



CACCI

Health & Education Newsletter

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Message from the Chairman



Dear CACCI members and friends,

As Chairman of the Asian Council on Health and Education (ACHE), I am pleased to present the 9th issue of the Newsletter of ACHE to all our colleagues in the health and education sectors.

This issue not only highlights the trends in the Asia-Pacific region, but also includes the latest news of the region and interesting reports on health and education. I hope that you will find the articles included in this Newsletter of great value.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continuing contribution to this Newsletter and wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

With best regards,

Dr. Seyed Hassan Tabatabaei Nejad
Chairman
Asian Council on Health and Education

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CACCI Organizes the 30th Conference and Celebrates 50th Anniversary in Taipei



(Left photo) H. E. Tsai Ing-Wen, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan), delivers her Special Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 30th CACCI Conference.

(Right photo) CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili emphasizes the importance of Asia in his Opening Statement.

The Confederation successfully held its 30th CACCI Conference in Taipei, Taiwan on November 23-25, 2016, with the participation of some 450 delegates composed largely of businessmen and chamber of commerce representatives from 22 Asia-Pacific countries, led by CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili from the Georgia.

Co-hosted by the Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association (CIECA) and the Chinese National Association of Industry and

Commerce (CNAIC), with CTBC Bank as major sponsor, this year's Conference focused on the theme "The Rise of Asia: Taking a Bigger Role in the Global Economy." It was designed to provide CACCI members and invited experts the venue to exchange views on measures that the business sector and governments in the region can undertake to take full advantage of the opportunities offered not just by markets in the Asia-Pacific region but also by countries in other parts of the

world.

The Opening Ceremony featured **H. E. Tsai Ing-Wen**, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) as Special Guest of Honor and Speaker. Invited as Special Guest during the Welcome Dinner on November 23 was **H. E. Mr. Lin Chuan**, Premier of the Republic of China (Taiwan). **Dr. Tain-Jy Chen**, Minister, National Development Council, Republic of China (Taiwan), was the speaker at the lunch hosted by CNAIC on November 24. **H. E. Mr. Javier Ching-shan Hou**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of China (Taiwan), was the Special Guest of Honor during the Gala Dinner on November 24.

The Taipei Conference also marked the **50th Anniversary of the Confederation**. Special activities were lined up to help commemorate this important milestone of the Confederation. One such activity was the CACCI Summit Meeting, which gathered together the presidents, chairmen and CEOs of all CACCI Primary Members primarily to: (a) review the accomplishments of the Confederation over the 50 years since its founding; (b) re-visit its vision

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(Left to right) CNAIC Chairman Mr. Por-Fong Lin, CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili, President Ms. Tsai Ing-Wen, ANA CEO Mr. Osamu Shinobe and CIECA Chairman Mr. C. Y. Wang pose for a group photo.

CACCI Organizes

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and mission as well as its goals and objectives in light of the current conditions and recent developments in the regional and global market environment; and (c) prepare a roadmap of its future direction.

As part of the commemoration of its 50th Anniversary, CACCI presented the Illustrious Distinguished Service Award to all members who had served as CACCI President. The Award was in recognition of their important contribution to the Confederation, their unwavering commitment to the CACCI objective of bringing businessmen in Asia together, and their continuing efforts to help promote regional cooperation and to further advance the interest of the region's business community.

The CACCI Council, which is the organization's governing body, elected the office bearers for the term 2017-2018. Mr. Jemal Inaishvili, Member of the Council of the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was re-elected CACCI President for a second term, and seven other members were elected as Vice Presidents.

CACCI announced the winners of the 7th Local Chamber Awards, the 6th Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur



CACCI presents the Illustrious Distinguished Service Award to all members who had served as CACCI President.

Award, the 1st Asia-Pacific Woman Entrepreneur Award, and the 2nd Hydropower and Clean Energy Excellence Award during the Gala Dinner of the Conference held on November 24, 2016. The winners received their awards from newly elected CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili and the chairmen of the respective Board of Judges of the Awards.

CACCI endorsed a policy paper entitled "Promoting Economic Empowerment of Women." In order to fight against slowing global



Foreign and local delegates network with each other during the coffee break of the 30th CACCI Conference.

economic growth, CACCI called on the business community to be proactive in improving productivity, and said that the economic empowerment of women is one key way through which this can be achieved. This increases participation in the workforce to support aging populations, generates innovation and better-decision making through diversity and provides incentives to continue learning and contributing to society.

CACCI signed a Partnership Agreement with the Sydney Business Chamber (SBC) and the ICC World Chambers Federation (ICC-WCF) covering their collaboration in the holding of the 31st CACCI Conference next year within the framework of the ICC WCF's 10th World Chambers Congress to be co-organized by SBC on September 19-21, 2017 in Sydney, Australia. ■



CACCI delegates listen to presentations made by Plenary Session Speakers.



Cambodian spirulina farm taps health and wellness market

With health and wellness big business in Asia-Pacific, we go behind the scenes at a Cambodian farm producing spirulina health supplements

By Ellie Dyer

Peering through the microscope at Global Superfoods, tiny spring-shaped strands lie illuminated on a bright white background. Each tightly wound spiral is a deep, clear forest green, indicating the good health of the farm's latest crop of *Arthrospira platensis*, a product better known as spirulina.

"I'm really happy with those," announces Global Superfoods co-founder Grant Catley, speaking from a compact white room on the site of the company's farm, set about 35 kilometres from the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh. "Like anything, you've got to look after something. If you look after them, they look after you."

As a former dairy farmer, it is a concept that Catley understands well. Back in his home country of New Zealand, he owned and managed a herd of 320 milking cows with his business

partner, and wife, Megan before making the move to the heat of Cambodia.

The couple, together with three shareholders, went on to launch Global Superfoods with the aim of cultivating high-quality spirulina – a nutritious blue-green alga known for its health properties and said to support cardiovascular function, strengthen the immune system and improve gastrointestinal and digestive health. Known as a 'superfood', the algae naturally occur in lakes in Myanmar, but the product is being commercially farmed across the world, including the Asean region.

With the Kingdom's climate providing excellent conditions for the water-bound crop, the enterprise is taking off. A tour of the farm reveals vast circular vats holding gallons of opaque dark-green liquid, all gently

swept by rotating mechanical arms.

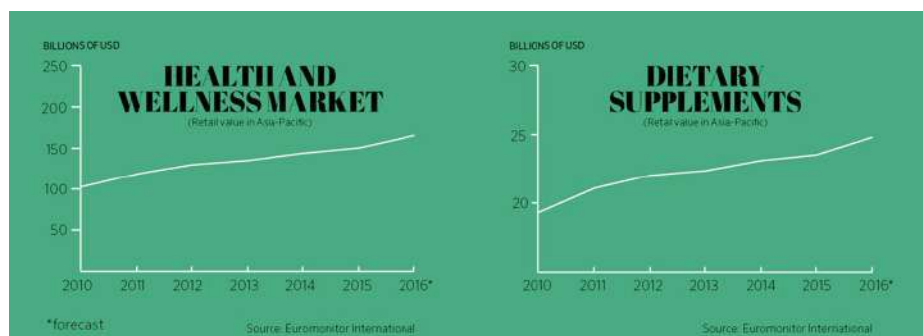
Every second day, the algae, which live in clean water pumped from an 80-metre-deep well, are harvested from the tanks. The algae-laden liquid is poured through a fine mesh to separate the spirulina. The resulting green slush is pressed to remove excess water and dried before being formed into health supplement pills and powders, or shaped into sprinkles that can be added to food or smoothies.

Despite the business only being about a year old, it has already exported to countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the UK, with products also stocked in leading Cambodian pharmacies. "It's an expanding market worldwide," says Catley.

For it's not just spirulina that is attracting attention. Statistics show that Asia-Pacific's multibillion-dollar health and wellness market is on the up. At the same time, leading players in the world's food and beverage sector have acknowledged a shift towards a more health-conscious consumer.

An article published on the Guardian website, which detailed Kellogg's removal of GM ingredients from Kashi Golean cereals and a Nestlé

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Cambodian

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USA announcement that it would halt the use of artificial colours in chocolates, pointed to comments made by Denise Morrison, the Campbell Soup Company president and CEO. Speaking in New York last year, she said: “We are... confronting profound shifts in consumers’ preferences and priorities with respect to food.”

The businesswoman went on to note an “explosion of interest in fresh foods, dramatically increased focus by consumers on the effects of food on their health and wellbeing and mounting demands for transparency from food companies about where and how their products are made, what ingredients are in them and how these ingredients are produced”.

In Asia-Pacific – a region where food safety scandals regularly reach the mainstream media, and organic stores and raw food cafés are popping up in increasingly affluent urban centres – reports indicate that local consumers are prepared to adjust their spending habits in order to invest in their health.

The 2015 Global Health and Wellness Report from insight agency Nielsen, which surveyed 30,000 consumers online in 60 countries, found that 93% of respondents in Asia-Pacific were willing to pay more for “foods with health attributes to some degree”. Sales of products classed under ‘health categories’ were said to have grown 15% in the region from 2012 to 2014, compared to a 5% boost for ‘indulgent



Spirulina is examined through a microscope at global superfoods. Photo by Vittorio Velasquez

categories’.

“Developing regions are particularly attractive markets for expansion opportunities given consumers’ purchase history and future buying intentions,” Susan Dunn, executive vice-president of global professional services at Nielsen, was quoted as saying in the report. “As purchasing power continues to grow in these countries, close attention to buying habits is necessary to stay aligned with their needs.”

Businesses operating in Asean are also taking note of changing demands. The Singapore arm of foodpanda – an online food delivery platform that recently hit headlines with its successful testing of deliveries by drone – is one adaptor.

“Within Singapore and across Southeast Asia, there is increased awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and being aware of what you eat. As such, we have seen a move towards healthier and more wholesome choices, which we expect to continue,” explains Emma Heap, managing director for foodpanda Singapore.

“Restaurant owners are also increasingly health-conscious and want to make sure that their food is sourced responsibly,” she adds, highlighting the company’s links with health-aware partners. “We have already responded to consumer demand for healthier options and faster delivery times, and we believe both trends will continue this year.”

Statistics also point to potential for further development. According to Euromonitor International, the retail value of the Asia-Pacific health and wellness sector – which includes organics, fortified produce and products tailored to food intolerances – has risen from \$149.1 billion in 2010 to \$219.5 billion in 2015 and is forecast to soar further in 2016 to an impressive \$241.9 billion. Although much smaller, the market for supplements, such as minerals, probiotics, ginseng and echinacea, is also growing steadily.

Chris Schmidt, senior consumer



Co-founder Grant Catley at the spirulina farm. Photo by Vittorio Velasquez

health analyst at Euromonitor International, highlighted their impact on Indonesia’s consumer health market in an opinion piece, stating that “recent growth has been fuelled by growing consumer interest in vitamins and dietary supplements (VDS), which are expected to account for 45% of all consumer health sales in 2016”. In Thailand, “VDS products dominate the overall consumer health market. In 2016, VDS is expected to account for 62% of industry sales.”

Back in Cambodia, the Catleys, who are operating the business on New Zealand business principles, are thinking big. The farm has been set up with expansion in mind. To the back of the site, set on a former beer garden complete with a lotus-filled moat, lies an empty plot that they plan to fill with eight additional 75,000-cubic-metre spirulina tanks.

Their hope is to establish further exports to markets in the southern hemisphere, Europe and the Middle East, as well as diversifying into products such as nutrition-rich spirulina crackers and jellies.

The message regularly comes back

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to the importance of care, consumer trust and social responsibility, alongside producing the highest-quality product possible for a market full of potential. “It’s definitely an opportunity,” adds Catley, surveying the algae tanks before him. “But, for me, I like a challenge in life.”

But the message regularly comes back to the importance of care, consumer trust and social responsibility, alongside producing the highest quality product as possible for a market full of potential. “It’s definitely an opportunity,” adds Catley, surveying the algae tanks before him. “But, for me, I like a challenge in life.”

Source: *Globe*, May 6, 2016



Spirulina in the form of sprinkles and powder. Photo by Vittorio Velasquez



Spirulina algae have a deep, forest green colouring. Photo by Vittorio Velasquez

Wary of Outside Influence, India Limits Foreign Involvement in Health System

By Ellen Barry and Suhasini Raj

Expressing concern about foreign influence on its policies, India is turning away from a decades-old practice of filling gaps within its health system with consultants hired by foreign aid agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

Under the new rules, consultants who have worked within India’s health system for foreign aid agencies for more than three years, a total of around 100 people, will be terminated, said Manoj Jhalani, joint secretary in the Ministry of Health. The roughly 100 who remain will need to be approved by a new screening committee.

Fifty employees of the National AIDS Control Organization were given notice this month, though supervisors said they hoped to retain them as government employees.

Experts warned that if vacancies went unfilled, major health initiatives, like those aimed at fighting the spread of AIDS and tuberculosis, could suffer serious setbacks.

“Every one of these jobs is a necessary one,” said Dr. Bobby John, a specialist in infectious disease and maternal health who previously worked for Global Health Advocates and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “These people are doing something the country needs.”

He said, “If this is a transition to hiring them on government of India rolls, brilliant.”

Beginning in the early 1990s, when its health system was chronically short of funds, India began to employ specialists provided by the World Health Organization, the United States Agency for International Development, Britain’s Department for International Development and the Gates Foundation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government, however, has been wary of nongovernmental organizations, in some cases charging them with acting against the national interest. Last year, the government suspended the registration for Greenpeace and placed

the Ford Foundation on a national security watch list for nearly a year, barring it from making grants in India without specific permission.

Similar concerns have arisen around the work of foreign-funded consultants in the health system. An article last year in *The Times of India* said the practice “raised serious issues of conflict of interest, security and sovereignty.” Dr. Sita Naik, a former official of the Medical Council of India, said the government “has been drawing criticism for some time now that they have been supporting foreign NGOs.”

Dr. C.V. Dharma Rao, a top official at the National AIDS Control Organization, whose headquarters is almost entirely staffed by consultants, said that for some workers the practice had led to split loyalties.

“When yesterday all these consultants met, they were saying ‘Sir, we have lost loyalties with our donor partners, because we kept on arguing

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Wary of

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for the government of India,'” he said.

But others said the consultants rarely waded into delicate policy matters.

Keshav Desiraju, who served as health secretary under the previous, Congress-led government, said they “were doing a lot of detailed work that nobody else had the time to do,” assisting senior bureaucrats who “simply had no time to handle the volume of paperwork.”

“To say policy decisions are being influenced is completely far-fetched,” he said. “Decisions are made at a more senior level.”

The policy change was first reported by Reuters.

A government notice released in December outlined stringent new regulations for foreign-hired consultants. They will be required to sign a confidentiality clause with the Indian government, “will report only

to the ministry” and will be barred from sharing any data or information with the foreign agency without specific approval from top Indian bureaucrats. Any foreign-hired consultant must wait for one year before taking another, similar job. And foreign citizens must undergo a security clearance.

Mr. Jhalani, of the Ministry of Health, said the aim of the order was to ensure that “no consultant should be permanently replacing a government employee.” Officials from Unicef and the World Health Organization said it was too early to comment on the decision.

A statement from the Gates Foundation offered India’s polio eradication as an example of successful



A doctor looked at an X-ray of a patient with tuberculosis at a hospital in Bhopal, India, last month. Credit Sanjeev Gupta/European Pressphoto Agency

collaboration between the Indian government, NGOs and the private sector.

“We believe that our role is to provide catalytic support in areas that are aligned with the priorities of the Government of India,” the statement said.

Source: New York Times, April 5, 2016 ■

It's Not Cancer: Doctors Reclassify a Thyroid Tumor

By Gina Kolata

An international panel of doctors has decided that a type of tumor that was classified as a cancer is not a cancer at all.

As a result, they have officially downgraded the condition, and thousands of patients will be spared removal of their thyroid, treatment with radioactive iodine and regular checkups for the rest of their lives, all to protect against a tumor that was never a threat.

Their conclusion, and the data that led to it, was reported on April 14, 2016 in the journal JAMA Oncology. The change is expected to affect about 10,000 of the nearly 65,000 thyroid cancer patients a year in the United States. It may also offer grist to those who have been arguing for the reclassification of some other forms of cancer, including certain lesions in the

breast and prostate.

The reclassified tumor is a small lump in the thyroid that is completely surrounded by a capsule of fibrous tissue. Its nucleus looks like a cancer but the cells have not broken out of their capsule, and surgery to remove the entire thyroid followed by treatment with radioactive iodine is unnecessary and harmful, the panel said. They have now renamed the tumor. Instead of calling it “encapsulated follicular variant of papillary thyroid carcinoma,” they now call it “noninvasive follicular thyroid neoplasm with papillary-like nuclear features,” or NIFTP. The word “carcinoma” is gone.

Many cancer experts said the reclassification was long overdue. For years there have been calls to downgrade small lesions in the breast,

lung and prostate, among others, and to eliminate the term “cancer” from their name. But other than the renaming of an early stage urinary tract tumor in 1998, and early stage ovarian and cervical lesions more than two decades ago, no group other than the thyroid specialists has yet taken the plunge.

In fact, said Dr. Otis Brawley, chief medical officer at the American Cancer Society, the name changes that occurred went in the opposite direction, scientific evidence to the contrary. Premalignant tiny lumps in the breast became known as stage zero cancer. Small and early-stage prostate lesions were called cancerous tumors. Meanwhile, imaging with ultrasound, M.R.I.’s and C.T. scans find more and more of these tiny “cancers,” especially thyroid nodules.

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It's not cancer

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"If it's not a cancer, let's not call it a cancer," said Dr. John C. Morris, president-elect of the American Thyroid Association and a professor of medicine at the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Morris was not a member of the renaming panel.

Dr. Barnett S. Kramer, director of the division of cancer prevention at the National Cancer Institute, said, "There's a growing concern that many of the terms we use don't match our understanding of the biology of cancer." Calling lesions cancer when they are not leads to unnecessary and harmful treatment, he said.

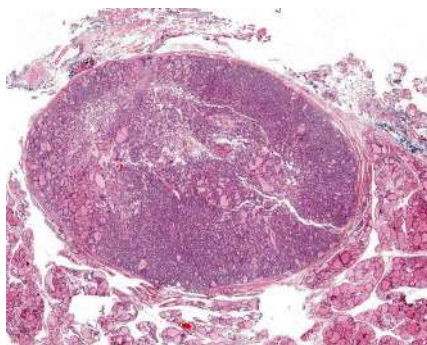
At major medical centers, many patients with encapsulated thyroid tumors are already being treated less aggressively. But, thyroid experts say, that is not the norm in the rest of the country and the rest of the world.

The word cancer is a problem, said Dr. Bryan R. Haugen, a thyroid cancer specialist at the University of Colorado, Denver, who was also not a member of the renaming panel.

"If you keep cancer in there a lot of people are going to be aggressive," he said.

The reclassification drive began two years ago when Dr. Yuri E. Nikiforov, vice chairman of the pathology department at the University of Pittsburgh, was asked his opinion about a small thyroid tumor in a 19-year-old woman. It was completely encased in a capsule and the lobe of her thyroid containing it had been removed to establish a diagnosis.

Over the last decade, Dr. Nikiforov had watched as pathologists began classifying noninvasive tumors as cancers and attributed the change to rare cases in which patients had a tumor that had broken out of its capsule, did not receive aggressive treatment and died of thyroid cancer. Worried doctors began treating all tumors composed of cells with nuclei that looked like cancer nuclei as if they were cancers. But this young woman's story drove Dr. Nikiforov over the edge.



A noninvasive follicular thyroid neoplasm with papillary-like nuclear features, or Niftp, a type of tumor that was previously considered a kind of cancer, but has been downgraded by a panel of doctors. Credit Yuri Nikiforov

"I told the surgeon, who was a good friend, 'This is a very low grade tumor. You do not have to do anything else.' " But the surgeon replied that according to practice guidelines, she had to remove the woman's entire thyroid gland and treat her with radioactive iodine. And the woman had to have regular checkups for the rest of her life.

"I said, 'That's enough. Someone has to take responsibility and stop this madness,'" Dr. Nikiforov said.

He brought together the international panel of experts — 24 renowned pathologists, two endocrinologists, a thyroid surgeon, a psychiatrist who knew the impact a cancer diagnosis could have, and a patient. The group collected a couple of hundred cases from multiple centers throughout the world — patients who had tumors that were contained within fibrous capsules and those that had broken out. All agreed that by the current criteria every one of those tumors would be classified as a cancer. And all of the patients had been followed for at least 10 years. The patients with the encapsulated tumors had not been treated after their tumors were removed.

None of the patients whose tumors stayed within their capsules had any evidence of cancer after 10 years. But some of the patients whose tumors had broken out of their capsules had complications, including death, from

thyroid cancer despite treatment.

"This study said it is not the presence of nuclear features but the presence of invasion that can make the difference between cancer and noncancer," Dr. Nikiforov said. Patients whose tumors are confined within their capsules "have an excellent prognosis," he said. "They do not need a thyroidectomy. They do not need radiotherapy. They do not need to be followed up every six months."

But if those tumors are not cancers, what should they be called?

"Ten different names were submitted and the voting went on, back and forth," said one member of the panel, Dr. Gregory W. Randolph, director of the thyroid and parathyroid surgical clinic at Harvard's Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. They finally settled on NIFTP, in part because its acronym, which he pronounced "Nift-P," was catchy, he said. The new small nodules in the name, the reclassification, he added, is "just awesome," because it explicitly defines those thyroid as nonmalignant.

In an editorial he and his colleagues submitted to the journal *Thyroid*, they report that eight leading professional societies from around the world signed on to the declassification and to the new name. They write in the editorial that doctors may be violating the principle of "first, do no harm" in treating patients with these tumors as though they have invasive cancer.

Dr. Nikiforov says he owes it to patients with reclassified tumors to tell them they never had cancer after all. At the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, he and others are going to start reviewing medical records and pathology reports to identify previous patients and contact them. He estimates there have been about 50 to 100 each year at the medical center. They no longer have to go back for checkups. They lose the shadow of cancer that the diagnosis hung over their lives.

Informing these patients, Dr. Nikiforov said, "is a moral obligation of doctors."

Source: *New York Times*, April 14, 2016 ■

High-mortality infectious diseases require global focus

Global health issues such as the implementation of universal health coverage and early detection of high-mortality infectious disease outbreaks should be placed on political agendas as global threats, a forum of global health organization officials recently reaffirmed.

Japan should take the initiative in discussing the issues on a global stage, and the upcoming G-7 Ise-Shima summit, scheduled for May in Mie Prefecture, presents an ideal opportunity to make such proposals, the officials said at the Worldwide Support for Development (WSD) Tokyo Summit on Global Health and International Policies in Tokyo on March 18, 2016.

“The world isn’t prepared for a major outbreak of infectious diseases,” Director of Global Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Peter Piot, who discovered the Ebola virus in 1976, told the attendees of the forum in a prerecorded video message.

Worldwide Support for Development, a Japanese non-profit founded and chaired by Haruhisa Handa, organized the forum, which was also attended by Masahiko Komura, a former foreign affairs minister. Referring to the recent epidemic of the Zika virus in Brazil, Komura said, “The international society is now called on to unite to tackle infectious diseases.”

As of March 11, Japan has confirmed two patients in the country with Zika symptoms, according to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare.

Until 2014, the Ebola virus has been contained to Central Africa, and patients suffering symptoms had been found only in limited areas throughout the region. But the virus spread last year to areas in Western Africa, hitting countries that were recovering from economies already damaged by decades-long civil wars, Piot explained. As global economies are intertwined with each other, and also

as advanced public transportation makes it easier for people to travel across borders, “nothing remains local these days,” he said.

Several global pharmaceutical firms such as Johnson & Johnson, Merck and GSK are currently developing vaccines for infectious and tropical diseases. Over the last 15 years, collaboration between those pharmaceutical companies, academic researchers and private or public organizations has led to a significant reduction in the diagnosis of such diseases, said Simon Croft, a professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Despite such efforts, summit participants agreed that there is more to be done.

The world is still suffering from the lack of effective vaccines for many infectious diseases because such products “are not profitable,” explained B.T. Slingsby, the CEO of the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund, a Japan-based organization to promote global partnership for the development of drugs for emerging countries.

Infectious disease vaccines are not suitable for large-lot production, because contagious diseases are not as common as those such as cancer and diabetes. Profits of vaccine sales sometimes are not sufficient to offset the huge development costs of the medicine.

The global health risks facing



World Support for Development Chairman Haruhisa Handa addresses the audience at the Tokyo Summit on Global Health and International Policies on March 18, 2016. | WSD



Panelists pose on stage after their discussions. WSD

the world include not only contagious diseases, but also chronic diseases seen in aged societies, and there is no doubt that Asian countries, except Japan, will more rapidly become aged societies in coming years. The existing health care systems in many Asian countries are not sufficient to cover all future patients, some officials said.

“The current health care systems (of those Asian nations) have limitations and it is indispensable to construct stronger systems,” insisted Keizo Takemi, chairman of the Special Mission Committee on Global Health Strategy of Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

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High-mortality

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As Japan introduced a nationwide health care system in 1961 to cover all Japanese citizens, the country is able to share its know-how in establishing and operating such a system with other Asian countries, Takemi said.

Last, but not least, Handa proposed the idea of forming a public

organization in Japan specializing in infectious diseases, just like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the U.S.

Although he admitted significant roles played by World Health Organization in conducting research and formulating guidelines, Handa criticized the U.N. health body for its slow response to the outbreak of the

Ebola virus and its spread over 2014 and 2015. The upcoming G-7 summit is a good opportunity for Japan to make a proposal to form a CDC-like national medical organization in each of the attending nations, as “health risks are now concerns of national security.”

Source: Japan Times, March 30, 2016 ■

Malnutrition becoming ‘new normal’ amid obesity boom: study

AFP

Malnutrition is becoming the “new normal” as rising rates of obesity across the world coincide with persistent under-nutrition in many poorer countries, according to a major study released on June 14, 2016.

The Global Nutrition Report says the number of people who are obese or overweight is rising almost everywhere, fuelling an increase in diabetes and other diseases.

Malnutrition covers a range of problems — from deficiencies in important vitamins and minerals for the undernourished to excessive levels of sugar, salt, fat or cholesterol in the blood for the obese.

At least 57 of the 129 countries studied were experiencing serious levels of both under-nutrition and adult obesity, putting huge pressure on health services, said the study.



DiABETES



“We now live in a world where being malnourished is the new normal,” said Lawrence Haddad, senior research fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute and co-author of the report.

“It is a world that we must all claim as totally unacceptable.”

The study found some progress was being made, with the number of stunted children under five declining on every continent except Africa and Oceania.

Stunted children grow up to be weaker than their well-nourished counterparts, with their brains and immune systems compromised.

But the report’s authors said there had been too little progress in the fight against all forms of malnutrition.

Almost every country studied was falling behind in reducing levels of diabetes and of anemia in women, for example.

One in 12 people globally now has diabetes and nearly two billion people are obese or overweight, according to the authors, who called for more funding for government initiatives on

nutrition.

Their analysis found a US\$70 billion global funding shortfall to meet 2025 milestones to tackle stunting, severe acute malnutrition and anemia.

The report highlighted the cost of malnutrition, which it said was “the number one driver of the global burden of disease.”

Africa and Asia lose 11 percent of gross domestic product every year due to malnutrition, it said.

Haddad said the key to success was political commitment.

“Where leaders in government, civil society, academia and business are committed — and willing to be held accountable — anything is possible,” he said.

“Despite the challenges, malnutrition is not inevitable — ultimately, it is a political choice.”

The Global Nutrition Report is an annual assessment of countries’ progress in meeting global nutrition targets established by the World Health Assembly — the world’s highest health policy body — in 2013.

These include a 40 percent reduction in the number of children under five who are stunted; a 50 percent reduction of anemia in women of reproductive age; and a halt in the rise in the number of adults who are overweight, obese or suffering from type two diabetes.

Source: China Post, June 15, 2016 ■



Taiwan tipped as a leader in medical aesthetic industry by dermatology firm Galderma

The China Post news staff

Galderma, a global dermatology company, on June 20, 2016 named Taiwan as a leader in aesthetic treatment expertise in the Asia-Pacific region.

“Taiwan has demonstrated very high medical standards and I see the same in medical aesthetics,” said Benoit Legodec, Galderma regional director of Greater China.

In an interview in Taipei, Legodec said many Taiwan medical professionals in the medical aesthetic industry were recognized in the Asia-Pacific region for their expertise, protocols and techniques.

“The progress in this market is maybe ahead of others in the region, together with Korea,” he said. “Taiwan has medical aesthetic expertise that is valuable of course here but also beyond.”

What’s Trending in Asia’s Beauty Market

Galderma is a Lausanne-headquartered firm best known for its skin health products including Cetaphil and Differin. After the acquisition of Q-Med, which developed the first Hyaluronic Acid dermal filler, Galderma completed a skin health portfolio.

It has a line of aesthetic and corrective products including dermal fillers, which have made rapid inroads particularly in Asia.

“We see a market that is growing fast,” Legodec said.

“What I see as well is that a younger group of people are being treated because (the demand in Asia) is not only for anti-aging. It’s also for contouring. In the west and Europe, it is more for anti-aging but here we have a group of users in the population that is bigger.”

In Taiwan, Hong Kong and mainland China, beauty has been



Galderma researcher Per Winl f holds blocks of treated hyaluronic acid gel in Taipei on Monday, June 20. (Photo Courtesy of Galderma)

recession-proof, posting double-digit annual growth that Galderma said should continue in the years ahead.

Legodec said the Greater China market was sophisticated, with a healthy demand for increasingly differentiated products and new technologies.

“We look at this market with — I would say — confidence. We invest a lot in innovation and we commit to bringing new products to the market. I think the conditions are met for this market to continue to evolve,” he said.

An Expanding Portfolio

Galderma began in 1961 as a small business in Dallas, Texas, and became a household name with products designed to treat skin conditions.

It is now present in 100 countries, with an extensive product portfolio that includes a nail lacquer that treats fungal infections; an oral therapy for rosacea; a scalp treatment for hair loss; and a range of aesthetic brands.

“We are a company dedicated to skin health,” Legodec said. “We focus on very different therapeutic areas. We do atopic dermatitis, redness, itchy skin ... moisturizing, cleansing the skin.”

Restylane in Focus: How to Make Dermal Filler

Legodec was in Taipei to mark the 20th year of Restylane — products for “miniature” non-surgical facelifts that have seen brisk demand in East Asia.

“We are celebrating 28 million treatments, many of them done in this part of the world,” Legodec said.

Restylane is an injectable gel made by treating hyaluronic acid (HA) in a process called Non-Animal Stabilized HA (NASHA), which researchers at Galderma developed in the 1990s.

“What we do is we take hyaluronic acid and we cross-link it, as we say: We stabilize it to make it last longer in the tissue,” said Per Winl f, one of the founding lab scientists behind the NASHA process.

Cross-linking is required because HA in its natural state tends to degrade very quickly after it is injected below the skin. Once stabilized, HA gel can last many months and up to a year.

Winl f said that Galderma’s stabilizing process was distinctive in that it preserved many of the properties of hyaluronic acid in its natural state.

“When we cross-link it, we do it a very gentle way, so we keep it very, very similar to natural HA. There is only a 1-percent difference. With other technologies there is between 5 and 10 percent difference from natural HA,” he said.

The result is a gel that is more biocompatible, meaning there is less risk of the body rejecting it. It is also a stronger, firmer gel with better lifting capacity, Winl f said.

“You can do things with NASHA

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Taiwan tipped

... Continued from page 11

technology and (get results that) cannot be achieved with other products because of the natural gel properties,” he said.

Today the Restylane line includes dermal fillers, which are used to lift wrinkles and give volume, and a popular injection called Skinboosters that does give a light lift but mostly behaves as a deep moisturizer.

“Skinboosters is more like skin rejuvenation,” Winl f said.

Made of 98 percent water and 2 percent HA gel, the product is injected beneath the skin to create a “reservoir of humidity” and to stimulate the skin to repair itself, he said.

Award-winning Syringe

To mark the 20th year of Restylane, Galderma last week launched its Red Dot Award-winning syringe for the Taiwan market.

The Restylane Skinboosters SmartClick™ syringe debuted at the Aesthetic & Anti-aging Medicine World Congress in Monaco in April 2014 and will be available in Taiwan from this year.

It’s a small injection device with an ergonomic finger grip and thumb rest, as well as a tamper-proof seal to ensure that no syringe is used more than once.

Its hero feature is a “smartclick™” system that emits a distinctive sound for every 10 microliters of gel that the physician administers.

The feature, which can be turned on and off, is designed to give doctors better control over the volume of Skinboosters micro-injections and to improve safe use.

“It is very difficult for a doctor to feel an injection of 10 microliters. Even if you look (at the syringe), you can’t really see (because the gel) is not moving very much,” Winl f said.

Galderma said it would continue research and development in skincare and beauty products, and to continue to invest in education and clinical practice



Regional Director of Galderma Greater China Benoit Legodec, left, stands with Galderma researcher Per Winl f at a press event in Taipei on June 20. (Photo Courtesy of Galderma)

sharing in markets including Greater China.

“It is important that we as an industry leader continue to share and build these platforms with experts, to share our knowledge and contribute to



Regional Director of Galderma Greater China Benoit Legodec attends a press conference in Taipei on June 20. (Photo Courtesy of Galderma)

the body of knowledge,” Legodec said.

Source: China Post, June 28, 2016 ■



CRISIS IN HEALTH CARE

Nursing care workers hard to find but in demand in aging Japan

By Mizuho Aoki

As the nation's population rapidly grays, ensuring there are enough nursing care workers to meet growing demand has become a pressing issue.

In 2025, 1 in 5 people will be aged over 75, and 1 in 5 seniors aged over 65 will have dementia, according to Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry estimates.

Given the urgency of the situation, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's administration released an action plan earlier this month outlining measures to secure enough nursing care workers for Japan.

Here are questions and answers about the current nursing care industry and the worker shortage:

Is the number of nursing care workers on the decline?

No. It has actually tripled to 1.71 million in 2013 from 550,000 in 2000, according to welfare ministry statistics.

The increase, however, has failed to keep pace with the rapidly growing demand, resulting in a nursing care

industry with a chronic shortage of manpower.

The ratio of job openings to job-seekers in care services stood at 2.69 in April, while it was 1.12 for all industries, according to the ministry. The ratio means there were 269 positions available for every 100 job-seekers.

Considering Japan's declining workforce, the labor shortage in the industry is expected to worsen over time.

According to the ministry's estimate, Japan will need 2.53 million care workers in fiscal 2025, but the number will fall short of demand by 377,000.

Why is there a shortage of care workers?

The job is generally low-paying and physically demanding.

A government survey released last year said the average monthly wage of full-time care workers was around ¥220,000, roughly ¥110,000 lower than the all-industry average.

A care worker job can be physically and mentally tough. Such workers have to provide physical support to the elderly and be on alert throughout their working hours, especially when looking after senile dementia patients.

Care workers also cover overnight shifts about four to six times a month, when there are even fewer workers on hand, said Shinichi Nakatani, a care worker at Yushima no Sato, an intensive nursing home for the elderly in Tokyo's Bunkyo Ward.

"Overnight shifts are nerve-



A nursing care worker helps a senior eat at a nursing care facility in Tokyo in March. Japan's care-worker shortage is becoming increasingly serious. | KYODO

wracking because you basically have to look after about 14 to 25 people all by yourself," Nakatani said. "You never know what trouble or emergencies will occur during those hours. It's psychologically draining."

According to the welfare ministry, care workers who applied for worker compensation due to mental illness more than doubled in five years to 140 in fiscal 2014 from 66 in fiscal 2009, marking the largest increase among industrial sectors.

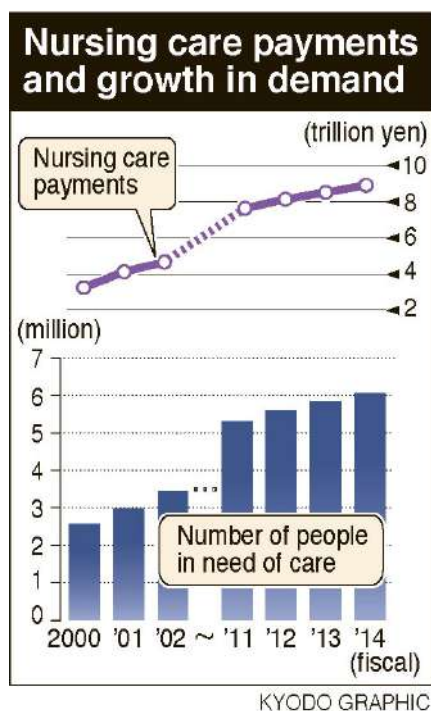
If demand is growing, why do wages remain low?

The government reduced the nursing care benefits — the subsidies for services provided by care facilities — because the ballooning costs were taking a toll on national finances.

The welfare ministry announced earlier this month that the cost of nursing care in fiscal 2014 more than doubled from ¥3.6 trillion in 2000 to a record ¥8.9 trillion. The rise reflected the increase in those receiving nursing care services.

The subsidies, coming from tax revenue and nursing care insurance

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Nursing care

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premiums, cover 90 percent of the payments while those in need of such services pay the remaining 10 percent.

The government reviews the benefit rates once every three years. In the latest review, which took effect in April last year, the government lowered its overall payments by 2.27 percent while raising the basic salary for care workers by 1.65 percent — an average monthly hike of ¥12,000 per worker.

After the benefits were cut, 57.6 percent of nursing care companies said their earnings fell and over 40 percent were in the red, according to a survey conducted in October by the Japan Finance Corp. Research Institute.

Experts said such subsidy cuts will force care facilities to potentially cut wages, possibly by reducing overtime pay or paring bonuses.

How does the government plan to turn the situation around?

The government seeks to add 250,000 more nursing care workers to the system by improving their working conditions and increasing their average monthly pay by ¥10,000 from fiscal 2017. But the state has not made clear how it will finance this.

The government also plans to create new nursing care facilities to accommodate 500,000 more users by the beginning of 2020. This, however, has been questioned by industry experts who argue that in densely populated urban areas, the lack of workers is more acute than the shortage of facilities.

The increasing difficulty in finding enough workers has led more facilities to rely on temporary staff dispatched from agencies, and some have reduced services.

Are there other remedial measures

in the pipeline?

To lessen the burden on staff, some nursing care facilities are starting to use robotics, including wearable units for elderly people and care workers.

The government is also eyeing an increase in non-Japanese nursing care workers by creating a new resident status category for those who graduated from schools in Japan and passed the national care worker license exam.

Japan has also accepted candidates from Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam under economic partnership agreements.

Under the EPA program, people who passed the national exam to qualify as nurses and caregivers can continue working in Japan. By the end of fiscal 2015, Japan had accepted 2,069, out of which 317 passed the exam.

Source: Japan Times, June 27, 2016 ■

Obesity Is Linked to at Least 13 Types of Cancer

By Nicholas Bakalar

A review of more than a thousand studies has found solid evidence that being overweight or obese increases the risk for at least 13 types of cancer. The study was conducted by a working group of the International Agency for Research on Cancer, part of the World Health Organization.

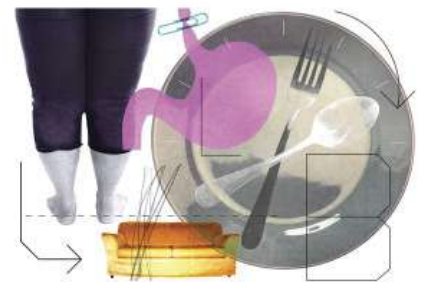
Strong evidence was already available to link five cancers to being overweight or obese: adenocarcinoma of the esophagus; colorectal cancer; breast cancer in postmenopausal

women; and uterine and kidney cancers.

This new review, published in The New England Journal of Medicine, links an additional eight cancers to excess fat: gastric cardia, a cancer of the part of the stomach closest to the esophagus; liver cancer; gallbladder cancer; pancreatic cancer; thyroid cancer; ovarian cancer; meningioma, a usually benign type of brain tumor; and multiple myeloma, a blood cancer.

According to the chairman of the working group, Dr. Graham Colditz, a professor of medicine and surgery at Washington University in St. Louis, these 13 cancers together account for 42 percent of all new cancer diagnoses.

“Only smoking comes close” as an environmental factor affecting cancer risk, Dr. Colditz said. “And that’s an important message for nonsmokers.



Obesity now goes to the top of the list of things to focus on.”

Obesity is associated with significant metabolic and hormone abnormalities, and with chronic inflammation, factors that may help explain its link to cancer.

Elizabeth A. Platz, a professor of epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and a widely published cancer researcher

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Obesity

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who was not involved in the report, said that this was a “high-caliber working group of respected epidemiologists and laboratory researchers,” and that women in particular should take note of the results.

“The strongest association they found,” she said, “is with uterine cancer. And postmenopausal breast cancer is also connected to obesity, especially estrogen receptor positive cancer. These are important messages that women need to hear.”

Most of the studies the researchers looked at were observational so can’t prove cause and effect, though researchers considered evidence sufficient if an association could not be explained by chance, bias or other confounding factors. And most compared any increases in risk to that

of an adult of normal weight having a body mass index of 18.5 to 24.9.

For some cancers, the group found that the fatter the person, the greater the risk. In endometrial cancer, for example, compared with a woman of normal weight, one with a B.M.I. of 25 to 29.9 was at a 50 percent higher relative risk. But her risk more than doubled at B.M.I.s between 30 and 34.9 and more than quadrupled at B.M.I.s of 35 to 39.9. A woman with a B.M.I. of 40 or more was at seven times the risk for endometrial cancer as a woman of normal weight.

The group found only limited evidence that obesity could be linked to three additional types of cancer: male breast cancer; prostate cancer; and diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, the most common form of non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma.

They found no adequate evidence to link obesity with squamous-cell



esophageal cancer, gastric noncardia cancer, cancer of the biliary tract, lung cancer, cutaneous melanoma, testicular cancer, urinary tract cancer, or glioma of the brain or spinal cord.

Does losing weight reduce the risk? Although animal studies suggest that it does, Dr. Colditz said, “it’s hard to study in humans because so few people lose weight and keep it off. But the priority of avoiding weight gain is the first thing we need to address.”

Source: *New York Times*, August 24, 2016

Growing Older, Getting Happier

By Nicholas Bakalar

Older people tend to be happier than younger people, and their happiness increases with age, a study in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry* reports.

Researchers contacted 1,546 people ages 21 to 99 via random telephone calls and found that older age was, not surprisingly, tied to declines in physical and cognitive function. But it was also associated with higher levels

of overall satisfaction, happiness and well-being, and lower levels of anxiety, depression and stress. The older the person, the study found, the better his or her mental health tended to be.

The researchers used well-validated scales to assess mental health, although the study relied on self-reports and was a snapshot in time that did not follow an individual through a lifetime. Other studies have found similar results linking advancing age and higher levels of happiness.

The reasons for the effect remain unclear, but the senior author, Dr. Dilip V. Jeste, a professor of psychiatry at the University of California, San Diego, had some suggestions.

“Brain studies show that the amygdala in older people responds less to stressful or negative images than in a younger person,” he said. “We become wise. Peer pressure loses its sting.



Better decision-making, more control of emotions, doing things that are not just for yourself, knowing oneself better, being more studious and yet more decisive.

“This is good news for young people, too,” he added. “You have something to look forward to.”

Source: *New York Times*, August 24, 2016



Expensive new drugs put strain on Japan's health system

By Philip Brasor and Masako Tsubuku

The big news right now in the medical world is the development of anti-cancer drugs that use the body's natural immune system to fight off tumors. In Japan, the most famous of these drugs is probably Opdivo, created by the relatively minor Ono Pharmaceutical Co. in collaboration with Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.

Last summer, Opdivo was approved for treating a certain type of lung cancer by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, which means national health insurance will pay for treatments. That's very important, since the drug costs a staggering ¥1.33 million per dose.

Under normal conditions of care for a lung cancer patient weighing 60 kilograms, the cost of using Opdivo would come to ¥2.55 million a month. However, an insured individual would only pay about ¥650,000 a year thanks to a special exception for "high-priced medicines" that reduces a patient's payment depending on their income. And if the patient is over 70 years old, the amount comes down even further, since the elderly only have to pay 10 percent of their medical costs out of pocket to begin with, rather than the 30 percent that most people pay through national health insurance.

Consequently, Opdivo, which was originally developed to treat skin cancer, is giving hope to lung cancer patients in Japan, though it may be too soon to celebrate it as the miracle drug some media are calling it.

A recent report on NHK's in-depth news program "Close-up Gendai" outlined the problems with Opdivo and, by extension, other expensive new drugs that are being put on the market. After telling the story of one 74-year-old lung cancer sufferer who saw no positive results from chemotherapy but whose tumors shrank after beginning treatment with Opdivo last December, the program presented a physician,



Soaring cost of care: Expensive drugs like Opdivo, a lung cancer treatment that costs a whopping ¥ 1.33 million a dose, are asking difficult questions of Japan's health insurance system.

Dr. Hideo Kunito of the Red Cross Hospital, who warned that widespread use of such expensive drugs will "destroy Japan's medical system."

What most media are not pointing out is that Opdivo so far has only proven "effective" for 20-30 percent of the patients who have taken it. Right now, drugs cost the Japanese government ¥8.5 trillion a year, and Kunito estimates that if 50,000 people — the number of lung cancer patients for whom Opdivo would be used — went on the new drug, it would add another ¥1.75 trillion, thus bankrupting not only the health insurance system but the country with it. And that, he says, is the minimum estimate. Some patients have reported side effects that require supplemental treatment, which means the bill related to just this one drug could increase in other indirect ways.

The main problem is that doctors are still learning how to use the drug,

and at present the dosages are mostly guesswork. Sometimes the tumor shrinks and sometimes it gets bigger, which means doctors may increase dosages. But since the drug is only effective 30 percent of the time at most, it makes it even more difficult to determine how much to administer.

On July 22 the health ministry warned doctors who prescribe Opdivo that when used with other anti-cancer drugs, the side effects can be particularly deadly. Obviously, there is still a lot more research to be done, and in the meantime, as Kunito points out, more of these types of very expensive drugs will be entering the market, and people who suffer from the ailments they treat will demand them from their doctors.

Kunito recommends that use of Opdivo be limited in accordance with age. At one point in the program he said that people "after the age of 75 should acknowledge that their life is essentially complete," a statement that will surely meet with a great deal of controversy. His point is that the government should not have to spend "millions of yen" to extend a life by only a year at most. Japanese over 65 make up 25 percent of those with health insurance, and they account for 60 percent of all medical costs. Drugs themselves are 20 percent of all medical expenditures, or ¥40 trillion in 2015, a 9 percent increase over 2014.

Other possible solutions to the cost-of-care problem will be equally controversial: revoke or reduce the special exclusion for expensive drugs, raise taxes and/or insurance premiums to address rising drug expenses or get pharmaceutical companies to push down the price. As it stands, the prices of all prescription drugs in Japan are set by the health ministry in accordance with drug company data.

What most consumers want

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Expensive new drugs

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to know is: Why are these drugs so expensive? The main reason is the cost of research. For every successful drug that makes it to market, 20,000 do not. Most of the expense goes into animal and human testing. An increasing portion of new drugs today are developed using biotechnology, meaning a living organism is involved in their manufacture. This adds considerably to the cost when compared to conventional factory-made pharmaceuticals.

As with many things in our world, the main culprit is the market. Drug companies naturally look for treatments that are in demand, which is why so many companies make medications to treat high blood pressure and diabetes, conditions that more and

more people are developing. Likewise, cancer is a huge money maker, even if an increasing number of doctors are questioning the widespread use of chemotherapy, since they believe the treatment is often worse than the disease. But these drugs are in high demand, so pharmaceutical companies work hard to develop them.

Rarer cancers and other diseases are not addressed as much, so when drugs are developed for them, they can be very expensive. That's why the health ministry doesn't set the price too low. If it did, Japanese companies might stop developing drugs for certain conditions because there would be no incentive. Opdivo's price is expected to come down in the future, since it was developed for melanoma, which relatively few people suffer from in Japan. There are many more lung cancer patients.

On July 27, the ministry said it would draw up new guidelines for expensive drugs aimed at making their use by doctors and hospitals more cost-effective and "mitigating side effects." According to the Asahi Shimbun, the guidelines will likely specify what sort of patients will use these expensive drugs and which doctors and hospitals will be able to prescribe them. If expensive drugs are used outside of these guidelines, national health insurance may not pay for them.

Opvido is one of the drugs targeted. Another is Repatha, a treatment for high cholesterol that went on sale in April and costs ¥23,000 per dosage. Patients who need Repatha will probably have to take it for a very long period of time — perhaps for the rest of their lives.

Source: Japan Times, August 13, 2016 ■

Digital health care services just around corner

By Kazuaki Nagata

Businesses small and large are looking to cash in on the potential for smartphones and wearable devices as health care trends toward the digital

age.

They are especially interested in preventive medicine, an area that could ultimately help rapidly graying Japan

slash its ballooning medical costs, which topped ¥40 trillion in fiscal 2014.

"Japan's medical spending is reaching its limit ... if there are things that can be streamlined, we need to do it. I think digital health care services can spark such efforts," Masato Iwasaki, a director at Takeda Pharmaceutical Co., said at a recent event for health care startups hosted with Daiichi Sankyo and DeNA Co.

But the harsh environment for startups in Japan is making it difficult to find a viable business model, let alone cultivate a new tech-based market, industry insiders say.

"Preventive medicine is really a challenging field" for turning a profit, Yota Yamada, CEO of Tokyo-based startup iCare Co., acknowledged.

The philosophy at Yamada's company is that practicing preventive

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Digital health care

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medicine, or committing to staying healthy, will help people detect diseases earlier, he said. Information technology devices will play a significant role in achieving that, he said.

To increase public awareness of the benefits of prevention, “it is essential to penetrate people’s daily lives. In that sense, these digital devices come in very handy because people have their smartphones with them all the time,” he said.

iCare markets a digital chat-based counseling service for company workers concerned about their health.

“The truth is that people don’t really care about being healthy,” until they aren’t, Yamada said, explaining why hospitals make money. The former doctor said many people don’t think twice about changing their eating or lifestyle habits until they feel pain, by which time it may be too late.

Yamada’s service connects people with doctors and public health workers through online chat, allowing people to more casually get information on their conditions so they can take actions needed to stay healthy, he said. The service primarily focuses on assessing people’s problems and providing information, he said, adding that it hopes to offer remote medical examinations in the future.

His startup is just one of several that believe digital health care is the key to a healthier society. At the startup event on July 24 at Shibuya’s landmark Hikarie Building, 10 firms including iCARE gave presentations on products and services mainly focusing on preventive medicine.

Officials attending from the major drugmakers said they were increasingly warming to the potential for digital health care services.

While the goal of streamlining medical spending is good, Yamada said that more advanced and costly medical equipment will continue to emerge at the same time, pushing it up. But many



Yota Yamada, CEO of Tokyo-based startup iCare Co., explains his chat-based health counseling business during a meet-up event in Tokyo on July 24, 2016. KAZUAKI NAGATA

others think spending on treatment, especially for such lifestyle-related diseases as diabetes and obesity, can be reduced by digital products.

Given the time and money required to develop innovative products on their own, however, some drugmakers think that teaming up with startups will be a more viable way to get digital services off the ground.

“To spread the use of digital health care and digital solutions in Japan, we think it’s best to involve more startups or people who have brilliant ideas, minds and technologies to launch businesses,” said Katsuhiko Hiwatashi, director of the business innovation group at Tokyo-based drugmaker MSD K.K., owned by U.S. drugmaking giant Merck & Co.

But “the ecosystem in Japan today is very small and immature.”

This is why MSD teamed up with Tokyo-based Globis Capital Partners to set up its Health Tech Program, a mentoring program for startups looking to get into the health care business.

As a drugmaker, MSD knows the issues that need to be solved in the

field, has an abundance of connections and is familiar with the regulations, putting it in good position to give startups with support and know-how.

Globis can then advise them on how to grow and find financing.

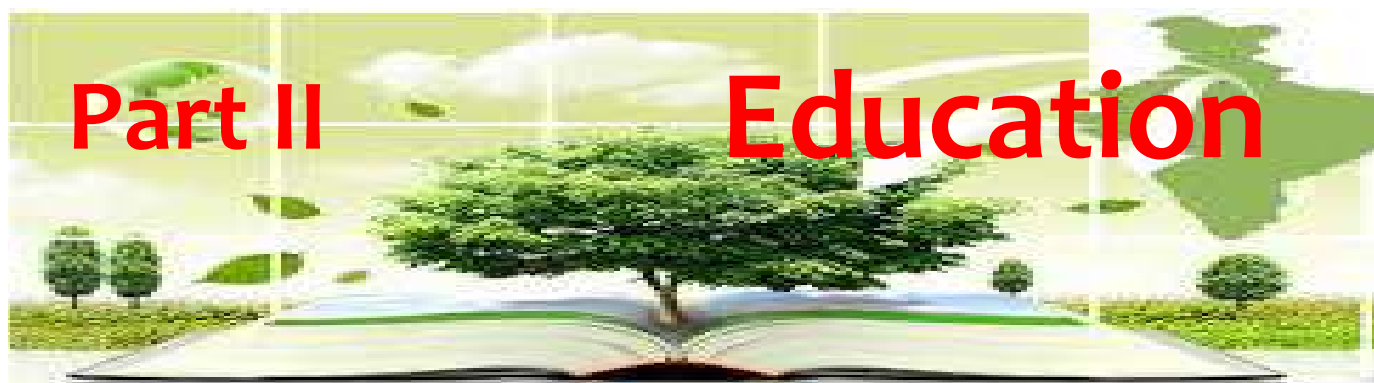
“We need to start making an ecosystem to encourage more companies to enter the business,” Hiwatashi said.

Building on its core drugs business, MSD wants to expand into a wider range of health care services, represented by its new slogan “beyond the pill.”

And as technology marches on, other drugmakers are looking to do the same.

Thanks to the internet, information that was once restricted to doctors can now be accessed by smartphones nearly anywhere at anytime. In addition, with wearable devices logging people’s vitals on a daily basis, IT innovations are only going to make it easier for people to check on their health by themselves, Hiwatashi said.

Source: Japan Times, August 7, 2016 ■



More Japanese look to Philippines to hone English skills

By Shinichi Tokuda

Japanese are increasingly choosing to study English in the Philippines over the United States or U.K., driven by the lures of cheaper tuition fees and the proximity to home.

And corporations are also encouraging staff to study in the Philippines, where English is one of the official languages.

Auto parts manufacturer Mitsuba Corp. has sent about two dozen of its employees to the Philippines every year to take part in a three-month language study program.

The Gunma Prefecture-based firm has expanded its production bases to include overseas facilities, with its staff now required to learn English.

“We used to send our employees to the United States, but school expenses and living costs are high,” said Yasutaka Iio, a manager at the company’s personnel division.

Studying in the Philippines is “very cost-effective” and employees can also build business connections with people coming from companies in other Asian countries such as South Korea, Iio added.



Educational provider Human Academy Co. launched study options in the Philippines two years ago. In collaboration with eight local English-language schools, it offers several study courses for students and adults.

The firm said it costs around ¥210,000 (\$1,866) to study in the Philippines for four weeks, including accommodation, food and textbook expenses.

The Philippines is also a hot destination for retirees to study English.

Satoshi Hasei, 72, and his wife, Katsuko, 70, participated in the Human Academy’s two-week study program last October, taking English lessons on Cebu Island in the central Philippines.

“We took classes during the day and then did homework at night. We were studying English all day. Teachers were friendly and we experienced almost no inconvenience in terms of living,” recalled Hasei, who lives in Kanagawa Prefecture.

“I want to be able to give a guided tour” in English for international tourists as visitors to Japan are expected to increase toward the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, he added.

Yasuhiro Murakami, who is in charge of promoting English-learning programs at Human Academy, said the company’s courses in the Philippines offered one-on-one English lessons.

In the United States and U.K., most classes have 10 to 20 students.



But the company’s study programs in the Philippines “offers private lessons for more than half of the day, so (students can) speak a lot and become better sooner,” said Murakami.

The English taught in these programs conforms to standard English that can be learned in the United States or U.K., according to Murakami.

Tokyo-based Disco Inc. has also launched similar programs in the Philippines and other parts of Asia.

Yumiko Goto, who is in charge of the firm’s global human resources development division, said Asian markets were expected to grow significantly and studying in those nations will be a huge advantage for job-seekers.

The firm’s programs mainly offer one-on-one lessons and the cost of studying is about ¥200,000 per month, excluding airfares, according to the company.

“Studying in Asian nations will be an opportunity to not only acquire English skills but also to think seriously about what kind of job one wants,” said Goto.

Source: Japan Times. April 11, 2016 ■

Education funding for disadvantaged students, says Tsai

By Stephanie Chao



Taiwan President-elect Tsai Ing-wen speaks at Southern Taiwan Science Park, Tainan, Monday, Feb. 29. (Central News Agency)

Taiwan President-elect and Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Chairwoman Tsai Ing-wen has recently proposed setting up an education development account to assist financially disadvantaged children.

According to the plan proposed by Tsai and the DPP, the student's legal guardians will not be able to access the funds before the child comes of age at 18, with emergency medical situations an exception, reported the United Daily News on Feb. 28, 2016.

If students choose to continue their education after 18, they would be able to use the funding from the account to pay for their college tuition fees.

Should the child choose to become an apprentice or pursue vocational training, the individual could access the development and "educational savings account" — which is under the vocational education category in the DPP's program — after completion of their training.

Both funds could become the basis for starting up their own business or undertaking further studies, reports stated.

The aforementioned policies were part of Tsai's "people-centered" economic development program, which aims to achieve fairness through systematic reform.

The DPP-backed New Frontier Foundation's head consultant for social affairs, Lin Wan-i, stated that while many

financially disadvantaged children — or those who were abused, abandoned or experienced certain domestic distress — had received social welfare funding throughout their lives, many lacked the opportunity to receive a quality education.

Many of those children can only take part-time jobs or enroll in evening classes, Lin said, stressing the need to ensure fairness for disadvantaged children. The government should intervene to provide an education funding for them, he stated.

Further amendments to the

Protection of Children and Youths Welfare and Rights Act will be proposed, as policy planning for education financial aid is almost complete, reports stated.

Tsai Drops Education Minister Hints

In other news, Tsai also hinted at her preferences for a Cabinet minister on Monday, saying that her future education minister should be able to "communicate with the industry."

Her comments were made during her visit to Southern Taiwan Science Park on her industry tour of the green energy sector, as reported by Chang Ching-sen, policy director for Tsai's presidential campaign.

Delta Electronics Inc. has said that the current education system in Taiwan is "extremely out of tune" with the industry — software talent is "severely lacking" and professors are "not willing to teach (software programming)" since it does not further their own career.

Tsai commented during the meeting with green energy industry bosses that during her tour, the talent gap was the one of the most common and evident problems that she had observed, which has led to deepened concern, Chang said.

The education minister and deputy education minister need to be understanding and show willingness to listen to industry suggestions, Tsai said, in order to close the talent gap in Taiwan.

The education of the next generation must be prioritized in nurturing industry talents for the new generation, she stated.

Source: China Post, March 1, 2016



'YouTubers' now outshining old-school television shows

By Glenn Chapman, AFP

A media revolution is taking place, and most people over 35 years of age aren't tuned in.

Millennials and their successors are shunning old-school television in favor of watching what they want whenever they wish on Google-owned YouTube or other video platforms like Dailymotion or Facebook.

"Young people don't really watch TV anymore; they watch online videos that are shorter and more talent-driven," says Fabienne Fourquet, a former executive at A&E Television and France's Canal+ who now heads the multichannel network 2btube.

"They don't want to be Hollywood stars when they grow up, they want to be YouTubers. There is this whole other world."

The new multichannel networks, or MCNs, are talent agents of sorts for creators of videos shared at online venues.

They help creators, often referred to as YouTubers, with video production and promotion along with finding partners or sponsors in return for a percentage of revenue.

Fourquet said popular subjects include music, comedy, sports, video games, fashion and beauty.

She noted that three-quarters of her viewers were younger than 34 years of age, and half were under 25.

"There are very few of us old people," Fourquet quipped.

World Tunes In

Self-described YouTuber Caroline Artiss has been a chef for 20 years, but opted out of restaurants and went to work for herself in catering in 2008.

Then, a friend showed her how simple it was to make videos for YouTube.

"It was just me and a tripod in my kitchen," Artiss told AFP.

"Then people starting tuning in from all over the world."



Chef and YouTuber Caroline Artiss is seen on her YouTube page in this photograph taken from a computer screen in Los Angeles, California, Friday, July 22, 2016. Self-described YouTuber Caroline Artiss has been a chef for 20 years, but opted out of restaurants and went to work for herself in catering in 2008. (AFP)

She recounted cooking her way across the United States for a multi-episode show after catching eyes at BBC America and a television network in Malaysia.

Artiss said she approaches her cooking videos from the perspective of a single mom — short on money and time but needing to feed a family.

She was signed on by a video network that describes itself as being tailored for a mobile generation and focused on "tastemakers" sharing passion for food and travel.

"It still blows my mind," Artiss said.

"I am coming from a single mom, living in London, struggling to pay my bills to having an opportunity to start my own TV channel in a way."

Artiss teamed with other chefs to open Gorgeous Kitchen restaurant at London Heathrow airport.

She has a cookbook due out later this year and works with Youth Policy Institute to raise money to get fresh produce to low-income families.

Naturally, she did a video. It can be seen online at app.mobilecause.com/vf/YPIFRESH.

Television Tomfoolery

An annual Vidcon gathering in Southern California has become a hot venue for YouTubers to connect with business opportunities and ecstatic fans.

Some 25,000 people were reported to have attended this year's Vidcon, which took place in June.

"With the onset of digital video platforms and the fact that everyone has a smartphone in their pockets, we have democratized being a creator," said Paladin co-founder James Creech, whose California company specializes in technology for finding budding stars in a vast universe where anyone can post content online.

"A 17-year-old in his or her own bedroom can compete with the likes of CBS and build an audience that would rival a major media company."

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'YouTubers'

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Keys to hit online videos include being creative and regularly posting content, according to Creech.

Amateurs can outshine polished professional content with authentic connections that make viewers think of them as friends, he said.

"Regular TV is about cartoons and YouTube is about real people and the games I like," 11-year-old California boy and online video fan Henry Crawford told AFP.

"Television is tomfoolery."

Paladin indexes millions of channels, providing analytics that can narrow down videos by popularity, topic, language and more.

The YouTube channel with the most subscribers is that of Swedish video maker and comedian PewDiePie, who provides captivating commentary while playing video games.

Hot online video trends include "unboxing," in which people film themselves or others opening packages with unknown contents.

A popular YouTube channel called

Hydraulic Press features videos of things being crushed by just that piece of equipment.

Amazon-owned Twitch on Friday announced that it is experimenting with a new social Eating category in which people streaming broadcasts on the service socialize with viewers over meals.

Traditional media companies would be wise to be worried by the trend, according to Creech.

Source: China Post, July 4, 2016

Fueling dreams through education

By Bernie Magkilat

For a developing country like the Philippines, education is a critical engine in powering progress. For most Filipinos, it may be the only key to survival and getting better prospects in life.

Since 2007, Shell's nationwide scholarship program "Gas Mo, Bukas Ko" (GMBK) aims to enhance the skills of forecourt service attendants as well as dependents of its Pepeng Pasada drivers' club. More than just providing motorists with smarter products for clean and efficient transport, Shell has undertaken such innovative methods in developing the potential of its people that enable them to provide cutting-edge services as well.

With over 1,600 scholars, GMBK continues to provide learning and capacity-building training programs that enhance employment and livelihood opportunities, as well as develop their values and character. In fact, 85 percent of these scholars have taken on bigger responsibilities as forecourt service champions, while some got promoted to higher positions.

The reluctant gas boy

"Honestly, never in my wildest imagination did I think that I'll be working in a gas station because it's not really considered as an 'ideal'



Shell Gas Mo, Bukas Ko Scholar
Andrelo Centinales /mb.com.ph

job," shared Lance Legaspi, a GMBK scholar. "But I have come to believe that I was really destined for this career."

Coming from a family of eight children, life was difficult for Lance. There were times when his parents weren't sure where to find food for the family, much less the means to support his college education.

Fate eventually intervened through Lance's high school principal, who endorsed him to a GMBK scholarship.

April Twinkle A. Corral, who at that time was the operations manager of the Shell Station in Davao, interviewed him and administered an exam. The entire process happened in less than four hours and he was deployed at the forecourt for hands-on training right there and then.

Things did not come easy at first, as Lance experienced a lot of challenges. "I was tempted to quit, but I know that my decision might affect future endorsements from my high school, so I persevered instead," he said. Lance's hard work paid off as he eventually rose up the ranks to become forecourt cashier, team leader, forecourt supervisor in-charge, to being currently the cluster's trainer.

"Being a GMBK scholar is life-changing. I took up Basic Computer and Troubleshooting and it really helps me with my current responsibilities. On a more personal note, it turned me into a more positive person. I learned to be courageous and made myself stronger as I face difficult chapters in my life. It taught me to be even more committed to strive hard and achieve my dreams and be the person my parents would be proud of," he related. Lance even ended up as one of two forecourt service champions who represented

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Fueling dreams

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the country in last year's Smiling Stars Award in Paris, France.

From fisherman to coach

"I used to live along a coastline in Bohol. My father is a fisherman, my mother is a housewife and I have 3 brothers and 3 sisters. I used to help my father fish during the weekends and every time I had no school," related Andrelo Centinales, another GMBK scholar. After graduating high school, he was prepared to live the life of a fisherman.

However, his parents wanted a better life for him and so he was sent to Cebu to find work. He eventually chanced upon a job posting looking for

forecourt crew at Shell. Things took a sharp turn from that point on as he eventually became a GMBK scholar.

Right now, Andel is still part of Shell as an onsite coach. "My greatest aspiration in life is to work with Shell abroad, but at this point in time my goal is to help my cluster win the Gold Retailer of the Year," he shared.

Pride of the pit crew

Jocelyn Bermoy, meanwhile, is similarly proud of her entry level position at Shell as part of the pit crew. "The words 'pit crew' or 'pump attendant' may come across as a low level job for many. But this was the job that helped me rise from the ranks. This was also what helped me develop myself," she said.

Her GMBK scholarship equipped

Jocelyn with the skills and the confidence to pursue higher positions and bigger responsibilities in her career. "Shell's GMBK scholarship is a great program. It helped me set my vision and direction in life. This gave me another opportunity to pursue my studies and finish a vocational course," she declared.

"Through this program, I gained more confidence in myself. I got promoted, from being a pit crew to being a cashier, team leader, and now a station supervisor. My family and I are truly happy with what I've accomplished in life. I really can't thank Shell enough for providing this opportunity," she concluded.

Source: Manila Bulletin, August 21, 2016

Asian students finish cross-cultural summer science course in Yokosuka

By Minoru Matsutani

Forty-eight junior high and high school students from across Asia got together in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture, to attend a one-week science summer school in early August 2016.

The second annual gathering, dubbed the International School of Science Summer School 2016, is a weeklong program in which students learn science together in English at Yokosuka Research Park, a special zone the city established to attract technology research and development centers.

The organizer, the International School of Science Founding Project, dubbed "ISSJ," is aiming to establish an international science school by 2020.

"Science is borderless and it is essential for scientists to be able to venture out into the world," its website says. "Scientists must think about how they should form relationships with others on an international level. Thus, our school's goal is to raise young and promising scientists to have the eyes, the brains and the hearts to be ready for the world."

The school, however, does not



Students from Japan and other Asian countries pose after an award ceremony on the last day of International School of Science Summer School 2016 in Yokosuka Research Park in Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture, on August 9, 2016. | MINORU MATSUTANI

only focus on science. It focuses on teaching students to "be innovators who use scientific research to involve other people to make big changes," representative Ryuichi Nomura said. In his mind, an innovator is a scientist who can persuade, make good presentations,

understand cultural differences in people and involve many people.

The International School of Science Summer School 2016 was held from Aug. 3 to 9. The 48 students — 17 Japanese, 10 Vietnamese, 11

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Asian students

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Filipino, three Indonesians, two South Koreans, two Mongolians, two Chinese and an American, ranging in age from 13 to 17 — experienced very intensive curricula in various classes, including the Road to Data Scientist, the Sexiest Job of 21st Century, Why Do We Know There Are Black Holes? Introduction to Einstein's Relativity and Rocket Experiment — One Day Field Work. Other classes that may not sound so scientific — but are important to science — included How to Make a Team, How to Work in a Team, Learn the Critical Basics of PowerPoint and Win That Investment! and Why Do Scientists Need to Think About Ethics?

They all stayed together at a hotel inside YRP, and worked in the evenings on presentations they had to deliver on the final day.

The students were divided into 12 teams and each team delivered a presentation. The themes of the presentations included, "Lack of Electricity in the Philippines," "Endangered Animals," "We're Going to Mars" and "Energy and its Demand: Use of Rice Husks by 2050."

Additionally, an awards ceremony was held on the final day of the school. One of the awards, the Head of Teacher Award, went to team Daisuke Daisuki, whose members were Ngo The Kien, 15, from Vietnam, Daniel Leshawn Hung Cruz, 16, from the Philippines, Le Quynh Huong, 15, from Vietnam,

and Rena Mototani, 15, from Japan. They won the award for exhibiting outstanding performance throughout the summer school and for having a positive influence on other students.

The second International School of Science Summer School grew considerably from last year, nearly doubling from the 25 participants seen in 2015.

The school plans to continue to hold the summer school in the future, even after it starts operating a full-time international school of science, Nomura said, adding that he felt the passion of Asian students interested in learning science and technology.

Source: Japan Times, August 24, 2016 ■

NT\$1 bil. in scholarships to back 'New Southbound Policy'

By Howard Chao

The Ministry of Education (MOE) indicated it has budgeted NT\$1 billion for scholarships in a bid to encourage local universities to hold more exchange programs with Southeast Asian countries at a forum, according to reports on August 12, 2016.

MOE Administrative Deputy Minister Lin Teng-chiao, speaking at the forum held at National Taipei University of Education, stated that the Education Ministry had arranged for NT\$1 billion in funding to match the administration's promotion of its "New Southbound Policy."

The funding will be spent on a number of scholarships, ranging from those targeting Taiwanese students, and

will encourage universities to increase the number of exchange programs in Southeast Asian countries to attract more students from the region to study in Taiwan.

Teachers from Vietnam's Foreign Trade University told the Central News Agency that there were many students who want to study in Taiwan but don't have the funds, so they hope that the new funding will help solve financial problems.

As Taiwan has not provided enough scholarships in the past, many potential students choose to study in mainland China instead, a Vietnamese teacher told the local media outlet.

A teacher also suggested that

Taiwan relax its restrictions on foreign students, namely Vietnamese students, who would be able to encourage the spread of Vietnamese culture and language in Taiwan.

Lin said Taiwan has had more and more interactions with Southeast Asian countries in recent years.

Taiwan has already sent numerous instructors to teach Mandarin Chinese at Vietnamese universities and Mandarin-teaching assistants to local middle schools, he added.

Reports also say that Taiwan has also already scheduled for Vietnamese teachers and students to teach Vietnamese in Taiwan.

Source: China Post, August 13, 2016 ■





ABOUT CACCI

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) is a regional grouping of apex national chambers of commerce and industry, business associations and business enterprises in Asia and the Western Pacific.

It is a non-governmental organization serving as a forum for promoting the vital role of businessmen in the region, increasing regional business interaction, and enhancing regional economic growth. Since its establishment in 1966, CACCI has grown into a network of national chambers of commerce with a total now of 29 Primary Members from 27 Asian countries. It cuts across national boundaries to link businessmen and promote economic growth throughout the Asia-Pacific

region. CACCI is a non-governmental organization (NGO) granted consultative status, Roster category, under the United Nations. It is a member of the Conference on NGOs (CoNGO), an association of NGOs with UN consultative status.

Among the benefits of membership in CACCI are the following:

1. Policy Advocacy - CACCI aims to play a strong policy advocacy role in order to establish a business environment conducive to creating better opportunities for CACCI members.

2. Wide scope for networking - Participation in the various projects of CACCI will provide members the opportunity to expand their reach in Asia-Pacific by establishing contacts with the business communities of the region.

3. Participation in CACCI Annual Conferences and Training Programs - Members are invited to participate in the annual Conferences and various training programs which CACCI regularly conducts either on its own or in cooperation with other

international organizations and member chambers.

4. Interaction in Product and Service Councils - Membership in CACCI allows participation in the activities of the various Product and Service Councils (PSCs) of the organization. PSCs are business groupings organized along product or service lines with a primary objective of promoting business cooperation, personal contacts, and technology transfer.

5. Access to CACCI publications – CACCI publishes the CACCI Profile, its monthly newsletter, and the CACCI Journal of Commerce and Industry, a bi-annual publication which features papers, speeches, and other articles pertaining to issues affecting the regional economy.

For more information, please visit www.cacci.biz



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