President U Thein Sein delivers address at Workshop on Urban and Housing Development Policy and Projects

Nay Pyi Taw, 21 Nov

—It is necessary to implement affordable housing projects in which houses can be purchased in installments or with mortgages by the poor, the disabled, retirees, family members of fallen soldiers and the low-income public as well as projects for public rental houses for those who cannot afford affordable homes as they do not have regular incomes, President U Thein Sein said in his speech at the Workshop on Urban and Housing Development Policy and Projects held in Nay Pyi Taw on Friday.

The president told the workshop that the purpose of the workshop is to develop national policy, laws, rules and regulations covering the entire nation for the development of the urban and housing sector that can effectively contribute to the socioeconomic development of the people and serve the national interest and to draft uniform policies, rules and regulations for states and regions based on the national policy.

The government has been implementing people-centred development tasks for living and basic socioeconomic development of the people since it took office, the president said.

The president pointed out that it is important to hold consultations not only with departmental staff but also with towns’ elders who have permanently settled in towns to develop rural and urban development projects that can provide food, clothing and shelter and job opportunities.

The government is taking measures to relocate the homeless as well as to address illegal squatters while efforts are being made to improve the living standards of the people, the president explained, saying it is vital to consider the employment situation as well as the residential situation of the poor.

As development partners, experts, scholars, Hlutaw representatives, representatives from states and regions are participating in the workshop, it is expected to be enacted.

President U Thein Sein highlights relocation of homeless and squatter at Workshop on Urban and Housing Development Policy and Projects.—MNA

SME development branches training aims promote SME knowledge among staff: Industry Ministry

By Khaing Thanda Lwin

Yangon, 21 Nov

The Department of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Development under the Ministry of Industry in cooperation with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) on Thursday organized its 15th batch of staff of SME development branches for training here, aiming to develop the private sector and promote SME financial knowledge among staff.

The two-day capacity-building training is scheduled to provide knowledge on an overview of entrepreneurs and the classification of roles of different participants involved in the private sector development of Myanmar as well as specific roles and tasks of SME development branches, said Mrs Irina Scheffmann, head of the programme at GIZ.

She added that lack of knowledge is the main challenge to the development of the SME sector in Myanmar, so GIZ will continue to provide knowledge of business skills to the sector development.

The two-day course admitted 28 trainees. The organizers managed to train more than 300 staff officers from SME development branches in regions/states and the Directorate of Inspection (DISI) this year.

“The GIZ has a future plan to extend its support for the department of SME development and its decentralization process with capacity-building exercises and financial support for office infrastructure,” said an official from GIZ.

In his opening remarks, U Aung Myo Khaing, director of the SME Development Department, said the small and medium enterprise bill is under discussion at the Pyithu Hlutaw. It consists of effective rules and regulations on developing the SME sector and it is expected to be enacted soon.

15th batch of staff of SME development branches for training.—PHOTO: KHAING THANDA LWIN

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
President Office
(Order No. 26/2014)
15th Waning Day of Tazaungmone, 1376 ME
(21 November, 2014)

Assignment of Deputy Minister

Under Sub-Sections (a) and (d) of Section 234 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Paragraph (ix) of Sub-Section (b) of Section 16 of the Union Government Law, Deputy Minister for National Planning and Economic Development Dr San Lwin has been assigned as Deputy Minister at the President Office Ministry (5).

Sd/Dr Thein Sein
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

INSIDE

Vice President
Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits Sports and Physical Education Institute, University of Medicine in Taunggyi

Ministry of Electric Power, Austria-based ANDRITZ Hydropower sign MoU for Deedoke Hydropower Project
**Pyidaungsu Hluttaw**

**Discussions on constitutional reform continue at Pyidaungsu Hluttaw**

**NAY PYI TAW, 21 Nov** — The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on Friday approved an agreement to be signed between Myanmar and Russia to cooperate in military intelligence, followed by discussions on a report submitted by a committee responsible for the implementation of constitutional change.

U Than Nwe of Buda-lin constituency suggested that decentralization will promise individual states and regions control over their own affairs, a federalism demanded by ethnic parties, calling for a constitutional change so that states and regions parliaments will enjoy the right to elect their regional chiefs. Dr Win Myint Aung of Sagang Region constituency said that ideologies and policies keep changing in the world, hinting that the constitution should be amended in a way that will ensure a win-win situation.

U Steven Tha Beit of Chin State constituency called the constitution the lifeline of the nation but pointed out the need to change underdemocratic sections, citing the changing patterns of the country’s political, economic and social settings as well as of international relations.

U Khin Maung Win of Lammadaw constituency said that the constitution is meant to safeguard and promote the interests of the ruled, noting that a constitution is a political pact reached between the ruler and the ruled. He added that constitutional amendments should take into consideration political and economic reforms, national reconciliation and ethnic conflicts.

**Pyithu Hluttaw**

**Myanmar taking measures to reduce trade deficits**

**NAY PYI TAW, 21 Nov** — A question was raised at the Pyithu Hluttaw on Friday on how to deal with the country’s trade deficits, with Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan responding that the fiscal year of 2014 from 1 April to 12 September saw export earnings of US$4,965.726m and import of US$7,366.937m, resulting in a trade deficit of US$2,401.211m.

**Ministry of Electric Power, Austria-based ANDRITZ Hydro sign MoU for Deedoke Hydropower Project**

**NAY PYI TAW, 21 Nov** — The Hydropower Administration Department under the Ministry of Electric Power and Austria-based ANDRITZ Hydro GmbH, a global supplier of electromechanical equipment and services for hydropower plants, on Thursday signed an MoU for the development, operation and transfer of Deedoke Hydropower Project on Myitnge River.

The project area is located 12 miles from Yeywa Hydroelectric Power Plant in Kyaukse District in Mandalay Region. Under the MoU, ANDRITZ Hydro will establish a 66 MW low-head power plant there through a JV or B.O.T system.

U Khin Maung Soe, Union Minister for Electric Power, clarified the government’s current activities to increase electricity services in the country and future plans for sustainable power generation, urging the project implementing bodies to obey the Environmental Conservation Law and offer support for regional development.

In his speech on the occasion, U Khin Maung Soe said he believes ANDRITZ Hydro will implement the project in line with the law as it has a good reputation among countries.

As part of efforts to develop the electricity sector, the Ministry of Electric Power of Myanmar and the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology of Austria also signed an MoU on technology cooperation in May.

According to the Ministry, only 36% of the country’s population uses electricity, with the remaining people living without electricity. People in Rakhae State will gain access to electricity through state-owned power grids in December.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives participate in debate on constitutional amendment in Friday’s session.—MNA

**Amyotha Hluttaw**

**Amyotha Hluttaw to discuss amendment bills**

Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan.—MNA

**NAY PYI TAW, 21 Nov** — The speaker of the Amyotha Hluttaw informed the Hluttaw session on Friday of the approval of the Pyithu Hluttaw on bills amending laws stipulating the salaries, allowances and titles of state/region level officials, representatives of the Pyithu Hluttaw, the Amyotha Hluttaw and state/region Hluttaw representatives and leading members of self-administered regions and areas to the Amyotha Hluttaw with added notes.

Afterwards, members of the Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee U Tin Mya, U Maung Aye Tun and Deputy Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint Hsan submitted the bill on the budget allocation proposal, the report on repealing the Agricultural Produce Markets Act and the bill repealing the Agricultural Produce Markets Act, respectively. The act was enacted in 1941 so it fails to reflect the current situation.

The Amyotha Hluttaw session today also agreed to debate the bills amending the Diplomats and Consular Officers (Oaths and Fees) Act and amending the United Nations (Rights and Exemptions) Act submitted by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Tin Oo Lwin.—MNA

**Myanmar Catholics celebrate anniversary of their faith**

**YANGON, 21 Nov** — Catholics in Myanmar celebrated their quincentenary anniversary of their faith at Saint Mary’s Cathedral on Bo Aung Kyaw Street here on Friday morning, with Oswald Cardinal Garcia extending greetings on behalf of Pope Francis, sources said.

Congregations gathering at the event paid homage to Jesus, saying prayers. A grand celebration will be made at Thuwunna Stadium on 23 November.

Catholicism in Myanmar dates back 500 years from 1511 to 2011.—MNA
President U Thein Sein delivers address at Workshop...

(from page 1)

vital to take into account the availability of investment as well as far-sighted modern projects, the president said.

The government is planning to implement insurance systems, installment systems and loan systems not just for housing for government staff but also for stipends for higher education and health care for their offspring, the president continued.

In conclusion, the president urged the participants to contribute to the development of the socioeconomic status of all citizens in accordance with the long-term goals of all-round national development projects and the framework for economic and social reform.

Afterwards, the president posed for a documentary photo with the participants.

The participants held discussions on urban development policy, infrastructure development and housing policy and development projects.

Union Minister at the President Office U Tin Naing Thein reviewed the papers and a discussion of the workshop in the afternoon. The workshop concluded with remarks by Vice President U Nyan Tun.

Also present at the workshop were Vice President U Nyan Tun, union ministers, deputy ministers, mayors, Hluttaw representatives, members of state/region governments, foreign diplomats and resource persons.

President U Thein Sein on Friday met Chairman Mr Wolfgang Semper of Andritz Hydro, Austria, and party.

President U Thein Sein on Friday met Chairman Mr Wolfgang Semper of Andritz Hydro, Austria, and party at the Presidential Palace here to discuss investment opportunities in the process of generating electricity and environmental conservation.

Both sides also discussed the progress of social welfare tasks, increasing the number of technology-related training programs to develop human resources, sustainable power generation with the use of advanced techniques and scholarship programmes for engineering students, he said.

Also present at the call were Union ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Soe Thane, U Tin Naing Thein, U Khin Maung Soe and U Zayar Aung, as well as the Austrian ambassador to Myanmar. —MNA

Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visits Sports and Physical Education Institute, University of Medicine in Taunggyi

Nay Pyi Taw, 21 Nov—Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham visited the Sports and Physical Education Institute (Taunggyi) and the University of Medicine (Taunggyi) on Friday.

On his visit to the Institute of Sports, the vice president heard reports on the establishment of sports and physical education institutes in Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Taunggyi, the selection of trainees depending on types of sports, the combination of sports and studies during education, matters related to health care and accommodation for trainees and arrangements being made to turn out outstanding athletes for the country and work to be done by Deputy Director-General U Tun Myint Oo and Union Minister for Sports U Tint Hsan.

In his speech, the vice president stressed the need to formulate short-term and long-term plans for realization of success in sports such as athletics and swimming and called for measures to be implemented systematically from now on to ensure sustainable development in different types of sports apart from the 10 types of sports for which training is being conducted at the sports training institutions.

Next, the vice president and party toured the institute and observed sports training being undertaken, learning centres and progress in the construction of men’s and women’s hostels.

The Sports and Physical Education Institute (Taunggyi) is the fourth one following the opening of institutes in Yangon, Mandalay and Mawlamyine. The two institutes in Yangon and Mandalay are graded A while Mawlamyine and Taunggyi are graded B.A., with a total of 150 trainees taking 10 types of sports courses at the institute in Taunggyi.

During his visit to the University of Medicine (Taunggyi), the vice president heard reports on progress in the construction of the main building and others including staff quarters and related buildings and work being conducted for ensuring electricity and water supply presented by Director-General Dr Zaw Than Myint of the Medical Science Department.

While giving necessary instructions, he stressed the importance of the role of building inspection teams to ensure buildings meet set standards and worksite safety and fire prevention measures.

Upon completion, the University of Medicine (Taunggyi) will become the fifth medical school in the country to nurture qualified health professionals.

In his closing remarks, the vice president stressed the need to develop distance learning programmes and modern teaching aids needed to link with medical schools in foreign countries.

Then the vice president and party observed documentary photos of construction of the university and work progress in building construction and staff quarters. —MNA
Missionary capacity enhancement course conducted

The Mandalay Region Women’s Affairs Organization organized a course for taking care of human trafficking victims at its office on Theikpun Street in Mandalay on Wednesday.

The organization’s Chairwoman Daw Su Su Lwin and Secretary Daw Thanda Phone Win explained the rehabilitation of human trafficking victims and implementation of a capacity enhancement plan.

SIP Tun Tun Naing of the No 11 Anti-Human Trafficking Police Platoon gave lectures on prevention of trafficking in persons to members of community surveillance groups.

The training course lasted up to 21 November, attended by 30 female trainees.

Win Bo (Myanaung Township IPRD)

Course on rehabilitating human trafficking victims given in Mandalay

A total of 17,720 acres of paddy plantations are grown in the township, but some of them are irrigated by Pyaungpya, Khetlan, Kanna, Wetlu and Myaingtha dams yearly.

This year, rain-fed paddy plantations still need water due to unfavourable weather in the late monsoon.—Htay Myint Maung

Mandala, 21 Nov—
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Win Bo (Myanaung Township IPRD)

Paddy plantations need water to thrive in Natogyi

Some paddy plantations need water for the plants to thrive in Natogyi Township, Mandalay Region, sources said.

A total of 17,720 acres of paddy plantations are grown in the township, but some of them are irrigated by Pyaungpya, Khetlan, Kanna, Wetlu and Myaingtha dams yearly.

This year, rain-fed paddy plantations still need water due to unfavourable weather in the late monsoon.—Htay Myint Maung

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

Dimawhso of Kayah State opens Institute of Agriculture

A ceremony to open the Institute of Agriculture (Dimawhso) under the Agriculture Department was held in Ngwetaung Village, Dimawhso Township, Kayah State, on Friday.

Kayah State Chief Minister U Khin Maung Oo and ministers, Deputy Director-General U Aye Tun of the department and local people attended the ceremony.

Kayah State Minister for Planning and Economic Development U Taw Rei, State Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Breeding U Poe Rea Yan Aung and the deputy director-general formally opened the archway of the institute.

Principal of the institute Daw Su San Aye reported on preparations for academic and management matters.

The chief minister and party visited the office of the institute, the computer lab, the library and plantations.

Dimawhso Township IPRD
**LOCAL NEWS**

**Staff issue citizenship scrutiny cards to locals**

LASHIO, 21 Nov — Head of Lashio Township Immigration and National Registration Department U Lay Maung and staff made a trip to Loikham village of the township, Shan State on 17 November and issued citizenship scrutiny cards to the local people through a one-stop service.

At Basic Education High School in Nampaung village, they delivered the citizenship cards to the students under the Moe Pwint Plan-7.

At the ceremony, Shan State Hluttaw MP U Sai Myint Kyu and Deputy Director U Saw Naung of Shan State INRD handed over 252 CSCs for the students to Headmistress Daw Nang Marlar Myint.

Zaw Lwin (Lashio)

**Heavy machinery, tractors available at Mandalay branch of company**

MANDALAY, 21 Nov — Myan Shwe Pyi Tractors Co Ltd opened its branch at the corner of 51st and Mingala streets in No 2 Industrial Zone in Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay, on Thursday.

Mandalay Region ministers and the chairman of the company formally opened the branch office and viewed heavy machinery, generators, machinery parts and a worker training centre.

Caterpillar machinery, dumpers, concrete mixers and tractors are available at the branch office of Myan Shwe Pyi Tractors Co Ltd in Mandalay.

Tin Maung (Mandalay)

**Mandalay Region marks 25th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

MANDALAY, 21 Nov — A press conference on policing procedures of Myanaw Township Police Force was held at the Dhammayan of Myoma police station on Thursday.

Commander of Township Police Force Police Major Tun Pe explained the causes of crimes in Myanaw Township, the arrest of fugitives, cooperation with the European Union for enhancement of policing work and the exposing of major crimes by police in cooperation with local people.

He distributed pamphlets on provisions of criminal laws related to the police and the arrest of fugitives, prevention of bribery cases and taking action against police officers who take bribes.

Commander of Myanaw Myoma Police Station Police Captain Maung Maung Tar briefed the attendees on the root causes of crimes and the important role played by people in cooperating with the police in exposing the criminal cases.—Win Bo (Myanaw Township IPRD)

**Volunteers ready to donate blood in Htilin Township**

HTILIN, 21 Nov — Fifteen people from Htanbin village and 52 from Htilin village in Htilin Township of Magway Region arrived at Htilin Township Hospital recently to check their blood groups in order to donate blood to needy patients at the hospital. Head of Township Health Department Dr Sein Po and health staff checked the blood groups and gave health care services to the volunteers.

Gangaw District IPRD

**Policing procedures explained in Myanaw**

MYANAW, 21 Nov — A press conference on policing procedures of Myanaw Township Police Force was held at the Dhammayan of Myoma police station on Thursday.

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Commander of Myanaw Myoma Police Station Police Captain Maung Maung Tar briefed the attendees on the root causes of crimes and the important role played by people in cooperating with the police in exposing the criminal cases.—Win Bo (Myanaw Township IPRD)

**Librarian and staff issue membership cards to students from Basic Education High School No 1 in Natmauk, Magway Region, on 20 November to borrow books from library of Township Information and Public Relations Department.** —HLA WIN (TOWNSHIP IPRD)
Japan PM dissolves lower house for election to push “Abenomics”

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe dissolved the lower house of parliament on Friday for a general election in which he hopes to gain a fresh mandate to continue his economic policies after putting off a major tax hike.

Voting in the House of Representatives election will be held 14 December following a two-week campaign from 2 December.

Abe called a snap election on Tuesday after announcing the postponement of the second phase of a consumption tax hike planned for October 2015 by 18 months.

The decision to put off raising the tax from the current 8 percent to 10 percent until April 2017 came in the wake of gloomy economic data that showed the country’s gross domestic product contracted for the second consecutive quarter in the July-September period.

In a televised Press conference on Tuesday, Abe announced he was calling an election to seek the voters’ verdict on his “Abenomics” policy package, saying postponing the tax hike was a “serious decision” that would affect the people’s lives and the economy.

Abenomics, aimed at pulling Japan out of deflation, features substantial monetary easing, fiscal spending and growth-oriented reforms.

Opposition parties, however, have criticized Abe’s decision to seek a fresh mandate as groundless. By calling an election halfway through the term of current lower house members until 2016, Abe aims to take advantage of disarray in the opposition camp while his popularity is still relatively high to cement his grip on power until 2018, political observers have said. His Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition ally Komeito party dominate both chambers of parliament.

But his political gambit has caused bewilderment among the public. A survey by Kyodo News shortly after Abe’s press conference showed 63.1 percent of respondents said they do not understand the premier’s move to seek a new mandate, while 30.3 percent said they support it.

“Our party will look for wins for everyone we officially endorse or recommend,” Sadakazu Tanigaki, LDP secretary general, told reporters on Friday morning when asked how many seats the party would target in the election.

Abe’s policies to strengthen the economy have produced a lot of results but have “some weaknesses,” Tanigaki said. “We will try to generate a positive growth cycle for the economy and continue to fight until the end of the election.”

Abe had a relatively smooth run in his second stint as prime minister from December 2012 until two female Cabinet ministers he appointed in September resigned over scandals after less than two months.

Political analysts say Abe also wants an early election held before debate starts on controversial issues his government is pushing such as the right to collective self-defence and the restoration of nuclear reactors.

The Abe administration is meanwhile struggling to make progress on the issue of North Korea’s abductions of Japanese nationals despite his longtime commitment to the issue, and this is another area that could push the prime minister’s approval rating lower.

Yukio Edano, secretary general of the main opposition Democratic Party of Japan, criticized Abe on Friday for deciding to dissolve the house, saying, “I don’t understand what this dissolution is for.”

Earlier this week, Abe said he will resign if the ruling coalition fails to secure a majority, or 238 seats, in the powerful lower house, whose number of seats will be reduced to 475 as part of an overhaul addressing vote value disparities.

The LDP and Komeito currently hold a two-thirds majority in the 480-seat house. Later Friday, the government will finalize 2 December as the date of the official start of campaigning, as well as the 14 December voting date for the first lower house election since December 2012, when the LDP returned to power with Komeito by trouncing the DPJ.

China’s defence chief calls for better dispute management mechanisms

China’s defence minister on Friday urged that the Asia-Pacific region be equipped with better dispute management and military-to-military consultation mechanisms to prevent tensions from escalating.

“The Chinese military stands ready to seek appropriate solutions to relevant issues in collaboration with other parties and share information at a timely manner,” Defence Minister Chang Wanquan told a security forum on the outskirts of Beijing attended by officials and experts from about 50 countries.

Chang proposed that countries having territorial disputes with China “establish (together) accessible and efficient dispute management and control mechanisms” for ensuring long-term stability and enduring prosperity in the region, adding that it is necessary to settle conflicts with “full respect to historical facts and the international law.”

His proposal at the forum came after Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed last week during their first talks that the two countries, whose ties have been fraught with tensions over the sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands, will work harder toward the establishment of a maritime communication mechanism to avert unforeseen circumstances.

To bolster mutual trust, Chang also called on Asian countries to “transcend Cold-War thinking and base their decisions on the reality of a changing security environment.”

By promoting “regular, open and inclusive contacts” between defence officials, he said, the region’s security architecture needs foster “a stronger sense of belonging to the community of common destiny.”

Since 2006, the Xiangshan Forum, organized by the China Association for Military Science, has been held biennially. Starting from this year, it will be held annually and try to attract more participation of foreign defence officials, not just scholars.

Some analysts say China’s decision to upgrade the forum is aimed at easing concerns over its growing military clout and creating a counterbalance to Asia’s foremost influential security forum, known as the Shanghai Dialogue held every year in Singapore.

At the dialogue, involving top government officials and experts, China’s increasing assertiveness has been in the limelight in recent years.

China-bound plane makes emergency landing in Philippine airport

MANILA, 21 Nov — A Japan-bound All Nippon Airways jet made an emergency landing at an airport in the Philippines capital region on Friday for deciding to disallow a major tax hike.

An initial report said that after 5 miles on air, the cockpit’s two pilots and eight flight stewards. CAAP said the plane, a Boeing 767 type aircraft, landed safely at runway 06/24. Two aircraft accident investigators were immediately dispatched by the state agency to determine the cause of the incident.

ướp the photos taken by children during an exhibition in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 20 Nov, 2014. A one-month-long exhibition of children’s photos kicked off here on Thursday to mark the Universal Children’s Day.—Xinhua
**Global New Light of Myanmar**

**WORLD**

**Japan, S Korea diplomats to hold talks next Thursday in Seoul**

Tokyo, 21 Nov — Senior officials from Japan and South Korea will hold talks next Thursday in Seoul, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said on Friday.

The issue of women who were forced to work in wartime brothels for the Japanese military are euphemistically known as “comfort women” in Japan is expected to be discussed at the director general-level talks. The issue is a major obstacle to furthering bilateral ties.

Bilateral relations have remained strained over the issue of comfort women, many of whom were Korean. South Korean President Park Geun-hye, who took office in 2013, and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who took power in 2012, have yet to hold a formal one-on-one summit meeting.

At the Thursday meeting, Japan is expected to say that the Abe government upholds a 1993 statement issued by then Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono which acknowledged for the first time the Japanese military’s involvement in setting up “comfort stations” and the use of coercion in recruiting women to provide sex to Japanese soldiers before and during World War II.

Japan will be represented by Junichi Ihara, head of the Foreign Ministry’s Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, and South Korea by Lee Sang Deok, director general of the South Korean Foreign Ministry’s Northeast Asian Affairs Bureau.

South Korea has repeatedly demanded that Tokyo settle the issue in a way that is acceptable to the surviving victims, including an apology and compensation.

Japan, for its part, maintains that the issue of compensation was legally settled with South Korea under a 1965 bilateral agreement when the two countries normalized ties.

It will be the first meeting between Ihara and Lee since they met 19 September in Tokyo. The two ministers said general-level talks have been held roughly every month since their first round in April but they were not held last month apparently due to tensions caused by the indictment of a Japanese journalist in South Korea.

Tatsuya Kato, the former Seoul bureau chief of Japan’s Sankei Shimbun daily, was indicted in October on charges of defaming Park in an article about her whereabouts on the day of the deadly ferry disaster in April. Japan has since protested the action.

**Kyodo News**

**Still long way to go for Iran nuclear deal**

Paris, 21 Nov — French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius and his US counterpart, Secretary of State John Kerry, acknowledged on Thursday there was some way to go to iron out differences with Iran over its nuclear programme.

“We want a deal, but important points of difference remain,” Fabius said in a joint statement with Kerry in Paris. “We hope that we can reduce those in the coming days, but that will depend on the attitude of the Iranians.” Fabius, whose country is deemed to have a tough stance in the talks, is due to head to Vienna before the weekend.

Kerry said he shared Fabius’ view and noted the so-called P5+1 group which also includes Britain, China, Germany and Russia, that are meeting Iranian officials this week in Vienna had a united approach even if there could be “minor differences” between all.

“Our fundamental principles … we are in agreement that you have to be able to verify this, there has to be limits, an acceptable level and we are confident of our unity,” he told a separate news conference at the US Embassy in Paris.

Asked whether the most likely conclusion on 24 November was an extension in talks — something diplomats have said privately is likely — Kerry said that was not being talked about. “We are not discussing an extension, we are negotiating to try and get an agreement,” he said. “If you get to the final hour and you need to look at alternatives then we’ll look at them,” he said, ahead of travelling to Vienna later on Thursday.

**Reuters**

**US to send new troops to Iraq even before Congress OKs funds**

Washington, 21 Nov — Some of the 1,500 new US troops authorized to advise and train Iraqi forces in their fight against Islamic State militants will deploy to the country in the next few weeks without waiting for Congress to fund the mission, the Pentagon said on Thursday.

Rear Admiral John Kirby, the Pentagon press secretary, said leading elements of the US force would begin moving into Iraq in the coming weeks, even if Congress has not yet acted on a $5.6 billion supplemental request to fund the expanded fight against the militants who overrun northeastern Iraq earlier this year.

Officials initially indicated they needed to lawmakers to approve the funding before the Pentagon could start the mission, but General Lloyd Austin, the head of US troops in the Middle East, recommended starting the effort using resources already available to him. “The commander … can reallocate resources inside his theatre as he deems fit. So he is going to … try to get a jump start on this programme,” Kirby told reporters, adding that Congress would get an additional report on the $5.6 billion was still needed to carry out the “more robust programme.”

Kirby’s comments came just days after US officials said some 30 special operations troops had been sent to Ain al-Asad air base in Anbar Province in Iraq to establish an operation to advise and train Iraqi troops.
A t the outset, it is worth stating that pub-
lic participation is at the heart of any
government. In other words, democracy
requires the involvement of the pub-
lic. Unfortunately, in our country, the majority
of people still assume that it would be a nice idea
to stay away from politics. Most of them are ac-
customed to living in fear as a result of being
haunted by the shadow of the recent past.

With a complete realization of the situation,
the speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw has often
called for public involvement in politics, stressing
that the fact politics is a national concern. Even
then, many people are heard to claim that politics
is a dirty practice, a silly waste of time.

In fact, politics is about promoting, enhanc-
ing and strengthening democratic structures
while catering to the needs, hopes and aspirations
of the people. It is therefore important for ordi-
nary people to open their eyes to the reality that
"we hold all the strings in the shaping of our own
destiny".

It is only natural that all representatives in
their electioneering promise the best things for
people, which is why any government, after com-
ing to power, should serve public interests not
only with high ambitions but also with realistic
objectives. In addition, it is necessary for a gov-
ernment to give individuals more choice about how
they can participate in the political process
for the simple reason that any decision the gov-
ernment makes affects their lives.

All in all, it is the people who are the deci-
sion-makers in electing a government. The power
therefore lies in the hands of the people. It is there-
fore quite natural that a government must be
servile to the public. In the end, the only measure of how successful a govern-
ment is how well it treats its citizens.

The Second last old capital city “Amarapura” Part V
Amarapura under the four successors of Badonsachen (Bodawpaya)

Amarapura, the second last old capital of the royal
family of Burma and the capital of the kingdom for
more than 50 years, is a place that has been
remembered for its beauty and its contributions to
Rakhine Buddhism. The city was founded by King
Tharawaddy in 1819 and was the capital of the
kingdom until 1837, when it was moved back to
old capital city Inwa.

KING THARAWADDY

King Tharawaddy was the son of King Badonsachen and
restored the temple of Maha Muni Buddha Image to Amarapura. The
inscription set up in the precinct full records the date and
regal title “Thiri Pawara Loka Dipati Ma-
ha Mawadda Mandawina Dapati Deva”.

Within nine years of his reign, King Tharawaddy was pre-occupied with the
idea of redeeming the two lost territor-
ies—Rakhine and Tenasserim. He tried to
reform and modernize his armed forces. He
reconstructed fortifications and rebuilt his capital and towns including
Yangon. He patronized and awarded re-
wards to outstanding writers and perfor-
ming artists. True to the tradition of a noble
Buddhist king, he repaired and renovated
old religious monuments and built new
ones of which a big pagoda of a fine archi-
tectural design, built by the side of a natural
lake “Zaung Kalaw” to the north east of his
capital “Loka Muni Culla”. A big stone
inscription set up in the precinct full records
his deeds of good merit.

In politics, Tharawaddy was farsight-
ed and were informed of the Anglo-French
colonial rivalry reaching South-east Asia.
He knew that these two Western Powers
would come to his kingdom unless he took
timely measures to prevent them. Burney
suggested the exchange of Rakhine and
Tenasserim with Pegu. That indicated to
King Tharawaddy that the British would
proceed with their territorial aggression in
Amarapura. With this he was no longer a
persona grata as a British Resi-
dent at the Court of Tharawaddy, returned
home on the excuse of ill health.

Now the way was opened to King
Tharawaddy to move forward with the plan
he deemed best. In 1841 the court of Am-
arapura issued the announcement of the
king’s intention to send a expedition via
Shwedagon in Yangon. The announcement was soon followed by the sending of an ad-
vanced party to make preparation for the
royal visit, causing much alarm among the
British. The British Commissioner of
Tenasserim sent an alarm report to the
Governor-General of British India saying
the Burmese king was advancing to Yan-
gon with 40 thousand troops to invade
Tenasserim. The British Intelligence learnt
that the “Burmese were constructing in
Yangon not only palace, court, and offices
but also barracks, armoury, stone-houses,
war boats, and vessels as if they were pre-
paring for war. Myanmar Communities in
lower Myanmar were much excited to see
their king coming in state.

The declared intention of the king’s riverine journey to Yangon was to worship
Shwedagon. But did he have other motives?
The following detail account of the king’s
progress attested that he intended to recover
his lost territories by his might and main.

“After security and defence measures were taken and arrangements for mainte-
nance of law and order were carried out, King Tharawaddy took a stately trip to Da-
gon via the Ayeyawaddy River. The fol-
lowing was the order of his flotilla:

(1) The White Sampan, carrying the
Buddha Images and Shin Pyu Paya, copies
of Tipitaka, 8 images of Arahath Saints and
Ministers in charge of glebe lands, and his
clothes; supervising, took the lead of the pro-
cession
(2) Boats, Sampans, and rafts, carrying
over 1500 gunners from Amyint, Taungla,
Alakapa, Myo Tha, and Pyay towns who
formed the army under the command of
royal son Prince Pyay followed next Prince
Mone Lancers, Kaung Han troopers, Ywe
Maha Thiri Thihathu, Jailor, Myo Sayey
and other boats carrying soldiers from the
army under the command of Prince Thitaw
followed next.
(3) Boats, Sampans, Kattu, Lwan Kyin and
other boats carrying soldiers from the
army under the command of Prince Thraya
followed next.
(4) Boats, Sampans, Kattu, Lwan Kyin and
other boats carrying soldiers from the
army under the command of Prince Pyin
Kun followed next.

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit
earials, analyses or reports please email wallace.
tin@gmail.com with your name and title.
Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500
words. Should you submit a text longer than 500
words please be aware that your letter will be edited.
Union Minister observes increasing development momentum in Shan State

NAV PYI TAW, 21 Nov
— Union Minister for Live-
stock, Fisheries and Rural
Development U Ohn Myint
made trips this week to the
self-administered zone and
division in Shan State.

University faculty members urged to conduct
more research to raise their capacity

NAV PYI TAW, 21 Nov
— Faculty members and
office staff are to abide by
State policies, directives,
rules and regulations to
manage academics, stu-
dent affairs and finances,
Union Minister for Science
and Technology Dr Ko Ko
Oo said at the coordination
meeting of universities of
the three-storey BMW fa-
cility occupies a total area
of more than 6,000 square
meters. The new facility
comprises a display area
that can hold up to eight
BMW vehicles, along with
a customer lounge area on
the first floor. The second
floor houses the sales of-
vice and meeting rooms,
while the service centre is
located on the third floor,
boasting four working bays
that can service more than
200 cars per month. The af-
tersales facility also comes
with body and paint repair
services that can handle
not only cosmetic repairs
but also structural repairs
to damaged vehicles. The
facility has more than 80
visitor parking lots located
both indoors and outdoors.

“It is truly an honour
to represent the world’s
leading premium car brand
in Myanmar. Our show-
room facility, which took
nine months to complete, is
currently the most advanced
car showroom and service
centre in Myanmar. Apart
from offering a comforta-
able showroom environment
for our customers to view
our cars, we have state-of-
the-art servicing equipment
and facilities. For instance,
our car body repair tools are
able to handle not only sur-
faced repairs, but structural
repairs to damaged vehicles
as well. We look forward to
providing our local custom-
ers with exciting new BMW
models as well as the best
possible customer service
from our staff,” said Mr.
Chan Mya, managing direc-
tor of Prestige Automobiles.

“BMW Asia is de-
lighted to deliver Sheer
Driving Pleasure to Myan-
mar. The move is part of
our strategy to expand our
reach to more customers in
this part of the world, and
to provide local custom-
ers with the BMW prod-
ucts that best cater to their
needs. With the experience
and expertise of the Pres-
tige Automobiles team, we
are confident that they are
the best candidate to repre-
sent BMW in Myanmar,” said
Mr. Ramesh Divy-
athan, director of Sales
Channel Development and
Customer Relations of
BMW Group Asia.
US seeks ways to stop Americans from becoming ‘foreign fighters’

BOSTON, 21 Nov — The US Department of Homeland Security has set up a task force to identify ways to prevent Americans from travelling abroad to become “foreign fighters,” a problem that the government has said is one of the nation’s top security concerns.

The task force, which was disclosed on Tuesday in the Federal Register, will also examine whether current security policies are adequate to prevent the return of “foreign fighters” who have been trained overseas. FBI Director James Comey said on Tuesday that his agency is tracking close to 150 Americans that it believes travelled to Syria in recent months, potentially to join armed groups.

He said Americans fighting with foreign jihadist groups were a top concern for the FBI because of the possibility they could return to the United States with the training, expertise and connections required to launch an attack on home soil.— Reuters

Australia fears Islamist radicals joining forces with biker gangs

SYDNEY, 21 Nov — Australia is confronting what authorities say is a growing threat from home-grown Islamist radicals and fears a new danger is about to rumble over the horizon — would-be militants hooking up with biker gangs.

Islamism and organized crime are already mixing, said retired New South Wales Assistant Police Commissioner Clive Small, and the new gang members use radical Islam as a justification for joining.

“You can have a person who says I’m in it (a gang), I’m selling drugs, because Australia’s a bad place and we need to raise money to take over,” Small told Reuters.

“So you’ve got this rationale which justifies almost anything you want.”

More than 800 police were involved in counter-terrorism raids in Sydney and Brisbane in September, which authorities said thwarted a plot by militants linked to the Islamic State to behead a random member of the public.

Last month, Australia passed laws aimed at preventing young people going to fight in Iraq and Syria, where scores of Australians have joined militant groups, and is on high alert for attacks at home by radicalized Muslims.

Convicted murderer and Brothers 4 Life gang boss Bassam Hamzy adopted the mantle of radical Islam behind bars while ordering his gang to join forces with the Bandidos Motorcycle Club in a bloody drug war, media said.

The new link between radical Islam and bikers is partly a consequence of Australia’s changing demographics.

More than a quarter century ago, when Mark “Ferret” Moroney joined the Finks Outlaw Motorcycle Club, members were like him: tough, covered in tattoos and, like much of Australia at the time, white.

The gangs have since been transformed by an influx of members of Middle Eastern origin, some of whom do not even ride motorcycles.

“It changed the clubs’ style a little bit. In the Mongol Nation you must have a motorcycle to be a member or to hang around,” Moroney, who defected from the Finks in 2013 to become national president of the rival, all-white Mongol Nation, said.— Reuters

New Zealand aircraft to serve another year in counter-piracy mission

WELLINGTON, 21 Nov — A New Zealand air force P3 Orion aircraft is to remain in the Gulf of Aden for another year to support the international operation against piracy, Defense Minister Gerry Brownlee announced on Friday.

“New Zealand has had a P3 Orion supporting international counter-piracy operations as part of the Combined Maritime Forces since earlier this year and that deployment is coming to a close,” Brownlee said in a statement.

“The Orion has performed a valuable role that has been welcomed by our international partners.” As a trading nation, New Zealand had a direct interest in ensuring that global shipping routes were protected from piracy and transnational crime.

“Our decision to extend the deployment of a P3 Orion to the Gulf until December 2015 is a reflection of the importance New Zealand attaches to multilateral security efforts,” Brownlee said.

As part of a detachment to the United States Naval Forces Central Command, the aircraft would contribute to a range of maritime security operations.— Xinhua

Swedish appeal court upholds Assange detention order

STOCKHOLM, 21 Nov — A Swedish court rejected on Thursday an appeal by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to revoke a detention order issued over allegations of sexual assault, but called on prosecutors to make more effort to question him.

Assange’s Swiss lawyer said the decision would be appealed to the Supreme Court.

The 43-year-old Australian has been stuck inside Ecuador’s London embassy since June 2012 to avoid a British extradition to Sweden, which wants to question him on allegations of sexual assault and rape but has insisted he must come to Sweden first.

Assange’s lawyers have argued that the arrest warrant should be repealed because it cannot be enforced while Assange is in the embassy, and Swedish prosecutors had not travelled to London to interrogate him.

“There is no reason to set aside the detention order solely because Julian Assange is in an embassy and the detention order cannot be enforced at present for that reason,” the Svea Court of Appeal said in a statement.

The court also said Swedish prosecutors had not made enough effort to interrogate Assange outside Sweden and said the “failure of the prosecutors to examine alternative avenues is not in line with their obligation”.

Per Samuelson, one of Assange’s lawyers, told Reuters he read this to mean that the court believed the defence was right, but that it did not take the full consequences and lift the detention order.

“If you don’t do it now, the arrest warrant will go next time, that is how it looks, like a warning,” he said of the court’s comments.

Prosecutor Marianne Ny said in a statement: “Like the court of appeals says, there is every reason to continue considering how the case should be taken forward.”

Assange denies the allegations and says he fears Sweden would extradite him to the United States, where he could be put on trial for one of the largest classified information leaks in US history.

Samuelson said Assange would not leave the embassy before he could do so without risking ending up in a US prison.

“This is about the threat of extradition to the US and 35 years of jail there,” Assange’s lawyer said. “As long as that threat remains, there is no doubt he will stay at the embassy.”

Assange was initially taken into custody in London but freed on bail, later claiming political asylum in Ecuador’s Embassy.— Reuters

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange gestures during a news conference at the Ecuadorian Embassy in central London on 18 Aug, 2014.— Reuters

Members of the Mongols Motorcycle Club prepare to ride away from their clubhouse compound located in western Sydney on 9 Nov, 2014.— Reuters

Pakistani soldiers inspect the train at the blast site in southwest Pakistan’s Mustang on 20 Nov, 2014. At least 12 people were injured when a passenger train derailed after a blast in southwestern Pakistan on Thursday, local media reported.— Xinhua
Google, Rockstar agree to settle patent litigation

NEW YORK, 21 Nov — Google Inc (GOOGL.O) has agreed to settle litigation with patent consortium Rockstar, though terms of the deal were not disclosed in a court filing made public this week.

Rockstar, which co-owns Apple Inc (AAPL.O) as an investor, outbid Google and paid $4.5 billion (2.87 billion pounds) in 2011 for thousands of former Nortel Network Corp patents as the networking products supplier went bankrupt.

In October last year, Rockstar sued Google and several handset manufacturers whose phones operate on Google’s Android operating system. Rockstar accused Google of infringing seven Nortel patents, all related to search engine technology.

Google and Rockstar have agreed to settle “all matters in controversy between the parties,” according to a filing in a Texas federal court on Monday. However, the document does not say whether Rockstar has also settled with handset makers including Samsung Electronics Co Ltd (005930.KS).

A Google spokesman declined to comment on Thursday, and Rockstar representatives could not immediately be reached. Samsung and Apple spokespeople were also not immediately available.

Google and Rockstar have reached a term sheet, which will be “reduced to a definitive agreement” over the next few weeks, the court filing said.

On that same day, Rockstar sued several handset makers over a different batch of patents. Google then asked a California judge to rule that devices using the Android platform had not infringed the patents cited by Rockstar against the handset makers.

Google succeeded in halting the Texas proceedings against the handset makers while its California case plays out. Earlier this month Cisco said it had signed a term sheet with Rockstar and would take a $188 million charge related to that agreement.

HIV drugs show promise in treating common eye disease

WASHINGTON, 21 Nov — A class of drugs used for three decades by people infected with the virus that causes AIDS may be effective in treating a leading cause of blindness among the elderly.

HIV drugs called nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs), including AZT and three others, blocked age-related macular degeneration in mice and worked well in experiments involving human retinal cells in the laboratory, researchers said on Thursday.

In HIV-infected people, NRTIs block an enzyme the virus uses to create more copies of itself. The new research shows the drugs also block the activity of a biological pathway responsible for activating inflammatory processes in the body.

It is that previously unrecognized quality that makes NRTIs promising for treating macular degeneration as well as graft-versus-host disease, a rare ailment that can occur after a stem cell or bone marrow transplant, the researchers said.

University of Kentucky ophthalmologist Dr Jayakrishna Ambati, who led the study published in the journal Science, said macular generation affects an estimated 50 million people worldwide.

“With the aging of the population, it is projected to affect 200 million people by the year 2020. It is therefore critical that we develop new and improved treatments for this disease, which is growing like an epidemic,” Ambati said.

Macular degeneration causes cells to die in the macula, a part of the eye located near the center of the retina that permits vision in fine detail.

The chronic disease has two forms: “dry” and “wet.” Several treatments exist for “wet” macular degeneration but only about a third of patients get significant vision improvement. There are no approved treatments for the “dry” form, which is much more common but less severe.

The “wet” type occurs when abnormal blood vessels grow under the retina and leak blood and fluid. The “dry” form occurs when cells in the macula break down.

Japan records huge sunspot cluster 66 times size of Earth

TOKYO, 21 Nov — Japanese space probe and observatory have recorded huge sunspot activity with a sunspot cluster 66 times the size of Earth, the Asahi Shimbun reported on Thursday.

Images of the sunspot cluster were released by the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) on Wednesday.

The solar observation probe Hinode and NAOJ took pictures of the sunspots on 16-30 October, before the sun’s rotation obstructed the view. The sunspot cluster could be seen again on 15 November, but it had shrunk to one-third of its peak size on 26 October.

Sunspots appear in big clusters when the sun is most active. Large solar flares, a phenomenon triggered by sunspot activity, were also observed on the surface of the sun on six occasions in October.

Solar activity intensities and then decreases over an 11-year cycle, according to the observatory. The sun currently appears to be in one of the most active phases of that cycle, it said.

The last time such a huge sunspot appeared was in 1990. That sunspot was 74 times the size of Earth and was observed over a four-month period. —Xinhua
Japan raises military profile in naval war games with US

**ABOARD THE US GEORGE WASHINGTON PACIFIC OCEAN, 21 Nov** — Japan stepped up its role in large-scale war games with the United States this week, with one of its admirals commanding air and sea maneuvers that the US military described as the most complex ever observed by the Japanese navy.

The Keen Sword exercises involving more than 30,000 Japanese troops and 11,000 US personnel came as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe seeks a higher profile for Japan in the security alliance.

At the same time, Washington has encouraged Tokyo to take a greater share of the defense burden, especially as China’s military modernizes rapidly.

Rear Admiral Hideoshi Iwasaki commanded a flotilla of two dozen destroyers, including American ships, in the Pacific Ocean south of the Japanese mainland during the exercises, which are held every other year.

Iwasaki, a commander of a Japanese Self-Defense Force escort flotilla, played a more prominent role than his predecessors in previous Keen Sword drills, beginning months ago with the formulation of battle plans and culminating in an unexpected event during the highly scripted games, officials said.

His main task during the exercises was to guard America’s prize military asset in Asia, the nuclear aircraft carrier USS George Washington, from surface and undersea threats.

“It is the largest and most complex operation in which a Japanese naval officer has been the sea combatant commander,” said Rear Admiral John Alexander, commander of the George Washington battle force.

As Alexander spoke, the roar and rattle of F-18 jet fighters taking off and the scrape of landing tail hooks on the flight deck above his cabin provided a steady reminder of the complex war games overhead.

The George Washington battle group is the most potent maritime force in Asia and the heart of the US Seventh Fleet.

Alongside the 100,000-tonne US behemoth sailed Iwasaki’s flag ship, the guided-missile destroyer Kirishima — its rising-sun ensign, a symbol inherited from the wartime Imperial Navy, flying from its main mast.

Japan and the United States are reviewing their security alliance for the first time in 17 years, with the conclusion in the coming months expected to give Japan’s military a bigger role in defending the home islands.

Abe has made a priority of strengthening Japan’s military, reversing a decade of defence spending cuts, easing curbs on arms exports and reinterpreting the pacifist postwar Constitution to allow Japanese troops to fight overseas for the first time since World War Two.

As President Barack Obama pivots the US security focus toward Asia, his budget-strapped government wants Japan to take greater responsibility for its own defence.

“The US-Japan defence relationship has historically suffered from being unbalanced, with the Americans being required to do too much of the ‘hard work,’” said Grant Newsham, a research fellow at the Japan Forum for Strategic Studies.

“This is no longer politically sustainable, especially in Washington DC,” said Newsham, a former US Marine liaison officer to the Japanese army.

US Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force shipssteam in formation during their military manoeuvre exercise known as Keen Sword 15 in the south of Japan, in this 19 Nov, 2014 handout provided by the US Navy. — Reuters

Bird flu outbreak hits second Dutch farm, exports to remain frozen

**AMSTERDAM, 21 Nov** — A second Dutch farm was hit by an outbreak of bird flu, the government said on Thursday, prompting the destruction of 43,000 chickens and prolonging restrictions on trade in the world’s leading egg exporting country.

A three-day, nationwide ban on the transporta-
tion of all poultry, eggs and related farm products was extended until Sunday, a statement said.

The measures have already caused up to 100 million euros (79.7 million pounds) in losses for farmers, said Gert-Jan Op-laat, president of the poultry farmers’ association. Industry groups say an extension of the ban could bankrupt smaller producers. Infections have also been discovered on farms in Germany and Britain.

The infection announced on Thursday was of the H5 strain, the government said, but it was unclear if it was the highly-contagious H5N8 virus discovered last week at a farm 12 km (12 miles) away. As in the previous outbreak, authorities imposed a 10 km (six miles) exclusion zone around the farm in Ter Aar, in the central Netherlands, and were testing four nearby farms for the virus. The first case in the Netherlands was reported last weekend in the village of Hekendorp, prompting the culling of 150,000 laying hens. Tests show that bird flu viruses found in Germany, the Netherlands and Britain are similar to one that devastated poultry flocks in South Korea earlier this year, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) said on Wednesday. — Reuters

Australian navy seizes heroin worth $158 million near east Africa

**NAIROBI, 21 Nov** — An Australian Navy warship patrolling Indi-

Pacific free trade talks likely to resume in US on 7 December

WASHINGTON, 21 Nov — Twelve countries involved in a Pacific free trade initiative are arranging to resume their negotiations on 7 December in Washington, a US trade magazine said on Thursday.

Officials from the United States, Japan, Canada, Australia and eight other countries are set to take part in working-level talks on a trade deal known as the Trans-Pacific Partnership through 12 December, likely involving chief negotiators, it said.

The negotiators for the US-led scheme, which would cover some 40 percent of global gross domestic product, are expected to discuss remaining sticking points such as tariffs, intellectual property and reform of state-owned firms. Bilateral meetings could also be held.

The countries have given up striking a broad deal by the end of the year despite holding ministerial and leaders’ meetings earlier this month in Beijing.

The eight other TPP member countries are Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

Japan and the United States, the two largest economies in the framework, are still at odds over market access for agricultural and automotive products and a bilateral accord is widely seen as vital to accelerate the whole process.

Kyodo News

**GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR**
Residents in western New York call snow worst in memory

NEW YORK, 21 Nov — Fresh snow fell on Thursday in snowbound western New York, where longtime residents described the blast of winter weather as the worst in memory.

At least eight deaths were blamed on the storm. Some areas of New York state along the Great Lakes had nearly 2 feet (60 cm) of new snow on top of accumulations as high as 5 feet (1.5 metres) from earlier in the week.

The National Weather Service said parts of the region could expect 3 feet (90 cm) more snow before skies clear on Friday.

“I’ve been in a lot of snowstorms, and this is by far the worst. There’s been more snow in the shortest period of time I’ve ever seen,” said Chuck Specht, 58, who reported 7 feet (2.1 metres) of snow at his house in Marilla, New York.

Specht was trying unsuccessfully to clear a patch in the snow for the family dog to relieve itself, he said.

“Even for seasoned veterans, this is getting to be a bit much to handle,” he said.

The Buffalo Bills will not play their home game against the New York Jets on Sunday because of public safety concerns, the National Football League said. The NFL said it was in the process of rescheduling and relocating the game.

The Bills had earlier offered to pay $10 an hour plus game tickets to people willing to shovel what it said were 220,000 tons of snow in its stadium.

The National Hockey League postponed the Buffalo Sabres’ home game against the New York Rangers on Friday night “due to the continuing weather-related difficulties in the Greater Buffalo area and out of respect for the fans of the Sabres.”

 Erie County Deputy Executive Richard Tobe said roof collapses posed a threat, especially at mobile home parks.

“With this heavy snow load now, there are buildings that are in danger,” he said.

Nearly 5 feet of snow had fallen in the week. The National Weather Service said parts of the region could expect 3 feet (90 cm) more snow before skies clear on Friday.

The contribution is equivalent to around 12 percent of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), whose total funds currently stand at around $9 billion (5.74 billion pounds), based on pledges from 13 countries, it said. At the weekend, the United States pledged $3 billion and Japan promised $1.5 billion. Germany and France have pledged $1 billion each. Britain’s contribution will come from existing funds earmarked for international climate work. High-level fund donors are meeting in Berlin on Thursday. The UN has set an informal target of raising $10 billion this year. Italy, Canada and Australia are among the major donors yet to announce pledges.

The cash is intended to help emerging economies curb their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to changes such as heatwaves, mudslides and rising sea levels, widely seen as vital to unlock a UN climate deal meant to be agreed in late 2015 in Paris. The GCF is a major part of a 2009 plan to increase financial flows from public and private sources to help developing nations tackle climate change to $100 billion a year by 2020. —Reuters

EU duty approval to come just in time for Kenya’s Valentine roses

Nairobi, 21 Nov — The renewal of a duty-free regime between the European Union and five east African nations may not win approval until January, an EU official said, bringing it dangerously close to the Valentine’s Day holiday so lucrative for Kenya’s flower growers.

The flowers sold in the two weeks leading up to 14 February are an account for about a third of annual sales for Kenya’s flower growers.

“We’re looking at the third or fourth week of January. I do not think it’s going to be possible to speed up the procedures further,” Lodewijk Briet, EU ambassador to Kenya, told Reuters.

A European Union tax on fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers from the five nations has been in effect since 1 October after the parties missed a deadline to renew the duty-free export regime.

Although they reached an agreement to renew last month, the pact now awaits approval by the European Parliament and European Commission.

“We should certainly not take parliament for granted,” Briet said. Chief executive of FPEAK Stephen Mbithi said he was still hopeful of approval by the end of December.

The flowers and nuts — a leading source of foreign exchange for Kenya alongside tea exports and tourism, and agriculture accounts for more than a quarter of Kenya’s gross domestic product.—Reuters

Residents in western New York call snow worst in memory

Heavy equipment works to clear a road following an autumn snow storm in Lackawanna, near Buffalo, New York on 20 Nov. 2014.—Reuters

Britain pledges 720 million pounds to UN Green Climate Fund

LONDON, 21 Nov — Britain has pledged up to 720 million pounds on Thursday to a United Nations climate fund to help poor nations cope with global warming, the government said.

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**Anniversary of Convention on Rights of Child held in UN headquarters**

Young participants speak during an event marking the global launch of UNICEF “Imagine Project” and the 25th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, at the UN headquarters in New York, on 20 Nov, 2014. The UNICEF “Imagine Project” is a musical and technological initiative helping to highlight the challenges children face and raise funds for UNICEF’s work worldwide.—Xinhua

**Mike Nichols, award-winning American director, dies at 83**

New York, 21 Nov — Mike Nichols, a nine-time Tony Award winner on Broadway and the Oscar-winning director of influential films such as “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf,” “The Graduate,” and “Carnal Knowledge,” died on Wednesday at age 83. The prolific director passed away at his home of cardiac arrest, his spokes-
woman said. A private ser-
vie for the family will be held this week, followed by a memorial at a future date. No director had ever moved between Broadway and Hollywood as easily as Nichols, one of the few people to win the Oscar, Emmy and Grammy Awards. Nichols, whose career first blossomed with a com-
edy partnership with Elaine May in the late 1950s, was married to Diane Sawyer, former anchorman of ABC’s “World News To-
night” broadcast. ABC News President James Goldston announced Nich-
ols’ death in a memo to staff, saying he “passed away suddenly on Wednes-
day evening.” “In a trium-
phant career that spanned over six decades, Mike cre-
ated some of the most iconic works of American film, television and theatre,” Goldston said. “He was a true visionary.” In mem-
ory of Nichols, marquee of Broadway theatres in New York will be dimmed on Friday evening for one minute.—Reuters

**Angelina Jolie to quit acting for direction**

Los Angeles, 21 Nov — After a successful act-
ing career, Angelina Jolie says she has found her true calling as a director. The Oscar-winning actress, who made her de-
but as a director with criti-
cally acclaimed war drama ‘In the Land of Blood and Honey’, picked up anoth-
er challenging project, the incredible life journey of World War II veteran Lou-
is Zamperini that releases this Christmas, for her sec-
ond film. In an interview to Du-
Jour, Jolie said she fought for the project which was gestating for almost half a century. Jolie, 39, feels she is finally at home with direct-
ing. “I’ve never been com-
fortable as an actor; I’ve never loved being in front of the camera. I didn’t even think I could direct, but I hope I’m able to have a ca-
reer at it because I’m much happier,” Jolie told the lux-
ury magazine.

When asked whether she plans to give up acting entirely, Jolie said, “Ab-
solutely.” But before that happens, Jolie is multitask-
ing as a writer, actor and di-
rector for period love story ‘By the Sea’, starring hus-
band Brad Pitt. The movie is about a 1970s American couple and their complicat-
ed marriage during a trip to France.

“Compared to ‘Unbro-
ken’, this film is a walk in the park. The tricky thing is directing myself and di-
recting Brad. It’s hard, dra-
matic material, and we’re balancing.” It is first time that the two are working togeth-
er after meeting on the set of 2005 film ‘Mr & Mrs Smith’.

“It’s a heavy film, and it’s not easy for us. But even as you struggle through it, you’re in the trenches together and you don’t expect it to be easy. We’re challenging each other and that’s a really good thing!”

**‘Aladdin’ writer to pen Robert Downey Jr’s next**

Los Angeles, 21 Nov — ‘Aladdin’ scribe Terry Rossio has been roped in to pen the film based on unfinished notes developed by Hollywood star Steve McQueen before his death, which will star Robert Downey Jr ‘Yucatan’ is de-
scribed as an ‘epic adventure heist’ film. It is based on a 1700-page treatment written by the iconic in the late 160s, reported Deadline. McQueen’s detailed template for the movie was found in two leather-bound trunks after his death. His vision involved a renegade salvage expert’s search for Mayan treasure in the Yu-
catan Peninsula in Southern Mexico. “To imbue a Mc-
Queen project with a sense of how he might have made it nowadays is a challenge and a thrill. Rossio is more than a great writer, he’s the perfect fit to embrace the ex-
istential nature of the project with the action, story and characters that drive ‘Yu-
catan’,” Downey, 49, said in a statement. The updat-
ed plot is under wraps, but Rossio and Downey Jr are using the original premise as a jumping-off point for a mind-bending adventure sto-
y. Downey Jr’s wife Susan Downey is producing with him and David Gambino, along with Dan Lin from Lin Pictures.—PTI

**Miley Cyrus’ Christmas party for homeless people**

London, 21 Nov — Pop star Miley Cyrus is reportedly splashing out 6,000 pounds on a Christmas party for homeless people.

The 21-year-old singer is eager to help out people who aren’t as for-
unate as herself, so has hired a chef to prepare a three-course meal for her guests to feast on over the festive period, reported Daily Star.

“How people only see the Miley who puts on a show. But she’s really caring and sensitive and wants to make a difference to the lives of homeless people,” a source said.

“She’s putting a lot of effort into this party, there’ll be waitresses to serve them. The whole thing will cost her around 6,000 pounds but she feels that it’s the least she can do,” it added.—PTI

**Christoph Waltz set for Walk Of Fame honour**

Los Angeles, 21 Nov — Austrian actor Christoph Waltz will receive the 2,536th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame this December. The 58-year-old Oscar winner’s friend and ‘Django Unchained’ director Quentin Tarantino will be among the speakers inducting Waltz prior to the unveiling, reported Hollywood Life. Announcing the news, Anna Mar-
tinez, the producer of the Walk of Fame ceremonies, said, “Christoph Waltz is one of Austria’s greatest exports and Hollywood is thrilled to add his name to our internationally known Walk of Fame.” The ceremony will come between the US releases of two of Waltz’s films — comedy ‘Horrible Bosses’ 2 and Tim Burton’s drama ‘Big Eyes’. Waltz will become the 15th Austrian-born celebrity to unveil a star — the others include Arnold Schwarzenegger, Hedy Lamarr, Peter Lorre and Billy Wilder.—PTI
Martinez dismisses Keane’s Irish claims as ‘nonsense’

LONDON, 21 Nov — Everton manager Roberto Martinez dismissed Ireland assistant manager Roy Keane’s claims that the Premier League club put pressure on their players not to play for Ireland as “complete nonsense” on Thursday.

Keane suggested that Everton put pressure on their Ireland players to exaggerate injuries so they would miss internationals but Martinez dismissed that when he spoke to reporters before Saturday’s match against West Ham United.

Aidan McCready, Darren Gibson, Seamus Coleman and James McCarthy are all Ireland regulars and Martinez said Keane’s comments were “complete nonsense”.

Asked if what Keane said upset him, he said, “No. The only thing I care about is the players.”

“We’ve produced four players for the Republic of Ireland, four incredible characters, four players who just love playing for their country and it is disappointing when you see that someone could put that in doubt. I have a good relationship with Martin O’Neill, the Ireland manager, we keep in touch frequently and we share information, and at this club we are very proud of our players and their countries.”

Everton are hoping that McCarthy, Coleman and Gibson will be fit to face West Ham and also hope that Leighton Baines will be fit following a hamstring injury.

West Ham could be without two players who have been crucial to their excellent start to the season. Senegalese striker Diafra Sakho, who has scored six goals for the Hammers in six starts, suffered a back problem which forced him out of his country’s Africa Cup of Nations qualifier with Botswana on Wednesday.

Midfielder Stewart Downing, who played for the opening 45 minutes of England’s friendly against Scotland on Tuesday, suffered a knee injury and is a doubt for the Goodison Park clash.

West Ham are fourth in the standings and unbeaten in their last five league matches.

Manager Sam Allardyce told reporters he was prepared to wait until Saturday morning before finalising his line-up. — Reuters

Irish abstract artist Scully paints for big walls in China

Scully, 69, and something of a bear of a man, is delighted that billionaire Chinese property developer Dai Zhukang will show some 100 of his artworks at his Shanghai Himalayas Museum from 24 November until 25 January. The collection ranges from early in his career to the present day, many of them giant canvases painted with big rectangles of colour.

The exhibition is, Scully said, the first big retrospective of modern abstract Western art ever mounted in China. He is pleased it is his works that have been selected, and not some of the perhaps buzziest contemporary art world figures like Jeff Koons or Damien Hurst. “My art is meant to be big rectangles of colour. It also will be a test of whether Scully’s work can crack the increasingly affluent Chinese art market. His works already are held by Western collectors and museums.

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Texas woman sues family after her dogs kill neighbour’s pet beagle

HOUSTON, 21 Nov — The owner of three pit bulls and a pit-bull mix is seeking up to $1 million in damages after her dogs entered the Houston-area property of her neighbour and fatally attacked her 10-year-old beagle.

Emerald White said she was trying to retrieve her four dogs from her neighbour’s yard when the beagle attacked her, causing her dog to attack, the lawsuit said.

The beagle’s owners, the Baker family, said the pit bulls broke into their yard and started the incident that left their beagle, Bailey, dead a few minutes after the attack ended in the Houston suburb of Texas City.

White’s attorney, Paul LaValle, told local broadcaster KHOU-TV, “I’m getting the hate mail and the death threats. They have a very good PR campaign working for the family that owned the beagle.”

White’s lawsuit said her neighbours were negligent and that she suffered from mental anguish, disfigurement, pain, loss of earnings and a fear of future disease because of the beagle attack.

The Baker family told KHOU-TV it had no plans to sue White because it would not bring their dead pet back.

“Bailey ... laid up next to the house and died,” Steve Baker told the broadcaster. — Reuters

Dujianyang is not only home to an irrigation system on the Minjiang River meant to prevent flooding in Sichuan Province, it is also a famous scenic spot featuring many attractions. It was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2000. Dujianyang, first established in the 3rd century BC, has the oldest extant irrigation system in the world. — Xinhua
Arsenal’s Oliver Giroud ready to return against United — Wenger

Barcelona, 21 Nov — Barcelona’s Spain midfielder Andres Iniesta was back in training on Thursday as he continues his recovery from a calf strain.

Iniesta sustained the injury in last month’s 3-1 defeat at Real Madrid in the La Liga ‘Clasico’ and although he has yet to be given the all-clear by the club’s medical staff he could feature in Saturday’s game at fifth-placed Seville.

Thomas Vermaelen, who joined from Arsenal in the close season but has yet to make his official debut, and fellow defender Jeremy Mathieu also trained on Thursday as they bid to shake off niggling injuries.

Barca said on their website (www.fcbarcelona.es) that they are second in La Liga after 11 matches, two points behind leaders Real, who play at Eibar on Saturday.

Iniesta’s return would provide some much-needed creativity in a side that has struggled for goals in recent outings.

Uruguay striker Luis Suarez, whose ban for biting an opponent at this year’s World Cup expired the day before the ‘Classico’, has still not opened his account in three La Liga appearances and one in the Champions League for his new club.

Brazil forward Neymar has been in fine form but four-times World Player of the Year Lionel Messi has been off colour and remains one goal short of the Spanish top-flight record of 251 set six decades ago by ex-Athletic Bilbao striker Telmo Zarra.

Messi has hit 250 since netting against Eibar on 18 October. The 27-year-old, who has struck 18 times against Seville in 11 outings in all competitions, failed to score either in the ‘Clasico’ or in Barca’s subsequent two games against Celta Vigo and Almeria, a long drought by his standards.

Messi also raised eyebrows this week when he gave the strongest hint yet that he might consider leaving Barca, although his father Jorge later played down his son’s comments and said an exit was not currently on the agenda.

Messi’s Argentina and Barca team mate Javier Mascherano told a news conference on Thursday that Messi was only expressing “what all soccer players think”.

“If football you cannot predict what you are going to do in six years, you can’t know what you will do in the future,” added the former Liverpool player.

“That’s the reality. He is in good shape and he wants to keep winning with Barça.” — Reuters

Iniesta back in training before Sevilla clash

LONDON, 21 Nov — Arsenal’s French striker Olivier Giroud could return for their Premier League clash with Manchester United on Saturday after recovering from a broken leg nearly a month ahead of schedule.

Giroud, 28, broke his leftibia in the closing seconds of Arsenal’s 2-2 draw at Everton on 23 August, moments after scoring a 90th minute goal that secured a point for the Gunners. “He is three or four weeks ahead of schedule,” Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger told a news conference on Thursday.

“Originally we planned to have him back for competition at the beginning of next year. So he’s one month ahead.”

Giroud played in the opening four games of the season, including the Community Shield curtain-raiser against Manchester City at Wembley where he scored Arsenal’s third goal in their 3-0 win over the Premier League champions.

He then came on as a second half substitute in the opening league game against Crystal Palace and played the full match in the Champions League playoff first leg against Besiktas before being injured against Everton.

Arsenal reacted to the loss of the Frenchman by buying Danny Welbeck from United on the closing day of the transfer window and he has scored five times, although only two of those goals have been in the Premier League.

Welbeck is expected to face United on Saturday for the first time since leaving the Old Trafford club.

Wenger also confirmed that 32-year-old midfielder Mikel Arteta, who pulled a hamstring in the 3-3 Champions League draw with Anderlecht on 4 November, is ready to return after missing the 2-1 Premier League defeat at Swansea City five days later.

“It’s just a question of how ready they are, but they are available,” Wenger was quoted as saying on the club’s official website.— Reuters

Wawrinka forgets London trauma, ready for Davis Cup final

LILLE, (France), 21 Nov — Switzerland’s Stan Wawrinka left the ATP World Tour Finals feeling wrecked last weekend but said on Thursday he had fully recovered for the Davis Cup final against France.

The world number four wasted four match points in losing a tight semi-final to Roger Federer in London last Saturday when he fumed at his team mate’s wife for intruding into his game.

Both players settled the argument and have played down the row with Wawrinka having showed he is back to his best after struggling for form following his Australian Open triumph.

He showed terrific improvement in London and is now mentally rested as well.

“Clearly on Saturday night I was destroyed. It was difficult to accept that loss. I did everything I could to win that match,” Wawrinka told a news conference on Thursday after the draw ceremony for this weekend’s Davis Cup final.

“Sunday was also a difficult day. It’s always difficult to take. I was hurt.”

But a change of scenery and a new objective have helped Wawrinka turn the page.

“When I came here with the physio and everything, everything was different. It was a new week, a new state of mind,” he said. “So mentally it was easy for me to switch, to forget about this big disappointment, start on something positive.” — Reuters

Arsenal’s Giroud ready to return against United — Wenger

Arsenal’s Olivier Giroud (L) celebrates after scoring a goal against Everton during their English Premier League soccer match at Goodison Park in Liverpool, northern England on 23 Aug, 2014.—Reuters

Iniesta back in training before Sevilla clash

Barcelona’s Andres Iniesta (R) battles for the ball with Malaga’s Juanmi during their Spanish first division soccer match at La Rosaleda stadium in Malaga, southern Spain, on 24 Sept, 2014.—Reuters

Wawrinka forgets London trauma, ready for Davis Cup final

David Moyes

Moyes has brought new intensity to Sociedad — Martinez

Madrid, 21 Nov — David Moyes has brought a new level of intensity and ambition to Real Sociedad since former Manchester United and Everton manager took over as coach, defender Inigo Martinez said on Thursday.

Moyes replaced the sacked Jagoba Arrasate at the Basque club, who are struggling in 15th place in La Liga, and they play their first game under the Scot’s orders at Deportivo La Coruna on Saturday.

Martinez said Moyes has transformed training sessions since arriving in San Sebastian last week and it was up to the players now to translate his orders into success on the pitch.

“Above all it is the intensity he brings to training, in the aggression he demands,” Martinez told a news conference after he had scored in Real Sociedad’s 2-1 victory over Deportivo.

“He is really on top of everything, he pressures you constantly from the side of the pitch and this is something that motivates players,” added the centre back.

“The intensity we are seeing now was not there before. But we need to learn everything he knows and then put it to use at the weekend.”

Saturday’s match against Depor at the Riazor is a good chance for Moyes to begin his career in Spain with a win to follow up to the 2-1 victory at home to champions Atletico Madrid in their last outing.

Depor are a shadow of the team that won La Liga in 2000 and blazed a trail in Europe over the following several seasons and are 17th after 11 matches, one of five clubs including Sociedad on nine points.

“He (Moyes) is a coach who demands every player give their all and commit 100 percent in every duel and every tackle,” Martinez told reporters.

Reuters