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Fishing trawlers in Maungtaw District to be registered



Men clean fishing nets in Rakhine state, on 15 November 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

FISHING trawlers, which temporarily ceased operation due to violent attacks in the district last year, will be registered by authorities in villages and townships, according to a decision reached at a meeting at the District General Administration Department held yesterday afternoon.

Fishing trawlers in Rakhine State were surveyed by combined teams of the Department of Marine Administration, the Fisheries Department, Myanma Insurance, police and township general administration departments in the state in Sittway, Pauktaw and Yanbye Townships.

Arrangements are underway to conduct surveys in Alethankyaw Village in Maungtaw Township to issue licenses to operate and for fishing in the near future.

About 300 fishing trawlers and about 1,300 manageable-level fishing boats operate in Rakhine State for nearshore waters fishing to fulfil domestic demand for fishery products. The district depends heavily on fishing. Authorities are planning to issue fishing licenses to trawlers and boats in the area as regional stability has been restored.—Zin Oo (Myanmar Alin)

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
National Reconciliation and Peace Centre
Notification 1/2017
13th Waxing of Pyatho 1378 ME
10 January, 2017

Announcement for those wishing to make donations to the Peace Fund of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre

- The Union Government has been placing special emphasis on the national reconciliation and peace process with a view to finding a solution for political problems through political means through negotiations and holding the Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong. In doing so, the Union Government is spending the public funds systematically. In spending public funds for the peace process, the Union Government is specifically putting great stress not only on compliance with financial rules and regulations but also to be effective and beneficial.

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REPORT ON RB NEWS WEBSITE FABRICATED, GOVERNMENT SAYS

The RB News website described in an article posted on January 8 that Myanmar government forces entered the village of Gorduthara in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State on the evening of January 7, beating and arresting villagers and raping & robbing women. The article also said that seven men were abducted.

In a statement released yesterday, the Information Committee of the State Counsellor's Office refuted the report, offering as proof interviews of villagers less than 48 hours after the alleged

abuses by police and military officials.

"As regards the news, a combined group comprised of authorities concerned, responsible military officials and border guard police went to the village at 10 am on January 9 to meet the village head, village elders and villagers, asking them whether the events in the news took place really or not. According to the villagers, the news was not true and Myanmar government forces and border guard forces did not commit any offences. The news

was found to have been fabricated," according to the statement.

The commission's statement also refuted news posted by the RB News Website in November 2016 that villagers were killed and houses were set on fire.

It is learnt that Myanmar government forces are performing their duties in combination with responsible organisations according to the law, for safeguarding the sovereignty of the State, rule of law and peace and stability of the area.—Myanmar News Agency



သဒ္ဓါထက်သန် မြန်မာအားမာန် ကမ္ဘောဇဘဏ်

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Htin Kyaw

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State / Government sent to President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Htin Kyaw, on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 4 January.

**From Mr. Md. Abdul Hamid,
President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Excellency,**

I am very much pleased to convey my warmest greetings and heartiest felicitations to Your Excellency and through you to the people of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Bangladesh and Myanmar can work together to secure peace and prosperity and make our two countries a bridge between the emerging regions in Asia. I strongly believe that both the countries will continue working to deepen meaningful cooperation to bring tangible benefits to our people.

I avail myself of this opportunity to convey my best wishes for your good health and happiness as well as for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From H.E. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee,
President of the Republic of India
Excellency,**

On behalf of the Government and people of India and on my own behalf, I extend to you warm greetings and felicitations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

India and Myanmar cherish our long standing close and friendly relations. I warmly recall your visit to India in August, 2016, on which occasion we reviewed our bilateral relationship and jointly identified the areas of shared interest where we would like to strengthen our cooperation to our mutual benefit. I am confident that our efforts will meet with success and contribute to the realization of our respective development goals.

I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes for your personal well-being and success and the continued progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From H.E. Mr. Bidhya Devi Bhandari,
President of Nepal
Excellency,**

On the happy occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I extend to your Excellency cordial felicitations and best wishes for your Excellency's personal health and happiness and for the progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

**From H.E. Mr. Mamnoon Hussain,
President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Excellency,**

Please accept our heartfelt congratulations, on the

auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Pakistan and Myanmar enjoy close relations. I am confident that the existing friendly bilateral ties would be further strengthened to the years to come for the mutual benefit of our two countries.

I would like to extend my best wishes for the good health, happiness and well-being of Your Excellency and for the prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From H.E. Mr. Maithripala Sirisena,
President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Excellency,**

It is my great pleasure to convey to Your Excellency, the Government and the people of Myanmar, my warm felicitations and best wishes on the happy occasion of the 69th Anniversary of Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

This historical friendship and close cooperation between our two countries have flourished and diversified to encompass areas of contemporary importance. The high level visits and increased people to people exchanges have further strengthened our bilateral ties in the recent past. I am confident that the excellent relations which exists between Sri Lanka and Myanmar will further expand and consolidate in the coming years.

Please accept, Excellency, my sincere wishes for your personal health and happiness and for the continued progress and prosperity of the People of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

**From H.E. Mr. David Johnston,
Governor General of Canada
Excellency,**

On behalf of all Canadians, it is my distinct pleasure to extend to you and to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar my warmest congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of your country's Independence Day.

This day offers your citizens an opportunity to reflect with pride on past accomplishments and to look with confidence to the future. Canada commends Myanmar for the progress it has made in the areas of political and economic reforms and for the efforts to facilitate peace and reconciliation. We look forward to our continued co-operation to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in order to further strengthen democracy in Myanmar.

Please accept my best wishes for your country's well-being and prosperity over the coming year.

**From H.E. Mr. Sauli Niinistö,
President of the Republic of Finland
Excellency,**

On the occasion of the Independence Day of Myanmar, I wish to extend my sincere congratulations and best wishes to You, Mr. President and to the people of Myanmar.

**From H.E. Mr. Alexander Lukashenko,
President of the Republic of Belarus
Excellency,**

On behalf of the Belarusian people and on my own behalf I congratulate You and the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the national holiday – the Independence Day.

I believe that trust-based political dialogue between our countries as well as consistent efforts to develop mutually beneficial relations will lead to the expansion of fruitful cooperation in different spheres.

Let me heartily wish You sound health and success in the fulfillment of Your noble task ahead as well as prosperity and wealth for the people of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From H.E. Mr. Raimonds Vejonis,
President of the Republic of Latvia
Your Excellency,**

On the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, I am pleased to convey my sincerest congratulations and genuine wishes for the further prosperity, peace and welfare of your country.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to voice my conviction that the relations between Latvia and Myanmar will continue to develop and intensify for the benefit of our people.

Your Excellency, please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

**From H.E. Mr. Andrej Kiska,
President of the Slovak Republic
Your Excellency,**

On the occasion of the Myanmar's National Day I am sending you greetings and congratulations on behalf of the citizens of the Slovak Republic and on my own behalf.

I take this opportunity to appreciate your country progress in the implementation of the liberalization and democratization reforms. I extend my best wishes in continuous endeavor in it and the prosperity to Myanmar people.

I believe that the bilateral relations between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will continue to develop towards mutual benefit of the citizens of both our countries.

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

The following message is the felicitations from Foreign Heads of State sent to Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Myint Swe, on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 4 January.

**From H.E. Ranil Wickremesinghe,
Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Excellency,**

It is with great pleasure that I convey to Your Excellency, my warm congratulations and good wishes on the

happy occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

The principles of Theravada Buddhism have stood as a firm foundation in the development of longstanding relations between our two countries. It is my fervent wish that the existing friendly relations and cooper-

ation between Sri Lanka and Myanmar will be further strengthened for the mutual benefit of our two nations.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your personal well-being and for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

The following message is the felicitations from Foreign Heads of State sent to Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Henry Van Thio, on the occasion of the 69th Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 4 January.

**From H.E. Ranil Wickremesinghe,
Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Excellency,**

It is with great pleasure that I convey to Your Excellency, my warm congratulations and best wishes on the

happy occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

The principles of Theravada Buddhism have stood as a firm foundation in the development of longstanding relations between our two countries. It is my fervent wish that the existing friendly relations and cooper-

ation between Sri Lanka and Myanmar will be further strengthened for the mutual interest of our two nations.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your personal well-being and for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Ministries deliver aid to two communities in northern Rakhine



Officials of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement delivers aid to villagers in Tamanthar Village-tract. PHOTO: KO MIN

THE Ministry of Border Affairs provided humanitarian aid to families of two communities in northern Rakhine yesterday.

The ceremony was held at the Rakhine State government meeting hall and was attended by Maj-Gen Than Htut, Deputy Minister for Border Affairs, Col Htein Lin, Rakhine State Minister for Border Affairs and security, and responsible persons. At the ceremony, Maj-Gen Than Htut, deputy minister for border affairs, delivered 4,000 bags of rice, 8,212 viss of cooking oil, 8,212 viss of salt, 8,212 viss of beans and 400 viss of dry fish to 139,745 members of 16,424 families. Meanwhile, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement delivered rice and peas to 158 households from two villages, 93

households in two villagers in Kyikanpyin Village-tract yesterday.

In the afternoon, the officials from the ministry delivered the food aid to 1,190 households from Tamanthar Village-tract and to 492 households from five villages in Kyeinchaung Village-tract.

Meanwhile, diplomats based in Yangon arrived Maungtau, Rakhine State, on 9th January to visit villages affected by violent attacks in October and November.

The four-member team comprising diplomats from the embassies of the United States, United Kingdom and Australia and ECHO held talks with local authorities at the Maungtau District General Administration Department on 9th January. —Ko Min

Announcement for those wishing to make donations to the Peace Fund of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre

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To ensure that success is achieved in a smooth manner, in performing the wide ranging tasks of the Peace Process, it is very important that the needed funds are acquired, that these funds are allocated equitably, and that they have been used effectively in a beneficial manner. As the International community is also providing assistance, the Joint Coordinating Body for Peace Process Funding — JCB) was formed on 20 December 2016, chaired by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor with

a view to allocating these funds systematically.

The Myanmar Peace Process is the concern of all ethnic nationals and Myanmar citizens. We will be able to build an all-inclusive peace only if everyone joined in the peace process as much as possible. In collecting funds needed for the peace process, contributions from international donors as well as Myanmar donors is very important to ensure that Myanmar citizens are involved in the Peace Process. Accordingly, for the people to be able to contrib-

ute, SF-004048 bank account of NRPC-Peace Fund has been opened at the Myanma Economic Bank, Nay Pyi Taw branch.

We therefore wish to respectfully inform and announce that donor organizations, and individuals in the country who wish to make donations, can take an active part in the implementation of the peace process of the country by contributing as much as possible to the Peace Fund of the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre.—National Reconciliation and Peace Centre

Bus stop volunteers to help passengers



A BRT bus is thronged with passengers in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

ACCORDING to the Yangon Region Hluttaw Representatives, volunteers will be stationed at bus stands for the convenience of passengers in commuting starting 16 January, when a new bus line system will be introduced.

U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, Yangon Region Hluttaw representative, said that U Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region Cabinet, disclosed the plan for the new bus system yesterday at a meeting held at the Office of Yangon Region Cabinet.

"In meeting with Hluttaw rep-

resentatives, Chief Minister told us to help for the convenience of the passengers on 16 January by stationing volunteers at bus stands for nearly 5 days starting from 16 January," U Kyaw Kyaw Tun said.

Volunteers will wear Yangon Bus Service (YBS) shirts and will be given a route map to help passengers. And signboards will be posted at bus stops, and leaflets will be delivered to pedestrians at crowded places in the coming days. Presently, there are over 300 bus lines and more than 2,000 bus stands. The Yangon Region Cabi-

net will upgrade the bus stands, it is said. Though it was announced that 58 bus lines would ply on all routes, two more bus lines will be added, for a total of 60 bus lines.

The new 60 bus lines will be supervised by Yangon Region Transport Supervision Authority and situations of the transport will be discussed quarterly. The bus lines will be changed into public-owned bus lines at the end of 2017. Out of over 6 million Yangon residents, nearly 2 million people use buses daily. —Ko Moe

UN special rapporteur visits IDP camps in Kachin State



UN Special Rapporteur Ms Yanhee Lee meets with people at Jarmaingkaung church. PHOTO: KACHIN STATE IPRD

UNITED Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar Ms Yanhee Lee and delegation met with internally displaced persons in their camps in Myitkyina and Waingmaw Townships yesterday morning. The special rapporteur and delegation first visited the IDP camps in Mongna Baptist Church and Mongna Roman Catholic

Church and met with some of the IDPs exclusively.

In the afternoon, the special rapporteur visited the IDP camp of RC Church and met with some IDPs separately.

Afterwards, the special rapporteur went to Yangon by air after meeting with Chief Minister of Kachin State Dr Khet Aung. —Kachin State IPRD

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order No 1/2017
13th Waxing of Pyatho, 1378 ME
(10th January, 2017)

Appointment of National Security Advisor to the Union Government

1. In order to advise the President and the Union Government on internal and external threats by assessing situations from a strategic point of view, Meeting 18/2016 of the Union Government has approved the appointment of a National Security Advisor to the Union Government, who holds the same status as a Union Minister.

2. In accordance with the decision of the meeting, the Union Government has appointed U Thaug Tun as the National Security Advisor.

3. Matters related to the rights and entitlements of the National Security Advisor to the Union Government shall be administered by the Office of the Union Government.

Sd/- Htin Kyaw
President
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives China's Special Envoy on Asian Affairs



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with China's Special Envoy on Asian Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

PHOTO: MNA

Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received H.E. Mr. Sun Guoxiang, Special Envoy on Asian Affairs of the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China yesterday morning at the Bayinnaung guest house in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they

discussed matters relating to stability of the border areas between the two countries and holding the 2+2 meeting for second time.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Myanmar labourers flow into Singapore

THE number of Myanmar labourers going to Singapore has increased because of increased demand in Singapore, according to overseas employment agencies.

"Myanmar workers can get a high salary and a good position as labour demand in Singapore has increased.

A worker who has a certifi-

cate of engineering can get a higher salary," said U Nay Lin, director of an overseas employment agency.

Although labour demand in Singapore has increased, the Myanmar workers should discuss the job they want with the overseas employment agency, said Ko Naing Lin, who is working in the Singapore con-

struction sector.

Labour is currently in high demand in Singapore as the city-state extends railways and improves infrastructure such as hospitals and modern buildings.

Singapore currently needs more labourers to work in the hotels, travel and transportation sectors.—200

Crime NEWS

683 narcotics cases in the month of December

A total of 1,326 drug traffickers were arrested in 683 cases in December, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

According to a statement released by the Myanmar Police Force (MPF) Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC), officials seized in December 2016 329.1468 kilos of cocaine in 31 cases; 224.9457 kilos of heroin in 134 cases; 2,851,784 amphetamine tablets in 428 narcotic drug cases; 42.4407 kilos of cannabis in 12

cases; 2.3248 kilos of opium lead in 2 cases; 0.3649 kilos of low-quality cocaine in 3 cases; 26.0447 kilos of opium powders in 38 cases; 10.7430 kilos of narcotic powders in 3 cases; 94.915 kilos of crystal meth in 6 cases; 940 kilos of ketamine, 0.2 of brown opium, 40 bottles of buprenorphine (synthetic opioid) in one case; 198.965 kilos of caffeine in one case; 34.1 kilos of ephedrine in 2 cases; 1152.5 liters of acetone in one case; 1.056 liters of opium fluid, 0.02

liters of heroin fluid in 4 cases; 2.027 liters of opium lead in 2 cases; 26,700 liters of sulphuric acid, 5532.5 kilos of ammonium chloride, 80 liters of phosphoric acid, 2,500 kilos of sodium, 18,800 liters of dimethyl sulfate in one case; 0.53 heroin papers, 85 tablets of buprenorphine and among others in 14 cases.

The officials arrested 1,326 — 1,195 men and 131 women — who are suspected drug abusers and/or sellers.—*Than Oo (Lemyethna)*

130 human trafficking cases occurred in 2016

A total of 130 human trafficking cases happened in 2016, with 230 traffickers arrested, while 175 suspects remain at large, according to a police source.

According to figures released by the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Division, Shan State topped the list with 47 cases, followed by Yangon Region with 24 cases, Kachin State with 13 cases, Ayeyawady Region with 11 cases, and Mandalay Region with 9 cases.

Bago, Sagaing, Magway and Taninthayi regions and Kayin, Mon and Rakhine states saw less than ten cases of human trafficking last year.

From January to December 2016, police also rescued 254 victims of human trafficking, but 51 other victims remain missing.

A total of 305 victims including 41 children, were sold in neighbouring countries, including China, Thailand and Malay-

sia to engage in forced labour, marriage and prostitution. Some were sold in country.

According to official figures, China is at the top of the human trafficking with 88 cases, followed by Thailand with 9 cases and Malaysia with 6 cases.

There were 85 cases of forced marriage, 31 cases of forced labour and 12 cases of prostitution.—*Than Oo (Lemyethna)*

Mon State agrees to Gulf of Mottama designation as wetlands area

THE Mon State Government agreed to the nomination of the Gulf of Mottama which located near Bilin and Kyaikto townships as a third wetland area, it is learnt.

The regional government submitted the report of the regional government agreement letter to the Union government on 9 January, 2017.

"We will submit the nomination to the Union government and will carry on the process to establish the Gulf of Mottama as a wetlands area," said Dr. Min Kyi Win, Mon State Minister for Forest and Environmental Conservation.

"World Wetlands Day falls on 2 February every year. If the Union government gives a green light to set the Gulf of Mottama as a wetland on that day, the Gulf of Mottama will become Myanmar's third Ramsar site," said Dr. Min Kyi Win.

According to the Mon State Forestry department statistics, 18,930 acres in Kyaikto and 34,580 acres in Bilin will be designated as a Ramsar site. The Ramsar Convention is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed in 1971.

"Some residents in the area worry that the Ramsar listing will result in them losing their homes, their lands and their livelihoods. In reality, the designation would benefit them," said U Myint Aung, Assistant Director of Thaton District Forest department.

The government will support the livelihoods of the local residents together with professionals.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) will set up funds to designate the wetland area together with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), NAG, HELVETAS and Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BAMCA).

Indawgyi lake is Myanmar's second Ramsar site, which is located in Mohnyin township in Kachin state in 2015.

The country's first Ramsar site was the Moeyungyi Wetland in Bago Region that was listed in 2004.

There were listed Ramsar sites in the Asia with the assistance of Switzerland: 14 places in Thailand, four places in Cambodia, eight places in Viet Nam and two places in Laos.—*Myit-makha News Agency*

Illegal gold mining discovered in Tachilek



Dozar earth-moving machine seen at illegal gold mining in Tachilek.

PHOTO: MNA

ARMY troops discovered and seized illegal gold mining materials near Hwai Hlan village, Tachilek township, Shan State (East) yesterday when they were conducting area clearance operations in the area.

Tatmadaw columns confiscated three excavators, one Dozar earth-moving machine,

three Sinoturk trucks, three water pumping machines, one vehicle, one generator and three huts. Arrested were eight foreign nationals and 20 residents.

The troops handed over the materials and arrested persons to the Tachilek Police force Station.—*Myanmar News Agency*

LOCAL Business

Twenty-four investment businesses permitted by MIC; create over 15,000 job opportunities

A total of 24 businesses are permitted to invest in Myanmar, creating over 15,000 job opportunities, according to the Myanmar Investment Commission meeting.

Out of 24 permitted enterprises, 21 are foreign direct investments, while the remaining are Myanmar Citizens investment businesses.

These foreign investments are said to be from Singapore, China, Korea, Japan, Brunei, France, Canada, Cambodia, Ireland, Australia, Hong Kong and China (Taipei) in these sectors: manufacturing, transport and communication, livestock and fishery, real estate, hotel and oth-

er services.

The MIC permitted these 24 enterprises to invest US\$826.115million of FDI and Ks46,243.560million of Myanmar Citizens Investments, it is learnt.

The foreign direct investments of US\$3,033.058million were attained from a total of 100 permitted foreign enterprises as of 6th January in this fiscal year 2016-2017.

The MIC permitted investment proposals only after scrutiny of environmental and social impact assessments and sector-specific developments, in keeping with the existing laws.

— Mon Mon



Containers seen at the container yard in Yangon on 8 December 2016. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

MRPPA to reveal Myanmar's rubber industry draft law

WITH a law already drafted for Myanmar's rubber industry, the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association (MRPPA) is reportedly planning to reveal it to the public.

Drafting this law took a year and MRPPA will make it public in each region and state so as to make amendments, if necessary.

The law will be designed to closely monitor those engaged in rubber industry so as to bring them on the right path in keeping with the law, said U Khaing Myint, the general secretary of MRPPA.

This rubber law was jointly drafted by rubber experts, authorities from the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and experts from the MRPPA.

"Formulating this law is better for our rubber planters. Currently, we have not known about this and we have to observe this law after public disclosure of the draft law," said U Than, a rubber planter from Mon State.

There are about 1.6 million acres of rubber plantation in Myanmar. The prevailing price of rubber is Ks1,070 per pound, it is learnt.—Myitmakha News Agency

Investment by-law (first draft) to be revealed on DICA website this week

MYANMAR Investment by-law (first draft) will be posted in the second week of January on the website of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), it is learnt from a press conference held at DICA on Monday.

The investment by-law draft will be posted on the DICA website in two languages by Friday. Those interested can visit the website to read the draft, said U Aung Naing Oo, the director-general of DICA.

Myanmar Investment Law was signed by President U Htin

Kyaw on 18th October, 2016. To formulate the by-law, discussions were made with the organisations and the departments concerned. There are differences between the currently drafted by-law and the previous by-laws, it is learnt.

The negotiations concerning the by-law (first draft) will be ongoing so that they can embody the opinions in the draft after receiving public opinion, in line with the policy laid down by the government.

After this, they will proceed to the second draft, said U Aung

Naing Oo.

Investors no longer need to seek a license from the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), but need to submit investment proposals to DICA offices in the regions and states concerned.

There are a total of 100 foreign enterprises as of 6th January in this fiscal year 2016-2017, with investments of US\$3,033.058million, while there are 40 Myanmar Citizens investment businesses with investments of US\$738.446million.—Myitmakha News Agency

International airline of Shwe Than Lwin and Japan's ANA Holdings to fly in 2018

A joint venture between Shwe Than Lwin and Japan's ANA Holdings will result in an international air transport service in 2018, said Shinyakatanozaka from ANA Holdings.

The parent company of All Nippon Airways, ANA Holdings will hold 49 per cent of shares, while the Shwe Than Lwin will own 51 per cent. The Directorate of Investment and Company Administration

(DICA) approved the investment of over US\$70million in early 2016 under the name of Asian Blue Aviation Co., Ltd. The company is gearing up to fly to international countries after a year-and-a-half to build up its operation.

The joint venture is currently preparing orders to buy or rent aircraft, assigning duties to management teams and marketing its airline destinations. Previously,

ANA Holdings declined to join with Asian Wing Airways, a Myanmar airline, citing intensified domestic competition.

Starting in 2018, ANA Holdings will operate its airline with a minimum of two aircraft. The airline decided to enter the country's air transport sector as a result of Myanmar's rising economy. It aims to fly several international routes for local travellers.—200

Tomato price quintupled in early 2017 compared to last year

THE price of tomatoes quintupled this month compared to the same period last year, when growers endured unusually low prices.

This year, tomatoes are fetching Ks500 to Ks600 per viss despite a lower supply than that of last year, when a viss of tomatoes sold for only Ks80-100, according to merchants.

Tomatoes are in higher demand compared to last year, allowing growers to recover financially. Both sellers and growers suffered from severe losses last year, said U Si Thu Aung from commodity depot from Pyay.

Normally, marketable tomatoes are pick from October to January, if weather conditions are favourable. Sometimes, tomatoes are produced late due to erratic weather, said a grower.

Early plantations before the winter crop season have not done well, with untimely rain falling. But those who planted late are doing well in this year. Good prices have been offered due mostly to the low supply, he continued.

The winter tomato crop is grown mainly in Pyay, Shwe Taung, Padaung and the islands along the Ayeyawady River. Those tomatoes are sent to Yangon, Minbu and Magway, it is learnt.—Myitmakha News Agency

Sulu Sea kidnappings a threat to merchant shipping — report

KUALA LUMPUR — The Sulu Sea between eastern Malaysia and the Philippines has become dangerous for merchant shipping due to rising threat of kidnappings, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) said on Tuesday.

The Sulu archipelago is a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf, an al-Qaeda linked group notorious for kidnappings and, increasingly, piracy.

The IMB report was released just hours after armed men attacked a fishing boat, killing eight fishermen, in what appeared to be a pirate attack off the southern Philippines.

IMB said global sea kidnappings rose three-fold in 2016, even as global piracy hit its lowest level in nearly 20 years. Pirates kidnapped 62 people for ransom in 15 separate incidents in 2016.

“The kidnapping of crew from ocean going merchant vessels in the Sulu Sea and their transfer to the Southern Philippines represents a notable escalation in attacks,” Kuala Lumpur-based IMB said.

IMB is advising char-

terers and owners to consider avoiding the Sulu Sea by routing vessels West of Kalimantan.

Tug boats, barges and fishing vessels have been targeted previously, but lately merchant ships are also being attacked, IMB said. They include the massive 180,000 tonne iron ore carrier Kumiai Shagang that saw an attempted attack late last year.

Several sailors and tourists were taken captive by Islamist militants last year in attacks on tug boats and yachts in the Celebes and Sulu seas, raising concern among defence officials from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

In November, the Philippines agreed to allow Malaysia and Indonesia to carry out “hot pursuits” in its territorial waters, as the three nations looked to tackle kidnappings and piracy by Abu Sayyaf.

Commenting on the threat of kidnappings in the Sulu Sea area, one Singapore-based senior maritime security executive said: “The only worthwhile advice is to avoid the area.” — Reuters

Thai king's office seeks changes to draft constitution



Thai Royal guards march as mourners line up to enter the Grand Palace to pay respect to Thailand's late King Bhumibol Adulyadej in Bangkok, Thailand, on 14 October, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

BANGKOK — Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn's office has requested changes to a draft constitution regarding his royal powers, the prime minister said on Tuesday.

The constitution drafted by the military is central to the junta's plan to hold a general election to return Thailand to democratic rule. It was approved in a referendum

last year and has been awaiting the king's endorsement.

“The request said there are three to four issues that need fixing to ensure his royal powers,” Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha told reporters after a weekly cabinet meeting. “This issue has nothing to do with the rights and freedoms of the people,” he said, without

giving further details.

The king came to the throne after the death of his father, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, in October.

Thailand has a constitutional monarchy and public interventions in political affairs by a king are rare. Prayuth said that the junta and the cabinet agreed to make the requested amendments.

The process will

take up to three months because the government would first need to make changes to the current interim constitution before it can then change the draft constitution, he said.

The military has said elections would be held in late 2017. Prayuth said the timeline remains unchanged and there would be a new government in place next year. —Reuters

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South Korea prosecutor says undecided on whether to seek arrests of Samsung executives

SEOUL — South Korea's special prosecution office said on Tuesday it had not yet decided whether to seek arrest warrants for two Samsung Group executives as part of a widening investigation into the political scandal threatening President Park Geun-hye.

South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported earlier on Tuesday, citing unnamed sources, that the prosecution would seek to arrest two Samsung executives.

However, the prosecutors' office later told Reuters that the two men, Samsung Group Vice Chairman Choi Gee-sung and President Chang Choong-ki, both of whom were summoned for questioning on Monday, were considered witnesses.

The two were questioned by investigators looking into whether the country's top conglomerate paid bribes to get the country's national pension fund to approve a controversial merger

between two Samsung affiliates.

A Samsung Group spokesman declined to comment.

President Park could become the nation's first democratically elected

leader to leave office early after parliament voted to impeach her in December over the corruption scandal, a decision that must be approved or overturned by the Constitutional Court. —Reuters



A flag bearing the logo of Samsung Electronics is pictured at its headquarters in Seoul, South Korea, on 29 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Xi to be first Chinese president to join Davos World Economic Forum

BEIJING — President Xi Jinping this month will become the first Chinese head of state to attend the World Economic Forum in Davos, as the foreign ministry on Tuesday confirmed his widely-expected attendance at the annual meeting in the Swiss Alps.

This year's forum is expected to be dominated by debate over public anger with globalisation and the coming presidency of Donald Trump, who won the White House in part with promises to pull the United States out of international trade deals and hike tariffs against China and Mexico.

Xi will take centre stage at the gathering of political leaders, CEOs and celebrities which runs from

17-20 January, as China presents itself as a champion of globalisation.

The president will travel to Switzerland from 15-18 January for a state visit and to attend the Davos meeting, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a regular press briefing.

He will also visit the United Nations offices in Geneva, and the offices of the World Health Organization and the International Olympic Committee, Lu said. He did not give further details about the trip.

Other global leaders, including WEF regular German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, will not attend the forum. —Reuters



China's President Xi Jinping arrives to attend a conference commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Sun Yat-Sen, widely recognised as the father of modern China, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, on 11 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

8 crewmembers killed in boat attack in southern Philippines

MANILA — Eight people have been shot dead in an attack Monday on a fishing boat in the southern Philippines, a military official said on Tuesday.

The fishing boat manned by 15 people was attacked by an armed group at night off the coast of Laud Siromon Island in the Zamboanga province, said Col Juvy Max Uy, commander of a military taskforce in the province.

He said a contingent of Philippine Marines has been sent to secure the area while local police hunt for the five unidentified suspects.

"These are lawless elements," Uy said, citing extortion as a possible motive behind the boat attack, which seven crew members survived after reportedly jumping off the boat.

Concerns have grown over piracy and crew abductions by pirates in waters stretching between eastern Malaysia and the southern Philippines, leading those two countries plus Indonesia to beef up maritime security cooperation.

According to a report issued on Tuesday by Kuala Lumpur-based Piracy Reporting Centre of the International Maritime Bureau's, 28 crew members were kidnapped from ships in the area, including ocean-going merchant vessels and slow-moving tugs and barges. Some of them were then transferred to the southern Philippines and held for ransom by armed men linked to the Abu Sayyaf terror group, which is based in the country's restive Mindanao region. —Kyodo News

Australian police say they are helping with 1MDB investigations

SYDNEY — The Australian Federal Police (AFP) said on Tuesday they are working with international law enforcement agencies to investigate companies associated with Malaysia's scandal-hit sovereign wealth fund.

1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), founded by Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak, is the subject of money laundering investigations in at least six other countries, including Switzerland, Singapore and the United States.

Civil lawsuits filed by the US Department of Justice allege more than \$3.5 billion was misappropriated from 1MDB. The lawsuits seek to seize \$1 billion in assets allegedly siphoned off from 1MDB and diverted into luxury real estate in New York, Beverly Hills

and London, valuable paintings, and a private jet.

Najib, who also chaired 1MDB's advisory board, has denied wrongdoing and said Malaysia would cooperate with international investigations. 1MDB has

also denied wrongdoing.

The AFP is responsible for investigating breaches of proceeds of crime laws by Australian companies, citizens and residents.

"The AFP is aware of allegations relating to

companies associated with 1MDB and have assisted our foreign law enforcement partners with their investigations in relation to a number of these matters," the AFP said in an emailed statement. —Reuters



Men walk past a 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) billboard at the fund's flagship Tun Razak Exchange development in Kuala Lumpur on 1 March, 2015. PHOTO: REUTERS

Thai floods cause 200-kilometre traffic tailback; death toll up to 25

BANGKOK — Flash floods in southern Thailand washed out a bridge on the country's main north-south highway on Tuesday, backing up traffic for 200 km (125 miles) as the death toll from days of unseasonable rain rose to 25, media reported.

More than 360,000 households, or about a million people, have been affected by the floods that have damaged homes and schools and affected rubber and palm oil production,

the Department of Disaster Prevention and industry officials said.

Television pictures showed abandoned cars submerged in murky waters in Prachuap Khiri Khan province where a torrent washed out a bridge on the main road linking Bangkok to the south, causing the 200 km tailback, media reported.

The railway link to the south, and Malaysia, beyond has been severed for days.

Thailand's rainy season usually ends in late Novem-

ber but this year heavy rain has fallen well into what should be the dry season.

Southern Thailand is a major rubber-producing area and the wet weather has hit production. Palm oil plantations have also been flooded, industry officials and farmers' groups said.

In Nakhon Si Thammarat, one of the worst-hit provinces, television footage showed villagers commuting by boat.

"It's like a big pond," said resident Pattama Narai.

Nakhon Si Thammarat has had 493 mm of rain in the past seven days, 426 mm more than the average for this time of year, according to Thomson Reuters data.

Flooding regularly occurs in the May-November rainy season.

In 2011, widespread flooding that began in the north and flowed down to Bangkok crippled industry, killed more than 900 people and slowed economic growth to just 0.1 percent that year. —Reuters



A bridge damaged by floods is pictured at Chai Buri District, Surat Thani province, southern Thailand, January 9, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Opinion

Write for us

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

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

The odds are very much in our favour to reach our goal in less than 20 years to come

Khin Maung Oo

IT has been nearly seven decades since our country gained independence. Sorrowfully enough, however, most of our national ethnic brethren cannot savour the taste of Independence to the full, until now. This is attributed to a legacy left behind by the colonialists that governed the country for about a century—sowing mistrust and misunderstanding among us by governing the country using the tactic of divide-and-rule. With the concept that the development of a country cannot be built up without peace and stability, our leaders are now trying to bring about the fruitful results of a federal democratic Union. In such a time when our leaders are exerting their concerted efforts to get national peace, destructive elements from home and abroad, unwilling for the country to get peace and stability are trying to ignite riots and conflicts in the country in various ways, by spreading rumours and invented stories among the people through social media—face-book and web pages. To add verisimili-

tude, they are found to have attached fake photos to their fabricated ones by photoshopping which is a slang term to describe any image that has been digitally manipulated or altered, so as to arouse misunderstanding. Much as they made efforts, their hidden image was unmasked.

According to the News on AL Jazeera News Grid programme, Ro Nay San Lwin has sent fabricated news and photos to a producer of AL Jazeera. Many pictures have been said to have flowed into AL Jazeera and they made the programme team frustrated. Ro Nay San Lwin also posted a fake picture on the social media and news that a child died due to forced vaccination in Rakhine State. Another foreign media has recently posted fake news and images which have been altered using Photoshop software. Suffice it to say that we should not fall for invented news of instigators of riots and conflicts. Now that we have many tasks to carry out relating to resettlement and rehabilitation in conflicted areas,

peace and stability is urgently needed. Thus, now is the time to remove misunderstanding among us to build a better future of our younger generation. And now is the time to build up a developed and modernized federal democratic Union by safeguarding our sovereignty from the dangers of destructive elements. In the Regions and States in which peace and stability has been gained, development projects are progressing remarkably well. Yangon City is now seeing imminent prospects. Its major urbanisation problems—traffic jams and undisciplined vendors on roads-side platforms have been solved to a satisfactory extent. Samaritans and philanthropic societies emerged here and there. Most students began to take part in social activities. Government servicemen were allowed to do politics outside working hours.

Rome was not built in a day. Change cannot be done overnight by any one person or group of people. It will take us time to move on to our destination, on

one condition that we need to contribute our physical and mental labour as much as we can, in order to smoothly and quickly get there. That is to say, the whole populace, including our national brethren need to take part in the nation-building process. Now, an unprecedented amount of budget allotment has been provided for the education sector. Our younger generation will be enjoying the fruits of this investment. Every advanced country started from zero development and had to work really hard to reach the current state. We have good leaders to lead our country. We have natural resources and human resources of great virtue. What we urgently need is Unity, or rather national reconciliation. This will be possible only if the People including our national brethren, the Government and the Tatmadaw will work hand in hand in sincerity, mutual understanding and mutual trust. We are likely to reach our goal in less than 20 years to come. To coin a phrase, "our days will surely come."

High time we make comprehensive efforts for addressing Non-communicable Diseases

Dr. Tej Ram Jat,
Programme Manager
Public Health, HelpAge
International, Myanmar

MYANMAR is currently walking on the path of rapid economic growth and development which is opening up several opportunities and at the same time posing serious challenges. One of these challenges is epidemiological transition shifting the burden of morbidity and mortality from communicable diseases to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes etc.

As per the World Health Organization 59% of all deaths in Myanmar are due to NCDs. The results of STEPS survey of 2014 revealed that 94% adults in the country are living with at least one high risk factor of NCDs. The major risk factors behind the unprecedented rise in the prevalence of NCDs are harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use, insufficient physical activity and unhealthy diet which are aggravated by globalization, unplanned urbanization, marketing of unhealthy foods, promotion of sedentary lifestyle and inadequate public health policies. The burden of NCDs is predicted to increase



PHOTO: AYE MIN SOE

with further rise in the pace of development in the coming years.

NCDs are chronic long term diseases that need ongoing management and treatment. They put huge economic burden on individuals, families and nations. On the one hand, individuals and families need to spend huge amounts on NCD treatment as out of pocket expenditures and governments need to invest more on strengthening services for management and

treatment of NCDs, on the other hand, household income and Gross Domestic Product are lowered due to disability and deaths caused by NCDs.

The government of Myanmar has been making efforts for addressing NCDs which are reflected in the steps such as integrating NCDs into government's priority action agenda, establishing NCD unit in the department of public health, piloting of package in es-

sential NCD interventions, planning for strengthening NCD services and developing draft NCD policy etc. However, the efforts made so far are not sufficient to tackle the problem.

It is high time we make comprehensive efforts for addressing NCDs in Myanmar. We must ensure multi-sectoral synergetic efforts such as developing strategic action plan on NCDs, strengthening health services for screening,

referral and management of NCDs, raising public awareness on healthy life style, encouraging people for more physical activity, promoting healthy food, introducing sin taxes on alcohol and tobacco. Adequate human and financial resources must be ensured for addressing the country's rapidly expanding NCD health needs. The government needs to establish coordination mechanism for engaging all concerned ministries and other stakeholders so that necessary action is taken at all levels of Myanmar society. The research gaps on NCDs needs to be filled through conducting in-depth research on areas requiring urgent investigation. International donors and development partners must be encouraged for supporting synergetic actions on NCDs in Myanmar as a priority in their development assistance programmes.

All these efforts will not only require leadership and initiative by the government but they will also need fully active and enthusiastic participation by all segments of society and by all concerned stakeholders. Let us all come together and join hands for making a conducive environment for healthy living and addressing NCDs in Myanmar. *(The views expressed in this article are author's personal views.)*

Foreign Heads of State and Ministers send felicitations to State Counsellor

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State and Ministers 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 H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and the people of Bangladesh and on my own behalf, I have the pleasure to extend my best wishes and warm felicitations to Your Excellency and through you to the Government and the people of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Union of Myanmar.

Bangladesh values her relations with Myanmar and wishes to work together for peace, security and prosperity of our two countries. I am confident that we will be able to intensify bilateral engagements to develop meaningful cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

I avail myself of this opportunity to wish you good health and happiness as well as the continued peace and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India Excellency,

On behalf of the people of India and on my own behalf, I extend to you my warm greetings and felicitations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

India and Myanmar share close and friendly relations based on enduring ties of culture, religion, language and ethnicity. A new momentum has been imparted to our bilateral relations by a series of high level visits, which have helped us to identify priorities of your government. I am confident that under your leadership, we would be able to further consolidate our relations and achieve our common goal of improving the economic and social well-being of our people.

I take this opportunity of extend my best wishes for your personal well-being and the continued prosperity of the friendly people of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E. Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Excellency,

On behalf of the people and the Government of the Islamic

Republic of Pakistan, and my own behalf, I wish to extend to Your Excellency, the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, warm greetings and heartfelt congratulations on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Since Independence, Pakistan and Myanmar have enjoyed friendly relations, I am confident that these would be further strengthened in days to come.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express my best wishes for Your Excellency's good health, and progress and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E. Mr. Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Excellency,

On this auspicious occasion of the 69th Anniversary of Independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, it gives me great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency my warm felicitations and best wishes.

The longstanding relations between our countries, based on ancient culture and religious ties expanded and diversified into areas of contemporary importance. Myanmar and Sri Lanka have cooperated with each other on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of importance to both countries. I am confident that the bonds of friendship and close cooperation between our two countries will continue to flourish for the mutual well-being for our two peoples.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

From H.E. Mr. Vladimir Makei, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus Your Excellency,

Let me heartily congratulate You on the occasion of the national holiday of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar – the Independence Day.

I believe that cooperation between our countries and Ministries of Foreign Affairs will further deepen and enhance.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes of sound health, longevity and success in the fulfillment of Your noble task ahead as well as the assurances of my highest

consideration.

From H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic Your Excellency,

On the occasion of the Myanmar's National Day, please accept my cordial greetings.

I take this opportunity to appreciate your personal contribution and the achieved improvement in the liberalization and democratization reforms of the Government of Myanmar. I believe that the Government of Myanmar under your leadership will further continue in its reformatory endeavor.

I have a confidence that the continuous cooperation between our foreign ministries will contribute to deepen friendly relations between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I avail myself of this opportunity to assure Your Excellency of my highest consideration.

From H.E. Mr. Pavlo Klimkin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Your Excellency,

I have a great pleasure to convey my warmest congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

We note the positive developments in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, especially after the last year's historic parliamentary elections and landslide victory of the National League for Democracy and welcome the progress of the new Myanmar Government on the path of reforms.

Ukraine considers Myanmar as a prospective partner in the Southeast Asia and I am absolutely convinced that there are promising opportunities for further strengthening the existing friendly relations and bilateral cooperation for the benefit of the peoples of our countries.

In this regard, I am looking forward to my upcoming visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, which will provide us with a possibility to discuss personally the Ukraine-Myanmar perspectives of interaction in both bilateral and multilateral dimensions.

Availing myself of this opportunity I wish You, Excellency, good health every success and new achievements in Your noble state activities, as well as peace and prosperity to the friendly people of Myanmar.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Legal action against Daw Inzali Mya Shein, Pwintbyu Township judge, for bribery

LEGAL action will be taken against Daw Inzali Mya Shein, township judge of Pwintbyu in Magwe Region, by the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Commission, it was learnt yesterday.

The action was sparked after a complaint was received that Daw Inzali Mya Shein jailed those who did not give her bribes, but handed down verdicts that only involved paying a fine for those who gave her a bribe. The Cabinet of Magwe Region handed over the case to Anti-Bribery and Corruption Commission, which launched an investigation and has since recommended legal action in accord with the law of anti-bribery and corruption.

In response to the complaints handed over to the commission, the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Commission formed an investigation committee that revealed

that Daw Inzali Mya Shein took a bribe of Ks5 lakhs (US\$370) through the higher grade pleader standing for the case, to acquit criminal case 219/2016 filed under section 30/A Excise Law and took another 5 lakhs from the culprit's wife to commute the punishment for case 294/2016 under section 15/A of the Gambling Law. The judge was found guilty of taking bribes by exercising the authority assigned upon her, and legal action was taken against her under section 56 of the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Law 2013. Yet, the judge absconded without going to trial.

Legal action will now be taken against Daw Inzali Mya Shein under section 56 of the anti-bribery and corruption law 2013 / section 512 of the Penal Code at the high court of Magwe Region.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Nobel Myanmar Literary Festival to be held from 22 to 24 January

THE third Nobel Myanmar Literary Festival will be organized at the National Theatre in Yangon from 22 to 24 January, organizers said at a press conference at the Orchid Hotel in the commercial capital yesterday.

U Maw Lin, chairman of the organizing committee, U Myo Nyunt, vice chairman of the organizing committee, committee secretaries U Kyi Win and U Win Cho, member of the committee U Khin Maung Soe (Maung Thamanya) explained arrangements, purposes and function of the event at the press conference.

The event will feature Myanmar literature including poems, an exhibition of books that were published one hundred years ago and will be accompanied with literary talks, poetry reciting and about 140



Press conference on Third Nobel Myanmar Literary Festival at Orchid Hotel in Yangon. PHOTO: ZAW MIN LATT

bookstalls.

The event is jointly organized by writers, poets, editors, librarians, illustrators, cartoonists, publishers and officials and aims to promote peace in society through literation creation. Lit-

erary talks, paper reading sessions, book introductions, poem reciting, readers' session will be held from 9 am to 5 pm and book fair will be held from 8 am to 6 pm during the event. —*Yi Yi Myint and Ohmar Thant*

Iraq forces advance in Mosul but civilian toll mounts: spokesman, UN

MOSUL—Iraqi forces have fought their way into two more southeastern districts of Mosul but their advances are being slowed by Islamic State's tactic of using civilians for cover, a military spokesman said on Tuesday.

The United Nations said civilian casualties had streamed into nearby hospitals in the last two weeks as fighting intensified in the jihadist militia's last major stronghold in Iraq.

Advances by elite forces in the city's east and northeast have picked up speed in a new push since the turn of the year, and US-backed forces have for the first time reached the Tigris river, which bisects the city.

But fighting in neighborhoods in the southeast has been tougher.

"The challenge is that they (IS) are hiding among civilian families, that's why our advances are slow and very cautious," Lieutenant-Colonel Abdel Amir al-Mohammedawi, a spokesman for the rapid response units of Iraq's federal police, told Reuters.

He said rapid response units and Iraqi army units had fought



Smoke rises from clashes in Baladiyat district, east of Mosul during a fight with Islamic State, Iraq, on 9 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

their way into the Palestine and Sumer districts in the last day, but that Islamic State fighters were firing at civilians trying to

flee.

"The families, when they see Iraqi forces coming, flee from the areas controlled by

Daesh (Islamic State) towards the Iraqi forces, holding up white flags, and Daesh bomb them with mortars and Molotov

cocktails, and also shoot at them.

"Whenever they (IS) withdraw from a district, they shell it at random, and it's heavy shelling," he said.

The United Nations' humanitarian coordination office (OCHA) said nearly 700 people had been taken to hospitals in cities in Kurdish-controlled areas outside Mosul in the last week, and more than 817 had required hospital treatment the week before that.

"Trauma casualties remain extremely high, particularly near frontline areas," it said.

The US-backed operation to drive the ultra-hardline militants from Mosul began in October and has recaptured villages and towns surrounding the city, and most of Mosul's eastern half.

New tactics and better coordination have helped Iraqi forces advance faster since they launched a new phase of the operation more than 10 days ago.

The advances slowed in November and December as IS put up fierce resistance and hid among the civilian population, making it difficult for Iraqi forces to target them—*Reuters*

Unclear whether truck attack in Israel inspired by Islamic State



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (C) and Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman visit the scene in Jerusalem. PHOTO: REUTERS

JERUSALEM—Israel's government has been quick to suggest a Palestinian who rammed a truck into a group of Israeli soldiers at the weekend was inspired by Islamic State, raising questions over how it came to that conclusion.

Hours after the attack on Sunday, which killed four soldiers and wounded 17, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the assailant showed all the signs of being a supporter of the ultra-hardline Sunni movement.

He did not give details and on Monday, an obscure Palestinian group claimed responsibility, saying it had no outside links and had acted on political motives.

Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman had also pointed to Islamic State, citing parallels with Islamic State-inspired at-

tacks on crowds using trucks in Germany and France last year.

"We saw it in France, we saw it in Berlin and unfortunately we saw it today in Jerusalem," he said during a visit to the scene overlooking Jerusalem's Old City.

The group which said it was responsible for the attack gave few details and it was not possible to verify the claim, but in Israel, multiple voices pointed out the differences between Palestinian violence and that perpetrated by Islamic State. While Islam may inspire some Palestinian assailants, political motivations around Israel's occupation and the long-running conflict remain the dominant factor, they said, suggesting the government was seeking to downplay politics.—*Reuters*

UN's Palestinian aid agency urges Trump to revive MidEast peace bid

GENEVA—US President-elect Donald Trump and foreign powers should revive the Middle East peace process at a time Palestinian youths are becoming increasingly disillusioned, the head of the UN aid agency for Palestinian refugees urged on Monday.

Relations between the United States and Israel have soured during President Barack Obama's administration, reaching a low point late last month when Washington cleared the way for a UN resolution demanding an end to Israeli settlements.

Obama's secretary of state, John Kerry, has said the settlement program threatened Middle East peace and described a two state solution as in "serious jeopardy". Trump has said he

will pursue more pro-Israel policies after taking office on 20 January.

"The reality is just that right now there is no such thing that one can call a peace process for Israel and Palestine. And it's a very big risk that the world is taking," Pierre Kraehenbuehl, UNRWA commissioner-general, told a news briefing.

He said re-investing in a meaningful political process should be "the absolute top priority". Kraehenbuehl's remarks came a day after a Palestinian ploughed a truck into a group of Israeli soldiers on a popular promenade in Jerusalem, killing four.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attack

was likely inspired by Islamic State.

Kraehenbuehl declined to comment on Trump's pronouncements but hoped the United States would continue to be the top donor to his agency that helps 5.2 million Palestinian refugees. Among them, the 1.2 million refugees in the Gaza Strip and West Bank faced "the most critical situation of their prolonged displacement" which began in 1948, Kraehenbuehl said.

It was a scandal, he said, that the number of Palestine refugees receiving food aid in Gaza had increased ten-fold to 911,000 since 2000. On Monday UNRWA appealed for \$813 million for Palestinian refugees in the territories and Syria.—*Reuters*

Policeman wounded in gun attack outside Greek socialist party office

ATHENS—Attackers shot at riot police guarding the offices of Greece's socialist Democratic Alliance party in central Athens early on Tuesday, slightly wounding one officer, Greek police said.

There was no claim of responsibility, though hardline left-wing activists have attacked the offices before.

The policeman was hit as

he sat in a truck outside and taken to hospital, an official from the force said. Three rifle shells were found at the spot.

Small-scale attacks on businesses, police, politicians and embassies are frequent in Greece, which has a long history of political violence and is struggling to emerge from a huge debt crisis which has sent thousands to unemployment and

cut incomes.

An organisation calling itself the Revolutionary Self-defence Group said it attacked the party's offices in 2014, as part of a move against "the state oligarchy, the dictatorship of the capital and its armed guards".

Democratic Alliance condemned the shooting as a "murderous" attack on democracy.—*Reuters*

Trump son-in-law Kushner to take on senior White House advisory role

WASHINGTON—President-elect Donald Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, will become a senior White House adviser and work on trade deals and the Middle East, transition officials said on Monday, in a rare case of a close presidential family member taking on a major job.

Kushner, 35, who is married to Trump's daughter Ivanka, is taking the job after receiving legal counsel he would not be violating a US anti-nepotism law based on court rulings that the statute does not apply to the White House. The position does not require US Senate confirmation.

Ivanka Trump, who like her husband has been a trusted adviser to the president-elect, will not take on a role in her father's White House but will focus instead on settling her family in Washington.

Both of the Trumps will undertake significant divestments of their wide-ranging financial portfolios as they prepare for their move to Washington from New York and face inevitable questions about a potential conflict of interest.

Senior transition officials and a lawyer for Kushner laid out the arrangement in a conference call with a small group of reporters.

Kushner is to work closely with incoming White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus and senior strategist Steve Bannon in advising the new president and the officials said he would focus at least in the beginning on trade policy and the Middle East.

The incoming president has vowed to rewrite international trade deals to make them more favourable to the United States and has adopted a pro-Israel stance with a pledge to move the US Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv. Jamie Gorelick, a New York lawyer who served as deputy attorney general for Democrat-



US President-elect Donald Trump greets his daughter Ivanka and son in law Jared Kushner (R) at his election night rally in Manhattan, New York, US, on 9 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

ic President Bill Clinton, helped advise Kushner on whether he would violate a 1967 anti-nepotism statute and said he would not. "I'm not saying that there isn't an argument on the other side, and I respect the people who have made the argument on the other side. I just think we have the better argument," she said.

Gorelick said Congress in 1978 authorized the president to hire personnel for the White House office "without regard" to federal personnel laws like the anti-nepotism statute and that the Justice Department had described that authority as unfettered and sweeping. "Even without that law, two DC Circuit decisions strongly suggest that the White House Office is not an 'agency' under the anti-nepotism statute, a position supported by the views of the Justice Department under Presidents Bill Clinton and George W Bush," Gorelick said.

In order to comply with federal ethics laws and after consulting the Office of Government Ethics, Kushner will take a number of

steps to divest substantial assets, Gorelick said.

Kushner will resign from his positions as chief executive of the Kushner Companies and as publisher of the New York Observer newspaper and divest from any interests in the New York Observer, Thrive Capital, 666 Fifth Avenue and any foreign investments.

In addition, Kushner will recuse himself from participating in matters that could have a direct effect on his remaining financial interests. Those interests include real estate in the New York area, Ivanka Trump's interest in the new Trump hotel in Washington and the Ivanka Trump Brand fashion business, the officials said.

Ivanka Trump will not participate in the management or operations of the Trump Organization or the Ivanka Trump brand or fashion business.

She will divest significant assets including all common stock and resign from all officer and director positions she holds in the Trump Organization.—Reuters



Donald Trump speaks as his son-in-law Jared Kushner (L) and his daughter Ivanka listen at a campaign event at the Trump National Golf Club Westchester in Briarcliff Manor, New York, US, on 7 June, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cruz meeting with Taiwan president has 'no bearing' on US China policy: White House

WASHINGTON—A weekend meeting between Republican US Senator Ted Cruz and Taiwan's president, Tsai Ing-wen, has no bearing on US policy on China, the White House said on Monday.

The meeting, during a Houston stopover by Tsai en route to Central America, was initiated by Cruz, a senator from Texas, and was not encouraged by the Obama administration, spokesman Josh Earnest said.

"The meeting doesn't have any bearing whatsoever on our continued pursuit of a one-China policy that benefits the United States and Taiwan," Earnest said at a news briefing.—Reuters

Senior Russian diplomat found dead in Athens apartment - Greek police

ATHENS—A senior Russian diplomat was found dead in his Athens apartment on Monday, a Greek police official said.

Andrey Malanin, 54, was head of the consular section, according to the embassy's website.

He was found on the floor of his bedroom by a member of the embassy's staff with no evidence of a break-in, the official said on condition of anonymity.

"At first sight, we are talking about natural causes," the police official said, noting that police were investigating and authorities were awaiting the coroner's report.—Reuters

McAllister: Serbia on right track of EU approximation

BRUSSELS — Serbia is on the right track of approximation to the EU, European Parliament rapporteur David McAllister said in Brussels Monday in what he said was a general assessment of Serbia's progress in 2016.

Presenting his draft report on Serbia to the EP Committee on Foreign Affairs, McAllister noted Serbia had already opened six out of 35 negotiation chapters, provisionally closing one.—Tanjug

Japan says always gathering information on North Korea's nuclear missiles

TOKYO—Japan is always gathering and analysing information on North Korea's nuclear missile situation with great interest, its top government spokesman said on Tuesday.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a news conference that the government was taking all possible measures for warning and surveillance of North Korea.

North Korea declared on Sunday it could test-launch an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) at any time from any location set by leader Kim Jong Un, saying a hostile US policy was to blame for its arms development.—Reuters

Teenage British girl arrested after death of child, 7

LONDON— A 15-year-old girl has been arrested following the death of a child in northern England, police said on Tuesday.

Officers said they were called to an address in the northern English city of York on Monday afternoon where they found a girl, 7, suffering from life-threatening injuries.

The child was taken to hospital but later died.

North Yorkshire police said the teenage girl was arrested in connection with the incident and was being held for questioning.

"Officers remain at the scene while the investigation to establish the full circumstances surrounding the death of the girl continues," police said in a statement.—Reuters

US Navy ship fired warning shots at Iranian vessels

WASHINGTON — A US Navy destroyer fired three warning shots at four Iranian fast-attack vessels near the Strait of Hormuz after they closed in at high speed and disregarded repeated requests to slow down, US officials said on Monday.

The incident, which occurred on Sunday and was first reported by Reuters, comes as US President-elect Donald Trump prepares to take office on 20 January. In September, Trump vowed that any Iranian vessels that harassed the US Navy in the Gulf would be “shot out of the water.”

“This was an unsafe and unprofessional interaction, and that is due to the fact that they were approaching at a high level of speed with weapons manned and disregarding repeated warnings,” Captain Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman, said in a briefing.

The warning shots were fired at the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps boats by the USS Mahan after it established radio contact but failed to get them to slow down, Davis said, confirming earlier accounts of US defence officials.

Those officials, speaking to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said the Iranian vessels came within 900 yards (800 meters) of the Navy destroyer, which was escorting two other US military ships.

The Mahan also fired flares and a US Navy helicopter also dropped a smoke float before the warning shots, they said.

The IRGC and Trump transi-



The guided-missile destroyer USS Mahan (DDG 72) transits the Mediterranean Sea in this on 31 August, 2012. PHOTO: REUTERS

tion team were not immediately available for comment.

The White House said the Iranian vessels had behaved in an unacceptable manner and that such incidents risked increasing tensions.

“At this point the United States does not know what the intentions of the Iranian vessels were, but the behaviour is not acceptable given that the USS Mahan was operating in international waters,” White House spokesman

Josh Earnest said during a press conference on Monday.

Years of mutual animosity eased when Washington lifted sanctions on Tehran last year after a deal to curb Iran’s nuclear ambitions. But serious differences still remain over Iran’s ballistic missile program as well as conflicts in Syria and Iraq.

One of the US defence officials said similar incidents occur occasionally.

Most recently in August, an-

other US Navy ship fired warning shots toward an Iranian fast-attack craft that approached two US ships.

In January 2016, Iran freed 10 US sailors after briefly detaining them in the Gulf.

The one official added that the warning shots fired on Sunday were just one of seven interactions the Mahan had with Iranian vessels over the weekend, but the others were judged to be safe.—*Reuters*

Split the euro zone in two, says Germany’s far-right co-leader

BERLIN — The euro zone should be split into two with a strong cluster around Germany and a weak cluster including France, the co-leader of Germany’s far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, Joerg Meuthen, said in a Reuters interview.

“The euro is a seed of discord in Europe that has different currency cultures and different competitiveness levels,” Meuthen said.

The AfD has climbed to 15 percent in opinion polls ahead of September’s election, but no other party in Germany is willing to form a coalition with it.

Meuthen, speaking by telephone, said the German economy could suffer for a year or two in the wake of such a euro zone split.

“The euro is too strong for southern European countries while for Germany and several others it’s too weak,” he said.

“It’s conceivable that the weaker countries leave,” he said, mentioning Italy, Spain, Portugal and France. He said Greece is so weak that no country wants to share a currency with it.

Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and Finland should remain in the core euro group, he said, even though a stronger currency would hurt exports from those countries.—*Reuters*

France’s Le Pen says would seek Trump-style repatriation of car plants

PARIS — Far-right French presidential candidate Marine Le Pen said on Tuesday she would seek to repatriate production of French motor vehicles and other industrial goods — just as President-elect Donald Trump hopes to do in the United States.

Trump has threatened to slap tariffs on cars made abroad, saying the practice costs American jobs. He has praised Ford Motor Co’s decision last week to scrap a plan to build a plant in Mexico, and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles’ confirmation of plans to create 2,000 jobs at its US factories.

Asked whether she would like to see the same thing happen with French manufacturers Renault and PSA Peugeot Citroen, the National Front (FN) leader said: “He (Trump) is putting in place measures I have been demanding for years.”

Speaking on France 2 Television, she described the policy as “economic patriotism, (and) intelligent protectionism.”

“I don’t mind explaining to French companies that they can

not escape tax that they should be paying in France, that they cannot go offshore without suffering the consequences ... A choice has to be made, a choice of patriotism.

Both Renault and Peugeot have significant cars and parts-making activities in Spain and eastern Europe.

Other candidates in France’s spring presidential election have praised Trump’s attitude on Ford, including Socialist Arnaud Montebourg and left-wing independent Jean-Luc Melenchon.

Le Pen’s protectionist and anti-globalisation agenda has helped win her widespread support in her campaign. Most opinion polls show her contesting, but losing, the second and final round of the presidential election in May with Francois Fillon who represents conservative party The Republicans.

Industrial policy is one of the key differences between the two. Fillon has a liberal programme aimed at rolling back state involvement in corporate life.—*Reuters*

Where are the women? Sweden’s top diplomat wants to know

UNITED NATIONS — Sweden’s top diplomat has a question: “Where are the women?”

Taking a seat on the United Nations’ influential Security Council, Sweden will use its clout to press its feminist foreign policy, Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom said on Monday.

That policy, coined when Wallstrom took office two years ago, seeks equal rights, decision-making roles and fair allocation of resources for women.

It is of major significance in peace negotiations, Wallstrom told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Sweden took its seat this month on the Security Council, which has 10 members elected to two-year terms along with five permanent members — the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia. Its key responsibility is maintaining international peace and security.

“Our instinct is to ask, ‘Where are the women? Are they represented? Are they around the table?’” Wallstrom said during a visit to the United Nations. “This will be consistently something that we will bring up.”



EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini holds a joint news conference with Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallstrom at the government headquarters Rosenbad in Stockholm, Sweden, on 10 October, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

She cited a lack of women’s involvement in efforts to find a peaceful transfer of power in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Colombia, meanwhile, found a way to end its 52-year civil war by making a concerted effort to include women, she said.

Women were seated on both sides of the negotiating table, and gender issues were addressed in Colombia’s peace agreement — an initiative UN Women described as the first of its kind.

Having women at the negotiating table increases the chance of a peace agreement lasting 15 years

by 35 percent, according to UN Women.

“You cannot have sustainable peace if you exclude half of the population,” Wallstrom said.

“It’s still the unfinished business of our time to make sure women have their rights and their representation and their resources looked after.”

She pointed to the work of the Nordic Women Mediation Network, a year-old effort that links women from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and trains them to participate in peace processes.—*Reuters*

German SPD boss Gabriel will challenge Merkel in election, Bild says

BERLIN — The chairman of Germany's Social Democrats (SPD), Sigmar Gabriel, has decided to run against conservative Angela Merkel for the chancellorship in September's federal election, the newspaper Bild reported on Tuesday.

The report backs up what senior party sources told Reuters last week, that there is no realistic alternative to Gabriel, vice chancellor and economy minister in Merkel's right-left coalition of the last four years.

A spokesman for Gabriel said the party was sticking to its planned timetable. "The SPD will decide on its candidate for chancellor on 29 January," he said. Senior party members are holding a closed-door meeting to discuss election strategy on Tuesday, but the question of who will be the party's top candidate will not be discussed officially,



German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel attend a meeting at the lower house of parliament Bundestag on 2017 budget in Berlin, Germany, on 23 November, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

Bild reported.

The paper said the SPD's last chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder, had urged Gabriel to stand. "You must make clear that you really want it," the newspaper cites Schroeder as saying, adding: "Otherwise I'm ready to do it again." Gabriel has long favoured to stand against

Merkel, but some party members had hoped that Martin Schulz, the former president of the European Parliament, would take on the role. That now looks unlikely, since he is tipped to become foreign minister, replacing Frank-Walter Steinmeier, whom ruling parties have agreed to elect as German president

next month.

Gabriel, a 57-year-old former school teacher, trails Merkel in popularity ratings. He has a reputation for being unpredictable, but he is more popular with the SPD rank and file than his recent predecessors.

Although the SPD wants to win enough votes to form a coalition with the Greens and possibly the radical Left party, most analysts think another 'grand coalition' is the most likely outcome with Merkel clinching a fourth term.

An INSA poll in Bild on Tuesday showed Merkel's conservatives on 32 per cent, unchanged from last week, and the SPD also stable on 21 per cent. The combined total for the SPD, Greens and Left was 41 per cent compared with 53 per cent for another grand coalition. It put the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) on 15 per cent. — Reuters

London commuters endure transport misery as rail staff strike

LONDON — Millions of Londoners struggled to work on Monday at the start of a week of travel chaos which sees rail networks brought to a standstill by a series of strikes.

Commuters used cars, boats, bicycles and heaving buses to cope with a 24-hour walkout by underground station staff that left the majority of "Tube" stops in central London closed and no services operating from mainline stations such as Victoria, Kings Cross and Waterloo.

Huge queues began building up outside stations while many major roads in the city were gridlocked.

"I'm giving up on even trying," said software developer Rajiv Perseedoss, 30, who was trying to get to work in central London from Canary Wharf in the east of the city.

"I'm not a Tube worker, I don't know about their conditions, but whatever it is, they can't take it out on everybody."

Monday's walkout on the Tube, which carries up to 4.8 million passengers a day, begins a week of industrial action which will hit rail and air passengers, and there are warnings the problems could



Commuters walk across Waterloo Bridge during a strike on the Underground by members of two unions in protest at ticket office closures and reduced staffing levels, in London, Britain on 9 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

spread across the country.

Train drivers on Southern Rail are striking on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, bringing all rail services used by hundreds of thousands of passengers from the south coast and Gatwick Airport to London to a halt.

Southern commuters have already suffered months of delays, cancellations and walkouts in Britain's worse rail disruption in decades, due to a row over whose role it should be

to open and close doors on the trains.

The Sunday Times newspaper said the dispute could spread to services in central and northern England as other operators look to bring in driver-only trains.

British Airways staff will also begin a strike for two days over pay on Tuesday, although the impact of the walkout is likely to be limited.

"It's intolerable that key public services can be

brought to a halt by a small number of militant trade unionists in what increasingly looks like a co-ordinated political action," Nick Herbert, a lawmaker in Prime Minister Theresa May's Conservative Party, told the Daily Telegraph newspaper.

The London Underground strike by staff in the RMT and TSSA unions comes in a dispute over staffing levels after the closure of ticket offices in recent years.—Reuters

US sanctions Russia's top investigator, four others for rights abuses

WASHINGTON — The United States on Monday blacklisted Alexander Bastyrykin, Russia's top investigator and a close aide to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and four other Russian officials for human rights abuses.

The sanctions, announced by the US Treasury Department, are not tied to US hacking allegations against Russia but to the 2012 US Magnitsky Act for human rights abuses, US officials said. However, the move comes on top of a series of measures taken by the Obama administration in recent weeks to punish Russia for the hacking during the US presidential campaign and for harassment of American diplomats.

Bastyrykin heads the Russian Investigative Committee, the government body that decides whether to bring criminal charges. Also sanctioned were Gennady Plaksin and Stanislav Gordiyevsky, a state investigator, both tied to Sergei Magnit-

sky, an anti-corruption lawyer who died in 2009 after a year in a Russian jail.

The Magnitsky Act bars Russians believed to have been involved in his death or other severe human rights abuses from entering the United States, and freezes their assets there. Also blacklisted were Andrei Lugovoy, a Russian lawmaker, and Dmitry Kovtun, both leading suspects in the murder of Russian spy and Kremlin critic Alexander Litvinenko in London in 2006. Litvinenko fled Russia for Britain, where he was poisoned after drinking green tea laced with a rare but potent radioactive isotope at a London Hotel.— Reuters

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV TOVE MAERSK VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MCC S'PORE VOY. NO ()

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MCC S'PORE VOY. NO () are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11.1.2017 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of M.I.T./M.I.P where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE)
PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185



Lead singer Bono (C) of Irish rock band U2 performs with Edge (L) and Adam Clayton (R) during their 360 Degree Tour at King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels on 22 September, 2010. PHOTO: REUTERS

U2 take 'operatic' Joshua Tree album on tour 30 years on

LONDON — Irish rockers U2 said on Monday they would mark the 30th anniversary of their hit album "The Joshua Tree" by playing it in full on a European and North American tour.

The 1987 album sold more than 25 million copies worldwide, and topped charts with its hits "With Or Without You", "Where The Streets Have No Name" and

"I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For".

"Recently I listened back to 'The Joshua Tree' for the first time in nearly 30 years ... it's quite an opera. A lot of emotions which feel strangely current, love, loss, broken dreams, seeking oblivion, polarization ... all the greats," frontman Bono said in a statement.

The north American leg of the tour will kick off in May in Vancouver, followed by a European section starting in London in July and including an appearance back home at Dublin's Croke Park stadium. OneRepublic, Mumford & Sons and The Lumineers will support the band in America, and Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds in Europe.—Reuters

The Weeknd climbs back to top of Billboard 200 with 'Starboy'



Musician The Weeknd. PHOTO: REUTERS

LOS ANGELES — Canadian hip hop singer The Weeknd climbed back to the top of the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday, in a quiet week where no new entries cracked into the top 10.

"Starboy," which was in the No 2 spot last week, sold 69,000 album units including 59 million album streams for the week ending on 5 January, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

The album initially debuted at No 1 after its release in November.

The soundtrack to Disney's hit animated film "Moana" climbed four spots to No 2 this week with sales of 64,000 album units, while Bruno Mars' "24K Magic" remained steady at No 3 with 45,000 more album units sold.

The Billboard 200 album chart tallies units from album sales, song sales (10 songs equal one album) and streaming activity (1,500 streams equal one album).

Last week's chart-topper, US a cappella group Pentatonix' festive "A Pentatonix Christmas," dropped to No 41 this week.

On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online song sales, Mars' upbeat single "24K Magic" climbed from No 7 to No 1 with 77,000 copies sold.

British singer Ed Sheeran is likely to make a big impact on the song charts next week after releasing two singles, "Shape of You" and "Castle on the Hill."

Both tracks made Spotify history over the weekend after breaking the streaming platform's previous first-day record with a combined 13 million global streams, each tallying more than 6 million streams.

The tracks overtook the previous record holder, One Direction's "Drag Me Down," which was streamed 4.8 million times on its first day of release in August 2015.—Reuters

Trump calls Meryl Streep 'overrated actress' as attack divides Americans

BEVERLY HILLS — Donald Trump called Meryl Streep an "overrated actress" on Monday after the three-time Oscar winner launched a blistering attack on the US president-elect that again exposed the rift between Hollywood liberals and conservative Americans.

Streep turned a lifetime award acceptance speech at Sunday's Golden Globe awards into an indictment of Trump's personality and his tough stance on immigration.

"This instinct to humiliate when it's modelled by someone in the public platform by someone powerful, it filters down into everybody's life," the "Sophie's Choice" actress said, recalling Trump's imitation in 2015 of a disabled reporter without mentioning the president-elect by name.

Trump responded on Twitter: "Meryl Streep, one of the most overrated actresses in Hollywood, doesn't know me but attacked last night at the Golden

Globes.

"She is a Hillary flunky who lost big."

Trump also repeated his denial that he had mocked the reporter when he flailed his arms and slurred his speech at a campaign event.

The speech by Streep, who had a prime-time speaking slot at last year's Democratic National Convention praising Hillary Clinton's "grit and grace," quickly became the most-talked about moment of the Golden Globes.

Global digital marketing company Amobee said it sparked some 627,000 Tweets in four hours. Not all the responses were complimentary.

"This Meryl Streep speech is why Trump won. And if people in Hollywood don't start recognising why and how - you will help him get re-elected," Meghan McCain, daughter of Republican Senator John McCain, wrote on Twitter.—Reuters

Vivienne Westwood closes London men's fashion week in eccentric style

LONDON — Britain's dame of fashion Vivienne Westwood wrapped up London Fashion Week Men's on Monday with an eclectic collection showcasing edgy designs that included dresses for men.

Westwood, 75, who is known for her eccentric creations and environmental activism, presented both menswear and womenswear for her autumn/winter 2017/18 "Ecotricity" line, putting men in dresses and skirts and ties on women.

Models wore colourful knits made up of jumpers and trousers as well as long dresses and arm cuffs, at times slit on the sides. Men's suits were deconstructed or had wide, ankle length trousers and sometimes were worn with long cloaks.

Women's jackets had asymmetric cuts or exaggerated shoulders. Shirts had large collars and colorful prints and patterns, including skulls and faces, adorned most designs.

"She and he are having fun with unisex and swapping clothes," shownotes for the collection read. "Buy less, choose



Designer Vivienne Westwood (C) walks the runway after her catwalk show during London Fashion Week Men's 2017 in London, Britain on 9 January 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

well, make it last' limits the exploitation of the planet's natural resources."

Outfits were often layered and looks were accessorized with face paint, paper crowns, colorful socks, tights and boots.

Westwood, who previously showed menswear in Milan, was the biggest name at the four-day London event following the departure of brands like luxury la-

bel Burberry.

"London is my home. I regret leaving Milan because they've been so kind to me," the designer said backstage.

"It's just easier and more efficient for us to be here."

Burberry will present its menswear collection alongside its womenswear line at London's higher profile women's fashion week next month.—Reuters

Cuban rides around advertising rules on towering bike



Felix Guirola, 52, rides a homemade bike with an advertising banner in Havana, Cuba, on 20 July, 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

HAVANA — Cubans are adept at inventing ways to earn cash but Felix Guirola stands - or rather, cycles - head and shoulders above them.

The handyman, who loves heights, provides advertising space for companies on homemade bikes that tower up to 7.5 metres (24.61 ft). He rides them around Havana in an ingenious way of getting around strict marketing regulations in the Communist-ruled island.

He said he clambered up coconut trees as a child so it was only natural that he would want to ride at tree-top level by soldering several frames onto one another.

For years, Guirola rode his contraptions as carnival attractions, which he dismounts by jumping off, or simply for pleasure.

His dream of earning a living off his bikes came slightly closer to reality last year when he was talent-spotted by foreign firms as Cuba was thrust into the global spotlight with a visit by US President Barack Obama's and a Rolling Stones concert.

They offered to pay Guirola for advertising their wares while he cycled by placing their adverts on the spindly frame of his bikes.

"It's a new job and I'm happy to advertise anything, be it for the Cuban

Revolution or for a business chain," said Guirola, who has seven bikes of various sizes.

Guirola's first gig was for Dutch energy drink Time Flies during the preparations for the Rolling Stones concert last March. He earned \$40, a princely sum in a country where the average state wage is \$25 per month.

Since then, he negotiated a deal with them whereby they pay him \$100 per month.

Guirola said his life's ambition was to win the Guinness World Record for the tallest rideable bike, although he was unsure how to apply. According to the Guinness website, the lat-

est record was set in 2013 by a US bike standing just 6.15 meters tall.

"In 1987, I was already riding a bicycle that measured six meters, but no one knew," said Guirola.

He said he was working on a 10-metre tall bike although it would be easier if the United States lifted its embargo on Cuba so Cubans could have access to better technology. Obama restored diplomatic relations with Cuba in July 2015, but the embargo remains in place.

"I've been doing this now for 34 years," Guirola said. "I could teach people how to (ride tall bikes) but not everyone wants to take the risk." —Reuters

Snow sculpture of police car unveiled in Hokkaido town

ASAHIKAWA — Police officers in a small Hokkaido town marked a Japanese police anniversary Tuesday by making a highly realistic snow sculpture of a police vehicle to help maintain local safety and bring smiles to children's faces.

10 January is designated Dial 110 Day in Japan to promote knowledge of the appropriate way to use the emergency number to call police to report a crime or accident.

In the town of Horonobe on the northernmost main island, a snow sculpture of a life-size police vehicle, which allows people to get in and sit on the backseat, was unveiled at a residential police box.

Several police officers of the town with a population of some 2,400 worked to create the sculpture, using a chainsaw and color sprays to shape a block of snow

into a smaller police vehicle. It even has a red light made of ice that glows at night.

The sculpture was originally the idea of Masashi Onishi, 32, who previously staffed the police box. He thought local residents would feel safer if there was a realistic snow sculpture of a police vehicle outside the box even when it was empty due to him patrolling.

As his sculpture, first made two years ago, became widely known in the town because of its closeness to reality, the practice has been passed on to the current policeman at the box, Akihisa Ikeguchi, 37. "I felt some pressure but it was good

to see the smiles of children," said Ikeguchi, who took part in the sculpture work for the first time. "I hope it will contribute to maintaining local safety." —Kyodo News

Tintin's debut "Land of the Soviets" adventure gets colour makeover

LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE, Belgium —The 1930 debut adventure of fictional young Belgian reporter Tintin and his dog Snowy was republished on Monday, showing his trip to the Soviet Union for the first time in colour.

Tintin in the Land of the Soviets is the only one of the series of 24 cartoon stories that has only ever appeared in black and white and the new version will recreate the colours used in the subsequent works.

The nine volumes that followed, including Tintin in America and the Blue Lotus, initially came out in black and white but were re-released in colour from the 1940s by Georges Remi, known as Hergé, who then switched to colour-only cartoons.

Casterman's artistic director Michel Bareaud said the new edition had taken since 2014 to get right.

It is not entirely clear

why Hergé chose not to re-issue Tintin in the Land of the Soviets in colour. Some critics consider it Hergé's most primitive piece and believe the artist was embarrassed by it.

The story has Tintin narrowly escaping from a bomb on a train in Berlin and then being pursued by Soviet secret police.

Casterman said the thoughts of Hergé, who died in 1983, were unknown but a colour edition made the story far more accessible.

At an event in central Brussels this weekend, Tintin fans dressed as characters were broadly positive.

"I was very happy with it when it was still in black and white but after all, why not? You have to move with the times. It's the only album that was not in colour, so maybe it's a good thing," said Marc Bosmans, a Brussels local dressed as Tintin. —Reuters

mitv Myanmar International Programme Schedule

(11-1-2017 07:00am ~ 12-1-2017 07:00am) MST

07:03	Am	News
07:26	Am	Orchid Lover
07:35	Am	A Way of Life: Karate-do
07:48	Am	A Way of Life: Aikido
08:03	Am	News
08:26	Am	Director: Kyi Phyu Shin
08:37	Am	Kambawzathardi Golden Palace - A Treasured Legacy Of Golden Days
08:52	Am	A Nun's Creation in Fruit Carving
09:03	Am	News
09:26	Am	Aye Aye Soe: Myanma Pioneer Female Bodybuilder
09:40	Am	Products of Myanmar - Myanmar Circular

09:52	Am	Stone Slab
10:03	Am	Philatelic Pleasure
10:26	Am	News
		An Ardent Aficionado Of Traditional Design

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

Prime Time

07:03	Pm	News
07:26	Pm	A Journey To Southern Shan State (Ep-1)
07:47	Pm	Grow Back For Posterity "The Dawn of Development"
08:03	Pm	News
08:26	Pm	Exquisite Myanmar Silk
08:46	Pm	The Art of Sand Painting And Its Creator's life

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

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

Ronaldo wins FIFA's player of the year award



Carli Lloyd and Cristiano Ronaldo pose with their awards after the FIFA Awards Ceremony for Men's Player of the Year in Zurich, Switzerland on 9 January, 2017. PHOTO: REUTERS

ZURICH — Cristiano Ronaldo won FIFA's player of the year award for the fourth time on Monday, beating his old rival Lionel Messi who was pulled out of the ceremony only a few hours earlier by his club Barcelona.

Italian Claudio Ranieri won

the coach of the year award for leading rank outsiders Leicester City to the English Premier League title.

Ronaldo was rewarded for his performance in 2016 when he won the Champions League with his club Real Madrid and then

Euro 2016 with Portugal. Five-times winner and four-times runner-up Messi was second and Frenchman Antoine Griezmann third.

Barcelona said that Wednesday's game against Athletic Bilbao would take priority over the

ceremony and that none of their invited players would travel, which disappointed Ronaldo.

"I would like Messi to have been here today but they have an important game on Wednesday and we can understand that," he said after accepting the award from FIFA president Gianni Infantino.

"I don't have much more to say, I think the awards speak for themselves," he added. "I'm very happy and I can say that 2016 was the best year of my career, the trophy shows that people aren't blind and watch the games."

FIFA, which organised the award jointly with France Football magazine from 2010 to 2015 when it was named the Ballon d'Or, rebranded it as "The Best" this year after splitting with the French publication.

France Football continued with its own award which was also won by Ronaldo last month.

The ceremony, previously held at the Kongresshaus theatre in central Zurich, this year took place in the much more modest setting of a television studio on an industrial estate near the airport. Ronaldo previously won in 2008, 2013, 2014 with Messi second on each occasion. Mes-

si won from 2009-12 and then again in 2015 with Ronaldo second on every occasion except in 2010 when Andres Iniesta was runner-up.

Ranieri said he was "crazy" after winning the coach's award ahead of Fernando Santos, who led Portugal to the Euro 2016 title.

"I am crazy now," he said. "What happened last season in England was something strange. The football gods said Leicester must win." Colombian side Atletico Nacional were given the Fair Play Award for conceding to Copa Sudamericana title to Brazilian side Chapecoense, whose team was decimated when a plane taking to the final crashed, killing 71 people.

"We did nothing more than what we had to do...handing them this trophy as a gesture of hope," said club president Juan Carlos de La Cuesta.

American Carli Lloyd won the women's player of the year award for the second year in a row. Mohd Faiz Subri, of Malaysian Super League side Penang, won the goal of the year award for a 35-metre free kick in which the ball dipped and swung in a bewildering fashion to leave the goalkeeper stranded.—Reuters

Wigan boss returns to Manchester United in FA Cup

LONDON — FA Cup holders Manchester United will face Championship side Wigan Athletic at Old Trafford in the FA Cup fourth round after the draw was made on Monday.

The match-up will mean a quick return to Old Trafford for Warren Joyce, the club's former reserve team manager who left United after 10 years to join Wigan last November.

Second tier side Wigan have struggled since producing one of the competition's biggest ever upsets when they beat Manchester City 1-0 in the final to win the FA Cup in 2013 and currently lie second from bottom in the Championship.

Unusually, the draw did not throw up one confirmed clash between Premier League teams although Arsenal could face Southampton if the Saints beat Norwich City in the replay and Sam Allardyce's Crystal Palace,



Wigan Athletic manager Warren Joyce. PHOTO: REUTERS

who also have more work to do after a 0-0 draw at Bolton, could face Manchester City.

Liverpool, who were surprisingly held to a goalless draw by League Two side Plymouth Argyle on Sunday, will play Wolves if they win their replay while league leaders Chelsea will entertain Championship side Brentford, the second time in four years the west London neighbours have been paired together in the fourth round.

London's other derby pits Millwall, who beat Premier League side Bournemouth in the third round, against Premier League side Watford.

The Midlands will also host a fierce local tussle between fast-improving Championship side Derby County and Premier

League champions Leicester City.

Eight-time winners Tottenham Hotspur will be pleased with a home draw against League Two side Wycombe Wanderers while Sutton and Lincoln, the two non-league sides left in the competition, will be disappointed not to have secured Premier League opposition if they win their replays against Wimbledon and Ipswich respectively.

Sutton have been paired with the winner of Monday's final third-round tie between Cambridge and Leeds United, while Lincoln would face Championship leaders Brighton. The games are scheduled to be played over the weekend of 27-30 January.—Reuters

Cibulkova, Wozniacki advance in contrasting style

SYDNEY — Women's world number six Dominika Cibulkova and former top-ranked player Caroline Wozniacki took contrasting routes to the second round of the Sydney International on Monday.

Cibulkova dropped just two games in her 6-2 6-0 demolition of Germany's Laura Siegemund as the reigning WTA Finals champion set up a second-round meeting with Eugenie Bouchard of Canada. Wozniacki survived a second set meltdown to beat Olympic champion Monica Puig 6-3 2-6 6-4. "It's a tough match, because you kind of feel like 'oh, I'm winning pretty comfortably right now' but then she can go on a streak," said the Dane.

"That's where it started going in the second set, and in the third set I tried to stay closer to the baseline and maybe play a little deeper," Wozniacki added.

Cibulkova needed three grueling sets against Siegemund in their only previous meeting last year in Wuhan but was a lot more assertive on Monday.

"I just felt pretty good, you know, overall when I practise here, and of course match and practice is different story, but I was ready," said Cibulkova, who suffered a quarter-final defeat at the hands of Frenchwoman Alize Cornet in Brisbane last week.

"I knew it was going to be tough, but I had very good answers for her good shots. I was really solid, and when I had the chance, I was going for my shots.

"The chances I didn't take in Brisbane against Cornet, today I took almost all of them. So sometimes it's like this. I really appreciate this performance I had today." Sixth-seeded Brit Johanna Konta and ninth seed Roberta Vinci also progressed with straight-sets victories.

Konta defeated local favourite Arina Rodionova 6-3 6-4 while Vinci beat Greek qualifier Maria Sakkari 6-4 6-0.

There was more heartbreak for local fans as Australian veteran Sam Stosur bowed out after her 6-3 6-1 defeat by Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.—Reuters