President U Thein Sein receives Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff of ROK Armed Forces

NAI PYI TAW, 22 Jan — President U Thein Sein Thursday received Admiral Choi Yoon-hee, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Korea, and party at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace here to discuss promotion of military cooperation between the two countries.

They also discussed promotion of bilateral relations between peoples and governments of the two countries, endeavours of armed forces of each country in peace and security measures, Tatmadaw’s role in democratization process in Myanmar and promotion of investment opportunities. Also present at the call were Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Union ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Lt-Gen Wai Lwin, U Wiwa Maung Lwin and U Tin Naing Thein.

Admiral Choi Yoon-hee was accompanied by Korean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Lee Baek-soon and officials.—MNA

2015 ASEAN travel trade event to feature tourism products and services at more than 400 booths

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 22 Jan — The 2015 ASEAN Tourism Forum TRAVEX — a two-day travel trade exhibition and business meetings platform on 28 and 29 January — is expected to see more than 400 travel booths showcasing tourism products and services of the 10 ASEAN countries, Myanmar’s Ministry of Hotels and Tourism said.

Up to 8 January, 415 sellers have been listed for the two-day trade exhibition. Among them, host Myanmar will be participating in a big way with 143 exhibition booths while Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia will have 86, 52, and 52, respectively.

Confirmed exhibitors include hotel chains such as Oberoi, Banyan Tree, Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts, Hyatt Hotels and Resorts, Vacation Singapore DMC Pte Ltd, Kempinski Hotels, Thavorn Hotels and Resorts, and Bayview International Hotels and Resorts.

Host Myanmar will have a pavilion area for booths of tour operators and hoteliers, airlines and related businesses in the country’s tourism industry, including members of Myanmar Tourism Federation. The event, part of the 2015 ASEAN Tourism Forum in Nay Pyi Taw from 22 to 29 January, will welcome more than 1,700 delegates from 50 countries comprising heads of National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) from ASEAN and dialogue partners, suppliers from across ASEAN, international buyers, international and local media, as well as trade visitors.

All ATF 2015 registered participants will have access to an array of networking and leisure activities, beginning with a friendly game of golf at the Royal Myanmar Golf Club on 26 January and a 2-day/1 night post-show city tours of Yangon or Mandalay on 30 and 31 January. A complimentary (See page 3)

A photo of an under-construction hotel in Myanmar’s capital Nay Pyi Taw. The Hotels and Tourism Ministry says that there are 1,106 hotels in the country, 58 hotels in Nay Pyi Taw with over 4,884 rooms up to 31 December 2014. Photo: Ye Myint

Beach resort to be built at Kabyawa Beach in Ye Township

YANGON, 22 Jan — A company is planning to invest $12 million in implementing a beach resort project at Kabyawa Beach in Ye Township, Mon State.

Aurum Co Ltd is negotiating with Mon State Government to build a beach resort project with an initial investment of $12 million along an 8-mile long beach in Ye Township and has a plan to expand the project.

The site chosen for the beach resort is 17 miles far from Ye Town. The project includes bungalows with 120 modern rooms, hotels, offices, restaurants, swimming pools, staff quarters and car parking.

Kabyawa Beach is considered the most beautiful beach in Ye Township, but it could not attract visitors as it was not easily accessible and because of security reasons.

The company carried out assessment of the project at the beach as from April, 2014, with the permission of Mon State Government and submitted the assessment report to the government in July.

It has invited local and foreign investment to build high-rise buildings and to develop ecotourism sites.

Meanwhile, it will encourage environmental conservation, marine research, Mon literature and culture, creating job opportunities for local people and establishing smokeless industries in the area.
Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses messages of president on national education law

**Nay Pyi Taw, 22 Jan** — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discussed the messages of the president on the national education law and six-party talks on Thursday.

Secretary of Joint Bill Committee U Saw Hla Tun read out the findings of the committee on the message.

The committee recommended amending the national education law, adding that the contents of the message on the law are comprehensive and contribute to stability and peaceful learning environment and the Ministry of Education should come up with the amendment bill as soon as possible.

Then, the secretary read out the response of the speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to the president’s message on six-party talks. The response to the message urges the president to hold the first found of six-party talks in order to develop the framework and future tasks of the talks as soon as possible.

Afterwards, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session discussed the bill amending the law on salaries and emoluments of Hluttaw representatives sent back to their constituencies to participate in the discussion at next sessions. — MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw raises questions on retirees, industrial waste water, upgrading of stadium

**Deputy Minister for Sports U Thaung Htaik**— MNA

**Nay Pyi Taw, 22 Jan** — Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) session raised questions on retirees who worked beyond their retirement age, environmental and social impacts from factory sewage of an industrial zone in Mawlamyine and upgrading a stadium in Myaung on Thursday.

Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Lin Aung answered the questions on retirees, saying that government employees are required to retire when they are sixty under section 230 of rules for government employees, and it is true that the Ministry of Education asked retirees who worked beyond their retirement age to repay the salaries and benefits they enjoyed beyond their retirement age.

The deputy minister added that some staff of the education ministry, however, were found to have dishonestly changed their dates of birth so that they could work beyond their retirement age and as a result, the ministry took necessary measures to recover the salaries and benefits in accordance with the law.

Deputy Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry Thet Thein Zin responded to the question on sewage from factories in Mawlamyine, saying that only nine out of 117 factories under operation use water and the waste water from the factories is treated before it is drained out into nearby paddy field. The waste water is not drained out into the Ayeyarwady River, which is about 1,800 feet away from the industrial zone, according to the deputy minister. As paddy in the field is growing well, there is no impact of waste water on the environment, she added.

For the upgrading of the stadium in Myaung, Deputy Minister for Sports U Thaung Htaik said that the government allotted K 100 million in 2014-15 fiscal year and upgrading tasks are being carried out at the moment.— MNA

Recompense for farmlands affected by highway construction underway

**Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan**— MNA

**Nay Pyi Taw, 22 Jan** — U Soe Tun, Deputy Minister for Construction, at the Amyotha Hluttaw session here on Thursday responded to a question of paying compensation to people affected by the construction of the Yangon-Mandalay highway.

The ministry in the 2013-2014 fiscal year paid nearly K1.486 billion to 976 farmers in recompense for the loss of 2,402.75 acres of their farmland, with the deputy minister saying that arrangements are underway to compensate over K1.182 billion to 797 farmers in four townships of the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area for the loss of 1,864.04 acres of their farmland in the 2014-2015 FY. He added that over K124m has been earmarked for spending on affected farmland in Bago Region, whose area is still being measured.

The compensation could be made, following an approval by the local government, he said, adding that funds of K10 billion have been appealed to recompense affected farmers in the regions of Yangon, Bago and Mandalay as well as the Nay Pyi Taw council area in the 2015-2016 FY.

U Than Hsan, Deputy Minister for Culture, dealt with a question of whether donations are allowed for the effort to maintain the World’s Biggest Book, a stone inscription which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The deputy minister explained cooperation between Myanmar and Australian researchers and archaeologists in preserving the pages of stone inscriptions, collecting data and upload digitalized photos of stone inscriptions online. Reckless acts of some people have caused damage to some stone pagodas, with the deputy minister saying that the damage is due to chemical reactions of correction ink, whitewash and metallic ink. Such acts have now been prohibited and donors are welcome to re-inking the inscriptions, according to the deputy minister.

The Amyotha Hluttaw approved a bill that revokes “the Agricultural Produce Markets Act” submitted by Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan and agreed to discuss a proposal that calls for the government to open a sport institute in Myitkyina, Kachin State.— MNA

Union Health Minister attends opening of 23rd ENT Specialists Conference

**Yangon, 22 Jan** — The 23rd Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists Conference kicked off at Inya Lake Hotel, here, on Thursday, with an address by Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung.

The union minister visited the photo gallery to mark the Golden Jubilee anniversary of Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist Hospital and booths of medical companies.

Chairman of Myanmar Medical Association Professor Dr Ye Mya and Chairman of the Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists Society Professor Dr Maung Maung Khaing extended greetings.

Specialists from China, Australia, Japan, Spain and some ASEAN countries will give lectures and hold talks at the conference. They will submit 20 research papers to the conference.

At a workshop at Yangon General Hospital on 20 and 21 January, Philippine specialist and party demonstrated academic tasks in medical education. Moreover, local and foreign specialists shared experiences of surgical operations. The conference will be held on 22 and 23 January.— MNA
Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and party visit Red Fort, Raj Ghat, Akshardham Temple, Vipassana Pagoda in India

MUMBAI, 22 Jan—Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham, wife and party attended a dinner hosted by Vice President, Mohammed Hamid Ansari and wife of India at Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India, on 21 January evening.

On Thursday morning, Dr Sai Mauk Kham and party visited the Red Fort, the Raj Ghat, a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi and Akshardham Temple.

The vice president and party left New Delhi by special flight and arrived at Mumbai International Airport in the afternoon.

The vice president and party paid homage to Swedagon designed Vipassana Pagoda in Bawdawila quarter in Mumbai where the chairman of the pagoda’s board of trustees and officials explained facts about the pagoda.

The 325 feet high Vipassana Pagoda is the largest temple across the world, one foot lower than Shwedagon Pagoda in Myanmar.—MNA

Vice President U Nyan Tun urges officials to return released land to farmers according to law

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Jan—Vice President U Nyan Tun inspected Saunders Weaving and Occupational Institute of the Small-scale Industries Department of the Ministry of Cooperatives in Amarapura, Mandalay Region, on Thursday.

Union Minister for Cooperatives U Kyaw Hsan and officials explained the vice president on salient points of the institute at the meeting hall.

The vice president urged the official to transform the institute into the most prestigious weaving centre in Myanmar, a school where high technology for hand weaving can be studied in Southeast Asia and a tourist attraction, saying that it is necessary to penetrate the market with innovative clothes from the institute, which was built in 1914 by Mr L H Saunders, who served as secretary for justice under King Mindon.

Then, the vice president and party view round the textile exhibition of the institute.

Later, the vice president attended the Regional Land Utilization Committee Meeting at the meeting hall of Mandalay Region Government. Present at the meeting were union ministers, the region chief minister, deputy ministers, region ministers and officials.

At the meeting, the region chief minister and officials explained the settlement of land disputes stated in seven parts of the report of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw commission, releasing confiscated land to farmers, totals of fallow and virgin land and the number of landless farmers and rural electricity supply for poverty reduction.

Then, union ministers and deputy ministers reported to the vice president on handover of confiscated land to former owners by each ministry.

At the meeting, the vice president said that it is necessary to return land to former owners in accordance with the law, pointing out that one of the biggest challenges for Myanmar is landlessness of farmers and the issue aggravated due to complex rules and regulations of the old systems, difficulty to examine ownership and outdated laws, rules and regulations.

Taking advantage of the situation, projects were implemented without transparency and consideration for locals, the vice president added.

The vice president also urged the officials to return released land to former owners without corruption in a transparent manner based on goodwill in accordance with the law and to make further investigation into land confiscation and to return land that should be released to former owners as soon as possible, he said. Emphasis should be placed on coordination to effectively solve land disputes in accordance with the law as soon as possible, he added.

Out of 576 cases of land confiscation in Mandalay Region stated in the seven-part of the report of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw commission, 546 cases have been examined and 30 cases are under investigation. A total of 16,906.999 acres including 13,629.716 acres of land for the 546 cases and 3,277.283 acres of land of the Ministry of Defence which is not stated in the report were released. A total of 10,642.304 acres have been returned to 2,760 farmers and 6298.709 acres have been handed over to departments concerned. Arrangements are also underway to return land to farmers for the 30 cases under investigation.

After the meeting, the vice president and party visited ShweUnim Monastery in TadaU Township and paid homage to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Sumangala. The vice president also heard reports of the officials on rural development tasks at the monastery, before inspecting preparations for fishery exhibition in Amarapura and Thirmingala Sport Grounds in Mandalay.

China-Myanmar Electric Power Cooperation Commission meets


In his welcome remarks, Union Minister U Khin Maung Soe emphasized the importance of implementing more hydro-power projects for long-term benefits of the country and stressed the need of greater transparency in conducting both environmental impact assessment (EIA) and social impact assessment (SIA) studies and public consultation over the projects. He affirmed that sufficiency of electricity for domestic consumption will be prioritized while investing in electric power production and the country’s power grids.

Vice-Administrator Mr. Liu Qi of the National Energy Administration of China also spoke at the meeting, followed by presentations of officials from both sides.

The China-Myanmar Electric Power Cooperation Commission was formed with a view to enhancing deeper cooperation in electricity sector of the two countries and addressing challenges with appropriate ways to develop power projects under implementation with minimal impacts.

2015 ASEAN travel trade...

(from page 1) half-day pre-show city tour of Nay Pyi Taw for host-ed buyers and media delegations includes a visit to Uppatasanti Pagoda (Peace Pagoda) where the royal white elephants are housed and a shopping trip to Myo- ma Market and a dining at a local restaurant.

ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) is a cooperative regional effort to promote the region of 10-nation bloc as one tourist destination where Asian hospitality and cultural diversity are at its best. Regional tourism statistics revealed that 99.2 million of 1,087 million international tourists travelling the world in 2013 visited ASEAN.

The 2015 ATP kicked off today and it will last eight days until next Thursday. This is the first time the forum takes place in Myanmar since its inauguration in 1981. Myanmar expects to welcome more globetrotters during the two-day leisure-trade event.—GNLM
**Region Minister meets Civil Society Organizations**

**Myanaung**, 22 Jan — A meeting between the Ayeyawady Region Minister for Development Affairs and civil society organizations in Myanaung, Ayeyawady Region, was held at the Township Fire Station on 20 January. Chairman of Township Fire Prevention Work Committee U Aye Thaung explained cooperation of the committee with Township Fire Services Department, and cooperation between CSOs and Township FSD in operating fire engines and fire trucks in full swing.

**Cooperative officials lecture book-keeping to trainees**

**Dawei**, 22 Jan — The book-keeping course for cooperative societies kicked off at the hall of Dawei Township Cooperative Department, Taninthayi Region, on 21 January. These cooperative societies carry out micro-finance tasks in the townships. Deputy Director U Kyaw Moe Tint of Taninthayi Region Cooperative Department spoke on the occasion. Township Staff Officer Daw Aye Aye Myint explained purpose of conducting the book-keeping course and arrangements for the training. Altogether 25 trainees from cooperative societies are attending the course up to 25 January. The instructors gave lectures on eight topics of accounting to the trainees.

**Madalarians interested in Dagon City 1 Mandalay Roadshow**

**Mandalay**, 22 Jan — Dagon City 1 Mandalay Roadshow for sales of housings and apartments was held at Hotel Amarapura in Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay, from 18 to 21 January.

**Villagers in Tatkon Tsp to get bridge, station hospital**

**Tatkon**, 22 Jan — Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Myint Shwe views progress of reinforced concrete bridge crossing Hsinthay Creek in Shwemyo, Tatkon Township.
Mon State authorities take security measures for locals

Thaton, 22 Jan — Mon State Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Htay Myint Aung on 21 January held a meeting with Township Administrator U Tun Tun Naing, departmental officials, members of Township Development Supporting Committee, local militia troops and local authorities at Thuwunna Hall in Thaton, Mon State.

The minister explained arrangements being made for ensuring rule of law and security measures in Mon State, cooperation of local authorities with people and undertakings of development tasks.

U.S. higher education programmes introduced at 1st education show in Mandalay

Mandalay, 22 Jan — The first education show here, aiming at introducing American’s higher education programmes to Myanmar students, according to the U.S. Embassy’s cultural diplomat.

At the show, a wide range of course information on academics and entrance to over 20 universities in the United States was presented to the audiences from upper Myanmar, with the explanation of agents from the U.S. universities on how to pursue a career education and meet the scholarship qualifications.

The cultural diplomat said students who want to attend the U.S. institutes may contact the embassy but they need to have good command in English language to enjoy the education opportunities in the U.S.

Hein Htwe Maung, a second year student from Chindwin College, said he got necessary information on overseas studies through the exhibition.

Immigration staff share knowledge about issuance of CSC to villagers

Dawei, 22 Jan — Staff Officer of Launglon Township Immigration and National Registration Department U Maung Maung and staff joined hands with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in giving talks on issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards and household registration to local people in Khamawngtaung, Taungmnyu, Myaung and Sakhangyi village-tracts in Launglon Township, Taninthayi Region, on 18 January.

The staff officer said that the department has implement Moe Pwint plans from July 2011 to December 2014. Moe Pwint Special Plan is being implemented from January to June 2015 for issuance of the cards to the eligible people, he said.

It was attended by local people from four villages, local authorities and staff of Education Department and Health Department.

Star turtles released into Minsontaung sanctuary

Bagan NyaungU Township. The turtles are being bred at three farms of a five-acre land plot. The Lawkananda farm has released star turtles into the sanctuary three times.

The ceremony was attended by township level officials and local authorities.

Mandalay, 22 Jan — The 2015 Mandalay invitational men’s and women’s volleyball tournament kicked off at the volleyball ground of the provost unit in the Royal City of Mandalay on 21 January.

Chairman of the region volleyball subcommittee commander of No 161 provost unit Major Win Zaw Naing made a speech and launched the tournament.

Provost men’s team played against Mandalay City Development Committee men’s team in the debut.

Mandalay, 22 Jan — A ceremony to release 300 star turtles into Shauktawyo farm in Natogyi Township was held at the Shauktawyo star turtle farm in the township, Mandalay Region, on 21 January.

Lawkananda farm breeds 300 star turtles in Dawei, 22 Jan — Staff Officer of Launglon Township Immigration and National Registration Department U Maung Maung and staff joined.

Mon State Security and Border Affairs Minister Col Htay Myint Aung on 21 January held a meeting with Township Administrator U Tun Tun Naing, departmental officials, members of Township Development Supporting Committee, local militia troops and local authorities at Thuwunna Hall in Thaton, Mon State.

The minister explained arrangements being made for ensuring rule of law and security measures in Mon State, cooperation of local authorities with people and undertakings of development tasks.

The ceremony was attended by township level officials and local authorities.

Star turtles released into Minsontaung sanctuary

Bagan NyaungU Township. The turtles are being bred at three farms of a five-acre land plot. The Lawkananda farm has released star turtles into the sanctuary three times.

The ceremony was attended by township level officials and local authorities.

Mandalay, 22 Jan — The first education show took place Wednesday here, aiming at introducing American’s higher education programmes to Myanmar students, according to the U.S. Embassy’s cultural diplomat.

At the show, a wide range of course information on academics and entrance to over 20 universities in the United States was presented to the audiences from upper Myanmar, with the explanation of agents from the U.S. universities on how to pursue a career education and meet the scholarship qualifications.

The cultural diplomat said students who want to attend the U.S. institutes may contact the embassy but they need to have good command in English language to enjoy the education opportunities in the U.S.

Hein Htwe Maung, a second year student from Chindwin College, said he got necessary information on overseas studies through the exhibition.

Mandalay, 22 Jan — Staff Officer of Launglon Township Immigration and National Registration Department U Maung Maung and staff joined hands with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in giving talks on issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards and household registration to local people in Khamawngtaung, Taungmnyu, Myaung and Sakhangyi village-tracts in Launglon Township, Taninthayi Region, on 18 January.

The staff officer said that the department has implement Moe Pwint plans from July 2011 to December 2014. Moe Pwint Special Plan is being implemented from January to June 2015 for issuance of the cards to the eligible people, he said.

It was attended by local people from four villages, local authorities and staff of Education Department and Health Department.

Star turtles released into Minsontaung sanctuary

Bagan NyaungU Township. The turtles are being bred at three farms of a five-acre land plot. The Lawkananda farm has released star turtles into the sanctuary three times.

The ceremony was attended by township level officials and local authorities.

Mandalay, 22 Jan — The 2015 Mandalay invitational men’s and women’s volleyball tournament kicked off at the volleyball ground of the provost unit in the Royal City of Mandalay on 21 January.

Chairman of the region volleyball subcommittee commander of No 161 provost unit Major Win Zaw Naing made a speech and launched the tournament.

Provost men’s team played against Mandalay City Development Committee men’s team in the debut.
Yingluck delivers closing statement for impeachment

BANGKOK, 22 Jan — Former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra on Thursday gave her closing statement for an impeachment trial over a rice-pledging scheme, calling for a fair verdict.

The impeachment against her is illegal as it has no constitutional basis and violates her fundamental rights, Yingluck told the National Legislative Assembly (NLA), which is set to vote on Friday.

The National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) filed the case with the NLA, accusing Yingluck of dereliction of duty in overseeing a controversial rice-pledging scheme and thus incurring great losses. The rice scheme had been far more beneficial than detrimental, helping low-income earners and liberating the rice market rather than distorting the market mechanism as alleged, Yingluck said.

She added that the NACC had never given her enough time to fight the charges, while listening to biased witnesses and disinterested witnesses she had offered. The former premier asked NLA members to be fair in the upcoming voting.

In his closing statement, Former Attorney General Wicha Mahakhun urged the NLA to find Yingluck guilty.

The negative impact of the rice scheme will linger on for years to come, Wicha said, adding that the impeachment would teach politicians in power about being responsible for the Thai people.

About 500 police and 300 military personnel were reportedly deployed around the parliament to maintain order.

If Yingluck is impeached, which will require three-fifths of NLA members’ support, or 132 votes, she will be banned from politics for five years and thus be unable to contest the next general election expected in 2016.

On Wednesday, the impeachment trial against former Senate Speaker Nikhom Wairatpanich and former House Speaker Somsak Katsuranan was wrapped up, with the final verdict also expected on Friday. The case against the two politicians was also filed by the NACC for their role in passing a charter amendment to change the composition of the Senate in September 2013. The amendment was later ruled unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court.

In his closing statement, Nikhom defended himself against accusations of power abuse and malfeasance, insisting that he had no interests in the charter change. Somsak, however, waived his right to give a closing statement either in a verbal or written form.

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha earlier denied giving any indication to the NLA about the impeachment ruling.—Xinhua


denpasar, (Indonesia), 22 Jan — Indonesia on Thursday rejected pleas for clemency for two Australian convicts of drug offences and is expected to go ahead with their executions, a move bound to strain already fragile ties between the two countries.

Australia has sought clemency for two members of the so-called Bali Nine, who were arrested in 2005 at Bali airport for attempting to smuggle 8kg (18lb) of heroin into Australia.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo, who took office in October, has pledged no clemency for drug offenders, drawing criticism from rights activists at home and abroad.

Indonesia executed six convicted drug traffickers, including five foreigners, by firing squad last week.

“It’s very upsetting to hear the rejection from the president, especially because there was no explanation, no reason given,” Todung Mulya Lubis, a lawyer for one of the defendants, told Reuters.

“This is hurting the country’s image.”

Brazil and the Netherlands recalled their ambassadors from Jakarta after reports that Australia hit a low in late 2013 after reports that Australia had spied on top Indonesian officials, including then-president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and his wife.

Indonesia froze military and intelligence cooperation with Australia and restored relations in May 2014.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said this week that she would not rule out recalling the Australian ambassador should the executions be carried out.—Reuters

Australian authorities call for tenders for potential MH370 recovery

SYDNEY, 22 Jan — The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) on Thursday called for expressions of interest in the recovery of missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 from the bottom of the Indian Ocean — should the aircraft be found.

Months of searches have failed to turn up any trace of the Boeing 777 aircraft, which disappeared on 8 March, carrying 239 passengers and crew shorty after taking off from the Kuala Lumpur-bound for Beijing.

The ATSB said preliminary tenders would allow it to assess which organizations are able to supply the equipment and expertise required. Any recovery of the aircraft is likely to cost millions of dollars and be technically difficult given the remoteness and depths of the Indian Ocean.

The current phase of the search is focusing on a previously unmapped 60,000-sq-km (23,000-sq-mile) patch of sea floor some 1,600 km (1,000 miles) west of the Australian continent.

Expressions of interest are due by 18 February. The ATSB will use those to draw up a shortlist. A final decision on any recovery operation will be made jointly by the Australian, Malaysian and Chinese governments.

Depths in the search area range from around 600 metres to 6,000 metres, which is at the limit of technological capabilities for both search and recovery operations.

France’s Alcatel Lucent SA operates the “Ile de France” salvage ship, which can drop cables to a depth of 6,000 metres and lift up to 10 tonnes at a time. US naval contractor Phoenix International is the manufacturer of the Remora 6000 robot, which lifted the wreckage of an Air France airliner from a depth of 3,900 metres in the Atlantic Ocean.

Dutch engineering firm Fugro is carrying out the current search, using four vessels and sophisticated underwater drones.

Singapore smoker fined $15,000 for throwing butts out of window

SINGAPORE, 22 Jan — Singapore has fined a smoker $19,800 ($15,000) for throwing cigarette butts out of his flat window, the National Environment Agency said, the highest ever such fine.

The man was fined $5600 per cigarette for the first 33 offences, and ordered to do community service for the 34th, all committed within four days, the agency said.

The 38-year-old smoker, who was caught on surveillance camera, will have to clean a public area for five hours wearing a bright vest bearing the words “Corrective Work Order”.

Singapore, famous for its cleanliness, cracks down hard on even minor crimes like littering and vandalism, which is punishable by caning, and bans the import of chewing gum, in part to keep its public areas spotless. The agency said on its website it deployed surveillance cameras at nearly 600 locations and took 206 enforcement actions against offenders for high-rise littering in 2014.

It did not say which floor the smoker lived on.
Historic US-Cuba talks shift to restoring diplomatic ties

HAVANA, 22 Jan—The United States and Cuba launch talks on Thursday on restoring diplomatic relations after a contentious session on immigration accentuated the difficulties in overcoming half a century of hostilities.

The highest-level US delegation in 35 years will conclude two-day talks in Havana on Thursday, with both sides cautioning an immediate breakthrough was unlikely.

Senior US officials say they hope Cuba will agree to reopen embassies and appoint ambassadors in each other’s capitals in coming months.

The United States also wants travel curbs on its diplomats lifted and unimpeded shipments to its mission in Havana.

During talks on Wednesday, the Americans vowed to continue granting safe haven to Cubans with special protections denied to other nationalities. Cuba complained the US law promotes dangerous illegal immigration and protested against a separate US programme that encourages Cuban doctors to defect, calling it a “reprehensible brain drain practice.”

As her deputy sparred with the Cuban officials over immigration policy, the lead US negotiator in the diplomatic talks, Roberta Jacobson, arrived in Havana aboard a commercial charter from Miami.

She became the first US assistant secretary of state to travel to the communist-led island in 38 years and the highest-ranking visitor in 35 years.

Her Cuban counterpart will be Josefina Vidal, director of the foreign ministry’s US affairs, who also participated in the immigration talks.

The meetings are the first since US President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced on 17 December they would work to restore diplomatic ties snapped by Washington in 1961. Despite resistance from some in Congress, Obama has set the United States on a path toward removing economic sanctions and a 53-year-old trade embargo against Cuba.

US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Wednesday he looked forward to formally opening a US Embassy in Cuba.

Kashashnikov group approves of intention to produce AK-47 rifles in US

She said she did not know on what grounds anyone in the US can start the manufacturing of the legendary assault rifles.

“These are very complicated things,” Tatiana Kalashnikova said. “What’s the corporation doing at present? We don’t know what relations it has had and who the partners were and who promised what whom to and who made arrangements.”

“We (the relatives) don’t know anything at all about it,” she said.

Kalashnikov, who died in December 1974, had the rights to the AK-47 assault rifles.

A Kalashnikov’s daughter Tatiana said: “My father had the right to ‘Made in the USA’ brand.

“I don’t know how to describe this. Most obviously, it’s quite astonishing.”

Historic US-Cuba talks shift to restoring diplomatic ties

HAVANA, 22 Jan—The United States and Cuba launch talks on Thursday on restoring diplomatic relations after a contentious session on immigration accentuated the difficulties in overcoming half a century of hostilities.

The highest-level US delegation in 35 years will conclude two-day talks in Havana on Thursday, with both sides cautioning an immediate breakthrough was unlikely.

Senior US officials say they hope Cuba will agree to reopen embassies and appoint ambassadors in each other’s capitals in coming months.

The United States also wants travel curbs on its diplomats lifted and unimpeded shipments to its mission in Havana.

During talks on Wednesday, the Americans vowed to continue granting safe haven to Cubans with special protections denied to other nationalities. Cuba complained the US law promotes dangerous illegal immigration and protested against a separate US programme that encourages Cuban doctors to defect, calling it a “reprehensible brain drain practice.”

As her deputy sparred with the Cuban officials over immigration policy, the lead US negotiator in the diplomatic talks, Roberta Jacobson, arrived in Havana aboard a commercial charter from Miami.

She became the first US assistant secretary of state to travel to the communist-led island in 38 years and the highest-ranking visitor in 35 years.

Her Cuban counterpart will be Josefina Vidal, director of the foreign ministry’s US affairs, who also participated in the immigration talks.

The meetings are the first since US President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced on 17 December they would work to restore diplomatic ties snapped by Washington in 1961. Despite resistance from some in Congress, Obama has set the United States on a path toward removing economic sanctions and a 53-year-old trade embargo against Cuba.

US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Wednesday he looked forward to formally opening a US Embassy in Cuba.

Kashashnikov group approves of intention to produce AK-47 rifles in US

She said she did not know on what grounds anyone in the US can start the manufacturing of the legendary assault rifles.

“These are very complicated things,” Tatiana Kalashnikova said. “What’s the corporation doing at present? We don’t know what relations it has had and who the partners were and who promised what whom to and who made arrangements.”

“We (the relatives) don’t know anything at all about it,” she said.

Still Kalashnikova believes that the brand of the assault rifle created by her celebrated father should belong to the Russian Defence Ministry, since the creation of the guns was sponsored by that ministry.

Kalashnikov corporation is Russia’s largest producer of combat automatic guns and sniping equipment, as well as guided artillery projectiles and a broad spectrum of civilian products from hunting guns to sports rifles to industrial processing units to bench-work tools.

Its product is exported to the US, Britain, Germany, Norway, Canada, Kazakhstan, Thailand and another 20 countries.

She said she did not know on what grounds anyone in the US can start the manufacturing of the legendary assault rifles.

“These are very complicated things,” Tatiana Kalashnikova said. “What’s the corporation doing at present? We don’t know what relations it has had and who the partners were and who promised what whom to and who made arrangements.”

“We (the relatives) don’t know anything at all about it,” she said.

Still Kalashnikova believes that the brand of the assault rifle created by her celebrated father should belong to the Russian Defence Ministry, since the creation of the guns was sponsored by that ministry.

Kalashnikov corporation is Russia’s largest producer of combat automatic guns and sniping equipment, as well as guided artillery projectiles and a broad spectrum of civilian products from hunting guns to sports rifles to industrial processing units to bench-work tools.

Its product is exported to the US, Britain, Germany, Norway, Canada, Kazakhstan, Thailand and another 20 countries.
National University of Singapore: A University stands and shines top in Asia

By Sayar Mya

A charming air hostess with sweet and smiling face asked me what I would like to have as breakfast, chicken curry with rice or prawn fried rice. I was on the comfortable seat of Myanmar Airways International Aircraft 8M 231 flying from Yangon to Singapore on Monday 12 January 2015. The weather was fine on a day of soft cool winter. The airline was founded by the government before independence in 1946 as Union of Burma Airways (UBA). It initially operated domestic services only. International services were added in 1950. The name was changed to Burma Airways in December 1972, and then to Myanmar Airways on 1 April 1989 following the renaming of the country from Burma to Myanmar. International services were transferred to Myanmar Airways International, which was set up in 1993.

I have noticed that MAI is changing fast and also rising rapidly in her overall services offered to the passengers.

I and my better-half landed at Singapore Changi Airport at 10:30 am local time. The weather was partly cloudy.

Changi Airport has three passenger terminals with a total annual handling capacity of 66 million passengers. Terminal 1 opened in 1981, followed by Terminal 2 in 1990 and Terminal 3 in 2008. The Budget Terminal was opened on 26 March 2006 and closed on 25 September 2012. It will make way for Terminal 4 which will be ready by the end of 2017. Changi Airport Terminal 5 is set to be ready in mid-2020s which will be able to handle 50 million passenger movements per annum.

Our purpose of visiting Singapore is to have fun with our grand kids coming from Campbelltown of New South Wales in Australia during their school holidays. Travelling a long way to Australia is quite expensive for pensioners like us, and that we arranged to meet them in Singapore. We stayed at the condominium of our daughter who is working in Singapore.

On the following day of our arrival, I had visited the expo fair ground and written an article entitled [Significant features of “Singapore Expo” and “John Little Mega Expo Sale” in Singapore: January 2015]. The article was already printed on The Global New Light of Myanmar English daily newspapers.

Over the past few months back in my beloved country Myanmar, the talk of the major cities and towns is “Educational Reform” and many people from all walks of life are uttering the buzz word with the great expectation for the creation of “Good Education System”.

During the quiet dinner at home one evening, my daughter told me and my better-half briefly about Singapore politics, economics, social, environment, institutions and annual events which included that of the NUS which is ranked as the top university in Asia.

Coincidentally, I have had the opportunity in visiting the prestigious National University of Singapore in January 2015. My purpose was merely to see the NUS in person. Luckily, I met a friend at the cafeteria who is working at the university. I was casually explained an overall picture of the institution, but my curiosity went deep.

The NUS is an object that arouses interest, as by being novel or extraordinary. I asked the web portal of the NUS and jotted down in my small note book. I have already decided to write an article for the Global New Light of Myanmar English dailies in my country. The moment I arrived back home of my daughter, I browsed the Google search machine and NUS website immediately.

It was established in 1905 as a national university, publicly and autonomous type of institution. Its endowment was US$1.79 billion. The statistics of 1980 showed that it had 2,196 academic staff and 27,216 undergraduates.

The National University of Singapore is a comprehensive research university and the flagship tertiary institution of the country which has a global approach to education and research. Founded in 1905, it is the oldest higher learning institute in Singapore, as well as the largest university in the country in terms of student enrolment and curriculum offered. It was ranked as the best university in Asia by QS University Rankings in 2014. QS World University Rankings are annual university rankings published by British Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). The publisher originally released its rankings in publication with Times Higher Education (THE) from 2004 to 2009 as the THE-QS World University Rankings. However, such collaboration was terminated in 2010, with the resumption of publishing by QS using the pre-existing methodology. It was only in the aftermath of new cooperation between Times Higher Education and Thomson Reuters releasing Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Today, the QS rankings comprise both domestic and international university rankings which will be able to handle 50 million passenger movements per annum. The moment I arrived back home of my daughter, I browsed the Google search machine and NUS website immediately.

It was established in 1905 as a national university, publicly and autonomous type of institution. Its endowment was US$1.79 billion. The statistics of 1980 showed that it had 2,196 academic staff and 27,216 undergraduates.

The National University of Singapore is a comprehensive research university and the flagship tertiary institution of the country which has a global approach to education and research. Founded in 1905, it is the oldest higher learning institute in Singapore, as well as the largest university in the country in terms of student enrolment and curriculum offered. It was ranked as the best university in Asia by QS University Rankings in 2014. QS World University Rankings are annual university rankings published by British Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). The publisher originally released its rankings in publication with Times Higher Education (THE) from 2004 to 2009 as the THE-QS World University Rankings. However, such collaboration was terminated in 2010, with the resumption of publishing by QS using the pre-existing methodology. It was only in the aftermath of new cooperation between Times Higher Education and Thomson Reuters releasing Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Today, the QS rankings comprise both domestic and international university rankings which will be able to handle 50 million passenger movements per annum. The moment I arrived back home of my daughter, I browsed the Google search machine and NUS website immediately.

It was established in 1905 as a national university, publicly and autonomous type of institution. Its endowment was US$1.79 billion. The statistics of 1980 showed that it had 2,196 academic staff and 27,216 undergraduates.

The National University of Singapore is a comprehensive research university and the flagship tertiary institution of the country which has a global approach to education and research. Founded in 1905, it is the oldest higher learning institute in Singapore, as well as the largest university in the country in terms of student enrolment and curriculum offered. It was ranked as the best university in Asia by QS University Rankings in 2014. QS World University Rankings are annual university rankings published by British Quacquarelli Symonds (QS). The publisher originally released its rankings in publication with Times Higher Education (THE) from 2004 to 2009 as the THE-QS World University Rankings. However, such collaboration was terminated in 2010, with the resumption of publishing by QS using the pre-existing methodology. It was only in the aftermath of new cooperation between Times Higher Education and Thomson Reuter...
Myanmar, Republic of Korea pledge to further promote bilateral ties

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Jan — Exchange of visits between the two army chiefs of the two countries will bring bilateral friendship to a new level, the command-er-in-chief of defence services of Myanmar told the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the Republic of Korea here on Tuesday.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said the two countries share a similar history in their struggle for reconciliation, adding that South Korea is making efforts for the reunification of South and North Korea while Myanmar is striving to strengthen unity among eight major ethnic groups.

Lack of modern armed forces had caused Myanmar to be colonized, with the senior general saying that Myanmar’s endeavor to improve its defence power is aimed at national defence.

He attributed Republic of Korea’s success to its advanced technology and hardwork, despite the country’s climate and scarce resources, welcoming further civil and military cooperation on all fronts.

He pledged Myanmar’s assistance to the reunification of the two Koreas, expressing ardent desires for seeing the Korea Peninsula as a nuclear-free zone, as well as for non-proliferation and destruction of nuclear weapons and the constructive use of nuclear energy in public interests.

Admiral Choi Yoon-hee expressed his delight of Myanmar’s successful rotating chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, appreciating the country for its assistance to his country when in difficulty.

He pledged more aid to Myanmar and greater cooperation between the two armed forces, expressing his belief that the host country had potential to enjoy bigger prosperity than ever before.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hosted a dinner in honour of Admiral Choi Yoon-hee at his residence.

National Objectives of 68th Anniversary Union Day

- To uphold Our Three Main National Causes—non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national unity and perpetuation of sovereignty
- To ensure that all national races strive for eternal peace of the Union
- To perpetuate national reconciliation already achieved forever
- To ensure that all national races live in the union through thick and thin
- To ensure that all national people join hands in building a new modern, developed and discipline-flourishing democratic nation

Union Minister for Home Affairs holds talks with DDG of JCG

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Jan — Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko received Deputy Director-General Lt-Gen Satoshi Takeda of Japan Coast Guard (JCG) and party at his office, here, on Thursday.

They focused on cooperation between the two countries. Also present at the call were Deputy Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Tun and officials of Myanmar Police Force.

MNA

Attorney-General of the Union arrives back from Sri Lanka

Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin poses for documentary photo with delegates to conference of Attorneys-General from South, South-East and East Asia in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Jan — Attorney-General of the Union Dr Tun Shin and party Wednesday arrived back here, after attending the 5-day conference of Attorneys-General from South, South-East and East Asia in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The conference was hosted by the Attorney General’s Department of Sri Lanka in conjunction with the 130th anniversary of the creation of the office of the Attorney General of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka from 16 to 20 January.

Dr Tun Shin participated in the discussion on the role of attorney-general in legal affairs in Asia, environmental conservation, climate change and human security and others.


While in Sri Lanka, Dr Tun Shin held several discussions with Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena, Attorney-General The Honorable Mr Yuvanjana Wijayatilake and the President Council, and the deputy attorney-general.

MNA

41st Meeting of ASEAN National Tourism Organizations kicks off

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Jan — The 41st Meeting of ASEAN National Tourism Organizations of the ASEAN Tourism Forum-2015 took place at Myanmar International Convention Centre-I, here, on Thursday.

Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Hlay Aung extended greetings.

Director-General U Tint Thwin of Directorate of Hotels and Tourism Development and Under Secretary of the Philippines’ Tourism Department Hon Bento Bengzon, Jr presided over the meeting.

The director-general in his address said that over three million of tourists visited Myanmar in 2014.

He quoted an estimate of World Tourism Federation that the number of tourist visiting across the world would raise from 4 percent to 4.5 percent in 2014.

The second-day meeting will be held tomorrow.

The 26th ASEAN+China, Japan and Korean NTOs Meeting, the 13th ASEAN+India NTOs Meeting, the 18th ASEAN Tourism Ministers’ Meeting and the 14th ASEAN+3 Tourism Ministers Meeting will be held on the schedules.

MNA

Murder of two school teachers under investigation

NAY PYI TAW, 22 Jan — Two female teachers were found dead of stab wounds and head injuries in their house in Kaungkha village of Muse district, Shan State, on 20 January, reports said.

The bodies of Ma Ramnuja (a) Ma Ramlu, 19, and Ma Rambamunikwn Nawn Sam (a) Ma Khong Sam, 21, were found when students visited their house because the teachers had failed to take their morning classes.

Neighbours said they heard screams coming from their house at around 1am and knocked on the door but received no response from the young teachers.

Their house is in the school compound of the Kachin Baptist Church in Kaungkha village, Muse district in Shan State.

Collected from the crime scene were a blood-stained steel blade, a fire-wood and other clues. Currently, the local government has formed a tribunal to investigate into the case in cooperation with a special investigation body, following a lawsuit.

MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of Republic of Korea Admiral Choi Yoon-hee.

NAYAWDY

MNA
After defiant speech, Obama brings message to Republican heartland

US President Barack Obama waves to the audience after speaking during a visit to Boise State University in Idaho on 21 Jan. 2015. — Reuters

BERLIN, 22 Jan — The leader of the fast-growing German anti-Muslim movement Pegida has rejected on Wednesday after a photo of him posing as Hitler, and reports that he called refugees “scumbags”, prompted prosecutors to investigate him for inciting hatred.

Lutz Bachmann, a 41-year-old convicted burglar — the leader of Pegida — said he was surprised by the front page of top-selling daily Bild on Wednesday sporting a Hitler moustache and haircut.

Bild and another paper said he had called asylum-seekers “animals” and “scumbags”.

The paper came as supporters of Pegida — Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West — are百花齐放, (Despite losing control of both chambers of Congress this month, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up four points from a week, up f
Iraq ‘months off’ major IS offensive, says UK’s Hammond before London meeting

London, 22 Jan — Iraqi forces are months away from being able to launch proper combat operations against Islamic State (IS), Britain’s foreign minister warned on Thursday, hours before hosting a London meeting of the US-led coalition against the militant group.

Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond is hosting senior officials from 21 countries to discuss how they can step up their campaign against IS in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere by doing more militarily, more to cut off the extremist group’s finances, and more to stem the flow of foreign fighters.

US Secretary of State John Kerry is attending as is Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who was due to meet British Prime Minister David Cameron beforehand. Abadi will tell delegates how his government’s fight against IS is progressing.

He wants more training and equipment for his soldiers beyond the air strikes which the coalition is already conducting. Hammond praised Iraqi forces on Thursday, saying the coalition was helping rebuild them so they could launch a sustained ground offensive against IS. But he warned it was a slow process.

“It will be months yet before they are ready to start significant combat operations,” Hammond told BBC Radio. — Reuters

Libyan rival parliament suspends UN-sponsored peace talks

Tripoli, 22 Jan — A parliament set up in Libya to rival the elected assembly has suspended UN-sponsored peace talks because of its intention of taking part in the talks, regardless of where the meetings take place.

Hammond praised Iraqi fighters remaining in position outside the presidential palace and Hadi’s private residence, where the head of state actually lives. Hadi in his statement said the Houthis had agreed to remove their men from those places.

“We’ve moved out the technical equipment. The cash is still in the safe,” he said, adding that a committee would decide what to do with the money.

A Reuters reporter saw damage to the central bank building, which is located near Benghazì port — the scene of heavy battles for weeks between Thinni’s troops and Islamists such as Ansar al-Sharia.

On Sunday, the GNC had accepted the UN dialogue so long as the meetings took place in Libya, not Geneva. But Hmeidan made clear that the Tripoli assembly no longer had any intention of taking part in the talks, regardless of where they were held.

“You have an escalation of fighting in the past two days by troops of the wanted Khalifa Haftar,” the GNC said in a statement referring to an army general allied to Thinni. — Reuters

Houthi officials say Yemen presidential statement acceptable

Sanaa, 22 Jan — A senior official of Yemen’s Houthi movement said on Thursday that a statement by President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi aimed at defusing a political crisis was acceptable because it confirmed the terms of a power-sharing agreement signed in September.

Witnesses said Houthi fighters remained in position outside the presidential palace and Hadi’s private residence, where the head of state actually lives. Hadi in his statement said the Houthis had agreed to remove their men from those places.

But Mohammed al-Bakhaïti, a member of the Houthi political bureau, told Reuters the withdrawals of the gunmen, and the release of Hadi’s office director, Ahmed Awad bin Muharuk, from Houthi detention could happen in one, two or three days, if the authorities committed to implementing the remaining items.

“The latest agreement is a series of timed measures to implement the peace and partnership accord, which shows that Ansarullah were not planning to undermine the political process,” Bakhaïti told Reuters, referring to an accord signed in September after the Sanza takeover that brought the Houthi group into the government. Ansarullah is the Houthi group’s official name.

“The agreement is satisfactory because it confirms what is most important in the partnership agreement,” he added.

Hadi’s statement confirmed that the draft constitution was subject to amendments and that all sides agreed that government and state institutions, schools and universities should rapidly return to work.

It was the first sign that the government was returning to work, officials in the southern city of Aden said the air and sea ports had resumed work after a one-day suspension due to the crisis in Sanza.— Reuters

African states to seek UN mandate to fight Boko Haram

Niamy, 22 Jan — African nations threatened by Nigeria’s Boko Haram will seek UN Security Council authorisation for a multinational force to take on the Islamist militants, Niger’s foreign minister said on Wednesday. Mohamed Bazoum said the countries of the Lake Chad region had agreed during a meeting in Niger’s capital Niamy on Tuesday that the resolution would be presented to the UN by the African Union. He did not specify when this would be done.

Boko Haram, which is fighting to create an Islamic emirate in northern Nigeria, has increasingly made incursions into neighboring Cameroon and is also threatening the stability of the region that includes Niger and Chad. Mistrust and disagreements between the states has however hampered attempts to pool military resources. The countries had agreed to create a multinational force to tackle the insurgents by last November but failed to contribute the troops.

“Contrary to what happened in the past, we agreed with our partners that a resolution should passed by the Security Council that will allow the establishment of the Joint Multinational Force,” Bazoum told a television channel in Niamy.

The countries also agreed to move the headquarters of the proposed multinational force from the Nigerian town of Baga to the Chadian capital N’Djamena after Baga was seized and ransacked by Boko Haram fighters, he said.— Reuters
UK aims to pass law to ban branding on cigarette packs before May

London, 22 Jan — The British government said on Wednesday it would try to pass a law to force tobacco firms to sell cigarettes in plain packets without branding in England before May, ending years of debate and lobbying over the issue.

The move, aimed at improving public health and cutting the number of child smokers, is likely to crimp tobacco firms’ profits and would see Britain follow in the footsteps of Australia, which two years ago enacted a groundbreaking law forcing cigarettes to be sold in plain olive green packaging with images showing the damaging effects of smoking.

Cigarette sales have dropped in Australia since plain packaging was introduced on 1 December, 2012, prompting Britain to move ahead even as Australia continues to battle international legal challenges from other countries and manufacturers.

Jane Ellison, a junior minister in Britain’s health ministry, said introducing plain packaging was “a proportionate and justified response” because of the health risks associated with smoking.

“In doing so we would be bringing the prospect of our first smoke-free generation one step closer,” she said in a statement.

The government previously said it wanted to ban cigarette branding but that it wanted to conduct a final consultation to make sure it was the right thing to do, stirring suspicion it wanted to further delay legislation.

The opposition Labour Party welcomed the move, but criticised the government for moving too slowly after MPs voted in its favour almost a year ago. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland will need to consent to legislation introduced in England.

Tobacco firms have fiercely resisted the new law, arguing that plain packs infringe on intellectual property rights covering brands and that they will only increase cigarette counterfeiting and smuggling. Around 3.4 percent fewer cigarettes were sold in Australia in 2013, compared with 2012, according to Treasury Department data. The government had previously withheld data on sales to protect commercially sensitive information, and is yet to release the figures for 2014.

A joint of tobacco-producing nations — Indonesia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Ukraine — are challenging the Australian law at the World Trade Organization. Hearings are due to begin in May with a decision unlikely before 2016.

Philip Morris Asia Ltd is contesting the packaging in the international Permanent Court of Arbitration under Australia’s bilateral investment treaty with Hong Kong. The court ruled last year Australia could challenge Philip Morris’ rights to contest the laws on the grounds the company only bought shares in its Australian arm to bring the case. — Reuters

El Salvador police free to shoot gang members if threatened

San Salvador, 22 Jan — El Salvador’s vice president said on Wednesday that police should respond with “any fear of suffering consequences” if threatened by gang members, following the killing of seven officers in amphibious cars so far this year.

Vice President Oscar Ortiz, acting as president while President Salvador Sanchez Ceren receives medical care in Cuba, said the government endorsed the decision of the federal police director last week to authorize the new policy.

Previously, police who used deadly force would be investigated and sometimes fired.

Ortiz added that the government will no longer tolerate attacks on the country’s police, military, prosecutors or judges.

“We support any member of our police, our soldiers, in full fulfillment of his duties and the defense of the safety of citizens, uses his gun and should use it without any fear of suffering consequences,” said Ortiz in a statement.

Last year, 39 police officers were executed by suspected gang members in the Central American country, or more than three times the number of officers killed in 2013, according to official figures.

The killing of police is just part of the violence that grips El Salvador, where gangs battle over lucrative drug transit routes and other criminal enterprises.

The number of murders last year jumped by nearly 60 percent to an average of 12 killings a day as a truce between the country’s powerful gangs collapsed.

The pact between the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and its rival Barrio 18 helped reduce the murder rate in mid-2013 to around five per day — a 10-year low.

Good morning India! Obama, Modi plan radio show to reach out to masses

New Delhi, 22 Jan — The leaders of the world’s largest democracies will next week take to India’s radio airwaves, the main source of news and information for many in the country, to get their message out.

US President Barack Obama, who will be the chief guest at New Delhi’s travesty Republic Day military parade on 26 January, will join Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on a special edition of the latter’s radio programme next Tuesday.

Listeners have been asked to pre-submit questions to Sunday by the leaders on the programme “Mann Ki Baat,” or “Talking from the Heart”.

“This month’s ‘Mann Ki Baat’ episode will be a special one, where our Republic Day guest @BarackObama & I will share our thoughts together,” Modi tweeted on Thursday.

Modi makes radio speeches at least every month to communicate with two-thirds of India’s 1.2 billion people who regularly listen to the radio. He had talked about a cleanliness drive, tax evasion, and drug abuse among others in his show.

Obama’s decision to appear on the show during his visit is a sign of the bond the two leaders share.

In a unique departure from protocol, Obama accompanied Modi on a motorcade drive from the White House to the memorial honouring slain US civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr during the leader’s first trip to Washington last year. Modi and Obama also issued a joint editorial before that trip, a first for an Indian leader, according to the Indian media. It is not clear whether Modi will speak in English or in Hindi, as he usually does during his broadcasts. Modi’s radio show is recorded at Race Course Road, the official residence of the Indian prime minister.

European Parliament committee backs then rejects 2021 start to carbon reforms

Brussels, 22 Jan — The European Parliament industry committee in a surprise vote rejected an earlier amendment on Thursday in which it had backed a 2021 start to reforms of the EU carbon market.

Having also voted to reject a 2017 start, members of the European Parliament called an adjournment. Then in a final vote less than 30 minutes later, they rejected all the votes that had preceded it. This leaves the weight to an environment committee vote next month which is widely expected to back the 2017 start date, parliamentary sources said. — Reuters

Chile to reopen investigation into poet Neruda’s death

Santiago, 22 Jan — Chile will reopen an investigation into the death of Nobel laureate Pablo Neruda, who died in 1973, according to a government source.

The poet, famed for his passionate love poems and staunch communist views, is presumed to have died from prostate cancer just days after the 11 September, 1973, coup that ushered in the brutal dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. “There is initial evidence that he was poisoned and in that sense the signs that specific agents... that could constitute a crime against humanity,” Francisco Ugás, the head of the government’s human rights department, said on Wednesday.

The poet’s chauffeur has said Pinochet’s agents took advantage of Neruda’s illness to inject poison into his stomach while he was bedridden at the Santa Maria clinic in Santiago. —Reuters
CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SINAR BAIK VOY NO (428N)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BAIK VOY NO (428N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDERA
SHIPPING LINE
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PACIFIC TRADER VOY NO (045)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACIFIC TRADER VOY NO (045) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORINET OVERSEAS
CONTAINER LINES
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV BANGSRIMUANG VOY NO (128)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGSRIMUANG VOY NO (128) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W (2) where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.
Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claims Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.
No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WONGSAMUT OCEAN SHIPPING CO LTD.
Phone No: 2301186

Japanese Shinkansen line between
Tokyo, Osaka halted for 3 hours
OSAKA, 22 Jan — Bullet train operations were suspended for about three hours early on Thursday morning on the Japanese Tokaido Shinkansen Line between Tokyo and Osaka due to a warehouse fire in Kyoto prefecture, local media reported.
The fire happened at 4:30 am local time on Thursday morning in a warehouse storing construction materials in Nagaokakyko city, Kyoto prefecture, and was put out an hour later. As the warehouse is close to the railway, the operations of bullet trains between Tokyo and Osaka fell into disorder, with 16 trains suspended, 94 trains running late, and about 62,000 people affected.
Normal operations were resumed until 9:00 am local time, said the railway operator JR Central.
The Tokaido Shinkansen is a Japanese high-speed rail line opened in 1964 between Tokyo and Osaka. It is one of the busiest high-speed rail route in the world, with average ridership of over 400,000 passengers every day.—Xinhua

WEATHER REPORT
BAY INFERENCe: Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 23rd January, 2015: Weather will be partly cloudy in Ayeyawady Region and Kachin State 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: Generally fair in the whole country.
Meghan Trainor steals Swift’s spot atop Billboard album chart

LOS ANGELES, 22 Jan — Pop singer Meghan Trainor’s debut album “Title” knocked Taylor Swift from her three-week perch atop the weekly Billboard album chart on Wednesday. “Title,” which has been buoyed by Trainor’s No 1 single “All About That Bass” and follow-up hit “Lips Are Movin,” sold 195,000 albums, 377,000 song downloads and nearly 8 million streams, according to figures compiled by Nielsen SoundScan.

Under the revamped billboard chart, that counted for 238,000 total sales units, besting the 131,000 sales of Swift’s “1989,” in sales for Swift’s “1989,” the album spent eight consecutive weeks atop the Billboard Hot 100 song chart last year. Other new releases in the top 10 include “Kidz Bop 27,” a collection of pop hits sung by children, at No 3 and pop producer Mark Ronson’s “Uptown Special” at No 5. Ronson and singer Bruno Mars’ hit “Uptown Funk!” was the top downloaded song on the digital chart for the third consecutive week with 400,000 sales, a rise of 60,000 downloads from last week.

Musician Luke Hatton

I am nervous for Super Bowl: Katy Perry

LOS ANGELES, 22 Jan — Singer Katy Perry says she feels jittery about performing at the upcoming Super Bowl, which is the annual championship game of the National Football League.

The 30-year-old singer said it will be a dream come true to headline Super Bowl XLIX half-time stage on 1 February, reported People magazine.

“Honestly? I feel like I’ve out dreamed my dream. I don’t get nervous about much, but I’ll definitely be a little tiny inside that day,” she said in an interview for the ESPN The Magazine’s music issue.

Last year, singer Bruno Mars took centre stage in front of 115 million viewers during the half-time gig. Perry will be joined by veteran rocker Lenny Kravitz on the stage. Fellow songstress Idina Menzel will be performing the US National Anthem.

Musical messiah Yanni to enthrall audience at Vadfest

VADODARA, 22 Jan — World famous music composer and instrumentalist Yanni, who will be performing in India after almost two decades at the Vadodara Art and Cultural International Festival (VADFEST) beginning tomorrow here, says that Mahatma Gandhi has been one of his biggest inspirations in life.

“I feel that Gandhiji has been a major influence on what I am today,” he told reporters here ahead of his performance on the opening day of the Festival at the Laxmi Vilas Palace compound here. Yanni popularised the combination of synthesizers with full scale symphony orchestra and is known as the world’s “True Global Artist”.

He has held live concerts all over the world including Beijing and has since gained a massive following in China and overseas. Now the 60-year-old music producer wants to hold a concert in South Africa.

“Am producing concerts at all the places including historic monuments. I use musicians and instruments from other cultures and will think over on using Indian musicians and instruments in my songs,” he said. On his genre of music, Yanni said, “I never believed that my music fits into any genre or category. It is simply music and it encompasses a wide variety of cultural and musical style influences. I do not like labels for art and in particular my music..so I have never found a genre that fits,” he added.

Yanni is known to blend Jazz, classical, soft, rock and world music elements to create instrumental magic, which transcends mere notes and melodies to become a soul-stirring experience. On what would be his advice to budding musicians, he said, “Simply to follow your dreams and passion. Music is a great medium... even if you do not have a professional career in music, it will be a friend for life.”

PTI

Music composer & instrumentalist Yanni

PTI

PTI

Nazi code breaker Alan Turing’s notebook to be sold at auction

NEW YORK, 22 Jan — A notebook about mathematics and computer science written by Nazi-code breaker Alan Turing, played by actor Benedict Cumberbatch in the Oscar-nominated film “The Imitation Game,” will be sold at auction, Bonhams auction house said on Wednesday.

The 56-page manuscript is expected to fetch at least seven figures, with a portion of the proceeds going to charity, when it goes up for sale on 13 April in New York.

Turing was a British genius mathematician and a pioneer in computer science who hastened the end of World War Two by cracking Germany’s wartime communications code.

In the notebook, which has never been seen in public and dates from 1942, Turing worked on the foundations of computer science and mathematics.

“This manuscript dates from the time when Turing was engaged in the crucial task of breaking the Enigma code,” said Cassandra Hatton, senior specialist in fine books and manuscripts at Bonhams.

Turing’s mathematical content gave an extraordinary insight into the working mind of one of the greatest luminaries of the 20th Century,” she added in a statement.

PTI

PTI

PTI

PTI

PTI
Juventus say have won appeal against Chelsea over Mutu

MILAN, 22 Jan — Juventus have won an appeal against a FIFA ruling which ordered them to pay Chelsea compensation in the decade-long case involving Romanian forward Adrian Mutu, the Turin club said on Wednesday.

“Juventus confirms that the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne has today issued an arbitration award on the claim brought by Chelsea FC against Juventus in regard to the registration of Adrian Mutu,” said Juventus in a statement.

“The arbitration award has wholly rejected the demands brought by Chelsea FC, ordering it to pay the legal fees for the case.”

Israeli arrested in Madonna song leak probe

JERUSALEM, 22 Jan — An Israeli man was arrested on Wednesday on suspicion of hacking into the computers of singers including pop star Madonna and selling unreleased songs online, according to Israeli and US law enforcement sources.

An Israeli police spokesman said a 39-year-old Israeli named Aviv to kick off her 2012 world tour. “Our investigator found her computers, at home and at a studio, were broken into from a computer in Israel,” Wizman said. “We tracked down the computer, and the man behind it. After gathering enough evidence, we turned to the police and he was arrested today.”

Israeli police said they launched the investigation following a complaint from a Madonna representative in Israel. Israeli media said the man taken into custody was a former contestant on a popular singing contest on Israeli television.

“Mister Mutu” injured again

MILAN, 22 Jan — Juve’s forward Mirko Vucinic, 28, who is recovering from surgery to repair a knee ligament, was injured again in an Italian league match against AC Milan.

The former Dinamo Zagreb and Palermo frontman was injured in the 89th minute in Juve’s 2-1 win over Atalanta.

Messi strikes to give Barca edge over Atletico

BARCELONA, 22 Jan — Barcelona controlled its King’s Cup quarter-final tie against Atletico Madrid when Lionel Messi followed up his saved penalty to score and secure a 1-0 first-leg victory at the Nou Camp on Wednesday.

Barca dominated possession against the La Liga champions but Atletico defended stoutly and held the record Cup winners at bay until Juanfran fouled Spain team-mate Sergio Busquets in the area six minutes from time.

Messi’s effort from the spot was well saved by Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak, but the ball fell kindly for the Argentina captain and he tapped it into the net to give Barca the advantage ahead of next Wednesday’s return in Madrid.

“It’s a good result but the second leg is still to come and they are going to be 90 very intense minutes,” Barca captain Andres Iniesta said in an interview with Spanish television broadcast Canal Plus.

“We performed extremely well again against an opponent which is very tough to overcome,” added the Spain international.

“Not conceding a goal is an important achievement but it does not guarantee anything. We will try to do things well again in the return,”—Reuters
S Korea reaches Asian Cup semis by defeating Uzbekistan in extra time

MELBOURNE, 22 Jan — South Korea became the first team to advance into the Asian Cup semifinals by beating Uzbekistan through two goals in the extra time here on Thursday.

The opening quarter-final match of AFC Asian Cup was expected to be a clash between a lean and mean defence and a fluent attack. South Korea has registered three clean sheets in the group stage, while in contrast Uzbekistan has scored in 16 of their last 17 Asian Cup finals matches. But the strikers of both sides were disappointing, instead the goalkeepers, Kim Jin-hyeon and Ignatiy Nesterov, caught the eyeballs by delivering fantastic saves.

In the 17th minute, Kim Jin-hyeon won in one-on-one with Lutfilai Turaev. Turaev did not stop the ball well and gave enough time for Kim to react; Seven minutes later, Son Heung-min let off a bullet shot in the box. Nesterov’s save let his teammates relieved.

The other players seemed not have found the feeling of shot. Turaev spurned the best chance for Uzbek to win the game in the second half. He was free in the box but his header went wide. Several minutes later, Nam Tae-hee missed Ki Sung-yueng’s accurate pass when he faced the open net.

In the 14th minute of the extra time, South Korea’s midfielder Son Heung-min broke the deadlock by a flying header in the box. Nesterov touched the ball but too late to save it; 15 minutes later, Son’s volley shot through Cha Du-ri’s pass sealed victory for the Taeguk Tigers.

These two sides have met just once before in an AFC Asian Cup Finals game — at Qatar 2011 when South Korea defeated Uzbekistan 3-2 in the third-place playoff.

South Korea will face the winner of Friday’s quarterfinal clash between Iran and Iraq.

Xinhua

Djokovic, Serena rush through at Melbourne Park

MELBOURNE, 22 Jan — Top seeds Novak Djokovic and Serena Williams barely moved out of second gear but still underlined their superior skills with thumping second round victories over Russian opponents at the Australian Open on Thursday.

Four-times champion Djokovic only needed to up his game after an hour of his 6-0, 6-1, 6-4 victory over Andrey Kuznetsov, while Serena clicked into action a little sooner following some early resistance from Vera Zvonareva.

Once the 18-times grand slam singles champion got up to speed, however, she cruised away from the Russian with a 7-5, 6-0 victory in warm conditions.

“Things really clicked. I had no other option but for things to click,” the American told reporters.

“I had to get my mind right. This girl has been ranked as high as number two in the world, she’s been on the tour and she’s a very quality player. She knows how to win.”

“I had to kind of snap into that.”

Djokovic had been battling illness before the tournament and suffered a slow start in his first round win over Romanian qualifier Aljaz Bedene.

His foot was flat on the floor from the first serve on Thursday, however, as he ran through the opening two sets in 51 minutes with the rallies short and sharp and Kuznetsov restricted to just 26 points.

“Much better. I was wishing two days ago after I was done with my first round to have a performance like today,” Djokovic said in a courtside interview. “Hopefully I can continue to play like this.”

Men’s champion Stan Wawrinka also advanced on a third round clash with Finland’s Jarkko Nieminen after a 7-6(4), 7-6(4), 6-3 victory over Romanian qualifier Marius Copil, the lowest ranked player in the second round at 194.

While the main focus for the early session was on the respective top seeds and the progress of Wawrinka, many were awaiting the late clash between twice champion Victoria Azarenka and eighth seed Caroline Wozniacki.

Azarenka’s ranking plummeted last year after she was restricted to just nine appearances with foot and knee injuries and is considered the ultimate dark horse in the draw. Zvonareva also could have been considered something of a dark horse for the world number one, with early signs of an upset when the 30-year-old Russian, a twice grand slam finalist who was ranked as high as number two in

Serena Williams of the US casts a shadow as she hits a return to Vera Zvonareva of Russia during their women’s singles second round match at the Australian Open 2015 tennis tournament in Melbourne on 22 Jan, 2015.—Reuters

Djokovic played the 2010 final game of the second set. Shoulder surgery in February 2013 has restricted his playing really well, especially first couple sets,” Nishikori said. “Heung-min broke the deadlock by a flying header in the box. Nesterov touched the ball but too late to save it; 15 minutes later, Son’s volley shot through Cha Du-ri’s pass sealed victory for the Taeguk Tigers.

These two sides have met just once before in an AFC Asian Cup Finals game — at Qatar 2011 when South Korea defeated Uzbekistan 3-2 in the third-place playoff.

South Korea will face the winner of Friday’s quarterfinal clash between Iran and Iraq.

Xinhua

Novak Djokovic of Serbia hits a return to Andrey Kuznetsov of Russia during their men’s singles second round match at the Australian Open 2015 tennis tournament in Melbourne on 22 Jan, 2015.—Reuters

Asian Cup Australia 2015

Asian Cup Australia 2015 Result
Korea Republic 2-0 China PR
Japan 2-0 UAE
Korea Republic 2-0 Uzbekistan
China PR 0-2 Australia

Asia Cup Australia 2015 Result
Korea Republic 2-0 China PR
Japan 2-0 UAE
Korea Republic 2-0 Uzbekistan
China PR 0-2 Australia