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The number of mobile phone subscribers is rising rapidly in Myanmar. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

SHOOTING IN THE DARK

Foreign firms eye new telecoms licence despite inexperienced partners

Timothy McLaughlin

SEVEN foreign firms are interested in bidding for Myanmar's fourth telecoms license, a government official said on Monday, as the prospects of one of the region's least connected nations outweigh the challenges of a partnership involving obscure local firms with scant industry experience.

Chit Wai, deputy permanent secretary of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), declined to give any details about the companies he said submitted expressions of interest earlier this month.

But unlike already established operators Telenor and Ooredoo, the foreign firm that wins this 15-year license will be a minority shareholder in a joint venture with

a consortium of 11, little-known public companies which mainly focus on agriculture, as well as a government shareholder.

The obscurity of the companies poses a potential problem in Myanmar, where some entities and businessmen are still targeted by US sanctions; connections to the military are not uncommon and reputational risk remains high.

The companies' lack of experience in telecoms or IT, and the complex partnership structure stipulated by the government, is also likely to complicate matters.

Ye Min Aung, the managing director of consortium-member Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation said the new operator should focus on providing information that is relevant to farmers.

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Co to sell YSX shares to announce in March

THE name of the first company to be permitted to sell shares on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) will be revealed at the start of trading in March this year, according to the Myanmar Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

A talk was held in Yangon at the headquarters of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) on 24 January under the title 'How to Invest in Stock Shares'.

Dr Maung Maung Thein, chairperson of the Myanmar Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), explained that the six companies registered on the YSX had to compete in order to be the first company to get permission to sell shares on the market.

"The companies that will trade on the stock market were instructed to compete with each other. They'll have finished their target by the last week of February. The announcement [of which company has been awarded permission to first sell shares on the YSX] won't be made through any other channels," he said.

Trading on the YSX will commence during the first week of March, while the companies that will take responsibility for the selling of shares on the exchange will be KBZ Stirling Coleman Securities (KBZSC), the Myanmar Securities Exchange Centre and Ayeyar Securities.

"Among those companies wishing to sell shares, one can select the company they like,

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Okkala Golf Course in Yangon has been upgraded and is open!! Golfers are invited to play happily and peaceful at Okkala Golf Course.



Ph: 09-30998334, 09-30998335

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session continues

THE 13th regular session of the first Pyidaungsu Hluttaw continued for its 37th day with a presentation on the findings of the Union Auditor General's report for the second six-month period for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

MP U Aung Lin Hlaing read out the Joint Public Accounts Committee's findings on the Union Auditor General's report and the committee's audit complaints report.

Next, MPs U Win Than, U Maung Toe and U Thein Tun read out the Joint Planning and Finan-

cial Development Committee's report, the Joint Public Accounts Committee's findings on the Union Auditor General's report on the Union Budget and a report of the Farmland Investigation Commission.

Then, eight parliamentarians discussed the Joint Public Accounts Committee's findings on the Auditor General's report on the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Development Fund.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session continues tomorrow.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

Amyotha Hluttaw discusses improving agricultural livelihoods



U Thame Swe. PHOTO: MNA

THE 13th regular session of Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) entered its 27th day in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with a question-and-answer session, a discussion on a proposal and parliamentary approval of a report.

During the question-and-answer session, members of Un-

ion-level organisations responded to three questions raised by parliamentarians.

Five parliamentarians held discussions on a proposal urging the Union government to coordinate the agricultural market and increase agricultural loans to ensure improvement to farmers' livelihoods.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation U Ohn-Thin explained the government's intervention in the rice market by buying rice to secure the country's reserves.

The private sector has been allowed to grow, store, transport and trade rice freely, added the deputy minister.

However, he said it is impossible to increase loans to farmers due to budget constraints, he said.

Next, the parliament sought the approval of the report of the Amyotha Hluttaw committee on education, health and women and children affairs committee.—*Myanmar News Agency*

C-in-C, Suu Kyi talk peace

DEFENCE Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met with National League for Democracy Chairperson Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for two hours at the Bayintnaung Guest House in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win and Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Lt-Gen Mya Tun Oo and Lt-Gen Ye Aung from the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Army), U Win Htein, U Win Myint, U Zaw Myint Maung and Dr Tin Myo Win represented the National League for Democracy at the meeting.

During the meeting, the participants discussed matters relating to the post-election transitional period, peace and stability, parliamentary affairs, the formation of the next government and the peace process as laid out by the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.—*Myawady*



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing welcomes Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on her arrival at the Bayintnaung Guest House in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MYAWADY

Pyithu Hluttaw

Pyithu Hluttaw approves Former Presidents' Security Bill

THE 13th regular session of Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) entered its 28th day in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with parliamentarians discussing recommendations of respective committees and the Former Presidents' Security Bill.

Parliamentarians from various committees, including the Ethnic Affairs, Rural Development and Peacemaking Committee, the National Planning Committee, the Union Budget and Taxation Scrutinising Committee and the International Relations Committee discussed

recommendations.

While holding discussions on the Former Presidents' Security Bill, which was sent back by the Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House) with amendments, parliamentarians called for the approval of the bill in line with the Lower House amendments.

Today's session approved seven amendments of the bill in accordance with the Pyithu Hluttaw's suggestions and decided to continue the process during the next session.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Co to sell YSX shares to ...

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which have underwriter licenses. Those wanting to buy shares must also first open an account with the securities company," said Dr U Nyo Myint, senior managing di-

rector of KBZ Stirling Coleman Securities (KBZSC).

A joint venture between the Myanmar Economic Bank, which has 51 per cent ownership, and the Japanese Stock Exchange Committee and Japan Daiwa Company, which have 49 per cent ownership, the YSX was officially opened on 9 December in

the building of the old Myawaddy Bank.

The six companies permitted to list on the YSX are First Private Bank Ltd, First Myanmar Investment, Great Hor khan Public, MAPCO, Myanmar Citizens Bank and Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Public.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Rural solar electrification launched in Ayeyawady Region

CENTRAL executive committee members of Myanmar Women and Children Development Federation carried out rural solar electrification project at four villages in Patheingyi, Nyaungdon and Kyaunggon Township, Ay-

eyawady Region on Friday.

According to the MWCDF, six women from the remote villages were sent to Barefoot College in India for implementation of the project.

The MWCDF and the wom-

en who completed the rural solar electrification course at the college discussed matters related to installation of solar panels worth US\$160,307 donated by the college for the villages.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President sends felicitations to President, Prime Minister of Republic of India

U THEIN SEIN, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent the messages of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India, and His Excellency Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, on the occasion of the 67th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India, which falls on 26 January 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President felicitates Governor-General, Prime Minister of Commonwealth of Australia

U THEIN SEIN, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent the messages of felicitations to General the Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and His Excellency the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, on the occasion of the anniversary of the National Day of the Commonwealth of Australia, which falls on 26 January 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Vice-President Dr Sai Mauk Kham felicitates India counterpart

DR. SAI MAUK KHAM, Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Vice-President of the Republic of India, on the occasion of the 67th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India, which falls on 26 January 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Vice-President U Nyan Tun felicitates India counterpart

U NYAN TUN, Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Vice-President of the Republic of India, on the occasion of the 67th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India, which falls on 26 January 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Union FM sends felicitations to Australian counterpart

U WUNNA MAUNG LWIN, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to Her Excellency the Hon. Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of Australia, on the occasion of the anniversary of the National Day of the Commonwealth of Australia, which falls on 26 January 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Union FM sends felicitations to Indian counterpart

U WUNNA MAUNG LWIN, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to Her Excellency Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India, on the occasion of 67th Anniversary of the Republic Day of India, which falls on 26 January 2016.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Foreign firms eye new telecoms licence despite . . .

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“Decision making will be very difficult,” said Shane Thu Aung, the chairman of internet provider Redlink Communications. He previously ran a firm tipped to partner with Vietnam’s Viettel as the fourth operator before that deal fell apart.

Penetration rates, however, are around 63 per cent according to the expression of interest documents issued by the MCIT, which is lower than several other Southeast Asian nations.

“It isn’t a greenfield business

anymore,” said Sachin Gupta, the head of telecommunications research for Asia-Pacific at Nomura Securities in Singapore.

“There is still money to be made but you are competing with three entrenched operators.”

Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications (MPT), which operates in partnership with Japan’s KDDI Corp and Sumitomo Corp, is the market leader with 18 million subscribers. Telenor has 12 million subscribers while Ooredoo has 5.8 million.—*Reuters*

VP Dr Sai Mauk Kham enjoys classical concert in Nay Pyi Taw



Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham and wife enjoy Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra Concert. PHOTO: MNA

VICE PRESIDENT Dr Sai Mauk Kham enjoyed the Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra Concert at the Myanmar International Convention Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the concert, Myanmar and Japanese artists performed classical music, movie

soundtracks, jazz music, traditional Myanmar songs and movie songs.

After the performance, the vice president and his wife and the Japanese ambassador to Myanmar presented flower bouquets to four Japanese artists and the State Orchestra of Myanmar.

The Nay Pyi Taw concert was

the second joint effort of the State Orchestra of Myanmar Radio and Television under the Ministry of Information and a group of Japanese artists led by Mr Yunosuke Yamamoto following the joint performance at National Theatre in Yangon on 22 January.—*Myanmar News Agency*

VP U Nyan Tun calls for regional development, environmental conservation at Kyaik-hti-yoe Pagoda



Vice President U Nyan Tun applies gold foils on Kyaik-hti-yoe Pagoda. PHOTO: MNA

VICE-President U Nyan Tun inspected development tasks and environmental works being undertaken in the region of Kyaik-hti-yoe Pagoda in Mon State yesterday.

Vice-President accompanied by Mon State Chief Minister U Ohn Myint and officials visited Kyaik-hti-yoe waterfall resort set to be implemented for developing the country’s tourism industry and boosting job creation.

Next, the Vice-President paid homage to the Pagoda and heard reports on ongoing works for regional development, green-

ing and cleaning of the region and accommodation for pilgrims.

In his address, the Vice-President called for far-sighted vision on the regional development without hurting the environment as the Pagoda and its environs are expected to be designated as cultural ecotourism zone which is situated on the East-West Economic Corridor linking Vietnam to Thailand via Myanmar.

He also stressed the need for ensuring emergency preparedness and response plan and risk management procedures, and conducting educative programs and taking

actions against earthworks that can damage the historic site.

The Vice-President also highlighted the importance of mass participation in drawing up of environmental conservation plan for the Pagoda, and setting up the monitoring and verification mechanism for ensuring donations collected at the Pagoda to help regional development tasks.

Next, he viewed round the Pagoda and cordially greeted pilgrims and owners who run shops at the Pagoda.—*Myanmar News Agency*



A whale is stranded at a beach at Hmyawdawoo Village in Manaung Township, Rakhine State, yesterday. PHOTO: WaiHIN AUNG, CREDIT: THE VOICE WEEKLY (FACEBOOK)

Myanmar sees 15,000 snakebite incidents per year

IN MYANMAR, there are about 15,000 snakebite incidents each year, 435 of which resulted in death last year, said Deputy Minister of Industry U Thein Aung at a workshop on Saturday.

The workshop was focused on raising the production of essential drugs for public health by the Ministry of Industry.

The Myanmar Pharmaceutical Factory will increase its anti-snake venoms production up to 80,000 units per year within 2016 with the use of modern machinery and state-of-the-art technology supported by Australia, Brazil and Thailand. The factory previously manufactured around 30,000 units of anti-snake venom per year. Modern equipment is being installed in the new factory building to produce additional drugs, such as Vilas. The new machinery has a capacity of 400 million tablets, 20 million injections

and 100 million capsules per year. In addition, hepatitis B vaccines produced at the new factory will soon be sold at fair prices, the minister said.

Anti-venoms were previously sold in liquid form, but the factory began producing freeze-dried anti-venoms last year.

The Pharmaceutical Factory produces two types of anti-venom—anti-viper venom and anti-cobra venom.

“Although many measures against snakebites have been carried out, annual snakebite morbidity and mortality show no apparent decrease over the last decade,” said Deputy Health Minister Dr Win Myint at a conference last year.

“The cause is multi-factorial. Some of the reasons are the frequency of delays in receiving anti-venom and the limited availability of safe and potent anti-venoms in our country.”—*Myanmar News Agency*

Yesagyo farmers turn to stable maize

FARMERS in Yesagyo Township have expressed interest in growing CP maize, as the maize market is stable and attracts high demand.

“CP maize is easily grown in any soil. The crop can thrive well if we grow it systematically,” said a local grower. “There has been no significant change in price during this harvest season.”

The maximum price of

maize is around K9,000 per basket, while the minimum price is around K6,000, he added.

“Some farmers from our village usually grow maize twice a year.”

“Farmers turn to CP maize because they are sure to earn profits, and there is stable local and foreign demand,” said an official from the Township Agriculture Department.—*Pe Tun Zaw*

Crime News

Fire in Pakokku destroys hut

A RESIDENTIAL hut was destroyed by a fire on Saturday morning in Pakokku Township, though no one was injured, police reported yesterday.

The hut, located in the township's Ward 11, was owned by U Kyaw Kyaw, who used the hut as a kitchen for

frying traditional snack made with beans. The fire started when he overheated oil in a frying pan.

In cooperation with neighbours, fire fighter was put under control at around 12:15pm.

Local police have taken action against the owner of the hut.—*District IPRD*

500,000 yabba pills seized in Rakhine State

AUTHORITIES seized more than 500,000 yabba pills from a passenger on a highway bus at the Ann-Paebadon toll gate on Wednesday, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

According to the investigation, an anti-drug squad in Sittwe Township searched

an express bus en route from Sittwe to Yangon in Ann Township, Rakhine State.

They found 509,960 yabba pills, K550,000 and a handset in the handbag of a passenger named Kyaw Min, 45, who was later charged by police.—*Kyemon*

Police arrest serial knife attackers in Yangon

POLICE yesterday arrested two fugitives who were wanted on drug charges, for extorting money from locals in Yangon's south and north districts and for attacking policemen with knives. They were captured at their hideout in Shwepyitha Township, Yangon.

Sources said police used a pump-action shotgun and a .38 bolt revolver in the process of arresting the two fugitives—Kyaw Win Sein and Hnget Pyaw Thee—

who tried to attack the policemen with knives.

Police seized several knives, a pair of nunchaku, handcuffs, slingshots, mobile phones and an unregistered vehicle and an unregistered motorbike during their raid.

According to a police investigation, Kyaw Win Sein is a fugitive fleeing from Mopalin quarry while serving his 65-year and three-month sentence for several

previous crimes, including robbery, extortion, drug possession and a knife attack against policemen in Yangon's Twante, Insein, Mingaladon and Ahlon townships.

Likewise, Hnget Pyaw Thee, was also a fugitive wanted for knife attacks against policemen and locals in Mayangone and Hlaingthaya townships. Police said an ongoing investigation focuses on whether they have committed other crimes.—*Ko Ye*



Kyaw Win Sein and Hnget Pyaw Thee are seen together with evidences. PHOTO: MPF

Leaders call for Australia to become a republic, reviving debate

SYDNEY — The leaders of seven of Australia's eight states and territories have called for the country to become a republic, reigniting a thorny debate ahead of a national holiday on Tuesday.

Australia is a constitutional monarchy, with Britain's Queen Elizabeth as head of state. The role is largely ceremonial, but the monarch does have the power to dissolve parliament, as in 1975, when Queen Elizabeth sacked the government.

The question of Australia becoming a republic is a perennial debate that often crops up around Australia Day, the 26 January holiday that commemorates the start of British settlement.

“Any self-respecting, independent country would aspire to select one of its own citizens as its head of state.”

Jay Weatherill
South Australia Premier



Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. PHOTO: REUTERS

“It's well past time for Australia to become a sovereign nation,” said South Australia Premier Jay Weatherill, who signed the declaration. “Any self-respecting, independent country would aspire to select one of its own citizens as its head of state,” he said in a statement.

Hopes of a shift in sentiment rose when Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, a staunch republican, took the leadership last year from his monarchist predecessor

Tony Abbott.

“My commitment to Australia having an Australian head of state is undiminished,” Turnbull, who headed the Australian Republican Movement in the 1990s, said in a statement, in response to Monday's declaration.

However, Turnbull has previously said the issue was not a priority and that he believed a national vote would be unlikely during the reign of the current 89-year-old monarch.—*Reuters*

Japan vows efforts to become UN Security Council permanent member

TOKYO — Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida pledged yesterday to step up Japan's contribution to the UN Security Council, as the country aspires to become a permanent member of the United Nations' top decision-making body.

“Japan needs to make a high-level contribution to the Security Council to show that it is suitable as a permanent member,” Kishida said as he launched the “Strategic Headquarters regarding UNSC” at the Foreign Ministry.

Kishida said the headquarters will discuss Japan's contribution during its two-year term from January as a nonpermanent member of the Security Council and ways to achieve the country's “long-cherished goal” of becoming a permanent member of the body.

The foreign minister said North Korea's fourth nuclear test earlier this month proved that discussions at the Security Council “directly relate to Japan's national interests and are

very important.”

“Japan will make firm efforts to adopt a UN Security Council resolution imposing tougher sanctions on North Korea,” Kishida said.

The meeting was attended by Seiji Kihara, senior vice foreign minister, Vice Foreign Minister Akitaka Saiki and other ministry officials.

Japan, along with Brazil, Germany and India, — known as the Group of Four — are calling for expanding the number of both permanent and nonpermanent members of the 15-member council so it can better represent the realities and needs of the international community in the 21st century.

The debate has seen little progress as there is no consensus so far on how to restructure the body.

At present, the Security Council has five veto-wielding permanent members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.—*Kyodo News*

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Search for missing Malaysia jet hits another snag with sonar detector lost

SYDNEY — Australian authorities searching for a missing Malaysia Airlines passenger jet said yesterday they had lost a deep-water sonar detector being used to scour a patch of the ocean floor where the plane is believed to have gone down almost two years ago.

Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 disappeared with 239 people on board during a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in March 2014, sparking one of the greatest mysteries in aviation history.

On Saturday, a piece of suspected plane wreckage was found off the east coast of southern Thailand but aviation experts and Thai officials said it was unlikely to belong to MH370.

A piece of the plane washed up on the French island of Reunion in the Indian Ocean in July 2015 but no further trace has been found.

The search, using a sonar detector known as a towfish, is focused on a 120,000-sq-km (46,330-sq-mile) band of sea floor in the remote southern Indian Ocean.

“The towfish collided with a mud volcano which rises 2,200 metres from the seafloor resulting in the vehicle's tow cable breaking,” the Joint Agency Coordination Centre (JACC), the agency overseeing the search efforts, said in a statement.



The Royal Australian Navy ship HMAS Perth is guided into position by a Royal New Zealand Airforce (RNZAF) P-3K2 Orion aircraft to recover an object in the southern Indian Ocean, as the search continues for missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

The incident occurred on Sunday, it said.

“The towfish and 4,500 metres of cable became separated from the vessel and are now resting on the sea floor,” it said.

The towfish coasts around 100 metres (330 feet) above the sea floor, sending out sound waves diagonally across a broad strip of

terrain to produce a flattened image of the seabed.

Earlier this month, JACC reiterated it would complete scouring the seafloor by the end of June, ruling out a further expansion without new confirmation on the aircraft's location.

On Monday, it did not say whether the lost towfish would

delay that timeframe. A spare towfish on board search vessel the Fugro Discovery was being prepared, JACC said. It was thought it would be possible to recover the lost towfish later.

The Australian-led underwater search is one of the most expensive ever conducted.—*Reuters*

India to build satellite tracking station in Viet Nam that offers eye on China

NEW DELHI/HONG KONG — India will set up a satellite tracking and imaging centre in southern Viet Nam that will give Hanoi access to pictures from Indian earth observation satellites that cover the region, including China and the South China Sea, Indian officials said.

The move, which could irritate Beijing, deepens ties between India and Viet Nam, who both have long-running territorial disputes with China.

While billed as a civilian facility — earth observation satellites have agricultural, scientific and environmental applications — security experts said improved imaging technology meant the pictures could also be used for military purposes.

Hanoi especially has been looking for advanced intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance technologies as tensions rise with China over the disputed South China Sea, they said.

“In military terms, this move could be quite significant,” said Collin Koh, a marine security expert at Singapore’s S Rajaratnam School of International Studies. “It looks like a win-win for both sides, filling significant holes for the Vietnamese and expanding the range for the Indians.”

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will fund and set up the satellite tracking and data reception centre in Ho



People watch as India’s Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-D6) blasts off carrying a 2117 kg GSAT-6 communication satellite from the Satish Dhawan space centre at Sriharikota, India, in 2015.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Chi Minh City to monitor Indian satellite launches, the Indian officials said. Indian media put the cost at around \$23 million.

India, whose 54-year-old space programme is accelerating, with one satellite launch scheduled every month, has ground stations in the Andaman and Nicobar islands, Brunei, Biak in eastern Indonesia and Mauritius that track its satellites in the initial stages of flight. The Viet Nam facility will bolster those capabilities,

said Deviprasad Karnik, an ISRO spokesman.

But unlike the other overseas stations, the facility will also be equipped to receive images from India’s earth observation satellites that Viet Nam can use in return for granting India the tracking site, said an Indian government official connected with the space programme.

“This is a sort of quid pro quo which will enable Viet Nam to receive IRS (Indian remote sensing)

pictures directly, that is, without asking India,” said the official, who declined to be identified because he was not authorised to speak to the media.

“Obviously it will include parts of China of interest to Viet Nam.” Chinese coastal naval bases, the operations of its coastguard and navy and its new man-made islands in the disputed Spratly archipelago of the South China Sea would be targets of Vietnamese interest, security experts said.

Another Indian official said New Delhi would also have access to the imagery.

India has 11 earth observation satellites in orbit, offering pictures with differing resolutions and areas, the ISRO said.

Indian officials had no time-frame for when the centre would be operational.

“This is at the beginning stages, we are still in dialogue with Vietnamese authorities,” said Karnik. Viet Nam’s Foreign Ministry confirmed the project, but provided few other details.

China’s Defence Ministry said the proposed tracking station wasn’t a military issue. The Chinese Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment.

Viet Nam launched its first earth observation satellite in 2013, but Koh said it was not thought to produce particularly high resolution images.

Security experts said Viet Nam would likely seek real-time access to images from the Indian satellites as well as training in imagery analysis, a specialised intelligence field. “The advance of technology means the lines are blurring between civilian and military satellites,” said Trevor Hollingsbee, a retired naval intelligence analyst with Britain’s Defence Ministry. “In some cases, the imagery from a modern civilian satellite is good enough for military use.”—Reuters

Cambodian PM calls for more investment in rice storage facilities, drying machines



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen visits a rice stall at the 5th Cambodia Rice Forum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 25 January. Hun Sen on Monday called for more investment in rice storage facilities and drying machines in order to increase the country’s rice export capacity.

PHOTO: XINHUA

PHNOM PENH — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen yesterday called for more investment in rice storage facilities and drying machines in order to increase the country’s rice export capacity.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 5th Cambodia Rice Forum here, Hun Sen said the

lack of rice storage facilities and drying machines is a key challenge for the country in buying a large amount of paddy rice from farmers and more investment in these sectors is needed.

“The government of Cambodia has been negotiating with China for loans to construct stor-

age facilities and drying machines across the country,” he told the forum, which took part by some 700 people who are policy makers, rice millers, exporters, farmer-representatives, and transport company representatives.

The prime minister said China is the largest importer of milled rice from Cambodia and expressed his confidence that the world’s second largest economy would continue to support Cambodia in rice industry development.

Meanwhile, Hun Sen said the government would continue to invest in irrigation system, rice species production, and transportation infrastructure in order to facilitate the development of rice industry.

Cambodia exported a total of 538,396 tons of milled rice to over 50 countries and regions last year, up 39 per cent year-on-year, according to the government’s figures.

The Southeast Asian country made over 9.2 million tons of paddy rice last year. With this amount, the country will have over 3 million tons of milled rice left over for exports this year. — Xinhua

Malaysia warns of Islamic State threat as alleged IS video surfaces

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said Islamic State is a “very real” threat to the country, hours after a video claiming to be from the regional wing of IS warned of attacks in the Muslim-majority nation for arresting its supporters.

Police said the video, believed to feature operatives from the militant group Katibah Nusantara speaking under the IS logo, was significant because, if confirmed, it was the first from Islamic State in Malay.

“This threat is very real and my government takes it very seriously,” Najib told a conference on extremism. “This is a challenge that faces us all around the world. We are far from immune to this danger in Malaysia.”

Police said on Sunday they had arrested seven members of an IS cell who were planning attacks across the country. The suspected militants were carrying bullets, books on jihad, IS

flags and propaganda videos.

Ten days ago, Malaysia arrested a suspected militant believed to have been planning a suicide attack in Kuala Lumpur.

The video that surfaced online warned Malaysia against the crackdown on IS supporters.

Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay, director of the police counter-terrorism unit, said the video suggested militants in the country were becoming more organised. Reuters could not independently verify the video.

“If you catch us, we will only increase in number but if you let us be, we will be closer to our goal of bringing back the rule of the Khalifah (caliph),” said a message on the video, according to Malaysian newspaper the *Star*.

Security experts in the region believe Islamic State’s footprint is still light in Southeast Asia because militants are jostling to be its regional leader.—Reuters

Britain may take in unaccompanied children fleeing Syria

LONDON — Britain might take in refugee children who have been displaced by the war in Syria and have travelled to other countries in Europe, a government minister said on Sunday.

International Development Secretary Justine Greening said the government was considering whether it could do more for the estimated 3,000 children who have fled the conflict without

their parents or guardians and are in Europe.

Asked whether the government was close to agreeing to calls from relief groups for Britain to admit the children, Greening told Sky News television: "That's what we are doing and I think that is the right thing."

Prime Minister David Cameron has previously said Britain would accept 20,000 refugees

over the next five years from camps in the Middle East, as opposed to those who have already made it to Europe.

Critics say that response has been meagre when compared with the 1.1 million asylum seekers who arrived in Germany last year. Campaign groups and more than 80 Church of England bishops have urged Cameron to do more.—*Reuters*



A migrant child walks through a frozen field after crossing the border from Macedonia, near the village of Miratovac, Serbia, on 18 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

Merkel's party, sliding in polls, weighs German 'border centres'

BERLIN — A senior figure in German Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative party has proposed setting up "border centres" along the frontier with Austria to speed up the repatriation of those asylum seekers deemed unqualified to stay.

Julia Kloeckner, leader of Merkel's Christian Democrats in the western state of Rhineland-Palatinate, said she thought the chancellor's push for a European solution to a large influx of asylum seekers into Europe was still the right decision, adding that her proposal was meant to "complement it".

"On the German-Austrian border, border centres will be set up," Kloeckner wrote in the paper, a copy of which Reuters obtained. It has been endorsed by the Christian Democrats' (CDU) secretary-general.

The proposal highlights the frustration in Merkel's party with the slow progress in achieving a European Union-wide solution to the refugee crisis, which is straining the infrastructure of many German municipalities.

Germany attracted 1.1 million asylum seekers last year, leading to calls from across the political spec-

trum for a change in its handling of the number of refugees coming to Europe to escape war and poverty in Syria, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Growing concern about Germany's ability to cope with the influx and worries about crime and security after assaults on women at New Year in Cologne are weighing on support for the CDU and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU).

An Emnid poll for the newspaper *Bild am Sonntag* showed support for the CDU/CSU bloc down 2 percentage points at 36 per cent from last week. The right-wing Alternative for Germany (AfD) gained 1 point to 10 per cent. Merkel's coalition partners, the Social Democrats (SPD), gained a point to 25 per cent.

Merkel, despite appearing increasingly isolated over her open-door policy on refugees, has resisted pressure from some conservatives to cap the influx, or to close Germany's borders.

Instead, she has tried to convince other European countries to take in quotas of refugees, pushed for reception centres to be built on Europe's external borders, and led an EU campaign to

convince Turkey to keep refugees from entering the bloc. But progress has been slow.

Neighbouring Austria said last week it would cap the number of refugees it allows in this year at 37,500 and risks bumping up against that limit in just months.

"That will probably be the case before the summer," Austrian Interior Minister Johanna Mikl-Leitner told Germany's *Welt am Sonntag* newspaper.

Kloeckner, who has quietly positioned herself as a leading candidate to replace Merkel when she finally leaves office, also called for Germany to support Italy, Greece and Turkey in processing asylum applications at registration centres there.

These beefed-up registration centres and the border centres along the frontier with Austria would deal with the repatriation of unsuccessful asylum applicants, easing pressure on German municipalities, she said in her position paper.

Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere, a CDU member, said each day German police were turning away 100 to 200 people at the border deemed not to qualify for asylum.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

No reports of casualties, major damage after Spain earthquake

MADRID — There were no immediate reports of any casualties or major damage across Spain's southern coast early yesterday after a major earthquake of magnitude 6.3 struck about 162 km (100 miles) southeast of Malaga.

The quake hit at 0422 GMT, the Spanish National Geographic Institute said, and was followed by six lesser aftershocks. The US Geological Survey had earlier reported the tremor had a magnitude of 6.6 and was registered at 33 km (20 miles) deep. Emergency services in the southern region of Andalucia said in a statement on their Twitter feed they had received 250 calls from alarmed residents.

The tremors and aftershocks were felt throughout the region, including in the cities of Malaga, Cordoba, Seville and Granada.

In Melilla, a Spanish enclave on the Moroccan coast, emergency services said they had received more than 200 calls from people warning of damage to properties. Schools would remain shut on Monday so buildings could be inspected.

Media in Melilla said power was being restored to areas where it had been cut.—*Reuters*

Pakistan university attacked last week by terrorists reopens

ISLAMABAD — A Pakistani university targeted by terrorists last week reopened yesterday, five days after a massacre there that left 21 people, mostly students, dead.

Local TV reports showed security guards with automatic weapons manning a barricade at the main entrance of Bacha Khan University, located in Charsada, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, and frisking people before letting them enter. Other armed guards were posted along the boundary wall, over which four armed militants entered the campus last Wednesday and began firing indiscriminately. They were later killed by security forces. "All employees have reported for duty. They have high morale. Let the terrorists know we're not afraid," a university professor said in the TV footage.

"We were not afraid on the day of attack, we are not afraid today," a veiled girl student said.

"We salute the martyrs of Bacha Khan University," banners inside the boundary walls said.

A renegade commander of banned Teheek Taliban Pakistan had claimed responsibility for the massacre and vowed to carry out more attacks on educational institutions.—*Kyodo News*

French minister says state of emergency will not last forever

PARIS — The state of emergency in France needs to be extended given the current security threat but it will not last forever, French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said on Sunday.

French President François Hollande said on 22 January that he would ask parliament to extend by three months the state of emergency declared after the 13 November Paris attacks that left 130 people dead, sparking a debate over civil liberties.

Emergency measures that give authorities extra powers to put people under house arrest and conduct raids without a judicial warrant had been due to expire on 26 February.

"As long as we think that there is an imminent (terrorist) threat, we need the state of emergency," Cazeneuve told France 5 television.—*Reuters*

Two killed, 1 injured in suspected bomb attack in Laos

VIENTIANE — Two Chinese nationals were killed and another injured in a suspected bomb attack in Xaysomboun Province of Laos on Sunday.

The Chinese Embassy confirmed the incident, saying it took place at 8:00am local time when the victims, one of whom was an employee of a mining company from China's Yunnan province, were on board of a vehicle.

Laos military personnel rushed to the scene and the injured, surnamed Zhou, has been shifted to a hospital in capital Vientiane for treatment.

The Chinese Embassy officials visited the injured person and required for prompt investigation into the attack.

Xaysomboun Province is located in central Laos with a population of some 82,000. The mountainous area has been seeing rise in violence recently.—*Xinhua*

OPINION

Avoid avarice and wrath

Khin Maung Aye

The central region of India is sometimes called majjhimadesa. This district bears a sacred character in the eyes of Buddhists, like places such as Rajagaha and Savatthi, which have been halloved by the residence or frequent visits of the Buddha. It is said to be nine hundred yojanas in circuit, its boundaries being the towns of kajangala and Mahasala, the river Salalavati, the towns of Setakannika and Thuna and the mountain Usiradhaja.

Majjhimadesa is a combination of the two pali words—majjhima and desa—the former suggesting middle, central, mean, moderate and of medium size, whereas the latter means ‘district’. Similarly, majjhimapatipada is composed of the two pali words—

majjhima and patipada—the former meaning middle, as mentioned above, while the latter suggests ingress, access, way, step, course, progress, practice and conduct. Thus, majjhimapatipada is the ‘middle way’. Although this is the way for the yogis to follow the path taken by Buddhist monks and for lay disciples to emancipate themselves from the cycles of rebirth, this path can be followed by anyone, irrespective of race and religion, to manage worldly affairs as well as to lead peaceful and prosperous lives.

It is of utmost importance for all people from all parts of the world to avoid the two extremes of lobha (greed) and dosa (anger), for these two extremes are add fuel to the fire. It is avarice and wrath that set the world on fire. As long as the world’s people are avaricious and furious, peace and tranquillity will not prevail on this earth. This is the reason why the World Buddhist Peace Conference has been held in Sitagu, Sagaing Region.

It is hoped that the Sitagu conference has at least given a message to the whole world to collectively endeavour to ensure peace and stability on this earth through preserving the noble spirit of universal brother-

hood, regardless of race and religion.

In this function, the Global New Light of Myanmar would also like to make its earnest request to all human beings, be they Buddhist monks or lay disciples, be they Christians or those professing different religious faiths other than Buddhism and Christianity, to avoid the two extremes of lobha and dosa, exercising self-restraint and concerted effort in the effectuation of peace and stability in all parts of the world.

Write for us

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

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

One Year After Charlie Hebdo incident

Thiha Zaw
(Nay Pyi Taw)

THE seventh January, 2016 was the anniversary of the attack of Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris, France by gun men. When we looked one year back at France and its people, more loss of lives, misery and sorrow were still there. Just before the end of previous year on November 13rd, gun men and suicide bombers were at large at various places of Paris. Restaurants, stadium and concert hall were attacked systematically killing as many as 130 innocent victims including foreigners. The November massacre made the Charlie Hebdo incident a trifle one. What kind of disasters and terror will happen Paris in this year will be a difficult and bone chilling question.

Paris is not alone. In Calais on the French side of Eurotunnel where there are many temporary shelters for the migrant people, truckers entering Eurotunnel were forced to cooperate by the migrants who want to enter the United Kingdom secretly inside their trucks. These truckers were threatened and attacked if they did not cooperate with those migrants. In Germany, there were sexual assaults on the women in the new-year eve where many of the attackers were from the migrant camps. That made the political life of Chancellor Merkel and her pro-migrant policy very difficult. In Austria and Hungary, new border fencings were erected. Even in Denmark where human rights is the top priority in its domestic and foreign policy, lawmakers are intensely debating whether they should control or seize the money more than 1,500 US\$ and precious jewelry items from those who seek political asylum. That is something we have never thought about a civilized European country will do one year ago. Europe is now full of tensions, debates, arguments and

counter arguments. Taking into account that Europe is the origin of two deadly world wars, the path of migrants is the sparkling points of these wars and the historical events can repeat its perpetual cycles; this is not a good time to take it easy and let things go by naturally.

The 21st century is the knowledge age. Technology and media are important part of our lives. Media is often quoted as the fourth pillar of the state in parallel with executive, legislative and judicial pillars. The main duties of the media are to inform, to educate and to entertain. Media is responsible for the dissemination of information among the public as to what is happening around the world, in our country and society. Another duty is to educate the public about the etiquette, conduct and discipline for everybody to live in harmony without endangering the welfare of other people or society. Another duty is to entertain the public to get away from the everyday hassles.

As far as I know I don’t see any positive points in the cartoon about Prophet Mohammed in Charlie Hebdo magazine published on 19th September, 2012. It does not inform the public about any positive contribution. I don’t feel like it is either educating or entertaining. So what is the point of publishing that cartoon? Is it going to add something good about the mankind, France and its people or any democratic society? I guess it is something like putting a kind of poison into the society. The people of the Charlie Hebdo magazine can argue that the freedom of expression is the inherent right of everyone on the earth and they have the right to exercise it.

But the article (29) (b) of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that: “In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the

rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.” So the question is “Are those cartoons in accordance with UDHR article (29) (b)?

It is very hard to deny that the bloodsheds in Paris in 2015 are just the act of terrorists and not really related to the Charlie Hebdo publications. However according to the poll done among Parisians in January 2015, 42 % of the respondents approved that these cartoons should not have been published and those responsible should have thought thoroughly about the consequences before publishing.

During the cold war, there is a power game between the west bloc and the communist east bloc leading to the armed conflicts worldwide. Since the fall of Berlin wall and the end of the cold war, there are a lot of debates among the scholars and strategists about the new world order. The famous ones among them are Samuel Huntington and Francis Fukuyama. Their opinions are totally different. In his book named “The End of The History”, Francis Fukuyama said that the end of communism had ushered in the end of conflict and the beginning of the peaceful era. Liberalism has won and there is no other ideology that can challenge the value of democracy and liberalism.

Samuel Huntington, being an older man, has been more cautious about the global outlook. He said that the most dreadful conflicts in the history of mankind are caused not because of ideological differences but because of the clashes between the big civilizations. The conflicts between different civilizations were temporarily subdued in the 20th century because of the strong battle between communism and capitalism. Since the fall of the communism, he predicted that the clash of civilizations can gain the new momentum and resurge in

21st century.

What is happening around Europe nowadays is exactly the same as Samuel Huntington has predicted 20 years ago. There are conflicts between policy makers and rights groups, the public and the government, the local community who share the brunt of migrant crisis and the policy makers living in some distant places. Europe of today is very different from Europe of last year. Nobody knows what the Europe will be like next year. There are explicit fault lines between different societies and countries in Europe. Whether the Charlie Hebdo publications have made that wedge wider and causing the fractured societies around the world is for the historians to decide later? It is for the scholars, historians and media to decide whether the Charlie Hebdo is the asset or the liability for France in later years. In fact, France is one of the super powers of the world from 18th to 20th century until after the 2nd world war. Even before that, it was one of the most civilized countries in the world and has contributed so many things towards the development of the mankind. In the field of medicine, the Pasteur Institute of the France is the original inventor of rabies, small pox, polio and hepatitis vaccines which have saved a lot of lives and relieved sufferings of so many people. It is also involved in the pioneering work in search of Human Immunodeficiency Virus causing AIDS. In the field of engineering, the invention of steam automobile by Joseph Cugnot in 1770, radial tires for car by Michelin and smart card by Roland Moreno in 1974 are only a few of many French inventions. In addition, French are the leading people in arts and architecture, diplomatic circle, foods and beverages. There are so many things for the French to be proud of.

Media worldwide has strongly opposed any restriction on media censorship. But there are defi-

nately some media which misuse that privilege in favor of their personal interests causing detrimental effects on the society. That is why International Council on Human Rights Policy has advised in 1999 that everybody has to balance between rights and responsibilities not to endanger the welfare of the societies in accordance with the article (29) (b) of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The pillars of democracy are responsibility and accountability. There is no doubt that radicals and terrorists are responsible for the atrocities of Paris last year claiming so many innocent lives. But the role of Charlie Hebdo publications in pushing some of the strong minded person to the extreme act of terror is not easily discernable and it is very bitter truth for some to swallow. During “I Love Charlie Hebdo” movement held on 11th January last year, 40 world leaders and two million people have walked along the street of Paris in unison in an act of defiance to the terrorism as well as to support the right of the freedom of expression of Charlie Hebdo.

Charlie Hebdo has published special issues of 7.95 million publications in six languages instead of 40,000 regular publications in French. After November incidents, the vigil this year is relatively modest which may be due to security concern or they may have a second thought about Charlie Hebdo aftermath.

In conclusion, rights and duties are inalienable part of our lives. Any freedom of expression contrary to the article (29) (b) of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights cannot bring benefit to the mankind and society.

If someone only cares about his or her right of freedom of expression and does not care about the consequences, the dire question is “Is it in the interest of the public or self interest?”

Tourists flock to century-old Sawbwas' Monastery in Nyaung Shwe



Century old monastery in Nyaung Shwe. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

SWELLING numbers of international tourists have been visiting the famous century-old Sawbwas' Monastic Chambers located in the southern Shan State township of Nyaung Shwe.

"Foreigners are coming here every day. The monastery is over a century old. People fast on top of the mountain every fullmoon. Different foreign tour groups of all kinds come here — it's a place full of historic artefacts," said U Hpo Chun, a 78-year-old Pa-O man who fasts every day on the mountain.

The foreign tourists visit the

ancient wooden monastery when they come to the region to visit Inle Lake, one of Myanmar's top tourist sites.

According to tourist operators in the Inle region, most foreign tourists visiting the area in 2016 have been Koreans, followed by French, Italian and Indian tourists.

"The people here today have come from India. All the tourists that come to Inle come here. The numbers are only going to continue to grow. At the moment, most tourists are from Korea," said Aung Soe U, a tour guide

from the Asian Tour Company.

The building of the monastery was a result of the charitable efforts of two Shan sawbwas in 1886 and 1887 and was constructed with a black wood finish. As such, the monastery building is dubbed the 'sawbwa'— or 'Shan chieftain'— monastic chambers by locals after those responsible for its construction.

The monastic chambers are located within the grounds of the Shwe Yan Pye monastery in the town of Nyaung Shwe.—*Myit-makha News Agency*

Vessels along Ayeyawady River face marine problems

CARGO vessels along the Ayeyawady River near Katha Township, Sagaing Region, are facing problems as the water level of the river is gradually declining.

Currently, boats and ships loaded with commodities travelling along the Ayeyawady River carefully control their ships to

avoid serious problems, such as sandbanks. Some vessels frequently get caught on sandbanks during their trips.

"Normally, we send cargo from Mandalay to Bamho with the use of river transport services over the course of a week. Now, it takes 10 to 15 days to complete

the Mandalay-Bamho return trip due to marine traffic along the river near Katha Township," said one private shipmaster.

Merchants traditionally use river transport to ship their commodities from Mandalay to Bamho, Mandalay to Katha and other areas.—*Maung Nyein Wint*



Motor boats anchored near a sandbank in the Ayeyawady River. PHOTO: MAUNG NYEIN WINT

POEM:

Life and technology

Our life now revolves around technology,
Technology in food, technology in living
Technology in travelling, technology in health
Are we turning into technology driven robots?

Our life is turning into machines
Efficient enough to churn into one more day of our life.

Now we even communicate using technology
We have emails, chats, apps, face book and twitter
But are we not loosing the spontaneous life splatters.

We have the world connected in seconds,
But are we not restricted selfishly by hours?
The postman does not ring the bell at the door anymore.

No one sends a long letter any more,
But the joys of our life probably fail to make any more uproar
Convenience has replaced the depth of our relationships.

The ATM card has robbed us the opportunity
To say a polite hello to the polite banking clerk any more.
Now even love is over ring tones, sex is enjoyed as a virtual entity
While we are losing all soft touches with humanity,
we feel we are mighty.

Our care for others have now been reduced to text messages
Looking around I see

Our world is now being inhabited by a new species,
A special breed of shapeless, mindless, heartless and formless
techno-robots.

At the end of the tunnel do we see any light?

Are there any humanists left in this world?

Can we still breathe a fresh air that is not churned out of
a robotics factory?

Technology now shapes our life, technology directs our life
Humans started innovative technologies for the betterment of life
And now technology has started redefining the story of humanity.

Do we still want to live in this technology minded,
selfish and loveless world?

Technology has started shaping our destiny, future and present

We are living only in our present moment,

Forgetting our past and ignoring our future.

Do we still believe that we can thrive in this planet any more?

May be technology will dictate us in the not so distant future

And we will turn into slaves for our new masters in the future,

Who happened to be our own hand generated slaves

in the not so distant past.

Saikat Kumar Basu

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

Elephants constitute a big part of life and socio-cultural and socio-religious practices in several countries of South and South-East Asia including Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia and Indonesia. Unfortunately, the love and appreciation for this wild animal often crosses path with sheer brutality, outright animal abuses, poor management and treatment of these helpless animals. Elephant labour camps in South and South East Asia are notorious examples of unimaginable exploitations of the pachyderms resulting in serious accidents, deaths and diseases of these animals. Furthermore, crowded zoo enclosures, use of the animals in family joy rides under inhospitable climate, illegal use of the animals in circuses and movie industries and related activities have been endangering the life of the gentle giants. The tradition of donating and keeping elephants in different Hindu, Jain and Buddhist temples, shrines, monasteries across South and South East Asia should also be brought under scanner as this is not acceptable under the global wildlife regulations; yet widely practiced on the basis of religious superstitions. I urge the people of South and South East Asia for seriously reviewing these socio-cultural practices of outright animal abuses and come forward as global citizens to eradicate them. Citizens should demonstrate that they care for these majestic wild animals and that they would not allow their continuous abuse and exploitations for any social, cultural or religious practices or for entertainment. The wild populations of Asiatic elephants are dwindling across their entire range or habits and need to be seriously considered before their population reach crashing levels beyond recovery.

Thanking you

Sincerely yours

Saikat Kumar Basu

Islamic State video purports to show Paris attackers, threatens Britain

CAIRO — A video published on Sunday by the media centre of Islamic State purported to show images and last statements of nine of the people who took part in the Paris attacks that killed 130 people on 13 November.

Reuters could not independently verify the authenticity of the footage, which showed the men delivering anti-Western diatribes and concluded with an apparent threat to attack Britain.

The French Foreign Ministry declined to comment on the video. There was no immediate comment from the prime minister's office, and Reuters was not immediately able to reach officials at the Interior Ministry.

A spokeswoman for the National Security Council at the White House had no comment.

Laith Alkhouri of Flashpoint Global Partners, which monitors militants' social media, said the "video meets all the right criteria

of an authentic and official ISIS release."

The video was uploaded to Islamic State's official Telegram channel and showed some of the attackers wearing camouflage fatigues in a desert location, before the time of the Paris attacks.

Several of them were shown beheading hostages of the ultra-hardline militant group, a tactic it has frequently used.

"These are the last messages of the nine lions of the caliphate who were mobilised from their lairs to make a whole country, France, get down on its knees," a narrator in the video said.

On the night of 13 November, nine men, split into three groups, attacked a sports stadium, a string of cafes and a concert hall. An arrest warrant has been issued for another man, Salah Abdeslam, who fled to Belgium the following day.

The attackers are identified in



People mourn outside "Le Petit Cambodge" and "Le Carillon" restaurants a week after a series of deadly attacks in the French capital, in Paris, France, in November 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

the video by noms de guerre referring to their nationalities — three French, four Belgian and two Iraqis, referred to as Ali al-Iraqi and Ukashah al-Iraqi.

The two could be the suicide bombers who tried to attack the Stade de France stadium. They

carried Syrian passports assumed to be forged and could not be formally identified. Seven other dead attackers have already been identified.

The video showed footage of British Prime Minister David Cameron expressing solidarity

with the French people after the attacks, and concluded by flashing a slogan on the screen saying: "Whoever stands in the ranks of kafir (infidels) will be a target for our swords." A spokesman for Cameron had no immediate comment.—Reuters

Air strike kills Yemeni judge and family



A view of the house of court judge Yahya Rubaid after a Saudi-led air strike destroyed it, killing him, his wife and five other family members, in Yemen's capital Sanaa on 25 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

CAIRO — A Saudi-led coalition air strike killed a Yemeni judge and seven members of his family in the capital Sanaa on Sunday, residents said, as an aid convoy delivered food to a besieged southern city for the first time in months.

A coalition led by Saudi Arabia has been bombing the Iran-allied Houthis, who control the capital, since March. Nearly 6,000 people have been killed, around half of them civilians, according to UN figures.

The bomb partially destroyed the home of Yahya Rubaid, a judge appointed by the Houthis to a national security court who had prosecuted cases against militant groups like Al Qaeda but had also

presided over treason cases against President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and other ousted foes of the Houthis. All of Rubaid's family except one of his sons was also killed in the blast, which destroyed the two-storey home, residents said.

President Hadi, driven out of Sanaa last year by Houthi fighters that Arab neighbours say are backed by Iran, has returned to lead a government from the southern port of Aden, recaptured in July by troops from the Saudi-led coalition.

Pro-Hadi and Gulf Arab forces have pushed up toward the capital but have been bogged down in mountainous battlefronts for months, especially in the south-

western city of Taiz.

Residents of the city, Yemen's third largest, have been caught in the crossfire and cut off from humanitarian aid for nine months which many residents call a "siege" imposed by the Houthis.

The United Nations World Food Programme said on Sunday it was able to send 12 trucks laden with food into some of the worst-affected districts of Tai on Sunday, providing enough aid to feed 3,000 families for a month.

The delivery followed weeks of intense lobbying by international aid groups with the Houthis to relieve stricken civilians in the city, one of the country's worst war zones.—Reuters

Kerry hopes for clarity on Syria talks within 24 to 48 hours

VIENTIANE — US Secretary of State John Kerry said he hoped for "clarity" within 24 to 48 hours on Syrian peace talks that were supposed to have started in Geneva on Monday, and that it was better to delay a few days than to have them crumble at the start.

Kerry told reporters on a visit to Laos he agreed with the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura that invitations for the talks should not be sent out until "you have pieces lined up."

The future of the talks was in the hands of the Syrian parties, he added. "They have to be serious. If they are not serious, war will continue. Up to them — you can lead a horse to water; you can't make it drink," Kerry said.

"We have created a framework; the Syrians have the ability to decide the future of Syria."

"We will have to see what decision Staffan makes as to exactly how he is going to begin; but we don't want to decide and have it crumble on day one. It's worth taking a day or two, or three, or whatever."

The talks between the Syrian government and opposition had been due to start in Geneva on Monday, but a Western diplomat said on Sunday they were unlikely to begin before Wednesday.

The Syrian government has said it is ready to attend, but the

opposition's High Negotiation Committee, which groups political and armed opponents of President Bashar al-Assad, has said it will not until the government halts bombardments, lifts blockades, and releases detainees — steps mentioned in a United Nations Security Council resolution last month. Kerry said he hoped for "clarity" within 24 to 48 hours. He rejected comments from the lead negotiator of the Syrian opposition, who said on Sunday it was coming under pressure from him to attend the talks. "I don't know where this is coming from. Maybe it's a pressure thing or an internal political thing, but that is not the situation," he said.

"They are the negotiators; so they will decide the future. What I did tell them is that it's by mutual consent. You have a veto, so does he, so you are going to have to decide how to move forward here," Kerry said, referring to Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad.

"The position of the United States is and hasn't changed, that we are still supporting the opposition politically, financially and militarily," he added.

Kerry said another meeting of the International Syria Support Group, of countries supporting the Syria peace process, had been "tentatively" called for 11 February.—Reuters

Google to face grilling by UK lawmakers over tax deal

LONDON — A UK parliamentary committee will invite Google to testify about a back tax deal under which it will pay 130 million pounds to settle claims covering a 10-year period — an amount the opposition Labour party has described as derisory.

Meg Hillier, the Labour party chairwoman of the Public Accounts Committee, tweeted at the weekend she would call Google, now part of holding company Alphabet Inc, and the UK tax authority to explain the “cosy deal”.

Google and Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs were not immediately available for comment. Corporate tax avoidance has prompted anger in recent years among citizens who question whether the burden of paying to combat the financial crisis was

evenly shared.

A study conducted by accountants PricewaterhouseCooper for the 100 Group, a lobby body representing around 100 of the biggest UK companies, showed their combined corporation tax bill was half 2010 levels in 2015, despite rising profits.

Google’s tax deal brings its total UK tax bill over the period to around 200 million pounds.

Over the period, its around 24 billion pounds in UK revenues would have generated a tax bill of almost 2 billion, if the UK unit reported taxable profits in line with group margins of around 30 per cent, according to Reuters calculations based on Google filings. Google’s tax bill is reduced because its European profits are channelled to Bermuda.—*Reuters*

Siemens to buy CD-adapco for close to \$1 billion

NEW YORK — Siemens AG (SIEGn.DE), Europe’s biggest industrial group, has agreed to buy CD-adapco, a privately held US engineering software firm, for close to \$1 billion in cash, according to a person familiar with the matter.

Siemens’s deal with CD-adapco could be announced as early as Monday, the person said, asking not to be identified because the agreement is not yet public. The two companies did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Melville, New York-based CD-adapco makes computer programs used by engineers to simulate the inner

workings of an engine. Those products will complement a business unit of Siemens focused on product lifecycle management software, the person added. Since taking over Siemens as chief executive two years ago, former finance chief Joe Kaeser has set out to reshape the German company and make it more profitable and less cumbersome by selling off non-core units. But Siemens has increasingly had to compete with software companies who can develop technology faster because they have a sole focus. Only 5 per cent of Siemens’ 350,000 employees are software engineers.—*Reuters*

Daimler CEO says Apple, Google making progress on car



Dr Dieter Zetsche, Chairman of the Board for Daimler AG and Head of Mercedes-Benz, sits in the 2016 Mercedes-AMG SLC 43 at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan, on 11 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

FRANKFURT — Daimler Chief Executive Dieter Zetsche told German weekly *Welt am Sonntag* that a recent trip to Silicon Valley revealed that Apple and Google have made more progress on automotive projects than he had assumed.

Several carmakers and silicon valley companies are working on developing a self-driving car. Google tested its own prototype vehicle in 2012, to which Daimler’s luxury brand Mercedes-Benz responded by developing an S-Class limousine which drove 103 kilometres without needing any driver input.

Rumours have swirled that rival Apple is also working on a car, although the company has

never confirmed this.

“Our impression was that these companies can do more and know more than we had previously assumed. At the same time they have more respect for our achievements than we thought,” Zetsche told the paper.

Zetsche and a handful of senior managers met with around 70 companies in Silicon Valley, the paper said, without naming them.

“There were concrete talks. I will not say anything about the content. It was not just about the fact that there is an innovative spirit in the Valley. We know that already. We wanted to see what drives it, and all the things that can be created from it,” Zet-

sche told the paper, explaining that they had also looked at start-up firms.

Zetsche said he expects Mercedes-Benz to post significant growth in the United States this year. Overall he sees the market for passenger cars growing between 1 per cent and 1.5 per cent in 2016, *Welt am Sonntag* said.

Separately, Zetsche said that officials from Germany’s vehicle authority KBA had spent three days testing various Mercedes and Smart models to see if their emissions violated emissions standards. “To my knowledge, no conspicuous emissions levels were found,” Zetsche told the paper.—*Reuters*

Asia rises after cold spell lifts oil, dollar stands tall

TOKYO — Asian stocks yesterday moved further away from four-year lows struck last week, as a cold spell in parts of the northern hemisphere pushed oil prices higher and relieved some of the bearish pressure on global markets.

World equities also took heart from the European Central Bank last week signalling additional monetary easing steps to come, raising hopes that other central banks, like the Bank of Japan, would take the same path.

Spreadbetters forecast a higher open for Britain’s FTSE .FTSE, Germany’s DAX .GDAXI and France’s CAC .FCHI against the positive backdrop for equities.

The dollar stood tall, notably against the safe-haven yen, as risk aversion eased slightly for now and pushed US Treasury yields higher.

MSCI’s broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan .MIAPJ0000PUS rose 1.5 per cent, putting further distance between a four-year low plumbed last week. Shanghai stocks .SSEC added 1 per cent and Tokyo’s Nikkei .N225, which slumped to a one-year low last week, rose 1.2 per cent. Australian shares advanced 1.8 per cent to a two-week peak. “The latest rebound in oil, combined with European and Japan central bank’s hinting at further stimulus, has provided a short-term reprieve for what so far this year, can be described as a nervous and punishing market,” said Gary Huxtable, client adviser at Atlantic Pacific Securities.

On Friday, the S&P 500 .SPX rose 2 per cent and the Dow .DJI added 1.3 per cent Friday as a cold snap in North America and Europe caused a rally in oil

prices. The S&P energy sector .SPNY surged 4.3 per cent.

Both the Federal Reserve and Bank of Japan hold policy meetings this week, with the Fed meeting on 26-27 January and the BOJ gathering immediately after, on 28-29 January. Investors will look for any hints of when the Fed intends to make a second interest rate hike, while there is speculation that the BOJ could opt to take additional easing measures.

“We expect no action from the Fed or BOJ, although investors will be looking for a more dovish forward bias as the renewed decline in oil prices lowers inflation expectations globally,” wrote strategists at Barclays.

Risk aversion amid fears of a China-led global economic slowdown and oil prices sinking to 13-year lows had rocked

global markets at the start of the year, and the lull in flight-to-quality seen towards the end of last week weighed on safe havens like US Treasuries and the Japanese yen.

The benchmark 10-year Treasury yield US10YT=RR nudged up to 2.06 percent after rising to as high as 2.089 per cent on Friday, the highest in a week.

The dollar was steady at 118.725 yen JPY= after surging 0.9 per cent on Friday, when it touched a two-week high of 118.88. The euro was little changed at \$1.0812 EUR= after losing 0.8 per cent on Friday.

The Australian dollar, sensitive to the ebb and flow in risk appetite and fluctuations in commodity prices, was up 0.2 per cent at \$0.7022 AUD=D4 after touching a nine-day high of \$0.7046 on Friday.

Crude, recently under pressure from a global glut, jumped as harsh winter weather on the US East coast boosted demand for heating oil. US crude CLC1 climbed 9 per cent and Brent LCOc1 bounced 10 per cent on Friday.

US crude was last up 0.9 per cent at \$32.49 a barrel. The contracts had descended to as low as \$26.19 last week, their lowest since May 2003. Brent crude rose 1.3 per cent to \$32.59 a barrel after dropping on Wednesday to \$27.10, lowest since November 2003.

Recently battered oil-linked currencies enjoyed a boon on crude’s sharp rebound. The Canadian dollar traded near an 11-day high of C\$1.4115 CAD=D4 per dollar hit on Friday, having jumped from a 13-year low of C\$1.4689 reached earlier last week.—*Reuters*

Ex-Haiti coup leader says to fight ‘anarchists’ as unrest spreads

PORT-AU-PRINCE — A former Haitian coup leader wanted by the United States for smuggling cocaine called on his supporters on Sunday to resist “anarchists” who forced a presidential election to be cancelled, in a sign of deep polarisation that could lead to more unrest.

The former rebel, Guy Philippe, called for counter protests and said he would not recognise any transitional government put in place when outgoing President Michel Martelly leaves office on 7 February unless it was representative of the provinces.

“We are ready for war,” Philippe said. “We will divide the country.”

It was not clear how much support Philippe can muster, but he remains popular in his southern stronghold of Grande-Anse and the tone of his remarks points to the depth of polarisation over the political crisis.

Haiti was due to choose Martelly’s replacement on Sunday, but the two-man race was postponed indefinitely after opposition candidate Jude Celestin refused to participate over alleged



Protesters throw rocks during a demonstration rallying for the resignation of President Michel Martelly in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on 23 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

fraud that sparked anti-government protests and violence. .

In a statement on Sunday, the US State Department called for accountability for any violence related to the delayed election, saying electoral intimidation and

destruction of property were “unacceptable.”

Given the short timeline, some form of interim government is likely to be formed to oversee the election process.

Martelly says the fraud claims are unfounded, but

critics believe he unfairly favored his chosen successor, banana exporter Jovenel Moise, who came first in the first round of voting in October.

On Sunday, Moise supporters in favour of holding the election protested for

the first time, using trucks to block a northern highway that is a major trade route with the neighbouring Dominican Republic, regional police chief Charles Nazaire Noel said.

Meanwhile, anti government protesters gathered

in a downtown area of Port-au-Prince still largely ruined from an earthquake six years ago. They sang and danced around a bonfire in the street to the thump of a sound system before setting out for the fifth mass march this week.

“Martelly believes the country is for himself and his family, we want him to go,” said Dorval, an unemployed man aged 40. Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, has been unable to build a stable democracy since the overthrow of the 1957-1986 dictatorship of the Duvalier family and ensuing military coups and election fraud.

A former police officer accused by Human Rights Watch of overseeing extra-judicial killings, Philippe in 2004 led bands of former soldiers to the capital, Port-au-Prince, and overthrew the chaotic government of then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The US Drug Enforcement Agency has a long-standing arrest warrant against Philippe for alleged cocaine trafficking and money laundering. The DEA has tried to capture him twice.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV THAI BINH STAR-01 VOY NO (01/2016)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV THAI BINH STAR-01 VOY NO (01/2016) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.1.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of S.P.W-7 where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S G-LINK EXPRESS PTE LTD.
Phone No: 2301186**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1045)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KUO HSIUNG VOY NO (1045) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.1.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S CHINA SHIPPING LINES
Phone No: 2301185**

Centre-right candidate wins Portugal presidential vote outright

LISBON — Centre-right candidate Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa won Portugal’s presidential election on Sunday, an outcome that should help maintain political balance after a dramatic swing to the left in October’s parliamentary ballot.

In his victory speech, Social Democrat Rebelo de Sousa, 67, said he will work to promote consensus and repair divisions created in the aftermath of the previous election when the left ousted a centre-right administration that imposed tough austerity under an international bailout in 2011-14.

Portugal’s president is a largely ceremonial figure but he plays an important role at times of political uncertainty — as have gripped the country since last October’s inconclusive parliamentary election. He has the power to dissolve parliament and fire the prime minister. Portugal is likely to need all consensus possible as a shaky government of moderate centre-left Socialists dependent on far-left parties for support in parliament tries

to reconcile its election pledges to end economic austerity with budget deficit cuts promised to the European Union.

“This election ends a very long election process... that unnerved the country and divided a society already hurt by years of crisis. It is time to turn the page and detraumatise, start an economic, social and political pacification,” Rebelo de Sousa said at the Lisbon University’s Law Faculty where he teaches.

“We have to align social justice with economic growth and financial stability, without compromising the financial solidity for which so many Portuguese sacrificed so much for years,” he said referring to Portugal’s budget consolidation drive of the past few years that helped it out of an acute debt crisis.

With nearly all votes counted, preliminary results showed Rebelo de Sousa, a former journalist and one-time leader of the centre-right Social Democrats, winning 52 per cent of the vote, enough to avoid a runoff.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MCC XIAMEN VOY NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC XIAMEN VOY NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.1.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T/ M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT
(S’PORE) PTE LTD
Phone No: 2301185**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-499)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA RESTU VOY NO (RSU-499) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26.1.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

**SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER
LINES
Phone No: 2301185**

New York rebounds after blizzard, Washington shuts down government



People sled on a hill at the US Capitol after a major winter storm swept over Washington on 24 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON — New York City emerged on Sunday from a massive blizzard that paralyzed much of the US East Coast, while snowy gridlock gripped the nation's capital and surrounding areas, where federal, state and local offices planned to remain closed yesterday.

Midtown Manhattan sprang back to life on a bright and sunny Sunday as residents and tourists rejoiced in the warming sunlight, digging out buried cars, heading to reopened Broadway shows and cavorting in massive drifts left by New York City's second-biggest snowstorm on record.

In Washington, where a traffic ban remained in effect, the recovery got off to a slower start, with the entire metropolitan transit system closed through Sunday.

The US Office of Personnel Management said federal government offices in the Washington area would be shut down on Monday, along with local government offices and public schools in the District of Columbia and its Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Virginia and Maryland state offices also were ordered closed.

Even so, many people were out in the street. Some skied and snowboarded down the steps of the Lincoln Memorial until security officials moved them on.

The monster weather system unofficially dubbed Winter Storm Jonas left at least 20 dead in several states, with most of the fatalities the result of traffic accidents.

The entire region seemed to breathe a sigh of relief that the worst was over.

"For us, snow is like a normal winter," said Viola Rogacka, 21, a fashion model from Poland, walking with a friend through New York's Times Square. "It's how it should look like."

Theaters reopened on Broadway after the blizzard forced them to go dark on Saturday on the recommendation of New York Mayor Bill de Blasio.

"We still have some areas that we have to do a lot more work on. But we've come through it pretty well," de Blasio said on ABC's Sunday programme "This Week". "We think we'll be broadly up and running again at the city tomorrow." —Reuters

UN council set to approve mission to verify Colombia peace deal

UNITED NATIONS — The UN Security Council is expected to approve a draft resolution on Monday that calls for establishing a UN mission to oversee disarmament should Colombia's government and leftist FARC rebels reach a final peace deal, diplomats said.

The UN press office said on Sunday the council was scheduled to discuss Colombia at 3pm (2000 GMT) yesterday. Several council diplomats said a draft resolution Britain circulated to the 15-nation body on Thursday would be put to a vote during that meeting.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the diplomats

said on Sunday they expected the resolution to be adopted unanimously.

Colombia's government and FARC agreed on Tuesday to ask the council to help monitor and verify rebel disarmament should the two sides reach a deal to end their 50-year-old war.

The text, drafted by Britain and seen last week by Reuters, would have the council "establish a political mission to participate for a period of 12 months ... to monitor and verify the definitive bilateral ceasefire and cessation of hostilities, and the laying down of arms."

To begin the process of creating the mission, it

would ask Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon "to initiate preparations and to present detailed recommendations to the Security Council for its consideration and approval." It said he would submit his recommendations within 30 days of the signing of a peace deal.

It added that the council would establish "a political mission of unarmed international observers" and welcomed the willingness of members of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States to contribute personnel.

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos said last year he would make such an appeal to the United

Nations. Santos, who staked his 2014 re-election on the peace talks, has been pressing for a deal to end Latin America's longest war, which has killed 220,000 and displaced millions since 1964. The rebels' willingness to make the request jointly with the government is a sign of progress as the two sides aim to reach a comprehensive peace agreement before a 23 March deadline that negotiators set last year.

In addition to verifying a bilateral ceasefire and presiding over the FARC's disarmament, the international monitors would settle any disputes and make recommendations. —Reuters

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES- FIRMS SELECTION)**

Country: MYANMAR
Project: Ayeyarwady Integrated River Basin Management (AIRBM)
Project ID: IDA 55590
Project ID: P146482
Assignment Title: System Integrator Consultant for Hydromet Observation and Information Systems Modernization
Reference No.: C2.2

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, National Water Resources Committee (NWRC) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Ayeyarwady Integrated River Basin Management (AIRBM) Project. The focal agency, Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems (DWIR), MoT is the implementing agency of the AIRBM through the Project Management Unit (PMU) established under the supervision of the secretary of NWRC and DG of DWIR, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The consulting services ("the Services") include:

- Improving the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH)'s meteorological and hydrological analysis and forecasting system.
- Modernization of the observation networks.
- Modernization of data management, communication, IT and forecasting systems.
- Improvement of numerical weather prediction system and hydrological modelling system.

Assessment of existing systems, preparation of modernization and integration system designs and preparation of designs for all the proposed stations, goods and small works are expected to be completed approximately within 18 months and the implementation period (procurement + installation, training and operating) is expected to be completed within 30 months following the design period. The PMU now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consulting Firms should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

- Extensive working experience in meteorological and hydrological services both in developed and developing countries (at least 10 years);
- Experience with the design and implementation of large-scale meteorological/hydrological modernization projects and the relevant capacity development needs;
- Extensive experience with disaster risk management, and multi-hazard impact-based forecast and warning systems and services;
- Previous working experience with National Meteorological and Hydrological Services in different countries.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants [under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants] by World Bank Borrowers dated July 2014 ("Consultant Guidelines"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest. Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a subconsultancy to enhance their qualifications. A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Consultant Guidelines. Further information can be obtained at the address below during 09:30 to 16:00 hours, office hours. Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by February 29, 2016.

Attn:
U Win Hlaing (Director)
Department: Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems (DWIR), Ministry of Transport.
Address: No-400, Lower Pazundaung Road, Pazundaung Post Office, Postal Code 11171, Pazundaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar
Fax: +95-(0)11-290230, Email: dwir.airbm@gmail.com

And copy to:
Daw May Khin Chaw (Deputy Director)
Department: Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH), Ministry of Transport.
Address: No-50, Kabaaye Pagoda Road, Postal Code 1161, Mayangone Township, Yangon, Myanmar
Fax: +95-(0)11-662808, Email: mkhinc@gmail.com

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The Revenant' tops chilly US Box Office as storm hits East Coast

LOS ANGELES — With a blizzard hammering the East Coast, Leonardo DiCaprio's "The Revenant" topped a subdued US box office with \$16 million at 3,711 locations this weekend, according to Sunday estimates.

Winter Storm Jonas shut down theaters Saturday in New York City, Washington DC, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, cutting the nation's overall moviegoing for the day by as much as 10% with as many as 400 locations affected. Some New York locations were re-opening Sunday but the icy conditions were likely to hold down box office in the Northeast.

Fox's "The Revenant," set in the brutal winter of 1823, topped the sixth weekend of Disney's "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," which grossed \$14.3 million at 3,365 locations. The seventh Star Wars has extended its record-setting domestic total to \$880 million in 38 days in the U.S. — \$120 million higher than "Avatar."

Universal's second weekend

of "Ride Along 2" finished third with \$13 million at 3,192 sites as the frosty conditions cut into business at locations that had performed well in its opening frame.

Despite the storm, a trio of newcomers came in at the higher end of moderate expectations, led by Lionsgate's raunchy comedy "Dirty Grandpa" with \$11.5 million at 2,912 venues, followed by STX Entertainment's horror-thriller "The Boy" with \$11.3 million at 2,671 sites. Sony's launch of sci-fi thriller "The 5th Wave" finished in sixth with \$10.7 million at 2,908 theaters.

"The storm certainly cut into US business on Saturday," said Sony distribution topper Rory Bruer. "It's really hard to quantify but it looks like about 10%."

Sony noted that "The 5th Wave," starring Chloe Grace Moretz, took in \$3.5 million on Friday, then rose 30% on Saturday to \$4.5 mil-

lion — the best mark among the openers. It also opened in Russia, Brazil, the UK and Spain to boost its foreign total to \$27 million with over 30% of the international rollout still to come.

Reuters

Cast member Leonardo DiCaprio poses during a photo call for the movie "The Revenant" in Rome, Italy 16 January, 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS



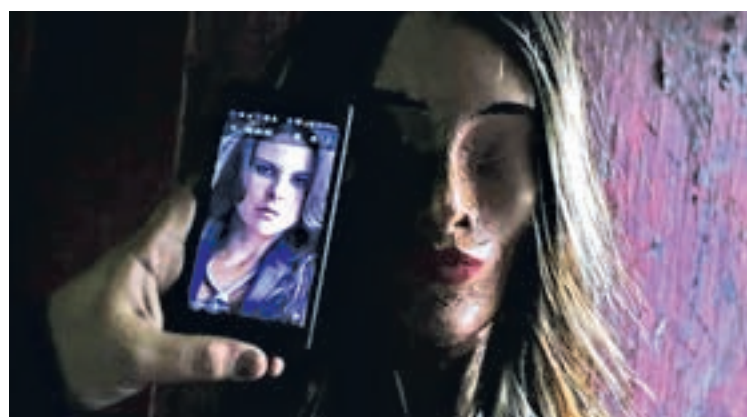
Despite bold reel image, Sunny Leone says she is 'shy in real life'

MUMBAI — Going by her on-screen persona Sunny Leone comes across as a bold and outgoing woman in real life but the actress says she is a shy person.

"When I am at an event or at a function or award show I get really shy. I am sure it is hard for people to believe that I am shy in real life. Sunny in real life is not outgoing always as people see on television," Sunny told PTI.

"I feel like saying hi, Hello but I get shy... People might think I am pretentious, snobby but that is not the case. I am shy and I have always been like this whole my life. I have never been a party like kid," she said. When the 34-year-old actress was new to the Hindi film industry, it was not that receptive towards her. But now things have changed as A-list celebs are responding to her messages on social media platform. "I don't know about acceptance. I think they have accepted me that she is not going anywhere. What I have noticed is that I tweet and A-list celebrity responds," she said.—PTI

Actress del Castillo says Mexico government wants to 'destroy' her



An artisan checks a photo of Mexican actress Kate del Castillo on his mobile phone, to make a pinata depicting her, at his workshop in Reynosa, in Tamaulipas state, Mexico, 13 January, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

MEXICO CITY — Actress Kate del Castillo, at the centre of a Mexican money laundering probe after she helped Hollywood star Sean Penn interview drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, said Mexico's government wants to "destroy her," Univision reported over the weekend.

Mexican Attorney General Arely Gomez has said that there were "indications" the actress may have used money from Guzman to help finance her tequila business.

"I have no reason to give explanations to the press. If I don't talk its because my lawyers told me not to because the government wants to destroy me," the actress said in a message to Univision,

which published the comment on its website.

A publicist for del Castillo did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

An official for Mexico's attorney general's office declined to comment on the remarks, but noted that Gomez has guaranteed that the presumption of innocence will be respected. Del Castillo's father said last week that his daughter will testify at the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles where she will present proof "she is clean." The attorney general's office said del Castillo would be questioned by authorities this week, although there were no details on when or where it would happen.—Reuters

Miss Universe starts homecoming tour with push for HIV tests, disaster relief

MANILA — Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach, the first Miss Universe from the Philippines in more than four decades, said on Sunday she will spend her reign bringing awareness to issues like HIV and draw support for countries vulnerable to disasters.

Wurtzbach, who spoke at the start of her week-long homecoming tour in Manila, is the third Filipina to become Miss Universe, ending a 42-year title drought for the Southeast Asian nation. She was crowned at a controversial ceremony in December that saw the show host correct himself after first announcing Miss Colombia as the winner.

The 26-year old Filipino-German actress was greeted by adoring crowd at Manila airport on Saturday. Dressed in a black knee-length silk, she engaged with the media on Sunday, answering questions ranging from her pageant experience, advocacies, failed love life and even the desire to become the first Filipina Bond girl.

"To be back here now

with the crown is the happily-ever-after that I've been dreaming for a lifetime," said the titleholder, who admitted to sleeping beside the \$300,000 gem-encrusted crown after her victory.

Wurtzbach entered the global pageant after three attempts to bag the Philippine crown, striking a chord in the heart of the Filipino masses. "I hope my story could become an inspiration of determination, discipline,

faith and hardwork," she said.

Wurtzbach, who said she was willing to undergo HIV testing to demystify the stigma of the disease, said detection allows patients to get proper treatment and help them live normally.

Raising funds for disaster relief will also take up her time, Wurtzbach said. Natural disaster is a key issue in the Philippines, which was ravaged in 2013 by typhoon Haiyan, the strongest on record to hit land — it killed over 6,300 people.

The Philippines is crazy about glitz and glamour, with numerous pageants dedicated to babies, children, youth, men, women, lesbians and gays organized by small communities and private groups.

Filipino candidates have made the top 10 in Miss Universe pageants for each of the past six years. "I have confidence in the girls that they're going to do well considering the training we have here and inspiration that winners will be giving to them," Wurtzbach told Reuters, speaking about the country's performance in coming pageants.—Reuters



Winner of the 2015 Miss Universe Pageant Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach from the Philippines, poses during an interview with Reuters in New York on 5 January.

PHOTO: REUTERS

American man heads residents' association in Osaka

OSAKA — American-born Samuel Edward Teckenbrock has headed a residents' association in a small community in Osaka Prefecture, western Japan, for the past seven years.

The 58-year-old, who has lived in Japan for three decades, was chosen to head the association in Koyodai, in the northeastern Osaka city of Hirakata, in a drawing held in February 2009.

He said he was initially worried about whether he would be able to understand the intricacies of the role, having grown up outside Japan.

But Teckenbrock agreed to take up the post as other residents promised to offer him assistance and he also believed it was a resident's responsibility

to contribute to his or her neighbourhood.

A native of Illinois, Teckenbrock first came to Japan at age 28 in 1986 to study Japanese.

After working as an English instructor at Kansai Gaidai University, he began his current career as an architecture consultant.

Teckenbrock moved to Koyodai in 2006 after marrying a Japanese woman.

As the association head, Teckenbrock, known as "Sam-san" by local residents, has strived to turn the neighbourhood into a place where residents can communicate with each other on a daily basis.

He has led residents in projects such as planting flowers and building benches for a park that had

been run-down and overgrown with weeds.

He also organises bus trips every year to an aquarium and other tourist spots.

Yoshiko Tsutsumi, 71, who has resided in Koyodai for more than 30 years, said, "Most of the previous association heads were reluctant and assumed the post just because they drew the ticket in a drawing."

"But Sam-san is different," she said. "Thanks to him, our community has become lively."

In fact, about 50 residents out of some 180 households belonging to the association gathered to plant flowers in a park in the morning one day in last December.

Among other things, Teckenbrock organises a "rakugo" comic story-

telling show before or after the Respect-for-Senior-Citizens Day holiday in September, inviting a professional rakugo storyteller to entertain senior residents, most of whom are unable to travel all the way to a city for such a show.

"I hope to give them a warm and heartfelt gift," he said.

"Smiling" is another key word for Teckenbrock's community building. He suggested residents smile and greet whenever they see each other on streets.

"I'm looking to make a cheerful community filled with smiles," Teckenbrock said.

"It is not that we smile because we are happy, but we feel happy because we smile."—Kyodo News

Four British women make history by rowing across the pacific ocean

SYDNEY — Four British women have become the first people to row across the Pacific Ocean after ending their mammoth journey in the northern Australian city of Cairns yesterday.

The coxless crew were greeted by more than 100 people, including family and friends, when they arrived on Australian shores yesterday after spending nine months rowing the 15,700 kilometres across the pacific from San Francisco to Cairns.

The women rowed 24-hours a day in two hour shifts, stopping only in Honolulu, Hawaii and Apia, Samoa for up to a week at a time to re-stock their 29-foot pink boat named Doris.

The team, which set out with the aim of rais-

ing more than 500,000 Australian dollars (350,734 US dollars) for charity, were due to arrive at Cairns Marina in northern Queensland state on Sunday, however were delayed by weather.

"The wind went more northerly and that made getting into the marina much harder, it slowed things right down," Cairns Marina operations manager Tony Humphries said.

"A 35-mile day is a fairly average mileage — but the last five to six days they've been down to about 20 miles a day which is very slow."

The four rowers hope to be recognised as the first all-female and four-strong crew to have rowed across the world's largest ocean.—Xinhua

PICTURE OF THE DAY



A local chef makes noodles during the temple fair held in Lusaka, Zambia, on 24 January, 2016. The temple fair was held on Sunday to celebrate the upcoming Chinese Spring Festival in Lusaka. PHOTO: XINHUA

Beijing photo exhibition held in Venezuela

CARACAS — The Chinese embassy in Venezuela on Sunday opened a photo exhibition on Beijing, which kicked off the Chinese New Year celebrations in the Latin American country.

The exhibition features 100 photographs of the historic landmarks and monuments that lie along the the Chinese capital city's central axis, extending 7.8 km from the Drum Tower in the north to the Yongding Gate in the south.

"We are very pleased to share with our Venezuelan friends the start of this new year, with the opening of this exhibition on China's capital, a city that is more than 4,000 years old," said Lan Hu, political counselor of the embassy.

The exhibits also include 14 miniature models of city highlights, as well as videos and inter-

active games that bring the central axis to life. Existing since the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368), Beijing's central axis is home to such key sites as the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven and Tian'anmen Square.

Maria Fernanda Barreto, cultural coordinator of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, appreciated the Chinese embassy for bringing Venezuela closer to the Chinese culture "through this wonderful exhibition."

Barreto noted that 2016 has been named the China-Latin America Cultural Exchange Year, and relevant activities in Venezuela will strengthen the ties between the two nations.

The Chinese Lunar New Year, which falls on 8 February, will usher in the Year of the Monkey.—Xinhua

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Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
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09:03	Am	News

09:48	Am	Today Myanmar: Effects of El Nino
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Yatana Theinga City and Shwe Bon Yatanamingalar Palace
10:45	Am	Elegant and Exquisite Myanmar Cotton Fabrics

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

Prime Time

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

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

Chelsea deny Arsenal top spot, Swansea win for Guidolin

Arsenal missed their chance to go back to the top of the Premier League after being forced to play with 10 men for much of the 1-0 home defeat by London rivals Chelsea on Sunday.

At the other end of the table Swansea City improved their prospects of avoiding relegation with a 2-1 win at Everton in new Italian head coach Francesco Guidolin's first match. Arsenal's German defender Per Mertesacker was sent off after 18 minutes for denying a goalscoring opportunity to Diego Costa, who scored the only goal five minutes later from a cross by Branislav Ivanovic.

The result preserved the defending champions' unbeaten record under experienced Dutchman Guus Hiddink, who took over as interim manager last month following Jose Mourinho's sacking.

They remain a bogey side to Arsenal, who have not beaten them in the last nine league games, failing to score in the last six.

Arsene Wenger's side were left in third place, level on points with Manchester City but three behind leaders Leicester City, who beat Stoke City 3-0 on Saturday.

Chelsea moved up to 13th, as high as they have been since beating Arsenal 2-0 at Stamford Bridge in September. On that occasion two Arsenal players were sent off — although the red card to defender Gabriel was later rescinded.

Costa proved the key figure on Sunday before making way for substitute Loic Remy midway through the second half.

Arsenal, who took off striker Olivier Giroud after the send-



Diego Costa celebrates after scoring the first goal for Chelsea during Barclays Premier League at Emirates Stadium on 24 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

ing-off in order to bring on Gabriel in defence, improved in the later stages, when Alexis Sanchez came on as a substitute, but they managed only one shot on target.

As Chelsea's captain John Terry claimed, his team were on top even before the sending off.

Terry insisted that reaching the top four to qualify for next season's Champions League was still not out of the question despite a 14-point gap with fourth-placed Tottenham Hotspur.

"Everyone's beating everyone and if we can put a run of games together, we are not writing

anything off," he told Sky Sports.

Hiddink was more circumspect. "It's a big gap," he said. "But I want to see ambition always, whether you can (do it) or not.

"When you come here, you have to take the initiative and I'm proud of the guys."

Wenger felt Arsenal should have had a draw despite making so few chances but said they are still very much in the title race.

"It will be very tight until the end," he told Sky Sports.

Earlier Swansea's victory at Everton lifted them four points

above the bottom three places.

A poor back pass by young Everton defender John Stones led to the 17th minute penalty from which Gylfi Sigurdsson gave Swansea the lead.

The home side soon equalised when Jack Cork touched Gareth Barry's flick into his own net, but a deflection off Stones from Andre Ayew's shot restored the Welsh club's lead before half-time.

They held out amid strong pressure in the second half, when Everton's leading scorer Romelu Lukaku twice went close and substitute Seamus Coleman twice

missed badly, including from two yards out with the last kick of the match. Achieving a second successive win for the first time this season put Guidolin's team in 15th place, and boosted their chances of avoiding relegation back to the Championship after five years.

"This is our target," Guidolin told Sky Sports. "These (two) results are very important for us."

The defeat left Everton 12th, with their former Swansea manager Roberto Martinez rueing a slow start and missed chances.

"The scoreline was very hard to take," he said.—Reuters

Match-fixing concerns return as former player pleads guilty

SYDNEY — Allegations of corruption in world tennis were reignited yesterday when a former Australian professional tennis player pleaded guilty to match-fixing just hours after a top global bookmaker suspended betting on a suspicious match at the Australian Open.

The case against former 187-ranked player Nick Lindahl reached court after reports surfaced last week that tennis authorities had failed to deal with widespread match-fixing, marred the opening of the year's first Grand Slam tournament.

Lindahl pleaded guilty in a Sydney court to one charge related to match-fixing in a minor

2013 tournament but will contest a separate evidence-tampering charge on technical grounds. Two other charges were dropped by prosecutors after the guilty plea.

Prosecutor Kate Young told the court that in September 2013, when playing at the Toowoomba Futures Tournament, Lindahl offered to intentionally lose a match to a lower-ranked player and informed an associate so that he could wager against him.

A transcript of telephone calls intercepted by police after the match and read in court appeared to show Lindahl coaching an associate on how to hide evidence from investigators and

admitting to doing the same himself. "Just get rid of it ... just get rid of everything," Lindahl said in the transcript, which was read by Young.

Lindahl, who was arrested a year ago, faces a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment on the charge to which he pleaded guilty and will be sentenced on 15 April.

His lawyer, Troy Edwards, said the timing of the case coming to court amid a blaze of publicity about suspected match fixing and the Australian Open tournament was unfortunate.

"The matter was set to be heard before Christmas but there was a sick barrister and Nick

asked me to agree to a delay," Edwards told Reuters. "And now it's all kind of blown up in his face."

Betting agency Sportsbet noticed heavy gambling on the relatively minor match and suspended betting before alerting police.

Similar suspicious betting prompted Pinnacle Sports, a Curaçao-based sports gambling company, to suspend bets on a mixed doubles match at the Australian Open on Sunday.

Unusually large amounts of money were placed on Andrea Hlavackova and Lukasz Kubot to beat Lara Arruabarrena and David Marrero, Pinnacle told the New York Times.

Heavy betting moved the odds on the match sharply over a 30 minute period more than 12 hours before the match began, data from sports odds comparison service Odds Portal shows.

Tennis regulators accept betting fluctuations can be an indicator of suspicious activity, but stress it is not sufficient to prove match fixing. Nobody was immediately available to comment at Pinnacle or the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU), the London-based body set up to counter corruption in the sport. Tennis Australia said in a statement it would continue to work with police and the TIU in regard to "integrity matters".—Reuters