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FABRICATED STORIES, MISLEADING PICTURES ABOUT RAKHINE CAUSE GLOBAL CRITICISM

THE government yesterday placed heavy blame on fabricated stories and incorrectly captioned pictures for causing major misunderstandings about Myanmar to the rest of the world.

The fake news posted on social media of events purporting to have occurred in Myanmar but actually happening in other places began to circulate in earnest

after the 9 October attacks in Maungdaw, northern Rakhine State, resulting in criticism and condemnation of Myanmar by countries and rights groups across the globe, according to the State Counsellor's Office Information Committee, which issued a press release yesterday.

"Such intentionally fabricated news and photos were

sent to international media, international human rights organisations and governments in an attempt to cause misunderstandings about Myanmar," the information committee said.

The following are some of the false items used by media about Myanmar, according to the information committee.—Myanmar News Agency (Photos on Page 3 >>)

VP U Myint Swe attends inauguration ceremony of the Civil Service Academy

VICE President U Myint Swe was at the opening ceremony of the Civil Service Academy that provides basic training for cadets and post-graduate diploma management courses for civil servants held at the Central Institute of Civil Service, Upper Myanmar in Pyin Oo Lwin Township, Mandalay Region yesterday morning at 8am yesterday and opened a

veil revealing the signboard of a commemorative inscribed stone by pressing a button.

At the ceremony, Union Ministers Dr Myo Thein Gyi and Dr Myint Htwe, Dr Win Thein, member of Union Civil Service Board, Mandalay Region Cabinet's Chief Minister Dr Zaw Myint Maung and U Aung Tin Soe, rector of the institute cut a ceremonial ribbon in front of the signboard of the academy.

The Vice President then sprinkled scented water on the inscribed signboard.

"If we are required to make political and economic reforms we need to change the administration sector, which is needed to implement those changes. In doing so, it is important to amend laws, rules and procedures and at the same time attitudes and capacities of civil servants play an important role. In any sector—govern-



An opening ceremony of the Civil Service Academy at the Central Institute of Civil Service in Pyin Oo Lwin. PHOTO: MNA

ment or private, in a country, human resources are very important in implementing any kind of sectors including management and service," the Vice President said in his address yesterday.

He stressed the need for the study of the latest information innovations as well as English proficiency.

"At present, the Civil Service Academy has two

more subjects of English and Information Technology which are urgently needed for all civil service personnel to master in these days. They will be added to 5 conventional subjects—management, economics, social science, political science and law, becoming 7 in all now," he said.

The Vice President said the training that students

will receive at the Civil Service Academy will not only qualify them to work as civil servants, but will also prepare them for a possible future as leaders of Myanmar.

"I want to say that you are urged to become leaders who are able to carry out the national tasks in the future, when a public-oriented administration system will be introduced in the coun-

try, and knowledge and experiences gained from the training are needed to be effectively used for the development of the country."

Afterward, the VP and party viewed a video showing arrangements for opening the CSI. The Vice President and party then posed for photos together with guests.—Myanmar News Agency



The commemorative stone signboard. PHOTO: MNA



သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်



Athletes receive training to take part in sports contests on the 69th Independence Day in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. PHOTO: KO MIN

69th Anniversary of Independence Day events to be held in Maungtaw

A COORDINATION meeting on organising funfairs to commemorate the 69th Anniversary of Independence Day in Maungtaw was held yesterday afternoon.

"Independence Day ceremonies are held on a grand scale across the country and we will also organise the ceremony in accordance with the tradition of our country and we are holding meetings with departmental officials and ward and village administrators," said Township Administrator U Hla Myint.

The head of the District Police

also promised to tighten security in the district. "We have arranged to deploy about 500 members of the security force for twenty-four hours. They will be deployed at sports events and ceremonies. We have taken special care for night events," the Maungtaw District Police Commissioner said.

Security for the ceremony will be provided by the local police, the district police, border guards and their alliance forces, according to a Maungtaw township police officer.

Sports competitions commemorating the event will start to-

day and will include Sepaktakraw, tennis, tug of war, and the oil pole climbing competitions, in addition to other sports.

Prizes worth up to Ks50,000 will be awarded to winners of the Sepaktakraw competitions.

The current situation in Maungtaw has been stable and peaceful, with restaurants crowded with patrons starting at about 6pm each evening. The Maungtaw area was under tight security following the 9 October attacks on several border guard outposts. — Zin Oo (Myanma Alin)

IED explodes in Punnagyun

AN EXPLOSION occurred near milepost 160 on Yangon-Sittwe road on Sunday evening in Punnagyun.

Acting on an information that an explosion happened near milepost 160 between Yoetayote village and Thetat village, security forces arrived at the scene at 4 pm and found one detonator shell, one battery holder that can house two dry cell batteries and one plastic package containing wires and plastic debris about 12 feet away from Yangon-Sittwe road.—Myanmar News Agency



PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Arts Show and Painting Competition to mark 69th Independence Day held in Taungoo

A DISPLAY of paintings and sculpture, plus a cartoon exhibition and painting competition, marked the 69th Independence Day yesterday morning at the gate of the Taungoo District Sport Ground in Taungoo, Bago Region.

Ahmyotha Hluttaw Representative Dr. Mya Thauang and retired professor of Myanmar



Students take part in the painting competition to mark the 69th Independence Day in Taungoo. PHOTO: SHWE WIN (PYAY)

Department of Taungoo University Dr. Daw Mar Mar Wai cut the ribbons to open the exhibition and painting competition. A total of 23 pupils from Basic Education

Primary Schools, Basic Education Middle Schools and Basic Education High Schools in Taungoo District took part in the painting competition.—Shwe Win (Pyay)

One hand-made mine found in Minbya

AN IMPROVISED explosive device (IED) was found about three miles north of May Lwan village on Sunday afternoon in Minbya.

The explosive device was discovered when U Tun Aye Kyaw and tele-communications staff were clearing the lines to lay down underground

cables beside Yangon-Sittwe road at about 2pm. The mine was 4 feet in length and joined to an iron pipe two inches in diameter and also with a 9V battery. It was driven into the ground with four 0.5" diameter iron rods. A security team deactivated the land mine. —Myanmar News Agency



PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE



2017

NOBEL-MYANMAR LITERARY FESTIVAL

[Creative Literature]

နိဘယ်လ်-မြန်မာ စာပေပွဲတော်

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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.

Fabricated stories, misleading pictures about Rakhine cause global criticism



The Body of Muslims slaughtered By Buddhist(Barma)

Fabricated incident: Muslims slaughtered by Buddhist monks in Myanmar.

Genuine incident: Buddhist monks prepare to incinerate bodies of the victims of the earthquake in Tibet in April, 2010.



Fabricated news: A man is set afire in Rakhine State.

Genuine incident: Jamphel Yeshe, a Tibetan activist, set fire to himself in Delhi, India, in protest of the Chinese president's visit to India in April 2012.

PHOTOS: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY



The caption reads "Burma's Muslims" in Urdu

.. however it's really an AFP photo of a stunt in India, as the BBC reported in 2009

Fabricated story: A man drives a motorcycle over the palms of children in Rakhine State.

Genuine incident: Children are participating in a training session from a martial arts school in southern India.



The event was stopped after a relative of a minister protested



Fabricated news by a Bangladeshi newspaper:

Myanmar soldiers set fire to homes in Rakhine State.

Genuine incident: Myanmar security forces extinguish a fire in Wabeik Village, Rakhine State, on 13 November 2016.



এই দৃশ্যটি মিয়ানমারের!!!!

Fabricated story: Muslims burnt by Buddhists.

Genuine incident: Dead bodies as a result of a fuel tanker fire in the Congo in 2010.

45th Myanmar Health Research Congress starts on 9 January

THE 45th Myanmar Health Research Congress will take place on January 9 at the Department of Medical Research located on Ziawaka Road in Dagon Township, Yangon, with plans to read out more than 100 health research papers.

Organised by the DMR, a total of 56 research posters will be presented at the event. Moreover, symposia on varieties of important health topics will be delivered by prominent local and international speakers.

Pharmaceutical companies, medical equipment and laboratory reagent companies, private health-care centres (laboratories, hospitals, clinics), both local and international, and all interested NGOs and INGOs will take part in the product exhibitions, poster displays and academic symposia at this congress.

Both international and local medical experts have been invited to attend the annual congress.—200

Independence Day ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw to be broadcast live

THE 69th anniversary Independence Day ceremony at City Hall in Nay Pyi Taw will be broadcast live on 4th January on Myanma Radio and Television.

The live broadcast programme will start at 6:40 am.—Myanmar News Agency

Speaker U Win Myint inaugurates Civil Services Academy

CIVIL Services Academy and a post-graduate diploma course No 1 on civil service management were opened at the Central Institute of Civil Service (Lower Myanmar) in Phaunggyi in Hlegu

Township yesterday, with the presence of Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint.

At the ceremony, Speaker U Win Myint unveiled the commemorative inscription stone signboard

of the academy.

The Civil Service Academy (Lower Myanmar) was formally opened by Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Kyaw Swe, Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun

Oo, Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Tin Maung Tun, member of the Union Civil Service Board Dr U Pwa and Rector of the CICS (Lower Myanmar) U Nyi Nyi San.

Following the opening ceremony, Speaker U Win Myint and party visited the lecture rooms, hostels and mess halls for the trainees.

A total of 61 trainees are attending the post graduate course which will last till 4th May.

CSA (Upper Myanmar) was also opened at the CICS in PyinOoLwin, with an opening address by Vice President U Myint Swe.

The two academies become the most important milestone in 50 years since 1965 when the Central Institute of the Civil Service was first established.—Myanmar News Agency



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Win Myint unveils the Civil Services Academy and a post-graduate diploma course No 1 in Phaunggyi, Hlegu Township. PHOTO: MNA

Pawlangyi elephant camp attracting tourists



Tourists are observing elephants at Pawlangyi elephant camp. PHOTO: MYITMAKHA NEWS AGENCY

PAWLANGYI elephants are catching the attention of tourists who prefer to observe the habitat of elephants, it is learnt.

The elephant camp was opened in Bago Yoma, Pauk Kaung township, Pyay district. The tourists visited the elephant camp in the last week of December to watch the nature of elephants, and the way the elephants and humans are co-existing and to ride the elephants.

"Only the tourists visit the camp. We let the elephants go

around the forest and we collect them in the evening. We take care of the elephants. The tourist arrivals at the elephant camp earn a high revenue for our country," said assistant manager U Zaw Lin Aung.

The camp was started in 1991 after elephants moved out to other places upon suspension of timber extraction, it is learnt from an official of the elephant camp.

"The Pawlangyi elephant camp has attracted a lot of tour-

ists. The employees taking care of the elephants are living in the camp so the tourists can have a chance to observe how the elephants and humans are living together in harmony. We have been arranging trips to the Pawlangyi elephant camp for three years," said Ko Soe Soe, in charge of Belmond Travel and Tour Company. Currently, there are 11 female elephants and one male elephant in the Pawlangyi elephant camp.—Myitmakha News Agency

Men suspected of murdering police inspector arrested

POLICE acted immediately early Sunday morning after receiving information that a man with his hands tied behind his back had fallen down near the intersection of Moe Wai Street and Tha Byay 13 Street in Dekkhina Thiri township, Nay Pyi Taw at about 4:30 am.

Officer from the township police station found a fellow law enforcement official, Police Inspector Zaw Zaw, 48, of the Pyinmana Police Station, dead with his hands tied behind his back with a longyi. Nearby was a Toyota Corolla with the keys in the ignition.

The body was sent to Nay Pyi Taw 1,000-bed hospital. It is learnt that the case was filed to take legal action against

culprits, under section 302 of the Criminal Code.

Within 24 hours after the murder was committed, Pyae Phyo, also known as Ko Phyo, Ko Ko and Ko Myo were arrested. —Myanmar News Agency



Pyae Phyo alias Ko Phyo. PHOTO: MPF



Ko Myo alias Myo Chit Aung. PHOTO: MPF



Win Ko Ko. PHOTO: MPF

Crime NEWS

Passenger killed in early morning crash

A DEADLY car crash on the Yangon-Mandalay expressway on Monday morning claimed the life of a passenger.

According to investigators, Min Thu Khant was driving from Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw with U Win Maung Maung on board.

At around 4 a.m. yesterday, an accident occurred because of a sleepy driver, who crash into a large tree beside the road between mile post Nos. 0/5 and 0/6, police said. U Win Maung Maung, who resides in Patheingyi Township, died on the spot due to serious injuries.



The damaged vehicle. PHOTO: MPF

The highway police charged the reckless driver under Section 304 (a) of the Penal Code.

According to traffic police, a total of 744 traffic accidents cases occurred in 2016, including 56 sleep related crashes. About 295 out of 774 cases happened due to excessive speed, police said. The majority of cases are linked to tyre explosion.

To reduce the expressway's high accident rate, highway police accelerated their traffic rules enforcement programme to raise traffic-related knowledge among the community. They conducted over 1,200 educative seminars in schools and villages, disseminating around 54,000 pamphlets to road users.

Between September and December last year, drivers of 5,907 vehicles were arrested by highway police for driving at an excessive speed beyond the limit allowed on the expressway.—Than Oo (Laymyathnar)

Car collides head-on with ambulance

A Toyota Wish station wagon collided head-on with an ambulance near the Thabyaygon roundabout last night in Nay Pyi Taw, injuring four people.

A Toyota Wish driven by unidentified person en route to Myoma Market with two women and two children on board crashed into an ambulance coming from the opposite direction on Pyinmana-Taung Nyo Road.

Both vehicles were heavily damaged and the passengers aboard the Toyota Wish were injured. No one on board the



Two damaged vehicles seen in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MPF

ambulance was injured.

The injured persons were taken to the 1,000-bed Nay Pyi

Taw General Hospital for medical treatment.—Myanmar News Agency

Motorcyclist dies after traffic accident

ONE person was killed and another badly injured after an accident on Shwebo-Myitkyina Road on the last day of 2016.

A Toyota Land Cruiser being driven by Soe Nwet, 42, collided head-on with a motorbike being driven by Hein Min Aung with one other on board on the road near the border of

Indaw Township of Sagaing Region and Mohnyin Township of Kachin State.

The 23-year-old motorcyclist died on the spot, while 21-year-old Tun Hla Win sustained serious injuries. The latter was taken to Mohnyin District Hospital.

Action is being taken

against the driver of the car under the existing law by Mawlu Police Station. A police officer said the rate of traffic fatalities significantly increased in Kachin State during 2016 because of the lack of knowledge about traffic rules and the growing number of unlicensed motorcycles and cars.—Salai Mang Ngai

LOCAL Business

Rice factory to be opened in Kyaiklat

A value-added production factory of rice and rice products is slated to be opened on 2nd March by the Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation (MAPCO) in a bid to minimise the wastage from farms to mills.

A parboiling machine made by the Induss company from India, which can produce 200 tonnes a day, and Yong Xiang's Satake rice milling machine, which can produce 250 tonnes a day, have been ordered. Additionally, two 15-tonne-dryers and two 17-tonne-dryers were ordered from Korea.

The construction of this factory is complete, developed by MAPCO E&C Co., Ltd. The factory will be opened on Peasant's Day (March 2), said U Thaung Win from MAPCO.

This factory aims at enhancing Myanmar's rice business. To build this factory in Kyaiklat Township, the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) approved on 5th September 2014 a project capital of Ks8,963.9million, it is learnt.—200

Pig farmers in Kengtung suffer losses from high cost of feedstuff

THOSE engaged in pig farming in Keng Tung, Eastern Shan State are suffering losses from the high cost of feedstuff in early 2017, according to pig farmers.

The price of the feed is Ks1,300 per barrel and Ks8,000 per bag. The high cost of feedstuff resulted in the loss of pig farmers.

Although the price of pork is high, the purchase price is low. The farmers are trying to reduce the feedstuff cost, said U Than Win, who is engaged in pig husbandry in Keng Tung.

The price of pork is Ks10,000 per viss, while that of pork mixed with belly and bones is Ks7,000 per viss, according to port stalls from Keng Tung Myoma market.

The pig feedstuff made in Thailand is purchased at Ks32,000 per 20-kilogram-bag. The price may vary depending on the appreciation and depreciation of the Thai baht.—Myitmakha News Agency



A file photo shows a man working in a rice field near the Thilawa economic zone, outside Yangon. PHOTO: REUTERS

Sixty per cent of MAPCO's rice export went to African market

SIXTY per cent of rice exports from Myanmar Agriculture Public Corporation Limited from 2012 to 2016 reportedly entered the African market, followed by the China market.

According to MAPCO's rice export statistics, MAPCO exported over 86,000 tonnes to the African market, over 17,800 tonnes to China, over 13,700 tonnes to Indonesia, over 11,000 tonnes to Japan, over 6,800 tonnes to the European market and another 7,000 tonnes to other countries.

MAPCO managed to boost rice exports to China through normal trade during border conflicts. Moreover, the

export via normal trade which was slowed in the past four years raised its head again, and MAPCO is planning to attain wider access to more international markets. The rice exports through the Muse border camp during this fiscal year is lower than that of last fiscal year, resulting from the confiscation of rice by China and fighting in the Muse border area.

Myanmar exported nearly 600,000 tonnes of rice to foreign countries as of mid-December this fiscal year. This export volume slumped by about 150,000 tonnes, according to the Commerce Ministry.—Ko Khant

Agribusiness Service Centers to open across Myanmar

TO MEET the requirements of local farmers, about 20 Agribusiness Service Centres (ASCs) are planned to be established across the country by the Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation (MAPCO), its Director U Aung Win said.

Distribution of fertilizer,

medicine and inputs, warehouse service, drying of crops and other services will be offered through the centres, with MAPCO planning to develop them in Yangon, Mandalay, Ayeyawady and Bago regions as well as the capital Nay Pyi Taw.

Currently, nine centres have been established in Twantay, Maubin, Myaungmya, Thonegwa, Hinthada, Shwetaung, Letpadan and Kyaiklat towns, and Nay Pyi Taw, with MAPCO projecting to open 20 more ASCs in target areas.

Some ASCs have start-

ed launching services such as mechanised cultivation, supplying of inputs and fertilizers and implementation of a contract farming system to farmers in respective areas. However, crop drying and warehouse services will soon be available, according to the MAPCO.—200

Construction of wharf in Thilawa to start by end of 2017

IN a bid to facilitate the export of rice and other products abroad through normal trade, a wharf supporting No. 27, 28 and 29 of Thilawa SEZ will be jointly starting by the end of 2017. The construction is slated to take about three years, said U Aung Win from the Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corpora-

tion (MAPCO).

With an aim enhancing the agriculture sector, agribusinesses are permitted to work at No. 27, 28 and 29 plots of Thilawa.

Myanmar Edible Oil Industrial Public Corporation Ltd (MEICO), Myanmar Agribusiness Public Corporation Ltd.

(MAPCO) and Myanmar General Development Public Ltd (MAGDPL) are cooperating to build a port 590 meters long and 30 meters wide pier to handle freight. This project has been already approved by the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

The construction of this

pier has been already put out for tenders. A total of 23 companies from foreign countries have submitted tenders to develop the pier and four enterprises have been selected after scrutiny. The final one will be selected in the second week of January, it is learnt.—200

Regional and state associations to be formed for watermelon, cucumber growers

THE Myanmar Watermelon and Cucumber Growers and Exporters Association is making efforts to form regional and state associations with the assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

After formation of the asso-

ciations, methods will be shared with the growers and courses will be offered as part of the 2017-2019 project, including growing techniques and crop protection from disease.

This project will initially launch in 30 townships in Mandalay and Sagaing regions with

the funds of USAID, offering the courses to over 6,000 farmers. The project will then proceed to other regions and states, said U Naing Win, the chair of Myanmar Watermelon and Cucumber Growers and Exporters Association.

There are over 10,000 acres

of muskmelons in Myanmar and are mainly grown in Chaung U, Budalin, Tatkon, Singain, Kyaukse and Myittha townships.

Over 100,000 tonnes of muskmelons were exported to Malaysia, Singapore and China in the fiscal year 2015-2016.—Myitmakha News agency

Indian court bans politicians from using religion, caste to win votes

NEW DELHI — India's top court on Monday prohibited politicians from using religion and caste to garner votes, a verdict that could force political parties to change their strategy in upcoming elections.

"No politician can seek vote in the name of caste, creed or religion," said Chief Justice TS Thakur in an order, adding that election process must be a "secular exercise".

India is officially secular but political parties have traditionally used religion and caste as the main criteria to select candidates and to appeal to voters.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has for years fought elections on a Hindu nationalist agenda, with party members in the past being accused of making anti-Muslim statements

to polarise Hindu voters.

The court ruling comes just weeks ahead of a state election in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state where the two issues of religion and caste generally dominate campaigns.

Results of the election will be important for Modi's expected bid for a second term in 2019.

State elections are also due this year in the states of Punjab, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur.

The Supreme Court, ruling on a petition filed by a politician in 1996, wrote in its opinion that the secular ethos of the constitution had to be protected. The majority view of the seven-judge Supreme Court bench held that elections would be void if a politician made an appeal for votes on the basis of religious sentiment. —Reuters

Thai election won't happen this year, legislator says

BANGKOK — Thailand will need to delay a planned general election until 2018 to allow time to pass the necessary laws, a member of the military government's national assembly said on Monday.

But a spokesman for the government said it remained on track for an election this year as set out in its roadmap to restore civilian rule.

The junta toppled an elected government in 2014 in a bid to enforce calm in a country divided by more than a decade of conflict between a military-backed royalist establishment and populist political forces.

Somjet Boonthanom, a member of the military-appointed National Legislative Assembly (NLA), told Reuters that elections would likely be delayed until March or April 2018.

"This is not a postponement but because of the intricacies involved in drafting election laws,



An election commission official holds a ballot paper from a ballot box while counting votes during a constitutional referendum vote at a polling station in Bangkok, Thailand, on 7 August, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

elections will not happen this year," he said.

Until now, the junta has said it is sticking to plans for an election in late 2017.

"As far as the government is concerned, we are on track with the roadmap. The NLA's opin-

ions are their own," said Major General Sansern Kaewkamnerd, spokesman for the prime minister's office.

Thailand's army has carried out 12 successful coups since 1932.

The next step in the transition back to civilian

rule is for new King Maha Vajiralongkorn to endorse a constitution which was approved in a referendum last year.

Critics argue that provisions in the constitution will entrench the hold of the military even after elections. —Reuters

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South Korea considers "measures" as China blocks charter flights

SEOUL — South Korea's government and airline companies will meet on Tuesday to discuss China's rejection of applications by Korean carriers to add charter flights between the two countries for early this year, a government official said on Monday.

South Korean Finance Minister Yoo Il-ho said on Sunday he would look into whether China's decision, which came ahead of a traditional surge in Lunar New Year travel, was "related to" the planned deployment of a US anti-missile

system in South Korea.

Yoo told reporters there were "several suspected cases of non-tariff barriers" following last year's decision to deploy the US Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system and South Korea needed to determine China's "real intention". China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on a holiday, while China's Civil Aviation Administration was not immediately reachable. China worries that the THAAD's powerful radar

can penetrate its territory and has objected to the deployment, which South Korea and the United States say is aimed solely at countering any threat from North Korea.

South Korean carriers Asiana Airlines, Jeju Air and Jin Air, an affiliate of Korean Air Lines, said their applications for charter flights to China were rejected for January and February, with no reason given.

"It is regrettable," a spokesman at Jeju Air said.

The companies already operate scheduled

flights to China but wanted to add charter flights at busy times.

The transport ministry had sent a letter to China's ministry seeking cooperation on the proposed flights and it would also meet the companies to ponder a next step, a ministry official said.

"We will hold a closed-meeting with major airline affiliates tomorrow morning to discuss measures," the ministry official said, without elaborating on what type of measures might be considered. —Reuters

China says won't allow Hong Kong to be used as subversion base

BEIJING — China will not allow anyone to use Hong Kong as a base for subversion against mainland China or to damage its political stability, Beijing's top official in the territory told state television.

Chinese leaders are increasingly concerned about a fledgling independence movement in Hong Kong, which returned to mainland rule in 1997 with a promise of autonomy known as "one country, two systems", and recent protests in the city.

In an interview with state television broadcast late on Sunday, Zhang Xiaoming, the head of China's Liaison Office in Hong Kong, said Beijing will not interfere in matters that purely affect Hong Kong's autonomy.

"As far as Hong Kong is concerned, nobody is permitted to do anything in any form that damage the country's sovereignty and security, they are not allowed to challenge the central government's authority or that of Hong Kong's Basic Law, they are not allowed to use

Hong Kong for infiltration subversion activities against the mainland to damage its social and political stability," Zhang said.

China's parliament last month staged a rare interpretation of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, to effectively bar pro-independence city lawmakers from taking office there.

Chinese President Xi Jinping told outgoing Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying last month that China's central government strongly sup-

ports efforts by the Hong Kong government to curb moves by some promoting independence for the global financial hub.

The former British colony returned to China under the "one country, two systems" agreement that ensured its freedoms and wide-ranging autonomy, including a separate legal system.

But Communist Party rulers in Beijing have ultimate control, and some Hong Kong people are concerned they are increasingly interfering to head off dissent. —Reuters

Beijing enjoys brief respite, but choking smog to return on Tuesday

BEIJING — Heavy smog that blanketed northern China at the weekend cleared somewhat on Monday, with flights in Beijing back to normal, but it was likely only to be a brief respite with more choking smog expected to return to the wintry north within 24 hours.

Weather forecasts on Monday showed the smog would return to Beijing and nearby Tianjin city from Tuesday. It was expected to persist until Thursday in Hebei, the heavily industrialised province that surrounds the Chinese capital, and Henan and Shandong provinces as the north battles freezing temperatures.

Authorities have been issuing smog alerts across China's north since mid-December, leading to orders for hundreds of factories to cut production or close outright and for restrictions on motorists to cut emissions.

Pollution alerts are common in northern China, especially during winter when energy demand, much of it met by coal, soars.

A pollution index that measures the average concentration of small breathable particles, known as PM2.5, dropped to just over 100 micrograms per cubic metre in Beijing early on Monday from more than 500 on Sunday night.

The safe recommended level of PM2.5 is 10 micrograms per cubic metre, according to the World Health Organization.

A customer service staff



Buildings are seen on a hazy day in Xiangyang, Hubei province, China on 31 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

member at the Beijing Capital International Airport said flights were returning to normal. Heavy smog on Sunday caused hundreds of flights to be cancelled and highways to shut, disrupting the first day of the New Year holiday.

On Monday, the Beijing government maintained its orange alert for heavy pollution and continued a ban on heavy-duty construction trucks from using the roads.

An orange alert is the second-highest level in a four-tier pollution warning system adopted by Beijing when China, worried that its heavy industrial past was tarnishing its global reputation and holding back development, declared a "war on pollution" in 2014.

Despite that declaration, public anger is mounting about pollution and what many Chinese see as government talk, but little action, to end it. That an-

ger has occasionally spilled over into protests.

Late on Sunday, the Ministry of Environmental Protection said 62 northern cities had issued yellow, orange or red alerts.

The latest bout of air pollution began on Friday. China has struggled to tackle the problem effectively after decades of breakneck economic growth, much of it based on heavy industry and the coal-fired power sector.—Reuters

Japan mulls more stringent genetically modified food labeling

TOKYO — Japan is considering expanding the scope of mandatory labeling of ingredients containing genetically modified crops from the current 33 food items, according to Consumer Affairs Agency sources.

The move is aimed at giving consumers a greater sense of security about the food they buy and eat amid growing imports of genetically modified crops and food products containing them.

In 2015, Japan imported 11.8 million tons of corn and 2.33 million tons of soy from the United States, and over 90 percent of them were believed to be genetically modified, according to the agriculture ministry.

The government plans to convene a panel of experts on the matter, including people from the food industry and consumer groups, in fiscal 2017, the agency sources said. Currently eight genetically modified crops are subject to the labeling requirement in Japan. By comparison, the European Union mandates labeling, in principle, of all food products containing genetically modified organisms. Japan mandates labeling if the three largest ingredients of a food product by weight contain substances from genetically modified crops and account for 5 percent or more of all ingredients.—Kyodo News

Daughter of South Korean leader's friend arrested in Denmark amid graft probe

SEOUL — Danish police have arrested the equestrian competitor daughter of a woman at the center of a South Korean influence-peddling scandal that has engulfed President Park Geun-hye, police and prosecutors said on Monday.

The scandal led to Park's impeachment by parliament on 9 December and has drawn hundreds of thousands of protesters onto the streets of the capital, Seoul, for weekly demonstrations.

South Korean authorities had been seeking the arrest of Chung Yoo-ra, 20, for her ties to the scandal in which her mother, Choi Soon-sil, is a central figure. Chung had been sought for alleged criminal interference related to her academic record, and other unspecified charges.

Park, 64, could become South Korea's first democratically elected leader to be forced to leave office early. The parliamentary impeachment must be confirmed or overturned by the Constitutional Court, which has months to rule.

"We will request an emergency extradition of Chung, working with the special prosecutor's office," Lee Chul-sung, commis-

sioner general of the Korea National Police Agency, told a media briefing in Seoul.

The two countries have an extradition treaty.

Chung, who did equestrian training in Germany, was arrested in the northern Danish city of Aalborg for staying illegally, at around 4 am Seoul time (1900 GMT) on Monday, Lee said.

South Korea's foreign ministry has been working to invalidate Chung's passport and authorities have asked German prosecutors for information about her whereabouts and assets.

The influence-peddling scandal centres on accusations the president colluded with her friend Choi to pressure big businesses to make contributions to non-profit foundations backing presidential initiatives.

Park, whose father ruled the country for 18 years after seizing power in a 1961 coup, has denied wrongdoing but apologized for carelessness in her ties with Choi, who is facing her own trial. Choi also denies wrongdoing.

As part of their investigation, prosecutors are trying to ascer-



South Korea's Chung Yoo-ra, then known as Chung Yoo-yeon. PHOTO: REUTERS

tain whether Samsung Electronics (005930.KS) sought favours from Choi and Park in return for funding some of their initiatives.

In particular, they are looking at whether favours Samsung sought included the National Pension Service's support for Samsung's founding family in a shareholder vote last year.

An element of the investigation

has been Samsung's sponsorship of Chung's riding career.

The special prosecutor's office has asked Interpol to place Chung on its red notice list, but Interpol had yet to make a decision on the request, Lee Kyu-chul, a spokesman for the special prosecutor said.

Chung told Danish police she was staying in Denmark for equestrian-related work, according to South Korea's JTBC TV channel. A Volkswagen vehicle and horse-riding equipment were found at the house where Chung and her party were arrested, JTBC said.

Lee Kyung-jae, a lawyer representing both Choi and Chung, said the daughter would cooperate.

"When Chung Yoo-ra returns I will ensure that she fully cooperates with the special prosecution's investigation," the lawyer told the Yonhap News Agency.

Danish officials had five people in custody, including Chung and a child born in 2015, a police official said, declining to be identified, not four as police said earlier on Monday. Chung is known to have a young son.

The others in custody are two men who appear to be Koreans in their late twenties or early thirties and a woman in her sixties.

Lee, the police official, said Danish police had 24 hours to secure evidence that Chung was staying illegally in Denmark.

Park's arrest was first reported by the JTBC channel, which said on its website that its journalists had alerted Danish police to Chung's presence there.

A video on JTBC's website showed a person identified as Chung in a heavy hooded parka being led to a police car. The person's face could not be seen.

Chung became a figure of public ire in South Korea last year after it emerged that she had received special treatment from the prestigious Ewha Womans University, where her admission was subsequently canceled.

News of Chung's arrest came a day after Park broke a month-long silence over her alleged role in the corruption scandal, publicly denying charges of wrongdoing and describing the accusations against her as fabricated and false.—Reuters

Opinion

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Efficient civil service personnel can make reforms a success

Aye Min Soe

THE capacities of civil servants are sine qua non for making political and economic reforms, as they are working in the important administrative sector.

In any sector of a country — government or private, human resources are vital in implementing any kind of management or organizational efforts. Civil service personnel have been operating the governments' administrative machineries smoothly even during the transition from one government to the other. To become qualified service personnel for government departments and private sectors, depending upon

the policy, aims and objectives and working process of the government of the State, they need efficient training and education.

Education, good will and courage are needed in building up a new era, and education will lead people along the right path, which will be helped by encouragement to follow the correct path.

The Civil Service Academy opened on Monday, the most significant event of the institution since its establishment 50 years ago in 1965 as the Central Institute of Civil Service.

We must have good will to go forward for own interest, our society and our coun-

try. The next thing we must have is the courage to move on the right path.

At the present Civil Service Academy, two more subjects of English and Information Technology, which are urgently needed for all civil service personnel to master in these days, will be added to 5 conventional subjects — management, economics, social science, political science and law, becoming 7 in all now. It is learnt that local and international experts on various subjects will give lectures at the institute.

Civil service personnel are an indispensable part of the administrative machinery, especially through the

change of government and leaders in the time of parliament democracy.

All civil service personnel at all levels, from departmental heads and high-ranking officials to low-level staff, must take their respective responsibilities to successfully operate the administrative machinery and must be loyal to the country and their jobs.

Hence, the trainees at the academy are obliged to effectively use the knowledge and experience gained during their training to help develop the country and to carry out the national tasks in the future, when a public-oriented administration system is introduced in the country.

Intrusion of sovereignty would not be tolerated

Khin Maung Myint

EVERY independent nation has jurisdiction over its land, water and air spaces or in other words, it has the sovereign rights over them. Anyone who enters such spaces without permission from that nation would be committing an act of intrusion. Such intrusion would tantamount to the intrusion of the sovereignty of that nation. In such a situation, a sovereign nation has the right to protect and safeguard its sovereignty.

There are various international laws related to the jurisdictions over the land, water and air spaces. However, I don't intend to go into the technical details of those laws here. In general, those laws bestow the respective nations, the powers to deter any intrusion of the sovereignty of their country. As an independent nation, our country has every right to take actions against those who intrude into our land, water and air spaces. Anyone who enters without permission from our country would be deemed as an intruder and would be treated accordingly.

Every nation should honour the sovereignties of other nations. Infringement of the sovereignty of a country is a provocation, which no nation will ever

tolerate. Any organization planning to intrude our sovereignty under the excuse of providing humanitarian assistance should be aware of the international laws, especially the Law of the Sea, before attempting such incursions. Also the country from which such activity is being planned should not allow them to carry on without getting permission from our country. A fellow member country of the ASEAN shouldn't encourage or allow such activities that would undermine the sovereignty of another member country to originate from their shores.

Our authorities had made it clearly known that any organization, without prior agreement or permission, will not be allowed to carry out such activities in our country. If they should go ahead with their plans, we have every right to deter them once they enter our territory. In normal circumstances, vessels can have the right of innocent passage through the territorial waters. However, in the present case their intentions wouldn't be innocent if they go against the warning given by our country. Thus they don't have the right of passage through our territorial waters, let alone entering our internal waters and setting their feet on our soil. I hope they wouldn't be that dumb.

The organization that is

planning to send an aid convoy of ships and the country from where they are planning to launch it should be mindful of the Gaza Flotilla Raid that took place on 31 May 2010. Considering the consequences of that incident they shouldn't attempt it if they are not given permission. It would be just fool-hardiness if they do, or it may be deemed as intentional provocation to force our country to react to their intrusion to get more international attentions. I'm sure our authorities will abide strictly by the rules and would never intervene any intruders while they are in the international waters, but once they enter our territorial waters, we have every right to do it.

If those people are really concerned for the welfare and are sympathetic to the plights of the destitute people of the Rakhine State, they should resolve it diplomatically through proper channels. Also the government, which is encouraging such unacceptable activities to take place from there by randomly condemning our country and our leaders pointlessly, should be more dignified and observe the diplomatic protocols and abide by the ASEAN Charter. I don't think I'll need to explain what points are included in that charter, which they should know better.

At present everyone with unbiased or unprejudiced outlook would notice that our country is handling the situations in the Rakhine State fairly and transparently. The recent killings and abductions of Bengali residents who are connected to the village administrative organizations are concrete evidences that the present conflicts are not communal conflicts anymore, but are intentionally being well plotted to create reign of terror and disturb the peace and stability in that region. Such actions pose threats to our sovereignty.

The misunderstandings, among the international communities, concerning the conflicts in the Rakhine State are caused by the unethical international

media reports of false and fabricated news. False and fabricated informations are being fed by the cadres of the belligerent group, who are trained in the use of the Internet via the mobile phones. People should be aware of the extent of damage such news could cause and shouldn't believe them blindly without any rationality.

I would like to caution those activists, who are planning to send the convoy of ships to provide assistance to the Rakhine State without obtaining official permission, not to attempt it, because it would amount to intrusion of our sovereignty. If that should take place, we have every right to repel it by force, if necessary.

Infringement of the sovereignty of a country is a provocation, which no nation will ever tolerate. Any organization planning to intrude our sovereignty under the excuse of providing humanitarian assistance should be aware of the international laws, especially the Law of the Sea, before attempting such incursions.

In Iraq, Hollande hopes for “year of victory against terrorism”



Iraqi President Fuad Masum (R) and French President Francois Hollande attend a joint news conference after their meeting at the presidential palace in Baghdad, Iraq, on 2 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

BAGHDAD — President Francois Hollande flew into Iraq on Monday and told French troops stationed there he was hoping for “a year of victory against terrorism”.

The Socialist president, whose country has faced a series of militant attacks in the past two years, said the soldiers serving in a US-led coalition were preventing more mass killings at home.

“Everything that contributes to reconstructing Iraq is an additional step to avoiding Daesh strikes on our own territory,”

Hollande said, using an Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

Hollande has seen his popularity rating plummet since taking office, amid frustration over his handling of the economy and national security. He has said he will not stand again in presidential elections this year.

He will travel later on Monday to the Kurdish city of Erbil, where France will deliver some 38 tonnes of humanitarian aid, including medicine, officials said.

Islamic State attacked an

Iraqi police checkpoint near the southern city of Najaf on Sunday, killing seven policemen as government forces in the north made more gains against the militants in Mosul, their last major stronghold in the country.

The recapture of Mosul would probably spell the end for the group’s self-styled caliphate in the areas it seized in 2014, but the militants would still be capable of fighting a guerrilla-style insurgency in Iraq, and plotting or inspiring attacks on the West. —Reuters

Trump aide says US sanctions on Russia may be disproportionate

WASHINGTON — A top aide to President-elect Donald Trump said in an interview aired on Sunday that the White House may have disproportionately punished Russia by ordering the expulsion of 35 suspected Russian spies.

Incoming White House press secretary Sean Spicer said on ABC’s “This Week” that Trump will be asking questions of US intelligence agencies after President Barack Obama imposed sanctions last week on two Russian intelligence agencies over what he said was their involvement in hacking political groups in the 2016 US presidential election. Obama also ordered Russia to vacate two U.S. facilities as part of the tough sanctions on Russia.

“One of the questions that we have is why the magnitude of this? I mean you look at 35 people being expelled, two sites being closed down, the question is, is that response in proportion to the

actions taken? Maybe it was; maybe it wasn’t but you have to think about that,” Spicer said.

Trump is to have briefings with intelligence agencies this week after he returns to New York on Sunday.

On Saturday, Trump expressed continued skepticism over whether Russia was responsible for computer hacks of Democratic Party officials.

“I think it’s unfair if we don’t know. It could be somebody else. I also know things that other people don’t know so we cannot be sure,” Trump said. He said he would disclose some information on the issue on Tuesday or Wednesday, without elaborating. It is unclear if, upon taking office on 20 January, he would seek to roll back Obama’s actions, which mark a post-Cold War low in US-Russian ties.

Spicer said that after China in 2015 seized records of US govern-

ment employees “no action publicly was taken. Nothing, nothing was taken when millions of people had their private information, including information on security clearances that was shared. Not one thing happened.”

“So there is a question about whether there’s a political retribution here versus a diplomatic response,” he added. US intelligence agencies say Russia was behind hacks into Democratic Party organizations and operatives before the presidential election.

Moscow denies this. US intelligence officials say the Russian cyber attacks aimed to help Trump defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton. Republican John McCain, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has scheduled a hearing for Thursday on foreign cyber threats and has said that Russia must be made to pay the price for attacks “on our very fundamentals of democracy.” —Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

Two men die after choking on rice cakes in Tokyo on New Year’s Day

TOKYO — Two men fatally choked on “mochi” rice cakes, a traditional New Year’s food, in Tokyo on New Year’s Day Sunday, according to the Tokyo Fire Department.

An 81-year-old resident of Itabashi Ward and a 60-year-old man from Kita Ward were rushed to hospitals after getting cake made of steamed glutinous rice stuck in their throats but were pronounced dead later.

A further nine people aged from 28 to 89 were taken to hospitals in the capital on New Year’s Day after choking on rice cakes but survived. —Kyodo News

Suicide car bomber targets African peacekeepers’ Somali HQ

MOGADISHU — A suicide car bomb exploded at a checkpoint outside the main African peacekeepers (AMISOM) base in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Monday, police said.

“A suicide car bomb rammed into the checkpoint outside the AMISOM base,” Abdikadir Hussein, a police officer, told Reuters.

“There are Somali security forces at the checkpoint and it is too early to know the number of casualties.”

A Reuters photographer at the scene saw the burnt-out shell of the bomber’s car and another vehicle nearby on fire. —Reuters

Expelled Russian diplomats leave United States

MOSCOW — Russian diplomats who were expelled by order of US President Barack Obama left Washington on Sunday, Russian news agencies reported, citing Russia’s embassy.

“The plane took off, everyone has left,” RIA quoted the embassy’s press service as saying.

Obama ordered the expulsion of 35 Russian suspected spies and imposed sanctions on two Russian intelligence agencies over the hacking of US political groups during the 2016 presidential election.

Russian President Vladimir Putin decided not to expel anyone in retaliation, saying he would consider the actions of President-elect Donald Trump, who takes office on 20 January, when deciding on further steps in Russia-US relations. —Reuters

Dacic: Serbia to be ready to open more than ten chapters in 2017

BELGRADE — FM Ivica Dacic expects Serbia to open Chapter 26 in its EU accession talks in January or February, and believes the country will be ready to open more than ten chapters in 2017.

Speaking at an annual press conference, Dacic said Serbia could also open Chapter 20, on entrepreneurship, and Chapter 29, on the customs union, during Malta’s EU presidency.

He said there had been no discussions about Chapter 31 on the common foreign and security policy and that it was usually opened towards the end of the accession process.

“That day is not so near for Serbia,” Dacic said.

Voicing dissatisfaction with the pace of the opening of chapters, Dacic said Croatia had on several occasion vetoed the process without arguments. “We want to proceed towards the EU, but Serbia will not allow humiliations and conditions,” he said. Serbia has to date opened six chapters. —Tanjug

Turkish, Russian aircraft destroy Islamic State targets in Syria: army

ANKARA — Turkish warplanes and artillery have struck Islamic State targets in Syria, killing 22 of the group’s militants, while Russian aircraft hit jihadists near the Islamic State-controlled town of al-Bab, Turkey’s military said on Monday.

In a round-up of its military operations over the past 24 hours in support of rebels in northern Syria, the army said the Russian aircraft destroyed Islamic State targets in the area of Dayr Kak, 8 km (5 miles) southwest of al-Bab.

The Turkish military operation, dubbed ‘Euphrates Shield’, was launched more than four months ago to drive Islamic State militants away from the border region and in recent weeks the forces have been besieging the town of al-Bab. —Reuters

Islamic State claims responsibility for Istanbul attack — statement

CAIRO — Islamic State claimed responsibility on Monday for a New Year’s Day mass shooting in a packed Istanbul nightclub that killed 39 people, an attack carried out by a lone gunman who remains at large.

The jihadist group made the claim in a statement on one of its Telegram channels, a method it has used to claim attacks in the past. There was no immediate comment from Turkish officials.

“In continuation of the blessed operations that Islamic State is conducting against the protector of the cross, Turkey, a heroic soldier of the caliphate struck one of the most famous nightclubs where the Christians celebrate their apostate holiday,” the statement said.

NATO member Turkey is part of the US-led coalition against Islamic State and launched an incursion into Syria in August to drive the radical Sunni militants from its borders.

The authorities believe the assailant may be from a Central Asian nation and suspect he had links to Islamic State, Turkey’s



Flowers are placed in front of a police barrier near the entrance of Reina nightclub by the Bosphorus, which was attacked by a gunman, in Istanbul, Turkey, on 1 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

Hurriyet newspaper said. Police distributed a hazy black-and-white photo of the alleged attacker taken from security footage.

The shooting at the Reina nightclub on the shores of Istanbul’s Bosphorus waterway shook Turkey as it tries to recover from a failed July coup and a series of deadly bombings in cities including Istanbul and the capital Ankara, some blamed on Islamic State and others claimed by Kurdish militants.

Some people jumped into the Bosphorus to save themselves after the attacker began shooting at random just over an hour into the new year. Witnesses described diving under tables as he walked around spraying bullets from an automatic rifle.

Nationals of Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Lebanon, Libya, Israel, India, a Turkish-Belgian dual citizen and a Franco-Tunisian woman were among those

killed, officials said. Saudi newspaper al-Riyadh said five of the dead were from Saudi Arabia.

Security services had been on alert across Europe for new year celebrations following an attack on a Christmas market in Berlin that killed 12 people. Only days ago, an online message from a pro-Islamic State group called for attacks by “lone wolves” on “celebrations, gatherings and clubs”.—Reuters

Blast in Baghdad’s Sadr City kills at least 24

BAGHDAD/TIKRIT, (Iraq) — At least 24 people were killed by a car bomb in a busy square in Baghdad’s sprawling Sadr City district on Monday, while Islamic State attacks on military positions north of the capital killed 16 pro-government fighters, sources said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast, which also wounded more than 40 people, but Islamic State regularly targets civilian areas in the heavily fortified capital, even after losing most of the northern and western territory it seized in 2014.

Three bombs killed 29 people across the capital on Saturday, and an attack near the southern city of Najaf on Sunday left seven policemen dead.

US-backed Iraqi forces are currently fighting to push Islamic State, the Sunni Muslim militant group, from the northern city of Mosul, the fighters’ last major stronghold in

the country, but are facing fierce resistance.

The recapture of Mosul would probably spell the end for Islamic State’s self-styled caliphate, but the militants would still be capable of fighting a guerrilla-style insurgency in Iraq, and plotting or inspiring attacks on the West.—Reuters

Israeli police to question Netanyahu over alleged gifts: media

JERUSALEM — Police are expected to question Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at his official residence in Jerusalem on Monday on suspicion of receiving gifts from businessmen in breach of his role as a public servant, Israeli media reported.

The move was authorized by Attorney-General Avichai Mandelblit, who decided after a preliminary probe that there was sufficient evidence for a criminal investigation, Haaretz newspaper reported.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. PHOTO: REUTERS

Photographers were camped outside the heavily guarded residence, hoping to get pictures of investigators arriving. Black screens were erected inside the gates of the property to block the view.

Haaretz and other newspapers said the probe related to gifts worth “hundreds of thousands of shekels” (\$1=3.85 shekels) given to Netanyahu by Israeli and foreign businessmen.

Channel 2, a commercial network, said the investigation was one of two cases now open against the prime minister, although it said details of the second remained unclear.

Netanyahu, 67, has been in power on and off since 1996. He is currently in his fourth term as prime minister and will become Israel’s longest-serving leader if he stays in office until the end of next year.

He and his wife, Sara, have weathered several scandals over the years, including investigations into the misuse of state funds and an audit of the family’s spending on everything from laundry to ice cream. They have denied any wrongdoing.

Netanyahu is not the first prime minister to be questioned in a criminal case.

Ehud Olmert, who held office from 2006 to 2009, is currently serving 18 months in prison after being convicted of breach of trust and bribery in 2014.—Reuters

The questioning will take place on Monday evening, Israel Radio said.

The police and Justice Ministry would not confirm when the interview would take place or the nature of the investigation, details of which have appeared in the media in recent days. Netanyahu’s office has denied any wrongdoing.

“All the supposed affairs will turn out to be fiction,” his family spokesman said on Monday. “We are repeating: there will be nothing, because there is nothing.”

France calls on Russia to respect truce in Syria

PARIS—France on Monday called on Russia to stop military action in Syria and respect a fragile ceasefire brokered by Moscow and Turkey seeking to end nearly six years of war.

“We resolutely condemn everything Russia could do in Syria that would contribute to a continuation of fighting,” Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said on France Inter radio.

The truce deal, which was welcomed unanimously by the United Nations Security Council, has been

repeatedly violated since it began, with warring sides trading the blame.

Rebels on Saturday warned they would abandon the truce if the government side continued to violate it, asking the Russians, who support President Bashar al-Assad, to rein in army and militia attacks in the valley by 8:00 pm.

“We hope talks between separate Syrian forces will continue so the ceasefire can hold,” Cazeneuve said.

“We ask the Russians



French Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve. PHOTO: REUTERS

to stop taking part in military operations which are deadly operations,” he added, without specifying which actions in particular he was referring to.—Reuters

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(17 / 2016)

Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in United States Dollars.

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-075(16-17)	Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) for Gas Coalescing Filter (22,680) KG	US\$
(2)	IFB-076(16-17)	Spares for Mack Truck (17) Items	US\$
(3)	IFB-077(16-17)	Spares for Mitsubishi 8DC8 1A Engine Ex Mitsubishi Fuso Bowser (26) Items	US\$
(4)	IFB-078(16-17)	Spares for CAT D 379 Engine (45) Items	US\$

Tender Closing Date & Time - 19-1-2017, 16:30 Hr

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 30TH December, 2016 at the Finance Department , Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No(44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph . +95 67 - 411206 / 411274

New drug approvals fall to six-year low in 2016

LONDON — Last year turned out to be a disappointing one for new drug approvals with the US Food and Drug Administration clearing just 22 new medicines for sale, the lowest number since 2010 and sharply down on 2015's tally of 45.

Across the Atlantic, the European Medicines Agency recommended 81 new prescription products against a 2015 total of 93. Unlike the FDA, the EMA includes generic drugs in its list.

The slowdown suggests the pharmaceuticals industry may be returning to more normal productivity levels after a spike in approvals in 2014 and 2015, when the haul of new drugs reaching the market hit a 19-year high.

Several factors led to the fall in the approval rate in 2016, John Jenkins, the FDA's director of the office of new drugs, told a

conference last month.

Notably, five new drugs that had been scheduled for approval in 2016 ended up winning an early green light at the end of 2015. There was also a decline in drugs being filed for approval and the FDA rejected or delayed more applications in 2016 than in the previous two years.

Some of the delayed drugs may yet go on to win approval in 2017, including Roche's multiple sclerosis treatment Ocrevus and Sanofi and Regeneron's sarilumab for rheumatoid arthritis.

Most industry executives remain upbeat about the hunt for new medicines, given recent advances in fighting cancer and an improved understanding of the genetic basis of other diseases, which has resulted in full development pipelines at many firms.

But it remains challenging

to get new drugs through the approval process and to secure a decent financial return once they are launched, given resistance from healthcare insurers and governments to the rising cost of medical treatment.

According to consultancy Deloitte, returns on research and development investment at the top 12 pharmaceutical companies fell to just 3.7 percent in 2016 from a high of 10.1 percent in 2010.

Increasing political pressure over the high prices of many modern medicines is a growing challenge at a time when biotech and pharma companies are developing more drugs targeted at niche patient populations.

The issue is exemplified by the last drug to win FDA approval in 2016. Spinraza, from Biogen and Ionis Pharmaceuticals, is the first medicine to treat patients with spinal muscular atrophy, a rare and often fatal genetic disease. It comes at a huge cost of \$125,000 per dose.

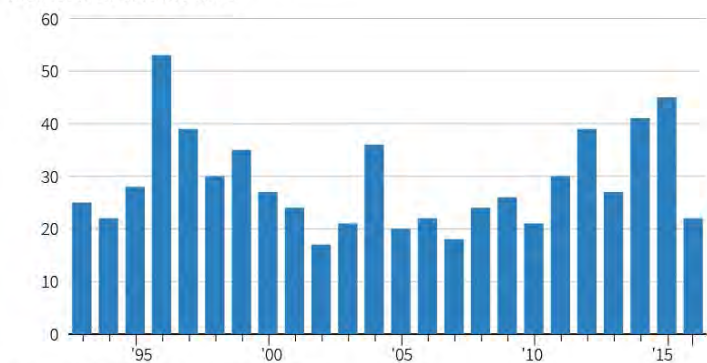
That price, implying a total cost of \$625,000 to \$750,000 for patients in the first year and \$375,000 in subsequent years, is likely to invite "a storm of criticism, up to and including Presidential tweets", according to Leerink analysts.

President-elect Donald Trump has vowed to bring down drug prices.—Reuters

U.S. FDA drug approvals

The FDA approved 22 novel drugs in 2016.

NUMBER OF APPROVALS



Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Staff, 01/01/2017

REUTERS

Germany to cull more turkeys after bird flu outbreak spreads

HAMBURG—About 22,000 turkeys are to be culled after suspect cases of bird flu were found on two more German farms in the major German poultry production region of Lower Saxony, authorities said on Monday.

It is not yet known if the cases involve the contagious H5N8 flu strain but the birds will be culled as a precaution, the local government authority in Cloppenburg in Lower Saxony said.

Around 90,000 turkeys,

chickens and ducks were also culled last week after the H5N8 strain was confirmed on farms in Lower Saxony while 16,000 turkeys were culled on a farm with the H5N8 strain in the neighboring state of North Rhine Westfalia.

The contagious H5N8 strain has been found in more than 500 wild birds in Germany in recent weeks. Outbreaks on farms have been rare after the government introduced tough sanitary rules to prevent infection by wild birds including or-

ders to keep poultry indoors in high-risk regions.

A series of European countries and Israel have found cases of H5N8 bird flu in the past few weeks and some ordered poultry flocks be kept indoors to prevent the disease spreading. France has widened high risk restrictions to the entire country after the detection of several cases of the H5N8 strain.

A case was also found in the Irish Republic last week.—Reuters

More work lies ahead to fight Zika, other threats — CDC chief

CHICAGO — A year ago, the mosquito-borne Zika virus was only beginning to reveal itself as a threat to pregnant women and their unborn babies.

Since then, US officials have issued 60 travel alerts along with guidance for athletes and tourists traveling to the Olympics in Rio. They have also deployed more than 1,000 experts to Puerto Rico and elsewhere, tested more than 147,000 lab specimens, initiated 25 major studies and issued more than 230 scientific publications.

And the work is not done, said Dr Thomas Frieden, director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"We have a lot more to do to control both Zika and diseases spread by this mosquito," Frieden told Reuters in an interview.

Frieden, appointed by President Barack Obama to run the CDC in 2009, will hand in his resignation on 20 January, the day of President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration.

The former New York City health commissioner will not say what he plans next. He did share his wish list for the incoming president and Congress which contains several items, not least of which is a public health emergency fund.

"We've dealt with Ebola, H1N1 influenza, MERS, fungal meningitis. We're dealing now with influenza and drug-resistant bacteria," he said.

And then there was Zika, the first-ever mosquito-borne virus shown to be capable of causing birth defects. The virus has spread to more than 60 countries and territories since the current outbreak was identified last year in Brazil.

"We don't know when the next global health threat will come. We don't know where it will come from. We don't know what pathogen it will be, but we are 100 percent certain that there will be a next one," he said.

Frieden said US health officials must continue to warn pregnant women about the risks of Zika and the need to protect themselves, avoiding travel to places where the virus is active.

Scientists also need to continue ongoing studies on the long-term effects of Zika exposure. Besides microcephaly, a



Thomas Frieden, director of US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, listens during an interview with Reuters at the Puerto Rico Health Department in San Juan on 8 March, 2016.

PHOTO: REUTERS

severe birth defect marked by abnormally small head size, fetal exposure to Zika has been linked to vision and hearing problems, severe irritability, trouble swallowing, epilepsy and hypertonia, or excessively stiff muscle tone.

"It's a startlingly complex infection," he said.

Better diagnostics are also needed, he said, along with more effective pesticides and other mosquito control methods.

It took nine months of political wrangling for US lawmakers to approve \$1.1 billion in emergency funds to fight Zika. Health experts said the delay hurt the US effort to fight the virus.

This problem that could be addressed through a proposed Rapid Reserve Fund that could be tapped in case of an infectious disease emergency, Frieden said.

A \$300 million reserve fund was included in the House version of the fiscal 2017 budget, but in December, Congress passed a stop-gap funding bill that runs through March.

"I really would hope that come April, if a budget is passed, it will include the Rapid Reserve Fund plan that was outlined in the House bill, which ideally would also have some spending authorities that would enable the government to act quickly in an emergency," Frieden said.

Although Trump has not said much on the subject, he did single out public health workers as being exempt from a hiring freeze he has planned for the first 100 days of his administration.

"It is certainly encouraging," Frieden said, adding that it reflects a recognition that public health, like public safety, "is about keeping Americans safe."—Reuters

Anthropologists to examine mummified body found in Detroit garage

DETROIT — A body that had decomposed to the point of mummification was found in a car in the garage of a Detroit home, and medical examiners have called for an anthropologist to conduct a special autopsy of the remains, authorities said on Friday.

The desiccated corpse was discovered by a man who was house shopping and ventured into the home's garage on Thursday afternoon, spotting the body inside an early 1990s-model Plymouth sedan, police and coroner's offi-

cials said. How long the body had been in the garage and the circumstances of the individual's death remained unknown, said Lloyd Jackson, a spokesman for the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office. "It was there for a long period of time," Jackson said. "It's mummified, so it's probably been over a year, at least."

Medical examiners visually inspected the corpse, which was found dressed in a shirt, sweater and pants. But the advanced state of decomposition, in which ex-

posed tissue has turned brown, taking on the appearance of tanned leather, precludes a conventional autopsy, even obscuring whether the person was male or female, Jackson said.

Coroners hope to resolve much of the mystery once an anthropologist from the University of Michigan arrives next week to conduct a special examination, including measurements of the hip bones to determine its gender.

Jackson said investigators expect the anthropological autopsy

will also reveal the approximate age of the individual, as well as something about the manner, cause and time of death. For now, there is too little information to know whether foul play was involved, and the case remains an open investigation, authorities said.

The home where the body turned up was being rented by tenants who told police they never used the garage and knew nothing about the body's presence, Detroit police spokesman Dan Donakowski said.—Reuters

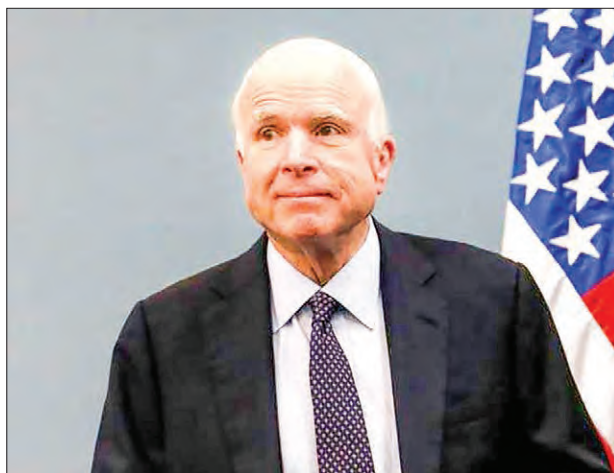
Senator McCain says US 'must stand up to Vladimir Putin'

TBILISI/KIEV — Republican Senator John McCain said on Sunday the United States could only improve its relations with Russia by taking a tough stance with President Putin, calling for stronger sanctions against Moscow.

On a tour of the Baltic states, Ukraine and Georgia, McCain and other senators assured the former Soviet-dominated countries that the United States would support them, despite President-elect Donald Trump's praise of Putin and expressions of doubts about NATO.

"We will strongly urge our colleagues toward more meaningful and stronger sanctions against Russia because of their attack on the United States of America," McCain told reporters in Georgia's capital Tbilisi.

"I believe that we must continue to improve our relations and to understand that Vladimir Putin — unless we stand up to him



US Senator John McCain attends a news conference at the Benjamin Franklin Library in Mexico City, Mexico on 20 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

— will continue his aggression and we must stand up to Vladimir Putin," McCain said.

On Thursday, President Barack Obama ordered the expulsion of 35 Russian diplomats and imposed sanctions on two Russian intelligence agencies over the hacking of US political groups during the election.

But Trump signalled during his campaign that he might take a softer line with Moscow, and on Friday congratulated Putin for not retaliating to the expulsions, tweeting: "Great move on delay (by V. Putin) - I always knew he was very smart!"

Earlier, in Kiev, McCain vowed continued US support to Ukraine.

"I send the message from the American people — we are with you, your fight is our fight and we will win together," McCain was quoted as saying by Ukrainian President Poroshenko's press service.

"In 2017 we will defeat the invaders and send them back where they came from. To Vladimir Putin — you will never defeat the Ukrainian people and deprive them of their independence and freedom," McCain said.

Reinforcing the line that the US Congress could oppose any move by Trump to take a softer line on Russia, Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, travelling with McCain and others, said it was time "to push back against Putin, to be a better friend to our allies here including Georgia."

"So 2017 is a year of offence and we're going to tell our colleagues what's at stake if we don't push back," Graham said.—Reuters

Britain's Labour leader could quit before next election — union boss

LONDON — The leader of Britain's opposition Labour party, Jeremy Corbyn, could step down before the next national election in 2020 if its poor opinion poll ratings do not improve, the head of its biggest union backer said in an interview published on Monday.

Labour has consistently placed a distant second in opinion polls and a survey by YouGov in December had the party on 25 percent, its lowest since September 2009, versus 42 percent for Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservatives.

The next parliamentary election is due in 2020.

"Let's suppose we are not having a snap election. It buys into this question of what happens if we get to 2019 and opinion polls are still awful," Corbyn supporter Len McCluskey, head of the country's biggest union and Labour's largest financial backer Unite, was quoted as saying by the Daily Mirror.

"The truth is everybody would examine that situation, including Jeremy Corbyn and (Labour finance spokesman) John McDonnell ... These two are not egomaniacs, they are not desperate to cling on to power for power's sake."

Left-winger Corbyn

was re-elected Labour leader in September after a challenge from one of his lawmakers that exposed sharp divisions between the party's elected representatives and grassroots supporters.

His office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on McCluskey's remarks.

May, appointed prime minister in July last year after Britain's vote to leave the EU forced the resignation of David Cameron, has said she does not intend to hold an early election.

But Labour's poor poll ratings and a court battle over whether parliament's approval is needed to begin EU divorce proceedings have increased speculation she could seek to boost her slim majority in parliament by calling a snap vote. Corbyn has repeatedly said Labour is ready to fight an early election.

His party faces an upcoming electoral test after lawmaker Jamie Reed, a vocal critic of Corbyn, said last month he would step down at the end of January.

The area in northern England that Reed represents voted strongly in favour of Brexit. In a December election for a vacant Conservative-held parliamentary seat, Labour slipped from second to fourth place.—Reuters

Obama to deliver farewell address in Chicago on 10 January

HONOLULU — US President Barack Obama will deliver a farewell address on 10 January to reflect on his time in office and say thank you to his supporters, he said in an email statement released on Monday.

Obama, noting that the first president of the United States, George Washington, had penned a farewell address in 1796, said he would deliver his speech in his hometown of Chicago.

"I'm thinking about

(the remarks) as a chance to say thank you for this amazing journey, to celebrate the ways you've changed this country for the better these past eight years, and to offer some thoughts on where we all go from here," he said.

Republican Donald Trump will be sworn in to office on 20 January. During his campaign for the White House, Trump pledged to undo many of Obama's signature policy measures, including his healthcare law.—Reuters

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Dated 3rd January 2017

hh@kcyagon.com

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Yangon Region Government Yagon City Development Committee Invitation for Bids

Date 3rd January 2017

Name of Project: Installation, Maintenance and Operation of Street Furniture Items in the City of Yagon.

1. YCDC invites bids from the interested bidders for the Installation, Maintenance and Operation of Street Furniture Items and the grant of an exclusive right to advertise on the street furniture items in the City of Yagon.

2. The interested bidders may obtain further information about this invitation for bids from the following office during office hours:

Engineering Department (Road and Bridge), Yagon City Development Committee, City Hall, Yagon.
Telephone no. 09-431 93314

3. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased upon submission of a written application to the above address and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Kyat 50000 (fifty thousand kyats only) to YCDC..

4. Bids documents shall be delivered in person to the above office on or before 15 hrs. on 17th February 2017. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Any bid submitted after the designated date and time will be rejected.

5. All Bids must be accompanied by bid security (tender guarantee) in the amount of Kyat 300,000,000 or USD 250,000 issued by local bank as described in the bidding documents.

6. Bids will be opened in a session to be held at the office of Yagon City Development Committee in the presence of representatives of the bidders on the date and time as may be notified to the bidders.

Yangon City Development Committee

Shooter kills 11, himself in Brazil New Year's party rampage

RIO DE JANEIRO — A gunman stormed a house party and killed 11 people, including his former wife and 8-year-old son, before shooting himself in the head during a New Year's party in the southeastern Brazilian city of Campinas late on Saturday.

Police in the state of São Paulo said the shooter, identified as 46-year-old Sidnei Ramis de Araújo, is believed to have been angry over a split with his wife, Isamara Filier, 41, and their son João Victor.

Three other people remain hospitalized, police said, while four people survived the attack unharmed, including one party attendee who managed to flee to a bathroom and phone the police when the shooting began.

Survivors, according

to a police spokesman, said that just before midnight, the shooter jumped over a fence surrounding the house, burst through a door and began firing even as he berated Filier for taking their son. Araújo possibly sought to take advantage of the commotion of New Year's Eve to disguise the shooting, police said.

One neighbor told local television that he and his family heard shots, but had thought they might be fireworks until one of the wounded ran to their property, bleeding and pleading for help. Despite high rates of crime and violence in Brazil, including significant problems with assaults against women, the attack alarmed Latin America's biggest country on a holiday associated with family gatherings.—Reuters

Japan, nuclear disarmament, and the ban treaty

By Faryl G. Kimball.

WASHINGTON — Tensions between the world's nuclear-armed states are on the rise. Progress on nuclear disarmament is stalled. Washington and Moscow are on track to replace their excessive nuclear arsenals at enormous cost; other nuclear-armed states are slowly improving their capabilities.

US president-elect Donald Trump appears poised to build up nuclear tensions even further. His 22 December tweet that "the United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear arsenal" and reported comments the next day welcoming an "arms race" could signal a radical shift away from decades of bipartisan US policy to reduce nuclear stockpiles and the risk of war. In response, America's allies, particularly Japan — the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks — must redouble efforts to head-off renewed nuclear competition, reduce the risk

of nuclear weapons use, and move the world toward the prohibition and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. In the coming year, Japan along with other "middle powers" — such as Brazil, Germany, Indonesia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Sweden and South Africa — need to press Moscow and Washington to slash their nuclear arsenals. At nearly 2,000 deployed warheads each, their arsenals vastly exceed what is necessary to deter nuclear attack.

Responsible states must also forcefully call upon all nuclear-armed states to halt to their nuclear build-ups, including by signing and ratifying the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and by refraining from developing and deploying new types of nuclear weapons.

Japan and other states can also help reduce the salience of nuclear weapons by actively participating in the forthcoming negotiations on a new "legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear

weapons, leading towards their total elimination."

By a 113-35-13 margin, the UN General Assembly voted on 23 December to launch talks on a nuclear weapons ban treaty beginning on 27 March. That decision follows three international conferences in 2013 and 2014 to consider the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons use and discussions by an open-ended working group on disarmament in 2016. In order to attain a world free of nuclear weapons, it will be necessary, at some point, to establish a legally-binding norm to prohibit these weapons. As such, the pursuit of a treaty banning the development, production, possession and use of nuclear weapons is a key step along the way.

Although most of the world's nuclear-armed states will boycott the negotiations, this unprecedented new process could help to further delegitimize nuclear weapons and strengthen the legal and political norm

against their use — a worthy goal that is consistent with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and outgoing President Barack Obama's shared vision of a world without nuclear weapons. Contrary to some skeptics' beliefs, this process is not a distraction from other disarmament work, nor will it undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In fact, the strong support for negotiations on a ban treaty is a logical and constructive international response to the failure of key nuclear-armed states to fulfill their NPT disarmament commitments.

Under pressure from Washington, Tokyo voted against the UN resolution for the ban treaty talks. But to his credit, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said on 28 October that Japan intends to join negotiations. That is the right move for the government in Tokyo and for disarmament.

Japan's participation would help improve the quality of the outcome, en-

sure that security and humanitarian factors are taken into account, and would help re-establish Tokyo as a strong leader for a world free of nuclear weapons.

The process will not be easy. To be effective, the ban treaty will need to:

— specify which activities related to nuclear weapons possession, planning, development, production and testing are prohibited. Each of these prohibitions must be effectively verifiable, even if this negotiation does not elaborate how the monitoring and verification regime would work.

— compliment and perhaps enhance existing treaties that prohibit or limit certain nuclear weapons-related activities, including the CTBT, the current nuclear weapons free zone treaties, and the NPT, among others.

— provide a pathway or pathways for states that now possess nuclear weapons or are part of alliances with nuclear-armed states to join the nuclear weapons prohibition treaty in the future.

The negotiators should seek a formula that is mean-

ingful but also draws the widest possible support from states participating in the negotiation. Consensus should be the goal but not a requirement for agreement on the final outcome. States such as Japan, Germany, the Netherlands, and China, each of which expressed reservations about the initiative, should nonetheless participate.

Achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons requires bold and sustained action. The coming ban treaty negotiations are not an all-in-one solution, but do represent an important and new contribution. As President Obama said last year when he visited Hiroshima: "We have a shared responsibility to look directly into the eye of history and ask what we must do differently to curb such suffering again."—Kyodo News

Daryl G. Kimball is executive director of the independent, Washington-based Arms Control Association.

Seeking a trade, Israel to withhold bodies of Palestinian militants

TEL AVIV—Israel said on Sunday it will withhold the bodies of Palestinian militants killed in attacks against its citizens as it seeks to pressure the Islamist movement Hamas to return the remains of soldiers and hand back missing Israeli civilians.

Hamas says it is holding two Israeli soldiers whom the army declared dead after they were lost in action in the 2014 Gaza war. The group also says it is holding two Israeli civilians who strayed into the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip.

Israel's security cabinet, a forum of senior ministers, made the decision on

Sunday, enacting what it said would be a permanent policy for dealing with the bodies of militants.

"The security cabinet discussed ways to effect the return of fallen soldiers and of civilians held in the Gaza Strip ... and decided that (the bodies of militants) should be buried, rather than returned," the statement said. Under the new policy, the bodies could be exhumed and handed back for burial if Hamas was willing to strike deals. It marks a hardening of Israel's stance: during 2016, according to the Israeli army, 102 bodies were returned for burial.—Reuters

PICTURE OF THE DAY



Women dressed as angels prepare to participate in the annual Polar Bear Plunge in Coney Island in the Brooklyn Borough of New York City, US on 1 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV PACAO VOY. NO (035N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV PACAO VOY. NO (035N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV IRRAWADDY STAR VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV IRRAWADDY STAR VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV KOTA HASIL VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

After New Year's Eve debacle, Mariah Carey wishes for 'more headlines'

NEW YORK — Grammy Award-winning singer Mariah Carey shrugged off a botched New Year's Eve show in New York's Times Square, telling fans and critics on Sunday that life does not always go as planned.

"Shit happens," Carey, the world's million-selling female singer, wrote on Twitter. "Have a happy and healthy new year everybody! Here's to making more headlines in 2017."

Carey, named the Grammy's Best New Artist in 1991, was the final musical act on ABC's "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve with Ryan Seacrest," taking the stage just before midnight.

In addition to the television audience, the program was watched in person by the hundreds of thousands of people who gathered in what is called the "Crossroads of the World" to mark the beginning of 2017.

Carey's opening song, a rendition of Robert Burns' "Auld Lang Syne," seemed to go as planned. But then the singer, surrounded by dancers and a sea of humanity, appeared flustered and complained of



Mariah Carey performs during a concert in Times Square on New Year's Eve in New York, US on 31 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

technical difficulties.

"We can't hear," she said, as the music from her 1991 hit song "Emotions" began to play. "It is what it is," she said. "Let the audience sing, OK?"

But the awkwardness per-

sisted, prompting Carey to say: "I want a holiday, too. Can I not have one? I'm trying to be a good sport here."

The next song, "We Belong Together," Carey's 2005 hit, went awry as well. Carey

dropped her hand-held microphone to her side and the song went on playing, revealing that she may have been only syncing her lips to the words.

"It just don't get any better," a frustrated Carey said after the song.

After the debacle, some fans came to Carey's defense on Twitter, while others were less than kind. Several tweets compared her to the disgraced pop duo Milli Vanilli, who lost their Grammy for Best New Artist in 1990 when it emerged they had never sung on their records.

A spokeswoman for Carey said later on Sunday that there was no lip-syncing. "It is not uncommon for artists to sing to track during certain live performances," spokeswoman Nicole Perna said in a statement.

Carey's ear piece was not working before or during the performance and technicians could not fix it, but she took the stage anyway "essentially flying blind" so she could honor a commitment, Perna said.

A spokesman for ABC declined to comment.—Reuters

Table tennis stars Fukuhara, Chiang hold wedding ceremony in Taipei

TAIPEI — Olympic table tennis players Ai Fukuhara of Japan and Chiang Hung-chieh of Taiwan held a wedding ceremony at a hotel in Taipei on Sunday.

The pair formally registered their marriage in both Taiwan and Japan in September, but, after months of preparation, they held their marriage ceremony on New Year's Day, after appearing before the media at a press conference.

Fukuhara, a double Olympic medalist, wore a v-neck lavender evening gown, and thanked her fans for their support, which she said had brought her happiness.

Saying she was more nervous about her wedding than competitions, the 28-year-old did not tell reporters much about her future plans, only saying "wherever Hsiao-chieh is, I'll be there," speaking in Mandarin and referring to her husband by a nickname.

Fukuhara trained with the Chinese national team as a teenager and still has a Chinese coach.—Kyodo News



A general view at the premiere of 'Finding Dory' at El Capitan theatre in Hollywood, California US, on 8 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

North American movie box office sets record in 2016

NEW YORK—The North American movie box office raked in \$11.4 billion in 2016, making it the highest-earning year in history, according to box office tracker comScore.

Last year's total eclipsed the previous record of \$11.14 billion in 2015.

The crop of blockbuster movies in 2016 was topped by "Finding Dory," which tallied \$486.3 million in sales in the

United States and Canada, comScore said.

The latest Star Wars movie, "Rogue One," finished the year in second place, but it was only released on 16 December in the United States and continues to enjoy strong sales.

Disney had six of North America's top 10 grossing movies in 2016 and all of the top three, including "Captain America: Civil War," which took in

\$408 million, according to comScore.

"Forgetful fish, super-heroes, household pets and space travelers led the charge in a year that was marked by an incredibly diverse selection of films from every genre and of every size and scope from all the studios," comScore's senior media analyst, Paul Dergarabedian, said in a news release on Sunday.—Reuters

'Bad Boys of Brexit' headed for screen, says Farage associate

LONDON — Three film production companies including Netflix are interested in making a warts-and-all screen dramatization of Nigel Farage's insurgent Brexit campaign, according to an associate of Farage.

This would be another extraordinary twist for Farage, who from the fringes of British politics achieved his life's goal when Britons voted to leave the European Union last June, and has since befriended US President-elect Donald Trump.

The project would be based on "The Bad Boys of Brexit", an account of Farage's campaign by Arron Banks, a multi-millionaire British insurance tycoon who bankrolled the campaign, according to Andy Wigmore, a spokesman for Banks.

"We have three interested parties in the rights to the book and we will be meeting representatives from three studios including a Netflix representative on 19 January in Washington DC," Wigmore told Reuters in a text message.

Farage, Banks, Wigmore and others in their circle will travel to Washington for Trump's inauguration as president, which will take place on 20 January.

"We have invited all of them (the studio representatives) to our pre-inaugural

drinks party ... We have also invited many of Trump's team to the event," said Wigmore.

Netflix did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Sunday Telegraph newspaper earlier reported that Hollywood studio Warner Bros. was also interested, but it was unclear from Wigmore's texts to Reuters whether those who have approached Banks included representatives of Warner Bros.

The subtitle of Banks' book is "Tales of Mischief, Mayhem and Guerrilla Warfare in the EU Referendum Campaign". It is described on its publisher's website as "an honest, uncensored and highly entertaining diary of the campaign that changed the course of history".

Asked whether Farage was likely to appear as himself in any screen adaptation of his campaign, Wigmore said: "Yes we all expect to make a Quentin Tarantino appearance", a reference to the director's cameo appearances in his own movies.

Despite handing over the reins of the anti-EU party UKIP to a successor in November, Farage, typically pictured with pint of beer in hand, remains the most prominent face of Brexit in the eyes of many Britons and is rarely out of the headlines.—Reuters

Emperor Akihito offers New Year's greetings to well-wishers

TOKYO — Emperor Akihito offered New Year's greetings Monday to the estimated 96,700 well-wishers who flocked to the Imperial Palace in central Tokyo.

"It is my hope that people can lead calm and spiritually rich lives this year," the emperor said during one of five appearances on a balcony of the Chowa-Den wing of the palace along with Empress Michiko.

"I pray for peace and happiness for the people of Japan and the people of the world," he said.

The emperor was



Some 96,700 well-wishers flock to the Imperial Palace in Tokyo on 2 January, 2017, to hear Emperor Akihito's New Year's greeting. The crowd was the second largest since he ascended to the throne in 1989, according to the Imperial Household Agency. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

joined by other members of the imperial family including Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako as well as Prince Akishino, his wife Princess Kiko and their daughters — Princess

Mako and Princess Kako.

The crowd was the second largest since Emperor Akihito ascended the Chrysanthemum Throne in 1989, according to the Imperial Household Agency. Since the 83-year-old emperor indicated in August his desire to abdicate, citing the possibility that his advanced age could one day prevent him from fulfilling his duties as symbol of state, he has drawn increased public attention. A record 38,588 people flocked to the Imperial Palace on his birthday on 23 December.—Kyodo News

Puppy love: hundreds compete in Madrid dog race to promote adoption



A woman takes a selfie with two dogs before the start of the 'Sanperrestre' walk to raise awareness about the need to adopt dogs and cats instead of purchasing them, in central Madrid, Spain, on 30 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

MADRID — Hundreds of dogs and their owners took part in the sixth annual San Perrestre dog race in Madrid on Friday

to raise awareness of pet adoption and abandoned animals.

The race was organized by El Refugio ani-

mal home, with five of the competing dogs up for adoption.

"The objective is to encourage the adoption

of dogs and cats. Animals should not be bought (in shops)," El Refugio director, Nacho Paunero, said.—Reuters

Britain to build 17 towns and villages to ease housing squeeze

LONDON — Britain's government announced plans on Monday to build 17 new towns and villages across the English countryside in a bid to ease a chronic housing shortage.

The new "garden" communities — from Cumbria in the north to Cornwall on England's southern-most tip — would be part of a scheme to build up to 200,000 new homes, housing and planning minister Gavin Barwell said in a statement.

That would still be a fraction of the million houses the government has said it wants to see built from 2015-2020 in an already densely populated nation.

Successive governments have promised to tackle a shortage that has seen house prices spiral in London and other major cities, out of the reach of many buyers.

But developers have complained about a lack of available land and strict planning laws that outlaw development on "greenbelt" land around existing towns and give local councils the power

to block construction.

Britain asked local authorities last year to say if they were interested in having new garden developments — based on a 19th century idea of housing growing populations in self-contained towns surrounded by countryside.

Barwell announced the locations for the first time on Monday and said the state would loosen planning restrictions and give 7.4 million pounds (\$9.10 million) to help fund the building.

The three newly announced towns, with more than 10,000 homes each, will be built near Aylesbury, Taunton and Harlow, the government said.

The new garden villages, including Bailrigg in Lancaster, Long Marston in Stratford-on-Avon, Welborne in Hampshire and Culm in Devon, would each have 1,500-10,000 properties. Together with seven other garden towns already announced, the new developments could provide almost 200,000 homes, Barwell said.—Reuters

London street artist Pegasus paints memorial for George Michael

LONDON — Street artist Pegasus has paid tribute to George Michael with a mural of the Wham! singer, who died on Sunday aged 53.

The artwork near a graffiti park in Shoreditch, in east London, features three images of the "Faith" singer clutching a jacket next to the words "Never gonna dance again", a lyric from Mi-

chael's single "Careless Whisper".

People stopped on Thursday to take photographs of the painting, which took four hours to complete.

"So many people stopped as I was painting it. It got a great reaction," Pegasus, who said he had been inspired by Michael, told the Evening Standard newspaper.—Reuters



A man walks past a mural depicting singer George Michael, in London, Britain 29 December, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(3-1-2017 07:00am ~ 4-1-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	A Visit to Kyauk Kyi
07:42	Am	Ancient Heritage at Natalin
07:53	Am	Paper Flower
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Reflected Glory
08:50	Am	Mt. Naw Bu Baw
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	The Strokes of Myanmar
09:52	Am	Today Myanmar "Auto Mobile Market 2017"
10:03	Am	News

10:26	Am	Strolling Along A Memory Link - U Pein Bridge
10:44	Am	Chinlone and the dreams of the player

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	"	A Day Out With Sarah (Ep-6)
08:03	"	News
08:26	"	Taste Of Myanmar (Mandalay Noodle Salad)
08:45	"	Young Lady Musician: Nge Nge Lay

(11:00 Pm ~ 03:00 Am)- Monday 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)

Kane and Alli strike twice as Tottenham crush Watford



Tottenham's Dele Alli scores their third goal during the match between Watford and Tottenham Hotspur in Premier League at Vicarage Road on 1 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

LONDON — Tottenham Hotspur steamed into the top four as Harry Kane marked his 100th Premier League appearance with a double in a 4-1 thrashing of a woeful Watford on Sunday.

Kane pounced in the 27th and 33rd minutes, both from Kieran Trippier assists, and Dele Alli also struck twice for the visitors with goals either side of halftime as Watford were punished for slack defending.

A fourth win in a row pushed Tottenham into third place with 39 points from 19 matches, above Manchester City and Arsenal, although their north London rivals could regain third spot if they beat Crystal Palace

later on Sunday.

For the second game in a row Tottenham struck four on the road to keep themselves firmly in the pack chasing runaway leaders Chelsea, who they host on Wednesday.

In torrential New Year's Day rain at Vicarage Road Tottenham had already peppered the Watford goal with shots before Kane opened the scoring.

Danny Rose fired wastefully over, Christian Eriksen stung the fingers of keeper Huerelho Gomes while Alli rattled the crossbar with a fizzing shot.

Seconds after Alli's near miss Trippier threaded a clever pass into Kane who reacted

sharply and slipped the ball past Gomes.

Trippier, deputising for the suspended Kyle Walker, was at it again six minutes later, whipping in a teasing cross which Kane prodded past Gomes with Watford's defenders dozing.

The England striker, who scored once and missed a penalty in the 4-1 victory over Southampton in midweek, has now bagged 59 goals in 100 Premier League games and 10 in his last 11. Watford continued to cause problems for themselves and a poor clearance by former Spurs defender Younes Kaboul fell to Alli who punished him with a tidy finish. Alli grabbed his sec-

ond after a mistake by Sebastian Prodl before he and Kane were both substituted with manager Mauricio Pochettino having one eye on Wednesday's clash with Chelsea who are 10 points ahead of Tottenham and six ahead of Liverpool.

"The Chelsea match is massive, so we'll recover and go hard at it," Kane told Sky Sports. "We just need to go out there and beat them and stop their winning run."

Watford grabbed a scrappy consolation goal in stoppage time when Kaboul touched home from close range after Spurs keeper Hugo Lloris had made a fine save. —Reuters

Shanghai SIPG fans cheer as Oscar arrives in China

SHANGHAI — Brazilian international midfielder Oscar was cheered by supporters of his new Shanghai club on Monday where some media reports said he would earn nearly \$500,000 a week, making him the highest-paid player in the world.

Financial details of Oscar's transfer to Shanghai SIPG from English Premier League club Chelsea have not been released, but media reports have suggested Shanghai paid 60 million euros (\$62.6 million) to lure the 25-year-old to the Chinese super league club.

Fans wearing the team's red and white colours shouted "Oscar, Oscar!" when the Brazilian arrived at Shanghai's in-

ternational airport on Monday. He stopped to sign autographs before being led away by team officials.

"I think it will definitely enhance the team's capabilities," Shao Lei, a 30-year-old SIPG supporter, said of the latest Brazilian to sign with the Shanghai club.

"Our goal is to strive for the championship, nothing else," he told Reuters Television.

The figures cited in British media reports would make Oscar the world's highest paid player at about 400,000 pounds a week (\$490,760).

However, he could be eclipsed by Carlos Tevez when the Argentine signs a huge con-



Brazilian international midfielder Oscar arrives at the Shanghai Pudong International Airport, after agreeing to join China super league football club Shanghai SIPG from Chelsea in Shanghai, China, on 2 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

tract with Shanghai Shenhua that could earn the striker 615,000 pounds a week, according to media reports.

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.

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

He will link up with compatriots Hulk and Elkeson who are already playing their trade at Shanghai SIPG, led by former Chelsea manager Andre Villas-Boas. —Reuters

Southgate targets world number one ranking for England

LONDON — New England manager Gareth Southgate wants to make the under-achieving nation the world's top football power, however long it takes, he said in a New Year message on Sunday.

England have slumped to 13th in FIFA's rankings and have failed to make any impact at major tournaments for decades but Southgate is relishing the task ahead.

"We're 13th in the world rankings and at the last two tournaments we haven't got through a knockout game," Southgate, who was named as full-time manager in November after a four-match interim period in charge, said.

"There are some obstacles we have to overcome but for me that's a great opportunity and the potential is huge.

"I don't have any fear in what lies ahead because I'm just seeing what's possible. How do we go to being the number one team in the world?"

"We've got to deliver, we've got to work hard, we've got to work intelligently. I'm looking at what's achievable, I'm not thinking about anything else."

Southgate has taken charge after a tumultuous period for England. After a poor 2014 World Cup when they went out at the group stage there came the dismal flop at Euro 2016 when they were knocked out by Iceland in the last 16, leading to the resignation of manager Roy Hodgson.

Hodgson's replacement Sam Allardyce lasted only 67 days before stepping down after being caught up in a newspaper sting in which he was secretly recorded saying it was possible to "get around" Football Association rules on player transfers.

Under his guidance England are unbeaten, if not thoroughly convincing, in four games with wins against Malta and Scotland and draws with Slovenia and Spain.

He has impressed with his realism and vision for the future though and has not been afraid to speak his mind.

On taking over he spoke of the need for some "humility" in a squad full of millionaire players. Continuing that theme Southgate, who won 57 England caps, said he was concerned about the spiralling wages of young players. —Reuters