

President U Thein Sein attends opening ceremony of Pyu Creek Dam



President U Thein Sein views Pyu Creek Dam at its opening ceremony in Pyu Township.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan — President U Thein Sein delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of Pyu Creek Dam, its diversion dam and hydropower station at the dam near milepost 114 on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway in Pyu Township on Thursday morning.

Present at the ceremony were Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ko Ko, U Aung Min, U Kyaw Hsan, U Myint Hlaing, U Ohn Myint, U Khin Maung Soe, U

Kyaw Lwin, Chief Minister U Nyan Win, Lt-Gen Hla Min of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and officials.

In his speech, President U Thein Sein said he was there to greet local people and to explain the efforts of the government, adding that Pyu Creek Dam was built by the previous government to prevent the overflowing of the Sittoung River, to supply water for agriculture and drinking and to gener-

ate electric power.

The president then said that the government would complete tasks that would contribute to the public interests during its term and

the region would be able to enjoy benefits from the opening of the dam. The government was able to adopt a new democratic system as soon as it took office and the objective of the government was to fulfill the will of the people, peace and socioeconomic development, according to the president.

Although the democratic government had to serve its limited term, it was able to change from one system to another through political, administrative and economic reforms, the president said, adding that Myanmar had transformed without bloodshed and comparatively peacefully. The president pointed out that in the political reform process, the government was able to pave the way for all to participate in the process by releasing political prisoners while efforts

were being made to end internal armed conflicts, resulting in round table talks where participants shook one another's hands. Nationwide ceasefire agreement would be signed in the near future and political dialogues would be followed for sustainable peace, said the president, promising that both sides would cooperate for agreements and solutions would be sought through negotiations for disagreements. In the economic reform, the president said that the government had been implementing eight processes for rural development and poverty reduction for socioeconomic development of rural people who make up 70 percent of the population.

The president then noted that agricultural development was essential for rural development, which would reduce poverty, say-

ing that the government had been building irrigation facilities so that peasants could grow multiple crops instead of only one crop while efforts were being exerted for changing from traditional farming to mechanized one. To do so, it was necessary for peasants to form cooperative societies, according to the president who also said that human resource development was important for tapping abundant natural resources of the country and the government was making arrangements to send outstanding youths abroad to study there. As the government had enacted the foreign investment law to attract foreign investment, some foreign businesses invested in Myanmar while others were studying or preparing to do so, according to the president.

(See page 3)



Yangon-Mandalay Expressway to be run under Build-Operate-Transfer model

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 8 Jan — With an official invitation for expressions of interest for the upgrade of Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay Expressway, Myanmar's Ministry of Construction called on local and foreign investors to undertake operating the road under the Build-Operate-Transfer model.

As of Monday, EOI forms are available for interested international and local companies until next Friday, the ministry said, adding that the deadline

(See page 2)



A road section of the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay expressway that is planned to be upgraded with local and foreign investments.

PHOTO: YE MYINT

Women's rights group to put women's protection bill to parliament within two months

By Aye Min Soe

YANGON, 8 Jan — Women's rights groups are planning to bring a bill on protection for women against violence to par-

liament within one or two months.

Government officials and women's activists are now working together to finish the bill which is expected to be ready within one or two months to be put forward to parliament, said Daw Pansy of the Gender Equality Net Work.

They have to draft the bill as Myanmar's existing legislation against sexual violence on women is not enough to protect the women against various forms of violence, she said.

The objective of the law is to protect women from various forms of violence as well as to give legal rights to women if violence occurs, according GEN.

The bill has guaranteed protection for women not only from sexual violence but also from various

(See page 2)

Corrigendum

Please read "By acknowledging the EU's welcoming of the progress achieved by Myanmar and taking into consideration the existing bilateral constructive cooperation, Myanmar did not call for a vote on the draft resolution" instead of the sixth paragraph of the news under the heading of "An interview on Myanmar's human rights situation approved at 69th Plenary Session of UN General Assembly" appeared on the front page of this daily issued on 3-1-2015.—GNLM

Provident funds helpful to savers and nation

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan—The practice of saving money is helpful to individual savers and the nation as a whole, Union Minister U Hla Tun told a meeting here

on Thursday, saying that Myanmar Provident Fund (MPF) is the first of its kind and as a result requires a detailed, broad analysis of sectors involved.

According to the union minister, a bill has been drafted for the fund which he said is designed to promote house ownership, education and medical expenses of workers.

He added more detailed discussions should be made for the fund to cover pension systems and social security systems, expressing his belief that coordination between departments concerned would come up with a better plan.

After taking briefings from officials, the union minister said that the provident fund is worth the effort and called for concerted cooperation. —MNA

Union Minister U Hla Tun highlights practice of saving money at meeting of Myanmar Provident Fund (MPF).—MNA



People in Kachin State enjoy Kachin State Day, Manaw festival

Myitkyina, 8 Jan—A ceremony to mark the 67th anniversary Kachin State Day and Manaw Festival took place at Sitapu Manaw Ground in Myitkyina, Kachin State, on Thursday.

Chairman of the organizing committee U La Khari La Aung extended greetings. Chief Minister of Kachin State U La John Ngan Hsai delivered an address.

Union Minister for Commerce U Win Myint, the chief minister, the organizing committee chairman and Catholic Bishop

op Lwam Dong formally opened the ceremony.

Students from basic education schools and Myitkyina University and colleges performed variety of dances to the spectators.

The ceremony was also attended by the speaker of the state Hluttaw, the commander of Northern Command, senior military officers, diplomats, NGOs, entrepreneurs and local people.

After that, they enjoyed Manaw dances at the festival.

Kachin State IPRD

YCDC to improve downtown traffic control system in FY 2015-16

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

YANGON, 8 Jan—As part of an effort to reduce traffic jams in the city, the Yangon City Development Committee plans to install automatic traffic control systems at more than 60 points in downtown Yangon, especially in busy areas, in the 2015-2016 financial year, an official told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

The committee has already submitted its proposal to the government. When the body gives the green light, the committee will continue installation work through an open tender system, U Nyan Tha, an officer from the YCDC's engineering department (roads and bridges), said.

Locals welcome the move to reduce traffic congestion urban areas. There

are more traffic problems every day and it is a major daily headache.

With the financial aid from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), an automatic traffic control system was installed at 10 intersections in two townships of Yangon—Yankin and Mayan—on 21 December.

Eighteen detectors have also been fixed in the newly installed traffic posts. These devices can clear heavy traffic jams every 15 minutes. It could reduce traffic congestion by 25 per cent, U Nyan Tha said.

“After installation of the new traffic clearance system, I noticeably see a good traffic condition in the project-affected points, especially at Chawdwin-

gon junction on Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, one of the traffic-busy roads in Yangon,” Ko Naing, a taxi driver, said.

Recently, members of the Yangon City Development Committee have already performed a two-day traffic survey at these intersections to promote the level of services of traffic posts. The traffic volume count survey also aims to measure traffic conditions in comparison with past surveys, according to the official.

Up to now, nearly 170 traffic lights have been installed in Yangon, with the official estimating these numbers will be increased up to 200 in the future.

GNLM

Myanmar, Australia consult bilateral air services

The consultation for revising air services agreement between Myanmar and Australia in progress. DCA



YANGON, 8 Jan—Consultations for revising the existing Air Services Agreement between Myanmar and Australia were held at the Department of Civil Aviation, here on 6-7 January 2015.

The Myanmar delegation was headed by U Win Swe Tun, Director-General of the Department of Civil

Aviation of the Ministry of Transport and the Australian delegation was headed by Mr. Samuel Lucas, Director, Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

In the consultations, the two delegations agreed on an initial final draft of new Air Services Agreement, and also agreed to

take measures for the formal signing of the Agreement. The two delegations further agreed on route rights, traffic rights, and operational rights for airlines of both countries.

The existing Air Services Agreement between Myanmar and Australia was signed in 1976.

DCA/GNLM

Women's rights group to put...

(from page 1)

forms of violence such as domestic violence, domestic abuse, physical and mental abuse of women, economic violence and abusing women by using information technology, said Daw Pansy.

The women activists held a press conference after meeting with Ms Yang-hee Lee, United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar on Thursday.

The drafting of the bill is led by Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Reset-

tlement and representatives from different races and religions are participating so that the drafting of bill can be inclusive, she said.

Myanmar and international law experts have also assisted in writing the bill, and all participants for drafting the bill learned about international legislation against sexual violence on women and considered what should be included in the bill after seeing weaknesses in the current legislation in Myanmar, according to GEN.

GNLM

Yangon-Mandalay Expressway...

(from page 1)

for return of the EOIs is 30 January noon.

According to the EOI advertisement in the state-owned newspapers on 28 December, the opening of EOIs will take place on 16 February.

A build-operate-transfer model requires investors to pay for construction, collect revenue from road users and eventually transfer the infrastructure to the state.

The ministry, in its invitation for EOI, revealed a plan to expand the road width from the current four lanes to eight lanes and pave the 366-mile and three-furlong-long Yan-

gon-Mandalay expressway with asphalt concrete.

The proposed project also includes installation of guard rails, CCTV, fencing on both sides of the road to avoid trespassing and construction of service roads for nearby villages.

The project is intended to be an eight-lane expressway of international standard in line with its original master plan, it added.

On attracting both local and international companies to invest in the country's main road from Yangon to Mandalay via Nay Pyi Taw, The Global New Light of Myanmar asked people using the facility frequently for their

opinion of the plans.

“More than 5,000 vehicles, most are passenger buses, pass through the road daily. We don't dare to risk our passengers' lives. Concrete road causes tire punctures. The safety of our passengers is our top priority. So, I welcome the upgrade of this road and the sooner the better,” Ko Myo, who works for a hire care service, said.

“It is the smooth and fast way to get to Yangon within the five or six hours of travel time,” said U Zaw Win, a government employee who commutes between Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon twice a week. “But, I feel anxious whenever I take a bus to get to my family in Yangon and my workplace

in Nay Pyi Taw.”

If the road is upgraded to international standard, there will be far fewer accidents, the 45-year-old added.

U Toe Maung, a highway bus driver with around 20 years service, said a significant number of expressway deaths and injuries are due to excessive speed, driving under the influence, drowsiness while driving, a lapse of concentration on turns or while using mobile phones or mechanical failures.

Apart from upgrading the expressway, making it safer calls for awareness in enhancing safety in vehicles and improvements in road-user behavior, he added.—GNLM

NATIONAL

President U Thein Sein attends . . .

(from page 1)

Regional development was essential for national development while reliable transportation and electricity, for which the government had been exerting efforts, were required to do so, the president said, advising that it was necessary for the people to set up small and medium businesses by using electricity. Doing so would also provide job opportunities which required human resources development that depended on education, the president pointed out, saying that the government placed an emphasis on education while measures were being taken for development of socio-economic development of government employees including the provident funds for health, education of their offspring and housing.

In conclusion, the president urged local people to cooperate with the

government for stability and the rule of law that were essential for national development.

After the president's speech, a local people expressed his thanks to the president, who later presented gifts to staff who built the dam, and greeted the local people warmly.

Then, Union Ministers U Aung Min, U Myint Hlaing and U Khin Maung Soe and Chief Minister of Bago Region U Nyan Win formally opened the dam.

The president then sprayed scented water on the stone pillar marking the opening ceremony. Afterwards, the president and party inspected the dam and its diversion dam before hearing reports from Union Minister U Myint Hlaing and Director-General U Kyaw Myint Hlaing.

After hearing the reports, the president urged the officials to carry out maintenance tasks of the dam, to prevent the wast-



Local people from townships of Bago Region heartily welcome President U Thein Sein on his tour of Pyu Creek Dam.—MNA

age of water, to supply water in time for farming and to be prepared for natural disasters.

Then, the president and party inspected the hydro power station of the dam. The hydro power station was one of the 11 projects included in the report on building dams

across rivers and creeks in the Sittoung Valley to prevent floods by the UNDP in 1964. Out of the 11 projects, nine have been completed while one is under construction and another has not been implemented.

After completion of all projects, 1070 megawatt of electricity will be

generated. Later, the president and party continued to Ottwin and inspected development of farmland on 103 acres of land for advanced mechanized farming near Yehlian Village in water supply area of Khaboung Dam. After hearing reports about the

farmland, the president presented gifts to farmers there. On their way home, the president and party cordially greeted local people from villages near mile post 152 who were waiting for the president to greet him.

MNA

MPs to cooperate in scrutiny of bills for serving interests of State and people



Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann discusses functions for 12th regular session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and duty of MPs to scrutinize bills.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan — The union government will submit the national planning bill for 2015-16 fiscal year,

the union budget bill and the taxation bill to the 12th regular session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Speaker of Py-

idaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann told a coordination meeting between the central committee for holding 2015 Hluttaw meetings and work committees at Hluttaw complex, here, on Thursday.

The speaker noted that the five-year term of the present Hluttaw will come to an end on 31 January 2016. Depending on the result of elections, the Hluttaw will be reconstituted, he said.

He stressed the need to cooperate in scrutiny of the bills for serving interests of the State and the people.

The director-general of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office reported on formation of the central committee for holding the 2015 Hluttaw meetings and preparations for reconstitution of work committees.

Union ministers and deputy ministers included in the central committee and work committees discussed preparations for ensuring smooth process for the Hluttaw affairs.

Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa focused on foods and accommodation for MPs and management matters.

The speaker reviewed discussions in the meeting.

The 12th regular sessions of Pyidaungsu, Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaw will resume on 19 January.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Mya Nyein, Union Ministers U Nyan Tun Aung, Dr Than Aung, U Than Htay and deputy ministers.

MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan — Myanmar introduced its scout association in 1920, with state heads playing a leading role in scout activities that peaked in the post-independence period from 1948 to 1962, U Khin Aung Myint, Speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw, told a ceremony at a high school in Yamethin township, Mandalay Region, on Thursday.

The high school had its first scout association with the aim of training students

for philanthropic work and sports. The school had a scout building, whose construction started on 8 January 1934, according to the speaker.

He said the 81-year-old building has now been renovated, doing credit to the township.

Myanmar saw scout activities come to a halt in 1962, but President U Thein Sein resurrected them and formed a scout association in line with international scouting poli-

cies and procedures.

The speaker pointed out that scouting has nothing to do with political and military affairs, urging the scouts to render noble services in accord with the scouting motto "Be Prepared".

According to Union Minister U Soe Thane, Myanmar has plans to increase the number of scouts nationwide to about 100,000, calling for parents and teachers to join hands with the government.—MNA

81-year-old scout building renovated and opened in Yamethin



Girl guides participate in building of tent.—MNA

BEPPS in Lewe Township gets new school building



NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan — A ceremony to hand over new school building constructed by Max Myanmar Company was held at Basic Education Post-Primary

School in Aungnancho Village, Lewe Township, on 5 January.

Members of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Myint Swe and U Phone Zaw Han, Nay Pyi Taw Education Director U Soe Win, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Htay Win and officials were in attendance. Manager of Max Myanmar Cement Plant U Thein Win handed over documents related to the school building to Director U Soe Win.

The school building is a 120 feet long and 30 feet wide one-storey structure. The company spent K39.1 million on construction.

Zaw Myo Naing

Students join School Family Day in Nyaunglebin



An official presents prize to an outstanding teacher at School Family Day of Nyaunglebin Township for 2014-15 academic year.

NYAUNGLEBIN, 8 Jan — A ceremony to launch the School Family Day for 2014-15 academic year was held at No 1 Basic Education High School in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Region, on 6 January.

Township Education Officer U Thein Zaw Kan spoke on the occasion. Township Education Officer Daw Khin Than Nu explained the purpose of holding the school family day.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Soe Myint, the township administrator, Major Aung Myo Kyaw of No 20 Light Infantry Regiment and departmental of-

ficials presented prizes to outstanding students and teachers. Township level departmental officials, school heads and students from Nyaunglebin, Pyuntada, Madauk and Peinzalok enjoyed the ceremony.

Nay Lin
(Nyaunglebin)

Yadanabon FC recruits star players to take part in Asian Champions League qualifier

MANDALAY, 8 Jan — Myanmar National League champion Yadanabon FC representing Mandalay Region will play a playoff match of Asia Champions League qualifier with Singapore's first division champion Warriors FC at Mandalay Thiri Stadium in Chanmyathazi Township on 4 February.

Yadanabon FC has recruited a Liberian striker Boakay Eddie Foday and extended an agreement term with defender Okpechi Happiness and agreed to recruit Nanda Lin Kyaw Chit from Ayeyawady United, Tin Win Aung from Zweigabin FC and Nay Myo Aung from GFA.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)



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Agriculture Department to produce quality Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan — Agriculture Department sowed paddy seeds on a 100-acre of farmland for production of Palethwe hybrid paddy seeds on 3000-acre modern farm in Dekkhinathiri Township on 7 January.

Director-General U Kyaw Win of the depart-

ment and officials, responsible persons of agricultural companies and local farmers were in attendance.

At the briefing hall, the director-general explained management of agricultural technology and health and weather relations.

Ko Pauk
(Okkar Myay)

Staff of Agriculture Department sowing paddy seeds at 100-acre farm in Dekkhinathiri Township.



Myaungmya Health Department to build rural health branch

MYAUNGMYA, 8 Jan — A ceremony to donate a land plot for construction of rural health branch was held in Pakeikgyi Village in Myaungmya Township, Ayeyawady Region, on 7 January.

Well-wisher Daw Win donated the one-acre land where the rural health branch will be built to the village development committee.

She has necessary documents related to the land plot issued by Township Settlement and Land Records Department.

Upon completion, the rural health branch will give health care services to about 3,500 people of the villages around Pakeikgyi Village.

Aung Min
(Myaungmya
IPRD)

LOCAL NEWS

Merchants discuss Opportunities for Cross-border Trade



MUSE, 8 Jan — A talk on opportunities for cross-border trade was held at the hall of New Star Light Industry in Muse Central Economic Zone Project in Muse, northern Shan State, on Wednesday.

Adviser to the President Professor Dr Aung Tun Thet gave talks on Opportunities for Cross-border Trade.

Myanmar opens 15 border trade stations—four at border sharing with China, seven with Thailand, two with India and two with Bangladesh. The professor replied to queries raised by local merchants.

Managing Director U Tin Zan Kyaw of Device Services Co. Ltd spoke on the occasion.

L Soe (IPRD)

Villagers get solar panels in Muse Township

MUSE, 8 Jan — A ceremony to donate solar panels for electrification of villages in Muse Township, northern Shan State, was held at the village in Muse Township, on 4 January.



Staff Officer U Sai Loung Kham of Department of Rural Development

ment explained systematic use of solar panel.

With the aim of ensuring village electrification, Department of Rural Development and Cherry Company provided one 80W solar panel, one 12V battery, one controller+inverter, two 3W bulbs and one 20W lamp to each house.

They plan to give 694 units of solar system to houses in Naunglonge village and 1,234 solar units to other villages.

The ceremony was attended by Pyithu Hluttaw representative Daw Nang Ngwe Ngwe, Muse District's deputy commissioner U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, Township administrator U Ko Ko Zaw and local ethnics.—*L Soe (IPRD)*

Fisheries Department to disburse loans to local fish breeders in Mandalay Region

MANDALAY, 8 Jan—A plan is underway to disburse K30 million each to villages included in the implementation of Emerald Green Project for development of livestock breeding on a manageable scale and of fish and meat sector in 18 villages of Mandalay Region in February, sources said.

Priority will be given to villages that need capital investment for engaging in fish breeding, Head of Mandalay Region Fisheries Department U Myo Aung

told media.

He said, “We received more fund for implementation of Emerald Green Project, so we will disburse loans to the local fish breeders. Depending on the fund, we will deliver more loans to the local breeders.”

The project is being implemented in 1,150 villages. Fisheries Department will disburse loans to 18 villages in Mandalay Region.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)

MCDC allows business at Mahaaungmye gems market as usual



MANDALAY, 8 Jan—Mandalay City Development Committee allows continuous trading at Mahaaungmye gems market (Kyaukwaing) and will help those wishing move to Myinmu gems market in Hsin Village, according to the MCDC.

“Some of merchants will carry out jewellery trading at new market while there remain some merchants in the old market,” said Mayor U Aung Moun.

Mandalay Region government is building a Jade Pagoda and a jade market in line with the town plan.

According to the announcement of the mayor, the merchants and shop owners cancelled a meeting in Oriental House on 7 January to stage the second

protest against move of shops from Mahaaungmye Gems Market to new one.

“The announcement was posted on the face-

book on 7 January. So, we changed our agenda of protest. We support upgrading of the market,”

committee not to move gems market U Kyaw Zaw Aung told media.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)

Futsal tournament wraps up in Chanayethazan Tsp



MANDALAY, 8 Jan — The Futsal tournament took place in Pyigy Pyawbwe Ward in Chanayethazan Township from 3 to 5 January, with participation of 44 teams.

Township officials presented K80,000

to champion PK team, K60,000 to second prize winner Pwint Yadana team and K50,000 each to joint third prize winners Zabukyaw and Tapwedoe teams.

Thiha Ko Ko (Mandalay)



Ex-PM's impeachment to test Thai junta's fragile calm

BANGKOK, 8 Jan — Thailand's legislature will start impeachment hearings this week against former Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who faces a lengthy political ban that could test a delicate calm established after a military coup last year.

The case hands the ruling junta its first big test of 2015 given Yingluck's popularity among millions of rural poor who elected her in a 2011 landslide.

Yingluck was removed from office in May after a court found her guilty of abuse of power, days before the military staged a coup after sometimes violent protests against her government that began in November 2013.

A day after she was removed, the country's anti-corruption body indicted her for dereliction of duty in relation to a controversial rice subsidy scheme.



Former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra

The National Anti-Corruption Commission found her guilty of mishandling the rice scheme, estimated to have cost \$15 billion in losses. The National Legislative Assembly (NLA) due to rule on Yingluck's impeachment was hand-picked by those behind last year's coup.

The hearings start on Friday and a decision could come by the end of this month, the NLA said. If im-

peached, Yingluck faces a five-year ban from office.

The junta has overseen a period of political stability but has struggled to revive the economy, Southeast Asia's second-biggest, which grew just 0.2 percent in the first nine months of 2014 due to weak exports and subdued domestic demand.

Critics say the case is part of the junta's ambition to end the influence of Yin-

gluck's powerful family and any move to impeach her could raise the specter of a backlash by her supporters.

"If Yingluck is removed it could ignite resistance to the military government," said Thanawut Wichaidit, a spokesman for the pro-Yingluck United Front For Democracy against Dictatorship group.

Martial law is still in place nationwide and protests are banned, but that has not stopped some farmers and activists from staging small rallies against the junta. Years of crisis have centered largely around Yingluck's billionaire brother Thaksin, whose populist policies won him huge support but upset the military-backed establishment. Thailand plunged into political crisis after Thaksin, whose parties have won every election since 2001, was deposed in a 2006 coup.—Reuters

Schools of Japanese traditional arts hold New Year ceremony



Dressed in kimono, students of the Ikenobo school of Japanese flower arrangement participate in a New Year flower arranging ceremony in Kyoto, western Japan, on 5 Jan, 2015.—KYODO NEWS

KYOTO, 8 Jan — As the New Year began, schools of Japanese traditional arts held ceremonies in Kyoto this week to mark the beginning of their activities for 2015.

At the Ikenobo school of Japanese flower arrangement, some 1,500 students aged eight to 96, dressed in kimono, participated in a

New Year flower arranging ceremony on 5 January.

The Urasenke school of Japanese tea ceremony began holding a six-day New Year tea ceremony on 7 January with guests invited from the business and political worlds. Around 2,200 people have been invited to the ceremony.

Kyodo News

Philippine gov't condemns murder of female reporter

MANILA, 8 Jan — The Philippine government condemned the killing of a female journalist in the northern province of Bataan on Thursday.

Authorities will make sure that justice will be served for the death of Nerlita Ledesma, 47, a tabloid reporter, said Herminio Coloma Jr, presidential communications

operations office secretary. "The PNP (Philippine National Police) is already going after the suspects," he said in a news briefing in Malacanang, the presidential palace.

Ledesma died on the spot after she was shot several bullets at close range by two motorcycle-riding killers on Thursday morning.—Xinhua

Malaysia condemns terrorist attack in Paris

KUALA LUMPUR, 8 Jan — Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak on Thursday condemned the attack on French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris that left 12 people dead. Najib said in his Twitter account "Malaysia condemns in the strongest terms all acts of violence. We stand in unity with the French people."

In a statement on Thursday, Malaysia's Foreign Min-

istry said, "the government of Malaysia strongly condemns the attack on the French satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* on 7 January."

"Nothing justifies taking innocent lives. Malaysia is united with the families of the victims, the government of France, and the French people," it said.

Xinhua

Electric fault triggers stampede in Cambodian garment factory

PHNOM PENH, 8 Jan — At least 63 workers at the Sun Best garment factory in south Cambodia's Kandal Province either got injured or fainted in a stampede triggered by an electric fault on Thursday morning, the police said in its website. "The electric fault occurred after factory electricians connected electrical wires improperly," it said, citing Mean Samnang, police chief of Snuol district, where the incident took place.

He said some 1,750 garment workers were on duty when the incident happened. "The electric fault triggered fears among

workers and they tried to make their way out of the factory, which resulted in a stampede," he said. "There was no fatality in the event, but some 63 workers were either slightly injured or fainted." The ill-fated workers had been sent to hospitals shortly after the incident and the rest of the workers were allowed to take a day-off.

The garment industry, the country's largest foreign exchange earner, made around 6 billion US dollars in revenues in 2014. The industry has some 960 factories employing about 620,000 workers, mostly females.—Xinhua

One killed in Philippine prison blast

MANILA, 8 Jan — At least one was killed and 19 others were injured in an explosion inside the Philippine New Bilibid Prison (NBP) on Thursday morning, the Bureau of Corrections said.

The incident took place at around 9:45 am local time when an alleged hand grenade exploded inside the security compound of the national penitentiary located in Muntinlupa City, Metro Manila.

The fatality died in the hospital inside the NBP while being treated. Investigation has been ongoing into the incident. Officers of NBP have been under fire after authorities conducted raids last month following reports that convicted drug lords still managed to continue with their illegal drug trade even under custody.—Xinhua



Photo taken on 7 Jan, 2015 shows a brand-new electric bus, 18 metres in length, at the Fuchengmen Outer street bus terminal in Beijing, capital of China. This batch of electric buses will put into operation recently.

XINHUA

French policewoman killed in shoot-out, hunt deepens for militant killers

PARIS, 8 Jan — A police-woman was killed in a shootout in southern Paris on Thursday, triggering searches in the area as the manhunt widened for two brothers suspected of killing 12 people at a satirical magazine in an apparent Islamist militant strike.

Police sources could not immediately confirm a link with the killings at Charlie Hebdo weekly newspaper which marked the worst attack on French soil for decades and which national leaders and allied states described as an assault on democracy.

Montrouge mayor Pierre Brossollette said the policewoman and a colleague went to the site to deal with a traffic accident. A car stopped and a man got out and shot at them before fleeing.

Witnesses said the shooter fled in a Renault Clio car. Police sources said he had been wearing a bullet-proof vest and had a handgun and assault rifle. However, one police officer at the scene told *Reuters* the man did not appear to fit the bill of the Charlie Hebdo shooters.

Live French television showed around a dozen police dressed in protective wear and helmets massed outside a building near the scene of the shoot-out.

The new incident came as France began a day of mourning for the journalists of Charlie Hebdo weekly and police officers shot dead on morning by black-hooded gunmen using Kalashnikov assault rifles. French tricolour flags flew at half mast.

Charlie Hebdo is well known for lampooning Islam, other religions and political figures. Tens of thousands took part in vigils across France on Wednesday to defend freedom of speech, many wearing badges declaring “Je Suis Charlie” (I Am Charlie) in support of the newspaper and the principle of freedom of speech.

Newspapers across Europe on Thursday either re-published its cartoons or mocked the killers with images of their own.

Britain’s *Daily Telegraph* depicted two masked gunman outside the doors of Charlie Hebdo saying to each other: “Be careful, they might have pens”. Many German newspapers republished Charlie Hebdo cartoons.

Police released photos of the two French nationals still at large, calling them “armed and dangerous”: brothers Cherif and Said Kouachi, aged 32 and 34, both of whom were already under watch by security services.

The attack has raised questions of security in countries throughout the Western world and beyond. Muslim community leaders have condemned the attack, but some have expressed fears of a rise in anti-Islamic feeling in a country with a large Muslim population.

In a separate incident, police sources said the window of a kebab shop next to a mosque in the central town of Villefrance-sur-Saone was blown out by an overnight explosion. Local media said there were no wounded.

Security services have long feared that nationals drawn into Islamist militant groups fighting in Syria and Iraq could return to their home countries to launch attacks — though there is no suggestion that the two suspects named by police had actually fought in either of these countries.

Britain’s Cobra security committee was meeting on Thursday morning. London’s transport network was target of an attack in 2005, four years after 9/11. There have been attacks in Kenya, Nigeria, India and Pakistan that have raised fears in Europe.

Islamist militants have repeatedly threatened France with attacks over its military strikes on



Islamist strongholds in the Middle East and Africa, and the government reinforced its anti-terrorism laws last year.

Prime Minister Manuel Valls said France faced a terrorist threat “without precedent” and confirmed the two brothers were known to security services. But he added it was too early to say whether authorities had underestimated the threat they posed.

“Because they were known, they had been followed,” he told RTL radio, adding: “We must think of the victims. Today it’s a day of mourning.”

A total of seven people had been arrested since the attack, he said. Police sources said they were mostly acquaintances of the two main suspects. One source said one of the brothers had been identified by his identity card, left in the getaway car.

Late Wednesday an 18-year-old man turned himself into police in Charleville-Mézières near the Belgian border as police carried out searches in Paris and the northeastern cities of Reims and Strasbourg. A legal source said he was the brother-in-law of one of the main suspects and French media quoted friends saying he was in school at the moment of

the attack.

Cherif Kouachi served 18 months in prison on a charge of criminal association related to a terrorist enterprise in 2005. He was part of an Islamist cell enlisting French nationals from a mosque in eastern Paris to go to Iraq to fight Americans in Iraq and arrested before leaving for Iraq himself.

Video captured during the Wednesday attack showed one of the assailants outside the Charlie Hebdo offices shouting “Allahu Akbar!” (God is Greatest) as shots rang out.

Another was seen calmly walking over to a wounded police officer lying on the street and shooting him with an assault rifle. The two men then climbed into a black car and drove off.

In another clip, the men are heard shouting in French: “We have killed Charlie Hebdo. We have avenged the Prophet Mohammad.”

Charlie Hebdo (Charlie Weekly) has courted controversy in the past with satirical attacks on political and religious leaders of all faiths and has published numerous cartoons ridiculing the Prophet Mohammad. Jihadists online repeatedly

warned that the magazine would pay for its ridicule.

Around France, tens of thousands of people joined impromptu rallies and vigils on Wednesday night in memory of the victims — among them some of France’s most prominent and best-loved political cartoonists — and to support freedom of speech.

Both the magazine’s founder and its current editor-in-chief were among those killed in what emergency services called to the scene described as executions carried out at point-blank range.

Satire has deep historical roots in Europe where ridicule and irreverence are seen as a means of chipping away at the authority of sometimes self-aggrandising political and religious leaders and institutions. Governments have frequently jailed satirists and their targets have often sued, but the art is widely seen as one of the mainstays of a liberal democracy.

French writer Voltaire enraged many in 18th century France with his caustic depictions of royalty and the Catholic Church. The German magazine *Simplicissimus* in its 70-year existence saw cartoonists jailed and fined for ridiculing figures from Kaiser Wilhelm to church leaders, Nazi grandees and communist activists.

“Freedom assassinated” wrote *Le Figaro* daily on its front page, while *Le Parisien* said: “They won’t kill freedom”.

On Thursday the highest state of alert was still in place, with tightened security at transport hubs, religious sites, media offices and department stores.

The last major attack in Paris was in the mid-1990s when the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) carried out a spate of attacks, including the bombing of a commuter train in 1995 which killed eight people and injured 150.—*Reuters*

US to deploy 12 F-16 fighters to Okinawa temporarily

WASHINGTON, 8 Jan — The US Defence Department will temporarily deploy 12 F-16 fighter jets and some 250 personnel to its Air Force base in Japan’s Okinawa starting this month, a Pentagon official said on Wednesday.

The planned deployment of the airplanes to Kadena Air Base from a base in Wisconsin will be part of a bid by the Pacific Command to train units in the Asia-Pacific region and last for a few months, the official said. The transfer of fighter jets and personnel is also to “keep our enemies

like North Korea guessing” the capabilities of the US military, the official added.

The US military has similarly stationed F-22 stealth fighter jets to the Kadena base on a temporary basis since 2007.

The F-16s and the personnel will be under the command of the US Air Force’s 18th Wing based in Kadena and the deployment is expected to enhance cooperation with the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in such fields as airplane operations and disaster relief.

Kyodo News

Pre-election lead for Greece’s Syriza narrowing

ATHENS, 8 Jan — The lead held by Greek opposition party Syriza over the ruling conservatives has narrowed, according to three polls conducted after Prime Minister Antonis Samaras called a snap parliamentary election for 25 January.

An Alco survey to be published in the *To Pontiki* newspaper on Thursday showed the radical leftist Syriza, which opposes Greece’s international bailout programme, would win a 33.8 percent share of the vote if elections were held now, ahead of Samaras’s New Democracy party, which would take 30.5 percent.

That marked a slight drop

from a 3.6-point lead Syriza held in the previous Alco survey. Syriza wants to scrap the painful austerity measures agreed by Greece under a 240 billion euro (188 billion pounds) bailout programme with its international creditors.

A poll conducted by GPO pollsters for Greek MEGA TV showed Syriza maintaining a 3.2 percentage point lead over the conservatives. Syriza had a 4.9 point lead in a survey conducted by the same polling agency last month.

A third survey conducted by Pulse on 5-6 January showed Syriza’s lead eroding to 3.5 points from 4 points two weeks ago.

A party set up by former prime minister George Papandreou last week — the Movement of Democratic Socialists — garnered 2.7 percent in the Alco poll, 2.6 percent in the GPO survey and 2.5 in the poll conducted by Pulse.

The polls were the first to include the new party, which is expected to siphon away votes from the Socialist PASOK that it split from, as well as other leftist parties including Syriza and the centrist *To Potami*.

There is a three percent threshold for a party to win seats in the Greek parliament.

Reuters

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 9 January, 2015

Internal Defamation

By Myint Win Thein

Almost all organizations have noble goals for the betterment of people, but many of them fail to reach the desired goals and collapse disastrously before disappearing from the public eye. Before they collapse, they always accuse others of slandering them or of conspiracies against them.

Some people think that defamation of an or-

ganization is just an outside job because people who oppose it often do so, but there is no organization in the world that collapses due to outside defamation. What is more dangerous is inside defamation by its members. The prestige of an organization may also significantly suffer due to an inside job.

When the leadership of an organization has set up noble objectives but its members are just taking their own courses in their own interests, the prestige of the organization suffers. People outside the organization generally think that the high aims of the leadership are just empty promises, however honest the leadership may be.

When one makes a promise and does not keep it, one is said to be lying. Members of the organi-

zation are defaming it because they turn the noble objectives of the organization into empty promises. Everyone as a member of a society is required to strive for the realization of the noble objectives of the society instead of just following self-interests.

Write for us

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

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

Pilgrims to Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda get access to Moebaw Creek waterfalls

Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda in Kyaikto Township in Mon State, is among the most famous religious buildings in Mon State and across the country.

Recently, I heard that everyone can travel to Singyan, Myasein and Yathay hills in addition to Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda. As of 3 December, Yoe Yoe Lay Company, which offers hotel services to tourists and local travelers, introduced transport service for Moebaw Creek waterfall to travelers and pilgrims.

To find out about the transport services to Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda and Moebaw Creek waterfall for

pilgrims and travelers, I interviewed U Aung Myo Oo, in-charge of the Yangon branch of Yoe Yoe Lay.

"The company runs an express bus line from Aungmyingala highway bus terminal in Yangon to Kinpunchaung bus terminal at the foot of Kyaikhtiyoe hill. Tickets for the express bus are available at No 165, Saya San Road, U Chit Maung housing, Bahan Township, at K3,500 per passenger. With regard to the special ticket at K5,000 per passenger, the express bus transports passengers to famous pagodas along the route to Kinpunchaung highway bus

terminal," he said.

For detailed information, contact 01-544916, 09-6836855 and 09-799875297, e-mail: info@yoeoyelatravels.com. The bus line can arrange a special package for pilgrimage of tourists to Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda.

U Khin Wai, supervisor for transport services of Yoe Yoe Lay highway bus line for climbing the hill of Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda, said: "Yoe Yoe Lay bus line from Kinpunchaung station provides convenient transport service to passengers onto the hill. The bus line charges K2500 per passenger in the rear of the bus and K3000 per passenger in the front. While in Kinpunchaung station, passengers may take a rest at restaurants of the Yoe Yoe

Lay family at the foot of the hill."

He added the bus line

**U Khin Maung Myint (Zabuthiri);
Photos: U Sein Hlaing (IPRD)**



Pilgrims going to Myaseinyang Shwe Pagoda in Kyaikhtiyoe Hill area in Kyaikto Township.

gave free of charge transport to passengers to Moebaw Creek waterfalls on 3

Aung Mingala Ecchasaya Buddha Image located on the route to Singyan, Myasein and Yathay hills.



December. As of 4 December, the bus line transports passengers to the waterfall and pagodas on Singyan, Myasein and Yathay hills. The buses leave the bus stop near two lion statues at the foot of the platform at 6 a.m. daily. The bus takes a 30-minute break each at Singyan, Myasein and Yathay hills along the road to

the waterfall to allow the pilgrims to pay homage to pagodas and enjoy the scenic beauty around the hills. Ticket is K2,000 per passenger along the route from the bus stop near two lion statues to the waterfalls and K1,500 per passenger from the waterfalls to the hill of Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda.

(See page 9)

GOLD PRICE, FE RATE (8-1-2015)

Yangon Gold Price

Buying K663,800 per tical: Selling K664,800

Mandalay Gold Price

Buying K663,700 per tical: Selling K664,700

FE RATE

USD Buying K 1033: Selling K----

SGD Buying K 773: Selling K783

Euro Buying K 1,213: Selling K1,233

NATIONAL



JBIC of Japan to implement projects together with Rail Transportation Ministry

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan—Union Minister for Rail Transportation U Than Htay held a talk with General Manager Mr. Yamada of Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and party of Japan at the minis-

try, here, on Wednesday.

They discussed feasibility studies for giving priority to implementation of project promoting vehicle between Myanmar and Japan's JBIC and most effectiveness for the people.

The union minister urged the Japanese guests to prioritize conducting of feasibility studies for construction of Light Rail Transit (LRT) on the most traffic congestion route in Yangon.

Myanmar and JBIC of Japan signed an agreement for project promoting vehicle (PPV) in December 2013.

MNA

**Union Minister for Rail Transportation
U Than Htay meets General Manager
Mr. Yamada of Japan Bank for International
Cooperation (JBIC).—MNA**

Action taken against 661 suspects in drug-related cases in December 2014

NAY PYI TAW, 8 Jan—The defence services, Myanmar Police Force and the Customs Department exposed 104.0745 kilos of opium in 37 cases, 1.9825 kilos of heroin in 213 cases, 1,208,738 stimulant tablets in 169 cases, 5,400 litres of Phenyl Propanone in one case, 0.07 kilo of stimulant tablet powder, 0.3203 kilo of opium oil solid in six cases, 16.1557

kilos of low-grade opium in 19 case, 3.1743 kilos of marijuana in 10 cases, 0.047 kilo of Ice in one case, 98.77 kilos of opium speciosa in five cases, five kilos of sodium metal, one kilo of potassium chloride, 25 kilos of sodium hydroxide, 990 litres of hydrochloric acid, 997.5 litres of acetic anhydride, 50 kilos of sodium carbonate, 240 litres of sulphuric acid,

3.1 litres of Ketamine in two cases, 1,600 ampoules of Midasolam, 575,000 pseudo Ephedrene tablets in two cases, two other cases and four cases in failure to register in December 2014.

Action was taken against 582 men and 79 women, totalling 661 in 471 cases under the law.

MNA

Pilgrims to Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda...

(from page 8)

Yoe Yoe Lay Hotel and other three hotels are on the hill of Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda. Yoe Yoe Lay Hotel (3) has been opened for three years. It accommodates travelers with 284 suites and 22 ordinary rooms.

General Manager U Ye Win of the hotel said: "The hotel gives better accommodation services to the guests for their convenience. The guests stay-

ing at Yoe Yoe Lay hotel may enjoy beautiful scenes of sunrise and sunset and panoramic views of the natural environment."

Yoe Yoe Lay hotel services are K60,000 and K50,000 per day for suites, not only for globetrotters but also to local travelers. The guests may also stay in ordinary rooms at K20,000 or K10,000 per day. Guests get access to free WiFi.

At present, everyone

may visit Kyaikhtiyoe Pagoda by Yoe Yoe Lay transport service bus and stay at a hotel of the same family. Yoe Yoe Lay emphasizes better transport and hotel services to the guests along the route of pilgrimage from Yangon to the pagoda.

**Moebaw Creek
waterfalls in
Kyaikhtiyoe Hill
area.**



Apprentice Training in Myanmar

Kyaw Win (Labour)

The Apprentices Act (1850) of India was among the earliest labour legislations introduced into Myanmar by the British colonialists. The Apprentices Act enabled, particularly disadvantaged children of age ten to eighteen years, to be bound by his or her father or guardian to learn any fit trade, craft or employment under a contract of apprenticeship for a term not exceeding seven years.

Most of the Government industries or private companies during the co-

lonial period, employed apprentices and trained them on the job to be skilled workers in the various 'trades' (e.g. foundry worker, machinist, fitter, plumber, electrician, welder, mechanic, etc). After the period of apprenticeship, they were usually employed by the industry/company that trained them. After Myanmar gained Independence in 1948, many of the industries/companies continued with apprentice training. Many of the apprentices eventually rose to responsible positions because of their expertise in their trades.

During the period

1962 to 1992 though the Apprentices Act was not repealed, apprentice training was not undertaken in line with the outdated law. However, some engineering industries/enterprises, particularly in ship building, continued with the apprenticeship system. Many of their apprentices after serving their term joined the mercantile marine. Quite a number of them, through years of service on board ships, and after passing the required examinations, rose to responsible positions as marine engineers.

In 1992 three outdated labour laws, including the

Apprentices Act of 1850 were repealed by the Government. However, according to a research study conducted by a Myanmar researcher, practically all the small and medium industries in Myanmar were 'training' their workers on-the-job, through a 'system' of informal apprenticeship.

The Parliament, which was convened after the multiparty elections of 2010, enacted several new labour laws. One of the new laws, namely 'The Employment and Skills Development Law (2013)' has provisions by which apprentice training may be undertaken by both the public and private sector enterprises. Under the law the apprentices would be

required to be trained systematically on-the-job based on National Occupational Skills Standards prescribed by the National Skills Development Committee. After necessary rules relating to apprenticeship are made under the law, systematic apprentice training will hopefully, be undertaken by industries.

Public and private industries all over the country, could train on-the-job, young persons above the age of 16, particularly disadvantaged youth and dropouts of the education system, under an apprenticeship contract. Regarding the related knowledge required by each occupation or trade, the public or private vocational training

institutes/centres located in the various Regions/States could organize part time or full time courses of appropriate duration for the apprentices. The apprentices could be released by the employers to attend such courses either on the block or day release system.

Apprentice training has the advantage that it entails no extra cost for equipments; that it is training in employment and hence reduces unemployment; that the apprentices during their term of apprenticeship are exposed to 'Industrial Culture' and this contributes to inculcating pride in skills and workmanship.

Sri Lankan president's bid to stay uncertain as election starts

COLOMBO, 8 Jan — Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa's bid for a third term hung in the balance as the country's election began on Thursday, with voters split between the "devil they know" and an upstart who has promised to root out corruption and political decay.

Rajapaksa won around 58 percent of the vote in the last election, surfing a wave of popularity that sprang from the 2009 defeat of Tamil Tiger separatists who had waged a crippling war against the government for 26 years.

Reminding voters of Rajapaksa's victory, state-controlled TV stations showed clips of Wednesday's attack in Paris by suspected Islamist militants at the offices of a satirical magazine and then switched to old footage of the Sri Lankan war.

"When we see these images we also remember the history of terrorism in Sri Lanka," the announcer said.

Although his popularity has waned, Rajapaksa called the election two years early, confident that



Sri Lanka's President Mahinda Rajapaksa casts his vote for the presidential election, in Medamulana, on 8 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

the perennially fractured opposition would fail to find a credible challenger.

But he did not anticipate the emergence of Mithripala Sirisena, who quit as one of Rajapaksa's ministers and crossed to the other side to become the opposition's candidate in November, triggering a flood of defections from the government.

"It has been a big

shock for the president," said a Western diplomat in Colombo, recalling Rajapaksa's campaign-trail plea to voters to back "the devil they know" rather than an "unknown angel".

Some 15 million people are eligible to vote in the election, which began shortly after dawn.

A result is expected to emerge in the early hours of Friday.

looks set to lose.

A local observer group, the Centre for Monitoring Election Violence, said there had been "unparalleled misuse of state resources and media" by Rajapaksa's party and that police inaction had given free rein to election-related violence in which one person was killed and dozens were injured.

There were no reports of violence on Thursday morning.

There have been no reliable opinion polls ahead of the vote, but many believe Sirisena will benefit from a popular yearning for change after a decade under Rajapaksa.

The economy has flourished in recent years, and many voters — especially Sinhalese Buddhists who represent 70 percent of the population — believe that sticking with Rajapaksa will keep living standards on an upward path.

"The known devil is better than the unknown," said a woman who identified herself only as Tania as she lined up to vote at a temple in a

Colombo suburb.

However, many voters complain of high living costs, rampant corruption and an authoritarian style that has concentrated power in the hands of the president's family.

On foreign policy, Rajapaksa has cold-shouldered neighbouring India. He has also fallen out with Western countries that want an international probe into possible war crimes and criticize his record on human rights, turning instead to China as a strategic and investment partner.

Sirisena, who would lead a potentially fractious coalition of ethnic, religious, Marxist and center-right parties if he wins, has pledged to abolish the executive presidency that gave Rajapaksa unprecedented power and hold a fresh parliamentary election within 100 days.

He has also promised a crackdown on corruption, which would include investigations into big infrastructure projects such as a \$1.5 billion deal with China Communications Construction Co Ltd to build a port city.—Reuters

Man wielding knife detained outside Australian parliament

CANBERRA, 8 Jan — The Australian Federal Police (AFP) detained a man armed with a knife outside the Parliament House in Canberra on Thursday afternoon.

Fears were sparked when security officers noticed a man, believed to be in his 30s, carrying a knife outside the ministerial entrance of the Parliament House just after midday.

The police were quickly called to the scene, where they attempted to persuade the man to hand over the weapon. When he refused, he was constrained by officers. The suspect was then detained while

paramedics arrived, before he was taken to Canberra Hospital. A statement released by the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Police, released on Thursday, said, "Around 12:30 pm local time, ACT Police and AFP Protection Services Officers attended to a man who was observed to be armed with a knife."

Although the Parliament House was not evacuated, AFP officers surrounded the area and diverted traffic away from the scene. The ACT Police later confirmed that there were "no national security concerns" regarding the incident.—Xinhua

Japan fleet leaves for whale stock survey in Antarctic

SHIMONOSEKI, (Japan), 8 Jan—Two ships of Japan's Fisheries Agency left for the Antarctic Ocean on Thursday to conduct a survey of whale stocks in place of an annual whaling mission that the International Court of Justice ordered the country to stop last year.

The fleet, which departed from the western Japanese port of Shimonoseki, will collect whale stock data through visual contact and whale skin sampling through March.

The survey comes after Japan gave up its so-called research whaling in fiscal 2014 following an order last March from the ICJ, which judged the program was not conducted for scientific purposes.

Whaling guns have been removed from the vessels for the current mission.

Tokyo hopes to continue surveys to help secure the accuracy of whale stock data it collects in the area in a bid to have the current moratorium on commercial whaling re-

moved in the Antarctic as early as possible.

Japan has vowed to resume research whaling in fiscal 2015, which starts in March, and has submitted to the International Whaling Commission a revised plan that limits the hunt to minke

whales and cuts the number of them to be caught by two-thirds from the previous target to 333.

The IWC is slated to discuss the plan at its scientific committee meeting in the United States in May and June.

Kyodo News



The Yushin Maru, a ship of Japan's Fisheries Agency, departs from the western Japanese port of Shimonoseki on 8 Jan, 2015, while it is seen off by relatives of crew members. The ship, leaving for the Antarctic Ocean, is to conduct a survey of whale stocks in place of an annual whaling mission that the International Court of Justice ordered the country to stop in 2014. — KYODO NEWS

Australia's food poisoning affects 110 people

SYDNEY, 8 Jan — More than 110 Australian people became ill and many were admitted to hospital suffering food poisoning, local media reported on Thursday.

The outbreak of potentially deadly salmonella poisoning was traced to a Chinese restaurant in Brisbane.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported that health authorities believe the salmonella came from eggs used in the batter to make deep fried ice cream.

The restaurant was ordered to cease trading pending an investigation.

Xinhua

WORLD

US-led air strikes have hit 3,222 Islamic State targets — Pentagon

WASHINGTON, 8 Jan — US-led air strikes against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria have damaged or destroyed 3,222 targets since August, including 58 tanks, 184 Humvees, 673 fighting positions and 980 buildings or barracks, the Pentagon said on Wednesday.

Army Colonel Steve Warren, a Pentagon spokesman, said he wasn't sure how many targets had been damaged versus destroyed, "but I'm confident that the destruction level is high. Our strikes are extraordinarily accurate."

Release of the target damage list came a day after US defence officials confirmed they are looking into reports of civilian casualties caused by the strikes in Iraq and Syria and are conducting a deeper investigation of two cases involving fewer than five deaths.

As of 11 pm on Tuesday (0400 GMT on Wednesday), US and coalition air forces had conducted a total of 1,676 air strikes against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria since 8 August, and had used some 4,775 munitions, a Pentagon spokeswoman said.

Warren said US and coalition forces had hit 3,222 targets in the air strikes but he declined to say what percentage of Islamic State equipment was destroyed. "In order for us to do that we would have to release to you the exact number of tanks we believe the enemy has, the exact number of Humvees we believe the enemy has," he said. "We don't want our enemy to know how much we know about them."

Countries whose forces have participated in the strikes in Iraq are: Australia,



Smoke and flames rise over a hill near the Syrian town of Kobani after an airstrike, as seen from the Mursitpinar crossing on the Turkish-Syrian border in the southeastern town of Suruc in Sanliurfa Province, on 23 Oct, 2014. —REUTERS

Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France and the Netherlands. Those participating in strikes in Syria are Bahrain, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The targets damaged or

destroyed included:

- 58 tanks;
- 184 HMMWVs, the highly mobile multi-purpose wheeled vehicles known as Humvees;
- 26 armoured personnel vehicles;
- 303 technical vehicles;
- 394 other vehicles;
- 79 artillery, anti-aircraft weapons or mortars;
- 41 staging areas;
- 11 improvised explosive device positions;

- 16 command posts;
- 92 checkpoints;
- 17 guard shacks;
- 980 other buildings or barracks;
- 673 fighting positions;
- 52 bunkers;
- 14 boats;
- 23 stockpiles;
- 259 oil infrastructure sites. No aircraft were on the list, Warren said.

He said the Humvees were US vehicles supplied to the Iraqi military and captured by militants as were some of the armoured personnel vehicles. It was unclear whether any of the tanks were US-made.

Warren said some vehicles had been hit while parked, while others were struck while engaged in combat. The boats were used by Islamic State to ferry supplies across the Euphrates River, he said.

Reuters

UN confirms Palestinians will be ICC member on 1 April

UNITED NATIONS, 8 Jan — United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has confirmed the Palestinians will formally become a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC) on 1 April and the court's registrar said on Wednesday that jurisdiction would date back to 13 June, 2014.

This means the court's prosecutor could investigate the 50-day war between Israel and Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014, during which more than 2,100 Palestinians, 67 Israeli soldiers and six civilians in Israel were killed.

The Hague-based court handles war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. It could exercise jurisdiction over such crimes committed by anyone on Palestinian territory. Israel, like the United States, is not a member, but its citizens could be tried on accusations of crimes on Palestinian land.

On Friday the Palestinians delivered to UN headquarters documents to join the Rome Statute of the ICC and other international treaties, in a move that has heightened tensions with Israel and could lead to cuts in US aid.

Ban announced in a letter posted to a UN website late on Tuesday that the Palestinians would formally become an ICC member on 1 April. The United Nations is the official depository of the Rome Statute and many other treaties.

The United States said on Wednesday



United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

it does not believe Palestine is a sovereign state and therefore does not qualify to be part of the International Criminal Court.

Experts said the only apparent way to challenge the Palestinians' eligibility to be an ICC member would be in court.

"The most likely challenge would be if an Israeli national ever came before the court," said Dov Jacobs, a law professor at Leiden University in the Netherlands.

"A defence lawyer could try to challenge the case's legality by arguing to judges that Palestine was not a state," he said. Few scholars say that such an argument would be successful.

The Palestinian government signed the Rome Statute on 31 December, a day after a bid for independence by 2017 failed at the UN Security Council.

Reuters

Al-Qaeda-linked militants blow up 13th century Muslim tomb in Syria

BEIRUT, 8 Jan — Nusra Front Islamist militants linked to al-Qaeda have blown up the 13th century tomb of a revered Islamic scholar in southern Syria, Syrian state news agency SANA and monitoring group, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, reported.

The mausoleum of Imam Nawawi is in Nawa in Deraa Province near the Jordanian border, a town captured by groups fighting the Syrian government in November.

The Nusra Front follows the same puritanical interpretation of Sunni Islam adopted by the Islamic State group that has also destroyed shrines in areas of eastern and northern Syria that it controls. They see tombs as sacrilegious.—Reuters

Suspected Kurdish militants attack Turkish police in southeast

DIYARBAKIR, (Turkey) 8 Jan — Suspected Kurdish militants fired a rocket at an armored police vehicle and opened fire on a police station in the southeastern Turkish town of Cizre on Thursday, injuring two officers in a surge of violence threatening a fragile peace process.

Security sources said the two officers were injured when their vehicle was hit by a rocket as they drove across a bridge while on patrol in the town. There was a brief gun battle as officers returned fire in the

attack on the police station.

Four people, two of them teenagers, have been killed over the past few weeks in clashes in Cizre.

Some of the violence has been Kurdish infighting between Islamist Kurds and youth groups linked to Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militants, but Kurdish protesters have also clashed with the Turkish police.

The violence highlights the fragility of a two-year-old peace process between Turkey and the PKK, a militant group

that has waged a three-decade insurgency for greater Kurdish autonomy in which more than 40,000 people have been killed.

Thirty-five people died in early October after Kurds rioted in several southeastern cities over what they perceived as the government's refusal to help Syrian Kurds fighting Islamic State militants in the besieged Syrian border town of Kobani.

The PKK is designated a terrorist group by Ankara, the United States and European Union.—Reuters



Afghan security forces inspect the site of an attack by Taliban militants in Khost Province in eastern Afghanistan, on 7 Jan, 2015. A group of suicide bombers stormed a police academy in Khost's provincial capital the Khost City on Wednesday. Four persons including three militants and a judge have been killed and five others including three police and two children sustained injuries, officials confirmed. — XINHUA

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

INVITATION TO OPEN
PREQUALIFICATION OF BIDDING

The Irrigation Department (ID), Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, announces the PREQUALIFICATION of International Competitive Bidding for “Procurement of Construction Machineries for ID” under the Irrigation Development Project in Western Bago Region based on the Loan Agreement (Loan No.: MY-P7) signed on 5th September, 2014 between the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Ministry.

The procurement works shall consist of equipment supply, site assembling, test-run, training and commissioning for the construction machineries, Please note that Joint Ventures are acceptable.

Sr.No.	Bidding No.	Description	Qty;	Remarks
1.	ITP-ID-01	Procurement of Construction Machineries for ID	1 lot	

A complete set of prequalification documents is available in Myanmar kyat (50,000/-) from 10:00 to 12:00 and 14:00 to 16:00 in the working days from 13th to 19th, January, 2015 at Procurement Director Office of Irrigation Department, Building No. (43), Nay Pyi Taw and closing date will be 27th, January, 2015 during office hours. Submission of the Documents later than closing date will not be considered.

Contact: Director, Procurement branch.
Telephone: +95-67-410019

Divers search wreckage of
AirAsia jet’s tail for black boxes

JAKARTA, 8 Jan — Scores of divers plunged into the Java Sea on Thursday to search the wreckage of an AirAsia jet for the black box recorders that could reveal why the plane crashed, Indonesia’s search and rescue agency said.

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.

The cause of the crash remains a mystery, with hopes centering on the so-called black boxes — the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder — providing vital clues. The plane which crashed was an Airbus A320-200, which carries the recorders near the tail section.

The tail of the plane was found on Wednesday, upturned on the sea bed about 30 km (20 miles) from the plane’s last known location at a depth of around 28-32 metres.

“After we found

the tail, our plan is to do everything step by step,” Fransiskus Bambang Soelistyo, head of the search and rescue agency, told a news conference in Jakarta. “First we will (check whether) the black box is still at its place, in the tail, or if it has detached.”

A total of 84 divers are in ships in the vicinity and teams began searching the jet’s tail at 0645 local time (6.45 pm EST), with visibility poor and strong currents still impeding efforts, Soelistyo added.

Should diving teams confirm the location of the recorders, the tail will probably be plucked out of the sea using a crane capable of lifting 70 tonnes.

Ships with acoustic “pinger locators” designed to pick up signals from the black boxes were at the location but were no longer being used, in a possible sign of confidence among Indonesian officials that the recorders will be found soon.

Two Japanese ships that were part of the international effort to find the plane would now leave the

mission on Friday, Soelistyo added.

“Now that the tail is confirmed, we are confident,” Mardjono Siswosuwarno, the main investigator of the National Transportation Safety Committee, told Reuters late on Wednesday. “In my opinion, the pinger locators are no longer necessary to finding 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.

In Pangkalan Bun, the southern Borneo town closest to the crash site, Indonesian armed forces chief Moeldoko said he would personally lead any mission to lift the jet’s tail.

Weather agency officials warned on Thursday that although weather conditions at search areas had improved over the last two days, it was likely to worsen from Friday onwards.

Reuters



The Japanese Navy Sea Hawk helicopter sits on the deck of the Navy ship Ohnami as it searches for victims and debris of AirAsia QZ8501 in the Karimata Strait, south of Pangkalan Bun, Central Kalimantan on 7 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

As storm
hits
Mideast,
refugees
bear brunt

BEIRUT, 8 Jan — A storm buffeted the Middle East with blizzards, rain and strong winds on

Wednesday, keeping people at home across much of the region and raising concerns for Syrian refugees facing freezing temperatures in flimsy shelters.

Snowfall and gales in Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley destroyed some refugee tents. “There’s no firewood, no diesel,” said Ali Eshtawi, a refugee from Homs who spoke by phone from a camp near the Syrian border where he said snow had caused three

tents to collapse, leaving 19 people without shelter.

The storm is forecast to last several days, threatening further disruption in Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which have all been affected. A 35-year old Syrian shepherd and an eight-year old boy with him died in the storm in the mountainous area between Lebanon and Syria, Lebanon’s National News Agency reported.

Snow blocked roads in the Bekaa Valley, where more than 400,000 Syrian refugees are sheltering.

“We are worried that tents will be flooded. Refugees who don’t have proper access to clean water or can’t store drinking water will be in severe difficulties if we don’t reach them in the next two days,” Laurie Gauny, program manager in the Bekaa Valley with the aid agency Oxfam told Reuters.

Transport was disrupted across the region: Israeli police closed the main highways to Jerusalem intermittently, while Beirut airport was briefly closed on Tuesday night.

Damascus was carpeted with snow. There was also heavy snowfall across large parts of Turkey.

Turkish Airlines canceled dozens of flights between Turkey’s biggest cities and to several international destinations. Budget

airline Pegasus also canceled some flights.

Night-time temperatures in Ankara were forecast to plunge to minus 17 degrees Centigrade and natural gas consumption spiked to record levels in Turkey as people tried to heat their homes, forcing some usually gas-fired power stations to switch to fuel oil to generate electricity, a Turkish energy official said.

Reuters

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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries
and Rural Development
Department of Rural Development
National Community Driven Development Project
IDA Grant H814-MM
Assignment Title : Technical Auditor Firm
Reference No: C-10/ 2014

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of its National Community Driven Development Project (NCDD), which is being implemented by the Department of Rural Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development. The Government intends to apply part of the proceeds for hiring Technical Services.

The objective of the assignment is to independently and objectively assess the technical quality of civil works financed during the second community cycle of the NCDD Project. The assignment would be expected to begin in June/July 2015, with up to three subsequent annual audits. The audit would be expected to cover technical quality issues including design and construction quality, operation and maintenance, sustainability and compliance with social and environmental safeguards.

The services will be conducted for a period of three (3) calendar months starting June/July 2015. The Consultant Team will be located at the NCDD Project office in Nay Pyi Taw with extensive travel to project sites. The team should be comprised of the following positions. Note that the consultants shall be free to prepare their own estimates of experts' time to carry out the assignment:

- 1 Team Leader/ Community Infrastructure Specialist (3 person-months)
- 3 other Infrastructure Specialists (Specific areas of specialization as will be needed, for a total of 6 person-months)
- 1 safeguards specialist (3 person-months)
- 1 rural economist (2 person-months)
- 1 local audit assistant (3 person-months)

The Department of Rural Development invites expressions of interest (EOI) from qualified and experienced Local and International NGOs/ Firms. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. Expressions of Interest must be submitted in writing to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by **February 2, 2015**.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the CQS method set out in the World Bank Consultant Guidelines. The Selection criteria are:

- Past experience with community based development activities in Myanmar or comparable countries;
- At least five years of experience with technical evaluation of community based infrastructure development activities in Myanmar or Asia;
- At least five years experience with beneficiary assessment of community based development activities in Myanmar or Asia;
- Familiarity with World Bank social and environmental safeguards requirement;
- NGOs/Firms must have managed contracts of at least a similar size in the past five years.

Further information and a copy of the detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) may be obtained from the NCDD webpage: <http://www.cdd.drdmyanmar.org> (or) Contact Person: Maung Maung Soe (Staff Officer of DRD), Mobile: (95) 9420749580, email: mngmsoe.drd@gmail.com during office hours from 0900 to 1600, Monday through Friday, except public holidays.

Attn: U Khant Zaw (Deputy Chief Engineer),
 Department of Rural Development,
 Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development,
 Office No. 14, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
 Tel & Fax: 067-409413:
 Email addresses: drdmyanmar@gmail.com

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PACIFIC TRADER VOY NO (044)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACIFIC TRADER VOY NO (044) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ORINET OVERSEAS
CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV DA WAI STAR VOY NO (1002)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV DA WAI STAR VOY NO (1002) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CONTINETAL SHIPPING
LINE PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV PACIFIC MERCURY VOY NO (1411)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACIFIC MERCURY VOY NO (1411) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING
CO LTD.

Phone No: 2301186

WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 9th January, 2015: Weather will be partly cloudy in Chin and Rakhine States, rain are likely to be scattered in Shan and Kayah States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough sea are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Tanintheyi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong wind may reach (30) mph. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Rain are likely to be isolated in the Eastern Myanmar areas.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV UNI ASSURE VOY NO (381N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UNI ASSURE VOY NO (381N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN
SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (427N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SINAR BIAK VOY NO (427N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9.1.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDERA
SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

Ten bodies and 11 heads found in violent Mexican state

MEXICO CITY, 8 Jan — Mexican police found 10 decapitated corpses and 11 heads in a southwestern state that has become a major problem for President Enrique Pena Nieto since the apparent massacre of 43 trainee teachers there in September.

Several of the headless corpses found in graves about 50 kilometres (31 miles) east of the Guerrero state capital Chilpancingo showed signs of torture and had their hands tied, local security officials said on Wednesday.

The 11 severed heads were discovered in one grave, inside four black plastic bags, the Guerrero state prosecutor's office said in a statement. The identity of the victims was unclear.

Mexico's government is still investigating what happened to the missing students, who it says were abducted on the night of 26

September by corrupt police in league with a drug gang in Iguala, the third biggest city in Guerrero.

Attorney General Jesus Murillo said the evidence strongly suggested that police officers handed the students over to drug cartel members who incinerated them. The remains of only one of the missing 43 has been identified so far.

The fate of the students has sparked major street protests in Mexico, and Pena Nieto has come under pressure to clear up the case and put an end to drug violence in the country.

In a meeting with Pena Nieto at the White House on Tuesday, President Barack Obama said he was committed to helping Mexico eradicate the cartels, but that it was up to the Mexican government to resolve the problem.

Reuters

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Superheroes triumph at People's Choice awards



Robert Downey Jr accepts the award for favourite movie actor during the 2015 People's Choice Awards in Los Angeles, California on 7 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

LOS ANGELES, 8 Jan — The people have spoken and superheroes continue to rule the movie pack, as Captain America, Iron Man and Batman were among the top winners at the People's Choice awards on Wednesday.

"Iron Man" and "Avengers" star Robert Downey Jr. was named favourite movie actor for the fourth year in a row, and favourite dramatic actor.

"I want to eat you up and you're never going anywhere," Downey said, quoting his toddler son.

Downey's fellow Avenger, "Captain America" star Chris Evans won

favourite action movie actor, and said "I don't win stuff so this is kind of cool," as he accepted the crystal statuette.

Amy Adams awarded her "Batman vs Superman" costar Ben Affleck with the favourite humanitarian award, praising his work in providing aid and trying to change policy to help improve the lives of the people of Eastern Congo.

"I've been called a lot of things in my life but I'm not sure if humanitarian is ever one of them," Affleck said.

"The one way to combat the sad things we see, the terrible things we see,

is to bring a little bit of kindness into the world," he added, dedicating the award to his Eastern Congo Initiative.

The People's Choice Awards are voted for by fans online in categories spanning film, television and music. The ceremony, aired live on the CBS network, kicks off Hollywood's annual awards season that culminates with the Academy Awards on 22 February.

Disney's "Maleficent" triumphed over "Captain America," "Guardians of the Galaxy," "22 Jump Street" and "X-Men: Days of Future Past" for favourite movie.

Melissa McCarthy won the People's Choice award for favourite comedic movie actress, while Adam Sandler won favourite comedic movie actor for the fifth consecutive year.

Reuters

Former 'Star Wars' actor Khan Bonfils dies



Khan (also known as Kan) collapsed on Monday while rehearsing with the Craft Theatre Company for a new production of Dante's 'Inferno'. —PTI

LONDON, 8 Jan — Actor Khan Bonfils, known to 'Star Wars' fans for playing Jedi master Saesee Tiin in 'The Phantom Menace', has died suddenly during a play rehearsal. He was 43.

Khan (also known as Kan) collapsed on Monday while rehearsing with the Craft Theatre Company for a new production of Dante's 'Inferno'. Despite the best efforts of his fellow cast members, and the play's director, as well as paramedics, they were unable to save his life.

"Kan collapsed during a rehearsal and the director Rocky Rodriguez Jr, he performed CPR on location," said Craft Theatre spokesman Chris Hislop. "An ambulance

was called out but unfortunately he couldn't be resuscitated. The company later released a statement saying, "With great sadness, we announce the death of Kan Bonfils. His sudden loss is a tragedy and he will be sorely missed."

The cause of his death has not been confirmed, although Hislop described it as a 'real tragedy' adding that the members of the theatre company were 'in shock'.

He added that they hoped to still go ahead with the production — which was due to open at the East London venue The Rag Factory on Thursday — with another actor in Khan's place.

Besides appearing in 'The Phantom Menace', Khan featured in a string of blockbusters including 'Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle Of Life', 'Sky Captain And The World Of Tomorrow', 'Batman Begins' and more recently, 'Skyfall'. He also appeared in several West End productions including 'The King and I' and 'Miss Saigon'. — PTI



Jodie Foster to be honoured at Athena Film Festival

LOS ANGELES, 8 Jan — Two-time Oscar-winning actress Jodie Foster will receive the Laura Ziskin Lifetime Achievement Award at the fifth annual Athena Film Festival on 7 February.

The award, bestowed by fest organiser Barnard College's Athena Centre for Leadership Studies and Women and Hollywood, is given in Ziskin's name to a woman in the film industry whose leadership demonstrates vision and courage and

sets a standard for other women to emulate, reported Deadline.

The 52-year-old 'Accused' actress becomes the third recipient of the honour, joining Sherry Lansing and Gale Anne Hurd.

The Athena fest, which runs 5-8 February, will honour HBO Documentary Films President Sheila Nevins, writer-director-producer Gina Prince-Bythewood and producer Cathy Schulman. —PTI

Elvis lives on in music, culture as fans mark his 80th birthday

NASHVILLE, 8 Jan — Happy birthday to the King!

Elvis Presley would have been 80 years old on Thursday, an occasion that will be marked with a multi-day celebration in Memphis, Tennessee at his Graceland mansion. The party will include birthday cake, movie screenings and an auction of artifacts like his first driver's license and first acetate recording.

Even though he died in 1977, Presley remains one of the best-selling artists of all time and still deserves the title of the "King of Rock and Roll," according to fellow musicians and fans.

"He has

stayed on top all these years," said Scotty Moore, 83, of Nashville, the guitarist and last man standing from the recording session that yielded the 1954 hit "That's All Right." That first session at Sun Studios in Memphis changed everything in popular music and culture, said Peter Cooper, writer and editor for Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

"It changed all of our lives, even those of us who weren't born yet. It changed the way we dress and the way we wear our hair and the way we talk," said Cooper. "It was a reset button for the United States of America."

Presley was born in poverty in Tupelo, Mississippi in 1935, and as a teen moved to Memphis with his parents and absorbed the mixture of blues, rhythm and blues, and African-American gospel from which rock music emerged. His influence has been cited by top pop acts from The Beatles to Justin Timberlake. —Reuters

Taylor Swift continues Billboard reign in first week of 2015



en SoundScan. It is the album's eighth non-consecutive week at the top of the chart.

In the recently revamped Billboard 200 chart guidelines, 10 song sales equal one album unit, and 1,500 album streams equal one album unit.

Swift notably refused to make "1989" available to stream for free on online platforms such as Spotify, but that didn't stop the record from becoming 2014's biggest seller, with 3.7 million albums sold.

Swift's "1989" sold 172,000 album copies and 718,000 individual song downloads, bringing her total tally to 244,000 units sold for the week ending 4 January, according to figures from Nielsen

the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week as artists usually do not release music in the final week of the year. Rapper Nicki Minaj's "The Pinkprint" remained steady at No 2, tallying 83,600 units this week, while British singer Ed Sheeran's "X" climbed from No 7 to No 3 with 83,400 units.

On the digital songs chart, which measures song downloads, Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars' "Uptown Funk!" sold 382,000 units and took the top spot from Swift's "Blank Space." "Blank Space" dropped to No 2 selling 284,000 copies, while Irish singer-songwriter Hozier's "Take Me to Church" remained steady at No 3 with 265,000 copies. —Reuters

GENERAL

American Red Cross pressured to rid itself of tobacco money



A cigarette smoker stands in the designated smoking area across from the National Headquarters of the American Red Cross in Washington, on 30 Dec 30, 2014. — REUTERS

NEW YORK, 8 Jan — The American Red Cross risks damaging the reputation of the global Red Cross brand because of its refusal to stop accepting donations from tobacco companies, a top official with the humanitarian network said.

These concerns are prompting the International Red Cross and public health organizations to press the US group to end its longtime policy of taking tobacco money, *Reuters* has learned.

The International Red

Cross, which recently rolled out a global disease prevention programme with a strong anti-smoking component, hasn't accepted tobacco donations since 2008. Most of the group's 189 national affiliates don't accept money either, but the powerful US member does, as do about half a dozen other countries, including Germany, Russia and Vietnam. While precise figures are not available, the American Red Cross and its US affiliates have received at least \$12 million from tobacco

companies such as Altria Group, Reynolds American and Philip Morris International since 2001, according to Red Cross tax records and tobacco company press releases and annual reports.

An American Red Cross spokeswoman, Laura Howe, declined to comment on the dispute with its parent body — whose guidelines are not binding on its affiliates — but said it was happy to accept any funds that support its efforts to assist disaster victims. She also declined to say how much it received from each company.

International Red Cross officials say that by accepting the donations, the US group risks damaging not only its own reputation but that of the entire global humanitarian network. Some public health advocates agree, saying there is a contradiction between the Red Cross's mandate to aid the vulnerable and its acceptance of money from an industry whose product may cause death. — *Reuters*

Stoke sign Germany defender Wollscheid on loan

LONDON, 8 Jan — Stoke City have signed Germany international Philipp Wollscheid on loan and are looking to make the deal permanent, the Premier League club said on Wednesday.

The 25-year-old defender, who has two Germany caps, has spent the first half of the season on loan at Mainz from parent club Bayer Leverkusen.

"He's got presence, technically he is good, he

has played at a high level and he has gone for big money in the past and to get a German international at relatively young age is a good deal for the club," manager Mark Hughes said on the club website (www.stokecityfc.com). "He's genuinely excited about the prospect of playing in the Premier League and is confident of making a big impression as a Stoke player."

Reuters



Bayer Leverkusen's Philipp Wollscheid addresses a news conference at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on 11 March, 2014. — REUTERS

Luis Enrique slams reports of bust-up with Messi



Barcelona's coach Luis Enrique

BARCELONA, 8 Jan — Barcelona coach Luis Enrique has described reports of a bust-up with Lionel Messi as "inaccurate and ill-intentioned" and said he has the backing of all the players in his squad. Talk has been rife of disagreements and heated exchanges between the pair while rumours of a move to Chelsea have grown with Catalan radio saying the London club has contacted the players' father and agent Jorge. RAC1 radio claimed Premier League leaders Chelsea would be prepared to pay Messi's €250 million (196 million pounds) buy-out clause.

"I have the same relationship with all the players since the start of the season. Obviously we know each other better now but there is no change in the relationship," Luis Enrique told a news conference ahead of Thursday's King's Cup last 16 clash with Elche.

"I feel I have the support of the club and the players. I have no doubt about that. I continue my work with the same professionalism as before and I am not here to deny stories. "I am not going to comment about all the different media reports about what has supposed to have taken place. There are so many varied reports which are inaccurate and ill intentioned," added the coach.

Messi and Luis Enrique were reported to have had heated arguments in training last Friday and again after Sunday's defeat at Real

The fact that on the same day he started following Chelsea on Instagram was interpreted as another indication of his state of mind. "Messi is the best player in the world. I have said it so many times that there is no point repeating it," added Luis Enrique.

Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu gave Luis Enrique his backing, saying the coach had "a project in place" and that Messi was the team's "leader".

"He is rebuilding a team and working with the players. He is the right man," Bartomeu told a news conference where he also announced presidential elections for the end of this season due to a boardroom crisis. — *Reuters*

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(9-1-2015, Friday)

6:00 am

• Travelogue Programme

6:30 am

• Honour Song of Alinka Kyaw Swar Shwe Pyi Aye

6:50 am

• TV Drama Series

7:15 am

• Musical programme

7:30 am

• TV Drama Series

8:20 am

• TV Drama Series

9:10 am

• Musical Programme

9:20 am

• Pyi Thu Ni Ti

9:45 am

• ASEAN-China Cultural Show (Malaysia)

10:00 am

• Myanmar Video

12:00 am

• Close Down

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(9-1-15 07:00 am~
10-1-15 07:00 am) MST

* Local News
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* World News
* Orphanage
* Local News
* The Most Prominent Resort And Residence — Ngapali
* World News
* Parents' Day
* Local News
* Traditional Matrimony of Ra Wan Nationals
* World News
* Today Myanmar "Gold Letter"
* Local News

* The Wachat Jivitadana Sanga Hospital
* World News
* In The Studio "Swel Lan Phyu"
* Local News
* Back to a Paradise (Ep-2)
* World News
* Sagaing: Pe Kwel Kone 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



Players of Qatar soccer team attend a training session ahead of the AFC Asian Cup in Canberra, Australia, on 7 Jan, 2015. Qatar's first match at this Asian Cup will be against the UAE in Canberra on 11 Jan, 2015. — XINHUA



AC Milan's midfielder Keisuke Honda plays during the first training session of the Blue Samurai in Cessnock, Australia, on 3 Jan, 2015, ahead of the Asian Cup. Japan seeks a record fifth Asian Cup.—KYODO NEWS

Honda says Japan under no strain ahead of title defence

CESSNOCK, (Australia), 8 Jan — Keisuke Honda on Thursday reasserted his belief that coach Javier Aguirre's alleged involvement in a match-fixing scandal will not increase the strain on Japan ahead of their defence of the Asian Cup, insisting all was cool in the squad.

"We have made a good atmosphere I've never felt any pressure about that," Honda said after being pressed on the issue by a Chinese television crew on the final day of the team's camp in Cessnock.

"Of course we are going to try (and win the championship) but every team at this tournament wants to beat us," Honda said before the Blue Samurai moved to Newcastle for their opening match Monday against Group D underdogs Palestine.

"Complacency will be the greatest enemy for us." Japan have been mainly working on physical conditioning in punishing heat during the camp, while also working on accuracy on crosses, a shortcoming Aguirre pointed

out after a 2-1 win over Auckland City FC in an exhibition match here on Tuesday.

Honda said he hoped the champions would hit top condition for the game against Palestine and keep it up through to the 31 January final.

"We still have time before our first game and we don't need to be a 100 percent right now. Ideally we will be able to hit peak condition for our first match and maintain it. Hopefully we can keep that up for six matches,"

he said.

"There are things that we can feel confident about and things that we are not satisfied with (at this) camp but it's not the first time to feel like that and we can't solve everything. But I do feel like we have to have a bit more of a sense of urgency."

Seeking a record fifth Asian title, Japan play Iraq in Brisbane on 16 January and face Jordan in their final group match in Melbourne four days later.

Kyodo News

Torres subdued on return but Atletico sink Real

BARCELONA, 8 Jan — A subdued Fernando Torres helped Atletico Madrid to a 2-0 win over local rivals Real in the first leg of their King's Cup last-16 tie on Wednesday in his first start since his return to his boyhood club.

Raul Garcia scored from the penalty spot after 58 minutes after he was fouled by Sergio Ramos and Jose Gimenez nodded in a corner 15 minutes from time, but Torres was very quiet and was taken off after an hour.

The striker came through the Atletico youth system and went on to be club captain before a move to Liverpool in 2007, but this was the first time he was on the winning side in a Madrid derby.

"I am very happy to return, for the victory and how we played; 2-0 is a great result to take to the Bernabeu," he told reporters.

"I had butterflies in my stomach both at my presentation (last Sunday) and during this game." Real finished 2014 on a 22-match winning run but lost to Valencia in La Liga on Sunday and face a mountain to climb to turn the tie around at the Bernabeu.

The sides shared all the trophies available to them during 2014 but some spice was taken out of the derby with many players rested including Real forward Cristiano Ronaldo.

"Ronaldo was tired and so we thought it was best for him to only play part of the game. It is our second defeat but I thought we were in control until the penalty," Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told a news conference.

"In the first half we needed to be more precise in attack. We needed to be more direct and use the wings but still we were in control. It is difficult in a game against a compact side and that is why you have to try and spread the play and press more.

"Obviously we still have a chance in the tie and we will give everything we have at home but it won't be easy at all."

The winners of the tie face Barcelona or Elche, who play their first leg on Thursday, in the next round.

Atletico rested more than half the side that began Saturday's La Liga victory over Levante but regular centre backs Gimenez and Diego Godin started and were caught out in the first minute from a corner.

Real defender Sergio Ramos leapt highest as the ball came into the box but his header was repelled by Atletico keeper Jan Oblak.

Gareth Bale found the back of the net for Real with a header from a free kick after 12 minutes but was flagged offside. Atletico mainly played on the break and Antoine



Atletico Madrid's Fernando Torres (R) and Real Madrid's Marcelo fight for the ball during their Spanish King's Cup soccer match at Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid on 7 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

Griezmann was their main threat in the first half.

He forced Real keeper Keylor Navas into a smart save and then should have done better when through on goal after 20 minutes, but Raphael Varane got back to clear the danger with a sliding challenge.

Reuters

Chelsea seek to regain momentum as Manchester City surge



Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho (L) and Tottenham Hotspur manager Mauricio Pochettino watch play during their English Premier League soccer match at White Hart Lane in London on 1 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

LONDON, 8 Jan — Stuttering Chelsea retained their Premier League lead by virtue of the alphabet heading into the new year but will need a quick ri-

poste at home to Newcastle United on Saturday to hold Manchester City at bay.

Jose Mourinho's side gleaned a mere four points from nine during a frenzy

of holiday fixtures and a humbling 5-3 loss at Tottenham Hotspur on 1 January meant champions City restored parity at the top having at one stage trailed by eight points.

An easy FA Cup win over second tier Watford offered Chelsea a breather, but they host managerless Newcastle knowing their margin for error between now and May is miniscule.

Buoyant City, who are level on points (46), goal difference (25) and goals scored (44) with Chelsea, are away at struggling Everton on the same day, looking to continue a blistering run which has yielded 26 points from the last 30 on offer.

After Mourinho's side had threatened to run away with it earlier in the season,

the title race now effectively starts from scratch with an 18-match sprint.

Chelsea's stumbles have happened away from home with losses to Newcastle and Tottenham and a draw at Southampton.

They have been immaculate at home though, winning nine out of nine in the league and striker Loic Remy believes the recent slip-ups are not the start of a longer slide.

"The mood is really positive and we're focused on all of our targets," Remy, who scored against Watford, said. "During the season every team will be in trouble at certain times, so for us I hope it's behind us now with the last two league games."

John Carver remains

in temporary charge of mid-table Newcastle after Alan Pardew left for Crystal Palace and he will be wary of a Chelsea backlash as he tries to stake his claim for the job on a full-time basis. "I'd be a fool if didn't want to be head coach of this football club," Carver, who could have first-choice keeper Tim Krul back, told the Northern Echo.

City will be boosted by the imminent return of Premier league top scorer Sergio Aguero as they travel to face an Everton side who have lost four consecutive league matches. "I wanted you to know I've already started field work. Slowly but surely I'll be back at the right moment. Thanks for the wishes!"

the Argentine, who hurt his knee in the 1-0 home defeat of Everton, said on Twitter.

Edin Dzeko and skipper Vincent Kompany are also expected to be available for Manuel Pellegrini.

Third versus fourth meet at Old Trafford on Sunday as Manchester United host Southampton while in-form Tottenham, up to fifth, are Pardew's first league test as Palace manager on Saturday. Tottenham would rise to fourth with a win.

Tottenham face six games in 21 days, including a two-legged League Cup semi-final and an FA Cup replay against Burnley. Sixth-placed Arsenal host Stoke City on Sunday.

Reuters