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Union Peace Conference to cover five topics

Ye Myint

THE secretaries of groups scheduled to attend the Union Peace Conference agreed to discuss five topics at the country's first political dialogue following a two-day preparatory meeting at the Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC) yesterday.

The five agenda items include political issues, economic issues and social issues, security and land and natural resources. The stakeholders used the two-day pre-meeting to prepare for the discussion, said U Aung Naing Oo, a programme director at the MPC.

According to U Aung Naing Oo, the topic of establishing a democratic federal Union is set to be discussed under political issues, while internally displaced persons will fall under social issues.

Likewise, the topic of revenue distribution and taxation will be discussed as part of the segment on economic issues, while the security segment will address basic principles of national security. Natural resources management and distribution will be discussed under the segment on land and natural resources.

The first session of the Union Peace Conference will be held at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II and will run for five days, from 12 to 16 January, in Nay Pyi Taw.

Sai Kyaw Nyunt, secretary of



U Aung Naing Oo, a programme director at Myanmar Peace Centre, explains the topics to be discussed at the Union Peace Conference to reporters on 6 January. PHOTO: YE MYINT

the Union Political Dialogue Joint Committee representing Myanmar's political parties, said there are plans to hold group discussions on separate topics, assigning representatives of each stakeholder group to discuss each topic.

Group discussions are set to run for three days, from Day 2 to Day 4 of the peace conference, said Sai Kyaw Nyunt, adding that a record of all previous discussions will be read out on the final day of the conference.

He said no decisions will be made on the five topics discussed at the first round of the Union Peace Conference.

Starting from 5 January, the stakeholder groups, representing the current government and parliament, the Tatmadaw, ethnic armed groups and political parties, held preliminary discussions on the structure of the upcoming Union Peace Conference. The pre-meeting ended the following day.

New Entry Visa System beginning Jan 11

THE new system for granting entry visas and re-entry visas to foreigners will be introduced beginning January 11. According to the new system, there are 12 types of entry visa and three types of re-entry visa as mentioned hereunder in the tabular form:

12 types of entry visa

No.	Types of Visa	Visa fees	Duration of stay
1	Gratis Diplomatic/Official Courtesy Visa	Free	Tour of Duty
2	Official Visa	US\$ 20	28 Days
3	Tourist Visa	US\$ 20	28 Days
4	Business Visa	US\$ 36	70Days
5	Employment Visa	US\$ 36	70Days
6	Social Visa	US\$ 36	28Days

7	Religious Visa	US\$ 36	70Days
8	Education Visa	US\$ 36	70Days
9	Journalist Visa	US\$ 36	28Days
10	Crew Visa	US\$ 36	28Days
11	Workshop/Seminar/Meeting/Research Visa	US\$ 36	28Days
12	Transit Visa	US\$ 18	24 hours

The above-mentioned visas can be applied for at Myanmar embassies abroad. Applications for Business Visa, Workshop, Seminar, Meeting, Research Visas, Crew Visa and Transit Visa can be obtained on arrival at Yangon International Airport, Mandalay International Airport and Nay Pyi Taw International Airport.

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Nationwide development plan to focus on agriculture, industry



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

THE Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development released its National Comprehensive Development Plan (NCDP) yesterday at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session in Nay Pyi Taw.

In the report, the ministry prioritises the agricultural and industrial sectors in the coming phases of its 20-year master plan (2010-2030) for the country's economic development, aiming to generate job opportu-

nities in these two sectors.

At the meeting, the Joint Bill Committee in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw also discussed the National Project Bill for the next fiscal year. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Amyotha Hluttaw

Transport ministry to regulate drones

THE Amyotha Hluttaw continued its session in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, approving four reports and discussed three questions, including one about the use of drones by people in Myanmar.

In response to the question about the use of drones, Deputy Minister for Transport U Zin Yaw said the ministry is planning to issue rules and regula-

tions and registration protocols pertaining to the use of drones. He said although drones can be used in terrorist attacks, they are useful for many purposes that can benefit society. The Civil Aviation Department under the Ministry of Transport is planning to issue an Advisory Circular on the use of drones around the country, he added. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Newly elected MPs to take seats in parliament on 1 Feb

THE second Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw will be convened on 1 February, according to announcements from the two parliaments yesterday.

The announcement of Pyithu Hluttaw, signed by Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann, stated that the second Pyithu Hluttaw is scheduled to convene at 10 am

on 1st February and the Hluttaw has already sent invitations to its newly elected members.

Meanwhile, the announcement of Amyotha Hluttaw, signed by Speaker U Khin Aung Myint, stated that the second Amyotha Hluttaw will begin at the same time and extended invitations. — *GNLM*

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New Entry Visa System beginning Jan 11

Three Types of Re-entry Visa

No.	Types of Visa	Visa fees	Duration of stay
1	Multiple Journey Special Re-entry Visa	US\$ 180	permitted period
2	Special Re-entry Visa	US\$ 54	permitted period
3	Re-entry Visa	Ks. 5000	(6) Month permitted

The above-mentioned re-entry visas can be applied for at Stay Permit Section, Foreigners Affairs Branch at No 122, Ground Floor, Pansodan Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon.

The details regarding the new system of entry visa can be checked at the website of the Ministry of Immigration and Population www.mip.gov.mm. — *Myanmar News Agency*

MNA gets 2nd ATR to add Thai flights



The second ATR aircraft of Myanmar National Airlines landed at Yangon International Airport. PHOTO: NYUNT LWIN (MNA)

MYANMAR National Airlines (MNA) welcomed its second ATR aircraft at Yangon International Airport on 5 January.

The aircraft is the second ATR plane, out of six ordered from ATR company, and would be used in the MNA's flights to local and foreign

destinations, according to MNA. The rest are expected to arrive in 2016 and 2017. With the newly arrived ATR plane, MNA would extend its wings to Chiang Mai and Bangkok in February, said Capt Than Tun, CEO of MNA.

In addition, MNA will oper-

ate a daily service from Yangon to Bangkok starting 28 January.

The country's oldest airline founded in 1948 carried out reforms last year with a new management, expanding regional and foreign destinations. — *Tin Maung (Transport)*

“Mum, do you miss the coo of the dove” launched



THE book “Mum, do you miss the coo of the dove” written by Naung Kyaw was launched yesterday in Yangon.

The launching ceremony was attended by doyens and younger writers.

Naung Kyaw introduced the book to the audience and spoke words of thanks. — *Kay Khaing*

Road accidents caused more than 4230 deaths in 2015

TRAFFIC accidents in 2015 killed 4,233 nationwide, according to a police source.

More than 15,300 road accidents occurred between January and December last year, with more than 11 deaths per day on average.

Myanmar has seen an increase in the death toll resulting from traffic accidents, from

2,811 in 9,762 accidents in 2011, 3,326 in 11,649 cases in 2012, 3,612 in 13,907 cases in 2013, 4,163 in 14,781 cases in 2014 and 4,233 in 15,306 cases in 2015.

More than 2730 traffic police are on duty nationwide to enforce traffic law as part of an effort to reduce accidents. — *Myanmar News Agency*

Vice president calls for valley authority law

VICE PRESIDENT U Nyan Tun addressed the National Disaster Management Committee at a work co-ordination meeting yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. The vice president serves as chairman of the committee.

"The Tennessee Valley, previously damaged by frequent floods, has now become a strong stimulus for American economic growth, as the US Congress has promulgated the Tennessee Valley Authority Act. Thanks to this act, an integrated valley development program has come into existence, with 54 dams and embankments supplying both water and electricity, in addition to the protection of hydrological environments," he said.

He also cited the Yangtze River Water Conservancy as another example of how irrigation networks have contributed to the socio-economic development of a local populace, saying the project has contributed to China's national development.



Vice President U Nyan Tun delivers address at the work co-ordination meeting of the committee for the National Disaster Management. PHOTO: MNA

The vice president said the income earned from Yangtze Economic Zone constitutes 28 per cent of China's GDP.

He also brought up the Murray

River in Australia, the Rhine River in Germany, the Meuse River in France and the Scheldt River in the Netherlands, saying dams on the rivers have contributed to the pre-

vention of natural disasters and the preservation of local ecosystems.

He stressed the need to promulgate a valley authority law in order to implement inte-

grated water basin management, build flood controlling dams and embankments and strengthen environmental protection measures.—*Myanmar News Agency*

C-in-C receives Indian Coast Guard DG



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Vice Admiral HCS Bisht, AVSM, the Director-General of the Indian Coast Guard. PHOTO: MYAWADY

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Vice Admiral HCS Bisht, AVSM, the Director-General of the Indian Coast Guard in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting the two representatives discussed the promotion of relations between the two armed forces and promoting cooperation between the nations in border exchange matters, the exchange of visits and promotion

of matters related to naval training and rescue activities in the sea and the issue of boat people.

Also present at the meeting was Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Vice-Admiral Tin Aung San and senior military officers from Commander-in-Chief (Army) Office.

Vice Admiral HCS Bisht, AVSM, was accompanied by Capt Manish Bhandari, Indian Navy Military Attaché to Myanmar and officials.—*Myawady*

U Wunna Maung Lwin receives Bangkok-based Argentine Ambassador

U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received H.E. Ms. Ana Maria RAMIREZ, Bangkok-based Argentine Ambassador to Myanmar, who has completed her tour of duty as the Ambassador of the

Argentine Republic of to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, in Ayeyarwaddy Room, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw at 9:30 hrs today. At the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on furthering bilateral relations and cooperation as well as matters of

mutual interest.

Also present at the meeting together with the Union Minister were Director-General of Political Department and responsible officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Ahtet Yeywa looks to complete in 2018

THE Ahtet Yeywa hydropower project over the Dokhtawady River in northern Myanmar is expected to be completed in 2018.

The Ministry of Electric Power is stepping up its efforts to complete the project which will be installed with four 70-MW generators to produce 1,409 million KW hours a year.

Work on construction of the project started 2010.

A diversion tunnel which is 33 ft in diameter and 1,010 ft in length is considered one of the main construction sites for the project completed in December 2013.

The Ahtet Yeywa Hydropower project is the second pro-

ject on the river, following the 280 MW-Yeywa Hydro power plant.

Meanwhile, on the same river, feasibilities are being reviewed for another three projects which could possibly generate 886 MW in total.

Upon completion, the five projects are expected to generate 1,936 MW in total.—*Myanmar News Agency*



The Ahtet Yeywa hydropower project over the Dokhtawady River is seen under construction in northern Myanmar. PHOTO: MNA

9,188 arrested in drugs cases in 2015

A TOTAL of 9,188 were arrested in 6,414 cases connected with drugs in 2015, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

Of those, 8,055 were male and 1,133 were female.

Among the seizures last year, 888,844 kilos of opium in 388 cases, 186 kilos of her-

oin in 2,502 cases, 49,959,9123 yabba pills (a synthetic-amphetamine based narcotics) in 2,805 cases and 87 kilos of marijuana in 215 cases, according to police. They also seized chemicals and equipment used for producing illicit drugs.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Visitors flock to NyaungU



Bagan, one of tourists attractionsites of Myanmar. PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

THE NyaungU area in the ancient city of Bagan, located on the bank of the Ayeyawaddy River, has become crowded with visitors this high season with particular interest paid to the pagodas located there—Tuyin Taung, Tantkyi Taung, Shwezigon and Lawkananda.

Most of visitors are foreign tourists according to locals. However, the majority of weekend visitors are Myanmar government staff and other weekenders professionals.

Boatmen at the jetty near Buu Pagoda have seen their income doubled from the large numbers of visitors from home and abroad who take boat trips to Tantkyi Taung Pagoda.

During the tourist season boats will charge K35,000 (US\$26) for a morning trip and K20,000 (\$15) for an evening trip.

Bagan-NyaungU is famous for its amazing landscapes and the chance to observe the culture of the country.

Bagan, the capital of

the first Myanmar Empire, is the main tourist destination area in the country. It includes one of the richest archaeological sites in South-east Asia. The Magic of Bagan has inspired visitors to come to Myanmar for nearly 1,000 years. This year's total number of tourist arrivals has reached more than 4.2 million. It is estimated that the number will increase up to 5 millions by April this year, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.—Ye Win Naing (NyaungU)

Naga Traditional New Year Festival in mid-January

Khin Yadana

VISITORS will enjoy free car-ride to Naga Traditional New Year Festival which is scheduled to be held on 15 January in Lahe of Naga Self-administered Zone, with a variety of events, one organiser said.

Not only Naga nationals but all visitors across the country are invited to enjoy the event, planning to take them to the festival from Hsinthay Village to Lahe by car free of charge.

The traditional festival annually taken place at

Khamti, Lashe, Lahe and Nanyun townships on a grand scale. It is famous among other festivals of Naga people. The annual festival is usually held in the areas where majority of Naga people live including Khamti border area and Yanaing, Hmat, Patkoi and Hukaung valleys at the same time. During the festival, car owners for Lahe and Hsinthay will take the visitors there without charging them. Normally, a passenger is charged about K30,000 (US\$ 23) on a motorbike and K15,000 (\$11) by car from

Hsinthay Village and Khamti Township. Lahe where the festival will be held, is located 50 miles away from Khamti, can be reached through Hsinthay Village.

To mark the gathering of Naga people wearing their national dresses during the festival, they present their traditional materials or animals to each other as a gift. The act is aim to promote friendship among them.

This year's festival is expected to draw high interest from visitors because of better transportation services.—MMAL



Naga men line up as they wait for dance in their new year festival. PHOTO: TIN WIN

Crime News

Man killed in traffic accident in Nay Pyi Taw

ONE man died on the spot and another was injured in a road accident in Zabuthiri Township in the capital Nay Pyi Taw.

The collision occurred between a car heading to Pyay from Yangon and a motorbike at the junction of Yazathingaha

Road and Thabyaygone Market Road near the Gem Museum on 31 December.

Aung Aung, 32, a passenger on the motorbike, was killed on the spot while The motorbike driver Kyaw Thet Khaing, 20, sustained serious

injuries and was admitted to the General Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw.

Kyaw Thet Khaing is being charged under Criminal Law Section 338/304 by the Inma Police Station.—Min Min Latt (Mann Takketho)

Illegal jade stones seized in Shan State

AUTHORITIES seized illegal jade stones weighing 299 kilograms in Kyaukme, Shan State on Sunday, police reported yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, members of the Kyaukme Town-

ship Police Force searched a vehicle enroute from Naungcho to Kyaukme being driven by 30-year-old Tun Naing together with 26-year-old Thein Zaw.

They found the illegal jade

stones and cut jade weighing 2.6 kilograms in the vehicle and seized them.

Charges have been filed against both suspects by the Kyaukme Myoma Police Station.—Police IPRD

15 injured following vehicle rollover

FIFTEEN people were injured in vehicle accident on 2 January near mile post No (76/4-5) on Gangaw-Monywa Road in Gangaw Township in Magway Region.

A six-wheeled vehicle

heading to Salin Township from Matupi being driven by one Wan Kyaw, 31, of Kyogwingyi Village in Salin Township, fell 20 feet into a roadside ditch when the driver lost control.

Fifteen construction workers on the vehicle sustained injuries.

The driver was found guilty of reckless driving by police at the Gangaw Myoma Police Station.—Police IPRD

Men arrested in Yangon for drug possession

TWO men who were found in possession of a cache of marijuana were seized by police in Thingangyun Township, Yangon.

A combined security force comprising police from Thuwunna, Thingyangyun, Thakayta and Dagon Seikkan townships searched the two suspects riding a bicycle on Kamarkyi Bridge in

Thingangyun Township on 2 January.

They discovered nearly 2 kilograms of marijuana.

Thura Tun, 36, and San Min, 32, have been charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law by the Thuwunna Police Station.—Myanmar News Agency



Thura Tun and San Min. Photo: Police

Indonesia prepares rural flood defences to protect crops

JAKARTA — Indonesia is bolstering its rural flood defences to help farmers protect crops from monsoon waters and the La Niña weather pattern, its agriculture minister said yesterday.

Indonesia is a top producer of cocoa, palm oil and coffee, as well as a major importer of rice and raw sugar. It has forecast that the La Niña weather pattern will strengthen from mid-2016.

Any reduction in output of these crops could support global prices or lead to greater imports as domestic supplies dwindle in Southeast Asia's biggest economy.

La Niña is a cooling of the tropical waters of the Pacific that is a counterpart to the El Niño weather event that is characterized by warmer waters.

Indonesia is repairing irrigation systems and installing water pumps in areas likely to be worst hit, such as East Java, Agriculture Minister Amran Sulaiman told reporters, adding

that rice planting was also being accelerated.

"La Niña (will) possibly occur in October," Sulaiman added. "We're preparing early in anticipation, just like last year when we made early preparations to face the drought."

Sulaiman said discussions with state food procurement agency Bulog were underway over domestic rice buying but declined to comment on imports, adding that harvests may be delayed a little and that Bulog currently had stocks of 1.2 million tonnes.

Rice imports are a contentious issue in the country where President Joko Widodo is faced with fast-rising food prices but is also pursuing self-sufficiency to protect farmers.

Despite the self-sufficiency push, Indonesia expected to have imported 700,000 tonnes of rice from Viet Nam and Thailand by the end of 2015, a government official said last month.—Reuters

North Korea says successfully conducts first H-bomb test



A sales assistant watches TV sets broadcasting a news report on North Korea's nuclear test, in Seoul, on 6 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

SEOUL — North Korea said it successfully tested a miniaturised hydrogen nuclear device yesterday, claiming a significant advance in the isolated state's strike capability and setting off alarm bells in Japan and South Korea.

The test, the fourth time North Korea has exploded a nuclear device, was ordered by young leader Kim Jong Un, state media said.

"The first H-bomb test was successfully conducted at 10:00 (2030 ET) on Wednesday," North Korea's official KCNA news agency said.

Last month, Kim appeared to claim his country had developed a hydrogen bomb, also known as a thermonuclear device, a step up from the less powerful atomic bomb, but the United States and outside experts were sceptical at the time.

South Korean intelligence officials and several analysts questioned whether Wednesday's explosion was indeed a full-fledged test of a hydrogen device.

The device had a yield of about 6 kilotons, according to the office of a South Korean lawmaker on the parliamentary intelligence committee — roughly the same size as the North's last test, which was equivalent to 6-7 kilotons of TNT.

"Given the scale, it is hard to believe this is a real hydrogen bomb," said Yang Uk, a senior research fellow at the Korea Defence and Security Forum.

"They could have tested some middle stage kind (of device) between an A-bomb and H-bomb, but unless they come up with any clear evidence, it is difficult to trust their claim."

Joe Cirincione, a nuclear expert who is president of Plough-

shares Fund, a global security organisation, said North Korea may have mixed a hydrogen isotope in a normal atomic fission bomb.

"Because it is, in fact, hydrogen, they could claim it is a hydrogen bomb," he said. "But it is not a true fusion bomb capable of the massive multi-megaton yields these bombs produce".

The United States Geological Survey reported a 5.1 magnitude quake that South Korea said was 49 km (30 miles) from the Punggye-ri site where the North has conducted nuclear tests in the past.

North Korea's last test, of an atomic device in 2013, also registered at 5.1 on the USGS scale.

The test nevertheless may mark an advance of North Korea's nuclear technology. The claim of miniaturising, which would allow the device to be adapted as a weapon and placed on a missile, would also pose a new threat to the United States and its regional allies, Japan and South Korea.

UN MEETING

North Korea has been under UN Security Council sanctions since it first tested an atomic device in 2006 and could face additional measures. The Security Council will meet later on Wednesday to discuss what steps it could take, diplomats said.

The White House said it could not confirm North Korea's claims, but added the United States would respond appropriately to provocations and defend its allies.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Japan would make a firm response to North Korea's challenge against nuclear non-proliferation.

"North Korea's nuclear test is a serious threat to our nation's security and we absolutely cannot tolerate it," Abe told reporters.

"We strongly denounce it."

South Korea said it would take all possible measures, including possible United Nations sanctions, to ensure Pyongyang paid the price after its fourth nuclear test. "The government must now work closely with the international community to ensure that North Korea pays the commensurate price for the latest nuclear test," President Park Geun-hye said in a statement. "We must respond decisively through measures such as strong international sanctions."

The North's state news agency said it will not give up its nuclear programme as long as the United States maintained what it called "its stance of aggression".

It called the device the "H-bomb of justice" and said: "The US is a gang of cruel robbers which has worked hard to bring even a nuclear disaster to the DPRK," using the official acronym for North Korea.

However, the agency said Pyongyang will act as a responsible nuclear state and vowed not to use its nuclear weapons unless its sovereignty was infringed. It said it will not transfer its nuclear capabilities to other parties. While a fourth nuclear test had been long expected, the timing of Wednesday's explosion came as a surprise. The test is bound to ratchet up tensions between the isolated country and its neighbours as well as Washington. China, North Korea's main ally, has not commented on the test but is likely to be displeased at the increase in tensions in its neighbourhood. China's Xinhua state news agency said the test ran counter to the goal of decentralisation and warned that any practice that disrupts stability in northeast Asia is "undesirable and unwise".—Reuters

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India's paramilitary to deploy women commandos for anti-Naxal operations

NEW DELHI — Indian paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has decided to deploy women commandos for anti-Naxalite operations.

"CRPF will soon deploy about 300 women commandos for undertaking anti-Naxal operations in select left-wing extremism affected states," Director General of CRPF Prakash Mishra said Tuesday during a function.

According to Mishra, several companies from CRPF's women battalions will be sent for pre-induction training and special tasks before final deployment.

Officials said there were specific reasons and operational benefits for deploying women combatants in Naxalite areas.

"While they can interact with the local women folk which not only helps in gathering good intelligence, it also helps in bringing forces closer to the locals and villagers," officials said.

CRPF is on the forefront of anti-Naxal operations in India.—Xinhua

Malaysia Airlines resumes checked baggage on Europe routes

KUALA LUMPUR — Malaysia Airlines resumed normal check-in baggage allowances on all its flights yesterday after banning it temporarily due to strong head winds on the longer routes it was taking for safety reasons.

The airline said it has recently had to operate a longer route to Europe, which combined with strong head winds, limited the airlines' ability to carry baggage and cargo.

The airline did not elaborate on the safety reasons behind its new flight paths to Europe but one of its airliners was shot down over rebel-held territory in eastern Ukraine in 2014 with the loss of all 298 people on board.

It banned checked-in baggage on flights to Amsterdam and Paris operated by its Boeing 777 aircraft.

"Based on its current risk assessment, done on a daily basis, the airline is now able to take a shorter route on European flights," the airline said in a statement.

All baggage is being shipped to affected customers in Europe, it added.

The airline suffered two disasters in 2014. In March that year, its flight MH370 carrying 239 passengers and crew disappeared while on a flight to China and is believed to have gone down in the Indian Ocean.—Reuters



Malaysia Airlines planes sit on the tarmac at Kuala Lumpur International Airport in 2014. PHOTO : REUTERS

Bangladesh court upholds death sentence for Islamist leader

DHAKA — Bangladesh's Supreme Court upheld the death penalty for a top Islamist party leader yesterday for atrocities committed during the country's war of independence from Pakistan more than four decades ago, a government lawyer said.

Four opposition politicians, including three leaders of the Islamist party, the Jamaat-e-Islami, have been convicted by a war crimes tribunal and executed since late 2013.

The executions have come amidst a rise in Islamist militant violence in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, with militant groups claiming the murder of two foreigners and four secular writers and a publisher last year.

The court rejected an appeal

by Motiur Rahman Nizami, head of the Jamaat-e-Islami, who was sentenced to death in 2014 by the tribunal for genocide, rape and orchestrating the massacre of top intellectuals during the 1971 war.

"The court upheld the death sentence. We are happy with the verdict," state prosecutor Syed Haider Ali told Reuters.

Jamaat-e-Islami, which has said the charges against Nizami to be baseless, called for a nationwide strike on Thursday in protest.

Nizami, a former legislator and minister under opposition leader Khaleda Zia's last term as prime minister, has been in jail since 2010 when he was charged with war crimes by the tribunal set up by Prime Minister Sheikh

Hasina that year.

Islamists have denounced the tribunal as part of a politically motivated campaign aimed at weakening the leadership of Jamaat-e-Islami, a key ally of the country's main opposition party.

Nizami could be hanged within months unless the Supreme Court reviews his case again, or he is granted clemency by the president.

"My client will decide whether he will file a review petition," chief defence prosecutor Khandker Mahbub Hossain told reporters.

The government has blamed the increase in Islamist violence on the Jamaat-e-Islami but the party denies any link to the militant attacks.—Reuters

Bee forces flight delay in Indonesia

JAKARTA — An errant bee caused the takeoff of a flight operated by Indonesia's flag carrier Garuda Indonesia to be delayed, the airline's spokesman said yesterday.

Benny Butarbutar, the company's vice president of corporate communications, told Kyodo News that the pilot of Flight GA197 decided to delay the flight for four hours Tuesday after finding some problems in one of the aircraft's engines.

The plane was scheduled to take off at 10:10am from Kuala-namu international airport in the North Sumatra provincial capital of Medan bound for the capital Jakarta.

"Based on a thorough investigation, the problem in the air-

craft's electronic engine control was caused by a bee entering the aircraft's pitot tube located on the outer part of the cockpit, delaying the departure," Butarbutar said. The pitot tube measures airspeed.

The incident, he added, "was beyond Garuda's control and caused more by the airport's situation and condition."

The problem was discovered just as the plane was about to take off, he said.

"Considering safety aspects, Garuda Indonesia decided to delay the flight, and after a one-hour repair process, the aircraft was declared serviceable and ready to operate," Butarbutar said, adding that the incident was the first of its kind for Garuda.—Kyodo News

Indonesia turns to China as ethnic Uighurs join would-be jihadis

JAKARTA — Indonesian authorities are working with their counterparts in China to stem a flow of ethnic Uighur militants seeking to join Islamist jihadists in the world's most populous Muslim country, Indonesia's counter-terrorism chief said.

Saud Usman Nasution's comments come amid mounting concern in Indonesia about possible attacks by sympathisers of the Islamic State group and follows the arrest of 13 men across the island of Java, including a Muslim Uighur with a suicide-bomb vest.

The appearance among Indonesian militant networks of Uighurs, who come from the Xinjiang region in far-western China, is likely to add to Beijing's concerns that exiles will return to their homeland as experienced and trained jihadists.

China says Islamist militants and separatists operate in energy-rich Xinjiang on the borders of central Asia, where violence has killed hundreds in recent years.

Rights groups say much of the unrest can be traced back to frustration at controls over the Uighurs'

culture and religion, and that most of those who leave are only fleeing repression not seeking to wage jihad. China denies repressing rights.

Nasution, who heads the National Counter-Terrorism Agency, told Reuters in an interview on Tuesday that several Uighurs had responded to a call last year by San-

toso, Indonesia's most high-profile backer of Islamic State, to join his band of fighters.

"We are cooperating with China and investigating evidence such as ATM cards and cell-phones," Nasution said, adding that an Indonesian team went to China to interview members of the man's

family, who would not confirm that they were related to him.

There was no immediate comment from China's foreign ministry on whether Beijing is collaborating with Indonesia.

"As far as China is concerned, these people are running off, some of them taking part in jihad

and planning to strike back," said Pan Zhiping, a terrorism expert at the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences.

"Of course we must stop them. I believe, in terms of jointly guarding against extremism, it is necessary that we cooperate."

Bilveer Singh of the Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore said the direct involvement of Chinese Uighurs in Southeast Asian militancy added "an external dimension to the existing home-grown terrorist threat". "It could also complicate ties with a rising China, which may want to play a bigger counter-terrorism role in the region," Singh said in a Eurasia Review article.

Indonesia's security forces have given Santoso, who styles himself as the commander of the Islamic State army in Indonesia, until 9 January to surrender along with his force of about 40 men on the far-flung island of Sulawesi.

However, security analysts believe a larger threat is emerging across the populous island of Java as networks of support for Islamic State grow.—Reuters



A security guard checks a car before entering the National Counter-Terrorism Agency building in Bogor, on 5 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

A year after 'Je suis Charlie', a divided France struggles



People hold panels to create an image depicting the eyes of late Charlie Hebdo editor Stephane Charbonnier, known as "Charb", as hundreds of thousands of French citizens take part in a solidarity march (Marche Republicaine) in the streets of Paris. PHOTO: REUTERS

PARIS — One year on, an anxious, fragmented France is paying tribute to the victims of the killings at *Charlie Hebdo* magazine, with old divisions made worse by what President Francois Hollande has called "a terrible year".

After the Islamist attacks that killed 17 on 7-9 January last year at the satirical weekly and at a Jewish supermarket, the French rallied, marched and lit candles in emotional gatherings celebrated as "the spirit of 11 January", the day four million took to the streets.

But cracks in that unity soon appeared and, a year later, after an even bloodier assault on Paris by another set of home-grown Islamists in November, politicians

are embroiled in a bitter debate over homeland security, and the anti-immigrant National Front (FN) is stronger than ever.

The slogan "Je suis Charlie," a defiant cry of solidarity that appeared everywhere immediately after the killings, is little seen a year on.

"Events such as the January or November attacks trigger moments of unity, in reaction. But that is not enough to offset deep divisions," said Brice Teinturier, head of the Ipsos polling organisation in France.

"The divisions are huge. There are several Frances and they are clashing," he said, describing a France of big cities turned towards the future, a rustbelt France that feels crushed by globalisation, and

a France of housing estates that feels forgotten.

Regional elections last month highlighted those divisions.

In the first round, the National Front came first, doing well in rural and small-town France. In the run-off, voters in big cities helped to keep the Front out of power, exposing another deep split, this time between those who look to the far-right for hope and those who reject it.

In a further sign of tension, a Muslim prayer hall was ransacked to cries of "Arabs out" during a protest rally in Corsica after firemen were attacked last month on a housing estate with a large migrant population.—*Reuters*

Obama, wiping tears, makes new push to tighten gun rules

WASHINGTON — Wiping back tears as he remembered children killed in a mass shooting, President Barack Obama on Tuesday ordered stricter gun rules that he can impose without Congress and urged American voters to reject pro-gun candidates.

Obama made it clear he does not expect gun laws to change during his remaining year in office, but pledged to do what he can to make gun control a theme in the months leading up to the November election to replace him.

In a powerful address in the White House, surrounded by family members of people killed in shootings, Obama's voice rose to a yell as he said the constitutional rights of Americans to bear arms needed to be balanced by the right to worship, gather peacefully and live their lives.

Obama has often said his toughest time in office was grappling with the December 2012 massacre of 20 children and six

adults at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut.

"Every time I think about those kids, it gets me mad," Obama said, tears rolling down his cheek.

"That changed me, that day," he said, after being introduced by Mark Barden, whose 7-year-old son was killed in the shooting. "My hope earnestly has been that it would change the country."

After that tragedy, the Democratic president failed to persuade Congress to toughen US gun laws. He has blamed lawmakers for being in the thrall of the powerful National Rifle Association gun lobby group.

Obama, comparing the issue to the great civil rights causes of his time, is set to discuss gun violence again during a live televised town hall on CNN on Thursday, and during his State of the Union address next Tuesday.

Vice President Joe Biden is slated to do a series of television interviews on the topic on

Wednesday. The US Constitution's 2nd Amendment gives Americans the right to have arms, a right that is fiercely defended.

Obama laid out executive action he is taking to require more gun sellers to get licenses and more gun buyers to undergo background checks.

Under the changes, the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is issuing guidelines intended to narrow exceptions to a system that requires sellers to check with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to determine whether buyers have criminal records, are charged with crimes or have mental health conditions that would bar them from owning a gun.

The proposal is "ripe for abuse" by the government, said Chris Cox, an official with the NRA, in a statement, adding that the group will continue to fight to protect Americans' constitutional rights.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

One US service member killed, two wounded in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON — One member of the US armed forces was killed and two others were wounded on Tuesday in southern Afghanistan's Helmand Province, the site of fierce fighting between Taliban insurgents and American-backed Afghan government forces, the US military said.

The US troops came under fire in the town of Marjah while accompanying Afghan special operations forces, and a US helicopter was damaged in the incident, Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said. Afghan troops also were injured in the fighting, Cook added.

American special operations troops were part of the mission accompanying Afghan forces, a US defence official said.—*Reuters*

Merkel's office sealed off due to suspicious package

BERLIN — The office of German Chancellor Angela Merkel has been sealed off due to a suspicious package, a police spokesman said yesterday.

"We are investigating a suspicious package," a spokesman for Germany's Federal Police told Reuters.

A Reuters eyewitness said there were four plastic yellow postal crates in the cordoned off area.—*Reuters*

25 labourers injured in factory collapse in east Pakistan

ISLAMABAD — At least 25 people were injured when roof of a ceramic factory collapsed in Pakistan's east Gujranwala district yesterday afternoon.

Urdu TV channel Abb Takk reported that the roof collapsed following the boiler of the factory exploded due to gas leakage at Sheikhpura road area of the Gujranwala district, located in the country's east Punjab Province.

Over 50 people were working inside the factory when the accident happened, and some of them are still trapped inside, said the report.

Rescue teams arrived at the site and efforts to pull out the stranded people from the debris of the collapsed factory are underway.—*Xinhua*

More than 2 kg cannabis, other drugs seized in Singapore

SINGAPORE — More than 2 kg cannabis and other drugs estimated to be worth more than 62,122 US dollars were seized by Singapore's Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) in a series of operations recently, said CNB in a press release yesterday.

CNB said a 41-year-old male Singaporean was arrested by police officers for suspected drug consumption and possession on Monday. Four Erimin-5 tablets were recovered from the man and he was referred to CNB.

The authority raided the residence of the 41-year-old male at Kim Tian Road on Tuesday following swift investigations, and a total of about 997 grams of cannabis was found at his residence.

A follow-up operation was also launched on Tuesday evening to seize the drug associate of the 41-year-old man. CNB officers recovered a total of about 1,015 grammes of cannabis, 125 grammes of 'Ice', 16 Erimin-5 tablets and various improvised drug-smoking apparatus at Segar Road and arrested a 42-year-old male Singaporean.—*Xinhua*

Cambodia's famed Angkor earns US\$ 60m from foreign visitors in 2015

PHNOM PENH — Revenue from ticket sales to foreign tourists visiting Cambodia's famed Angkor archaeological park reached 60 million US dollars last year, up 1.2 per cent year-on-year, a spokeswoman said yesterday.

The ancient site welcomed 2.1 million foreigners last year, up 1.96 per cent compared to a year earlier, said Chau Sun Kerya, spokeswoman for the state-run Apsara Authority, which manages the site.

In December alone, the heritage site received 222,581 visitors, generating a revenue of 6.5 million US dollars.

"China, South Korea, Japan and Viet Nam are the largest sources of tourists to the site," she told Xinhua over telephone.

Located in northwest Cambodia's Siem Reap Province, Angkor archaeological park, inscribed on the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1992, is the kingdom's most popular tourist destination.—*Xinhua*

OPINION

Well-begun is half done

Khin Maung Aye

THE year 2016 is a very exciting year as the people of Myanmar have placed high expectations upon the incoming government, which received a mandate from the people to shape their destiny. The people of Myanmar have been particularly encouraged by the slew of preparatory measures taken by the incumbent government to ensure a smooth transfer of the duties of the state, as well as those of the presidency. Now, we are keen to see how the incoming government will get through its first year in power.

What is certain is that the year 2016 will definitely bring dramatic changes to the implementation of political reforms, which will foster a more democratic society. The new regime is expected to handle the country's most sensitive issues, including the

peace process, building a federal union and structural reform within the government. These must all be carried out in a tactful manner in order to ensure that those who resist change and those who are not optimistic about the prospect of drastic changes are not left out of the reform process.

In this regard, it is worth noting that the onus is on the entire populace to be actively involved in the reform activities to be carried out by the new democratic regime; the administration alone cannot build a nation anew. Without the participation of the people, we cannot expect good governance from the new government. Without abandoning dirty tricks, such as work-shirking on the part of civil servants, and dropping the old habits of graft and corruption, the administrative machinery will not be able to contribute to our national development. Only when all levels of government are duty-conscientious, law-abiding, corruption-free and initiative-taking will the nation become prosperous, peaceful and progressive.

These are all easier said than done. Reform on a national scale is extremely difficult; it takes time to change the people's habits and mindsets. Therefore, the new government should also be credited some time to turn the country around. We should, therefore, not

place too much hope on the new regime to build a new country overnight. Let us remember that Rome was not built in a day.

What we should expect of the new government is a good start, as the saying goes: "Well begun is half done".

The Global New Light of Myanmar would, therefore, like to urge Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her colleagues not to rush, but to focus on securing a good start in the implementation of reforms that will, ultimately, bring the change our people sorely need.

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.

MODERN DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

U Than Htay

ACTUALLY like an avenging avalanche with icy indifference, the NLD juggernaut driven by people's power, bulldozed its way into Myanmar political arena in November 2015 handing a crushing defeat to all of its opponents much to the surprise of the many. It was really the initial victory for the masses of Myanmar in their strenuous struggle for democracy. Now it is left to the New Government and the people to develop the country and build the nation with proper democratic reforms and moral rearmament.

Unfortunately, quite a number of vocal and valiant parliamentarians, most of them true people's representatives, were swept away in this maelstrom of virtually monoparty election victory. Also there are less people's representatives elected from our ethnic brethren this time. As a nonpartisan citizen of the Union, I find it truly regrettable.

This is one of the iniquitous instances of modern version of democracy in action. Democracy in its pristine form, as practised in the city states of ancient Greece, was pure and simple. It was simply "a rule by the people for the people". True people's representatives manned the city state councils managing and manipulating quotidian affairs that directly concerned the citizens' welfare. Those city state councillors had neither political party affiliation and nor party line to toe at the expense of citizens' interests. How good it must have been for everybody enjoying the benefits of democracy in those days!

Now this good system of "a rule by the people for the people" succinctly designated as "democracy" has deplorably degenerated into a medley of partisan contentions, political party infightings,

pullulation of politicians, election intrigues, vote cheatings, divisive rivalries, sectarian schisms, all sorts of discords and dissensions among the citizens that inevitably leads to national disunity in countries like ours.

As a rule, political parties prioritise the election victory in their party mandates. It is natural and inculcable. But when it comes to prioritising the interests, those of the people, the voters should come first.

Big political parties always aim for an all-out win in every election, so that any one of them could dominate both houses of Parliament (the Legislature) and form one-party government. It has become the tradition and trend of the modern democracy, visible in all democratic countries everywhere.

In this respect, the Americans (the US citizens) have a lot of political savvy. They elect their congressmen and congresswomen and senators (and senators?) in such a manner that neither of the two big political parties, Republican (GOP) and Democratic, could dominate both Houses of the Legislature. So there is always "Check and Balance" to rein in the malpractices of the Government (the Executive Branch) by the true people's representatives. It is indeed one good present-day democratic tool.

Would we be able to maintain this beneficial "Check and Balance" routine now in Myanmar? It remains to be seen. Mainly it depends on each and every parliamentarians. They should never forget that they are not only party members (excepting independents) but also people's representatives. As such, they should fulfil their bound duties (i.e. to serve their respective voters) at all times. They should also cherish their singular loyalty to their voters, the people. "Voters first, Parties second"

should be their unshakable credo and motto.

Serendipity hit me when I stumbled on this very interesting and relevant news item in the GNLM Daily, dated 21 November 2015 on page 13. Allow me to reproduce part of it verbatim as follows:

"The US House of Representatives defying a veto threat by President Barack Obama, overwhelmingly passed Republican-backed legislation on Thursday to suspend Obama's programme to admit 10,000 Syrian refugees in the next year and then intensify the process of screening.

The measure quickly drafted this week following the Islamic State attacks in Paris on Friday that killed 129 people, was approved on a vote of 259-137, with 47 of Obama's 188 fellow Democrats breaking with the White House to support it. It could require that high level officials at the FBI Director, the Director of National Intelligence and Homeland Security Secretary — verify that each Syrian refugee poses no security risk.

Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan said the bill would pause the programme the White House announced in September to admit 10,000 Syrian refugees over the next year. He said it was important to act quickly "when our national security is at stake".

In another Myanmar language journal (TOMORROW News Journal, 24.XI.2015, p.34) I found that the Governors of 31 States in the USA (including Texas, Illinois, Arizona, Florida and Massachusetts) refuse to accept the admittance of the aforementioned Syrian refugees into their respective States despite their President's veto threat. Of these 31 State Governors, only one is Republican. How remarkable!

Along with those gutsy House Representatives, I deeply respect

the undaunted patriotic spirit of those 47 House Democrats and 31 State Governors (30 Democrats and 1 Republican) who dare to defy their President's minatory but meaningless veto threat, especially the Democrats who really care more for the national security of their voters rather than toeing the party line like a flock of sheep. Obviously Obama, already committed in this case, is bent on achieving a resplendent global image in humanitarian benevolence risking national security at home. The House Representatives and those State Governors did the right thing. If Obama willfully wields his veto, he would be the loser when so many of his voters took to the streets to demonstrate against his apparently reckless programme and his popularity with his fellow Americans on the skids. He should shed his autocratic attitude down right now.

In fact, Americans and many of us could not forget that maniacal massacre of nearly 3000 unarmed people (soft targets in the lingo of terrorists) on that ill-fated day of 11 September 2001 in New York. As we all know, this atrocious act was cold-bloodedly perpetrated by those pathetically misguided al Qaeda terrorists who had easy access to enter the USA.

Moreover, when we all know that one of the IS attackers in Paris was a Syrian refugee, it would be abysmally asinine to let those potentially perilous persons to enter the country without super-tight security screenings. Otherwise, it would be just like what we Myanmarers used to say: "toting venomous viper in one's hip-pocket of longyi cincture."

I take my hat off to those US House Representatives and State Governors who love their own people more than their political parties. How daring and democratic these Americans are! For Myanmar, we need people's representa-

tives just like those intrepid and patriotic US politicians.

We also have a similar national security threat with those (at least some) illegal Bangali (Bangladeshi) infiltrators in the Rakhine State and southern part of the Chin State. The Paris mishap and US national security menace should be serious security alerts to those human rights enthusiasts and the New Government, and of course, security forces in this country to take proper precautions in dealing with those potential crazy militants trained for a variety of terrorist atrocities.

The proper protective measure is to effectively seal off the porous Bangladeshi-Myanmar and Indo-Myanmar land borders as one careful and considerate Nepalese (?) observer has so conscientiously pointed out very recently (GNLM Daily, 24.XI.2015, p.8) by bilateral government level negotiations and strong reinforcement of border security forces with modern security aid appurtenances. It would not only subdue, if not crush the cross-border insurgencies, but also prevent the stealthy entry of undesirable illegal infiltrators.

I am told that there are 7 geologists and 5 mining engineers, neither too old nor too young, among the elected. Of the 5 mining engineers, I know 3 of them very well. They are good and capable men. One of them, a Kayin national, is a well-known staunch defender of this country's exotic environments, picturesque scenic spots, fragile ecological systems, wonderful biodiversity, River Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy) and her sister Thanlwin (Salween). So I am much heartened about the fate of our beloved Mother Ayeyarwady. I am convinced that he would do his utmost to terminate that maleficent Myitson Dam Project with the concerted cooperation of same-minded fellow parliamentarians.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

AS a Consultant Advisor, it has been my privilege to submit this nation talking with students, parents, teachers, school administrators and other citizens about what drug works today. I have found a broad consensus on three basic issues:- first of all ensuring that every person in Myanmar is educated to his or her full potential: second, providing access to a quality education for all students regardless of economic status, gender, handicaps or racial and ethnic background and third, holding accountable each participant in the educa-

tional process.

The biggest threat that now stands in the way of achieving the kind of educational system we know is needed to be avoidance of the wide spread use of illegal drugs by our nation's young people. I am firmly convinced that the most effective weapon we have in the battle against drug use is prevention as an aid to schools and communities seeking to develop and implement comprehensive drug prevention programs.

Now, I am proud to offer this new message built on research which shows that the most promising approaches to drug prevention are comprehensive

programs that involve schools, communities, parents, students and law enforcement and that it offers practical guidance on issues such as setting and enforcing policies, teaching about drug prevention and how the law can help.

I believe young people are not only concerned about drugs but are also enthusiastic about getting rid of them. Studies show that attitudes are changing. Young people are getting the message that drugs are dangerous and drugs can ruin lives. We as parents, educators and concerned citizen must continue to provide support and guidance for youngsters to make healthy choices. Each of us must play a role in the war against drugs by joining our efforts. We can

achieve communities without drugs and finally a drug-free society.

Drugs cause physical and emotional dependence. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the effect of drugs. Drugs threaten normal development in a number of ways.

Drugs can interfere with memory, sensation and perception. They distort experiences and cause a loss of self-control that can lead users to harm themselves and others. Drugs can interfere with the brain's ability to take in, sort and synthesize information received. Drugs can have an insidious effect on perception. Drugs erode the self-discipline and motivation necessary for learning. Drugs use frequent-

ly progresses in stages from occasional use to regular use, to multiple use ultimately to total dependency. With each successive stage, drug use intensifies become more varied and results in increasingly debilitating effects.

The first temptations to use drug may come in social situations in the form of pressures to 'act grown up' by smoking cigarettes or using alcohol or marijuana. Be knowledgeable about drugs and sign of drug use. When symptoms are observed, respond promptly. Yet, the earlier a drug problem is detected and faced, the less difficult it is to overcome.

Thanking you,
Dr. Aung Naing Moe.

MODERN DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

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The protection and preservation of nature's beauties and ecological equilibrium are also very important. With his facile pen, my friend Bohmu Khin Maung Myint, quondam Deputy GM from MPT, is a prolific writer. His articles printed in this highly esteemed newspaper are readable and rewarding! What he has written under the caption, "Who is to blame, the Nature or the Human Beings" (GNLM Daily, 2.XI. 2015, p-9) is quite a good article, true and tragic. His opinions are incontrovertible. I completely agree with him. Like he mentioned, one day, the human habitat would be destroyed by man himself through his own uncontrolled avarice, boundless bellicosity and abysmal ignorance, if he does not change his wicked ways in time.

Thanks to the environmentalists, ecologists, nature lovers, the Greens and conscientious people like Bohmu Khin Maung Myint who are out to defend the Earth and our no longer happy and endangered habitat at all costs. It is indeed one of the good points of modern democracy.

I humbly hope that the New Government would have time and funds to address these environmental impact issues promptly. The first on the list is rampant deforestation that causes the immense loss of sylvan resources, soil erosion, silting of waterways and flash floods. Next comes the superfluous dam constructions. Dams, especially the big ones, imperil nearby human settlements with ever-threatening dam deluge and they could, big or small, trigger anthropogenic earthquakes in geologically unstable areas. Recently a Brazilian village named Bento Rodrigues has been destroyed by

waste (mine tailings) dam deluge as a 20 metre (65 foot) high flood swiftly swept through it within minutes with one person dead and 13 wounded. The villagers have just about 25 minutes to escape from this man-made disaster (GNLM Daily, 8.XI. 2015, p-12)

I also hope that those geologists and mining engineers could counsel and convince their Party Leader the true value or the real worth of resources or rather mineral resources. It takes tens to hundreds of million years to form a mineral or an ore deposit, either gold or lead-zinc-silver-copper or tin-tungsten. The same thing goes for coal, oil (petroleum) and gas (natural gas), gemstone and jade deposits. Besides, these mineral deposits are exhaustible assets. Once mined or taken out, they are irretrievably gone or exhausted, unlike yearly crops like rice, wheat, peas and pulses. So mere cash is no match for such a naturally hard-to-get and highly valuable mineral commodity.

In the case of Monywa copper deposits (Sabedaung, Kyesin Taung and LetpadaungTaung), we have, so far, only these copper deposits (copper only or straight copper) well-developed and ready for mining. If we cannot get any copper metal out of our own deposits, just because of investment share ratio problems, how outrageously unfair and unjust it would be for all us! Copper, still a strategic metal in industry, more so for this country, in fact, worth more than even a fair amount of money from the viewpoint of its availability.

Both the elected geologists and mining engineers could very well assist the New Government in revamping the Mines Ministry, if deemed necessary, and

boosting the mining industry with their professional experience and knowledge. The revenue accrued from the mining and sales of minerals (metallic and non-metallic), fossil fuels (oil and gas), jade (jadeite) and gemstones could underpin the national economy to some extent.

The other day, just in a casual confab with a young Japanese resource geologist, a Ph.D. graduate from the University of Tasmania (UTAS), Australia, I learnt this. Now our ASEAN friends, Laotians, Vietnamese, Thais and Indonesians, especially the last one, are getting wise and impose a lot of restrictions on the exploitation of their mineral resources by both domestic and foreign mining companies. Thus the majority of the western mining investors are contemplating to converge on Myanmar and try their luck timing perfectly with the expected change of political scenario here. Our Myanmar mining men (both from the government and the private sector) should be smart enough (like Indonesians, for instance) to receive them and do business with them profitably for the good of the country as well.

I often wonder why we could not get united like our fellow Southeast Asians, the Vietnamese people. After all, we all are fellow countrymen living together in this lovely Land of Ours since time immemorial. Can we not really bury the hatchet and cease our mutually imperilling internecine fightings, forgiving the bygone grievances and forgetting the past opinion conflicts with overriding fraternal love for our fellow Union citizens?

Throughout my over 40 year professional career, I have been to various parts of this country.

Despite the language barrier, I have met, befriended and even lived for some time with many of the hill-dwelling ethnic brethren including Akhars, Chins, Danus, Inthars, Kachins, Kayahs, Kayins, Kokangs, Mons, Nagas, Palaungs, Pa-os (Taungthus, Rakhines, Shans, Taungyos and Was. They, the common people, both urbanites and villagers, were very friendly, helpful, hospitable, solicitous, and warm-hearted and received me with open arms like one of their own relatives. I would say that they have, whether knowingly or by instinct, Union Spirit in their hearts. But I am not so sure about some of their current leaders and those of the armed groups.

Nagas even have a legend that claims that there were originally 10 brothers living in this Land of Ours. Bamar was the eldest, and Naga, the youngest. While I was in Kunlon years ago, I learnt this from one army battalion commander whose name escaped from my senile memory.

It is high time that we all see the light at the end of the tunnel and strive for the urgently needed national unity and nation building through national reconciliation and countrywide peace. What we must do is to establish a mutual trust and understanding among the Three Groups or Big Three, the Bamar, the Ethnic Brethren and the Tatmadaw (the Armed Forces) with fraternal love and good will.

It is, of course, easier said than done. But if we all have a will, there would be a way. With

deep desire, dedication and determination, we would surely win. There is no doubt about it. We don't have to consult astrologers, fortunetellers, predictors, soothsayers or vaticinators.

My ardent wish is that my country stays intact and my people united. Fraternal love and fellow countryman feeling should bind us together and consolidate our national unity transcending race and religion. Not a whit of ill will and hatred should fester us. We all should love one another and live happily together. It should be the true spirit of federalism. Maybe I am expecting too much or daydreaming and optimistic.

As an afterthought, it occurs in my mind, whether we should switch to that once proposed but rejected PR System from the current practice of "winner takes all" mode of election not only to give chance to small political parties, but also promote numerically more participation of true ethnic people's representatives in the parliaments.

The best thing, however, is in future, the voters should get wise up like Americans to elect the true blue people's representatives in such a way that no big political party could have a majority control in both Houses of the Legislature to prevent one-party dictatorship and obviate the victimisation of the voters by unscrupulous political parties. This is the best way to beat the cheats in the hodiernal world of perfidious politics. My sincere apologies to my readers, if I sound cynical.

Author: U Than Htay, a career geologist with 36 year active service and 11 years as an able Advisor, is a retired Deputy Director General from the Department of Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration (DGSE), Ministry of Mines.

Iran unveils second underground missile, likely to irk US

DUBAI — Iran unveiled a new underground missile depot on Tuesday with state television showing Emad precision-guided missiles in store which the United States says can take a nuclear warhead and violate a 2010 UN Security Council resolution.

The defiant move to publicize Iran's missile programme seemed certain to irk the United States as it plans to dismantle nearly all sanctions on Iran under a breakthrough nuclear agreement.

Tasnim news agency and state television video said the underground facility, situated in mountains and run by Iran's Revolutionary Guards, was inaugurated by the speaker of parliament, Ali Larijani. Release of one-minute video followed footage of another underground missile depot last October.

The United States says the Emad, which Iran

tested in October, would be capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and US officials say Washington will respond to the Emad tests with fresh sanctions against Iranian individuals and businesses linked to the programme.

Iran's boasting about its missile capabilities are a challenge for US President Barack Obama's administration as the United States and European Union plan to dismantle nearly all international sanctions against Tehran under the nuclear deal reached in July.

Iran has abided by the main terms of the nuclear deal, which require it to give up material that world powers feared could be used to make an atomic weapon and accept other restrictions on its nuclear programme.

But President Hassan Rouhani ordered his defence minister last week

to expand the missile programme.

The Iranian missiles under development boast much improved accuracy over the current generation, which experts say is likely to improve their effectiveness with conventional warheads.

The Revolutionary Guards' second-in-command, Brigadier General Hossein Salami, said last Friday that Iran's depots and underground facilities are so full that they do not know how to store their new missiles.—Reuters



Iran's parliament speaker Ali Larijani shakes hands with a soldier as he inaugurates a new underground missile depot in this undated handout photo released on 5 January 2016 by Farsnews.com. PHOTO: REUTERS

Islamic State threatens to destroy Saudi prisons after executions

RIYADH — Islamic State threatened to destroy Saudi Arabian prisons holding jihadists after Riyadh's execution of 47 people including 43 convicted al Qaeda militants.

The militant group, which has claimed responsibility for attacks in the kingdom and stepped up operations in neighbouring Yemen, singled out the al-Ha'ir and Tarfiya prisons where many al Qaeda and Islamic State supporters have been detained.

"The Islamic State always seeks to free prisoners, but we calculate that the ending of the issues of prisoners will not happen except with the eradication of the rule of tyrants, and then destroying their prisons and razing them to the ground," it said in an article posted online on Tuesday.

An Islamic State supporter killed himself in a car bomb at a checkpoint outside Ha'ir prison near

Riyadh in July.

While Islamic State and al Qaeda are rivals who have condemned each other on ideological grounds, they are both united in enmity towards Saudi Arabia, which has declared them terrorist groups and locked up thousands of their supporters.

Riyadh's mass execution on Saturday included four Shi'ite Muslims, among them prominent cleric Nimr al-Nimr, a move that heightened sectarian tensions with Shi'ite power Iran. But analysts say it was mostly meant as a message to militant Sunnis.

Islamic State has claimed responsibility for a series of bombings and shootings in Saudi Arabia since November 2014 that have killed more than 50 people, most of them Shi'ites but also more than 15 members of the security forces.—Reuters

Japan, US seek to resolve Saudi-Iran tensions through dialogue



Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida & US Secretary of State John Kerry. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TOKYO — Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and US Secretary of State John Kerry held talks over the phone yesterday, agreeing to seek to resolve tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran through dialogue.

Kishida told reporters following the 20-minute talks that he and Kerry shared concerns about the deteriorating relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran and confirmed a plan to urge all parties to exercise restraint for the stability in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic ties with Iran this week in protest of a crowd's storming into its embassy in Tehran after Riyadh said Saturday that it had executed 47 people including prominent Shiite

cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr for their alleged involvement in terrorism in opposition to the kingdom's ruling family.

In the telephone talks held at Kerry's request, the US secretary welcomed a recent agreement between Japan and South Korea to resolve the drawn-out dispute over so-called "comfort women," who were forced to work in Japan's wartime military brothels.

In a landmark deal, Japan and South Korea, both US allies, agreed 28 December to end the dispute "finally and irreversibly" in which Japan pledged to provide 1 billion yen (\$8.4 million) for a new South Korean foundation aimed at helping aging former comfort women.—Kyodo News

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (048 7JR)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV YANGON STAR VOY NO (048 7JR) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2016 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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV NOBLE BREEZE VOY NO (023N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV NOBLE BREEZE VOY NO (023N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (101N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV WEST SCENT VOY NO (101N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTERASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV JAN VOY NO (1322S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV JAN VOY NO (1322S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.1.2016 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 CHINA SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

Researchers taking power of locust to new heights

TEL AVIV — A locust-like robot could prove to be an inspired leap into the future of autonomous surveillance and emergency response systems.

Inspired by the locust's jumping mechanism and elastic energy storage, Tel Aviv University researchers designed a tiny robot made from carbon rods, steel springs and 3D printed plastic pieces. It weighs less than once ounce (23 grammes) and is approximately four inches (10 centimetres) long.

"The locust being a large insect that has wonderful jumping performance had offered itself as wonderful inspiration for this specific idea of a jumping...miniature jumping robot," lead developer Professor Amir Ayali, of the Department of Zoology at Tel Aviv University's Faculty of Life Sciences, told Reuters as he inspected a locust grown in his laboratory.

The robot can jump a remarkable 11.5 feet (3.5 metres), said Ayali, due to its structure and energy storage, which along with its motor makes it capable to withstand high accelerations.

"The locust uses mechanical energy in addition to its muscle force in order to generate a jump and this is exactly what we are imitating...We are using a tiny motor that generates, or stores mechanical energy, and this mechanical energy in springs is actually very similar to the locust legs is what propels the robot into the air," said Ayali.

The bio-inspired robot, dubbed 'TAUB' (Tel Aviv University and Ort Braude College) was born out of an interdisciplinary



A monitor displaying an image of a miniature robot is seen besides Israeli Professor Amir Ayali of the Department of Zoology at Tel Aviv University's Faculty of Life Sciences on 22 December 2015.

PHOTO: REUTERS

nary collaboration between engineers and zoologists at the bequest of the Pearls of Wisdom Association for Research and advanced technology development in Israel.

Unlike drones that can be airborne for up to about 30 minutes, the locust robot is powered by a lithium battery. With its energy efficiency it can reach up to 1,000 jumps with only one battery loading.

Ayali said the robot could be easily mass produced since its parts are cheap and it is easy to manufacture, estimating the price

of a robot at \$100 USD.

From oil spills to rescue and surveillance operations, "what you do with it is whatever is needed whenever you want to engage any kind of robotic system with no human interference," he said.

Ayali believes that with sufficient knowledge of locusts' swarming capabilities, the robots may be capable of implementing the mechanisms of swarming capabilities in robotic systems.

Hungarian-born Doctor Gabor Kosa, of TAU's Faculty of Engineering, a confessed sci-fi

fan, envisages a swarm of robots installed with GPS navigation systems, cameras and solar panels for powering, entering enemy territory to carry out a surveillance operation.

Around \$200,000 USD was invested in the project at its early stages. Ayali says the team is seeking more funding to develop it further. Kosa hopes that with proper funding his team can build a robotic system capable of jumping multiple times and possibly even mimicking the locust by spreading its wings and flying.—Reuters

Over 12,000 receive TCM for HIV/AIDS treatment in Yunnan

KUNMING — Around 12,800 people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in southwest China's Yunnan Province have benefited from a traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) project over the past decade, the local government said Tuesday.

Jiang Xu, deputy head of the province's TCM administration, said the pilot project, which was launched in June 2005, includes a combination of TCM and antiviral therapies as well as herbal remedies, which suppress the virus load and help the immune system.

After comparing data collected from 1,131 PLWHA before and after the TCM treatment, Jiang said more than 40 per cent gained weight and 18 per cent reported fewer colds. "TCM treatment can strengthen the immune system and alleviate symptoms such as fever, cough and diarrhea," said He Lisheng, head of Yunnan Academy of Chinese Medicine. There were 575,000 PLWHA in China by the end of October. Of that number, 87,634 were living in Yunnan.—Xinhua

Hong Kong on holiday health alert after China bird flu death

HONG KONG — A woman in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen has died after being infected with the highly contagious H5N6 bird flu virus, days after she was admitted to hospital, Hong Kong's Health Department said yesterday.

The 26-year-old woman's death last week comes ahead of the Chinese New Year holiday in early February when millions of Chinese travel to their home towns to celebrate with their families, with chicken a popular festive meal.

All border check points between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, and the airport, had already introduced disease prevention measures with thermal imaging systems in place, a department spokesman said. The department was also notified by the Guangdong health authority on 1 January that a 40-year-old woman from Zhaoqing city in the same province was infected with H5N6 and was in a critical condition.—Reuters

Fewer Americans want to lose weight

BEIJING — Fewer Americans said they would like to lose weight while obesity rate is still increasing, according to the latest Gallup's annual Health and Healthcare poll.

The poll, conducted in November, 2015, discovers about 49 per cent of Americans would like to lose weight, down from about 60 per cent from 2001 to 2008.

In 25 years, it is the first time that less than half of Americans want to lose weight, according to the poll.

The Gallup poll findings are based on telephone interviews conducted with 1,021 adults, aged 18 and above, living in all 50 US states and the District of Columbia.—Xinhua

Aerojet wins US contract to set standard for 3-D printed rocket engines

WASHINGTON — Aerojet Rocketdyne Holdings Inc on Tuesday said it has won a \$6 million contract from the US Air Force to define the standards that will be used to qualify components made using 3-D printing for use in liquid-fueled rocket engine applications.

The award is part of a larger drive by the US military to end its reliance on Russian-built RD-180 rocket engines now used on the Atlas 5 rocket built by United Launch Alliance, a joint venture of Lockheed Martin Corp and Boeing Co.

The Air Force plans to award additional, larger contracts for US-developed propulsion systems later this year.

Aerojet said it would draw

upon its extensive experience with 3-D printing, or additive manufacturing, to draw up the standards that would be used to qualify 3-D printed rocket engine components for flight.

Aerojet is developing its AR1 engine as an alternative to the RD-180 engine. New rocket engine designs like the AR1 are increasingly using 3-D printing technology because it reduces the amount of time and money required for the engines.

The use of additive manufacturing technology reduces the cost to produce components, shortens build times and provides flexibility to engineers to design components that were once impossible to build using traditional manu-

facturing techniques.

The contract calls for Aerojet to define the rigorous engineering and inspection processes to be followed when producing and testing 3-D printed components to ensure they meet the stringent requirements of aerospace systems.

In 2014, Aerojet successfully tested an engine made entirely with additive manufacturing that had a thrust of 5,000 pounds. A year later, it used additive manufacturing to replicate the injector of the gas generator used on the Apollo-era F-1 rocket engine to demonstrate that a proven design can be built at a competitive cost without sacrificing performance.—Reuters

Fresh sex abuse charges against UN forces in Central Africa



UN peacekeepers take a break as they patrol along a street during the presidential election in Bangui, the capital of Central African Republic, on 30 December 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

UNITED NATIONS — The UN peacekeeping mission in Central African Republic said on Tuesday it was investigating new allegations of sexual abuse of minors by peacekeepers in the conflict-torn African nation.

Last month, an independent review panel accused the United Nations and its agencies of grossly mishandling allegations of child sexual abuse in 2013 and 2014 by international peacekeepers in the Central African Republic.

While those allegations did not involve UN troops or police wearing blue helmets or berets, charges later emerged of misconduct by UN peacekeepers in Central African Republic (CAR).

The mission in CAR, known as MINUSCA, said in a statement it was “investigating fresh allegations concerning both sexual exploitation and abuse and other misconduct by UN Peacekeepers and international forces in Bangui.”

It said that staff of the UN Children’s Fund based in Bangui have had four visits with four alleged child victims.

The statement said the head of MINUSCA, Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, was discussing with the UN human rights office in Geneva ways of combating sexual abuse, including through the formation of a police brigade that would identify perpetrators and deter such abuse.

It was not clear how many peacekeepers were involved in the alleged abuse or what countries they were from.

“The mission continues to investigate each and every allegation of a misconduct,” MINUSCA said. “A fact finding mission is currently underway in this regard.”

New Zealand’s UN ambassador, Gerard van Bohemen, told reporters he was “really sick and tired” that such allegations keep surfacing.

Uruguay’s ambassador, Elbio Rosselli, president of the Security Council this month, said that as a troop contributor, his country expected “zero tolerance” of sexual abuse.—Reuters

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development Department of Rural Development National Electrification Project (IDA Project No. P152936) Assignment Title: Solar PV Inspection and Verification Reference No: C2-TA10

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the National Electrification Project (NEP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The Myanmar NEP Off-Grid Programme co-financed by the World Bank with the Government over 5 years shall electrify close to one million households and several thousand facilities and building using solar PV off-grid technologies, targeting the rural and remote regions of the country. The initial procurement in 2016, shall be one of the first large scale international procurements in Myanmar, and is intended to establish modalities for future NEP roll-out. WB Procurement Guidelines shall be followed for supply and installation of the solar equipment, and the disbursement of payments for the solar installations equipment shall be subject to corresponding supporting verification of the installations and quality of equipment and works, by an Inspection and Verification Consulting Firm. The Consulting Firm shall be required to manage the entire inspection, verification and reporting process on a sampling basis.

The Department of Rural Development invites expression of interest (EOI) from qualified and experienced Local and/or International Consulting Firm (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The short-listing criteria are:

- At least 2 years of experience working in rural areas in Myanmar or similar conditions;
- At least 2 years of experience in installation and/or inspection of solar systems in countries with similar conditions with Myanmar;
- At least 2 permanent professional staff with relevant expertise in energy, renewable energy, electrification, and/or project management;
- At least three contracts in relevant areas, each with a value of at least USD10,000 over the past five years;
- Demonstrated ability to use app-based MIS software or related programs developed for monitoring and evaluation of project activities

The Consultant may express interest to provide inspection and verification services in one or more regions/states of International Competitive Bidding packages for Solar PV as listed below:

- Lot 1– NEP Solar PV Packages in Kayin
- Lot 2– NEP Solar PV Packages in Chin (1)
- Lot 3 - NEP Solar PV Package in Chin (2)
- Lot 4– NEP Solar PV Packages in Sagaing
- Lot 5– NEP Solar PV Packages in Tanintharyi
- Lot 6– NEP Solar PV Packages in Rakhine (1)
- Lot 7– NEP Solar PV Packages in Rakhine (2)
- Lot 8– NEP Solar PV Packages in Shan (East)
- Lot 9- NEP Solar PV Packages in Shan (North) (1)
- Lot 10– NEP Solar PV Packages in Shan (North) (2)
- Lot 11– NEP Solar PV Packages in Ayeyawaddy (1)
- Lot 12– NEP Solar PV Packages in Ayeyawaddy (2)

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers dated January 2011 (revised July 2014) (“Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment: “Consulting Firms hired to provide the Inspection and Verification Service in any of the above regions/states shall be disqualified from subsequently providing goods and services in the particular regions/states they are awarding the contracts”.

International consulting firms are encouraged to associate with local firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications. Consultants will be selected in accordance with the Quality -and Cost-Based Selection Method (QCBS) set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours: 09.30 to 16.00 hours and contact person, Dr. Soe Soe Ohn at dr.soesoeohn@gmail.com. Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by **January 21, 2016**.

Attention

U Myint Oo, Deputy Director General and Chairperson of the Procurement Committee
National Electrification Project (NEP)
Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development
Office Number 14, Nay Pyi Taw Territory, Myanmar, Tel/ FAX: +95 67 409529, +95 67 409071
E-mail: dr.soesoeohn@gmail.com, neppmo.drd@gmail.com, ksaung@gmail.com

Medical charity MSF ends Mediterranean rescues, appeals to EU

LONDON — The medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) has ended its sea rescue operation aimed at reducing the number of migrants and asylum seekers killed while trying to cross the Mediterranean from north Africa to Europe, it said on Tuesday.

MSF said its three ships had rescued more than 20,000 people in over 120 search and rescue operations during eight months at sea.

The International Organisation for Migration

(IOM) has said 3,771 people died in 2015 while trying to reach Europe by sea, making the year the deadliest on record for those seeking sanctuary from conflict and poverty.

“Whilst we remain absolutely convinced of the importance of dedicated search and rescue in saving lives, we are doctors and search and rescue shouldn’t be our job,” Stefano Argenziano, MSF manager of migration operations, said in a statement.

“We very much hope

that European resources will be sufficient in 2016 and that our boats will not be required.”

The charity said it would remain on standby to intervene if European Union countries failed to help people trying to reach the continent in the coming months.

It also called on EU countries to find safe and legal ways for refugees and migrants to reach Europe so that they did not have to rely on smugglers and rickety boats to make the journey.



Migrants in the water scramble to get onto Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS) rescue boats launched from the MOAS ship Phoenix after they jumped from an overloaded wooden boat during a rescue operation 10.5 miles (16 kilometres) off the coast of Libya in 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

“What will really end deaths at sea, in the central Mediterranean as well as in the Aegean, is the implementation of policies and

practices that provide safe and legal channels to the EU and eliminate the need for people to use smugglers and overcrowded rubber

and wooden boats to reach the shores of Europe,” said Brice de la Vigne, MSF director of operations.—Reuters

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Individual Consultant
Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development
Department of Rural Development (DRD)
Myanmar : National Electrification Project (NEP)

Off-Grid Pre-Electrification Component - Project Implementation Advisor
IDA Project No. 152936
Reference No. C2-TA1

1. This Request for Expressions of Interest follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in *Development Business* online on November 3, 2015.
2. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received financing from the *International Development Association (IDA)* and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this financing to payments under the contract for a Project Implementation Advisor for National Electrification Project (NEP).
3. The National Electrification Project includes an off-grid electrification component with \$90 million in IDA credits. IDA support in off-grid areas will target communities located far beyond the existing national grid and, thus, unlikely to receive grid-based access in the next 10 or more years. More importantly, the IDA support will be directed to the peripheral States/Regions with social and ethnic cohesion and peace building. Off-grid electrification will be technology neutral, depending on technology assessment for target communities, including solar photovoltaic (PV), mini-hydropower, wind, diesel, and hybrid (eg. diesel/solar). Deployment of household solar PV systems in target communities includes households, public institutions (schools, health clinics and other community building) as well as public street light. The Implementation Advisor shall assist Department of Rural Development - Project Management Office (DRD-PMO) to efficiently and effectively to perform its day-to-day management of the implementation of the Project and deliver results.

The primary responsibility of the Advisor is to support the PMO, and in particular, the Project Director and Project Manager to ensure the efficient, effective, and on-schedule execution of the various activities under the Project in line with the Financing Agreement between the Government of Myanmar (GOM) and the World Bank and in accordance with all applicable procedures and Guidelines.

4. The Department of Rural Development now invites eligible individual consultants to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the Services (CV with academic background, experience in similar assignment, knowledge of local conditions (if any) etc.) Consultants may be invited for interviewing, if necessary. The evaluation criteria are:
 - (i) University degree to at least a Master’s level in a relevant field such as management, finance, economics or engineering is necessary.
 - (ii) More than 10 years’ experience in successful management, including project management is essential with demonstrated understanding of technical, legal, institutional and financial issues. This is to include experience at senior management level in setting up and successfully managing similar support units, including hands-on responsibility for managing the start-up and establishment of operations of a major project(s) or similar.
 - (iii) Experience in financial and non-financial services for businesses; experience in services for small and medium private enterprises would be an advantage.
 - (iv) Experience in the energy field; experience in coordinating activities in support of renewable energy investments and rural electrification business and finance will be an added advantage.
 - (v) Excellent report writing, presentation and public relations skills.

To be considered, a candidate must be fluent in English and have strong skills in use of office software packages, particularly Word and Excel. Fluency in Myanmar language will be an advantage.
5. A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out the World Bank’s *Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers dated January 2011(revised July 2014)* (“Consultant Guidelines”). The attention of interested consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the Consultant Guidelines, setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.
6. Interested individual consultants may obtain further information at the address given below from 09.30 to 16.00 hours. DRD will provide prompt responses to all interested individual consultants, should there be any questions.
7. Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by no later than **January 25, 2016**.
 Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development

Attention

U Myint Oo, Deputy Director General and Chairperson of the Procurement Committee
National Electrification Project (NEP)
Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development
Office Number 14, Nay Pyi Taw Territory, Myanmar, Tel/ FAX: +95 67 409529, +95 67 409071
E-mail: dr.soesoeohn@gmail.com, neppmo.drd@gmail.com, ksaung@gmail.com



PHOTO: REUTERS

I'm beyond done talking about Justin Bieber: Selena Gomez

LOS ANGELES — Pop star Selena Gomez says she is "beyond done" talking about her ex boyfriend Justin Bieber.

The 23-year-old's on-off relationship with the Canadian singer has been hitting headlines since December, 2010, and rumours suggesting the pair had rekindled the romance swirled in November after Justin, 21, was filmed singing "My Girl" to Gomez in a Los Angeles bar, reported Rolling Stones magazine.

"Well, I am sorry, first of all," she said when asked about the status of her Bieber romance. "And honestly, what I would love to be printed is that I am so beyond done with talking about that, and him."

Gomez's latest album, *Revival*, features a number of songs about relationships, including "Same Old Love", and many listeners have speculated the tracks are about her time with Bieber.

"I understand that. It's a song about a cycle, a cycle that people understand. It drives you mad, but it's beautiful. People have seen most of the choices that I've made in my life."

"And I love every choice that I've made. Because now I understand how to apply that to my music. This is who I am. I'm glad my life was never perfect." — PTI

Priyanka Chopra 'nervous' about People's Choice Award



Priyanka Chopra.
PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Actress Priyanka Chopra, who will be presenting this year's People's Choice Award here, said she is nervous about her first inter-

national nomination for debut American TV show "Quantico".

The 33-year-old former Miss World will be competing in the New TV Series category along

with big names like Jamie Lee Curtis, Emma Roberts, Marcia Gay Harden and Lia Michele.

"LA LA land bound! @peopleschoice tomorrow! Strange that I have nerves! 1st nomination in another country I guess! Wish me luck!! @QuanticoTV," she posted on Twitter.

In her debut TV thriller, Priyanka plays the lead role of a young FBI recruit Alex Parish.

Apart from the actress, the show has also bagged the final nomination in the Favourite New TV Drama category.

Other celebrities expected to attend the award function include Mayim Bialik, Meghan Trainor, Dakota Johnson and Vin Diesel.

The 2016 People's Choice Awards will air today on CBS.— PTI

Dakota Johnson, John Boyega lead BAFTA Rising Star nominations

LONDON — "Star Wars" actor John Boyega and "Fifty Shades of Grey" actress Dakota Johnson are among five new faces who will be in the running for the Rising Star Award at the Bafta Film Awards next month.

Brie Larson, who appears in new drama "Room", and "King-

man: The Secret Service" actor Taron Egerton are also nominated, reported BBC online.

They are joined by Bel Powley, from 2015's "The Diary Of A Teenage Girl".

The award, which has previously been won by the likes of Tom Hardy, James MacAvoy

and Kristen Stewart, is voted on by the public.

Jack O'Connell took it last year following his memorable performance in Yann Demange's stunning feature directorial debut "71".

The BAFTA ceremony will take place on 14 February.—PTI

'Ghayal Once Again' to now release on 5 February

MUMBAI — Actor Sunny Deol's much-awaited "Ghayal" sequel, which was earlier slated for 15 January release, will now hit theatres on 5 February.

"Ghayal Once Again" marks Sunny's second directorial venture after "Dillagi" (1999). The reason

behind the film's postponement is not known yet. "Big announcement: Save the date, Ghayal Once Again now to be released worldwide on 5th February, 2016 #Ghayalon5Feb @IAMSUNNYDEOL @sakpataudi," read a tweet from the movie's official page.

Sunny retweeted the post. Besides Sunny, the movie also stars Om Puri, Soha Ali Khan and Tisca Chopra in pivotal roles.

The first film that released in 1990 was produced by Dharmendra and directed by Rajkumar Santoshi.—PTI

Ellen DeGeneres to accept People's Choice Humanitarian Award on Wednesday

LOS ANGELES — Ellen DeGeneres, host of the popular daytime television talk show "The Ellen show" is receiving a humanitarian award.

Producers of the People's Choice Awards made the announcement Monday, saying that DeGeneres will be recognised as the Favorite Humanitarian at Wednesday's ceremony.

Ellen joked that the award "sums me up perfectly as I am both a human and an itarian."

She then thanked director Andrew Stanton for casting her in his movie "Finding Nemo,"

saying it gave her the chance to have a career again.

"So three years later, 'Finding Nemo' comes out, my talk show launches and then 13 years later starting my 13th season on my show and things couldn't be better for me. I am so grateful and this comes out. It's really amazing."

DeGeneres is also nominated for Favourite Talk Show Host at the fan-voted People's Choice Awards, which will be presented at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles and broadcast on CBS.—Xinhua

Tarantino shuns rain to leave imprint on Hollywood

LOS ANGELES — A torrential downpour did not hamper director Quentin Tarantino as he left imprints of his hands and feet in cement at Hollywood's historic TCL Chinese Theatre on Tuesday.

Known for his gritty, edgy and often bloodied tales of revenge in films such as "Reservoir Dogs," "Kill Bill" and his most recent Western, "The Hateful Eight," Tarantino was bestowed the honour of leaving his mark alongside stars such as Robert De Niro, Sandra Bullock and Meryl Streep.

"I wanted to put my hands and footprints in the Grauman's Chinese courtyard way before I ever had a career, so this is something I wanted to do my whole life," the director said.



Quentin Tarantino.
PHOTO: REUTERS

Tarantino, 52, has been a passionate film fan even before he turned to writing and directing movies, and even did a stint as an usher in a movie theatre.

He has won two screen-writ-

ing Oscars, for "Pulp Fiction" and "Django Unchained," and on Tuesday was joined by actor Christoph Waltz, who won two Oscars for his roles in Tarantino's "Inglourious Basterds" and "Django." —Reuters

Finland and Estonia ponder undersea railway tunnel

HELSINKI — Finland and Estonia on Tuesday agreed to explore the possibility of constructing an undersea railway tunnel between their capitals.

Tens of thousands of Estonians work in the Helsinki region, many of whom commute over the Baltic Sea weekly, and many Finn-

ish tourists visit Tallinn.

“Helsinki and Tallinn together form an economic area of approximately 1.5 million people. To fully utilize the area’s potential, transport between the cities should be faster and flow easier than at present,” the city of Helsinki said in a statement. It added that a

tunnel would shorten the travel time between the cities to about 30 minutes, from at least 90 minutes currently by fast ferry. The tunnel would be 65-92 km (40-60 miles) long.

The tunnel would link up with Rail Baltica, a railway connection between Tallinn and Warsaw pro-

jected to be completed in 2025. A Helsinki report last year estimated the railway tunnel would cost 9-13 billion euros and could be operational after 2030.

A memorandum of understanding was signed by the two cities and governments of both countries.—*Reuters*

Paul Bley, avant-garde jazz pianist, died at 83

NEW YORK — Canadian jazz pianist Paul Bley, whose career spanned seven decades and myriad forms of the genre, died on Sunday at his home in Florida, according to his record company, ECM Records. He was 83.

His death was announced late on Monday. No other details were available.

Bley began studying

music at age 5 and formed his first band in Montreal when he was 13.

He went on to co-found the Montreal Jazz Workshop, studied at the Julliard School and played and recorded with such jazz greats as Charlie Parker, Charles Mingus, Chet Baker, Jimmy Giuffre, and many others.

He was known as a master of improvisation and the jazz trio, and an in-

fluence in the free jazz and avant-garde movement of the 1960s and 70s.

“As a fragmentary approach to the well-chosen note or chord, the idea that only this note or that counts, restricting the number of notes and thinking about those notes before you play — Paul Bley was the best at this,” said ECM Records founder Manfred Eicher, in a statement posted on Tuesday

by the company. Bley was named in 2008 as a member of the Order of Canada, which recognizes the merit and contributions of its citizens, for his influence on jazz music and performers.

According to a statement distributed by an ECM publicist, private services will be held in Florida, New York and “and wherever you play a Paul Bley record.” —*Reuters*

OBITUARY

MR G.S. SHARMA (a) G. SHANKER (B.A; B.L)
Ex- President of All Myanmar Hindu Centre Board, Yangon
Managing Director of Yamona International Co. LTD,
76 years

Son of late Bhogee Ram and late Savitari Devi, beloved husband of Mrs. Parvathi Devi residing at No. 17/21, 35th Street Kyauktada Township Yangon and No180(B) Dhamma Zedi Street, West Shwegondine Quarter, Bahan Township, Yangon, father of Janaki Devi Sharma, Dr. Vijaya Laxmi Sharma, Poonam Sharma and son-in-law of Ram (a) Bhai, passed away at 5:45am (India Standard Time) on 4th January 2016 in Mumbai.

Relatives and friends far and near are informed that cremation has been done in India in according to Hindu culture.

Bereaved Family

Three Kings have new friends in Madrid

MADRID — The arrival of the Three Kings, Melchor, Gaspar and Baltasar, is perhaps the most exciting time of the holiday season for Spanish children as they come bringing presents and one of the most popular event of the year is the Cavalcade of the Kings, a tradition which goes back 150 years. This procession, which is accompanied by artists, dancers and all sorts of fun for adults and children alike, is held in nearly every Spanish city, but there is no doubt that the most important is in the capital city of Madrid, where the main road to the city centre is closed off to allow their Majesties to make their way to the town hall.

The 2015 procession

in Madrid saw 36 different groups of artists and wagons from many different stores and Television stations, but this year the Kings had some new friends with a group of Chinese artists, all of whom live in Spain, forming part of the parade. Banging drums and performing a Lion dance, this is the first time any Chinese artists have taken part in the parade.

The presence of these members of the Chang Qing cultural association shows that not only is Madrid becoming an ever-more multicultural city, but that the Chinese residents are increasingly integrated into its life and traditions while also integrating a bit of China into Madrid. — *Xinhua*



A girl accompanied by her grandmother writes a letter to the Three Kings during the Epiphany at Mexican Postal Service headquarters, in Mexico City, capital of Mexico, on 5 January. PHOTO: XINHUA

mitv Myanmar International

(7-1-2016 07:00 am~ 8-1-2016 07:00 am) MST

Today Fresh

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Trend Of Kachin Dress
07:51	Am	Sai Ye Kwan
08:03	Am	News
08:25	Am	Orchid Lover
08:34	Am	Shwe Maw Daw: The Glory Of Bago City
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	A Myanmar Tapestry
09:35	Am	Independent Filmmaker
09:41	Am	Climate Context “Adaptation to Climate Change” (Part- II)
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	Myanmar Masterclass: Artist Tin Win (Beikthano)
10:36	Am	A Tea Business: Pankwan (Part-1)
10:47	Am	A Historic Town: 9 Pagodas

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm) - Wednesday 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	A Trip To The City Of Rakkhita, Rakhine
07:46	Pm	A Way of Life: Karate-do
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Pride of Myanmar - Bagan arts and handicrafts
08:40	Pm	Now in Yangon
08:46	Pm	A Life In The Ring

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

(7-1-2016, Thursday)

6:00 am	8:35 am
• The Mirror Images of the Musical Oldies	• Musical Programme
6:15 am	8:50 am
• Pyi Thu Ni Ti	• Pyi Thu Ni Ti
6:30 am	9:10 am
• Nay Ma Win Ah Hla Myar	• ASEAN China Cultural Show
7:00 am	9:35 am
• TV Drama Series	• Myanmar Video

From 7.1.2016 (Thursday) 06:00 hrs
To 8.1.2016 (Friday) 06:00 hrs
This schedule will be repeated four times in 24 hours.

MRTV News Channel

(7-1-2016, Thursday)

6:00 am	9:45 am
• Paritta By Venerable Mingun Sayadaw	• Documentary (ASEAN)
8:35 am	10:35 am
• Documentary	• Documentary
9:35 am	11:35 am
• Beautiful ASEAN	• Science and Technology Programme

12:50 pm	5:15 pm
• Teleplay (Part-2)	• Weekly Sports Info
1:10 pm	5:35 pm
• TV Drama Series	• People Talks
2:00 pm	6:35 pm
• TV Drama Series	• Current Affairs
2:30 pm	8:00 pm
• Real Story Real Movie	• News / International News / Weather Report
3:35 pm	9:00 pm
• University Of Distance Education (TV Lectures) - Fourth Year (Law)	• News
4:35 pm	• Documentary
• Documentary	• TV Drama Series
	• Talk on old Flim

Note/ Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)



Leicester's Jamie Vardy shoots at goal during Barclays Premier League at King Power Stadium on 2 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

Bournemouth lose appeal against Francis' red card

LONDON— Simon Francis will miss Bournemouth's FA Cup third round tie against Birmingham City after the Football Association rejected his club's appeal against his red card in the goalless draw against Leicester City on Saturday.

The FA's Independent Regulatory Commission upheld referee Andre Mariner's decision to issue a straight red card to the defender during his team's Premier League away fixture at Leicester City.

Television replays showed Francis got a touch of the ball before bringing down Leicester's Jamie Vardy, resulting in a penalty which Bournemouth goalkeeper Artur Boruc saved.

"The defender, who was

dismissed for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity against Leicester, will serve his one-match suspension with immediate effect," the FA said in a statement.

Currently four points above the relegation zone after 20 matches, Bournemouth will make a trip to Championship side Birmingham City on Saturday as the Cherries seek to progress to the next round of the FA Cup for the third season in a row.

Francis will be eligible to feature in next week's Premier League fixture against an in-form West Ham United at the Vitality Stadium. Manager Eddie Howe will have right-back Adam Smith available for the FA Cup clash at St Andrews.—Reuters

West Brom keeper Foster to return after nine-month absence

LONDON — West Bromwich Albion keeper Ben Foster is on course to return to the first team on Saturday after spending nearly nine months on the sidelines with a knee injury. The 32-year-old has been out of action since damaging his cruciate knee ligaments against Stoke City in March last year, but manager Tony Pulis said he could be involved in Saturday's FA Cup third-round tie against Bristol City.

The England international played 45 minutes for the club's under-21 side on Tuesday.

"It's good to have Ben back. He played 45 minutes and

then trained with us," Pulis told the club's website (www.wba.co.uk). "I will speak with the medical staff but I would like to think he might be involved in Saturday's FA Cup game."

Boaz Myhill has replaced Foster as the Baggies' first-choice keeper this campaign and the club also signed Anders Lindegaard from Manchester United in the close season. Foster has lost his place as rival to first-choice keeper Joe Hart in the England squad to Stoke's Jack Butland, while manager Roy Hodgson has also drafted in Burnley's Tom Heaton.—Reuters

Nishikori opens with win at Brisbane International

BRISBANE — Japanese ace Kei Nishikori downed Kazakhstan's Mikhail Kukushkin in straight sets in his opening match in the second round of the Brisbane International yesterday.

The second-seeded Nishikori, who received a first-round bye, won 6-3, 6-4 in just under 90 minutes at Pat Rafter Arena to book his spot in the quarter-finals.

Kukushkin raced into a 2-0

first-set lead, but could not hold onto it against Nishikori, who registered five aces and capitalized on three of seven break-point chances en route to victory. Nishikori is seeking a fourth straight trip to the Brisbane semifinals.

He also advanced in the doubles competition, partnering Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov to a 4-6, 6-1, 10-7 win over French pair Pierre-Hugues Herbert and Nicolas Mahut.—Kyodo News

Advantage Liverpool as Ibe downs Stoke in League Cup

LONDON — Jordan Ibe came off the bench to drive home the winner as Liverpool took a big step towards reaching the League Cup final with a 1-0 victory at Stoke City in the first leg of their last-four tie on Tuesday.

Ibe was summoned into the action early and the winger fired home left-footed in the first half as Juergen Klopp's side grabbed a narrow but potentially priceless advantage ahead of the return leg on 26 January.

Liverpool's hopes of a record-extending ninth League Cup title were given a stern examination in the second half as Stoke piled forward in search of an equaliser. However, a makeshift defence featuring Lucas Leiva and Kolo Toure stood firm.

The prize on offer is a place in the final against Manchester City or Everton who play the first leg of their semi-final at Goodison Park on Wednesday.

Klopp's delight at victory was tempered by yet more injury woe as Philippe Coutinho and Dejan Lovren succumbed to hamstring problems in a high-paced first half, while Toure was limping at the finish.



Liverpool's Nathaniel Clyne in action with Stoke's Marko Arnautovic during Capital One Cup Semi Final First Leg at Britannia Stadium on 5 January. PHOTO: REUTERS

"It's a strange feeling," Liverpool's German coach told Sky Sports. "I'm proud as it was a perfect reaction from the last game (a 2-0 defeat to West Ham United)."

"But of course we have two bad injuries and that's why I'm not lucky tonight."

The eight-times winners were sharp and incisive as they pinned Stoke back in the early stages although they again looked to be lacking a killer instinct in front of goal.

It was substitute Ibe who broke the deadlock for the visitors, putting the finishing touch

to a swift counter attack after 37 minutes. Adam Lallana beat the offside trap down the right flank and squared for Joe Allen, whose scuffed shot fell into the path of Ibe who controlled the ball neatly before dispatching his left-footed shot low into the net.

Liverpool's Roberto Firmino was denied by a last-ditch tackle from Ryan Shawcross, but Stoke did finish the half with their best two chances as Marko Arnautovic headed wide and former Liverpool fullback Glen Johnson drew a good save from Simon Mignolet.—Reuters