Aye Min Soe

FOLLOWING Myanmar’s historic elections, President U Thein Sein and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing will meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the National League for Democracy, which dominated the elections in a landslide, on Wednesday. The two incumbent leaders will meet Suu Kyi separately.

“In response to a request by the chairperson of the National League for Democracy Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to meet with the President, arrangements have been made for the meeting at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on the morning of 2 December 2015,” announced the president’s office Facebook page.

Meanwhile, the Tatmadaw’s information team released a statement on Monday confirming the meeting between the Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The statement said arrangements have been made to hold a meeting with the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the chairperson of the National League for Democracy, on the afternoon of 2 December at the command-in-chief’s office, as she requested on 10 November.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi sent separate letters to President U Thein Sein, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann on 10 November, requesting meetings with each of them within a week to address national reconciliation. In her letters, she stressed the importance of the peaceful implementation of the desires of the people as expressed by the election results.

President U Thein Sein and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing replied that they would hold talks with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi when the electoral process of the Union Election Commission had concluded and would cooperate with the NLD to ensure the stability of the country in the post-election period. The president and the commander-in-chief also congratulated the National League for Democracy for its leading position in the 2015 election results. The NLD enjoyed a projected landslide victory at the polls. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and parliamentary speaker Thura U Shwe Mann held talks on 19 November, focusing national reconciliation, peace and the smooth running of parliament during the country’s political transition.—GNLM

Aye Min Soe

FOLLOWING a recent deadly landslide at a jade mining site in Hpakant, Kachin State, a member of parliament has urged the Union government to carry out measures to prevent future landslides in the area.

In his proposal to discuss the issue at the Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) on Monday, U Khet Htain Nan, an MP from Kachin State, stressed the need to add sections to the Myanmar Gems Law in order to guarantee the safety and livelihoods local people and to create job opportunities for them.

He also pointed out the weakness of law enforcement for jade mining operations, which has failed to prevent the dumping of waste soil and regulate transportation, environmental conservation and marketing in the jade industry.

“The environment in Hpakant has been deteriorating for about 40 years. Environmental conservation is very weak, and companies have used lots of heavy machinery in their jade mining operations,” said the MP at the parliamentary meeting.

In Hpakant, there have been 37 landslides of dumped soil, including the 11 November landslide, which killed more than 114 migrant miners searching for jade in the piles of waste soil on the mountainside.

The parliament has invited MPs to discuss the issue in future meetings.

In an effort to prevent future landslides, local authorities have planned to inspect mountains of dump soil routinely, according to Hpakant Township Administration Office.

“We have already formed 11 inspection teams at the ward-village level to inspect 11 mountains of dump soil in the township twice per week. Our township-level inspection team will conduct inspections there every Saturday,” said U Tin Swe Myint, the Hpakant Township Administration Officer in an interview with The Global New Light of Myanmar.

So far, 70 makeshift huts in the at-risk area have been removed, according to local authorities.

“If we find conditions that show that landslides can happen in the mountains, we will stop companies from dumping waste soil there,” said U Tin Swe Myint.

The deadly landslide was caused by the collapse of a 200-foot mountain of dump soil. It buried around 70 makeshift huts located in the ravine between two mountains of dump soil, killing 114 migrant miners.

The dump soil was deposited there by jade mining companies.

Only five huts in the ravine escaped the landslide, according to a local resident.
UNICEF announced yesterday that the Government of Myanmar on Monday discharged 53 children and young people who had been recruited by the country’s Defence Services.

With this latest release, the total number of children discharged in 2015 reached 146, according to the UNICEF press release.

Since June 2012, when the Myanmar government signed a Joint Action Plan with the United Nations, 699 children have been released by the army.

The UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFM) on Grave Violations against Children welcomed the mass discharge, while also stressing the need for the Government of Myanmar to continue making every effort to end the recruitment and use of children in its armed forces.

“Today’s release is the result of continued efforts of the Government of Myanmar and the Tatmadaw to put an end to the harmful practice of recruiting and using children. I am delighted to see these children and young people returning to their homes and families,” said Renata Lok-Dessalines, the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar and co-chair of the CTFM.

“We are hopeful that institutional checks that have been put in place and continued efforts will ensure that recruitment of children will exist no more.”

The CTFMR has called on the government to accelerate essential remaining steps, particularly by adopting legal measures in the re-drafted Child Law that are necessary to prohibit and criminalise the use and recruitment of children, whether committed by military personnel or civilians, by reinforcing age-assessment procedures within the military recruitment process and by including the prevention of violations against children in the military curriculum.

Since the signature of the Joint Action Plan, important actions have been taken, namely the centralisation of the recruitment, and the signature in September of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

“The signature of the protocol is a crucial step toward a child-free army,” said Bertrand Bainvel, the UNICEF Representative to Myanmar and co-chair of the CTFMR.

“Now it is urgent that Myanmar ratifies the protocol. Along with the review and the adoption of the revised Child Law, this would be one of the most important legacies the outgoing parliament has the opportunity to leave to new generations in Myanmar.” —GNLM

53 children released by Myanmar Army

The three international agreements to be signed by Myanmar include cooperation among Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar and military cooperation with Israel.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session on Monday discharged 53 children released by the army.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Roundup

THE Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) continued its session Monday with the submission of one bill and the approval of one bill.

Deputy Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Khin Maung Aye said a marine police corps has been formed for the prevention of illegal fishing and overseas crime in Myanmar waters. The Fisheries Department will submit the Myanmar Marine Fishing Bill to the Security, Stability, Peace and Rule of Law Committee and to the Pyithu Hluttaw.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Khin Zaw said a 13-mile embankment will be built along the Bilin River from Muthin village to Shwehlay village in Bilin Township. However, the embankment cannot be built at present due to the need for more feasibility studies.

The Pyithu Hluttaw Sports, Culture and Public Relations Development Committee and the Investment and Industrial Development Committee submitted reports during the session.

During the Hluttaw session, MPs were informed that bills amending the Evidence Act, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law, the Foreign Exchange Management Law and the Banks and the Monetary Organisations Bill have been accepted.

The Ministry of Transport submitted a bill amending the Comprehensive Transport Law. The Hluttaw approved a bill amending the Veterinary Education Council Law.

—Myanmar News Agency

Pyithu Hluttaw Roundup

Yangon Stock Exchange to debut on 9 December

Aye Min Soe

THE Yangon Stock Exchange will launch its operations on 9 December with 10 underwriting companies, according to a statement released by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM).

At a meeting with the 10 tentatively selected underwriting companies on Monday in Yangon, U Maung Maung Thein, the chairman of the SECM and deputy minister for finance, urged the companies to pay their licensing fees by December in preparation for the launch date.

There will be about five companies listed in the YEX, he added.

A license for underwriting costs K15 billion (US$11.5 million); a dealing licence costs K10 billion ($7.7 million); a brokerage licence costs K7 billion ($5.4 million) and a consultancy licence costs K30 million ($23,000) in up-front capital, according to the deputy minister.

The Yangon Stock Exchange, Myanmar’s first, will have the abbreviation YEX.

Japan’s Tokyo Stock Exchange and the Daiwa Institute of Research Ltd signed an agreement with the Myanmar Economic Bank to help establish and run the stock exchange in December 2014.

The market will be run by the Yangon Stock Exchange Joint-Venture Company, with a 51 percent stake owned by the Myanmar Economic Bank under Myanmar’s Finance Ministry and the remainder owned by the Japanese partners.
President sends messages of felicitations to Romania

U THEIN SEIN, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Klaus Werner Iohannis, President of Romania, and His Excellency Mr Sorin Mihai Cimpeanu, Prime Minister of Romania, on the occasion of the National Day of Romania, which falls on 1 December 2015.—Myanmar News Agency

Trainees of Myanmar Egress visit UEC office

Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye meets trainees of Myanmar Egress. Photo: MNA

Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets Commander of Yunnan Provincial Military Area

VICE-Senior General Soe Win, the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army), received Major General Yang Guangyue, Commander of the Yunnan Provincial Military Area of the People’s Liberation Army of China at the Bayintnaung Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They discussed Myanmar’s recent elections, international relations and the friendly ties between Myanmar’s and China’s armed forces in the post-election period. They also discussed the ongoing internal peace process since the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, cooperation between the two countries in promoting peace and stability, the development of border areas and the exchange of information for anti-drug operations and illegal trade prevention.—Myawady

Vice-Senior General Soe Win receives Major General Yang Guangyue, Commander of the Yunnan Provincial Military Area. Photo: Myawady

Myanmar courts investments from Poland

Chargé d’affaires of Poland’s representative office in Myanmar Mr Miroslaw Zasada.

“Poland has an embassy in Myanmar, but it cannot issue visas at the moment yet,” said Mr Zasada.

In commemoration of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Poland, the “Myanmar-Poland: Economic Transformation and Development—The Past, The Present and The Future” will be held at Kandawgyi Palace Hotel in Yangon on 2 and 3 December.—Min Thit

UEC reminds candidates to submit campaign spending records

The Union Election Commission issued a notice on Monday reminding candidates who ran in the 2015 general election to submit their campaign spending data within 30 days of the announcement of the election results by region or state sub-commissions.

The notice also said candidates who fail to submit their campaign spending records would be disqualified as candidates.

Only a few candidates have submitted their campaign spending records so far, the notice said.

The UEC also released statistics on the general election on Monday.

According to the data, the Pyithu Hluttaw elections were held in 97.88 percent of constituencies scheduled for elections, while the Amyotha Hluttaw elections were held in 100 percent of constituencies scheduled for elections. State and Region Hluttaw elections were held in 97.92 percent of all scheduled constituencies.

Voter turnout in each of the three hluttaw elections was around 69 percent.—Myanmar News Agency
MCEA to cooperate with Korean Overseas Construction Association

THE Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Association (MCEA) and Korean Overseas Construction Association plan to cooperate and implement local construction and development projects starting in mid-December, according to an MCEA spokesman.

He said the initial works will include the expansion of the current Yangon-Mandalay expressway and the construction of an express railroad along the highway. “As more foreign investment comes in and the financial sector stabilises, apartments for low-income families will be built in regions and states with a half-cash down and half-installment payment system. Low-priced apartments will also be built at industry zones for factory workers,” he added.

There will also be regional development works to be implemented together by MCEA and the Korean association, the spokesman said.

The Korean companies Hyundai, Samsung, KIA and other members of the Korean Overseas Construction Association have already established operations in Myanmar.

The spokesman said more foreign investment would benefit Myanmar and its people.—Soe Win

Domestic science and advanced tailoring courses conclude

DOMESTIC Science Course No. 55 and Advance Tailoring Course No. 41 concluded at the Women’s Vocational Training School in Myawady on 27 November.

At the event, District Deputy Commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo said the schools were opened to benefit women living in border areas. He said the courses would help trainees receive vocational training and earn livelihoods. The courses educated local ethnic women on traditional domestic science and the tailoring of traditional costumes, he said. School principal Daw Khin Thein Oo and other officials presented prizes to outstanding students and gave certificates of completion to the trainees. The trainees were also given labour registration cards by township labor officer Daw Mya Sanda Win.

One trainee spoke words of appreciation on behalf of her classmates at the event.

Myawady Township, Kayin State, borders Thailand.—Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Meiktila to take action against traffic law violations

THE administration of Meiktila Township, Mandalay Region, says that it will take serious actions against cars that do not abide by rules and regulations of vehicle and road laws. The sentences for violations will range from one- to six-month jail terms or fines between K30,000 and K300,000, or both.

The Township Vehicle and Road Laws Supervision Committee held its meeting on 27 November, and members including township administrator U Myo Hlaing, township police chief Police Major Maung Shwe, township Development Supportive Committee chairman U Khin Maung Lin, township Development Committee chairman U Thura and administrators from the town’s 14 wards discussed the township’s traffic issues. They agreed that all vehicles in the township must abide by the 2015 Motor Vehicle Law and that serious action will be taken against drivers and owners who break the law.

According to the law, if a driver drives without a license, he or she will be fined K50,000. If the driver is drives an unregistered car, if the registration card has previously been seized by traffic police for an offense or if the registration has expired or been cancelled, both the driver and the owner of the car will be fined K50,000 or sentenced to a one-month jail term, or both.

If government emblems are displayed on a private vehicle or if a civilian uses government papers, the driver and owner will be fined K300,000 or sentenced to a six-month jail term, or both, according to the law. Taking action against unruly cars around the town’s busy market and around the township have satisfied the townspeople, according to a local resident.—Chantha

Yangon General Hospital undergoes successful renovation

REMARKABLE progress has been achieved in the renovation of the Yangon General Hospital, said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe at a coordination meeting with the administration of the hospital on 27 November.

The chief minister stressed the need to implement the renovation projects in accordance with financial policies and regulations.

Region Minister for Social Affairs Dr Myint Thein explained the meeting’s decisions and their financial implications.

Deputy Auditor-General U Myo Myint about the project’s financial statement, the supply of electricity and maintenance works at the hospital.

The chief minister presented a certificate of honour to the medical superintendent for the successful performance of an electrophysiological study and radiofrequency ablation.

After the meeting, the chief minister and his party visited the construction site of a 12-storey building.—Myanmar News Agency

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China deploys mass surveillance to secure streets around ancient Tibetan temple

LHASA — Once the site of violent clashes between Tibetans and Chinese security forces, the ancient area of Barkhor in the Tibetan capital has become one of the safest places in China, officials say, thanks in part to an on-the-ground surveillance network.

Guard posts erected among shops and in courtyards around the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa watch the comings and goings of residents. The posts are manned by locals who are selected by the residents’ management committee, though some appeared to be unstaffed. At night, the doors to the courtyards are locked, residents say.

Managing the remote Himalayan region of Tibet remains a difficult issue for China, which has struggled with decades of often violent unrest in protest against Chinese rule, which started when Tibet was annexed 1950.

The government’s strategy, which was formally rolled out across the region in November 2014, is a “grid management” surveillance system aimed at managing society “without gaps, without blind spots, without blanks,” according to state media.

“This is a Chinese specialty, where the masses participate in managing and controlling society and they also enjoy the results of managing their society,” said Qi Zhala, the top Communist Party official in Lhasa.

Earlier this month, Reuters reporters, along with a small group of journalists, were granted a rare visit to the region on a highly choreographed official tour. Chinese authorities restrict access for foreign journalists to Tibet, making independent assessments of the situation difficult.

For the Han Chinese, many of whom have moved to Lhasa in recent years, the scheme is popular. “If there’s anyone suspicious entering the courtyard, then they know,” said Shou Tianjiang, a Barkhor resident, referring to the ramshackle guard post erected in the centre of the courtyard where he rents a room for his sock business. The changes that have transformed Lhasa are evident. Five years ago when Reuters was last allowed access to the Tibetan capital, squads of paramilitary officers patrolled the streets and armoured personnel carriers were stationed on most roads. But the paramilitary presence was not visible on the visit this November.

Activists say, however, that the real aim of the programme is to maintain absolute control over the Tibetan population. Beijing reviles exiled Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama as a dangerous separatist. “They want to detect and root out any sentiment that runs counter to the party state,” said Kate Saunders, spokeswoman for the International Campaign for Tibet.

Rights groups say China has violently tried to stamp out religious freedom and culture in Tibet. China rejects the criticism, saying its rule has ended serfdom and brought development to a backward region. — Reuters

Cambodia’s parliament approves $4.3 billion budget for 2016

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia’s National Assembly yesterday adopted the government’s $4.3 billion budget for 2016, despite the session being boycotted by all opposition lawmakers.

All 66 lawmakers from the ruling Cambodian People’s Party of Prime Minister Hun Sen who were present for the session voted unanimously in favour of the draft budget, which was passed without any critical debate in the absence of all 55 opposition lawmakers of the Cambodian National Rescue Party.

Finance Minister Aun Porn Moniroth said the government’s spending in 2016 will be 16.1 percent higher than this year’s figure of $3.9 billion and is aimed at securing 7 percent economic growth.

Some $387 million will be allocated to defence, an increase of 17.3 percent compared with this year’s budget, while education will receive $507 million, an increase of 28 percent. The approved budget allows the government to borrow $961 million from foreign creditors as an additional reserve fund.

CNRP lawmakers boycotted the budget vote, showing their concern at the deteriorating climate for opposition politicians and activists, including an arrest warrant issued against CNRP leader Sam Rainsy over an old defamation conviction, the beating of two CNRP lawmakers by pro-CPP protesters outside the National Assembly and the ouster of the opposition party’s co-leader Kem Sokha as the assembly’s vice president.— Kyodo News

Thai junta detains opposition leaders ahead of anti-graft inspection

The junta has banned political gatherings of more than five people and has summoned hundreds of activists for questioning since taking power.

Many, including politicians and journalists, have been forced to attend attitude adjustment sessions at military facilities.

Winthai urged the public to follow news about the park graft investigation through official channels.

The accusations of kickbacks, leveled by some Thai media and opposition groups, have transfixed a country anxious over the declining health of King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 87.

Nattawut and Jatuporn were taken to a military camp in Kanchanaburi, 111 km (69 miles) west of Bangkok. Four military vehicles and plainclothes military officers went to his house on Sunday, Nattawut wrote on his Facebook page.

“I let it be known that seeking truth is dangerous,” he said.

But the junta said it won’t allow the opposition to play politics over the park which features giant statutes of former Thai kings.

“If they hope to go there to start a political issue, the army is not going to play that game,” Defence Minister General Prawit Wongsuwan told reporters on Monday.

“Honestly, they should not go.” — Reuters
Smog chokes Delhi, Beijing as climate talks begin

BEIJING — The capitals of the world’s two most populous nations, China and India, were blanketed in hazardous choking smog on Monday as climate change talks began in Paris, where leaders of both countries are leading participants.

China’s capital Beijing maintained an “orange” pollution alert, the second-highest level, on Monday, closing highways, halting or suspending construction and prompting a warning to residents to stay indoors.

The choking pollution was caused by the “unfavourable” weather, the Ministry of Environmental Protection said on Sunday.

Emissions in northern China soar over winter as urban heating systems are switched on and low wind speeds have meant that polluted air has not been dispersed.

In New Delhi, the US Embassy’s monitoring station recorded an air quality index of 372 — which put air pollution levels well into “hazardous” territory. A thick smog blanketed the city and visibility was down to about 200 metres.

Air quality in the city of 16 million is usually bad in winter, with thousands of coal fires lit by the poor to ward off the cold.

The Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau said on Sunday that it had requested factories to limit or suspend output and had also stopped construction work throughout the city.

The ministry said the number of cities affected by heavy pol-

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

lution had reached 23, stretching across 530,000 square km, an area the size of Spain, but a cold front beginning on Wednesday would see the situation improve.

State-run Xinhua news agency said more than 200 expressway toll gates in east China’s Shandong province were closed on Monday due to smog. The province issued a yellow alert.

India launched a “war on pollution” last year following a spate of smog outbreaks in Beijing and surrounding regions. — Reuters

Japan gives Australia final submarine proposal

SYDNEY — Japan has submitted to Australia a final proposal to become its partner for developing submarines for the Australian navy in a bid against Germany and France, a Japanese government source said yesterday.

Australia is expected to decide next year on which country to team up with and produce the submarines. The project for building up to 12 submarines is estimated to cost AS$50 billion (US$36 billion), with maintenance and management costs included.

If Japan wins the project under Australia’s competitive evaluation process, it would be Japan’s first full-fledged export of weapons since the country eased its nearly half-century ban on defense equipment exports in April last year. The government-led Japanese team with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. and Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd. has proposed the world’s first lithium ion battery-powered submarines against Germany’s plan to enlarge its export model and France’s nuclear subs.

Japan sees the possible tie-up with Australia as a benefit amid China’s growing maritime assertiveness in the region and affirmed it can export submarine technology, which will entail the transfer of highly confidential information, in light of its new defense equipment export policy. — Kyodo News

Thai traffickers exposed by group investigating fishing industry

LONDON — A three-year investigation into slavery on Thailand’s fishing boats, which netted 65,000 tonnes of seafood in 2013, is dominated by three companies that help make Thailand the world’s third largest seafood exporter.

The Thomson Reuters Foundation tried to contact the three companies — Boonlarp Fishing Co. Ltd, Jor Monchai, and Wor Wattana Sophon — seeking comment on their operations and crew conditions.

Three Thai fishing enterprises promised to clean up a $3 billion industry through a campaign group said they expected to lay charges early in 2016 with investigations ongoing into the money trail and more arrests likely.

EJF’s report comes a week after Swiss food giant Nestle SA admitted that slave labour was used in its Thai seafood supply chain, adding to mounting calls to clean up a $3 billion industry long dogged by allegations of abuse in recent years.

EJF’s director Steve Trent said he hoped evidence the organisation had collected would be fully tested in court to protect fishermen, many of whom are migrant workers trafficked from Thailand’s poorer neighbours, Cambodia and Myanmar.

“This cannot be an arbitrary kangaroo court just driven to please the international community at this key time for Thailand. It’s got to bring people justice,” Trent told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview.

EJF said Kantang’s fishing industry could not immediately find a working telephone number or email address for Wor Wattana. — Reuters

A man walks in front of toll gate on a highway between Beijing and Hebei Province, China, which is closed due to smog on an extremely polluted day on 30 November 2015. Photo: Reuters

Thai traffickers exposed by group investigating fishing industry
PARIS — President Barack Obama laid a single rose at a memorial for the victims of the Paris attacks yesterday shortly after arriving in the city, visiting the Bataclan, the concert hall where the deadliest attacks took place during the onslaught some two weeks ago.

Obama, who is in town for international talks to curb climate change, was joined at the site by French President Francois Hollande not long after Air Force One touched down around midnight local time.

After solemnly placing the rose among the flowers and candles at the makeshift memorial, Obama stood silently in tribute, his head bowed and his hands clasped in front of him.

Afterwards he walked away with his arms around Hollande and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo, who was also present.

He did not make remarks.

Obama has made a concerted effort to show US solidarity with France after the 13 November attacks, which killed 130 people. He and Hollande agreed during a meeting in Washington last week to ramp up military operations against Islamic State in Syria and Iraq and coordinate intelligence on domestic threats. By visiting the memorial so soon after his arrival in Paris, Obama signalled the importance he placed on continuing to show support to the people of France.—Reuters

Declaring ‘new beginning’, EU and Turkey seal migrant deal

Before the summit itself, Merkel met leaders of some other EU states which have taken in many refugees — Sweden, Finland, Austria and the Benelux countries — and said afterwards they had discussed how they might resettle more of them directly from Syria, rather than wait for families to reach the EU via dangerous smuggling routes across the Mediterranean.

She said they had discussed no figures. German media reports had spoken earlier of up to 400,000 Syrians being resettled.

Measures the EU has taken have done little to control migrant movements. While winter weather may lower the numbers for a few months, it is also worsening the plight of tens of thousands stuck by closing borders in the Balkans.

Sunday’s summit, called just days ago as Brussels tried to clinch a deal offered over a month ago, has been complicated by Turkey’s downing of a Russian warplane on the Syrian border.

That has complicated European efforts to re-engage with Moscow, despite a continued downing of aircraft. The EU is trying to advance a peace in Syria and contain Islamic State.

The German leader defended her stance: “If we are strategic partners, we must of course discuss openly with each other those issues on which we have questions, concerns or criticism.”—Reuters
Since the peace process ended up following the former approach, some stakeholders have not been willing to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. As a result, fighting continues in some parts of the country. The ceasefire is not truly nationwide.

The current fighting has its roots in political issues that have not been resolved through political dialogue, and as a result, doubts still linger among stakeholders. Nevertheless, peace is essential, not only for internally displaced persons in conflict zones, but also for national development.

Therefore, armed ethnic groups that have not yet signed the truce should be given a chance to participate in political dialogue when the schedule begins, even before they have signed the ceasefire agreement. Only then will the current peace process be a two-way, inclusive process that can produce sustainable peace.

After adopting this approach to peace, all stakeholders should show gestures of peace toward each other.

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Incurable Megalomaniac Persons and Poisonous Extreme Ideologists

Tommy Pauk

Incurable Megalomaniac Persons and Poisonous Extreme Ideologists

Megalomaniac persons can be found in dictatorship, monarchy and higher rank officials in some governments in the world. When they are in absolute power, they are intoxicated with power and luxury. They usually forget the stepping stones of obtaining the power and their origin of their life. Literally, they are just above the vast majority of their own people and they lead their country as they wish. The luxury and power motivates or breeds selfishness and extreme ego in their minds. Obviously, their behaviors reflect their selfishness, ruthlessness and brutality when they govern their people. Megalomaniac persons lose their people’s trust and love so they are mentally insecure whenever they face or talk to the mass. Psychologically, they are scared of mass power though they are the in-cumbent head of states or presidents or prime ministers etc. If a certain society is ruled by a handful of megalomaniac people, the all citizens feel unhappy and insecure for their life due to lack of justice and equality. Thus, the harmonious relations and cooperation do not exist between the people concerned and the ruler. As a consequence, the process for socio-economic development is impossible or far-fetched. This situation does affect or hinder the country’s prosperity and progression. The unity, credibility and cooperation must be founded by the people and government so that a particular society will prosper constant-ly. Megalomania is identical to obsession of sexual pleasure or extreme lust in human minds. A person dominated by megalomania disregards for the feelings of the people concerned. He or she always protects his or her power, unjust wealth and luxury blatant-ly. His or her minions or companions are conferred with authority, creature comforts and special privileges, but the vast majority of people are oppressed. The minions or sycophants all always protect and safeguard the megalomaniac ruler for the sake of their personal gains and opportunities despite the majority of people dislike him or her bitter-ly. Ridiculously, the megalomaniac ruler tries to grab or abuse the power forever. However, in the 21st century, people in different societies around the world topple or overthrow the uncivilized or undignified or selfish rulers with mass power in unison. Nowadays, the global people condemn or denounce the act of exploitation between the rulers and people concerned.

These days, in the very few stubborn and cruel rulers remain isolated, but they are still exploiting and suppressing their own people unkindly and even pat-riotically. The way they treat their people obviously reveal that they do not love their race and do not endeavor for building their society to be an advanced one in the world. As their extreme greed of power in their minds domi-nates them, the interests of the people deteriorate vividly. The mental illness of these persons is rather incurable. They will never get relieved of such extreme ob-session of power. They do not even remorse for their unjust reign and illegitimate power as they are overwhelmed by megalomania.

There is a variety of ideolo-gies in different societies. The ideological differences may be either beneficial or harmful to the societies concerned. Sometimes, some ideologies can be even det- rimental to mankind. The act of poisonous extreme ideologists is the latest issue or the greatest threat to all countries and people in the world. Global people now horrifiedly shocked to learn their bestial, callous and brutal acts. They recklessly commit homicide regardless of any race, religion and places in the world.

Most of the victims are innocent people such as international jour-nalists, artists and unarmed ordi-nary-people. Their attacks, tak-ing-hostages and kidnapping al-ways end in tragedy and their attempts to gain something are in vain. How come they survive on this peaceful and amazing earth in the solar system? Who supports them to activate with arms and ammunitions to kill innocent people on earth to achieve their end of sense? Currently they are being wiped out by super powers cons-tantly in order to save or protect the innocent people who are not their enemies across the world in-deed. All civilized people bitterly and unanimously condemn their barbaric acts and decide to elimi-nate those who are poisonous extre-me ideologists across the world. The threat of attack of extreme ideologists on innocent and unarmed people while enjoying their daily life peacefully. The act of bestiality is totally unbelievable. The vio-lence with weapons are their tactics to propagate their extreme ideology. Then they are trained to persuade and intimi-date the youngsters to join their organ-izations. The threat of extreme ideologists is a global concern. The global peace is endangered by the bestial cruelty of extreme ideologists. All peace loving nations and these nations are responsible for annihilating the IS group by any means.

The inordinate greed, power and self-centeredness are the vi-ruses which affect those persons to become incurable megaloma-niac persons. There is no medica-tion for them. When their power is expired, they are saddened and frightened for their unknown des-tiny in future. However, if they realize the natural law of imper-mortality, they will certainly re-ceive from pain and suffering of such illness. As for those poison-ous extreme ideologists, they will be punished by global people un-lessthey attain right view on hu-manity. When compassion, lov-ing-kindness and contentment deteriorate in human minds, the unpleasant or chaotic events or behaviors arise in human society. Let’s try to eliminate man-made disaster on this planet with wis-dom!!!

About the author
Tommy Pauk is the pseudonym of U Thein Swe, a freelance writer. He is the pesudonym of U Thein Swe, Tommy Pauk is the pesudonym of U Thein Swe, Tommy Pauk is the pesudonym of U Thein Swe, Tommy Pauk is the pesudonym of U Thein Swe, Tommy Pauk is the pesudonym of U Thein Swe, Tommy Pauk is the pesudonym of U Thein Swe. He has English Teaching experience at Yangon University English Department and Workers’ College. Tommy Pauk is working as freelance writer and English Teacher cum Translator/Interpreter for foreign firms.
Dawei Commercial Ltd held AGM

DAWEI Commercial Ltd held its 72nd annual general meeting in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, on 29 November, featuring a speech by director U Soe Naing. Assistant general manager U Pe Than sought the approval of the minutes of the 71st annual general meeting, while director Daw Nyo Nyo Su read the BOD report.

Accountant U Kyaw Than read the financial statement of the company. After that, new BOD members were elected, and the meeting approved the audit team for the 2015-16 fiscal year. Managing director U Aung Myint Sein sought approval of the goal of delivering 6-percent profits to shareholders for the 2014-15 fiscal year.

Po Shwe Thun

Pyin Oo Lwin’s Dattawgyaing Waterfall gains popularity among tourists

MANY visitors, both foreigners and locals, have been visiting the Dattawgyaing Waterfall in Pyin Oo Lwin Township, Mandalay Region, recently.

To reach the waterfall, visitors must hike for about an hour, and the way back may take as much as two hours, according to a local resident. Families visiting the waterfall often have picnics and swim in the water, he added.

The waterfall is the highest among many in the township. Visitors who are unable to hike can take expensive hammock rides, which are carried using shoulder-poles by local villagers.

The waterfall receives most of its visitors during the summer months of April and May.—Chantha

Monsoon peanuts harvested in Tatkon

MONSOON peanuts planted three months ago were harvested in Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw, recently.

Peanut farmer U Kyaw Win Sein of Gatchan village, who grew 1.3 acres of Magway-11 hybrid peanuts, said he had planted three baskets of peanut seeds on his field, mainly applying only cow dung as fertiliser. The yield was about 2,666 kilos per acre, which the farmer plans to sell for peanut oil production. One basket of the harvested peanuts can produce six viss (9.6 kilos) of peanut oil. The farmer makes K2,000 per viss of harvested peanuts, which he said is profitable.

Peanuts growers as well as field workers who harvested the peanuts celebrated the Tazaungmon Festival with the money they earned, the farmer said. The farmer also added that he can sell the leftover peanut stalks in his field as cattle feed. The bitter stalks are good for the digestive systems of cattle, according to the farmer. Monsoon peanuts can be grown twice during the six-month rainy season.—Tin Soe Lwin (IPRD)

Po Shwe Thun

Myanmar maintains debt sustainability

ACCORDING to debt sustainability analysis conducted by the World Bank and the IMF, Myanmar has maintained its debt sustainability. Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein told the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session on Monday.

The minister pointed out that every country has to borrow foreign loans for to pursue its national interests and development, and even developed countries sell government bonds in foreign markets, which are actually foreign debts. The union minister cited the foreign debts of ASEAN countries and other developing countries. According to him, Singapore had US$1.3 trillion in foreign debts on 30 December 2014, while Myanmar had only $9.1 billion in debt on 30 June 2015.

Myanmar has settled the foreign debts of successive governments and was provided with more foreign loans, the minister said.

Myanmar has been cooperating with the ADB for its foreign debt management and has developed a medium-term debt management strategy and a borrowing plan, while the debt sustainability analysis was carried out by the World Bank and the IMF.

A bill for public finance management has also been submitted to the parliament, according to the union minister. The success of projects implemented with foreign loans is important, and they should be implemented with special supervision, he said.—Myanmar News Agency

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Po Shwe Thun
Burkina Faso to announce provisional election results

OUAGADOUGOU — Burkina Faso should announce provisional results yesterday from an election to choose the West African country’s first new leader in decades, the head of the electoral commission said.

Sunday’s peaceful election comes after longtime leader Blaise Compaore was toppled in a popular uprising in October 2014 in which demonstrators faced down the security forces over his attempt to extend his tenure.

The vote could serve as an example for democratic transition in Africa, where veteran rulers in Burundi and Congo Republic have this year changed the constitution to pave the way for a fresh term in office.

It also represents a pivotal moment for a nation ruled by leaders who came to power in coups for most of its history since independence from France in 1960.

There was strong turnout in all 45 provinces and logistical problems at the start of the day were by-and-large resolved, Barthelemy Kere, president of the Independent National Electoral Commission, told a news conference late on Sunday.

Analysts say only two of the 14 candidates stand a real chance of winning and a second round is possible, though in the absence of reliable opinion polls it is difficult to tell.

One is Roch Marc Kabore, prime minister and president of the National Assembly under Compaore. The other is Zephi- rin Diabre, who was minister of finance in the 1990s before stepping down to start an opposition party.

Kabore heads the Movement of People for Progress (MPP), made up of disaffected allies of Compaore who left the party months before he stood down. Diabre fronts the Union for Progress and Change (UPC), which was the formal opposition.

By 6:30am (0630 GMT) the electoral commission had announced results for 21 communes out of 368 communes total and those showed Kabore in the lead with Diabre second.

Compaore seized power in a coup, ruled for 27 years and won four elections, all of which were criticised as unfair. — Reuters

Israel convicts two Jewish defendants in Palestinian teen’s murder

JERUSALEM — An Israeli court yesterday found two Jewish defendants guilty of the 2014 murder of a Palestinian teenager in Jerusalem, but held off on formally convicting a third man pending a psychological review, Israeli broadcasters said.

Prosecutors said the three, two of whom were minors, had confessed to abducting, bludgeoning and burning Mohammed Abu Khudair in what they described as revenge for the killing days earlier of three Israeli youths by Hamas militants.

The incidents touched off Israeli-Palestinian violence culminating in the seven-week Gaza war. —Reuters

More than 20 missing after boat capsizes on Congo’s Lake Kivu

KINSHASA — More than 20 people are missing after a government-operated speed boat capsized on Lake Kivu in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday, the provincial governor said.

“The boat capsized with about 44 people. We don’t have the exact numbers ... About 20 have been rescued from the water,” North Kivu governor Julien Paluku told Reuters.

Paluku said the boat left from Goma at the northern tip of Lake Kivu at about 7:30am for Bakavu at its southern edge. It was not immediately clear what caused the capsize.

Maritime travel on the country’s eastern lakes and the Congo River is central to commerce and transport in a country with few paved roads but accidents are common due to lax safety standards. — Reuters

The security personnel were taken captive in August 2014 during an incursion from by fighters from the Nusra Front and Islamic State into the border town of Arsal.

The authorities have been trying to negotiate the release with Qatari mediation.

“We showed our flexibility on many of the demands by Nusra Front, and completed all the commitments to implement the deal,” Ibrahim said. “It got to a point where we could not comply with paralyzing demands that the kidnappers made at the last minute.”

Four of those held have been killed. Nusra is still holding 16 security personnel, according to a security source. Nine soldiers believed to be held by Islamic State are not included in the negotiations.

Local media began circulating reports on Friday that a deal was imminent, but by Monday morning none had been struck.

Prime Minister Tamam Salam cancelled a trip to Paris for a global climate change summit in order to follow up on the continuing negotiations. Violence from the Syrian war has repeatedly spilled over to Lebanon, with bombings in Beirut, fighting in the northern city of Tripoli, and rocket attacks on Bekaa Valley towns close to the frontier. — Reuters

Nusra Front demands obstruct release of Lebanese soldiers: security chief

BEIRUT — Efforts to secure the release of Lebanese soldiers and policemen held captive by the Nusra Front have been obstructed by last minute demands from the Syrian al Qaeda-linked group, the head of a Lebanese security agency was quoted as saying yesterday.

Major General Abbas Ibrahim, head of General Security, told al-Joumhouria newspaper the government had fulfilled all its commitments to secure their release. The men were expected to be released over the weekend in a deal that would include the release of a number of Islamist prisoners jailed in Lebanon.

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Israel convicts two Jewish defendants in Palestinian teen’s murder
Beijing aims to refill medicine chest with ‘Made in China’ drugs

SHANGHAI — China, already a global powerhouse in high-tech areas from solar panels to bullet trains, is turning its industrial might to the challenge of making more of its own drugs for a vast and aging population.

Given the 10 years or more it typically takes to bring a new medicine to market, original “Made in China” treatments won’t arrive overnight, but multinational-ers are already encountering more competition from local generics that look set for a quantum leap in quality.

The stakes are high. China is the world’s second biggest drugs market behind the United States, and fast food, smoking and pollution have fuelled a rise in cancers and chronic heart and lung diseases.

The country also has more diabetics than any other in the world, with numbers expected to hit 151 million by 2040 from 110 million today, according to the International Diabetes Federation.

That has made China a sweet spot for Denmark’s Novo Nordisk; the world’s biggest insulin producer has mined a rich seam in the country since opening production facilities here in 1995.

By 2010, it dominated 63 percent of China’s insulin market. But it has recently been losing ground to local competitors cheered on by Beijing.

“China is going to be tough for us for the next couple of years,” said Chief Science Officer Mads Krogsgaard Thomsen. “Right now, the country is very focused on building domestic production.”

Local rivals are selling both cut-price basic insulin and sophisticated modern versions, including locally advanced as well as new patented medicines, although the scale of demand for such expensive products is uncertain in a country with only basic health insurance cover.

At the other end of the spectrum, multinationals aim to build up volume, often in partnership with local players, in the big markets outside China’s top cities, where distribution costs are high and prices low.

“It’s the right thing to do, even if profit margins shrink,” said the head of one big multinational.—Reuters

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New test may improve diagnosis of pancreatic cancers

WASHINGTON — Scientists have developed a noninvasive, feasible and safe method to detect tumour cells in the pancreas and bile ducts, which could lead to early diagnosis for pancreatic cancer.

By collecting samples from the portal vein — which carries blood from the gastrointestinal tract, including from the pancreas, to the liver — physicians can learn more about a patient’s pancreatitis than by relying on peripheral blood samples, the standard method.

They found CTCs in 100 per cent of 18 patients with suspected tumours in the pancreas and bile ducts. Tests using peripheral blood samples, the standard method, detected tumours cells in only 4 per cent of the 18 patients.

“We demonstrated that this method is potentially quite valuable as well as noninvasive, feasible and safe,” said study director Irving Waxman, professor of medicine and surgery and director of the Centre for Endoscopic Research and Therapeutics at the university.

Only seven per cent of patients diagnosed with stage II disease are still alive five years after diagnosis, making it one of the most lethal forms of cancer, the researchers said.

“Branded generics are something that exist today, but the need for them in 10 years time is not going to be there,” said Luke Miels, AstraZeneca’s global portfolio head.

That means foreign firms will be more reliant on new, patented medicines, although the scale of demand for such expensive products is uncertain in a country with only basic health insurance cover.

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Scientists offer explanation of how snakes lost legs

WASHINGTON — Researchers analysing a 90-million-year-old fossil skull of an extinct reptile from Argentina said Friday they may have solved an evolutionary puzzle about how snakes lost their legs.

Their results, published in the US journal Science Advances, showed that snakes lost their limbs when their ancestors evolved to live and hunt in burrows, which many snakes still do today.

Some scientists have previously argued that limblessness in snakes was due to an adaptation for swimming in the ocean, although the prevailing hypothesis about snake evolution is that they were ancestrally terrestrial burrowers.

In the new study, scientists used CT scans to examine the bony inner ear of Dimylissa patagonica, a two-meter-long reptile closely linked to modern snakes.

Then, they built 3D virtual models to compare the inner ears of the fossils with those of modern lizards and snakes and determined that the extinct snake’s ear appears to be that typical of terrestrial burrowing animals.

Dimylissa patagonica possesses a large, spherical vestibule in its inner ear which enhances sensitivity to low-frequency vibrations, they said.

This vestibule was similar in size to that found in modern snakes known to perceive low-frequency ground vibrations and similar to those found in burrowing species that use low-frequency ground vibrations to detect prey.

“How snakes lost their legs has long been a mystery to scientists, but it seems that this happened when their ancestors became adept at burrowing,” study author Hongyu Yi of the University of Edinburgh’s School of GeoSciences said in a statement.

The findings may help scientists fill gaps in the story of snake evolution, and confirm Dimylissa patagonica as the largest burrowing snake ever known, they added.—Xinhua

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Shelves displaying medicines are seen at a pharmacy in Shanghai, China.

Photo: Reuters

GlaxoSmithKline two years ago.

GSK itself has seen its drug sales slump.

Increasing local competition is part of a structural upheaval in China’s hospital-dominated prescription drug market. Selling drugs to patients at a hefty mark-up — especially off-patent Western “branded generics” — often accounts for 40-50 percent of Chinese hospitals’ revenues. But the authorities are now pushing a policy of zero mark-ups, initially in smaller county hospitals.

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China gives 14 officials jail terms over 2013 oil pipeline blast

BEIJING — China has sentenced 14 former officials at state energy firm Sinopec and the local government to jail for up to five years for their role in a massive oil pipeline explosion in 2013, the official Xinhua news agency said yesterday.

The explosion in the eastern province of Shan-dong killed 63 people and injured 156, and caused losses worth 751.7 million yuan (78 million pounds), Xinhua said. It said the Sinopec officials were sentenced for violating safety regulations while the government officials had failed to fully perform their duties in dealing with the blast.

The explosion was one of the biggest to hit infrastructure developments in China, raising questions about safety standards in the world’s second largest economy. In August, explosions at port warehouses killed more than 160 people in the northeastern city of Tianjin.— Reuters

US says supports Thailand’s relationship with China

BANGKOK — The US Ambassador to Thailand said yesterday that the United States supports Thailand’s relationship with China, countering suggestions that Thailand has turned to Beijing amid a chill in ties between Bangkok and Washington.

Ambassador Glyn Davies’s comments follow those by the Thai junta last week that it was not distancing itself from the United States despite blossoming military and political ties between Bangkok and Beijing since a 2014 coup.

Last week, Thailand’s air force joined military exercises with China’s air force at a military base northeast of Bangkok aimed at increasing “mutual trust and friendship”.

China has said it is supportive of Thailand’s military rulers and, since the coup, Thailand’s military generals have sought to counterbalance the country’s ties with Washington.

Recent deals between China and Thailand include an ambitious project to build rail links from southern China to Thailand and plans by the Thai navy to buy submarines worth $1 billion from China.— Reuters

Stay-at-home mom, Iraq war veteran named among Colorado clinic fatalities

“With my daughter Jennifer I’m going to miss so much, I lost you in a senseless shooting in Colorado Springs,” the post read.

Stewart was an Iraq war veteran and Texas native who attended high school in Waco, according to relatives and friends.

“He was caring, giving, funny and just a damn good person,” Amburh Butler, a friend, said on a fundraising page set up to help Stewart’s family with funeral and transportation costs.

Swasey, a retired champion figure skater who moved from Massachusetts to Colorado Springs to train at the US Olympic Training Center, located a few miles from the clinic. He was a married father of two who served as an elder at a local church.— Reuters

Myanmar Auto Corporation ( Tender Notice )

1) Myanmar Auto Corporation (MAC) will sell following Equipment as it is

   a) KOMATSU DOZER (D85ESS-2), 2012Year, 1 UNIT
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2) Selling Method
   : Tender ( Closing date : 17:00 Dec. 28, 2015 )

3) Remarks
   : Tender Documents shall be collected at Yangon Head Office
   Contact (MAC Yangon Head Office) : 09-49317989, 09-421128015

A Colorado Springs Police car is seen sitting in the snow outside the Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, Colorado on 28 November. Photo: Reuters
EU official says close to data deal with US

European Union flags flutter outside the EU Commission headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, on 28 October. Photo: Reuters

Somalia regional states urged to de-escalate tensions

VIENNA — The European Union and United States should reach agreement next month on a new framework to replace the Safe Harbour pact enabling data transfers from Europe to the United States, European Justice Commissioner Vera Jourova told a newspaper.

Brussels and Washington are locked in negotiations to forge a new agreement for the transfer of data, which would otherwise be subject to cumbersome and lengthy legal processes under EU data protection law.

Safe Harbour, which was used by more than 4,000 US and European companies, was declared invalid by the European Court of Justice in October because US national security needs trumped the privacy of Europeans’ data.

“The main problem is the responsibilities of the European data protection authorities and those of the USA and it put it into a legally binding text,” Jourova told Austrian newspaper Wirtschaftsblatt in an interview published yesterday.

“We should manage by the next meeting on 17 December,” to address the court’s concerns, particularly that Europeans do not have legal means to challenge misuse of their data, the Commission is looking for ways to involve European privacy watchdogs more deeply, Jourova said.

“The main problem is the responsibilities of the European data protection authorities and of the US counterpart, the Federal Trade Commission: they should implement the requirements and deal with the complaints of citizens,” she said.

The US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) was responsible for monitoring companies’ compliance with the Safe Harbour privacy principles, although it does not deal with complaints from individuals.

A bigger role for European watchdogs would allow citizens to complain directly to their national authorities, people familiar with the matter said last week. A similar mechanism existed in the old Safe Harbour framework for human resources data which are often sensitive.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV GSS YANGON VOY NO ( )
Consignees of cargo carried on MV GSS YANGON VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30.11.2015 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 Port of Yangon.

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS CHINA SHIPPING LINES
Phone No: 2301185

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV FRISIA ALSTER VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-7 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of Port of Yangon.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: MS MCC TRANSPORT (S’TORE) PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV THAI BINH 039 VOY NO (04)
Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH 039 VOY NO (04) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-7 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of Port of Yangon.

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
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Box Office: ‘Hunger Games’ leads Thanksgiving pack, ‘Creed’ scores

LOS ANGELES — Moviegoers said goodbye to Katniss Everdeen and welcomed back Rocky Balboa, a series of farewells and reunions that powered Thanksgiving box office receipts above last year’s holiday.

“The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2” led a crowded field of contenders, topping charts with $75.8 million and bringing its domestic total to $198.3 million.

It marks the final film in the hugely popular series, although Lionsgate, the studio behind the franchise, has hinted it wants to figure out ways to create future spin-offs.

The previous two “Hunger Games” films have both debuted the week before Thanksgiving and gone on to rule multiplexes over the holiday. Its dominance is practically a holiday tradition. If “Mockingjay - Part 2”’s strong returns was a familiar relic after racking up $42.6 million, what seemed like a Reagan-era upswing against conformity in the 1950s made $203,000 from four theaters in New York and Los Angeles. It grossed more than two of Daniel Day Lewis’ fans that he has decided to make a second part. “The movie’s fans keep telling me to make one more ‘Tum Bin’. I have never had a story to take the film forward. But in the past six or seven years, the demand from my partner Bhushan and the audience grew,” Sinha told PTI on the sidelines of IFFI.

“I finally had a story that I liked and I decided to make it. I haven’t done a love story for a while now. Looking forward to it.”

The film will go on floors in February next year but no actor has been roped in yet. The director said he also has a few films, which he wants to make as a producer, and work on them will also begin from next year. “Next year I will be making a lot of films.—PTI

Fans forced to make ‘Tum Bin 2’: Anubhav Sinha

PANAJI — The sequel to hit romantic drama “Tum Bin” is in the making after almost 14 years and director Anubhav Sinha says it is because of the relentless requests of the movie’s fans that he has decided to make a second part.

The 2001 movie, starring Priyanshu Chatterjee, Himanshu Malik, Sandali Sinha and Raqesh Vashisth, was a sleeper hit at the box office.

Sinha said producer Bhushan Kumar had also been coaxing him into making the sequel.

“The movie’s fans kept telling me to make one more ‘Tum Bin’. I have never had a

Beloved Japanese artist who depicted horrors of war dies at 93

ANAJI — Beloved Japanese artist, whose retellings of traditional ghost stories and depictions of the horrors of World War Two helped propel anime to global popularity, died yesterday at the age of 93.

Shigeru Mizuki, a giant among Japanese manga artists and his wife Nunoe Mura.

TOKYO — An award-winning Japanese manga artist, whose retellings of traditional ghost stories and depictions of the horrors of World War Two helped propel anime to global popularity, died yesterday at the age of 93.

Shigeru Mizuki, a beloved household name in Japan, was an art student when he was drafted in 1942 and sent to fight in New Guinea, where he lost his left arm and witnessed scenes that haunted him for the rest of his life.

Debuting in 1957, Mizuki went on to write manga dealing with the US wartime bombing, the abuse he and other military recruits suffered under their emperors who was subsequently made into an animated series that ran for several years.—Reuters

In 1979, he illustrated “The Darkness of the Fukushima Nuclear Reactor” about the lives of workers at the Fukushima nuclear plant that was crippled by the 11 March 2011, earthquake and tsunami.

A 1991 piece in an educational magazine depicted wartime abuses committed by Japanese soldiers in China and Korea, including one scene where a soldier boasts of testing his new sword on “live or six civilians.”

But he was probably best known for “Ge-ge-ge no Kitaro,” a manga series about a young ghost boy fighting off a series of monsters based on Japanese folklore that was subsequently made into an animated series that ran for several years.—Reuters

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Cast members Liam Hemsworth, Jennifer Lawrence and Josh Hutcherson (L-R) pose at a red carpet event for the China premiere of “The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2” in Beijing, China. PHOTO: REUTERS

The director said he also has a few films, which he wants to make as a producer, and work on them will also begin from next year. “Next year I will be making a lot of films.—PTI

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India receives just 0.68pc of international tourists

NEW DELHI — India receives less than one per cent international tourists annually and their average stay in the country has come down by two days, Tourism Minister Mahesh Sharma said yesterday.

Replying to a question in Lok Sabha, Sharma said India received just 0.68 per cent of the world tourists every year and efforts have been made to attract more and more international tourists to the country.

“Various initiatives have been taken by the government to attract more foreign tourists that include e-tourist visa, providing financial assistance to state governments launching 12 theme based tourist circuits,” he said during question hour. The Minister said in 2011-12, on an average foreign tourists in India used to stay 20-22 days at a stretch which has come down to 18-20 days now.

Sharma said Tourism Ministry has launched a new scheme ‘Swadesh Darshan’ for development of theme-based tourist circuits in a way that caters to both mass and niche tourism in a holistic manner.

The 12 circuits are North-East India circuit, Buddhist circuit, Himalayan circuit, Coastal circuit, Krishna circuit, Desert circuit, Tribal circuit, Eco circuit, Wildlife circuit, Rural circuit, Spiritual circuit and Ramayana circuit.

“A series of promotional activities are being undertaken in tourist generating markets overseas through the India Tourism Offices abroad with the objective of showcasing India’s tourism potential and promoting tourism to the country,” he said.

These promotional activities include participation in travel fairs and exhibitions, organising road shows, Know India seminars and workshops, organising and supporting Indian food and cultural festivals, publication of brochures, offering joint advertising and brochure support and inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers to visit the country under the hospitality programme of the Ministry, he said.—PTI

Modern Etiquette: Why not something personal for the holidays?

Mary Mitchell

NEW YORK — As I write this, I look up at a foot-high stack of holiday catalogs — clothing, travel gear, hiking gear, home accessories, pet accessories, art acquisition, foods, wine... They make me sad for all those trees.

Then I look at my inbox and see more holiday sales pitches. It makes me sad for my tired eyes and fingers as I hit the delete button, over and over.

Their message is uniformly clear: Buy (our) stuff.

Don’t people realize the only true gifts are time and attention?

When I think about the most important gifts I’ve received, they seldom translate into purchased objects. They always translate into generous thoughts about what makes me happy. Everybody is different, so I put it out there on social media to get more ideas for gifts that did not require cash.

A friend shared how much it meant when someone went out of their way to make a disabled child feel special. Another told me how much trapeze lessons can mean.

One of my students, a new mom, told me how precious it is when her own mom volunteers to come over a week every month and help out with the housework. Another took a photo of her daughter and son-in-law’s sneaker-shod feet in the sand, each flanking a pair of empty baby shoes representing the baby that was on his way. Charming.

Cooking can bring much joy. Cranberry-ginger chutney has become my signature holiday item, and I always anticipate my friend’s annual Christmas Eve cookie delivery. So does my family!

What about writing out favourite recipes for friends and family? Ever thought about volunteering to use them? What about putting together playlists of favourite music? Some of my fitness students do this, and I use their tunes in class. I think arts and crafts in school. So I cannot overstate how wonderful it was to have someone help me with holiday decorations. Or the time my pal helped me hang a set of Japanese prints. Or the time my sister, a noted artist, came over a week every month when her own mom volunteers to help out with the housework. So I cannot overstate how wonderful it was to have someone help me with holiday decorations. Or the time my pal helped me hang a set of Japanese prints. Or the time my sister, a noted artist, came over a week every month when her own mom volunteers to help out with the housework.

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Inspired Murray leads Britain to Davis Cup title

GHENT — The moment Andy Murray has pursued with such fanatical zeal finally arrived, unforgettably, on Sunday when an outrageous lob arced over Belgium’s David Goffin to seal Britain’s first Davis Cup title for 79 years.

Fittingly for a player who has almost single-handedly guided his country to the title this year, the indefatigable Murray ended Goffin’s inspired resistance with a moment of sheer brilliance few could conjure to complete a 6-3, 7-5, 6-3 victory.

It gave Britain a winning 3-1 lead and started a party that hundreds of visiting fans decked out in union flags and Scottish saltires will keep going long into the night in medieval Ghent.

Murray, who put in a triple-shift over the weekend and looked exhausted at the end of a tense three-hour contest, collapsed on to the claycourt before being swamped by his team-mates, including brother Jamie, and captain Leon Smith.

Smith – who has been Knocked to his feet to console Goffin who had gallantly clung on to the hope of keeping alive Belgium’s chances of winning the title for the first time.

Murray then saluted the ‘Barmy Army’, who roared his hope of keeping alive Belgium’s chance of reeling off a third straight win.

It was his first title of new European Tour season. The 31-year-old former US Open champion and world number one Andy Roddick said on Twitter.

81-82... Murray is the first player to win this competition. I didn’t know that would ever be possible. It’s great.”

World number two Murray, whose return to the team in 2013 accelerated Britain’s rapid rise from the depths that began when Smith took charge in 2010, has won 11 live and 15 at his year’s running, moving Ivan Ljubicic’s total for Croatia in 2005.

He has won all eight singles he played while teaming up three times with brother Jamie for crucial doubles wins, one of which came on Saturday to put Britain 2-1 ahead.

“Really impressive from @andy_murray. One of the best Davis Cup years in history,” said former US Open champion and world number one Andy Roddick said on Twitter.

The small Dutch town of Dunblane, where the Murray brothers grew up, could justifiably claim its name should be inscribed on the trophy.

Fellow Scot Smith, who took over when Britain were on the verge of relegation to the Davis Cup’s fourth division, paid tribute to the whole team but described Murray’s mammoth contribution to the country’s first title since 1936 as “one of the best achievements of all time.”

“It’s incredible for all of us to watch how he’s managed to win that many rubbers, that many wins,” he said.

“Just now what’s important is what’s been achieved. It’s monumental.”

Murray is the first player since American Pete Sampras in 1995 to win three live rubbers in a final.

There was a sense of inevitability about the outcome on Sunday with Belgium trailing 2-1 and needing to win both reverse singles. But Goffin, roared on by a soccer-style crowd inside the claustrophobic arena, forced Murray to his best tennis.

Goffin squandered a break point at 2-2 in the opening set and Murray then pounced, scooting a backhand winner off a weak second serve to take a lead he never relinquished.

There was no chance of Goffin fading though. He played some sensational tennis to stay within touching distance of Murray in the second set but a tired forehead into the net in 11th game gave Murray a break and the Scot secured a stupendous forehand winner to seal the set.

Murray wobbled briefly when he dropped serve early in the third set but he responded to move 5-3 ahead before providing the most spectacular of climaxes to a memorable year.—Reuters

Schwartzel wins opening event of new European Tour season

MALELANE — South Africa’s Charl Schwartzel won the Leopard Hill Championship by four shots at Leopard Creek Country Club on Sunday to clinch the first tournament of the new European Tour season. The 31-year-old former US Masters champion, who was leaders on three strokes overnight and carded a final-round 70 to end 15 under, to complete his 67, tied for six strokes and six strokes respectively.

Schwartzel, who has slumped to 50 in the world rankings, opened with rounds of 66, 67, 70 and he mixed four birdies with two bogeys on Sunday for a 10th European Tour win.

It was his first title since success at the same event on the southern boundary of the Kruger National Park in 2013.

Boudry made a last start on the final day with four consecutive birdies from the third but a triple bogey on the par-three seventh hole slowed his momentum.

Gros, playing in only his second European Tour event after finishing second on last season’s Challenge Tour, hit a tournament-low 63 in the third round, but struggled with an erratic 73 to finish. The Leopard Creek event marked the start of the 2016 European Tour, which moves to Sun City next weekend for the Nedbank Golf Challenge.—Reuters

Bale and Ronaldo on target as Real beat Eibar

BARCELONA — A Gareth Bale header and a Cristiano Ronaldo penalty gave Real Madrid a much-needed 2-0 victory over Eibar in La Liga on Sunday, following their hammering by leaders Barcelona last weekend.

The Welshman notched his third goal since returning to Tottenham before halftime against the top of the standings.

The win eases the pressure on coach Rafa Benitez following defeats in La Liga against Atletico Madrid and in the ‘Clasico’ last Saturday where they lost 4-0.

Third-placed Real now have 27 points from 13 games, two behind Atletico Madrid, which has 29, and leaders Barcelona, which has 30.

“We have been through a difficult moment, it has been hard for all of us and we all have to improve,” Real keeper Keylor Navas told reporters.

“These three points are important to help us fight for what we want which is titles and we now need to keep improving.—Reuters

Liverpool’s Coutinho set to return against Southampton

LONDON — Midfielder Philippe Coutinho is on course to return to Liverpool’s squad for their Capital One (League) Cup quarter-final clash against Southampton on Wednesday, manager Jurgen Klopp has said.

Club captain Jordan Henderson and striker Daniel Sturridge made their first appearances under Klopp in Sunday’s 4-0 win over Swansea City.

Liverpool have been without Coutinho since the Brazilian picked up a hamstring injury during their 4-1 win over Manchester City last month.

“Philippe had a very intense session (on Saturday) but we decided two or three days ago that we didn’t want to risk (him) for this game,” Klopp told reporters after the Swansea game.

“One now he’s fit. I saw him in the dressing room and he looks good. I’ll have to talk with him tomorrow – I think he’s ready for Southampton,” the German added.

The win, which came thanks to James Milner’s second half penalty, moved Liverpool up to second on 23 points, two behind fifth-placed Tottenham Hotspur.

Klopp said the windy conditions had not helped his side at Anfield and added that the result was the most important thing.

“Just once I was on the pitch during the warm-up but it was really crazy because it changed all the time, he said. “We are an outdoor sport, no problem, we have to accept all rain, snow, wind, whatever. It’s the biggest enemy of football, wind.”—Reuters