

Q: US senate OKs crucial tax deal?

The US Senate has approved a deal to avert general tax hikes and spending cuts known as the "fiscal cliff". The bill, which raises taxes for the wealthy, came after lengthy talks between Vice-President Joe Biden and Senate Republicans. The House is due to consider it later. Spending cuts have been delayed for two months to allow a wider agreement. Congress missed the deadline to pass a bill, but few effects will be felt as Tuesday is a US public holiday. Tax cuts approved during the presidency of George W Bush formally expired at midnight on Dec. 31. Without approval in the House, huge tax rises for virtually all working Americans will kick in automatically. Analysts warned that if the full effects of the fiscal cliff were allowed to take hold, the resulting reduction in consumer spending could spark a new recession. The compromise deal reached on Monday seeks to avoid this by extending the tax cuts for Americans earning under USD400,000 - up from the USD250,000 level Democrats had originally sought. A huge spending cut that would see USD1.2 tln shorn from the federal budget over 10 years has been deferred for two months, allowing Congress and the White House to reopen negotiations.

Q: French president vows to revive supertax?

France's President Francois Hollande says he still plans to raise the top rate of income tax after his 75% plan was struck down on technical grounds. In a national address on New Year's Eve, he said the law would be redesigned, adding, "we will still ask more of those who have the most". However, he did not mention the 75% figure, leading some to speculate that the move would be watered down. The president also promised "all efforts" towards cutting unemployment. The number of jobless broke the three-million barrier for the first time this year, prompting Hollande to say the trend must be reversed. Hollande has been criticised for lacking direction, and his popularity levels have plummeted, since he took power in May. He acknowledged the "serious and legitimate" concerns of the public, and that there had been "fits and starts" in his first six months. The policy has angered France's business leaders and the right-wing opposition, who say it discourages entrepreneurship and wealth-creation.

Q: Indian carrier loses licence to fly?

India's troubled Kingfisher Airlines has lost its flying permit after a deadline to renew its suspended licence expired, the aviation regulator said. The debt-ridden carrier has been grounded since October after repeated strikes by workers over unpaid wages. The airline said there was no cause for concern as rules allowed the renewal of a permit within two years of expiry. Kingfisher has USD1.4 bln in debts and it is looking to raise funds after lenders refused to give fresh loans. The airline said it was "confident of securing approval from the

regulator on the restart plan, licence approval and reinstatement of its operating permit".

Owned by flamboyant billionaire Vijay Mallya, Kingfisher has made annual losses for five years in a row.

问：美国参议院通过关键的税收协议？

美国参议院已通过一项协议，以防止跌落“财政悬崖”。所谓的“财政悬崖”是指一般税收增加和开支削减。在副总统拜登与参议院共和党人进行漫长的讨论之后，这项向富人增税的法案终获参院通过。众议院将于晚些时候对此予以考虑。削减开支已决定延后两个月执行，以达成更为广泛的协议。国会错过了通过此项法案的最后期限，但由于周二是美国公众假期，民众感觉不到明显的影响。总统乔治·布什在任期间批准的减税措施于 12 月 31 日午夜正式到期。未获众议院批准的情况下，向几乎所有美国工薪阶层大幅增税的计划将会自动生效。分析师警告称，如果“财政悬崖”全面生效，其造成的消费开支削减可能会使美国经济陷入新一轮的衰退当中。为避免这种情况，周一两党达成了妥协协议，决定向年收入低于 400,000 美元的国人延长减税措施，减税门槛从原先民主党人提出的 250,000 美元有所提高。未来 10 年削减 1.2 万亿美元联邦预算的巨额开支削减已延后两个月执行，以允许国会与白宫进行重新谈判。

问：法国总统誓言继续征收附加税？

拟征 75% 的所得税在技术层面被否决后，法国总统奥朗德称其仍计划上调最高所得税税率。在新年前夕的全国讲话中，他表示将会重新制订法律，还说，“我们将继续对富人征收更多的税”。然而，他并未提到 75% 这个数字，部分人揣测这一举措将会有所放宽。总统还承诺会“竭尽全力”降低失业率。今年失业人数首次突破三百万大关，奥朗德随即表示一定会逆转这一趋势。奥朗德被指责施政混乱，自五月份掌权以来，支持率一路下滑。他说公众的关切是“严重的，也是合乎情理的”，并坦承自己上任的头六个月的表现“时好时坏”。这一政策触怒了法国商界领袖和右翼反对派，他们表示该政策不鼓励创业精神和财富创造。

问：印度一航空公司被吊销飞行执照？

印度航空监管机构表示，陷入困境的印度翠鸟航空公司(Kingfisher Airlines)因未能在最后期限前对暂被吊销的执照进行续期，现已失去飞行许可证。自 10 月份以来，工人多次因拖欠工资而罢工，债务缠身的翠鸟航空已被停飞。该航空公司表示不必担心，因法规允许在许可证到期两年内进行续期。翠鸟航空现负债 14 亿美元，因放款人拒绝提供新的贷款，正积极寻求融资。该航空公司表示，其“有信心确保监管机构批准重新启动计划、执照及恢复经营许可”。翠鸟航空公司已连续亏损五年，为财大气粗的亿万富翁 Vijay Mallya 所有。