Islamic State militants overran much of the northwest part of the country.

The United States had about 2,140 military personnel in Iraq as of 4 January, with about 800 of those protecting US personnel and facilities and the remaining 1,340 advising Iraqi forces fighting Islamic State militants or training Iraqi troops, Warren said.

US forces also are planning to train Iraqi military personnel at bases in Anbar in the Kurdish region as well as Basmaya south of Baghdad, the site of a combat base that trained many Iraqi troops.

“We don’t expect either of those to be up and running for several more weeks,” Warren told reporters at a briefing. Warren said the Marines at al Asad base in Anbar Province were primarily assisting Iraqis with “mission support planning, information and intelligence fusion, close air support coordination operations and overall development of security strategies.”

He said Asad was “coming under regular ... harassment fire” from Islamic State militants, describing them as “purely nuisance attacks” using indirect weapons like mortars. “The fire has become completely ineffective.”

The Iraqi security forces there have done a very good job of creating a security zone. American forces — have sustained absolutely no injuries, wounds or even a close attack,” he said.

Two Egyptian policemen shot dead outside church south of Cairo

CAIRO, 6 Jan — Two policemen guarding a church in Egypt’s Minya Province, south of the capital Cairo, were killed by unidentified gunmen on Tuesday, security sources said.

The two policemen fell dead immediately after the masked men showered them with bullets, according to eyewitnesses and security sources. Security sources have stolen all the weapons in the security men possession, security sources added.

Policemen were killed before they took place one day before the Coptic Christmas, ahead of which security has been intensified. Website of state-run Al-Ahram newspaper also confirmed the deaths.

Following the attack, dozens of security forces have cut the road in front of the church to protest the killing of their colleagues. The victims include Eid Fahim, a 57-year-old Coptic, who has only two months left to finish his service, and Mohamed Yazid, a 40-year-old Muslim.

The officials from the Minya Forensic Department told Xinhua that more than 32 policemen have penetrated their bodies.

Coptic Christians, co-existing peacefully with the majority Sunni Muslims in Egypt, make up about 10 percent of the country’s total population of 85 million.

Following former President Mohamed Morsi’s removal by the military in July, 2013, a number of churches and public properties were burned and destroyed.

Meanwhile, anti-government attacks killed hundreds of police and military men in the Sinai Peninsula and other parts across the country, including Cairo.

Xinhua

Syria tells UN that McCain and former diplomats visited illegally

UNITED NATIONS, 6 Jan — Syria has complained to the United Nations that US Senator John McCain, former Foreign French Minister Bernard Kouchner and former US diplomat Peter Galbraith entered the country without visas in separate visits in violation of its sovereignty.

Syria’s UN ambassador Bashar al jaafari, called on UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the 15-member Security Council to press governments to take “the necessary measures against their nationals who enter Syrian territory illegally.”

Such actions are a blatant violation of Syria’s sovereignty and of the resolutions of the Security Council concerning Syria,” Jaafari wrote in a letter dated on 30 December and seen by Reuters on Monday.

He complained generally about “certain journalists and political figures” entering Syria illegally but singled out McCain for entering Syria in June 2013. McCain, a former Republican presidential candidate, visited Syria in May 2013 and met with some Syrian rebels, his spokesman said at the time.

US Senator John McCain

Ja’afari also cited Kouchner for visiting in 2014 November, Galbraith for travelling to Syria in December 2014 with other US political and military leaders, and former Kuwaiti politician Walid al-Talibab’a for entering Syria in September 2013.

In response, McCain said in a statement: “It is a sad but unsurprising truth that the Assad regime is less concerned with its massacre of more than 200,000 men, women and children than it is my visit with those brave Syrians fighting for their freedom and dignity.”

“The fact that the international community has done virtually nothing to bring down this terrible regime despite its atrocities is a stain on our collective moral conscience,” McCain added.

Reuters
China’s upbeat housing sentiment rolls into 2015

**Han Kong, 6 Jan —** China’s stronger-than-seasonal property sales in December point to a recovery in market sentiment thanks to looser housing and monetary policy, with the upbeat momentum expected to swing into 2015, analysts said.

But with oversupply still looming large, any recovery — especially in home prices — is likely to be slow, tempering hopes that housing could provide a badly needed boost to the Chinese economy as it struggles to overcome the slowest growth since the global financial crisis.

“December sales figures were a positive surprise because they were better than the September and October figures which were traditionally the golden and silver month,” Macquarie analyst David Ng said. “They’re stimulated by loosening policies.”

Ng said however that sales would see slow, healthy growth rather than a big rebound.

China’s top listed residential developer China Vanke reported a 129 percent surge in sales in the last month of 2014 from a year earlier, while sales over the same period for mid-sized Country Garden leapt 167 percent.

Sixty percent of China’s major cities recorded a rise in sales volume in December, according to housing data researcher CRIC, with first-tier cities rising the most, up more than 15 percent from November and up over 45 percent from a year earlier.

China has put in place a series of stimulus measures including interest rate cuts to spur home buying demand and market liquidity since the third quarter.

Betting on even looser policy to come, investors have been snapping up property shares, pushing the property sub-index in Shanghai to its highest since February 2008.

But housing supply remains excessive despite the pick-up in sales, with only two major cities out of 23 seeing a decline in inventory at the end of December, CRIC data showed.

“Inventory is high. We can’t raise prices until after the market digests them,” said a chief executive officer of a developer based in southern Guangdong Province. “The sales went up but prices didn’t; it won’t be easy for us to raise prices.”

China’s new home prices fell for the 11th consecutive month in November by an annual 3.7 percent, the biggest drop since 2011. Property sales hit 132.2 million square metres, the highest level in 11 months, though still down 11 percent from a year earlier.

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) said in a report last month it expects home prices in first and second-tier cities to continue to fall in 2015 on high inventory, while prices in third and fourth-tier cities would stabilize.

In terms of full-year results, a breakdown of sales figures also underscores the increasing polarisation between large and small players, leading to quicker consolidation. CASS forecasts that half of the developers will “vanish”.

China has an estimated 50,000 developers although only 80 account for close to 40 percent of market share.

The largest companies tend to grow faster. Seven developers with over 100 billion yuan in sales, including Dalian Wanda Commercial Properties and Evergrande Real Estate, on average sold 24 percent more in 2014, while those with 30-100 billion sales grew at 14.6 percent, according to housing researcher China Index Academy.

Unlisted state-backed Greenland Group said its 2014 contracted sales jumped 50 percent from a year earlier to 240.8 billion yuan, topping China Vanke for the first time.—*Reuters*

Toyota targets 1.1 million vehicle sales in China this year, after missing 2014 goal

**Beijing / Shanghai, 6 Jan —** Toyota Motor Corp and its two Chinese joint ventures are targeting to sell 1.1 million vehicles in China in 2015, after failing to meet its sales objective for last year.

The carmaker sold about 1.03 million vehicles in China in 2014, up 12.5 percent from the previous year but short of its sales target of more than 1.1 million vehicles.

For the month of December, the top Japanese carmaker sold 125,000 vehicles, a rise of 15.3 percent from a year earlier, it said on Tuesday.

The monthly gain followed a 2.9 percent year-on-year rise in November and a 27.1 percent increase in October.

Toyota executives told *Reuters* late last month that it was likely to miss its 2014 sales target and will sell slightly more than 1 million vehicles this year.

Still, 2014 marks the first time Toyota surpassed annual sales of 1 million vehicles in China, a target it originally aimed for in 2010.

Toyota operates joint ventures in China with China FAW Group Corp and Guangzhou Automobile Group.—*Reuters*

Feijoas, blackberries offer new hope for inflammatory ailments: NZ study

**Wellington, 6 Jan —** Two common fruits could provide a breakthrough in treating inflammatory diseases, particularly in the bowel, according to New Zealand research out on Tuesday.

Feijoas and blackberries stood out among 12 fruits for their anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties, said University of Auckland researchers.

The study also looked at mangoes, elderberries, cranberries, blackcurrants, red raspberries, strawberries, green and black grapes, plums and pears.

The study identified fruit compounds with an anti-inflammatory effect through certain chemical pathways that could be tested further to develop them as complementary therapies for inflammatory bowel disease and other inflammatory disorders.

“Inflammatory responses are important for coping with damage, but an over-active inflammatory response is also damaging and can create problems,” Professor Lynn Ferguson said in a statement.

The two fruits could help to limit the inflammatory response.

The study also showed that the anti-oxidant action of the feijoa compounds was not a direct effect, but was mediated through inhibitory effects on the enzyme, kinase.

For the experiments reported in the study, the testing included the skin and pulp of all the fruits.

“In feijoa, the skin has more bio-activity than the pulp,” said Ferguson.

“Some Asian cultures eat the skin, but in most Western cultures many people find the taste too sour.”—*Xinhua*

GM says 2014 China auto sales up 12 percent year-on-year

**Shanghai, 6 Jan —** General Motors Co and its Chinese joint ventures sold a record 3,539,970 vehicles in China in 2014, up 12 percent from the previous year, the US automaker said on Tuesday.

For the month of December, GM sold 357,375 2014 models, a rise of 31.9 percent from a year earlier.

The monthly gain followed a 5.3 percent year-on-year rise in November and a 3.2 percent rise in October.

GM has said it plans to invest $12 billion (8 billion pounds) in China between 2014 and 2017 and build five more plants to ramp up its manufacturing capacity.

GM makes vehicles in China in partnership with China FAW Group Corp and SAIC Motor Corp Ltd.—*Reuters*

J&J and Bavarian Nordic start clinical tests of Ebola vaccine

**London, 6 Jan —** US drugmaker Johnson & Johnson and Johnson said on Tuesday it had started clinical trials of its experimental Ebola vaccine, which uses a booster developed by Denmark’s Bavarian Nordic.

The initiation of the Phase I tests, which had been expected about now, marks further progress in the race to develop a shot against a disease that has killed more than 8,000 people in West Africa since last year.

Two other experimental vaccines, one from GlaxoSmithKline and a rival from NewLink and Merck, are already in clinical development.—*Reuters*
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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No</th>
<th>Tender No</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>(1)</td>
<td>IFB-123(14-15)</td>
<td>Skid Mounted Double Pump Cementing Unit with Complete Accessories (Silo, Cutting Pot, Power Pack, Dryer &amp; Compressor) (1) Lot</td>
<td>US$</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
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<td>6” x 8” R Mixing Pump with 50HP Motor (2) Lots</td>
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<td>IFB-125(14-15)</td>
<td>Mud Agitator Unit with Motor (2) Lots</td>
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<td>(4)</td>
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<td>(5)</td>
<td>IFB-127(14-15)</td>
<td>Spares for Metering System (CNG Filling Station) (5) Items</td>
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<td>(6)</td>
<td>IFB-128(14-15)</td>
<td>Komatsu (D 39 E x 22) or Caterpillar (D40A, P-3) Bulldozer (1) Unit</td>
<td>US$</td>
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<td>(7)</td>
<td>IFB-129(14-15)</td>
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<td>(9)</td>
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<td>Electrical spares for D3 T2 Drilling Rigs (15) Items</td>
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<td>Tender Closing Date &amp; Time — 2-2-2015, 16:30 Hr</td>
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Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 5 Jan — 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

**How to age gracefully? Ask a bowhead whale**

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan — To learn the secret behind aging gracefully, you may want to check out the bowhead whale, the majestic denizen of the Arctic waters that boasts a lifespan topping 200 years.

Scientists on Monday unveiled the genetic blueprint for the bowhead whale, a genome chock full of clues behind this creature’s exceptional longevity and remarkable disease resistance.

Comparing its genome to other mammals, the scientists discovered differences in the whale’s genes related to DNA repair, cell cycle, cancer and the aging process that may help explain its lifespan and vitality.

“This is the biggest animal whose genome has been sequenced thus far and the first big whale to be sequenced,” said University of Liverpool genetist João Pedro de Magalhães, who led the study published in the scientific journal *Cell Reports*.

“By identifying novel maintenance and repair mechanisms, we hope to learn what is the secret for living longer, healthier lives and may be able apply this knowledge to improve human health and preserve human life,” Magalhães added.

Bowhead whales, which live longer than any other mammal, are among Earth’s largest creatures. They reach up to 60 feet (18 metres) and are the second heaviest whale after the blue whale. They are mostly black, with the front part of their upturned lower jaw white. Bowhead whales are filter feeders that eat huge amounts of zooplankton.

“Bowhead whales weigh between 50 and 100 tons when fully grown and have probably 1,000 times as many cells as humans, but they apparently have a anti-tumor response at the cell level that is far more efficient than what is found in humans,” said biologist Mads Peter Heide-Jörgensen of the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources and the University of Copenhagen.

The scientists said the bowhead whale’s genome may also help explain physiological adaptations related to size.

Magalhães said whale cells must have a much lower metabolic rate than those of smaller mammals. He said the genome study detected changes in one specific gene involved in the body’s temperature regulation that may be related to metabolic differences in whale cells.

The bowhead genome is slightly smaller than the human genome and the typical mammalian genome.

“Generally speaking, more complex species tend to have larger genomes with more genes, but I don’t think within mammals there is a correlation between body size and genome size,” Magalhães said.—Reuters

**Landslides, flooding menace rain-soaked western Washington state**

SEATTLE, 6 Jan — An unusual burst of heavy rain-fall in western Washington state caused landslides and flooding early on Monday, knocking three homes off foundations and forcing the evacuation of a nursing home, officials said.

Several landslides in rain-soaked coastal Grays Harbor County pushed muddy floodwater and debris across key state highways, county and rural roads, most of which remained closed at nightfall in and around Aberdeen and Hoquiam, the county’s largest cities.

“It’s not one of these snow-melt events, it’s the inundation of rain over the last 24 hours,” said Dave Porter, a spokesman for the Grays Harbor County Sheriff’s Office, adding no injuries have been reported.

Drier forecasts for Monday night and Tuesday could aide emergency crews working to clear roadways, although it was uncertain when roads would be re-open, Porter said.

Officials warned of possible severe flooding for downtown Aberdeen and other areas with high-tide early on Tuesday.

In Hoquiam, where 7 inches of rain fell in 24 hours, some 60 nursing home residents were ordered to leave due to flooding, Porter said. Officials at local schools, including Grays Harbor College, canceled classes and sporting events.

Outside of Seattle, in the Fall City area, two people died and one suffered non-life-threatening injuries after a car crash, the King County Sheriff’s Office said on Twitter.

There was no word on the cause of the crash but broadcast images showed a car and a truck with their fronts smashed near a guardrail of a turning, rain-slicked roadway.

Several roads would be closed due to flooding in Snohomish County, northeast of Seattle, and a flood warning was declared through Wednesday evening for the Snohomish River, the county sheriff said on Twitter.

Some 1,000 customers were without power Monday morning in Seattle-area communities, local media reported, citing Puget Sound Energy. About 50 customers remained without power by nightfall, the utility’s website said.—Reuters
**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV ASSADULL ULOY VOY NO (04/14)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MV ASSADULL ULOY VOY NO (04/14) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W 6 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.

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV KORALIA VOY NO (743)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KORALIA VOY NO (743) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**

**MV FLORENCE K VOY NO (178)**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV FLORENCE K VOY NO (178) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T. where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**WEATHER REPORT**

**BAY INERENCE:** 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 7th January, 2015:** Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagiung and Tannithayi Regions, Kachin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

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

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in the Eastern Myanmar areas.

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**NEW YORK/LOS ANGELES, 6 Jan — Two US airlines said on Monday they have applied to US regulators to operate daily nonstop flights to and from Tokyo’s Haneda airport using a slot currently unused by another US carrier.**

American Airlines applied to link with Haneda from Los Angeles International Airport, while Hawaiian Airlines requested to connect from Kona International Airport in Hawaii in their applications with the Department of Transportation, they said.

Under a US-Japan bilateral agreement, US airlines can operate a total of four daily round-trip flights at Haneda, with all slots having been allocated, but a service operated by Delta Air Lines Inc from Seattle has been suspended since October, according to American Airlines.

In opposing the moves to take over its slot, Delta said the service is expected to reopen in late March. Hawaiian Airlines, which operates direct daily flights between Haneda and Honolulu, said it seeks to launch the new route to Kona, as the area is popular with Japanese tourists.

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**Two killed in train-school bus collision in US state N Dakota**

WASHINGTON, 6 Jan — Two people were killed and a dozen of others injured on Monday when a school bus collided with a freight train in the US northern state of North Dakota, local media reported.

The accident took place on Monday afternoon in Larimore in the northeastern part of the state, as the school bus from the Larimore Public School failed to yield to a stop sign at a railroad crossing where a westbound freight train was passing by, local authorities were quoted as saying.

The bus driver, 62, and a student, 17, were killed after being ejected from the bus as the train struck it on the passenger side. About 12 other students were wounded, with three being listed as “in very serious condition,” according to the reports—Xinhua
Brad Pitt leads sing-along at film-awards gala

California, 6 Jan — The first star-studded film-award ceremony of the new year was literally something to sing about.

While not an honouree himself, actor-producer Brad Pitt stole the spotlight with a sing-along for a few moments on Saturday night at the annual black-tie gala for the Palm Springs International Film Festival.

Pitt traveled some 100 miles (160 kilometres) east of Los Angeles to the desert town of Palm Springs, California, to introduce British civil-rights leader Dr Martin Luther King Jr. The festival honoured Oyelowo with its Breakthrough Performance Award for an actor.

In his introduction, Pitt professed his admiration for Oyelowo — both as a colleague and friend — and, at one point, Pitt led the audience in a sing-along with lyrics spinning around ‘Oyelowo’s often-mispronounced last name. (It sounds like “oh-yellow-oh,” by the way.)

The gala, which attracts numerous locally based Academy voters who now have ballots in hand, traditionally is the first of each calendar year’s award-season ceremonies, which include approximately two-dozen events significant enough to attract major movie stars between now and the Oscars, set for 22 February in Hollywood.

“This is the first time I am a part of (the month-long award season),” said Morton Tyldum, director of the Golden Globe-nominated drama “The Imitation Game” earlier in the evening while doing red carpet interviews. “When I saw the schedule,” Tyldum continued, “I was in shock.”

“Birdman,” ‘Boyhood,’ small films vie for Producers Guild Award

Los Angeles, 6 Jan — “Birdman” and “Boyhood,” two of the front-runners for Hollywood’s film honours this year, were nominated along with a slew of small movies on Monday for the top Producers Guild Award, a reliable predictor of the best picture Oscar.

Among the 10 films nominated for outstanding producer in the a motion picture category were the LA drama “Nightcrawler” and the tale of a drummer’s obsession in “Whiplash,” both small independent films with Oscar chances.

The notable exclusions were two films that opened 25 December, Angelina Jolie’s second film as director, the World War Two survival story “Unbroken” and the civil rights drama “Selma.” Clint Eastwood’s portrayal of an Iraqi war hero in “American Sniper” made the list, as did two British biopics, “The Imitation Game” and “The Theory of Everything.”

Rounding out the nominations were the film adaptation of the best-selling novel “Gone Girl,” the American wrestling tragedy “Foxcatcher” and the off-beat period comedy “The Grand Budapest Hotel.” “Birdman,” a satire of show business, and “Boyhood,” a coming-of-age drama filmed over 12 years with the same actors, are the two other small films vying for the awards season that kicks off next Sunday with the Global Globe Awards.

Cameron Diaz marries Benji Madden at her Beverly Hills home

Los Angeles, 6 Jan — Hollywood actress Cameron Diaz has tied the knot with Good Charlotte rocker Benji Madden. The pair said their vows at the star’s Beverly Hills pad in front of close friends and family last evening, reported Us magazine.

The wedding was attended by celebrity guests including Reese Witherspoon, Gwyneth Paltrow, Samara Weaving, and friend Cameron’s father, Joe Geronimo.

The ceremony was followed by a reception dinner catered by Babalu’s in Beverly Hills.

“Now it’s time to celebrate,” said Diaz earlier in the evening while doing red carpet interviews. “When I saw the schedule,” Tyldum continued, “I was in shock.”

Not so award-season veteran and Palm Springs honoree Reese Witherspoon (“Wild”), who said, “It’s a great opportunity for all of us to get together and celebrate this wonderful year of film.”

The actress, an Oscar winner for “Walk the Line” (2005), said, “Wonderful performances, wonderful direction and producing. And I feel like it has been a real, great strong year.”

At points, love was in the air on the red carpet, as festival honoree Eddie Redmayne (“The Theory of Everything”) posed for photographers with his new wife, public-relations executive Hannah Bagshawe, “Imitation” star Benedict Cumberbatch, briefly stopped for a few snaps with his fiancee, theater director Sophie Hunter.

Oyelowo actually did two photo sessions: one with wife, actress Jessica Oyelowo, and three of their four children. The actor returned to pose for photos with DuVernay.

Both Oyelowo and DuVernay are nominated for Golden Globe awards, to be handed out next weekend in Beverly Hills.

“The last time I was at the Golden Globes, I was a publicist for (the movie) ‘Dreamgirls,’” DuVernay recalled. “I was in a black suit on the (standing) side of the room. This time, I have an actual seat. I’m very happy about that. I get to sit down. No matter what I wear, I won’t be on my feet. So I’m very happy about that.”

Ali Smith’s ‘How to be both’ takes Costa novel award

London, 6 Jan — Scottish writer Ali Smith’s inventive “How to be both”, which is divided into two parts, each starting with a different character, was named as the winner in the novel category on Monday for Britain’s Costa Book Awards.

Smith’s critically acclaimed novel, which also was short-listed for the Man Booker Prize, contains the twin stories of George and Franchesca, one a 1960s teenager, the other a young artist in 15th-century Ferrara, which can be read in either order.

A winner of the same award in 2005 for “The Accidental”, Smith’s novel will contend with four other books for the main Costa Book of the Year award, to be announced on 27 January.

The five Costa Book Award winners, each of whom will receive £5,000 pounds, were selected from 640 entries.

Since the introduction of the Book of the Year award in 1985, it has been won 11 times by a novel, five times by a first novel, five times by a biography, seven times by a collection of poetry and once by a children’s book.

The Costa Book Awards is the only major British book prize that is open solely to authors resident in the United Kingdom and Ireland.
Azarenka loses comeback match at Brisbane International

BRISBANE, 6 Jan — The decibel readings were not needed for Victoria Azarenka on Monday as the groans from the crowd at the Brisbane International almost drowned out her trademark shrieks.

Still struggling to get back to her best, the former world number one was beaten 4-6, 7-6(7), 6-4 in the first round by Czech Karolina Pliskova.

The crowd at the Pat Rafter Arena, aware of the injuries and personal problems the Belarusian has endured over the past year, urged her on but her vocal backing was not enough.

Azarenka was the architect of her own defeat.

She failed to convert two match points in the second set and made nine double faults and 44 unforced errors in a match that lasted 3-1/4 hours.

At 25, time is still on Azarenka’s side and there were enough positive signs to show she can get back towards the top but the road to a full recovery looks likely to be a slow one.

A year ago, Azarenka arrived Down Under hoping to successfully defend the Australian Open title she won in 2012 and 2013 but bowed out in the quarter-finals. She suffered a foot injury that saw her miss most of the first six months of the year and then had a knee problem. Azarenka finally abandoned the season in September after playing just 24 matches all year and not winning a title. She plummeted down the rankings and split up with her boyfriend Stefan Gordy, better known as Redfoo, one half of LMFAO, the US pop duo behind the hit single “I’m Sexy and I Know It”.

Azarenka started the Brisbane International ranked 42nd in the world without hope. She is healthy again, physically and emotionally, and determined to get back to where she was. Monday’s match was her first since September and Pliskova was a difficult and dangerous first-round opponent, ranked 23rd in the world after winning two WTA title last year.

For a while it looked like old times for Azarenka. She jumped out to a 5-1 lead in the opening set before the first signs of trouble came.

Pliskova reeled off the next three and although Azarenka took the set, she squandered her chances in the second before running out of puff in the decid-er.—Reuters

Unstoppable Anderson leads Lazio to 3-0 win

MILAN, 6 Jan — Felipe Anderson produced one of the best individual performances of the Serie A season, setting up two goals and scoring with a brilliant effort of his own, to lead Lazio to a 3-0 win over Sampdoria on Monday.

After creating the first goal for Marco Parolo and then rifling home a 25-metre shot just before half-time, the inspired Brazilian capped his performance by running 50 metres to lay the third on a plate for Filippo Djordjevic.

Although the sides began the match level in joint third alongside Napoli, Sampdoria were ultimately outclassed and seemed certain to get a roasting from coach Sinisa Mihajlovic, who watched most of the match from the stands.

Anderson burst down the left and laid the ball off for Marco Parolo to volley home.

Three minutes later, the 21-year-old, signed from Santos 18 months ago, doubled Lazio’s lead with a low, diagonal shot which flew past Emiliano Viviano and into the left-hand corner, his fourth goal in as many Serie A games.

Not content with that, Anderson then ran from his own half, skipped past a couple of tackles and laid the ball off for Djordjevic to tap into an empty goal midway through the second half. Lazio moved onto 30 points from 17 games, six behind second-placed AS Roma and a further three adrift of leaders Juventus.—Reuters

South Korea need more time under Stielike, says Lee

SOUTH KOREA’S head coach Uli Stielike
SOUTH KOREA are on the right track under new coach Uli Stielike but may need another year to reach their full potential and are unlikely to break their 55-year Asian Cup drought in Australia this month, former international defender Lee Yong-.pyo said.

Stielike has revitalised South Korea since taking over in late September following the resignation of Hong Myung-bo, injecting a much-needed dose of confidence in a young side that were totally overwhelmed at the World Cup in Brazil.

Lee, who won 127 caps in a career that also included spells at PSV Eindhoven and Tottenham Hotspur, was part of the Korean side that finished third at the Asian Cup four years ago in Qatar, a team he believes was one of the nation’s best ever.

“I think in 2011 in Qatar at the Asian Cup our team was fantastic,” Lee told the Asian Football Confederation’s website.

“Individually this team I can’t say is better than 2011, but they’re still strong. We can reach the semi-finals, but I don’t know if we can go further than that.”

The South Koreans went through the 2011 competition unbeaten in normal play, suffering a penalty shootout defeat to arch-rivals Japan in the semi-finals before beating Uzbekistan in the third place playoff game.

“It was a great pity because we had one of the best teams in Korean history,” he added.

Lee said Stielike, who won three German and Spanish league titles playing for Borussia Monchengladbach and Real Madrid, was determined to bring back the swagger to South Korea.

“He told us he would try to change the mentality because some of the players are too shy on the pitch,” said Lee, who now works as a television commentator in South Korea.

“He has asked them to become stronger and more confident, and if we do that then we can go on to be much better than before.

“But it’s going to take more than a few months, we will need more than one year. I believe we can show something different at the end of the year.”

South Korea, who won the last of their two Asian Cup titles in 1960, kick off their 2015 campaign on Saturday against Oman. They also face hosts Australia and Kuwait in the group stage. —Reuters

MRTV Entertainment Channel

MRTV MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

| 7:20 am | TV Drama Series |
| 8:10 am | TV Drama Series |
| 9:00 am | Musical Programme |
| 9:10 am | Pyi Thu Ni Ti |
| 9:25 am | Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra Concert |
| 10:30 am | TV Drama Series |
| 10:45 am | Fashion Show |

MITV MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

| 7:15-15 07:00 am | In The Studio: Zipp Air Air |
| 8-15 07:00 am | Insight Myanmar “Overview of Child Protection Program” |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Local News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | A Visit To San-Taw-Shin Kyike-Hii-Yo Pagoda |
| 15-15 07:00 am | World News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Yangon |
| 15-15 07:00 am | “Myanmar’s Beauty and Nature” Beach |
| 15-15 07:00 am | World News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Traffic Police |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Local News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Chef Life |
| 15-15 07:00 am | “Phyo Aridans” |
| 15-15 07:00 am | World News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Kay Tu Marlar “The Family” |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Local News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Htan Taw Drums (Part-I) “Osi” |
| 15-15 07:00 am | World News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Food Trip (Ep-3) |
| 15-15 07:00 am | World News |
| 15-15 07:00 am | Next Weekend |
Gerrard double gets Liverpool out of trouble

LONDON, 6 Jan — Captain Steven Gerrard scored twice to rescue Liverpool from FA Cup embarrassment and lead them into the fourth round after a tricky 2-1 win at fourth tier AFC Wimbledon on Monday.

In the night’s other Cup match, Premier League strugglers Burnley fought back from a goal down at Turf Moor to draw 1-1 with Tottenham Hotspur and force a replay to decide who takes on Leicester City.

Liverpool will move on to play second tier Bolton Wanderers in the next round but only after a night of living dangerously with determined League Two opponents who looked far from overawed.

“That was a very tough game,” Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers told the BBC. “We lost our sort of shape within the game and presented them with chances by giving the ball away.

“We had to defend right the way through to the end.”

Gerrard, in his first match since announcing his departure for the United States at the end of the season, had headed the opener in the 12th minute as Liverpool ‘Crazy Gang’ beat Arsenal in a hard-tackling final at Wembley, refused to follow the script. Lifelong Liverpool fan Adebayo Akinfenwa, a stocky striker nicknamed ‘The Beast’, had the home fans dreaming when he poked in a 36th minute equaliser from close range after some woeful defending by the Menaywaysiders.

The hefty 32-year-old, who has played for 11 clubs, was perfectly placed to cash in after the ball bounced back off the bar following a goalmouth scramble.

With a major upset looking possible, and Wim-ledon missing several clear chances, Gerrard settled nerves with a curling free kick into the top corner in the 62nd minute.

“I always enjoy the FA Cup, it is a great competition and to play in it. It’s going to be my last time and I want to make the most of it and try and go all the way,” the midfielder, who turns 35 on Cup final day, told the BBC.

“It’s the beauty of the FA Cup,” added Gerrard of Wimbledon’s spirited performance. “It doesn’t matter where you are, in that league it seems to go out of the window and it becomes a leveller.

“Our target was to keep a clean sheet and we finished pretty well.”

Burnley’s Sean Rigg (L) shoots to score a goal against Burnley during their FA Cup third round soccer match at Kingsmeadow Stadium in Kingston-upon-Thames, southern England on 5 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

Tottenham Hotspur’s Nacer Chadli (R) shoots to score a goal against Burnley during their FA Cup third round soccer match at Turf Moor in Burnley, northern England on 5 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

Podolski completes loan move to Inter Milan

LONDON, 6 Jan — Striker Lukas Podolski has completed a loan move from Arsenal to Inter Milan for the rest of the season, the Premier League club said on Monday.

The 29-year-old German has scored 31 goals in 82 appearances for Ar- senal since arriving from Cologne in 2012.

“Everyone at Arsenal would like to wish Lukas the best for his time in Se- rie A,” the London club said on their website.

This season the World Cup winner has been reduced to being a bit-part player at Arsenal despite injuries to Olivier Giroud and Theo Walcott, with manager Arsene Wenger appearing to better trust the speed and skills of young er players such as Danny Welbeck and Alex Ox- lade-Chamberlain.

Podolski has made just two starts and 11 substitute appearances for the Gunners, netting three times, during the current season.

Podolski became the youngest ever European to reach the 100-cap mark for his country during Euro 2012.—Reuters

Murray sizzles in scorching Perth

PERTH, 6 Jan — Andy Murray continued his strong build-up in his quest for a maiden Australian Open title with a comfortable victory over Frenchman Benoit Paire in the Hopman Cup mixed-team event in Perth on Monday.

Fresh from his first title of 2015 in Abu Dhabi, the Scot, representing Britain at the event alongside Heather Watson, de-feated Paire 6-2 7-5 in the evening match.

The 27-year-old arrived in scorching Perth on Sunday after a walkover against an ailing Novak Djokovic in the Abu Dhabi final but showed no signs of rust despite the stark difference in conditions.

“It was a bit of an eye-opener when we arrived at the practice court this morning and it was 44 degrees (Celsius) outside.”

Murray, who also beat Rafa Nadal and Feliciano Lopez in Abu Dhabi, said with a grin in a courtside interview.

“I’m from a small town in Scotland and the weather is not quite like that there.

“The conditions here are fantastic to get ready for Melbourne.”

After breezing through the first set, the world num-

Andrew Murray of Britain plays a backhand shot to Benoit Paire of France during their men’s singles tennis match at the 2015 Hopman Cup in Perth on 5 Jan, 2015. —Reuters

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Wednesday, 7 January, 2015