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Friday, 4 December, 2015

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OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

Foreign investment generates 300,000 new jobs in four years

Min Thit (MNA)

WITH Myanmar's opening up over the past four years, the sharp increase in foreign investment – including a number of special economic zones – has created hundreds of thousands of jobs for Myanmar citizens.

U Aung Naing Oo, Director General of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) said he is upbeat about a continued increase in foreign investment over the coming years, which will be boosted significantly in the likelihood that the United States lifts all remaining economic sanctions when the National League for Democracy assumes power in March following free and fair elections on November 8.

He estimates that 300,000 new jobs have been created since Myanmar's political and economic reform process began in 2011.

The director general added that revising investment laws and the outdated Companies Act will attract more foreign investment, with SEZs launching major operations that will further spur employment growth in Myanmar.

Garment workers in Hlinethaya Industrial Zone in Yangon. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

A large number of potential foreign investors have been hedging their bets about Myanmar's reform process and are likely to wait until a smooth transfer of power takes place before committing FDI into Myanmar, he said.

He hinted at the granting of tax exemptions and easing certain restrictions on registration procedures currently in place.

Singapore tops the table of foreign investors in Myanmar, while other major investors include South Korea and Hong Kong. The country's telecoms, oil and gas and electricity and industry sectors have garnered the most FDI to date.

Ethnic signatories aim for inclusion of all in post-NCA meetings

Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing, one of three framework drafting representatives from the government side, explains the contents of the framework to fellow drafting members. PHOTO: MYANMAR PEACE CENTRE

Ye Myint

NON-signatory ceasefire groups have been invited to attend a meeting to approve the draft political dialogue framework slated for 14-15 December, according to a spokesperson of ethnic signatories.

"We would like non-signatories to take part in the upcoming meetings," said Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong of Chin National Front, one of the ceasefire signatory groups.

A framework for political dialogue that is inclusive of all stakeholders is being drafted by a joint drafting team of three members from each of the political parties, the present USDP government and ethnic signatories at Myanmar Peace Centre in Yangon.

"I cannot say whether it is possible or not to get them involved in the framework approval meetings, but we are genuinely making efforts for it to happen," said the spokesperson.

Coordination is underway with the leaders of government side as well as non-signatories for the latter's participation in the upcoming events, he added.

According to the ethnic spokesperson, non-signatories are unlikely to raise serious objections to the ongoing framework drafting. This is because the 10 elements recently approved by the three stakeholder groups differ little from those approved by ethnic armed organizations – including the non-signatories before the inking of truce pact.

A shared vision is needed for signatories and non-signatories, U Myo Win of All Burma Students' Democratic Front, another NCA signatory, told The Global New Light of Myanmar on Sunday.

A compromise was reached between the government and eight ethnic armed organisations

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SSMNC holds 47-member plenary meeting

THE State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee (SSMNC) yesterday held its ninth 47-member plenary meeting at the Wizaya Mingala Dhamma Hall on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hillock in Yangon Region.

SSMNC Chairman Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa chaired the meeting, while Religious Affairs Union Minister U Soe Win was briefed on religious activities designed to promote and propagate Theravada Buddhism, followed by discussions on religious and educational affairs.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Union Minister for Religious Affairs U Soe Win was present at 47-member plenary meeting of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee. PHOTO: MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

MPs discuss Union's supplementary budget 2015-16

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

THE Union's supplementary budget allotment for 2015-16 was discussed at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw yesterday, with deputy ministers and officials making statements.

In connection with the announcement of a notification for the establishment of the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone project, Deputy Minister for Rail Transportation U Myint Thein said that the Kyaukphyu SEZ would be set up on 4,289 acres of land and would include a deep-sea port project, an industrial zone project and a housing estate project.

A team has been founded to monitor the possible social, economic and environmental impacts the construction might have on the area, the deputy minister said.

MPs also discussed the signing of a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in tourism by Myanmar with ASEAN countries, China, Japan and South Korea, which received parliamentary approval.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Pyithu Hluttaw

Four bills approved at Pyithu Hluttaw

THE Pyithu Hluttaw yesterday approved four bills and four reports submitted by its committees.

The Evidence amendment bill, the second amendment bill of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law and the Foreign Exchange amendment bill were brought before the Pyithu Hluttaw with comments by the Amyotha Hluttaw.

U Khaing Maung Yee. PHOTO: MNA

U Kyi Thar. PHOTO: MNA

The Pyithu Hluttaw also approved the amendment bill of the Multipurpose Transport Law.

The Public Affairs Management Committee and the Transport, Communication and Construction Committee each presented a report. It also approved two reports submitted by the Sports, Culture and Public Relations Development Committee and the Investment and Industrial Development Committee. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

Amyotha Hluttaw discusses five bills

THE Amyotha Hluttaw discussed five bills including the bill amending the Myanmar Nationals Investment Law during its session yesterday

Discussed bills included amending the Myanmar Nationals Investment Law, the bill on navigation in canals, the bill amending the Myanmar Lighthouse Act and the bill for the Shops and Workplaces Labour Law 2015.

The Amyotha Hluttaw session will continue on 4 December.—*Myanmar News Agency*

U Khin Shwe. PHOTO: MNA

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Senior General opens golf tournament

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing opened the the last leg of the Myanmar Local Golf Tournament (Nay Pyi Taw) on Thursday.

Present at the ceremony were Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and senior military officers.

A total of 148 golfers, including 21 female competitors, participated in the 18-hole first day of the tournament.

Golfer Thein Zaw Myint of KM Golf Centre won first prize with a score of 65 at the professional level while Hein Sithu won the first prize with a score of 68 at the amateur level.

The tournament was sponsored by Ayeyawady Bank, Myawady Bank, IBTC Foundation, KBZ Bank, CB Bank, Myanmar Apex Bank, Phyo Si Thu Trading and the Shwe Man Taung Group.—*Myawady*

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing formally opens Myanmar Local Golf Tournament in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MYAWADY

Myanmar National Airlines launches direct flights to Hong Kong

MYANMAR National Airlines will launch a direct Hong Kong-Yangon flight today.

Flights are scheduled for Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays and will depart from Yangon at 9am and arrive at Hong Kong at 1.30pm.

Flights from Hong Kong to Yangon are scheduled to depart on the same days of the week.

On Fridays, flights will depart Yangon at 7.55am and will arrive in Hong Kong at 12.25pm, while the flight from Hong Kong leaves for Yangon at 1.55pm and arrives in Yangon at 3.35pm.

The airline is selling one-way flights at a promotional rate of US$252 dollars.—*Zaw Min Latt*

Govt takes pragmatic approach to development through framework of economic and social reform: President U Thein Sein

President U Thein Sein delivers speech at meeting of Central Committee for Management of Foreign Aids and Grants. PHOTO: MNA

SINCE its inception in 2011, the government has taken pragmatic approaches to national development by laying down a framework on economic and social reform, President U Thein Sein yesterday told the meeting of the Central Committee for Management of Foreign Aids and Grants.

"We have gradually and systematically laid a firm foundation for democratic reforms in the political, economic, social, executive and managerial settings while giving encouragement to the development of the private sector."

The president said that international aids and grants have contributed a lot to the country's development projects.

The successful democratic reforms enabled the country to earn recognition by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2012 and as a consequence humanitarian aid and development aid are in place again.

As part of the strengthening of cooperation with international organisations, the country organised its first development cooperation forum in 2013 in Nay Pyi Taw and released the Nay Pyi Taw Accord, with similar forums taking place in 2014 and 2015.

Official development assistance includes low-interest trade, commercial loans and community development loans under the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP).

President U Thein Sein expressed his gratitude to international organisations for their assistance to the states and regions hit by floods and landslides in July and August in 2015.

Union Ministers U Soe Thane, Dr Kan Zaw and U Win Shein spoke on the management of foreign loans and ongoing development projects.

In his remarks, President U Thein Sein called for the establishment of support groups in a bid to ensure stability and peace, an end to armed conflicts and the development of social structure. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Ethnic signatories aim for inclusion...

>> From page 1

to invite non-signatories to meetings during the framework drafting process as well as political dialogue, thus granting them the status of special invitees, said Khun Myint Tun last week, the leader of Pa-O National Liberation Organisation, which is an NCA signatory.

The joint drafting team was given five days to complete its task – it is midway through the process.

The draft will be submitted for approval by a 24-member drafting committee of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee on 5-6 December at Myanmar Peace Centre, said U Hla Maung Shwe, who represents the government side on the committee.

Myanmar Gazette

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

	Name	Appointment
(1)	U Zaw Oo Deputy Director-General Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department Ministry of Border Affairs	Director-General Education and Training Department Ministry of Border Affairs
(2)	U Ye Naing Deputy Permanent Secretary Union Minister Office Ministry of Border Affairs	Director-General Progress of Border Areas and National Races Department Ministry of Border Affairs
(3)	Brig-Gen Ko Ko Naing Military Attaché Myanmar Military Attaché Office (Army, Navy and Air) in Singapore Ministry of Defence	Director-General Protocol Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(4)	Dr Than Htut Deputy Director-General Food and Drug Administration Department Ministry of Health	Director-General Food and Drug Administration Department Ministry of Health
(5)	U Win Naung Deputy Permanent Secretary Union Minister Office Ministry of Rail Transportation	Principal Central Institute of Transport and Communication Ministry of Rail Transportation

KBZ Bank wins Bank of the Year in Myanmar

KBZ Bank's Chairman U Aung Ko Win accepts the Bank of the Year in Myanmar 2015 Award.
PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY KBZ

KANBAWZA Bank (KBZ) has won the Bank of the Year in Myanmar 2015, the title is awarded by the Financial Times based in London, England.

KBZ Bank Ltd has won the award consecutively for the last three years.

Bank Chairman U Aung Ko Win accepted the award at the Banker Awards 2015 held at the Hilton London Bank side Hotel in London yesterday evening.

Awards for the best banking services were won by the banks from 152 countries including Lloyds Banking Group in England, ICBC Bank in China, KEN HANA Bank in South Korea, UOB Bank in Singapore, Bangkok Bank in Thailand and the Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group in Japan.

The Financial Times awards the prize based on set criteria against which data concerning banking services collected by reporters and the media are measured.

KBZ Bank was chosen as the winner for its achievements in improving banking services and system efficiency, the establishment of ATM machines and bank branches nationwide, making a large number of loans to businesses, showing higher income and profits, the improvement of calibre of its staff, the use of modern equipment, connectivity with other international banks and being number one on the country's tax-paying list for four years consecutively.

KBZ Bank also won the Global Award presented by Wells Fargo Bank, based in the USA.—*GNLM*

Pyin Oo Lwin, Kandawgyi National Garden crowded with visitors

WITH the blossoming of flowers in Kandawgyi National Garden in Pyin Oo Lwin, the number of visitors to the park is increasing daily.

Pyin Oo Lwin, which was known as May Myo during the colonial period and is known by locals as 'the city of flowers' is a popular destination for foreign tourists.

During the Tazaungdine Festival the Kandawgyi National Garden was crowded with visitors. Visitation peaks at the weekend.

The Pyin Oo Lwin Kandawgyi Garden was established in1924 and was initially known as the Government Botanical Gardens. It was renamed in 2001.—*U Chan Thar*

People visit Kandawgyi National Garden in PyinOoLwin. PHOTO: CHAN THA

Rakhine artist to exhibit works of life at sea

More than 30 oil and acrylic art pieces will be on display at Yangon Gallery during the 5-day exhibition

Khaing Thanda Lwin

THE Yangon Gallery will host a solo show of the artist Shwe Thein this month, featuring works depicting the lives of travellers on row boats, event organiser Lynn Whut Hmone said.

The 34-year-old artist said the exhibition is entitled 'North Wind' as the paintings tend to focus on the cooler months of the year.

"The winter season is better for seaman as the waves are more stable," said Lynn Whut Hmon.

The event will run from 5 to 9 December and will showcase more than 30 oil and acrylic paintings. Most of his works are based on the daily lives of people in Kyauktaw Township in Rakhine State, the native town of the Arakanese (Rakhine) artist.

All artworks are available for sale at the gallery, with prices ranging from US$1,000 to $5,000.

This is the fifth solo exhibition by Artist Shwe Thein, who has exhibited both at home and abroad. He also plans to display his works at a group event scheduled to take place in Thailand.

The Yangon Gallery is located within the compound of People's Park near the Planetarium Museum on Ahlone Road. The gallery will present a series of events this month, including a photo exhibition and an art show by female artists.

The gallery invited Artist Shwe Thein to showcase his works last year, according to the organiser, who said the gallery will also request another prominent artist to host an exhibition later this month.

A painting by artist Shwe Thein.
PHOTO: SUPPLIED BY ARTIST SHWE THEIN

Citizenship ID cards issued to school children

Immigration and National Registration officers are preparing to issue citizenship scrutinizing cards to children .PHOTO: IPRD

THE Immigration and National Registration Department issued national citizenship scrutinizing cards to school children at No.19 Basic Education High School in Dakkhina Thiri Township yesterday.

Children over the age of 10 are entitled to receive ID cards, said an officer.

The immigration and national registration office will issue ID cards between 1 and 4 December.

Students must provide census data (66-Ka), copies of their parents National Registration Certificate, and recommendations from their village and school headmasters to be eligible to receive a card.—*IPRD*

Myanmar, Poland to promote economic ties in agriculture

IN commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Myanmar and Poland, a forum on economic transformation and development was held at the Kandawgyi Palace Hotel in Yangon Region Wednesday.

At the forum, titled "Myanmar-Poland: Economic Transformation and Development—Past, Present and Future", business professionals discussed the promotion of economic ties and investment opportunities between the two countries, according to U Aung Lin, permanent secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Statistics show that Poland has enjoyed a boosts in its agriculture and productivity and is ranked 20th in the world's economic index and sixth in Europe.

Mr MiroslawZasada, the charged'affaires of Poland's representative office in Myanmar, urged Polish business people to invest Myanmar's agricultural sector.—*Myanmar News Agency*

U Aung Lin, permanent secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, delivers speech at a forum on economic transformation and development between Myanmar and Poland. PHOTO: MNA

World AIDS Day marked in Mandalay

Mandalay-based HIV activist group raises awarnesss of HIV in Mandalay. PHOTO: SHWE LIN PYAE SONE

THE Mandalay-based HIV activist group Spectrum used World AIDS Day on Tuesday to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS.

Spectrum gave talks on HIV/AIDS and distributed pamphlets to the public in busy areas, such as the General Hospital, the Railway Station, markets, pagodas and City Hall.

The volunteers of the group, led by Daw Ei Ei Chaw, spoke about how HIV is transmitted, how to prevent infection and the application of ART medicines. She suggested that blood tests be performed before marriage.—*Shwe Lin Pyae Sone*

Jovago to expand market presence in Myanmar

Jovago Myanmar plans to link with 1,500 hotels by next year

Khaing Thanda Lwin

JOVAGO, Africa's leading online hotel booking site, has launched its services in Myanmar focusing on promoting the country as a destination for locals who are yet to discover its "magical environment," Chief Executive Officer Mr Paul Midy said.

At the launching of Jovago Myanmar yesterday, the CEO said the expansion confirms its strategy to expand operations and presence in Asia in order to reach and meet the needs of all travellers.

"Jovaco mainly targets the local population in emerging markets."

Jovago recently opened its 17th global branch office in downtown Yangon.

Mr Abdesslam Benzitouni, Director of Public Relations for Jovago, said the company links with around 250 hotel partners and plans to reach 1,500 hotels by next year.

"We wish to be a key partner for tourism in Myanmar, to promote new destinations and make trips easy and accessible."

Jovago.com has over 25,000 local hotel listings across Africa and Asia and over 200,000 hotels worldwide. It opened its first office in Africa in 2013 and was founded by joint venture between Rocket Internet, Asia Pacific Internet Group and leading telecoms company Ooredoo.

Tritone Living Square Apartment introduced at Novotal Hotel, Yangon

TRITONE Living Square project is made public on 1st December at Novotal Hotel.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, President of Hanwha Co.Ltd. Mr. Jae Hong Park, CEO of Living Square Co., Ltd U Aung Shein and Ambassador of the Korean to Myanmar H.E. Mr. Lee Baek Soon opened the ceremony to introduce the living square project with the public, erecting three scale model towers of the square at the ceremony.

The square would be built on 2.036 area of land located at No. 106 in Pyi Road, Mayangon Township. The living square comprises one 25-storybuilding, two 30-story buildings and 424 rooms. –*Myanmar News Agency*

Yunnan Province of China donates sheeting to flood-hit households

1. Handing over of (200,000) aluzinc sheets (Length 2200 mm x with 920 mm x thickness 0.32 mm) donated by the people's Government of Yunnan Province for the flood affected areas in Myanmar took place on 3 December 2015 at Muse Township, Shan State. It was attended by U Soe Naing, Director, Relief and Resettlement Department, Shan State, and U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, District Administrator of Muse District and Chairman of District National Natural Disaster management Body and officials concerned from the Myanmar side and Ms, Shi Lin, Deputy Director General, Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Mandalay and officials concerned from the Chinese side. The National Natural Disaster Management Committee will quickly distribute the donated aluzinc sheets to the flood affected areas such as Chin State, Sagaing Region, Rakhine State, Ayeyarwaddy Region, Magway Region and Bago Region.

2. Consul-General U Aung Kyaw Oo from Consulate General of Myanmar in Kunming, People's Republic of China, also attended the said occasion to facilitate smooth handing over of the donated items.

3. It is learnt from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that H E Mr Hong Liang, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, will deliver the documents related to the handing over of donated aluzinc sheets in Nay Pyi Taw in near future.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Correction

PLEASE read "The remaining boat people are being verified and they will be handed over to their country of origin …" in the story "48 boat people repatriated to Bangladesh" on Page 3 of 3-December issue of the Global New Light of Myanmar. —*Ed*

Thai police say arrests made abroad are in connection with Bangkok bomb

BANGKOK — Thai police said yesterday that suspects wanted in connection with a bomb that ripped through a Bangkok shrine, killing 20 people, have been arrested abroad and that Thailand was in the process of requesting their extradition.

More than 120 people were wounded in the August blast, the worst peacetime bombing in Thailand's history.

So far, arrest warrants have been issued for 17 people in connection with the attack. Police have said many are thought to have fled abroad.

"We have caught more people with arrest warrants out for them in connection to this case, including Thais and foreigners, but they are currently abroad and we are in the process of working with the attorney general and foreign affairs ministry to bring them to Thailand," Police Lieutenant General Srivara Rangsibrahmanakul, deputy national police chief, told reporters.

"I cannot give more details on this as it is a sensitive matter and could impact diplomatic relationships."

There has been strong criticism of the police investigation because few facts have been clearly established. Authorities were also accused of failing to seal off the crime scene properly and rapidly hosing down the pavement before forensic evidence was recovered.

It was not immediately clear if those detained would return to Thailand to appear in court.

Two suspects arrested in Thailand were indicted by a military court last month and are currently being held at a Bangkok military base. Ten charges were brought against the pair, including illegal possession of weapons, premeditated murder and murder for the bombing.

Documents sent by prosecutors to the military court say the two men are Chinese nationals from the Muslim Uighur minority.

The men will formally hear the charges against them in February.

Police have said that the blast was in retaliation for a crackdown on human smuggling gangs earlier this year. They ruled out any link to the repatriation of 109 Uighurs to China in July.

The Uighurs are a Turkic-language speaking group that calls China's western Xinjiang region home. Some Turks see themselves as sharing cultural and religious bond with their Uighur "brothers".

The Uighur issue is sensitive for the Thai government and any link between the bomb and the deportation of people at China's behest could expose it to censure that its foreign policy led to the bomb attack.—*Reuters*

Malaysia's PM to meet anti-graft agency over 1MDB scandal

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak will give a statement to an anti-graft agency yesterday over funds worth 2.6 billion ringgit (410 million pounds) that were transferred into his bank accounts, a source aware of the meeting said.

Najib is facing calls to step down over a graft scandal surrounding state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) that erupted in July when the *Wall Street Journal* reported that investigators had found that funds had been transferred into Najib's bank accounts.

The source said the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) would record a statement in connection with its investigation into graft allegations at 1MDB and its subsidiary, SRC International.

Najib had earlier made a commitment to give a statement to the anti-graft agency and his office is also expected to take queries on the matter in parliament later in the day.

Najib has denied wrongdoing or taking any money for personal gain. The MACC has already said the money was a political donation from an unidentified Middle Eastern benefactor.

The prime minister has complained that the investigation had caused "various accusations and slander".

A spokesman at the Prime Minister's Office did not confirm whether Najib would be questioned by the MACC yesterday, but said he had made a commitment to give a statement.

Najib is chairman of the 1MDB advisory board. The fund is also being investigated by law enforcement agencies in Switzerland, Hong Kong and the United States, media and sources have said.—*Reuters*

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Indian army on war footing to rescue survivors as flood toll nears 270

CHENNAI — The Indian military evacuated more than 2,000 residents stranded in the southern state of Tamil Nadu yesterday as the death toll from flooding rose to 269 after the heaviest cloudburst in over a century.

Forecasts of more rain over the next 48 hours forced the army to work on a war footing to rescue survivors trapped in inundated parts of Chennai, India's fourth most populous city.

Chennai saw only slight rains yesterday, but water levels had not receded since Wednesday morning, when a massive release of water from a brimming reservoir swamped low-lying areas of the city.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has blamed climate change for the deluge, travelled to Chennai to get a first-hand view of a rescue effort that has so far been halting. "Chennai has become a small island. This is unprecedented," Home Minister Rajnath Singh told parliament. "Rapid rescue and relief is the need of the hour. We are working very hard to restore normality."

After auto manufacturers and IT outsourcing firms suspended operations on Wednesday, state-run Chennai Petroleum (CHPC. NS) shut down its 210,000-barrels-per-day oil refinery due to heavy flooding. The cloudburst earlier this week dumped as much as 345 mm (14 inches) of rain over 24 hours. "We live in a city expecting that we will have access to basic facilities. But today, we have no drinking water, no fresh food and no control over our lives," said Sudha Raman Murthy, a mother of two teenage daughters.

People travel on a boat as they move to safer places through a flooded road in Chennai, India, on 2 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

Soldiers set up 25 temporary shelters and community kitchens and installed portable toilets. "We will have to resurrect an entire city," said Abhijit Shaw, an army officer who was setting up a makeshift maternity ward in a government building. Floods cut off more than three million people from basic services and hampered rescue efforts by the army, which has so far evacuated 18,000 people from rooftops and outlying villages.

City authorities were deploying bulldozers and bags of concrete to repair collapsed roads, while several bridges were under water as urban lakes in the low-lying coastal city of six million overflowed.

Train services and flights to Chennai, capital of Tamil Nadu, were washed out and the navy has pressed fishing boats into service to evacuate people from the worst-hit suburbs to temples, schools and wedding halls.

A senior federal official said more than 1,000 people had been critically injured and were rushed to government hospitals by paramilitary forces.

Additional rainfall of 100-200 mm (4-8 inches) was predicted from Thursday through Sunday, keeping the situation critical for several more days.

The federal government pledged $141 million in immediate relief and launched a survey to assess losses to life and property. Assocham, an industry lobby, estimated that the floods may cause financial losses of over $2.25 billion. —*Reuters*

Australia stepping up hunt for MH370, confident of search area

A woman whose relative was aboard Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 holds a placard after police stopped protesting relatives from entering a road leading to the Malaysian embassy in Beijing on 7 August. PHOTO: REUTERS

SYDNEY — Australia will step up search efforts in an area they believe holds the best hope of finding a missing Malaysia Airlines jet, whose disappearance last year sparked one of the greatest mysteries in aviation history, officials said yesterday.

An Australian-led underwater search, the most expensive ever conducted, has so far found no trace of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, which went missing with 239 passengers and crew during a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in March 2014.

The number of vessels searching for the jet would be doubled to four, Australian Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss said. One of the vessels would be provided by China. The search has thus far focussed on a 120,000 square km (46,330 square miles) band of sea floor in the remote southern Indian Ocean, where the plane is believed to have gone down.

Truss, flanked by officials from the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) and Department of Defence, identified an area at the southern tip of that search band that is now believed to be the likeliest resting place of the wreckage.

The area, described by Truss as a "purple patch", had been chosen based on an analysis of the flight data, path and information gleaned from global satellite networks. "We have a high level of confidence that we are searching in the right area," Assistant Minister for Defence Darren Chester told a media conference in Canberra.

A piece of the plane found washed up on the French island of Reunion in July provided the first direct evidence that the plane had crashed into the sea. No further trace has been found.

Experts involved in past deep-water searches have said the hunt could easily miss the plane because Dutch company Fugro NV was using inappropriate technology and inexperienced personnel for the highly specialised task.

Fugro did not respond to requests for comment when that criticism was made.

US firm Williamson & Associates said images of the southern Indian Ocean floor released by the ATSB in October bore a striking similarity to the underwater debris field Air France Flight 447 left on the Atlantic Ocean floor when it crashed in 2009, killing all 228 passengers and crew.

More than 70,000 sq km have already been checked. The search of the entire band was expected to be completed by June 2016, Truss said.—*Reuters*

ADB says developing Asia on track to hit growth target this year

MANILA — The Asian Development Bank said yesterday that developing Asia is on track to hit growth target of 5.8 percent this year and 6 percent in 2016 as the region's economies remain resilient to economic weakness in the United States and other industrialised countries.

"Despite some softening in prospects for the major industrial economies, developing Asia is poised to meet growth forecasts published in September in Asian Development Outlook 2015 Update," the Manila-based bank said in its latest update.

"The regional forecast is sustained in the face of a lower combined growth outlook for the major industrial economies of the US, the euro area and Japan," the report says.

"Although we have seen some softening in a number of economies, the broader regional outlook is for continued steady growth," ADB chief economist Shang-jin Wei said.

Wei said the region's growth is supported by "vibrant private consumption in China and expanded industrial production in India and other countries."

"At the same time, countries reliant on commodities are hurting from the global slump in prices, and slower-than-expected recovery in the US and economc contraction in Japan will continue to weigh on export prospects," he said.

The report says the outlook for growth in East Asia continues to be subdued, maintained at 6 percent in both 2015 and 2016.

It says China's economy will expand 6.9 percent this year, slightly more than the 6.8 percent previously projected. Despite an ongoing housing overhang and excess industrial capacity, it says China's economy has remained resilient, supported primarily by private consumption and services. "Investment growth remains weak, though, under a substantial housing overhang and persistent excess capacity in industry," the report says.

It says central bank and government measures to stabilise the economy and bolster small and medium-sized enterprises are also providing some comfort.

Next year, the bank predicts that China's economy will grow 6.7 percent, driven increasingly by services and consumption.

South Asia's outlook remains positive, says the report. Growth forecasts for the whole of that region are maintained at 6.9 percent in 2015 and 7.3 percent in 2016. "Continued strength in India is supported by growth in industrial production, public capital expenditure, and retail sales. This is helping to offset slowdown seen for Bhutan, the Maldives and Nepal," the report says.

Southeast Asia as a whole is maintaining its growth pace despite marginal downward revisions in Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore, the report says. The growth forecasts across Southeast Asia remain at 4.4 percent for 2015 and 4.9 percent for 2016.—*Kyodo News*

Cambodian medic sentenced to 25 years in prison for spreading HIV

Yem Chrin is escorted by police officers upon arrival at the Provincial Court of Battambang on 3 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

PHNOM PENH — A Cambodian court yesterday sentenced a male medical practitioner to 25 years in prison for spreading HIV to nearly 300 people in the country's northwestern province of Battambang.

The Battambang provincial court said Yem Chrin intentionally spread the human immunodeficiency virus, which can lead to AIDS and other health complications, and ran a medical business without a license from the Ministry of Health.

Yem Chrin, 57, was arrested and detained soon after 120 villagers filed complaints against him last December for spreading HIV to residents of three villages in Roka Commune, located 8 kilometres southeast of Battambang provincial town.

The commune has six villages and about 3,000 people live there. Soon after information came out on the spread of HIV in the commune, about 1,000 people from Roka village and two other neighbouring villages flocked to a local health center for HIV testing. Of the 290 people who tested positive for HIV, 10 have died of related causes.

Yem Chrin was accused of repeatedly using syringes and needles when he treated patients in Roka Commune where he began his medical business in 1996.

The defendant denied the charges and said he had complied with all standards of medical professionalism.— *Kyodo News*

OPINION

National Reconciliation on the track

Kyaw Thura

National League for Democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held separate talks with President U Thein Sein and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in the capital city of Nay Pyi Taw two days ago.

Though full details of the talks are yet to be made public, the meetings among Myanmar's three political kingpins were hailed as a great success in this changeover period after the NLD claimed a landslide victory in the country's first ever free and fair elections in a quarter of a century, securing 80 percent of parliamentary seats in the 8 November election.

Analysts described the initiative as a bold move from the president and the commander-in-chief to have pledged their all-out assistance to a smooth transfer of power and responsibility, as well as committing to fully cooperating with the handover - thereby easing public anxiety.

It is encouraging to hear that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has taken a decisive step to scrutinise the efficiency and ability of her representatives-elect, encouraging them to build their own capacity through a careful study of the constitution and the party's policies.

In addition, she warned them that the party's landslide win does not derive from the capacity of individual members, but from courageous and determined individuals who desire real change.

Judging from what these public figures said, there is every reason to believe that they have come together to put the country on the track of national reconciliation.

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 thantunaungnlm@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.

Pathway Moving Services (pictured) will lessen the stress of moving.

How to play the rental game in Yangon – and win

Jessica Mudditt

IT'S hard to find a bargain in Yangon's rental market. In fact it's probably safer to assume that you won't, because prices have skyrocketed with the influx of expats and international businesses setting up shop. At one point, things got so out of control that prices in several townships were on a par with New York City. Fortunately, as supply is catching up with demand, the situation is improving. And things will only get better, as thousands of condo units will soon be on the market.

However many quirks remain in Yangon's real estate market. As someone who has lived in two houses and one apartment over the course of three years, I've compiled a list of tips aimed at improving your chances of being happy in your chosen abode.

Tip 1: Begin your search online

'For Rent' signs don't appear out the front of properties in Myanmar, which makes it impossible to scour a neighbourhood or a particular street that appeals. The reason for the lack of signage is due to the highly competitive and unregulated market for real estate agents and brokers – neither of whom require a licence to operate.

"Putting a sign up would draw attention to the fact that a property is available and agents want to do the best job they can without other agents and brokers cutting in on the deal. Also, the owner of a vacant property would be inundated with calls from agents and brokers claiming to have prospective tenants. It would make the situation very messy, which is why there is a hush-hush attitude towards it," said a real estate player who declined to be named.

However due to a lack of education among agents, for whom internet listings is a relatively new concept, properties listed on online search engines such as house.com.mm are often merely for show. Don't spend too much time weighing up one versus another – it's better to click on a dozen or so, regardless of price or location (or appearance). The value of using house.com.mm is that it connects you with various agents, who most often will follow up promptly with a call to ask questions such as "Which townships do you prefer?", "How many bedrooms?", "How many square foot?", "What is your budget?" and "Are you looking for furnished or unfurnished?" Not once has a reference been made to a specific property I was interested in viewing.

Tip 2: Use a variety of different agents

Some agents are better than others so it's best to try as many as possible. My husband and I have been shown the exact same apartment by different agents and were quoted significantly different prices. This isn't uncommon. Furthermore, agents may disregard your stated criteria despite answering the aforementioned questions. You'll likely be taken to three or four different properties to view and if one or more is wildly beyond your budget or other stated requirements, it may be a sign that the agent will lead you on further wild goose chases. Many agents are savvy and know a good deal when they see it – ask them if they have any 'special' properties worth viewing.

Tip 3: Negotiate hard

Most landlords in Myanmar begin with a 'calling price' – that is, the optimum amount they're seeking, which is cheekily above market value (even for Yangon). Ask the agent about how willing the landlord is to negotiate: you may very well get it for significantly less. Ask your agent to do the bidding for you and offer a price much less than what you'd actually be willing to pay: most of the time you'll meet somewhere in the middle.

Tip 4: Know your landlord

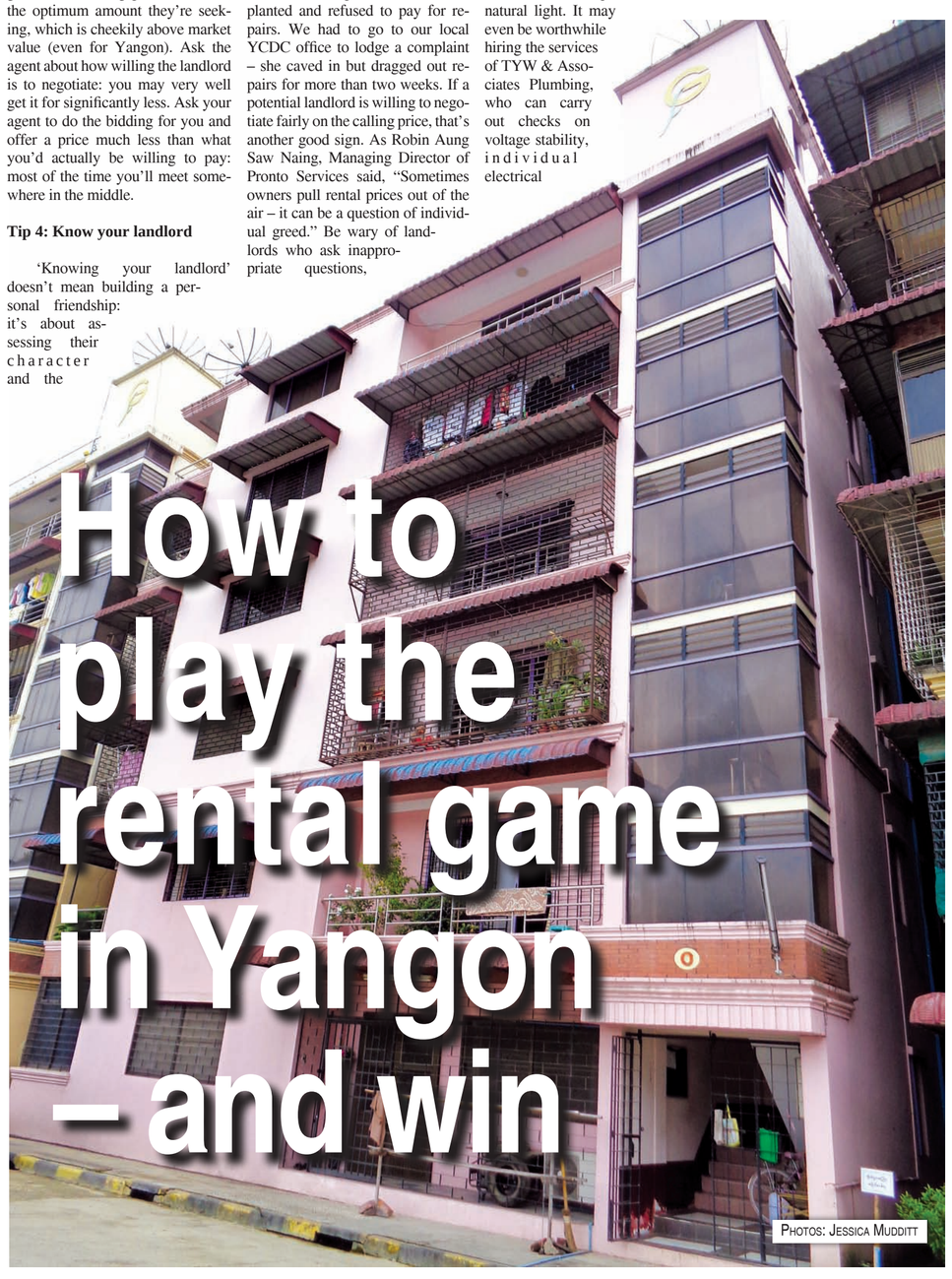
'Knowing your landlord' doesn't mean building a personal friendship: it's about assessing their character and the likelihood of them carrying out any necessary maintenance, as well as sticking to their end of the deal (I knew a couple who spent a significant amount of money renovating a very basic flat and were subsequently kicked out of it after their landlord paid a visit and noticed the improvements). Landlords that are agreeable to installing the odd air-conditioning unit or repairing a broken fence prior to you moving in are better than those who possess a 'take it or leave it' approach. For example, when our front fence keeled over during a particularly heavy monsoon drenching, our landlady blamed its collapse on a shrub we'd planted and refused to pay for repairs. We had to go to our local YCDC office to lodge a complaint – she caved in but dragged out repairs for more than two weeks. If a potential landlord is willing to negotiate fairly on the calling price, that's another good sign. As Robin Aung Saw Naing, Managing Director of Pronto Services said, "Sometimes owners pull rental prices out of the air – it can be a question of individual greed." Be wary of landlords who ask inappropriate questions, such as how many male or female friends you have or what your religion is. They may prove intrusive.

Tip 5: Test everything before signing anything

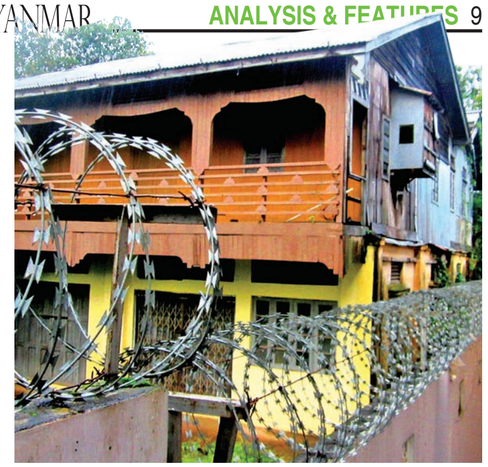
Many properties are poorly maintained – or were constructed on the thinnest of budgets. When inspecting a property, don't be shy about testing everything from water pressure (both toilets and taps) and whether windows and doors close smoothly or with a loud creak – and make sure you inspect properties during the daylight hours to make sure there is adequate natural light. It may even be worthwhile hiring the services of TYW & Associates Plumbing, who can carry out checks on voltage stability, individual electrical units and plumbing systems. We failed to do so and spent a year in a house that couldn't accommodate more than one AC at a time and got electric shocks from kitchen appliances (those same appliances work perfectly in our new place). If a monastery is located nearby, you may also need to consider the possibility of chanting that can last through the night.

Tip 6: Do you really want to live in a house?

Having a yard is a wonderful thing, as is the privacy most houses afford. However the constant upkeep of a house can be monumentally challenging if your agent or landlord is hands-off. It can involve manually turning on water tanks (the supply of water itself can be inconsistent), slipping on concrete yards, curbing the growth of weeds and grass in the rainy season and encountering the occasional rat or snake – not to mention a countless number of potential infrastructural problems. While bleach can counter the slipperiness of a concrete yard, direct contact with it (especially for pets) is harmful. Furthermore, the true colours of a house tend not to be revealed until the monsoon season hits. Mould is a health hazard (which is not to say it doesn't srpout in apartments) and leaking roofs can damage your furniture and peace of mind. While it's hard to predict what may or may not happen in advance, it's worth asking the landlord about how recently a home was rain-proofed.



PHOTOS: JESSICA MUDDITT



Reams of razor wire are par for the course at most Myanmar homes.

Tip 7: A six month lease or a 12 month lease?

Myanmar is highly unusual in that it is only one of two countries (the other being Indonesia) where rent is required to be paid upfront in full. Deposits themselves are negligible though. While many landlords nowadays are amenable to the idea of paying six or even three-month installments, the risk of signing a six month lease is that rent is likely to be hiked up when the time comes to sign a new lease. Some landlords will offer a reduced monthly rent fee if 12 months is in paid in full at the beginning. It's definitely worth asking about a possible discount if you can front up a year's rent in advance. Fortunately, the vast majority of landlords will not evict a tenant and sub-leasing is permissible should you need to leave the country sooner than planned. However the responsibility of making such arrangements is entirely up to the tenant. Yangon Expat Connection is a useful means of finding people looking for a short-term stay (that they could later extend with the landlord), however rental prices advertised by brokers and agents on YEC tend to be overpriced and are thus best avoided.

Tip 8: Try to avoid moving during Buddhist Lent

The three months of Buddhist Lent, which begins in mid-July, is a tricky time to move as there is a deeply held belief in Myanmar that undertaking property dealings during this period results in bad luck. Thus, choices become limited. The upside is that those properties which are listed on the market are likely to be something of a bargain, as inquiries will be few and far between. Another upside is that you can assess a property's resilience to the rainy season!

Tip 9: Use Pathway Moving Services

Pathway Moving Services offers a premium moving service that includes having at least one English speaker on the job. The company is owned by an American husband and wife, who will drop off cardboard boxes and packing tape to your door step and will provide a quote based on the amount of furniture that needs to be moved (and the distance between the two homes). There's even a packing and unpacking service, which is a great option for busy parents with small children. While cheaper moving services certainly exist, there's a fairly big risk of damage being caused to either your belongings or your current or former abode as workers tend to rush things.

Tip 10: Invest as much time as possible

Moving is incredibly stressful – as is the process of finding a new home. However worst of all is coming home to an apartment or house that you detest. Your well-being will suffer and no doubt, your work productivity will too. Start house-hunting at least a couple of months in advance of your actual move date and be prepared to sacrifice many a weekend doing so. There are some abysmally bad places to live in Yangon, but there are also some spectacular ones. The more time and energy you invest, the more likely you are to feel content and at ease in your new home in Yangon.

Packing up a home can be an arduous task: enlist the help of friends if you can!

Couple identified as suspects in California mass shooting

Rescue crews tend to the injured in the intersection outside the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California on 2 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

SAN BERNARDINO — A man and woman armed with assault-style rifles opened fire on the holiday party of his co-workers in Southern California, killing 14 people and wounding 17 others, and then were slain hours later in a shootout with police after a manhunt, authorities said.

The two suspects were identified as Syed Rizwan Farook, 28, and Tashfeen Malik, 27, who San Bernardino Police Chief Jarrod Burguan said were in a relationship, possibly married or engaged. He said they were believed to be the only shooters involved in the attack.

While the motive remained unclear, Burguan said, "We have not ruled out terrorism." Farook was US born, while Malik's nationality was still undetermined.

According to the police chief, Farook was a county public health employee who attended the party, held in a conference building on the campus of the Inland Regional Centre — a social services agency — and at some point stormed out, then returned with Malik to open fire on the celebration. The couple were dressed in assault-style clothing and also placed several bombs at various locations, which police detonated.

The shooting rampage marked the deadliest US gun violence since the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, in December 2012, in which 27 people, including the gunman, were killed.

Wednesday's carnage amplified concerns about gun violence and security in the wake of a deadly rampage on a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs last week and the attacks in Paris three weeks ago by Islamic State militants that killed 130 people.

So far in 2015, there have been more than 350 shootings in which four or more people were wounded, according to the crowd-sourced website shootingtracker.com, which keeps a running tally of US gun violence.—*Reuters*

Turkey involved in Islamic State oil trade: Russian defence ministry

MOSCOW — Russia's defence ministry said on Wednesday it had proof that Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and his family were benefiting from the illegal smuggling of oil from Islamic State-held territory in Syria and Iraq.

Moscow and Ankara have been locked in a war of words since last week when a Turkish air force jet shot down a Russian warplane near the Syrian-Turkish border, the most serious incident between Russia and a NATO state in half a century.

Erdogan responded by saying no one had the right to "slander" Turkey by accusing it of buying oil from Islamic State, and that he would stand down if such allegations were proven to be true. But speaking during a visit to Qatar, he also said he did not want relations with Moscow to worsen further.

At a briefing in Moscow, defence ministry officials displayed satellite images which they said showed columns of tanker trucks loading with oil at installations controlled by Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, and then crossing the border into neighbouring Turkey.

The officials did not specify what direct evidence they had of the involvement of Erdogan and his family, an allegation that the Turkish president has vehemently denied.

"Turkey is the main consumer of the oil stolen from its rightful owners, Syria and Iraq. According to information we've received, the senior political leadership of the country — President Erdogan and his family - are involved in this criminal business," said Deputy Defence Minister Anatoly Antonov.

"Maybe I'm being too blunt, but one can only entrust control over this thieving business to one's closest associates."

"In the West, no one has asked questions about the fact that the Turkish president's son heads one of the biggest energy companies, or that his son-in-law has been appointed energy minister. What a marvelous family business!"

"The cynicism of the Turkish leadership knows no limits. Look what they're doing. They went into someone else's country, they are robbing it without compunction," Antonov said.

Erdogan last week denied that Turkey procures oil from anything other than legitimate sources. The United States said it rejected the premise that the Turkish government was in league with the militants to smuggle oil.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkish PM says doing everything possible to control border with Syria

ANKARA — Turkey is doing all it can to control its border with Syria and is setting up "physical barriers" in the 98-km (61 miles) stretch of land controlled on the Syrian side by Islamic State militants, Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said yesterday.

In a news conference before departing on an official visit to Azerbaijan, Davutoglu said Turkey was working with coalition partners on trying to remove Islamic State fighters from the Syrian side of the border in the period ahead.—*Reuters*

France and Germany step up fight against militant financing

BERLIN — France and Germany pushed on Wednesday for Europe to speed up a crackdown on money laundering and said they would propose a package of new EU measures next week to cut off funding to militants.

Germany has vowed to show solidarity with France after the 13 November militant Islamist attacks in Paris, in which 130 people were killed. Berlin plans to join the military campaign against Islamic State insurgents in Syria.

Visiting Berlin, French Finance Minister Michel Sapin said attacks such as those in Paris last month could be financed with as little as 10,000-30,000 euros, with pre-paid bank cards an easy means of funding.—*Reuters*

Pilot of Russian plane downed by Turkey buried with military honours

LIPETSK — A Russian pilot killed after his plane was shot down by a Turkish jet last week was buried in the Russian city of Lipetsk on Wednesday with military honours, after being posthumously given the country's highest military award.

The downing of Oleg Peshkov's plane on 24 November near the Syrian-Turkish border has triggered a tense standoff between Russia and NATO member Turkey and Moscow has imposed a raft of economic sanctions on Ankara in retaliation. Russian defence officials said Peshkov managed to eject from his stricken plane only to be killed by ground fire from militants inside Syria. His navigator survived, but a Russian marine was killed during the rescue mission.

Fellow air force officers carried the coffin with Peshkov's body to his grave in a snow-swept cemetery in Lipetsk, some 450 kilometers (279.62 miles) south of Moscow, a Reuters photographer at the funeral reported.—*Reuters*

US and China discuss cyber commitments

WASHINGTON — Two top advisers to US President Barack Obama met on Wednesday with Chinese State Councilor Guo Shengkun to discuss cyber issues and the threat posed by Islamic State militants, the White House said.

Susan Rice, Obama's national security adviser, and Lisa Monaco, his counterterrorism adviser, met Guo "to underscore the importance of full adherence" to commitments made during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to the White House in September, the White House said in a statement.—*Reuters*

11 killed in attack on Ivory Coast military camps

ABIDJAN — Eleven people, including seven soldiers, were killed on Wednesday in clashes with 15 unidentified gunmen in two military camps in Ivory Coast near the border with Liberia, a UN source with knowledge of the events said.

The West African nation has been attacked by unidentified armed men near its border with Liberia on at least three previous occasions in the past two years, including one assault in January in which two soldiers were killed.

The United Nations deployed helicopters for reconnaissance of the clashes that injured 10 Ivory Coast soldiers, four seriously. The military detained eight assailants, including three from Burkina Faso and one from Togo, the UN source said.

Defence Minister Paul Koffi Koffi said on state radio that the situation was under control, adding, "We have reinforced our position." Four of the gunmen were killed in the clashes, which began at around 5 am, according to state radio.

Ivory Coast emerged from a brief civil war in 2011 that capped a decade of political turmoil and has since seen rapid economic growth, becoming a darling for investors.—*Reuters*

British bombers make first air strikes on Syria after parliament vote

RAF personnel work on a British Tornado after it returned from a mission at RAF Akrotiri in southern Cyprus, on 3 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

AKROTIRI — British bombers made their first strikes on Syria yesterday, just hours after Britain's parliament voted to target Islamic State targets in Syria, a government source said.

Tornado bombers took off from the RAF Akrotiri air base in Cyprus and made strikes on targets in Syria, the source said. The bombers were back at base.

"A strike was made from over Syria," said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The source declined to give further operational information about the targets or the number of aircraft involved, citing national security.

A Reuters witness in Cyprus saw four jets leaving in pairs from the air base within an hour of each other. All four had since returned.

RAF Akrotiri has been used as a launchpad for attacks on Islamic State targets in Iraq for just over a year, and late on Wednesday Britain's parliament broadened its scope for targets within Syria. After more than 10 hours of tense debate, members of parliament voted in favour of the air strikes by 397 to 223.

Addressing parliament on Wednesday, Prime Minister David Cameron said high-precision, laser-guided Brimstone missiles attached to the Tornado GR4 bombers would help to make a real difference by hitting the de facto Islamic State capital of Raqqa and its oil-trading business.

France and the United States are already bombing Islamist militants in Syria, while Russia has bombed mainly other rebels, according to conflict monitors and Western officials, in an intervention launched on 30 September to bolster its ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The West says Assad must go.

Cyprus, 100 km (60 miles) from Syria, is the closest European Union member state to turmoil in the Middle East.

In October, two boatloads of Middle Eastern migrants, including Syrian refugees, washed ashore at Akrotiri, a jutting peninsula on Cyprus's southern coast.

Britain, a former colonial power, retains two sovereign military bases in Cyprus.—*Reuters*

New questions about US Defence Department task force in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON — US Department of Defence officials in Afghanistan spent nearly $150 million on private "villas," even though they could have saved millions of dollars by staying at bases, a US government watchdog said.

In a letter to Defence Secretary Ash Carter dated 25 November, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) John Sopko said employees for the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO) were not only provided with furnished houses, but also hired contractors for security and food services.

"If TFBSO employees had instead lived at (Defence Department) facilities in Afghanistan, where housing, security, and food service are routinely provided at little or no extra charge to (Defense Department) organisations, it appears the taxpayers would have saved tens of millions of dollars," Sopko said in the letter.

According to SIGAR, the task force was started in Afghanistan in 2009 and between 2010 and 2014 the US Congress appropriated more than $820 million. The task force was shut down earlier this year.

SIGAR said it had received more allegations about the task force than any other programme in Afghanistan. Sopko said each room in the villas included a flat screen television, DVD player and mini-refrigerator, while food services were required to provide at least two entree options and three side order choices for meals. A Defence Department official said the letter had been received and the department will respond.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (138W)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV ESM CREMONA VOY NO (138W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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 ORINET OVERSEAS CONTAINER LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV RAINBOW HARMONY VOY NO (CH0197)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV RAINBOW HARMONY VOY NO (CH0197) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T-2 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 CHUN AN CHARTERING CO LTD.

Phone No: 2301186

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV HE BO VOY NO (1511)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV HE BO VOY NO (1511) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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 BRIGHT SAIL SHIPPING LTD.

Phone No: 2301186

EU presses Greece over migrants, weighs Schengen threat

ATHENS — Greece hit back on Wednesday at threats from some EU states to suspend it from the Schengen zone of open border travel because of its failure to control large numbers of migrants entering Europe.

Some central European officials, most prominently Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, have suggested excluding Greece from Schengen. Diplomats and European Union officials say some governments have raised the possibility informally but it would be a largely symbolic move, with little impact on migration."It is not said officially, but there is pressure," Greek Migration Minister Yannis Mouzalas told reporters, denying a *Financial Times* report on Wednesday that Athens had, among other things, refused an EU offer of devices designed to share the identity data of incoming migrants around the bloc.

"These are very common lies for Greece ... This blame game towards our country is unfair," he said.

Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn, responding to a Financial Times report that he had conveyed a suspension warning on a visit to Athens this week, said he delivered no ultimatum but had urged Greece to cooperate with EU agencies in order to dispel talk of excluding it from Schengen.

"We have to make sure that people aren't talking in Brussels about ... pushing Greece out of Schengen," Asselborn told Reuters. "That's something we must avoid at all costs." "We are working to maintain Schengen and make it work properly," an EU official said. "The moment of truth will be the December European Council," the official said, referring to the next meeting of EU leaders in Brussels in two weeks' time.

A stranded migrant holds a baby as she waits next to the Greek-Macedonian border near to the Greek village of Idomeni, on 30 November. PHOTO: REUTERS

Clashes erupted on the Greek-Macedonian border on Tuesday when Macedonian riot police fired tear gas to repel up to 1,000 mostly Pakistani migrants trying to force their way across a newly erected border fence, a Reuters witness said. One Macedonian officer fired warning shots in the air.

Migrants later blocked the crossing for Syrians and others who would be let in as refugees. "If we don't cross, no one does!" they chanted. Police stood guard. Buses full of people who have landed elsewhere in Greece kept arriving.

Frustration has risen in recent weeks in the European Commission, the EU executive charged with ramping up controls on the external borders, and among EU governments that Greece is failing to make use of available EU funds and personnel to ensure people arriving in the Schengen area are documented.

With no land borders with the rest of the 26-nation Schengen area, Greece has allowed hundreds of thousands of people, many of them Syrian refugees, to travel from its islands off the Turkish coast across Greece to the northern border with non-EU Macedonia as they head for Germany.

Mouzalas said that as long as Turkey did not shut down people smugglers operating on its coastline, Athens could not stop frail boats packed with refugees from landing on Greek islands in the Aegean Sea. He said he had taken EU ambassadors out to sea to watch arrivals and asked what Athens should do.

"They don't dare to ask us 'drown them', but if you do push-back on a plastic boat in the middle of the sea with 50 or 70 refugees aboard, you're asking me to drown them," the minister said. —*Reuters*

> **"They don't dare to ask us 'drown them', but if you do push-back on a plastic boat in the middle of the sea with 50 or 70 refugees aboard, you're asking me to drown them."**
>
> **Yannis Mouzalas**
> Greek Migration Minister

Brazil's Congress opens impeachment proceedings against president

BRASILIA — The speaker of Brazil's lower house of Congress opened impeachment proceedings against President Dilma Rousseff on Wednesday, deepening a political crisis as the economy nosedives.

Opposition parties first filed a request to impeach Rousseff in September, accusing the unpopular president of violating Brazil's fiscal laws and manipulating government finances to help her win re-election last year.

Lower house speaker Eduardo Cunha finally said he had agreed to open proceedings.

A special committee with members from all parties will decide on the merits of the request, which needs two-thirds, or 342, of the votes in the lower house. She would then be suspended pending a 180-day trial by the Senate.

It is not clear if Rousseff's foes have the votes to remove her from office but the process could force further political wrangling and uncertainty, complicating her efforts to push austerity measures through Congress and encourage investment.

Brazil's political establishment is already close to paralysis due to an investigation into a massive graft scandal at state-run oil company Petrobras.

The $1.5 trillion economy, the largest in Latin America, is also expected to contract steeply this year and next in what could become Brazil's longest recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

In a televised address to the nation, Rousseff expressed her "outrage" at Cunha's decision and said there was no evidence of any wrongdoing by her.

"I do not have any accounts abroad," she said, in a dig at Cunha who is under investigation for graft and has bank accounts in Switzerland.

Rousseff is Brazil's most unpopular president in a generation and has faced mounting calls for her resignation for running the once-booming economy to a standstill. Recent opinion polls show that most Brazilians would like to see her impeached.

In Rio de Janeiro's upmarket neighbourhood of Copacabana, residents reacted with disdain to Rousseff's televised address, banging pots and pans in their homes.

"This will be a sort of plebiscite in the country," Senator Jose Serra, of the main opposition PSDB party, said of the impeachment efforts.

Although Rousseff is not under investigation in the Petrobras scandal, much of the corruption happened when she was chair of its board. Her opponents say she should be held accountable.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV BEHSHAD VOY NO (SCY 1008)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV BEHSHAD VOY NO (SCY 1008) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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 LAND AND SEA SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MOROTAI VOY NO (277YFR)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MOROTAI VOY NO (277YFR) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4.12.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to 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 CMA CGM LINE

Phone No: 2301185

Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
Department of Agriculture
Fostering Agricultural Revitalization in Myanmar Project
(Invitation for Open Tender)

1. The fostering Agricultural Revitalization Project in Myanmar (FARM) funded by IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) and the Government of Myanmar is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MOAI) in the area of five townships (Lewe, Othrathiri, Pyinmana, Tatkon, Zeyathiri) within the Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.
2. Open tenders are invited for the construction of
   (1) Knowledge Centers (56'-0"x26'-0"x12'-0") (25) sets
   (2) water tower made by wood (6'-0"x6'-0"x12'-0") and 200 gallon fiber tanks, (25) sets
   (3) concrete tank (3'-0"x3'-0"x3'-0") (25) sets
   (4) 2" tube well, engine compressor and pipe installation (25) sets
   for FARM Project of Department of Agriculture with Myanmar Kyat.
   Date and Time for Tender documents selling - 9 December 2015 (office hours)
   Date and Time of Tender closing 31-12-2015 (12:00 noon)
3. Further and detailed information may be obtained the address below during office hours Monday to Friday.

No. 921, Tharaphi Street, Thabyegone, Nay Pyi Taw,
Phone: 067-432009

Rocky road: Disabled refugees battle through the Balkans

TABANOVCE — Since the beginning of this year, more than 700,000 migrants and refugees have taken boats from Turkey to Greece and made their way to Western Europe using the so-called Balkan route. The journey is exhausting and dangerous, even for the young and able-bodied. For the injured and disabled, the risks and challenges are multiplied.

The World Health Organisation estimates that 15 percent of the world's population has a disability. No one knows what percentage of the refugees who have travelled the Balkan route this year are disabled or have mobility problems, but the vast majority are fleeing war zones. Many have sustained injuries in conflict or on the journey, while those with existing disabilities are considered too vulnerable by their families to be left behind, even if it means pushing or carrying them across Turkey and Europe.

Bashar from Homs, Syria, lost his leg to diabetes. He is travelling with his son, his pregnant daughter-in-law and two grandchildren. They have made it as far as the Republic of Macedonia's border with Serbia and Bashar still has his wheelchair.

Aid workers in Greece report that many disabled refugees have to abandon their wheelchairs before boarding boats or are forced to throw them over the side when smugglers overload the vessels.

The International Rescue Committee has been distributing wheelchairs on the Greek island of Lesvos, where many of the boats come ashore. Demand sometimes outstrips supply. "We have had shortages, just because procuring that quantity of wheelchairs isn't always easy," says IRC health coordinator Rowan Cody.

Those wheelchairs that are handed out sometimes break down along the way, she adds. "They're not meant for the terrain they're going on."

Much of the Balkan route can now be travelled by bus or train but "there are still certain places where they have to walk," says Cody. The Macedonia-Serbia border is one such place. Bashar's wheelchair is not much use here. Several kilometres of muddy no man's land separate the two countries. Volunteers in Macedonia drive Bashar as far as they can, until a dirt road peters out. From there, they

Bashar's grandson, aged seven, and also called Bashar, carries his grandfather's prosthetic leg. PHOTO: IRIN

transfer him and his prosthetic leg into a wheelbarrow. Pane Ignov, who works for the Macedonian NGO La Strada, another refugee and Bashar's son Maher, push and pull the disabled man over the bumpy ground to the border, occasionally getting stuck in mud, while Bashar groans in pain.

At a stream where wooden pallets have been laid down to form a makeshift crossing, the men transfer Bashar to his wheelchair and push him gingerly across.

Finally, at the top of a small hill, they lay him on top of a raincoat to rest under a large tree, alongside two elderly refugees who also cannot walk.

Unable to accompany Bashar into Serbia, Ignov tries to call his counterparts across the border in the hope they can come and collect the three disabled refugees. Nobody answers his calls and the families are eventually left to try to find a solution on their own as dark clouds overhead threaten rain and a cold wind blows.

Doaa, Bashar's pregnant daughter-in-law, rests nearby with her two children while Maher goes ahead to look for help. In the distance are two motionless Serbian police vehicles. No help is forthcoming.

Ignov says he and his fellow volunteers see at least four migrants a day with disabilities or mobility problems. During October, when a record 218,000 migrants crossed the Mediterranean to Greece and travelled through the Balkans to reach northern Europe, the numbers were even higher.

"We can't always provide wheelbarrows," says Driton Maliqi, who works for the Macedonian NGO Legis. He explains that the wheelbarrows they provide are seldom returned and that when no wheelbarrow is available, disabled refugees sometimes have to be carried. The distance that refugees have to walk at the Greece-Macedonia border is fairly short since a transit camp was built in Gevgelija over the summer, but the procedure for requesting a wheelchair is laborious.

"The refugee has to tell the border police that they need the wheelchair. Then the border police evaluate whether or not the claim is valid. Then, if they approve the claim, the police call the Red Cross to bring a wheelchair," explains Andreevska.

Conditions at the Macedonia-Serbia border improved recently after Macedonian authorities laid gravel on the first section of the dirt track that leads to the Serbian border. But the final 600 metres must still be crossed on foot, after which Serbia-based NGOs can usually bring vehicles to pick up disabled people. Some days, however, the mud is too deep for even four-wheel drive vehicles to access the area and most of the NGOs don't work late at night, meaning that disabled refugees are dependent on friends or family members to carry them.

Maliqi says his organisation is working with NGOs across the border in Serbia to try to find a solution. There is talk of taking disabled people by vehicle all the way across the border, but for now there is no agreement between the two countries. The IRC also has plans to support NGOs in Serbia to provide wheelchairs, crutches and walkers.

Cody expects to see more cold weather issues in the coming months, ranging from frostbite and trench foot to hypothermia and respiratory infections. She says the IRC and other agencies will be looking at how they can do more to help refugees with mobility problems, particularly at border crossings. "It's difficult when the routes change frequently," she tells IRIN. "Anything we put in place is going to have to be highly mobile."—*IRIN*

Myanmar Auto Corporation (Tender Notice)

1) Myanmar Auto Corporation (MAC) will sell following Equipment as it is
: KOMATSU DOZER (D85ESS-2), 2012Year, 1 UNIT
Equipment location : Manoyong, Boakpyin Township, Tanintharyi Region
2) Selling Method
: Tender (Closing date : 17:00 Dec. 28. 2015)
3) Remarks
: Tender Documents shall be collected at Yangon Head Office
Contact (MAC Yangon Head Office) : 09-49317989, 09-421128015

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION
MYANMA RAILWAYS
COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT FOR YANGON CENTRAL RAILWAYS STATION COMPLEX

Provision of additional information to potential developers / investors regarding request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

1. To enable the developers / investors to have sufficient time to prepare a comprehensive EOI document, MR has announced the postponement of submission date for EOI to 6th January 2016 in the local newspapers and the website www.yangonrailwaystation.com.mm.
2. In this regards, MR would like to provide additional information / further clarification as attached, to interested developers / investors to have better understanding of the proposed project. The information is also available to download from www.yangonrailwaystation.com.mm or could be obtained from Deputy General Manager, Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of Theinbyu Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar, Phone; + 95-1-291985, 291994 or 202419, 298594, during office hours before 6 January 2016.

Managing Director,
Myanma Railways

Advertisement hot line 09 250107962, 09 251022355

မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း
ရွေးချယ်တင်မြှောက်ပွဲကျင်းပရေးကော်မရှင်
အမှတ် ၂၄၉၊ သိမ်ဖြူလမ်း၊ မင်္ဂလာတောင်ညွန့်မြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့

ရွေးချယ်တင်မြှောက်ပွဲကျင်းပရေး ကော်မရှင်သည် မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း (ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး) အလုပ်အမှုဆောင်အဖွဲ့ (၂၀၁၆-၂၀၁၈) ရွေးချယ်တင်မြှောက်ပွဲကို ပွင့်လင်းမြင်သာမှုရှိပြီး တရားမျှတမှုရှိစေရန်ဆောင်ရွက်လျက်ရှိပါသည်။ အဆိုပါရွေးချယ်တင်မြှောက်ပွဲကို ၂၀၁၅ ခုနှစ် ဒီဇင်ဘာ ၂၆ ရက် စနေနေ့ (၁၀း၀၀ နာရီမှ ၁၆း၀၀) နာရီထိ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း (ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး) နှစ်ပတ်လည် အစည်းအဝေးနှင့်အတူ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း၌ ကျင်းပမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

၁။ ဆန္ဒမဲပေးပိုင်ခွင့်ရှိသူများ၏ အရည်အချင်းသတ်မှတ်ချက်များ
(က) မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း၏ ရာသက်ပန်အသင်းဝင်(သို့မဟုတ်)အသင်းဝင်ကြေးအကြွေးမရှိသူဖြစ်ရပါမည်။
(ခ) ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီးတွင် နေထိုင်သူဖြစ်ရပါမည်။
(ဂ) ပြစ်မှုကင်းရှင်းသူ ဖြစ်ရမည်။
(ဃ) ရွေးချယ်တင်မြှောက်ပွဲဆိုင်ရာ လုပ်ထုံးလုပ်နည်းစည်းကမ်းများကို တိကျစွာလိုက်နာနိုင်သူဖြစ်ရမည်။

၂။ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း (ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီး) အလုပ်အမှုဆောင်အဖွဲ့ဝင်အဖြစ် အရွေးချယ်ခံမည့် သူများ၏ သတ်မှတ်အရည်အချင်းများ
(က) ပြည်ထောင်စုသမ္မတ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်၏ နိုင်ငံသားဖြစ်ရမည်။
(ခ) ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီးတွင် နေထိုင်သူဖြစ်ရမည်။
(ဂ) ပြစ်မှုကင်းရှင်းသူဖြစ်ရမည်။
(ဃ) မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း၏ရာသက်ပန်အသင်းဝင်(သို့မဟုတ်) အသင်းဝင်ကြေးအကြွေးမရှိသူဖြစ်ရပါမည်။
(င) သက်တမ်းရှိ(ဆမ)လက်ဝယ်ရှိသူ (သို့မဟုတ်) မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆေးကောင်စီ၏ မှတ်ပုံတင်လက်ဝယ်ရှိသူဖြစ်ရမည်။
(စ) မိမိဆန္ဒအလျောက် ဆရာဝန်အသင်း၏ တာဝန်များကို ထမ်းဆောင်နိုင်သူဖြစ်ရမည်။
(ဆ) နိုင်ငံရေးပါတီတစ်ခုခု၏ ဗဟိုအလုပ်အမှုဆောင် ကော်မတီတွင်လည်းကောင်း၊ လွှတ်တော် တစ်ရပ်ရပ်တွင် လွှတ်တော်ကိုယ်စားလှယ်အဖြစ် တာဝန်ထမ်းဆောင်နေသူလည်းကောင်း မဖြစ်စေရ။
(ဇ) မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဆရာဝန်အသင်း၏ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံ အခြေခံစည်းမျဉ်းစည်းကမ်းများကို လေးစားလိုက်နာသူဖြစ်ရပါမည်။

အလုပ်အမှုဆောင်အဖွဲ့ဝင်အဖြစ် ရွေးချယ်ခံရန် ၂၇-၁၁-၂၀၁၅ မှ ၁၅-၁၂-၂၀၁၅ ရက်အတွင်း ရွေးကောက်ပွဲကော်မရှင်ရုံးခန်းတွင် နေ့စဉ် နံနက် ၁၀း၀၀ နာရီမှ ညနေ ၄း၀၀ နာရီအတွင်း (ရုံးပိတ်ရက်များအပါအဝင်) ဆန္ဒပြုလွှာပုံစံနှင့် ကိုယ်ရေးမှတ်တမ်းပုံစံကို လာရောက်ထုတ်ယူ၍ ၁၅-၁၂-၂၀၁၅ ညနေ (၄း၀၀) နာရီ နောက်ဆုံးထားပြီး လျှောက်ထားနိုင်ကြောင်း အသိပေးအပ်ပါသည်။

အလုပ်အမှုဆောင်အဖွဲ့ဝင်အဖြစ် ရွေးချယ်ခံမည့် ကိုယ်စားလှယ်လောင်းစာရင်းနှင့် ၎င်းတို့၏ ကိုယ်ရေးမှတ်တမ်းများကို ၁၉-၁၂-၂၀၁၅ ရက် နံနက်ပိုင်းမှစတင်၍ ကော်မရှင်ရုံး၌ ကြေညာထားမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

ထို့အပြင် ရွေးကောက်ပွဲဆိုင်ရာမူဝါဒနှင့်ပတ်သက်၍ မရှင်းလင်းသောအချက်များရှိပါက အပတ်စဉ် တနလ်ာနေ့မှ ဗုဒ္ဓဟူးနေ့ထိ မွန်းလွဲ ၁း၀၀ နာရီမှ ညနေ ၄း၀၀ နာရီအတွင်း ရွေးကောက်ပွဲ ကျင်းပရေးကော်မရှင်ရုံးခန်းတွင် လာရောက်တွေ့ဆုံမေးမြန်းနိုင်ပါသည်။

ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ
ရွေးချယ်တင်မြှောက်ပွဲကျင်းပရေးကော်မရှင်

Ringo Starr drum kit seen fetching millions at auction

PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — A drum kit played by Ringo Starr is seen fetching millions of dollars at auction this week as part of a sale of items belonging to the Beatle and his wife, Barbara Bach.

Starr is bidding farewell to items such as instruments, career memorabilia as well as personal items . Among them are seven stage and studio drums played by Starr, including the first Ludwig Oyster Black Pearl drum kit used for the Beatles' early recordings, including "Can't Buy Me Love" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand".

Starr used the kit in more than 200 performances.

Last month, Julien's Auctions sold a drum head from a kit Starr played on US television show "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1964 for $2.1 million.

"We've conservatively estimated this (Ludwig) kit for three to five hundred thousand (dollars) but that was prior to knowing what the drum head would sell for," Darren Julien, president and chief executive of Julien's Auctions, said. "So, today we'd probably estimate it two to four, three to five million just because we think it's such a significant piece of Beatles history." Also for sale is a guitar used by John Lennon, which the late Beatle gave to Starr.

"(We) thought ... we've got lots of furniture, we've got lots of cutlery ... and I thought let's make it really crazy and special ... like John's guitar," Starr said at a cocktail party on Tuesday night ahead of the auction. "It's been played twice." Part of the sale proceeds will go to The Lotus Foundation, which was founded by Starr and Bach and aims to fund and promote charitable projects, Julien's Auctions said. —*Reuters*

'Star Wars' versus 'Star Trek': why can't fans just get along?

LOS ANGELES — "May the Force be with you" vs. "Live Long and Prosper," lightsabers vs. phasers, warp drive vs. hyperdrive. The fan debate over which story, technology, space ships and characters are superior started a long time ago.

To casual moviegoers, there is not much difference between "Star Trek," the sci-fi franchise that launched on television in 1966, and "Star Wars," which debuted on movie screens in 1977. Yet to hard-core fans the differences are as significant as those between tribbles and droids.

"Star Trek" fans think "Trek" is better because it portrays a complex, science-based technological future where diverse species unite for the betterment of all. "Star Wars," many believe, is a simple adventure with ray-guns and walking carpets, the good guy wears white, the bad guy wears black, and there's a magic "Force."

"Star Wars" fans think "Star Wars" and "The Empire Strikes Back," are "The Godfather" Part I and II of science fiction films – a perfect original followed by an equally great sequel. They can tell you exactly where they were when they first heard "No, I am your father," as a seminal life event. "Trek," for many, is boring techno-babble, everything gets talked to death over tea, Earl Grey, hot, whereas a Jedi with a lightsaber and a rascal with a ship that can make the Kessel Run in less than 12 parsecs will always save the day.

YouTube videos debating and lampooning the rivalry abound. Fan polls from the last few years indicate a fairly even split, and for many Hollywood stars the choice is far from unanimous. Josh Hutcherson of "The Hunger Games" picks "Star Wars," as does "Captain America" star Chris Evans. Reese Witherspoon, and Ryan Reynolds pick "Star Trek," according to a 2012 IGN Entertainment video.

Even if the fan base cannot agree, the fathers of the respective franchises admired each other's creations. In the 2013 DVD release of documentary "Trek Nation," George Lucas said that "Star Trek" had "softened up the entertainment arena so that 'Star Wars' could come along and stand on its shoulders." —*Reuters*

Females and felines are top 2015 Instagram stars

PHOTO: REUTERS

NEW YORK — If you want to be an Instagram star, you had better be female and get a cat. Or be Taylor Swift.

All of the Top 10 most-liked images of 2015 on the social media platform featured women, including pop stars Beyonce and Selena Gomez, according to an Instagram list released on Wednesday.

But Swift captured five of the top spots with three photos of the 25-year-old country-pop star with her white cat Meredith, one of the huge bunch of white roses she got from rapper Kanye West after the pair settled a long-running feud at the MTV Video Music Awards, and another of her with Scottish DJ boyfriend Calvin Harris.

The "Shake It Off" singer also has the most followers -- more than 49 million — on the photo-sharing app owned by Facebook Inc, that has 400 million plus global users.

However, the top place for 2015 went to 20-year-old fashion model and TV reality star Kendall Jenner's "heart hair" photo, which has been liked more than 3.2 million times since it was posted in July.

Jenner's younger sister Kylie took the fourth spot with her high school graduation photo. Both are members of the Kardashian family. —*Reuters*

Prices for Southeast Asian art soars: Sotheby's

SINGAPORE — When "Bathing in the Shower" by the late Indonesian artist Hendra Gunawan went under the hammer at Sotheby's autumn auction in Hong Kong in October this year, the oil painting of three female bathers was sold for HK$9.7 million ($1.3 million).

That price was almost 30 times higher than the most expensive Southeast Asian painting sold at Sotheby's first auction of the region's work in 1996 in Singapore.

At the 1996 auction, Sotheby's achieved S$3.77 million (2 million pounds) of sales - but prices for Southeast Asian art and sales volumes have since soared, Sotheby's says.

With its Southeast Asian auctions now anchored in Hong Kong, the world's biggest art market, Sotheby's says its sales have improved sharply: last year it sold HK$350 million ($45.16 million) of art by the region's artists.

Rival auctioneers Christie's says that in November 2011 it sold six Singapore art works for a shade over HK$2.7 million, while at an auction in May of this year it sold 30 works for HK$19.8 million.

"Southeast Asian art is increasingly becoming an internationalised category and sees increased buying from other parts of Asia as well as from the West," Kim Chuan Mok, head of Southeast Asian Paintings at Sotheby's, said in an interview.

Many of the collectors are from the region, and the rise of Southeast Asian art correlates with increased affluence, namely in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines, Mok said.

He declined to give specific information on clients' profiles but said many of them are drawn to works because of their diversity. "You give Southeast Asian artists one theme and they all would come up with different things because of diverse influences," Mok said. "Which is unlike, for example, Chinese artists who have similar backgrounds and experiences."

A security guard walks past "Our Soldiers Led Under Prince Diponegoro" by Indonesian artist S. Sudjojono during a preview ahead of Sotheby's Spring Sales in Hong Kong in 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Koh Seow Chuan, an architect and avid art collector based in Singapore, said he has been acquiring Southeast Asian artworks for the last 50 years because of their unique attributes.

"They reflect the convergence of the great cultures of the world over the past 200 years", he said.

Ryan Su, a Singapore trainee lawyer and art collector who owns the largest collection of Andy Warhol Polaroids in Asia, said collecting Southeast Asian art is a way to go back to one's roots and can be a celebration of heritage. "I started my art collecting by collecting Western contemporary art. This was only natural for me as I was living in the West. Upon returning to Singapore, I feel that the type of SEA Art that resonates the best with me are works by the Nanyang School artists," he said.

Southeast Asian art, compared to art in other regions, is also relatively affordable, making it a popular entry point for new collectors, Mok said.

"Collectors can get their hands on a quality Southeast Asian art piece by a bluechip artist for a fraction of the price paid for an artwork from the more mature and established categories," Mok said.

It is important for artists in the region to be seen as a cohesive Southeast Asian brand to garner more international attention, he added.

Singapore is riding on this need for a collective Southeast Asian identity by investing heavily in art development with the intent of becoming the region's art market hub. The island-city opened the National Gallery Singapore last week, featuring the largest public collection of Southeast Asian art.

While Indonesia dominates the region's art market with a 54 percent market share based on total auction sales at Sotheby's and Christie's, Singapore provides the necessary infrastructure for an art market to flourish, Mok said. The late S. Sudjojono's "Our Soldiers Led Under Prince Diponegoro" held the record for Southeast Asian artists. The painting by the Indonesian artist fetched HK$58.36 million ($7.53 million) at a Sotheby's auction in 2014.—*Reuters*

Japan Airlines eyes routes to new US cities

DALLAS — Japan Airlines Co. is considering new routes between Japan and the US as well as additional airline partnerships to offer connections to a greater number of North American cities, JAL Chairman Masaru Onishi indicated to Kyodo News in a recent interview.

Speaking in Dallas as the airline reinstated service Monday between Tokyo and Dallas-Fort Worth after a roughly 14-year break, Onishi, 60, suggested the possibility of further expansions to JAL's network, including service to Australia.

In the interview, he also acknowledged a blow the carrier suffered in November on its Paris service after the terrorist attacks on the French capital earlier in the month.

"With this (resumption of Dallas service), JAL now offers flights from Japan to the majority of American Airlines Inc.'s main hubs," Onishi said, referencing the oneworld Alliance partner with which it has the closest ties, including revenue-sharing agreements on trans-Pacific flights.

American's other hub cities served by JAL are Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. The Japanese carrier also flies to Boston, San Francisco, San Diego and Vancouver. All routes are served from Tokyo with the exception of Los Angeles, which is also served from Osaka.

Onishi went on to say that JAL is currently "in the midst of a search" for other possible US destinations for trans-Pacific flights, and that the airline is "open to the possibility" of expanding its code-sharing arrangements with carriers other than American to offer more connections to North America.—*Kyodo News*

mitv Myanmar International

(4-12-2015 07:00 am~ 5-12-2015 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Welcome To Naga Land
08:03	Am	News
08:25	Am	Myanmar Childhood Games (Episode-3)
08:36	Am	Around The Maha Boditahtaung
08:48	Am	A Tea Business: Pankwan (Part-2)
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	A Novitiation Ceremony in a Rural Township
09:52	Am	Egg Shell
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	A Life In The Ring
10:43	Am	Inspiration
10:50	Am	Products Of Myanmar - Kachin Traditional Knife

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	The Precious Lands Of Myanmar (Mandalay Region)
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Creator Of Imagination
08:52	Pm	TECH School

(09:00 Pm ~ 11:00 Pm) - Today Repeat (09:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am) - Thursday Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)
(03:00 Am ~ 07:00 Am) - Today Repeat (07:00 Am ~ 11:00 Am)

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

MRTV Entertainment Channel

(4-12-2015, Friday)

6:00 am
- Alinka Wut Yee Music Troupe

6:20 am
- Pyi Thu Ni Ti

6:40 am
- Song Programme

7:50 am
- TV Drama Series

8:50 am
- Teleplay

9:45 am
- My Dream

10:00 am
- Myanmar Video

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Friday, 4 December, 2015

Liverpool hit Saints for six to reach League Cup semis

Divock Origi celebrates with team mates after scoring the fourth goal for Liverpool during Capital One Cup Quarter Final at St Mary's Stadium on 2 December. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Liverpool ran riot to reach the League Cup semi-finals with a 6-1 thrashing of Southampton on Wednesday in which Divock Origi grabbed a hat-trick and Daniel Sturridge scored twice as the Juergen Klopp juggernaut rolled on.

Jordon Ibe added his name to the scoresheet as Liverpool emphatically overcame the early blow of Sadio Mane putting the hosts ahead inside a minute to emphasise their resurgence since Klopp arrived at the start of October.

Klopp's side, who have now won seven of their last eight games in all competitions, will face Stoke City in the semi-finals while Premier League leaders Manchester City will play Everton in the other last-four clash after Wednesday's draw.

While Liverpool's improvement under Klopp, especially away from home, has sparked a wave of renewed belief among their fans, they were second best and a long way off the pace as Southampton grabbed an early stranglehold on the tie.

A little over 40 seconds were on the clock when Mane stole a march on Liverpool left back Alberto Moreno and arrived at the far post to get his head to a cross from Ryan Bertrand and bury the ball past Adam Bogdan. Liverpool, however, seem to have developed a steelier constitution under Klopp and turned the game around thanks to an inspired five minutes from Sturridge.

Having returned from a long injury absence as a substitute against Swansea City on Sunday, he shook off the remaining ring rust to draw Liverpool level on 25 minutes.

The England striker miscontrolled a long, arcing pass from Joe Allen, but collected the ball, beat the final defender and drilled a left-footed finish into the far corner of the net. —*Reuters*

Tennis Comp held at Theinbyu Tennis playground

Ko Moe

THE 9th Tennis competition will be held at Theinbyu Tennis playground from 10 to 16 December by the Yangon City Development Committee. The competition comprises 13 events, those who are deemed to be outstanding players at the competition will be honoured.

Under 10 years, 12 years and 14 years men and women's events as well as individuals and team groups will be included in the competition.

Italian anti-doping body calls for bans on 26 athletes

ROME — Italian anti-doping authorities have called for two-year bans on 26 athletes, including Olympic bronze medallist Fabrizio Donato and European champion long jumper Andrew Howe, for allegedly failing to provide doping samples.

Italy's National Anti-Doping Organisation (NADO) accused the athletes of evading doping controls or failing to be available for them, the country's Olympic Committee (CONI) said in a statement on Wednesday. NADO also called for cases against a further 39 athletes to be dropped.

The 26 athletes named included Howe, who won the European title in 2006 and a world silver medal a year later, and Donato, who was European triple jump champion in 2012 and won a bronze at the London Olympics the same year.

Daniele Meucci, reigning European marathon champion, was also named. Others included Giuseppe Gibilisco, a former pole vaulter who was world champion in 2003 and Olympic bronze medallist in Athens the following year, and former European marathon champion Anna Incerti. The accusations followed a police investigation in Trento, in northern Italy.

None of the accused had yet responded publicly, reports said. Gazzetta dello Sport said the accusations could have repercussions for Italy's hopes at next year's Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games.

Athletics was plunged into crisis last month over a report by the independent commission of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) detailed systematic, state-sponsored doping and related corruption in Russia. The IAAF, governing body of world athletics, has since voted overwhelmingly to suspend Russia from the sport — potentially casting one of track and field's most successful nations out of next year's Rio Olympics. —*Reuters*

Cahill signs new 4-year Chelsea deal

LONDON — Chelsea's England defender Gary Cahill has signed a new four-year contract that will keep him at the club until 2019, the Premier League champions said in a statement.

The 29-year-old has become a pivotal figure in the Chelsea backline since joining from Bolton Wanderers in 2012, winning the Champions League, Europa League, Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup in his relatively short time at Stamford Bridge.

His partnership alongside John Terry at the heart of the Chelsea defence was a key component in their run to the Premier League title last season, with the west London club boasting the meanest rearguard in the top flight.

Chelsea's Gary Cahill and Asmir Begovic in action with Tottenham's Harry Kane during Barclays Premier League at White Hart Lane. PHOTO: REUTERS

"I'm really pleased to commit my future to Chelsea and it's great the club has put their faith in me," the centre back, who has made 177 appearances for Chelsea, scoring 15 times, said on the club website.

"I have achieved a lot here and I hope I can keep on learning, helping the team and lifting trophies over the next four years."

Chelsea have endured a poor start to the season with question marks hanging over their defence that was so watertight in the last campaign. They are 14th in the table with only 15 points from their opening 14 games of the season and are at home to Bournemouth on Saturday. —*Reuters*

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