EU TRADE BOOST

Fisheries and pulses sectors targeted for possible export surge

THE EU-Myanmar Trade Development Programme was launched on Tuesday with the aim of strengthening Myanmar’s economy and supporting the country’s return to the global trade market.

The main objective of the three-year technical programme is to assist both the public and private sectors to seize new trading opportunities and thereby generate sustainable and inclusive economic growth in Myanmar, according to a press release issued by the EU on Tuesday.

The programme will run until December 2017, with the budget of 10.5 million euro ($US11.82 million) funded by the European Union and co-funded by Germany.

The press release said that the programme will focus on the fisheries sector and the beans and pulses sector, with strong potential for ramping up exports to the EU.

Fishery sector exports to the EU are already established, while beans and pulses will be required to meet EU regulations regarding post-harvest handling and packaging procedures.

“The EU would be a welcome customer of Myanmar’s fishery sector in the future. But we must overcome weaknesses in capital, infrastructure and technology in order to be able to produce fishery products which meet EU export standards,” U Win Khaing Thanda Lwin, the General-Secretary of the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF), told The Global New Light of Myanmar.

“The greatest weakness of the Myanmar’s fishery sector lies in it lacking a master plan that was developed with the government’s assistance,” he added.

Since sanctions were lifted in 2012 and the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) restored, the EU has created many opportunities for Myanmar’s fishery sector as it is a potentially lucrative market.

Workers process raw seafood at a factory in Yangon. PHOTO: MINISTRY OF LIVESTOCKS AND FISHERIES

“The greatest weakness of the Myanmar’s fishery sector lies in it lacking a master plan that was developed with the government’s assistance,” he added.

Since sanctions were lifted in 2012 and the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) restored, the EU has created many opportunities for Myanmar’s fishery sector as it is a potentially lucrative market.

Since then, the EU has given the green light to the country’s 20 cold storage facilities that meet EU standards, allowing the factories to export their products to the EU.

In May, the EU said it would allocate Myanmar’s aquaculture sector with a budget of 20 million euro ($US22.52) in 2016, as part of an attempt to breathe life into the country’s fish and prawn farming sector, according to the MFF. The sector was badly hit during the floods that swept through the country in July and August, causing about K90 billion ($US70.03 million) in damage nationwide.

At a high-level disaster recovery forum in early September in Yangon, a spokesperson from privately-run fisheries businesses estimated that the sector needed about K5.6 billion ($US70.03 million) to replenish farmers’ stocks with fingerlings.

Some have said that it will take at least three years for the sector to recover from the damage caused by the floods.

Under the programme, both local and international experts will facilitate technical assistance and capacity building, which will include the holding of workshops, study visits and the procurement of laboratory equipment.—GNLM

Campaign to promote hand washing through social media

Actress and singer Chit Thu Wai gets behind a campaign to reduce mortality rates among under-fives

CELEBRITY Chit Thu Wai will be the face of a hand-washing social media campaign aimed at reducing under-five mortality rates in Myanmar.

The ‘Let’s join hands for child health’ campaign is being organised by Unilever, who is a member of the Global Public-Private Partnership for Handwashing with Soap (PPPHW), which established Global Handwashing Day in 2008.

Global Handwashing Day is also part of the company’s “help a child reach five” campaign and it will likely launch to coincide with Global Handwashing Day on 15 October.

Hand washing with soap is extremely effective and the most inexpensive way to prevent diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections (ARI). Pneumonia, a major ARI, is the number one cause of mortality among children under five years old. Diarrhoea and pneumonia together account for almost 3.5 million child deaths worldwide every year.

The child mortality rate in Myanmar in 2012 was 52 deaths per 1,000 live births and half of the 49,000 child deaths in the country in 2012 occurred within the first 28 days of life.

Some have said that it will take at least three years for the sector to recover from the damage caused by the floods.

Under the programme, both local and international experts will facilitate technical assistance and capacity building, which will include the holding of workshops, study visits and the procurement of laboratory equipment.—GNLM

See page 3 >>
**NCA is more than a document**

The following is the monthly radio speech delivered by President U Thein Sein on 6 October.

A country’s traditional arts best reflect that society’s heritage and national identity. In diplomacy, traditional arts can also play an ambassadorial role. Developed countries also use films and music to raise their nation’s image internationally.

When I met with artists, musicians, and performers at an event last year, I asked how the government could help to promote the arts. As a result, space for movie studios is now being secured, and on September 14th, I attended the groundbreaking ceremony of the Myanmar Art Center in Yangon. I wish to see artists’ talents being used to promote the creativity of Myanmar society and the development of the nation. I would like to urge artists to recognize the important roles they play in Myanmar society, and use their art and talents to foster a better future for our country.

The 2015 general elections is a vital turning point in Myanmar’s democratic reforms. There have been challenges such as with voter lists and in other areas due to the country’s inexperience holding elections. Despite these difficulties, I believe these elections will truly reflect the choices of the electorate. For this to happen will depend greatly on the political parties and candidates that are contesting the elections. As they strive to successfully contest the elections, political parties and candidates should comply with rules, regulations, codes of conduct, and conduct themselves with the spirit of mutual respect and understanding.

The results of the elections must also be respected with sincerity and good faith. Because of the importance of these elections, I urge citizens to carefully consider the qualities, qualifications, character, attitude and objectives of the candidates before casting their votes.

Citizens should check voter lists, and report any inconsistencies with the relevant UEC office. Only with help from citizens will there be more complete and correct voter lists. I believe the compilation of voter lists will be overcome with the cooperation of voters, relevant organizations and the UEC. The government will also offer assistance.

Within the next five years, the administration of township and city affairs will transfer to democratically elected Town Councils and City Councils. In order to facilitate this change from administration by government departments to a citizen governance mechanism, appropriate constitutional amendments will be made. Only through a “civilian governance mechanism” will the needs of the community be met.

I am committed to achieving internal peace, improving livelihoods, and ensuring better lives for future generations. By learning from past experiences, I firmly believe we will sustain these processes, accomplish democratic reforms, and overcome the challenges facing our country. I conclude this month’s radio address by reaffirming my pledge to work towards a better future for our country.

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**Pyawbwe poll officers receive training**

POLL officials in Pyawbwe Township were given a training course Monday to ensure their professionalism during the upcoming general election.

A total of 180 ballot officials in No. 1 Constituency attended the course, and 120 ballot officials will attend a similar course in No. 2 Constituency today. The trainees were given instruction manuals on polling procedures and shown demonstrations of secret voting in ballot booths. Pyawbwe Township, Mandalay Region, has 291 ballot stations in its two constituencies.—Min Min Htwe- Pyawbwe
Dr Sai Mauk Kham meets with faculty staff from Magway, Pakokku

The reforms that took place in Myanmar’s education sector during the tenure of the current government made it possible for the wide-reaching National Education Law to be enacted, said Vice President Dr Sai Mauk Kham during a meeting with rectors and faculty members from universities and colleges in Magway and Pakokku on Tuesday.

Some needs of tertiary institutions are fulfilled at the Union level, while others are handled by the respective region and state governments, he said.

He said he attaches great importance to the quality of graduates because although Myanmar is endowed with natural resources, these can only be managed responsibly by having a pool of talented human resources. He therefore urged teachers to produce the highest calibre graduates. — MNA

Campaign to promote personal hygiene through social media

Thai Princess bids Myanmar farewell

Thai Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn left for Bangkok on Tuesday following a four day visit of Myanmar. Before leaving the country, the princess visited schools in Yangon and planted trees in the compounds. She also had photographs taken with school staff and students. — MNA

What they stand for: campaigns aired

Zo National Region Development Party, National Development Party, Women Party (Mon) and Arakan Patriot Party broadcast campaign speeches on Tuesday.

Four party speeches to be broadcast today

CAMPAIGN speeches delivered by representatives from Negotiation, Stability and Peace Party, Union Farmer Force Party, Daingnet National Development Party (D.N.D.P) and United National Congress will be broadcast on state radio and television networks today. MRTV, the Hittaw channel, Myawady TV, Myanmar Radio and Shwe FM will broadcast the speeches. — GNLM

ELECTION COUNTDOWN

Make your voice count. Cast your vote.

32 DAYS

Chairman U Khun En Htun explained the history, objectives and policies of the party. He said that the word ‘Zo’ refers to all members of the Chin ethnic group. The party believes that when nationalism is concerned with only one ethnic group, it becomes politicised and counter-productive to all ethnic groups. As a result, his partyjetisons nationalism and patriotism in favour of democratic values and a unified national identity.

CHAIRPERSON Mi La Yi Mon, who is also known as Mi Than Shin, said that the party aims to promote federalism, equality among ethnic groups, the development and safety of Rakhine nationals and to further democracy. He said that ethnic equality is the key to sustainable development and peace. — GNLM

Leaders and chairmen of four political parties will broadcast campaign speeches delivered by representatives from the zone of North Rakhine State, Central Rakhine State, Arakan State and Rakhine State. The speeches will be broadcast on radio and television networks today.

Chairman Dr Nay Zin Latt said that the party aims to promote equality, federalism and cooperation in building a state without political, military or social conflicts. It would also work to create a fresh political culture that appeals to Myanmar’s youths.

CHAIRMAN U Maung Maung Saw said that the party aims to promote federalism, equality among ethnic groups, the development and safety of Rakhine nationals and to further democracy. He said that ethnic equality is the key to sustainable development and peace. — GNLM

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing tours Mon and Kayin states

The Tatmadaw has carried out its duties to protect the lives and property of the people of Myanmar during the country’s transition to democracy, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said at a meeting at an advanced military training school in Thanpyuzayat on Monday.

During the meeting, the senior general explained ongoing efforts aimed at building a modern army and securing internal peace. He ended the discussion by urging others to vote for those who are committed to furthering the public good. The senior general then presented books, food and cash to local battalions before proceeding to Kyainseikkyi Station. On Tuesday, the senior general visited Hpaon Station and discussed the nationwide ceasefire agreement, national defence duties and the four measures for building military power and ensuring the welfare of soldiers and veterans. The senior general wound up the day by inspecting facilities at a military hospital in Hpaon. — Myanmar

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents a gift to a patient in Hpaon Station. Photo: MNA

Campaign to promote personal hygiene through social media

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Thai Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn welcomed by school children in Yangon. Photo: MNA

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Photo: mna
ADB Trade Finance Program and CB Bank Agreement to Support Myanmar Trade

THE Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) Trade Finance Program (TFP) and Cooperative Bank (CB Bank) on Tuesday signed an agreement in Yangon that enables the TFP to provide guarantees of up to $12 million per annum in support of the trade finance operations of CB Bank.

This marks the first such ADB TFP facility to assist trade finance capacity for a local bank in Myanmar. “Under this agreement, ADB and CB Bank are partnering to support exporting and importing companies in Myanmar, including small and medium-sized enterprises,” said Steven Beck, ADB’s head of trade finance.

“This agreement will help develop the trade sector and create jobs.” ADB’s TFP guarantees will help banks in the US, Europe, Singapore, Thailand, People’s Republic of China and elsewhere work with Myanmar banks to support more international trade with Myanmar companies.

IKBZ finalises compensation to bus crash victims

INTERNATIONAL Kanbawza Insurance Company (IKBZ Insurance) paid K38.59 million (US$30,000) on 5 October as a second and final installment of compensation to 16 injured passengers of Shwe Oo express bus which crashed on the Yangon-Mandalay express highway on 10 August.

The compensation varied according to the severity of the passengers’ injuries. The next of kin of passengers who died in the accident received K3 million ($2,366) each. The injured passengers were promptly given an initial sum of K100,000 each at Phyu and Nay Pyi Taw hospitals and Yangon, which came to a combined total of K32.3 million.

The compensation payments were presented by IKBZ’s Vice-Chairman U Nyo Myint. IKBZ Insurance provides a variety of insurance packages, including travel insurance, fire insurance, health insurance and car insurance. The company has 14 branch offices across the country and more than 500 employees.

German director produces documentary film on Myanmar

GERMAN film director Martin Schacht recently completed a two week visit to Myanmar to make a documentary. His itinerary was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Hotel and Tourism, Yadanaung Kingdom Travels & Tours Co., Ltd and German-Myan’s Medien Kontor company.

The documentary, which will soon air on ARTE TV Channel and French German Culture Channel will seek to promote Myanmar’s tourism sector. The film crew worked from 14-30 September, with sites including Mandalay Railway Station, the Shan State towns of Thibaw and Lasuho, and the prominent tourist attraction of Gauhtatkya viaduct, which was built by the British during the colonial era. They also visited Pyin Oo Lwin.

The crew also went to famous pagodas in Mandalay and the monasteries of Amarapura. The filmmaker focused on the everyday lives of Myanmar railway employees, as well as their families.

The documentary will also feature Myanmar traditional food and medicines as well as ethnic minority communities. The German director and his crew left Myanmar on 1 October.

Agricultural loans in Sagaing reach K6.56 billion

AS of 30 September, the Bank of Agriculture Development has lent K6.568 billion (US$5.1 million) to more than 10,000 farmers in Kawlin township, Sagaing Region during the rainy season.

The loan process extends from 11 June to 30 September but it had been temporarily suspended due to widespread flooding in Myanmar. Since 3 August, the bank had been lending K100,000 per acre with affordable interest rates.

The estimated loan amount is K7 billion for the 2015-16 financial year in Kawlin, though only K5.685 billion has been lent to farmers as yet, according to Kawlin Agriculture Development Bank manager Daw Cho Cho Thin.

Scholarship ceremony for veterans’ children held

A ceremony of scholarships for the 2015-2016 academic year were received by the children of members of Kalaw Veterans’ Organisation in Kawlin township, Sagaing Region, on Sunday. The scholarship is supported by the head of Myanmar Veterans’ Organisation and K10,000 was provided to 12 primary students each, while K15,000 was given to secondary students, K20,000 for high school students, K11,3000 for each degree in matriculation exams.

The scholarship fund came to K913,000 Kyat and was presented by organisation chairperson U Thar Shein. One of the father’s of the students, Sergeant Tun Tin (retired) gave a thank you speech on behalf of the parents.

Traditional rowing competition held in Mandalay

A Myanmar traditional rowing competition’s award presentation ceremony was held in Mandalay on Sunday.

The celebrations included replacing a new parasol at Chan Thar Ra Pagoda and the completions to Chan Tha Ra Bridge.

In the junior rowing competition, Aung Zaya’s team took the top spot, while second prize went to Pon Nya Wazana. Prizes were awarded by the deputy director general of sports and physical education department, and the vice president of Pagoda Trustees. In the senior competition, Shwe Pyi San team emerged as the winner, while second prize went to the defense service of central command and third prize to Shwe Lay. These awards were presented by the assistant director of the department U Win Maung and the chairman of Pagoda Trustees and ward governor U Thein Lin Aye.

Martin Schacht on a shooting scene in a market in Myanmar. PHOTO: MoHT

An official from IKBZ hands over compensation to injured passenger. PHOTO: KBZ

Officials of ADB’s trade finance program and CB Bank exchange document after signing agreement on assistance for trade finance capacity. PHOTO: CB BANK

A Mickey Mouse plush toy at a toy store. PHOTO: MoHT

A Myanmar traditional rowing competition’s award presentation ceremony was held in Mandalay. PHOTO: MoHT
MANILA — Philippine boxing world champion and congressman Manny Pacquiao has announced he will take up a new challenge by running for a Senate seat in national elections next year.

Pacquiao, whose popularity transcends economic classes and makes him one of the most recognized figures in the Philippines, said late on Monday he was looking at one of the 12 Senate seats up for grabs in May. “I am formally announcing my candidacy for senator. I am running for high office,” he said during an address in his home province of Sarangani, which he represents in Congress.

“But it’s necessary to win the first time in our history that we’ll have a senator from Region 12,” Pacquiao told his constituents, referring to one of six regions comprising the southernmost Mindanao islands.

Pacquiao, 36, did not say what party or coalition he would join for his Senate bid. Politics in the Philippines is a multi-party system that has long been dominated by powerful clans, as well as film celebrities and sports stars.

Boxing matches featuring Pacquiao, who is also an army reservist with the rank of lieutenant colonel, have often brought the country to a standstill. Maoist rebels and Islamist extremists fighting government forces in the south have even paused to watch telecasts of his fights.

Pacquiao lost the richest prize fight in boxing history to American Floyd Mayweather last May. The fight catalyzed both boxers into the Forbes’ list of the world’s 100 highest-paid celebrities.

As a second-term congressman, Pacquiao authored 15 bills and co-authored 27 others, mostly promoting social welfare and sports-related causes.

However, the Philippine Daily Inquirer newspaper reported early this year that Pacquiao attended only four sessions of Congress in 2014, the fewest of any congressman.

More than 54 million Filipinos will go to the polls in May to vote for a new president, vice president, and some 18,000 lawmakers and local government officials in elections that happen every six years.—Reuters

**Abe to seek to play it safe in cabinet shake-up**

TOKYO — “Once burnt, twice shy” could well sum up Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s attitude as he readsies a cabinet to be unveiled on Wednesday, a year after a shake-up that ended in tears.

Dozens of veteran lawmakers in his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) are keen for posts when Abe, elected to another three-year term as party chief last month, reshuffles his cabinet, but the premier has signalled that many will be disappointed.

Abe’s attempt to bolster his ratings with a big shake-up that included putting five women in his cabinet in September 2014 backfired when two of the women quickly had to resign over funding scandals.

The trade minister then came under fire when it emerged a support group had spent money at a diary shop while the defence minister was replaced a few months later.

Rivalry between the royal-military establishment and the Shinawatra family, in particular Yingluck’s brother, ousted populist premier Thaksin Shinawatra, has been at the heart of a decade of political turmoil in Thailand.

Yingluck faces up to 10 years in jail if she is found guilty of negligence. Yingluck’s legal team said in their lawsuit the attorney-general had charged her with insufficient evidence.

One of Yingluck’s lawyers said an appeal against Tuesday’s ruling was being considered.

“We will first look at the court’s explanation because there are many details, and decide whether to appeal,” lawyer Sommai Koosap told Reuters.

“I personally believe we will appeal.”

Rivalry between the royal-military establishment and the Shinawatra family, in particular Yingluck’s brother, ousted populist premier Thaksin Shinawatra, has been at the heart of a decade of political turmoil in Thailand.

Yingluck was removed from office in May 2014 after a court found her guilty of abuse of power, days before the army staged a coup after months of street demonstrations.

She has defended the policy which bought rice from farmers at above-market prices. The ruling junta says the rice scheme was tainted by graft and caused $16 billion in losses.

In January, Yingluck was banned from politics for five years after a military-backed legislature found her guilty of corruption relating to the rice subsidy scheme.—Reuters
Japan agrees to help Sri Lanka on economy, maritime security

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Sri Lanka’s Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe agreed Tuesday that Japan will cooperate in shoring up the South Asian country’s economy through infrastructure development and strengthening its maritime surveillance capability.

Their talks were held at a time when Sri Lanka’s new government under President Maithripala Sirisena is shifting away from a pro-China policy and trying to strike a balance in its ties with China, Japan and India.

Japanese officials have stressed the importance of having the Abe-Wickremesinghe talks as the president, who was re-elected in January, is reviewing the stance of Sri Lanka’s previous leadership which favored China in infrastructure development projects.

With Sri Lanka lying in an important geographical location near Middle Eastern shipping routes in the Indian Ocean, vital for the export of the region’s oil to the east, Japan wants to cement bilateral ties and support Sri Lanka’s political and economic reforms.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, seeks more foreign investment. The leaders said in a joint declaration released after their talks at Abe’s office that they “decided to hold an economic policy dialogue at the senior officials’ level in the first half of 2016” to map out details of their economic cooperation.

Wickremesinghe, for his part, promised that Sri Lanka’s new government will “create a more favorable investment climate, ensuring transparency and good governance to attract investment from Japanese companies.”

In line with Japan’s efforts to develop high-quality infrastructure in Asia, the two countries have signed a document about the upgrade of an airport in Sri Lanka.

The two leaders also said they will cooperate more closely in urban transport infrastructure and information and communication technology in Sri Lanka, the joint declaration read.

Maritime security was also one of the key topics during Tuesday’s talks. In light of China’s growing assertiveness at sea, Abe reiterated Japan’s pledge to help Sri Lanka in its maritime security capacity-building, including Tokyo’s plan to provide patrol ships, according to the declaration.

The two reaffirmed the “importance of the freedom of navigation and overflight of the high seas” and expressed hope a dialogue on maritime affairs will take place by the end of this year, the declaration said.

Abe also unveiled that Japan will train about 1,800 Sri Lankan local public officials by next year, and support the reconstruction efforts of Sri Lanka following decades of civil war.—Kyodo News

India aims to roll out goods and services tax

BENGALURU — India hopes to roll out a goods and services tax (GST) in 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday in a speech to Indian and German businesses that played up the attractiveness of investing in Asia’s third-largest economy.

The GST, currently blocked in parliament, was one of a range of business-friendly measures highlighted by Modi in a speech in tech hub Bengaluru, in southern India, during a visit by German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The prime minister said his government was speeding up regulatory clearances, reducing licensing requirements in the defence sector and making tax policy more consistent.

“We have articulated very clearly that we will not resort to retrospective taxation,” Modi said.—Reuters

IAEA chief worried about N Korea’s nuclear activities in Yongbyon

SEOUL. — The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency expressed concern Tuesday over North Korea’s expanded activities at its Yongbyon nuclear complex.

“We have observed the discharge of water, transportation of equipment to the facilities, some indication of operation at the 5-megawatt reactor,” Yukiya Amano, director general of the UN nuclear watchdog told reporters in Seoul. He said, however, that he cannot say anything for sure as there are no inspectors from the IAEA actually checking the situation in North Korea.

“Our function is to verify and our biggest concern is we don’t have inspectors on the ground,” he said. Amano made his remarks after holding talks with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se and other senior officials.

He arrived in Seoul earlier Tuesday for a two-day visit for consultations on nuclear safety and other related issues.—Kyodo News

Japan scientists win Nobel Prize for Physics

STOCKHOLM — Japan’s Takaaki Kajita and Canada’s Arthur B McDonald won the 2015 Nobel Prize for Physics for their discovery that neutrinos, labelled nature’s most elusive particles, have mass, the award-giving body said on Tuesday.

“The discovery has changed our understanding of the innermost workings of matter and can prove crucial to our view of the universe,” the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said in a statement awarding the 8 million Swedish crown ($962,000) prize.

The scientists’ research discovered a new phenomenon — neutrino oscillations — that was seen as ground-breaking for particle physics. “Yes there certainly was a Eureka moment in this experiment when we were able to see that neutrinos appeared to change from one type to the other in travelling from the Sun to the Earth,” McDonald told a news conference in Stockholm by telephone.

Kajita is director of the Institute for Cosmic Ray Research and professor at University of Tokyo, while McDonald is professor Emeritus at Queen’s University in Canada. Physics is the second of this year’s Nobels.

The prizes were first awarded in 1901 to honour achievements in science, literature and peace in accordance with the will of dynastic inventor and business tycoon Alfred Nobel.—Reuters

Detained Bangladesh militant leader killed in grenade blast

DHAKA — The leader of the militant wing of a banned Islamist militant group in Bangladesh was killed when a grenade exploded while he was in police custody early on Tuesday, hours after he was arrested in possession of weapons, police said.

Mohammad Javed, the 26-year-old chief of the military wing of Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen, was arrested on Monday night along with four other members of the group in the port city of Chittagong.

Senior police official Babul Akter said Javed was killed while he was helping police to recover more weapons in Chittagong.

“The grenade exploded when the team was trying to recover it from a drain,” Akter said. Two policemen suffered minor wounds, he added. Bangladesh has been convulsed by rising Islamist violence over the past year in which four on-line critics of religious militancy were hacked to death, a US citizen among them. Attacks on foreigners are rare in Bangladesh. The South Asian nation is on alert after two foreigners were shot dead last week in attacks claimed by the Islamic State group, although police said there was no evidence the group was behind the attacks.

Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen fighters have been sought since the group detonated nearly 500 bombs across Bangladesh on a single day in 2005. Later attacks on several courts killed 25 people and wounded hundreds.

Police said nine hand grenades, 120 rounds of ammunition, pistols, knives and a large quantity of bomb-making materials were seized in Monday’s raid.

Separately, police arrested a student member of the Jamat’s student wing party on Tuesday in connection with an attack on a Christian priest in northwest Bangladesh.

Three Muslim men tried to slit the priest’s throat while he was preaching, police said. Attacks on members of Bangladesh’s small Christian community are rare.—Reuters
Mass immigration is damaging Britain: Interior Minister

Britain’s Home Secretary Theresa May. PHOTO: REUTERS

MANCHESTER — Mass immigration is damaging British society, interior minister Theresa May will say on Tuesday in a speech designed to ease some voters’ concerns that the government is failing to control the country’s borders. May will tell the ruling Conservative Party’s annual conference that levels of immigration seen over the last 10 years were not in the national interest.

Net migration into Britain reached a high of 330,000 people in the year to March, far above the 100,000 level Prime Minister David Cameron has promised.

High rates of immigration has fuelled support for rival parties and

Spain’s Princess Cristina tax fraud trial to start in January

CARACAS — Venezuela’s foreign minister on Monday blasted her US counterpart John Kerry for questioning the country’s democratic credentials ahead of legislative elections the ruling socialists are forecast to lose.

The spat follows a nascent rapprochement earlier this year between the two ideologically-opposed nations.

In an interview broadcast by CNN en Espanol on Monday, Kerry described Venezuela as “troubled” and said December’s elections would be a “measure of the type of democracy that exists in the country.”

Responding on Twitter on Monday night, Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez accused Kerry of “giving false information” to US officials in the administration. PHOTO: REUTER

US probes alleged UN bribery scheme

WASHINGTON — US law enforcement authorities are investigating an alleged bribery scheme involving payments to officials at the United Nations to gain support for real estate developments in Macau, the Wall Street Journal reported, citing people familiar with the matter.

The investigation, led by the office of the US attorney in Manhattan and the FBI, centres on alleged bribery by Chinese businesspeople, the newspaper reported. The number of UN officials involved in the alleged scheme and their identities were not known, the newspaper said.

Last month’s arrests of Macau real-estate mogul Ng Lap Seng, and his assistant, Jeff Yin, are connected to the alleged scheme and additional charges are expected to be announced as early as Tuesday against a number of other people, including current or former UN officials, the Journal said.

US authorities charged Ng, a real estate developer from the Chinese territory Macau, and his principal assistant for engaging in a two-year scheme to import over $4.5 million into the United States.

Prosecutors have conducted a lengthy investigation into the affairs of Cristina’s husband, former Olympic hand-ball player Inaki Urdangarin, centred on large payments from public bodies to the Noos Charity for sports promotional activities.—Reuters

Tsipras pleads for debt relief with austere budget

ATHENS — Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras issued a resounding call for debt relief on Monday as his government unveiled an austere 2016 budget

Greece’s Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis. PHOTO: REUTERS

sticking strictly to international bailout targets in a new spirit of cooperation with European and IMF creditors.

The draft budget, released as Tsipras delivered his keynote four-year policy programme to parliament, projected that the economy would stay in recession next year, shrinking by 1.3 percent after a 2.3 percent contraction in 2015, before returning to growth in 2017.

Tsipras, whose leftist government was re-elected on 20 September after performing a U-turn and accepting a bailout of up to $86 billion euros ($90.1 billion) in return for spending cuts, tax rises and economic reforms under strict external supervision, told lawmakers he would bargain hard for debt relief.

The budget contained a total 6.4 billion euros of austerity measures this year and next, of which 3.43 billion will fall in 2016.

Euro zone finance ministers have agreed to discuss a limited debt restructuring, but not write-downs, if Greece successfully concludes a first review of the new bailout programme by the end of this year, which entails passing far-reaching reforms of taxation, pensions and public administration.

Tsipras said the government would pass all the required laws to achieve a successful bailout review and open the door for debt renegotiations, which were crucial for economic recovery.

“We will propose an extension of (loan) maturities, a reduction of interest rates and a conversion to stable interest rates,” he said.

“We will also propose a growth clause (linking the amount of debt service to GDP growth) and an extended grace period (on debt service payments) to create enough fiscal space to support investment activity and the restructuring of our welfare state.”

The prime minister said the government aimed to restore capital market access within 20 months by the first half of 2017 and he expected economic growth to return by mid-next year. Economists say both goals seem optimistic if not impossible.

“The implementation of the bailout is necessary but it is not enough on its own. We need a web of parallel actions ... in the next 20 crucial months to achieve our target of restoring liquidity and regaining market access,” Tsipras said.—Reuters

Venezuela hits back at US for questioning its democracy

CARACAS — Venezuela’s foreign minister on Monday blasted her US counterpart John Kerry for questioning the country’s democratic credentials ahead of legislative elections the ruling socialists are forecast to lose.

The spat follows a nascent rapprochement earlier this year between the two ideologically-opposed nations.

In an interview broadcast by CNN en Espanol on Monday, Kerry described Venezuela as “troubled” and said December’s elections would be a “measure of the type of democracy that exists in the country.”

Responding on Twitter on Monday night, Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez said Venezuela rejected Kerry’s comments.”The electoral register in the United States is founded on democracy... Our political system is founded on democracy.”

Venezuela and the United States have had difficult relations since late president Hugo Chavez was elected in 1998. They came to a nadir in 2006 when Chavez described his then US counterpart George W Bush as “the devil”.

The two countries have not had ambassadorial ties since 2010. On Sunday, Venezuela’s President Nicolas Maduro said President Barack Obama was delaying consent for his proposed new ambassador in Washington.

The United States has not named a proposed ambassador to Venezuela and US officials in Caracas did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Relations began to warm earlier this year though the process appears to have been set back when Leopoldo Lopez, a jailed opposition leader, was sentenced to nearly 14 years in prison in September on charges of fomenting anti-government violence.

Washington had been pressing for Lopez’s release.—Reuters
Aspirations of Men In The Street

San Shwe Aung

In most countries of the world, the majority of citizens are ordinary working people. They are workers (both blue and white collar) in agricultural, production, industries, transport, tourism and many other public and private service sectors. Governments in all countries have mandate to raise the living standards of these ordinary people. During the cold war times, nations were classified as west bloc and east block, the former represented countries with democratic political system and capitalist economy and the latter practiced socialist/communist system and centralized economy. Then there was another concept created. The term third world arose during the cold war to define countries that remained non-aligned with either NATO, or the communist bloc. The United States, Western European nations and their allies represented the first world, while the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and their allies represented the second world. Most of the third world countries were low to middle income developing countries. In classifying a country as economic, education criteria have tended to dominate discussions. One such criterion is income per capita; countries with high gross domestic product (GDP) per capita would thus be described as developed countries. Another economic criterion is industrialization; countries in which the tertiary and quaternary sectors of industry dominate would thus be described as developed countries. More recently another measure, the Human Development Index (HDI), which combines an economic measure, national income, with other measures, indices for life expectancy, standard of education, has become prominent. This criterion would define developed countries as those with a very high (HDI) rating. According to the United Nations Statistics Division, there is no established convention for the designation of “developed” and “developing” countries or areas in the United Nations system. And it notes that the designations “developed” and “developing” are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express judgment about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process.

Least developed country (LDC)

A LDC is a country that, according to the United Nations, exhibits the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, with the lowest Human Development Index ratings of all countries in the world. The concept of LDCs originated in the late 1960s and the first group of LDCs was listed by the UN in its resolution 2768 (XXVI) of 18 November 1971. A country is classified as a Least Developed Country if it meets three criteria: Poverty (adjustable criterion: three-year average GNI per capita of less than US $992, which must exceed $1,190 to leave the list as of 2012); Human resource weakness (based on indicators of nutrition, health, education and adult literacy); and Economic vulnerability (based on agricultural production, instability of exports of goods and services, economic importance of non-traditional activities, merchandise export concentration, handicap of economic smallness, and the percentage of population displaced by natural disasters).

LDC criteria are reviewed every three years by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Countries may “graduate” out of the LDC classification when indicators exceed these criteria. The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) coordinates UN support and provides advocacy services for Least Developed Countries. The classification (as of 24 January 2014) applies to 48 countries. Since the LDC category was initiated, only four countries have graduated to developed country status. The first country to graduate from LDC status was Bhutan in 1971. The second country was Cape Verde, in 2007. Maldives graduated to developing country status on 1 January 2011, while Samoa graduated in 2014. It is anticipated that Equatorial Guinea and Vanuatu will be the next countries to be promoted from LDC status. At the UN’s fourth conference on LDCs held in May 2011, delegates endorsed a goal targetting the promotion of at least half the current LDC countries within the next ten years. There are three countries which presently meet the criteria for LDC status, but have declined to be included in the index, questioning the validity or accuracy of the GDP’s data: Ghana, Papua New Guinea, and Zimbabwe. Out of 48 LDC countries there are 9 in Asia and of 3 which are within ASEAN countries including Myanmar. The three LDCs located in Oceania are: (1) Afghanistan (2) Bangladesh (3) Bhutan (4) Cambodia (5) East Timor (6) Laos (7) Myanmar (8) Nepal (9) Yemen.

Characteristics of LDC

Least developed countries suffer conditions of extreme poverty, ongoing and widespread conflict (including civil war or ethnic clashes), extensive political corruption, and lack political and social stability. The form of government in such countries is often authoritarian in nature, and may comprise a dictatorship, warlordism, or kleptocracy. AIDS is a major issue in many of these countries. The majority of LDCs are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Over population and lack of proper distribution of wealth and resources is also a common matter within the LDC countries. These characteristics generally do not apply to LDCs located in Oceania. Kiribati, Samoa, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu are politically stable democracies, and lack any form of civil or ethnic strife. Nor are they strongly affected by AIDS. Although they have small economies, often dependent on monocultures, the population generally does not suffer from extreme poverty, thanks to an enduring subsistence sector in the economy. The Solomon Islands is the only Oceanian LDC currently affected by political instability and ethnic tension. In 2006, the United Nations recommended that Samoa be graduated from LDC status. The Samoan government disagreed, however in 2007 the UN Economic and Social Council endorsed the recommendation, setting Samoa’s graduation date for 31 December 2010. Following the tsunami that hit Samoa in 2009, Samoa’s graduation was deferred until January 2014. “Middle class” is widely recognized now to indicate and reflect the progress of economy and social sector in the developing countries such as India, Brazil, Malaysia etc. Middle class is a social group that consists of well-educated people, such as technicians, small business owners, public and private sector employees and teachers, who have good jobs and are neither very rich nor very poor. The “upper middle class” tend to go into business or the professions, for example, lawyers, doctors, IT experts, managers or accountants. Both middle and upper middle classes belong to the men-in-the-street or ordinary people. We all, in Myanmar, must aspire and work diligently to get out of LDC status and graduate to become fully fledged Developing Country. We in Myanmar have all potentials to become a Developing Country in few years time because we have strong prospect in human resources, economy, agriculture, export oriented diverse industries, improving infrastructure, tourism and other services. We ordinary people, men in the street are patriotic, are peace loving, hardworking and we are the majority of the population in the country. Regardless of whatever political parties or Government elected in the country, we people and the families have been having the same common aspirations for decades. One of the most important and essential factors to be graduated from LDC and become a Developing Country is rule of law in the country. Every citizen must be under the law of the land and it will become smooth to realize our common aspirations.

We, the ordinary people and tax payers, want peace in the country; job & employment opportunities for all, protection of natural resources & forests, international standard education and health services for us and for our children, gender equality, eradication of drug abuses, crime, bribery and corruption; sustainable and reliable utility services (water, electricity, gas, communication etc.); good infrastructure nationwide, safe & efficient public transports; stability of prices of essential daily food items & consumer goods, proper and affordable housing for families all over the country and efficient Government services.

Reference: https://en.wikipedia.org

The decent thing for authorities to do is to raise the stipulated costs for constructing the apartments and contractors should adhere to building standards. Any financial difficulties faced by projects should be solved through alternative means, such as bank loans or extra government funds.

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email wallace.tun@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.

We are living in a sea of corruption. Not a sea, mate. It isn’t a sea...it’s an ocean!

TIN AUNG
Hygiene: The Basis of a Healthy Life

Khin Maung Myint (MPT Retired)

Before proceeding any further, I must admit I am obsessed with cleanliness and hygiene. I am so obsessed with hygiene and cleanliness that I always carry a small bottle of antiseptic hand gel to clean my hands after handling such things and absent-mindedly touched or rubbed my eyes, I got eye allergies that are very irritating. The use of hand gel has become a second nature to me. There may also be multitude of germs on every object I had to unavoidable touch and also in the atmosphere, invisible to the naked eyes. So it is safe to be overly conscious about cleanliness. The motto is “Prevention is better than cure.”

Having said that, I would like to discuss the importance of the germs — bacteria, virus, fungus and protozoa on everything we touched. In one documentary video clip, which I had viewed sometime ago, showed a scene where a swapping from the computer keys was placed under a microscope. To my horror, there were uncountable number of crawling germs of different shapes and sizes. The narrators explained the various types of germs that were seen and cautioned what they can cause. Also, the scrappings from the cakes, cups, forks, spoons and even toothbrushes were seen to be infested with germs when placed under the microscope. Thus it is quite evident that everything we touch, though they may seem to be clean, are not clean but swarming with germs that are infectious. The video clip went further to explain that even the atmosphere around us are not free from dangerous germs and substances that are bad for the health.

As the above mentioned situations are unavoidable, the best way to safeguard ourselves is to keep our personal cleanliness or hygiene. Hygiene, if maintained properly would benefit our wellness and health. Thus, I believed that hygiene is the basis for a healthy life. I have been in the habit of observing my personal hygiene, especially in my old age. What would be the meaning of living a long life if I am not healthy?

To be healthy, one does not have to always depend on the medicines or treatments only. If one leads a healthy life they would not be necessary, unless, unfortunately, one fell victim to some diseases caused by improper exposure to pollutants. Leading a healthy life includes observance of hygiene and life style — eating habits, exercising, abstaining from excessive indulgence in drinking, smoking and other activities that are detrimental to the health. The personal hygiene, only, could be observed by each individual, while the public hygiene would be beyond one’s control.

“Leading a healthy life includes observance of hygiene and life style — eating habits, exercising, abstaining from excessive indulgence in drinking, smoking and other activities that are detrimental to the health. The personal hygiene, only, could be observed by each individual, while the public hygiene would be beyond one’s control.”

In Thailand, public toilets everywhere are always clean and hygienic. The reason is because the authorities take care to keep the cleanliness and hygiene of those places. For instance, at the gas stations all over the country, toilets are clean and hygienic at any time you use them. The concerned authorities regularly inspect them. Those that met their standards were accredited with brass plaques that described their standards were accredited with brass plaques that described their standards. Those who met their standards were awarded the health inspection plagues who were away on vacation. The concerned departments should have a warning system to alert those visitors. It must be due to the fact that they are not accustomed to spicy foods or they did not check where or what they eat. Anyway, my friends and I must say that the overall cleanliness and the hygienic of most eateries are quite plausible, whether they received the “Clean foods. Good tastes” citation or not. From some documentary videos, I no longer had to depend on the medicines which every good citizen must try to renew their validity. The food stall’s image, whereas a clean restaurant is quite evident that the concern authorities. A health inspector was immediately dispatched to the scene. He supervised the repair of the sewage pipe but was unable to do anything about the sewage that had entered into the house. He left a notice stuck on the front door of the house for the owners to report to the authorities immediately on their return. When the house owners reported, by phone on their return, the inspector arrived at his home immediately and gave instructions as to how to clean the house. After a few days the inspector went back to check and found that the house still smelled of sewage. He made a thorough check and found the floor carpeting, although it looked clean, was causing the foul smell. The inspector insisted they should replace the carpet. At first the ladies were reluctant as they had spent much time and money for hiring the cleaners. However, they realized the responsibility of the household and told them they either do it or face charges.

Another example of maintaining hygiene by enforcement was the one I had seen myself, in the country of Cambod- ia in 1967. In those days, there were warning signs posted inside every public restroom (toilets), to wash the hands before leaving the room and those who did so fouled disheving would be liable to fines of fifty dollars. That was quite a large sum, because one king-sized hamburger or a gallon of petrol cost only twenty five cents in those days. No wonder the rest rooms were always clean.

I am citing these examples at length to make my point that cleanliness and public hygiene is important. They should be drastically enforced as in the case of Australia and the U.S. Awareness campaigns are necessary, but without proper enforcement a high standard of cleanliness and public hygiene could not be achieved. To strengthen my views, I would like to mention briefly how Singapore came to be recognized as a very clean place. Those who had been to Singapore in the early nineteen sixties, before her independence, would tell you how filthy that place was. However, after their independence, thanks to their great leader and founding father, Mr. Lee Kwan Yew, Singapore became a very clean city, not only by Asian standards, but by international standards. How did they do it? Of course by enforcing it strictly with penalties of heavy fines. By judging the above mentioned examples, it is quite evident that the “carrot and stick” policy could bring desired results.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize, once again, the importance of cleanliness and hygiene, which are the basis of a healthy life. Every individual should be aware of the importance of personal hygiene and had the responsibility to observe it. As for the maintenance of public hygiene, the concerned departments should educate the public and enforce them to abide by the rules and regulations regarding littering, urinating and spitting recklessly. The health inspector was a symbol of Americ- nia’s image, whereas a clean city enhance it. It is a civic duty, which every good citizen must fulfill.
ADEN — Unidentified assailants fired missiles at a hotel in Aden used by Yemeni government officials and at a compound housing troops of the government’s Gulf Arab allies on Tuesday, residents said. The residents said they had unconfirmed reports that about 10 people were killed or wounded. Yemeni Vice President and Prime Minister Khaled Bahah and other officials were unharmed, officials said. President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi is believed to be in Saudi Arabia.

Initial reports said the missiles were rocket-propelled grenades. Video footage posted on Twitter purporting to show the incident showed a large sheet of flame enveloping the front of the Qasr hotel, followed by an expanding plume of dark smoke. The missile apparently were fired at the gate of the hotel, residents said. A second missile landed nearby and a third hit a compound in Aden’s Buraqish district where Gulf Arab troops are housed, residents said. The United Arab Emirates condemned the attack and suggested it was carried out by Houthis and Saleh’s allies, former president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

UN to hold off on separate Afghan bombing probe

UNITED NATIONS — The United Nations said on Monday it would wait for the results of US, NATO and Afghan investigations into a deadly air strike on a Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) hospital in Afghanistan before deciding whether to support an independent probe.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Saturday called for an “impartial” investigation of the incident but he stopped short of saying that should be done by the UN. His spokesman Stephane Dujarric said on Monday it was too soon to say if an additional probe would be necessary. MSF and the UN human rights chief have said the incident could be a war crime.

“I think what we’re looking for is a credible and transparent investigation.”

Spokesperson of Ban Ki-moon

US Defence Secretary Ash Carter has promised a full investigation into whether the American military was connected to the destruction of the MSF hospital in Kunduz, but cautioned it would take time to gather information.

Under international law, the bombing would only be a war crime if it was carried out to destroy the hospital was attacked intentionally, legal experts said. A United Nations investigation is unlikely at this point because the United States is viewed as capable of carrying out a credible investigation and because the incident is not viewed as part of a systematic campaign targeting civilians, diplomatic sources said. If doubts arose over the credibility of the US or NATO investigations, there might be calls for a UN probe.

Australian police arrest boy near scene of ‘terror-linked’ shooting

SYDNEY — Australian police arrested a boy after he was questioned about his social media posts on Tuesday outside the same high school attended by a teenager who last week shot dead a police worker in an attack authorities say was “linked to terrorism”.

The boy was arrested when he threatened and intimidated police who wanted to talk to him about his social media activity. New South Wales state police said in a statement. On Friday, a 15-year-old boy of Iraqi-Kurdish descent identified as Farhad Khalil Mohammad Jabar gunned down a police employee leaving the headquarters of the New South Wales Police. He was shot and killed by police at the scene. Police provided few additional details about the arrest, but the Australian Broadcasting Corp reported the youth had allegedly praised Farhad on Facebook and posted comments saying police should “burn in hell”. Australia is grappling with a rise in violence perpetrated by radicalized Muslim youths at home while trying to stop others from traveling to Syria to fight with Islamic extremists.

A staunch ally of the United States and its battle against Islamic militants in Iraq and Syria, Australia has been on heightened alert for attacks by home-grown radicals since last year.

Authorities estimate at least 70 Australians have joined militant forces in the Middle East with another 100 or more Australian-based facilitators and support-
ATLANTA — Twelve Pacific Rim countries on Monday reached the most ambitious trade pact in a generation, aiming to liberalize commerce in 40 percent of the world’s economy in a deal that faces scepticism from US lawmakers.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) pact struck in Atlanta after marathon talks could reshape industries, change the cost of products from cheese to cancer treatments and have repercussions for drug companies and automakers.

Tired negotiators worked round the clock over the weekend to settle tough issues such as monopoly rights for new biotech drugs. New Zealand’s stance for greater access for its dairy exports was only settled at 5 am EDT (10 am BST) on Monday.

If approved, the pact would cut trade barriers and set common standards from Vietnam to Canada. It would also furnish a legal-tying victory for US President Barack Obama, who will promote the agreement on Tuesday in remarks to business leaders in Washington.

The Obama administration hopes the pact will help the United States increase its influence in East Asia and help counter the rise of China, which is not one of the TPP nations.

Lawmakers in the United States and other TPP countries must approve the deal. Five years in the making, it would reduce or eliminate tariffs on almost 18,000 categories of goods.

Initial reaction from US Congress members, including Democrats and Republicans, ranged from cautious to sceptical.

Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, a Democratic presidential candidate, worried the pact would cost jobs and hurt consumers. “In the Senate, I will do all that I can to defeat the TPP agreement,” he tweeted.

Many of Obama’s Democrats, as well as labour groups, fear the TPP will cost manufacturing jobs and weaken environmental laws, while some Republicans oppose provisions to block tobacco companies from suing governments over anti-smoking measures.

Republican Senator Orrin Hatch, who heads the Senate Finance Committee, was wary, “I am afraid this deal appears to fall woefully short,” said Hatch, who had urged the administration to hold the line on intellectual property protections, including for drugs.

US lawmakers can approve the deal or vote it down, but not amend it.

Ministers said the agreement would include a forum for finance ministers from participating countries to discuss currency policy principles. This takes into account, in part, concerns among US manufacturers and critics who suggest Japan has driven the yen lower to benefit its car exporters and other companies.

But Democratic Representative Debbie Dingell from Michigan, home of the US auto industry, said currency has not been fully dealt with. “Nothing that we have heard indicates negotiators sufficiently addressed these issues,” she said. The United States and Australia negotiated a compromise on the minimum period of protection to the rights for data used to make biologic drugs. Companies such as Pfizer Inc (PFE.N), Roche Group’s Genentech and Japan’s Takeda Pharmaceutical (4502.T) could be affected.—Reuters

Sony to split off fast-growing image sensor business

TOKYO — Sony Corp said it will split off its semiconductors operations in a bid to bolster growth in devices such as image sensors, which have helped lead a turnaround at the Japanese electronics maker.

Sony said its move was part of the company’s push to give autonomy to its business units to accelerate decision-making and make them more accountable for their profitability.

So far, Sony has focused on splitting off underperforming units, but it said more autonomy for the sensors business would help it remain competitive.

Its competitive sensor rivals include OmnVision Technologies and Samsung Electronics.

Sensors, used in smartphones such as Apple Inc’s iPhone, have been one of the company’s strongest products in the past few years, in contrast with its TVs and smartphones which have lagged behind those of Asian rivals.

Sony in April said it would spend 45 billion yen ($3.74 billion) to bolster sensor production capacity this fiscal year on top of a 105 billion yen investment announced in February.

The company is hoping to expand its sensors into automobile-related products, as vehicles adopt more sensor-enabled safety features.—Reuters

Cement created with rice chaff for nuclear waste disposal

TOKYO — Osaka University and a cement company in Hokkaido have co-developed a low-alkaline cement by utilizing rice chaff that would strengthen the durability of final nuclear waste disposal sites.

The development of low-alkaline cement is essential for the construction of final nuclear waste disposal facilities that will need a durability of up to 100,000 years to prevent harm from radioactive materials.

In such repositories, nuclear waste will be solidified with glass and placed in metallic containers before being covered with clay and deeply buried underground.

If normal cements are used underground, they will react with groundwater, producing calcium hydroxide and making ground-water highly alkaline. That would cause cracking and deterioration in the clay and bedrock at the facility.

In order to lower alkaline cement levels in cement, Katsuyoshi Kondo, professor at Osaka University’s Joining and Welding Research Institute, and Nippon Steel & Sumikin Cement Co. based in the city of Muroran mixed silica dioxide extracted from rice chaff with cement. Sili-ca reacts with calcium hydroxide and weakens alkaline.

More than 100 million tons of rice chaff, a highly siliceous crop residue, is produced worldwide every year.

The team succeeded in developing a technology to extract highly purified silica with numerous holes measuring 5 to 7 nanometers in diameter by washing rice chaff with organic acid and burning them.

The surface area of the silica extracted from rice chaff is 50,000 to 90,000 times larger than that contained in existing cements, enhancing the reaction between silica and calcium hydroxide and thus lowering the alkaline level. Japan is in the process of looking for a place to build a final repository for highly radioactive nuclear waste generated from power plants. In Finland, a disposal site for high-level radioactive waste is already under construction.

“We aim to utilize the low-alkaline cement at facilities abroad after repeated tests to verify its performance,” a Nippon Steel & Sumikin Cement official said.—Kyodo News

Toyota aims to commercialise semi-autonomous cars by 2020

TOKYO — Toyota Motor Corp (7203.T) said it would aim to bring to market cars that can autonomously change lanes, merge with traffic, and overtake other vehicles on highways by around 2020 as it aims to catch up in the nascent field of self-driving cars.

Demonstrating its newest safety technology features to media on Tuesday, Japan’s biggest automaker said in that car of the future, drivers would be able to turn on and off the auto-pilot mode with a single switch.

Toyota also said it would launch three models in Japan this year equipped with “intelligent transportation system” (ITS) technology, which allows vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communication to alert drivers to potential dangers using sensor technology. The face-lifted Crown sedan unveiled in the domestic market last week was the world’s first car to use ITS technology, Toyota said. The fourth-generation Prius hybrid, due for launch in Japan at year-end, will be among the three models, it said.—Kyodo News
Patience, desire to ‘do good’ behind Nobel winner Omura’s achievements

TOKYO — Patience and a resolve to “do good for others” have guided Satoshi Omura in his microbe research, leading him to make discoveries that led to the treatment of devastating parasitic diseases and a share of this year’s Nobel Prize in medicine.

Born to a farming family in Yamanashi Prefecture, center of Tokyo, Omura worked as a science and physical education teacher at a night school before embarking on life as a researcher. “I have had a burning desire to be a person that does good for others, and (such a hope) has brought this result,” the 80-year-old professor emeritus at Keio University asked in Tokyo on Tuesday, after he was named one of the winners of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

Being raised with four other siblings and having to help with farm work, Omura admits that he hardly studied initially. He devoted himself to soccer and other sports when he was in senior high school and was so good at skiing that in college he even took part in a national sports event.

After graduating from the University of Yamanashi with a bachelor of science in 1958, he became a night school teacher in Tokyo, where he says he was motivated by students who were studying hard after working at factories during the day, some with greasy hands.

While continuing to work as a school teacher, Omura studied analytical chemistry at the graduate school of the Tokyo University of Science and became immersed in research.

Omura encountered microbes when he became involved in a wine brewing study at his alma mater in Yamanashi, where he was working as a research associate after getting his master’s degree. He was surprised by how sugar, in a culture solution for microbes, turned into alcohol overnight.

The feeling that microbes can do “amazing” things that even chemists cannot do led Omura to look for microbes that could be useful chemical agents.

In 1973, Omura returned from the United States, where he was a visiting research professor at Wesleyan University, and launched a study on drugs for animals, an area receiving little attention at the time.

He set out with colleagues to collect soil, leaves and decaying wood all over Japan and the following year found bacteria that he thought were “different from others” in a soil sample from a golf course in Ito on the Izu Peninsula near Tokyo.

Omura cultured the microbes, called Streptomyces, and together with Irish-born research-er William Campbell, with whom he shared the Nobel Prize, found the culture produced an agent that works against animal parasites.

The discovery led to the development of a new drug, avermectin, which the Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute said has “fundamentally changed the treatment of parasitic diseases.” Ivermectin, a more effective compound that was derived from the bioactive agent, is being used by hundreds of millions of people in Africa and elsewhere to-day to treat debilitating parasitic diseases such as river blindness.

Microbial research is believed to be a Japanese forte as they have traditionally used microbes for fermented foods. “Japanese people have known the character of microbes and used them well,” Omura said. Still searching for ways to help people, Omura says he always carries a bag in his wallet so he can collect soil samples.

Omura told reporters on Thursday that hearing the news of his success he instantly thought of his wife Fumiko, who died aged 60 about 15 years ago, as she had always hoped he would be awarded the prize one day.

“I have had a burning desire to be a person that does good for others.” — Nobel Prize winner

Because Omura earned little when he was a junior researcher and had to spend money on books, the couple had barely got by. Fumiko chipped in by teaching the abacus to children and working as a private tutor, according to Omura. Omura said he still regrets the last moments with his wife. “I should have said thank you to her, but I couldn’t.” Had it not been for her support, he said, “I don’t think I would have had a day like this.”

Aside from his life as a researcher, Omura is also known as an avid art collector who heads the Nirasakiomura Art Museum in Nirasaki, his hometown. In the collection are about 1,900 items, including paintings and ceramics, which he bought over the years. He gave the museum to the municipality after it was opened in 2007. — Kyodo News

India court gives New Delhi 3 days to come up with pollution plan

NEW DELHI — India’s Supreme Court has given New Delhi three days to come up with a plan to clean up the air in a city ranked by the World Health Organisation as the most polluted in the world.

Successive local governments in Delhi have failed to check pollution from industry and increasing traffic. This is not the first time the court has passed such an order — successive local governments have failed to build roads to ease congestion.

About 52,000 commercial vehicles, excluding taxis, pass the landlocked city each day, more than double government estimates, the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) said in a report this week. Such vehicles account for about a third of the city’s pollution.

“If we are able to have a strategy to address this commercial traffic, it will help clean up the air,” said Anumita Roychowdhury, an executive director at the CSE.

Hearing a plea filed by lawyer Harish Salve, the Supreme Court on Monday asked the federal government, Delhi’s local government and its municipal body to come up with a solution within three days.

An Indian court banned all vehicles older than 15 years from entering the city this year in a bid to clean up the air, but the order has since been delayed.

The WHO last year said New Delhi had the worst air quality of 1,600 cities surveyed worldwide. — Reuters

300,000 Indonesians suffer respiratory illnesses as haze stays

JAKARTA — More than 300,000 Indonesians have been recorded suffering from respiratory illnesses since the dry season started in June in the country, Indonesia’s health ministry said on Tuesday.

Indonesian Health Minister Nila Moeloek disclosed that the figure of recorded respiratory patients jumped by around 20 percent since the start of the fire in Sumatra and Borneo Islands last month, pushing the government to take greater measures to terminate the regular problem in the country.

“The number of those suffering from acute respiratory problem has steeply hiked by 15 to 20 percent since three weeks ago,” she said at the health ministry. South Sumatra, which has more population than other five Indonesian provinces affected by the haze, recorded the largest number of patients, which stood at 83,276. Combined, the six haze-affected provinces recorded a whopping 307,360 cases as of Monday.

Moeloek said that the ministry has sent tons of medicines and thousands of masks to haze-affected areas in Sumatra and Borneo Islands.

The minister said that the ministry would continuously take measures to minimize the risk of haze on human health. The government has conducted the biggest air operation, involving helicopters, planes and thousands of soldiers, to stop forest fire that has spread haze to Singapore and Malaysia. — Xinhua
One killed as gov’t troops encounter leftist rebel in Central Philippines

MANILA — One member of New People’s Army (NPA) was killed after series of encounters from Monday to Tuesday with government soldiers in Bilbao province of central Philippines, the military reported on Tuesday.

The troops from 82nd Infantry Battalion encountered 5 militants of NPA when they were conducting security patrol at the vicinity of Ambankan Village, Illoilo at 4:30 pm on Monday. After series of fleeing and encounters, the militants managed to escape on Tuesday morning with one killed in the conflict.

The battle site is around 40 kilometers away from Ilolod City, where an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting is held from last Sunday to Tuesday.

The NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has been waging a guerrilla campaign against the government in the countryside for four decades. Military estimates the NPA strength at more than 4,000 men scattered in more than 60 guerrilla fronts throughout the country.—Xinhua

California governor signs bill legalising doctor-aided suicide

SAN FRANCISCO — California Governor Jerry Brown on Monday signed into law a bill legalising doctor-aided suicide in California, becoming the fifth American state to allow terminally ill patients to commit doctor-aided suicide, joining Oregon, Washington, Vermont and Montana.

This bill is about life and death, said Brown in a statement explaining his decision, adding that the key part of the issue is whether it should continue to be a crime in California for dying patients to take their own lives.

The campaign for the right-to-die legislature has been going on in California for years with strong opposition from religious and disability rights groups.

The movement gained big momentum last year after the death of 29-year-old Californian resident Brittainy Maynard, who suffered end-stage brain cancer and had to move to Oregon to take her own life.—Xinhua

Germans give Hitler actor a warm welcome

BERLIN — A German actor who dressed up as Adolf Hitler and traveled through the country for four weeks chatting to smiling voters and stroking their pets for a film that opens this week says he was shocked by the warm welcome he received.

The film “Look Who’s Back” is an adaptation of a satirical novel by Timur Vermes which has sold over a million copies. In it, Hitler wakes up in modern times, becomes a celebrity and enters politics again.

Vermes has said he wrote the book to lambast what he calls Germans’ complacency about the Nazis and highlight his belief that Hitler would have a chance to succeed today, even though the modern German state is constructed to ensure that Nazi tyranny can never return.—Reuters

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY NO (115N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV MERATUS GORONTALO VOY NO (115N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S YANG MING LINE Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV LANTAU ACE VOY NO (0013N)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV LANTAU ACE VOY NO (0013N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7.10.2015 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of A.W.P.T where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY AGENT FOR: M/S YANG MING LINE Phone No: 2301185
Elvis Presley’s gold grand piano, Beatles drum skin up for auction

LOS ANGELES — Elvis Presley’s gold-leaf grand piano is expected to fetch more than half a million dollars at a November auction that will also feature a Beatles logo drum skin used by the British group in their first performances in the United States.

Juliens Auctions said on Monday that Presley played the piano at his Graceland mansion. He bought it in 1955 as a gift for his mother. After she died, Presley’s wife Priscilla decided to adorn its original walnut finish with 24-karat gold-leaf as a gift for the couple’s first wedding anniversary in 1968.

The piano has been on display at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville for years. Juliens estimates it will fetch between $500,000 - $700,000 at the 7 November auction. It is being sold by a man who obtained it years ago from Graceland and wishes to remain anonymous.

The auction house has put no estimate on the skin from the drum kit played by Ringo Starr when The Beatles performed live on “The Ed Sullivan Show” in New York in 1964 for some 73 million TV viewers.

The drum head also was used for The Beatles 1964 concerts in Washington D.C. and New York’s Carnegie Hall. It then passed onto the late Beatles manager, Mal Evans, before making its way to a private collector.

A spokeswoman said the drum skin, which bears The Beatles signature logo with a dropped “T,” was so unique that it was difficult to put a price on it. Only the skin is up for auction, not the entire drum.

Sam Smith video for Bond theme

‘Writing’s On The Wall’ released

London — Grammy Award winner Sam Smith released the video for his theme song for the new James Bond film “Spectre” on Monday, days after the ballad became the first 007 title track to top the British pop charts.

The song “Writing’s On The Wall” went straight to the top of the British charts last week. The video shows snippets of the film featuring Bond actor Daniel Craig, Italian actress Monica Bellucci and French actress Lea Seydoux.

Smith, 23, is the first British male solo artist to record a Bond song since Tom Jones’ “Thunderball” track in 1965.

He co-wrote the single with fellow Grammy Award winner Jimmy Napes, with whom he worked on his best-selling 2014 debut album “In the Lonely Hour.” “Spectre” opens on 26 October in British cinemas and on 6 November in the United States.— Reuters

Rapper Fetty Wap’s ‘Trap Queen’ crowns Billboard 200 chart

LOS ANGELES — Rapper Fetty Wap’s first album topped the Billboard 200 chart on Monday, following a wave of hit singles including hip hop anthem “Trap Queen.”

In its debut week, the self-titled album from the 24-year-old New Jersey rapper sold 75,000 albums, 270,000 songs and was streamed 39 million times, totaling 129,000 units in the week ending 1 October, according to figures from Nielsen SoundScan.

Last week’s chart-topper, rappers Drake and Future’s surprise release of “What A Time To Be Alive,” dropped into the second slot with 107,000 units sold. Don Henley, founding member of rockers The Eagles, claimed No 3 with his first solo album in 15 years, country record “Cass County” selling 89,000 units.

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

Two other country records debuted in the top ten of the Billboard 200 chart: “Cold Beer Conversation” from industry veteran George Straight at No. 4 and “Tangled Up” from songwriter Thomas Rhett at No. 6.

Other new albums in the top ten included Scottish synth-pop group Chvrches’ “Every Open Eye” at No 8, British house band Disclosure’s “Caracal” at No 9 and rocker supergroup Dead Weather’s “Dodge and Burn” at 10 November.— Reuters

Every superstar has insecurities: Irrfan Khan

NEW DELHI — In a career spanning roughly 27 years, Irrfan Khan has attained stardom by being a part of Bollywood and Hollywood movies, but he feels a certain insecurity persists in an actor’s life.

Irrfan, whose filmography boasts of films like “Maqbool,” “Life in a Meto... Metro,” “The Namesake,” “The Lunchbox,” “Jurassic World” and “Life of Pi,” however, is of the view, a star should overcome the self-doubts and concentrate on his or her performances.

“I every superstar has some insecurity. If a movie of a director becomes hit, then the star wants to work with him. He thinks the director gave a hit with others so I’ll work with him too.

“That is why a superstar is in search of choosing new subjects. Insecurity is everywhere. But if you carry the burden of insecurity always and if it is affecting your performance, then that’s a big problem,” Irrfan said in an interview.

The 48-year-old actor’s upcoming project, Sanjay Gupta’s action drama “Jazbaa,” will see him sharing screen space with Bollywood diva Aishwarya Rai Bachchan.

The “Piku” actor said, despite her stardom, Aishwarya is a grounded person.

“She has a very larger-than-life image but she is very simple. She takes care of people around her and is unlike the big superstar image she has. She is very grounded.”

The movie marks Aishwarya’s return to big screen after a gap of five years but Irrfan never felt she was away from movies.

“Comeback from where? For me she was always here. She didn’t go anywhere.

An actor should be allowed a gap. Her audience is still with her.

People are her fan, her admirers, and they’ll definitely go to watch her,” he said.— PTI
Check, pleats and sporty comfort from Stella McCartney in Paris

LOS ANGELES -- Disneyland has hiked prices for its annual passes, a spokeswoman said on Monday, putting some prices above $1,000 for the first time as the Southern California theme park owned by Walt Disney Co cashes in on growing demand during peak seasons.

One daily pass was discontinued while two costlier options were added on Sunday, a move that provoked frustration among some social media users and fans saying they would not renew at higher rates.


Garnier, the Briton sent out modern sportswear for women’s wardrobes next spring.

Under the gilded chandeliers of Paris’ Opera Garnier, the Briton sent out modern sportswear for women’s wardrobes next spring. The collection, shown on Monday as part of Paris Fashion Week.

She further experienced a mix of sporty, tailored in sleeveless thigh-length jackets, worn over wide-leg trousers in pale pink, tan and black. On top of the stripes, check and pleats detailing, McCartney sent swish patterns on top-and-trousers combos and loose summer dresses.

The final look of the show, attended by racing driver Lewis Hamilton and tennis player Maria Sharapova, was a mix of short and floor-length dresses in yellow, orange and blue, opened up with tiny panels of see-through eyelet embroidery.

Accessories included sandals with sporty-sneaker soles as well as aviator sunglasses with brightly coloured frames.

McCartney said the line was dedicated to inspiring women.

“We all have these incredible women that fill us with motivation and allow us to be who we are,” she said backstage.

“So this collection was sort of a tribute to them and their confidence and their incredible color that they give off.” — Reuters
**Badminton tournament held in Mandalay**

In a bid to discover an emerging generation of talented badminton players in Mandalay region, the Social Affairs Minister’s Cup was held by the department of sports and physical education and Mandalay Badminton Club at Aung Myay Mingalar Stadium, Aung Myay Thar Zan Township, Mandalay, on Sunday. Some 200 players from Yadanapar University, Mandalay College, Mandalay Sport Science, Badminton clubs from Mandalay and Mogok competed in the competition.

Third prize winners in the doubles competition were awarded to Myo Htet Aung and Moe Hlaing Win, Nyen Pyae and Aung Hetin Lin, and second prize winners were Akar Cho and Ye Naing Aung. First prize winners were Moe Kyaw and Hein Sithu Toe and the awards were presented by Regional Social Affairs Minister Dr. Win Haling. — Tin Maung

**Berdych wins rain-delayed Shenzhen Open**

BEIJING — Tomas Berdych captured his 11th career ATP title, and his first this year, by beating Spain’s Guillermo Garcia-Lopez 6-3, 7-6 (7) in a rain-delayed Shenzhen Open final on Monday.

Berdych maintained his composure through another frustrating weather interruption to win in straight sets.

“The last three days were tough especially mentally to keep being very focused,” the top-seeded Czech said in a post-match interview. “I was the one who dealt with that. I’m proud of myself to make it happen because these conditions were not easy at all.”

The victory gave the 30-year-old Berdych his first ATP title since last year’s Stockholm Open. He has also reached three other finals this year, at the Qatar Open, the Rotterdam Open and the Monte Carlo Masters, but lost them all. He made a strong start against Garcia-Lopez, racing into a 5-2 lead before play was halted for 45 minutes due to a downpour.

When the players returned Berdych closed out the opening set but fell 3-1 behind in the second. He managed to recover and force a tiebreak but had to save a set point before sealing victory.

“It was another challenge to finally get the trophy,” said Berdych. “The tiebreak was really up and down but I think my experience was decisive.” — Reuters

**Jones plays down England talk, plays up record TV audience**

WARWICK — Japan coach Eddie Jones dismissed rumours Monday that he was being lined up as the next England coach as “just talk.”

“That’s 100 percent just talk,” he told Kyodo News. “Everyone is speculating. Anyone that holds a clipboard has a chance and I hold a clipboard. But that’s as far as it goes.”

Jones’ name has been mentioned by a number of people as a successor to Stuart Lancaster, should the incumbent England coach lose his job as a result of the hosts failing to make the knock-out stage of the Rugby World Cup. “If I was approached of course I would have a chat,” Jones said. “But that doesn’t mean I’m interested or want the job. But I am always interested to listen to an offer.”

Jones has already said he is leaving his current job as head coach of the Brave Blossoms after the World Cup and relocating to Cape Town to coach the Stormers Super Rugby franchise. The superb performance of the Brave Blossoms at the tournament has seen Jones’ reputation soar to new heights.

And the performances have been reflected in Japan where a world-record national audience tuned in to watch the Brave Blossoms defeat Samoa in Pool B on Saturday. Twenty-five million people watched the 26-5 victory in Milton Keynes, eclipsing the previous record of 20.7 million held by France, when national broadcaster TF1 televised the first semifinal of Rugby World Cup 2007 between France and England in Paris. — Kyodo News

**Junior tennis players limber up before Southeast Asian Tournament**

MYANMAR’s national team are undergoing intense training ahead of the Southeast Asia Junior Tennis Tournament, according to coach of Myanmar Tennis Federation U Min Min. Myanmar’s team will leave for Singapore on 26 October. The tournament will run from 27 October to 1 November.

The federation selected the following players to represent the country: Mg Min Min Thu, Mg Lin Khant Oo, Ma Su Myat Phyu Phyu, Ma Myat Pwint Phyu for the Under 12 tournament; Mg Ye Min Paing, Mg Paing Hein Ko, Ma Shun LoeWai, Ma Hsu Yat for the Under 14 tournament; Mg Phyo Thu Lwin, Mg Kaung Htet San, Ma HlaHtet Moe for the under 16 tournament. — Ko Moey

**Jones emerges as clear favourite for Liverpool job**

LONDON — Jurgen Klopp has emerged as the clear front runner for the Anfield hot seat, with Liverpool hoping to appoint the German as a replacement for sacked manager Brendan Rodgers by the end of the week, British media reported.

The former Borussia Dortmund coach is favourite to take over from the Northern Irishman, with ex-Chelsea boss Carlo Ancelotti also in the frame.

Klopp is understood to be open to the idea of a move, the reports said, adding that talks between Liverpool and his representatives were progressing well. The 48-year-old has been out of work since leaving Dortmund in the summer.

Klopp won two German Bundesliga titles at Dortmund and led the club to the finals of the Champions League in 2013, but lost the German Cup final to Wolfsburg in his final game in charge at the end of the 2014-15 season during which his side struggled in the domestic league, eventually finishing seventh.

Klopp is understood to have spoken to former Liverpool and Germany midfielder Dietmar Hamann about the club, the city and the fans, the BBC reported.

Former Germany midfielder Stefan Effenberg believes Klopp will be back coaching “very, very soon” and thinks he is “exactly to Anfield. ‘He gave me this answer a couple of weeks ago. He said, ‘I’m ready for a team that’s not on the highest level, to create something, to build something up’. This could be Liverpool, right?”, Effenberg, who has played 35 times for Germany, told the BBC. “Liverpool is one of the greatest atmospheres. It’s pretty much the same as Dortmund.

The fans stay with everything behind the club and this is what Jurgen Klopp likes and what he needs,” the BBC quoted Effenberg as saying at the ASPIRESPORT conference in Berlin. “So maybe, very soon, we’ll hear something from Jurgen Klopp, to make a decision, maybe, for Liverpool.” — Reuters

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**AFC U-19 Championship 2016 Results (6-10 May)**

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**Japan rugby fans celebrate their team’s second try as they watch Japan’s IRB Rugby World Cup 2015 Pool B match against Samoa in Milton Keynes, England, at a public viewing event in Tokyo, Japan 3 October, 2015.** — Photo: Reuters