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Myanmar Scout Centenary held with opening address by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, made the opening address at the Myanmar Scout Centenary held at the diamond jubilee hall of Yangon University yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who was also a Girl Guide more than 50 years ago in Myanmar, expressed delight to see the scout spirit existing in Myanmar.

She also stressed the importance of having a collective working spirit in working for achieving peace in Myanmar.

"As known by all, now is the time for our country to make attempts to gain peace and stability. Only if we collectively work, can peace be achieved in our country, region and our world," said the State Counsellor.

The ceremony was opened by singing the song titled, "Virtue of Scout—Kin Htauk Gonyi" composed by Hinthada Myint Ngwe.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addresses the Myanmar Scout Centenary at the diamond jubilee hall of Yangon University. PHOTO: MNA

The State Counsellor recounted that it has been over 50 years. She felt sorry that she could not stand together with her colleagues who had taken part in the Girl Guides team dressed in Girl Guides uniforms.

"But it is a great pleasure for me to see our scout spirit existing in us. Activity of Scout youths is a kind of nurturing moral development among youths. Collective contribution in a good cause is a kind of finding life-long comrades or alter egos. Nothing can supersede collective contribution in a good cause. Therefore, I am very glad to see our Scout Youths assemble like this. Standardized attitudes and mindsets indoctrinated since young age can impress anyone's mind for ever. These will surely benefit not only oneself but also one's society, one's country and the whole world. Scout activity means the activity concerning the globe, not for the country or organization only. Yet, beneficial contribution of individual countries can benefit the whole world, or vice versa," said the State Counsellor

"Collective work is in some way getting rid of "Self." Every being has "self". But it is necessary for everyone to control it to some extent. Self is thinking for oneself and "Metta—the Loving Kindness" is thinking for the many, that is to say, willingness to share one's wholesome deeds. As known by all, now is the time for our country to make attempts to gain peace and stability. Only if we work collectively, can peace be achieved in our country, region and our world. The lyrics of the scout song have the meaning of encouraging youths to bear good characters. Youths can take lessons from the song. The century-long survival of the organization is the result of these spirits. When we were young, scouts used to go out on trips once a week or yearly camping that will give pleasure and good advantage of taking lessons. Scouts had to take exams step by step. There had been President Scouts' Team formed in our younger days. I myself was the one among the first-ever Fours who passed the exam. As I had to move to India at the age of 15, I did not take part in scout activities any longer, but I did not disconnect with scouts across the world. Esprit de corps strengthened in me gave me the chance not to lose sight of the international scout movement.

Following the opening address, Dr Tin Nyo, Chief Commissioner of men's scout, and Dr Tin Hla Kyi, Chief Commissioner Myanmar Girl Guides, spoke about the progress of Myanmar scouts and its history.

At the ceremony, representatives from international scout organizations presented commemorative gifts to the State Counsellor.

After the ceremony, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi posed for documentary photos together with representatives of the Myanmar Scout Committee and International scout organizations, her childhood girl guide friends and the new generation of Myanmar scouts.

The Myanmar scouts movement was formed in 1916 and suspended in 1964. The Myanmar scouts was reformed in 2012 and it became the 164th member of the World Scout on 11 August 2016 after it was unanimously approved by 163 members.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Information committee refutes rumours of rapes

THE Information Committee of the State Counsellor's Office issued a press release concerning the rumours that some women were raped during the area clearance operations of security forces following the violent attacks in Maungtaw Township.

According to the press release, No. 1 Border Guard Police Command Centre (Kyikanpyin), Koetankauk Police Outpost and Ngakhuya Police Outposts were attacked by violent attackers at dawn on 9th October. Nine police officers were killed and a total of 51 assorted weapons and ammunition were lost during the attacks. After the attacks, military columns comprising government troops and the police conducted area clearance operations in the area to recover lost weapons and ammunition and to capture the violent attackers in accordance with the law. However, terrorists fabricated stories with the use of social media and the internet while foreign new agencies spread bad news that was contrary to the ethics of the media by publishing one-sided accusations.

Rakhine State Investigation Commission led by Vice President U Myint Swe conducted field trips to Maungtaw from 11 to 13 December. During these trips, Dr Daw Thet Thet Zin, member of the commission and Chairman of the Woman Affairs Federation and other members interviewed local residents including women, children and men to find out whether rapes were committed during the operations. When the commission members arrived at Pyaungpaik Village on 11 December afternoon, they interviewed Ma Jarmaliha exclusively and asked her whether she had been raped, other young women had been raped and whether she had witnessed such cases but she answered that she had never been raped nor witnessed any case of rapes.

A media team comprising local and foreign media visited Rakhine State from 19 to 22 December and on 21 December during their trip, Ma Jarmaliha, 25, of Pyaungpaik Village and Daw Than Than (a) Ma Norjan, 32, told the media that they had been raped by security forces.

As a result, authorities visited Pyaungpaik Village and met elders of the area including U Khali, a head of hundred households in Pyaungpaik Village, and Mammud Enu, Village Administrator of Sabeigon Village. Authorities also invited Ma Jarmaliha and Daw Than Than (a) Ma Norjan, who no longer lived in Pyaungpaik Village and have moved to Ngasarkyu Village, to the meeting but they did not come to the meeting and had escaped, according to the village administrator. Therefore, authorities asked her neighbours including Abu Bawshof, Manunat and the head of hundred-household and they told the authorities that the accusation were not true, that they had never heard of any rape in the village and could not understand why the women told journalists that they had been raped.

Any resident of Maungtaw has the right to report to the police in accordance with the law and action will be taken against perpetrators if the report is correct and victims will be given effective protection, according to the press release.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, addresses the Coordination Meeting for Renovating & Upgrading Yangon University (Main Building)

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor, addressed the Coordination Meeting for Renovating and Upgrading Yangon University (Main Building) held in the Convocation Hall of the Yangon University at 2 pm yesterday.

Afterwards, Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Education, clarified current working situations and plans to be carried out further.

Dr Maung Maung Wint, member of the committee for renovating and upgrading Yangon University (main building), explained current working situations with Dr Pho Kaung, Rector of Yangon University, clarifying arrangements for 2016-2017 academic year, followed by discussions of those present at the meeting.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor made the closing speech.

The State Counsellor is met by a throng of people in front of the Convocation Hall. PHOTO: MNA

Present at the meeting were Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein of the Yangon Region Government, Cabinet Ministers, members of the Committee for Renovating and Upgrading Yangon University (main building) and responsible officials. —*Myanmar News Agency*

During area clearance operation, government troops confront TNLA armed group

THE government troops made a march to wage an area clearance operation at point 1543 hill, 3000 meters far from south west of Man Ii village in Manton Township, being fired by TNLA armed group comprising 50 or so with firearms and artilleries. In pursuit of TNLA armed group, the government troops were attacked by 3 triggered mines. Due to the cross-fire from the government troops, TNLA armed group fled into the west and south-west.

The Tatmadaw troops are pursuing them, and in the attack some from the government troops were killed and some injured, it is learnt.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Vice President urges non-signatories to sign NCA in order to settle political problems at table

VICE President U Myint Swe has called on non-signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement to sign the deal as soon as possible in order to solve the political problems at the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong.

He made the remarks at a co-ordination meeting of the Central Committee for Holding 70th Anniversary Union Day yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

The 21st Century Panglong Conference is the only road to the Union which would be based on democracy and a federal system, and the government is striving for inclusiveness of the conference, said the Vice President U Myint Swe.

In his capacity as the chairman of the central committee, Vice President U Myint Swe also reiterated the government's commitment to ending armed conflicts in the country through political dialogues.

The President Office formed the central committee and sub-committees for holding the 70th Anniversary Union Day which falls on February 12.

The Union Day will be celebrated with the objective of unity and peace for all national peoples.

The objectives of the 70th Anniversary Union Day have called on all national peoples to work in unity for peace of the country, he said.

The Vice President also stressed the importance of Union Spirit in bringing together all national peoples in unity, saying in retrospect the Panglong Conference could result in regaining the country's independence through the unity of all national peoples.

"Peace is sine qua non for development of our country, and so we must work hard to achieve peace," he said.

Vice President U Myint Swe speaks at the co-ordination meeting. PHOTO: MNA

In his concluding remarks, Vice President U Myint Swe has called on the management committee and sub committees on holding the 70th Anniversary Union Day for working together to be able to successfully hold the ceremony.

Participants of the meeting discussed arrangements for holding the Union Day.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Dus Mammad, also known as Runarmyar, answers questions to journalists at his village.
PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Muslim man decapitated in northern Rakhine after refuting accusations against security forces

A Muslim man in Ngakhuya Village in northern Rakhine was beheaded Thursday after he refuted accusations against security forces of arson attacks, rapes and extrajudicial arrests to independent journalists.

Dus Mammad, also known as Runarmyar, who is currently volunteering as an in-charge of the village library, answered questions raised by the group cof independent journalists comprising 13 reporters and photo-journalists at the village on 21st December.

Following the interview, he came back home at around 6 pm and changed his clothes and went out to the village.

As he did not arrive back home till 10.45 pm, his elder brother Dil Muhamad informed the village's head U Georgyi Aung and the Ngakhuya Police Station.

While probing into the case, the security forces were informed by his elder brother that he found some blood stains near Dotan Village.

The security forces found the body of Dus Mammad without his head and with two stabs on both thighs.

Security forces are investigating this case.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw, wife attend Christmas Festival and Ceremony for Thanks to God

CHRISTMAS Festival and Ceremony for Expression of Gratitude was held at the house of U Henry Van Thio, Vice-President at 6 pm on December 23.

At the ceremony, Dr J Ral Bual, the reverend priest made expression of virtues of the God and gave prayers of wish. Then, President U Htin Kyaw gave Christmas Greetings, followed by hymns of Jesse Van Bawl and Jennifer Par.

Afterwards, Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe read out the Christmas Greeting Massage sent by the State Counsellor, with U Henry Van Thio gaving X-mas greetings.

Sai Kyaw Tint, the reverend priest gave a short sermon about Christmas and Dr Aung Man sent out good wishes to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and its people. Then the President and those present were entertained to a Friendship Dinner hosted in honor of the Birthday of Jesus Christ.

Present at the ceremony were President U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin, Vice-President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Vice-President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr Shwe Hlwan, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint and wife Daw Cho Cho, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife Daw Nant Kyin Kyi, Chairman of State Constitution Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt and wife Daw Htay Yi, Chairman of Union Election Commission U Hla Thein, Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat and wife, Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung and wife, Union Ministers, and Deputy Ministers and invited guests. — *Myanmar News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin attend Christmas Festival and Ceremony for Expression of Gratitude held at the residence of Vice President U Henry Van Thio. PHOTO: MNA

President and family given blessings by students from Khawechan School for the Visually Impaired

Students from the Khawechan School for the visually impaired singing songs, praying for the President and family at the Presidential Palace. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw, wife Daw Su Su Lwin and family were given psalms & words of blessings at a pre-Christmas event by students and staff from Khawechan School for the visually impaired at 4 pm on December 23 at the President Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

Then, U Maung Maung Hla gave words of blessings and prayed for the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the President. 21 students and staff led by Daw Tin Tin Htwe of the school entertained the President and family by singing songs, "Joy to the World" "Rudolph" and "Jingle Bells" and gave Christmas presents to the President.

Afterwards, the President, wife and family served them with food and drinks.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Union minister receives Japanese ambassador

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint received HE Mr Tateshi Higuchi Ambassador of Japan, and party at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Discussions focused on performance of the Japanese Orchestra in Asian countries and joint-performance of the National Orchestra and the Japanese Orchestra, and implementation of Translation Machine Project between the National Institute of Information and Communications Technology and the Ministry of Information of Myanmar. Also present were officials of the ministry.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw and wife enjoy performance of Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra Concert

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw and wife Daw Su Su Lwin enjoyed the musical performance of the Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra Concert 2016, December, jointly organized by the National Orchestra of Myanma Radio and Television of the Ministry of Information and Japanese musicians led by Mr Yamamoto at the Myanmar International Convention Centre (II) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Also present at the music performance were Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint and wife and head of departments and enterprises under the ministry, the Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar and embassy officials and their families and fans.

Then, the President and officials and fans enjoyed the music performance which featured classical music, Christmas songs and Myanmar songs. After the performance, the President presented a bouquet to the Japanese musicians. Then, Union Minister Dr Pe Myint presented flower baskets and bouquets to both Myanmar and Japanese musicians.

Later, the President and wife and guests and fans posed for documentary photos together with musicians and vocalists.

The Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra Concert 2016, December staged a performance at the National Theatre in Yangon on 17 December.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myanmar National Symphony Orchestra Concert 2016, December, at the MICC-II in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Chief Minister U Nyi Pu clarifies stability and development in Rakhine State to journalists. PHOTO: MNA

Rakhine State Chief Minister meets journalists

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu met with a group of independent journalists at the office of Rakhine State Government yesterday.

At the meeting, the chief minister clarified policies for stability of Rakhine State, international relations and cooperation, performing duties with accountability, consequent attacks, measures for trust building and upgrading Khamaingseik and Myinlook villages into towns during the fiscal year, border trade, offshore fishing measures taken to return to normalcy.

The journalists viewed round the viewpoint and upgrading work along Strand Road and implementation of Kalatan River Comprehensive Development Project, Seiyokya and Thetkalpyin IDP camps.

The local and foreign journalists left Sittway for Yangon in the evening.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Over 1300 acres of land being granted to 442 landless farmers from Pyapon township

AYEYAWADY region government granted 1,326 acres of land owned by union government to 442 landless farmers from Kyetpha Hmwe Zaung village, Pyapon township, it is learnt from Ayewawady region government.

There are over 1,000 farmers having submitted the applications for the land. But, the government allowed only 810 landless farmers to draw the lucky draw in a transparent manner. Out of those who tried their luck, only 442 landless farmers won three acres of land each.

"Agriculture and livestock is the main industry in the Pyapon township. But, they don't have job opportunities because they are landless farmers. I wish them enjoying their farmers rights and their difficulty being overcome soon," said U Sithu Aung, a member of the Ayeyawady region lands and other lands scrutuinization committee.

Currently, the government has issued the temporary grant form 3 to 442 farmers. If the farmers are cultivating the crops on their land for three consecutive years, the government will issue the land grant form 7. Also, the government has already connected other relevant organizations to receive assistance of farming implements.

"I used to work on the farm as a labour because I don't have farm land. I tried very hard to be able to live from hand to mouth. I could not send my children to school. Now, I got three acres of land to grow the crops on. So, I don't need to worry about the food for my family," said U Mya Aye, a local farmer from Kyetpha Hmwe Zaung village.

The Ayeyarwady still has fallow and virgin lands in Maubin township and Yekyi township.The government will reclaim the land to grant them to landless farmers.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Amarapura urban development project presentation held in Mandalay

AMARAPURA urban development project presentation was held at Swan hotel in Mandalay hotel on 21 December.

The ceremony was attended by Mandalay region Hluttaw speaker U Aung Kyaw Oo, Regional Resources and Environmental Conservation minister U Myo Thit and officials from the government department.

"Currently, the projects are being implemented with transparency. So, I want all of you professionals to discuss whether we should implement this project or not," said Mandalay region Hluttaw speaker U Aung Kyaw Oo.

The presentation of Amarapura urban development project held in Mandalay. PHOTO: AUNG THANT KHINE

The project will be implemented on 500 acres of land on the eastern side of Ayeyawady river whereas another 1,000 acres of land will be on the Western side of Ayeyawady river.

After verifying Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Social Impact Assessment (SIA), the project will be submitted to Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

"We don't have any objection against the project. The project will be implemented in such a way as not to affect environment, said U Zaw Ye Win, information officer from Mandalay Business Capital City Development.

About 10,000 local people will get the job while the project is being implemented and when the project is completed, about 7,500 local people will get the job.

The project will include roads, bridges and parks, drainage system, religious edifices, Orphanage, hospital, administrative office, police station, fire station and playgrounds. The project will take approximately 10 years to complete. —*Aung Thant Khine*

Humanitarian aid goes to war victims in Hsipaw

RADIO Station Cherry FM will offer Ks15 million to raise funds for war victims taking shelter in Hsipaw, a town in northern Shan State, according to the manager of Cherry FM (Lashio).

Temporary shelters opened in Hsipaw Town hosts around 1,800 victims who abandoned the conflict-affected villages in the aftermath of a fight which happened in Namtu Township, with the majority of them going to a relief camp opened at Tarpoke Monastery.

The contribution aims to provide humanitarian assistance to fulfil individual needs to a certain degree, said Ko Hlaing Htoo, manager of Cherry FM in north Shan State, adding the number of war victims are continuing to increase in the town because of several clashes.

The contribution is planned to make on Christmas Day which falls on 25 December, with a plan to present Ks15 million donated by the Cherry FM facilities plus Ks500,000 by other local well-wishers. —*Myitmakha News Agency*

Book sharing program started in Yamethin

YAMETHIN Technological University students can now borrow books from a book sharing program which is arranged by Ohwai free library staring from 22 December, it is learnt from Yamethin Technological University Student Union (YTSU).

The students have to call the YTSU and the YTSU will deliver the books to their home free of charge.

"The library offers free-delivery and hire service. The students only need to phone the YTSU. YTSU wants the students to read more books," said Ko Yazar Tun, the librarian of Ohwai free library.

"I really appreciate this book sharing program because they are sending the books that I want to read free of delivery charges. Our students are now bent on using facebook only. This program makes us interested in reading the books, said Ko Aung Thura, a second year student.

Currently, YTSU has already posted their contact phone numbers in the classrooms, at the departments and dormitories.

The students can hire the books for seven days. Upon lapse of the seven-day period, YTSU will collect the books back. The library is closed only on Tuesdays.

There are nearly 300 books in the library.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Crime NEWS

Heroin seized in Waimaw Tsp

AN ANTI-NARCOTIC squad from Myitkyina Township searched a motorcycle driven by Ma Than Than Hlaing together with Lamyarlay on board on Ywarle street, Ward 1, Wuyan village, Waimaw Township on 22 December. Police found them in possession of 22 soap-box of heroin weighing 272 grams.

Interrogation of the two suspects has led to further arrest of Ma Than Than Hlaing's husband Zaw Luu waiting near Wuyan village market to accept heroin, and so the police arrested Zaw Luu together with a handset. Police have filed charges against them under the Anti-narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.—*Myanmar Police Force*

Ma Than Than Hlaing, Zaw Luu and Lamyarlay with drugs. PHOTO: MPF

LOCAL Business

New investments in December create over 7,000 job opportunities: MIC

THE Myanmar Investment Commission granted 14 local and foreign enterprises to operate business in the country this month, creating over 7,000 employment opportunities for locals, according to the MIC.

The MIC gave the green light to 11 businesses including four wholly foreign-owned enterprises from Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Cambodia, five citizen-owned firms and two joint ventures from China and Hong Kong according to its meeting on 17 December.

Three enterprises—Kingsrich (Myanmar) Fashion Ltd, Crown Beverage Cans Myanmar Ltd and Linfra Ltd—received permission from the MIC in early this month, creating over 2,200 job opportunities for citizens.

The majority of investments went to the country's garment industry to manufacture of garment and related accessories on CMP basis, according to the MIC.

An employee works on a production line at a garment factory in Hlaingthaya, Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

The types of new investment businesses includes construction of water treatment plant and supply of water in Monywa under B.O.T, hotel services by B.O.T, manufacturing of Coach Bus, City Bus and Body Building, production and marketing of all kinds of paper roll, manufacturing, distribution and marketing of metal cans and ends, and power system installation and maintenance of telecommunication equipment services.

Those businesses will operate in Yangon's industrial zones in Shwepyitha, Hlaingthaya, Shwepaukkan, Mingaladon, Dagon Myothit (South) and Htantabin, Sagaing and Bago regions as well as southern Shan State.

According to the MIC, there are a total of 78 foreign enterprises with investments of US$2,146.934 million and 37 Myanmar Citizen investment projects with investments of $518.506 million as of 19 December in this fiscal year.—*Soe San*

Domestic fuel consumption increases year by year

DOMESTIC fuel consumption continues to rise each year and the country consumed over 4,000 million gallons of fuel over the past five months, according to the Ministry of Electric Power and Energy.

The petrol consumption increased to over 403 million gallons in 2015-2016 fiscal year from 155 million gallons in 2010-2011 FY, whereas diesel consumption went up to over 807 million gallons from over 460 million gallons in the past five years.

According to the official figures issued by the ministry, the country consumed 155.025 million gallons of petrol in FY2010-11, 147.055 million gallons in FY2011-12, 164.459 million gallons in FY2012-13, 169.61 million gallons in FY2013-14, 340.791 million gallons in FY2014-15 and 403.095 million gallons in FY2015-16.

The diesel consumption in the country was 464.866 million gallons in 2010-11 FY. It decreased to 416.395 million gallons in 2011-12 FY, 316.749 million gallons in 2012-13 FY and 372.493 million gallons in 2013-14 FY. The diesel consumption went up to over 600 million gallons in 2014-15 FY and 807.619 million gallons in 2015-16 FY.

The ministry confirmed that there are 1,968 registered filling stations nationwide with most of them being opened in Mandalay, followed by Shan State and Bago Region. The commercial capital Yangon has 145 permitted filling stations and the capital Nay Pyi Taw has 69.

The petroleum price in local market this moth increased by over Ks300 per gallon because of unstable dollar price, according to filling stations in Yangon, saying that a litre of diesel was sold for Ks700 on 22 December, while the retail price of higher diesel was Ks720 per litre.

The price of 92 octane was Ks720 per litre when a litre of 95 octane was sold for Ks750.

In late November, a litre of diesel was sold for Ks630, higher diesel for Ks650, 92 octane for Ks630 and 95 octane for nearly 700.—*Khine Khant*

Cotton growers trying to penetrate foreign market to reach profit targets

COTTON producers are putting forth concerted efforts to introduce Myanmar's cotton to neighbouring countries in early next year, employing effective market penetration strategy, according to cotton growers.

Market penetration is being accelerated by local cotton farmers in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation to promote socio-economic status of rural community, a farmer said.

Although the price of cotton increased to Ks1,450 per viss this year from Ks1,000 last year, the growers are having difficulty achieving their profit targets because of growing agricultural expenses.

This is the reason why local farmers are trying to penetrate the international market, with a plan to double the current price when they have access to export market.

Cotton is cultivated mostly in Magway Region which falls in the arid zone of central Myanmar.—*200*

Water chestnut growers get healthy profits

THE PRICES of water chestnut have gradually increased in KhinU Township in Sagaing Region, resulting in growers having a handsome profit this harvest time, say local farmers.

One basket of water chestnut was sold for over Ks6,000 last December. The prices increased to Ks9,000 the most per basket this year. Based on the size, the crops were sold for between Ks7,000 and Ks90,000 per basket in December this year.

"Thanks to the good weather condition, we have a bumper harvest this season and our plantations produced a high-quality water chestnut," said Ko Khaing, one of the local farmers. "The set retail price of the crop is Ks1,000 per pyi (2.19 kg)."

In 2015, an acre of water chestnut plantation produced about 14 baskets. The volume increased by around 16 baskets per acre this year. There are over 30 water chestnut growers across KhinU Township. Their products are popular only in the local market.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Agricultural call center will be opened for farmers

AN AGRICULTURAL call center will be opened for the farmers to ask the agricultural questions in Nay Pyi Taw, it is learnt from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

The construction of call center will be finished by 2017. Also, the staff who have knowledge on agriculture will be assigned to answer the questions from farmers.

" We are preparing to run the call center. Now, we are collecting the main information about agriculture and communication equipment. We do not have the vaguest idea of when it can start, said U Myo Tint Tun, assistant secretary from the ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

The farmer can ask the call center concerning using of fertilizers, land, and insects. The call center will also answer the question in real time. Ten members of staff who can answer the questions properly will be assigned. The staff will be selected from across the country. They will be trained for their assignment.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Viet Nam's Central Highlands aims to become Southeast Asia's top vegetable production hub

HANOI — The People's Committee of Da Lat City, in Viet Nam's Central Highlands Lam Dong Province, has announced a plan to boost hi-tech agriculture in 2016-2020.

According to the plan, Da Lat will develop its comprehensive and sustainable hi-tech agriculture with multi-sectoral approach to become the top vegetable production hub of the Southeast Asia and Viet Nam's top agricultural tourist destination, reported local Sai Gon Giai Phong (Sai Gon Liberation) online newspaper on Friday.

Specifically, Da Lat will see some 7,000 hectares, or 65-70 per cent, of its agricultural land applied with high technology by 2020, bringing agricultural production value to 4.346 trillion Vietnamese dong (194.88 million US dollars) a year.

Besides, Da Lat will build sustainable agricultural production models together with development of tourism and agricultural services.

According to Viet Nam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the country is forecast to earn 2.5-2.6 billion US dollars from exports of vegetables and fruits in 2016. Local experts said potentials of Vietnamese vegetables and fruits remain high. If the country can well manage quality of input materials, the export revenue of the item can reach 5 billion US dollars a year in the future. —*Xinhua*

Scientists urge Australians not to leave rubbish at beaches this summer

CANBERRA — Scientists on Friday asked Australians to be mindful of leaving plastic rubbish at beaches, saying it has a lasting detrimental effect on the marine ecosystem.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) released a statement detailing the impact that ocean rubbish has on the local ecosystem, ahead of the busy beach season.

CSIRO Principle Research Scientist Chris Wilcox said around half of all Australia seabirds have some amount of plastic inside their stomachs, while 15,000 sea turtles are trapped in dumped fishing gear every year.

He said it was important to be mindful of the environmental impact that leaving or dumping rubbish was having on the local ecosystem.

"More than 8 million tons of rubbish finds its way into the worlds' oceans each year," Wilcox said in a statement on Friday. "While about one million tons is out floating in the ocean, the rest ends up on the shore.

"We think turtles eat plastic bags because they look like jellyfish in the water and with seabirds it's the smell of plastic which takes on a krill-like smell in the water."

Wilcox said a lot of the rubbish found at sea and washed up on beaches was easily prevented by using a bin or taking one's rubbish with them after boating or having an afternoon relaxing at the surf.

"While up to 40 per cent of litter found during clean-up activities are beverage containers, things like discarded fishing equipment are also common culprits," he said in the statement. "If you're out on the beach or at the park, take your rubbish home with you — don't add to the pollution pandemic."—*Xinhua*

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Chief Editor - Khin Maung Aye
ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Deputy Chief Editor - Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Expatriate Consultant Editor
Mark Angeles
markrangeles@gmail .com
Senior Translators
Khin Maung Oo, Myint Win Thein
editor2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Editor
Ye Htut Tin (Local News)
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
International Editors
Tun Tun Naing (Editor)
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Nwe Nwe Tun (Sub-editor)
Translators
Khaing Thanda Lwin,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Hay Mar Tin Win,
translator@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Ei Myat Mon
Chief Reporter
Tun Aung Kyaw,
reporter2@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Computer Team
Tun Zaw (Chief of Computer Team), Thein Ngwe,
Zaw Zaw Aung, Ye Naing Soe, Nyi Zaw Moe,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win, Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin
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Asia on Christmas alert as police foil two bomb plots

JAKARTA/BANGKOK — Security forces across Asia were on alert on Friday ahead of the Christmas and New Year holidays, as police in Australia and Indonesia said they had foiled bomb plots and Malaysian security forces arrested suspected militants.

Australian police said they had prevented attacks on prominent sites in Melbourne on Christmas Day that authorities described as "an imminent terrorist event" inspired by Islamic State. The announcement came after an attack in Berlin in which a Tunisian suspect smashed through a Christmas market in a truck on Monday, killing 12 people.

In Indonesia, where Islamic State's first attack in Southeast Asia killed four people in Jakarta in January, at least 14 people were being interrogated over suspected suicide bomb plots targeting the presidential palace in Jakarta and another undisclosed location, police said.

Anti-terrorism police killed three suspects in a gunfight on Wednesday on the outskirts of the capital, Jakarta. Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, would deploy 85,000 police and 15,000 military staff for the Christmas and New Year period, police said.

Moderate Indonesian Muslim groups were helping authorities secure Christmas celebrations amid heightened religious tension after the Christian governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, went on trial on a charge of blasphemy against Islam, which he denies.

Hardline group Islamic Defenders Front swept into shopping centres in the city of Surabaya, in East Java, last week to make sure Muslim staff were not forced by employers to wear Santa hats or other Christmas gear.

In West Java, a group stopped a Christmas event as it was being held in a public building rather than in a church.

In Jakarta, about 300 volunteers from Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's biggest moderate Muslim group, will join police in overseeing security.

"The focus is against terrorism, especially in Jakarta and Bali, because these are the traditional targets," Indonesia police chief Tito Karnavian told reporters. The largely Hindu island of Bali, famed for its temples and beaches, suffered Indonesia's most serious militant attack, in 2002, when 202 people were killed, most of them foreigners, by bombs at a bar.

Police in Muslim-majority Malaysia, where Islamic State claimed responsibility for a grenade attack on a bar on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur in June, said this week they had arrested seven people for suspected links to the militant group. Police will monitor transport hubs, entertainment centres and tourist spots.

"We try not to have too much physical presence in public and focus more on prevention," deputy home minister Nur Jazlan Mohamed said. "People should feel free to enjoy their holidays."

The US Embassy in India warned this week of an increased threat to places frequented by foreigners, and cited media reports indicating Islamic State's desire to launch attacks in the country.

In mostly Muslim Bangladesh, where a militant group killed 22 people, most of them foreigners, at a Dhaka cafe in July, police would be patrolling near churches, an officer said.

Mostly Buddhist Thailand plans to have more than 100,000 police on patrol until mid-January, police said, adding it was an increase from last year, without giving details.—*Reuters*

Indonesian police stand guard with their sniffer dogs providing security ahead of the Christmas and New Years holiday at Gubeng station, Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, on 23 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Moon rising? South Korea presidential hopeful quietly takes stage

SEOUL — As hundreds of thousands of South Koreans poured into the streets every weekend for two months to call for President Park Geun-hye to resign, the opposition's leading contender to replace her appeared reluctant to seize the moment.

That is changing as Moon Jae-in, a 63-year-old human rights lawyer who lost the 2012 election to Park by more than a million votes, has in recent days taken a higher public profile as he seeks to lead the liberal Democratic Party into the next election and end eight years of conservative rule.

Like many on the left, he calls for sweeping reform of the chaebol — the big conglomerates that dominate the economy and have been at the heart of the current political crisis — calling them a "source of unfairness" in South Korea.

He promises to move the presidential office into a multi-purpose government building and turn the palace-like Blue House, where Park remains while a court decides her fate after she was impeached by parliament, into a public museum.

He has also said that, if elected, he would visit rival North Korea before making a trip to South Korea's main ally, the United States. Just two North-South summits have been held since the 1950-53 Korean war that divided the peninsula.

Moon Jae-in (C), former human rights lawyer and presidential candidate of the main opposition Democratic United Party, attends a campaign encouraging people to vote, in Seoul, South Korea, on 19 December 2012. PHOTO: REUTERS

"The people who are angry in Korea want regime change, and the most realistic option and most probable person to do that is Moon Jae-in," Yang Jung-chul, a close aide to Moon, told Reuters.

Moon had led opinion polls in recent weeks, although a survey released on Thursday by Realmeter showed he had fallen just behind United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, by 23.1 per cent to 22.2 per cent.

Ban has yet to declare his candidacy or party affiliation, but has been expected to join a conservative grouping.

Moon's popularity among liberals stems from his time as chief of staff to South Korea's last liberal president, Roh Moo-hyun, a figure revered by the left for his experimental and anti-establishment politics that sought chaebol reform.

"Moon is a symbol of that experiment," said Yang.

But Roh, derided by conservatives for his pursuit of engagement with North Korea that they say failed to change Pyongyang's behavior, could also be Moon's undoing, especially among South Korea's elderly.

The majority of people aged over 60, most of whom are conservative, have turned out to vote in the last three presidential elections, according to National Election Commission data. In 2012, 85.9 per cent of over-60s voted.

By contrast, the least-avid voting group is people in their 20s or 30s, many of whom took to the streets for the first time during recent candle-lit protests in Seoul. At the last election their turnout levels were below 65 per cent.

That was high, by recent standards, for the demographic, but Moon will need to convince an even bigger share of them to turn out and vote for him in the upcoming election, which is no sure thing.

"He has a tendency to make ambiguous comments and be overly-cautious of crossing lines," said Moon Ji-hyun, a student activist at Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul. "He wasn't in the frontlines at the early stages of the protests."

The Constitutional Court must decide whether to uphold parliament's 9 December motion to impeach Park, which could take up to 180 days and, if successful, trigger an election two months later. —*Reuters*

Australia makes arrests over 'imminent threat' of Christmas Day attacks

SYDNEY — Australian police said on Friday they had foiled a plot to attack prominent sites in the city of Melbourne with a series of bombs on Christmas Day that authorities described as "an imminent terrorist event" inspired by Islamic State.

Police laid terrorism charges against one man, and were expected to charge at least three others, after authorities conducted overnight raids on homes in the suburbs of Australia's second-largest city.

Six men and a woman, all Australian citizens in their 20s, were arrested during the raids, which were conducted by about 400 police and members of Australia's domestic spy agency.

"This is a significant disruption of what we would describe as an imminent terrorist event in Melbourne," Australian Federal Police Commissioner Andrew Colin told reporters in Sydney.

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turn bull told reporters that the planned attack was an "Isla mist terrorist plot" and "one of the most substantial terrorist plots that have been disrupted over the last several years".

The plot targeted high-profile locations in Melbourne, including Federation Square, Flinders Street Station and St Paul's Cathedral "possibly on Christmas Day", acting Victorian police commissioner Graham Ash ton said.

Police walk towards a door as they search a house in the Melbourne suburb of Meadow Heights, Australia, on 23 December 2016 during an operation regarding a plot to attack prominent sites in central Melbourne with a series of bombs on Christmas Day that authorities described as 'an imminent terrorist event' inspired by Islamic State. PHOTO: REUTERS

It was inspired by the Islamic State militant group and the suspects had been under close surveillance for a fortnight, he said. One of the suspected planners in custody was an Egyptian-born Australian and the others were all Australian-born of Lebanese descent, Ash ton told reporters.

He said the threat had been "removed ... in its entirety", however security in Melbourne was boosted on Friday. Extra police would be on patrol on Christmas Day and at the annual Boxing Day cricket test, which attracts tens of thousands of fans every year, in Melbourne the following day, he said.

Melbourne Archbishop Philip Freer told reporters that services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day would go ahead "unaffected by these things".

One of the arrested men, Abdul Maharani, was later charged with terror offences and did not apply for bail when he appeared briefly in the Melbourne's Magistrate Court, court spokeswoman Asher Whitaker.

Similar charges are expected to be laid against at least three other men, a Victoria Police spokeswoman said.

Two of those arrested, including the woman, were released without charge, police said earlier.

Police in Australia are able to hold terror suspects without charge for four hours but they can also apply to a court to detain them without charge for as long as two weeks.

Few details were released about what evidence was collected by police during the raids in suburbs in Melbourne's northwest but Ash ton said the attacks would likely have involved explosives and either guns or knives.

Australia, a staunch US ally which sent troops to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq, has been on heightened alert for attacks by home-grown radicals since 2014.

Authorities have said they have thwarted a number of plots, particularly involving radicalize teenagers, in recent years.

There have also been several "lone wolf" assaults, including a 2014 cafe siege in Sydney in which two hostages and a gunman were killed, and the killing of a police accountant in 2015. —*Reuters*

Singapore arrests eight Indonesians for selling contraband cigarettes

SINGAPORE — Singapore's Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) has arrested eight Indonesians for immigration offences and peddling of duty-unpaid cigarettes in a joint operation, said ICA in a press release on Friday.

The joint operation which involved officers from the ICA, Singapore Police Force and Singapore Customs, seized about 119 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes, with potential duty and Goods and Services Tax (GST) of about 10,460 Singapore dollars (5882 US dollars) and 1,005 Singapore dollars (565 US dollars) respectively.

ICA said it takes a "serious view" of attempts to overstay, enter or depart Singapore illegally.

Under the Immigration Act (Cap 133), overstaying or illegal entry could be jailed for up to six months plus a minimum of three strokes of the cane, while the penalties for illegal departure is a fine of up to 2,000 Singapore dollars (1125 US dollars), a jail term of up to six months, or both.—*Xinhua*

Opinion

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We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email ***ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.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.

Mission to resolve conflicts will be accomplished in no time

Tha Sein

FOR a long time Rakhine State has been a backwater. But this has changed. The 9/10 violent attacks launched have resulted in an escalation of tension that would place the region deep into a communal violence. The assailants perpetrated the atrocities for the mere reason that they courted displeasure.

No matter how desperately they undermined regional stability and peace, the region is starting to recover from the battering it endured in recent violent attacks, and it is a daydream for those who are still unable to have a proper look at the strategic position of the country to expect the collapse of the region.

Having a lot of time for both communities, officials engaged in bringing back the situations to normal, rose to the occasion and responded to the plight of locals in distress. In a surprise move, independent journalists had disclosed the true situations after having extensive media access in the region. Having expressed their satisfaction about the access to information in the conflict areas and having seen the true situations with their own eyes, one of them stated that what the people expressed were totally different from the situations on the ground.

Now, the government is taking a shrewd, pragmatic approach to turn the region into a healthy one, which is a vital issue that relates to the destiny of both communities. If the atmosphere were made best use of, the region could surely prosper due to the vast potential it owns.

Now that the international community's view and outlook on the situation has undergone a fundamental change, we are now acting in a way that is transparent and accountable to the communities and looking into what is a bone of contention. With this, it is hoped that our mission to resolve the conflicts will be accomplished in no time.

Sexual offences In Myanmar, Singapore and India

U Mya Thein. B. A., B.L.

(Continued from 23-12-2016)

(2) Subject to subsection (3), a person who is guilty of an offence under this section shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 10 years, or with fine, or with both.

(3) Whoever commits an offence under this section against a person (B) who is under 14 years of age shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 20 years, and shall also be liable to fine or to caning.

(4) No person shall be guilty of an offence under this section for an act of penetration against his or her spouse with the consent of that spouse.

(5) No man shall be guilty of an offence under subsection (1)(a) for penetrating with his penis the vagina of his wife without her consent, if his wife is not under 13 years of age, except where at the time of the offence -

(a) his wife was living apart from him -

(i)under an interim judgment of divorce not made final or a decree nisi for divorce not made absolute;

(ii) under an interim judgment of nullity not made final or a decree nisi for nullity not made absolute;

(iii) under a judgment or decree of judicial separation; or

(iv) under a written separation agreement;

(b) his wife was living apart from him and proceedings have been commenced for divorce, nullity or judicial separation, and such proceedings have not been terminated or concluded;

(c) there was in force a court injunction to the effect of restraining him from having sexual intercourse with his wife;

(d) there was in force a protection order under section 65 or an expedited order under section 66 of the Women's Charter (Cap. 353) made against him for the benefit of his wife; or

(e) his wife was living apart from him and proceedings have been commenced for the protection order or expedited order referred to in paragraph (d), and such proceedings have not been terminated or concluded.

Commercial sex with minor under 18

Section 376B.

(1) Any person who obtains for consideration the sexual services of a person, who is under 18 years of age, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 7 years, or with fine, or with both.

(2) Any person who communicates with another person for the purpose of obtaining for consideration, the sexual services of a person who is under 18 years of age, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 2 years, or with fine, or with both.

(3) No person shall be guilty of an offence under this section for any sexual services obtained from that person's spouse.

(4) In this section, "sexual services" means any sexual services involving -

(a) sexual penetration of the vagina or anus, as the case may be, of a person by a part of another person's body (other than the penis) or by anything else; or

(b) penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth, as the case may be, of a person by a man's penis.

Commercial sex with minor under 18 outside Singapore

Section 376C.

(1) Any person, being a citizen or a permanent resident of Singapore, who does, outside Singapore, any act that would, if done in Singapore, constitute an offence under section 376B, shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) A person who is guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable to the same punishment to which he would have been liable had he been convicted of an offence under section 376B.

Tour outside Singapore for commercial sex with minor under 18

Section 376D.

(1) Any person who -

(a) makes or organises any travel arrangements for or on behalf of any other person with the intention of facilitating the commission by that other person of an offence under section 376C, whether or not such an offence is actually committed by that other person;

(b) transports any other person to a place outside Singapore with the intention of facilitating the commission by that other person of an offence under section 376C, whether or not such an offence is actually committed by that other person; or

(c) prints, publishes or distributes any information that is intended to promote conduct that would constitute an offence under section 376C, or to assist any other person to engage in such conduct,

shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(c), the publication of information means publication of information by any means, whether by written, electronic, or other form of communication.

(3) A person who is guilty of an offence under this section shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 10 years, or with fine, or with both.

Sexual grooming of minor under 16

Section 376E. (1) Any person of or above the age of 21 years (A) shall be guilty of an offence if having met or communicated with another person (B) on 2 or more previous occasions -

(a) A intentionally meets B or travels with the intention of meeting B; and

(b) at the time of the acts referred to in paragraph (a) -

(i)A intends to do anything to or in respect of B, during or after the meeting, which if done will involve the commission by A of a relevant offence;

(ii) B is under 16 years of age; and

(iii) A does not reasonably believe that B is of or above the age of 16 years.

(2) In subsection (1), "relevant offence" means an offence under -

(a) section 354, 354A, 375, 376, 376A, 376B, 376F, 376G or 377A;

(b) section 7 of the Children and Young Persons Act (Cap. 38); or

(c) section 140(1) of the Women's Charter (Cap. 353).

(3) For the purposes of this section, it is immaterial whether the 2 or more previous occasions of A having met or communicated with B referred to in subsection (1) took place in or outside Singapore.

(4) A person who is guilty of an offence under this section shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 3 years, or with fine, or with both.

Procurement of sexual activity with person with mental disability

Section 376F. (1) Any person (A) shall be guilty of an offence if -

(a) A intentionally touches another person (B) who has a mental disability;

(b) the touching is sexual and B consents to the touching;

(c) A obtains B's consent by means of an inducement offered or given, a threat made or a deception practised by A for that purpose; and

(d) A knows or could reasonably be expected to know that B has a mental disability.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), a person who is guilty of an offence under this section shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 2 years, or with fine, or with both.

(3) If the touching involved -

(a) penetration of the vagina or anus, as the case may be, with a part of the body or anything else; or

(b) penetration of the mouth with the penis,

a person who is guilty of an offence under this section shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 10 years, or with fine, or with both.

(4) No person shall be guilty of an offence under this section for any act with that person's spouse.

(5) For the purposes of this section -

"mental disability" means an impairment of or a disturbance in the functioning of the mind or brain resulting from any disability or disorder of the mind or brain which impairs the ability to make a proper judgement in the giving of consent to sexual touching;

"touching" includes touching -

(a) with any part of the body;

(b) with anything else; or

(c) through anything, and includes penetration.

Incest

Section 376G.(1) Any man of or above the age of 16 years (A) who -

To be continued

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers speech at graduation of Defence Services Nursing and Medical Academy

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the graduation parade of Nursing and Medical Academy. PHOTO: MNA

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered an address at the graduation ceremony of the 14th Intake of the Defence Services Nursing and Medical Academy and the 1st Intake of Nursing Science for Females at the Defence Services Medical Academy in Yangon yesterday morning.

The senior general presented the best cadet award to Cadet Lwin Moe of the 14th Intake of the Defence Services Nursing and Medical Academy, outstanding training award to Cadet Han Lin Naing and outstanding studies award to Zaw Hein.

Then, the senior general presented the best cadet award to Cadet Nu Htet Htet Hlaing of the 1st Intake of Nursing Science for Females, outstanding training award to Cadet Myat Thet Mon and outstanding studies award to Cadet Ei Thandar Phyo.

After the parade of the graduation of the cadets, the senior general met with parents of the outstanding cadets and praised them.

Later, the senior general and party viewed round teaching aids for cadets, general practical room, the ICU and the Paediatrics room before inspecting the library.

In the evening, the senior general attended the graduation dinner of the cadets.—*Myanmar News Agency*

National objectives for the 69th anniversary Independence Day, 2017

1. To build a genuine Union in the future, making use of the common agreement which will emerge from the negotiations and discussions to be reached at the Union Peace Conference – 21st century Panglong.
2. For all nationalities to collectively preserve and protect non-disintegration of the Union; non-disintegration of national unity; and perpetuation of sovereignty.
3. To strive hard to draw up a constitution suitable for the union and in accord with democratic principles and norms for the emergence of a democratic federal union.
4. To endeavour to create good economic conditions that ensure equitable development between the regions and the states and that will be in conformity with the national economic policy and goals.

MYANMAR GAZETTE

1. The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following heads of service organizations shown against each on expiry of the one-year probationary period.

	Name	Appointment
(a)	U Myint Thu	Director-General ASEAN Affairs Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(b)	U Sein Oo	Director-General Consular and Legal Affairs Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(c)	U Soe Thein	Director-General Department of Communications Ministry of Transport and Communications
(d)	U Min Lwin	Director-General Department of Civil Aviation Ministry of Transport and Communications

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

	Name	Appointment
(a)	U Ni Aung General Manager Myanma Port Authority Ministry of Transport and Communications	Managing Director Myanma Port Authority Ministry of Transport and Communications
(b)	U Min Thu Deputy Permanent Secretary Union Minister's Office Ministry of Planning and Finance	Director-General Revenue Appellate Tribunal Department Ministry of Planning and Finance

Eight arrested for attempted human smuggling before transporting 200 Bangladeshi people to Malaysia

EIGHT men, who were found on a boat in the Myanmar's territorial waters, were arrested yesterday for attempted human trafficking, according to the State Counsellor's Office Information Committee.

According to the interrogations, the boat left Kyaikkhami jetty in Mon State on 19 December and entered into Bangladesh's territorial waters through the international sea route.

They were waiting for three Bangladeshi smugglers at the appointed place in the Bangladeshi sea at 11.30 pm on 22 December till 2 am. They were arrested around 2.35 am yesterday by the security forces while they were sailing into Myanmar's territorial waters as the Bangladeshi smugglers failed to meet them.

According to Maung Tharke from Kawthaung, one of the suspects, they were hired by Jamah, a Bengali national living in Thailand, to transport 200 people from Bangladesh to Malaysia.

Eight suspects seen after arrest.
PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

They did not know the payment for hiring the boat as Jamah contacted U Thant Zin, the owner of the boat, living in Watthoe Ward in Kyaikkhami. The suspects got K150,000 each for transportation and it costs Baht 15,000 for each passenger from Bangladesh to Malaysia, he said.

The suspects will transport about 200 peoples from Bangladesh to Malaysia in this trip, and the boat will stop over in southern Thailand before entering Malaysian sea where Jamah will be waiting to transport the boat people to Malaysia. Action will be taken against the eight suspects in accordance with the law. —*Myanmar News Agency*

Commercial CP chicken breeding boom in Kyaukpyu township, Rakhine

THE NUMBER of commercial CP chicken breeders has increased in Kyaukpyu township because of the fast growth rate and lower cost, it is learnt from a local breeder.

The CP chickens are ready to sell in 45 days at a weight of one viss. Also, they grow more rapidly, at a heavier weight and lower feed costs. So, the local people from Gon Chein, Sanae, Zin Chaung, Min Pyin are breeding the CP chicken on a commercial scale in 2016.

"Last year, we bred only 100 or 200 CP chickens. If we have enough supply of electricity, we can expand our breeding industry. Now, we have another extra cost for grill of baby chicken. But, the CP chickens grew faster than the home-bred chicken. This year, we planned to bree the more CP chickens," said U Thein Naing, CP chicken breeder from Zin Chaung village.

"The price of CP chicken ranges from Ks 8,000 to Ks 8,500 per head depending on the size and weight in the market," said U Pho Kyi, a local CP chicken breeder from Min Pyin village.

The private companies from Kyaukphyu are breeding the CP chicken for commercial. Also, C.P Group Co Ltd based in Kyaukpyu township invested in 20 CP chickens in farms. As a result, CP chicken farming has grown in the villages.—*Myitmakha News Agency*

Five good news stories you might have missed in 2016

LONDON — As 2016 draws to a close with news dominated by bloodshed, disasters and disease from the Middle East to Africa and Latin America, it may seem there wasn't much to be happy about this year.

Despite continued violence in Syria and Yemen, severe drought in Africa and the outbreak of the Zika virus in Latin America, there have been events worth celebrating in 2016.

Here are five of them that you might have missed in the last 12 months:

1. PEACE COMES TO COLOMBIA

In November, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and FARC rebel leader Rodrigo Londono signed a modified peace deal, cobbled together after the first version was rejected in a public vote in October, to end 52 years of war.

For his efforts to end Latin America's longest-running conflict, Santos was awarded the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize.

The conflict killed more than 220,000 people and displaced millions more in the Andean nation.

2. CLIMATE ACTION

A landmark global accord to combat climate change officially entered into force on 4 November, putting pressure on nearly 200 countries to start executing plans to slash their greenhouse gas emissions.

The Paris Agreement, agreed in December 2015, seeks to wean the world economy off fossil fuels in the second half of the century, limiting the rise in average world temperatures to "well below" 2.0 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above preindustrial times.

3. INDIA'S QUEST TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos and Marxist FARC rebel leader Rodrigo Londono, known as Timochenko, shake hands after signing a peace accord in Bogota, Colombia, on 24 November 2016.
PHOTO: REUTERS

In May, India's minister for women and children unveiled a draft of the country's first comprehensive anti-human trafficking law, which would treat survivors as victims in need of assistance and protection rather than as criminals.

South Asia, with India at its centre, is the fastest-growing region for human trafficking in the world, says the UN Office for Drugs and Crime.

4. WEST AFRICA BATTLES FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

More than 300 communities across four West African countries with some of the world's highest rates of female genital mutilation (FGM) are declaring themselves free of the practice in public ceremonies this month.

FGM affects an estimated 140 million girls and women across a swathe of Africa and parts of the Middle East and Asia, and is seen as a gateway to marriage and a way of preserving purity.

The ritual involves the removal of the external genitalia and causes numerous health problems that can be fatal.

5. UN APPOINTS FIRST LGBT RIGHTS INVESTIGATOR

In September, the UN Human Rights Council appointed its first independent investigator to help protect gay and transgender people worldwide from violence and discrimination.

Vitit Muntarbhorn, an international law professor at the Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, will have a three-year mandate to investigate abuses against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. —*Reuters*

Trump tweets about nuclear weapons, raising questions and fears

PALM BEACH, (Fla.) /WASHINGTON — President-elect Donald Trump called for an expansion of the United States' nuclear capabilities on Thursday, in a tweet that alarmed nonproliferation experts who said that a boost to the US arsenal could fuel global tensions.

In his Twitter post, Trump said, "The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes," but gave no further details.

It was not clear what prompted his comment. However, earlier on Thursday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Russia needed to "strengthen the military potential of strategic nuclear forces."

Asked about the tweet, Trump spokesman Jason Miller later said Trump was "referring to the threat of nuclear proliferation and the critical need to prevent it — particularly to and among terrorist organisations and unstable and rogue regimes."

Trump, who takes office on 20 January, also has "emphasised the need to improve and modernise our deterrent capability as a vital way to pursue peace through strength," spokesman Jason Miller said.

Miller told Reuters that Trump was not advocating the use of nuclear weapons, and said Trump's comments were not meant to be read as a new policy proposal.

Experts wondered whether Trump's brief tweet meant he wanted to breach limits imposed on US strategic weapons and delivery systems by the 2011 New START treaty with Russia — or planned to expand the non-deployed stockpile.

"It is completely irresponsible for the president-elect or the president to make changes to US nuclear policy in 140 characters and without understanding the implications of statements like 'expand the capacity,'" said Daryl Kimball, the executive director of the Arms Control Association, a leading proponent of arms control based in Washington.—*Reuters*

NEWS IN BRIEF

Putin, Netanyahu discuss Mideast anti-terror cooperation

MOSCOW — Russian President Vladimir Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu discussed the situation in the Middle East and the fight against terrorism, the Kremlin press service said on Friday.

In a telephone talk, "Putin and Netanyahu continued exchange of opinions on the current situation in the Middle East. They confirmed their readiness for further active cooperation in the fight against terrorism," it said.

The conversation, held on the Israeli initiative, was the second this week.

On Wednesday, Netanyahu offered condolences over the assassination of Russia's Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Karlov and said Israel was ready to boost anti-terrorism cooperation with Russia.—*Xinhua*

Stove was turned on at restaurant as blaze breaks out in coastal city

NIIGATA, (Japan) — The owner of a ramen noodle restaurant told police Friday that he went outside after turning on a stove burner when a fire broke out amid strong wind the previous day that destroyed some 150 buildings and injured 11 people in a city on the Sea of Japan coast.

The blaze, which forced hundreds of residents to evacuate their homes and prompted the dispatch of the Self-Defence Forces, was fully extinguished by Friday afternoon, about 30 hours after it broke out at a ramen noodle restaurant in Itoigawa, Niigata Prefecture.

According to the police, the owner of the ramen restaurant, believed to be the origin of the fire, left the kitchen and returned to his home after putting ingredients into a pot and setting it on the kitchen stove. He told them that when he returned to the kitchen, he saw flames coming out from the pot.

"I feel deeply sorry for what I've done," the man was quoted by the police as saying. The magnitude of the blaze, which burned 40,000 square meters of the city, also prompted Emperor Akihito to express his sympathy for people affected by the biggest fire in 20 years not caused by a natural disaster.—*Kyodo News*

Russia says Trump better partner for Syria deal than Obama: Ifax

MOSCOW — Russia is not in touch with the incoming US administration over Syria, but Moscow sees Donald Trump as a better partner to negotiate with than Barack Obama, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov said on Friday.

The Interfax news agency quoted Gatilov as saying that Trump had never linked the resolution of the Syrian crisis to the removal of President Bashar al-Assad, who is supported by Moscow.

"As we understand it, that means he has more room for maneuver than the outgoing administration of Obama," Gatilov was quoted as saying.—*Reuters*

German police arrest two men suspected of planning shopping mall attack

BERLIN — Police special forces arrested two men suspected of planning an attack on a shopping mall in Oberhausen in the West German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, police said on Friday.

The suspects, two brothers aged 28 and 31 who were born in Kosovo, were arrested in the city of Duisburg after information provided by security sources, police said in a statement.

It was not clear if there was any connection with Monday's attack on a Berlin Christmas market that killed 12 people. Police are searching for a Tunisian suspect whose fingerprints were found inside the truck.—*Reuters*

Airbus signs deal with Iran for sale of 100 aircraft

TEHRAN — Airbus signed a contract Thursday for the sale of 100 aircraft to Iran Air in the wake of the lifting of sanctions against Tehran in January.

The deal is reportedly worth more than $18 billion, with deliveries expected to begin early next year. It came after Iran's flag carrier finalized a deal for 80 jetliners from Boeing Co. earlier this month.—*Kyodo News*

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS SCHEDULE

YANGON TO BANGKOK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-304	09:50	11:45	Daily
TG-2302	15:00	16:55	1,5,6,7
TG-302	15:00	16:55	Daily
TG-306	19:50	21:45	Daily
PG-706	6:00	8:15	Daily
PG-702	10:30	12:25	Daily
PG-708	15:30	17:25	Daily
PG-704	18:20	20:15	Daily
8M-335	7:30	9:15	Daily
8M-331	16:30	18:15	Daily
UB-017	15:45	19:15	2,4,6,7
UB-017	17:45	19:15	1,3,5
UB-019	8:00	9:30	3,5,7
UB-019	8:55	10:25	1,6

BANGKOK TO YANGON

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
TG-303	8:00	8:45	Daily
TG-2351	10:10	11:00	1,5,6,7
TG-301	13:15	14:00	Daily
TG-305	18:05	18:50	Daily
PG-701	8:45	9:40	Daily
PG-707	13:45	14:40	Daily
PG-703	16:45	17:35	Daily
PG-705	20:30	21:45	Daily
8M-336	10:15	11:00	Daily
8M-332	19:20	20:05	Daily
UB-020	10:35	11:10	3,5
UB-018	21:05	21:35	Daily
UB-020	11:30	12:05	1,6,7

YGN TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-252	8:30	10:15	Daily
FD-256	12:55	14:20	Daily
FD-254	17:35	19:25	Daily
FD-258	21:40	23:30	Daily
DD-4231	08:00	9:45	Daily
DD-4235	12:00	13:45	Daily
DD-4239	21:00	22:45	Daily
SL-201	11:00	13:35	Daily
SL-207	19:45	21:45	Daily

DMK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-251	7:15	8:00	Daily
FD-255	11:35	12:25	Daily
FD-253	16:20	17:05	Daily
FD-257	20:15	21:10	Daily
DD-4234	10:30	11:15	Daily
DD-4230	6:30	7:15	Daily
DD-4238	19:25	20:15	Daily
SL-200	08:45	10:00	Daily
SL-206	17:10	18:35	Daily

YGN TO CAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-012	07:00	11:30	7
8M-711	8:40	13:15	2,4,5,7
CZ-3056	11:35	15:50	3,6
CZ-3056	17:40	22:20	1,5

CAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-012	12:30	15:45	7
8M-712	14:15	15:50	2,4,5,7
CZ-3055	8:40	10:35	3,6
CZ-3055	14:40	16:40	1,5

YGN TO SIN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-231	8:20	12:40	Daily
SQ-997	10:25	15:10	Daily
MI-515	14:20	18:50	1,3,5
MI-519	17:35	22:10	Daily
MI-522	16:20	20:50	4,6
MI-533	13:35	20:50	2
3k-584	19:40	00:10	Daily
3K-582	11:35	16:05	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2823	9:45	2:15	1,2,4,5,6,7
UB-001	7:30	11:45	Daily

SIN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
8M-232	13:40	15:15	Daily
SQ-998	07:55	09:20	Daily
MI-522	11:30	15:30	4,6
MI-518	15:15	16:40	Daily
MI-516	12:00	13:25	1,3,5
MI-533	11:30	12:45	2
3K-583	17:30	19:00	Daily
3k-581	09:10	10:40	1,3,4,5,6,7
TR-2822	7:20	8:45	1,2,4,5,6,7
UB-002	13:00	14:30	Daily

YGN TO NRT

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-814	22:10	06:45	Daily

NRT TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
NH-813	11:00	16:30	Daily

YGN TO ICN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KE-472	23:30	7:50	Daily

ICN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KE-471	18:30	22:30	Daily

YGN TO KUL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-505	8:30	12:45	Daily
AK-503	19:10	23:30	Daily
8M-501	16:00	20:15	2
8M-501	11:45	15:45	1
MH-741	11:15	15:40	Daily
MH-743	16:00	20:15	1,4,6,7

KUL TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
AK-504	6:55	8:00	Daily
AK-502	17:20	18:30	Daily
8M-502	16:45	17:45	1
8M-502	21:10	22:10	2
MH-742	13:55	15:05	1,4,6,7
MH-740	09:10	10:15	Daily

YGN TO KMG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-416	12:30	16:00	Daily
MU-2032	15:30	18:50	Daily
MU-2012	12:55	19:55	3

KMG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-415	10:50	11:30	Daily
MU-2031	14:00	14:30	Daily
MU-2011	08:20	11:55	3

YGN TO TPE

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7916	10:50	16:10	Daily

TPE TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CI-7915	7:00	9:50	Daily

YGN TO PEK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-906	23:50	0550+1	3,7

PEK TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
CA-905	19:30	22:50	3,5

YGN TO HAN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-956	19:10	21:35	Daily

HAN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-957	16:40	18:10	Daily

YGN TO SGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-942	12:10	14:55	2,3,4,5,7

SGN TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
VN-943	9:25	11:10	2,3,4,5,7

YGN TO HKG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA -251	1:05	5:25	Daily
UB-8027	09:00	13:30	1,3,5,7

HKG TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
KA-250	21:50	23:45	1,3,5,7
KA-252	22:20	00:10	2,4,6
UB-8028	14:50	16:20	1,3,5,7

YGN TO DOH

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-919	8:05	11:30	1,4,6

DOH TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
QR-918	20:10	5:20	3,5,6

YGN TO CNX

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG -724	13:40	15:35	Daily

CNX TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-723	12:00	12:55	Daily

YGN TO DAC

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-061	16:45	18:30	1,3,6

DAC TO YGN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
BG-060	13:30	16:00	1,3,6

MDL TO DMK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-245	12:55	15:15	Daily

DMK TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
FD-244	11:10	12:25	Daily

MDL TO SIN

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-533	15:45	20:50	2
MI-522	14:15	20:15	4,6

SIN TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MI-522	11:30	13:20	4,6
MI-533	11:30	14:50	2

MDL TO BKK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-710	14:10	16:35	Daily

BKK TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-709	12:00	13:20	Daily

MDL TO KMG

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2030	14:25	17:15	Daily

KMG TO MDL

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
MU-2029	13:20	13:15	Daily

NYT to BKK

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-722	19:50	22:50	1,3,4,5,6,7

BKK TO NYT

Flight no.	Dep	Arv	Days
PG-721	17:20	19:20	1,3,4,5,6,7

AIRLINE CODES

8M = Myanmar Airways International
BG = Biman Bangladesh Airlines
MH = Malaysia Airlines
MU = China Eastern Airlines
NH = All Nippon Airways
SQ = Singapore Airways
PG = Bangkok Airways
UB = Myanmar National Airlines
VN = Vietnam Airline
3K = Jet Star
AI = Air India
CI = China Airlines
DD = Nok Airline
KA = Dragonair
MI = Silk Air
TG = Thai Airways
AK = Air Asia
CA = Air China
CZ = China Southern
FD = Air Asia
KE = Korea Airlines
QR = Qatar Airways
TR = Tiger Airline

DAY
1 = Monday
2 = Tuesday
3 = Wednesday
4 = Thursday
5 = Friday
6 = Saturday
7 = Sunday

A man walks under Chinese New Year decorations as he visit the Old City God Temple in Yuyuan Garden in Shanghai on 29 January 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

China to relax foreign investment rules for aged care: State Council

BEIJING — China is set to relax regulations for foreign elderly care firms in an effort to attract investment, the State Council said in a statement issued on Friday.

The statement said China will loosen approval processes for foreign aged-care firms and encourage overseas investors to establish non-profit pension funds.

China is facing the looming challenges of a rapidly aging population, driven in part by its restrictive one-child policy which was partially relaxed in 2015.

The country opened the industry to for-profit investment in 2014, allowing some foreign investors to manage wholly-owned firms in the sector, albeit under close surveillance and cumbersome approval processes.

According to UN data, the number of Chinese people over 80 will surge threefold to 90 million, making it the largest aged population in the world.

Currently the country's elderly care infrastructure is critically underdeveloped. China also has strong culture of filial piety, stigmatising those who opt to put elderly relatives in nursing facilities.

The notice also reiterated previous commitments to fully liberalise the elderly care market, setting a 2020 deadline.—*Reuters*

Chinese medical team completes 503 cataract surgeries in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO — A visiting Chinese medical team has successfully completed 503 cataract surgeries in Sri Lanka's Kalutara General Hospital in the south, as part of their first overseas charitable mission, a press statement by the Chinese Embassy said.

The delegation are part of "Lifeline Express," China's mobile eye hospital specializing in charitable medical activities.

The project was titled "Brightness Action" and was praised by the Sri Lankan government.

During the one-month operation, the Chinese doctors conducted cataract surgeries for 503 low income Sri Lankan patients, helping them successfully recover their eyesight.

The medical team also consulted more than 700 patients and carried out technical trainings and exchange programmes introducing advanced ophthalmology surgical techniques to local doctors and nurses.

All medical services provided by Lifeline Express were free of charge.

The Chinese medical team consisted of eminent eye physicians from Peking Union Medical College Hospital (PUMCH) with modern medical equipment and instruments.—*Xinhua*

Angola declares end to world's worst yellow fever epidemic in decades

LUANDA — Angola declared the end of the world's worst yellow fever epidemic in a generation on Friday after a UN-backed vaccination campaign of 25 million people that resulted in no new cases in six months.

The outbreak began a year ago in a slum in the capital, Luanda, before spreading throughout Angola, a war-scarred southeast African nation, and into neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo. In all, more than 400 people died.

More than 15 million Angolans and 10 million Congolese were vaccinated under a campaign coordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

In a statement entitled "The end of the epidemic of Yellow Fever in Angola", the health ministry in Luanda said the vaccination campaign had stopped the spread of the disease.

The WHO said in September the epidemic was under control but that it was too early to say it had been completely stamped out, with up to 6,000 suspected cases of the mosquito-borne disease.

The vaccination campaigns depleted the global stockpile of 6 million doses twice this year, forcing doctors to switch to administering one-fifth of the normal dose, a tactic that the WHO says gives at least temporary protection.—*Reuters*

Passengers leaving hijacked plane in Malta

VALLETTA — Passengers walked down the steps from a hijacked plane at Malta International Airport on Friday, and Malta's Prime Minister Joseph Muscat tweeted that a first group of 25 had been freed and the release of another 25 was under way.

Buses were driven onto the tarmac to carry passengers away, and more releases were expected, with more than 100 passengers and crew reported to have been on board. Television footage showed no signs of struggle or alarm.

The aircraft had been on an internal flight in Libya on Friday morning when it was diverted to Malta, 500 km (300 miles) north of the Libyan coast, after a hijacker told crew he had a hand grenade.

Initial reports said the hijacker had told crew he was "pro-Gaddafi" and that he was willing to let all 111 passengers leave the Airbus A320, but not its seven crew, if his demands were met, the Times of Malta said.

It was unclear what the demands were. Some media reports said there was more than one hijacker. Former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was killed in an uprising in 2011, and the country has been racked by factional violence since.

Troops took up positions a few hundred metres (yards) from the plane as it stood on the tarmac. Several other flights at Malta International Airport were cancelled or diverted.

A senior Libyan security official told Reuters that when the plane was still in flight on Friday morning the pilot told the control tower at Tripoli's Mitiga airport it had been hijacked.

"The pilot reported to the control tower in Tripoli that they were being hijacked, then they lost communication with him," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Maltese troops survey a hijacked Libyan Afriqiyah Airways Airbus A320 on the runway at Malta Airport, on 23 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

"The pilot tried very hard to have them land at the correct destination but they refused."

Large numbers of security officials could be seen at Mitiga airport after news of the hijacking.

The aircraft had been flying from Sebha in southwest Libya to Tripoli for state-owned Afriqiyah Airways, a route that would usually take a little over two hours. The government of the tiny Mediterranean island, a European Union member, said Muscat had discussed the hijack with Libyan Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj by phone, and a negotiating team had been formed and was at the airport. Britain offered Malta help with dealing with the incident.—*Reuters*

Berlin market attack suspect killed in police shootout in Italy

MILAN — Italian police shot dead the man believed to be responsible for this week's Berlin Christmas market truck attack, killing him after he pulled a gun on them during a routine check in the early hours of Friday.

The suspect — 24-year-old Tunisian Anis Amri — travelled to Italy from France, triggering a spate of criticism from eurosceptics over Europe's open-border Schengen pact.

Italian Police officers work next to the body of Anis Amri, the suspect in the Berlin Christmas market truck attack, in a suburb of the northern Italian city of Milan, Italy, on 23 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

A police chief said his men had no idea they might be dealing with 24-year-old Tunisian Anis Amri when they approached him at around 3 am (3.00 am BST) outside a station in Sesto San Giovanni, a suburb of the northern city of Milan.

Amri is suspected of driving a truck that smashed through a Berlin market on Monday killing 12 people, and security forces across Europe have been trying to track him down. The truck mowed through a crowd of people and bulldozed wooden huts selling Christmas gifts and snacks beside a famous church in west Berlin.

Militant group Islamic State acknowledged Amri's death and his suspected role in the German attack — for which it has claimed responsibility — through its Amaq news agency.

"The executor of the Berlin attacks carries out another attack on Italian police in Milan and is killed in a shoot-out," it said.

Milan police chief Antonio De Iesu told reporters that Amri had arrived in Milan's main railway station from France at around 1am and had then travelled to Sesto San Giovanni, where two young policemen approached him because he looked suspicious. "We had no intelligence that he could be in Milan," De Iesu said. "They had no perception that it could be him otherwise they would have been much more cautious." —*Reuters*

Japan seeks to win Thai air defence radar contract

TOKYO — Japan is seeking to win a contract to supply Thailand with an air defence radar system built by Mitsubishi Electric Corp (6503.T), as it looks to counter growing Chinese influence in the Southeast Asian nation, according to four Japanese government officials and one industry source. The effort is part of a wider push by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's administration to bolster its position in the region along with its US ally. The Chief of Staff of Japan's Air Self Defence Force, Yoshiyuki Sugiyama, traveled to Bangkok last month to discuss areas of possible cooperation.

Japan expects the Thai military government to begin accepting competitive bids as early as next year as it upgrades and adds to its existing US and European radar systems, the sources said. It is unclear who else may be bidding.

The value of such a contract is unclear as the specifications for the system have not yet been released. Radar systems built by Mitsubishi and other companies for Japan can stretch to hundreds of millions of dollars depending on the complexity and coverage. The sources said Japan would look to offer a lower price system because of Thailand's limited defence budget.

Japan's push for stronger ties with Thailand, will benefit the US given the growing tensions over China's claims in the South China Sea, according to the sources. Japan, which until 2014 had a ban on arms exports, has not previously sold military equipment to Thailand.—*Reuters*

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV EVER ABLE VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER ABLE VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 24.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV SENTOSA STAR VOY. NO ( )

Consignees of cargo carried on MV SENTOSA STAR VOY. NO ( ) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 24.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of B.S.W 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 BLPL SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KORALIA VOY. NO (759)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KORALIA VOY. NO (759) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25.12.2016 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-5 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 MERIDIAN SHIPPING AGENCIES PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

China's name and shame campaign fails to deter polluters

SHANGHAI — China has publicly named more than 20 enterprises, which it says broke environmental rules during this week's outbreak of hazardous smog in the country's north, its latest attempt to bring lawbreaking firms to account by shaming them.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) accused steel and paper mills, cement plants, power generators and chemical producers of a range of offences, including ignoring output suspensions, "maliciously" evading government inspections and falsifying production data.

Beijing's latest public shaming campaign — in which strongly-worded ministry reprimands are disseminated by local TV and newspapers — is its most overt attempt to bring polluters to account by exposing their infringements to wider community scrutiny, one part of the government's broader "war on pollution" launched in 2014.

But with employment still a priority and penalties too weak, this tactic — used in the past, albeit in a more low-key manner — has done little to discourage firms from evading or ignoring emergency measures imposed in 24 northern cities put on smog "red alert" this week.

"Naming and shaming is meant to deter firms from environmental violations," said Alex Wang, an expert in Chinese environmental law at UCLA. "But where the economics don't work out for firms, and in places where non-compliance is common, (the tactic) won't have much of an effect."

This year, the environment ministry has turned its fire on local governments for lapses in enforcement, singling out cities like Linfen in Shanxi Province. It said last month that 487 officials in smog-hit Hebei province, which surrounds Beijing, would be punished for environmental failings.

Hebei, home to seven of China's 10 most polluted cities last year, set up a "media exposure platform" in October and promised to publish cases of serious violations at least twice a month.

While the transparency push has made it harder for firms to conceal their transgressions, an investigation by the MEP this week showed the province remains one of the country's worst black spots for rule-breaking. The investigation, published on Thursday, revealed six Hebei steelmakers failed to comply with a 18 December order to suspend all sintering operations. It identified the offenders as Hebei Rongxin Steel, Qianan Zhayi Steel, Tangshan Stainless Steel, Tangshan Xinglong Steel and Tangshan Ganglu Steel.

Of the firms, only Tangshan Ganglu could be reached for comment on Thursday, but an official said he had no information about the matter. The ministry also accused three more provincial steel firms — including Hebei Xinda Iron and Steel — of "maliciously" restarting sintering facilities as soon as its inspectors had left the site.

An official with Hebei Xinda also said he was unaware of the situation when contacted by Reuters on Thursday.

Three firms named by the MEP earlier this week - Shandong Yuhuang Chemical, Heze Dashu Biological Engineering and Mancheng Success Paper Industry - told Reuters they had subsequently complied with the orders to suspend production, but they would not say whether they would suffer any further punishment.

A logistics subsidiary of oil giant PetroChina, based in Hebei's Zhuozhou, was accused of exceeding special emissions restrictions imposed this week.

An official at the company told Reuters that it has already paid "special attention" to the criticism and rectified its mistakes. He said he did not know if the firm would be subject to any additional penalties.—*Reuters*

Temperatures around North Pole leap close to melting point

OSLO — Temperatures around the North Pole surged close to melting point on Thursday as a freak blast of warm air blanketed an Arctic region usually deep frozen in mid-winter darkness, scientists said.

Air temperatures at the North Pole were an estimated minus 4 degrees Celsius (24.8 Fahrenheit) around midday with light snow, according to the Norwegian Meteorological Institute, against a more usual temperature close to -30 degrees Celsius (-22F).

There are no weather stations at the Pole itself but a buoy floating in the Arctic Ocean north of the Norwegian island of Spitsbergen was reporting zero degrees (32F) on Thursday.

Worldwide, this year is set to be the warmest on record, driven up by man-made greenhouse gas emissions and a powerful El Nino weather event in the Pacific Ocean.

"There's a low pressure between Greenland and Spitsbergen, with a very powerful air current" driving warm air north, said Justyna Wodziczko, a Norwegian Meteorological Institute forecaster.

Such spikes in Arctic temperatures "are becoming more frequent because we have a declining sea ice cover — the water below is warmer," said Jesper Eriksen, a forecaster at the Danish Meteorological Institute.

Arctic sea ice is at a record low for the time of year, according to December 20 measurements by the US National Snow and Ice Data Center. The Arctic region is warming at twice the global average, disrupting the hunting livelihoods of indigenous people and threatening creatures such as polar bears while opening the region to more shipping and exploration for oil and gas. The temperatures are expected to fall in coming days. The Norwegian Meteorological Institute issued a Tweet this week showing that Father Christmas's sleigh would be able to take off without a risk of getting bogged down in slush.

In late December a year ago, temperatures also briefly rose to around freezing point.

Such winter temperature surges have typically happened once or twice a decade stretching back to a first recorded event in 1959, according to a study in the journal Scientific Reports this month by G.W.K. Moore of the University of Toronto.

Such events were expected to happen more often "as the region transitions towards the occurrence of warmer and wetter winters," he wrote.

A UN panel of climate scientists says it is at least 95 per cent likely that man-made greenhouse gas emissions are the main cause of climate change, disrupting food and water supplies with more floods, heat waves and rising sea levels.—*Reuters*

A member of a team of Cambridge scientists walks on some drift ice 500 miles (800 km) from the North Pole on 3 September 2011. PHOTO: REUTERS

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Transport and Communications
Myanma Posts and Telecommunications (MPT)
INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION
IFP No. MY-P9/CNIP/ PQ Invitation / 16-17
Communication Network Improvement Project (CNIP)
JICA ODA Loan: L/A No. MY-P9

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a loan from Official Development Assistance (ODA) of JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY (JICA) toward the cost of Communication Network Improvement Project (MY-P9) to apply part of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract as "Single Contract" for procurement of Carrier Grade Transmission Equipment (100Gbps DWDM/ ROADM), Internet Gateway Overhaul & ISP Upgrading for IPv6 (High Capacity Routers, Servers), Power Plant, Air Conditioners, Optical Fiber Cable Laying and Civil Works (110km-duct installation) covering 27 sites from Mandalay to Yangon as well as 27 exchanges in Yangon Metro in Myanmar including related Installation/ Construction , Testing and Commissioning.

The Executing Agency, MPT, intends to prequalify potential bidders for a bid after prequalification which will be conducted through the procedures specified in JICA Guidelines for Procurement under Japanese ODA Loans (April 2012) and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as specified in the Guidelines.

Prequalification (PQ) notice with the following contents:

1.	Package/ Project Name	Communication Network Improvement Project (CNIP) , MY-P9
2.	P/Q Document Issuance Time and Venue	Between 10:00 to 15:30, from January 2nd - 3rd 5th -6th 2017. Ministry of Transport and Communications, MPT Managing Director Office @ Office No.2, Nay Pyi Taw
3.	P/Q Document Fee and Necessaries	A complete set of the Prequalification Document fee is MMK 600,000 (Myanmar Kyats Six Hundred Thousand only) (non-refundable) with the submission of a written Application to the above address as the registration.
4.	P/Q Document Submission Closing Date and Time	February 17th , 2017 at 12:00 noon., (Myanmar Standard Time)
5.	Submission Venue	Ministry of Transport and Communications, MPT Managing Director Office @ Office No.2, Nay Pyi Taw
6.	Important Notice	□ **Application** for P/Q should be submitted in sealed envelopes, and be clearly marked "Submission of P/Q on Communication Network Improvement Project (MY-P9)" □ The applications for prequalification shall be submitted by in person and allowed registered applicant(s) only □ If Applicant is only one , it would be interpreted and rejected
7.	Eligibility for Applicant	A minimum requirement for qualification is to have successfully carried out similar projects in overseas countries, demonstrating technical capacity and sound financial position / solvency, as it is specified in the Instruction to Applicants (ITA) of the P/Q Documents. An Applicant must refer to all the P/Q Documents, especially "4. Qualification Criteria" and clear the following in order to satisfactorily perform the contract for the Project. □ **Eligibility** : () **Historical** Contract Non-Performance () **Financial** Situation () **Experience** Procurement method: International Competitive Bidding "ICB" (Open to all Applicants) with P/Q. Single Contract
8.	Contact Person (Office hour)	U Myo San (Executive Engineer) MPT Managing Director Office , Office No.2, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Nay Pyi Taw Phone: +95 67 407188 +95 9 450000016 Email Address: myosan@mpt.com.mm
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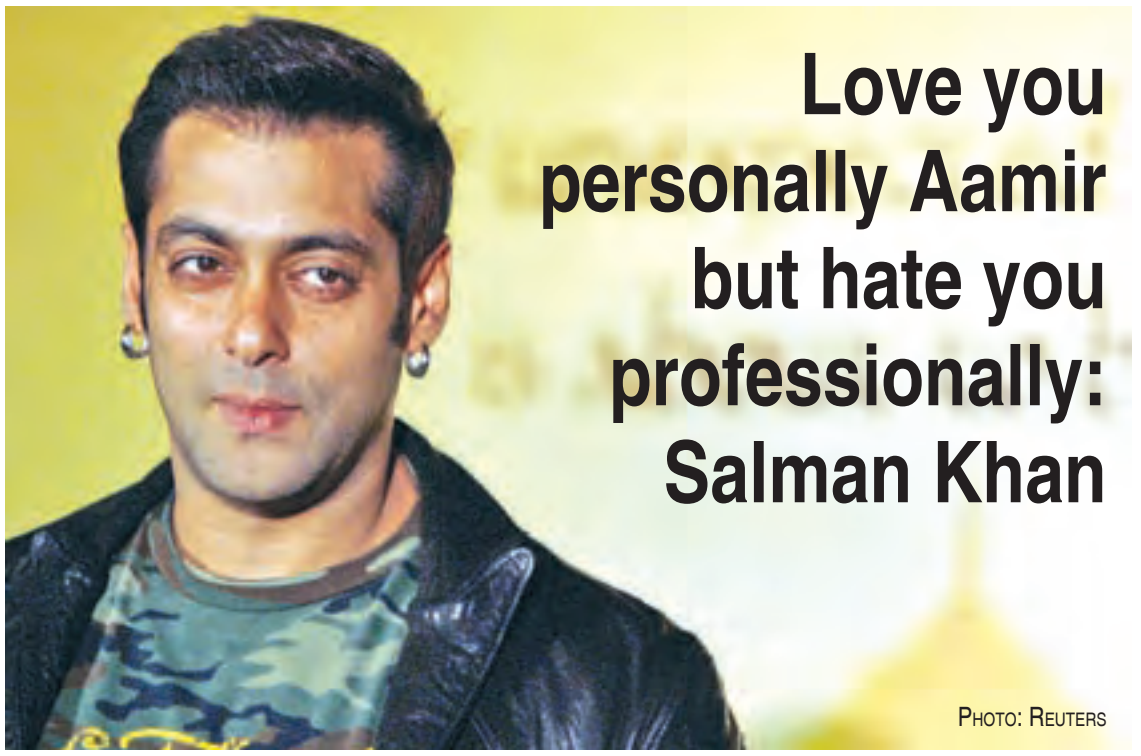

Love you personally Aamir but hate you professionally: Salman Khan

PHOTO: REUTERS

MUMBAI — Superstar Salman Khan lauded Aamir Khan's performance in "Dangal", saying he loves him personally but hates the actor when it comes to their profession as he has done a fantastic job in the biopic.

The 50-year-old star says his family liked Aamir's film even more than his own released "Sultan".

"My Family saw #Dangal today evening and thought it was a much better film than #Sultan. Love u personally Aamir but hate u professionally," Salman wrote on Twitter.

To which Aamir replied, "Sallu, in your 'hate' I feel only love. 'I love you like I hate you'."

While Salman's "Sultan" was about a fictional wrestling champion from Haryana, whose successful career creates a rift in his personal life, Aamir's "Dangal" chronicled the story of a real life wrestler Mahavir Singh Phogat.

In the film, Aamir plays Phogat, a former national champion, who trained his daughters to become professional wrestlers.

"Dangal", also stars Sakshi Tanwar, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Zaira Wasim, hit the theatres on Friday.—*PTI*

Have been lucky to have equal pay: Emma Stone

LOS ANGELES — Emma Stone, who has generated Oscar buzz with her role of a struggling actress in La La Land, says she has been lucky to have been paid the same as her male co-stars despite the gender wage gap in Hollywood. The 28-year-old actress says it is a difficult conversation to have and she finds it odd to look at herself from the outside.

"We should all be treated fairly and paid fairly. I've been lucky enough to have equal pay to my male costars. Not 'lucky.' I've had pay equal to my male costars in the past few films. "But our industry ebbs and flows in a way that's like, 'How much are you bringing into the box office?' 'How much are you the draw or is the other person the draw?' "I felt uncomfortable talking to my agent or lawyer about it because I was like, 'Do people want to see me as much as they want to see Steve Carell?' It's a weird conversation to have because it's trying to see oneself from the outside. What are we at? Seventy-nine cents to the dollar? It's insane. There's no excuse for it anymore."—*PTI*

PHOTO: REUTERS

Indian cinema had a big influence on me: Michael Sheen

LOS ANGELES — Acclaimed Welsh actor Michael Sheen said the cinema of India, including movies by legenadary Indian filmmakers Satyajit Ray and Mira Nair, have had a big influence on him.

"I would love to come and do something in India. It will be amazing. The films from India, the cinema of India has had such a big influence on me, watching Satyajit Ray, Mira Nair films. It is such an incredible country and culture and so I hope that I can come soon," Sheen told PTI in an interview here.

Sheen stars in the sci-fi romance movie Passengers, which has Oscar-winning actress Jennifer Lawrence and Jurassic World star Chris Pratt in the lead roles.

Passengers, a Sony Pictures Entertainment film, will hit Indian theatres on 6 January in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. The movie is about two strangers Jim and Aurora, played by Pratt and Lawrence, who are on a 120-year journey to another planet on a technologically-advanced "cruise-liner" style space ship when their hibernation pods wake them 90 years too early.

Jim and Aurora are forced to unravel the mystery behind the malfunction as the ship teeters on the brink of collapse, jeopardizing the lives of the several thousand passengers traveling from Earth on the spaceship to the distant planet for starting a new life. Sheen plays 'Arthur', an android bartender onboard the ship.

Sheen said playing the role of a robotic bartender was "physically quite uncomfortable" as he had to be strapped into a machine and had a steel rod tied through his back to facilitate his robotic movements.

Michael Sheen. PHOTO: PTI

The actor said he had a great time working with Lawrence and Pratt, adding that "it was just such a laugh working" with them on the sets.

"They are great people, really funny and we all got along really well which is handy because it was just the three of us everyday for a long time," he said.

On the way technology is impacting movie-making, Sheen said it is a "double-edged sword."

"Technology, as it advances is supposed to make our lives easier and help us in all kinds of ways but at the same time technology is always threatening how much we are able to be useful and how much we can get involved in things," he said adding that "so it starts to take away our sense of our own usefulness in some ways."

Sheen said the technology in terms of how people watch films and the way stories are being told is "changing" all the time.

"But ultimately it always comes back to what is the story. Is it a good story, is it a story that you connect to, does it fires up your imagination, makes you think.

That is what I loved about this film as it seems to do all of this," Sheen added.—*PTI*

Witnesses fearful in wealthy heir Durst's L.A. murder case: prosecutor

LOS ANGELES — Witnesses expected to testify in the Los Angeles murder trial of real estate scion Robert Durst are concerned for their safety, a prosecutor told a judge on Wednesday, citing the heir's vast wealth and the deaths of people close to him.

Durst, 73, whose ties to several slayings were chronicled last year in the HBO documentary "The Jinx," is charged with fatally shooting writer and longtime confidante Susan Berman in December 2000.

Prosecutors say he killed her because of what she knew about the death of Durst's wife in New York two decades earlier.

Durst, who appeared on Wednesday in Los Angeles County Superior Court in a wheelchair wearing a blue shirt and glasses with his hair cropped short, pleaded not guilty last month to first-degree murder in the Berman case.

Real estate heir Robert Durst appears in a criminal courtroom for his trial on charges of trespassing on property owned by his estranged family, in New York, US, on 10 December 2014. PHOTO: REUTERS

Deputy District Attorney John Lewin asked Judge Mark Windham to schedule a conditional hearing for February to record witness testimony, ahead of trial, saying witnesses "understandably are concerned about their safety."

He said witnesses are concerned because Durst is accused of killing Berman over what she knew about his wife's disappearance. They are also worried about the killing and dismemberment of a Texas neighbour of Durst, whom Lewin called "a witness." Durst was acquitted of murder in that case.

Lewin told the court the real estate heir has some $100 million in assets.

The prosecutor said among those he hopes to testify is an 85-year-old doctor and another unnamed witness who Lewin said could "disappear, die, be murdered."

An attorney for Durst, David Chesnoff, rejected the argument that Durst, wheelchair-bound and incarcerated, poses any threat to witnesses, calling the remarks "hyperbole."

Windham did not rule on the proposed condition examination hearing to speed up testimony.

He did, however, grant prosecutors' request that an independent expert be appointed to examine crates of Durst-related documents confiscated by investigators and determine which papers should be excluded as material protected under attorney-client privilege.

Windham also said he would hold a hearing on the question of whether Durst waived his right to attorney-client privilege over materials seized from Durst's friend in New York State.

Berman, 55, was found dead in her Los Angeles home, reportedly shot execution style, not long after police in New York reopened their investigation into the 1982 disappearance and presumed killing of Durst's wife, Kathleen.

Durst was questioned but never charged in that probe.

After the hearing, defense attorney Dick DeGuerin told reporters that "Bob Durst didn't kill Susan Berman, doesn't know who did, and we are ready to get down the road for a trial."

Durst was formally charged with the Berman murder a day after HBO aired the final episode of "The Jinx," in which Durst was recorded muttering to himself off-camera: "What the hell did I do? Killed them all, of course."

Durst told authorities after his arrest that he smoked marijuana daily and was high on methamphetamine during his appearance on "The Jinx," according to court records.—*Reuters*

Panto dames come out to cheer Britain after a tumultuous 2016

LONDON — Roy Hudd cakes on the make-up, squeezes into his super-size bra and baby-blue slip dress, then heads out on stage to entertain a packed house of Londoners badly in need of a laugh at the end of a testing 2016.

The 80-year-old comedy stalwart is appearing as Mother Goose in the pantomime of the same name at Wilton's Music Hall, a venue dating back to the 1690s, packed in between tower blocks and train lines in the capital's East End.

It is a difficult show to describe to anyone who didn't grow up in Britain, watching pantomimes every Christmas.

"I describe it as the ultimate dog's breakfast of a show," says Hudd in his changing room. "Because it combines dancing, singing, story-telling, anything ... Mostly it's aimed at children. But as the years go by it's become an adult attraction as well."

There are classic ingredients: men dressed as women - the pantomime dames - fairy tale plot lines, audience chants of "he's behind you", music hall routines, villains, bawdy - not dirty - humour and topical jokes that let the audience laugh away the political upheaval of the past year.

The villains and topical references come together at Wilton's in the character "Vanity" who tries to steal Mother Goose's goose - the one that lays the golden eggs.

"He's the villain of the piece and he always refers to Mr Trump, or President Trump, or Trumpy as his great friend. Which is guaranteed to get more boos from the audience than he does himself," says Hudd.

After Trump, there is Brexit, a particularly seismic event in London where most voted to stay in the European Union and lost.

"I ask the goose what is her problem, because she is very down in one scene. And she whispers in my ear and I say, 'Oh dear, you voted Remain, did you? Well it's too late now mate, sorry.' Which gets a big laugh."

Similar scenes are playing out across Britain.

The online National Database of Pantomime Performance lists two other professional productions of Mother Goose, alongside 48 Cinderellas, 37 Aladdins, 21 Snow Whites - so, presumably, 147 dwarfs - and one "Robinson Crusoe and the Pirate Queen".

Heading out further east along the River Thames, actor Andrew Pollard pulls on his own oversized bra and dress — this one covered in pert cupcakes — for a production of "Peter Pan: A New Adventure" at Greenwich Theatre.

He is tea lady Long Joan Silver, the lynchpin in a plot involving Wendy's great-great-grandaughter, also called Wendy, Tinkerbell on a motorised scooter and the boy who still hasn't grown up, Peter.

Cast members perform during a pantomime performance of 'Mother Goose' at Wilton's Music Hall in London, Britain, on 15 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

There is a light touch of politics to go alongside the songs and joyous corpsing and dancing. Captain Hook goes into a rant about fighting Peter that segues into an impression of Donald Trump talking about his "beautiful wall".

"It's a family show based on a fairy tale ... It's also a slight comment on a society, what's been going on in a year. It's a rag-bag of things," says Pollard.

It's a mix that seems to be attracting a more diverse audience. Grownup-only groups are up. As are ticket sales overall. "We've been pretty much sold out from the word go, so maybe people really do need a bit of a laugh."—*Reuters*

Spain's socialists cheer at last: they win El Gordo lottery

MADRID — Staff from the Madrid headquarters of Spain's PSOE socialist party were among the top winners on Thursday of El Gordo, the world's biggest lottery jackpot with prizes totaling 2.31 billion euros ($2.41 billion) this year.

"A great end to a difficult year," the PSOE said on the party's official twitter account.

The party lost general elections in December last year and in June against the center-right People's Party, registering its worst election results in 40 years.

Up by 70 million euros this year, El Gordo, Spanish for "The Fat One," is designed so as many people as possible get some win or at least break even with cash prizes doled out across the country. Many people buy tickets in groups and companies, local bars or associations often offer tickets to staff and customers. On the day of the draw, people huddle around television sets and watch school children sing out the winning numbers. El Gordo's complex rules — which allow for multiple purchases of the same lottery number — mean it is not yet clear how much the PSOE staff will get.—*Reuters*

Paquita celebrates with lottery kiosk owners Agustin Ramos and his wife Maria Jose Rojo outside the kiosk where the winning number was sold in Spain's Christmas Lottery 'El Gordo' (The Fat One) in Madrid, Spain, on 22 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Govt earmarks 100 m USD for Great Wall protection over past two years

BEIJING — China's central government has allocated 700 million yuan (100.72 million US dollars) to protect the Great Wall over the past two years, said a top cultural heritage official on Friday.

The figure was revealed by Liu Yuzhu, director of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH), at a national meeting attended by senior cultural heritage officials across the country. In 2017, SACH aims to set up model zones for protection, launch training programmes for protectors and volunteers, and establish a national research centre for Great Wall protection, Liu said.

With a total length of more than 21,000 kilometers, China's Great Wall runs through 404 counties in 15 provincial regions, with much of it in poor condition due to natural erosion and man-made damage.—*Xinhua*

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(24-12-2016 07:00 AM ~ 25-12-2016 07:00 AM) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:27	Am	Great Shwedagon-The Ten Traditional Arts & Crafts
07:49	Am	Welcome to the Southern most part of Myanmar
08:03	Am	News
08:27	Am	Come Beat Eggs For Fun & Reward
08:49	Am	Egg Shell
09:03	Am	News
09:27	Am	Sons of the lake
09:50	Am	Fantastic Orchid Garden From The Flower City
10:03	Am	News
10:27	Am	Next Generation "Thin Wai Khing (Golf)"
10:35	Am	The Korean Treasure, Perilla Oil
10:56	Am	Moe La Win's Piano Melody 4 (Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer by Johnny Marks)

(11:00 Am ~ 03:00 Pm)- Friday 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
07:27	Pm	Travel To The Southern Part of Shan State (Kalaw)
07:45	Pm	Writer
07:52	Pm	Today Myanmar: Yangon Night Market
08:03	Pm	News
08:27	Pm	An Aficionado Of Alluring Antiques

(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)- Friday 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 (24-12-2016, Saturday)

6:00 am
- Paritta by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw

7:35 am
- Hyper Sports

8:35 am
- Pan Pyo Khin (Part-11)

8:50 am
- Documentary

9:35 am
- Business News

10:35 am
- Poem for Children

10:45 am
- Documentary

11:15 am
- Health and Vegetable

11:35 am
- Game for Children

12:35 pm
- Super Book

2:20 pm
- HUMAN DIGNITY FILM INSTITUDE (A Whetstone + The Rope)

3:15 pm
- Teleplay

4:35 pm
- NHK Programme "Treasures from the Earth" (From the Soil)

5:15 pm
- Football Magazing

5:35 pm
- ASEAN Programme

5:45 pm
- ASEAN Spotlight

6:35 pm
- Tasty Trip

7:15 pm
- TV Drama Series

8:00 pm
- News/International News/ Weather Report
- Gitadagale Phwintbaohn
- Musician's Talks

Note/Hourly News Bulletins (Local + International)

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Saturday, 24 December 2016

Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Chelsea's ability to grind out victories will make it very difficult for anyone to catch them in the Premier League, Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho has said.

United, unbeaten in their last eight league games since being thrashed 4-0 at Stamford Bridge, are sixth with 30 points after 17 matches. They are 13 points behind leaders Chelsea, who are six clear of second-placed Liverpool.

"You have to be honest and say that is very difficult. It's not just the difference in points, it's also the Chelsea philosophy of playing," he told British media about his side's title chances.

"They score one goal and they win. They defend a lot. They defend well ... They don't care what people say, what people think. They just want to win. And, because of that, I don't see them losing many points."

United have narrowed the gap to fourth-placed Arsenal to four points thanks to three straight wins, and Mourinho was reluctant to predict where his side might finish.

"Let's see where we finish. I don't want to say fourth, because I think we can do better than fourth," he added.

"But we have the risk of not finishing fourth because the competition is so hard and the top teams have the same ambitions as we have. So I don't want to say fourth or third or fifth." United host 18th placed Sunderland on Monday.—*Reuters*

Conte curious to see how Chelsea fare without Costa, Kante

LONDON — Chelsea manager Antonio Conte is keen to see how his side cope with the absence of striker Diego Costa and midfielder N'Golo Kante and may change his favoured 3-4-3 formation when Bournemouth visit in the Premier League on Monday.

Costa, the league's leading scorer with 13 goals, and Kante have both featured in all of Chelsea's league games this season, but are suspended against Bournemouth.

"It is a good test for us because we play without two players who are important for our team," Conte, whose side are six points clear at the top after an 11-game winning streak, told a news conference on Thursday.

"This team showed in the past that we can play with different formations. It can be an option."

Conte would not be drawn on whether he would hand striker Michy Batshuayi his first league start since his 33 million pounds move from Olympique de Marseille.

"For the young player to adapt is very difficult," Conte said. "I think Michy is working very well. We must have patience with him. The next step is to play more in this season."

Conte described his opposite number Eddie Howe, who has steered Bournemouth to 10th, as "a really good manager."

"I like him and have great respect for him... If he continues in this way he can become a manager of a great team," he said.

"I have studied Bournemouth and they are a good team with good organisation. They always try to play from the back and put on good pressure."

Conte has no injury concerns ahead of the game apart from skipper John Terry, who is still unavailable.—*Reuters*

Paris St Germain 'to sign Draxler from Wolfsburg'

PARIS — Reigning French soccer champions Paris St Germain have agreed to sign Germany international Julian Draxler, sports newspaper L'Equipe and RMC Sport reported on Thursday.

L'Equipe reported that the deal for the 23-year-old Wolfsburg midfielder was worth 36 million euros and would be PSG's first major signing in the winter transfer window, which opens on Jan. 1.

Officials at Qatari-owned PSG could not be immediately reached for comment.

Draxler's signing will help strengthen PSG for the second half of the season, after a tricky start to the defence of their Ligue 1 title. They are currently third, five points behind league leaders Nice.—*Reuters*

Germany's Julian Draxler celebrates scoring their first goal. PHOTO: REUTERS

Chelsea confirm Oscar move to Shanghai SIPG

LONDON — Brazilian international midfielder Oscar will join Chinese club Shanghai SIPG from Chelsea, the English Premier League club said on its website on Friday.

Although no financial details of the transfer were released, media reports suggested Shanghai paid 60 million euros ($62.63 million) to lure Oscar to the 16-team league.

"Chelsea Football Club and Shanghai SIPG have agreed terms for the permanent transfer of Oscar," Chelsea said in a statement.

The 25-year-old Oscar, who scored 38 goals in 203 appearances for Chelsea, lifted the Premier League, League Cup and Europa League during his four-and-a-half-year spell at the club.

Oscar, who will link up with former Chelsea manager Andre Villas-Boas at Shanghai, struggled to nail down a starting spot under manager Antonio Conte this season, making four of his nine league appearance from the bench. With compatriots Hulk and Elkeson plying their trade at Shanghai, Oscar becomes the latest Brazilian to join the Chinese Super League team and is reportedly set to become the highest paid player, earning about 400,000 pounds a week ($490,760).

However, Oscar could soon be eclipsed by Carlos Tevez when the Argentine puts pen to paper on a huge contract with Shanghai Shenhua, with the striker reportedly set to earn 615,000 pounds a week.

Shanghai SIPG finished third in the 2016 Chinese Super League season, which ran from March to the end of October, 12 points behind champions Guangzhou Evergrande and five behind second-placed Jiangsu Suning.—*Reuters*

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Tel : +95 1 8604597/ +95 9 43181656/ +95 9 5405687 | Email : enquiry@cnqc.com.mm
Add : No.22, U Chit Mg Housing, U Chit Mg Road, Tamwe Township,Yangon, Union of Myanmar

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