THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. II, No. 242, 8th Waxing Day of Nadaw 1377 ME | Saturday, 19 December, 2015

President receives MBA delegation from Stanford University PAGE 3

No plans to invite more shareholders for Zone-B at Thilawa SEZ PAGE 4

ANALYSIS
Can Myanmar become a future tiger in Southeast Asia? PAGE 8

LET'S PARTY FOR PEACE

DATE SET FOR UNION PEACE CONFERENCE

THE President's Office announced yesterday that the Union Peace Conference has been scheduled to take place on 12 January 2016 as part of the peaceful solution to national reconciliation, ending armed conflict and solving political disputes through diplomatic means.

President U Thein Sein held out the olive branch to ethnic armed groups on 18 August 2011, an initiative that resulted in the signing of the nationwide ceasefire agreement with eight ethnic groups on 15 October this year.

The ceasefire truce required the signatories to pave a way to political dialogue. Accordingly, the framework for political dialogue was finalised on 15 December, thereby setting a date for the Union Peace Conference.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Authorities tighten rules around jade mines

Aye Min Soe

SHORTCOMINGS in following safety regulations by both mining companies and migrant squatters pose challenges to local authorities in preventing future landslides around jade mines in Kachin State.

To prevent landslides, local authorities have suggested that migrant miners squatting in at-risk areas relocate to safer areas and that mining companies dump their waste soil in accordance with technical safety rules, said U Tin Swe Myint, the head of the Hpakant Township Administration Office, to *The Global New Light of Myanmar* over the phone.

U Aung Nyunt Thein, the Managing Director of the Myanma Gems Enterprise.
PHOTO: MINISTRY OF MINES

"We issued an order to evict the squatters. We erected warning signboards in the at-risk areas, but they have not fully cooperated with us," he said.

"Meanwhile, mining companies are dumping waste soil day and night. But they do not follow our suggestions for safe dumping from a technical point of view," he added.

When miners began using heavy machinery to extract jade from mines in Myanmar in 2005, migrant workers across the country flowed into the area to scavenge small jade stones from discarded soil. There are currently around 200,000 squatters in Hpakant Township.

Miners search for jade stones at a dump side in Lonkhin, Kachin state. PHOTO: MINISTRY OF MINES

Following the deadly landslides, the authorities relocated 108 migrant miners living in at-risk areas to safety sites about 3,000 feet away from the nearest mounds of dump soil.

Since the beginning of Hpakant's jade business boom, migrant miners have formed their own villages.

Among 120 villages in the township, only 54 are official villages, according to inspection teams. The rest are unofficial squatter villages.

In an interview with Myanmar News Agency, U Aung Nyunt Thein, the managing director of the Myanma Gems Enterprise under the Ministry of Mines, said those who received official permits for mining are obliged to follow the rules of the Myanmar Gemstone Law for their mining, keeping, transportation and selling of gems stones.

According to data collected up to 30 November 2015, 627 mining companies have been allowed to mine on 7,714 plots, while another 231 companies are mining through a win-win business system on 311 plots. Mining areas constitute a total area of more than 22,558 acres in the township. As of 2000, the government has practiced a production-sharing system with mining companies, collecting 25 per cent of the incomes from the sales, apart from tax.

Companies must submit environmental and health impact assessments to the Ministry of Mines when they are granted permits for mining, and the ministry has been supervising and monitoring whether they follow these procedures or not, said U Aung Nyunt Thein.

Maung Pho Zaw (Kalay) also contributed to this story.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Customs duties decrease because of FTA agreements, fewer vehicle imports

MYANMAR collected less customs duties this year, in part because the country imported 28,000 fewer vehicles than in the previous year, and in part became certain taxes were exempted under free trade agreements, Deputy Minister for Finance Dr Lin Aung explained at friday Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session at which MPs recorded one bill, discussed another bill, explained two reports and sought comments on the findings of the report of the Public Account Joint Committee and the Bill Committee.

Deputy ministers for the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development replied to queries raised by representatives at the session.—*Myanma News Agency*

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers speech at graduation of 17th Intake of DSMA

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives the salute of graduation parade of the 17th Intake of the Defence Services Medical Academy. PHOTO: MYAWADY

COMMANDER-in-Chief of the Defense Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at the graduation parade of the 17th Intake of the Defence Services Medical Academy on Friday.

In his speech, the senior general said that the military medical academy has produced 4,535 medical doctors so far and over 1,600 of them acquired master's and doctorate degrees from international universities.

Medical personnel of the defense services are also providing healthcare services to local people in fur-flung areas, he added.

In conclusion, the senior general urged graduating cadets to try to become responsible military officers as well as good physicians. After the graduating parade, the senior general met with two outstanding cadets and their parents to honour them.

Present at the ceremony were wife of the senior general Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, the Joint Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy and Air Force) and Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Khin Aung Myint and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice Admiral Tin Aung San and his wife and senior officers.

In the evening, the senior general and party attended a graduation dinner.—*Myawady*

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing greets cadets of the 17th Intake of the Defence Services Medical Academy at dinner. PHOTO: MYAWADY

President meets with French delegation

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein met with a delegation led by Mrs Elisabeth Guigou, President of the French National Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee, at the Presidential Palace yesterday.

They discussed Myanmar's transition to Democracy, stability in the country during the post-election period and the peace making process.

Also present at the meeting were Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin and U Soe Thame, and other officials as well as the French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Oliva Richart.—*Myanma News Agency*.

President U Thein Sein shakes hands with Mrs Elisabeth Guigou at the Presidential Palace. PHOTO: MNA

President receives MBA delegation from Stanford University

President U Thein Sein poses for documentary photo with Stanford University delegation at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT U Thein Sein received a Master of Business Administration delegation led by Professor Dan Ianca of Stanford University, USA, at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The MBA trainees of the delegation questioned the president on political and economic reforms and the measures being taken to ensure peace and socio-economic development in Myanmar.

Also present at the meeting were Union ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Thame, U Ye Htut, U Zeyar Aung, Dr Daw Khin San Yi and Dr Kan Zaw and officials.

The 32-member delegation visited the Ministry of Energy in Nay Pyi Taw on Thursday.

The delegation attended a meeting there with U Zeyar Aung, Union Minister for Energy, Communications and Information Technology and the Chairman of the Myanmar Investment Commission. They discussed investment policies, reforms aimed at attracting foreign investment to the country and the nature of doing business in Myanmar.— *Myanma News Agency*

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits poultry farms in Lashio

VICE President Dr Sai Mauk Kham yesterday visited poultry farms in Man Ai village, Lashio, northern Shan State, urging the farmers to exert more effort for the development of their livelihoods.

The large-scale farm in Lashio keeps nearly 130,000 chickens and produces more than 80,000 eggs per day. The eggs are distributed to townships in Shan State as well as Mandalay.—*Myanma News Agency*

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets local people at poultry farms in Man Ai village, Lashio, northern Shan State. PHOTO: MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
President Office
(Order No. 23/2015)
7th Waxing of Nadaw, 1377 ME
(18 December 2015)

Union Education Minister concurrently appointed as Union Minister for Science and Technology

Under Section 232 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 12 of the Union Government Law, Union Minister for Education Dr Daw Khin San Yee has been concurrently appointed as Union Minister for Science and Technology as of 18 December.

Thein Sein
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Vice President U Nyan Tun attends Int'l Migrants Day event in Nay Pyi Taw

INTERNATIONAL Migrants Day 2015 was observed at a ceremony at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with a speech by Vice President U Nyan Tun.

In his speech, the vice president said that the observance of the day is to raise public awareness of migrants and speed up our efforts to respect and protect their human rights in accordance with international laws and standards.

He described the event as an occasion to remember the important contribution of migrants to the economic development of their host countries, calling for greater cooperation in protecting the labour rights of migrant workers. The 21st century has witnessed massive human mobility in countries of both origin and destination, with the vice president saying that the issue of migration should be included in national development plans. He pledged the enhanced cooperation with international organisations in safeguarding the interests of Myanmar citizens.

U Aye Myint, Union Minister for Labour, Employment and Social Security, spoke briefly on the measures being undertaken to protect migrant workers.

Mr Kieran Gorman-Best, representative of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), read out messages sent by the secretary general of the United Nations and the director general of the IOM. –*Myanma News Agency*

Vice President U Nyan Tun visits booth on International Migrants Day 2015 in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

No plans to invite more shareholders for Zone-B at Thilawa SEZ

A building is under construction in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone. PHOTO: YE MYINT

Khaing Thanda Lwin

THE Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Public Ltd said it has no plans to invite new shareholders for Zone-B at the Thilawa SEZ project.

"Shares will be sold to public if necessary," U Win Aung, Chairman of MTSH, replied to shareholders and media at the company's second annual general meeting yesterday.

He added,"Currently the company has no plans to invite new shareholders to the Zone-B project at Thilawa SEZ in southeastern Yangon,which covers an area of 500 to 700 hectares. We will implement the Zone-B project with the use of current investment levels."

U Min Naing, who owns 30 shares of MTSH, said the share value of Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Public Ltd has gone up fivefold within two years. "It is expected to go on rising."

Since its establishment in January, 2014 the MTSH's share price has risen from K10,000(US$7.67) per share to K50,000 ($38.35).

The 396-hectare Zone-A projectof Thilawa SEZ,which is located 25 kilometers southeast of Yangon, will be completed in two phases. Initiated in late November 2013, the first phase comprising the development of 211 hectares was put into operation in September.

The second phase of the-Zone-A project comprising 150 hectares has been under construction and is scheduled to be completed by mid-2016.

Essential infrastructure developments to support the Thilawa SEZ with Japan'sODA loan is also on track, U Win Aung said.

"Construction of a 50 MW power plant and gas pipeline are on schedule. Road expansion works from Thanlyin Bridge to Thilawa SEZ, sea port construction and water supply pipeline construction are expected to be carried out next year."

Fund to be established to ease burden on SMEs

A FUND will be established in Myanmar to provide the country's small and medium enterprises (SMEs)with loans at low interest rates.

The plan comes as established small and medium enterprises in Myanmar are often forced to put up their properties up as collateral for bank loans, according toMr Edward Clarence Smith, a resident representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

His comments were made during a workshop which focused on the opportunities and constraints of boosting responsible and sustainable investments and the development of youth and female-led enterprises in Yangon yesterday. He advised that small and medium enterprises in Myanmar join hands with SMEs in foreign countries in order to overcome their current challenges and constraints.

More than 120 experts and representatives from both the Myanmar public and private sectors, international financial institutions and development partners participated in the workshop.

Daw Aye Aye Win, Director-General of the Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection under the Ministry of Industry suggested providing SMEs in Myanmar with capital and modern technology in order to make them more competitive in preparation for when the ASEAN Economic Community plan takes effect.—*Min Thit*

Fishery sector incluing crab farming needs to be provided with loans with low interest rate to compete with others in the regional market. PHOTO: YE HTUT

SLCM ties up with Myanma Apex Bank

Mr. Anubhav Sengar (L) and Mr. Kyaw Soe Min (R). PHOTO: SLCM

SLCM Group (Sohan Lal Commodity Management) — SLCM Ltd has signed an MoU with Myanma Apex Bank for collateral financing in Myanmar.

SLCM is the only Agri Logistics Group which has presence in Myanmar to provide Warehouse Management and Collateral Management Services through its wholly owned subsidiary.

The step is aimed at strengthening the network for providing collateral management solutions to processors, traders, exporters, farmers & importers across Myanmar. Mr. Anubhav Sengar, Country Head, SLCM Ltd and Mr. Kyaw Soe Min, Deputy Managing Director, Myanma Apex Bank signed the MoU yesterday. The signing commitment states that rate of interest for loan disbursement remains fixed at 13%. With this, SLCM Ltd. becomes the only warehousing & collateral management services provider in Myanmar & has tie-ups with four leading local banks including Yoma Bank, C B Bank, United Amara Bank and now with Myanma Apex Bank. Myanma Apex Bank will offer financial solutions to both individuals and corporate customers, in accordance with their needs, while maintaining excellence in customer service at all times.—*GNLM*

Bureau Veritas Ramps Up Operations in Myanmar

BUREAU Veritas, a global leader in laboratory testing, inspection and certification services listed on Euronext Paris, announced yesterday that it expects to increase its headcount of engineers and certification professionals in Myanmar by about three times within the next two years.

Starting afresh barely three years ago in Myanmar, Bureau Veritas Myanmar expects to expand its current strength of 15 qualified professionals, after relocating to its new premises at Hledan Center in November, according to its press release.

The strategic intent is for the Myanmar operation to grow into a fully independent unit with the ability to deliver its testing, inspection and certification services that meet international standards in a seamlessly and real-time manner.

The company, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bureau Veritas parent group, also aims to expand beyond its current focus on agricultural inspection & testing services to include new emerging sectors like infrastructure development and the oil & gas sector in Myanmar.—*GNLM*

A-bomb museum to be built in South Korea region where survivors live

HIROSHIMA — Construction will begin next year of a museum in South Korea dedicated to showing the horror of the August 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui said Thursday.

The museum in southern Hapcheon county, where many survivors of the blast live, will be the first such public museum in South Korea, according to its consulate general in Hiroshima.

The consulate general has asked the Hiroshima city government for assistance in providing items that can be displayed at the museum, the mayor said at a press conference.

"We have been asking the United Nations and other organisations to display materials related to the atomic bombing, so we are unstinting in lending our support," Matsui said, expressing hope as well for future cooperation between the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and the South Korean museum.—*Kyodo News*

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Chief Executive Officer - Nakagawa
gnlmdaily@gmail.com
Chief Editor - Khin Maung Aye
khinmaungaye.hotmail@gmail.com
Deputy Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe
koayeminsoe2006@gmail.com
Chief Reporter
Ye Myint, uyemyint76@gmail.com,
Consultant Editors
Jacob Goldberg
jgold.news@gmail.com
Alec Wilmot
alec.wilmot.gnlm@gmail.com
Editors
Ye Htut Tin
mryehtuttin@gmail.com
Kyaw Thura, kthura.spk@gmail.com,
Myint Win Thein
journalist.sss@gmail.com
International news
Tun Tun Naing
tunyunaing@gmail.com
Reporters
Khaing Thanda Lwin
juniorlwin25@gmail.com
Tun Aung Kyaw
tunaungkyaw.31@gmail.com
Translators
Ma Than Htay,
Hay Mar Tin Win
haymarfat@gmail.com
Proof reader
Nwe Nwe Tun
Computer Team
Tun Zaw, Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung,
Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin
Circulation & Advertising
San Lwin (+95) (01) 8604532
Ads and subscription enquiries:
adv.gnlm@gmail.com

Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

Australian PM Turnbull in Japan, eyes stronger technology cooperation

TOKYO — Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull arrived in Japan yesterday on a one-day visit to meet Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and strengthen cooperation in the field of science and technology.

Before the meeting, the Australian prime minister said, "We'll discuss innovation. We'll discuss the economy. We'll discuss obviously the important strategic collaboration we have."

"This might be our fourth or fifth meeting, so we have got to know each other already," Turnbull added.

The two leaders will discuss "a point of difference" as Australia disagrees with Japan's whaling in the Antarctic Ocean this year, he said. "If we can't resolve it then we will obviously keep talking, but we should not allow it to erode the goodwill in the rest of the friendship," Turnbull said.

Shortly after arriving, Turnbull visited the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation, known as Miraikan, in Tokyo, as he aims to seek cooperation in pursuing scientific advancement required for economic revitalization, and technology innovation to support business entrepreneurs.

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull takes a selfie with ASIMO, a humanoid robot developed by Honda Motor Co., at Tokyo's National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation on 18 December. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Turnbull met Honda Motor Co.'s Asimo humanoid robot with whom he took a picture using his phone.

Later, he attended a luncheon hosted by the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee and said that a strong Japan and a strong Australia will be important for the Asia-Pacific region.—*Kyodo News*

Chinese drones prove mettle in Tianjin disaster

BEIJING — When an explosion devastated parts of China's Tianjin port in August, one insurance company turned to Chinese-made drones to help analyse the rubble and estimate the damages.

Comparing satellite photographs of the site ahead of the blast with high-resolution images taken later by drones, the People's Insurance Company of China (PICC) was able to determine how many vehicles had been destroyed and total the losses for German automaker Volkswagen (VOWG_p.DE).

"There was nothing left but a big hole in the ground," Lin Changqing, a deputy general manager at PICC Property and Casualty Co told Reuters. With the government maintaining a one kilometre exclusion zone around the site, an accurate loss assessment would have been "mission impossible" without unpiloted aircraft, he added.

Chinese drone developers are racking up an impressive list of aerial solutions for a growing variety of demands, from police surveillance to agricultural mapping and traffic management. Already well established as a world leader in drone manufacturing, China is slowly emerging as a world-class innovator, not just a duplicator of foreign designs.

"People have been calling China 'copy cats' for a long time. That's still true in a lot of industries, but when it comes to drones China is no copycat," said Joe Tymczyszyn, a senior adviser and former executive director for the US-China Aviation Cooperation Programme.

Chinese firm SZ DJI Technology Co, the world's biggest consumer drone maker, will open its first flagship retail store in Shenzhen on Sunday. The company claims 70 percent of the commercial market worldwide and a larger portion of the consumer market.

A drone operated by paramilitary police flies over the site of 12 August 2015 explosions at Binhai new district in Tianjin, China. PHOTO: REUTERS

Others are lining up to replicate SZ's success. Wuhan Airbird UAV Co Ltd designs and maintains drones for government, corporate and private users. But its traffic monitoring micro-drone — so small it can be launched from a car window — is proving a hit with the car-driving public.

The privately-held manufacturer expects revenue to rise 50 percent this year to 18 million yuan (2 million pounds), and employs about 45 engineers and mechanics.

Research firm Taibo Intelligence forecasts Chinese drone industry revenue to more than double to 2.5 billion yuan ($388 million) this year and grow by as much as eight fold to 20 billion yuan by 2020.

With revenues booming and participants rushing to stake out territory, regulators are trying to rein in the exuberance and set some ground-rules for the industry.

China's aviation regulator this month published provisional rules aiming to hold drone operators more accountable and control where commercial and private unmanned aerial vehicles may fly.

The rules, which are less severe than regulations being considered by the US and Europe, came after a series of security breaches, including an incident where a civilian drone photographed a Chinese fighter jet as it prepared to land.

While some chafe at the government scrutiny, other industry players welcome the attention.

"It's like saying traffic rules have hurt the development of the car industry," said Ke Yubao, executive secretary-general of the government-backed China Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

Wuhan Airbird Chief Executive Wang Xiaobo said tighter regulation was needed to improve industry safety. "Once a major accident happens it will be too late," he said.

The military continues to control about 70 percent of China's airspace, and demands that all drone flights receive approval before entering controlled areas. Even so, the vast majority of drone operators in China are untrained and fly without licences.

"Unlicensed flights need to be addressed sooner or later," said Yan Jianqiao, marketing chief at Shenzhen AEE Technology Co. Ltd, which supplies high-performance drones for police in Europe and the US military. "It will become a liability for manufacturers otherwise."—*Reuters*

China warns of widespread smog, Beijing issues second 'red alert'

A man sets up a warning sign next to a vehicle after an accident amid heavy smog after the city issued its first ever 'red alert' for air pollution, in Beijing, China, on 8 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

BEIJING — China warned residents across a large part of its north yesterday to prepare for a wave of choking smog arriving over the weekend, the worst of which is expected over Beijing, prompting the capital to issue its second ever "red alert".

The National Meteorological Centre said the smog would stretch from Xian, home to the world-famous Terracotta Warriors, across part of central China, through Beijing and up into Shenyang and Harbin in China's frigid northeast.

The air pollution would begin rolling in from about Saturday evening and last until Tuesday, with visibility in the worst affected areas such as Beijing likely to fall to less than 1 km (0.6 mile), it said.

The pollution index would probably exceed 500 in Beijing and parts of Hebei Province, which surrounds the capital, it said. Residents are encouraged to remain indoors at levels higher than 300, according to government guidelines.

The Beijing city government issued its first "red alert" last week following criticism that previous bouts of smog had failed to trigger the highest warning level.

Beijing's second red alert comes after a landmark climate agreement was reached in Paris earlier this month, setting a course to move away from a fossil fuel-driven economy within decades in a bid to arrest global warming.

A red alert is triggered when the government believes air quality will surpass a level of 200 on an air quality index that measures various pollutants for at least three days. The US government deems a level of more than 200 "very unhealthy".

In Beijing, a red alert means around half the vehicles are removed from the roads with an odd-even license plate system enforced. Schools are recommended to close and outdoor construction is banned.

"I'm very concerned about the pollution, I think the government needs to put more effort into solving this," said Cheng Xianke, a 34-year-old Beijing software developer.

The Beijing environment bureau said the red alert would last from 7am Saturday to midnight on Tuesday. The official Xinhua news agency said the smog would be worse than last week.

"Parts of north China will see the worst smog so far this year from Saturday," it said, citing the National Meteorological Centre.

Beijing is not the only city to have a coloured alert system, and the restrictions rolled out in the most severe cases are broadly similar.

Beijing's neighbouring city of Tianjin also aims to remove about half of all cars from the road in the event of a red alert.

Hebei's environment protection bureau said it was issuing an orange alert, the second-highest, starting from Friday.

Schools will not close and there will be no vehicle restrictions but it recommends no outdoor activities and that people use public transport.

Shenyang said it was issuing a yellow alert, the third-highest level.

After decades of unbridled economic growth, China's leadership has vowed to crack down on severe levels of air, water and soil pollution, including the heavy smog that often blankets major cities. City residents have previously criticized authorities for being too slow to issue red alerts for heavy smog.

Shanghai schools banned outdoor activities and authorities limited work at construction sites and factories earlier this week.

Environmental Protection Minister Chen Jining vowed this month to punish agencies and officials for any failure to implement a pollution emergency response plan quickly.—*Reuters*

India lowers 2015/16 growth estimate to 7-7.5pc

NEW DELHI — India slashed its full-year economic growth forecast yesterday, weighed down by weak global demand and a drought that has created risks for farm output, but reiterated its commitment to narrow the fiscal deficit to an eight-year low.

Asia's third-largest economy is now expected to grow 7-7.5 per cent in the fiscal year ending in March 2016, the finance ministry said in its mid-year economic review, down from an estimate of 8.1-8.5 per cent announced in February.

The downgrade came after the economy grew 7.2 per cent in the first half of the 2015/16 fiscal year.

Still, if it meets the government's estimate, the South Asian nation will remain the world's fastest growing major economy as China's GDP is struggling to maintain the near-7 per cent pace promised by its leaders.

Slowing demand for Indian merchandise in overseas markets has hit growth as exports, that account for about a fifth of India's $2 trillion economy, have tumbled for the past 12 months.

"Declining exports seem to be predominantly determined by a decline in the world demand," the report said. "Regardless of the causes, the effect has been a drag on growth."

Growth in 2016/17 is unlikely to be significantly higher, the report said.

The finance ministry said it will stick to its budgeted fiscal deficit target of 3.9 per cent of GDP for the current fiscal year.

But the fiscal outlook for 2016/17 looks challenging and the government will need to reassess its commitment to cut the deficit further by 0.4 per cent of its GDP in the financial year that begins in April, the report cautioned.—*Reuters*

Farmers sprinkle fertilizer on a wheat field on the outskirts of Ahmedabad, on 15 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

Okinawa to sue state early next year to stop US base transfer

NAHA — The Okinawa prefectural assembly yesterday passed a bill to file a lawsuit early next year to block the central government's plan to relocate a key US military air base within the southern island prefecture.

The assembly also approved a supplementary budget of around 13 million yen ($106,750) to cover the costs of the lawsuit to prevent the transfer of the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from a crowded residential area in the city of Ginowan to the less populated Henoko coastal area of Nago.

The Okinawa government plans to bring the case to the Naha District Court in early January. With the passage of the bills, two lawsuits related to the relocation of the Futenma base, filed by the central and prefectural governments, are set to proceed simultaneously.

Hearings started on 2 December for the suit filed by the central government, which is seeking to overrule Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga's move to block landfill work for the relocation of the US base.

The central government lodged the suit last month after Onaga revoked his predecessor Hirokazu Nakaima's permission for the landfill work and rejected the land minister's instruction to reinstate the approval.

The Okinawa assembly in its suit will seek the retraction of the land minister's decision to invalidate Onaga's move.

Japan and the United States struck an accord in 1996 on the return of the Futenma air base to Japanese control.

The Japanese government subsequently decided to transfer the base to the Henoko coastal area of Nago but progress has been slow due to strong local opposition.

Onaga and many residents of Okinawa want the base moved outside the prefecture to reduce the burden from hosting the bulk of US forces in Japan. —*Kyodo News*

Renzi urged European socialists to unite against German power

Italy's Prime Minister Matteo Renzi. PHOTO: REUTERS

BRUSSELS — Centre-left governments should join forces to counter German influence in the European Union, Italy's Prime Minister Matteo Renzi told socialist leaders on Thursday, according to a source who attended the meeting.

In the past months, Rome's relations with the EU have soured over how to deal with Europe's migration crisis and on new rules to increase the euro zone's financial stability, issues where Germany has played a prominent role.

At a meeting of EU socialist leaders, hours before an EU summit began in Brussels, Renzi urged his colleagues to work together to offset German power in Europe, airing concerns about Berlin's plans to import more Russian gas despite EU sanctions, the source said.

Renzi's party has the biggest centre-left contingent in the European Parliament but has so far commanded little influence in the EU, where German-led conservative forces prevail.

In EU politics, national interests often take priority over political affiliations. France's socialist president Francois Hollande, for example, has often found himself closer to German Chancellor Angela Merkel than to Renzi.

Hollande did not attend the meeting of socialist parties. The German president of the European Parliament Martin Schulz was among the participants, together with the leaders of Austria, Portugal, Sweden, Malta and Slovakia. At the meeting, Renzi raised concerns about Berlin's plans to double the capacity of Nord Stream, the pipeline that brings gas to Germany through the Baltic Sea from Russia.

Renzi argued that the German plan was at odds with EU economic sanctions on Russia, which have already caused the collapse of plans for South Stream, a pipeline that was supposed to carry Russian gas to Southern Europe.

Italy has requested a debate at the EU summit on plans to extend economic sanctions against Russia for its intervention in Ukraine by six months until July of next year. This is considered an unusual move given that there is already broad consensus among EU states on the extension.

Socialist leaders made no comments after their summit. Leaving the meeting, Renzi called "quite surreal" the EU pressure on Italy to fingerprint migrants, claiming that the country is already doing what is required.

Rome is accused of not registering arriving migrants and allowing them to move on freely to other countries in the border-free Schengen area.—*Reuters*

EU leaders agree to fast-track new border force

A barbed wire is seen in front of a European Union flag at an immigration reception centre in Bicske, Hungary. PHOTO: REUTERS

BRUSSELS — European Union leaders pledged to fast-track the establishment of an EU border and coastguard force at a summit where they again urged each other to implement measures agreed this year to curb migration across the Mediterranean.

By the middle of next year, they decided at a summit yesterday, they would agree the details of the new border force which was proposed by the EU executive earlier this week.

Some leaders, including Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, made clear, however, that they wanted to strike out a controversial element of the proposal which would give Brussels power to send in EU border guards without a country's consent.

Summing up the three-hour discussion, the summit chairman, European Council President Donald Tusk, said leaders had agreed there was a "delivery deficit" in making good on a series of measures agreed over recent months to stem chaotic movements that have put Europe's Schengen open-borders area in jeopardy.

"Over the past months, the European Council has developed a strategy aimed at stemming the unprecedented migratory flows Europe is facing," the final agreement read. "However, implementation is insufficient and has to be speeded up.

"For the integrity of Schengen to be safeguarded it is indispensable to regain control over the external borders." Greece and Italy are under pressure to do more to manage and identify those arriving — a million or more so far this year — while governments in general have yet to make good on promises to help take in asylum seekers and deport unwanted migrants.

There are only two fully operational "hotspots" for screening of migrants arriving to Italy and Greece from 11 that are supposed to be set up. Only about 200 migrants who have already arrived to the two states were relocated to other EU countries under a deal that is intended to cover 160,000.

Greece and Italy have been overwhelmed by the arrivals and shift the blame on other EU members for encouraging the flows or not offering the right assistance. The leaders urged more security checks against databases and fingerprinting — a procedure those who make the perilous journey to Europe often try to avoid as, under EU rules, it would require them to claim asylum in Greece or Italy, while many aim for Germany or other wealthier states to the north.

The EU says it wants to help Syrians and others fleeing wars and therefore potentially eligible for asylum but wants to separate those coming from places where they are less at risk.

Leaders agreed that their envoys in Brussels should try to agree quickly on how to fund 3 billion euros promised to Turkey for helping curb migrant flows to Greece. Diplomats say a deal is in the works under which possibly 1 billion will come from central EU funds and the rest direct from national treasuries.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia and Britain discuss avoiding airspace, naval 'incidents'

MOSCOW — The Russian Defence Ministry said late on Thursday that senior British military officials had met with their Russian counterparts in Moscow to discuss how best to avoid incidents between the two countries' armed forces at sea and in the air.

Britain has complained of increasingly having to scramble fighter jets to see off Russian bombers flying close to its airspace in episodes which at times have disrupted commercial flights. Russian warships which have sailed close to British territorial waters have also needed escorting away.—*Reuters*

Nigeria yet to decide on joining Saudi-led anti-Islamic State alliance

ABUJA — Nigeria has yet to decide whether to join a Saudi-led alliance to fight the militant group Islamic State, a spokesman for President Muhammadu Buhari said on Thursday.

On Tuesday, Saudi Arabia announced a 34-nation Islamic military coalition, a move welcomed by the United States, which has been urging greater regional efforts to push back Islamic State, now in control of large parts of Iraq and Syria.

However, there has been confusion over the initiative, with some of the countries named as members of the coalition caught unawares by the announcement.—*Reuters*

Israel and Turkey reach preliminary deal to restore ties

JERUSALEM — Israel and Turkey have reached a preliminary agreement to normalise relations, including the return of ambassadors to both countries, an Israeli official said on Thursday. The deal was reached during a recent meeting in Switzerland between the incoming head of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, Yossi Cohen, Israeli envoy Joseph Ciechanover and Turkish foreign ministry under-secretary Feridun Sinirlioglu, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

A spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declined comment. A Turkish official confirmed that talks had taken place but denied any agreement had been reached, adding that efforts to normalise relations were continuing.

Under the preliminary agreement, Israel will establish a compensation fund to address the killing by Israeli marines of 10 Turks aboard a pro-Palestinian activist ship that tried to break Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip in 2010, the Israeli official said. Turkey would then drop all claims against Israel.—*Reuters*

California shooters' ex-neighbour charged with supporting terrorists

WASHINGTON — A former neighbour accused of supplying assault rifles to the couple who massacred 14 people in San Bernardino, California, appeared in court on Thursday charged with conspiring to provide material support to terrorists.

Enrique Marquez, 24, a friend of Syed Rizwan Farook, 28, who launched the Islamic State-inspired rampage on 2 December with his wife, Tashfeen Malik, 29, also told investigators he and Farook plotted earlier mass casualty attacks, prosecutors said.

US Attorney Eileen Decker said the two men conspired to commit "vicious" assaults on targets including a California community college and a state highway during rush hour.—*Reuters*

Cambodia's Central Bank issues silver coins to mark founding of ASEAN Community

PHNOM PENH — The National Bank of Cambodia (NBC), or Central Bank, has issued ASEAN Commemorative Coins to mark the establishment of the ASEAN Community on 31 December 2015, according to its statement yesterday.

"The NBC, together with the Royal Government of Cambodia, would like to express our congratulations to the ASEAN member states for successfully moving another step forward in the process of regional integration," the statement said. "This significant achievement will be beneficial to all ASEAN nations."—*Xinhua*

OPINION

Can Myanmar become a future tiger in Southeast Asia?

Kyaw Thura

THE success stories of the government's commitment to fundamental political and economic reforms over the past five years have prompted the British magazine The Economist to declare Myanmar 'the country of the year'.

Buoyed by the honour of being mentioned in the magazine's 19 December issue, the stakeholders engaged in the democratic reform feel confident of further success, with some anticipating the prospect of the country becoming a future tiger in Southeast Asia.

In its overview on Myanmar in October, the World Bank commented that the five years of political and civil inclusiveness has "the potential to create opportunity and shared prosperity for the people of Myanmar and for the country to resume its place as one of the most dynamic economies in Asia", referring to the easing of media censorship, the release of political prisoners and the signing of nationwide ceasefire agreement with eight ethnic armed groups.

Its prediction is not without reason. Not only is our country the largest of all in Southeast Asia, but it still possesses fertile lands and untapped natural resources. In addition, the country is sandwiched between the world's two most populous countries, China and India. Being positioned between the two dynamic economies can help our country play a regional trading hub.

As a key supplier of minerals, natural gas and agricultural produce our country is back on track to foreseeable prosperity. Whether it can be a tiger in the region rests on the capacity of the incoming government and their management skills.

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email thantunaungnlm@gmail.com with your name and title.

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

Why do our children need so much extra help with their school lessons?

Myo Myint

WHY do our children need so much extra help with their school lessons? Do people still ask this question, or has it become so commonplace that people do not bother with asking this question and simply do not bother with finding an answer, and do what they have to do? Do also teachers think about it? As everyone accepts that education is the basis for individual as well as national development, children from poor families are to be complacent with what is taught at school but parents who have the means seek help outside the school to supplement what is taught to their children at school. For many students, gradually what is taught in class is being replaced by what is taught outside the school as the main instruction.

Those who have an interest in the quality of education, the government, education authorities, school heads, teachers, parents and community leaders all should be greatly concerned that many schools are neither performing their best, nor giving serious attention to their main responsibilities of teaching, and nurturing good citizens. Schools and teachers are beginning to lose their influence on many students, and the confidence in and respect that students and their parents have for them are also rapidly waning. Many feel that this needs to be redressed quickly, because a large number of schools are becoming mere day care centres for children of working parents, and not as centres of learning that provide knowledge, life skills, good citizenship and all-round development.

Without much profound thinking and research, one can identify many of the causes of the decline in the role of schools in the education of students, just by listening to the complaints of parents. They point to unprincipled teachers as one of the main reasons. But before we discuss the harm being caused by these unscrupulous teachers (the ones who adorn themselves with huge diamond earrings, lockets and rings to show off their extra income, success and price) in the growing loss in confidence in schools and teachers by parents and students, we need to acknowledge and express our profound appreciation to the hard work and personal sacrifices of many dedicated teachers who with worn-out slippers and shabby clothes unfailing turn up to teach their students (my former teachers topping the list). They make great efforts to get to their schools on time, rain or sunshine, using various means of cheap public transport, hitchhiking, riding rickety bicycles, or walking for hours. In ramshackle schools with few teaching aids, they use whatever skills they possess to disseminate what is presented in the textbooks to their students. In addition to their main responsibilities, these teachers are conscripted by education and local authorities into giving so called voluntary service ranging from welcoming dignitaries, serving as part of the audience at opening ceremonies, and taking part in local as well as national development activities such as elections, referenda and literacy campaigns (which they are quite happy to participate in).

What are some of the underlying reasons related to the general decline in teacher quality? One reason is the attitude of some teachers towards their profession. Unlike three or four decades ago, some became teachers not for the love of teaching but because there was no other job available. Some became teachers drawn by the extra income from tuitions than from the love for the profession. Some became teachers because they felt it was an easy job. Some felt that they were being badly paid, and so they felt that their job does not merit their best.

Another reason for the fall in teacher quality is the poor quality of training provided by some teacher training institutions, partly caused by outdated curriculum, the poor quality of the teaching materials, lack of attention to methodology, and inadequate facilities and teaching aids at training institutions. Another reason is the quality of instruction at teacher training institutions. Many of the instructors, knowingly or unknowingly, do not exert the amount of effort, interest and creativity needed in lesson preparation and training their students. In addition, poor management of teacher training institutions adds to the woes. Managing a teacher training institution, be they colleges, or universities, requires much ability, experience, interest, dynamism, creativity, dedication and the right qualifications, and at some teacher training institutions, administrators lack such qualities, and as a result both the institution and trainees suffer. Moreover, some leaders of departments, the heads, devote their time more to getting promotion, showing off their authority, and competing with one another, rather than to improving the quality of their departments, staff and trainees, thereby setting a bad example to their staff and students.

At the same time, one must say, with great sadness and anxiety that another reason for the deterioration in teacher quality is the decline in the awareness of the traditional roles assigned to Myanmar teachers, in many teachers, and a sharp increase in selfishness in them, especially those serving in cities and towns. They exercise little restraint when it comes to making extra money, and feel that they as class teachers, have every right to openly conduct tuition classes just as doctors employed by the government are allowed to do private practice, and some even exert pressure on their students to attend their private classes. It is common knowledge that to force their students to attend their tuitions, some teachers use numerous dirty tricks such as, doing minimal teaching in class, treating badly the students who do not attend their tuition by finding excuses to mete out punishment, practicing favourtism, or ignoring them, and familiarizing students with test questions in their tuitions, giving extra marks in tests to students who attend their tuitions, giving marks only to answers they have provided in their tuitions although there are other possible answers, and forming networks among tuition-giving teachers to provide special services to their tuition students. Adding to the miseries of the students is the tribe of lazy and incompetent teachers who make no effort to improve their teaching. Worst still are the teachers who are present at school, but do not take classes, or do so with little preparation and interest, with the excuse that students are not interested in their teaching, as they have learnt everything at their tuitions, or with the inexcusable reason that they are forced to teach subjects that they have not taught before. Both these groups of teachers get away with their irresponsible acts, simply because their heads and school inspectors do not check them, or because they have good connections, i.e. they know persons who are feared by their superiors. The problem is compounded at some schools, especially in remote areas, by the inadequate number of teachers appointed, because of teachers going on long leave, with heads and township education officers turning a blind eye to it for obvious reasons. In addition to these problems is the need for students to find occasions to appease greedy teachers with presents such as their birthdays, Thadinkyut, Tazaungdaing, New Year, beginning of the new academic year, etc. etc. etc. It is no wonder that although the country has introduced free education at schools, parents still complain about the high cost of education.

One might want to ask why parents do not lodge complaints against these corrupt, incompetent, lazy and sometimes ruthless teachers. A few bold parents do, and many want to complain, but parents, especially those in the rural areas dare not do so, for fear of reprisals against their children. Their attitude is that the poor quality education is better than no education at all, and being ignored is far better than being targeted for unwarranted punishments. Parents who can afford to, or are able to scrimp and save enough money, transfer their children to private schools in the hope of escaping from the clutches of these greedy and corrupt teachers.

Teachers often say that their reputation is being hurt by a few corrupt teachers. The question is "Is it only one rotten fish that is spoiling the name of the whole boatload? Although nobody from the education sector has deemed it a worthy topic to conduct research on, bearing in mind the large number of complaints from parents, the number of teachers giving tuition does not appear to be small, and the amount of money that parents, even the ones with low income, have to spend on tuition fees each month is quite large.

It is high time that measures are taken to balance personal interests with national interests and to deal with the greedy, the corrupt, the lazy, the incompetent, the unmotivated, the vicious and the uncaring among teachers and education administrators, so that their number will not increase, public trust in schools and teachers will not be further eroded, and that they will not be a hindrance to the effort being made to raise the standard of education in the country and ensure that education plays its rightful role in the social and economic development of the country.

Medical aid for the disabled donated to NRH

THE National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) in Yangon received medical aid for disabled persons yesterday per kind favour of a generous personal donation.

Mr.YoshinoriKomaru, Managing Director of MyanmarYutani Co., Ltd presented Matsunaga and Kawamura high quality wheelchairs,Aisin auto wash toilet seat covers,peg boards for occupational therapy and goniometers. All in all the donated goods are worthK2 million and are pegged for use in assisting the disabled at the hospital.

Dr. Nwe Nwe Thein, Medical Superintendent of the NRH accepted the donation,expressed words of thanks and presented a certificate of acknowledgement to the donor.

Myanmar Yutani has been supporting government hospitals, military hospitals, medical universities and various fields in the health sector in Myanmar since 1996.—*GNLM*

Donation from Myanmar Yutani benefits disabled persons at the National Rehabilitation Hospital. PHOTO: NRH

Myanma Postal Service to launch Online Money Order services in 17 towns

THE Myanma Postal Service is planning to launch Online Money Order door to door services in 17 towns.

The online money order service is expected to begin in January and would be expanded depending on the online networking conditions in regions and states, said Daw NguThida, Deputy General Manager of the Myanmar Postal Service.

"Currently, Myanma post office is running the service in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw. Hitachi Company (Japan) provided us with a software programme and we will handle the hardware system in order to run the online system," She added.

The Myanma Postal Service is currently operating a money transfer system through 333 stations nationwide.. —*Yi Yi Myint/Ohnma Thant*

Drunk man burns blanket, causes house fire

A HOUSE fire broke out in Pakhokuu Township, Magway on Wednesday when Nay Zaw, 29, allegedlybecame inebriated and attempted to burn a blanket following a domestic dispute.

The fire quickly got out of control and consumed his family home. It took three fire trucks and the assistance of neighbours to put out the blaze.

Local police have filed charges against the man. —*PoliceIPRD*

Shwebo paddy profitable in Khin Oo

Farmers harvest rice in Khin Oo. PHOTO: YAUNG NI TIN WIN

PADDY plantations growing the Shweboztrain of monsoon paddy were harvested in Khin Oo Township, Saging Region. The paddy is secure and fetches good prices.

In Khin OoTownship, local farmers have grown the Shwebo paddy strain on 50,000 acres of farmland. A Shwebo-strain plantation yields 60 baskets per acre on average. Farmers have been able to sell100 baskets of the crop for K800,000.

Farmer U Tin Oo from KanThit Village said that over the"last two years, we haven'tgotten any profit from selling paddy because it was destroyed by insects. But this year, we yielded 60 baskets per acre and received high profits from selling the Shwebo paddy."

Last year's monsoon paddy sold forK1,300,000 ($998)per one hundred baskets, and summer paddy sold for K500,000 for the same volume in the township.—*Yaung Ni Tin Win*

U San Hlaing passes away at 93

MYANMAR'S oldest classical artist U San Hlaing has passed away at 93. He died at 7 pm on Tuesday, 15th December.

The venerated artist had just recently concluded a solo art exhibition that was seen as a success as celerbities from various fields, fellow artists, enthusiasts and tourists visited it and paid respects. The exhibition showcased the artist's masterpiece paintings featuring Myanmar rural traditions, ancient pagodas and historical heritage, the life story of the Buddha and the struggle for independence in Myanmar.

A painting by U San Hlaing displayed at his recent solo show in Yangon. PHOTO: MAUNG MAUNG HTWE

Mr Wayne Roger Keagle of Canberra, Australia, said that the paintings reflected the life styles, rural traditions, history and exciting images of Myanmar people. He added that he liked Myanmar paintings as they presented the truth concerning.

U San Hlaing was the son of U Khant and Daw Tint, born in Pyapon on 24 December 1923. He was the fifth of seven children. As his parents were poor, he could not afford pencils, brushes, paper or paints and had to draw pictures on the ground with a stick in his childhood, according to sources who knew him.

He later studied the art of painting under Saya Hmart, U Thein Nyunt, U Ngwe Gaing, U Hla Maung Gyi, U Khin Ohn, U Ba Nyan, U Ba Zaw, U Ba Lone, U Tun Kywe, U Saw Maung and U Phone Lwin.

As a teenager, he earned a living from painting but had to do various jobs to support his parents.

He joined the Burma Defence Army during the Second World War and he was later awarded the second order of independence medal.

He later lived at 27th Street in downtown Yangon and became a professional artist by drawing paintings for advertisements, cinema posters, newspapers and periodicals. His first solo exhibition was held at Jubilee Hall in 1956. He drew historic paintings and created a design for the state flag during the ear of Burma Socialist Programme Party.

He was known for his honesty and humble life style and strong traditional painting techniques among fellow artists.

His death is mourned by millions of Myanmar art lovers and patriots.—*Maung Maung Htwe (MNA)*

World's refugees and displaced exceed record 60m

GENEVA — The number of people forcibly displaced worldwide is likely to have "far surpassed" a record 60 million this year, mainly driven by the Syrian war and other protracted conflicts, the United Nations said yesterday.

The estimated figure includes 20.2 million refugees fleeing wars and persecution, the most since 1992, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in a report.

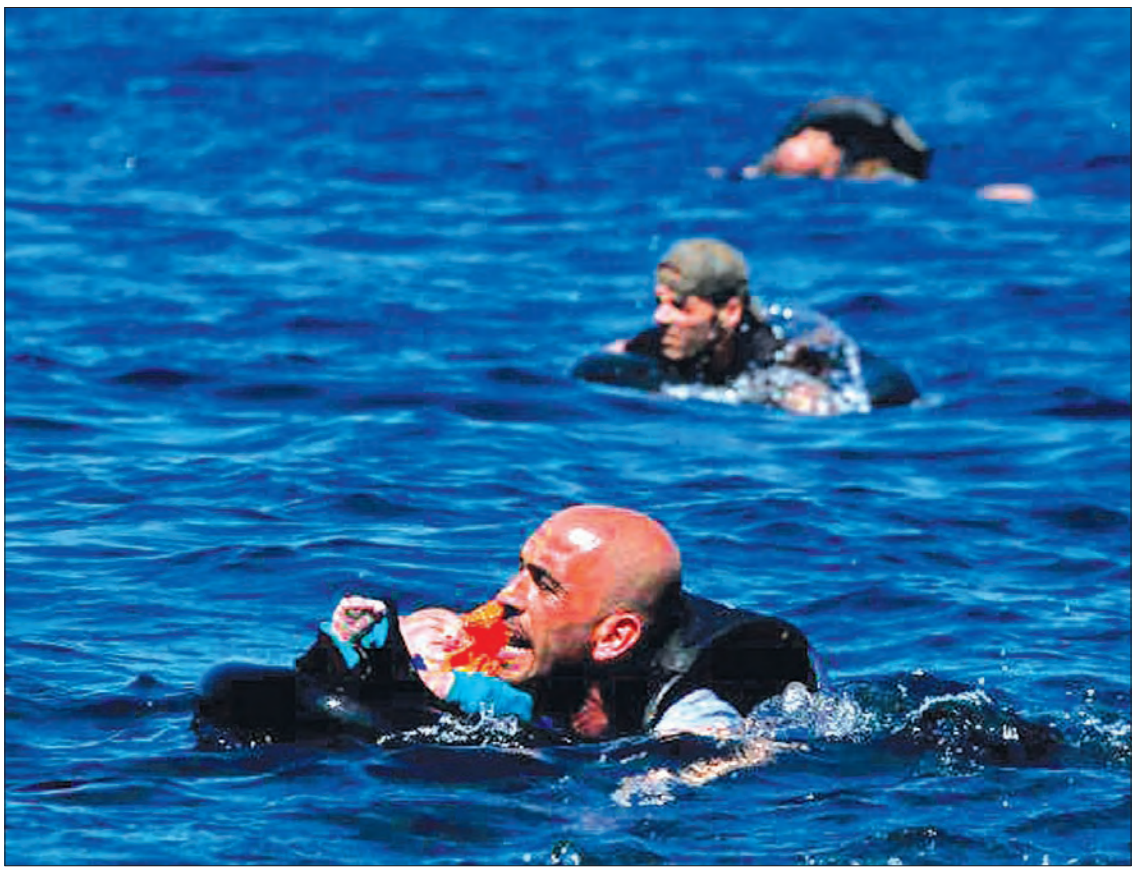
Nearly 2.5 million asylum seekers have requests pending, with Germany, Russia and the United States receiving the highest numbers of the nearly one million new claims lodged in the first half of the year, it said.

"2015 is on track to see worldwide forced displacement exceeding 60 million for the first time — 1 in every 122 humans is today someone who has been forced to flee their homes," it said. The total figure at the end of 2014 was 59.5 million.

An estimated 34 million people were internally displaced as of mid-year, about 2 million more than the same time in 2014. Yemen, where civil war erupted in March, reported the highest number of newly uprooted people at 933,500.

"Never has there been a greater need for tolerance, compassion and solidarity with people who have lost everything," Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said in a statement.

Developing countries bordering conflict zones still host the lion's share of the refugees, the report said, warning about growing "resentment" and "politicisation of refugees".



A Syrian refugee holding a baby swims towards the Greek island of Lesbos, on 12 September. PHOTO: REUTERS

The report, based on official figures as of mid-year before the influx of refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean to reach Europe peaked in October, extrapolates from trends to estimate the global total.

Syria's civil war that began in 2011 has been the main driver of mass displacement, with more than 4.2 million Syrian refugees having fled abroad and 7.6 million uprooted within their shattered homeland as of mid-year, UNHCR said.

Together, nationals of Syria and Ukraine, where a separatist rebellion in the east erupted in April 2014, accounted for half of the 839,000 people who became refugees in the first half of 2015, it said.

Violence in Afghanistan, Somalia and South Sudan sparked large refugee movements, as well as fighting in Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Iraq.

Voluntary returns — a measure of how many refugees can safely go back home — are at their lowest levels in more than three decades, with only 84,000 people returning by mid-year against 107,000 at the same time a year before, the UNHCR said.

Many refugees will live in exile for years to come, it said. "In effect, if you become a refugee today your chances of going home are lower than at any time in more than 30 years."—*Reuters*

Big powers struggle to agree UN resolution ahead of Syria talks

UNITED NATIONS — The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council were struggling to agree on a draft resolution endorsing an international bid to end the five-year-old civil war in Syria ahead of ministerial talks taking place in New York yesterday. The US ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, told reporters that the five veto-wielding council members did not yet have an agreed draft to present to the 15-nation body for approval yesterday.

Originally, Western powers hoped the council would rubber-stamp a resolution endorsing a two-year road map for talks between Syria's government and opposition on a unity government expected to begin in January and eventual elections. Council diplomats said they hoped agreement on a text could be clinched.

The road map, which also calls for a nationwide ceasefire that would not apply to Islamic State, Nusra Front and some other militant groups, was worked out in two rounds of ministerial talks in Vienna. Russian Ambassador Vitaly Churkin suggested there were significant disagreements among the five powers.

"I'm not sure it's going to happen because there are some unfortunately deliberate, or not deliberate, attempts to undercut the Vienna documents and we don't want to see that," he told reporters without elaborating.—*Reuters*

UN Security Council adopts resolution to cut off Islamic State funding

UNITED NATIONS — The UN Security Council on Thursday unanimously adopted a resolution to cut off funds for the Islamic State the extremist group, in a firmer move by the international community to fight terrorism.

Measures such as asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo will be taken against the Islamic State, also known as the ISIL and Daesh that controls large swaths of Syria and Iraq, including oil and gas fields, according to the resolution.

The resolution was adopted by the 15-nation UN body at an open meeting chaired by US Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew, whose country holds the rotating council presidency for December.

The resolution decided to "freeze without delay the funds and other financial assets or economic resources of these individual groups, undertaking and entities, including funds derived from property owned or controlled directly or indirectly, by them or by persons acting on their behalf or at their direction, and ensure that neither these nor other funds, financial assets or economic resources are made available, directly or indirectly for such persons' benefit, by their nationals or by persons within their territory."

The UN Security Council unanimously adopting a resolution to cut off funds for the Islamic State the extremist group, in a firmer move by the international community to fight terrorism, in UN headquarters in New York, on 17 December. PHOTO: XINHUA

The Security Council decided to "prevent the direct or indirect supply, or transfer to these individuals, groups, undertakings and entities from their territories or by their nationals outside their territories, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, of arms and related material of all types including weapons and ammunitions, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts ...and technical advice, assistance or training related to military activities."

The resolution noted that ISIL is a splinter group of Al-Qaida and said that "terrorism can only be defeated by a sustained and comprehensive approach involving the active participation and collaboration of all States and international and regional organisations to impede, impair, and incapacitate the terrorist threat."

The resolution also recognized that terrorism poses a threat to international peace and security and that countering this threat requires concerted efforts on national, regional and international levels on the basis of respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council reaffirmed that "terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or civilization," the resolution said.

The resolution called upon member states to move vigorously and decisively to cut the flows of funds and other financial assets and economic resources to individuals and entities on the ISIL (Daesh) & Al-Qaida Sanctions List, while condemning the frequent, recent terrorist attacks perpetrated by ISIL around the world resulting in numerous casualties.

"As Daesh and other terrorist groups disseminate their hateful propaganda and ratchet up murderous attacks, we must join forces to prevent them from acquiring and deploying resources to do further harm," UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said before the council voted 15-0 to adopt the new resolution, jointly drafted by the United States and Russia.

"We know the challenge before us," the secretary-general said. "Terrorists take advantage of weaknesses in financial and regulatory regimes to raise funds. They circumvent formal channels to avoid detection, and exploit new technologies and tools to transfer resources."

Terrorist have forged destructive and very profitable links with drug and criminal syndicates — among others, said Ban. "And they abuse charitable causes to trick individuals to contribute. They are agile and have been far too successful in attaining resources for their heinous acts."

"Terrorists continue to adapt their tactics and diversify their funding sources," the secretary-general said. "Today, Daesh runs a multi-million dollar economy in territories under its control."—*Xinhua*

China's modest housing recovery continues in Nov, more stimulus likely

A general view of Shanghai's financial district of Pudong is seen from the top of the Shanghai Tower, which is undergoing construction, on 2 August. PHOTO: REUTERS

BEIJING — China's home prices rose for the second straight month in November in on-year terms, signalling further stabilisation in the country's largest urban housing markets, although oversupply continues to plague smaller cities.

Average new home prices rose 0.9 per cent in November from a year earlier, Reuters calculated from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) data released on Friday, continuing October's 0.1 per cent rise.

The two months of on-year increases follow 13 consecutive months of declines, providing tentative signs of an improving property market and easing fears of a sharper slowdown in the broad economy, which is heading for its weakest growth in 25 years this year.

Analysts say the mild recovery is likely to continue in 2016 with the government expected to unveil more measures to reduce high inventories in small-and medium-sized cities.

"Top policymakers have made it clear that the next step will be focussed on destocking in the housing market. We think the policy stance will be more supportive," said Xia Dan, property analyst at Bank of Communications in Shanghai.

Most of China's unsold homes are in third- and fourth-tier cities, which have been hit by emigration to larger centres and where cash-strapped local governments rely on land revenues as their main income. Some analysts estimate it could take at least two years to clear the glut.

Chinese leaders said at Monday's Politburo meeting that the government will take more steps next year to tackle property inventories, including helping migrant workers to buy homes in cities.

The NBS data showed previous government policies continued to gain traction, with on-month price rises seen in 33 of 70 major cities tracked by the NBS, up from 27 in October.

Following a year-long slump, China's home sales and prices have increased in bigger cities over recent months, helped by a barrage of government measures, including reduced downpayments for home buyers and scrapping home purchase restrictions.

A Reuters poll shows China's home prices are expected to rise 2.0 per cent in 2016 from a year before, with the government likely to unveil more measures to support the struggling sector.

Analysts expect local governments will roll out more detailed stimulus measures, including financial and interest subsidies, tax reduction and downpayment cuts, to encourage rural residents to buy homes in small cities.

Already, local authorities in central Henan Province vowed to allocate at least 300 million yuan (£31.06 million) annually to encourage farmers to buy first home by cutting transaction fees, the official Xinhua news service reported last month.

China's central bank said in a working paper on Wednesday that it would take more than three quarters for improved sales to be felt in property investment, with stabilisation likely in the second half of 2016.

Property investment, a crucial driver of the economy, grew 1.3 per cent in the first 11 months of 2015 from a year earlier, slowing from an increase of 2.0 per cent in January-October, official data showed on Saturday, the lowest rate since early 2009.—*Reuters*

Apple to launch Apple Pay in China, take on Alibaba, Tencent

SHANGHAI — Apple Inc (AAPL.O) said it will launch its payment service in China as soon as 2016, pitting it against entrenched Chinese rivals Alibaba Group Holding (BABA.N) and Tencent Holdings (0700.HK).

Apple will partner with China's main bank card and payment firm UnionPay, a state-controlled consortium that has a monopoly on all yuan payment cards issued and used in the country.

Jeff Williams Apple's senior vice president of Operations, speaks about the Hermes watchband for the Apple Watch, during an Apple media event in San Francisco, California, on 9 September. PHOTO: REUTERS

The move will see Apple Pay take on Tencent's WeChat Payment and Alipay, the crown jewel of ecommerce king Alibaba's affiliate Ant Financial ANTFIN.UL, the top player in China's fast-growing online payments market.

Eddy Cue, Apple's senior vice president of Internet software and services, said the tie-up with UnionPay and leading local banks would help Apple Pay give Chinese shoppers a "convenient, private and secure payment" option.

"China is an extremely important market for Apple," he said.

China, the world's second-largest economy, is one of Apple's most important markets for iPhone and tablet sales, but until now the firm has been kept out of its online payments market.

Online transactions are booming in China, boosted by the proliferation of hundreds of millions of smartphones that are being used for everything from paying for taxis and meals to buying goods at High Street stores.

In July, China proposed regulations to shake up the online payment services sector, where companies which own payment systems can reap huge profits by charging transaction fees.

UnionPay said in a statement on Friday it also planned to tie up with Samsung Electronics Co Ltd's (005930.KS) payment system, Samsung Pay, which was launched earlier this year.—*Reuters*

Yelp, OpenTable part ways amid heightened competition

SAN FRANCISCO — Review site Yelp Inc and restaurant reservation service OpenTable have quietly ended a long-running partnership, the companies confirmed on Thursday, as the one-time allies increasingly eye each other's businesses.

The companies parted ways in April under mounting competition, with OpenTable facing new rivals to its reservation business and Yelp dogged with questions about stalling growth. Both companies are trying to take charge of the entire customer experience, said analyst Ben Bajarin of Creative Strategies.

"If they have to share that customer with someone else, it threatens their long-term viability," he said.

The companies halted a deal that since 2010 had allowed users to make OpenTable reservations through Yelp, home to a trove of reviews from diners.

The move, long speculated by industry watchers, underscores the growing rivalry between the companies, said Kerry Rice, a senior analyst at Needham & Company.

"Those two companies will be more head-to-head competitors," he said.

While the deal was not a big revenue source for either company, Yelp drove traffic to OpenTable, a former OpenTable employee said. But business has kept humming, OpenTable spokeswoman Lisa Singh wrote in an email.

"This did not have a material impact on our business or the millions of diners who find and book great restaurants on OpenTable," she said.

Yelp touted its progress in reservations.

"We're excited about the more than 18,000 restaurants that have chosen Yelp's reservation products for their reach, flexibility, and affordability," a Yelp spokeswoman said in a statement. The spokeswoman confirmed OpenTable paid Yelp for referrals.

"We had the standard referral relationship with OpenTable that they have with others, and it was immaterial to Yelp," she said. While OpenTable is best known for bookings and Yelp for reviews, the companies have gradually encroached on each other's territory.

OpenTable, which was acquired by Priceline Group Inc last year, has expanded its reviews. And Yelp in 2013 acquired rival reservation firm SeatMe, which offers restaurants similar services at a lower price, sparking speculation that the deal with OpenTable was in jeopardy.—*Reuters*

A man holds a picture of General Khalifa Haftar during a demonstration in support of the Libyan army under the leadership of General Khalifa in Benghazi, Libya. PHOTO: REUTERS

Libyan factions sign UN deal to form unified government

SKHIRAT — Delegates from Libya's warring factions signed a UN-brokered agreement on Thursday to form a national unity government, a deal that Western powers hope will bring stability and help to combat a growing Islamic State presence.

Four years after Muammar Gaddafi's fall, Libya is deeply fractured, with a self-declared government in Tripoli and an internationally recognised one in the east — each backed by coalitions of former rebels and militias.

The UN deal calls for a presidential council to lead a unified government, but hardliners in both factions reject it and questions remain about how it will be implemented in a country where rival armed brigades hold the key to power.

Chants of "Libya! Libya!" erupted as representatives from both parliaments signed the accord along with local councils and political parties in the Moroccan coastal town of Skhirat, after more than a year of hard-scrabble negotiations.

"The doors remain wide open to those who are not here today," UN envoy Martin Kobler said at the ceremony, attended by regional foreign ministers. "The signing of the political agreement is only the first step."

Western officials believe war fatigue, promises of foreign aid, the strain on Libya's oil economy and the common threat of Islamic State will help to build momentum for the national government and bring opponents on board.—*Reuters*

Panel blasts UN over handling of Central Africa peacekeeper abuse

UNITED NATIONS —The United Nations and its agencies grossly mishandled allegations of child sexual abuse by international peacekeepers in the Central African Republic, an independent review panel said in a report released on Thursday.

At least 13 French soldiers, two from Equatorial Guinea and three Chadian troops were implicated in the alleged abuse of children between December 2013 and June 2014, according to a UN report leaked in April.

The peacekeepers were not under United Nations command at the time, but the UN has come under fire for its handling of the allegations, including its investigation of the UN official who alerted French authorities to the charges.

The UN only began speaking openly about the year-old charges after media organisations began reporting on them in April. At that point, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon ordered an independent investigation of the UN treatment of the allegations.

In its findings, the three-member review panel harshly criticised the way the UN and its agencies dealt with the alleged abuse, calling it "seriously flawed" and a "gross institutional failure." It said three senior UN officials had abused their authority by failing to take action.

Ban said he accepted the report's findings.

"The report depicts a United Nations that failed to respond meaningfully when faced with information about reprehensible crimes against vulnerable children," he said. "I express my profound regret that these children were betrayed by the very people sent to protect them."

US Ambassador Samantha Power said in a statement that the report painted a "troubling picture of a woefully inadequate response by the UN to credible allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. We are horrified by the panel's findings of inaction around these crimes."

British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft said on Twitter that the "UN has failed to protect most vulnerable — this is unacceptable."

The panel said investigating sexual abuse by peacekeepers, whether or not those troops have a UN mandate, is obligatory because such actions can constitute a "serious human rights violation."

But the allegations were "passed from desk to desk, inbox to inbox, across multiple UN offices, with no one willing to take responsibility." The panel was particularly harsh about the head of the Human Rights and Justice Section (HRJS) of the UN mission and the head of the mission itself, saying they had abused their authority. Neither of them was available for comment, and it was not immediately clear where they were.

"HRJS obscured the allegations by only reporting them in the context of broad, thematic reports that also included violations by other international troops," the panel said.—*Reuters*

asean

THE ASEAN SECRETARIAT INVITES ASEAN NATIONALS TO APPLY FOR THE FOLLOWING VACANCIES:

Positions vacant at the **ASEAN Political-Security Community Department:**

- **Assistant Director Political Cooperation-1**
- **Assistant Director External Relations-3**
- **Senior Officer Security Cooperation-2**
- **Senior Officer External Relations-1 (two positions)**
- **Senior Officer External Relations-3**

Positions vacant at the **ASEAN Economic Community Department:**

- **Assistant Director Enterprise & Stakeholders Engagement**
- **Senior Officer Trade Facilitation**
- **Senior Officer Intellectual Property Rights**
- **Senior Officer External Economic Relations**
- **Senior Officer Agriculture/ Fisheries**

Positions vacant at the **ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Department:**

- **Assistant Director ASCC Monitoring**
- **Assistant Director Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance**
- **Senior Officer ASCC Analysis**
- **Senior Officer Health**

For details on terms of reference and application, kindly visit www.asean.org/opportunities/vacancies.

MYANMAR DAEWOO LIMITED
Notice Of
Members Voluntary Winding Up Under Section 203 (2)

The following Special Resolutions were unanimously passed at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the shareholders of MYANMAR DAEWOO LIMITED held at 11:00 a.m 18 December 2015 required under Section 203 (2) of the Myanmar Companies Act:-

Special Resolution No.1

Resolved that the Company be wound up as "Members' Voluntary Winding Up" with effect on from December 18, 2015.

Special Resolution No.2

Resolved that U Maung Maung Aung, C.P.A, be hereby appointed as Liquidator of the Company with effect from December 18, 2015, for the purpose of such winding up and is authorized to carry on the business of the Company to such extent and for such period as may be necessary only for the beneficial winding up thereof and is granted such other powers as may be deemed fit and proper and to finally wind up the Company.

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(17/2015)

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

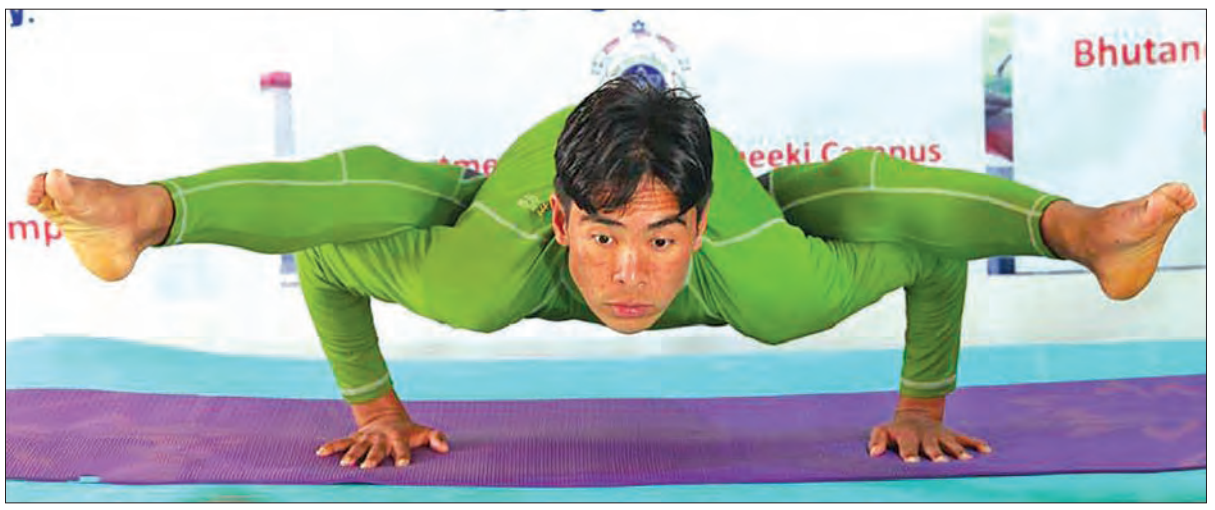
Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-059(15-16)	Spares for HDD Rig Model 11-046 (HK 250 T) (3 Items)	US$
(2)	IFB-060(15-16)	Spares for ZJ 70L SR - 2 Rig (5) Items	US$
(3)	IFB-061(15-16)	Spares for Niigata Transmission and Reduction Gear Box Ex TM 3500 Drilling Rig (55) Items	US$

Tender Closing Date & Time - 11-1-2016, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 16th December, 2015 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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

PICTURE OF THE DAY



Nepal's 30-year-old Uttam Moktan performs yoga to challenge the Guinness World Record of the longest yoga marathon, in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 17 December 2015. PHOTO: XINHUA

Sri Lanka aims to expand air links with China to attract more tourists

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka is targeting more Chinese airlines to arrive in the island nation as the government looks to further expand its tourism industry next year, Senior Advisor to the Tourism Minister, Felix Srimal Rodrigo said.

"Sri Lanka is an island which means tourists can only reach here by air transport. Establishing strong air links will boost our tourism industry," Rodrigo told Xinhua in an exclusive interview.

Presently the government is negotiating with the Chinese government to expand air links between the two countries, said Rodrigo.

Sri Lanka's national airline carrier, Sri Lankan Airlines is operating three weekly flights between the two countries.

"However we should have more Chinese airlines coming here. China is a big place. We want at least four to five more Chinese airlines," Rodrigo noted.

Tourism had become the number one foreign exchange earner in Sri Lanka as the Chinese currency, Renminbi, had become the most used foreign currency, said Rodrigo.

"The export of Sri Lanka's traditional products such as Ceylon Tea and Coconut is going down. Now we rely on tourism," Rodrigo said.

The island nation's tourism industry has seen an upward trend since the end of the civil war in May 2009. This year Sri Lanka has been able to attract 200,000 Chinese tourists with the government maintaining that cooperation between China and Sri Lanka had recently witnessed "a very big development."

"In 2016, we want to double the number of tourists. In the coming three years, Sri Lanka is going to depend on tourism," Rodrigo said adding that Sri Lanka's target of 2 million tourists for this year has almost been achieved as 1.9 million tourists have already visited the country. The Sri Lanka government hopes to attract at least 3 million tourists next year and it has set a target of 4 million by 2020.—*Xinhua*

After half a century, US and Cuba to resume scheduled flights

WASHINGTON — The United States and Cuba have agreed to restore scheduled commercial airline service for the first time in more than five decades in a deal allowing 110 round-trip flights a day between the former Cold War foes.

Announced a year to the day after the two countries embarked on a process of normalizing ties, the latest accord will not go into effect immediately but should eventually increase tourism and business on the communist-ruled island.

Under the pact, US airlines will be able to sell tickets on their websites for flights to Cuba but they must first apply for permission from US regulators to fly specific routes. Charter flights operated by US carriers already connect the countries.

The United States and Cuba have agreed to allow 110 round-trip flights on US airlines to Cuba per day, according to Thomas Engle, deputy assistant secretary for transportation affairs at the US State Department.

That includes 20 flights to Havana and 10 to each of the other nine international airports in Cuba, he said, adding that no date has been set for final signing of the aviation pact but that nothing was expected to derail it.

There will likely be a 60-to-90 day process during which US-based air carriers will submit proposed routes, suggesting scheduled flights would not begin until the first few months of 2016 at the earliest.

The decision to restore ties, made by US President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro a year ago, in part reflected Washington's judgment that its policy of isolating Havana politically, economically and diplomatically had failed.

While US officials still criticise Cuba for human rights, they now believe promoting political and other freedoms is more likely to be achieved through engagement.

Although the agreement will eventually make it easier to travel back and forth between the countries, the US ban on general tourism to the Caribbean island remains in force.

US travellers still must meet at least one of 12 criteria to visit, such as visiting family in Cuba or taking part in educational tours or journalistic activity.—*Reuters*

An American Airlines airplane prepares to land at the Jose Marti International Airport in Havana. PHOTO: REUTERS

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV PERLA VOY NO (002)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PERLA VOY NO (002) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P 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 Claim's 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 ORIENT OVERSEA CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BANGSRIMUANG VOY NO (135)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BANGSRIMUANG VOY NO (135) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.I.P.T-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 Claim's 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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MOUNT BOKOR VOY NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOUNT BOKOR VOY NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 19.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's 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 YANG MING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

ADVERTISE WITH US!

- We are Myanmar's highest-circulating English language daily newspaper
- We offer competitive ad rates
- Your ad will be seen by a wide and influential readership

Email: adv.gnlm@gmail.com,
Ph: 09 250107962, 09 251022355

Donnie Yen, Mike Tyson team up for new kung fu movie

Former heavyweight boxing world champion Mike Tyson and Hong Kong actor Donnie Yen arrive at the 18th Shanghai International Film Festival on 13 June. PHOTO: REUTERS

HONG KONG — Actor Donnie Yen says boxer Mike Tyson was "very easy to work with" on the set of "Ip Man 3", a kung fu movie inspired by the life of Bruce Lee's trainer.

The movie is a mash up of east-meets-west — Tyson's character tries to take over the city, prompting Yen's kung fu master character to take a stand. "Working with Mike Tyson has been a pleasure and an honor. First of all I'm his boxing fan, a big fan," Yen said at an event promoting the film. "He's actually very professional and very easy to work with and we had a really good time." —*Reuters*

Going, going, gone; Adele US concert tickets sell in minutes

NEW YORK — Tickets for Adele's first concert tour of North America in five years sold out within minutes for venues on the US East Coast on Thursday, leaving thousands of fans empty-handed and venting their frustration on social media.

The British singer's 56-date tour, announced earlier this week, follows record-breaking sales of 5.2 million units in the United States alone of her new album, "25." Fans reported getting stuck for 45 minutes or more on ticketing websites, only to find that seats were sold out for major cities on the tour that starts in July in St. Paul, Minnesota and ends in Mexico City on 15 November.

Adele's representatives said tickets for some shows were going on sale at 10 am local time in the relevant cities, but otherwise declined to comment.

Hashtags #adeletickets and #adelesoldout trended on Twitter, with fans posting memes, messages and GIFs inspired by the Grammy Award-winning singer's lyrics and music videos. "Hello from the ticket line. I've clicked refresh a thousand times," tweeted Maggie Sage Hunter, in a twist on the lyrics to Adele's hit single "Hello."

"3 days worth of Adele tickets sold out in 2 minutes and I am heartbroken," wrote Sammi Steger. "Just spent an hour trying to get #adeletickets in Boston and no luck...At least I can say that I tried," tweeted Jen Taranto.

Tickets for many shows appeared within minutes on secondary market sites like Stubhub, with asking prices ranging from $9,999 each for seats closest to the stage at New York's Madison Square Garden to $300 each for those in the furthest reaches of the arena. Official prices ranged from $40 to $750 each for premium packages.—*Reuters*

PHOTO: REUTERS

It's challenge to be role model: Kendrick Lamar

LONDON — Rapper Kendrick Lamar says he struggles to deal with the "power" of being a role model to so many people.

The 28-year-old recording artist knows he has been "chosen" as someone for young people to look up to but admits he is fearful of the "power" and responsibility that comes along with it, reported Female First.

"I know I'm chosen. I know I'm a favourite. I know in my heart there's a whole other energy and leadership side of me that I have probably run from my whole life. How much power do I want? How much can I handle? That's the question I keep asking myself.

"Cause when you are a voice for the youth, nothing can stop you. The youth is what changes things. Can I lead that? Should I? I get confused because people are championing me to be that vocal point and it's a challenge for me to be that because I have some fear of that type of power," he said.—*PTI*

PHOTO: REUTERS

Gigi Hadid to design collection for Tommy Hilfiger

LONDON — Supermodel Gigi Hadid is joining forces with top fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger to create her own clothing line.

The 20-year-old beauty had a breakout 2015, including her first gig as a Victoria's Secret angel, and her memorable appearance at Hilfiger's New York Fashion Week show in September, when she made a splash on the catwalk in her Caribbean-inspired bikini.

Now, Hadid is reuniting with Hilfiger to create Gigi by Tommy Hilfiger, which will incorporate both their personal style sense.

"Global ambassadorships are a bit overused and not too exciting. We're really doing something different. We're creating a line called Gigi by Tommy Hilfiger, using her style, her sense, her social media presence as the top supermodel in the world today," Hadid said. The collection is expected to debut next autumn and Hadid will also star as the face of the brand's campaign.—*PTI*

Jake Gyllenhaal honoured at Dubai film festival

DUBAI — Hollywood actor Jake Gyllenhaal has been honoured at the Dubai International Film Festival with Variety Magazine's International Star of the Year award.

"To be acknowledged in any way for what you do is always really lovely," the "Southpaw" and "Everest" actor said.

"And to be on the other side of the world having been acknowledged by not only by the international film community but also culturally, it's pretty interesting thinking that people even know who I am over here, it's amazing."—*Reuters*

Disney's 'Star Wars' rakes in $14.1 million in opening day sales

LOS ANGELES — Walt Disney Co's "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," billed as the biggest movie release of the year, raked in $14.1 million in ticket sales on its opening day in some international markets.

The movie opened at a number of European markets, including France, Italy, Sweden and Belgium, on Thursday.

Star Wars is expected to haul in between $180 million and $223 million in the United States and Canada from its Thursday night debut through Sunday, according to experts.—*Reuters*

Construction of 25-km tunnel for maglev starts in Yamanashi

HAYAKAWA — Central Japan Railway Co. began construction yesterday of a 25-kilometre tunnel in Yamanashi Prefecture for its magnetically levitated train line expected to connect Tokyo with Nagoya in 2027.

Work by a group of companies including Taisei Corp. got under way on a 7.7-km portion of the tunnel, with construction expected to be completed in the fall of 2025, according to JR Central.

JR Central President Koei Tsuge told reporters after a groundbreaking ceremony, "I hope the workers will ensure their safety, preserve the environment and cooperate with local residents to overcome any difficulties during the work."

Excavation for the tunnel running through a mountainous area in Yamanashi, Shizuoka and Nagano prefectures is scheduled to start in March 2016, with the deepest point reaching 1,400 metres underground. Some local residents have aired concerns over possible underground water pollution.

According to the construction plan, 86 percent of the 286-km Tokyo-Nagoya line will be tunnels and trains will run more than 40 meters underground in urban areas.

The new train, which is expected to run at a maximum speed of 500 km per hour, will link Tokyo's Shinagawa and Nagoya in central Japan in only 40 minutes, compared with 86 minutes currently taken by the quickest bullet train operated by JR Central.

The company aims to start train services between Nagoya and Osaka in 2045. Construction work on the maglev line is also expected to begin next year in Nagano and Shinagawa.—*Kyodo News*

Mother Teresa to be made Catholic saint in September

VATICAN CITY — Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the Nobel laureate who dedicated her life to helping the poorest of the poor, will be made a saint of the Roman Catholic Church in September 2016, an Italian Catholic newspaper reported on Thursday.

Avvenire, the official newspaper of the Italian Catholic bishops conference, said on its website that Pope Francis had earlier on Thursday approved a decree recognising a miracle attributed to her intercession with God.

Mother Teresa, who died in 1997 at the age of 87, was beatified in 2003 by the late Pope John Paul.

Beatification, which requires one miracle, is the last step before sainthood.

Avvenire said the second miracle attributed to the intercession of Mother Teresa, which is required for canonisation, involved the inexplicable healing of a man who was suffering from a deadly brain disease.

Family members prayed to Mother Teresa and he recovered, leaving doctors at a loss to explain how, the newspaper said.

A Vatican spokesman said he had no information about the report.

The paper, which has been well informed about similar stories in the past, said the pope would most likely hold a canonisation ceremony for Mother Teresa in early September.

Mother Teresa was born Anjezë Gonxhe Bojaxhiu of Albanian parents in Macedonia in 1910 in what was then part of the Ottoman Empire.

She founded the Missionaries of Charity to help the poor on the streets of Kolkata and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.—*Reuters*

Catholic nuns from the Missionaries of Charity, the global order of nuns founded by Mother Teresa, pray at Teresa's tomb on her 18th death anniversary in Kolkata, India, on 5 September 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Facebook puts a price on suburban living for employees

NEW YORK — Facebook Inc is offering employees at its Silicon Valley headquarters at least $10,000 to move closer to the office, a reflection of the challenges many tech companies face in the increasingly expensive and congested San Francisco Bay area.

To qualify for the payment, which the social networking firm started offering in the last 12 months, according to current and former Facebook workers, employees must buy or rent a home within 10 miles (16 km) of the Facebook campus at One Hacker Way, a desolate strip of road overlooking a marsh about 30 miles (48 km) south of San Francisco.

Some Facebook employees with families to support could earn a one-off payment of $15,000 or more for housing costs.

Facebook's efforts, along with similar programmes at some other technology companies including investment management technology company Addepar, data company Palantir and software firm SalesforceIQ, a unit of Salesforce.com Inc, could help ease a major source of tension in San Francisco: an influx of young, wealthy tech workers who commute to Silicon Valley on private buses and often displace lower-income residents.

But Silicon Valley has a housing affordability crisis of its own, and if Facebook's programme gains traction it could further accelerate the gentrification of nearby communities, especially the low-income city of East Palo Alto.

"A lot of local families are going to get hurt," said John Liotti, chief executive officer of East Palo Alto community advocacy group Able Works.

Facebook says the programme is not about social engineering. "Our benefits at Facebook are designed to support our employees and the people who matter most to them at all stages of life," a Facebook spokesman said.

Cynics suggest the company might be looking to encourage people to spend more time in the office while also cutting the cost of its luxury bus service, whose drivers recently unionized.

For Mark Shim, an engineer who had worked at Addepar, living across the street from the Mountain View-based company earned him a $300-a-month bonus. But the money, which was a taxed benefit, wasn't the reason behind his housing decision.

"For me, it wasn't financially driven as my rent has gone up more than 60 percent since I moved to Mountain View and the stipend doesn't keep up with the rent spikes in the area," said Shim, who has since joined another company.

"If you live closer to work you are less worried about leaving at an exact time, and if you're in the middle of solving a cool problem, you'll spend the extra time to finish that up."

Lissa Minkin, vice president of people at Addepar, said the perk was designed to help employees spend more time on personal interests or with their families.

"Not having a long commute makes a huge positive impact on maintaining a healthy work-life balance," she said.

Tech workers say the commute is getting worse. What would have been a one-hour commute each way three years ago has stretched to 90 minutes or more as the tech economy has boomed and more cars hit the road.

San Francisco-area drivers spend more time in gridlock than those of any city other than Washington, DC, and Los Angeles, according to traffic data service Inrix. Still, plenty of young techies are willing to endure it.

Take Nilesh Patel, a single technology worker who commutes from San Francisco to a large company almost 40 miles (64 km) away so he can cultivate his rich social life in the city.

"I didn't want to move into one of those depressing bachelor complexes," he said about the generic Silicon Valley apartment buildings that often house people like him. Even for those who might consider a more suburban lifestyle, $10,000 doesn't necessarily go very far in a city like Menlo Park, where the average rental is $3,600 a month, according to data from online real estate company Trulia.—*Reuters*

mitv Myanmar International

(19-12-2015 07:00 am~ 20-12-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Great Shwedagon- Charitable Associations
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Ar Khar New Year Festival
08:47	Am	Myanmar Railways City Circular Train
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	The Richly Blessed Gem Land
09:53	Am	Made in Myanmar "Mixxo"
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Chinlone & The Dreams of the players
10:40	Am	Products Of Myanmar - Mya Setkyar Pure Silk Fabric From Inle Lake
10:54	Am	School for the Blind

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Friday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Pm ~ 07:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Interesting Features of Rakhine
07:47	Pm	Today Myanmar: Private Teak Plantation
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Bogalay Tint Aung: A Man of Versatility (Part- 3)
08:53	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass "Still Life" (Fruit)

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Friday Repeat(07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

(For Detailed Schedule – www.myanmaritv.com/schedule)

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(19-12-2015, Saturday)

6:00 am
- Classical Songs

6:25 am
- Real Story, Real Movie

6:45 am
- Myanmar Series

7:00 am
- Classical Drama

8:25 am
- Documentary

10:00 am
- Myanmar Video

12:00 noon
- Close Down

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

8th Waxing Day of Nadaw 1377 ME | Saturday, 19 December, 2015

Suarez grabs hat-trick as Barcelona stroll into final

YOKOHAMA — Barcelona's Luis Suarez got a hat-trick, including an exquisite second goal, as they strolled into the Club World Cup final with a 3-0 win over Asian champions Guangzhou Evergrande on Thursday.

The Chinese side gave the European champions a couple of scares in the first half but they were utterly outclassed by the end of a match that often resembled an attack-versus-defence training session.

Zou Zheng also suffered a horrific injury in the first half, appearing to break his leg as he fell awkwardly to the clear distress of his Guangzhou team mates.

Even without Lionel Messi, who was taken ill just hours before the game, and the injured Neymar, Barca enjoyed 75 percent of possession as they claimed a place in the final against South American champions River Plate.

Barca needed 39 minutes to break down the Guangzhou defence, Suarez pouncing to tuck in the rebound after goalkeeper Li Shaui failed to hold Ivan Rakitic's long-range drive.

The game was settled as a contest after 49 minutes when Andres Iniesta sent a beautifully-weighted pass into the area and Suarez caught it on his chest before volleying past Li in one movement.

The Uruguay forward completed his hat-trick by converting a penalty in the 67th minute as Barca fired an ominous warning to the 15,000 Argentines who have made the trip to support River Plate.

"We played a very serious, very sharp game against a complicated opponent," said Barca coach Luis Enrique.

"These games against opponents you do not usually meet always generate doubts, especially as they have Brazilian players with quality, and we have played a really good game."

Barca's dominance was almost embarrassing as they stroked the ball effortlessly around and not even Guangzhou's contingent of three Brazilian players could stop them.

It was the Chinese team's first defeat in 26 games under coach Luiz Felipe Scolari who took over in June.

Scolari was returning to the stadium where he led Brazil to their fifth world title in 2002, although this time he was in search of redemption after last year's 7-1 World Cup semi-final defeat to Germany on home soil in his second stint in charge.

"I want to thank the players for this fantastic year they have had," Scolari told reporters. "Losing 3-0 to Barcelona is no different to what other big clubs have suffered." —*Reuters*

Luis Suarez.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Investigation commission formed to probe heavy machinery entering Kampaiti

AN investigation commission has been formed to probe into the issue of heavy machinery entering Myanmar through Kampaiti in the border area in Kachin State.

The commission, comprising four members, is led by the Union Minister for Environmental Conservation and Forestry.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Fustal coach training to be opned in Yangon

Ko Moe

A FUTSAL coach training course will be opened in Yangon this February. The training has been jointly organised by the Myanmar Football Federation and the Asia Football Federation. The course will run at the Myanmar Football Federation office from 22 to 27 February.

The course will include theoretical and practical sessions as well as training by the Asia Football Federation. Upon opening, the course will be known as the Fustal Level 1 Coaching Course 2016.

Trainees must be 18 years of age and older, pass a fitness test and must attend every lesson in order to graduate.

Trainees who wish to attend the course must inform the Myanmar Football Federation not later than 9 January.

Jose Mourinho exit leaves Sunderland's Allardyce in the dark

LONDON — Jose Mourinho's sacking by Chelsea has left Sunderland manager Sam Allardyce uncertain what to expect from the struggling champions when his team visit Stamford Bridge on Saturday.

Mourinho was given his marching orders on Thursday after a dreadful run of results have left the club hovering a point above the Premier League relegation zone in 16th place, three points above Sunderland in 19th.

Chelsea attributed the dismissal to a "palpable discord" between the Portuguese and the players, and while Allardyce expects a reaction from the team, he is also intrigued by how the reaction from the fans might affect matters on the pitch.

"I'm not sure whether it'll make my job harder or not to be honest," Allardyce told the British media.

"Everybody expects a reaction when a manager gets sacked, and sometimes there is and sometimes there isn't.

"I always think it's quite a sad state of affairs when a team actually plays better when their manager has been sacked.

"I find it irresponsible from a players' point of view, especially when they come out after the game and say: 'We've done that for the old manager'.

"I think there will be a reaction from their players but I also think what happens with the crowd could be interesting."

Allardyce knows that inflicting a 10th Premier League defeat of the season on Chelsea could make a crucial difference to Sunderland's campaign.

"It's fair to say that if we were to win, it would put a huge amount of pressure on Chelsea because we'd end up on 15 points, the same as they are," he said.

"That would take them further down the league and it would be a huge success for us.

"Their players haven't seen this before. They have had huge pressure at the top but the pressure down here is different."—*Reuters*

Jose Mourinho.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Editorial Section — (+95) (01)8604529, Fax — (01) 8604305
Advertisement & Circulation — (+95) (01) 8604532
gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
www.facebook.com/globalnewlightofmyanmar

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

"Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629."