

UEC cooperates with international organizations to successfully hold elections in transparent manner

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan—Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye received Country Director Mr. Stephen Cima and party of International Republican Institute (IRI) at his

office, here, on Wednesday.

At the talks, the country director said that IRI is conducting training courses for enhancement of political parties' capacity and canvassing capacity. IRI

gives equal rights to all political parties in its cooperation. The institute will cooperate with the Union Election Commission in sharing knowledge about international standards and

norms on work management and voting process to civic organizations.

In his speech, the chairman of UEC welcomed cooperation of IRI. He said that the commis-

sion cooperates with international organizations for successful holding the Myanmar's elections in a transparent manner. International organizations need (See page 3)

MNA to lease 10 new Boeing aircrafts from GECAS

YANGON, 7 Jan — Myanmar National Airlines, rebranded from the state-owned Myanmar Airways, will lease 10 new Boeing aircraft from US-based GE Capital Aviation Services, according to the Ministry of Transport.

MNA will lease six new Boeing 737-800s and four new Boeing 737-8 MAX models to modernize its services, said U Than Tun, MNA's managing director.

A first plane is expected to arrive in June and will be added to the currently operating nine aircraft. The remaining aircraft will arrive within five years, according to MNA.

Myanmar Airways, the only state-owned flag carrier in Myanmar, changed its name to Myanmar National Airlines on 10 December, 2014 to corporatize the airline and began its flight



services to 26 local destinations with fixed schedules from December 15, 2014.

Myanmar Airways be-

gan services in September 1948 and has been flying the skies of Myanmar for 66 years.

GNLM

Deliveries of the new leased aircraft from GE Capital Aviation Services (GECAS) to Myanmar National Airways are scheduled to begin in June 2015, and the aircraft will be delivered through 2020, according to GECAS.
PHOTO GECAS

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By Ye Myint

YANGON, 7 Jan—After taking the oath of office for a 15-month term, 115 recently elected municipal officials of the Yangon City Development Committee began their first working day in designated posts.

All representatives-elect on Tuesday appeared at City Hall for

the swearing-in ceremony with Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe and Yangon Mayor U Hla Myint, who is also the head of the nine-member central committee, the highest municipal governing body.

Welcoming new faces to central, district, and townships levels of the committee, the mayor stressed the need to make all-out efforts to imple-

Newly elected municipal officials begin duties

ment their commitment to meeting the needs of Yangonites.

It is required to work actively and justify the trust that voters have in them by the time they took the oath, a local in Insein who had voted as a Yangon dweller on municipal election day, told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

A YCDC official said all elected members are encouraged to do their best in the work of the respective municipalities that provide services such as electricity, water and rubbish collection.

For the first time in 60 years, 115 — four at the city level, 12 at the district level and 99 at the township level — of 293 candidates were publicly elected to work together with



Yangon City Development Committee welcomes new faces to all levels to begin managing municipal affairs in the city of more than 5 million people.

PHOTO: YE MYINT

YCDC staff to make the country's largest municipal area cleaner, greener and more beautiful.

According to the

YCDC, 106,089 out of 409,889 eligible voters on 27 December 2014 cast their ballots at 1,086 voting stations for 293 can-

didates in the first municipal polls in Yangon, which has a population of 5.2 million.

GNLM

Myanmar Dental Association holds 35th conference, 16th FDI-MDA joint education meeting

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 7 Jan—Organized by the Myanmar Dental Association, the 35th Myanmar Dental Conference and 16th FDI-MDA Joint Education Meeting is being held from 7 to 10 January at National

Theater in Yangon with the aim of enhancing the standard of dental care and treatment.

Nineteen international speakers, including one speaker from the World (See page 2)

Concession Agreement signed to upgrade Yangon International Airport



YANGON, 7 Jan — Department of Civil Aviation has invited private sector to participate in upgrading the government-run Yangon and Yangon international airports and carrying out airport services, Union Minister for

Union Minister for Transport
U Nyan Tun Aung attends signing ceremony of Concession Agreement for upgrading Yangon International Airport.
MNA

Transport U Nyan Tun Aung said at the signing ceremony of a Concession Agreement on Yangon International Airport project between DCA and Yangon Aerodrome Co., Ltd. at the office of Asia World Port in Ahlon Township, here, on 6 January.

He said that the DAC held meetings for 19 times with Pioneer Aerodrome Services Consortium to sign the project agreement. They took approvals from the office of the Attorney-General of the Union and the Union government for signing the concession agreement, he added.

Union Minister U Nyan Tun Aung, Director-General U Win Swe Tun of DAC and Chairman

of Yangon Aerodrome Co., Ltd. U Tun Myint Naing signed the Yangon International Airport concession agreement.

The department conducted a prequalification for local and foreign investors from 25 October to 5 December 2012 and announced the list of 11 qualified organizations at State-run newspapers on 7 February 2013. Of them, seven organizations submitted tender proposals for the project. The department announced tender winner Pioneer Aerodrome Services Consortium and reserved Yongnam-CAPE-JGC Consortium on 10 August 2013 through State-run newspaper.

MNA

Myanmar Dental Association . . .

(from page 1)

Dental Federation (FDI) and local professionals, are scheduled to participate in academic programmes, and six research posters are being displayed during the conference.

In an opening address, Union Health Minister Dr Than Aung put emphasis on prevention and control of transmission of infectious diseases such as HIV at dental clinics. He urged dentists to try to offer quality health services to the community, raise the patients' level of confidence and perform their operations ethically.

The Union minister suggested both public and

private dental care providers should actively take part in the public health improvement programmes nationwide, especially in the remote areas.

Wednesday, seven speakers from home and abroad shared their experiences under different themes, including alternative treatments for aesthetic and functional complaints of dental patients. Different diagnoses and the treatment of peri-implant disease is one of eight sessions that will be presented on the second day of the conference.

Jogging, tennis, golf and bowling will place on the last day of the

conference. Participants may also observe newly advanced dental products being displayed at more than 60 exhibition booths from about 30 dental trading companies during the conference.

Prof Pwint Hpoo, president of the MDF, said improving dental education programmes and promoting relationships with ASEAN countries as well as international bodies are high on the association's lists of priorities.

The Myanmar Dental Association was established in 1979 with the aim of providing quality dental health services to the community. The group has more than 1500 members.

GNLM



Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung views documentary photos and research papers on dental medicine.

PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

Locals call for end of violence at Letpadaungtaung copper mine project

NAY PYI TAW, 7 Jan — Around 250 people in Monywa Township protested against violence at Letpadaungtaung area and cancellation of China-backed copper mine project Wednesday.

The protesters, including Buddhist monks, peacefully marched in the city of Sagaing region from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m with protest permit from local authorities.

Letpadaungtaung copper mine is a joint-venture of the State, Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd., and Myanmar-Wanbao Company, with an agreement on profit sharing

plan of 51 percent, 19 percent and 30 percent respectively.

The stakeholders have agreed to contribute a total of US\$ 1 million annually

before the project starts and two percent of profit during production period



Local people stage protest to end of violence at Letpadaungtaung copper mine project in Monywa Township.—MNA

to the development programmes of the region. After the production period has completed, the rehabilitation of the region will be carried out with \$2 million each year.

Compensations for the loss of lands were fixed at 20 times of land tax in the first stage, and the locals have taken out them. According to the report of investigation commission, compensations have been given out the second time for the lands on the basis of local prices, and the third package of compensations includes K 300,000 to K 1.2 million per acre. The total compensation for the project area has been K10.80 billion plus for perennial plants.

Regional development

project has been injected \$1.43 million from the fund of Corporate Social Responsibility and K0.497 billion from Union budget in 2013-2014 fiscal year. A total of one million US dollars was contributed to the project from CSR fund in 2014-2015 fiscal year.

The project has created 1,994 job opportunities and more employments will be developed.

The report of investigation commission has said that individual received \$70 per month for their seized lands from one to 10 acres; \$120 from 11 and 20 acres; \$160 from 21 acres and above. The compensations are given out every six months in advance for discount salaries before production period.—MNA

NATIONAL

UEC cooperates with...

(from page 1)

to know election law, by-laws, order and directives for the elections and carry out their tasks in line with the laws. In the work processes, those organizations will have good relations with election sub-commissions, political parties and civil society organizations. The commission has given directives to its sub-commissions to meet CSOs several times. Staff members of sub-commissions are to be allowed to attend the training courses conducted by IRI so as to have good relations with political parties and CSOs. IRI

needs to inform sub-commissions concerned of conducting training courses and workshops.

Also present at the call were members of UEC U Myint Naing, U Aung Myint, Dr. Daw Myint Kyi, U Win Kyi, U Nyunt Tin and Secretary U Tin Tun.

MNA

Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye holds talks with Country Director Mr. Stephen Cima and party of International Republican Institute (IRI).—MNA



Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission

Nay Pyi Taw

Notification No. (1/2015)

3rd Waning Day of Pyatho, 1376 ME

(7 January, 2015)

Two Defence Services Personnel representatives substituted

According to a request made in accordance with Section 33 of the Amyotha Hluttaw Election Law to substitute two Defence Services Personnel Representatives who are parliamentarians, the Union Election Commission scrutinized and substituted the following two Amyotha Hluttaw representatives under the Notification No. 2/2011 of the commission dated 20-1-2011.

The Defence Services Personnel Representatives of Amyotha Hluttaw to be substituted were nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services in the first multi-party general election held on 7 November 2010.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) BC 22130 | BC 36253 |
| Major Maung Maung Gyi | Major Phyo Wai Tint |
| (2) Navy 3636 | Navy 4146 |
| Lt-Cdr Myint Sein | Lt-Cdr Aung Phyo Kyaw |

By Order,
(Tin Tun)
Secretary
Union Election Commission

UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar visits MNHRC, Insein Prison

YANGON, 7 Jan—Ms. Yanghee Lee, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, met officials of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission at the UN office in Yangon on

Wednesday morning.

Ms Yanghee Lee and party visited Insein Prison of Myanmar Correctional Department in Insein.

She arrived in Yangon on Tuesday night. Her trip is second time in Myanmar

to submit the report to 28th regular session of Human Right Council.

She has a plan to tour Myanmar up to 16 January. On 8 January, she will make a trip to Sittway, Rakhine State.—MNA



UN Special Rapporteur Ms. Yanghee Lee meets officials of Myanmar Correctional Department.—MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission

Nay Pyi Taw

Notification No. (2/2015)

3rd Waning Day of Pyatho, 1376 ME

(7 January, 2015)

Four Defence Services Personnel Representatives from Region and State Hluttaw substituted

According to a request made in accordance with Section 33 of the Region Hluttaw or State Hluttaw Election Law to substitute four representatives of the Armed Forces who are parliamentarians, the Union Election Commission scrutinized and substituted the following four Region Hluttaw and State Hluttaw representatives under the Notification No. 3/2011 of the commission dated 20-1-2011, the Notification No. 48/2012 of the commission dated 15-11-2012, the Notification No. 5/2014 of the commission dated 17-1-2014 and the Notification No. 30/2014 of the commission dated 5-8-2014.

The Region Hluttaw or State Hluttaw representatives to be substituted were nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services in the first multi-party general election held on 7 November 2010.

Kachin State Hluttaw

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| (1) BC 28738 | BC 34956 |
| Major Myo Naing | Major Zaw Lin Aung |

Magway Region Hluttaw

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| (2) Air 2667 | Air 3409 |
| Major Han Win Htut | Captain Han Win Aung |

Mandalay Region Hluttaw

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| (3) BC 20681 | BC 25097 |
| Major Toe Aung | Major Aung Thiha |

Yangon Region Hluttaw

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| (4) BC 28280 | BC 36258 |
| Major Zaw Myint Thu | Major San Thar Nay Aung |

By Order,

(Tin Tun)

Secretary

Union Election Commission

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission

Nay Pyi Taw

Notification No. (3/2015)

3rd Waning Day of Pyatho, 1376 ME

(7 January, 2015)

Change of title of Mro (a) Khami National Solidarity Organization to Mro National Development Party allowed

Mro (a) Khami National Solidarity Organization that had got registration No 1 at the Union Election Commission under Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law submitted change of its title as Mro National Development Party to the commission.

The commission approved the change of its name after scrutinizing it under the law. The commission hereby announced that Mro (a) Khami National Solidarity Organization was renamed as Mro National Development Party as of 7-1-2015.

By order,

(Tin Tun)

Secretary

Union Election Commission

Kayah State holds School Family Day

DEMAWHSO, 7 Jan — Dimawhso Basic Education High School held the township School Family Day in Kayah State on 6 January.

Students from Ngwetaung BEHS sang a song entitled “Myanmar School”.

Dimawhso Township Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Bo Rei made a speech and Township Education Officer U Khun Htet explained the purpose of school family day.

Officials presented prizes to outstanding students in 2014-15 academic year.

It was also attended by Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Soe Rei, Chairman



of Township Development Myint Aung and members, school heads and students.—Dimawhso Township IPRD

Mandalay Convention Centre and Commercial Complex project under implementation

MANDALAY, 7 Jan — Mandalay Investment and Development Group Ltd has signed an agreement with Mandalay City Development Committee on

Mandalay Convention Centre and Commercial Complex project on 2 January.

MIDG Ltd is implementing the project on the

southern part of Theikpan Road between 69th and 71st streets in Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay.

With regard to the project, officials of MIDG

Ltd explained that Mandalay Convention Centre is under construction on 14.78 acres of land. The centre will have one 4000 seat hall, two small halls, one 240-seat conference hall and a car park. The centre can give seats to three donation ceremonies and wedding receptions at the same time.

The centre can accept car shows, trade shows and commercial exhibitions.

The Commercial Complex will comprise one 12-storey hotel, one four-storey supermarket, one 16-storey office tower and two 22-storey condominiums.

Tin Maung
(Mandalay)



Township MCWA gives nutritious foods to children



MCWA officials give nutritious foods to children of pre-primary school in Nyaunglebin.

NYAUNGLEBIN, 7 Jan — Nyaunglebin Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association fed re-

freshments to pre-primary children at the self-reliant pre-primary school of Social Welfare Department

in Nyaunglebin, Bago Region, on 6 January.

Chairperson of the association Daw Nang Shwe Nwe explained the purpose of providing nutritious food to the children.

In-charge of the school Daw Khin Hsan Wai spoke words of thanks.

They fed soya milk and cakes to 68 children.

The chairperson of the association and party presented textile, equipment and cash to mothers of three babies who were born on the Independence Day.

They also comforted patients at the hospital.

Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)



Natogyi's farmers send mask melon to domestic market

NATOGYI, 7 Jan — Croplands are being extended to grow mask melon in Pyinsi and Kanna wards of Natogyi Township, Mandalay, year after year.

Up to now, a total of 113 acres of croplands have been placed under mask melon plants.

Mask melon yields high in the township this year but it does not get good price in the domestic

market. Local farmers sell mask melon at K500 per fruit, said a fruit seller at Natogyi market.

Watermelon and mask melon are marketable in China. However, brokers in Kyegoung market of China do not give good prices to the farmers. That is why, local farmers sell their products to domestic market only.—Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)



Urban farms getting popular in Singapore

SINGAPORE, 7 Jan — Having urban farms where one can grow vegetables and ornamental plants has been a new trend in the lion city after the government encouraged developers and residents to maximize green areas in both residential and commercial buildings.

An urban farming consultancy has, in fact, been set up in early 2012 to help design vegetable gardens for homes, schools, and any available areas such as forgotten rooftops and abandoned spaces near residential areas.

Co-founded by Bjorn Low and Robert Pearce, the firm had already set up a rooftop garden and a pop-up store called “nong”, which means “farmer” in Chinese, on top of People’s Park Complex, a signature building located in Singapore’s Chinatown.

The Singapore Management University (SMU) on Tuesday launched an

environmental initiative called “GROW” by starting with a new garden plot outside the School of Accountancy and Law building along Queen Street, to promote green and sustainable living in the centre of the city.

The garden, which contains some 50 varieties of plants, will be maintained by students and staff volunteers. Interested city residents can also choose to adopt 30 planter boxes at 80 Singapore dollars each.

The produce from the farm will be used in projects such as the annual SMU Challenge, in which students donate food and household items to those in need, particularly the elderly and low-income families.

“Tending a garden physically and giving your full attention in it brings one back to the basics, which are important to life. We need to produce food for our body and soul and

we should contribute in the greening of the city as part of our civic duty,” said SMU President Prof Arnaud de Meyer.

City residents have been generally receptive to the greening programme of the government.

“This is another giant jackfruit we harvested today, which is the reward of Papa’s effort. There’s no word to describe the taste of a home-grown jackfruit!” The tweet, which was recently posted on social media by a local resident, drew wide attention in Singapore since many were unaware that jackfruits can be grown just aside their own building.

The goal of Singapore authorities is to extend its “green revolution” skywards given the city’s high-rise urban development.

In June 2014, Singapore’s Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) announced a new urban greenery initiative called

LUSH or Landscaping for Urban Spaces and High-Rises programme that calls for more development of green areas not only in residential areas but also in offices, shopping malls, hotels, and other open areas.

Since the introduction of LUSH in 2009, over 40 hectares of green spaces within the city-state’s urban environment have been added, which is equivalent to 130 primary school fields. Under the LUSH 2.0 program, URA said the

geographical coverage will be extended substantially to cover most of Singapore.

If the goal of the LUSH programme is fully achieved, Singapore will really live up to its reputation as Asia’s “Garden City.”—Xinhua



Actors and actresses perform during the commemoration of the 36th anniversary of the Liberation Day in Phnom Penh on 7 Jan, 2015.—XINHUA

AirAsia jet tail found underwater, black box may be close

JAKARTA / PANGKALAN BUN, 7 Jan — The tail of a crashed AirAsia jet has been found on the sea bed about 30 km (20 miles) from the plane’s last known location, Indonesia’s search and rescue agency said on Wednesday, a breakthrough that investigators hope will lead to the crucial black box recorders.

Flight QZ8501 vanished from radar screens over the northern Java Sea on 28 December, less than half-way into a two-hour flight from Indonesia’s second-biggest city of Surabaya to Singapore. There were no survivors among the 162 people on board.

“We’ve found the tail that has been our main target,” Fransiskus Bambang Soelistyo, head of the search and rescue agency, told a news conference in Jakarta.

The tail was identified by divers after it was spotted by an underwater machine using a sonar scan, Soelistyo said. He displayed underwater photographs showing partial lettering on the sunken object compared with a picture of an intact Airbus A320-200 in AirAsia livery.

“I can confirm that what we found was the tail part from the pictures,” he said, adding that the team

“now is still desperately trying to locate the black box”.

Forty bodies and debris from the plane have been plucked from the surface of the waters off Borneo, but strong winds and high waves have been hampering divers’ efforts to reach larger pieces of suspected wreckage detected by sonar on the sea floor.

Locating the tail has been a priority because the cockpit voice and flight data recorders that can provide vital clues on why the plane crashed are located in the rear section of the Airbus.

“I am led to believe the tail section has been found,” AirAsia boss Tony Fernandes tweeted minutes after the announcement.

“If (it is the) right part of tail section, then the black box should be there ... We need to find all parts soon so we can find all our guests to ease the pain of our families. That still is our priority.”

In Pangkalan Bun, the southern Borneo port closest to the crash site, search and rescue agency coordinator Supriyadi told reporters the bad weather that has dogged the operation for 10 days had abated and divers were in the water.

But, as ships with

acoustic “pinger locators” designed to pick up signals from the black box converged on the scene of the find, he cautioned the tail section of the aircraft might not be fully intact.

“The location of the tail is relatively far from the point of last contact, about 30 km (20 miles),” he said.

“The black box is located behind the door, to the right of the tail. There is a possibility that the tail and the back of the plane are broken up.”

Soelistyo said a total of 12 objects had now been found, but he did not confirm whether all were parts of the aircraft. The wreckage is thought to also in-

clude parts of the fuselage, where many of the bodies of victims may still be trapped.

Until investigators can examine the black box recorders the cause of the crash remains a mystery, but the area where the plane was lost is known for intense seasonal storms. BMKG, Indonesia’s meteorological agency, has said bad weather may have caused ice to form on the aircraft’s engines.

Indonesia AirAsia, 49 percent owned by Fernandes’s Malaysia-based AirAsia budget group, has come under pressure from the authorities in Jakarta since the crash.—Reuters



A Russian search team member uses a pair of binoculars to look out the window of a Super Puma helicopter during a search operation for passengers onboard AirAsia Flight QZ8501, off the Java sea, in Indonesia on 7 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

Malaysia mulling visa free policy for Chinese visitors

BEIJING, 7 Jan — Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said on Monday the Malaysian government is mulling visa free policy for the Chinese visitors.

Malaysia needs to provide free visa service for Chinese tourists and businessmen like other countries do, Liow said. Owing to visa-free access, the number of Chinese visitors to Thailand in 2013 grew from 22.4 to 26.5 million, an increase of 18.8 percent.

By contrast, the number of tourists to Malaysia only increased by 2.7 percent, industry reports said.—Xinhua

ASEAN Secretary-General to start Malaysia tour

KUALA LUMPUR, 7 Jan — The Secretary-General of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Le Luong Minh, will be arriving here on Wednesday on a working visit, officials said.

During his three-day tour, Le is expected to discuss issues concerning Malaysia’s role as the Chairman of ASEAN and bring about an understanding between Malaysia and the ASEAN Secretariat on matters including the upcoming establishment of the ASEAN Community at the end of the year, said the sources.

Le, on his visit, will also pay a courtesy call on Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak and Foreign Minister Seri Anifah Aman.—Xinhua

Indian police urges religious sites in Delhi to step up security

NEW DELHI, 7 Jan — Police have required the managements of all religious venues in the capital to step up security, following at least two recent arson attacks on Christian churches, Indo-Asian News Service reported on Wednesday. “We have asked all religious organizations to install CCTVs in and outside the campus and step up the security,” the media quoted a police officer as saying.

Security has been tightened in New Delhi following intelligence input that terrorists might stage attacks ahead of a visit by US President Barack Obama to India later this month. Two Christian churches in the capital region came under arson attacks since last month.—Xinhua

DPJ kicks off leadership race with three men in running

TOKYO, 7 Jan — The main opposition Democratic Party of Japan kicked off its leadership race on Wednesday, with three male lawmakers vying to lead a party still struggling to regain strength after being ousted from power more than two years ago.

Former health minister Akira Nagatsuma, 54, former DPJ Secretary General Goshi Hosono, 43, and acting DPJ chief Katsuya Okada, 61, are in the race to choose on 18 January the successor to Banri Kaieda, who lost his seat in the House of Representatives election in mid-December.

Amid the opposition's continued weakness, the



Katsuya Okada, acting head of the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan, speaks to reporters in Tokyo on 7 Jan, 2015, after he filed his candidacy for the party leadership election on 18 January.

KYODO NEWS

lower house election saw Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Liberal Democratic Party and its junior coalition partner Komeito retain the two-thirds majority they gained in the December 2012 election that returned Abe and his party to power.

The next DPJ leader, whose term lasts until September 2017, will face the challenge of regaining support lost during the party's period in power between 2009 and 2012, and of coming up with a strategy for taking on the Abe government, with nationwide local elections planned this April and the House of Councillors election in the

summer of 2016.

Nagatsuma is supported by liberals within the DPJ, while Hosono is backed by lawmakers who have shown a positive stance toward a reconfiguration of opposition forces to challenge the LDP's dominance. Okada has received support from members of the previous DPJ government, such as Yukio Edano, currently secretary general of the party, and former Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda.

The three candidates will hold a joint Press conference later Wednesday at the DPJ headquarters in Tokyo.

Kyodo News

Bushfires continue to burn across Australia as temperatures soar

CANBERRA, 7 Jan — Out-of-control bushfires, assisted by sweltering temperatures exceeding 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit), are causing havoc across South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

In the latest update delivered on Wednesday, Country Fire Service incident controller Scott Turner said the biggest area of concern was in the south-west of the fire zone, where the blaze is burning in difficult-to-access terrain. "With the weather conditions easing and abating tomorrow, that will give firefighters, for the first time, the upper hand where we will have full control of the fire," he told the ABC, adding that "The weather won't dictate to us and it certainly will allow us to strengthen all containment lines and hopefully over the next two days declare our fire controlled."

Containment lines had been established along 85 percent of the 240 km perimeter of the worst fire, at Sampson Flat, 30 km northeast of Adelaide, said firefighters.

Meanwhile, an emergency warning was issued mid-afternoon Wednesday in western Victoria after severe winds pushed the fire towards nearby communities.

Adelaide's city centre reached 41.2 degrees Celsius (106 degrees Fahrenheit) at 2:30 pm local time, the sixth straight day the mercury has exceed 40 degrees.

The South Australian bushfire has raged since Friday and burned through 12,500 hectares. Up to 140 people have been injured.

More than 160 buildings, including up to 38 houses, have been lost in the Sampson Flat fire as police crime scene investigators trawl through the charred landscape cataloguing information. Some buildings were so badly damaged that it was not immediately known whether they were houses or sheds.

Residents and firefighters in Western Australia and Victoria have also been on high alert as fires breakout across the states. In Western Australia, two out of control bushfires north of Perth are endangering lives and homes, with the largest fire front 5 km long and spot fires starting 700 metres ahead of it.

Meanwhile in Victoria, a medium bushfire that has burned more than 2,000 hectares remains out of control in parkland west of the Grampians National Park, 340 km northwest of Melbourne.

The Country Fire Authority issued an emergency warning mid-afternoon on Wednesday to residents east of the fire front after severe winds pushed the blaze east.

As of 3:00 pm local time on Wednesday, there were 24 bushfires burning out of control in South Australia, 20 in Victoria and nine considered active in Western Australia.

Xinhua

Gunman fatally shoots one person, kills himself at Army medical facility in Texas

AUSTIN, (Texas), 7 Jan — A gunman fatally shot one person and then killed himself in an incident on Tuesday at a US Army facility in El Paso, Texas, a senior US Army official said. The names of those who died were not released. The shootings took place at a veterans' clinic at the William Beaumont Army Medical Centre in the western Texas city.

"The alleged shooter is dead and we have one casualty. That casualty is deceased," Major General Stephen Twitty, the commander of Fort Bliss, told a news conference.

The facility, which is part of Fort Bliss, had been on lockdown for several hours. Local news reports said one of those shot in the attack was a doctor at the



El Paso police block off an entrance to the Beaumont Army Medical Centre as other officers search for a gunman during a shooting incident in El Paso, Texas on 6 Jan, 2015 where a gunman shot a doctor at the Army medical centre and then apparently took his own life, according to media reports. — REUTERS

VA facility, citing a preliminary investigation provided by officials, including US Representative Beto O'Rourke's office. "Our thoughts

and prayers are with the men and women at the El Paso VA clinic," O'Rourke said on his Facebook page.

Video from the scene

showed numerous police cars and emergency vehicles, while at least one helicopter flew overhead.

Reuters

Korean Air chairman's daughter charged over nut case outburst

SEOUL, 7 Jan — South Korean prosecutors charged the daughter of the chairman of Korean Air Lines on Wednesday for delaying a flight following an outburst over the way she was served nuts, in a case that stirred public outrage and ridicule.

Heather Cho, a former executive of the airline and head of in-flight service before she resigned, had demanded the chief steward be removed from the flight at John F Kennedy airport in New York after another flight attendant in first class served her macadamia nuts in a bag, not

on a dish.

The early December incident, which media has dubbed the "nut rage" case, has aggravated public resentment of South Korea's powerful family-run conglomerates, called chaebol, which are seen as dominating the economy and contributing to a widening wealth gap.

Prosecutors said Cho, who has been held in custody by a court since 30 December, was facing charges of violating aviation security law and obstructing a government investigation.

The Airbus A380 on

which Cho was travelling had pushed back from its gate but returned for the chief attendant to disembark. It arrived in South Korea 11 minutes late.

Deputy chief prosecutor Kim Chang-hee told reporters Cho had disrupted the flight and "threatened the plane's safety".

The Transport Ministry had concluded that Cho abused flight attendants and that airline officials may have tried to cover up the incident.

Another airline official was detained over allegations that he abetted perjury and obtained infor-



Cho Hyun-ah, also known as Heather Cho, appears in front of the media outside the offices of the Aviation and Railway Accident Investigation Board of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, in Seoul on 12 Dec, 2014. — REUTERS

mation on the ministry's investigation to update Cho. Public outrage grew when Korean Air initially issued what many members of the public took to be a half-hearted apology that instead appeared to rationalize Cho's conduct in the face of what it said was inadequate performance by the cabin crew.

"The unprecedented case of the plane's return undermined Korean Air's credibility and also damaged national dignity," the Seoul Western District Prosecutors' Office said in a statement.

Reuters

WORLD

Merkel to give little ground to Cameron over EU reform on visit



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron (R) greets German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the start of the NATO summit at the Celtic Manor resort, near Newport, in Wales on 4 Sept, 2014. —REUTERS

LONDON, 7 Jan — German Chancellor Angela Merkel will give little ground on Wednesday as British Prime Minister David Cameron seeks her help in curbing EU migration, insisting that free movement of workers is crucial to the bloc.

Cameron, whose Conservatives are losing support to the Eurosceptic UK Independence Party (UKIP) before an election in May, plans to raise his proposals on reforming the European Union when he meets Merkel in London to discuss Germany's presidency of the G7.

With immigration among voters' top concerns, Cameron wants to renegotiate ties with the EU before a referendum on Britain's membership of the bloc that he has promised by the end of 2017 if his party is still in power.

But while Merkel is sympathetic to cracking down on any welfare abuse by migrants, one of her allies made clear she would not yield on the right of EU workers to seek employment wherever they want in the 28-nation union.

"When Merkel visited London last year there was also the expectation that she would meet the demands of the British prime minister on changes to the EU treaty. She didn't do this then and she certainly won't do it now," said Gunther Krichbaum, head of the European Affairs committee of the German parliament.

Cameron has made controlling the flow of EU citizens to Britain a central part of his renegotiation effort. UKIP and some Conservatives say Britons fear that workers from poorer member states in central and eastern Europe are depressing wages, while others may be coming to collect more generous welfare entitlements than back home.

As the leader of the EU's most powerful state, Merkel's backing will be crucial if Cameron is to have any hope of getting the EU to agree to his proposals. But Krichbaum, a member of her Christian Democrat party, said the British leader should stand up to the Eurosceptics.

"Cameron is in a very difficult situation and is under a lot of pressure within his party. But he got himself into this situation. He is trying to match the demands of UKIP," he said.

Merkel also faces a Eurosceptic challenge at home, with the anti-EU Alternative for Germany (AfD) soaring from nowhere to around 7 percent in national opinion polls in less than two years. However, she has chosen to ignore rather than directly challenge the AfD in the hope that it would burn itself out.

A senior German official underlined this policy. "There is a feeling that too many concessions are being made to the Eurosceptics. We have had experience in Germany with parties like (UKIP) and the view is that if you try to give them something, you only dig yourself in deeper," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.—Reuters

Boehner survives conservative challenge, re-elected US House speaker

WASHINGTON, 7 Jan — John Boehner narrowly won a third term as House of Representatives speaker on Tuesday, surviving a stiff challenge from 25 conservative Republicans that may signal a growing split in the party as it takes full control of Congress.

Boehner received 216 of 408 votes, with a growing faction of dissident House Republicans opposing him because they said he had done too little to cut spending and fight President Barack Obama's immigration and healthcare policies.

The last time more than 25 House members voted against a candidate for speaker from their own party was in 1859, according to congressional historians.

Within hours of the vote, a senior Republican aide said that Florida Representatives Richard Nugent and Daniel Webster, who had both opposed Boehner, were stripped of their assignments on the powerful House Rules Committee.

The number of Republican defectors was more than twice the dozen who withheld their support from

him in an election two years ago, evidence of the stark party divisions that could make it hard to pass legislation, including bills to keep government agencies operating without interruption.

One of the defectors, Representative Walter Jones of North Carolina, said he was deluged by calls from people urging Boehner's ouster. Jones, like others, complained of Boehner's handling of a massive government spending bill in December.

"We didn't get 72 hours to read it, it was 1,600 pages and spent \$1.1 trillion," Jones said.



US House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) (L) makes remarks before handing the gavel to House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) (R) after he was re-elected speaker on the House floor at the US Capitol in Washington on 6 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

Obama, in a statement wishing Republicans well, said there would be "pitched battles" with Congress but that there were also "enormous areas of potential agreement."

Last year's Congress, which was badly gridlocked, has been dubbed one of the least productive in history.

Boehner's detractors in Tuesday's vote were conservative activists, some of them junior members, who regularly have voted against House Republican leadership-backed bills. But they also included seven-term Representative

Steve King of Iowa, who has helped stymie Boehner's efforts to advance major changes to US immigration laws.

Idaho's Raul Labrador, who declined to vote for Boehner in the speaker's election two years ago, supported him on Tuesday, as did Tea Party member John Fleming of Louisiana.

"The votes were simply not there to defeat the speaker," Labrador said in a statement. "I think it is unwise to marginalize yourself when there is no chance of victory, which was the case today,".

He added that Boehner had asked for his help in moving the House in a more conservative direction. A tearful Boehner told House members after the election: "As a speaker, all I ask and frankly expect is that we disagree without being disagreeable." Boehner is often overcome by emotion at the start of a new Congress.

In coming weeks, Boehner is expected to face the difficult task of finding a middle ground on a bill to keep the Department of Homeland Security operating beyond February when funds run out.—Reuters

At least eleven dead in Paris shooting

PARIS, 7 Jan — Black-hooded gunmen shot dead at least 11 people at the Paris offices of the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo, a publication fire-bombed in the past after publishing cartoons lampooning Muslim leaders and the Prophet Mohammad, police said.

President Francois Hollande headed to the

scene of the attack and the government said it was raising France's security level to the highest notch.

"This is a terrorist attack, there is no doubt about it," Hollande told reporters.

Another 10 people were injured in the incident and police union official Rocco Contento described the scene inside the offices

as "carnage".

"About a half an hour ago two black-hooded men entered the building with Kalashnikovs (rifles)," witness Benoit Bringer told the TV station. "A few minutes later we heard lots of shots," he said, adding that the men were then seen fleeing the building.

France is already on high alert after calls last

year from Islamist militants to attack its citizens and interests in reprisal for French military strikes on Islamist strongholds in the Middle East and Africa.

British Prime Minister David Cameron described the attack as sickening.

Late last year, a man shouting "Allahu Akbar" ("God is greatest") injured 13 by ramming a vehicle into a crowd in the eastern city of Dijon. Prime Minister Manuel Valls said at the time France had "never before faced such a high threat linked to terrorism".

A firebomb attack gutted the headquarters of Charlie Hebdo, a publication that has always courted controversy with satirical attacks on political and religious leaders, in November 2011 after it put an image of the Prophet Mohammad on its cover.

The last tweet on Charlie Hebdo's account mocked Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the leader of the Islamic State, which has taken control of large swathes of Iraq and Syria.—Reuters



French cartoonist Charb, publishing director of French satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo, poses for photographs at their offices in Paris, in this 19 Sept, 2012 file photo. —REUTERS

PERSPECTIVES

Thursday, 8 January, 2015

Better infrastructure needed to bolster Myanmar tourism industry

By Aung Khin

The tourism industry has become one of the most important sectors in Myanmar over the past few years, with around 3.05 million of inbound tourists in 2014.

The country's opening-up policy under the reform process is paving the way for better opportunities for the tourism industry, even as it faces the shortcomings of local infrastructure.

Myanmar has abundant cultural legacies such as the Bagan Dynasty that reached its zenith about 800 years ago.

Pristine conditions of natural resorts can be seen across the country from north to south and east to west. But after years of being closed to the outside world, Myanmar's tourism industry needs improvements to be able to compete with neighbouring countries.

Myanmar introduced an e-visa system on 1 September, and it was expanded for more countries. The system now covers 100 countries. However, the good system needs more efficient staff members to reach the goal.

Arrival of tourists to Myanmar has increased year by year. However, the country also faces hotel rates which are noticeably higher in major cities than in neighbouring countries. Roads, train and airlines also need better infrastructure to attract a larger number of tourists.

Foreign arrivals surpass the expected total each year as the number of tourists to Myanmar reached more than 2.04 million in 2013, compared with 1.06 million visitors in 2012.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has targeted an increase in international tourist arrivals to nearly 7.5 million by 2020. To meet this number, the country will need a master plan that includes improving infrastructure, its institutions, better human resources and developing more tourist destinations.

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Making right choices in life

By Myo Myint

Those who are well-educated have more choices of livelihood. For a person like San San Aye, who had to leave school, after finishing her primary school, there were few choices, either work as an unskilled labourer at a construction site like her elder sister, become a housemaid, return to her birthplace, a small village in the Ayeyawady delta, and work in the paddy fields as a farmhand, or become a vegetable vendor like her next door neighbour. When her widowed mother who sold boiled beans in the morning had to return to the village to take care of her grandmother who had suffered a stroke, San San Aye chose to remain in Yangon together with her elder sister and continued to live in the small ramshackle house located in a poor section of Kyimyindine not far away from the Hline river, which they shared with their aunt and her family, rather than return to the monotonous life in the countryside.

San San Aye decided to sell vegetables like her neighbour rather than the boiled peas that her mother sold in the mornings, as it needed very little outlay, and she felt that with a bit of risk-taking, she could earn much more than what her mother made. She was not worried about the initial outlay she would need, as her neighbour said she could introduce her to a money-lender who lent

money at a high interest to be paid daily. But little did she know how much decision-making, how much hard work, and how much time the path she chose would demand. She had to choose in which market she should sell. She would have to decide what to sell, from which wholesale market she should buy the vegetables, and how much she should buy. She went along with her next door neighbour to Hledan market where she sold vegetables, to see how things were at the market. It was a bustling market and there were many vendors selling a variety of things along the road behind the market. There were fish, prawn and crab sellers, poultry sellers, mutton and beef sellers, vegetable sellers, fruit sellers, egg sellers, flower sellers, toy sellers, and sellers of all sorts of things that housewives needed daily. She observed how her neighbour dealt with her customers and how she persuaded them to buy more than they intended to. The same day, she borrowed some money from the money lender introduced by her neighbour and invested in round bamboo trays of different sizes and a pair of scales. Weights, she didn't need, as she got them as inheritance from her mother. That night she went along with her neighbour to buy vegetables from the Thiri Mingalar fruit and vegetables wholesale market not far from where she lived. As advised by her neigh-

bour, she bought vegetables that did not require much outlay, and would sell fast, like chillies, roselle leaves, water convolvulus, and egg plants. Early the next morning, she went along with her neighbour to the market and had a hard time finding a place to sell her vegetables. The only vacant place she found was at the tail end of the row of vendors, not far from a smelly rubbish dump. At first, she was not able to sell a lot, but later as the number of shoppers decreased at about nine, she was able to move to a better spot vacated by sellers who had sold out all their goods, and she was able to cater to late comers who were looking for a bargain. Although most of the vendors had left, she stayed on hoping to sell most of the vegetables in her bamboo tray. Her persistence paid off, and she was able to sell about half of the vegetables she had brought. She wrapped the remaining vegetables in an old longyi soaked with water and returned home to have her lunch. San San Aye returned to the market at about 2 p.m. with her remaining vegetables. Again, like in the morning, she did not make much sale at the spot near the rubbish dump, and only after some of the vendors left, she was able to choose a better place to sell. At about 8 p.m. she was able to sell off all the vegetables she had, and then she set off to the Thiri Mingalar fruit

and vegetables wholesale market to buy vegetables. On her way back home, she stopped at the money lender's house to pay the daily interest. When she got home, it was well past 10 p.m. She counted the money left in her hand. The profit did not come up to much, after deducting the interest, the cost of the vegetables, and the bus fare, but she thought that if she could get some regular customers, and a better place to sell her vegetables, she could possibly make more. She had her dinner and then cleaned the vegetables and tied them into small bundles, and it was about midnight when she went to bed. Tomorrow, she would have to leave home at about 4 a.m. to get to the market by 5 a.m.

San San Aye was a friendly as well as forceful person. Whenever she caught sight of a customer who had bought from her the previous day, she would call out loudly to her to buy something from her. She was also not a stingy person and gave a few extras to her customers, so she was able to build a corps of regular customers. She was not too greedy, and only traded in less expensive types of vegetables to keep the capital low. She also had the business acumen to sell unusual kinds of vegetables that she sometimes found in the wholesale market and were not sold by others. In addition, she thought she had good luck, as a few months after she started selling vegetables at Hledan market, a vendor

whom she became friendly with returned to her village to get married, and bequeathed San San Aye her place, which was better located.

Now, after ten years, she feels her life has improved slightly. She is able to make a regular profit of about ten thousand kyats a day, and is now able to rent a room for herself and her sister whom she was able to persuade to give up her job as a labourer and sell vegetables together with her. She is also able to send back money regularly to her mother and grandmother. The best thing she was able to do was to repay the money she borrowed as outlay, and so now she no longer has to pay a huge interest daily. Of course, life is still hard. The Thiri Mingalar fruit and vegetables wholesale market has been moved to Hline township which was not as close to her house as its old location, so she gets home only around midnight. Sometimes, she falls ill and cannot work for many days. Life is also especially hard for a roadside vendor during the rainy season, as there are fewer customers, and she has a tough time protecting herself with a small umbrella from the heavy rain.

Nevertheless, San San Aye feels that she has made the right choice. She is thankful that she made the right decision not to return to her village, as she would be making only about two thousand kyats a day there, as a farmhand. She is glad that she did not become a housemaid and lose her independence, or become a construction labourer and lose her fair complexion. She is also extremely glad that she has never been tempted to choose the easy path and lose her dignity like some of the beautifully dressed and made-up young women she saw walking on the streets at night. She cannot understand why strong, healthy, young women should want to live on immoral earnings. As for the future, she would like to own a small apartment close to Hledan market and run a dry goods shop. Other things, she is not very sure of. There is a young carpenter near her house who has been showing a lot of interest in her. There is also the fruit seller on the other side of the road who has been making excuses to come and talk to her. (My thanks go to vegetable vendor Ma San San Aye of Hledan market for telling me about her life.)

GOLD PRICE, FE RATE (7-1-2015)

Yangon Gold Price

Buying K664,500 per tical: Selling K665,300

Mandalay Gold Price

Buying K664,300 per tical: Selling K665,100

FE RATE

USD Buying K 1033: Selling K----

SGD Buying K 772: Selling K782

Euro Buying K 1,215: Selling K1,235

LOCAL NEWS

Private school honours outstanding students

MANDALAY, 7 Jan — Hnin Htet Aung private high school held a prize presentation and concert for 2013-14 academic year at Kanaung Hall on Po Yazar Street in Industrial Zone-1 in Mandalay on 4 January.

Children from pre-primary school sang variety of songs. School administrator U Kyi spoke on the occasion.

Founder of the school

U Thein Htoo-Daw Khin San Win presented a motorcycle worth K600,000 each to two five-distinction winners in matriculation examination.

Assistant Township Education Officer U Khin Maung Oo presented K800,000 each from Ministry of Education and the private school to Ma Ei Thazin Oo who won the middle school scholarship award at

township level.

The school won 78 percent of pass rate in the 2013-14 academic year matriculation examination.

The school facilitated with science lab, multimedia corner, computer pool, language lab, modern classrooms, library and gymnasium conducts teaching to students from pre-primary level to matriculation level.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



Myanaung Township MCWA organizes baby show



MYANAUNG, 7 Jan — Myanaung Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association held a baby show at its pre-primary school on 4 January.

Township medical officer Dr Maung Maung Chit and members of the association performed medical checkup at the babies for taking part in the contest.

Officials of the association presented prizes to winning children.

Win Bo-Township IPRD

Ngazun Township to get station hospital

NGAZUN, 7 Jan—A 16-bed station hospital is under construction in Myotha station, Ngazun Township, Mandalay Region. Mandalay Region Hluttaw representative U Kyaw Tin, Myingyan District's deputy commissioner U Myint Thin Aung and District Senior Engineer U Thein Shwe

of Public Works inspected progress of construction tasks. Ministry of Health allotted K150 million for construction of the station hospital.

The deputy commissioner instructed officials to use quality raw materials for construction.—*Zaw Min Naing (Myingyan)*

Meeting focuses on vaccination of measles and German measles

BAWLAKHE, 7 Jan — A meeting on vaccination of measles and German measles diseases for 2015 was held at Township People's Hospital in Bawlakhe, Kayah State, on Wednesday.

Bawlakhe District's deputy commissioner U Thein Zaw spoke on the

occasion.

Head of Township Health Department Dr San Win explained matters related to vaccination.

Health staff will vaccinate children under 15 against measles and German measles diseases schools from 19 to 27 January and at the public from 19 to 28 February.

Hla Shwe (IPRD)

Mandalay Region honours outstanding persons, associations

MANDALAY, 7 Jan — Mandalay Region government announced notification 1/2015 on outstanding persons in the region on 4 January.

The excellent award in administration went to Director U Than Zaw Win of Region Internal Revenue Department, Director Daw Mu Mu Wai of Region Budget Department, Assistant Director U Nay Aye of Irrigation Department, Staff Officer U Thurein Ko Ko Kyaw of Irrigation Department and Deputy Region Electrical Engineer U Sein Win Myint of Electricity Supply Enterprise.

The excellent awards in industrial economy were presented to Staff Officer U Win Naing of Irrigation Department, U Aung Aung of Shwe Thiha Mechanical Engineering, Industrial Zone-2 and U Maung Aye of Mandalay Power-tiller, Industrial Zone-2.

Assistant Director U Toe Min of Meiktila District Agriculture Depart-

ment, farmer U Nay Win of Yenatha Village, Madaya Township and farmer U Nyein of Myittha Township won the excellent award in agriculture.

U Aung Thura Oo of Aung Yadana breeding farm in PyinOoLwin Township won the excellent award in livestock breeding.

Aungmyethazan Basic Education High School No 1 and BEHS No 4, Chanmyathazi BEHS No 26 and CAE private high school of Chanayethazan Township won the excellent award in education.

Meiktila Home for the Aged, PyinOoLwin funeral service association, Pearl Parahita Foundation, Lawkapana social welfare association, Myingyan funeral service association, Doebin Aungkantha Parahita School in PyinOoLwin, Shwe Min Thar Foundation and Mandalay Region Interfaith Friendship Association won the excellent award in social field.—*Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay)*

Wellwishers donate cold coffin to funeral service association



MANDALAY, 7 Jan — A ceremony to share merits for donation of a cold coffin to Thida Chanmya funeral service association was held at its office in Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay, on 5 January.

U Myo Thein, wife Daw Myint Myint Than and family of North Chanmyathazi ward donated a cold coffin worth K1.3 million to chairman of the association U Khin Maung Min who returned a certificate of honour.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



US investigating civilian casualty claims in Iraq, Syria



Syrian rebel fighters fire a heavy machinegun against Islamic State positions from a location west of Kobani during fighting on 4 Nov, 2014. — REUTERS

WASHINGTON, 7 Jan — The US military said on Tuesday it had received 18 complaints of civilian casualties in air strikes against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria, but concluded that 13 of the cases were not credible and was still reviewing the other five. The Pentagon has said it takes allegations of civilian casualties seriously and investigates them, but in the past military officials had played down such reports.

“We ... apply very rigorous standards in our targeting process to prevent civilian casualties in the first place,” said Sergeant First Class Sheryl Lawry,

a spokeswoman for Central Command, which oversees US military forces in the Middle East.

Lawry said nine reports of possible civilian casualties took place in Syria and nine in Iraq. Thirteen of the cases were found to be baseless while five are under further review, including two involving fewer than five deaths that are being investigated more deeply.

She said the two cases under closer investigation were the result of the US military’s own internal review process and were not based on allegations from outside the Department.

The United States had

carried out 1,350 air strikes against Islamic State militants as of Monday night, 687 in Iraq and 663 in Syria. US coalition partners have carried out 309 attacks, of which 237 were in Iraq, a Pentagon spokeswoman said.

Pentagon spokesman Rear Admiral John Kirby said the Pentagon believed the strikes had killed several hundred militants, but he said it could not track all of the casualties and killing was not the aim.

The strikes began in August after Islamic State militants seized part of northwestern Iraq and Baghdad and asked for US help.—Reuters

Female suicide bomber hits police station in Istanbul’s historic heart

ISTANBUL, 7 Jan — A female suicide bomber blew herself up at a police station in Istanbul’s historic Sultanahmet district on Tuesday, killing one officer and wounding another.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility; but the bombing comes less than a week after far-left group DHKP-C said it was behind a grenade attack on police near the prime minister’s office in Istanbul.

Turkey also faces possible threat from Islamist militants moving across the border from Syria and Iraq and, despite a truce in a 30-year-old insurrection, from Kurdish rebels.

Police sealed off the street where Tuesday’s attack happened, across the square from the Aya Sofya museum and the Blue Mosque and near the Basilica Cistern, which are among the main sites for millions of visitors to Istanbul each year.

“We were shaken by a very loud blast. There were customers and everyone dropped to the floor,” Kaan Koc, who works just across from the station, told broadcaster CNN Turk.

“A police officer came out of the station and fired into the air saying ‘disperse, there is a suicide bomber, go inside’. Then

we heard gun fire but we weren’t sure who was shooting.” Windows were shattered and shutters hung unhinged from the yellow, three-storey tourist police station.

The woman entered the police station saying in English that she had lost her purse and then blew herself up, Istanbul Governor Vasip Sahin told reporters at the scene. Her nationality and identity were unknown.

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said one of the officers had died. It was not immediately clear whether the bomber had links to any particular group.—Reuters



Forensic officers work at the scene of a bomb blast in Istanbul on 6 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

Dozens killed and wounded in Yemen police college blast

SANAA, 7 Jan — A car bomb exploded outside a police college in Yemen’s capital Sanaa early on Wednesday, killing around 30 and wounding more than 50 others, police sources said, underscoring the country’s deteriorating security and growing al-Qaeda threat.

Turmoil in Yemen, already high since a 2011 popular uprising that led to a change of government and splits in the army, has accelerated since September when the Shi’ite Muslim Houthi militia seized Sanaa, prompting fears of sectarian conflict.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), one of the Sunni militant movement’s most active wings, had staged a growing number of bombings and shootings across the country and further stepped

up its campaign after the Houthi advance.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Wednesday’s bombing. Al-Qaeda has in the past claimed they were behind such attacks. The victims

from the latest blast included students at the college and people waiting in line to enrol with the police, the police sources said, as well as passers by.

Ambulances were transporting casualties

away from the scene of the blast, and bodies were seen lying in the street, witnesses said. The explosion was heard across the city and a large plume of smoke was visible in the area of the college.—Reuters



Policemen look at the wreckage of a car at the scene of a car bomb outside the police college in Sanaa on 7 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

Dozens of Islamist fighters killed as battle of Kobani rages on

BEIRUT, 7 Jan —Forty-one Islamic State militants were killed in the Syrian border town of Kobani on Tuesday as US-led air strikes helped local forces push the group to the city’s edges, a monitoring group said.

The predominantly Kurdish town, known as Ayn al-Arab in Arabic, close to the Turkish border, has become a symbol in the international fight against the hard-line Islamist group that broke away from al-Qaeda.

The US military said it or its coalition partners had conducted 10 air strikes against Islamic State in Syria, mostly on Kobani, since Monday. As well as the 41 members of Islamic State, seven Kurdish fighters and two civilians were killed in the fighting, according to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which tracks the war that has dragged on for four years.

The Kurds, who have secured effective self-rule in northern parts of Syria, now control around 80 percent of Kobani, pushing Islamic State out towards the south and southeast, according to the Observatory.

Islamic State launched an attack on the town more than three months ago. The group has seized expanses of land in Syria and Iraq and declared what it calls a caliphate. The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) estimates that 670,000 children in Syria are being deprived of education after Islamic State ordered schools to close while the curriculum is made to conform with its religious rules.

Reuters

BUSINESS & HEALTH



A Formula One fan wraps herself in a Union flag as she leaves a full car park ahead of the British F1 Grand Prix at Silverstone, central England on 8 July, 2012.

REUTERS

Binge drinking most likely to kill middle-aged Americans, CDC says

ATLANTA, 7 Jan — It's not college students or teenagers but rather middle-aged Americans who are most likely to die from drinking too much alcohol too quickly, according to a study released by the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday.

An average of six people die each day in the United States from alcohol poisoning or excessively high levels of alcohol in the blood, which is typically caused by binge drinking, the federal study found.

Three out of four of those who died were between the ages of 35 and 64, the study found, countering the popular perception that young people are more likely than their elders to die from binge drinking.

Only 5.1 percent of the deaths were drinkers between the ages of 15 and 24, the study found.

"Contrary to conventional wisdom, there is a lot of binge drinking going on by people who are post college-age," the study's co-author, Robert Brewer, told reporters. "We were surprised by these findings."

The CDC defines binge drinking as consuming four or more drinks for women or five or more drinks for men on a single occasion.

Fewer than a third of the people who died of alcohol poisoning were considered alcoholics, the study found.

Analyzing death certificate data from 2010

through 2012, researchers found that an average of 2,200 people, more than half of them white males, died from alcohol poisoning each year.

State death rates ranged from a low of 5.3 deaths per million residents in Alabama to a high of 46.5 deaths per million residents in Alaska. The regions with the highest

death rates were the Great Plains, the West and New England.

"Living in geographically isolated rural areas might increase the likelihood that a person with alcohol poisoning will not be found before death or that timely emergency medical services will not be available," the researchers wrote.

Reuters



Country music fans drink beer as night falls during the final day of the Stagecoach country music festival in Indio, California on 27 April, 2014. —REUTERS



A line of new Nissan autos is seen outside a Nissan auto dealer in Broomfield, Colorado on 1 Oct, 2014.

REUTERS

UK new car sales highest in 10 years in 2014

LONDON, 7 Jan—British new car registrations last year reached their highest point since 2004 and the outlook for 2015 is for a similar level of sales, the head of an industry body said on Tuesday.

Mike Hawes, chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), told reporters that sales in 2014 had been "incredibly strong, stronger than expected" as Britain's eco-

nomic recovery boosted confidence among consumers.

Low interest rates, which facilitated attractive financing deals, were also behind the surge in demand, he said.

Hawes declined to give numbers for registrations in 2014 ahead of their official release at 0900 GMT on Wednesday.

While sales in Britain were strong last year, Hawes reiterated that pro-

duction had been "disappointing" and resembled levels in 2013 due to weak exports to the struggling economies of the euro zone and Russia.

He said he expected a small increase in sales in 2015, when a national election might usher in higher taxes for motorists as the next government turns its attentions to plugging one of Europe's largest budget deficits.

Reuters

New Ebola vaccine trial begins in UK



LONDON, 7 Jan — Oxford University doctors and scientists are starting the first safety trial of an experimental preventative Ebola vaccine, aiming to have vaccinated all 72 healthy adult volunteers by the end of January.

According to a press release from the university on Tuesday, volunteers for the trial, aged from 18 to 50, will be the first humans to receive the vaccine, which is developed by Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson and Johnson.

The study involves a prime-boost vaccine regimen, in which patients are first given a prime to the immune system to stimulate an initial immune response, and then a boost intended to further enhance the level of the body's immune response over time.

The vaccine regimen does not contain any rep-

licating virus, so it is not possible to be infected with Ebola, according to researchers.

Pre-clinical studies have demonstrated that the prime-boost regimen, given two months apart, provides non-human primates with complete protection from death due to the Kikwit Zaire strain of Ebola — which is similar to the virus causing the current outbreak in Western Africa.

"We aim to immunise all participants within a month," Dr Matthew Snape, who will lead the study team said. "The main aim is to understand the safety profile of the vaccines." He added: "While public health measures are currently still the best way to bring the outbreak under control, if we have a safe and effective vaccine it could begin to have an impact later this year."

Xinhua

Nissan says 2014 China sales up 0.5 percent

SHANGHAI, 7 Jan — Nissan Motor Co Ltd and its Chinese joint venture partner sold 1.22 million vehicles in China in 2014, up 0.5 percent from the previous year, the Japanese carmaker said on Wednesday.

In the month of De-

cember, Nissan sold 121,900 vehicles, down 9.1 percent from a year earlier, the sixth straight month the carmaker has seen sales decline in China. Japanese carmakers in China have faced the twin challenges of a slowing economy and

political tension between Beijing and Tokyo over the past year. The growth rate of China's auto market, the world's biggest, halved to around 7 percent in 2014.

Nissan, which operates a car venture in China with Dongfeng Motor Group Co

Ltd, revised its 2014 China forecast in November to reflect slowing sales. Rival Toyota Motor Corp forecast on Tuesday that its pace of growth in China would halve to 6.8 percent in 2015 after it failed to meet last year's target.—Reuters

UN aviation body to propose 15-minute flight tracking standard

TORONTO, 7 Jan — The United Nations aviation agency will propose a new standard that requires commercial aircraft to report their position every 15 minutes as part of a global tracking initiative in the aftermath of the disappearance of a Malaysian jetliner.

The loss of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 last March sparked a global drive for a system that would make it possible to pinpoint the exact route and last location of an aircraft.

An International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) spokesman said on Tuesday that the standard, if adopted, could go into effect in the near term because it would not require new technology on planes. ICAO members are set to discuss the proposal at a major safety conference in Montreal next month.

Airline industry group International Air Transport Association (IATA) promised to lead an industry task force last year on the issue and to voluntarily improve tracking while ICAO developed its standard.

In December, that industry task force recommended that airlines start tracking planes in at least 15 minute intervals within 12 months, but IATA itself balked, saying the deadline was not practical.

ICAO spokesman Anthony Philbin called the ICAO scheme a “foundational flight tracking standard.” The agency is developing more stringent tracking recommendations.

“If (member states) agree to the standard, the safety conference will also be asked how quickly it expects it to be implemented and if it would want ICAO to expedite that process,” Philbin told *Reuters* via email. “Once our states have made their views known in that regard, we’ll have a better idea of the time frame.”

ICAO could effectively force airlines to act because the standards it sets typically become regulatory requirements in its 191 member states. But the agency prefers to make decisions by consensus, making February’s conference crucial.

Many airlines already track their planes using satellite systems. An ICAO working paper recently noted that the majority of long-haul aircraft already have systems on board that can transmit their position.

But it noted that the equipment is not always turned on and that in some locations, including along polar routes, there are gaps in satellite coverage.

Asked if radio could be used to meet the draft standard, ICAO’s Philbin said voice communication could serve as a fallback for planes that do not have newer technology.—*Reuters*

All on New Zealand plane parachute to safety before crash

SYDNEY, 7 Jan — Thirteen people on board a skydiving plane, including the pilot, parachuted to safety in New Zealand on Wednesday moments before the aircraft crashed into a lake.

Witnesses saw a steady stream of people jumping from the plane, which authorities said experienced mechanical failure on its way to Lake Taupo, 280 km (175 miles) south of Auckland, for skydiving.

“I saw everyone deploy out of the plane and the next minute it was in the lake,” witness Bevan Johnhill told New Zealand’s TV3 network.

“I think the pilot he must have been the last one to get out because he ended up in the blackberries,” Johnhill said.

Television footage showed a small aircraft submerged in shallow water. “It was nothing short of a miracle,” said Roy Clements, chief executive of Skydive Taupo, which operated the plane.

Everyone on board the plane got out and landed safely, he said.

New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority spokesman Mike Richards told media it was miraculous no one was killed. An investigation into the cause of the accident had been launched, he said.—*Reuters*

Texas seismologists investigate quakes near old Cowboys stadium



Texas Stadium, former home of the Dallas Cowboys, is demolished in Irving, Texas, on 11 April, 2010.

REUTERS

DALLAS, 7 Jan — Seismologists installed a new earthquake-monitoring device in the Dallas suburb of Irving this week after a series of minor tremors rocked an area near the site of the former Dallas Cowboys football stadium.

Irving was shaken by nine quakes on Tuesday and into Wednesday, including three measuring

magnitude 3.6, 3.5, and 3.1, the US Geological Survey said. The quakes were the strongest in a series of about 20 minor quakes to hit around the stadium area since September.

Five smaller quakes registering between 1.6 and 2.9 were recorded on Tuesday in the suburb. Another 1.7 magnitude quake was recorded in the nearby city

of Farmers Branch late on Tuesday night, according to the USGS.

There were no immediate reports of injury or damage.

But the seismic series has left residents on edge, wondering whether the situation will get worse and what has been behind an uptick in quakes over the last several years.

“The safety and security of our residents is paramount for the city of Irving,” said Irving City Manager Chris Hillman.

Some residents believe the implosion of Texas Stadium in 2010 may have exacerbated problems. There is also speculation the quakes might be related to hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” an energy extraction technique that has a long history in north Texas.

Irving, headquarters of

Exxon Mobil’s XTO unit that helped pioneer hydraulic fracturing in the region, has two gas wells that were fracked in 2010, according to city officials.

The study by seismologists from Southern Methodist University in Dallas is aimed at pinpointing the quakes’ epicenters, said SMU seismology professor Brian Stump.

About 40 miles west of Irving, a series of small earthquakes rattled the town of Azle a year ago, causing sinkholes and cracks in house foundations. Residents blamed fracking and injection disposal wells for drilling waste as the cause, but an official finding is still pending.

Energy industry officials have said fracking is safe and causes no significant seismic damage.

Reuters

Maryland police warn civilians to return cash dropped by bank robber

MARYLAND, 7 Jan — Police in Maryland on Tuesday warned that people who picked up money dropped on a city street during a New Year’s Eve bank robbery must return what they found or face

criminal charges.

Montgomery County Police are seeking a man who they say entered a TD Bank branch in the Washington suburb of Silver Spring the morning of 31 December, approached the

teller, presented a note implying he had a weapon, and requested money. A weapon was not seen, but the suspect obtained an undisclosed amount of cash and fled from the bank, police said. The suspect dropped some

of the stolen money after the robbery, and passersby picked it up before police arrived on the scene, according to police.

Police said they are still seeking the suspect and are asking people to return any money recovered at the scene or face prosecution for theft.

Reuters



Elements of the Attorney General of Guerrero accompanied by members of the municipal police, the state police and the Secretariat of National Defence (SEDENA), take part in the exhumation of clandestine graves located in the area known as “El Huizache”, in the town of Chilapa of Alvarez, state of Guerrero, Mexico, on 6 Jan, 2015. According to local press, after an anonymous denunciation, experts of the Attorney General of Guerrero attended to El Huizache, where after several hours of work were found human remains, without that has been achieved to establish the exact number of bodies that could be found in the area.—XINHUA

ADVERTISEMENT & GENERAL

**The Government of the Republic
of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Energy
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Auction for Petroleum Coke**

Tender No. (2)

The Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (MPE), the Ministry of Energy, hereby announces a tender for auctioning the 3,000 (±5%) metric tons of petroleum coke (FOR EXPORT ONLY) in foreign currency.

1. The documentation related to the petroleum coke auction can be purchased with 100 USD per package by any interested parties commencing 12th January 2015 in the head office of MPE at the address mentioned below.
2. The petroleum coke shall be auctioned off in United States Dollar.
3. Interested parties can submit the bid with proposed price as EX-FACTORY in accordance with the details mentioned in tender document in sealed envelope to the following address in person before 27th February 2015 at 12:00 noon;
Chairman
Tender Evaluation Committee
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Building No.44, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
4. Bidders shall also submit a bid bond of 50,000 USD issued by the Myanma Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB) in the name of MPE together with the bid in the same envelope.
5. The tender evaluation committee shall receive all bids by the mentioned deadline and open the bids on 27th February 2015 at 13:00 hour at the same location.
6. For more information, please contact the following address;
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise
Ministry of Energy
Building No.44, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
mpeict@gmail.com
Fax: +95 67 411094, +959411343
7. Late inquiries or inquiries via telephone will not be answered.

Tender Evaluation Committee
Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PINYA STAR VOY NO ()**

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PINYA STAR VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W (1) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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**THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(23/2014)**

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-123(14-15)	Skid Mounted Double Pump Cementing Unit with Complete Accessories (Silo, Cutting Pot, Power Pack, Dryer & Compressor) (1) Lot	US\$
(2)	IFB-124(14-15)	6" x 8" R Mixing Pump with 50HP Motor (2) Lots	US\$
(3)	IFB-125(14-15)	Mud Agitator Unit with Motor (2) Lots	US\$
(4)	IFB-126(14-15)	4" Dia Steel Line Pipe (3,000) Meter	US\$
(5)	IFB-127(14-15)	Spares for Metering System (CNG Filling Station) (5) Items	US\$
(6)	IFB-128(14-15)	Komatsu (D 39 E x 22) or Caterpillar (D40A, P-3) Bulldozer (1) Unit	US\$
(7)	IFB-129(14-15)	Spares for Kenworth Truck (14) Items	US\$
(8)	IFB-130(14-15)	Data Acquisition Sercel 428 Telemetry System (4) Items	US\$
(9)	IFB-131(14-15)	Interpretation Workstation (1) Item	US\$
(10)	IFB-132(14-15)	Electrical spares for D3 T2 Drilling Rigs (15) Items	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time – 2-2-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 5th January, 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



Painters work at the International Painting Trade Centre in Harbin, capital of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, on 5 Jan, 2015. The centre opened to public on Monday.—XINHUA

**China investigates malpractice
behind four deadly accidents**

BEIJING, 7 Jan — China's top prosecuting body is investigating multiple cases of alleged malpractice, which occurred over the past ten days, including a warehouse blaze in northeast China that killed five firemen.

The Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) vowed to bring those responsible to task in a statement released on Wednesday.

The incidents include the collapse of scaffolding at a construction site at Tsinghua High School in Beijing, which left ten dead and four injured on 29 December, and a factory blast in Foshan, in south China's Guangdong Province, which killed 18 and injured over 30 on 31 December.

There was also a warehouse blaze in Harbin in northeast China on 2 Janu-

ary that killed five firemen and injured 14, and a fire in southwest China's Yunnan Province on 3 January, which destroyed Gongchen Tower, an ancient city gate tower that dates back more than 600 years.

The SPP has sent staff from its major liability accident investigation office to the related provinces to support the local prosecutors.—Xinhua

WEATHER REPORT

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and South Bay and generally fair elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 8th January, 2015: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region, weather will be partly cloudy in Up-

per Sagaing Region, Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperature in the Upper Myanmar areas.

**At least 20
killed in bus
mishap in
southern India**

MUMBAI, 7 Jan — At least 20 people were dead after a passenger bus fell into a ravine in southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday morning, local media reported.

According to TV reports, the incident took place near Penukonda district. There were around 40 passengers in the bus and at least four students are among the dead.

Injured passengers have been rushed to Bengaluru hospital. More details are awaited.—Xinhua

**AirAsia
denies flight
suspension
to Brunei**

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 7 Jan — AirAsia has denied the rumours that it has canceled flight service to Brunei, saying the message is not true and services are still running as scheduled, Brunei's News website BruDirect.com reported on Wednesday.

As recovery efforts continue following the latest crash of AirAsia QZ8501, rumours of the suspension of AirAsia services to Brunei Darussalam are rife in the social media as the public wanted to know the authenticity of the allegations. There is a message spreading in the social media saying that all incoming and outgoing flights using AirAsia to and from Brunei will be canceled until April 2015 and AirAsia maintenance will be checked until further notice. In a short response to an inquiry, AirAsia dismissed the rumours. A representative said, "The message is not true," and services are still running as scheduled.

People in the region and those from around the world are still coming to grips with the 28 December crash that has left 162 people, bound for Singapore from Surabaya, Indonesia, dead.—Xinhua

AC/DC charge up 2015 Coachella lineup with Jack White and Drake

LOS ANGELES, 7 Jan — Veteran Australian rockers AC/DC will headline the first night of this year's Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, organizers Goldenvoice said on Tuesday, joining alt-rocker Jack White and hip hop star Drake as lead acts of the desert fest.

The festival, promoting the same three-night lineup over two consecutive weekends in the Southern California town of Indio, has a reputation for being the venue where top acts of the 1980s and 1990s reunite or kick off a tour in the hopes of drawing a new generation of fans.

Last year, Atlanta rappers Andre 3000 and Big Boi reunited

after eight years as OutKast on the Coachella stage, while British rock groups Stone Roses and Blur reassembled in 2013 to headline the festival.

With more than 40 years in the business, AC/DC released its 15th studio album "Rock or Bust" in December 2014. The band, currently comprising Brian Johnson, Angus Young, Stevie Young, Cliff Williams and Phil Rudd — all in their late 50s and 60s — will kick off the "Rock or Bust" live tour in May 2015 in the Netherlands.

It is not known if drummer Rudd will join the group after he was ordered in December to stay off drugs by a New Zealand judge. He was also charged with trying to set up a murder, which was later withdrawn because of lack of evidence.



Rock band AC/DC lead guitarist Angus Young (R) and vocalist Brian Johnson perform during a concert at the Telenor Arena in Fornebu, near Oslo, in this file photo taken on 18 Feb, 2009.—REUTERS

Jack White, who has performed at Coachella in the past as the front man for The White Stripes, will headline the festival's Saturday lineup, while hip

hop artist Drake will be the top act for the first time on Sunday.

Drawing crowds of more than 80,000 people, Coachella has grown into one of the top

music festivals in North America since starting in 1999.

Previous festivals have featured headliners such as Prince, Kings of Leon, Beastie Boys, Madonna, Jay-Z and Kanye West.

The lineup of around 150 acts this year features established performers such as Interpol, Ryan Adams and Florence + the Machine, and rising stars that include Hozier, FKA Twigs and Kiesza.

While Coachella has returned to its rock music roots in recent years, it still features electronic dance music artists, including DJs David Guetta, Alesso and Kaskade, all big draws for the crowds dancing late into the desert night. Tickets start at \$375 (247 pounds) and go on sale on 7 January at 12 pm PST (2000 GMT).

Reuters



Director Ava DuVernay

'Selma' director makes history before awards are bestowed

LOS ANGELES, 7 Jan — The last film Ava DuVernay directed cost \$200,000 (131,735 pounds), while her new movie "Selma" was 100 times that.

It was a big step up for the former Hollywood publicist, one that has reaped recognition even before the awards season takes off at the Golden Globes on Sunday.

Regardless of whether she and the Martin Luther King Jr biopic collect honours, DuVernay made history as the first African-American woman to be nominated for best director in the 72 years of the Globes. If she wins, she would be the first black man or woman to win a best movie director Golden Globe.

"I don't believe I am the first one who has made something worthy," DuVernay told Reuters. "That is where the bittersweet moment comes in. It is sweet for me in this moment and my mother is very

happy, but certainly I know I stand on the shoulders of a lot of amazing women."

"Selma," which focuses on the civil rights leader's role in the seminal 1965 marches in Alabama for black voters' rights, was percolating for years and several directors had come and gone.

DuVernay, 42, got the call from the actor signed to play King, David Oyelowo, who was in her previous movie.

It seemed like destiny. No other filmmaker she knew had a father from the county where Selma is located, nor a mother who crossed the landmark bridge featured in the marches on her way to work. "That was the entry point that allowed me to go from a \$200,000 film to a \$20 million film without a lot of jitters because ... I know that place, I know how to recreate the lives of black folk on film," DuVernay said.

She also knew she had "a damn good King" in Oyelowo, nominated for best actor in a drama at the Golden Globes.

"He's a Brit, he is very posh, but he is one of the most exquisite souls and hard-working actors I have ever met," she

said. DuVernay has also been praised for deftly handling a large supporting cast that includes veterans like Oprah Winfrey, a producer of the film, and newcomers like Canadian Stephan James.

"If there is anything I bring from my publicity background it is working with a lot of people at one time," she said.

The film, which goes into wide release on Friday, has resonated in the current debate about racial justice in America following killings of unarmed black men by white police officers. It is nominated for the most coveted Golden Globe award, best drama, and could earn a best picture Oscar nod.

One thing not going DuVernay's way is criticism that President Lyndon Johnson is misrepresented in the film as lukewarm to African-Americans' fight for voting rights.

"It's not a documentary. I'm not a historian. I'm a storyteller," DuVernay said of the controversy last weekend. "And we take it from there. We don't let this stuff get us down, we just go onward."—Reuters

Gossip Girl star Blake Lively welcomes first child with Ryan Reynolds

BEIJING, 7 Jan — US actress Blake Lively and actor Ryan Reynolds have welcomed their first child, according to media reports on Tuesday.

Born near the couple's home in Bedford, New York, the little one is reportedly doing well. The sex of the newborn has not been revealed.

Reynolds couldn't contain his excitement over becoming a father. "I'm just excited about having a buddy," he said.

During pregnancy, Lively was keen on sharing photos to show off her adorable baby bumps for all to see.

The 27-year-old actress, who became famous when she starred in popular TV series Gossip Girl, has been open about her desire to start a family and said that family is what he always wanted since she was a little girl.

Xinhua

Bradley Cooper plays air guitar to celebrate 40th birthday

LOS ANGELES, 7 Jan — Hollywood star Bradley Cooper displayed his surprising air guitar skills during his appearance on the "Tonight Show".

The 'Elephant Man' actor, who turned 40 recently, said that playing air guitar was a skill he'd honed since his days as a music-mad little boy, reported *Us* magazine.

"You have a little musical talent," the show host asked the hunky



star, introducing the unlikely segment to the audience. "I'm glad you said that because it's very little," Cooper agreed.

"I play air guitar. When I was a kid I had a lot of time on my hands and there's this one song by Neil Young. It's just the guitar solo from 'Down by the River'. To air guitar to it is so meaningless but I'd love to give you a little taste. It's long!" he said.—PTI

Sony's 'The Interview' earns \$31 million online, \$5 million at theatres

LOS ANGELES, 7 Jan — Sony's provocative North Korea parody "The Interview" has earned more than \$31 million (20.47 million pounds) from online, cable and telecoms sales since its December release, Sony Pictures Entertainment said on Tuesday.

The raunchy comedy film was rented or purchased more than 4.3 million times between 24 December and 4 January on online and video-on-demand platforms.

To date, the film has earned \$5 million at the theatrical box office, with 580 independent theatres showing the movie in North America. —Reuters

GENERAL

Nadal comeback ends in loss to German journeyman

DOHA, 7 Jan — Rafa Nadal's season got off to a miserable start as his comeback from injury and illness stalled in the Qatar Open first round with a 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 defeat by German journeyman Michael Berrer on Tuesday.

The Spaniard, who endured a stop-start season during the latter half of 2014 after suffering from a wrist injury and appendicitis, looked on track for a promising win when he took the first set at the warm-up event for this month's Australian Open.

However, 127th-ranked Berrer came out firing winners to all corners of the court to pull off his first victory over a top five player. "These things happen after a long time without being on the road... being in competition. I was playing with more nerves because after a long time away I wanted to win," world number three Nadal told reporters.

"My motivation and my hunger to keep doing things well is still the same." Although the 34-year-old German achieved the remarkable feat in his final season on tour, he did not get too carried away by the



Rafael Nadal of Spain returns the ball to Michael Berrer of Germany during their match at the Qatar Open tennis tournament in Doha on 6 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

result. "It's really unbelievable," said Berrer, who until Tuesday had won just four games against the former world number one.

"Losing 1-6 felt like the other matches against him so I had to do something. It's my last season, I'm going for it, I have nothing to lose, I'm enjoying it here so why not."

"It's one of the matches that will stay in my memory but, let's be honest, it was the first match for Rafa after many months of injuries, so we have to be realistic. But for me great."

Nadal had three break points to level the third set at 5-5 but despite jitters from Berrer, who served

two double faults trying to close out the win, the German hung on to watch his opponent whip a service return wide on match point.

Reuters

Inter hold Juve, miserable debut for Zola



Juventus' Arturo Vidal (L) and Inter Milan's Gary Medel jump for the ball during their Italian Serie A soccer match at the Juventus stadium in Turin on 6 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

MILAN, 7 Jan — Serie A leaders Juventus were held to a 1-1 draw by Inter Milan who hit back through a clinical Mauro Icardi strike after conceding an early Carlos Tevez goal on Tuesday.

Second-placed AS Roma cut the gap to one point with a 1-0 win at Udinese, although the hosts claimed that Davide Astori's header never crossed the line after it bounced down off the crossbar.

Gianfranco Zola's Serie A coaching career got off to a miserable start when his Cagliari side were thumped 5-0 at Palermo. Germany forward Mario Gomez missed a penalty and Fiorentina had two men sent off in a 1-0 defeat at bottom club Parma while a spectacular goal by Simone Zaza, who met a corner with a full-blooded volley, gave Sassuolo a shock 2-1 win at AC Milan.

Two goals from Argentina forward Gonzalo Higuain took his tally to nine and helped Napoli win 4-1 at relegation-threatened Cesena, keeping them joint third with Lazio who beat Sampdoria 3-0 on Monday.

Jose Callejon also scored and Daniele Capelli turned Marek Hamsik's shot into his own goal.

Titleholders Juventus lead with 40 points from 17 games with Roma on 39 and Lazio and Napoli on 30.

Tevez gave Juventus a fifth-minute lead with his 11th goal of the season as the hosts dominated the first half.

Reuters

Everton's Lukaku grabs late equaliser vs West Ham

LONDON, 7 Jan — Everton's Romelu Lukaku spared his side a fifth straight defeat by snatching an added-time equaliser to salvage a 1-1 home draw with West Ham United in the FA Cup third round on Tuesday.

It had looked like being another dismal occasion for Everton when West Ham centre back James Collins was left unmarked to head the visitors into the lead from Morgan Amalfitano's corner to the near post 11 minutes into the second half.

But Lukaku volleyed home after Bryan Oviedo crossed into the area to force a replay and relieve the tension and frustration

that had been building inside Goodison Park as well as lifting some of the pressure off Everton manager Roberto Martinez.

It was a first goal in seven matches for Belgium striker Lukaku, who was signed for 28 million pounds (\$42.42 million) from Chelsea in the close season but has struggled to justify the price tag in a mixed start to the campaign. "It would have been a crime if we had been out of the cup," Everton boss Martinez told BT Sport.

"I am pleased with the character and the reaction we showed. We are low on confidence, but it was a phenomenal reaction and it could easily be a turning

point." Everton have won only one of their last 10 matches in all competitions and hopes that Lukaku's late leveller could be a catalyst for an upturn in fortunes will face a stern test when they host Manchester City in the Premier League on Saturday. The result extends West Ham's winless streak to four games ahead of next week's replay at Upton Park with the winners facing a clash against Doncaster Rovers or Bristol City.

For West Ham manager Sam Allardyce, whose team's excellent start to the season has tapered away in recent weeks, conceding such a late goal was a bitter blow.—Reuters

Australia expect defensive slogs at Asian Cup

MELBOURNE, 7 Jan — Asian Cup hosts Australia do not expect the same free-flowing contests that marked their World Cup campaign in Brazil and are gearing up to face teams intent on stifling their attacking threat in the group stage, said midfielder Mark Bresciano.

The Socceroos lost all three of their matches in Brazil to be eliminated from the group stage but won admirers for their enterprising play against the Netherlands, Chile and Spain. Australia play world number 124 Kuwait in their tournament opener on Friday, before matches against 69th-ranked South Korea and 93rd-ranked Oman, and some might expect an easier run in front of home fans.

Not so, according to playmaker Bresciano, who said their Asian Cup opponents might prove tougher to crack than the teams at the World Cup.

"At the World Cup obviously, it was flowing, attacking games (for us),

but I think we were playing against other opposition that play the same style of football," he said.

"I think this time around we'll be playing against other countries playing a different style, obviously going to stop us trying to play that attacking football for ourselves."

"But we're going to try to play the best to our ability and create as much opportunity as we can. But we know, for us, they're going to probably be tougher opponents to play against."

Kuwait, Australia's first opponents at Melbourne's Rectangular Stadium on Friday, will be something of an unknown quantity given they have had only four weeks under new coach Nabil Maaloul, who replaced Brazilian Jovan Vieira after a poor Gulf Cup of Nations.

Kuwait's warmup match against United Arab Emirates was cancelled at the last minute on Saturday due to a dispute over recording the game.—Reuters

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(8-1-2015, Thursday)

6:00 am

• Travelogue
Programme

6:30 am

• Honour Song of
Alinka Kyaw Swar
Myoma Nyein

6:55 am

• TV Drama Series

7:20 am

• Fashion Show

7:30 am

• TV Drama Series

8:15 am

• TV Drama Series

9:00 am

• Musical
Programme

9:10 am

• Pyi Thu Ni Ti

9:25 am

• ASEAN-China
Cultural Show

9:45 am

• Myanmar Video

12:00 am

• Close Down

MITV MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(8-1-15 07:00 am~
9-1-15 07:00 am) MST

* Local News

* Back To A Paradise
(Ep-2)

* World News

* Sagaing: Po Kwel
Kono Nat Festival

* Local News

* Beauties of Makyee
Island

* World News

* Independent
Filmmaker

* Local News

* Black Gold (P - I)

* World News

* Dhamma School

* Local News

* Five Treasures in
the Ancient City of

MraukU

* World News

* My Life & My Art

* Local News

* A Visit To
San-Taw-Shin

Kyike-Hti-Yo
Pagoda

* World News

* Nang

* Local News

* "Myanmar's Beauty
and Nature" Beach

* World News

* Traffic Police

* Local News

* Chef Life

* "Phyo Aridans"

* World News

* Kay Tu Mar Lar

"The Family"

* Local News

* Htan Taw Drums

(Part-I) "Osi"

* World News

* In The Studio:

Zip Zapt &

Air Air

Bouchard thrashes sluggish Serena in Perth

PERTH, 7 Jan — Canadian teenager Eugenie Bouchard swatted aside an out-of-sorts Serena Williams 6-2, 6-1 at the Hopman Cup in Perth on Tuesday.

The American world number one's body language throughout the contest suggested she would rather have been anywhere else than on the blue hardcourts in Western Australia.

An on-court espresso helped spark her into life as she overcame a first set bagel to beat Italy's Flavia Pennetta 0-6, 6-3, 6-0 on Monday in the round robin mixed team event but nothing could help bring her out of Tuesday's malaise.

"I don't know what's wrong with me. I'm so tired," Williams said after the match. "It's weird. I can't get my body to move.

I feel like I've got no energy.

"It's a little frustrating because I know I can play two thousand times better."

Sluggish footwork and uncharacteristically slow serves allowed Bouchard to break the 33-year-old with ease as the Canadian bounced back from a 6-0, 6-4 loss to Czech Lucie Safarova in her opener.

Williams had complained of jet-lag following her previous day's efforts against Pennetta but she looked in good spirits as she teamed up with John Isner to win their mixed doubles against the Italians for a 3-0 whitewash later on Monday evening.

Williams, who did not call the trainer to court on Tuesday, showed flashes of her usual brilliance against



Serena Williams

Bouchard as she went for her shots but never had the consistency, or the fight, to beat the Canadian.

"I've been trying to rest up," Williams said. "I did a little gym work, but I just felt depleted. I don't know why. I don't know

how to describe it.

"I've just got to get my feet moving. I have to figure it out. Hopefully I can do better in the next match." Whether it was jet-lag, illness or something else, Bouchard did not care as she notched a



Eugenie Bouchard of Canada

first win over the 18-times grand slam singles champion in the warm-up event for the year's first major, the Australian Open, later this month in Melbourne.

"I think I played pretty solid, I'm happy I came out and put on a better show

than last time, the 19-year-old world number six said in a courtside interview.

Isner was next up against Vasek Pospisil before the quartet meet in the mixed doubles later on Tuesday.

Reuters

Toure in the running for record fourth African award

CAPE TOWN, 7 Jan — Yaya Toure has a chance to become the first player to be named African Footballer of the Year four years in a row when the 2014 winner is announced in Lagos on Thursday.

Toure is one of a trio of finalists, along with Nigeria goalkeeper Vincent Enyeama and Gabon striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, for the annual accolade voted for by coaches and captains of the continent's national teams.

Toure has earned another nomination on the back of excellent perfor-

mances for Manchester City in the Premier League rather than his achievements with the Ivory Coast, who failed to reach the second round at the World Cup in Brazil and struggled through the qualifiers for the 2015 African Nations Cup.

The 31-year-old scored in Manchester City's League Cup final win over Sunderland in March and netted 20 goals on their run to the Premier League title.

But he suffered heart break in Brazil when the Ivory Coast were eliminat-

ed from the group phase by a last-minute Greece goal in their final match.

Aubameyang and Enyeama are finalists for the first time.

The 25-year-old French-born Aubameyang, who was a youth player at AC Milan, has been nominated on the back of superb performances with club side Borussia Dortmund, notably in the first half of the year.

He also helped Gabon to Nations Cup qualification although missed their last two key qualifiers controversially amid fears over the Ebola virus.

Enyeama was outstanding at the World Cup where Nigeria qualified for the second round. The 32-year-old has also been a consistent performer in Ligue 1 with Lille.

Only Samuel Eto'o has won the award four times, but not successively. The Cameroon great earned a hat-trick of awards between 2003 and 2005 and was again Footballer of the Year in 2010. Abedi Pele won three in a row from 1991 to 1993.

Toure has won three years in a row since 2011, beating Seydou Keita (Mali) to second place in 2011, compatriot Didier Drogba in 2012 and John Obi Mikel of Nigeria last year.

Reuters

I would have signed new deal in the summer, says Gerrard



Liverpool's Steven Gerrard (R) celebrates his goal during their English Premier League soccer match against Leicester City at the King Power Stadium in Leicester, central England, on 2 Dec, 2014. —REUTERS

LONDON, 7 Jan — Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard has said he would have agreed to stay at the club if he had been offered a new contract in the close season.

The 34-year-old announced last week he would leave at the end of this season and move to Major League Soccer in the United States after spending his entire career at the Merseyside club.

Gerrard said at the weekend the turning point in his decision to depart came when manager Brendan Rodgers told him he could no longer play every game.

He did not blame the club for effectively making

up his mind to leave but said he was ready to commit his future to Liverpool in the summer after they finished as Premier League runners-up.

"If a contract had been put in front of me in pre-season I would have signed it," Gerrard was quoted as saying by the Liverpool Echo on Tuesday.

"I'd just retired from England to concentrate all my efforts on Liverpool. I didn't want my club games to be tailored.

"My injury record had been fantastic for the past two and a half years and I had a great season from a personal point of view last season.

"It's all ifs, buts and hindsight now. That period between the summer and the end of November gave me thinking time.

"There's no blame and I'm not angry about it. There are other people in the squad and the club had other things to worry about.

"There is no finger pointing from me towards the manager or anyone else at the club."

Gerrard, who scored twice on Monday to help Liverpool beat AFC Wimbledon 2-1 and reach the FA Cup fourth round, is close to signing an 18-month deal with the Los Angeles Galaxy, according to media reports.—Reuters



Manchester City's Yaya Toure stands in the snow during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester City and West Bromwich Albion at The Hawthorns in West Bromwich, central England on 26 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS