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Vol. III, No. 265, 9th Waxing of Pyatho 1378 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Friday, 6 January 2017

Commission: More investigation needed on Maungtaw

THE Investigation Commission on Maungtaw pledges that it will complete its final report within the set time frame even after it was deemed that further investigation was necessary.

Vice President U Myint Swe, who chairs the commission, made the remarks at a meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

"All members of the commission are obliged to write the report fully and correctly, said the vice

president.

One of the main reasons for conflicts in Rakhine State is that the state lags behind in development and has a low living standard, said U Hla Maung, a retired ambassador and a patron of the Interfaith Friendship and Unity Group, said in his capacity as a member of the investigation commission.

"It is very important to work for bringing unity, peace, understanding and development to both

communities in Rakhine State," he added.

The interfaith group is planning to go to northern Rakhine as part of peace and friendship mission, U Hla Maung said. At the meeting, Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Maj-General Zaw Win, a member of the commission, clarified charges against those who were involved in the violent attacks in northern Rakhine and the possible connection between an increase

in seizing drugs in Maungtaw and violent attacks.

The commission issued its interim report on Tuesday, refuting allegations of abuses by security forces.

"Concerning the claims that women were raped, the Commission interviewed local villagers and women using various methods, finding insufficient evidence to take legal action up this date. As to the arsons, investigations are un-

derway to get sufficient evidence. Illegal arrests and torture are also being investigated."

However, there are new cases of abduction, threats and killings of those who cooperated with departments and organisations, said the report. Legal action was taken against 485 suspects in 49 cases. Of them, 28 cases have been put on trial with 3 coming to a final conviction, according to the report.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Rice, articles of clothing and tents were delivered to villagers affected by armed attackers in Rakhine State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Aid flows into villages affected by armed attacks

RICE, beans, clothes and canvas tents donated by the Rakhine State Cabinet were delivered yesterday to villages affected by armed attacks.

Two-hundred ninety-eight households consisting of 3,895 family members in Kyetyoepyin village-tract's Kyetyoepyin Ywama were provided with 75 rice bags, 5 bags of beans and 600 articles of clothing, while 115 households comprised of 1,331 family members were provided with 29 bags of rice, 2 bags of beans and 200 articles of clothing.

Similarly, 25 bags of rice, 2 bags of beans, 12 canvas tents and 200 articles of clothing were provided to 83 households of 3,178 family members in Dargyizar village.

"We went to these three villages for the third time to provide subsidies. Now we have given out 128 bags of rice, 337 1/2 viss of beans and 12 canvas tents for 597 households of 8,404 people.

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သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Five villagers attempting to emigrate to Bangladesh arrested in Maungtaw

WHILE making regular patrols near the village of Kwanthipin in Maungtaw township, security forces found Tarzaw Mokuk of Kwanthipin (middle) village and 5 suspects, including Adushakur, residing in the village, Auk Pyuma at 4 am on Wednesday.

According to the investigation, Tarzaw Mokuk received money from them to take them to Bangladesh. An arrangement is being made to take legal action against them in accord with the law, it is learnt.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Two more suspected terrorists detained in Buthidaung



Ibra Hein and Mammud Shar. PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE

ACCORDING to information received from detainees suspected of conducting and undergoing terrorist training in Myitnar Village, Maungyi Taung Village-tract in Buthidaung Township, Rakhine State, security forces conducted an area clearance operation nearby yesterday and found two

terrorists who had completed terrorist training at about 5 pm, including Ibra Hein and Mammud Shar.

The suspects have been handed over to border guard police and the security forces are seeking further information.— *Myanmar News Agency*

China provides cash assistance to peace process in Myanmar

THE government of China provided financial assistance to Myanmar's peace process yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

U Kyaw Zeya, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, received US\$ 1 million from Mr Hong Liang, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Yangon extend to National Reconciliation and Peace

Center (NRPC) of Myanmar.

The Permanent Secretary of Ministry handed over to Mr Hong Liang to the certificate of appreciation of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre. China has pledged to donate a sum of US\$ 3 million for the National Reconciliation and peace process of Myanmar.— *Myanmar News Agency*



U Kyaw Zeya receives the cash assistance presented by Chinese Ambassador Mr Hong Liang. Photo: MNA

Terrorist trainings exposed in northern Rakhine

ONE trainer and 3 trainees who were arrested loading with hand-made guns in Maunggyitaung village, Buthidaung on 4th January confessed giving and receiving trainings for violent attacks in northern Rakhine.

According to interrogations, a two-week training for violent attacks was conducted at a hill west of Darpaingsayar Village in Buthidaung Township in July, 2016 and about 30 villagers from Darpaingsayar Village and nearby villages attended the training.

Two nationals from a neighbouring country and Mawlawi Adu Razauk from Paletaung Village in Chinthamar Village-tract trained them for shooting and basic martial arts.

Similarly, training for violent attacks were also given to about 15 villagers at a field near Gawduthara Village, Maungtaw Township and about 10 villagers in a valley west of Maunggyitaung Village in June last year.

About 10 villagers received training for violent attacks at Gawduthara (East) Village and five at a garden owned by Sunarli in Darpaingsayar Village in July last year.

Five villagers received the same training at a garden owned by Marmud Shah in Hsinohpyin Village in November last year.

During the training, two nationals from the neighbouring country and a trainee from Maunggyitaung Village named Sardek arranged to make home-made weapons while the two people from the neighbouring country calculated requirements for making weapons and two trainees, Sardek and Mammaud Shoree, purchased necessary accessories from Santhit Industry from Ward-2 in Buthidaung before Mammaud Shoree, Kumushu and the two people from the neighbouring country assembled homemade weapons. In June, 2016, Mam-



Map shows location where terrorist trainings are conducted in northern Rakhine. PHOTO: STATE COUNSELLOR'S OFFICE INFORMATION COMMITTEE

maud Shah of Maungyitaw Village and Zawtula Yuseop crossed from Tukuparlong Refugee Camp in the neighbouring country to Myanmar through an identified border gate along Kyaingchaung-Gukpeek mountain road, bringing 16 weapons to Mammaud Karyar in Maunggyitaung Village, who was instructed to recruit young people and told that about 100 armed terrorists would come to Myanmar on 20 January 2017. Mammaud Karyar, Mammaud Shar and Larlu were also

told to provide food, clothing and shelter for the attackers before they attack army and police outposts in Buthidaung. The financier of the group was Mammaud Shah of Maunggyitaung Village, according to the interrogations.

Following the interrogation, authorities has detained Mumud Shah from Maunggyitaung Village for further interrogation and measures are being taken to arrest those who are connected with the trainings.— *Myanmar News Agency*

Sarmalauk village river bank collapses

A river bank near Sarmalauk village in Nyaungdon Township, Ayeyawaddy Region collapsed yesterday, damaging dozens of homes and requiring the relocation of at least 15 households, according to Hluttaw representatives, Nyaungdon Township.

The collapse of the Pan Hlaing river bank resulted in a landslide that reached within 300 feet of the Yangon-Pathein main road. The landslide damaged 15 houses and rendered another 21 households uninhabitable, which required the evacuation of its residents. Riverside houses were also damaged by the collapse of the river bank.

"The cause of the collapse

is due to soil erosion by the Pan Hlaing River. The upper layers cracked, causing several villager's homes to collapse. It is worse when the tide subsides. Despite the landslides reaching nearly 300 feet from the main road, we cannot carry out relief measures. We have to focus only on protective operations," said Daw Ni Ni Moe, Nyaungdon Township representative, Ayeyawaddy Region.

Landslides along the river started on 3 January with earthen cracks measuring 400 feet in length and 60 feet in width. Nyaungdon Township natural disaster funds were spent on prevention activities, it is learnt from

Hluttaw representatives.

Over 100 members of families from 15 households were resettled at a nearby monastery. Those people from households which did not collapse sought refuge in relatives' houses.

"We've built a temporary shelter to accommodate people from the collapsed houses. We also have to evacuate other households. We have sent relief assistance to disaster-affected people. We are also taken protective measures to prevent future collapses," said U Htay Win, Ayeyawaddy Region Minister for electricity, transport and communication.— *Myitmakha News Agency*

State Counsellor receives South Korean ambassador



State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Myanmar, Mr Yoo Jae Kyung at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday morning.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint receives French Ambassador to Myanmar

THE Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint received French Ambassador to Myanmar H.E Mr. Olivier Richard at the ministry yesterday morning.

They discussed the technical issues concerning the Media Law and the Television Law

and the sending of experts for Digital Archiving Systems of information, TV programmes, documentary videos and films of the ministry.

Also present were officials of the ministry.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker receives British Ambassador

SPEAKER of the Pyithu Hluttaw U Win Myint received British Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Andrew Patrick at the Pyithu Hluttaw Building yesterday morning.

They discussed promotion of cooperation between the two

parliaments and legislation processes and promotion of friendship between the two countries.

Also present were Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat and officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Speaker U Win Myint holds talks with British Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Andrew Patrick in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

Article on Bangladeshis injured by Myanmar Navy refuted

A story in a Bangladeshi newspaper claiming that Bangladeshi fishermen were wounded by Myanmar Navy forces is false, the State Counsellor Office's Information Committee said in a press release yesterday.

In the news report posted in the Dhaka-based Daily Star online media at 9:49 pm on December 27 under the headline "6 Bang-

ladeshis shot in Myanmar firing at Bay", it was claimed that Myanmar Navy Forces attacked a Bangladeshi fishing boat near the St. Martin Island in the Bay of Bengal on the morning of December 27, injuring 6 fishermen. The Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) said it did not make any attacks on the ship, it is learnt.—*Myanmar News Agency*

President U Htin Kyaw receives outgoing Filipino, Chilean ambassadors



President U Htin Kyaw bids farewell to the Chilean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Javier Becker. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw on Thursday received Mr Alex G. Chua, the outgoing Filipino Ambassador to Myanmar, at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw at 9 a.m.

The president then met with Mr Javier Becker, the outgoing Chilean Ambassador to Myanmar, based in Bangkok, Thailand, at the same venue at 9.40 a.m. on that day.

Also present at the calls were Union Information Minister Dr Pe Myint, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Tin and officials.—*Myanmar News Agency*

More 213,777 households supplied with electrical power

More than 213,700 houses recently received access to electricity, bringing the total number of households supplied with power nationwide to 3,911,966, which constitutes 35 per cent of the country's households.

On a nationwide scale, out of 10,877,832 households, there were 3,698,219 households that could use the power supply up to the end of March, 2016 — 34 per cent of the whole nation, according to the Ministry of Electrical Power and Energy. The Ministry of Electrical Power and Energy has been increasing access to electrical power, which plays an important role for the development of the State in many ways, with budget allotments granted by the State and with foreign aid and loans.

From the end of March up to now, 206 miles of 230-KV Grid Line, 190 miles of 66-KV Grid Line, 14 miles of 33-KV Grid Line, 0.32 mile of 6.6-KV Grid Line and 173 miles of 400-Volts Grid Line were installed.

In addition, 14 66/11 KV Grid Stations, 13 Grid Stations of 33/11 KV, 173 Grid Stations of 11/0 . 4 KV were built. —*Than Oo (Laymyathnar)*

MYANMAR GAZETTE

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the following persons as heads of service organizations shown against each on the expiry of one-year probationary period from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(1) Dr Daw War War Maung	Director-General Central Statistics Organization Ministry of Planning and Finance
(2) U Tin Maung Kyi	Director-General National Archives Department Ministry of Planning and Finance

Yangon Book Street to start this week

WITH the aim of promoting literary knowledge, the Printing and Publishing Department of the Ministry of Information and the Myanmar Publishers Association are going to organise the Yangon Book Street Saturday and

Sunday on Theinbyu Road starting on 7 and 8 January.

About one hundred book stalls will participate and the public is invited to the fair every weekend.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Aid flows into villages affected ...

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Further arrangements are under way to go the aid-needed places to support subsidies in cooperation with governmental departments, NGOs and INGOs," said U Ye Htoo, deputy district administrator. The aid was de-

livered by the deputy district administrator, township administrator, members of the UNHCR and representatives of Malteser International. In the villages, a mobile medical treatment provided medical care to local villagers, it is learnt.—*Zin Oo and Ko Min*

LOCAL Business

Myanmar's breakneck growth bring surge in fuel oil shipping from Singapore

MYANMAR's oil imports are surging to fuel a fast-growing economy and rebuild rotting infrastructure, creating a small but profitable route for ships making a beeline for the emerging southeast Asian nation from the regional hub of Singapore.

Servicing growth that could top 8 percent this year is a clutch of small tankers ferrying gasoil and diesel from Singapore 2,000 kilometers (1,260 miles) north to Myanmar. The country's sole port, at Yangon, can only handle small vessels.

Shipping data in Thomson Reuters Eikon shows that around 20 small tankers with a combined capacity of around 220,000 deadweight tonnes (DWT) are currently shipping refined products into Myanmar, virtually all from Singapore. That's about twice as many vessels as were on that route around a year ago, according to one shipper.

"Everyone is quite bullish about the Myanmar market," said Lim Han, executive director and head of chartering at Singapore's Hong Lam Marine. The firm, which started oil shipments to Myanmar from Singapore six months ago, is one of a handful of small, local shippers now plying the route.

After almost 50 years of economic struggle under military dictatorship, Myanmar is



A file photo of the Myanmar industrial port terminal at the banks of the Hlaing river in Yangon, on 9 June 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

opening up to investors as it tries to reconstruct roads, factories and airports, as well as supply an electricity grid stretched to breaking point.

Rising use of refined oil products like gasoil or diesel is a leading indicator for economic growth in places like Myanmar. The fuels are mostly used in power generation, construction,

and transportation, especially in heavy duty vehicles.

"We forecast refined fuels consumption in Myanmar to increase at an average annual rate of 6 percent over the next 10 years," BMI Research said this week. The unit of rating agency Fitch Group said demand would be fueled by new laws supporting foreign investment, as well as

strong economic growth.

Myanmar's diesel demand rose to 110,000 barrels per day (bpd) over September to October 2016, from 80,000 to 90,000 bpd over the same period in 2015, according to Energy Aspects oil analyst Nevyn Nah.

Its gasoil imports are expected to hit 37,250 to 50,000 bpd in 2017, up from just around

17,400 to 19,900 bpd in previous years, according to involved trading sources.

Although the amount of fuel being shipped into Myanmar is small by international oil trading standards, with global crude oil demand approaching 100 million bpd, the shippers servicing the route enjoy healthy profits from arbitrage trades.

Traders say that Myanmar Petroleum Products Enterprise, the country's state oil firm, has typically bought gasoil from buyers in Singapore, such as trading house Trafigura's subsidiary Puma Energy, at a premium of over \$3 per barrel above Singapore prices.

Shippers say fuel shipments to Myanmar will rise further. Yangon's port is being expanded to handle ships up to a size of 50,000 DWT, compared with the current fleet of ships sized at 5,000-18,000 DWT. That would put the port of Yangon ahead of ports such as Bangkok and Jakarta's Tanjung Priok and on a par with Ho Chi Minh City in terms of ability to handle vessels.

Singapore, as Asia's oil trading hub, will benefit further from this rising demand as it takes in surplus fuels from other regional markets and offers it to buyers in need of supplies - like Myanmar.—Reuters

Gap of over Ks150,000 between highest and lowest rate of Myanmar's pure gold in 2016

A gap between highest and lowest rate of Myanmar's pure gold was recorded at over Ks150,000 in 2016, according to the gold entrepreneurs.

Myanmar's gold fetched Ks732,000 per tical in early January of 2016, whereas the price hit the recorded high of Ks900,500 per tical in October, 2016.

With the appreciation of the U.S. dollar and a high global gold price, domestic gold price reached the highest rate last

year. The price dropped back in December, said U Zaw Aung, Tate Sein gold and jewellery shop owner.

Meanwhile, the global gold price reached the highest rate of US\$1,400 per ounce and the lowest rate of US\$1,050 per ounce, it is learnt. The exchange rate of the US dollar in early 2016 was Ks1,100 for one dollar and the rate has been on the rise since July, reaching up to Ks1,440 per dollar.

Previously, businessmen

guessed the gold price on the basis of the price of petroleum and stock. However, the global gold price reached a high despite the drop in petroleum price. As a result, the gold entrepreneurs find it hard to guess the gold price in 2017.

Myanmar's pure gold price was around Ks844,000 per tical in early January, 2017 whereas the global gold price is around US\$1,100 per ounce, it is learnt.—Myitmakha News Agency

Myanmar's rubber price rebounds in global market

RUBBER prices bounced back from a two-year slump following a recovery in the global market, resulting in employment for those engaged in rubber farming who were out of work.

Over 6,330 tonnes of rubber worth over US\$8million were exported abroad through the Muse 105th Mile trade zone, Chin Shwe Haw border trade camp and Tachilek border trade camp from 10th to 16th December, according to the Commerce Ministry.

High demand for rubber scaled up the prices. Domestic rubber farming is badly in need of better techniques to produce quality rubber in a bid to attain more buyers in the global market, said a rubber entrepreneur.

Rubber growers were previously faced with hardship due to the steady drop in the price of rubber price that forced workers out of the farms, according to the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

The drop in the price of rubber in the global market led rubber growers to shut their operations. Additionally, the lack of techniques to produce quality products pulled the prices down in the competitive high market, it is learnt.

The rubber price is likely to remain on the rise since Chinese New Year is approaching. Myanmar exported 88,000 tonnes of rubber in the fiscal year 2015-16, with more than 70 per cent of the total export going to China, according to the Myanmar Rubber Planters & Producers Association (MRPPA).

Seventy per cent of the global production of rubber comes from South East Asian countries but Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos constitute only 3 per cent of rubber in the international market, the report said. Myanmar's rubber is still unable to meet international quality standards and is being offered at a discount price.—Mon Mon

Watermelon export volume up by over 50,000 tonnes in 9 months

THE export volume of watermelons as of the end of December in the fiscal year 2016-2017 is up by over 50,000 tonnes compared to that in the similar period of last year, according to the fruit depot of Muse 105th Mile.

The rise in export is attributed to the increasing number of watermelon growers as well as the high demand from China,

merchants said.

During nine months of this FY, over 230,000 tonnes of watermelon were exported. In the same period last year, over 180,000 tonnes of watermelon were exported through the Muse border trade camp, according to the statistics of border trade.

The prevailing price of watermelon ranges from over

Ks388,000 to Ks970,000 per tonne. About 300 truckloads of watermelon flow daily into Muse Market for export to China, it is learnt.

"The growing of watermelon can bring us more profit than other crops and vegetables if watermelon is systematically grown in the short term," said a watermelon grower.—Ko Htet



A file photo shows Dhammayangyi Temple in Bagan, Mandalay Region. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

MEC to check earthquake resistance of Bagan pagodas in 2017

THE Myanmar Earthquake Committee (MEC) will check that pagodas in ancient Bagan, Nyang U District, Mandalay Region can withstand future temblors.

"Earthquakes shook Myanmar ancient pagodas last year, causing extensive damage. We take measures that the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) will renovate the damaged pagodas. And we will check the earthquake resistance of Bagan pagodas. We are current-

ly assessing how to conduct these activities," said U Myo Thant, the secretary of MEC.

"We will submit our suggestion on which pagodas need to be renovated based on the assessment to the department concerned."

The earthquake on 24th August damaged 258 vaunted temples, 104 pagodas and 13 brick monasteries. MEC will lead the assessment activity in cooperation with Myanmar Engineering Society (MES).—Myitmakha News Agency

Crime NEWS

Police detain robbery suspect within hours

POLICE quickly arrested a suspect who had robbed an elderly woman of jewellery and cash in Hlinethaya Township recently.

A woman who lives in Ward-6 Hlinethaya Township reported to the police that a man in his thirties armed with a chisel calling himself Aye Min came to her house and robbed her mother of the jewellery and cash.

Following the case, the police came to know that Aye Min, 33, is a man named Kyaw Kyaw

Htoo, who lived in Hlinethaya, and was hiding in Pathein, Ayeyawady Region.

He was detained at Myat-to toll gate in Pathein on Tuesday night, together with a gold bracelet, two gold chains, one diamond locket, one gold ring, Ks155,000 out of K200,000 he had robbed and a bank account book.

Action has been taken against the offender under Section 386 of the criminal code.—Myanmar News Agency



Kyaw Kyaw Htoo alias Kyaw Htwe. PHOTO: MPF

Rape cases on the rise in Yangon Region

ALTHOUGH cases of murder, robbery, snatching and theft fell in the Yangon region, rape cases increased, according to Yangon police.

Yangon Region Police said there were 180 murder cases in 2016, down from 191 cases in last year. Murder cases decreased as did those of robbery, snatching, burglary and theft of pets, which decreased by 3, 16, 15 and 1, respectively.

But there were 229 cases of rape recorded in 2016, up from 110 cases of rape in last year. Out of the 229 cases of rape that occurred in 2016, 69 involved the rape of adults and 64 cases were the rape of children. The other 96 cases were adulteries.

Officials said easy access to internet pornography is to blame.

"The people can easily access the pornographies mov-

ies from online. Currently, the courts are giving deterrent punishment to those who commit felonies. The parents also need to take care of their children. Prevention is the best way," said U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, a law enforcement agent.

Currently, there are over 96 cases of rape that have action taken under sections 376/363 of the Penal Code in 2016.—Myitmakha News Agency

House fire in Hsinthaypyin village, Maungtaw Tsp



Two-storey fired house in Hsinthaypyin village, Maungtaw. PHOTO: MNA

AN unoccupied two-storey thatched house with bamboo-mat walls and wooden floors caught fire at 9:15 pm on Wednesday in Hsinthaypyin village in Longdon village-tract under the jurisdiction of Ngakhura police outpost. The fire was extinguished within half an hour thanks to the efforts of villagers.

An investigation of the cause of the fire was being made and legal action will be taken against those responsible.—Myanmar News Agency

24 kilos of Ketamine seized in Kengtung

A local anti-drug squad seized 24 packs of Ketamine weighing 24 kilos in Kengtung on 4th January.

The police discovered the drug during the search at a car driven by Sai Lon Tun and also arrested two men who were on board.

Similarly, a local anti-drug squad in Bhamo discovered 7,900 stimulant tablets on 3rd January.

A local police searched a passenger bus on Lashio-Tanyan Road and seized 2,345 stimulant tablets from Kyaw Naing Win.—Myanmar News Agency



Sai Lon Tun, Li Saw (a) Aik Yi Sut and Aik Sum are seen together with drug seized from them. PHOTO: MPF

Father, children killed in head-on-collision

A HEAD-ON-COLLISION occurred between a car and motorbike in Theinni Township in northern Shan State on Wednesday afternoon, killing four people including three children, according to local police.

A motorcycle being driven by U Kyaw Soe Lin together with his three children aboard collided head-on with a Nissan AD Van

near Mangli modern village on Wednesday, police said.

The bodies of the traffic victims were sent to Theinni General Hospital.

Action is being taken against the motor car driver under Section 304 (a) of the Penal Code, relating to causing death by negligence.—Myitmakha News Agency

Little precedent, wide latitude for South Korea court in impeachment trial

SEOUL — The South Korean court that will rule on the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye has only one precedent and little in the law books to go by, and several legal experts said it will have wide discretion in deciding if she is fit to remain in office.

Seven of nine experts interviewed by Reuters said they believed the Constitutional Court's yardstick in deciding whether Park should remain in office would be less than the "beyond a reasonable doubt" standard for criminal trials, making it more difficult for her to win the case.

South Korean law does not specify the standard needed by the Constitutional Court to reach a ruling. It calls for criminal procedural law to be applied during an impeachment trial "at a level that does not clash with the nature of a constitutional trial". Experts say this means that the Constitutional Court has discretion on deciding which part of criminal procedure it will apply, including whether to use a rigorous level of proof, a lower

standard, or apply a rigorous standard for some deliberations and a lower standard for others.

Two experts, however, said a high standard would be needed to establish grounds for upholding impeachment.

Park, 64, was impeached by parliament last month over an influence peddling scandal. If the nine-judge Constitutional Court rules that she did allow a friend to have influence over state affairs, as alleged, and that it was an impeachable offence, she will be ousted, making her South Korea's first democratically elected leader to be forced from office.

"This is not a criminal trial, it's a constitutional trial deciding whether a president is no longer fit to carry out presidential duties," said Noh Hee-bum, a lawyer who worked as a Constitutional Court research judge from 1998 to 2015.

"Although it's not expressly stipulated in law, it is the prevailing view that the level of proof is not as severe." That, some experts

said, would make it more difficult for Park.

"The common view, a lower burden of proof, is comparatively unfavourable to Park than a higher burden of proof would be," said Koh Moon-hyun, a professor at the Soongsil University College of Law. Park has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing and her lawyers have argued that the case should be thrown out.

"In an impeachment proceeding, proof beyond a reasonable doubt is needed," her lawyer, Lee Joong-hwan, said in court on Tuesday, citing a publication by the research institute attached to the Constitutional Court.

"We can see that this means a rigorous level of proof is needed based on evidentiary principles of criminal procedure," he said.

The parliament's impeachment committee and its legal counsel, who are the prosecutors in the case, could not immediately be reached for comment.

Two sessions of the trial have been held this week and Park did not attend, as

expected. Lee said he believes she will not appear, barring special circumstances. The court can take several months to deliver a ruling.

Park is accused of violating her constitutional duty by allowing her friend Choi Soon-sil to wield undue influence over state affairs and colluding with her to pressure big businesses into making contributions to foundations and enterprises backed by Choi.

Choi is in custody as she undergoes criminal trial for abuse of power and fraud, while her daughter, 20-year-old equestrian competitor Chung Yoo-ra, has been detained by police in Denmark and faces extradition proceedings after being charged with "committing economic crime" in South Korea.

Both have denied any wrongdoing.

In South Korea's only previous presidential impeachment, the Constitutional Court overturned a 2004 parliamentary impeachment of then-President Roh Moo-hyun. — Reuters

Indonesia looks to draw more than 760,000 Japanese tourists in 2017

JAKARTA — Indonesia is seeking to attract 15 million tourists from abroad in 2017, including 762,000 from Japan, compared with last year's target of 12 million foreign travelers, according to the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism.

The 2017 target consists of 2.45 million tourists from the Greater China market of mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, followed by 2.28 million travelers from Singapore and 2.20 million from Europe.

Japanese tourists, ranked sixth on the Indonesia government's target list, "also come to our attention because of their quite large numbers every year," Minister of Tourism Arief Yahya said in a press release.

Foreign tourist arrivals in Indonesia totaled 9.40 million in the January-October period of 2016, up 9.5 per cent from 8.58 million in the same

period of 2015.

In the October-December quarter last year, there was a target of 3.9 million foreign tourists. October alone saw 1.04 million visitors, while numbers for the last two months of 2016 are unavailable. The government also targets a 13 per cent contribution by tourism to gross national product, foreign exchange earnings of 200 trillion rupiah (around \$15 million) and employment of 12 million people in the tourism industry.

The Indonesian government has other programs to help achieve the target in 2017, including promotion of digital tourism through the greater use of information technology, optimization of air accessibility by increasing the number of seats on international flights and more appropriate allocation of runway time slots to airlines. —Kyodo News

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Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

Abe urges business leaders to address working hours, equality issues

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe urged business leaders Thursday to push for fundamental reform of working conditions to limit long working hours and promote equal treatment of workers regardless of their employment status.

"This year will be the year to implement bold working style reforms," Abe said speaking at a New Year's celebration in Tokyo organised by three major Japanese business lobbies. "I request all of you to take the initiative and change working culture."

The government is seeking ways to curb excessive working hours following the suicide of a 24-year-old employee of advertising giant Dentsu Inc. due to overwork in December 2015, which began to draw public attention in the fall of 2016 and sparked criticism of illegally long working hours.

Last month, the government compiled guidelines for a system of "equal pay for equal work" regardless of employment status, stipulating that companies provide equal payment to non-regular employees engaged



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (2nd from L) and Sadayuki Sakakibara (2nd from R), chairman of the Japan Business Federation, shake hands during a New Year's celebration in Tokyo, on 5 January 2017, with Akio Mimura (L), head of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Yoshimitsu Kobayashi, head of the Japan Association of Corporate Executives, looking on. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

in work equivalent to that of regular employees.

Abe asked business leaders to raise wages this year in order to help the country's economy escape from chronic deflation and "build a strong nation."

The prime minister also told the business leaders that Japan is expected to remain a "stabilising force" in the international community amid rising uncertainty over

the global economic outlook with "many new world leaders coming in this year."

US President-elect Donald Trump will take office later this month. The Republican said throughout his campaign that he would focus on putting "America First," fueling concern that world's largest economy could shift to isolationist and protectionist trade policies.

Trump has also vowed

to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership pact, a US-led free trade deal that Japan, the United States and 10 other Pacific Rim nations signed last year, on his first day in office.

The celebration was organised by the Japan Business Federation, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Japan Association of Corporate Executives. —Kyodo News

China to plow \$360 billion into renewable fuel by 2020

BEIJING — China will plow 2.5 trillion yuan (\$361 billion) into renewable power generation by 2020, the country's energy agency said on Thursday,

as the world's largest energy market continues to shift away from dirty coal power towards cleaner fuels.

The investment will cre-

ate over 13 million jobs in the sector, the National Energy Administration (NEA) said in a blueprint document that lays out its plan to develop the na-

tion's energy sector during the five-year 2016 to 2020 period.

The NEA said installed renewable power capacity including wind, hydro, solar and nuclear power will contribute to about half of new electricity generation by 2020.

The agency did not disclose more details on where the funds, which equate to about \$72 billion each year, would be spent.

Still, the investment reflects Beijing's continued focus on curbing the use of fossil fuels, which have fostered the country's economic growth over the past decade, as it ramps up its war on pollution.

Last month, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the country's economic planner, said in its own five-year plan, that solar power will receive 1 trillion yuan of spending, as the country seeks to boost capacity by five times.

That's equivalent to about 1,000 major solar power plants, according to experts' estimates.

The spending comes as the cost of building large-scale solar plants has dropped by as much as 40 per cent since 2010. China became the world's top solar generator last year.

"The government may exceed these targets because there are more investment opportunities in the sector as costs go down," said Steven Han, renewable analyst with securities firm Shenyin Wanguo.

Some 700 billion yuan will go towards wind farms, 500 billion to hydro power with tidal and geothermal getting the rest, the NDRC said.

The NEA's job creation forecast differs from the NDRC's in December that said it expected an additional 3 million jobs, bringing the total in the sector to 13 million by 2020.

Concerns about the social and economic costs of China's air pollution have increased as the northern parts of the country, including the capital Beijing, have battled a weeks-long bout of hazardous smog.

Illustrating the enormity of the challenge, the NEA repeated on Thursday that renewables will still only account for just 15 per cent of overall energy consumption by 2020, equivalent to 580 million tonnes of coal.

More than half of the nation's installed power capacity will still be fueled by coal over the same period.—Reuters



A security guard stands in front of windmills used to generate energy in Shanghai in 2011. PHOTO: REUTERS

India arrests four over New Year attack on woman in tech hub

NEW DELHI — Police on Thursday arrested four men in India's technology hub of Bengaluru over a video recording of a New Year attack on a woman that has sparked a national public debate about women's safety.

News of the video came after a Reuters witness and media said several women revellers were groped and assaulted by a mob in the southern city in a separate incident on New Year's Eve.

Police made the arrests after examining a closed-circuit video clip of the attack by two men as the woman walked down a secluded lane in a residential area

late on 31 December.

The four men arrested were "directly related to the case", including the two who perpetrated the attack, a senior city police official said.

"There is clear evidence in the case," added the official, who declined to be named as he was not authorised to speak to the media.

The police official did not elaborate on why the other two men were arrested. All face charges of sexual harassment and assault.

The video sparked outrage because it showed a man dis-

mounting from a scooter to grab the woman and drag her towards the vehicle, despite her struggles. The other man on the scooter briefly joined the scuffle as bystanders watched.

But she was thrown to the ground before the men rode off.

Bengaluru, in India's southern state of Karnataka, is home to many well-educated professionals, and had widely been viewed as safer for women than New Delhi, which is often labelled the country's rape capital, for the many sex crimes reported there.

Sex crimes are common in India, with more than 34,000

rapes reported in 2015, figures from the National Crime Record Bureau show.

Authorities often face criticism for not doing enough to address a weak system of law enforcement and policing that leaves women vulnerable.

G. Parameshwara, the state's home minister, said the government would soon bring the "culprits to book".

The government plans to install nearly 550 more closed-circuit cameras within two months, increase police call-centre facilities and deploy more women police officers, he added.—Reuters

Japanese destroyers dock in Philippines for resupply, exchanges

MANILA — Two Japanese naval vessels made a port call on the Philippines on Wednesday, ahead of the planned visit of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in mid-January.

The destroyers Inazuma and Suzutsuki of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defence Force docked at Subic Bay in the western part of Luzon, the country's main island, for supply replenishment, maintenance work and crew rest, as well as exchanges aimed at promoting goodwill.

They are returning to Japan after having participated in counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden.

In a statement, the Philippine Navy said the visit "is expected to enhance the already strong relationship" between the two countries' naval forces, while also promoting camaraderie and naval diplomacy.

Japanese officers will pay a courtesy call at the Philippine Navy's Naval Education and Training Command in Zambales, the same province where Subic Bay is located.—Kyodo News

Thailand tourist numbers rise nearly 9 per cent in 2016

BANGKOK — The number of foreign tourists visiting Thailand rose nearly 9 per cent to 32.6 million in 2016, bringing in 1.64 trillion baht (\$45.9 billion) worth of business, up nearly 13 per cent from 2015, according to data released by the Tourism Ministry on Thursday. The rise, just beating the ministry's forecast of 32.4 million visitors, came despite the mourning period for Thailand's late king, a number of bombings in resorts, cases of the Zika virus and

a crackdown on some low budget Chinese tours. Tourism has been a rare bright spot for Southeast Asia's second-largest economy, with exports sluggish and domestic demand subdued since the military seized power in 2014 coup to end political unrest.

The ministry said almost a third of its total international arrivals in 2016 came from China, with 8.87 million Chinese visitors, making for an increase of 11.8 per cent from 2015.—Reuters



Tourists board a sightseeing boat at a pier at Chao Phraya River in Bangkok, Thailand, on 3 October 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Opinion

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

Overcome hatred and anger by loving kindness or "metta"

Editorial from
Kyemon
(5th January 2017)

THE Old Year has ended. The New Year has begun. In the New Year, every one of us would wish to build a better new life with renewed bodies and spirits. Yet, as we are worldly beings or "putujana", we would find it difficult to lessen our latent defilement of attachment. Therefore, because of this difficulty it can be said that unresolved conflicts still cannot be uprooted. They still survive.

At present in human society, feelings of hatred are still growing between individuals and between groups. Originating from small normal matters and things of a contradictory nature, differing views and different beliefs arise. Thus the obsessive thoughts of Ego and Pride begin to grow and whether we are right or wrong we move headlong towards the path of conflict without any thought of retracing our steps. In such a case it is very difficult to put down the flames of anger.

In reality, no one would want conflicts which can cause sufferings. We continue to do foolish and wrong things because we cannot

totally get rid of our greed, anger and ignorance. Therefore we should try to change our attitudes and mind-sets for the better. We should try to improve ourselves making our minds pure and wholesome so that we will gain the praise of devas and men.

We should imitate and emulate the life-style and manners of King Milinda who diligently practiced how to control his mind and thereby won the praise of wise men and the admiration of the multitudes. Although he was a sovereign monarch, with absolute power, the fact that he was able to lead a virtuous life and elevate himself to a higher level of spirituality can be regarded as a really remarkable feat of fulfillment or "parami".

The way King Milinda disciplined himself was in this manner. When he got up in the morning he would not wear his normal clothes. Although he would not wear the robes of a monk, he would wear clothes that were equally pure and clean. He would then observe a discipline of "Eight characteristics" for seven days without fail.

Thus was his discipline of "Eight characteristics". During these seven days he would not be interrupted by his kingly duties. He practiced self-control by controlling his lustful thoughts, his thoughts of anger, and his thoughts of ignorance. He disciplined himself by acting with humility towards his servants, workers and courtiers with a mind free from pride. He disciplined himself by controlling his words and actions; he trained himself so that he would not commit any unwholesome deeds based on what he saw, heard, touched or thought. He thus controlled his eye-door, ear-door etc. (all his six sense-doors). He declared to himself that he would radiate loving kindness or "Metta" to all sentient beings.

All men and women who wish to elevate themselves to a higher level of virtuous life should try to imitate the way King Milinda trained his mind. They should train their minds, where ever they may be, on a daily basis or even if it were only for one morning. They should practice purification of their minds to be free from un-

wholesome thoughts, as much as possible and as frequently as possible. If they practiced thus, in time they will become virtuous persons and higher knowledge and deep faith will develop in their minds. For many days, the unwholesome thoughts which use to develop in their minds will no longer appear.

This world is mind made. This world is influenced by mind. All beings have to follow the dictates of the mind. Thus in this way, as we follow the dictates of our minds, we become overwhelmed by greed, anger and ignorance and begin to do unwholesome deeds and conflicts which should not have happened, happen. Therefore, we should discipline and train our minds as much as possible so that these things will not happen.

We have to encounter undesirable conflicts and sufferings, although we may not wish to, because this is in the nature of things. So to be able to face these undesirable things and lessen their impact upon us, we should contemplate and meditate upon loving kindness or "Metta".

Translated by
Khin Maung Oo

Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Ba Sein
(Religious Affairs)

ACCORDING to the concrete resolution of the First Successful Congregation of the Sangha of All Orders of 1980, the different levels of the Sangha Organizations throughout country could be formed and also the very first unity of the Sangha of All Orders could be reconstructed within one-hundred year in the history of Buddhism of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The different levels of Sangha Organizations are as follows: -

1. State Ovadacariya (Patron) Committee of Sangha.
2. State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders.
3. State Sanghamahanayaka Committee.
4. State / Region Sanghanayaka Committees.
5. Township Sanghanayaka Committees.
6. Ward / Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees.

These different levels of the Sangha Organizations represent over five hundred thousand members of the Sangha in the Republic the Union of My-

anmar who are striving to carry out the noble task of purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Sasana. Including other (5) Sanghanayaka Committees, the Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees consisting of (19993) members of Sangha have been formed throughout the Union of Myanmar since 1980. Members of Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees shall be elected by the majority of the members of Sangha who are residing in respective regions and states of the respective townships throughout the country. The general election of Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees shall be held in accordance with principles of the different levels of Sangha Organizations of the Republic the Union of Myanmar after five years' term.

The main objectives of the ward and village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees are to carry out the noble task of the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana and other religious matters in their respective Ward and Village-tract.

Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees

There are altogether (5508) Ward and Village-tract Sang-

hanayaka Committees consisting of (19993) members of Sangha throughout the country.

Functions and duties of Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees

1. Shall carry out their functions concerned in accordance with the fundamental principles approved and adopted by the Congregation of the Sangha of All Orders and procedures of Sangha Organization, procedures of settlements of Vinayadhamma Kamma Adhikarana Disputes Act, other decisions and instructions approved and passed by the meeting of the State Central Working Committee of the Sangha of All Orders.
2. Shall perform their duties leading to the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Buddha Sasana and the unity of the members of Sangha.
3. Shall make monks and novices (Samaneras dwelling in their ward and village-tract to know and follow the instructions of the higher levels of Sangha Organizations.
4. Shall collect and prepare the final list of monks and novices in their Ward and

Village-tract in each year of retreat and shall send tit. to respective township Sanghanayaka Committee.

5. Shall report their functions to respective township Sanghanayaka Committees occasionally.
6. Shall occasionally give advice and counsel to monks and novices in their Ward and Village-tract without affecting management of respective monasteries and monastic institutions.
7. If one of group-members or members of Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees is (are) suspected in any case without complainant, he (they) shall be sent for to receive counsel of responsible member of respective Ward and Village tract Sanghanayaka Committees.
8. If he or they do not follow the counsel, he or they shall be sent for in front of (2) or (3) Executive members of Ward and Village tract Sanghanayaka Committee for the second time.
9. If he or they have not yet followed, for the third time he or they shall be sent for again.
10. If not yet, he or they shall be removed from group-members of Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committee until confession made by him or them, and complete particulars of such person or

persons shall be informed to the Township Sanghanayaka Committee.

11. Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committee and removed persons shall obey and follow the decision of Township Sanghanayaka Committee.
12. If the removed persons do not obey and follow the decisions of Township Sanghanayaka Committee, it shall be reported to the Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committee, the authorities concerned and the Township Sanghanayaka Committee.
13. If any representative of Sangha Samutti, any member of Vanayadharas, any member of Sangha Working Committee, any member of Sanghanayaka Committee or any member of Sangha Patron Committee falls vacant, it shall be informed to respective Township Sanghanayaka Committee within (5) days after vacancy has been fallen.

According to the functions and duties of the Ward and Village-tract Sanghanayaka Committees, various matters and affairs in connection with the members of the Sangha or Sangha Organizations can only be decided and settled by members of the Sangha themselves.. Matters of the Sangha cannot be decided and settled by any civil court or authorities concerned.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hosts breakfast in honour of winners of Thiha Thura and Thura Titles



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing greets the winners of Thiha Thura and Thura titles and their families members in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF’S OFFICE

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hosted a breakfast in honour of winners of Thiha Thura and Thura titles and their family members at the Bayintnaung guest house in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The senior general first extended greetings to the winners and their families and then enjoyed the breakfast with them.

After the breakfast, the senior general and wife greeted winners of the titles and their families warmly individually and attended to their needs.—*Myanmar News Agency*

More GPS system to be installed to get earthquake information

THE Myanmar Earthquake Committee will install more GPS systems in earthquake fault zones to get real-time information of the earthquake, it is learnt.

“Currently, we are fixing the GPS system in Sagaing region. We have planned to fix GPS systems in two more places with Singapore technology. We have already installed GPS in Kyaikh-to and Bago areas,” said Saw Htway Zaw, secretary of Myanmar Earthquake Committee.

“Over 100 GPS systems were installed in 2015 in 20 places,” he added.

GPS systems cost over Ks50 million each. Currently, the GPS systems are being installed in Sagaing and Rakhine offshore faults.

The GPS systems can give definite data about earth movements, the underground situation and the type of earth in the aftermath of an earthquake. The data will be useful for construction of roads/ bridges and high-rise buildings, said U Nyunt Oo, a member of Myanmar Engineering.

Myanmar is one of the countries that is prone to catastrophic earthquakes. — *Myitmakha News Agency*

Senior General receives US ambassador

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received US Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Scot Marciel at the Bayintnaung guest house yesterday afternoon.

They exchanged views on incidents in northeastern Rakhine State and armed conflicts in northeastern Shan State.—*Myanmar News Agency*



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with US ambassador in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF’S OFFICE



Foreign Heads of State and Foreign Ministers send felicitations to State Counsellor

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to State Counsellor, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 4 January.

**From Prak Sokhonn
Senior Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International
Cooperation of Cambodia
Excellency,**

I would like to extend my warmly congratulations to Your Excellency on the auspicious occasion of the 69th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am strongly convinced that based on our mutual commitment and joint effort, the existing close relations of friendship and cooperation between the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will continue to flourish for the mutual interest of our two peoples as well as of our shared goals of peace, stability and sustainable development in our region and beyond.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and best wishes for your good health, prosperity and greater success in your endeavors.

**From Dr Vivian Balakrishnan
Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore
Your Excellency,**

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations on the auspicious occasion of Myanmar’s 69th Independence Day. Myanmar has come a long way since its independence in 1948. I am confident that Myanmar will continue to grow and flourish under your leadership and with

the hard work of its people.

Singapore and Myanmar share a warm and long-standing friendship. This year has been an eventful one for both our countries as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations. I fondly remember my introductory visit to Myanmar in May 2016 and was delighted to welcome you to Singapore during your recent Official Visit. I am glad that you enjoyed the tour of Ghim Moh Food Centre and Market, and hope that this experience is useful for your plans to reinvigorate Yangon.

I was also pleased to learn that you recently visited the Singapore-Myanmar Vocational Training Institute (SMVTI), which represents Singapore’s firm commitment to support Myanmar’s human resource development to drive its economic growth. Ambassador Robert Chua informed me that the ten students who are now in Singapore for their six-month SMVTI Singapore Internship Programme have been inspired by your encouragement to them, and are determined to become role models of vocational education in Myanmar.

I am confident that we will build on this firm foundation to strengthen our partnership through bilateral initiatives and mechanisms such as the Joint Ministerial Working Committee, Singapore-Myanmar Technical Cooperation Programme and the SMVTI. These will allow us to continue cultivating more opportunities for a win-win partnership.

I look forward to seeing you again.

**From Bohuslav Sobotka
Prime Minister of the Czech Republic
Excellency,**

Let me extend my most sincere congratulations to you and to the people of your country on the 69th anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence. I avail myself of this opportunity to express my firm conviction that the friendly relations between our countries will continue to develop successfully and dynamically in many areas.

Excellency, I would like to wish you good health and every success in your responsible work.

**From Sergey Lavrov
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia
Your Excellency,**

On the occasion of the Independence Day please accept sincere congratulations. We note with pleasure a positive dynamics of the Russia-Myanmar relations, strengthening of interaction of two countries on the international stage. We confirm intent to implement constructively the bilateral agreements, including those achieved during our meeting on the sidelines of the ASEAN events, which took place in Vientiane in July of the last year, in order to consolidate further the bilateral multi-aspect cooperation aimed at ensuring stability and sustainable development in the Southeast Asia and the Asian-Pacific Region as a whole.

I wish You, Dear Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, sound health and new success, as well as to all colleagues in the Myanmar’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs – wellbeing and all the best.

US, European weapons used to commit war crimes in Iraq: Amnesty

ERBIL, (Iraq) — Militias fighting alongside Iraqi troops against Islamic State are committing war crimes using weapons provided to the Iraqi military by the United States, Europe, Russia and Iran, Amnesty International said on Thursday.

The rights group said that predominantly Shi'ite Muslim militias, known collectively as the Hashid Shaabi, were using weapons from Iraqi military stockpiles to commit war crimes including enforced disappearances, torture and summary killings.

Parliament voted for the Hashid to formally become part of Iraq's armed forces in November but the session was boycotted by Sunni representatives who worry it will entrench Shi'ite majority rule as well as Iran's regional influence.

Iraqi and Western officials have expressed serious concerns

about the government's ability to bring the Shi'ite militias under greater control.

"International arms suppliers, including the USA, European countries, Russia and Iran, must wake up to the fact that all arms transfers to Iraq carry a real risk of ending up in the hands of militia groups with long histories of human rights violations," said Amnesty researcher Patrick Wilcken in a statement.

States wishing to sell arms to Iraq should ensure strict measures to ensure weapons will not be used by militias to violate human rights, he added.

Amnesty cited nearly 2-1/2 years of its own field research, including interviews with dozens of former detainees, witnesses, survivors, and relatives of those killed, detained or missing.

Its report focused on four powerful groups, most of which

receive backing from Iran: the Badr Organisation, Asaib Ahl al-Haq, Kataib Hezbollah and Saraya al-Salam.

Spokesmen for the Hashid and for the prime minister, to whom the fighters technically report, did not respond to requests for comment.

The Hashid deny having sectarian aims or committing widespread abuses and say they saved the nation by pushing Islamic State back from Baghdad's borders after the army crumbled in the face of the jihadists' lightning advance in 2014. The dispute threatens to complicate efforts to pull the country back together.

A major offensive by Iraqi security forces to retake the northern city of Mosul from Islamic State is nearing the end of its third month. Thousands of fighters from various Hashid groups are participating. —Reuters



US President-elect Donald Trump shakes hands with Vice President-elect Mike Pence (R) at the USA Thank You Tour event at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines, Iowa, US, on 8 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Republicans make repealing Obamacare 'first order of business'

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama exhorted fellow Democrats on Wednesday to preserve his legacy-defining healthcare law as Republicans moved ahead with their long-sought bid to scrap it in what Vice President-elect Mike Pence called the "first order of business" of Donald Trump's administration.

The emerging Democratic strategy is to warn that Republicans risk throwing the entire US healthcare system into chaos by moving to dismantle the 2010 Affordable Care Act, popularly known as Obamacare, without a plan to replace it.

Republicans argue the system is already broken and that they will help more people gain coverage by repealing the law while working to minimize disruptions to those who depend on it.

Both Obama and Pence visited Capitol Hill for closed-door discussions on Obamacare.

Pence, the Indiana governor and a former member of the US House of Representatives, met Republican lawmakers to plot the path forward on scuttling the law.

"The first order of business is to keep our promise to repeal Obamacare and replace it with the kind of healthcare reform that will lower the cost of health insurance without growing the size of government," Pence told a news conference.

Down the hall from Pence, Obama, who hands over the presidency to Trump on 20 January, urged Democratic lawmakers to protect his signature domestic policy measure. He told reporters his message was: "Look out for the American people."

Democrats acknowledge they lack the votes needed to stop repeal legislation being pushed by Republicans, who will control the White House and both chambers of Congress when Trump takes office. But they are warning of the risks of the repeal legislation in hopes of spurring a public backlash against it.

Without a replacement by Republicans, as early as 2018, the roughly 20 million people who gained insurance under the law could see their coverage in jeopardy. "The Republican plan to cut healthcare wouldn't 'make America great again,'" Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer told reporters, invoking Trump's campaign slogan. "It would make America sick again and lead to chaos instead of affordable care." —Reuters

NEWS IN BRIEF

New York City crime fell to historic low in 2016

NEW YORK — Crime in New York City fell to a historic low last year, the police said on Wednesday in a report showing that the largest US city avoided the spike in murders that has battered other major American cities, including Chicago.

Overall, there were 101,606 crimes that police said they knew about during 2016, down 4 per cent from 2015, police said.

There were 335 murders reported last year, down 5 per cent from the 352 murders a year earlier, police said. The record for the fewest since the city started keeping reliable numbers in 1963 was 328 murders in 2014. By way of comparison, Chicago, which has about one-third as many residents as New York's 8.6 million people, recorded 762 murders last year, more than twice as many killings as in New York. —Reuters

Vucic to attend political/business summit in India next week

BELGRADE — Serbian PM Aleksandar Vucic will visit India next week to attend one of the country's most significant political and business conferences and speak with Indian counterpart Narendra Modi.

The Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit will bring together heads of state and government and corporations, representatives of chambers of commerce and industry associations, SMEs, scientists and experts.

This will be an opportunity for Vucic to meet with several foreign officials and owners of companies from India and elsewhere, Blic reported. The central focus of the 10-13 January summit is Sustainable Economic and Social Development.

Officials from over 100 countries, representatives of 2,000 Indian and foreign companies as well as over 2 million visitors are expected to attend. —Tanjung

Turks questioning US-led coalition presence at air base: deputy PM

ANKARA — Turks are questioning the presence of US-led coalition forces at the Incirlik air base in southern Turkey, a deputy prime minister said on Thursday, reflecting frustration at what Ankara sees as a lack of support for its operations in Syria.

Deputy Prime Minister Veysi Kaynak told broadcaster A Haber that the issue of the Incirlik air base, used by NATO and the US-led coalition, was on the government's agenda.

Turkey launched an incursion into Syria in August to push Islamic State from its border and prevent Kurdish militia fighters taking ground in their wake. It has questioned why the United States, which backs some Kurdish groups, has not lent support to its latest push around the Syrian town of al-Bab. —Reuters

Man phones police from roof of speeding car to thwart thief

PARIS — A man clung onto the roof of his father's stolen car and called police on his mobile phone during a 130 km per hour (80 miles per hour) motorway chase before the thief was arrested.

Osama Aoukili, who was largely unscathed after the late-night chase near France's border with Switzerland on Sunday, told French media his reaction was spontaneous.

"I told myself this was my father's car and that it meant a lot to him," Aoukili told BFM TV.

Police commander Christophe Lesznewski said the chase through Oyonnax town and then on the motorway lasted several minutes before the car, an ageing Renault Clio, left the main road and slowed down, at which point Aoukili let go. The thief tried to escape on foot but police caught and arrested him. —Reuters

Japanese airlines see robust flight demand for year-end holidays

TOKYO — Japanese airlines saw robust demand for both international and domestic flights during the year-end holiday season due partly to a recovery in trips to Europe, according to their traffic results compiled by Thursday.

In the period between 22 December and Tuesday, the number of passengers for domestic flights grew 7 per cent from a year earlier to 3.96 million, while that for international flights expanded 12 per cent to 870,000. Both All Nippon Airways Co. and Japan Airlines Co. saw the number of passengers on their European flights increase, rebounding from a drop the previous year following terror attacks in Paris in November 2015. —Kyodo News

Iraqi general says 70 per cent of east Mosul retaken from Islamic State

ERBIL, (Iraq) — Iraqi forces have retaken around 70 per cent of eastern Mosul from Islamic State militants and expect to reach the river bisecting the city in the coming days, Iraq's joint operations commander told Reuters.

Lieutenant General Talib Shaghathi, who is also head of the elite counter-terrorism service (CTS) spearheading the campaign to retake the northern city, said the cooperation of residents was helping them advance against Islamic State.

In its 12th week, the offensive has gained momentum since Iraqi forces backed by a US-led coalition renewed their push for the city a week ago, clearing several more eastern districts despite fierce resistance.

"Roughly 65-70 per cent of the eastern side has been liberated," Shaghathi said in an interview late on Wednesday in the Kurdish capital of Erbil. "I think in the coming few days we will see the full liberation of the eastern side".

The western half of the city remains under the full control



US army soldiers sit next a military vehicle in the town of Bartella, east of Mosul, Iraq, on 27 December 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

of Islamic State, which is fighting to hold on to its largest urban stronghold with snipers and suicide car bombs numbering "in the hundreds" according to Shaghathi. The Mosul assault, involving a 100,000-strong ground force of Iraqi government troops, members of the autonomous Kurdish security forces and mainly Shi'ite militiamen, is the most complex battle in Iraq since the US-led invasion in 2003.

The commander of a US-led coalition backing the Iraqi offensive told Reuters on Wednesday that increased momentum was due largely to better coordination among the army and security forces. He said the Iraqis had improved their ability to defend against Islamic State car bombs.

Although vastly outnumbered, the militants have used the urban terrain to their advantage, concealing car bombs in narrow alleys, posting snipers on tall buildings with civilians on lower floors and making tunnels and surface-level passageways between buildings. They have also embedded themselves among the local population.—Reuters

More detentions in hunt for Istanbul attacker, gunman still at large

ISTANBUL — Turkish police carried out a dawn raid in a town on the edge of Istanbul on Thursday and detained suspects thought to be linked to the nightclub attack which killed 39 people on New Year's Day, the state-run Anadolu news agency said.

Counter-terrorism police, gendarmes and special forces swooped on a housing complex in Selimpasa, a coastal town just to the west of Istanbul, after receiving intelligence that individuals who may have helped the gunman were there.

The gunman, who is still at large, shot his way into exclusive Istanbul nightclub Reina early on Sunday and opened fire with an automatic rifle, throwing stun grenades to allow himself to reload and shooting the wounded on the ground.

Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it was revenge for Turkish military involvement in Syria.

Turkish media reports have said the attacker is believed to be an ethnic Uighur from central Asia and Uighurs were among those detained in Selimpasa. The Uighurs are a largely Muslim, Turkic-speaking minority in far western China with significant diaspora communities across central Asia and Turkey.

The gunman appeared to have been well-versed in guerrilla warfare and may have trained

in Syria, according to a security source and newspaper reports.

It was not immediately clear how many people were detained on Thursday, but at least 36 people have been held since the attack, according to earlier media reports.

Police in the Aegean coastal city of Izmir on Wednesday detained what they said were 20 suspected Islamic State militants thought to be of Central Asian and North African origin. Fake

passports, mobile phones, and equipment including night vision goggles and a GPS device were seized.

Turkey's foreign minister said on Wednesday the identity of the gunman had been established but did not give further details. The authorities have not named the suspect.

The nightclub attack in Istanbul's upscale Ortakoy district on the shore of the Bosphorus followed a failed coup in July

and a series of attacks by radical Islamist and Kurdish militants which have shaken NATO member Turkey over the last year.

President Tayyip Erdogan said the attack on the club, popular with local celebrities and wealthy foreigners, was being exploited to try to divide the largely Sunni Muslim nation.

Among those killed in the attack were Turks and visitors from several Arab nations, India and Canada.—Reuters



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

At least nine killed in car bomb in Syria's coastal town of Jableh

AMMAN — At least nine people were killed in a car blast on Thursday in the centre of the Syrian town of Jableh in the coastal Mediterranean province of Latakia where two Russian bases are located, state television said.

State media said scores of cars were on fire and shops were also damaged by the blast in a bustling commercial part of the town that lies in President Bashar al Assad's minority Alawite sect's heartland. Senior medical officer Ghassan Findi told state television the death toll was expected to rise with rescue operations still continuing and scores of injured still being rushed to nearby hospitals.

State television showed footage of mangled cars and shutters of shops damaged and blown apart as rescue workers cleared the debris amid a heavy security presence in the bustling commercial area near a popular vegetable market and a garage depot.

At least 150 people were killed and 200 wounded in May when bombs hit the town and the port city of Tartous on the Mediterranean coast that hosts Russian military bases. Islamic State claimed the May attacks in a statement posted online saying its fighters had targeted "gatherings of Alawites". Hardline Sunni militants consider Alawites heretics.—Reuters

Brooklyn train crash renews talk of operator health precautions

NEW YORK — A commuter train crash at a busy New York City terminal on Wednesday morning was the latest of several accidents that have focused attention on how rail agencies monitor the health of their operators, especially sleep disorders.

The cause of the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) derailment, which injured more than 100 people at Brooklyn's Atlantic Terminal, remains unknown. But officials immediately drew comparisons to a similar crash in Hoboken, New Jersey, in September that involved a driver who apparently suffered from a sleep disorder.

"This is minor compared to what happened in Hoboken," New York Governor Andrew Cuomo said at a news conference. "But the same question: why did the operator not stop the train before it hit the block?"

The Hoboken crash, which killed one person and injured more than 100, remains under investigation. An attorney for the engineer of the NJ Transit



Officials investigate after a Long Island Railroad train derailed at Atlantic Terminal in Brooklyn, New York City, US, on 4 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

train has cited undiagnosed severe sleep apnea, which restricts breathing during sleep, causing daytime drowsiness and attention deficits. The condition can be triggered by obesity, family history and age and is more often seen in men.

The disorder has been linked to other crashes as well, including the 2013 derailment of a Metro-North Railroad com-

muter train in New York City. A National Transportation Safety Board report concluded that the driver had undiagnosed sleep apnea that contributed to the accident.

The NTSB has also found sleep apnea likely played a role in several freight crashes, including a 2011 collision in Iowa and a 2013 accident in Missouri.

A union representative for LIRR engineers could not be reached on Wednesday.

Last month, US regulators at the Federal Railroad Administration issued an advisory citing the Hoboken crash and recommending that rail agencies screen crews for sleep apnea.

The agency in March began the process of draft-

ing a rule in conjunction with the US trucking regulator that would require railroads and truck companies to ensure medical examinations for drivers include sleep apnea screening.

A spokesman for the FRA said there was no timeline for issuing a final regulation.

Airlines are already required to screen pilots for sleep apnea. Those diagnosed with the disorder are barred from flying unless they show the problem has been treated and obtain a special permit.

"It's playing a part in every transportation area, including trains," said Bob Swint, a rail accident expert and consultant.

After the 2013 crash, the Metropolitan Transportation Agency, which operates both Metro-North and the LIRR, conducted a pilot program to test operators for sleep apnea. In April, the agency said it would expand the effort to all MTA employees, including LIRR, though the screening has not yet started.

The MTA is in the process of selecting a medical firm to handle the screening and expects to award a contract in the coming months, according to spokesman Aaron Donovan, who said the program was the first of its kind in the nation.

After the Hoboken crash, NJ Transit also improved its sleep apnea screening process, which had been in place since at least 2005, a spokesman, Jim Smith, said in an email. Any rail employees with "safety-sensitive" jobs who exhibit sleep apnea symptoms are removed from operation until they can certify that the condition has been corrected or controlled.

NJ Transit also made other safety changes including adding a second crew member in the cab when a train arrives at terminals in Hoboken and Atlantic City.

US train engineers are required to undergo vision and hearing testing every three years, but federal regulations do not specify other medical examination standards.—Reuters

Governor says restart of nuclear plant in Niigata to take 'several years'

TOKYO — The restart of a nuclear power plant operated by Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. on the Sea of Japan coast will likely take "several years," the governor of Niigata Prefecture said Thursday, highlighting the difficulty in concluding post-2011 nuclear disaster reviews. The utility known as TEPCO has been seeking to reactivate the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear plant, the world's largest by generation capacity, as soon as possible to boost

revenue, as it grapples with ballooning costs stemming from the 2011 nuclear disaster in Japan's northeast.

"There can be no discussions about a restart without reviewing" factors including the cause of the Fukushima nuclear accident and evacuation plans for residents, Niigata Gov. Ryuichi Yoneyama said in his first talks with TEPCO executives since assuming office in October. Restarting reactors remains a sensitive issue in Japan following the crisis

at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, triggered by the devastating earthquake and tsunami in northeastern Japan in March 2011. Stricter safety standards were introduced after the crisis. "I expect it will take several years to review" all the factors, Yoneyama told TEPCO President Naomi Hirose and Chairman Fumio Sudo at the prefectural government office. The prefectural government plans to set up independent investigation panels to look



Niigata Gov. Ryuichi Yoneyama (R) meets with Fumio Sudo (2nd from L), chairman of Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc., at the prefectural government office building in Niigata on 6 January 2017. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

into the Fukushima disaster and its health impact, as well as arrangements for evacuating residents in the event of a nuclear disaster. Hirose remained confident, however, that both sides will find

common ground, telling reporters after the meeting that he had the impression that TEPCO and the prefectural government "can continue to have positive discussions."—Kyodo News

Academic societies propose defining elderly as those aged 75 or older

TOKYO — Academic societies in Japan on Thursday proposed defining "elderly" people as those aged 75 or older from 65 or above at present, reflecting the fact that many senior citizens remain physically and mentally vibrant. The Japan Gerontological Society and the Japan Geriatrics Society suggested calling people aged 90 and above "super-elderly," while proposing that that "semi-elderly" be applied to people aged between 65 and 74.

After analyzing various health-related data for senior citizens, the gerontological society found that the average physical and mental abilities of old people in the same age group have been improving every year. According to the gerontological society, most people aged between 65 and 74 can still actively engage in social activities and creating an environment in which senior citizens can work and participate in volunteer activities is important amid the nation's rapidly graying population.—Kyodo News

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV EVER APEX VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV EVER APEX VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 6.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN SHIPPING

LINE

Phone No: 2301185

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR

MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY

MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE

(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)

(1 / 2017)

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

Sr.No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	IFB-079(16-17)	Spares for CNG Compressor Cooling System (7) Items	US\$
(2)	DMP/L-020(16-17)	Assorted Kind of Engineering Workshop Tools (3) Groups	Ks
(3)	DMP/L-021(16-17)	Brandt Shale Shaker Screen for NAT; 55 Series (3) Items	Ks
(4)	DMP/L-022(16-17)	Mechanical Seal for Andritz Pump(6)Items	Ks
Tender Closing Date & Time - 24-1-2017, 16:30 Hr			
Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 5 TH January, 2017 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

Thai baby elephant gets water-based treatment for injured foot

PATTAYA (Thailand) — A baby elephant took a tentative dip in a swimming pool in Thailand on Thursday as part of a lengthy rehabilitation process to heal her injured foot.

Baby Fah Jam was three months old when her front left leg was caught in a trap set by villagers in Chanthaburi province, 250 km (155 miles) southeast of the capital, Bangkok.

Veterinarian Padet Siridumrong said Fah Jam, who is now five months old, was showing signs of improvement following initial water-based exercises known as hydrotherapy.

“By her fourth or fifth sessions she will enjoy swimming more. She’s just a baby, that’s why she’s a bit scared at first but, by nature, elephants love the water,” Padet said.

The treatment could take up to two months, he said.

The elephant is a symbol of Thailand and in ancient times they were used to carry soldiers into battle. They were also used in the logging industry.

But logging has been banned and many domesticated elephants have ended up on the tourist trail, giving rides and putting on displays in shows.

Animal rights groups have criticized the use of elephants in the tourism industry, arguing that the animals are often mistreated.

There are about 3,700 elephants left in the wild in Thailand and up to 4,000 domesticated ones, according to EleAid, a British organisation working for the conservation of the Asian elephant.

Deforestation, rapid urbanisation and poaching of elephants for their ivory have all contributed to a dramatic decline in the wild elephant population.—Reuters



Handlers wash Fah Jam, a five-month-old baby elephant, before a hydrotherapy treatment as part of a lengthy rehabilitation process to heal her injured front left foot at a rehabilitation center in Pattaya, Thailand, on 5 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES– INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT)

[COUNTRY]

[NAME OF PROJECT]

Loan No.:

Assignment Title:

Reference No.:

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project

5889 -MM

International procurement specialist

C4-IST-IC02

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has applied for financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The consulting services (“the Services”) include Assisting and advising the project team at all stages of procurement for contracts, providing technical assistance on tender, preparing communications and coordinating between Ministries and World Bank. The services of international procurement specialist will cover for 12 months.

The Ministry of Construction (MOC)and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI)now invites eligible individual consultant (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (e.g. consultant’s profile, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, etc.). The minimum qualifications and experience requirements are:

- Must have an advanced degree in management, economics, business administration, engineering or any related field
- At least 10 years of working experience in public procurement in developing countries, including at least 5 years in conducting procurement under World Bank financed projects.
- Familiarity with government and foreign aid project operations
- Excellent communication skills, including speaking and writing in English
- Willingness to train local staff on day-to-day basis
- Good working knowledge of computer programs such as word, excel etc.

The attention of interested individual consultant is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s [Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants \[under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants\] by World Bank Borrowers](#)(Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. An individual consultant will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultant Selection method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours [09:30 to 16:00 hours’ local time].

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by, **FRIDAY 27 January 2017 (16:00 hours local time).**

Attn: Daw Tin Moe Myint, Director,
Department of Rural Development
Office no-14, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

Tel: 95 67 409410, 9595118240

Fax: 9567409210

E-mail: rbbdrd@gmail.com

For Detailed information please contact:
U Kyaw Swa Aung (Director)
Department of Rural Development
+95(0) 943434333
ksaung@hotmail.com

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES– INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT)

[COUNTRY]

[NAME OF PROJECT]

Loan No.:

Assignment Title:

Reference No.:

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project

5889-MM

International Road and Bridge Advisor

C4-IST-IC01

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has applied for financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Myanmar Flood and Landslides Emergency Recovery Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services. The consulting services (“the Services”) include Technical supervision, administration and coordination support, procurement, financial management, safeguard, monitoring and reporting, capacity development.The services of international road and bridge advisor will cover for 3.5 years.

The Ministry of Construction (MOC)and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI)now invites eligible individual consultant (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested individual consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services(e.g. consultant’s profile, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, etc.). The minimum qualifications and experience requirements are:

- At least Master’s Degree in Civil Engineering with a specialization in Highway, Road, or Transportation engineering from a recognized University;
- Minimum of 10 years large-scale project management experience;
- Demonstrated experience in design, rehabilitation, and maintenance of roads; estimate and contract preparation and negotiation; experience with procurement of engineering services and works contracts;
- Demonstrated technical background in labor-based appropriate technology road construction, build-back-better, DRM, CBDRM;
- Good knowledge of World Bank guidelines and requirements;
- Previous work experience in the region is an asset.

The attention of interested individual consultant is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s [Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants \[under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants\] by World Bank Borrowers](#) (“Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. An individual Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Individual Consultant Selection method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

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Department of Rural Development
Office no-14, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

Tel: 95 67 409410, 9595118240

Fax: 9567409210

E-mail: rbbdrd@gmail.com

For Detailed information please contact:
U Kyaw Swa Aung (Director)
Department of Rural Development
+95(0) 943434333
ksaung@hotmail.com

Pamela Anderson wants to move to Europe



Pamela Anderson wishes to relocate to Europe. She says she has more friends in the UK and France than in California, where she currently resides. PHOTO: PTI

LOS ANGELES — Baywatch star Pamela Anderson wishes to relocate to Europe. The model says she has more friends in the UK and France than in California, where she currently resides, reported Female First.

"I'm looking for an apartment to rent in London or in Paris. I have more friends there than in LA. 'I'd like to end up somewhere in Europe. Dancing on chequered tables or on a boat sailing around the world...' Anderson said. The 49-year-old star is also keen to spend some time in Africa.

"I'm at a crossroads. I have big dreams. There are so many places to see. I've never been to Africa and I want to help elephants and rhinos so I could see

myself living there," she said.

Also, this Baywatch star has requested President Barack Obama to consider "pardoning" Julian Assange after his website WikiLeaks leaked hacked Democratic emails in the run up to US Presidential election last year.

The 49-year-old actress has penned a letter to Obama, who will step down as the American leader later this week, in a bid to stop the investigation into the hacking scandal. "...I request that you consider Pardoning Julian Assange in your last days in office. It would be a bold and exciting move for the time we live in- the information age generation. Please stop the grand jury investigation, and the bully-

ing that is turning the world off America.

The actress, who posted the letter on her official website, went on to state that she knows if President Obama made the decision to call off the investigation it would cause uproar but thinks it's vital for the world going forward.

Anderson concluded by asking Obama to think about Julian and his children, who live in his native Australia as he is only trying to "protect" people from corruption. "And for Julian to be able to travel freely. See his children and his mother. He is protecting and informing us all. He has no agenda but to help end corruption of governments and empower people."—PTI

Ben Affleck's struggle with fame

LONDON — Actor Ben Affleck says he made a lot of mistakes in the initial years of his success. The Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice star said becoming famous at a young age made things very tough for him, reported Female First.

"I'd always had a strong idea about my values and the direction I wanted to be headed in, then I ran into getting famous

and it totally spun me around and I flailed around for a few years. When you're a young man in your 20s, part of that is making mistakes and learning from them.

"I just made those in front of everybody, rather than privately. There's stuff I look back on and kind of cringe at but I always tried to treat other people well. My parents imbued that in me

and the mistakes I made were mostly just of the embarrassing kind," Affleck said.

The 44-year-old star, who has Violet, 11, Seraphina, seven, and Samuel, four, with his estranged wife Jennifer Garner, does not want his children to experience the same and hopes he can help them grow up outside of the spotlight. —PTI

Natalie Portman hoping for Marvel comeback



Natalie Portman may not be reprising her role as Thor's love interest, scientist Jane Foster in "Thor: Ragnarok," but she insists that does not mean the character is being retired forever. PHOTO: PTI

LOS ANGELES — Actress Natalie Portman says she would like to return to the Marvel cinematic universe some day. The 35-year-old actress may not be reprising her role as Thor's love interest, scientist Jane Foster in "Thor: Ragnarok," but she insists that does not mean the character is being retired forever, reported Deadline.

"Well hopefully one day I figure it out! It is really an incredible thing to get to be part of. As an actor it is like a completely different scale. Because when

you are making those movies you are working with so much blue screen and so much fantasy, your imagination has to be so much larger.

"It is really challenging for me that and I don't feel like I have gotten it yet. I don't feel like I have understood it yet. It is something that I'm fascinated by, because I'm really challenged by it more than anything almost," Portman said.

The star said she enjoys the experience because she needs to use her imagination so much so

that it almost feels like she has returned to childhood. "Because when you are in a room that looks like a room and has all the things a room has in it, you can interact with all that stuff, and all that stuff does what it does in life. You don't have to imagine anything. You are just in the emotional state of your character. "When you are doing those blue screen movies, you have to imagine everything outside and within. You have to create the whole world. It is like being a kid again."—PTI



Members of J-pop band Ikimonogakari, (from L) Yoshiki Mizuno, Kiyoe Yoshioka and Hotaka Yamashita, pose in this photo taken in June 2012. The band will cease activities to allow its three members time to pursue solo careers and refresh themselves, its agent said on 5 January 2017. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

J-pop band Ikimonogakari to cease activities

TOKYO — Ikimonogakari, a J-pop band best known for its 2010 "Arigato," will cease activities to allow its three members time to pursue solo careers and refresh themselves, its agent said Thursday.

While the members posted a joint message on the band's official website indicating they will one day get back together, the agent said the band was ceasing activities indefinitely.

"The three of us have been

working hard for 10 years. We think now is a good time for each of us to be free for a time," the message said.

Ikimonogakari (caregivers of living creatures) was named after the role Yoshiki Mizuno and Hotaka Yamashita, the two male guitarists of the band, played looking after their elementary school pets. The third member of the band was female vocalist Kiyoe Yoshioka.

—Kyodo News

SMAP posts online message thanking fans

TOKYO — SMAP, a well-known Japanese pop idol band that broke up at the end of last year after a nearly 30-year career, posted a message online Thursday thanking fans for their support.

"All of your support has reached us. We received all of your feelings and thank you from the bottom of our hearts," the group said in a message posted on the official website of their

agents, Johnny & Associates Inc.

SMAP's loyal fan base launched various campaigns last year attempting to convince the band to continue, including placing a crowdfunding eight-page advertisement in a major newspaper. The online campaign collected nearly 40 million yen (\$342,000) from about 13,000 fans over the space of a week. —Kyodo News



Visitors look a Dippy the diplodocus at the Natural History Museum in London, Britain, on 4 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

London museum bids farewell to Dippy the dinosaur

LONDON — Britain’s Natural History Museum bids farewell to its most famous exhibit, Dippy the diplodocus, on Wednesday after almost four decades of greeting visitors before being dismantled ahead of a national tour.

For 35 years, the huge skeleton cast, 4.25 metres (14 ft) high and 21 metres long, has been the first sight visitors see when they enter the London museum’s main entrance.

On Thursday, a team

begins the three-week process of dismantling Dippy before conservators spend 12 months preparing the delicate plaster-of-Paris cast for the journey around Britain where it will go on show at eight locations from 2018 until 2020.

From the end of 2020, a bronze cast of Dippy will then go on display outside the museum. Scottish-born American industrialist Andrew Carnegie originally presented the 292-bone cast to the museum in 1905, and

it has held its prominent position in the main entrance hall since 1979. Dippy will be replaced by a 25.2 metre real skeleton of a blue whale as part of a major overhaul.

Diplodocus was first described as a new type of dinosaur in 1878 by Professor Othniel C. Marsh at Yale University. The herbivore species lived sometime between 156 and 145 million years ago and belongs to a group called sauro-pods, meaning ‘lizard feet’. —Reuters

105-year-old Frenchman cycles into history with hour-long ride

PARIS — A French centenarian, Robert Marchand, made cycling history on Wednesday by covering 22.528 km (14.08 miles) in one hour on a track near Paris at the age of 105.

Marchand has a huge following in France and was cheered on by hundreds of fans as he rode round the velodrome at Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, clad in yellow and blue with the number 105 on his back.

However, he fell short of his own previous best of 26.927 km in the over-100s category, which he set in 2014 at the age of 102 years old.

Marchand, a tiny, bird-like figure, beamed at his success after his one-man race was over, telling journalists he could have done better.

“I didn’t see the notice telling me I had 10 minutes left,” he said. “If I had, I would have been a bit quicker. I would have done better.”

He said he would cel-

brate by having “a bite to eat with all my pals.”

He was philosophical when asked if he would turn out again on the track in two years time. “You are nine months in the making. But it takes you only 30

seconds to drop dead,” he said.

Born in 1911 in northern France, Marchand started riding a bike when he was 14 but only took up cycling seriously when he was 67.

He trained for six months for his performance on Wednesday. In 2012, when he was 100, he set a record for his age of covering 100 kms in four hours, 17 minutes and 27 seconds.

—Reuters



French cyclist Robert Marchand, aged 105, reacts after he rode 22,528 km (14,08 miles) in one hour to set a new record at the indoor Velodrome National in Montigny-les-Bretonneux, southwest of Paris, France, on 4 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS



Kiyomura Co’s President Kiyoshi Kimura (C), who runs a chain of sushi restaurants Sushi Zanmai, poses with a 212 kg (467 lbs) bluefin tuna at his sushi restaurant outside Tsukiji fish market. Kiyoshi Kimura won the first bid for the sixth consecutive year. PHOTO: REUTERS

Tuna fetches \$614,000 at Tokyo’s famed New Year’s fish auction

TOKYO — In what could be the last New Year’s auction at Tokyo’s famed Tsukiji fish market, the owner of the Sushizanmai restaurant chain on Thursday paid top price for a single fish, forking over more than \$600,000 for a Pacific bluefin tuna.

The world’s largest fish market was supposed to be relocated last November to make way for a road needed for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, but was delayed due to environmental concerns.

The delay allowed for Tsukiji to hold at least one more New Year’s auction, which is considered auspicious and a great way for the winning bidder to gain some publicity.

For the sixth straight year, Kiyoshi Kimura, president of Kiyomura Corp., which owns the Sushizanmai chain, had the winning bid, paying 72 million yen (\$614,000) for a 212 kilogram (467 pound) Pacific bluefin tuna — a species experts warn is being overfished.

That was well above

last year’s winning bid of 14 million yen, but half the record 155 million yen paid in 2013.

Afterward, Kimura posed with a sword-like knife in front of the big, dark-silvery fish, caught off the coast of northern Japan.

The Tokyo government wants to move the 80-year-old Tsukiji market, set on prime real estate on Tokyo Bay not far from the posh Ginza shopping district, to a manmade island called Toyosu located two km (1.24 miles) away.

But the plan was delayed after concerns emerged about toxic pollution at its proposed new home, where a gas plant once stood.

The Tokyo government, which decided on the move 15 years ago, is expected to get results from environmental tests at the new location within weeks.

The delay has left fishmongers, many of whom oppose the move, in limbo.—Reuters

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(6-1-2017 07:00am ~ 7-1-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Discovering Tribes “Enn Shan”
07:53	Am	A Photographer’s Life at Shwedagon Pagoda
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	A Real Dream of Accidental Gift
08:52	Am	Sagaing: Gold Leaf
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	The Richly Blessed Gem Land
09:53	Am	Ngapali Beach: Fishing Villages
10:03	Am	News
10:26	Am	The Green Corner (Epi-8) 3 D Shadow Box

10:36	Am	A Bike Ride in pursuit of Mural Art (Episode-1)
10:55	Am	Kid’s Home

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

Prime Time		
07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	Ngapali, Unique Spot To Relax
07:44	Pm	Karaweik Palace-A Symbol of Glorious Myanma Culture
08:03	Pm	News
08:25	Pm	Orchidologist Dr. Saw Lwin
08:48	Pm	Myanmar Masterclass: Min Wae Aung

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

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

Alli double for Tottenham ends Chelsea's winning streak

LONDON — Tottenham Hotspur denied Chelsea a record 14th consecutive Premier League win and loosened their grip on the title race as two Dele Alli headers secured a 2-0 victory at a rocking White Hart Lane on Wednesday.

After Tottenham's own title dream last season ended in a tumultuous 2-2 draw at Stamford Bridge in May, there was a particular satisfaction that they stopped the Chelsea bandwagon.

Arsenal still hold the record for consecutive Premier League wins although their streak included 13 at the end of 2001-02 and one more at the beginning of the following campaign.

"We knew that defeat could happen before the game but I think today I saw a game with a good balance and they scored a goal at the end of the first-half and the second goal in our best moment," Chelsea boss Antonio Conte said.

"It is a pity to stop this run, but Tottenham is a good team, a really strong team and I think is for sure one of the teams that can fight for the title until the end." Conte's side were not at



Tottenham's Dele Alli scores their second goal against Chelsea during Premier League at White Hart Lane, on 4 January 2017. Small photo: Tottenham's Dele Alli celebrates scoring their second goal. PHOTO: REUTERS

their best although there was little between the sides in a high-tempo derby that thankfully never descended into the kind of indiscipline that resulted in 12 bookings in the Bridge battle of last season.

The 50th Premier League

clash between the London rivals was an engrossing tactical affair with chances at a premium.

In the end it was decided by two carbon-copy goals either side of halftime — both created by the precision of Tottenham's Danish playmaker Christian

Eriksen.

Eriksen was a whisker away from giving his side the lead midway through the first half with shot that flew just wide.

Yet it was one of his trademark deliveries that led to Tottenham's opener in first-half

stoppage time.

Given too much time to pick his spot, he whipped in a right-footed cross that Alli headed past Thibaut Courtois.

Chelsea upped the pace at the start of the second half and Eden Hazard wasted their best chance when he stooped to head a bouncing ball wide at the far post under no pressure.

Alli showed him how to do it minutes later when Eriksen again sent in a lethal cross and the young England midfielder found too much space to head past Courtois.

After a slow start to the season Alli now has 10 goals and has netted seven in his last four games.

Tottenham's fifth consecutive victory lifted them from fifth to third with 42 points from 20 games, ahead of Man City on goal difference and one point above Arsenal.

Chelsea, who could have set a new record for consecutive wins during a single season, still lead second-placed Liverpool by five points after 20 games with Tottenham seven adrift.—Reuters

Murray struggles to tame Melzer in Doha

DOHA — World number one Andy Murray laboured past Austrian Gerald Melzer 7-6(6), 7-5 to reach the quarter-finals of the Qatar Open on Wednesday after defending champion Novak Djokovic had also progressed with relative ease.

A passive Murray dropped serve twice in the opening set and world number 68 Melzer saved eight set points with some brave hitting before the Briton took the opener on a tiebreak.

Left-hander Melzer continued to strike the ball heavily, especially off the forehand side, and Murray grew visibly rattled

at his inability to polish off his opponent.

Eventually the Scot got the break in the seventh game of the second set but he failed to claim victory when serving at 5-4 as the 26-year-old Melzer forced a break of his own.

When the 29-year-old Murray served for the match for the second time he made no mistake, wrapping up victory when Melzer sent a backhand return wide.

Murray, who looked drained at the end, will play Spain's Nicolas Almagro next.

"He played great, great tennis and dominated large parts of

the match," Murray said on court after warmly congratulating his opponent. "I told him at the net he will keep climbing the rankings if he plays tennis like that."

"I played pretty good but he was hitting the ball huge."

Djokovic, seeded two, had an easier time against Argentina's Horacio Zeballos, winning 6-3, 6-4 in 72 minutes.

The Serb will face 38-year-old Czech Radek Stepanek who became the oldest ATP Tour quarter-finalist since Jimmy Connors, aged 42, in 1995, when he beat wildcard Arthur De Greef.—Reuters

Singapore fans want Formula One race to continue

LONDON — Formula One fans in Singapore are keen for the race to remain there, despite negotiations between organisers and F1 supremo Bernie Ecclestone seemingly stalled, according to a survey conducted by British research firm YouGov.

The contract for the Singapore race expires this year and Ecclestone and organisers are still in negotiations about extending beyond 2017, though he suggested in an interview with a German autosport magazine last November that talks were not progressing well.

The Singapore race costs some S\$150 million (\$104.69

million) to put on every year, 60 per cent of which is funded by the government. It was first staged in 2008 and the city-state renewed its contract for another five years in 2012.

The future of the race, however, was a concern for the 1,002 Singaporean respondents to the survey, with 57 per cent keen for it to continue beyond this year.

About 70 per cent also felt the race had been a net positive for the country.

YouGov conducted the

survey of 9,332 people within eight countries in the Asia-Pacific area because the future of the sport within the wider region is clouded.

The area hosts five Grands Prix on the 20-race calendar this year — in Australia, China, Singapore, Malaysia and Japan.—Reuters



PHOTO: REUTERS

Rodriguez to fight for place at Real

MADRID — James Rodriguez has rowed back on comments that raised speculation about his future at Real Madrid by stating his desire to stay at the European champions.

The Colombia international, whose role at Real has diminished in the last two seasons since his 80-million-euros (\$83.53 million) move from Monaco in 2014, scored twice in a 3-0 win over Sevilla in the King's Cup last 16 on Wednesday.

The playmaker has made just four league starts this campaign and in December stated he would consider his options if he did not get more playing time.

"Everyone in the team wants to play all the time and we all go through bad moments but now a new year has begun for me and I'm staying, I'm staying at Madrid," Rodriguez told reporters.

The 25-year-old opened the scoring against Sevilla in the 11th minute with a low curling effort from the edge of the area and hit the third from the penalty spot.

"I just want to play well when I have the chance and be able to do good things like I did today and help the team by scoring goals," he added.

Rodriguez angered club of-



Real Madrid's James Rodriguez and Sevilla's Vitolo in action during King's Cup soccer match at Santiago Bernabeu stadium, Madrid, Spain, on 4 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

ficials and team mates after Real won the FIFA Club World Cup in Japan by saying: "I can't guarantee if I'm going to stay here. I've had offers and I have seven days to think about it. I'm happy at Real Madrid but I want to play more."

Real coach Zinedine Zidane was impressed with the Colombian's display against Sevilla but did not single him out for praise.

He said: "James had a good game, he worked hard and scored two goals. He was important, just like everyone else."—Reuters