

President stresses systematic handover of unfinished but well-started projects to those who will take charge of them

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb —President U Thein Sein delivered a speech at the meeting of the Central Committee for Management of Foreign Aids and Grants held at the Presidential Place in Nay Pyi Taw on Thursday.

Also present were Vice Presidents Dr Sai Mauk Kham and U Nyan Tun, union ministers, the union attorney-general, the chairman of the Union Civil Service Board, the governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar and officials.

In his speech, President U Thein Sein said that foreign aids and grants for development should be effectively used for short-term and long-term development tasks of the country.

Although Myanmar is abundant in natural resources, they will be spent in a short time if they are not tapped systematically, the president pointed out, saying that it is necessary to promote human resource development to prevent that.

The president said

that financial and technical assistance from other countries must be utilized for human resource and infrastructure development while officials at various levels are required to monitor the use of foreign aids to ensure that they are utilized in a transparent manner without abuse.

Afterwards, Union Ministers U Soe Thane and U Win Shein reported to the president on budgets for ministries and management of foreign aids respectively.

Then, Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw reported on foreign grants and loans saying that Myanmar received US\$ 1,471.327 million grant out of US\$ 2,954.421 million for 562 projects in construction, education, health, agriculture, vocational education, social, communication, transport, electricity, disaster risk reduction, livestock breeding, financial, sports, energy and land development sectors during the period from April 2011 to December 2014.

During the same peri-



President U Thein Sein calls for effective use of foreign aids and grant at the meeting of the Central Committee for Management of Foreign Aids and Grants.—MNA

od, Myanmar received US\$ 150.734 million foreign loans out of US\$ 3,852.928 million for transport, agriculture, water supply, construction, health, financial, health, communication, education and rural devel-

opment sectors, according to the union minister.

The meeting concluded with remarks by the president.

In his concluding remarks, the president said that it is almost four years

since the government took office in March 2011 and the government was able to promote cooperation with the international community, resulting in an influx of development loans, grants (See page 3)

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Wanderlust Travel Magazine names Bagan second top city for travel in 2015

By Ye Myint

YANGON, 5 Feb—Readers of Wanderlust, a



Photo of a hot-air balloon flying over one of thousands of temples and stupas in Bagan, Myanmar's main tourist attraction site.—PHOTO CREDIT TO CRESCENT MOON TRAVELS & TOURS

leading British travel magazine, voted Bagan, Myanmar's historic ancient city known for its thousands of stupas and temples, as second "top city" for travel in 2015.

The ranking is from the annual survey for Wanderlust Travel Award 2015 by the magazine. Bagan, which topped last year's best city list, is at number two, behind world heritage site Luang Prabang in Laos and ahead of Sweden's Stockholm, a newcomer to the magazine's top 10 cities for travel and leisure in 2015.

"Bagan takes a close second place - proving that not only are our readers an intrepid bunch, they have fantastic taste, too," said the magazine.

According to the Wanderlust Travel, Bagan scored 95 per cent, down from last year's 97.5 per cent, while 97.14 per cent of the readers nominated

Luang Prabang as their favourite destination and 94.74 per cent voted for Stockholm.

The top 10 cities are Luang Prabang, Bagan, Stockholm, Kyoto in Japan, Hoi An in Vietnam, Vancouver in Canada, Berlin in Germany, Rome in Italy, Vienna in Austria and Krakow in Poland.

Myanmar as a whole was the ninth top ranked country with 95.16 per cent of readers voting for it to visit for 2015. 2013 winner Myanmar fell from fourth in 2014. However, it is still in the top 10 in the top country category for 2015 in which New Zealand is first.

Last November, Myanmar ranked first in the list of top 10 destinations for 2015 predicted by Skyscanner, a favourite travel search engine of globetrotters, according to its data that found a 59 per cent increase in flight searches for Myanmar.—GNLM

Logistics service starts between Yangon and Shanghai

By: Khin Yadana
Photo: May Oo Moe

YANGON, 5 Feb- A logistics service between Yangon and Shanghai was introduced at a ceremony held at Parkroyal Hotel here on Wednesday.

As a sister company of Maersk Group, one of the world's biggest shipping companies, MCC Transport has made an attempt to capitalize on growing trade between Myanmar and China by pioneering a new direct

logistics service between the two countries.

Leaving Shanghai on 27 January, the first 1100 TEU container vessel will arrive in Yangon on 9 February, according to reports.

In the past, it took 18 days to travel from Shanghai to Yangon, but the new lines will shorten the time to 13 days, said MCC Transport CEO Tim Wickmann, adding that transparent trade policies attract their investment to the country.

Maersk Line opened its agency office in Yangon last May.





Twelfth day session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in progress.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session goes on for twelfth day

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb — Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session continued for twelfth day on Thursday with the presentations of Union Budget report for the first six month of 2014-2015 FY by Union ministers.

Union Minister for Finance U Win Shein explained budgetary matters in the six months of the current fiscal year and activities of the some ministries and departments that spend less and more than the proposed budgets.

Union Minister for National Planning and

Economic Development Dr Kan Zaw also clarified national planning report for the first six month of 2014-2015 FY, explaining the country's GDP rate, investments in state, private and cooperative sectors, macro-economic development in the country and foreign aid.

Next, parliamentarians held discussions on the report of the Joint Public Account Committee regarding findings of the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union on 2013-2014 Union Budget.

MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw

Development of SMEs creates middle class people



U Aung Thein.—MNA



U Maw Tha Htwe.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb — At the 13th day session of Amyotha Hluttaw on Thursday, Q&A session focused on upgrading of a laterite road linking Awaing Village and Yangon-Mandalay highway, adoption of a pro-

ject for prevention of floods in Yangon, construction of Manipur Dam, electrification of villages in Thanatpin Township and construction of a hydropower station in Yathedaung Township.

Dr Myat Nyana Soe of

Yangon Constituency No 4 asked a question whether there is a plan to adopt a project for prevention of floods in commercial hub Yangon city annually. Deputy Minister at the President Office U Aung Thein replied that repairing of drains and installation of sluice gates at outlet of rivers and creeks are being carried out in fiscal years in Yangon not to cause floods. Yangon City Development Committee has conducted preliminary survey in three downtown townships for prevention of flood. If the region government cannot spend the budget for the project, the committee will seek the budget from President's special fund and submit the report to the union government for taking technology.

MPs participated in discussions of SME development bill.

U Nay Win Tun of Shan State Constituency No 9 and U Hla Swe of Magway Region Constituency No 12 discussed prospects from development of SMEs and progress of SMEs to emerge a middle class people for Myanmar's graduation from lower developed countries status, and seeking foreign assistance and technology for development of SMEs in Myanmar.

The speaker of the Hluttaw decided the Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee must review the discussions of the MPs.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw

11 MoUs signed between Govt, local & foreign companies to make assessment of building coal-fired power plants



U Aung Myint.—MNA



U Aung Kyaing.—MNA

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb — The government has signed 11 Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with local and foreign companies to carry out assessments of potentials for building coal-fired power plants, said Deputy Minister for Electric Power U Aung Than Oo.

The deputy minister made the remarks at the meeting of Pyithu Hluttaw Thursday as U Myint Soe of Pyawbwe Constituency submitted a proposal to produce power sufficiently with the use of modern technologies including coal-power and nuclear power technologies without damaging the health of the people and environment.

However, the government has no plan yet to produce electricity from nuclear power in the country as generating electricity from the nuclear power is

under criticism currently in the world, U Aung Than Oo said.

He also replied to a question raised by U Aung Kyaing of NyaungU Constituency that power will be supplied to 45 Bagan-era pagodas in Sarle Village in Chauk Township when budget allocation for building a 11-KV cable line in the region is approved.

The deputy minister continued to say that regional and state governments have sought budget allocations from the government to build and upgrade 11-KV cables in the respective regions.

To supply power to 45 Bagan-era pagodas in Sarle Village in Chauk Township, it is needed to build a one- and- a half-mile-long cable to link the village and a sub-power station in Yenanchaung, the deputy minister said.

Meanwhile, the Ministry

of Electric Power is implementing power supply projects with the use of budget allocation from the government and assistance from the World Bank, Asia Development Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency and loans from the other countries, giving priorities to supplying power to rural areas, U Aung Than Oo said.

Besides, the ministry has a plan to build a 230-KV cable line, apart from a 66-KV cable line, to be able to supply power to villages in Gangaw Township.—MNA

PyinOoLwin Maha Thingyan gold cup golf tournament 12-15 April

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb — PyinOoLwin Golf Club will organize the 57th PyinOoLwin Maha Thingyan gold cup golf tournament with the sponsorship of KM Golf Center at PyinOoLwin Golf Course from 12 to 15 April.

The tournament is classified as gold, silver and bronze level inter-club tournaments, individual, senior and women's events.

Golfers may dial 09-2044164 of Major Sai Win Han (Rtd) for further information.

GNLM

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Nay Pyi Taw Notification No. (4/2015)

2nd Waning Day of Tabodwe, 1376 ME
(5 February, 2015)

Unity and Peace Party allowed to be renamed as Bamar People's Party

1. Unity and Peace Party, registered at the Union Election Commission with registration No 46 under Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law, submitted change of its name as Bamar People's Party to the commission.
2. After scrutinizing the submission of the party, the commission agreed change of the name. The UEC hereby announced Union and Peace Party was renamed Bamar People's Party as of 5-2-2015.

By order,

Tin Tun
(Secretary)
Union Election Commission

NATIONAL

President stresses systematic handover...*(from page 1)*

and technical assistance in various sectors.

The Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum was held two times in 2013, with the aim of creating new levels of cooperation with development partners and organizations. Arrangements are under way to organize the third forum on 7-8 February.

The Nay Pyi Taw Accord Effective Development Cooperation adopted at the first forum has witnessed more foreign assistance, but the country still needs more aid taken the proportion of sectorwise and regionwise.

Special emphasis should be put on the effective and proportional use of aid in such major projects as poverty reduction, employment and income generation, clean drinking



President U Thein Sein chairs the meeting of the Central Committee for Management of Foreign Aids and Grants.—MNA

water, electricity, agriculture, education and health.

The president stressed that careful consideration should be given not only to the outputs and outcomes of projects but also to the actual effects they

can have on the socio-economic development of the country.

He described monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a crucial process in the implementation of development projects, especially

projects that are undertaken with foreign aid.

He pointed out the need to ensure that projects implemented with foreign loans conform to national-level development projects, that they

do not pose any threats to economic, social and environmental affairs, and that they are sustainably effective and efficient in the long run.

He called for speedy efforts to complete ongoing

ing projects and new ones in the remaining tenure of the government, stressing a systematic handover of unfinished but well-started projects to those who will take charge of them.

MNA

Senior General stresses reciprocal relationship between politics and economy

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb—Politics and economy is interrelated in such a way that political stability can pave the way for economic growth and vice versa, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing told Mr Wang Yingfan at a call here on Thursday.

The commander-in-chief of Defence Services told the special envoy of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs that military-related businesses are conducted in line with the law, and stressed intergovernmental coordination in

border management to promote stability and peace.

Wang Yingfan said China plans to make more investments in foreign soils as the country's supply has been much lower than demand over the past 30 years of its reform.

Peace and stability is key to regional and national development, with the Chinese special envoy recognizing the important role the Myanmar defence services play in restoring peace and stability and carrying out national development.

Constructive relation-

ships between the two armies provide a solid foundation for bilateral relations between the two countries, he said, pledging cooperation in peace processes.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing called for improved bilateral relationships and pledged cooperation without detriment to the people.

Despite China's policies, service personnel at low levels were found to be granted rights in some border issues, with the commander-in-chief noting that the people would suffer

from being sandwiched between armed conflicts.

Scanty experience in politics and little knowledge make the economy weak, the commander-in-chief said, adding that Myanmar is faced with a challenge resulting from a tug of war over its geographically strategic location.—Myawady

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing shaking hands with Mr Wang Yingfan, special envoy of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA



Public request released regarding amendment of national education law

YANGON, 5 Feb — Press Release Team of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar made a public request regarding amendment of national education law through a press release (3/2015) on Thursday.

The press release called for adherence to rule of law to ensure security, peace and stability and tranquility by each and every citizen while enjoying democracy and freedom, pointing out unrests and violence that caused instability and tarnished

the country's image in the past.

The government will manage as much as it can for development of education sector by reporting genuine wishes of the students relating to education to Parliament, said the press release.

It revealed there are some political organizations, so-called students and those masterminding the protests involved in the demonstrations to create unrests.

The press release re-

quested the people including political organizations, parliamentarians, ethnic leaders and civil society organizations to cooperate with the government for ensuring peace and stability and rule of law of the country.

Likewise, the Ministry of Education also released a statement, saying that coordination are being made and works are underway to amend the national education law before sending back to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

The ministry's statement confirmed examinations of respective universities, matriculation examination and examinations of Grade 9 and Grade 5 will be held without fail as announced.

In the statement, the Ministry of Education also requested the people to cooperate with the ministry for ensuring peaceful learning of their schoolchildren and successful holding of the examinations for the students.

GNLM

World Bank (IDA) to disburse US\$100 million to Myanmar

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb—The signing of financial agreement took place at the Ministry of Health, here, on Thursday, with an address by Deputy Minister Dr Daw Thein Thein Htay.

Director-General U Maung Maung Win of Treasury Department under the Ministry of Finance and SEA Country Director

Mr Ulrich Zachau of World Bank signed the financial agreement.

WB (International Development Association) will disburse US\$100 million without interest rate to Myanmar for spending it on maternal and child basic health care services in 330 townships within four years.—MNA

Local authorities, wellwisher hoist umbrella atop ancient pagoda in Kyaunggon

KYAUNGGOON, 5 Feb — A ceremony to hoist an umbrella atop ancient Mogaung Pagoda was held at Mogaung Pariyatti Monastery in Ward 1, Kyaunggon, Ayeyawady Region, on 3 February.

Amyotha Hluttaw representative U Soe Win, Deputy Speaker of the region Hluttaw Dr Htein Win and chairman of Township Development Supporting Committee U Tin Maung offered diamond orb, pennant shape vane and umbrella to members of the Sangha.

MP U Soe Win, the deputy speaker and wellwishers hoisted tiers of umbrella atop the pagoda.

David (Kyaunggon)



Children of pre-primary schools make trips in Nay Pyi Taw



NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb — As a gesture of hailing the

centennial birthday of General Aung San and Myanmar

Children's Day which falls on 13 February 2015,

a total of 70 children from Nan Htaik Yadana pre-primary under Social Welfare Department and children from ILBC and pre-primary school of Pyinmana Township Maternal and Child Welfare Association together with supervisor teachers visited Uppatasanti Pagoda and white elephant shed on 4 February.

Principal of Nan Htaik Pre-Primary School Daw Theint Theint Htwe said that the school marks birthday of the General and Myanmar Children's Day for forging nationalistic spirit of children. All countries celebrate Children's Day on the significant days annually, he said.

Than Naing (Zabuthiri)

Taninthayi Region FSD gets two new fire trucks, two ambulances



DAWEI, 5 Feb — Three Japan-made fire trucks purchased by Taninthayi Region Fire Services Department and two ambulances delivered by Fire Services Department arrived at the Region FSD in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, on 1 February.

Deputy Director of Region FSD Ye Thurein Khin Maung Yi said, "Each fire

truck is worth K22.5 million. Under the permission of Region government, township fire station and staff quarters have been facilitated with modern equipment so as to prevent outbreak of fire in the region."

Assistance of the region government will contribute to fire preventive measures in the region.

Po Shwe Thun-Dawei

Rural youths join livestock breeding workers course

NAY PYI TAW, 5 Feb — Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department in Dekkhinathiri Township started the basic rural livestock breeder course at its office as of 26 January.

Officials of the department gave lectures on breeding of cow, poultry, pig and goat, integrated farming system, animal nutrition, feedstuff, animal health and development law, emerald green project, livestock breeding banking system and control of infectious diseases.

Altogether 10 youths from emerald green project villages and livestock breeding villages are attending the course from 26 January to 6 February.

More batches of training course will be conducted

for the rural youths so as to contribute towards development of meat and fish production of the nation.

Thant Maung



Htamane making contest depicts images of Myanmar tradition

MYAWADY, 5 Feb — Myanmar's traditional Htamane making contest was held in the precinct of Shwemyinwun Pagoda in Myawady, Kayin State, on 2 February.

Leader of the panel of judges Dr San Myint explained disciplines of the contest.

District's deputy commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo, Commander of District

Police Force Police Lt-Col Moe Nyo, township administrator U Khin Maung Zaw and officials supervised the contest.

A total of 13 teams participated in the contest. Township officials awarded first prize to Ward 5, second to Inland Freight-handling team and third to Township Customs Department respectively.

Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)



TODAY'S
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REGIONAL

Lower house adopts anti-terror resolution condemning hostage killings

TOKYO, 5 Feb — Japan's lower house unanimously adopted an anti-terrorism resolution on Thursday condemning the recent killings of two Japanese hostages by Islamic State as "inhumane and despicable."

The resolution said terrorist acts can never be justified whatever the reason or purpose, adding that Japan and its people resolutely denounce terrorism.

"We strongly condemn that ISIL has carried out inhumane and despicable terrorist acts against two Japanese," the resolution said, referring to Islamic State by one of its acronyms.

"We declare that Japan and its people resolutely denounce terrorism, and will stand firm in our pledge never to tolerate terrorism."

The resolution was adopted by House of Representatives lawmakers across party lines, follow-

ing a hostage crisis that resulted in the killings by Islamic State militants of 42-year-old Haruna Yukawa and 47-year-old Kenji Goto despite days of diplomatic efforts to get them freed.

The resolution called on the Japanese government to increase its humanitarian aid to countries in the Middle East and Africa, and step up coordination with the international community in the fight against terrorism.

Since the hostage crisis erupted on 20 January during Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Middle East tour, Japan has been on high alert and beefed up security at major airports and other key facilities.

The resolution urged the government to take "all possible measures" to secure the safety of Japanese nationals both in Japan and abroad.

The hostage-takers



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe applauds during a plenary session of the House of Representatives in Tokyo on 5 Feb, 2015, after the lower house unanimously adopted an anti-terrorism resolution condemning the recent killings of two Japanese hostages by Islamic State as "inhumane and despicable."

KYODO NEWS

first demanded a ransom of \$200 million for the release of the two men — the same amount Abe committed for countries fighting Islamic State. They later switched

to seeking the release of convicted Iraqi terrorist Sajida al-Rishawi from prison in Jordan in exchange for journalist Goto.

Jordan had offered to swap al-Rishawi for 26-year-old captive Muath al-Kasaesbeh. But a new video posted on Tuesday purportedly showed the Jordanian military pilot being burned alive in a cage, prompting Jordan to execute al-Rishawi in retaliation.

"We express our deep appreciation for Jordan and other countries that have shown strong solidarity with Japan and offered co-operation toward securing the release" of the hostages, the resolution said.

The resolution was prepared at the initiative of the Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition partner Komeito. The House of Councillors is expected to adopt a similar resolution on Friday.—Kyodo News



Photo taken on 2 Feb, 2015 shows the snow scenery in Zhangjiajie scenic spot in central China's Hunan Province.—XINHUA

Thailand's famous Tiger Temple raided for suspected wildlife trafficking

BANGKOK, 5 Feb—Thai officials have raided a Buddhist temple that is home to more than 100 tigers and are investigating suspected links to wildlife trafficking, authorities said on Thursday.

Wat Pa Luang Ta Bua, or Tiger Temple, in Thailand's western Kanchanaburi province, is popular with tourists who pet, cuddle and pose for selfies with the big cats.

The temple has been dogged for years by talk of links to wildlife trafficking and its maltreatment of tigers.

A Thai official said at least 100 tigers had been impounded in raids this week and were being kept at the temple until authorities wind up their investigations. Thirty-eight hornbills, a bird species, were also seized. "We're checking if the temple had official permits to keep them," said Cherdchai Charipanya, director of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment in the province of Ratchaburi. The temple bills itself as an animal sanctuary and tiger-breeding facility, and its abbot has denied animal cruelty

and illegal trafficking. Thailand is one of the world's biggest hubs for wildlife trafficking. In recent years, the country has tried to shed its reputation as a source and destination for exotic meat and rare pets. But demand from China, including for tiger parts and ivory tusks, has fuelled a thriving trade in illicit wildlife.

Conservationists must try to reduce demand for tiger parts in China to save the animals, wildlife experts warned at an anti-poaching conference in Nepal this week.

In 2013, Thailand's then premier, Yingluck Shinawatra, pledged to outlaw any kind of ivory trade but there has been little progress. Yingluck was forced from office in May. Kanitha Krishnasamy, programme manager for Southeast Asia at TRAFFIC, a wildlife trade monitoring network, urged authorities to look into the origin of the seized hornbills and tigers and to pursue legal action. "We hope the investigations don't end with the seizure of wildlife, but results in legal action and a deterrent punishment for offenders," said Krishnasamy.—Reuters

Malaysia to take special visa policy to attract Chinese tourists

KUALA LUMPUR, 5 Feb — Chinese tourists travelling to Malaysia via Singapore will be issued with visa on arrival, a Malaysian government official said on Thursday.

Tourism Promotion Board chairman Dr Ng

Yen Yen was quoted by local media report as saying that she hopes travel trade operators in Singapore will take the opportunity to make use of Malaysia's special policy of visa on arrival to attract more Chinese tourists. "Chinese

arrivals are very (much) linked to the Singapore market. If they don't come to Malaysia, they will not come to Singapore. So, we are trying to do our best to develop both," she said during a luncheon event with travel trade operators

in Singapore.

When Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 vanished on 8 March last year, Malaysia experienced a big drop in tourist arrivals from China to the tune of almost 10 percent.

Xinhua

Vietnam's HCM City ranks on top 20 "dynamic" global list

HO CHI MINH CITY, 5 Feb—Vietnam's southern economic hub Ho Chi Minh (HCM) City has been ranked among the 20 most dynamic cities globally by the US-based financial and professional services firm Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), local media reported on Thursday.

The firm revealed the list through its City Momentum Index (CMI) paper in late January. This is JLL's second annual CMI, which captures the dynamics of a city's real estate market — its rates of construction and absorption, price movement and the attraction of a city's built environment for cross-border capital.

The CMI selected HCM City as one among six new cities, including Sydney and Melbourne, to figure in the top 20. The city's construction levels are high, although growth rates are exaggerated by

the small size of the existing commercial real estate market, according to Vietnam News daily report.

In 2014, HCM City achieved Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 9.6 percent, 1.7 times high-

er than the country's average.

The city received a total of 4.4 million foreign visitors last year, accounting for 53 percent of the number of foreign visitors to Vietnam. It targeted 4.7

million foreign visitors and 19.3 million local tourists this year, which would bring an estimated total revenue of 98.26 trillion VND (4.57 billion US dollars), said the report.

Xinhua



The 19th-century French-built Notre-Dame Basilica and modern Ho Chi Minh City.
XINHUA

S Korea reconfirms intent to develop own missile defence system

SEOUL, 5 Feb — South Korea on Thursday reconfirmed its position of trying to develop its own missile system to better cope with growing military threats from North Korea.

"To be better prepared for North Korea's missile threats, we have conveyed to China on various occasions that we plan to develop our own KAMD system, which is suitable for strategic environment on the Korean Peninsula," Foreign Ministry spokesman Noh Kwang Il said during a press conference, referring to the Korea Air Defence Missile system. Noh's comments were made in response to a question about the South's official position on possible deployment of an advanced US missile defence system, known as Terminal High Altitude Area Defence.

"For the deployment of THAAD on the peninsula, no decision has been made, no request from the US has been made and no bilateral consultations have been held," he said.—Kyodo News

S Korean president orders stern readiness against DPRK provocations

SEOUL, 5 Feb — South Korean President Park Geun-hye on Thursday instructed security officials to keep a stern military readiness against possible provocations from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Park chaired a meeting of top military intelligence and police officials at the presidential office, saying the militar "should deter DPRK provocations" by maintaining a firm military preparedness "without any holes" in a situation that security on the Korean Peninsula is increasingly unpredictable.

The president said firm

security and military defence is the most important base in a road to opening an era of the unified Korea, denouncing the DPRK for continuing its development of nuclear weapons and long-range missile and maintaining its strategy of developing nuclear bombs and stimulating the economy.

South Korea offered in December to hold high-level talks with the DPRK in January to discuss all issues of mutual concern, but Pyongyang has kept mum about the proposal and has said that Seoul should accept preconditions such as the stop of anti-DPRK



South Korean President Park Geun-hye

leaflets and the suspension of joint annual war games with the United States this year.

Park said the DPRK has continued threat of

provocations while demanding various preconditions for South Korea's dialogue offer. She said the peninsula's security situations became hard to predict after the DPRK's hacking attack against Sony Pictures, in which Pyongyang has denied its involvement.

Her comments came ahead of joint annual military exercises between Seoul and Washington scheduled for early March to April. The DPRK proposed to suspend its nuclear tests in return for the halt of the joint drills, a proposal flatly rejected by the two countries.—Xinhua

Media outlets punished for doing paid news

BEIJING, 5 Feb — China's media watchdog published four violations of media outlets or journalists writing paid news, sending a clear signal that such conduct is unacceptable.

In one case, Yu Zhangshu, a journalist in east China's Jiangxi Province, wrote "soft news" for 16 companies, from which Yu made 150,000 yuan (19,346 US dollars) and helped a company run by his relatives earn around 1.65 million yuan, according to a statement from the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television.

The administration has confiscated the illegal gains and shut down the bureau. Yu is banned from news reporting for five years. His criminal responsibility will be examined by judicial organs.

In another case, China County Times in 2013 traded an investigative report about local governments in Gansu for eight pages of promotional contents worth 260,000 yuan, said the statement.

The administration urged media outlets to take a warning from these violations, strengthen internal management and rectify similar problems.—Xinhua

Pilot hailed a hero for pulling plane clear of buildings



Rescuers search inside the wreckage of a TransAsia Airways turboprop ATR 72-600 aircraft after it was recovered from a river, in New Taipei City, on 4 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

TAIPEI, (China), 5 Feb — Taipei's mayor hailed the pilot of a crashed TransAsia Airways plane a hero on Thursday for narrowly avoiding buildings and ditching the stalled aircraft in a river, likely averting a worse disaster. At least 31 people were killed when Flight GE235 lurched between buildings, clipped a taxi and an overpass with one of its wings and crashed upside down into shallow water shortly after take-off from a downtown Taipei airport on Wednesday. There were 15 known survivors and 12 more unaccounted for.

"He really tried everything he could," Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je said of the pilot, his voice breaking with sobs. Amateur video recorded by a car dashboard camera showed the plane

nose-up as it barely cleared the buildings close to Taipei's Songshan airport before crashing into the river.

"The pilot's immediate reaction saved many people," said Chris Lin, brother of one of the survivors. "I was a pilot myself and I'm quite knowledgeable about the immediate reaction needed in this kind of situation."

Aerospace analysts said it was too early to say whether the pilots intentionally pulled the plane above the buildings, and noted that the crew may have been aiming for the river to reduce casualties. A more conclusive picture will emerge only when authorities release details from the plane's cockpit voice and flight data recorders, which were recovered on Wednesday.

"He's missed the buildings but it is premature to

make an analysis of what happened on this flight. We have to wait for the data from the cockpit voice recorder and flight recorder," said aviation analyst Geoffrey Thomas, editor-in-chief of airlineratings.com. The pilot and co-pilot of the almost-new turboprop ATR 72-600 were among those killed, Taipei's aviation regulator said. TransAsia identified the pilot as 42-year-old Liao Chien-tung. Taiwanese media reported that it appeared Liao had fought desperately to steer his stricken aircraft between apartment blocks and commercial buildings.

The head of Taipei's Civil Aeronautics Administration, Lin Tyh-ming, has said Liao had 4,914 flying hours under his belt and the co-pilot 6,922 hours.

Reuters

Sri Lankan court bans LTTE leader from leaving country

COLOMBO, 5 Feb — A Sri Lankan court on Thursday banned top leader of the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Eelam (LTTE) Kumaran Pathmanathan (KP) from leaving the country.

Pathmanathan is on Interpol's most wanted list for various charges including arms smuggling and criminal conspiracy linked to terrorist organization LTTE. He is also wanted by India's law enforcement agencies for connection with the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and for violation of the Terrorist Act and the Indian Explosive Act.

KP, as he is known lo-

cally, was appointed to lead the LTTE after it was militarily defeated by the Sri Lankan government in 2009. He was arrested in Malaysia and deported to Sri Lanka but was subsequently freed by former President Mahinda Rajapaksa.

However, calls for his arrest were renewed after Rajapaksa was ousted from power early last month. Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), a coalition partner of the new government, filed a Writ Application in a bid to obtain an order to arrest and prosecute KP who was one time LTTE's arms procurement wing leader.

Xinhua

Reporters invited for test ride on new bullet train



A W7 series bullet train, developed for use on the Hokuriku Shinkansen Line scheduled to start operation in March 2015, enters JR Kanazawa Station in Ishikawa Prefecture on 5 Feb, 2015, for a test-ride event for reporters. The new bullet train service connecting Nagano, central Japan, and Kanazawa on the Sea of Japan coast, is an extension of the existing route between Tokyo and Nagano. — KYODO NEWS

KANAZAWA, (Japan), 5 Feb — A new bullet train carried members of the media between Kanazawa on the Sea of Japan coast and Nagano, central Japan, on Thursday for a test-ride ahead of the launch in March of the Hokuriku Shinkansen Line. The W7 series train developed for the new service departed JR Kanazawa Station in the morning. In about 10 minutes it reached the top speed of 260 kilometres per hour and took just 25 minutes to arrive at JR Toyama Station. The Hokuriku Shinkansen Line, which will debut on 14 March, goes through one of the nation's most snowy regions. It is an extension of the existing bullet train route

between Tokyo and Nagano. Also on Thursday, musician Yasutaka Nakata, a member of the electronic music duo CAPSULE and producer of the female techno pop group Perfume, met with Kanazawa Mayor Yukiyoshi Yamano at the municipal government offices to talk about a train departure melody he composed at the request of the municipal government.

It will be played for a Hokuriku Shinkansen train departing Kanazawa Station. Nakata, who is from the city, told the mayor he incorporated elements representing "the wonderful history and culture of Kanazawa" as well as "the comfort and sense of speed of the shinkansen" in the tune.—Kyodo News

Pentagon nominee vows to resolve Jordan arms sales delays

WASHINGTON, 5 Feb — President Barack Obama's nominee for defence secretary on Wednesday vowed to cut through "red tape" slowing US arms deliveries to Jordan, which plans to step up its fight against Islamic State after the killing of a captured Jordanian pilot.

Ashton Carter, a former No 2 Pentagon official, told the Senate Armed Services Committee it was important for Jordan to be able to acquire the weapons it needed, and he would work to address concerns raised by King Abdullah during a meeting with committee members on Tuesday.

"We need partners on the ground to beat ISIS," Carter told the committee during a hearing on his nomination, adding that Jordan need help in fighting a "savage and nasty" foe.

Jordan on Wednesday said it would intensify

its efforts to fight Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, after the release of a video said to show the pilot being burned alive in a cage. Abdullah cut short a visit to Washington after the release of the video.

US Senator John McCain, chairman of the committee, said King Abdullah had told senators at the US Capitol on Tuesday that Jordan was unable to get military equipment it needed in a timely fashion, sometimes for as long as a year. All 26 members of his committee signed a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry and Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel on Tuesday urging them to send Amman everything it needs immediately.

McCain said the committee would also consider proposing legislation if needed to achieve goals outlined by the king during his meeting with committee members.

Ashton Carter, US President Barack Obama's nominee to be secretary of defence, testifies before a Senate Armed Services Committee confirmation hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington, on 4 Feb, 2015.
REUTERS



Carter told the hearing he was not familiar with the specific concerns raised by Abdullah but would address the issue promptly if confirmed as defence secretary. He said he knew well how unnecessary "red tape" could slow deliveries of equipment, and had seen similar issues regarding weapons needed by US troops in Iraq and Afghanistan during his previous jobs in the Pentagon.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest said he was not aware of specific requests made by Jordan

for additional weapons, but the Obama administration would consider any request submitted. Carter said he could "well believe" that arms deliveries to Jordan were proceeding slower than King Abdullah or US officials found acceptable.

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said the US government had signed a memorandum of understanding that would significantly increase US assistance to Jordan. She said she was not aware of any bottlenecks in delivering weapons.

Reuters

Argentine former spy called to testify in case of dead prosecutor

BUENOS AIRES, 5 Feb — Investigators into the mysterious death of Argentine prosecutor Alberto Nisman just days after he made serious allegations against the president have called for a former top spy to testify in the case on Thursday, a news agency reported.

Nisman was found dead in his apartment just over two weeks ago, with a gunshot wound to the head, the day before he was to testify in Congress about his accusations that President Cristina Fernandez tried to derail his probe into a deadly 1994 bombing of a Jewish community centre.

It remains unclear whether Nisman committed suicide or was murdered. His death has rocked Argentina, sparking a myriad of conspiracy theories.

The government says Nisman's allegations and his death were linked to a

power struggle at Argentina's intelligence agency and agents who had recently been fired.

One of those fired in a December shake-up was Antonio Stiusso, a senior spy who had helped Nisman with his investigation of the 1994 bombing that killed 85. The government has said Stiusso misled Nisman.

Citing sources close to the investigation into Nisman's death, Argentine news agency DYN said that Stiusso had been called to testify at 11 am (1400 GMT) in Buenos Aires.

The lead investigator into the case, Viviana Fein, called upon him to testify after checking calls received and made on Nisman's telephone before his death, according to DYN.

Fein was not reachable for comment in the early hours of Thursday.

Reuters

Troops kill eight in highway battles in northern Mexico

MEXICO CITY, 5 Feb — Mexican federal troops killed eight alleged gang members on Wednesday in battles along a highway near the US border in the northern state of Tamaulipas, a region plagued by a bloody dispute between drug cartels.

The gunmen were killed in separate battles after they hijacked buses and used them to block a highway between the cities of Matamoros and Reynosa,

opposite the Texas border towns of Brownsville and McAllen, a federal and state police task force said.

An explosive device was also found and deactivated in front of the mayor's office in Matamoros, the task force added.

Residents rely on reports from social media to learn about frequent gun battles, which can rage for hours. Local media, which have been repeatedly attacked by the gangs, refrain

from reporting the violence.

The US consulate in Matamoros issued a statement on Wednesday warning American citizens of the spike in violence, which it said had been attributed to a battle between Matamoros and Reynosa factions of the Gulf Cartel.

The consulate said staff had been advised to restrict travel in the city, noting that there had been a surge in violence and an

increase in reports of large convoys of armed drug gang members driving through Matamoros.

"While daytime convoys of armed Transnational Criminal Organization members are not necessarily unusual for Matamoros, the amount of violence that has resulted from gun battles between these rival factions is cause for increased vigilance," the consulate said in a statement on its website. —Reuters



A woman holds a sign that reads, "Justice for Nisman" during a demonstration outside Argentina's Congress in Buenos Aires on 4 Feb, 2015. —REUTERS

NATO to strengthen its presence in eastern Europe

BUSSELS, 5 Feb — NATO defence ministers will on Thursday strengthen the alliance's presence in eastern Europe by setting up a network of small command centres that could rapidly reinforce the region in the event of any threat

from Russia. Ministers will also decide on the make-up of a new rapid reaction force and agree to expand a corps-level headquarters in western Poland as part of a plan to bolster NATO's eastern flank in response to Russia's annexation of

Ukraine's Crimea. The US ambassador to NATO, Douglas Lute, said NATO flags would fly over the Polish headquarters and the six command centres in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and the three Baltic states, where the alliance has had little presence until now. "These will be the first seven NATO flags in eastern Europe," he told a news conference.

The plan, which builds on decisions taken at NATO's summit in Wales last September, falls short of the hopes of some eastern European countries for NATO to set up large bases in the region, but may still alarm Russia, which is deeply hostile to NATO encroach-

ing closer to its borders.

The ministers' meeting comes at a time of high tension between the West and Russia over the Ukraine conflict, that has raised the spectre of a return to Cold War-style confrontation.

NATO officials believe its small-scale measures comply with the alliance's 1997 commitment not to permanently station substantial combat forces in eastern Europe while providing allies in the region with a visible assurance that the rest of NATO would come to their aid if they were attacked.

Ministers are also set to discuss growing concerns within NATO over Russia's nuclear strategy and indica-

tions that Russian military planners may be lowering the threshold for using nuclear weapons in any conflict, diplomats say.

Britain, France and Germany are expected to announce on Thursday that they will be among the "framework nations" that will take turns to lead the new fast reaction force that will be set up over the next few years. Spain, Italy and Poland may also take on a lead role.

The force is expected to have around 5,000 soldiers with air, sea and special forces support. The United States will support the force with strategic air lift and intelligence-gathering aircraft.

Ministers are also likely to expand the small headquarters set up by Germany, Poland and Denmark in the Polish city of Szczecin. The corps headquarters will take charge of NATO exercises in the area and will serve as a northeastern base if NATO forces had to operate in the region, officials said.

The six command-and-control centres, which will have a staff of only about 50 officers each, will be responsible for staging exercises and for receiving the rapid reaction force if deployed.

The United States is expected to contribute some officers to each of the seven NATO centres, Lute said.

Reuters



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg

PERSPECTIVES

Friday, 6 February, 2015

No weapon is powerful enough to protect mankind

By Myint Win Thein

Man has been inventing various weapons to protect himself along the course of history. At first, weapons were made from stones and then metals. Today, weapons are being made everywhere from everything at any price. This is because people

tend to think that those who possess better weapons are safer than others.

To the contrary, weapons give worries and fears to mankind including those with the most advanced weapons in the world. Actually, those who rely on weapons always have to be afraid of weapons. They are always worried that weapons in the hands of others might put them into danger. For instance, most advanced countries that possess weapons of mass destruction are afraid of them in other countries and have to hold negotiations to reduce the number of weapons of mass destruction including nuclear warheads. Therefore, it can be said that no weapon is powerful enough to protect mankind.

The alternative to weapons is not a modern invention. It has always been with mankind since

prehistoric times. It is man's inborn traits known as love and friendship that give protection to mankind. Love and friendship among people can make the world safer and more secure than destructive weapons. Man should not forget to use his traits. It is high time man dropped weapons and stopped invention of lethal weapons.

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Education in Singapore: Pre-school Playgroup to Junior College

By Sayar Mya

(Continued from yesterday))

History of Singapore Education

Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles founded the Singapore Institution (now known as Raffles Institution) in 1823. It was the starting point of education in Singapore under the British rule. Later, there were three main types of schools appeared in Singapore: (a) Malay schools, (b) Chinese and Tamil schools and (c) English schools. Malay schools were provided free for all students by the British, while English schools, which used English as the main medium of instruction, were set up by missionaries and charged school fees. Chinese and Tamil schools largely taught their respective mother tongues. Students from Chinese schools in particular were extremely adjusted and attuned to developments in China, especially in the rise of Chinese nationalism.

The "survival-driven education" system

During World War II, many students in Singapore dropped out of school, causing a huge backlog of students after the war. In 1947, the "Ten Years Program for Education Policy" in the Colony of Singapore was formulated. This called for a universal education system that would prepare for self-governance.

During the 1950s and 1960s, when Singapore started to develop its own economy, the country adapted a "survival-driven education" system to provide a skilled workforce for Singapore's industrializa-

tion program as well as to lower unemployment.

Apart from being an economic necessity, education also helped to integrate the new nation together. The bilingualism policy in schools was officially introduced in 1960, making English the official language for both national integration and utilitarian purposes. Universal education for children of all races and different background started to take shape, and more children started to attend schools. However, the quality of schools set up during that particular time varied considerably. The first Junior College was opened in 1969.

In the 1980s, Singapore's economy started to prosper. Therefore, the focus of Singapore's education system shifted from "quantity to quality". More differentiation for pupils with different academic abilities was implemented. The changes included the revamping vocational education under the new Institute of Technology and splitting of the Normal stream in secondary schools into "Normal (Academic)" and "Normal (Technical)" streams. The "Gifted Education Program" was also set up to cater to more academically inclined students. "Thinking Schools, Learning Nations" vision

In 1997, the Singapore education system started to change into an "ability-driven system" after the then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong outlined his "Thinking Schools, Learning Nations" vision. Under this policy, more emphasis was given to national

education, creative thinking, collaborative learning as well as ICT literacy. Schools became more diverse and were given "greater autonomy" in deciding their own curriculum and developing their own niche areas, in other words a comfortable or suitable position in life or employment. Differences between the various academic streams became blurred. The Ministry of Education also officially acknowledged that "excellence" will not be measured solely in terms of academics; a mountain range of excellence "with many peaks".

School grades in Singapore

The school year is divided into two semesters. The first begins in the beginning of January and ends in May; the second begins in July and ends in November.

Level, grade and typical age are prescribed as follows.

Pre-school playgroup and Kindergarten (aged 3 to 6); Primary 1 to Primary 6 (aged 6 to 12); Secondary 1 to Secondary 5 (aged 12 to 17).

Kindergartens in Singapore

Kindergartens in Singapore provide up to three years of pre-school for children ages three to six. The three years are commonly called Nursery, Kindergarten 1 (K1) and Kindergarten 2 (K2), respectively.

Kindergartens provide an environment for children to learn how to interact with others, and to prepare them for formal education at Primary school. Activities include learning language – written and oral – and

numbers, development of personal and social skills, games, music, and outdoor play. Children learn two languages, English and their "official Mother Tongue" (Mandarin, Malay, or Tamil). Many private or church-based kindergartens might not offer Malay or Tamil, so non-Chinese pupils might also learn some Standard Mandarin in these kindergartens.

The kindergartens are run by the private sector, including community foundations, religious bodies, and civic or business groups. There are more than 200 kindergartens registered with the Ministry of Education. Kindergartens are also run by child care centers as well as international schools.

The People's Action Party, which has governed Singapore since 1957, runs 247 kindergartens through its charitable arm, the PAP Community Foundation.

Primary education in Singapore

Primary education, normally starting at age sev-

en, is a four-year foundation stage (Primary 1 to 4) and a two-year orientation stage (Primary 5 to 6). Primary education is compulsory under the "Compulsory Education Act" since 2003. Exemptions are made for pupils who are homeschooling, attending a full-time religious institution or those with special needs who are unable to attend mainstream schools. However, parents have to meet the requirements set out by the Ministry of Education before these exemptions are granted.

Primary education is free for all Singapore citizens in schools under the purview of the Ministry of Education, though there is a fee of up to SGD 13 monthly per student to help cover miscellaneous costs.

The foundation stage is the first stage of formal schooling. The four years, from primary 1 to 4, provide a foundation in English, mother tongue (which includes Standard Mandarin, Malay, Tamil or a Non-Tamil Indian Language

(NTIL)), Mathematics and Science. Other subjects include "Civics and Moral Education", arts and crafts, music, health education, social studies, and physical education, which are taught throughout Primary 1 to 6. Science is taught from Primary 3 onwards.

After six years of Primary education, students will have to sit for the national Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE). Students will then choose the secondary school of their choice based on their results at this examination. They will then be assigned to a secondary school based on merit and their choice. Students are also admitted into a secondary school under a separate "Direct School Admission" scheme, whereby secondary schools are able to choose a certain number of students based on their special talents before these students take the PSLE. Students admitted under this scheme cannot select their schools based on their PSLE results.

(To be continued)



Temasek Polytechnic, third polytechnic established in Singapore (Photo from Google)

LOCAL NEWS

Environmental Conservation Dept to install machine of Air Analyzer monitoring system in Amarapura



MANDALAY, 5 Feb — A plan is underway to install Air Analyzer monitoring system will be carried out in Mandalay in May 2015.

Asia Center Air Pollution (ACAP) provided an AAMS machine that can analyze content of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and ozone and PM2.5 particles, an official of Environmental Conservation Department (Mandalay Branch) told media.

“Priority is given to installation of such machine in Mandalay. We have to record the facts about environment. Japan’s Environment Ministry joining hands with ACAP group to give assistance to our department,” he said.

The machine worth K110,000 will be installed in Amarapura Township.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)

Shwepyi Yanaung free clinic, library put into service in Yamethin

YAMETHIN, 5 Feb — “Shwepyi Yanaung” free clinic and library was put into service at Yanaungmyin Pariyatti Monastery in Yamethin Township, Mandalay Region, on 4 February.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Commissioner U Aung Myint Soe, Township Administrator U Htet Myat Aung, members of “Shwepyi Yanaung” Parahita association and the wellwishers.

Sayadaw U Viccita explained the purposes of the

free clinic and library. Then, the deputy commissioner, the township administrator, philanthropist Dr Myint Myint Maw and chairman of “Shwepyi Yanaung” Parahita association U Khin Zaw cut the ribbon to open the building.

The clinic opens from 12 noon to 4 pm every Saturday and Sunday and free healthcare services will be given to the needy people regardless of race and religion by the specialists from Yamethin District People’s Hospital.—*Kyaw Hti Soe*



The opening of Shwepyi Yanaung free clinic in progress.

Myawady Town to hold Myanmar Children’s Day



Township officials discuss celebrating Myanmar Children’s Day in Myawady, Kayin State.

MYAWADY, 5 Feb — A meeting to hold the Myanmar Children’s Day was held at the hall of District General Administration Department in Myawady, Kayin State, on 3 February.

In his speech, District’s deputy commissioner U Lwin Ko Oo said that the ceremony to mark the

Myanmar Children’s Day will be held with the aim of ensuring physical and mental development of children.

Township administrator U Khin Maung Zaw said that the Myanmar Children’s Day is held in the country as a significant day like other international

days. Assistant Director U Than Aung of Social Welfare Department explained the preparations for holding the day.

The meeting was attended by township level officials, school heads and teachers.

Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Myawady Town puts K5 M facelift on road

MYAWADY, 5 Feb—A concrete road is under construction in Ward 5, Myawady, Kayin State. The 2nd Kyundaw Street, 950 feet long, 18 feet wide and six inches thick, is being built through K5 million from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw fund, K2 million from Ward 5 administrator office and K19.3 million from local people.

Executive Officer U Kyaw Kyaw Oo of Township Development Affairs Committee and officials inspected progress in placing concrete on the street.

Tun Tun Oo (Myawady Town)



Action to be taken against illegal sand extractors

MANDALAY, 5 Feb — Some persons extract sand from the waterway in Pathingyi Township, Mandalay Region.

Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems will take action against those sand extractors.

On 21 January, officials found three vassals extracting sand in the waterway of Shangalekyun.

“Anyone shall not extract sand from the rivers and creeks without permission. Extraction of sand may

cause change of waterways and landslides. Notices have been issued to sand extractors not to do so through au-

thorities concerned,” said an official of the department.

Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-printing House)



Jordanian king vows “relentless” war on Islamic State’s own ground

AMMAN, 5 Feb — Jordan’s King Abdullah vowed a “relentless” war against Islamic State on their own territory on Wednesday in response to a video published by the hard-line group showing a captured Jordanian air force pilot being burned alive in a cage.

Jordan hanged two Iraqi jihadists, one a woman, on Wednesday and vowed to intensify military action against Islamic State.

“We are waging this war to protect our faith, our values and human principles and our war for their sake will be relentless and will hit them in their own ground,” state television quoted the king as saying during a security meeting.

US officials said on Wednesday that the United Arab Emirates had

withdrawn from flying air strikes in the US-led coalition campaign against Islamic State after the Jordanian pilot’s plane went down over Syria in December. Jordan, which is part of the US-led alliance, had promised an “earth-shaking response” to the killing of its pilot, Mouath al-Kasaesbeh, who was captured after his F-16 crashed.

Government spokesman Mohammad al-Momani said on Wednesday: “We are talking about a collaborative effort between coalition members to intensify efforts to stop extremism and terrorism to undermine, degrade and eventually finish Daesh.” Daesh is used as a derogatory Arabic term for Islamic State.

He said it was a continuation of Jordan’s long standing policy in fighting



People wave the Jordanian flags as they line the street to receive the king after his return from the United States at the Queen Alia International Airport in Amman on 4 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

hard-line Islamist militants and that King Abdullah, who cut short a trip to the United States, headed a meeting with senior security officials on Wednesday. “All the state’s military

and security agencies are developing their options. Jordan’s response will be heard by the world at large but this response on the security and military level will be announced at the

appropriate time,” Momani said.

Islamic State had demanded the release of Sajida al-Rishawi in exchange for a Japanese hostage whom it later beheaded.

Sentenced to death for her role in a 2005 suicide bomb attack in Amman, Rishawi was executed at dawn.

Jordan also executed a senior al-Qaeda prisoner, Ziyad Karboli, an Iraqi man who was sentenced to death in 2008.

The Jordanian pilot was the first from the coalition known to have been captured and killed by Islamic State.

Jordan is a major US ally in the fight against hardline Islamist groups and hosted US troops during operations that led to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

It is home to hundreds of US military trainers bolstering defences at the Syrian and Iraqi borders, and is determined to keep the jihadists in Syria away from its frontier.

Reuters

Gunmen kill 12 Libyans, foreigners at oilfield raid

TRIPOLI, 5 Feb — Gunmen killed 12 people, among them two Filipino and two Ghanaian nationals, after storming a remote, Libyan oilfield, a Libyan official said on Wednesday.

“Most were beheaded or killed by gunfire,” said Abdelhakim Maazab, commander of a security force in charge of protecting the al-Mabrook oilfield, some 170 km (105 miles) south of the Mediterranean city of Sirte.

A French diplomatic source in Paris and another Libyan official said Islamic State militants were behind the attack, which took place on Tuesday night.

It was impossible to get more details on the incident which happened in a remote part of the turbulent desert nation.

The violence followed an assault on a hotel in Tripoli last week that killed nine people, including five foreigners, underscoring the deteriorating security

situation in Libya more than three years after the downfall of Muammar Gaddafi. The Philippines Foreign Ministry said earlier on Wednesday that three Filipinos were among seven foreign nationals who had been kidnapped in the Mabrook assault.

But Maazab said eight Libyans, two Filipino and two Ghanaian nationals were killed during the raid, with nobody kidnapped. He added that his men were back in charge of the field.

France’s Total has a stake in the site, which is currently off-line, but it is contracted to a Libyan company. The Filipinos worked for an Italian company. Libya is in turmoil with two rival governments controlling different areas, each with their own armies. Rival armed factions have also been fighting for almost two months for control of Libya’s biggest oil ports, Es Sider and Ras Lanuf, on the Mediterranean coast.—Reuters

One killed in attack on KFC in town north of Cairo

CAIRO, 5 Feb — One person was killed in an attack on a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant in a town north of Cairo early on Thursday, Egypt’s state news agency MENA reported.

A fire broke out at the restaurant in the town of Menoufia, 80 km (50 miles) north of the capital, after assailants on a motorcycle threw flammable materials and then opened fire, it said.

Frequent small-scale attacks on security forces have hurt Egypt’s efforts to project an image of stability after four years of turmoil triggered by the 2011 Arab Spring uprising.

Egypt was hoping to ease security concerns before holding an investment conference in the resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh in March.—Reuters

Boko Haram kill more than 100 in Cameroon — local leader

YAOUNDE/ACCRA, 5 Feb — Boko Haram fighters have killed more than 100 people in the north Cameroon town of Fotokol, murdering residents inside their homes and a mosque, a local civic leader said on Wednesday.

The massacre comes amid a major regional offensive against the Islamic group, which has kidnapped hundreds and killed thousands in neighbouring northern Nigeria and has mounted increasingly bloody cross-border raids.

“Boko Haram entered Fotokol through Gambaru early in the morning and they killed more than 100 people in the mosque, in the houses and they burned property,” said the civic leader Abatchou Abatcha, reached by telephone.



Chadian soldiers wave guns as they drive in Bangui on 4 April, 2014.—REUTERS

The militants shot and killed one of his sons during the raid, he added.

Many of the dead were found with their throats slit, according to Cameroon’s

L’Oeil du Sahel newspaper. Cameroon’s information minister Issa Tchiroma declined to comment on the massacre. He said the Cameroon army pushed Boko

Haram out of the border town after heavy fighting, which killed 50 militants and six of its own soldiers.

The Sunni Muslim jihadist group is seen as the

main security threat to Nigeria, Africa’s biggest economy and top oil producer which holds a presidential election on 14 February. The African Union last week authorised a regional force of 7,500 troops to fight the militants. Chad’s army and state television said it had “completely wiped out” Boko Haram bases at Gambaru and Ngala in northern Nigeria on Tuesday, killing more than 200 militants. Nine Chadian soldiers died, they added. Chadian TV footage on Wednesday showed jubilant Chadian soldiers cheering near to the bodies of what it said were two Boko Haram fighters.

Chad and Cameroon are deploying thousands of troops and Niger has reinforced its border against the militant group which has

been fighting for five years to create an Islamist emirate. But analysts say they are facing an uphill battle against a sect that has already seen off major offensives by Nigeria’s military.

“Whether through intimidation, opportunism or genuine support for the radical Islamist cause, local communities continue to swell Boko Haram’s ranks,” said Roddy Barclay, senior Africa analyst at consultancy Control Risks.

Chad, reputed to have one of the region’s best militaries, has carried out air strikes on insurgent positions over the last few days. Former colonial power France is also sending aircraft from its base in the Chadian capital to carry out surveillance missions in the border area.—Reuters

Indonesia's 2014 GDP slowest in five years, but govt spending may fuel pick up

JAKARTA, 5 Feb — Indonesia's economic growth slipped to its weakest in five years in 2014 as weak exports and investments dragged, underlining the challenges facing the country's new President Joko Widodo.

Southeast Asia's largest economy is finding it harder to fire up its engines of growth with the ending of the commodities boom and as high interest rates weigh on domestic demand.

The economy expanded 5.02 percent last year, slower than growth of 5.58 percent in 2013. In the fourth quarter, the economy grew a slightly better than forecast 5.01 percent from a year earlier, but contracted 2.06 percent against the third quarter, on a seasonally unadjusted basis.

"Today's disappointing figures, which were broadly in line with consensus, help to underline the challenge facing the country's new president, Joko Widodo, who despite a promising first few months in office faces a tough challenge to reinvigorate the economy," said Gareth Leather from Capital Economics.

The London-based consulting firm said growth was expected to be flat

this year and unlikely to rebound in the near term "with weak commodity prices and high interest rates set to weigh on economic activity."

Investments grew 4.12 percent last year, weaker than both historical trends and growth of 5.28 percent in 2013, the statistics bureau said on Thursday.

Government spending was also much weaker during the year, which Suryamin, head of the statistics bureau, said was related to a slash in ministries' expenditure in the 2014 budget.

But Aldian Taloputra, analyst with Mandiri

Sekuritas in Jakarta, said growth had struck a bottom in the final quarter of last year and would only pick up from there.

"Investment may be a little bit slow in the first half of the year, but we expect it to pick up in the second half with big infrastructure projects by the government."

The government has set a growth target of 5.6-5.8 percent for 2015 based on higher investment and government spending.

To help achieve that, Widodo set up a government agency to serve as a one stop service for investment licences in a bid

to make things easier for investors.

The president, in his first full year in office this year, will also use the fiscal windfall from removing gasoline subsidies to improve the country's creaky infrastructure.

Analysts in a *Reuters* poll had forecast 4.95 percent year-on-year growth in the fourth quarter, and a contraction of 1.48 percent against the third quarter.

The rupiah was at 12,645 per dollar, slightly weaker than the previous close, and the main stock index was off 0.60 percent after the data.

Reuters



Indonesian labourers load cement onto a ship at Sunda Kelapa port in Jakarta on 3 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

California lawmakers seek to end 'personal belief' vaccine exemptions

LOS ANGELES, 5 Feb — Responding to an outbreak of measles that has infected more than 100 people, two California lawmakers said on Wednesday they would introduce legislation to end the right of parents in the state to exempt their children from school vaccinations based on personal beliefs.

California public health officials say 92 people have been diagnosed with measles in the state, many of them linked to an outbreak that they believe began when an infected person from outside the country visited Disneyland in late December.

More than a dozen other cases have been confirmed in 19 other US states and Mexico, renewing a debate over the so-called anti-vaccination movement in which fears about potential side effects of vaccines, fueled by now-debunked science, have led a small minority of par-

ents to refuse to allow their children to be vaccinated.

"The high number of unvaccinated students is jeopardizing public health not only in schools but in the broader community. We need to take steps to keep our schools safe and our students healthy," state Senator Ben Allen said in a written statement announcing the legislation he is co-sponsoring with fellow Democrat

Richard Pan. The measure would make California the 33rd state to bar parents from opting out of vaccinations based on personal beliefs.

Also on Wednesday, a top Los Angeles County health official said that a total of 21 cases have been recorded in the county but that after the initial wave of reports, the number has fallen to four in the latest two-week period.—*Reuters*



A teenager receives a tetanus vaccination at Palmview High School in Mission, Texas on 5 Aug, 2014.—REUTERS

Ebola virus sent out of high-security lab was likely dead: CDC

CHICAGO, 5 Feb — An internal investigation of an Ebola incident at a US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention laboratory in December found that samples sent to a lower-security lab were "unlikely" to have contained live virus and posed no threat to staff, the CDC said on Wednesday.

The close call followed mishaps involving anthrax and a deadly strain of bird flu, raising questions about how the agency handles the world's deadliest pathogens.

CDC Director Dr Tom Frieden said the agency had made "real progress" to improve safety, "but we have more to do."

The report found that on 22 December, a scientist working with Ebola, which in 2014 caused the worst recorded outbreak in West Africa, inadvertently transferred a small amount of virus from a high-biosecurity lab to a lower-biosecurity one not authorized to handle live Ebola.

A chief cause of the breach, the investigation concluded, was the "lack of a written study plan," a document that outlines specific steps to be followed in an experiment. The report also noted a failure to design the study to minimize the possibility of human error.

"That concerned me," said Scott Becker of the Association of Public Health Laboratories. "I thought that was one of the issues

they uncovered after the first lab incident."

According to the report, the scientist placed Ebola into two sets of tubes, one to inactivate it and another to merely isolate it. The tubes were identical except for a blue cap and label on one. But the caps had been removed, leaving no visual cue as to which was which, and the wrong tubes were sent to the lower-biosecurity lab down the hall.

CDC scientist Michael Shaw said most labs have adopted a material transfer certification, in which two scientists have to certify that pathogens were inactivated before they leave the lab. But the Ebola lab, which has been swamped by the West African outbreak, had not adopted it for internal transfers.

"It was a mistake. They were mortified when they discovered it had happened," Shaw said.

The report also took CDC to task for "lack of project oversight," noting the deadly-pathogens lab lacks a full-time manager.

The CDC said it is looking into changes to prevent further incidents, such as using colored liquids and different-sized containers to differentiate live from killed pathogens.

CDC last month said it installed surveillance cameras to ensure procedures are performed correctly.—*Reuters*



Crowds of visitors take pictures during the opening ceremony for the seven-day Sapporo Snow Festival on 5 Feb, 2015, in front of the snow sculpture of a gate of the Kasuga Taisha Shrine at Odori Park in the northern Japan city of Sapporo. The event attracts more than 2 million domestic and foreign tourists every year.

KYODO NEWS

SKorea's Air Force holding aerial exercise

SEOUL, 5 Feb — South Korea's Air Force is holding a large-scale aerial exercise through next week to boost its capability to cope with a surprise attack and destroy enemy targets, a

Defence Ministry spokesman said on Thursday.

The drill, code-named Soaring Eagle 2015, kicked off on Monday and will last until 13 February, Nah Seung Yong said during a

press briefing.

"The exercise is aimed at blocking enemies' surprise infiltration and destroying their core targets," he said.

Kyodo News

Heavy snow expected in eastern, western Japan through Friday

TOKYO, 5 Feb — Heavy snow is expected in wide areas of eastern and western Japan through Friday, the Japan Meteorological Agency said on Thursday.

With a low pressure system likely to cause snow particularly in the Kanto-Koshin and Kinki regions, the agency warned

the public about icy roads and possible traffic disruptions. Over the 24 hours through 6 am Friday, up to 40 centimeters of snow is forecast to fall in Kinki, 25 cm in Koshin, 20 cm in Kanto and Tokai regions, and 10 cm in Tohoku region in the northeast facing the Pacific. Snow may also

fall on the plains in some areas, the agency said.

A strong cold air mass at minus 36 C or lower is expected to move into western Japan from Thursday night through Friday, resulting in a stronger wintry atmospheric pressure pattern, the agency said.

Kyodo News

Electrified rail pierced New York train in crash, official says

VALHALLA, 5 Feb — Hundreds of feet of electrified rail skewered the first two carriages of a New York commuter train in a collision with a car at a railroad crossing, a federal investigator said on Wednesday, describing the area's worst rail crash in decades.

Investigators were focussed on why the car was stopped at the crossing near the suburb of White Plains north of New York City before the Metro-North train crashed into it during Tuesday evening's rush hour, pushing the vehicle about 1,000 feet down the line.

The rail broke into long pieces, penetrating the first train carriage as a fire broke out, apparently fuelled by gasoline in the vehicle's fuel tank, gutted the rail car's interior, he said. At least one section of the electrified, or "third," rail also entered the second carriage near its ceiling.

"This third rail is just basically piling up inside that first train car," Robert Sumwalt, a member of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), said at a news conference ahead of a week of gathering evidence and interviewing witnesses.

Sumwalt said the NTSB expected to release data from the recorder on the train on Thursday.

Five train passengers and the woman who was driving the Mercedes sport utility vehicle that was stuck on the tracks were killed. Investigators said they do not yet have an explanation for how the vehicle, which officials had earlier mistakenly

identified as a Jeep, became stuck on the tracks.

Metro-North, run by the state-controlled Metropolitan Transportation Authority, had four high-profile accidents in 2013 that led to a safety assessment by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

In a March 2014 report to the US Congress, the FRA criticized the nation's second-largest railroad for a "poor safety culture" and "ineffective training".

The NTSB released a report late last year that also identified common safety issues, but Sumwalt said Tuesday's crash may be unrelated.

"I would be very cautious with trying to draw a nexus with what may have happened with Metro-North in the past and this accident," he said.

The crash appeared to

be the deadliest rail accident in the New York area since March 1982, when nine teenagers in a van were killed when a train crashed into them at a crossing in Mineola.

A Metro-North train derailed near the northern edge of New York City in December 2013, killing four people and injuring 70. In May 2013, two Metro-North passenger trains collided in Connecticut, injuring more than 70.

Some 650 passengers regularly take the 5:44 train, which carries commuters through some of country's wealthiest suburbs. Fifteen people were injured, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo said. One passenger remained in critical condition and another passenger in "serious" condition on Wednesday afternoon at the local trauma

hospital along with six other patients with less serious injuries, Westchester Medical Centre officials said.

The Mercedes' driver was identified as Ellen Brody, a 49-year-old jewellery-shop worker with three children, according to Paul Feiner, the Greenburgh town supervisor.

"She was not a risk-taker in terms of safety," Feiner, who described himself as a family friend, said in a telephone interview.

One of the killed passengers was identified as Eric Vandercar, who worked at Mesirow Financial, according to a statement by his previous employer, Morgan Stanley. Another was Walter Liedtke, a curator of European paintings for New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art, the museum said.

Reuters



Metropolitan Transportation Authority officials point at the damaged car of a commuter train the morning after it struck a vehicle in Mount Pleasant, near Valhalla, New York on 4 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

Poorest children more likely to die young in developing countries — charity



Seven-year-old Mamat (R) sits beside his younger brother who is sleeping on the floor at a slum area in Jakarta, on 14 Sept, 2012.—REUTERS

NEW YORK, 5 Feb — A "lottery of birth" is at play in many developing countries where poorer, socially disadvantaged children are more likely to die than their more fortunate peers, according to a leading children's charity.

Save the Children said that in 78 percent of the 87 low and middle income countries it analysed in its "Lottery of Birth" report, at least one social or economic group was lagging behind and making slower progress in reducing child mortality.

In 16 percent of those countries, the gap in child mortality rates had increased across all social and economic groups.

"In this day and age, it is scandalous that so many children's chances of survival across the world is purely a matter of whether or not they were lucky enough to be born into an affluent family who can access quality healthcare," Jonathan Glennie, director of policy and research at Save the Children, said in a statement.

Living in the countryside and belonging to a marginalized ethnic group are among the factors that play a huge role in a child's chances of survival, the report said. Disparities in child mortality rates between ethnic groups increased in 76 percent of the countries studied, it said.

In Indonesia, children born into the poorest 40 percent of households in 2012 were almost 2.5 times more likely to die than their peers in the richest 10 percent, the study found.

However, almost a fifth of the countries examined for the report had achieved rapid and inclusive reductions in child mortality, it said. Some countries have made huge strides in ensuring the survival of children, saving tens of millions of lives since the Millennium Development Goals were set, Save the Children said.

"We know that change is possible. We now have a significant window of opportunity to drive this change," said Glennie.

Reuters

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MV KULTHARA VOY NO (01/15)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KULTHARA VOY NO (01/15) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W (6) where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S KULNATEE CO

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Consignees of cargo carried on MV SHAMIM VOY NO (ISC0070E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.2.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

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

1. Open tender only for local companies in invited by Public Works, Ministry of Construction, Nay Pyi Taw, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for upgrading projects with the part of proceeds of the Regional Development Project for Poverty Reduction under JICA ODA Loan, Japan.

Sr.	Name of Work	Type of Work
1.	Taunggoo-Mawchi-Loikaw Road (7 miles 2 furlongs) + Medium and Small Bridges (17nos) (Kayah State)	Bituminous Road
2.	Hanmyintmo-Myogyi-Ywam gan Road (34 miles 1 furlong) (Mandalay Region & Shan State)	Bituminous Road
3.	Kalay-Phalan-Harkhar Road (7 miles 1 furlong) (Chin State)	Bituminous Road
4.	Harkha-Gangaw Road (19 miles 2 furlongs) (Chin State)	Bituminous Road
5.	Thinengin-Teetain Road (16 miles 4 furlongs) (Chin State)	Bituminous Road

2. Distribution period of Tender Documents

- (11.2.2015) to (18.2.2015)

3. Pre-Bid Meeting

- 14:00 hours on 25.2.2015

4. Submission Date of Tender Documents

- (9:30 to 12:00) hours on 11.3.2015

5. Opening Date of Tender

- 13:00 hours on 24.3.2015

6. Tender Documents can be purchased with fifty thousand kyats (50000Ks.) 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



Cars run on the waterlogged Wudu Road in the Chengguan District of Lanzhou, capital of northwest China's Gansu Province on 5 Feb, 2015. A water pipe in a household on Yongchang Middle Road broke on Thursday morning, causing a flood with the maximum depth of 80 centimetres.—XINHUA

Israeli diplomats recalled over tweets
seen as critical of Netanyahu

JERUSALEM, 5 Feb — Israel's ambassador to Switzerland and two other diplomats face possible dismissal for Twitter posts seen as critical of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

The disciplining of the three comes amid heightened Israeli public scrutiny over the impartiality of civil servants before a 17 March election that is widely seen as a

referendum on the right-wing Netanyahu, now in his third term.

Yigal Caspi, the envoy to Bern, had retweeted remarks by Israeli journalists disparaging Netanyahu's planned 3 March speech to the US Congress about Iran, an event that looks likely to deepen rifts with the Obama administration.

The other two diplomats, a political officer in New Delhi and a Foreign

Ministry staffer in Jerusalem, appeared to have suspended their Twitter accounts on Thursday.

Israel's NRG news site quoted them as having tweeted direct criticisms of Netanyahu.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the NRG report was accurate and that the three diplomats had been summoned for disciplinary hearings that could conclude with their firing.—Reuters

World's oldest man
turns 112

Sakari Momoi, a resident of Saitama city near Tokyo, receives a certificate from Guinness World Records as the world's oldest man in this file photo taken in August 2014. Momoi turned 112 on 5 Feb, 2015.—KYODO NEWS

SAITAMA, (Japan), 5 Feb — A resident of Saitama city near Tokyo who was recognized as the world's oldest man last August by Guinness World Records turned 112 on Thursday.

Sakari Momoi responded with a smile as his family helped him celebrate, according to his third son Hiroo, 66.

Momoi, who lives at a healthcare institution in Tokyo, mostly finishes his meals and participates in activities such as throwing a ball and practicing calligraphy, according to the family.

The native of Minamisoma in Fukushima Prefecture used to be an agricultural chemistry teacher and principal of prefectural government-run high schools in Fukushima and Saitama.

The world's oldest woman recognized by Guinness is Misao Okawa, a 116-year-old Japanese in Osaka.—Kyodo News

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WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 6th February, 2015: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State, weather will be partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing Region, Shan, Chin and Rakhine States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated light rain in the extreme Northern Myanmar areas.



Children models present creations of CND By Condor during the 15th "080 Barcelona Fashion" in Barcelona, Spain on 3 Feb, 2015.—XINHUA

Taylor Swift joins elite group as '1989' tops Billboard chart again

LOS ANGELES, 5 Feb — Taylor Swift's "1989" regained the top spot in the weekly Billboard 200 album chart, giving the pop star the distinction of being the second woman in history to have two albums hit No 1 for at least 10 weeks, Billboard said on Wednesday.

Swift's milestone puts her behind the late Whitney Houston, who had three albums top the charts for at least 10 weeks, Billboard said. Swift's second album, "Fearless," spent 11 weeks at the top.

By tallying 101,000 sales units, including 71,000 albums and 302,000 song downloads, "1989" — the best-selling album of 2014 — marks its tenth non-consecutive week at the top in the 14 weeks since its release, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan for the week ended on 1 February.

Swift also became the seventh act overall to have at least two albums top the charts for so long, joining the likes of the Beatles and Elvis Presley.

The reformulated Billboard 200 considers album sales, song downloads and online streaming

to compile an album's total sales units. Swift famously does not allow her work to be on streaming services.

Jumping back into second place ahead of the Grammys on Sunday is nominee Ed Sheeran's "X," followed by other favourites to win awards on the music industry's biggest night. Meghan Trainor remained at No 3 with "Title," and Sam Smith's "In the Lonely Hour" rebounded to No 4 from No 9.

The only new release in the top 10 was R&B singer Ne-Yo's "Non-Fiction," debuting at No 5.

Last week's No 1, "American Beauty/American Psycho" from rock group Fall Out Boy, dropped 75 percent to 55,000 units, putting it in sixth place.

Singer Bruno Mars and producer Mark Ronson's hit "Uptown Funk!" was the top downloaded song for the fifth consecutive week with 365,000 in sales, a 7 percent rise from last week.

Reuters



Katy Perry to perform at 2015 Grammys?

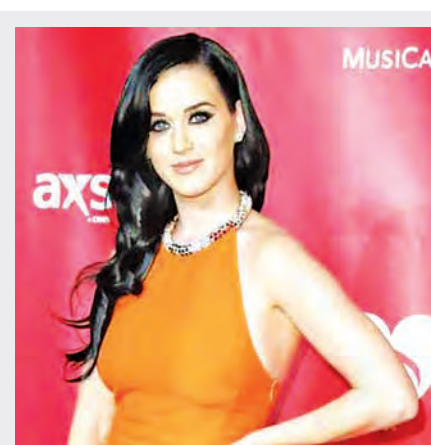
LOS ANGELES, 5 Feb — Pop star Katy Perry has reportedly been added to the line-up of performers for the 2015 Grammy Awards.

The 30-year-old pop diva will be taking the stage at the Staples Centre in Los Angeles, California to sing the ballad "By the Grace of God" from her latest album, 2013's "Prism".

The news came just a few days after Perry headlined the halftime show of the Super Bowl XLIX. During her 12-minute set at the Sunday, 1 February event, she played a number of her biggest hits including "Roar" and "Teenage Dream".

Kanye West, Rihanna, Paul McCartney, Madonna and Sam Smith are among the other artists already confirmed to perform at the Grammy Awards.

LL Cool J will host the 57th



Pop star Katy Perry

Annual Grammy Awards, which will air on CBS from the Staples Centre in Los Angeles on 8 February.—PTI

NBC's Brian Williams apologizes for Iraq story after soldiers protest

NEW YORK, 5 Feb — NBC Nightly News anchor Brian Williams said on Wednesday he was sorry for "making a mistake" when he said he was on a helicopter that was hit and forced down by rocket fire during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, after soldiers complained it was not true.

Williams made the claim on his broadcast last Friday while reporting a tribute at a New York Rangers hockey game for a retired soldier who provided ground security during the incident. Williams said he and his news crew were protected by a mechanized platoon from the US Army 3rd Infantry after their Chinook helicopter was crippled by enemy fire.

That prompted crew members on the 159th Aviation Regiment's Chinook that was hit by two rockets and small arms fire to tell the Stars and Stripes military newspaper that the journalist had arrived on a different helicopter an hour later.

In a statement responding to the soldiers, Williams said they were absolutely right and he was wrong.

"In fact, I spent much of the weekend thinking I'd gone crazy.

I feel terrible about making this mistake, especially since I found my OWN WRITING about



Television personality Brian Williams

the incident from back in '08, and I was indeed on the Chinook behind the bird that took the RPG in the tail housing," Williams wrote.

He said he supposed that repeatedly watching a video of himself inspecting the impact damage, plus "the fog of memory over 12 years," made him conflate and misremember events, some of which took place in a thick "Orange Crush" sandstorm.

"Nobody's trying to steal anyone's valor," he wrote. "Quite the contrary: I was and remain a civilian journalist covering the stories of those who volunteered for duty."

On his show on Wednesday evening, Williams said those two nights in the desert were "harrowing," and he called the story "a bungled attempt by me to thank one special veteran."

He said he hoped veterans everywhere know that they have his greatest respect, "and also now, my apology."

Reuters

Lady Gaga to collaborate with Paul McCartney



Lady Gaga and Paul McCartney

LOS ANGELES, 5 Feb — Pop star Lady Gaga has confirmed her upcoming collaboration with Paul McCartney by posting a couple of photos with him from the studio.

The first picture shows her and McCartney, 72, surrounded by a number of instrumentalists including Pearl Jam's guitarist Mike McCready, reported Ace-showbiz.

"Working on one of his many secret projects! Killer musicians, vibe, and lots of laughs," she wrote.

She and McCartney pose next to a drum kit in the second snap.

The 28-year-old 'Applause' singer revealed in the caption that she once 'rejected' a collaboration with the surviving member of The Beatles. "Always a good time with my buddy. I'll never forget when he called me last year to work and I hung up the phone cuz I thought it was a prank!" she said.

PTI

GENERAL

Van Gaal charged by FA over alleged media comments

LONDON, 5 Feb — Manchester United manager Louis van Gaal has been charged by the English FA for comments made after the FA Cup fourth-round match at Cambridge United last week.

United were held to a 0-0 draw by the fourth-tier side before winning the replay 3-0 at Old Trafford on Tuesday.

“Every aspect of the match is against us — the pitch, the referee.

Everything that you can think about this is against you,” Van Gaal said after the game at Cambridge.

“It is alleged that the Manchester United manager’s comments allege and/or imply bias on the part of the match referee and/or bring the game into disrepute,” the FA said on its website.

Dutchman Van Gaal has until 1800 GMT (6.00 p.m. BST) on Monday to appeal against the charge.

Reuters



Manchester United manager Louis van Gaal in Manchester, northern England on 11 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

Cave tombs discovered in Xinjiang

URUMQI, 5 Feb — Chinese archaeologists have identified a cliff cave burial site in Tashkurgan Tajik Autonomous County on the Pamirs Plateau in farwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Three cave tombs were found in high cliffs in the county after a region-wide heritage survey in 2014, said Ai Tao from the Xinjiang Archaeological Institute.

Besides human bones, infant corpses were found sealed inside niches in the walls and covered by rocks or earth. Ai said such a custom was rare in China, but local Tashkurgans did bury stillborn babies in this way until a few decades ago.

A cluster of 102 tombs, 40 percent of which were made for infants, were unearthed in nearby Kezilesu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture in 2013.—Xinhua

West Ham fined by FIFA for using Sakho in Cup tie

ZURICH, 5 Feb — West Ham United have been fined 100,000 Swiss francs (71,018 pounds) by FIFA following a dispute with the Senegalese FA over Diafra Sakho who played in an FA Cup match having withdrawn from the squad for the African Nations Cup.

West Ham claimed Sakho, who was issued with a reprimand, could not play for Senegal due to a back injury but 18 days after pulling out of the squad he scored the only goal in their FA Cup fourth round win at Bristol City. Football’s world governing body announced the sanctions in a statement on Wednesday.

FIFA said the player was called up by the Senegal FA on 18 December to play in the 17 January-8 February tournament as well attending their training camp from 5-16 January in Morocco. “The Senegalese FA was in-



Diafra Sakho of West Ham United celebrates scoring his team’s third goal against Swansea City during their English Premier League soccer match at Upton Park in London, on 7 Dec, 2014. — REUTERS

formed by West Ham United that Sakho was prevented from playing and travelling by plane due to injury and thus he did not join the Senegal team,” FIFA said. “On 25 January 2015, the player took part in an official match for his club. Senegal were eliminated from the Africa Cup of Nations 2015 on 27 January 2015.”

FIFA ruled that West

Ham and Sakho violated their regulations on players’ status and subsequently imposed the fine and the reprimand. League One (third tier) side Bristol City said in a statement on their website “The club is disappointed with the penalty handed down by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee and is considering its options.”

Reuters

Christie’s bites back with surrealism after Sotheby’s London record



A member of staff poses with ‘L’oiseau au plumage deploye vole vers l’arbre argente’ (R) by Joan Miro at Christie’s auction house in London, on 30 Jan, 2015.

REUTERS

LONDON, 5 Feb — Auctioneers Christie’s staked out its share of a buoyant art market on Wednesday with a barrage of surrealist works, a day after fierce rival Sotheby’s set a London

auction sale record.

Sotheby’s brought in \$280.2 million (184.65 million pounds) from its Impressionist and Modern paintings sale, led by a brace of museum class Claude

Monet landscapes, showing the world’s rich still eager to collect despite an oil price collapse and talk of chillier times ahead.

A few blocks away, Christie’s ended its sale with a collection of surrealist works that contributed almost half of the evening’s total of \$222.8 million, which included its own Impressionist and modern art haul.

Its art experts said more Asian buyers were being tempted away from the soothing Impressionists to the works of surrealists, which express the mood of unreality, unease and the irrational in Europe between the two world wars.

Chinese buyers were becoming intrigued by sur-

realism, said Christie’s deputy chairman Impressionist and modern in London, Olivier Camu. “It’s simmering,” he told reporters after the sale. The top price of the night was \$23.5 million for Spanish surrealist Juan Miro’s “Painting (Woman, Moon, Birds)” of 1950.

The headline work from the Impressionist sale, a Cezanne landscape, realised the second highest price, \$20.5 million.

“Vue sur L’Estaque et le Chateau d’If” — a Mediterranean view of sea, sky and red rooftops said by Cezanne to be stacked up like the design on a playing card — was one of his works that paved the way for the cubism of Picasso.

Reuters

mitv Myanmar International

(6-2-2015 07:00 am~ 7-2-2015 07:00 am) MST

- | | |
|--|---|
| * Local News | * World News |
| * A Journey To Southern Shan State | * The Pride of Myanmar |
| * World News | * “Traditional Handicraft” |
| * Myanmar Invites You | * Local News |
| * Local News | * Culture Show: Abdication of King Thibaw |
| * Archery Session (from Ramayana Play) | * World News |
| * World News | * Director: Maung Myo Min (Yin Twin Byit) |
| * Kid’s Home | * Local News |
| * Local News | * Mya Setkyar Pure Silk Fabric from Inle Lake |
| * Rakhine Traditional Wedding | * World News |
| * World News | * Writer |
| * Dhamma School | * Local News |
| * Local News | * A Worth Studying Site For Ancient Myanmar Heritages |
| * Pottery Business | * World News |
| * World News | * Myanmar Masterclass “Aung Thiha” |
| * A Tea Business: Pankwan | |
| * Local News | |
| * A Novitiation Ceremony in a Rural Township | |

MRTV News Channel in Brief

(6-2-2015, Friday)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6:00 am | 2:20 pm |
| • Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw | • 68 th Anniversary Union Day Programme |
| 7:00 am | 2:35 pm |
| • News/ Weather Report | • Traditional Boxing |
| 7:30 am | 4:35 pm |
| • Head Line News | • University of Distance Education (TV Lectures) — Second Year (Psychology) |
| 8:00 am | 5:00 pm |
| • News/ International News | • News |
| 8:35 am | 6:00 pm |
| • Current Affairs | • News / Weather Report |
| 9:35 am | 6:35 pm |
| • Weekly Entertainment | • Hyper Sports |
| 10:35 am | 7:00 pm |
| • MRTV’s Youth Programme | • News |
| 11:35 am | 7:35 pm |
| • Science and Technology Programme | • People’s Talks |
| 12:00 noon | 8:00 pm |
| • News / International News / Weather Report | • News / International News / Weather Report |
| 12:35 pm | 9:00 pm |
| • Hluttaw Image | • News |
| 1:05 pm | • Hluttaw Image |
| • Myoemanyein Music Troupe (Part-4) | • Amazing World |
| | • Pyi Thu Ni Ti |

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(6-2-2015, Friday)

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 6:00 am | 8:25 am |
| • Wut Hmone Music Troupe | • TV Drama Series |
| 6:20 am | 9:05 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • MUiscal Programme |
| 6:45 am | 9:20 am |
| • TV Drama Series | • Pyi Thu Ni Ti |
| 7:10 am | 9:40 am |
| • Song Programme | • ASEAN Cultural Fair 2014 |
| 7:25 am | 9:50 am |
| • Teleplay | • Myanmar Video |
| 7:45 am | 12:00 noon |
| • TV Drama Series | • Close Down |

Villa and Hull facing more misery from Chelsea and Man City

LONDON, 5 Feb — Things might well get a lot worse before they get any better for relegation-threatened Aston Villa and Hull City who face title-chasing Chelsea and Manchester City in the Premier League on Saturday.

Villa, who host leaders Chelsea, were accused of being “gutless” by former Villa striker Stan Collymore when they were beaten 5-0 at Arsenal on Sunday, an unwanted club record sixth successive league game without a goal. They have only scored 11 times in the league all season, and

after being second in September are now 16th, three points above the relegation zone and in danger of going down for the first time in 27 years. Manager Paul Lambert was given the full support of American owner Randy Lerner last week, but an unlikely win over Chelsea would do more to help get the fans off his back.

Similarly, a shock victory over City would be a huge boost for Hull boss Steve Bruce, whose team are in an even worse position than Villa — in the bottom three with two wins in 16 games and no goals or

points from their last three. They were crushed 3-0 by Newcastle United on Saturday and unless they improve soon, their second season back in the top flight could well be their last for a while.

It would be a major upset if the top two did not collect three points each after sharing the spoils in a drab 1-1 draw at Stamford Bridge on Saturday that left Chelsea, on 53 points, five clear of City.

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho added Colombian winger Juan Cuadrado to his squad for 26 million

pounds (\$39.6 million) from Fiorentina on transfer deadline day and he could feature on Saturday.

City’s major new acquisition, striker Wilfried Bony, is on African Nations Cup duty with Ivory Coast but even without him City look too strong for a fragile Hull side seemingly bound for the drop. Saturday’s programme gets underway at lunchtime when Tottenham Hotspur, who are sixth, face arch-rivals Arsenal, who are one place and two points above them in the north London derby at White Hart Lane.—Reuters



Hull City manager Steve Bruce reacts during their English Premier League soccer match against Newcastle United at the KC Stadium in Hull, northern England on 31 Jan, 2015.—REUTERS

Sterling, Coutinho strike late to send Liverpool through



Liverpool’s Raheem Sterling celebrates after scoring during their FA Cup fourth round replay soccer match against Bolton Wanderers at the Macron Stadium in Bolton, northern England on 4 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

LONDON, 5 Feb—Last-gasp goals from Raheem Sterling and Philippe Coutinho helped Liverpool reach the FA Cup fifth round and avoid the giant-killing fate of many of their Premier League rivals with a 2-1 replay victory at

second tier Bolton Wanderers on Wednesday.

The hosts took the lead when former Chelsea and Barcelona striker Eidur Gudjohnsen coolly slotting home a penalty before Bolton were reduced to 10 men when Neil Danns was

sent off after receiving two yellow cards.

But Sterling volleyed in the equalizer with four minutes left and a long-range Coutinho strike in stoppage time won the fourth-round replay for the Premier League club.

“It was always going to be a tough game,” Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers told the BBC.

“Neil Lennon’s done a brilliant job at Bolton. Going 1-0 behind away from home put us on the back foot. We must have hit the bar about five or six times but eventually the quality came through.”

Liverpool, who next face an away tie at Crystal Palace on 14 February, will fancy their chances of launching an assault on the trophy after the exits

of Premier League heavyweights Chelsea and Manchester City.

Both fell to lower league opponents in a remarkable series of FA Cup fixtures in which Manchester United were taken to a replay by fourth tier Cambridge United before they too eased through with a 3-0 replay win.

Liverpool and Bolton had played out a goalless draw at Anfield and the replay started in the same fashion, with Bolton defending stoutly to shut out an attacking Liverpool side. Bolton took the lead against the run of play when the 36-year-old Gudjohnsen rolled back the years to strike from the spot.

The hosts were reduced to 10 men when

Danns received his second yellow card for a rash challenge after being booked for a similar tackle in the first half.

The dismissal gave the visitors an invitation to push forward led by captain Steven Gerrard who was making his 700th Liverpool appearance, but the former England captain was subdued.

Just as the Bolton defence looked to be standing firm in the face of a red onslaught, Sterling steered in a precise volley to equalize. Coutinho, who signed a new five-year contract at Anfield this week, proved his worth when his dipping strike from 25 metres flew in via the underside of the crossbar to send Liverpool through.

Reuters

Rodriguez scores, gets injured as Real beat Sevilla

BARCELONA, 5 Feb — James Rodriguez headed the opener before going off injured in Real Madrid’s 2-1 victory over Sevilla on Wednesday which extended their lead at the top of La Liga to four points.

Real warmed up for the Madrid derby against Atletico on Saturday with three points but it came at a cost with Sergio Ramos as well as Rodriguez going off injured in the first half.

“I don’t think they will make it in time,” Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told a news conference. Marcelo will definitely miss the next game through suspension after picking up a yellow card but they will have Cristiano Ronaldo back after he completed his suspension against Sevilla.

“We may be lacking experience.... Ramos, Pepe and Marcelo are among the best players in the world but it doesn’t worry me,” Ancelotti said.

“We have lost experience but we will have players with plenty of enthusiasm and that is also very important.” Colombia international Rodriguez nodded home a Marcelor-cross after 12 minutes in a copy of the goal he scored last weekend against Real Sociedad. Sevilla caused plenty of problems for the Real rearguard, especially in the first half, and Vicente Iborra hit a post having been played in by Vitolo.—Reuters

Toure sparkles as Ivory Coast ease into Nations Cup final

BATA, 5 Feb — Goals from Yaya Toure and Gervinho helped steer Ivory Coast into the African Nations Cup final in a 3-1 win over Democratic Republic of Congo in the Estadio de Bata on Wednesday. Toure, playing at a sixth finals, blasted home a missile-like shot after 21 minutes to give the Ivorians the lead but a handball allowed Dieumerci Mbokani to equalise from the penalty spot three minutes later.

Gervinho had an effort cleared off the line in the 40th minute but the Ivorians won back the ball and caught the Congolese defence cold with Wilfried Bony setting up Gervinho to sweep home less than a minute later.

Defender Wilfried Kanon added a third midway through the second

half with a rebound from a corner.

Ivory Coast will play in Sunday’s final in Bata against Equatorial Guinea or Ghana who meet in the second semi-final in Malabo on Thursday.

They overpowered their opponents, although coach Herve Renard said he had not been pleased with some of their sloppy play.

“I had to keep reminding them we were playing in a semi-final with a goal of getting to the final,” he said. Toure showed the way in one of his better performances for the national team with a stunning shot on the half volley from the edge of the box that was hit with ferocious power for the opening goal. Bony had been trying to weave his way through the defence but lost the



Ivory Coast’s Yaya Toure (R) celebrates his goal during their semi-final soccer match of the 2015 African Cup of Nations against Democratic Republic of Congo in Bata, on 4 Feb, 2015.—REUTERS

ball which spilt in the direction of Gervinho but before he could get a foot on it, Toure came surging through to almost burst the net with sublime precision. A careless handball from Eric Bertrand Bailly offered the Congolese the chance for an immediate

response from the penalty spot, which Mbokani duly dispatched. Then came Gervinho’s header that hit the crossbar before Gabriel Zakuani cleared it while the Ivorians appealed that it had crossed the line.

They regained their composure while DR Con-

go were caught ball watching and Bony’s pass left Gervinho with little else to do but guide his effort home. Yannick Bolasie continued to offer a glimmer of hope for the Congolese with his mazy runs, having a 55th-minute effort saved. But it was Gervinho, Bony and Toure who dictated terms in the second half and a third goal seemed inevitable.

“This is one step in our life, we need to enjoy this night and be ready for the game on Sunday. It was tough game, DR Congo were very fast but we were compact. All we care now is about bringing the cup back home,” said Bony. Ivory Coast have now reached two of the last three Nations Cup finals but their only previous success was in 1992.

Reuters