Cheats in beans sales hurt both traders and growers

The Manila-based financial institution predicted that the possible bond sale of Southeast Asia will help to support annual expansion that it saw reaching 9.5 percent by 2030, said Park. The chief economist of ADB.

The International Monetary Fund has also predicted the growth of Myanmar will average 8.25 percent in the next few years.

Myanmar granted licenses to nine foreign banks this month, including Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp, Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd and Malayan Banking Bhd. Experts commented that Myanmar could follow the example of Laos, which sold its debut sovereign notes last year in Thailand.

Park said in the statement of ADB on 22 October that Myanmar is trying to establish a legal frame for capital markets but initially what’s important is to strengthen the banking sector.

ADB has also commented that improving access to credit will help raise Myanmar’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita from US$876 to a forecast US$5,000 by 2030. The World Bank data shows that Laos has now a GDP per capita of US$1,646, Indonesia’s is US$3,475 and the ratio is US$5,779 in Thailand.

The ADB, founded in 1966, has 67 members and its capital base was $175 billion as of Dec. 31, 2013, while the AIIB is expected to start with a capital of around $50 billion.

According to the report of Xinhua news agency on Saturday, twenty-one Asian countries that are willing to join the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as founding members on Friday signed the Memorandum of Understanding on establishing the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) by 2015.

The countries are Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

The inter-governmental regional development institution in Asia aims to fund rail, road, power and other projects across the region.

According to the official statement, the Bank’s authorized capital is $100 billion while the initial subscribed capital is expected to be around $50 billion, with the possible paid-in ration of 20 percent.

Myanmar business model contest winners to enter Mekong Business Challenges 2014

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

Yangon, 25 Oct—Two Myanmar teams have been selected to enter the Mekong Business Challenges 2014, which will be held in Hanoi of Vietnam on 15 March 2015, sources said.

The two business teams emerged victorious at the professional level of the 4th Myanmar Business Model Contest 2014 on Saturday, with organizers saying that they will have to compete with smart teams from Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and Yunnan Province of China.

Wah Wae Aye Khine and Yu Mon Kham, the first winners of the contest, said that they hope to hold the championship in the Mekong Business Challenges with their business model entitled “Effective and Inexpensive Water Filter”.

They said their device is intended for people especially in developing countries and it needs no electricity and can be easily used for getting safe drinking water.

Table Top Grocers, the second winning team, won the contest with their business plan entitled “Starting up a Door-to-Door Grocery Delivery Business”, said it took them three months to work on the plan, expressing their gratitude to their training providers for their suggestions.

The Myanmar business model contest was jointly organized by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and the Cross-Border International Education Support Foundation (CIESF) of Japan with the aim of inspiring and establishing the new generation of Myanmar entrepreneurs.

At the award ceremony on Saturday, Dr Myo Thein, a vice-president of the UMFCCI and Mr Ken Matsuura, a country representative of the CIESF, presented prizes to the six winning teams at both amateur and professional levels.

The first-prize winning team at the professional level received US$3,000 and the second-prize winning team, US$1,000.

The Japanese foundation has pledged business links between Japanese entrepreneurs and participants with the best business models at the challenge.
Cultural course conducted at Youth Development Park on Sama Hill

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Oct—With the sponsorship of the chairman of Myanmar Theravada Buddhist Federation and Border Areas and Hill Region Sasa-Nyugaha Association, a ceremony to open the culture course was held in conjunction with the health care services free of charge at Mahta Parahita Youth Development Park on Sama Hill in Thawutti of Lewe Township on Friday. Leader of the religious advisor group to the President Thura U Maung Maung and Chairman of the association Agga Maha Thiri Thuhamma Manjotadhara Wunna Kyawhin Dr Khin Shwe made speeches.

They donated teaching aid and uniforms to the students.

Dr Khin Shwe presented K100,000 each to eight students at University of Technology, three cadets at military academy and one at University of Economics and K50,000 each to four students of University of Nursing. Those students were turned out from Sama Hill Youth Development Park.

Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vimala and Bhaddanta Naninda of Sama Hill established the park in 1990 to be able to nurture the children. So far, the park has turned out 20 graduates. Now, it nurtures 446 children. —Yun Soe

Repaved streets commissioned into service

NAY PYI TAW, 25 Oct—A ceremony to inaugurate Gandama street, 1st and 2nd Myitmakha streets and 2nd Swedaw street were held in Shwenatha Ward of Ottarathiri Township on Friday morning. Member of Nay Pyi Taw Council U Phone Zaw Han explained development undertakings in Ottarathiri Township. The Nay Pyi Taw Council member and officials formally opened the repaved streets.

The ceremony was also attended by Vice Mayor of Nay Pyi Taw U Than Kyaw Htoo.—MNA

Land plot inspected for construction of fire station

NAYOYI, 25 Oct—Hsan Zaw Oo and Head of Natogyi Township Fire Station U Maung Maung Htwe made a field trip to choose the plot for the fire station in Pyinsi Village of the township on 23 October. They inspected a three-acre plot for the fire station in the southern part of the village. Head of Township Fire Station U Maung Maung Htwe reported on coordination being made for plot of the fire station near the Myingyan-Mandalay road or the centre of the village.

Fire Services Department (Head Office) has sent two fire trucks to Natogyi to deliver them to Pyinsi Fire Station so as to take fire preventive measures in over 1,000 households of the village. —Khin Zar Mon Myint (Law)

EU Country Roadmap for Engagement with civil society Myanmar held in Mandalay

MANDALAY, 25 Oct—A seminar on EU country roadmap for engagement with civil society Myanmar: Consultation with civil society took place at Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel in Aungmyethazan Township of Mandalay on Friday morning, with an address by Mr George Dura, on behalf of the EU Ambassador.

The civil societies discussed drawing of policy, sustainable development of environment for civil society. The seminar focused on the most important challenges and vision. —Tin Maung (Mandalay)
Union Health Minister inspects upgrading and renovation of Yangon General Hospital

YANGON, 25 Oct — Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung on Saturday made an inspection of tour of Yangon General Hospital where renovation and upgradation works are taking place.

 Accompanied by Director-General Dr Min Than Nyunt and officials, the Union minister held a meeting with the medical superintendent, professors/heads of departments and those who are responsible for the upgrading and renovation of the hospital.

In his speech, the Union minister said that a great deal of attention is being put into the hospital to turn the hospital into the reliable one for the people seeking medical care, with the working groups carrying out upgrading and renovation works.

He called for timely completion of construction works, meeting set standards and underlining the importance of serving patients efficiently.

Dr Hla Myint, medical superintendent of the hospital, reported that efforts are being made to ensuring construction work is completed on time. Main building is undergoing renovation, without damaging its structure, he added.

Next, the Union minister inspected construction of extended five-storied building, Cyclotron and PET/CT building which is about 85 percent complete and the upgrading and renovation of the main building.

Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung inspects Yangon General Hospital.—MNA

Veteran writer U Aung Thin dies at 88

YANGON 25 Oct—Myanmar veteran writer U Aung Thin died at the age of 88 at his home here on Saturday.

The winner of National Literature Award had wrote more than 50 books in the genres of ethical conducts, cultural knowledge and motivation of youth inspiration since he had entered writing career in 1957. He entered academic profession in 1962 as a tutor, and worked at Myanmar language department of academic institutions, including University of Yangon.

U Aung Thin was born in Tawndwingyi Township of Magway region, central Myanmar, on 17 April 1927. He received a master degree for his paper on the study of short stories in 1974. The former lecturer was also a member of Free Funeral Service Society (Yangon), while he was going around the country for literary talks.

He won the Lifetime National Literary Award in 2012 for its tireless efforts for the development of Myanmar literature.

Union FM sends message of felicitations to Austria

NAV PYI TAW, 26 Oct — U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, has sent a message of felicitations to His Excellency Mr Sebastian Kruz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria, on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Austria, which falls on 26 October 2014. —MNA

Rakhine State Chief Minister receives guests, attends ECC meeting

SITTWE, 25 Oct — Rakhine State Chief Minister U Maung Maung Ohn received Mr. Oliver Mouquet, head of UNHCR Sittwe Office, and party at his office on Monday.

During the meeting, they held talks on construction of houses for 70 Maramagyi households at Setyonsu (1) relief camp and renovation of hostels at other relief camps.

Likewise, the Chief Minister met with U Shwe Maung, chairman of REIC Public Co., Ltd, and party at the same venue to hold discussions on agriculture sector development in the region.

Matters related to selling combined harvesters to farmers by installment and developing a new town near Mingan ward and construction of affordable housing were discussed at the meeting.

Next, the Chief Minister attended a work coordination meeting of Rakhine State Emergency Coordination Centre and delivered a speech.

Rakhine State IPRD

7th Meeting of High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs held in Mandalay

Mandalay, 25 Oct—The Seventh and Final Meeting of the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs was held at Mandalay Hill Resort Hotel, Mandalay from 21st to 24th October 2014.

The meeting was chaired by Director-General (Rtd.) U Aung Bwa, Chair of HLTF and Myanmar Representative to the HLTF and attended by HLTF representatives and delegates from ASEAN Member States and U Nyan Lyann, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN and officials from the ASEAN Secretariat.

As it is the final meeting of the HLTF, recommendations made by members of HLTF were finalized and adopted. The Report of the HLTF and their recommendations will be submitted to the ASEAN leaders at the 25th ASEAN Summit to be held in November 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw through 15th ASEAN Coordinating Council in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the HLTF.

The HLTF focused its recommendations on strengthening ASEAN through streamlining and improving its work processes and coordination among ASEAN Organ, enhancing the conduct of ASEAN’s external relations as well as strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat. The recommendations are made for “Immediate Term” (within 2 years), “Medium Term” (within 2 to 5 years) and “Long Term” (more than 5 years) for implementation.

ASEAN Leaders, in 2013, decided to establish the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs. During Myanmar Chairmanship in 2014, seven meetings were held to deliberate on their mandates. It is expected that the recommendations of the HLTF will be instrumental in strengthening ASEAN Institutions including ASEAN Secretariat as well as to assist in realization of the Post-2015 ASEAN Community’s Vision to be adopted at the 27th ASEAN Summit in 2015.

Ten Maung (Mandalay)

The Seventh Meeting of the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN Organs Mandalay, Myanmar 21-24 October 2014

Union Minister for Health Dr Than Aung inspects Yangon General Hospital.—MNA

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Ten Maung (Mandalay)
Thai man confesses to killing another Japanese man

BANGKOK, 25 Oct — A Thai police official said on Friday a 47-year-old Thai man who admitted to killing Yoshinori Shimato, a 79-year-old Japanese man who had been missing since late September, has said he killed another Japanese man.

The revelation was made by Somchai Kaewbangyang, who is thought to be a former husband of Phornchanok Chaiyapa, 47. The couple was arrested on Thursday for allegedly killing Shimato and another Thai woman and a 79-year-old Japanese man's statement.

The police found a severed body parts from Shimato's corpse in a canal near Bangkok after a search based on the Thai man's statement.


India’s Modi unusually approaches media after assuming office

NEW DELHI, 25 Oct — Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday formally reached out to the media, his first such interaction since assuming office after general elections in May this year.

Modi lauded the media for its role in furthering his ambitious “Clean India Campaign”, which he launched early this month.

“Have turned your pen into a broom,” he told some 400 journalists at the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party’s headquarters in capital New Delhi.

The Prime Minister said, “I am reading so many articles on clean India. Electronic and social media is also doing a comprehensive debate on it.

This is a service to the nation. This is a good example of how the media can play a constructive role.”

Modi also recalled his days as a young party worker when he used to wait for the media to arrive and put out chairs for them.

“I am trying to find ways to improve my connection with the media,” he said.— Xinhua

Two killed in flash floods in southern India

NEW DELHI, 25 Oct — At least two people were killed and another one trapped in flash floods in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu on Saturday, a senior police official said.

“The mishap happened when three people were crossing a bridge on a bike in the morning. One person is feared to be trapped in the floods,” he said on condition of anonymity.

The river in the Erode District was rising due to heavy rains in Sathyanganagal forest.

Rescuers had been rushing to the spot, the official added.— Xinhua

Thailand appoints chief negotiator in talks with southern insurgents

BANGKOK, 25 Oct — Thai authorities have appointed the chairman of the army’s advisory panel to lead the renewed peace talks with insurgents in the country’s restive Deep South, a deputy prime minister confirmed on Friday.

The appointment of Gen Aksara Kerdpol is awaiting an official order from Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwon was quoted by the Bangkok Post as saying.

The government is working on solutions to problems in the violence-ridden far South and is determined to make headway, Prawit, who is also the defense minister, said. Thailand’s Deep South, including three Muslim, ethnic-Malay dominated southern border provinces — Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat and four districts of Songkhla, has been plagued with separatist violence since January 2004.

The Prayut government has set out to resume peace talks with southern separatists, with Malaysia continuing to act as the facilitator.

Previous talks between the already-deposited Yingluck government and insurgent groups led by the Barisan Revolusi Nasional started early last year, but stalled in October after five rounds.

A 10-member team has been formed to continue the negotiation which will include all groups involved in the long-standing insurgency, army chief Udomdej Sitabutr said earlier.

According to Udomdej, the National Security Council is currently working with Malaysian authorities on the framework of the negotiation, but the date has yet to be set. — Xinhua

Vietnam urges int’l support to help end AIDS pandemic by 2030

HANOI, 25 Oct — Vietnam urged international support to help end AIDS pandemic by 2030, Vice President Nguyen Thi Doan said on Friday.

Doan made the remarks at a meeting Michel Sidibe, executive director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) and under-secretary-general of the UN in Hanoi.

Doan urged Sidibe to continue coordination and dialogue with the international community to support Vietnam to implement a strategy to end AIDS pandemic by 2030, focusing on prevention.

Sidibe said his current visit to Vietnam aims to further boost the programme of prevention and fight against HIV/AIDS in the country, as well as mobilize domestic and international resources to help Vietnam achieve the UN goal.

The UNAIDS official also called Vietnam to continue investment in preventing and combating HIV in a bid to reach the goal of ending AIDS by 2030.

— Xinhua
Prayer ceremony for peace held in Philippines

MABALACAT CITY, (Philippines), 25 Oct — A group of Japanese and Filipinos gathered in Mabalacat city north of the capital Manila on Saturday to take part in a prayer ceremony for world peace.

The “Pilgrimage Prayer for World Peace” was held to mark the 17th anniversary of the declaration of Mabalacat as a “City of World Peace” and the 70th anniversary of the first suicide air attack deployed by Japanese forces against US warships during World War II.

The ceremony, attended by local officials, tribal children, and some delegates from Japan, was organized by the Mabalacat city government.

It was held at the Goddess of Peace Shrine inside Clark Freeport Zone, close to the former airfield where, on 25 Oct, 1944, Lt.Yukio Seki led the first kamikaze attack fleet against US warships in Leyte Gulf.

“We hope that the day will come when people from all over the world can live without fear of being harmed or killed because one group or nation claims to be more superior, or because they claim to have the blessings of the gods,” Mabalacat Mayor Marino Morales said in a speech at the ceremony.

“Until that day comes, we shall not rest, and we shall always work for peace,” he added. Kyodo News

Turkey: Kurds reject Erdogan report of deal with Syrian rebels to aid besieged Kobani

ISTANBUL / BEIRUT, 25 Oct — A senior Syrian Kurdish official on Friday rejected a report from Turkey’s president that Kurds had agreed to let Free Syrian Army fighters enter the border town of Kobani to help them push back besieging Islamic State insurgents.

The Free Syrian Army is a term used to describe dozens of armed groups fighting to overthrow President Bashar al-Assad but with little or no central command. They have been widely outgunned by Islamist insurgents such as Islamic State.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan is a leading opponent of Assad and has allowed his more secular, Western-backed opponents such as FSA fighters to use Turkey as a base and sanctuary.

Erdogan said on Friday, 25 Oct, 1,300 FSA fighters would enter Kobani after the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) agreed on their passage, but his comments were swiftly denied by Saleh Moslem, co-chair of the PYD.

“We have already established a connection with FSA but no such agreement has been reached yet as Mr Erdogan has mentioned,” Moslem told Reuters by telephone from Brussels.

Turkey’s unwillingness to send its powerful army across the Syrian border to break the siege of Kobani has angered Kurds, and seems rooted in a concern not to strengthen Kurds who seek autonomy in adjoining regions of Turkey, Iraq and Syria.

Ankara’s stance has also upset Western allies, as Islamic State’s capture of wide swathes of Syria and Iraq has caused international shock and US-led air strikes began in August to try to halt and eventually reverse the jihadist advance.

Erdogan told a news conference on a visit to Estonia that Ankara was working on details of the route of passage for the FSA fighters, indicating they would access Kobani via Turkey.

But Moslem said talks between FSA commander Abdul Jabbar al-Qaiddi and the armed wing of the Kurdish PYD were continuing about the possible role of FSA rebels. “There are already groups with links to the FSA in Kobani helping us,” he said.

The FSA, however, is little more than an acronym used to describe dozens of tenuously affiliated rebel groups who complain of a lack of arms and resources leaving them unable to effectively confront Assad and better-armed Islamist rebels.

Moslem said the FSA would be more helpful if it opened a second front against Islamic State elsewhere in Syria. “Politically we have no objections to FSA….But in my opinion, if they really would like to help, then their forces should open another front, such as from Tel Abyad or Jarablus,” he said.

He was referring to two nearby Syrian border towns captured by Islamic State as part of its lightning military campaign in which it has beheaded or crucified prisoners, massacred non-Sunni Muslim civilians in its path and declared a mediæval-style caliphate spanning eastern Syria and northwestern Iraq.

Erdogan said on Wednesday that some Kurdish peshmerga fighters from Iraq would be allowed to transit Turkey to Kobani.

Although Turkish and US officials acknowledge Kobani itself is not especially strategically important, the fate of the town has become a credibility test of the international coalition’s response to Islamic State. Reuters

US envoy for six-party talks to visit Asia

WASHINGTON, 25 Oct — The US special envoy for six-party talks will travel to the Republic of Korea (ROK), China and Japan next week to discuss policy toward Pyongyang, the State Department announced on Friday.

The trip by Sydney Seiler, Washington’s new special envoy for six-party talks over denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula, was made known after the US and ROK urged the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) to return to “credible and meaningful negotiations.”

Seiler last visited the three Asian countries last month with Glyn Davies, US special envoy for DPRK policy.

The six-party talks, that also involve Russia, were initiated in Beijing in August 2003 but have been stalled since December 2008. The DPRK dropped out of the talks in April 2009.
Two killed, four wounded in Washington state school shooting

MARYSVILLE, (Washington), 25 Oct — A student fatally shot one classmate and wounded four others when he opened fire in the cafeteria of his Washington state high school on Friday, following a fight with fellow students, authorities said.

The shooter took his own life as Marysville-Pilchuck High School students scrambled to safety in the latest outburst of deadly violence at an American school.

A school district official, who declined to be named because the shooter was not officially identified yet, said he was Jaylen Fryberg, a Native American student at the school. The official said the shooting followed a fight at the school. There was little on Fryberg’s social media account at the school.

Fryberg, a Native American student at the school, said he was Jaylen named because the shooter was from Marysville, Washington, and his name was Jaylen because the shooter was from Marysville, Washington.

His father, who was not present at the school, said he was Jaylen Fryberg, a Native American student at the school. The official said the shooting followed a fight at the school. There was little on Fryberg’s social media account at the school.

Two of the wounded students were boys and two girls, hospital officials said.

The fourth wounded student suffered less serious injuries in the gunfire and had been transferred to Harborview Medical Centre in Everett.

All of the victims of the shooting were young people, and three of the wounded were in critical condition with gunshot wounds to the head, said Joanne Roberts, chief of medicine at Providence Regional Medical Centre in Everett.

The fourth wounded victim suffered less serious injuries in the gunfire and had been transferred to Harborview Medical Centre in Seattle. A spokeswoman for that hospital said he was in serious condition.

Two of the wounded were boys and two girls, hospital officials said.

At this point, we are confirming that there are two deceased,” Marysville Police Commander Robbie Lamoureux told reporters in the town, about 30 miles (50 km) north of Seattle.

The violence at Marysville-Pilchuck High School marked the latest in a series of deadly rampages at American schools that have played a central role in a national debate over gun laws. In 2012, a 20-year-old gunman entered Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, and killed 20 children and six adults before taking his own life in one of the deadliest mass shootings in US history.

Police would not say what kind of weapon Fryberg, who died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, had used, and they declined to discuss his motive.

“He came up from behind and had a gun in his hand and he fired about eight bullets into backs of them. They were his friends so it wasn’t just random,” student Jordan Luton told CNN, adding that the gunman fired several more shots. “Then he turned and looked at me and my girlfriend … and kind of gave us a smirk and turned around and then shot more bullets outside,” Luton said.—Reuters

Brazil presidential campaign ends in slugfest over corruption

BRASILIA, 25 Oct — Presidential candidates traded accusations over political corruption on Friday night in a last ditch attempt to sway undecided voters before Sunday’s election runoff in Brazil’s closest race in decades.

In the final television debate of a bitter campaign, leftist President Dilma Rousseff and pro-business opposition candidate Aecio Neves sparred over who knew about a scam that allowed Petrobras contractors and funnelled funds to former Petrobras executive Paulo Roberto Costa and a black-market money dealer called Alberto Youssef who were arrested in March in a money laundering investigation.

The weekly magazine Veja reported on Friday that Youssef had told police and prosecutors that Rousseff and her predecessor, Workers’ Party founder Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, knew about the corruption scheme. The jailed money dealer provided no evidence.

Rousseff dismissed the allegation as unfounded and called Veja magazine an opposition mouthpiece that had systematically anagorized her government and was trying to derail her re-election.

Neves, the market favourite who had stirred investor enthusiasm by promising business-friendly policies to pull Brazil out of recession, assailed Rousseff for poor management of Latin America’s largest economy and losing control of inflation.

A mild economic rebound and a bruising campaign have boosted the incumbent’s chances in recent weeks. Surveys of voters by Brazil’s top polling firms published on Thursday showed Rousseff with a lead of 6 to 8 percentage points.—Reuters

MONTEGO BAY, (Jamaica), 25 Oct — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) kicked off a high-level forum here on Thursday in hopes of unlocking economic growth for the Caribbean region.

The two-day forum, which has brought together finance ministers and central bank governors from across the Caribbean, is supposed to play the role as a platform for strengthening cooperation and advancing solutions to key challenges facing the region.

This get-together has been the third of its kind in the Caribbean over recent years. The last two were held in Trinidad and Tobago, and the Bahamas.

“While the 2013 conference programme took a comprehensive approach to the growth challenge, this year we have streamlined the agenda to cover three specific topics,” IMF Deputy Managing Director Min Zhu said.

Energy costs, tax competition and financial sector vulnerability, according to Zhu, are among issues that have the biggest impact on the growth, and thus became the topics being focused on.

In recent years, many of the Caribbean countries have suffered from slow economic growth and heavy burden of debt at the same time. Four countries – Antigua and Barbuda, St Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica, and Grenada – have embarked on economic programs supported by the IMF.

The multilateral financial agency estimates that growth in the Caribbean will remain weak at 1.5 percent in 2014, compared with the world overall level of 3.3 percent.

Within this context, Zhu said: “Reinvigorating growth remains the top priority” for the region.

Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Zhu Min (L) shakes hands with Jamaica’s Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller before the inauguration of the Caribbean High Level Forum of IMF in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 23 Oct, 2014. IMF kicked off a high-level forum here on Thursday in hopes of unlocking economic growth for the Caribbean region.—Xinhua

IMF seeks to unlock economic growth of Caribbean states

Presidential candidates Aecio Neves of Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB) and Dilma Rousseff of Workers Party (PT) pose before a television debate in Rio de Janeiro on 24 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

Two girls hug at Shoultes Gospel Hall church where families are reuniting after an active shooter situation at Marysville-Pilchuck High School in Marysville, Washington on 24 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

statements made by former Petrobras executive Paulo Roberto Costa and a black-market money dealer called Alberto Youssef who were arrested in March in a money laundering investigation.

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The multilateral financial agency estimates that growth in the Caribbean will remain weak at 1.5 percent in 2014, compared with the world overall level of 3.3 percent.

Within this context, Zhu said: “Reinvigorating growth remains the top priority” for the region.

Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Zhu Min (L) shakes hands with Jamaica’s Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller before the inauguration of the Caribbean High Level Forum of IMF in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 23 Oct, 2014. IMF kicked off a high-level forum here on Thursday in hopes of unlocking economic growth for the Caribbean region.—Xinhua

Two girls hug at Shoultes Gospel Hall church where families are reuniting after an active shooter situation at Marysville-Pilchuck High School in Marysville, Washington on 24 Oct, 2014.—REUTERS

statements made by former Petrobras executive Paulo Roberto Costa and a black-market money dealer called Alberto Youssef who were arrested in March in a money laundering investigation.

The weekly magazine Veja reported on Friday that Youssef had told police and prosecutors that Rousseff and her predecessor, Workers’ Party founder Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, knew about the corruption scheme. The jailed money dealer provided no evidence.

Rousseff dismissed the allegation as unfounded and called Veja magazine an opposition mouthpiece that had systematically anagorized her government and was trying to derail her re-election.

Neves, the market favourite who had stirred investor enthusiasm by promising business-friendly policies to pull Brazil out of recession, assailed Rousseff for poor management of Latin America’s largest economy and losing control of inflation.

A mild economic rebound and a bruising campaign have boosted the incumbent’s chances in recent weeks. Surveys of voters by Brazil’s top polling firms published on Thursday showed Rousseff with a lead of 6 to 8 percentage points.—Reuters

MONTEGO BAY, (Jamaica), 25 Oct — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) kicked off a high-level forum here on Thursday in hopes of unlocking economic growth for the Caribbean region.

The two-day forum, which has brought together finance ministers and central bank governors from across the Caribbean, is supposed to play the role as a platform for strengthening cooperation and advancing solutions to key challenges facing the region.

This get-together has been the third of its kind in the Caribbean over recent years. The last two were held in Trinidad and Tobago, and the Bahamas.

“While the 2013 conference programme took a comprehensive approach to the growth challenge, this year we have streamlined the agenda to cover three specific topics,” IMF Deputy Managing Director Min Zhu said.

Energy costs, tax competition and financial sector vulnerability, according to Zhu, are among issues that have the biggest impact on the growth, and thus became the topics being focused on.

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Chad says Nigeria deal with Boko Haram to free girls still on

N’Djamena, 25 Oct — Chad said it believed Nigeria’s secret deal with Boko Haram Islamists to free over 200 kidnapped Nigerian schoolgirls would go ahead despite the break-up of the group.

Pro-government officials had mediated a deal by Chad for the release of the girls seized from Chibok in northeast Nigeria in April, a source told Reuters late on Thursday. The deal was mediated by Chad and the Chadian capital N’djamena.

“We can say that those that negotiated with the Nigerian government did so in good faith. We are waiting for the next phase which is the release of the girls,” the source said.

Dago said the two sides agreed verbally to a series of points summarised in a document he had seen, including the release of the schoolgirls and of jailed Boko Haram fighters.

The Nigerian insurgent group, which has fought a bloody five-year revolt mostly in the northeast, has said it wants to carve out an Islamist enclave in the religiously-mixed nation. Africa’s top oil producer and biggest economy.

“The starting condition of Boko Haram was the liberation of some of their members... That is the compensation,” Dago said, adding that the specifics on the names and precise number of Boko Haram fighters still to be released had not yet been agreed.

Dago said he still expected the girls to be freed, without giving a time frame. The Boko Haram negotiators were no longer in Chad although they had agreed to return in October after freeing the girls to hold more talks, he added.

The first stage of the agreement made was the release of a group of 27 Chinese and Cameroonian hostages by Boko Haram two weeks ago in northern Cameroon, Dago said.

“We remain optimistic. The two sides agreed to find a negotiated solution and to show their good faith they already freed some hostages and announced a ceasefire,” he said.

Dago admitted it would be embarrassing for Chadian President Idriss Deby’s government, which has taken a leading role in security and diplomacy in Africa’s turbulent Sahel region in recent years, if the girls were not freed.

“It would be very disappointing. We are engaged in this now. If this process fails, we would have no other option but to treat the local government as we do with other Government officials,” Dago said.

“We want to believe that they are not Boko Haram because their representatives assured us that they are committed to seeing that the ongoing peace negotiations succeed,” he said.

“Our meeting with them on Monday will basically be a follow-up to the release of the adopted girls, so we may be having the girls and other abducted released to us from Chad by next week,” said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Reuters

Islamic State keeps up Syrian oil flow, despite US-led strikes

Asman, 25 Oct — Islamic State is still extracting and selling oil in Syria and has adapted its trading techniques despite a month of strikes by US-led forces aimed at cutting off this major source of income for the group, residents, oil executives and traders say.

While the raids by US and Arab forces have targeted some small makeshift oil refineries run by locals in eastern areas controlled by Islamic State, they have not avoided the wells the group controls. This has limited the effectiveness of the campaign and means the militants are able to profit from crude sales of up to $2 million a day, according to oil workers in Syria, former oil executives and energy experts.

“They are in fact still selling the oil and even stepping up exploitation of new wells by tribal allies and taking advantage of the inability of the enemy to hit the oil fields,” said Abu Lahat al-Jalam, a tribal elder in Shuhaili, a town in Syria’s oil-producing Deir al-Zor Province.

US-led forces want to avoid hitting the oil installations hard because it could hurt civilians more than the militants and could radicalise the local population.

Analysts say.

On Thursday the United States threatened to impose sanctions on anyone buying oil from Islamic State militants in an effort to disrupt what it said was a $1-million-a-day funding source. Most of the oil is bought by local traders and covers the domesic needs of rebel-held areas in northern Syria. But some low-quality crude has been smuggled to Turkey where prices of over $350 a barrel, three times the local rate, have nurtured a lucrative cross-border trade.

“Our options are limited unless you hit the wells — but it does not just hit Islamic State, it hits the entire population and that is not something that the US can do very easily,” said Andrew Tabler, a senior fellow at the US-based Washington Institute, who focuses on Syria.

“It’s a good example of the constraints of trying to work your way out of it.” Any bombing of Syria’s major oil fields could evoke memories of the 1990-1991 Gulf War when the US-led coalition invaded Kuwait and burnt oil wells as they were repelled by US-led forces, causing severe damage to the infrastructure.

Reuters

NYC police say hatchet attack by Islam convert was terrorism

New York, 25 Oct — The hatchet-wielding man who wounded two New York City police officers, one of them critically, was a self-radicalized convert to Islam who is believed to have acted alone in what police say was a spontaneous, Bratton said.

A search of computers seized from the home of Thompson’s father in Queens, where the 32-year-old man lived, showed he also spent time on internet sites containing content on the online radicalism, which is believed to have played a major role in the attack.

The suspect, Zale Thompson, 25, said he was involuntary discharged from the Navy in 2003 for undisclosed reasons, lived with his mother in a home in Queens, but had stayed at undisclosed reasons, lived with his mother’s residence the night before the incident, Bratton said.

The officer struck in the head, remains in critical condition at Jamaica Hospital, Bratton said.

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Kenneth Healey, the 25-year-old officer hit in the head, remains in critical condition at Jamaica Hospital, Bratton said.

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“He was a recluse were ‘anti-government, anti-western, anti-white.’ Still under investigation was the extent of planning involved in the attack, which appeared to be unprovoked and somewhat spontaneous, Bratton said.

“The fact that he was walking around with a hatchet in the backpack makes it clear this individual had some sense of preparation,” Bratton said.

The attack on Thursday, which took place in a shopping district, unfolded in a matter of seconds, police said. A group of four police officers were posing for a freelance photographer when Thompson charged them, swinging the hatchet. One officer was struck in the arm and another in the head before the other two officers opened fire, killing Thompson.

A 29-year-old female bystander was struck in the lower back by a stray bullet and critically wounded.

Newspapers with various front page headlines on the Chibok girls and their possible release are displayed at a news stand in Abuja on 18 Oct, 2014.—Reuters

Reuters
Clean Water Scarcity Problem

By : Tommy Pauk

Luckily, in Myanmar, ground water, river water, lake water, creek water, stream water and rain water are naturally abundant. These are the natural fresh water resources in Myanmar. The vast majority of people do not need to worry about fresh water or portable water which is for daily consumption and household use. However, those who live in arid zone have some problem to get access to the source of potable water. Myanmar has plenty of fresh water resources and salt water resources in their country. However, very few people encounter water scarcity problem in Myanmar. Normally, those who live nearby the river banks can easily take fresh water from the rivers. In the big cities there exist huge reservoirs, which are maintained by modern water treatment system. They supply sufficient potable water to city dwellers every day. The water from these reservoirs is purified and so it is clean. The ground water and surface water exist in these big cities in Myanmar.

Nowadays, purified bottled water is available at affordable price at the markets. The purified bottled water is especially manufactured for urbanites. This drinking water is said to be safe and clean. The urbanites use the potable water supplied by metropolitan water supply station for washing, bathing and flushing toilet in their homes. Some people boil that water and then cool it and drink it. So Myanmar people are blessed with clean and purified fresh water in the entire country. Since water is important sustaining element for living things, we humans must consume and use it properly. We ought not to waste potable water. We ought to use it frugally. Besides, it is the most essential element for everyday human life.

In some countries, they are lack of fresh water resources and receive littile rainfall. In this circumstance, the people cannot get safe and clean drinking water so they have to import potable water from foreign countries. For example, Singapore gets rain water, but unfortunately, fresh water resource is not sufficient for the total population in it. So they have to use hi-tech in water treatment system to purify used and flushed water, and then they reuse it. Besides this, Singapore imports purified drinking water from a neighboring country in order to fulfill the requirement of the public demand.

Nowadays, clean water scarcity becomes one of the global hot issues. Currently, the total human population on earth is about 7 billion (7 billion). They need to drink clean water every day for their survival. Unless they get it, they cannot continue to live. It is vitally important for human beings to get access to potable water so that they can sustain their life. As drinking water is the most essential element for everyday life of the humans, we must try to find ground water as well as surface water as much as we can. A man can live without food for several days whereas he cannot live without drinking water a day. That is why people around the world seriously think about finding ways and means to exploit fresh water resources on land in the world. Otherwise, if a country exists near the sea or an island country, the solar powered desalination plant should be set up to generate fresh water resources from sea water. Actually this installation does not cost a lot. Either rich countries or small countries can afford to do this way. We know how important water is and it is a life of living things. Most of the highly-civilized nations had settled near the big rivers e.g. Babylon (near the river Euphrates and Tigrase), Egypt (near the river Nile) Bagan (near the Ayeyawaddy). This record vividly shows that human settlement depends on the availability of water resources. They chose the locations near the river banks because they could take drinking water from the rivers for sustainable human life. They also could grow crops by irrigating water from river and catch fish for their daily food. Even the space scientists are striving to find water on the moon and on other planets However, they still have not found any water and biological activities on the moon and Mars. This is Man’s exploration in solar system to conquer the planets but exploring water is categorized as the most important task of human existence.

United nations and some INGO have sought to exploit clean water resources as much as they can for supplying safe water to those who do not get drinkable water in their daily life. World Food Program, a UN organization, is supplying purified bottled drinking water to peoples in some African countries and in India. They live in the poverty stricken areas and their health conditions are worsening. The root cause of being unhealthy is that they do not get access to clean water for their daily consumption. They are still alive but suffering from some diseases because they drink dirty or contaminated water every day. The scarcer the clean water, the worse they face health problems. Due to neglective activities of humans, fresh water of some areas in the world is getting dirty and contaminat ed badly e.g. Mining, Disposing wastages, Herding animals and animal husbandry near the lakes, rivers and streams. The people who live around these areas cannot enjoy drinking clean water indeed. Acid rain caused by mass factories is also a problem which makes natural rain water unclean and toxic. In this case, storage of rain water is totally not possible and to both, bee and flower, The giving and the receiving is a need and an ecstasy.

Every community should not pose risk to each other as the flies spread diseases. Therefore, civilized world should establish a caring and humane society for a fair and efficient global welfare.

We should be aware of the global water-shortage caused by ground water over-pumping and aquifer depletion. The adequate treatment of waste-water is required and it is a solution to this problem. It is one of the easy and possible ways to take drinkable water. Therefore, please don’t waste and contaminate water on earth! Water is your life!!!
A Prominent Mon King Dhammasetti (1472-92AD) was a prominent king in Mon Chronicles. His brilliant contributions to Buddhism have constituted valuable historical evidence in Myanmar. He was among the most successful Mon Kings in the Hansavati Dynasty. What is the most interesting and envious thing of his is that he was not a royal-blood, although he succeeded to the royal throne of Hansavati. In fact, in a hamlet in Mon Kingdom, he was brought up as a poor cowherdsboy who dared not dream of becoming a king during the time when feudalism reached its apex in Myanmar. According to Dr. Hla Tun, he seemed to be a piece of red charcoal promising fire (an ember) (1406?). He was named ti in Lower Myanmar in the royal mother-in-law, in the two young monks established symbolic mutual relationship between the Mon nationalities in the foreign land. She was their female donor of the four requisites (monastery, robe, alms-food and medicine) and they became her tutors of religious learning. Then, they also became the confidants of her personal secrets. One day, they pull heads together confidentially on the present political grounds and made a plan to flee down the Irrawaddy River to Hansavati, Pegu from Inwa. Shin Saw Pu also made a promise to Shin Dhammadhara that he grow old and I’ve been neglected by my Inwa King, so I requested you to help me manage to get to Hansavati, my native, and to be able to pay homage to the Dagon Sandawshin Pagoda. If I am home safe and sound and if I’m elected Queen of Hansavati, I can also help you succeed to the throne when I pass away, I promise you.”

The consort and the two monks went into a huddle to steal away from Inwa and tried to fulfill her strong desire with zest and zeal without molestation. Her adventurous homeward journey to Hansavati was enough to be composed in a mysteriously story.

Carrying the Day in Hansavati

On her arrival in the flight from Inwa, the lady Shin Saw Pu donated a grand monastery to each of the two monks- the Leik Pyin Monastery to Dhammadhara and the Atulavasa Monastery to Dhammanana. As parrots that were golden on a golden tree, both monks had their days within a short time with the great help of the lady Shin Saw Pu. However, it was Dhammadhara towards whom an excess of her endorsement seemed to flow. She was able to seize the royal throne of Hansavati and made a decision to help one of her constant benefactors return to lay his life so as to install the Crown Prince.

Lot and Loss

There has been a pacifying poem “The nature of Things” composed by Antanatsuriya, a chief minister in the kingdom of Bagan under King Narathinaka (CE.1170-73)…..

Often a man suffers destruction
In order that another man Might enjoy well-being
Such is the nature of things!”

So prosperity went to Dhammadhara and at the same time, adversity to Dhammanana.

Great Ruler and Patron of Buddhism

Dhammasetti was not only the apple of Queen Shin Saw Pu but also the oasis of the people in Mon Kingdom. He was able to rule over his land in accordance with good administration and judicature by discussing all with his ministers. He also put special efforts into purification and perpetuation of the Theravada Buddhism. However, he was not an extremist of religion. He had to release many plots of land from the compound of the Shwedagon Pagoda having been donated by Queen Shin Saw Pu, his royal mother-in-law, in order to share the land for gardening plants, growing rice and making shelter for the people because he thought that it was wider than enough. However, in return, the gold weighing the total weight of the queen and his was re-gilded to the pagoda.

Moreover, at the

Shwedagon Pagoda stands Dhammasetti’s stone inscription mentioning his religious contributions. It is solid evidence for history enthusiasts. One of his remarkable contributions was that for the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the Theravada Buddhism, he set up the Buddhist monks of the three provinces in the kingdom and his ministers assembled at the palace and then deputed two Buddhist missions to Ceylon and there they received afresh their Upasampada (ordination) at the hands of the two young monks on the Kalayani River. On the return of the mission, they handed down the process of ordination. Some monks were also sent to India to make some measurements of the original Holy Land of Buddhism in particular the Sattasatta-hathana (seven stations in seven weeks) where the Buddha spent the first seven weeks just after his enlightenment. On their return, he built a model of it near his capital.

It is true that no one is perfect. Dhammasetti was no exception. He had to kill his best friend Dhammanana and his throne-rival Banya Ein, the lord of the Pathein. Anyhow, to put it in a nutshell, he was able to contribute to the country to some extent.

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The author of this article is a freelance translator, private teacher and independent researcher on History.

A Prominent Mon King Dhammasetti (1472-92AD) was a prominent king in Mon Chronicles. His brilliant contributions to Buddhism have constituted valuable historical evidence in Myanmar. He was among the most successful Mon Kings in the Hansavati Dynasty. What is the most interesting and envious thing of his is that he was not a royal-blood, although he succeeded to the royal throne of Hansavati. According to Dr. Hla Tun, he seemed to be a piece of red charcoal promising fire (an ember) about to blaze glows brightly. He was also called “Nyankelay(Sharp-witted man)”. He was also called “Nyankelay(Sharp-witted man)”. He was also called “Nyankelay(Sharp-witted man)” because of his cleverness among his playmates. He was clever at every effort, wisdom and lot. He was the one from hell to heaven. His life was, more or less, similar to that of King Matha in the Hansavati Dynasty. He was well recognized as a wise king of Mon Kingdom.

His Childhood

He was born of poor parents U Bhodi Gamon and Daw Tet in a small Mon village of Hansavati in Lower Myanmar in (1406). He was named Min Tan. He seemed to be an intelligent novice among the blind. One’s mind was like a cat eating a shrimp confidentially on the present achievement of learning as he requested his first teacher to explain the meaning of the very first word “Namo” of his very first lesson. He did not want to learn anything in vain. He insisted on his parents’ permission to send him to a better school so as to study under a better teacher. He became a fast learner among his peers on account of his endeavor and rationality. He studied all the texts taught by his teacher omitting none and learnt all by heart. He was like a cat eating a shrimp with special enjoyment.

Meeting with a Good Friend

In his school life, he seemed to be very lucky. He could have never improved his learning if he had been proud as a one-eyed person among the blind. One’s skills can be improved only when he has a close match. Fortunately, he met with an intelligent novice Shin Dhammapala at the monastery and made his best friend. They loved each other. Both of them were eager to learn all of their subjects with heart and soul. Both were never content with their learning and stepped towards their higher academic pursuits. They made up their mind to leave their native for Inwa, the capital city of up-country, where there were so many scholars in their fields of study in order to carry on their further studies.

Constant Companions in Arms

As they dwelt in a monastery at the foot of the Sagaing Hill over the banks of Ayeyarwaddy, studying in peace and tranquility, they met with the lady Shin Saw Pu, a Mon consort of Innwa King, Mohnyintha (1427-40AD). The consort and the two young monks established symbolic mutual relationship between the Mon nationalities in the foreign land. She was their female donor of the four requisites (monastery, robe, alms-food and medicine) and they became her tutors of religious learning. Then, they also became the confidants of her personal secrets. One day, they pull heads together confidentially on the present political grounds and made a plan to flee down the Irrawaddy River to Hansavati, Pegu from Inwa. Shin Saw Pu also made a promise to Shin Dhammadhara who was loved her own son…

“My son Dhammadhara, I know very well that the book is constituted and constructed on actual facts of both the countries. Since Myanmar citizens and Mon Kingdom people are desirous and eager to contribute as far as possible in the future at their own manageable scale and pace to the community, the society and the country by using the motley assortment of English books and Internet on nation building affairs. The travelogue is readily available to all as it is written in Myanmar and English.

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Two US states to quarantine health workers returning from Ebola zones

NEW YORK / WASHINGTON, 25 Oct — New York and New Jersey will automatically quarantine medical workers returning from Ebola-hit West African countries and the US government is considering the same step after a doctor who treated patients in Guinea came back infected, officials said on Friday.

The steps announced by the two states, which go beyond the current restrictions being imposed by President Barack Obama’s administration on travellers from Liberia, Sierra Leone or Guinea, came as medical detectives tried to retrace the steps in New York City of Dr Craig Spencer, who tested positive for Ebola on Thursday.

The new policy applies to medical workers returning from the region through John F Kennedy International Airport in New York and Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey. In the first instance of the new move, a female healthcare worker who had treated patients in West Africa and arrived at the Newark, New Jersey airport, was ordered into quarantine. She had no symptoms upon arrival at the airport but developed a fever on Friday evening, the New Jersey Health Department said in a statement. She is now in isolation and being evaluated at University Hospital in Newark. The agency gave no further details.

“Voluntary quarantine is almost an oxymoron,” New York Governor Andrew Cuomo said. “We’ve seen what happens. ... You ride a subway. You ride a bus. You could infect hundreds and hundreds of people.”

Cuomo had earlier in the day sought to reassure New Yorkers that the risk of Ebola’s spread in the city was limited. He appeared at a news conference to announce the new quarantine policy with the governor of neighbouring New Jersey, Chris Christie, marking a bipartisan teaming of two prominent political figures to act at the state level, independently of the federal government. Cuomo is seen as a rising star in the Democratic Party led by Obama and Christie, a Republican, is widely discussed as a potential 2016 contender for the White House.

In Washington, Obama also sought to reassure a worried public with an Oval Office bag of Dallas nurse Nina Pham, who was declared Ebola-free on Friday after catching the virus from a Liberian patient who died.— Reuters

Dublin, 25 Oct — European bank stress tests have found that Ireland’s permanent tsb (PTSB) had a capital shortfall of 800 million euros (630.14 million pounds) to 850 million euros (669.53 million pounds) at the end of 2013, a source familiar with the process said on Friday.

The shortfall will drop to around 200 million euros (157.54 million pounds) afer taking into account the bank’s financial actions so far this year plus the potential conversion of 400 million euros of contingent capital notes, known as CoCo bonds, the source added.

Finance Minister Michael Noonan said last week that the 99.2 percent state-owned bank would be able to raise any additional funds it might need from private investors. All other Irish lenders passed the tests, the result of which was made public on Friday.

The smallest and weakest of Ireland’s three remaining domestically owned banks, PTSB remains the only loss-making lender. In the first half of this year, however, it cut its underlying loss by 62 percent to 171 million euros.

Two thirds of PTSB’s loan book is made up of expensively funded and loss-making tracker mortgages, which are linked to the European Central Bank’s low interest rates.

PTSB, one of Europe’s 25 banks that have failed the tests, according to two people familiar with the matter, said it would re-lease a response to the test results on Sunday.

The state-controlled mortgage lender recently sold two portfolios of mortgage loans, which it said improved its regulatory capital position. It has appointed Deutsche Bank to advise on its capital market plans.

In a trading update released after the stock market closed on Friday, PTSB said that it had reduced the amount of money set aside to cover losses on bad loans in the third quarter as it made further progress towards profitability.

ECB tests find 800-850 million euro shortfall at PTSB

ZAGREB, 25 Oct — The Chinese market is extremely important for Croatia’s tourism given the huge numbers of China’s annual outbound travellers, Croatian Tourism Minister Darko Lorencin has said. In China, “there is huge number of tourists and they travel not only in top season,” he said in a written interview with Xinhua, noting “a constant growth” in Chinese market for Croatia’s tourism sector.

To promote Croatia as an all-year round destination among Chinese travellers, Croatian tourism authorities recently organized a week-long study tour across the southeastern European country for China’s tourist operators.

Shao Yiheng, general manager of China Classical Holiday, a tour operator agency, was optimistic that Croatia will become a new destination for Chinese tourists.

In Split, the second largest city of Croatia, Deputy mayor Aida Anteiro said a sister-city memorandum had been signed between Split and southeastern Chinese city of Hangzhou this month and it would be a new platform to further cooperation, not only between the two cities but between the two countries.

She said split, a historical city with a number of cultural heritages, saw a 6 percent growth in terms of Chinese travellers last year. She expressed hope that Chinese companies would invest in the city’s education and tourist sectors.

Zeljko Anicic, manager of Atr tourist agency of Croatia, said he had received an increasing number of Chinese tourists annually since 2010, “but not enough, compared with the number of the Chinese outbound tourists of nearly 100 million in 2013.”

Chinese tourists spent 120 billion US dollars abroad last year, and “these figures are we cannot ignore,” he said. — Xinhua

Chinese market extremely important for Croatian tourism

US nurse with Ebola discharged from hospital

A huge euro logo is pictured next to the headquarters of the European Central Bank (ECB) before the bank's monthly news conference in Frankfurt on 7 Aug, 2014.—Reuters

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PTSB, which forecasts a return to profit across its businesses by 2017, said it expected impairment charges on loans to fall significantly in the second half of the year, allowing it to release some provisions.

“Notwithstanding that the group has maintained a conservative peak-to-trough fall assumption of 55 percent for Irish residential property prices, the group saw a net provision release in the third quarter,” the bank said, without specifying the level of provisions it was writing back.

“In future periods this positive trend is anticipated to continue, driven also by improving macroeconomic indicators, particularly the improvement in the residential property prices and reducing levels of unemployment.”

The bank said its net interest margin, a key metric that shows how profitable its lending is, was rising steadily, while its mortgage arrears continued to decline and its deposits and its market share of new mortgages were going up.—Reuters

US nurse with Ebola discharged from hospital

Nina Pham (C), the nurse who was infected with Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia was released from the hospital on Friday, officials at the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) treating her said in Maryland.—XINHUA

Nina Pham (C), the nurse who was infected with Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia, attends a news conference in Maryland, the United States, on 24 Oct, 2014. Nina Pham, who contracted Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia was discharged from hospital on Friday, officials at the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) treating her said in Maryland.—XINHUA

Nina Pham (C), the nurse who was infected with Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia, attends a news conference in Maryland, the United States, on 24 Oct, 2014. Nina Pham, who contracted Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia was discharged from hospital on Friday, officials at the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) treating her said in Maryland.—XINHUA

Nina Pham (C), the nurse who was infected with Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia, attends a news conference in Maryland, the United States, on 24 Oct, 2014. Nina Pham, who contracted Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia was discharged from hospital on Friday, officials at the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) treating her said in Maryland.—XINHUA

A man pushes a rack near the building where Dr Craig Spencer lives while a cleaning crew from "Bio Recovery Corporation" works inside the apartment in New York on 24 Oct, 2014.—Reuters

Nina Pham (C), the nurse who was infected with Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia, attends a news conference in Maryland, the United States, on 24 Oct, 2014. Nina Pham, who contracted Ebola while caring for a patient from Liberia was discharged from hospital on Friday, officials at the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) treating her said in Maryland.—XINHUA
Old, cold and bold: Ice Age people dwelled high in Peru’s Andes

WASHINGTON, 25 Oct — In a bleak, treeless landscape high in the southern Peruvian Andes, bands of intrepid Ice Age people hunkered down in rudimentary dwellings and withstood frigid weather, thin air and other hardships.

Scientists on Thursday described the world’s highest known Ice Age settlements, two archaeological sites about 2.8 miles (4.5 km) above sea level and about 12,000 years old packed with artifacts including a rock shelter, stone tools, animal bones, food remnants and primitive artwork.

“What this tells us is that hunter-gatherers were capable of colonizing a very extreme environment, the high Andes, despite the challenges at the end of the Ice Age,” said archaeologist Kurt Rademaker of Germany’s University of Tübingen, who led the study published in the journal Science.

“And they did so quite successfully. It pushes back the date of initial entry of humans to this kind of elevation.”

The sites in an Andean locale called the Pucuncho Basin were occupied by small numbers of people, probably only in the dozens.

“Bands of hunter-gatherers are small and not many could fit into the rock shelter, perhaps just a few families,” said University of Maine archaeologist Dan Sandweiss, another of the researchers.

The researchers said the sites show high-altitude human habitation was occurring nearly a millennium earlier than previously known.

“We look at the challenges and we say, 'Why would you do that when you could just live somewhere else?'” Rademaker said. “Whatever reason they initially went up there, there were reasons to stay despite the challenges.”

At that altitude, temperatures averaged 37 degrees Fahrenheit (3 degrees Celsius), solar radiation was high and oxygen was low. But there also were animals like vicuña and guanaco — llama relatives — and taruca deer to hunt, the rock shelter, water in streams, bogs and wetlands, and stone like obsidian to make tools.

The tools included spear points, scrapers for working animal hides and implements for cutting and butchering. “A lot of the stone tools seem to be all about hunting and processing of animals,” Rademaker said.

The ceilings of the natural rock shelters were blackened with soot from fires. The researchers found an abundance of animal bones as well as potato-like starchy tubers that apparently were gathered from lower elevations.

There also was art on the walls of the rock shelters including red ochre pictographs of animals, with some entire wall sections painted red.

“We don’t know whether they date back to the earliest occupation of the site,” Rademaker said.

An open-air site called Pucuncho 14,300 feet (4,355 metres) above sea level yielded hundreds of tools. The Cuncaicha rock shelter featured two alcoves and likely served as a base camp at 14,700 feet (4,480 metres).

Some experts think people need to acquire genetic adaptations over many thousands of years to withstand such altitudes. But the fact that people colonized these sites only about 2,000 years after humans first entered South America may suggest otherwise.

“We have to re-examine that idea,” Rademaker said.

Int’l Freshwater Dolphin Day: Saving finless porpoise

Photo taken on 22 Oct, 2014 shows the samples of finless porpoise in a museum in the Tongling National Nature Reserve for Freshwater Dolphins in Tongling City, east China’s Anhui Province. Friday coincided with the International Freshwater Dolphin Day. The day set in 2010 for the preservation of the freshwater mammal was also claimed by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as a sad reminder of the recently lost Yangtze white-finned dolphin, known in Chinese as Baiji Dolphin, which is bigger than the finless porpoise. As the Yangtze, the longest river in China, has been turned into a busy shipping waterway and a hydrological power source for hundreds of reservoirs, animal activists warned the finless porpoises may die out within 10 to 15 years, if tough measures are not taken. There are only about 1,040 finless porpoises in the Yangtze and two lakes linked to the waterway, according to a survey in 2012 by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and WWF. However, they are considered “functionally extinct”, because water dams and shipping have blocked their travel and the population is too small for the species to reproduce. On 14 October, the Ministry of Agriculture issued a Yangtze finless porpoise protection notice urging local authorities to implement the most restrictive protection measures possible for the finless dolphin. Sources with the agriculture authorities said rescuers are expected to displace dolphins to safe havens whenever the mammal is found and rescued in the wild. — XINHUA

Google’s Pichai to oversee major products and services

SAN FRANCISCO, 25 Oct — Google Inc Chief Executive Officer Larry Page has put Sundar Pichai, one of his key lieutenants, in charge of the Internet company’s products.

The India-born executive will have oversight over products such as search, maps, Google+, commerce, advertising and infrastructure, according to a Google spokesman. Six executives who previously reported to Page, including the heads of research, social media and search, will now report to Pichai, according to Re/code, which first reported the change on Friday, citing an internal memo.

The change will free Page from having as many direct reports and product units to oversee so that he can better focus on “the bigger picture,” according to the Re/code report, which also cited anonymous sources.

YouTube, Google’s popular video website, will be unaffected by the new structure and will continue to report directly to Page.

The move puts Pichai, 42, in charge of many of Google’s main services, including its core search and advertising units, which generate the bulk of the company’s revenue.

Google, the world’s No1 Internet search engine, has experienced several high-level management changes this year.
Suspicious powder sent to western consulates in Istanbul

Istanbul, 25 Oct — Packets of an unidentified yellow powder were sent to five western consulates in Istanbul on Friday, officials said, prompting security alerts following two militant attacks in Canada this week.

Consulates of the United States, Canada, France, Germany and Belgium received suspicious packages, the officials said. It was not immediately clear what the powder was and Turkish officials said results of tests on them were due on Monday.

Sixteen people were hospitalised as a precaution from three different embassies, including 10 from the Canadian consulate, the Turkish Ministry of Health said in a statement. A hospital treating the Canadians said the consulate was among them.

One Canadian consulate employee came into direct contact with the package and six others had indirect exposure, Turkey’s disaster management agency AFAD said in a statement.

German and Belgian consular staff were also being monitored in hospital, the Ministry of Health added.

A US Embassy spokesman confirmed the consulate had received a “suspicious” envelope containing a powder, but said it was dealt with according to security protocols and the consulate remained open.

Istanbul’s governor later confirmed the French consulate had also received a similar package.

Teams decontaminated the Canadian and Belgian consulates and were working on cleaning the German mission, AFAD spokesman Dogan Eskinat said. Other consulates and embassies were reviewing their security arrangements.

“There was a package with some yellow powder, suspicious, that was sent to the Canadian mission in Istanbul, it was sent to a number of other foreign missions,” Canada’s foreign affairs minister John Baird said in Ottawa.

“Out of an abundance of caution we’ve closed the mission until we can ensure the safety of all our employees.”

Canadian consulates and embassies overseas have been on heightened alert this week after two attacks in Canada.

Ze-haf-Bibeau, 32, a Canadian citizen and convert to Islam, shot and killed a soldier stationed at the National War Memorial in Ottawa on Wednesday before running into the nearby parliament buildings. He was killed by guards in a flurry of gunfire.

Two days earlier, Martin Rouleau, a 25-year-old convert to Islam, drove over two Canadian soldiers in Quebec, killing one, police said. He also was shot dead by security officers.

Reuters

Canada vows tougher laws as citizens worry in face of attacks

Ottawa/Hamilton, 25 Oct — Canada vowed on Friday to toughen laws against terrorism in ways that critics say may curtail civil liberties as a country that prides itself on its openness mourned the second soldier this week killed by homegrown radicals.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper joined a crowd at the National War Memorial in Ottawa to mark the death of Corporal Nathan Cirillo, who was shot by a troubled and drug-addicted convert to Islam on Wednesday while on ceremonial guard at the memorial in the centre of the country’s capital.

Behind the sombre scenes, Harper and his Conservative colleagues scrambled to beef up anti-terrorism legislation that was already in the works before the attacks. An opinion poll showed a majority of Canadians lacked confidence in their security services’ ability to deter homegrown threats.

Investigators said there was no apparent link between the two attackers, one killed a soldier in Quebec and the other killed Cirillo in Ottawa, before they themselves were shot dead — but Canadians worried about the parallels between them.

Police said both were Canadian citizens who had been radicalized, a term the government uses to refer to Canadians who become supporters of militant groups such as Islamic State.

Justice Minister Peter MacKay said the government would act swiftly to strengthen the powers of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service spy agency that was already being drafted before this week’s incidents.

“We’re looking ... to see if there is a way in fact to improve or build on those elements of the Criminal Code that allow for pre-emptive action, specifically in the area of terrorism,” MacKay told reporters in Brampton, Ontario. A government source said legislation to be introduced next week on the spy agency would be largely unchanged from the bill that was being prepared before Wednesday’s Ottawa attack.

The government will put forward more measures later, the source said, and they will include wider powers to address security threats in the wake of the attacks.

Reuters

Terror attack in Egypt kills 33, strongly condemned by UN

Cairo, 25 Oct — Egypt’s President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has declared a three-month state of emergency in parts of northern Sinai Peninsula after at least 33 people were killed in an attack against a military checkpoint.

The measure would take effect at 5 am (0300 GMT) Saturday, the presidency said on Friday night in a statement following an emergency meeting of the National Security Council.

The president also announced a three-day national mourning starting Saturday, and ordered a curfew between 5 pm (1500 GMT) Friday and 7 am (0500 GMT) Saturday in areas near Egypt’s borders with Israel and the Gaza Strip.

“The army and the police will take all necessary measures to tackle the dangers of terrorism, to preserve the security of the region and protect the lives of civilians,” according to a statement issued after the meeting.

The Rafah crossing, the Gaza Strip’s only non-Israeli access to the outside world, has been closed, state-run Nile TV reported.

No group has claimed responsibility for the suicide car bombing attack, one of the deadliest single attacks against the armed forces in Egypt. The attack also left 28 people wounded. Security officials told Xinhua that the death toll was expected to increase because some of the injured soldiers were in severe condition.

State TV channels have marked the top left corner of their screen with a black line as a sign of mourning.

The UN Security Council on Friday condemned “in the strongest terms” the deadly terrorist attack, saying “any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable.”

“Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security, and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivation, wherever and whenever and by whomsoever committed,” the Security Council said in a statement.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also on Friday strongly condemned the terrorist attack.

“The secretary-general extends his deep condolences to the families of the victims and the government of Egypt, and hopes for the quick and full recovery of the wounded,” said a statement issued by Ban’s spokesman.

This week saw several terrorist attacks. A bomb went off outside Cairo University on Wednesday, leaving at least 10 people injured. On Sunday, seven soldiers were killed and four others injured in an explosion that hit their vehicle in Arish city in northwestern Sinai. Assaults on security personnel and premises have been growing since the ouster of former President Mohamed Morsi by the military in July 2013 and the following massive crackdown on his supporters, which left about 1,000 of them killed and thousands more arrested.

Xinhua

Bolivia’s President Evo Morales (2nd R) attends the presentation of the first batch of silver ingot production at the Karachipampa silver and lead foundry in Potosi, Bolivia, on 24 Oct. 2014.—Xinhua

Pakistan women hold placards during a rally to mark World Polio Day in eastern Pakistan’s Lahore on 24 Oct, 2014. World Health Organization said on Friday that three more polio cases have surfaced in Pakistan, bringing the number of new cases so far this year to 220, a record figure that authorities blame on attacks by militants targeting vaccination teams.—Xinhua
Female researcher writes picture book about eel’s life

**Kyodo News**

**Napoleon’s two-cornered hat up for grabs at French auction**

**Kyodo News**

**Three die after being administered hepatitis C drug**

**Kyodo News**

**WEATHER REPORT**

**BAY INFERENCE:** Weather is generally fair in the North Bay and partly cloudy in the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 26th October, 2014:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Taninbayi Region, isolated in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Southern Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).
MPs slam police over Cliff Richard house search

LONDON, 25 Oct — The search of Cliff Richard’s house by police investigating allegations of child sex crimes, which was broadcast live on television, was “inexplicable” and “irreparable damage” to the British singer’s reputation, lawmakers said on Friday.

Officers raided the home of Richard, 74, one of Britain’s best-known entertainers, in August, with the search carried out in the glare of BBC cameras after the broadcaster was given advance warning.

Richard has denied any wrongdoing over the allegations, which date back to the 1960s and involve an undercover boy. He has been interviewed under caution by police, but neither arrested nor charged.

The singer was on holiday when the raid was carried out and in a report, parliament’s Home Affairs Committee criticised what it said was the unnecessary public nature of the police action.

“South Yorkshire Police’s handling of this situation was utterly inept,” said the committee’s chairman Keith Vaz.

“Sir Cliff Richard has suffered enormous and irreparable damage to his reputation and he is owed an apology over the way matters were handled. We are not surprised that he wishes to sell his home.”—Reuters

Beyonce, Jay Z renew wedding vows after six years of marriage

LONDON, 25 Oct — Hollywood star couple Beyoncé Knowles and Jay Z have reportedly renewed their wedding vows, six years after their marriage.

The ceremony, which took place during their tour of Europe where they were playing their On The Run tour, was said to be tiny and low key, reported the Daily Mirror.

“Things have been difficult for them but they have worked through it. Now things are better than ever for them,” a source said about the Beyonce, 33, and Jay Z, who have a two-year-old daughter, Blue Ivy.

“Their friends and families are now delighted that there has been a very happy ending to this whole sorry scenario. Both Beyoncé and Jay-Z have put a lot of work into their marriage and it has paid off. They are both over the moon,” the source added.

The pair’s marriage found itself in trouble when a video of Beyoncé’s sister Solange attacking rap king Jay Z, 44, in a New York lift back in May went viral.

Footage of them arguing was leaked, but things became so nasty, Solange also tried to kick and hit her brother-in-law.

Fans were shocked and R&B’s golden couple found their marriage under staunch pressure. Rumours became rife that they would split following the end of their tour last month, however, in public the pair always maintained their relationship was strong.—PTI

Keira Knightley to appear on Broadway in 2015 in ‘Therese Raquin’


Knightley, who was nominated for a best actress Oscar in 2006 for her performance in “Pride & Prejudice,” will begin previews of the play commissioned by Roundabout Theatre Company next year on 1 October, with the official opening set for 29 October.

The 29-year-old star made her theatrical debut in London’s West End in 2009 in “The Misanthrope” and more recently appeared in Lillian Hellman’s “The Children’s Hour.”

The full cast for “Therese Raquin,” which is about a woman trapped in a loveless marriage who begins a passionate affair with her husband’s friend, will be announced shortly.

The play will be the first production in the 50th anniversary season of the Roundabout Theatre Company.—Reuters

‘Shell Shock’ opera brings trauma of World War One to stage

BRUSSELS, 25 Oct — Belgian composer Nicholas Lens and Australian rocker Nick Cave have joined forces to create an opera marking the centenary of World War One, depicting the horrors of the conflict through the eyes of soldiers, deserters, a nurse and an orphan.

“Shell Shock” debuted at La Monnaie opera house in Brussels on Friday, with eight further performances in the coming days, but all but one of them sold out.

It depicts neither great battles nor heroism — instead it focuses on the traumatic effects war has on individuals.

Cave’s libretto is organised into 12 songs, or cantos, each focusing on one participant in the war. It is also littered with expletives.

Best known for his time as lead singer of alternative rock band Bad Seeds, Cave said he struggled with the subject matter and the problem of expressing the feelings of soldiers at war.

“What do I know about killing a man or seeing a friend die,” Cave wrote in the programme notes. “At the end it was a battle between me, the keyboard and my imagination.”

At the opera’s start, the auditorium is plunged into darkness only to be awakened by the wailing of the choir as the curtain pulls up and a war cemetery appears under faint light.

The individual scenes are interspersed by modern dance routines by Belgian company Eastman, the dancers at times joining to form a heroic statue and at other times convulsing on the floor of an infirmary.

TLC cancels reality TV programme ‘Here Comes Honey Boo Boo’

LOS ANGELES, 25 Oct — Cable television network TLC on Friday said it has cancelled “Here Comes Honey Boo Boo,” the popular cable reality series, about a rural Georgia family and their precocious beauty pageant-daughter.

TLC, owned by Discovery Communications Inc, did not explain why it was cancelling the show but said in a statement that “supporting the health and welfare of these remarkable children is our only priority. TLC is faithfully committed to the children’s ongoing comfort and well-being.”

June Shannon, the mother of Alana “Honey Boo Boo” Thompson, 9, on Friday denied a report the previous day on celebrity website TMZ.com that she was in a relationship with a convicted child molester. Efforts to contact a lawyer for the man were unsuccessful.

In a video posted on Facebook, Shannon said she hadn’t seen the man cited by TMZ in a decade. “I would not ever, ever put my kids in danger,” Shannon said. “That is my past,” she added. Reuters could not independently verify the TMZ report.

“Here Comes Honey Boo Boo,” which began airing in 2012, follows Alana as well as her father and Shannon’s three other daughters in rural McIntyre, Georgia.—Reuters

Lens’s music is not always melodic but uses the orchestra to paint the scenes, such as light wind instruments accompanying the lamentation of an abandoned orphan in the final scene.

It takes a surreal turn in the dramatic canto of the Angels of Death with high-pitched voices shrieking “I am the angel of death, I catch breath”, followed by repeated expletives.

The deserter’s canto begins: “My mother’s in the laundry crying from the shame. My father would have preferred I took a bullet in the brain.”

Perhaps most striking words are those of a survivor, who, back with his family, cannot shake the horrifying memories of battle.

“Sometimes I think my wife wished I’d died,” he sings.

Reuters
World War One bombs a part of life in Belgium even 100 years on

Ypres, (Belgium), 25 Oct — Pondfarm in western Belgium is used to digging up an unusual crop. “It’s a fairly poor harvest,” said Stijn Butaye, 26, as he looked at a haul of 28 World War One shells unearthed with potatoes and beet in the last two weeks and awaiting collection by Belgium’s bomb disposal squad. The 40-hectare (100 acre) Butaye family farm sits where — 100 years ago — advancing German forces pounded British lines, eventually setting up a hospital and an aid station in two large fortified bunkers. Belgian farmers who returned to the muddied battlefields after the war mostly just filled in the trenches and began the season. They are unbeaten in a total of 27 matches since April.

River are four points clear at the top of the championship with 24 points from 12 matches, and have reached the quarter-finals of the regional Copa Sudamericana after completing a 5-1 aggregate victory over Paraguay’s Libertad on Wednesday. Gallardo inherited the team as champions from Ramon Diaz but they have improved under the 38-year-old, who is among several young coaches breathing new life into the Argentine game.

‘Babyface’ Gallardo rejuvenates Argentine game

BUENOS AIRES, 25 Oct — Marcelo ‘Babyface’ Gallardo made his River Plate and Argentina debut at 17 and is now making waves as a young coach in the tough Argentine first division. When Gallardo’s River team visit Atletico Rafaela on Sunday they will be defending a 19-match unbeaten run in all competitions achieved during his first 100 days at the helm since he took charge at the beginning of the season. They are unbeaten in a total of 27 matches since April.

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Vienna inaugurates monument to World War Two deserters

VIENNA, 25 Oct — Austria inaugurated a monument on Friday to thousands of its nationals who deserted Hitler’s army during World War Two, marking a new step in efforts to acknowledge the nation’s wartime past.

Germany annexed Austria in 1938, making it part of Hitler’s Third Reich, that wrought destruction across the continent and slaughtered millions of Jews in the Holocaust.

The Nazi military justice system executed thousands of deserters and opponents of the war effort. Austria’s parliament voted in 2009 — over the objections of far-right parties — to clear the reputations of those who met disdain and abuse for refusing to follow the Nazi line. “If they were the good ones in Hitler’s army, then we deserters were of course the evil ones, the bad ones that you could take action against,” said activist Richard Wadani, 92, one of those who deserted.

Austrian President Heinz Fischer said it was important for people to have been treated this way in a democratic post-war Austria. “This is something for which one has to apologise and be ashamed,” he said.

Austria — which has been struggling to escape a reputation for glossing over its wartime history — for decades maintained that it was Hitler’s first victim, overlooking the enthusiastic welcome he got from many Austrians.

The monument, designed by German artist Olaf Nicolai, depicts a three-level form in the shape of an X, meant to symbolize the plight of the individual pitted against society’s power.

It stands in the Ballhausplatz in central Vienna, near the presidency and chancellery. Seen from above, an inscription carved into the monument spells out “all alone.”

Despite criticism from some veterans that not all deserters deserve to be honored, other monuments to soldiers who laid down their arms and fled have already been erected in Austria and Germany.

People surround the memorial for ‘Victims of Nazi Military Justice’ during the inauguration ceremony in front of Hofburg Palace in Vienna on 24 Oct, 2014. — Reuters
MANCHESTER, 25 Oct — Louis van Gaal says he is a very Special One. The Manchester United manager has built up Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho into something special because I’ve worked with him and we’ve continued our relationship which in the football world is not normal,” added the Dutchman. “It is a very modest and emotional human being and I like that.”

“The pair have only clashed once before in a competitive game when Mourinho’s Inter Milan beat Van Gaal’s Bayern Munich 2-0 in the 2010 Champions League final. Hosting his former assistant on Sunday will be another difficult task for the United boss with Chelsea in devastating form, dropping only two points from their opening eight games to open up a five-point gap on nearest rivals Manchester City.”

Serbia get walkover v Albania, three points docked

BERNE, 25 Oct — Serbia have been awarded a 3-0 walkover against Albania for last week’s abandoned Euro 2016 qualifier but they have also been docked three points, UEFA said on Friday.

Serbia have been ordered to play their next two home games in Group I behind closed doors, while both teams have been fined ₣100,000 euros (78,726 British pounds) European soccer’s governing body added. Both sides said they had been treated unfairly and would appeal the decision.

The match, played on 14 October with no away fans permitted, was interrupted when a flag depicting so-called Greater Albania was waved over the pitch by a remote-controlled drone.

Albanian soccer fans protest near the Serbian Embassy

SINGAPORE, 25 Oct — Serena Williams regained her composure after smacking her racquet and being on the brink of defeat to beat Caroline Wozniacki 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 (6) on Saturday and reach the title match at the WTA Finals. The world number one had been playing out like two prizefighters for more than two hours until Williams delivered the killer blow to end a contest filled with drama and escalating tension.

The world number one looked to be on the ropes after losing the first set and slamming her racquet in frustration, then falling 5-4 behind in the third set.

But Wozniacki, who lost to Williams in last month’s US Open final, failed to serve out the match and the American made her pay, winning the tie-break.

Williams remains on course to win the elite season-ending championship for the third year in a row.

She will play either Simona Halep or Agnieszka Radwanska in Sunday’s final at Singapore’s National Indoor Stadium.

Coric stuns Nadal in Basel, Federer through

BASEL, (Switzerland), 25 Oct — Croatian wonderkind Borna Coric offered emphatic proof of his potential when he crushed Rafa Nadal in the Swiss Indoor tournament on Friday before local hero Roger Federer cruised into the last four.

The 17-year-old Coric, already being called ‘Baby Djokovic’ because of similarities with world number one Novak Djokovic, gave an off-colour Nadal a torrid time, winning 6-2, 7-6 (4).

The Spaniard, who had appendicitis and later announced he would not play at the Paris Masters next week or season-ending ATP World Tour Finals in London next month, was unmistakable in the first set as he offered little resistance, losing the opening five games.

Nadal’s timing improved marginally in the second but twice Coric served to stay in the set and he then held his nerve when a loose forehand from his opponent gave him two match points. Coric needed only one of them, forcing a weary Nadal to send a defensive forehand wide.

Top seed Federer, looking for a sixth Basel title, beat Bulgaria’s Grigor Dimitrov 7-6 (4), 6-2 in a much more even contest.

Roger Federer of Switzerland

The world number one edged a first set last ing Ivo Karlovic in the semi-finals after the Croat beat Germany’s Benjamin Becker 6-4, 6-4 with the help of 19 aces.

Should Federer, 33, win the title on Sunday he would move into within 500 points of Djokovic and keep alive his hopes of returning to the top of the rankings.

Federer will play in-form Belgian David Goffin who caused a surprise by beating Canada’s Milos Raonic in three sets.