

Israel to provide technical assistance, make investment in Myanmar's agriculture sector

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan— Vice President U Nyan Tun received a delegation led by Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Yair Shair of Israel at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace, here, on Thursday afternoon.

They discussed technical assistance and investment in agriculture sector, utilization of water resources, export of value-added fruits to international market, and rural development.

Also present at the call were Union Minister U Myint Hlaing, deputy ministers U Thant Kyaw, U Ohn Than and Dr Aung Myat Oo and Israeli Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Daniel Zonshine.—MNA



Vice President U Nyan Tun poses for documentary photo with Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Yair Shair of Israel and party.—MNA

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Thilawa SEZ management committee chairman responds to WSJ's op-ed on Japanese investment in Myanmar

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 15 Jan— On The Wall Street Journal's 6 January op-ed "Japan's Misadventures in Burma" written by Rin Fujimatsu and Alex Moodie, U Set Aung, chairman of Thilawa Special Economic Zone Management Committee responded to the WSJ with a letter saying Japan is doing good work in Myanmar.

Authors of the op-ed said projects funded by the Japanese government are pushing for development at the expense of human rights, highlighting the plight of people who have been forced to make way for the future SEZ.

U Set Aung, in his letter to the editor on Tuesday, refuted their statement, pointing out a series of inaccuracies they introduced.

He wrote that "villagers were never forced. Con-

sultative meetings about the Thilawa site were conducted many times. Photos and signatures of residents in these meetings feature in the Thilawa Resettlement Work Plan, readily available online".

Among the points highlighted by authors were inadequate compensation, poor quality housing, reduced livelihood opportunities and worsening access to essential services such as education, clean water and sanitation.

The TSEZMC chairman firmly rejected the authors' allegations, insisting that compensation for Thilawa villagers—equivalent to the value of six years of corps for each family—was double the level

under existing law, and the new housing is clearly far superior to their original housing, bamboo huts that lacked electricity, water and sewage, and the new housing features electricity and toilets with adjacent water facilities.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) commissioned an independent assessment of the project, also publicly available, and significant improvements are also being made as per the recommendations in the assessment, he added.

U Set Aung who is also the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, stated that the government's SEZ initiative is the result of carefully devel-

oped policies to encourage responsible investing and promote decent employment—especially for local people.

He concluded his letter stating the governments of Myanmar and Japan and their private-sector partners from both sides have spent time, effort and money on encouraging responsible investing and making a question that "Is it too much to hope that commentators and journalists aim for more responsible reporting and balanced analysis."

The Thilawa Special Economic Zone, 24 kilometres southeast of Yangon, is being developed by a joint-venture between the Myanmar and Japan.

GNLM

Myanmar the market with greatest potential growth: TAITRA research

YANGON, 15 Jan— Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) said on Monday that Myanmar is at the top of a list of the 40 markets with the greatest potential selected by the semi-official trading body.

The council published its target export market potential index for the first time Monday, with Myanmar at the top, followed by Bangladesh and Mozambique.

The index covered 80 major markets around the world and will be posted online on Jan. 14.

Kate Chen, an associate researcher at the Market

Research Department, said that of the 40 export markets with the most potential for growth in 2015, 17 are in Asia, while the other 23 are in Europe, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East.

Though Myanmar had the highest rating for growth potential alone, China, the United States and India ranked the highest for growth potential, market scale and overall potential in 2015.

They were followed by Hong Kong, South Korea, Vietnam, Germany, Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates.

GNLM

Photo of a line of houses for project-affected persons who were relocated for the Class A Area of the Thilawa Special Economic Zone being developed by Myanmar and Japan under a joint-venture agreement.

PHOTO: YE MYINT



UEC calls for impartial media coverage of general elections



Mrs Borbra and Mr Oliver Spencer, representatives of Article 19 call on Chairman of Union Election Commission U Tin Aye.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan—U Tin Aye, Chairman of the Union Election Commission, called for impartial media coverage of

general elections in 2015, at a meeting with guests of journalists associations at his office here on Thursday.

U Kyaw Swa Min, secretary-2 of the Myanmar Journalists Association, and Mrs Borbra and Mr Oliver Spencer, rep-

resentatives of Article 19, a partner group of MJA, were informed of the organizational structure of the commission, the voting system, the compilation of voter lists, and measures being taken for the successful conduct of general elections.

Article 19 raised some questions of voter education campaigns, coordination with the media and their possible roles of cooperation with the commission.

In his response to the queries, the chairman pledged a free and fair election in 2015, stressing that the acid test of free and fair elections is whether it sticks to the law.

He pointed out the need of political parties, social organizations, media and observers to collectively participate in holding the elections successfully, calling for impartial media coverage.

MNA

Correct labour data requested for survey

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan — A field survey of 24,000 households on labour workforce, child workforce and entering workforce after school has been conducted in states and regions including the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area from 1-1-2015 to 31-3-2015.

Statistics on work-

force and unemployment of Myanmar resulted from the survey will be used in developing policies and objectives for the State.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security has requested the public to cooperate for correct data of the survey.

Than Oo
(Laymyethna)

Myanmar, Israel discuss cooperation in agriculture sector

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan — Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Myint Hlaing held talks with Israeli entrepreneurs led by Israeli Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Yair Shair and Israeli Ambassador Mr Daniel Zonshine at the ministry, here, on 15 January.

They discussed seeking market in agriculture sector between the two

countries.

They exchanged views on cooperation in agriculture sector between the two countries and Israeli technology, investment and job opportunities of Israel.

The guests visited a modern cold storage for vegetables and fruits showroom and net house plantations of New Ayeyaya Company in 900-acre farmland.

MNA



Union Minister U Myint Hlaing meets Israeli Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development Mr Yair Shair.—MNA

LBVD, FAO emphasize control of animal to human infectious diseases

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan—Animal diseases may cause hindrance to rural development and poverty alleviation programme of the State, Union Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development U Ohn Myint told the meeting on surveillance, preparedness and response to animal to human infectious disease, at the ministry, here, on Thursday.

He said that control of animal diseases is one of

the tasks of World Health Organization, urging officials to participate in surveillance and prevention of animal diseases.

Regional Manager of FAO Asia and Pacific Region Dr Wantanee Kalpravidh explained control of animal disease, technical cooperation, outbreaks of animal diseases in the region and information.

WHO representative Dr Erwin Cooreman also

explained an important situation of bird flu and cooperation of FAO and OIE.

Departmental officials and breeders joined the discussions on surveillance of animal to human infectious diseases and response process.

The workshop, jointly organized by Department of Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department and FAO, will continue tomorrow.

MNA

First aid course to enhance capacity of TVET teachers

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan—The First Aid Instructor Course for Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Teachers (TVET) organized by Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), began at the Government Technical High School in

Nay Pyi Taw on 12 January.

The course includes topics on first aid concept, victim assessment, various injuries, wounds and bleeding, dressing and bandaging, handling and transportation, and facilitation skills. The MRCS trainers are facilitating twenty trainees, who have recently completed the Basic Fire Safety Training. The course will last up to 18 January.

This course is the second in series of capacity building training which will enable the teachers assigned to the project to deliver competency-based modular short courses to

disadvantaged youth in the following skill areas: construction, welding, and maintenance and repair of farm equipment and motorcycles and other simple commonly used machinery.

The course was conducted under the 'Skills Development for Inclusive Growth' pilot project implemented by Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Industry and funded by Asian Development Bank-ADB and Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction-JFPR.

GNLM



Trainees taking practice in first-aid course, organized by Myanmar Red Cross Society.

MCIT issues rules for networking and interconnecting

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan —The Telecommunication Law was approved as Law No (31) of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 8th October, 2013. Applying the powers conferred under Sub-section (a) of Section 88 of the law and with the approval of the Union Government, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology issued the rules for

networking and interconnecting under Notification No. 1/2015 on 6th January 2015.

The rules are available for the public in Myanmar Gazette, at the website of the ministry at www.mcit.gov.mm and at the website of the Directorate of Telecommunications at <http://www.mcit.gov.mm/content/law-regulation.html>.—MNA

NATIONAL

MYANMAR GAZETTE

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan — The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has transferred the following heads of service organizations shown against each from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(a) Dr Khaing Mye Rector Yangon West University Ministry of Education	Director-General Department of Myanmar Education Research Bureau Ministry of Education
(b) Dr Myo Thein Gyi Director-General Department of Myanmar Education Research Bureau Ministry of Education	Rector Yangon West University Ministry of Education

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(a) U Kyaw Min Oo Deputy Director-General Water Resources Utilization Department Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation	Director-General Water Resources Utilization Department Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
(b) U Nyunt Aung Deputy Director-General Commercial and Consumer Affairs Department Ministry of Commerce	Director-General Commercial and Consumer Affairs Department Ministry of Commerce
(c) Dr Daw Khin Naing Oo Pro-Rector Yangon Institute of Economics Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Yangon Institute of Economics Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Ministry of Education
(d) Dr Kyaw Kyaw Khaung Pro-Rector Yangon East University Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Yangon East University Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Ministry of Education
(e) Dr Daw Si Si Hla Bu Pro-Rector Myeik University Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Myeik University Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar) Ministry of Education
(f) Dr Saw Pyone Naing Pro-Rector Sagaing University of Education Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Sagaing University of Education Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education

(g) Dr Ko Ko Kyaw Soe Pro-Rector Meiktila University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Meiktila University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar Myanmar) Ministry of Education
(h) Dr Than Win Pro-Rector Kalay University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Kalay University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar Myanmar) Ministry of Education
(i) Dr Aung Win Kyi Pro-Rector Loikaw University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Loikaw University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education
(j) Dr Kyi Shwin Pro-Rector Bhamo University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education	Rector Bhamo University Higher Education Department (Upper Myanmar) Ministry of Education
(k) Dr Zaw Myint Deputy Director-General Department of Myanmar Language Commission Ministry of Education	Director-General Department of Myanmar Language Commission Ministry of Education
(l) Professor Dr Aye Tun Professor/Dean Medical Education Department University of Medicine (Magway) Medical Science Department Ministry of Health	Rector University of Medicine (Magway) Medical Science Department
(m) Professor Dr Zaw Wai Soe Professor/Dean Emergency Care Department University of Medicine-1, Yangon Medical Science Department	Rector University of Medicine-2, Yangon Medical Science Department
(n) U Yin Zaw Myo General Manager Myanma Foreign Trade Bank Ministry of Finance	Managing Director Myanma Investment and Commercial Bank Ministry of Finance
(o) U Tun Than Deputy Director-General Social Security Board Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security	Director-General Social Security Board Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
(p) U Myo Tint Deputy Director-General (Training/Research) Office of Supreme Court of the Union	Director-General Office of the Supreme Court of the Union
(q) Daw Aye Aye Kyi Thet Deputy Director-General (Admin) Office of the Supreme Court of the Union	Director-General Union Judicial Supervisory Office



Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo receives Ms Yanghee Lee, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.—MNA

Chief Justice of the Union receives UN Special rapporteur on Myanmar human rights

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan — U Tun Tun Oo, Chief Justice of the Union, received a delegation led by Ms Yanghee Lee, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, at his office here on Thursday.

The chief justice told the UN special rapporteur that the Supreme Court of the Union is implementing its three-year strategy which encompasses access to justice, enhancement of public awareness, judicial

freedom and accountability, promotion of justice, equality and prestige, and immediate court hearings. He expressed his belief that the strategy would reinforce the rule of law and impartial judicial procedures.

Regarding the monogamous marriage bill, he stressed the bill, when carefully studied, has no effect on freedom of worship and that it gives protection to women rights. Their discussions fo-

cused on visits by justices to prisons and detention centres. Ms Yanghee Lee also met the Bills Committees of the Amyotha Hluttaw and the Pyithu Hluttaw, advisors to the President on legal, political and economic affairs, the Constitutional Amendments Implementation Committee, and the Pyithu Hluttaw's Committee for Rule of Law and Stability, in their respective places at separate times. MNA

Belgian specialists perform cleft lip and palate surgery on patients



DAWEI, 15 Jan — Under the auspices of Sitagu Sayadaw Ashin Nanissara, a 15-member surgical team led by cleft lip and palate surgical specialist Professor Dr Tonnard Patick of

Belgian and a supportive team from Sagaing Sitagu group performed surgery on patients with cleft lip and palate at Sitagu Arojadana Hospital in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, from 11 to 15 January.

The medical team successfully operated on 51 patients at the hospital on 13 January.

Wives of Taninthayi Region ministers donated K200,000 to the hospital and wellwishers, medi-

cines and cash to the fund of the hospital.

*Po Shwe Thun
(Dawei)*

Agriculture Department gives assistance to local farmers

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan — Agriculture Department in Zeyathiri Township provided assistance for farmers who grow summer Palethwe hybrid paddy in their farms in 2014-15 fiscal year, at its office on 14 January.

Deputy Head of Nay Pyi Taw Agriculture Department U Win Oo and officials, In-charge of Mapco Company U Soe Myint and staff attended the ceremony.

The deputy head of Nay Pyi Taw Agriculture Department presented assistance to 39 local farmers.—*Ko Ko Yu Pa (Nay Pyi Taw)*



**TODAY'S
MYANMAR
NEWS SITES**



Students, faculty members donate blood at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan— As a gesture of welcoming fresher students for 2014-15 academic year in Yezin University of Forestry, a blood donation was held at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1000-bed) on 13 January.

A total of 61 students and four faculty members, totalling 65 led by Lecturer Daw Khin Mar Lwin of Yezin University of Forestry donated blood at the hospital.—*Shwe Ye Yint*



U-22 team players commence training session

YANGON, 15 Jan — The tentatively selected U-22 team launched its training session on 13 January in Yangon.

The team will take part in the 2016 AFC U-23 Championship qualifiers.

Youth players from football clubs of Myanmar National League are given training two days a week. Arrangements are being made to play the international tune-up matches.

Myanmar is included in the Group F of the qualifiers in China (Taipei) in March this year together with Australia, Hong Kong and China (Taipei).—*MFF*



Region minister supervises development activities in Myanaung Tsp

MYANAUNG, 15 Jan — Ayeyawady Region Minister for Development Affairs U Kyaw Win Naing on 12 January supervised free medical treatment, issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards and regional development tasks in Theboh Village in Myanaung Township, Ayeyawady Region.

A medical team led by Township Medical Officer Dr Maung Maung Chit and head of Township Traditional Medicine Department Daw Than Than Swe pro-

vided medical treatments to over 200 people.

Head of Township Immigration and National Registration Department U Nyunt Oo and staff issued the cards to 119 eligible people and household registrations to local families.

The region minister and the township medical officer gave talks on regional development and health knowledge to local people and students, totalling over 1,000.—*Win Bo (Township IPRD)*

REGIONAL

Pope leaves post-war Sri Lanka after preaching reconciliation

COLOMBO, 15 Jan — Pope Francis started the second leg of his Asia tour on Thursday, departing from Sri Lanka after a two-day visit in which he preached a message of reconciliation between the country's different religious groups to huge crowds.

Francis visited a Church-founded, post-war reconstruction institute in Sri Lanka before boarding a flight to the Philippines, where he will stay until Monday. On Wednesday night he became only the second pope to visit a Buddhist temple.

Pope arrives in Philippines amid massive security operation



Members of the Philippine National Police (PNP) stand guard in front of well-wishers waiting along a main street for the arrival of Pope Francis in Manila on 15 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

MANILA — Tens of thousands of people lined the streets of Manila on Thursday, cheering Pope Francis as he began his first visit to Asia's largest Catholic nation amid one of the biggest security operations in Philippine history.

The other pontiffs to visit the Philippines were both targets of assassination attempts, prompting the deployment of nearly 50,000 soldiers and police in the capital and in the central Philippine province of Leyte for his weekend trip there.

Earlier this week, the Vatican denied Italian newspaper reports that US and Israeli intelligence officials had informed the Vatican that there could be an imminent attack by Islamist militants.

On Wednesday, President Benigno Aquino personally inspected motorcade routes and public venues, which were lined with black-and-white concrete barriers topped by thick wire mesh to control eager crowds.

Interior Secretary Manuel Roxas said Aquino was willing to serve as Francis' "personal bodyguard" to ensure his safety. In a televised address on Monday, Aquino appealed to Filipinos to follow security rules after two people were killed in a stampede during a religious procession on Friday.

Asked if he was nervous ahead of the Pope's arrival, Philippine National Police (PNP) spokesman Senior Superintendent Wilben Mayor said: "For a long time now, yes. This is very challenging for the PNP."

In 1970, a Bolivian artist dressed as a priest tried to stab Pope Paul VI when he arrived at Manila airport. The Pope sustained minor chest wounds from the attack.

In 1995, a group of Islamist militants, including the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, conspired to assassinate Pope John Paul II in Manila. But an accidental fire in an apartment in Manila led to the discovery of the bomb plot days before the Pope's visit.

Aquino said there was no known threat in the country to Francis' life, but security officials were not taking any chances. Snipers will be positioned at key points around Manila and Tacloban during the trip, with sniffer dogs deployed at sites he will visit.

Asked by reporters aboard the papal plane to Manila if he felt vulnerable to an assassination attempt or an attack, Francis said he was more worried about others rather than himself, and that he was confident about security measures in the Vatican and during his trips.

"I am in God's hands," he said, joking about having asked God to spare him a painful death. "If anything should happen to me, I have told the Lord, I ask you only to give me the grace that it doesn't hurt because I am not courageous when confronted with pain. I am very timid." —Reuters

Rights groups urge Thailand to end project that sends prisoners to sea

BANGKOK, 15 Jan — More than a dozen rights groups urged Thailand on Thursday to end a project to recruit prisoners to work on fishing boats, saying it would not address problems in the fishing industry and posed a serious threat to prisoners' rights.

Thailand is the world's third-largest seafood exporter. Its fishing industry employs more than 300,000 people, many of them illegal migrant workers from neighbouring countries who are often subject to ill-treatment. A labour shortage in the industry has also partly fuelled human trafficking to meet demand for man power in the fishing sector. Rights groups say the pilot project would fail to stop the illicit trade.

"This project poses a serious threat to the human rights of prisoners," said a letter to Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha signed by 45 non-governmental organizations.

"The project will also likely fail to address the fundamental causes of the labour shortage that fuels trafficking in Thailand's fishing industry." Abuses recorded in the fishing industry include human trafficking, forced labour and violence. That has threatened business and put Thailand under international pressure to respond.

The warning comes as Thailand scrambles to boost its record in fighting human trafficking ahead of a US deadline to show improvement. In December the

Labour Ministry said that it would send consenting prisoners who had less than a year left of their sentence to go and work on fishing boats to ease a labour shortage and to combat human trafficking.

On Wednesday the ministry said that the scheme was intended to help ex-prisoners find work and would not send current inmates to sea. "We've found that ex-prisoners are not welcome in the Thai workforce so we've found a way to help them," Labour Minister Surasak Karnjanarat told Reuters. A pilot programme in Samut Sakhon Province, west of the capital Bangkok, was currently employing 173 ex-prisoners to work on fishing boats, he added.

Reuters

3rd Japan-China maritime affairs talks imminent

TOKYO, 15 Jan — Japan and China are set to hold a third round of intergovernmental talks on maritime affairs in Tokyo, possibly this month, government sources said on Thursday.

The talks will focus on crisis management and resource development in the East China Sea, focusing on waters around the Japanese-controlled Senkaku Islands, as well as responses to illegal activities by Chinese coral fishing vessels, the sources said.

Tokyo and Beijing are also likely to exchange opinions on maritime security, following the resumption of talks between defense authorities Monday on a maritime crisis management mechanism.

According to the sources, the talks will be attended by high-level officials from each country's foreign and defence ministries and coast guard.

The first of the series of maritime affairs talks, aimed at deep-

ening understanding between maritime-related government bodies, started in May 2012, but were suspended by China after Japan's purchase of some of the uninhabited Senkakus from a private owner in September that year.

The islets are claimed by China, which calls them Diaoyu.

A second round of talks was held in September last year at Qingdao in eastern China.

Kyodo News

Divers search for bodies in fuselage of crashed AirAsia jet



An Indonesian investigator from the National Transportation Safety Committee hands a cutting tool to a police officer while standing inside part of the tail of the AirAsia QZ8501 passenger plane in Kumai Port, near Pangkalan Bun, Central Kalimantan on 12 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

PANGKALAN BUN, (Indonesia), 15 Jan — Indonesian navy divers searched for bodies on Thursday in the fuselage of an AirAsia airliner that crashed into the sea more than two weeks ago, killing all 162 people on board.

A military vessel found the fuselage on Wednesday, about 3 km (2 miles) from where the tail of the aircraft was hauled up from the bottom of the Java Sea

last weekend.

Indonesia AirAsia Flight QZ8501 lost contact with air traffic control in bad weather on 28 December, less than halfway into a two-hour flight from the Indonesian city of Surabaya to Singapore.

The cause of AirAsia's first fatal crash is not yet known, but seasonal storms are believed to have been a factor.

Divers retrieved the flight data and cockpit voice recorders earlier this week from the plane's sunken wreckage. Indonesian investigators have started examining the black box recorders and hope to find clues on why the plane crashed within days. Only 50 bodies have been recovered and searchers hope more of the victims, most of whom were Indonesian, will be found in the fuselage, the main section of the plane that holds passengers and crew.

If bodies are found in the fuselage, divers will need to determine whether the entire wreckage can be lifted by using large balloons or if bodies need to be retrieved separately.

"We will wait for the calculation results from the divers on which one is faster. If it's faster to lift (bodies), we lift one by one," Supriyadi, operations coordinator for the National Search and Rescue Agency, told reporters in the town of Pangkalan Bun, the base for the search effort. Any recovered bodies will be flown to East Java's police headquarters in Surabaya for identification.

Reuters

Japan looks to revise law on corporate secrets protection

TOKYO, 15 Jan — The Japanese government is looking to boost protection of corporate secrets following the country's biggest-ever data theft scandal, the industry ministry said on Thursday.

A panel of experts under the ministry proposed on Thursday raising the maximum fine imposed for theft of corporate secrets and introducing a new scheme to confiscate profits gained by providing stolen information to rival firms, among other measures.

The government is

eyeing submitting a bill to the ordinary Diet session to be convened this month, according to the ministry. The maximum fine under the unfair competition prevention law for stealing corporate secrets is currently 10 million yen for individuals and 300 million yen for companies.

Last year, a former system engineer was charged with stealing customer data from Benesse Corp, a major correspondence education provider for children.

An investigation by

Benesse Holdings Inc, the parent firm, estimated that at least 28.95 million customers were affected by the incident.

The ministry is also considering widening the scope for applying the penalty, given that in the Benesse case customer data leakage spread through reselling by name-list traders.

The government's efforts to strengthen protection of corporate secrets also come amid an increasing threat of cyberattacks against businesses.

Kyodo News

Flights resume in Tonga as volcanic ash, smoke relent

SUVA, 15 Jan — Flights to and from Tonga resumed on Thursday following cancellations earlier this week due to undersea volcanic eruptions which spewed plumes of ash and smoke high into the sky near the Pacific island country's capital of Nuku'alofa.

Fiji Airways resumed its flights into and out of Tonga in the morning, and

an Air New Zealand flight has touched down at Tonga's Fua'amotu Airport to bring back tourists stranded in the Pacific island country, according to local news website *Tonga Daily News*.

Regional airlines had been grounded for three days, affecting over 1,000 passengers. As flights resumed, Fiji Airways and Air New Zealand said they

will continue monitoring the volcanic activity in Tonga.

Earlier this week, Tonga's Ministry of Land and Natural Resource issued an advisory of volcanic ash emissions.

Previous volcanic activity at the undersea vent was recorded in 1912, 1937, 1959, 1988 and in December 2014.

Xinhua

Kerry and Zarif hold lengthy Iran nuclear talks in Geneva

GENEVA, 15 Jan — US Secretary of State John Kerry and Iran's foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held intensive talks on Teheran's disputed nuclear programme on Wednesday, returning for an evening session before handing off to their deputies, officials said.

Iran and six world powers have renewed their quest for an elusive nuclear deal — seen as crucial

to reducing the risk of a wider Middle East war — after negotiators failed for the second time in November to meet a self-imposed deadline.

Kerry and Zarif "had substantive meetings for approximately five hours today and they discussed a broad range of issues with a small group of staff from each side," a senior State Department official said.

But Kerry later unex-

pectedly returned to the Geneva lakeside hotel for a third meeting lasting some 90 minutes with Zarif after briefing senior US negotiators ahead of their technical-level talks scheduled with Iranian counterparts for Thursday in the Swiss city. "Secretary Kerry and Foreign Minister Zarif reconvened this evening to continue discussion about the nuclear negotiations in advance of the start of the

next round of talks tomorrow," a US State Department spokeswoman said.

Wendy Sherman, acting deputy secretary of state, and deputy foreign minister Abbas Araqchi are to lead their delegations at Thursday's talks, to be followed on Sunday 18 January by wider talks between Iran and major world powers. As the two sides met in Geneva, Iran's judiciary indicted American journalist Jason Rezaian and sent his case to be tried in a hardline Revolutionary Court, the official IRNA news agency reported late on Wednesday. Earlier Zarif said that serious dialogue with the West would be easier if it respected Muslim sensitivities, ruffled by the latest *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons.

Speaking to reporters before talks began, Zarif said the meeting would help gauge whether both sides were ready to advance toward a deal to curb Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief.

"I think it's important. I think it will show the read-

iness of the two parties to move forward and to speed up the process," Zarif told reporters.

The official said rescue teams have pulled the bodies and injured.

The injured were taken to a nearby hospital. Those died were from the Swat valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Locals say there are nearly

300 coalmines in the area and blasts have also occurred in the past.

Three labourers were killed in a coalmine blast in this tribal region last week.

Employees have long complained about lack of proper security measures in the coalmines.

Xinhua

Coalmine blast kills six labourers in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 15 Jan — A blast in a coalmine killed at least six labourers in north-western Pakistan's Orakzai tribal region on Thursday morning, officials said.

An official told the media that a gas leakage caused the blast at Doli area of Orakzai agency.

He confirmed that six

labourers were killed and three others injured.

The official said rescue teams have pulled the bodies and injured.

The injured were taken to a nearby hospital. Those died were from the Swat valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Locals say there are nearly

300 coalmines in the area and blasts have also occurred in the past.

Three labourers were killed in a coalmine blast in this tribal region last week.

Employees have long complained about lack of proper security measures in the coalmines.

Xinhua



US Secretary of State John Kerry shakes hands with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif before a meeting in Geneva on 14 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS



A parade featuring characters from Disney animation film "Frozen" is held at Tokyo Disneyland in Urayasu, Chiba Prefecture on 13 Jan, 2015, as a special winter event themed on the film started the same day. — KYODO NEWS

Charlie Hebdo “survivors’ edition” sells out in minutes

PARIS, 15 Jan — Charlie Hebdo’s first edition since an attack by Islamist gunmen sold out within minutes on Wednesday, featuring a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammad on a cover that defenders praised as art but critics saw as a new provocation.

French readers queued at dawn for copies to support the satirical newspaper, even as al-Qaeda’s branch in Yemen claimed responsibility for the attack last week, saying it ordered the killings because it deemed the weekly had insulted the Prophet.

Across the Middle East, Muslim leaders who have denounced the attack in which 12 people died called for calm, while criticising *Charlie Hebdo*’s decision to publish a fresh caricature of Mohammad.

President Francois Hollande visited France’s Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean and said it was ready to support military operations

against Islamic State in Iraq “in close cooperation with coalition forces”.

The US State Department said Secretary of State John Kerry would meet with Hollande in Paris on Friday to offer assistance to France.

Also on Wednesday, the Interior Ministry said over 50 cases of people voicing support for terrorism had been registered since the attack on Charlie Hebdo’s Paris office and the subsequent killings of a policewoman and four people at a Jewish supermarket.

Millions of copies of the “survivors’ edition” were printed, dwarfing the usual 60,000 print run. On its cover, a tearful Mohammad holds a “Je suis Charlie” sign under the words “All is forgiven.”

David Sullo, standing at the end of a queue of two dozen people at a central Paris kiosk, said he had never bought it before. “It’s not quite my political stripes, but it’s important for me



A handwritten sign at a newsstand, which reads “No more Charlie Hebdo”, is displayed after it sold out the limited stock of the satirical newspaper in Paris on 14 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

to buy it today and support freedom of expression,” he said.

Inside, one cartoon showed jihadists saying, “We shouldn’t touch Charlie people ... otherwise they will look like martyrs and, once in heaven, these bastards will steal our virgins.”

This week’s edition underlined the irony of how the victims had been commemorated at Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris.

“What makes us laugh most is that the bells of Notre-Dame rang in our honour,” read an editorial in the newspaper, which emerged from the 1968 counter-culture movement and has long mocked all religions and pillars of the establishment.

Prime Minister Manuel Valls, himself a frequent target of the weekly’s caricatures, left a cabinet meeting with a copy tucked under his arm.—Reuters

Ohio man arrested for planning attack on US Capitol

WASHINGTON, 15 Jan — An Ohio man claiming sympathy with Islamic State militants was arrested and charged on Wednesday in connection with a plot to attack the US Capitol with guns and bombs, court documents disclosed.

Christopher Cornell, 20, of Cincinnati researched the construction of pipe bombs, purchased a semi-automatic rifle and 600 rounds of ammunition and made plans to travel to Washington to carry out the plot, according to an FBI informant’s legal testimony.

Court documents showed that Cornell indicated on Twitter that he supported the Islamic State group under the alias Raheel Mahrus Ubaydah.

According to the documents, in instant messages to the undercover FBI informant, Cornell indicated that while he did not have support to conduct an attack on behalf of any group, “we already got a thumbs up from the Brothers over there and Anwar al Awlaki before his martyrdom and many others.” Awlaki was killed by the United States

in Yemen in 2011.

In a November meeting with the informant, Cornell said he considered members of Congress to be his enemies, and he outlined a plan to place pipe bombs at and near the US Capitol and use firearms to kill employees and officials inside, according to the documents.

Federal Bureau of Investigation Acting Special Agent in Charge John Barrios noted that the public was not in danger during this investigation.

Ohio US Republican Senator Rob Portman praised the FBI and other law enforcement agencies for their work “to thwart this potential terrorist act. It is an important reminder of the very real threat that radical Islam continues to pose to the homeland.”

The US Capitol Police said they had worked with the FBI on the case.

Cornell has been charged in a federal court in Ohio with attempting to kill a US government officer and possession of a firearm in furtherance of an attempted crime of violence.—Reuters



The US Capitol building is seen before US President Barack Obama delivers his State of the Union address in front of the US Congress, on Capitol Hill in Washington on 28 Jan, 2014.—REUTERS

Minister says spy agencies don’t have enough powers to protect UK

LONDON, 15 Jan — Britain’s failure to pass a law forcing communications firms to collect and store online data is endangering lives and weakening the country’s ability to protect itself, Theresa May, the interior minister, warned on Wednesday.

“Every day that passes without the proposals in the communications data bill, the capabilities of the people who keep us safe diminishes and ... more people find themselves in danger and yes crimes will go un-



Britain’s Home Secretary Theresa May listens during a news conference in central London on 5 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

punished and innocent lives will be put at risk,” May, the home secretary, told parliament. May, a member of

Prime Minister David Cameron’s Conservatives, said the extra capabilities were urgently needed, but that party political differences were blocking legislation. The Liberal Democrats, Cameron’s junior coalition partner, oppose the move, saying it would infringe people’s privacy.

The head of Britain’s GCHQ eavesdropping agency last year called on technology firms Twitter Inc. and Facebook Inc. to allow security services greater access to their networks,

citing their huge importance to militant groups.

The head of Britain’s MI5 Security Service has echoed that concern over lack of access to communications, warning last week that al-Qaeda militants in Syria were plotting attacks to inflict mass casualties in the West. Cameron has said if he is re-elected in a national vote in four months time, he will bring in new laws to give security and intelligence services greater powers to monitor Internet communications.—Reuters



Italian President Giorgio Napolitano waves to people when leaving the Quirinale palace in Rome, Italy, on 14 Jan, 2015. Italian President Giorgio Napolitano resigned on Wednesday after almost nine years at the helm of the country and before the natural end of his second tenure.—XINHUA

Italian president steps down, ferment grows for successor

ROME, 15 Jan — Ageing Italian President Giorgio Napolitano resigned on Wednesday before the natural end of his second seven-year tenure, amid growing ferment in politics for the choice of his successor.

Senate speaker Pietro Grasso, the second executive of state, took the temporary presidency and will hold the presidential powers until a new head of state is appointed.

A statement issued by the Chamber of Deputies, or lower chamber, said parliament, composed of 630

deputies, 315 senators and currently six senators for life including Napolitano who serves as senator for life like all former presidents, will meet along with 58 regional representatives on 29 January to start presidential elections, within 15 days from the president’s resignation as established by the Italian Constitution.

The election will take place by secret ballot with a majority vote cast by two-thirds of the assembly in the first three rounds of balloting, after which a simple majority is sufficient.

In this lapse of time, laboured negotiations for the choice of a new president, who can be any Italian citizen aged at least 50 and in possession of all civil and political rights, are expected to take place among political parties. A number of potential candidates have been mentioned by the local press in recent weeks including former Rome mayor Walter Veltroni, constitutional court judge Sergio Mattarella, former prime ministers Giuliano Amato and Romano Prodi, Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni,

Defence Minister Roberta Pinotti and former national anti-mafia prosecutor Grasso himself.

Respected figures such as conductor Riccardo Muti or Mario Draghi, the current head of the European Central Bank (ECB), have also emerged as possible presidents. Local experts, however, say no real guessing is possible for a vote which has always been characterized by a high grade of unpredictability. Many believe the next president will be a compromise, balanced candidate.—Xinhua

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 16 January, 2015

Stock Market Potential

By Myint Win Thein

A stock market cannot be introduced overnight, let alone operated successfully. Myanmar has been trying to establish a stock market for a number of years, but it is still grappling with infrastructure and legal requirements. Therefore, it is unlikely that property prices will fall as soon as a stock market emerges in Myanmar. It will take a stock market some time to be fully operational.

On the other hand, there are a number of requirements that a company has to fulfill before listing on a stock market. It is sure that

both stock exchange authorities and companies will have to take time while the public has to learn to understand its operations. Myanmar people are complete strangers to a bourse and simply think that if they invest in a stock market they will get profits. Actually, investing in stock is neither as simple as that nor as safe as depositing their money at banks or buying treasury bonds. They can enjoy a regular interest for their money at banks or on treasury bonds, but they will have to take risks investing in stock because they can get profits or lose their money there. If they do not understand the operations of a stock market, they might feel cheated when they lose their money. Stock market authorities are required to guarantee that they will monitor the stock market properly so that stock investors are not cheated.

Myanmar people do not trust banks as much as their counterparts in other countries and buying property is a much more lucrative market than others, including the future bourse,

due to speculation. It is too early to say that the stock market will bring down property prices sooner or later.

Another factor to be considered is that property prices are rising in London where one of the biggest stock markets is located. The most likely scenario is that a property market bust will force people to rush to the stock market if they still have anything to invest. Clearly, it will be just an exaggeration of proponents of stock market to say that the stock market will bring down property prices.

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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.

Less arrogance, please!

By Myo Myint

Creating harmony is an important factor in working for development of peace, trust, growth and collaboration in any organization or society. Harmony is achieved through mutual respect, tolerance of differences, developing more equality, having understanding of problems faced by others, and appreciation of the contributions of others. Harmony is also consolidated through polite speech, acts of kindness, and building familiarity.

An important factor that destroys harmony is arrogance. Arrogance is extreme pride and unpleasant behaviour, arising from a feeling of superiority that one is more important than

others, or that one knows more than other people. Arrogance may stem from extreme pride, status, authority, capability, wealth, unsuitable role models, bad upbringing, etc. Arrogance leads to poor social relations and fear and unhappiness in people who have to deal with such persons.

With the strengthening of democratic principles in the country and the recognition that power stems from the people, one would have expected a gradual reduction of arrogance and superiority complex in Myanmar. However, the numbers of arrogant individuals and the degree of arrogance do not seem to have declined noticeably. Some members of the bureaucracy forget that they are public servants, and behave arrogantly towards the public,

because they know that without their signature or blessing, some matters cannot be affected. They are as arrogant as before to their subordinates, because they know that their juniors are under their authority and require their recommendations for promotions and other benefits. So, they freely continue to hurl abuse and sometimes, things, which their subordinates have to tolerate due to fear and old habit. Arrogance breeds arrogance, so in the same way, some junior bureaucrats imitate their seniors, and treat the public as disdainfully as they used, if not, with more contempt, as they have to be more discreet about taking bribes. Those who have whatever bit of authority, make full use of it, such as bus drivers and conductors who continue to treat passengers as rudely as they used to.

There are also some people who behave arrogantly towards those who are dependent on them for advice or information due their expertise in some field. With the rise in the number of private enterprises, some persons ranging from magistrates, managers, salespersons, and receptionists to security guards and car park attendants have also joined the ranks of arrogant persons. Some young people also stride about proudly in public, imitating the arrogant style of models who have become their role model. Even some young children, especially those who are enrolled at private schools, look down on other children and their elders, taking pride of their fluency in English and thinking that others cannot converse like them in broken English. Arrogance is very much in display in speech, tone,

mannerism and action, knowingly or unknowingly, by the persons concerned.

If we think for a minute the ups and downs in life, we, and others face, and how easily and fast things can change, we will discover the impermanent nature of life easily, as the Buddha has pointed to us. One's fortunes can change overnight in times of economic recession, and one can find oneself pushing a cart selling food instead of running a posh restaurant. One can find oneself jobless long before one's retiring age, if one makes a serious mistake, even if it has been done unintentionally. One can suffer a serious stroke on getting up from bed to start a new day and be left unable to speak. One can die from food poisoning after eating the most exotic delicacies and drinking the most costly liquor. One can also contract new viruses like Ebola and H1N1 which may be difficult to cure, while travelling abroad on a business trip. One can be the innocent victim of terrorist acts while enjoying a scenic view abroad. One can be bitten by a shark and lose one's leg while having a swim in the sea. One can be left maimed or dead after an accident while travelling by bus, helicopter, or plane or while aboard a ship. In this age of unbridled greed and desperate needs, one can be robbed and killed by people with whom one may be familiar. In addition, natural disasters like earthquakes and tornadoes can occur without warning and

destroy the building one is sheltering in.

So, while we are striving to build a more developed, prosperous and harmonious nation through democracy for the benefit of all citizens, let us all remember that we are all human beings, and as fellow human beings, we all need to respect others as well as their opinions and contributions. Let us make our society a more equal, harmonious and secure place, if not in deed at least in speech and manners, so that all can enjoy a bit of happiness. Let us honestly examine our roots and sources of our good fortunes and assert self-control over ourselves and be less arrogant, so that we enjoy the same good luck in our next existence. If we are persons of authority, let us become good role models by treating others the way we would like to be treated, and let us encourage and train those under our charge, be they members of one's family, staff, or students, to be less arrogant and have more humility. If they do not realize that they are being arrogant, make them aware of their weakness and show them how to behave in the proper way. Let us also remember to be humble genuinely because if we are only pretending to be modest, like a snake provoked, it is very easy for arrogance to rear up its ugly head and strike. Finally, let us also try to leave behind some good memories and something nice to say about us, whether we depart this life tonight or in twenty years' time.

NPED Ministry, Geneva-based South Centre hold workshop

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan—The Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and the Geneva-based South Centre of Switzerland jointly organized a workshop on Taking Global and Regional Agreement into Account When Planning for National Economic Development and Financial Stability at the ministry, here, on Wednesday, attended by Deputy Minister for NPED Daw Lei Lei Thein.

The workshop focused on development plan, financial policy, current situation for intellectual property, agreement for free trade, reform process in



taxation and progress of SME industries.

The Geneva-based South Centre discussed overview of globalization (trade, investment, technology/IPRs) and its interrelations with national devel-

opment and policy making, industrial policy, development strategy and the effects of global process and the global economic situation, vulnerability of developing countries to new crises and the role of

the state.

It was attended by officials of ministries, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Yangon Institute of Economics, executive director Mr Martin Khor of South Centre.—MNA

LOCAL NEWS

Social welfare association to give free service to locals



NYAUNGLEBIN, 15 Jan — A ceremony to launch Karuna social welfare association took place in Tawwi model village in Nyaunglebin Township, Bago Region, on Thursday.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Soe Myint, Township Administrator U Thein Zaw Kan, Head of Township Fire Services Department U Thein Htaik and officials formally unveiled the signboard of the association.

Chairman of the association U Myint Than explained the mission and vision of the association.

The association will give a helping hand to local people free of charge with the use of an ambulance.

Nay Lin (Nyaunglebin)

Nay Pyi Taw Council members meet parents, students



TATKON, 15 Jan — Members of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Myint Shwe and U Phone Zaw Han held a meeting with school heads, teachers and students from Basic Education High School No 1, No 2, BEHS (MRTV), BEHS (Shwemyo), BEHS Branch (Dahatgon), BEHS Branch (Taungbohtha), BEHS (Defence Industry-1) and BEHS Branch (Shadaw) in Tatkon Township on 14 January.

Council member U Myint Shwe urged parents and teachers to cooperate in encouraging the students for

raising pass rate in matriculation examination.

Council member U Phone Zaw Han stressed the need for students to regularly study school lessons.

Nay Pyi Taw Education Director U Soe Win and Township Education Officer U Shwe Gyi discussed academic matters for raising the pass rate in the township.

It was also attended by Township Administrator U Kan Saw Hlaing, officials, students and parents, totaling over 1,000.

Tin Soe Lwin (Tatkon)

Police on patrol in Lewe Township for security of people

NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan — Under the guidance of Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Police Force Police Col Ko Ko Aung, police from Lewe Myoma station discharged duty on patrol by saloon, motorcycle and bicycle in the local areas.

They gave educative talks on crime reduction to the local people and urged them to inform emergency situations of administrative office, fire station and police station in time.

Min Min Latt (Mandalay University)

LFRD Ministry conducts training courses



NAY PYI TAW, 15 Jan — The Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development and UNICEF jointly conducted the utilization of Syscal R2 underground water seismic machine kicked off at the ministry.

Deputy Director-General U Myint Oo of the ministry opened the course.

The planning management capacity building course was also opened at the same venue. International Consultant Mr Jerry

E Pacturan of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) explained the purpose of conducting the course.

The course will comprises subjects on establishment of model village, basic

needs of villages, rural development plan, and assessment of plans.

Altogether 26 trainees from Department of Rural Development are attending the two-day course till 15 January.—MNA

Health staff vaccinate sanitation workers against tetanus

MANDALAY, 15 Jan — Under the instruction of the Mandalay City Development Committee, staff of Health Department vaccinated workers from sanitation department against tetanus disease at the health

session of the MCDC on 13 January.

A medical team led by Dr Khin Maung Oo gave vaccination of tetanus to the sanitation workers to be free from their worksites.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)



33 Chinese tourists visit Muse, Mandalay, Bagan

MANDALAY, 15 Jan — A 33-member team led by Chinese citizen Mr Liu Xuan entered Muse, northern Shan State, with the use of 11 vehicles on 12 January under the arrangements of Shwe Haw Nan Travel & Tours Co Ltd.

They arrived in Mandalay via Lashio on 13 January and stayed at Hotel Shwe Pyi Thar.

The Chinese tourists visited Shwekyangyi monastery, Kuthodaw stupa, Mandalay Hill, Shwenandaw Golden Palace, Maha Muni Buddha Image and Taungthaman Bridge in Mandalay on 14 January.



They will leave for Bagan on 15 January, an official said. SIP Min Min

Naing and party of Tourist Security Police Force gave security assistance to the

tourists during their tour of Mandalay.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Obama, Cameron vow to stand firm against Islamist extremists

WASHINGTON, 15 Jan — US President Barack Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron vowed a united front on Wednesday against the threat posed by Islamist extremists and their “distorted ideology.”

In a joint opinion article that appeared in Thursday’s *Times of London* newspaper and released on Wednesday night in Washington, Obama and Cameron outlined the principles of the US-British alliance ahead of two days of White House meetings.

The two leaders are to have a working dinner on Thursday night and hold more talks on Friday.

Obama and Cameron, noting the Paris attacks last week against a satirical newspaper, said extremists would not muzzle freedom of speech.

“Whether we are facing lone fanatics or terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda, Islamic State or Boko Haram, we will not be cowed by extremists.



US President Barack Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron (L) talk at the start of the plenary session at the G20 summit in Brisbane on 15 Nov, 2014.—REUTERS

We will defeat these barbaric killers and their distorted ideology,” the leaders wrote.

Obama and Cameron were also firm in their resolve to stand up against

Russia’s aggression in Ukraine. They pledged to maintain diplomatic pressure on Moscow.

The United States and Europe have imposed a variety of sanctions against

Russia in retaliation.

“If we allow such fundamental breaches of international law to go unchecked, we will all suffer from the instability that would follow. Our strong

and united response has sent an unmistakable message that the international community will not stand by as Russia attempts to destabilize Ukraine,” they wrote.—Reuters

Iraq says US-led coalition not doing enough against Islamic State

BAGHDAD, 15 Jan — Iraq has told President Barack Obama’s envoy that the US-led coalition battling Islamic State needs to do more to help Iraq defeat the jihadists controlling large

areas of the north and west of the country.

Parliament speaker Selim al-Jabouri said he delivered the message in a closed meeting with retired US Marine General

John Allen, who visited Baghdad this week for talks with Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi’s government.

“Until now our feeling is that the international support is not convincing,” Ja-

bouri told *Reuters* in an interview on Wednesday. “We might see participation here or there, but it is not enough for the tough situation we are passing through.”

Islamic State fighters swept through north Iraq last June, seizing the city of Mosul in a lightning offensive and approaching the capital Baghdad as Iraq’s army disintegrated.

The Sunni Islamist advance was contained by Shi’ite militia allied to the Baghdad government and Kurdish peshmerga fighters, backed by US-led air strikes. US soldiers who withdrew from Iraq in 2011, eight years after invading to overthrow Saddam Hussein, have also returned to help re-train Iraqi forces.

But Jabouri, one of Iraq’s most senior Sunni politicians, said he told Allen that the international

community must “activate its role” because Iraq feels that, despite air strikes and other assistance, it is fighting largely on its own.

Jabouri’s frustration echoed the more guarded comments issued by Shi’ite prime minister Abadi after his own meeting with Allen on Tuesday.

A statement from Abadi’s office after the talks said US-led alliance should “increase the tempo of the effective air strikes on Islamic State positions”, and also called for the training programme for Iraqi security forces to be expanded.

Abadi’s official Twitter account said the two men had agreed on both those points.

For his part, Allen painted an optimistic picture on Wednesday of the ongoing war against Islamic State.

Reuters



Iraqi Shi’ite fighters prepare to fire a weapon during fighting with Islamic State militants at Al-Nibai, north of Baghdad on 12 Jan, 2015. Picture taken on 12 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

Female Yazidi captives forced to give blood to wounded Islamist fighters

LONDON, 15 Jan — Female Yazidi captives are being forced to donate blood to wounded Islamic State (IS) fighters, according to a pregnant teenager who escaped after being seized and held captive by IS militants.

The 19-year-old, identified as Hamshe, said she and her baby were held for 28 days by IS militants, who she believes killed her

husband, brother-in-law and father-in-law.

She spoke to activist and former journalist Nareen Shammo as part of a BBC Arabic documentary, *Slaves of the Caliphate*, in which Shammo tracks captured Yazidi women and works to negotiate their release and return home to northern Iraq.

The Yazidi are a reli-

gious sect living mainly in northern Iraq whose beliefs combine elements of several ancient Middle Eastern religions. Thousands have been killed or captured since an IS offensive in the region began last August.

Since then hundreds of Yazidi women and girls have been captured, raped and tortured, and forced to convert to Islam and marry

IS followers, according to rights groups Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

Hamshe recalled the militants separating their male and female prisoners and said it “was very painful to witness women and girls being taken as spoils of war.” A pamphlet published in December by IS, a Sunni Muslim Islamist group that

has declared a caliphate in parts of Iraq and Syria it controls, said it was permissible to buy, sell or give women and girls away as gifts, the documentary said.

“They forced the Yazidi girls to donate blood to IS wounded fighters. Which God allows these acts?” it added.

Reuters

New round of Libyan political talks kicks off in Geneva

GENEVA, 15 Jan — A new round of Libyan political discussions kicked off in Geneva on Wednesday, seeking to end Libya’s deepening political and security crisis.

Wednesday’s discussion is the second round of talks hosted by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), with an aim to reach a political settlement to form a unity government acceptable for all Libyans, and stop fighting within armed groups.

UNSMIL viewed this new round of dialogue as providing a key opportunity for Libyan parties to engage in a political process that might lead to breaking the political deadlock underlying the crisis that has overtaken the country.

“It’s going to be a long process. It’s going to be difficult. But I hope we will have many opportunities to continue to meet and this relation will be fruitful and satisfactory for everyone,” Bernardino Leon, the special representative of the secretary-general for Libya and head of UNSMIL, told a Press conference before the talks. The meeting is expected to last until Friday. Attendees include representatives from the country’s political, social, economic, and civil society, as well as participants from municipalities, militia groups, and tribal leaders.

“We do not expect to have a breakthrough tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. There is gap between the parties, which is becoming more complicated and there is more fighting on the ground ... We will try to facilitate the talks to reach common ground,” he said.

Xinhua

BUSINESS & HEALTH



Pharmaceutical tablets and capsules in foil strips are arranged on a table in this picture illustration taken in Ljubljana on 18 Sept, 2013.—REUTERS

SAN FRANCISCO, 15 Jan — The world's biggest drugmakers face a new reality when it comes to US pricing for their products as insurers use aggressive tactics to extract steep

price discounts, even for the newest medications.

Big Pharma executives acknowledged the depth of change this week during public presentations and interviews with *Reuters* at

Big Pharma faces up to new price pressure from aggressive insurers

the JP Morgan Healthcare conference in San Francisco. Drugmakers have long relied on their ability to charge whatever they deemed appropriate in the US, the world's most expensive healthcare system.

Industry advocates have defended those US prices in the past as a way to recoup the billions of dollars spent on experimental drugs that fail and to offset discounts offered overseas.

"There has definitely been increased price com-

petition ... if a product is viewed as a commodity," Derica Rice, chief financial officer at Eli Lilly & Co (LLY.N), said in an interview. "Our goal is clinical differentiation."

Pascal Soriot, chief executive of AstraZeneca Plc (AZN.L), warned investors that the pressure exerted by health insurers has expanded from medicines used to treat common maladies to the specialised fields, like cancer, where drugmakers have been able to charge their highest prices.

"Payers will try to leverage their strengths to try and get pricing concessions because those agents are very expensive," Soriot said.

Many say the tide shifted with a campaign by insurers and pharmacy benefits companies against Gilead Sciences Inc's (GILD.O) \$84,000 (55,167 pound) hepatitis C treatment Sovaldi. The drug represented the first effective cure for hepatitis C and quickly raked in billions of dollars in sales

within its first few months on the market in 2014. Sovaldi's cost is based on a 12-week treatment regime and amounts to \$1,000 a pill. By contrast, the treatment costs about \$57,000 in the UK.

As soon as US regulators approved Sovaldi's competitor, a treatment from AbbVie Inc (ABBV.N), last month, the country's largest pharmacy benefits manager Express Scripts Co (ESRX.O) dropped reimbursement for the Gilead drug. —*Reuters*

SINGAPORE, 15 Jan — Crude oil dipped on Thursday after a volatile session the previous day, when prices rebounded sharply from near-six-year lows that reflected a global oversupply.

Wednesday's 4.5 percent surge in Brent crude futures LCOc1, the biggest percentage gain since June 2012, came as traders covered themselves on expiring options.

However, the tone remains bearish because of the supply glut and on Thursday Brent had fallen back 19 cents to \$48.50 a barrel by 0605 GMT. On Tuesday it hit \$45.19, the lowest since March 2009.

US crude CLc1 was trading at \$48.38 a barrel, down 10 cents.

"We are again lowering our oil price forecast to reflect what will likely be an oversupplied market through at least the first half of 2015," US investment bank Jefferies International said on Thursday.

"We are lowering our Brent price forecast: to \$50.25/barrel from \$72.25/barrel in 2015; to \$67.50/barrel from \$83/barrel in 2016; and to \$77.25/barrel from \$90/barrel in 2017," it said.

Jefferies said the use

Oil dips after big rally as oversupply weighs on market



A ship passes a petro-industrial complex in Kawasaki near Tokyo on 18 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

of floating storage would, in the near term, absorb barrels from the market in excess of physical demand, but noted that "those same barrels will eventually be delivered and could moderate a future price recovery".

ANZ bank said in a note on Thursday that it saw a 60 percent chance Brent would range between \$40 and \$60 a barrel in the

first half of the year, a 30 percent possibility of prices falling to \$35-45 during that time and only a 10 percent chance of prices going up to \$60-80 a barrel.

"A war for output market share means oil prices are skewed to the downside. Funds are unwinding a large positive investment premium, but further selling is possible," ANZ said.

The glut in oil markets

has been created by surging output around the world.

In North America, US shale oil output has soared, while oil producer club OPEC decided late last year to maintain its output despite slowing Asian and European economic growth and to defend its market share. Russian output has reached levels not since seen the end of the Soviet Union.—*Reuters*

WEF summit to look for answers to major global challenges

GENEVA, 15 Jan — The World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting 2015 scheduled from 21 to 24 January in Davos of Switzerland would serve as a platform looking for solutions to major challenges faced by the world, said the organization on Wednesday.

Over 2,500 participants from more than 140 countries representing business, government, international organizations, academia, civil society and the media are expected to participate in this year's annual gathering, the WEF said.

The upcoming meeting is to be framed around 10 major global challenges, namely: environment and resource scarcity, employment skills and human capital, gender parity, long-term investing, infrastructure and development, food security and agriculture, international trade and investment, the future of the internet, global crime and anti-corruption, social inclusion, and the future of financial systems.

Addressing a pre-event press conference, Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of WEF, said 2015 would be a "critical" year, being "a year where we are at a crossroads."

"The world has changed substantially. We are in a post-crisis world. That is the reason why we have chosen the 'New Global Context' as this year's theme," said Schwab.

Schwab shared his expectations for the annual meeting, which included reaching an understanding of the new context and searching for solutions in such a framework, making contributions to confidence-building efforts for the conflict areas, and achieving progress in addressing major global challenges.

According to the WEF, over 40 heads of state and governments are expected to be at the four-day meeting where participants can attend the 280 sessions and workshops and exchange opinions on a range of issues.—*Xinhua*

British hospital says has suspected Ebola case

LONDON, 15 Jan — A woman suspected of having Ebola was being treated on Wednesday at a hospital in Northampton, central England, a spokeswoman for the hospital said.

British media reports said the woman was thought to have traveled abroad recently, but the Northampton General Hospital spokeswoman could not immediately confirm that.

"A patient with a suspected case of Ebola was admitted to Northampton General Hospital this evening," the hospital said in a statement.

It said tests have shown the patient does not have malaria, and added that while "Ebola is considered unlikely, ... testing is being done as a precaution."

"We are confident that all appropriate actions are

being taken to protect the public's health and ensure there is no risk to patients or staff," it said.

A British nurse diagnosed with Ebola last month is being treated in hospital in London, where doctors said on Monday she was no longer in critical condition.

Pauline Cafferkey, a 39-year-old nurse who normally works at a health

center in Scotland, became the first person to be diagnosed with the disease in Britain after contracting it in Sierra Leone where she was volunteering at an Ebola clinic.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday the global death toll from the Ebola epidemic had reached 8,429 out of 21,296 reported cases.

Reuters



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Dated 16 January 2015

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Travel ban on Japan reporter by S Korea

"humanitarian issue": Suga

TOKYO, 15 Jan — Japan's top government spokesman said on Thursday it is a "grave humanitarian issue" that South Korea extended by another three months the travel ban imposed on a Japanese reporter indicted without arrest for defaming its president.

The reporter "has been banned from leaving the country and his movement has been restricted. And now we are seeing (the ban) extended by three months, which is a grave humanitarian issue," said Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga.

"The government will convey our concern to the South Korean side and urge them to take appropriate action," Suga told a press conference.

Last year, Tatsuya Kato, the former Seoul bureau chief of Japan's *Sankei Shimbun* daily, was indicted without arrest on charges of defaming South Korean President Park

Gyeun Hye in an article published online in August.

Kato suggested in the article that Park was not at her office for seven hours on 16 April, the day the *Sewol* ferry sank causing about 300 deaths, possibly because she was meeting clandestinely with a recently divorced former aide.

Kato cited hearsay among stockbrokers and quoted from the *Chosun Ilbo*, a major South Korean newspaper that first reported the rumor but has not similarly been charged with defamation.

His travel ban, which initially came into force on 7 August, was set to expire on Thursday.

Suga reiterated that freedom of the press should be ensured, saying that Kato's indictment "deviates significantly from international norms" and cannot be tolerated in a democratic country.

Kyodo News



Journalists take video clips on a ship to the construction site of the New Suez Canal, in Ismailia, a city by the Suez Canal in Egypt on 14 Jan, 2015. Egypt launched the new waterway project in August 2014, and the construction was ordered by Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi to be completed in one year. — XINHUA

US Secret Service dumping senior officials after security lapses

WASHINGTON, 15 Jan — The US Secret Service will remove four senior officials while another has opted to retire, the latest shake-up after a series of security lapses at the agency charged with protecting the president, an agency official said on Wednesday.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed Acting Director Joseph Clancy had told the four assistant directors who oversee the agency's missions of protection, investigations, technology and public affairs that they must leave their jobs.

The departures represent a house-cleaning within top management. "Four assistant directors have been notified that they're being assigned to other positions," the official said.

Recent lapses by the agency include allowing a knife-carrying man to jump a fence and run into the White House last September in one of the worst security breaches since President Barack Obama

took office in 2009.

Clancy told Congress in November he was seeking to establish a culture of trust within the Secret Service after replacing Julia Pierson, who resigned under fire as agency director on 1 October.

The assistant director in charge of Secret Service training, who also headed Obama's protective detail, disclosed in recent weeks that he was retiring.

"Change is necessary to gain a fresh perspective on how we conduct business," Clancy said in a statement. "I am certain any of our senior executives will be productive and valued assets either in other positions at the Secret Service or the (homeland security) department."

The Washington Post first reported the story.

Several other incidents have tarnished the agency's reputation.

In 2012, Secret Service agents sent to Colombia to prepare for Obama's arrival at a summit meeting capped a night of partying



Acting Secret Service Director Joseph Clancy testifies before a House Judiciary Committee hearing on "Oversight of the United States Secret Service." on Capitol Hill in Washington on 19 Nov, 2014. — REUTERS

at strip clubs by taking several prostitutes back to their hotel.

Last March in Amsterdam, a Secret Service agent was found passed out drunk in an the hall of a hotel, where he was helping prepare for an Obama visit.

In 2011, after an Idaho man opened fire on the White House with a semi-automatic rifle from the street, no one realized the building had been hit by seven bullets until four days later when a house-

keeper found a broken window and piece of concrete on a balcony.

On 19 November, Clancy, who formerly led Obama's protective detail, told a congressional panel that a lack of trust had driven some employees to take concerns about internal problems to people outside the Secret Service rather than trusting their supervisors and agency leadership to confront issues head-on.

Reuters

Sri Lankan drug kingpin arrested in Pakistan

COLOMBO, 15 Jan — A wanted Sri Lankan drug dealer who fled the country has been arrested in Pakistan, police said on Wednesday.

The underworld kingpin Gampola Vidanage Don Samantha Kumara aka "Wele Suda" has been arrested in Pakistan and deported to Sri Lanka, police

spokesman Ajith Rohana told reporters.

"An Interpol Red Notice was issued last year on Wele Suda, one of the major drug traffickers in Sri Lanka."

He was arrested in Pakistan and sent here," confirmed Rohana.

Sri Lanka Police Narcotics Bureau said the drug

kingpin has lived in Peshawar in Pakistan.

The suspect has amassed a massive wealth from drug trafficking and fled the country with his wife last year as police attempted to arrest him.

Police later arrested his wife when she returned to Sri Lanka.

Last year, over 200 kg

of heroine has been detected by law enforcement authorities in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka's government earlier expressed fear that the island is becoming a transshipment hub for drugs after police records revealed 53,000 people had been arrested for drug offenses in 2013.

Xinhua

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**Ministry of Construction
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(Invitation for Open Tender)**

1. Open tender is invited (only Indian Companies) by the Public Works of the Ministry of Construction of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for Feasibility Report and Detail Project Report of the following road upgradation projects under Grant assisted by the Republic of India.

Sr.	State	Name of Work
1.	Kachin	Myitkyinah-Swamprabwon-Putaoh Road (218 mile)
2.	Rakhine	Kanyintan-Alathankyaw-Ahngumaw Road (49 miles 6 furlongs)

2. Selling period of Tender Documents
- (26.1.2015) to (30.1.2015)

3. Last Submission Date of Tender Documents
- 12:00 noon on 11.2.2015

6. Opening Date of Tender
- 13:00 hours on 24.2.2015

7. Tender Documents can be purchased with fifty thousand kyats (50000 Ks.) at the following address and for the detail information, please contact the office within office hours.

Tender Selection Committee, Public Works
Road Department, Office No.(11), Nay Pyi Taw
Tel: 067-407468, 407578, 407603, 407583, 407380

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(1/2015)

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

<u>Sr.No</u>	<u>Tender No</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Remark</u>
(1)	IFB-133(14-15)	BOP Control Accumulator Unit (1) Lot	US\$
(2)	IFB-134(14-15)	6" x 8" R HSB Pump without Motor (3) Lots	US\$
(3)	IFB-135(14-15)	6" x 8" R SB Pump without Motor (3) Lots	US\$
(4)	IFB-136(14-15)	Shore Water Pump with Motor (1000 gpm x 200 ft hd) (2) Lots	US\$
(5)	IFB-137(14-15)	Skid Mounted Water Transfer Pump with Motor (400 gpm x 400 ft hd, 100 HP) (1) Lot	US\$
(6)	IFB-138(14-15)	Skid Mounted Water Transfer Pump with Motor (250 gpm x 600 ft hd, 100 HP, 400 V) (1) Lot	US\$
(7)	IFB-139(14-15)	Skid Mounted Water Transfer Pump with Motor (200 gpm x 350 ft hd, 50 HP) (1) Lot	US\$
(8)	IFB-140(14-15)	Solid Control Unit (1) Lot	US\$
(9)	IFB-141(14-15)	Derrick Shaker Unit (Flow Line Mud Cleaner) FLC-504 (2) Sets	US\$
(10)	IFB-142(14-15)	Spares for Rotary Table Drive Group Ex GEFCO Drilling Rigs (4) Items	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time – 9-2-2015, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 12th 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

**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE
EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER**

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(a) DATE & TIME - (23-1-2015) (26-1-2015) (13:00) PM
 (b) COMMODITIES & VOLUME - TEAK LOGS (765) TONS
 - TEAK HANDSAWN & CONVERSION (939) TONS
 - PYINKADO / KANYIN / HNAW
 - TAUNG THAYET LOGS ABOUT (3500) TONS
 - HARDWOOD HANDSAWN (TAMALAN) (574) TONS
 (c) PLACE - TAW WIN HALL, GYOGONE, INSEIN
 TOWNSHIP. YANGON.

2. FOR FURTHER DETAILED INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE HEAD OFFICE AND ALSO VISIT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WEB-SITE (www.myanmar timber.com.mm).
Contacts; Office Ph; 01528771
E-mail: Marketing 1 ppv@gmail.com

OPEN TENDER COMMITTEE
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

Five fishermen missing after Portuguese shipwreck

LISBON, 15 Jan — Five Portuguese fishermen went missing early Wednesday after a boat capsized off the coast in Sintra, around 24 km Northwest of capital Lisbon.

A Portuguese navy corvette, a helicopter of the Portuguese air forces and several fishing vessels have been taking part in the search and rescue efforts for six fishermen on board the boat.

However, searches stopped on Wednesday

evening and will be resume on Thursday morning, President of Portugal's Fisherman Safety Association, Jose Festas told *Xinhua*.

Festas said the fisherman had received on-board safety training and that there was hope that there would be more survivors, however, he said that in Portugal fishermen disappear fairly frequently.

One of the fishermen, Henry, 26, managed to swim to the shore hanging

on to a float, and arrived at Mindelo, and began knocking on doors to plead for help, according to Portuguese *Lusa News Agency*. He was found by a night security guard.

"I never saw someone trembling so much in my life," security guard Eduardo Gil told *Lusa*, who explained that the boat had turned upside down and that there were two other fishermen swimming behind him but he lost them from sight.—*Xinhua*

WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 16th January, 2015: Rain are likely to be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Shan, Rakhine and Kayah States, isolated in Upper Sagaing Region, Chin and Mon States and weather will be partly cloudy

in 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-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong wind may reach (30) mph. Seas will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters.

Amitabh Bachchan awarded as Social Media Person of the Year



Amitabh Bachchan

MUMBAI, 15 Jan — Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan has been honoured with the Social Media Person of the Year award by Internet and Mobile Association of India.

The 72-year-old actor, who is an active social media user and online blogger, took the opportunity to thank his online fans, whom he affectionately calls 'extended family' for their support. "There is an association of social media for India the IAMAI, and they reward me with the 'Social Media Person of the Year' award and it is time really to reward the extended family for this... you are the ones that have made it possible for me to be given this recognition," he posted in his blog.

IAMAI presented him with the award at his home as he will not be able to attend the ceremony in Delhi.

"The ceremony is in Delhi, and since I cannot be there, they came over to present to me and play a video of it at the function to be held in a few days," he said.

Bachchan, who has more than 10 million followers on Twitter, the maximum for any Bollywood celebrity, complimented social media for becoming a powerful tool of communication. "What a medium this has become and what a massive element of connectivity it is proving to be, not just for the times of today, but for the years ahead.

"The association was telling me that the Twitter account or its activities are conducted by those on this medium, to almost 90 per cent through their mobiles! I must be archaic. I still use my lap top," Bachchan said.—PTI

Taylor Swift sitting pretty atop Billboard chart for ninth week

LOS ANGELES, 15 Jan — There is no knocking Taylor Swift from her perch at the top of the weekly US Billboard 200 chart, where her album "1989" notched its ninth week at No 1.

"1989" sold 111,000 album copies and 439,000 individual song downloads, bringing her total tally to 155,000 units sold for the week ending on 11 January, according to figures released on Wednesday by Nielsen SoundScan.

It is the album's ninth non-consecutive week at the top of the chart in the 11 weeks since release. In the last week of 2014, "1989" surged ahead of the "Frozen" soundtrack to become the year's biggest seller.

In the revamped Billboard 200 chart guidelines, 10 song sales equal one album unit, and 1,500 album streams equal one album unit. Swift famously opted out of streaming "1989" and the rest of her catalogue on popular online platform Spotify.

Only one new entry entered the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week, hip hop duo Rae Sremmurd with "SremmLife," which came in at No 5.

British singer Ed Sheeran's "X" climbed one rung to No 2 with 76,000 units 29 weeks after release, while rapper Nicki Minaj's "The Pinkprint" dropped down to No 3 with 60,000 units.

On the digital songs chart, which measures song downloads, Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars' "Uptown Funk!" sold 340,000 units for the top spot two weeks running. Taylor's "Blank Space" dropped to No 4 with 176,000 units.—Reuters



Taylor Swift performs in Times Square on New Year's Eve in New York on 31 Dec, 2014.—REUTERS

After awards coup, Amazon lands Woody Allen for TV series



Director Woody Allen arrives for the premiere of his film 'Magic in the Moonlight' in New York on 17 July, 2014.—REUTERS

LOS ANGELES / SAN FRANCISCO, 15 Jan — Woody Allen will make his first foray onto the small screen, writing and directing an online series for Amazon.com, the latest coup by deep-pocketed cable and streaming companies in luring the biggest names in film to television.

The Internet retail-

er rolled out the news of Allen's series on Tuesday, two days after winning its first major awards at the Golden Globes following years of experimentation with developing original programming.

The deal with Allen, 79, who has said he doesn't use email or own a computer, puts the filmmaker at the heart of Amazon's

strategy to use original content to woo consumers to its \$99-a-year (65 pounds-a-year) Prime programme, a vehicle for online shopping with free shipping.

"The end game for Amazon is just getting more people to buy into Prime, and this is their way of doing it," said Paul Verna, a senior analyst at market research company eMarketer.

"It's almost as if they use content to get people to buy into this programme that is about a lot more than video content," Verna added.

Filmmakers such as Martin Scorsese, Steven Soderbergh, David Fincher and Guillermo del Toro have all made recent forays into television. Premium cable networks like Time Warner Inc's HBO and Amazon's online streaming rival Netflix have offered directors the chance and re-

sources to tell longer-form stories over several episodes and hours.

"I think any programme developer or producer or director who has a series or script or anything, at this point they're looking at Amazon as on par with Netflix and really the whole rest of the ecosystem," Verna said.

Amazon has been spending more on content overall, including \$100 million in the third quarter alone on original shows, in the latest sign of founder Jeff Bezos' hunger to dominate businesses from books, to phones to entertainment.

Allen's yet-to-be titled series will be a half-hour, Amazon said, adding that casting announcements would be made in the future. The series will be shown exclusively on its Instant Prime Video service next year.

The famously press-

shy Allen joked that he was not sure how he got involved in the project.

"I have no ideas and I'm not sure where to begin," the Oscar-winning director said in a statement. "My guess is that Roy Price will regret this," he added, referring to the vice-president of Amazon Studios.

Known for his ironic insight into contemporary life, Allen has starred in many of his own films, including generation-defining comedies like "Annie Hall."

The deal cements Amazon's credibility following Sunday's Golden Globe win for "Transparent," which is about a man transitioning to live as a woman. The show's lead, Jeffrey Tambor, also won a Globe for best actor in a TV comedy series.

"Amazon needed to prove they were a serious player in television because

there was always kind of a question mark of how real are they," said Eric Deggans, National Public Radio's TV critic.

Like "Transparent," Allen's upcoming series and 13 new pilots for programmes that Amazon will unveil on Thursday will only be available on Prime.

The Amazon Studios division began operations in 2010.

Allen, who makes a film almost every year through art-house studio Sony Pictures Classics, has joked about his profitability as an artist.

"The two biggest myths about me are that I'm an intellectual, because I wear these glasses, and that I'm an artist because my films lose money," he once said. "Those two myths have been prevalent for many years." —Reuters

GENERAL

Three Malaysian lenders scrap deal to form megabank

KUALA LUMPUR, 15 Jan — The three-way merger talks between CIMB Group Holdings Bhd, RHB Capital Bhd. and Malaysia Building Society Bhd to create Malaysia's biggest bank has been called off due to economic downturn, the parties involved said in a joint statement on Wednesday.

"We had thoroughly deliberated the merger, and whilst we remain convinced that the combination of our three franchises follows sound strategic logic, we ultimately were not able

to arrive at a value creating transaction for all stakeholders," said Tengku Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz, acting group chief executive of CIMB Group who owns the country's second largest bank, in the statement.

CIMB and RHB said they have withdrawn their application to the central bank and the exclusivity agreement entered into by the parties has been terminated. Last July, Bank Negara had given the trio the green light to initiate their merger talks.

The deal that was reported to be worth 72.5 billion ringgit (\$20 billion) was restructured as a reverse takeover, with RHB Capital which owns the country's fourth largest bank acquiring CIMB's assets and liabilities via a share swap at an exchange rate of one RHB share for 1.38 CIMB shares based on the benchmark price of 7.27 ringgit per CIMB share and 10.03 ringgit per RHB share.

At the same time, the Islamic banking arms of

CIMB and RHB will merge with Malaysia Building Society, a nonbank property financing company, to form a mega Islamic bank that will become a subsidiary of the merged CIMB-RHB entity.

With combined assets of 629 billion ringgit as of 30 June, the proposed mega bank is set to overtake Malayan Banking Bhd, or Maybank, as the country's biggest bank with an asset of 583.4 billion ringgit.

But CIMB shares have been underperforming late-

ly due to the economic slowdown. CIMB Chairman Nazir Abdul Razak told reporters earlier on Wednesday before the announcement came that the merger was aimed at streamlining cost.

"From day one, we have already said that there is limited synergy of revenue. The real synergy upside will have to come from cost...In a slow economic environment, cost synergy is just a bit more difficult to achieve," he said.

Kyodo News

Hong Kong tops Asia in construction costs

HONG KONG, 15 Jan — Hong Kong topped Asia in terms of construction costs in 2014, according to a report published on Thursday.

The annual International Construction Costs Report, released by the Dutch design and engineering consulting firm ARCADIS, said that price inflation continued to affect the Hong Kong market in 2014, resulting in its elevated position in the rankings.

The city ranked third worldwide in construction costs, just behind Switzerland and Denmark. Elsewhere in Asia, construction markets had another strong year in 2014, particularly in Japan where the stimulus associated with one of the three "arrows" of Abenomics has had a significant impact, the report said. Singapore also saw strong growth throughout 2014, driven by a combination of robust housing markets and high levels of infrastructure spending.

The report also showed that India was the cheapest country in the world for construction. The report forecast construction costs in Hong Kong would rise 6-8 percent in 2015, slower than the 7-10 percent growth seen last year.

However, the report said, in Chinese mainland, the gradual shift to a consumption-based economy means that the huge growth in construction that has been witnessed over the last 10 years is unlikely to continue in the long term. Looking ahead, despite the changing nature of the economy, construction investment in China is likely to continue to diversify across both project types and geography, which will sustain relatively strong growth during 2015, according to the report. —Xinhua



Rescuers work at the accident site after a bus caught fire in Xiamen City, southeast China's Fujian Province, on 15 Jan, 2015. A suspected arsonist has been caught after the bus fire. One passenger suffered burns while others were injured as the driver applied the emergency brake after the No 656 bus caught fire on Thursday morning on its regular route. —XINHUA

Fastest goal in Asian Cup gives UAE 2nd straight win



UAE's Ali Mabkhout (C) celebrates his goal with team mates UAE's Mohamed Abdulrahman (L) and UAE's Omar Abdulrahman during their Asian Cup Group C soccer match against Bahrain at the Canberra stadium in Canberra on 15 Jan, 2015. — REUTERS

CANBERRA, 15 Jan — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) defeated Bahrain 2-1 in the Asian Cup here on Thursday, grabbing their second victory out of two games at the AFC Asian Cup group C and also booked a

place in quarterfinals.

It was Ali Mabkhout who opened the scoring in just 14 seconds into the match, the fastest goal of the Asian tournament, after he received an accurate long pass from the "Gulf Messi"

Omar Abdulrahman.

Ahmed Khalil almost expanded UAE's lead after a couple of short passes sent the ball in Bahrain's box in the 16th minute, but his powerful strike was denied by the left post.

Jaycee Okwunwanne equalized the score 10 minutes later as Okwunwanne's header went through UAE's keeper Majed Naser and found the net.

UAE had more ball possession but Bahrain almost scored first at the second half with Abdulwahab Al Malood's shot went wide.

Bahrain's defender Mohamed Hasan headed an own goal in the 74th minute, rendering UAE the game-decider and also a quarter spot. His powerful header flew into the net without seeing any reaction from Bahrain's keeper Sayed Abbas.

Two straight defeats dismissed Bahrain from the Asian Cup's knockout stage. The gulf team has never kept a clean sheet in the Asian Cup since a 0-0 draw with Kuwait in their tournament debut in 1988 with 17 games being played.

Xinhua

MRTV
Entertainment
Channel

(16-1-2015, Friday)

6:00 am

- Travelogue Programme

6:30 am

- Wut Hmone Music Troupe

6:50 am

- TV Drama Series

7:20 am

- Song Programme

7:35 am

- Fashion Show

7:45 am

- TV Drama Series

8:35 am

- TV Drama Series

9:20 am

- Musical Programme

9:40 am

- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

10:00 am

- ASEAN-China Cultural Show (Singapore)

10:15 am

- Myanmar Video

MITV

MYANMAR INTERNATIONAL

(16-1-15 07:00 am~

17-1-15 07:00 am) MST

- * Local News
- * A Dream A Destination (Hpa An)
- * World News
- * Goldsmith
- * Local News
- * U Kyaw Thu: From Artist to Philanthropist (II)
- * World News
- * Dengue Fever
- * Local News
- * Traditional Matrimony of Khamti Shans
- * World News
- * The Iron Rider
- * Local News
- * Power Ring
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- * Grow Back for Posterity
- * Local News
- * The World's Largest Book
- * World News
- * In the Studio: Aw Thada

Iran ride wave of support into Asian Cup last eight

SYDNEY, 15 Jan — Iran stormed into the Asian Cup quarter-finals on a wave of passionate support with a 1-0 win over Qatar in their second Group C match at Stadium Australia on Thursday.

Striker Sardar Azmoun scored the only goal in the 52nd minute to send the vast majority of the 22,672 crowd home happy and three-times champions into the last eight for the sixth straight Asian Cup.

Qatar, who had come into the tournament with high hopes after winning the Gulf Cup at the end of last year, failed to get a shot of note on target and will now go home after their final group match against Bahrain on Monday.

Iran finished the first half strongest and Sardar had already had a chance to break the deadlock in the 46th minute but poked the ball wide of goal with his left foot after Qatar goalkeeper

er Qasem Burhan had failed to deal with a corner.

The 20-year-old made no mistake six minutes later when, receiving the ball on the edge of the box from Ashkan Dejagah, he turned defender Almahdi Ali Mukhtar brilliantly and slipped the ball past Qasem and into the net.

The stadium exploded with noise and Sardar, the only change from the side that beat Bahrain 2-0 in their tournament opener on Sunday, raced to the corner to be embraced by a mob of fans.

Qatar were stung into life by the goal but were still unable to get any real penetration despite their possession their strength and technique earned them.

Former Asian Player of the Year Khalfan Ibrahim, omitted from the starting line-up, joined the fray at the hour mark just as Sardar left it with an ankle injury.

Sardar's replacement Reza Ghoochannejhad looked determined to get back on the score-sheet to try and win back his place in the side but his long-range efforts lacked power when they did not lack accuracy.

Still, the impressive De-



Qatar's Mohammed Abdullah Tresor (2nd R) clears the ball next to team mate goalkeeper Qasem Burhan (L) as Iran's Sardar Azmoun (TOP) leaps over him during their Asian Cup Group C soccer match at the Stadium Australia in Sydney on 15 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

jagah continued to cause problems for the Qatar defence on the break while Qasem looked like a liability every time the ball was crossed.

Qatar substitute Meshaal Abdulla hit the post with a header in stoppage time but had been ruled offside in any case.

The first half had plenty of endeavour and effort but little goal-mouth action to reward the

crowd, which made up for lack of numbers in the 82,000-capacity stadium with noisy passion.

Iran had come closest to breaking the deadlock five minutes before halftime when skipper Javad Nekounam found the target with a thumping header from a corner only for Ahmed Mohamed Elsayed on the goal-line to head clear.

Reuters

Spurs roar back, Southampton see off Ipswich in FA Cup



Burnley's Ross Wallace scores a goal from a free kick during their FA Cup third round replay soccer match against the Tottenham Hotspur at White Hart Lane in London on 14 Jan, 2015. —REUTERS

LONDON, 15 Jan — Tottenham Hotspur stormed back from 2-0 down to beat Burnley 4-2 in their FA Cup third-round replay on Wednesday despite resting their top striker in the once-fabled competition.

Red-hot Harry Kane watched from the bench as Danny Rose sealed the home victory for eight-times FA Cup winners Spurs after Burnley, who gave their leading forward Danny Ings a breather, had scored twice in the first eight minutes.

The overbearing significance of the Premier League was underlined by Southampton also resting top scorer Graziano Pelle for much of their replay at second tier Ipswich Town but fellow forward Shane Long struck with an instinctive finish after 19 minutes to secure a dour 1-0 win.

With both sides third in their divisions and the clubs winning their only FA Cup in the competition's sideburn-filled glory years of the 1970s, the replay after a 1-1 draw in Southampton promised much.

But, in truth, the gap in quality was clear, although a hamstring injury to influential midfielder Victor Wanyama might lead Southampton fans to question the worth of the FA Cup as they chase a Champions League place.

At least the "magic" of the Cup was slightly in evidence in Wednesday's other replay.

Third tier Bradford City thumped second tier Millwall 4-0 at home to set up a fourth-round glamour trip to Premier League leaders Chelsea.

Tottenham's prize for battling back against Burnley at White Hart Lane is a home tie against top-flight strugglers Leicester City in round four.

"It was a very interesting game. It was a strange game," Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino told reporters.

"The team has shown character and faith. It's important to grow in the group."

Tottenham's progression looked unlikely in north London after a goal from Burnley reserve striker Marvin Sordell and a deflected Ross Wallace free kick.

But forgotten midfielder Paulinho netted from close range after 10 minutes before a blistering Etienne Capoue strike just before halftime made it 2-2.

Pochettino made seven changes to the team beaten 2-1 by Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Saturday and the players that came in gave him a nice selection headache following Saturday's lacklustre display.

Reuters

Del Potro's comeback bid ends in Sydney quarters

SYDNEY, 15 Jan — Former US Open champion Juan Martin del Potro's comeback from a lengthy injury layoff was cut short by Kazakhstan qualifier Mikhail Kukushkin in the quarter-finals of the Sydney international on Thursday.

The towering Argentine was out for 10 months after having surgery to fix an issue with his left wrist and went down 7-6(5), 7-6(3) to Kukushkin, ranked 66th in the world.

Defending champion Del Potro, who won the US Open in 2009, has seen his ranking plummet to 338 and had hoped to get some match practice in Sydney before the Australian Open begins in Melbourne from Monday.

There was not much to choose between the two players, who went unbroken throughout

the match, barring a few points in the tiebreakers.

Australian Casey Dellacqua's progress before her home open was also halted after the top seed bowed out of the Hobart International with a second-round loss to Italian Karin Knapp.

The world number 29, however, did not seem too worried with her 7-5, 2-6, 6-3 defeat.

"I feel ready for the Australian Open and I feel that I'm the best prepared that I can be and that I have done everything that



Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro

I possibly can," Dellacqua, Australia's best hope at the year's first grand slam behind Samantha Stosur, told reporters.

"Now I just turn my focus onto the Australian Open and doing what I can in the next couple of days to prepare best for that." —Reuters



Asian Cup Australia 2015

	13:30 MST (16.1.2015)	
Palestine		Jordan
	15:30 MST (16.1.2015)	
Iraq		Japan
Asian Cup Australia 2015 Result		
Bahrain	1 - 2	UAE
Qatar	0 - 1	Iran