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Thursday, 8 October 2020

Amyotha Hluttaw speaker, govt officials donate cash to national COVID-19 committee



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than presents cash donation to Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe for COVID-19 containment measures on 7 October. **PHOTO: MNA**

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and government officials presented cash donations to the National-Level Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19 through Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe yesterday.

At the donation ceremony, the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker said that the cash contribution was aimed to support the containment measures of

COVID-19 and to honour the health workers in front-line of the measures.

Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win explained the donation from the staff members of his ministry who also took part in adopting the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan, in the process of getting international loans, relaxing financial rules in the government's response to the pandemic, extension of budget expenditure period, production

of ambulance cars, medicines and personal protective equipment from the factories under the ministry. Director-General Dr Sai Kyaw Naing Oo from the Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training talked about the volunteer services of teachers under the department and production of robot trolley, and the cash donation was to honour health workers in fight against the pandemic.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe expressed thanks for the

donations, and explained the activities of ministry, effective use of funds and cooperation with the relevant organizations.

Then, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than donated K5 million, Deputy Ministers U Maung Maung Win and U Sett Aung K70.5 million on behalf of the ministry's staff and Director-General of DTVET Dr Sai Kyaw Naing Oo K27 million representing teachers of the department.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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Online film festival to commemorate centenary of Myanmar motion picture

A film festival will be organized online to mark the 100th anniversary of Myanmar film industry, which will fall on 13 October.

The Ministry of Infor-

mation and the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization will jointly launch Myanmar movies of successive eras online from 8 to 31 October as the films cannot be screened

at the cinemas due to control measures against COVID-19.

Over 2,500 Myanmar films and videos can be enjoyed in Mahar mobile application

by using promo code 102020 from 8 to 31 October; over 50 Myanmar films, over 50 TV channels and movie albums in Cookie application by using promocode MMFILM 100

from 13 to 31 October; 30 Myanmar films and movie series in Pyone Play application.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

"People are the key"

Advance voting begins in South Africa, Nanning of China on 7 Oct

ADVANCE voting of Myanmar citizens started in South Africa and the Nanning city of China yesterday.

Nine eligible voters cast their votes at the Myanmar Embassy in Pretoria of South Africa and 17 persons at the Myanmar Consulate-General in Nanning city of China.

Moreover, Myanmar people continued advance voting, with 791 persons in Bangkok of Thailand, 71 in Cairo of Egypt, over 1,700 persons in Singapore, 93 persons in Seoul of the Republic of Korea and 402 persons in Tokyo of Japan.

More advance voting stations will be set up at Myanmar Embassy in New Delhi of India and at Myanmar Consulate-General in Kunming city of China on 8 October, and at Myanmar Embassy in Malaysia and in Nagoya city of Japan on 9 October respectively. —MNA



Advance voting at Myanmar Consulate-General in Nanning city, China on 7 October. PHOTO: MNA



Advance voting at Myanmar embassy in Bangkok, Thailand on 7 October. PHOTO: MNA



Advance voting at Myanmar embassy in Singapore on 7 October. PHOTO: MNA



Advance voting at Myanmar embassy in Tokyo, Japan on 7 October. PHOTO: MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Flower prices in Mandalay market drop by half in pandemic period

MANDALAY flower market prices have dropped by half with many flowers entering the market. The flowers are blossoming in the mountain region during the COVID-19 period, said U Aung Myint, a flower trader at Myodaw flower market, Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region.

"Myodaw flower market, a central place of Mandalay, is selling many species of flowers. The flower prices have been dropping for nearly a month. Especially, the chrysanthemum (Gandhama

flower in Myanmar) price is on the decline. Previously, chrysanthemum flowers were sold for K2,500-3,000. Now, the price of the chrysanthemum flower is only over K1,000. So, the flower growers are unhappy with the lower price of their plants. I am growing chrysanthemum flower as well as other species. The local growers are selling their flowers for only K500-800," he said.

The price of the flower is down because there are difficulties in transportation during the pandemic period. The flowers

which are to be sent to Yangon remain in this market because of transport difficulties. We have many flowers in this market. So, we could not sell all the flowers. That is the reason why the flower prices have plunged, he added.

The Myodaw flower market was opened in February 2020 by Mandalay City Development Committee with over 90 shops. The market is a wholesale market, and more than 100 people are selling the flowers daily. —Than Zaw Min (IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

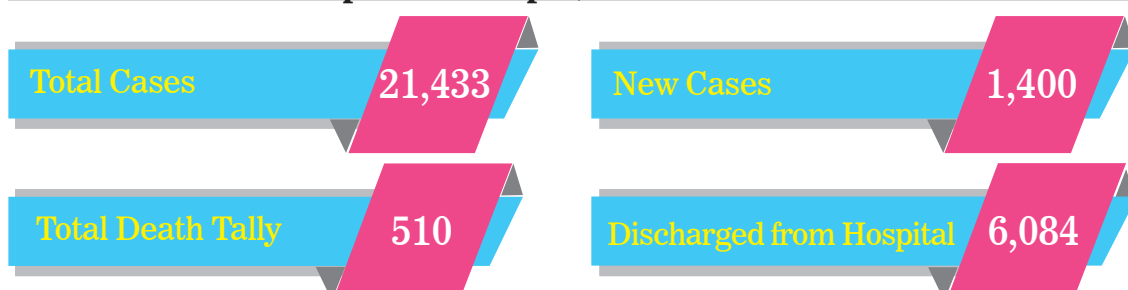


Flower prices in Mandalay market are declining due to difficulties in transportation. PHOTO: THAN ZAW MIN

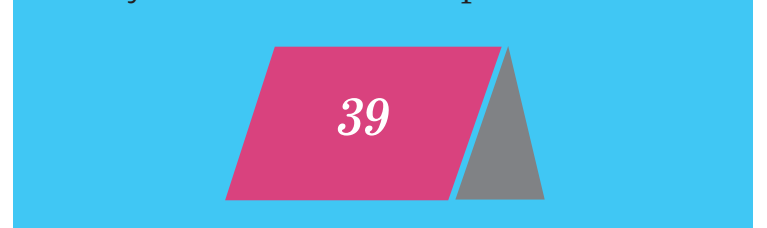
1,400 more new cases of COVID-19 reported on 7 October, total figure rises to 21,433

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rise to 21,433 after 1,400 new cases were reported on 7 October according to Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 21,433 confirmed cases, 510 died, 6,084 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 7 October 2020



Daily Death toll until 8 pm 7-10-2020



Ministry of Health and Sports

2020 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION



The General Election will be held on 8 November 2020.

- Union Election Commission has announced the first edition of eligible voter lists at local offices of the commission in respective wards/village-tracts, in the villages from 25 July 2020 to 7 November 2020.
- If the name of any eligible voter is not included in the list, voter registration can be requested by filling in Form 3.
- Objection can be filed against any ineligible voter in the list by using Form 4.
- Correction for voter list can be requested by using Form 4 (c).
- Voters can cast their votes only if their names are included in the voters list.
- Cooperation is requested for at least one member of each family to check their names without fail to ensure a complete and correct voters list.
- Check the voters lists not to lose voting rights by filling up discrepancies, deleting and making corrections.

2020
General Election
Sunday, 8 November 2020

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Myanmar pre-service teacher training steering committee holds online meeting



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi chairs online meeting of steering committee on Myanmar pre-service teacher training programme on 7 October. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE steering committee on capacity-building programme for pre-service teachers held a meeting via videoconferencing yesterday morning.

The meeting was participated by Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Finnish Ambassador to Myanmar Ms Riikka Laatu, Coun-

sellor for Development at the Finnish Embassy in Myanmar Ms Sanna Takala, Head of the UNESCO office in Myanmar Ms Min Jeong Kim, members of

the National Education Policy Commission, the National Academic and Quality Assurance Assessment Committee and the National Curriculum Committee, the directors-General, the deputy directors-General and the directors from the Ministry of Education and the directorates, and the officials from the UNESCO Myanmar Office.

Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi expressed words of thanks to the Government of Finland and the UNESCO for their financial and technical assistance to support the Myanmar Pre-Service Teacher Capacity-Building Programme.

He said that the Ministry of Education enhanced the policy and teaching capacity in 25 education degree colleges during the second phase of the STEM Project of Myanmar pre-service teacher capacity-building project and the technical assistance was provided in designing a new education degree college curriculum, for gender equality, peace, sustainable and balanced

development and teacher opportunities

He continued that two-year education degree colleges have been upgraded to four-year degree colleges and the textbooks for the first semester and second semester of the First Year and the Second Year Education Degree College and teacher guidebooks have been planned to publish.

He thanked for the support in developing the framework for assessing quality of primary teachers.

He also said that he believed the programme will support the National Education Strategic Plan (2021-2030).

The meeting discussed the performance of the STEM Project from July to September 2020, the report of the project phase 2 and the report on the evaluation of the implementation of the New Education Degree College Curriculum.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Myanmar citizens fly back home from India, Japan

THE relief flight of Air India landed at Yangon International Airport yesterday afternoon, carrying 85 Myanmar nationals who were stranded in India due to suspension of flights amid COVID-19 outbreak.

In addition, a total of 157 citizens returned to Myanmar from Japan by a relief flight of All Nippon Airways in the same afternoon.

The returnees have

to stay the 14-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels after immigration processes and medical tests, followed by the 7-day home quarantine, which were arranged by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been working with Myanmar

embassies in foreign countries and local ministries concerned to bring back citizens stranded abroad due to the suspension of international commercial flights, in accordance with the guidance of the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Myanmar returnees from India queuing for immigration process at Yangon International Airport on 6 October. **PHOTO: MNA**

MoC discusses implementing 10,000 units of Public Rental Housing

THE Ministry of Construction held a coordination meeting for implementing Public Rental Housing Project with 10,000 units via videoconferencing yesterday afternoon.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister U Han Zaw, Deputy Minister Dr Kyaw Linn, the Permanent Secretary, the Director-General and officials of Urban and Housing Development Department, Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Tin Tun, Yangon Region Industry and Transport Minister Daw Nilar Kyaw, Mandalay Region Electricity, Energy and Construction Minister U Zarni Aung and chairpersons of three private entrepreneurs associations.

During the meeting, Union Minister U Han Zaw discussed about the terms and conditions of the contracts for 10,000 units of the public rental housing project, budget status, stake driving ceremony for the projects, bringing benefits and creating job opportunities for the public while implementing the project and high-quality housing projects.

Deputy Minister Dr Kyaw Linn later explained that the meeting was held to approve the contracts to start the projects and the contracts are already given to the relevant organizations and he called on the attendees to give comments and suggestions.

He also discussed budget



Union Minister U Han Zaw presides over the videoconference for implementing Public Rental Housing Project on 7 October. PHOTO: MNA

allocation in line with the rules of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, complying with health guidelines set by National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control

and Treatment of COVID-19 and the Ministry of Health and Sports and cooperation works to implement the projects as quickly as possible.

Then, the attendees to the

meeting coordinated the discussion and Deputy Minister delivered a closing speech.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

PWDs rights working committee holds 2/2020 meeting

THE Working Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities organized its 2/2020 meeting via videoconferencing at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement on 6 October.

Chairman of the Committee and Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun, working committee members and national committee members for the rights of PWDs and officials from the organizations of PWDs joined

the meeting.

In his opening remark, Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye said that the ministry is working for the persons with disabilities during COVID-19 pandemic while providing assistance to the street children and the vulnerable communities including women, elderly persons and leprosy patients. The working committee meetings for the rights of PWDs have been holding twice a year since 2018 and now is the second

session of 2020. The decisions of meetings are implemented by cooperating with the relevant organizations.

Model facilities for the PWDs are now available at the Myoma Market and the Water Fountain Garden in Nay Pyi Taw in developing a Barrier Free Community.

The Union Minister continued saying that the tourism industry can develop in the post-COVID-19 period and so the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism

drafted Myanmar Barrier Free Tourism Pilot Project for the PWDs to be able to travel to the famous destinations in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, Yangon and Mandalay Regions and in Bagan.

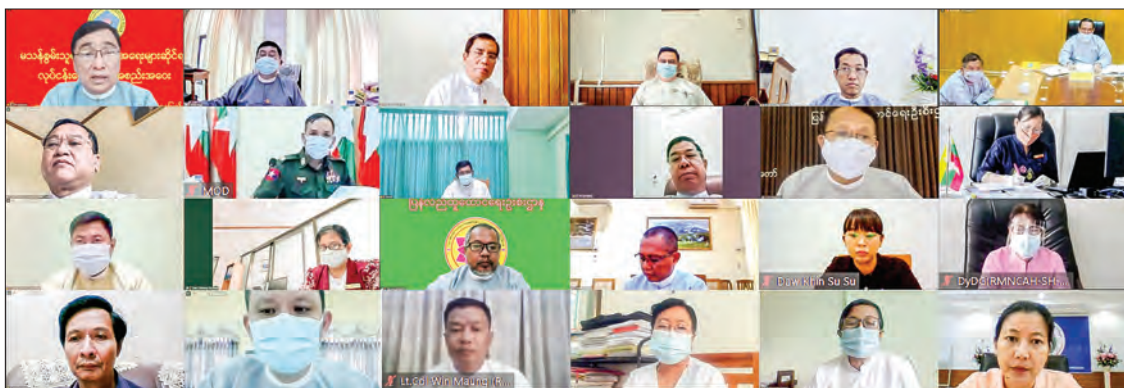
The pilot projects for disability rating and registration for the disabled are being carried out in Nyaunglebin Township of Bago Region, Hlinethaya Township of Yangon Region, Hpa-an and Kya-in-Seikkyi townships of Kayin State. The officials adopt the systems of remote assessment and digitalization to provide coverage in Kayin State by the end of 2020.

There are 9 sub-committees to carry out the welfares of persons with disabilities and online meetings are being held by organizing the Technical Core Group to draft five-year national strategic plan for the rights of persons with disabilities. He continued that it needs to accelerate the processes of the Work-

ing Committee for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities during COVID-19 pandemic.

Vice-Chairman (1) of the committee and Deputy Minister U Soe Aung later explained the fund raising for K3 billion capital amount for the persons with disabilities and loan processes.

Secretary (1) of the committee and Director-General for Rehabilitation Department U Win Naing Tun and Director-General for Social Welfare Department Dr San San Aye briefed the work plans of the committee and progresses in implementing the decisions of former committee meetings. The attendees at the meeting coordinated the discussion and joint-secretary (1) U Myat Thu Win expressed words of thanks for the performance of the government and ministries concerned in carrying out for the welfares of the persons with disabilities.—MNA (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye takes part in videoconferencing of Working Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 6 October. PHOTO: MNA

External trade exceeds \$36 bln as of 25 September

MYANMAR'S external trade between 1 October and 25 September in the 2019-2020 financial year touched a high of US\$36.2 billion, an increase of \$1.889 billion compared with the corresponding period of the 2018-2019FY, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the same period in the previous FY, trade stood at

\$34.3 billion, according to data released by the ministry.

Myanmar's foreign trade has shown a 10-per-cent increase, year over year, under the incumbent government. Myanmar has already reached total trade value target of \$34 billion for the current FY, said an official from the ministry.

In the current FY, both mar-

itime and border trade recorded an increase compared with the year-ago period, with exports estimated at over \$17.37 billion and imports valued at \$18.8 billion.

The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports.

The Ministry of Commerce

is endeavouring to boost export, enhance value-added production, reduce export barriers and provide trade financing services.

Under the National Planning Law for the Financial Year 2020-2021, Myanmar intends to reach the export target at US\$16 billion and import at \$18 billion.

Myanmar's external trade

between FY2016-2017 and FY2019-2020 (as of 21 August) under the incumbent government period touched a high of US\$149.67 billion, comprising exports worth \$68.53 billion and imports valued \$811 billion, according to the statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce. — Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye joins virtual meeting with leprosy sufferers, organizations



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye organizes a meeting on providing assistance to leprosy sufferers on 6 October. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye held a virtual meeting with leprosy sufferers on 6 October via videoconferencing on providing assistance to them.

During the virtual meeting, the Union Minister said his ministry has put in a great deal of effort to work for social welfare of the people. He stressed that democracy and the rule of law is essential to protect rights of individuals and to promote democracy. He highlighted that appropriate policies, laws and strategies are needed to efficiently promote the welfare of children, women, elderly people and the disabled.

He said that leprosy suf-

ferers and people from their environment need to increase mental strength of the leprosy sufferers. He continued that the Ministry will work for the welfare of leprosy sufferers and provide necessary support to them without discrimination.

Myanmar Leprosy Sufferers Association Chairperson U Soe Win expressed thanks to the officials for helping them and not discriminating against them.

Currently, the association, in cooperation with the ministries concerned, has formed township branches. He said thanks to the officials and well-wishers for supporting them even amidst COVID-19 crisis.

Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettle-

ment U Soe Aung said that the next batch of support will also be provided for the needy sufferers who did not get the support this time amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual meeting was also participated by the Permanent Secretary of the Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, the directors general of relevant departments, other relevant officials from the Ministry, and representatives from Public Health Department, the Leprosy Mission (Myanmar), Myanmar Leprosy Sufferers Association, and other relevant organizations.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Deputy Minister U Thar Oo joins cybersecurity, cyber week events online

DEPUTY Minister for Transport and Communications U Thar Oo took part in the opening ceremonies of the 5th ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC) and the Singapore International Cyber Week (SICW) 2020 via videoconferencing.

The opening ceremony of SICW was held on 6 October, and that of AMCC was on 7 October.

During the online events with ministers and officials from ASEAN countries, the Deputy

Minister discussed regional cybersecurity cooperation and setting the rule-based regional norms.

Singapore is hosting the SICW event from 5 to 9 October, with the participation of ASEAN ministers concerned with the cybersecurity, its deputy ministers, the Secretary-General of ASEAN and representatives from the dialogue-partnered countries.

The exhibition of GovWare Exhibition was also held and



Deputy Minister U Thar Oo joins opening ceremony of 5th ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity on 7 October . PHOTO: MNA

the ICT Solution can be viewed through virtual platform.

Singapore has already hosted the four previous events

of AMCC and SICW.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

Comparisons of inbound foreigners through international airports/seaports and border crossings

Sr	Month	2018-2019 financial year			2019-2020 financial year		
		Tourism	Business	Total	Tourism	Business	Total
1	October	52647	21005	73652	91836	27590	119426
2	November	77498	21482	98980	115898	27488	143386
3	December	82474	19538	102012	127950	24967	152917
4	January	93125	18689	111814	123622	26032	149654
5	February	102016	24612	126628	46879	21948	68827
6	March	95932	23693	119625	14479	21979	36458
7	April	71048	22848	93996	0	61	61
8	May	67410	22123	89533	0	102	102
9	June	65079	21714	87593	1	278	279
10	July	78035	23245	102080	0	426	426
11	August	88772	21955	110727	0	1175	1175
12	September	81064	23721	104785	0	345	345
total		956000	264625	1221425	520665	152391	673056

Remark: Although international inbound flights have been suspended since 30 March 2020, the foreign visitors in the list are from special flights related with COVID-19.

Comparisons of inbound foreigners through international airports and border crossings

Sr	International airports and border crossings	September 2019		September 2020		remark
		Tourist	Business	Tourism	business	
1	Yangon Airport/Seaport	42717	16173	0	345	
2	Mandalay Airport	31660	4024	0	0	
3	Nay Pyi Taw Airport	1401	315	0	0	
4	Myeik Airport	0	0	0	0	
5	Tachileik	3930	122	0	0	
6	Myawady	913	2984	0	0	
7	Kawthoung	146	64	0	0	
8	Hteekee	24	22	0	0	
9	Tamu	268	13	0	0	
10	Reedhorda	5	4	0	0	
Total		81064	23721	0	345	

Remark: Although international inbound flights have been suspended since 30 March 2020, the foreign visitors in the list are from special flights related with COVID-19.

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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.

Sittway state ministers encourage truck drivers, their mates undergoing antigen tests



A health worker is taking swabs from a man at Khine Thazin hall in Sittway on 7 October.

PHOTO: TUN TUN

RAKHINE State Electric Power, Industry and Transport Minister U Aung Kyaw Zan and State Social Affairs Minister Dr Chan Thar encouraged the truck drivers and helpers who are undergoing the Covid test through the use of the antigen test kits to receive virus clearance certifi-

icates to be able to go to the regions and states from Sittway town.

The antigen test kits using virus tests were carried out in Khine Thazin hall in Sittway town on 7 October 2020.

Initially, the state ministers and officials inspected the

preparation work to take the samples to detect the virus with the use of the test kits in the garden and inside the hall to control the spread of the coronavirus. Then, they encouraged the truck drivers and helpers to be patient with the need to wait for the test.

Regarding taking of the samples to detect with the test kits, Rakhine State Transport Department Head U Aung Than Phyu said that they have the directive of the Ministry of Health and Sports. We aim at detecting the virus with the use of the test kits to enable rapid trade flow upon giving the COVID-19 clearance certificates. There were a total of 203 truck drivers and conductors when we surveyed for three days to check the test kits. Today, we will test about 60 of them. The truck drivers and conductors have requested to conduct the tests for them. We have given the recommendations for some trader associations for the drivers and conductors to be able to go everywhere freely. Then we can ensure the smooth flow of the commodities. This time, around 25 trucks are entering Sittway town daily.

If we find the truck drivers and helpers positive, we will send them to hospital in coordination with the health department. And if they are discovered negative, they will receive the health clearance certificates for travelling.—Tin Tun (IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Suspension of domestic airlines extended until 31 October

FIVE airlines operating the domestic routes have extended the suspension of their domestic flights until the end of October to control the outbreak of COVID-19 better.

The domestic airlines had suspended flying of domestic routes starting from 11 September when COVID-19 second

wave started.

The suspension of flights was till 1 October, but the airlines have now extended the moratorium until 31 October.

At present, the Department of Civil Aviation has also extended a ban on arrival of the international airlines into Myanmar until 31 October.

With the suspension of the domestic routes, the five domestic airlines are refunding for the air tickets, but they also allow changing the flight schedule for the flight passengers.

The five domestic airlines in the country are Air KBZ, Air Thanlwin, Golden Myanmar Airline, Mann Yadanarbon and

Myanmar National Airline.

At present, Myanmar has reported 20,033 confirmed cases of Covid-19 with 471 deaths as of 7 October, according to the latest figures released by the Ministry of Health and Sports.—Zin Yaw Aye

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Trucks allowed to use Yangon-Mandalay expressway amidst COVID-19

THE trucks are allowed to use Yangon-Mandalay expressway temporarily from 5 October to 30 November to enable smooth flow of cargos in states and regions.

The trucks, which will use Yangon-Mandalay highway, are allowed to cross after paying as per the type of vehicle and tonnes as prescribed by the Ministry of Construction.

The Ministry of Construction has already informed the Myanmar Highway Freight Transport Service Entrepreneurs Association of the rules that allow the trucks to cross the Yangon-Mandalay highway. The rules are: the truck drivers are not allowed to drive at a speed of more than 60 kilometres per hour and only use the right lane and not to stop on the road ex-

cept 39th Mile, 115th Mile, 285th Mile and 352nd Mile truck terminals.

The truck drivers, who break the rules, will not be allowed to take the highway again.

The trucks will be inspected by the related committee to see whether they follow the rules and regulations or not. The highway police will also check the trucks on the highway.

Myanmar Highway Freight Transportation Service Entrepreneurs Association submitted a proposal to the government to temporarily use Yangon-Mandalay highway during the stay home period to ensure rapid flow at the end of September.—Aye Maung

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Trade Mark Ads

Call Thin Thin May,

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Black bean price jumps to above K1.1 mln per tonne on India demand



A worker piling the bag of beans in a warehouse. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

By Nyein Nyein

FOLLOWING the notification released by India concerning 150,000 tonnes of the black bean import quota, the domestic price of black beans soared to above K1.1 million per tonne, the trade data of Yangon Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung commodity depot) showed.

The black bean fetched around K107,000

per tonne in September-end. After the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India notified the quota for black bean import on 1 October, the prices climbed up to K1,130,000 per tonne.

The notification stated India's companies would get import licence for an equivalent amount of bean import. The import deadline will be on March-end, 2021.

Earlier, India issued

the notification to import 400,000 tons of black beans by March-end 2021. On 22 May. Then, India rapidly changed the import period of black bean to three months by August-end 2020 from the earlier set deadline of March 2021, as per their official notice.

However, Myanmar cannot export the entire quota by August-end deadline. Consequently, Myanmar's bean body asked to extend the Au-

gust-end deadline, and India still has not responded to the request. They reissued the notification to buy 150,000 tonnes of black bean from Myanmar instead.

Myanmar exported about 100,000 tonnes of black beans out of 400,000 tonnes to India by August-end, Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association stated.

"India extended import deadline as they experienced some damages to their farms due to erratic weather, resulting in yield drop," the traders shared their opinions.

Myanmar is the top producing country of black bean that India demands. Besides Myanmar, other beans such as pigeon peas, green grams and yellow peas, are also grown in Australia and Africa, the association stated.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

US dollar weakening despite CBM one week purchase of over \$15 mln

By Nyein Nyein

THE US dollar against Kyat keeps depreciating although the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) purchased over US\$15 million at an auction rate within a week, the local forex market data showed. The CBM reportedly purchased \$3.7 million on 2 October; \$3.8 million each on 5, 6 and 7 October. The US dollar exchange rate stood at K1,295 on 7 October despite the CBM's purchase.

"The instability in the exchange rate posed difficulties to those stakeholders engaged in the agriculture and livestock supply chains including farmers, traders and exporters. That is why the stable exchange rate is of vital importance for the businesses," the businesspersons pointed out. At present, the local forex market sees the weak sentiment amid the coronavirus outbreak and the trade disputes between the US and China, business experts shared their opinions.

Additionally, the CBM also bought \$44.2 million in the auction market last month (September), the CBM's data indicated.

The CBM's move is aimed at governing the market volatility and supporting the state's foreign exchange reserves, the CBM stated on 24 July. This year, the exchange rate moved in the range of K1,465-1,493 in January, K1,436-1,465 in February, K1,320-1,445 in March, K1,395-1,440 in April, K1,406-1,426 in May, K1,385-1,412 in June, K1,367-1,410 in July, K1,335-1,390 in August and K1,310-1,355 in September. Last year, the rates are pegged at K1,508-1,517 in July, K1,510-1,526 in August, K1,527-1,565 in September, K1,528-1,537 in October, K1,510-1,524 in November and K1,485-1,513 in December. On 20 September 2018, the dollar exchange rate hit an all-time high of K1,650 in the local currency market. (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

MIC to review Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR Investment Commission (MIC) will critique the Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan, said U Thant Sin Lwin, secretary of MIC.

The commission and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will jointly review the MIPP, affected by the coronavirus crisis, to boost the agricultural, health, industrial and digitization sectors for the post-coronavirus era.

"As per the MIPP, there are four task forces in which digitization is included. We need to review the digital industrial technology, with the assistance of JICA. Digitization plays a pivotal role in the coronavirus crisis. Consequently, the business digitization is required to be reviewed in manufacturing, production and related industries, he stressed. An Investment Promotion Committee meeting was held on 15

September, resulting in a decision to analyze the MIPP on account of the world economic situation.

"To promote the investment, the MIPP is carefully implemented by paying close attention with mindful and close observation of detail," the MIC secretary said.

The MIPP stated that Myanmar intends to reach foreign direct investment target of US\$5.8 billion for the Financial Year 2020-2021. Myanmar set FDI target of \$5.8 billion in the previous FY; however, it reached nearly the mark -- only \$5.68 billion owing to the COVID-19 negative impacts.

MIPP includes the first five-year plan, the second five-year plan, the third five-year plan and the fourth five-year plan. The objectives of MIPP are to realize the responsible and quality investments necessary for Myanmar to

become a middle-income country by 2030 and to pursue subsequent further growth until 2035, through the fundamental improvement of the business environment.

According to MIPP, the expected foreign investments are US\$5.8 billion from 2016-2017 to 2020-2021 financial years and then increase to \$8.5 billion from 2020-21 to 2025-26FYs. The FDI is possible to grow up to US\$12.3 billion in another five-year term from 2026-2027 to 2030-2031FYs. It is expected that the total foreign investment to reach US\$17.6 billion from 2031-2032 to 2035-36FYs.

As per the MIPP, the country expects to attract foreign direct investments of over \$200 billion in 20 years, said U Thang Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations. (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Commemorating 45 years of Diplomatic Relations

 Myanmar-Korea 

Joint Cultural Performance

For detail ↓ 

 ▷ [Highlights] 5-5:45pm, 9th Oct, MRTV TV

 ▷ [Full] 5-6:30pm, 9th Oct, MRTV-LIVE facebook (+ all MOI FB pages)

► Korean Embassy and Myanmar MORAC present Special Performance.
"with Congratulatory Remarks by the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi"




■ MORAC
- Ganggang Sullae (Korean song)
- Graceful Gems Dance (Myanmar song)




■ ROK Embassy (Pyeong Taek Nong Ak Preservation Society)
- Nong Ak (Korean song)
- Lutti (Myanmar song)



■ MC
Khar Ra & Aye Chan Moe



■ Special Performance
Ni Ni Khin Zaw & Billy La Min Aye

Ensure rights of people with different disabilities during COVID-19

CCOVID-19 presents particular risks for many people with different disabilities around the world. People with disabilities are entitled to life, human decency and the pursuit of happiness, just like all Myanmar people – and the government and the people must fight together to protect these rights, especially during this time of crisis. The work committee on rights of persons with disabilities formed nine sub-committees to ensure every disabled person enjoy their rights. Besides, the Technical Core Group of the work committee is drafting the five-year National-level Strategy for Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the draft is expected to be finished this year.

Meanwhile, the committees concerned should take measures to speed up the Ks.3 billion fund programme and leasing loans under the programme for the people with disabilities.

It is necessary to work for the rights of persons with disabilities, which should, on its current trajectory, ensure that every disabled person is guaranteed his/her rights, even during the pandemic.

To ensure that every person with disabilities in our country is not deprived of their rights and basic needs for their survival and livelihood, there must be systematic records of PLWD men and women lists including PLWD demographics.

People with disabilities who live at home often rely on community-based social services to meet their basic daily needs, including for meals and hygiene. They must have access to lifesaving information, communication strategies with qualified sign language interpretation for televised announcements, websites that are accessible to people with different types of disabilities, and telephone-based services that have text capabilities for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Without swift action to include people with disabilities in our response to COVID-19, they will remain at serious risk of infection or evendeadth as the pandemic spreads.

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EVERYONE TO DRAW "HARD LESSONS" FROM THE PANDEMIC

UN chief urges greater investment in universal health coverage, starting now

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of strong public health systems and emergency preparedness for communities and economies globally, the UN Secretary-General said on Wednesday, calling for greater investments in universal health coverage.

LAUNCHING his latest policy brief, "COVID-19 and Universal Health Coverage", Secretary-General António Guterres called on everyone to draw "hard lessons" from the pandemic, for which the world was not prepared.

One of those lessons, he said, "is that under-investment in health can have a devastating impact on societies and economies".

The pandemic revealed utterly inadequate health systems, yawning gaps in social protection, and major structural inequalities within and between countries, added Mr Guterres.

"COVID-19 has shown that universal health coverage, strong public health systems and emergency preparedness are essential to communities, to economies, to everyone," he highlighted.

Nine months into the crisis, COVID-19 has claimed more



Parents and caregivers line up with their children at an immunization centre in Janakpur, southern Nepal. PHOTO: UNICEF

than one million lives and infected more than 30 million people worldwide, with infections rising and signs of new waves. It has also cost the global economy \$375 billion a month, about 500 million jobs have been lost so far, and decades of human development

are going into reverse.

Healthcare should not depend on financial status

Though health is a fundamental human right and universal health coverage (UHC) a key target for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), at least

half of the world's population does not have full coverage of essential health services and over 800 million people spend at least 10 per cent of their household budgets to pay for health services.

The Secretary-General underlined that universal health cov-

erage requires governments to increase investments in common goods for health, including surveillance and risk communication, as well as making public health programmes inclusive and equitable, without financial barriers.

"Health treatment should not depend on financial status," he stressed.

Mr Guterres also highlighted the urgent need of universal health coverage, including mental health coverage to strengthen efforts against COVID-19 as well as to prepare for future crises.

Policy brief recommendations

The policy brief outlined five major recommendations, which include controlling further transmission of COVID-19 through proven public health measures and a coordinated global response; protecting the delivery of other essential health services

during the pandemic, such as for cancer; heart disease and other diseases.

Alongside, it also calls for ensuring everyone, everywhere has access to future COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatment; achieving universal health coverage, with increased investments in common goods for health, such as surveillance, procurement and supply chain, and risk communications; and strengthening pandemic preparedness and response.

The Secretary-General said though universal health coverage comes at a cost, the price is cheap, "when we consider the alternative".

"I urge all to speed up and scale up investment in universal health coverage and in stronger health systems, starting immediately," he said.

SOURCE: UN NEWS

STRONG LEADERSHIP, COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIES, CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION, AS WELL AS ENGAGING THE POPULATION

70 per cent of COVID cases located in just 10 countries, WHO reports

While COVID-19 has affected all countries, the pandemic is "uneven", and it is estimated that 10 per cent of the global population may have been infected with the virus, senior officials with the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Monday.

SPEAKING to a special session of the agency's Executive Board, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said 10 countries account for 70 per cent of all reported cases and deaths, and just three countries account for half.

"Not all countries have responded the same way, and not all countries have been affected the same way", he told the 34 members.

Most people still at risk

Globally, there were more than 35 million cases of COVID-19 as of Monday, and more than one million deaths.

Dr Michael Ryan, WHO Emergencies Director, reported that the pandemic continues to evolve, with a surge in Southeast Asia, an "upward trajectory" in the northern hemisphere, and an

increase in cases and deaths in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. Meanwhile, the situation "is currently rather more positive" in Africa and the Western Pacific.

"Our current best estimates tell us that about 10 per cent of the global population may have been infected by this virus. This varies depending on country; it varies from urban to rural; it varies between different groups. But what it does mean is that the vast majority of the world remains at risk", said Dr. Ryan.

"We know the pandemic will continue to evolve. But we also know we have the tools that work to suppress transmission and save lives right now, and they are at our disposal. The future depends on the choices we collectively make about how we use

those tools; develop, scale-up and distribute others."

Four country scenarios

Tedros outlined four scenarios countries are facing during the crisis. Some nations took quick and decisive action against the pandemic, thus avoiding large outbreaks. And while some countries suffered large outbreaks, they were able to bring them under control and suppress the virus.

"Third, while some countries brought the virus under control, as economies and societies have eased restrictions, there has been an increase in cases", he continued. And fourth, there are still some countries in the "intense phase of transmission."

Tedros stressed that "every situation can be turned around", underlining the importance of



Wearing a full protective suit, a woman doctor who leads a group of volunteer medical professionals attending to COVID-19 patients and persons under investigation at a community hospital in the Philippines. PHOTO: LOUIE PACARDO/ UN WOMEN

strong leadership, clear and comprehensive strategies, consistent communication, as well as engaging the population.

Funding and solidarity

With the northern hemisphere influenza season fast approaching, and COVID-19 cases increasing in some countries, the WHO chief outlined three pri-

orities for the coming months, including increasing funding to ensure all people will have equal access to any potential treatments. — SOURCE: UN NEWS

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INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (2020)
"ပေါင်းစည်းညီညွတ်သော စီမံဆောင်ရွက်မှုမှသည် သဘာဝဘေးလျော့ပါးရေးစီမံခန့်ခွဲမှု
"It's All About Governance"
အောက်တိုဘာလ(၁၃)ရက်

Next Generation Supplement be suspended due to COVID-19 pandemic

Dear students and contributors:

We, the Global New Light of Myanmar daily, will suspend our Next Generation Supplement pull-out, which comes out every Sunday, beginning from Sunday, 11 October due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We will announce one week ahead of schedule when we again begin publishing the section.

With Best Wishes,
Editorial Team



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 4:00 pm Wednesday 7th October, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the North Bay and East central Bay of Bengal. Monsoon is moderate over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 8 October, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, fairly widespread in Chin and Rakhine States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavyfalls in Taninthayi Region and Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of thundery activities in the Southern Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 October, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 October, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 October, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

management@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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Inn National League Party (INLP) presents its policy, stance and work programmes

Inn National League Party's (INLP), Youth Affairs Committee Member U Myo Min Tun presented party's policy, stance and work programmes through radio and TV on 7 October.



Mingalaba

May all Myanmar people and nationalities enjoy the improvement in real political, social and economic life, and have a mutual understanding.

I am U Myo Min Tun, youth affairs committee member of the Inn National League Party. Our party was founded on 26 April 2019, and its registration number is 124.

Our party has emerged to fulfil the needs of the nationalities. The main objective of our party is to foster mutual understanding and respect and personal mental power. We wish to use the enhanced qualification for the success of multiple reform and development undertakings of the nation.

Here, I would present an important point.

The establishment of a political platform for Inn nationals is the main point of the formation of our party. History proves that Inntha people played a significant role in reaching the Panglong Agreement, the foundation of the Union of Myanmar. Not a single candidate of the parties that represented Inntha people won a seat during the 2015 general election. The result is that even a single member of the parties representing Inntha people or a single person representing Inntha people was not invited to the Union Peace Conference: 21st Century Panglong which has been held for four times. So, we lost the opportunity to take part in the conference. So, we request support votes for us so that MPs of our party will be able to partake in the sessions of the national meetings and conferences held after the 2020 General Election. Voters should seriously consider our request as we also wish to serve the interest of the people, region and the nation like all other nationalities.

The visions of the party are:

- Involvement of Inntha people in the affairs of the Union together with all other nationalities;
- Conservation and promotion of literature, culture, traditions and socio-economic lives of Inntha and all brethren nationalities;
- Utmost efforts for the eternal existence of Inn Lay Lake;
- Cooperation with all other national races in the activities for unity and development of the entire Union.

We have resolved to realize the abovementioned points with the involvement of all national races of the whole country.

As the number of graduated local youth members is increasing, job opportunities for them have become an enormous challenge. We wish to solve this problem. We would disseminate basic knowledge that may enable the youth members to overcome the hardships with resilience after reviewing historical traditions and current situation.

We named our party "Inn National League" since it can ensure the united participation of other nationalities such as Shan, Pa-O, Taungyoe, Danu, Kayan and Bamar; with Inn Lay Lake, the home base to Inn nationals.

So, we can fully understand the hardships of the entire area and all the nationalities living in it and can use all-inclusive means to overcome them through coordination effectively. We seriously believe that the ways we are carrying will be useful and practical. Our population and area are the same as those of the nationalities, who have already been granted self-administration. However, we are not entrusted with self-administration. So, we are weak in development undertakings as we have no specific budget for them, and we also lost educational opportunities for children.

We intensely aim to amend the Constitution and thereby lead to the immediate and long-term development of the Union and the entire people. We shall consolidate national solidarity to ensure equal development of the nationalities of hill regions and plains, fundamental rights of nationalities, and human rights together with all other national races.

Inn nationals are living on the Inn Lay Lake and its shores. The lake is drying, and deterioration is worsening, and these changes are hurting the socio-economy of the Inn nationals. As the conservation of the lake is our responsibility, we will make coordinated efforts for the parallel development of the conservation work and

socio-economic development of the people.

According to the unique nature of Inn Lay area and Inn Lay Lake, villages, homes and floating crop fields are on the surface of the lake. But they have no guarantee. So, our party will lead the campaign for the State to acknowledge and guarantee its existence legally. Now, the UNESCO has acknowledged the lake as a 'Man and Biosphere Reserve'. So, there is the way for the balanced improvement of the lake conservation and regional interest.

We will make coordinated efforts for improving transport, commodity flow, farming, especially tomato cultivation as it is the main crop of the area, through appropriate means.

We seriously believe that residents should obey the rules and the laws, and invest all their morale, unity and knowledge for the benefit of the lake.

The party members will play a leading role in organizing the participation of responsible organizations and departments at the Union level and Shan State level, social organizations and expert groups, and international institutions to remedy in time the damage caused by the climate change.

We believe that efforts for the abovementioned issue will be more effective if the Inn Lay region becomes a self-administered zone.

The Inn Lay region is an important tourism destination of Myanmar; and its natural beauties are famous all over the world. So, it is one of the primary sources of foreign exchange income of the country. So, we will try to increase the revenue of locals through the tourism industry.

Esteemed nationalities

We the Inn National League Party will make collective efforts in the interest of the people, region and the country with noble spirit and qualified efforts. So, we believe people will support us with full confidence. With this, I conclude.

100-rower boat's coming,
All Inn nationals, vote the yellow circle,
It's the yellow circle you must vote.



Campaign speeches of political parties for 2020 General Election on 9 October

CAMPAIGN speeches of Khumi (Khami) National Party, Wa National Party (W.N.P) and Karen National Democratic Party for 2020 General Election will be published in the state-owned newspapers — the Myanmar Alinn, the Mirror and the Global New Light of Myanmar — on 9 October. — MNA

Campaign speeches of 3 political parties will be broadcast for second time

CAMPAIGN speeches of Mro National Development Party, National Unity Party and Lahu National Development Party for 2020 General Election will be broadcast on MRTV, Hluttaw Channel, Myanmar Radio and MRTV Facebook page on 8 October for the second time. — MNA

INDONESIAN EMBASSY IN YANGON STAYS RELEVANT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

UNPRECEDENTED occurrences require unprecedented actions. As Covid-19 strikes globally, the safety of the Indonesians in Myanmar is the priority of the Indonesian Embassy in Yangon. The capability to stay in touch with Myanmar friends and colleagues are also essential. Although the Covid-19 pandemic restricts people to gather, to the Embassy, being idle has never been an option.

Safety is priority

Prof. Dr. Iza Fadri, Indonesian Ambassador to Myanmar often reiterates that the safety of the Indonesian citizens is the priority. We use every channel possible (including the Embassy's social medias, whatsapp group, zoom meetings and contacting them personally) to reach out to approximately 800 Indonesians in Myanmar, to ensure that they are updated with any developments concerning the pandemic and stay alert on how to stay safe.

Since April 2020, the Embassy has assisted Indonesian Citizens to repatriate. As the pandemic spreads wider, more Indonesians are repatriated. So far, 151 Indonesians have returned safely. We coordinate closely with Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Myanmar Airways International to ensure its success. We deeply appreciate their support.

Economic blow or economic opportunities?

Restriction on overseas and domestic travels have resulted in the cancellation of a large-scale event including trade promotions. Therefore, The Indonesian Embassy encourages direct business-to-business contacts. Several Indonesian companies have successfully met their Myanmar importers or exporters for several product lines



Prof. Dr. Iza Fadri,
(Indonesian Ambassador to Myanmar)

such as chemical raw materials, Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), especially food and beverages, cosmetics and personal care, grains, and coal. The trade value between the two countries is quite stable until July 2020 at USD464 million. In details, Indonesia exported products amounted USD593 million, while Myanmar exports to Indonesia reached USD128 million.

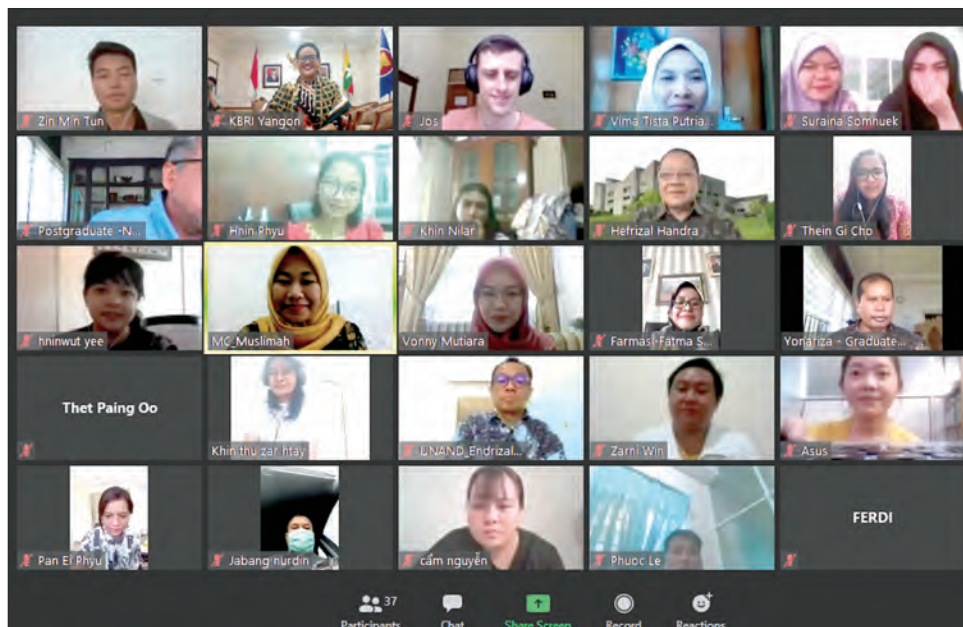
JAPFA Comfeed, Kalbe Myanmar, Telkom International, Wijaya Karya (WIK), Mayora and Nabati are some of the companies that are successfully maintaining their positive business flow amid the pandemic. Notably in the early days of the pandemic and during quarantine in April 2020, JAPFA, the livestock company, was among the main suppliers of broiler chickens sold in Yangon markets. With their growing interests and expansion within Myanmar market, Indonesia is currently planning to form a business community consisting of Indonesian companies and entrepreneurs to increase the bilateral trade.

Amidst an uncertain situation, Myanmar has not lost positive sen-

timent from foreign investors and profitably approved USD5 billion new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from October 2019 - July 2020. An Indonesian pharmaceutical company Kalbe Myanmar is one of the investors. The company has constructed a ready to operate drugs factory in Thilawa SEZ. The plant is currently undergoing clinical trials for their drugs before they are registered to the authorities. Once fully operational, Kalbe is committed to maximizing its factory capacity to help overcoming Covid-19 or another disease outbreaks in Myanmar.

Scholarships from Indonesia

Nine Myanmar students in July 2020 received scholarship to pursue their master's and doctorate degree in Andalas University (UNAND), Padang, Indonesia. The scholarship is under a direct of cooperation between the Embassy and UNAND. Among the awardees are graduates from the University of Medicine 1, Myanmar (dr. Zarni Win), Technological University, Mandalay (Khin Thu Zar Htay), Mandalay University (Hnin Phyu Wai) and Yangon



Web conference receiving Myanmar students awarded scholarships to pursue further education at Andalas University, Indonesia, 1 September 2020

University of Distant Education (Thet Paing Oo, an alumnus of the Indonesian Language Course held in Yangon).

On 1 September 2020, the Myanmar awardees took part in a zoom meeting socialization event for new foreign students of the UNAND postgraduate program. Scholarship recipients from Thailand, Vietnam, United Kingdom and Tajikistan were also present. UNAND is one of the best universities in Indonesia and highly capable to organize an international program. The learning process is conducted online. When the pandemic ceases, the students will study in Indonesia.

From 2019-2020, twenty Myanmar students received scholarship under direct cooperation between the Indonesian Embassy and universities in Indonesia and many more from different schemes. Currently three Myanmar students are studying at Brawijaya University, East Java and eight students at Padang State University, West Sumatra. More scholarships are offered in the future.

Two of the awardees studying at Brawijaya University are teachers from the Indonesian International School Yangon (IISY). The students and teachers of IISY are mostly from Myanmar. With the objective to improve IISY quality, providing scholarships and trainings to the teachers are inevitable.

This year, fifty new students are accepted by IISY out of 200 applicants. The total number of IISY population is 358 students (ECCE to Grade X). The learning process are currently online and will continue until it is safe for the students to return to the school.

Covid-19 does not equal fewer engagements

The Indonesian Embassy is aware that Myanmar people are active users of facebook (fb). Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Indonesia's independence, we held a

video competition "What does the friendship of Indonesia and Myanmar mean to you?", announced a week before 17 August 2020. We received more than 40 videos and uploaded them in our fb (Kbri Yangon) and instagram (indonesiainyangon). The Embassy reactivated its fb in January 2020. When the competition was announced in August 2020, it only had 466 friends. In the beginning of October 2020, it has 1,153 friends. The more than 147% increase is because the video competition allows more interactive engagements so we could promote Indonesia more.

One of the winners is Captain Aung Po, a Myanmar National Airlines pilot who studied in the Indonesian Government owned aviation school in Curug, Indonesia. He now owns a house production, which has been importing five Indonesian TV series to be played in Myanmar TV channels.

The Indonesian Embassy also reaches out to organizations that serve the people in need. Prof. Dr. Iza Fadri visited Yangon Muslim Free Hospital in November 2019 and saw how the hospital treated the patients equally regardless their religion. The Embassy donated a few times and in August 2020, Indonesia contributed required medicine. The value is considerably small, but we believe any contribution is helpful. Dawn Education Center is another non-profitable organization we supported this year with food and medicine supplies. Currently, we are in contact with Myanmar National Blood Center so we would be able provide them with required items within our reach.

Perceiving the pandemic as a challenge instead of obstacle, the Indonesian Embassy is determined to continue strengthen Indonesia-Myanmar cooperation, so both nations could keep on harvesting from it. —



A facility of Japfa Comfeed Myanmar in Myaung Dagar Industrial Zone

Saudi cruise displays pristine sites, economic ambitions

RIYADH — Sailing past pristine islands and turquoise lagoons, the first cruise ship offering Saudi tours serves a twin purpose -- jump-starting tourism despite coronavirus fears and showcasing austerity-defying megaprojects planned along the Red Sea.

In August, the cruise liner Silver Spirit began offering tours along the unspoiled coastline which the petro-state aspires to turn into a global tourism and investment hotspot as part of a plan to reduce reliance on oil revenue.

Chartered by a company owned by the Saudi Public Investment Fund,

the luxury ship offers a window into multi-billion-dollar "giga projects" that the kingdom is forging ahead with despite a sharp economic downturn.

"We are introducing the Red Sea to the world," Tourism Minister Ahmed al-Khatib told AFP in an interview aboard the ship.

"We are unlocking the value of the Red Sea."

On a four-day cruise, the ship sailed past the sites of key developments including the Red Sea project -- designed to be a Maldives-style resort destination embracing dozens of picturesque islands -- and Amaala, a luxury tourism project. —AFP ■

FAA posts pilot training standards for Boeing 737 MAX

WASHINGTON — US aviation safety regulators on Tuesday released pilot training protocols for the Boeing 737 MAX, moving the grounded jet one step closer to returning to the skies.

The Federal Aviation Administration published the standards incorporating recommendations from a board of civil aviation regulators from the United States, Canada, Brazil and the European Union. The agency is seeking public comment through November 2.



FAA chief Steve Dickson last week piloted a Boeing 737 MAX test flight, moving the grounded plane closer to regulatory approval to return to service. PHOTO: AFP

Although Tuesday's action by FAA is "an important step", the agency reiterated that "several key milestones" remain before the plane can be

returned to service.

These include a review of Boeing's final design documentation to confirm compliance with FAA regulations.

The MAX has been grounded since March 2019 following two crashes that killed 346 people.

FAA chief Steve Dickson last week said he was pleased with a 737 MAX test flight he piloted, but emphasized that more work was needed before the jet is returned to service.—AFP ■

Universal Studios Japan to open Mario themed area next spring

OSAKA — A Nintendo themed area at Universal Studios Japan in Osaka featuring its popular characters such as Mario will open to the public from spring 2021, the park's operator said Wednesday.

"Super Nintendo World", the world's first

attraction based on the firm's games, was initially slated to open in tandem with the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic games this summer, but was postponed to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, according to Comcast Corp.'s NBC

Universal.

Guests will be able to visit buildings featured in the games such as Mario's enemy's Bowser's Castle, and experience an attraction based on the hit "Mario Kart," among others.

The area cost over 60 billion yen (\$568 million) to

construct.

A Mario themed cafe and store will open on Oct. 16 within Universal Studios Japan prior to the area's grand opening. The cafe will serve food based on the games and the store will sell original merchandise.—Kyodo ■

Specific Procurement Notice Request for Bids Goods (Two-Envelope Bidding Process)

Country: Myanmar

Name of Project: National Electrification Project (NEP)

Contract Title: Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Solar PV Systems for Households and Public Facilities

RFB Reference No.: ICB S&I-DRD-3

1. The Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock and Irrigation now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for supply, installation and maintenance of solar PV Systems for households and public facilities in the following Regions: Lot 1- NEP Solar PV Packages in Shan North (6) and Shan East (5)

Lot 2- NEP Solar PV Packages in Ayeyarwaddy (10)

The Contracts will be financed by the Community Contribution.

2. For quick reference, some key qualification requirements include:

- The average annual turnover (or annual sales volume) of the last three years should be a minimum of MMK 3,800 million (equivalent) for Lot-1 and MMK 9,000 million (equivalent) for Lot-2 or higher which varies by lot and is cumulative if bidding for multiple lots.

- The bidder has successfully completed at least two (2) contracts in supplying, installing, supervising, commissioning and/or maintaining off-grid solar PV systems with batteries, in any year over the last five (5) years, and at least one of the two (2) contracts had a value equivalent to or greater than MMK 1,900,000,000 (equivalent) for Lot 1 and MMK 4,500,000,000 (equivalent) for Lot 2.

The details of the qualification requirements are in the bidding document.

3. Bidding will be conducted through the International Competitive Bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Procurement of Goods, Works and Non-Consulting Services under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers* dated January 2011 (revised July 2014) ("Procurement Guidelines"), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Procurement Guidelines. In addition, please refer to paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7 setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the address below and inspect the bidding document during office hours 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. at the address given below.

5. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be obtained free of charge by interested eligible bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below. The Bidding Documents will be issued through e-mail only. In case of any difficulty in obtaining the bidding documents, interested parties may contact in writing:

Dr. Soe Soe Ohn, Director

Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Office No. 36, Naypyitaw,

Country: Myanmar, Tel./Fax +95 673 418635, 418636

Email: ksaung@gmail.com; dr.soesoehohn@gmail.com; drdnep.procurement@gmail.com

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **November 25, 2020** (10.00 a.m.) Myanmar time. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. The outer Bid envelopes marked "ORIGINAL BID", and the inner envelopes marked "TECHNICAL PART" will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend, at the address below on or before **November 25, 2020** (10.00 a.m.) Myanmar time. All envelopes marked "SECOND ENVELOPE: FINANCIAL PART" shall remain unopened and will be held in safe custody of the Purchaser until the second public opening.

7. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security" as stated in ITB 19.1 - Bid Data Sheet of the Bidding Document.

8. The address referred to above is:

Attention: Dr. Soe Soe Ohn, Director, Project Manager of National Electrification Project

National Electrification Project, Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

Office No. 36, Naypyitaw, Myanmar. Tel /Fax: +95 673 418635, 418636

ksaung@gmail.com, dr.soesoehohn@gmail.com, drdnep.procurement@gmail.com

9. Clarification of the bidding document will be conducted through e-mail or letter to the Purchaser as stated in ITB 7 of the bidding document.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (031W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (031W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-10-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP/MITT 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 Claim's 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.

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NORDMAAS VOY. NO. (039S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NORDMAAS VOY. NO. (039S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-10-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/TMT 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 Claim's 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.

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The manufacture of SHANDONG TOPAGRI LIMITED (CHINA) have registered the following products in Pesticide Registration Board of Myanmar to distribute in Myanmar. Now, we have to change from old distributor name "AGRO POWER CO.,LTD", to new distributor name "ROYAL SHIN THANT CO.,LTD". If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days. ROYAL SHIN THANT CO., LTD. Ph-09444461516.

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2 female scientists win Nobel chemistry prize for gene editing method

OSLO — Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier on Wednesday won this year's Nobel Prize in chemistry for discovering a revolutionary genome editing technique, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said.

Doudna, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and Charpentier, who is currently based in Germany, created the CRISPR/Cas9 technique, which has contributed to new cancer therapies, the academy said in a release.—Kyodo ■



Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer Doudna.
PHOTO: AFP

New Zealand firefighters beating forest blaze

WELLINGTON — Firefighters in New Zealand battling a blaze that razed much of a small alpine village said they were making “good progress” Wednesday as high winds finally eased.

The wildfire erupted in a mountain forest on the South Island in the early hours of Sunday morning and swept through the popular tourist spot of Lake Ohau, forcing residents to flee for their lives.

Officials said it was miraculous no one was hurt in the fire, which has now burned out 55 square kilometres (21 square miles) and destroyed at least 50 homes.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand said firefighters were moving through the rugged terrain dousing hotspots and maintaining a perimeter around the blaze.

“Conditions have been better for crews today allowing for good progress,” it said.—AFP ■

Scientists detect ‘mass death’ of sea life off Russia’s Kamchatka

MOSCOW — Pollution off the Pacific shoreline of the remote Kamchatka peninsula has caused the mass death of marine creatures, Russian scientists said Tuesday.

Locals sounded the alarm in late September as surfers experienced stinging eyes from the water and sea creatures including seals, octopuses and sea urchins washed up dead on the shore.

Coming on the heels of a massive oil leak in Siberia, the latest incident has sparked a

large-scale investigation with fears that poisonous substances in underground storage since the Soviet era could have leaked into the water.

A team of divers from a state nature reserve found a “mass death” of sea life at a depth of five to 10 metres (16-33 feet), Ivan Usatov of the Kronotsky Reserve said, adding that “95 per cent are dead.”

“A few large fish, prawns and crabs are left, but only a very

small number,” the scientist said at a meeting with Kamchatka Governor Vladimir Solodov.

WWF Russia said in a statement that the pollutant appears not to be oil, but a “highly toxic transparent substance that is highly soluble in water.”

Surfers suffered burns to their corneas after swimming in the water, the Kamchatka governor said earlier.

Kamchatka, renowned for its spectacular scenery and live

volcanoes, teems with wildlife including brown bears. It is sparsely populated with just over 300,000 inhabitants.

Russian officials have launched a flurry of activity on President Vladimir Putin's orders.

Putin in June publicly chided officials for being evasive and slow to act over a spill of thousands of tonnes of diesel into soil and waterways in Arctic Siberia.—AFP ■

Japan’s Go To Travel campaign in trouble amid surge in COVID-19

TOKYO — In the context of a continued decline in exports and difficult recovery of inbound tourism amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Japanese government has launched a domestic travel promotion campaign to help tourism revive.

However, as a recent resurgence of the pandemic makes people hesitate, the “Go To Travel” campaign has run into trouble and may take more time to swing into full gear.

The government originally planned to launch the campaign in August, but moved it forward to July 22 to exploit a four-day vacation beginning July 23.

Since the beginning of July, the epidemic has rebounded in some parts of the country. In particular, the number of daily new infections in Tokyo has been on the rise.

With the situation, some experts and the public have expressed deep concern about the nationwide tourism promotion

campaign, fearing that the mass movement of people would lead to a wide spread of the virus. Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, alongside other government officials, have made clear their objections.

The Japanese government was thus forced to adjust its plan and exclude Tokyo from the campaign, affecting its residents and visitors as well.

Tokyo is both the most important source of tourists and a major tourist destination in Japan. As a result, many travel agencies have received cancellation requests, and the Japanese government has had to reimburse the related cost.

After Tokyo lowered its COVID-19 alert level in mid-September, the central government decided to bring it back to the Go To Travel campaign from Oct. 1.

The programme subsidizes domestic travels across the country, with the government providing up to half of the cost



Travellers check in at the domestic departure lobby of Chubu Centrair International Airport in Tokoname, Aichi Prefecture, on 21 July, 2020. PHOTO: KYODO/FILE

of the travel.

Under the 1.35 trillion yen (12.7 billion U.S. dollars) cam-

campaign, each tourist can get a subsidy of up to 20,000 yen (188.6 U.S. dollars) per day when going on a

lodging trip, and a one-day round trip can get up to 10,000 yen (94.3 U.S. dollars).—Xinhua ■

Singapore's deputy PM calls for avoiding zero-sum approach to technology



It's game on at the 10th Singapore Cyber Conquest! Teams from Institutes of Higher Learning in Singapore and ASEAN are working against the clock to complete a diverse range of cybersecurity challenges 1 October, 2019. **PHOTO: SICW/XINHUA/FILE**

SINGAPORE — Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat on Tuesday evening called on countries to avoid a zero-sum approach to technology and embrace cooperation instead.

The best way is to learn from one another and draw on each other's strengths, so that

countries can build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, Heng said when delivering a keynote address at the opening ceremony of the virtual Singapore International Cyber Week organized by the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore.

Noting that the world is at the centre of a digital revolu-

tion which would fundamentally change societies and economies, Heng said countries worldwide need to address such issues as the ethical use of technology, user privacy and a growing digital divide.

"As more people go online, crimes and threats have also gone virtual," he said. "Cyber-

security will be critical as we become more digital."

The rules-based multilateral order, which has underpinned growth and peace since the end of the Second World War, is now under pressure, Heng cautioned.

"Some countries have turned inwards as a result of domestic pressure, as the benefits of globalization had not been evenly spread and some segments are hurting," he said. "But despite their flaws and limitations, the world will be a poorer place without multilateralism and globalization."

By working together, countries can grow the global commons and sustainably benefit all countries and their peoples, he said, adding that a key area of collaboration is the digital economy, one of the few growing sectors during the pandemic.

Countries should better harness the strong growth potential of the digital economy by strengthening digital connectivity to enhance cross-border digital trade, and should also work together to develop new governance frameworks for the digital commons, so as to enable innovation while preserving public trust, Heng said.—Xinhua ■

French MPs vote to freeze ban on bee-killing pesticides

PARIS — French MPs have voted to temporarily lift a two-year-old ban on bee-killing neonicotinoid pesticides in a bid to save the country's crucial sugar beet crop threatened by an insect plague.

The ban entered into force in August 2018, placing France at the forefront of a campaign against chemicals blamed for decimating crop-pollinating bees.

But lawmakers in France's National Assembly, the lower house of Parliament, voted late Tuesday for a temporary lifting of the ban — a move that must still receive the green light from the Senate upper house.

There were 313 "yes" votes, 158 against and 56 abstentions for the move, which amounts to "a pragmatic response to the catastrophic situation in which the French beet sector finds itself," said Jean-Baptiste Moreau, an MP from Emmanuel Macron's LREM party.—AFP ■

Trump calls off stimulus talks, Fed says recovery faster with aid

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Tuesday called off talks on a new stimulus plan to boost the Covid-ravaged US economy until after the election, sending Wall Street plunging and upending recent progress made in the long-delayed negotiations.

The afternoon tweet undid optimism that had developed in recent days after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin resumed talks on a follow-up measure to the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act passed to blunt the coronavirus downturn.

But Trump struck a more conciliatory tone that night, tweeting he would immediately sign a Congressional bill guaranteeing a second round of \$1,200 stimulus checks and \$135 billion for small businesses — two elements that were already

included in the negotiations.

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell had hours before repeated his call for additional spending to help the world's top economy weather a downturn that has left tens of millions unemployed and caused a historic contraction in the second quarter.

But Trump accused the Democratic House leader of negotiating in bad faith, and said he had asked Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to instead focus on confirming his appointed judge to an opening on the Supreme Court.

"Nancy Pelosi is asking for \$2.4 Trillion Dollars to bailout poorly run, high crime, Democrat States, money that is in no way related to COVID-19," Trump tweeted, citing an incorrect figure for the Democrats' latest proposal.—AFP ■

US lawmakers call for shake-up of Big Tech 'monopolies'

WASHINGTON — A House of Representatives panel in a report Tuesday accused four Big Tech firms of acting as "monopolies," calling for sweeping changes to antitrust laws and enforcement that could potentially lead to breakups of the giant firms.

But the report by the House Judiciary Committee failed to win the endorsement of Republican members, highlighting a partisan divide despite widespread criticism of the tech giants.

The 449-page document concluded that Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google "engage in a form of their own private quasi regulation that is unaccountable to anyone but themselves."

"Companies that once were scrappy, underdog startups that challenged the status quo have become the kinds of monopolies we last saw in the era of oil barons and railroad tycoons," the report said.



A congressional report called for sweeping changes to antitrust laws and enforcement in response to the growing power of Big Tech firms, but Republican lawmakers declined to endorse the findings. **PHOTO: AFP**

The report follows an investigation of more than 15 months and hearings this year with the top executives of the four firms, in parallel to antitrust probes being led by federal and state enforcers.

Judiciary Committee chairman Jerrold Nadler and antitrust

subcommittee chairman David Cicilline said in a joint statement that the tech firms "each possess significant market power over large swaths of our economy" and have "exploited their power of the marketplace in anticompetitive ways."—AFP ■

Lebanon to begin consultations to name new premier

BEIRUT — Lebanese President Michel Aoun will begin parliamentary consultations to name a new prime minister next week, his office said on Wednesday.

It will mark the third attempt to name a new premier in less than a year following a series of resignations in the face of a deepening economic crisis and a port explosion that ravaged entire districts of the capital.

Outgoing prime minister Hasan Diab quit in the wake of the colossal August 4 explosion at Beirut port that killed more than 190 people, and wounded at least 6,500.

His designated successor Mustapha Adib stepped down last month after he failed to forge a consensus around a new government line-up.

“President Aoun has set Thursday, October 15 as the date for holding parliamentary



To unlock desperately needed Western aid, Lebanese President Michel Aoun must designate a new prime minister capable of persuading the country's myriad of confessional factions to approve a government committed to reform. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

consultations to assign a figure to form a new government,” his office said on Twitter.

Since the Beirut port blast,

Western governments have stepped up pressure on Lebanese leaders to put in place a government ready to implement

sweeping reforms and unlock much-needed aid.

On a visit to Beirut at the beginning of last month,

French President Emmanuel Macron said he had secured promises from Lebanon's factions to install a reform-minded administration within a fortnight.

When Diab finally abandoned his efforts to get faction leaders to deliver, Macron accused them of looking to their own selfish interests rather than those of the country.

The date set by Aoun for the start of parliamentary consultations comes just two days before Lebanon marks the first anniversary of a nationwide protest movement demanding sweeping political reform.

Its rallies lost momentum earlier this year as the coronavirus pandemic hit, but public anger has soared since the port blast, which was caused by the ignition of a huge stockpile of ammonium nitrate fertilizer that had been left uninspected for years.—AFP ■

As US reels, Pence and Harris square off in critical VP debate



Vice President Mike Pence and Kamala Harris's showdown has taken on an unusually pressing quality, given President Donald Trump's coronavirus diagnosis means the White House deputy is just a heartbeat away from the presidency. **PHOTO: AFP**

WASHINGTON — Vice President Mike Pence and Kamala Harris's showdown has taken on an unusually pressing quality, given President Donald Trump's coronavirus diagnosis means the White House deputy is just a heartbeat away from the presidency.

For once in their rollercoaster US presidential election, principals Donald Trump and Joe Biden yield the spotlight Wednesday to Vice President Mike Pence and the Democrat seeking his job, Kamala Harris, as they debate for the first time.

With Trump infected with the coronavirus that has already killed more than 210,000 Americans, the Pence-Harris showdown has taken on an unusually pressing quality, given that the White House deputy is

just a heartbeat away from the presidency. The duel in Salt Lake City occurs as the nation lurches from one crisis to another.

Not only has the president tested positive; coronavirus has spread through his inner circle, infecting dozens of top advisors, administration staff, senior military officials and Republican lawmakers.

Racial and political tensions are simmering, prompting Biden to issue a clarion call for national unity Tuesday and warn that “the forces of darkness” and division are “pulling us apart.”

Trump killed the Covid stimulus negotiations on the same day, assuring no new relief will reach millions of suffering families and countless struggling businesses until after the November 3 election.—AFP ■

Big crowd gathers for Greek neo-Nazi trial verdict

ATHENS — More than 8,000 people gathered Wednesday outside a Greek courthouse for the verdicts in the trial of leaders of the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn, police told AFP.

Many carried placards calling for the defendants to be imprisoned as they waited for the climax of one of the most important trials in the country's modern political history. The crowd started gathering two hours before the verdicts were due to be handed down from 0800 GMT, in response a call from the anti-fascist movement, trade unions and parties on the left.

“The people want the Nazis in jail”, read the placards.

Hundreds of police were also deployed at the courthouse, a few kilometres from the historic centre of the capital. After hearings over the last five years, the Athens court will determine whether Golden Dawn is a criminal organization that carried out violent attacks on opponents on the orders of founder Nikos Michaloliakos and his inner circle.—AFP ■

EU's Borrell warns over N.Cyprus 'violation'

BRUSSELS — The EU's diplomatic chief on Wednesday condemned plans by breakaway northern Cyprus to reopen part of a long-fenced-off town as a “serious violation” of a UN ceasefire agreement on the divided island.

Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar, backed by Ankara, has vowed to open a coastal section of disputed Varosha,

prompting anger from the island's internationally recognized government.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said the incident would only exacerbate tensions between Turkey and the bloc, already running high over Ankara's gas exploration in Cypriot waters.

“The opening of this area which is a closed area according

with the ceasefire agreements under the auspices of the United Nations is a serious violation of this agreement,” Borrell told the European Parliament.

He said the bloc would issue a statement later Wednesday “asking Turkey to stop this activity”.

“For sure this is not going to help. On the contrary it's going to make it more difficult

to reach an agreement on an especially difficult situation for all of us on the eastern Mediterranean,” he added.

The Turkish army has kept Varosha fenced off since its Greek Cypriot residents fled when it invaded northern Cyprus in 1974 in response to an Athens-engineered coup attempting to unite the island with Greece.—AFP ■

Phone Myint Kyaw wins silver in Chinese 8 Ball Ranking League

MYANMAR'S 9 ball and 8 Ball professional player Phone Myint Kyaw (alias) Ko Ar Ti won second place in the Chinese 8 Ball Ranking League which was held in Yingkou, China this week.

Phone Myint Kyaw stated the qualification matches of the tourney on 2 October and, he passed all the qualification matches.

Next, the Myanmar pool star made another brilliant victory in the quarterfinal stage on 3 October to reach the semifinal.

In semifinal which was held on 5 October, Phone Myint Kyaw met Chinese 8 ball professional player Yang Zhang Bin.

In the semifinal Phone Myint Kyaw managed to beat Yang Zhang Bin by a point of 12:9.

On the same day, Phone Myint Kyaw continued his final game and he faced against Chinese pool star Zhang Kun Peng.

In the final game, Phone

Myint Kyaw suffered 10-15 loss to Zhang Kun Peng.

For the loss in the final, the Myanmar pool star earned silver medal while Zhang Kun Peng won the gold medal for the 8 Ball League.

As a second prize, Phone Myint Kyaw won Yuan40,000, tourney authorizes stated.

After the game, Ko Ar Ti said: "I tried my best. But at the point of 10:10, I made a big mistake, and that made my mind some relentless to lose the game. There was no lucky ball later, and the opposing player is excellent."

This year, I have been second four times. I would like to express special thanks to all my fans for their encouragement, the Myanmar pool star added. Phone Myint Kyaw will next participate in a Chinese Snooker Tournament named "107 Saibaily" which is being held in Chen Chuan this week.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Myanmar's pool star Phone Myint Kyaw (Right) seen with second prize at the Chinese 8 Ball Ranking League in Yingkou, China on 5 October. PHOTO: KO AR TI FACEBOOK PAGE

Scotland, Ireland among those seeking Euros places in playoffs

LONDON — Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland are among the 16 sides hoping to take a step closer to qualifying for next year's European championships in the Euro 2020 playoffs on Thursday.

AFP Sport explains how the new format will work and who can claim one of the four remaining

places at the rescheduled tournament.

How does it work?

Twenty teams have already book their place at Euro 2020 through qualifying. The 16 sides in action this week are the best-placed finishers from the inaugural Nations League to have not

already qualified.

Split into four sections of four, each path will consist of two semi-finals played on Thursday and one final on November 12.

Who is in the mix?

At least one nation from every tier of the Nations League must qualify. Therefore one of Georgia, Belarus, North Macedonia and Kosovo will reach a major international tournament for the first time as the best teams from League D.

Scotland are aiming to end a 22-year wait to qualify for a tournament as they face Israel at Hampden.

"We knew how big this game was going to be a long time. It has always been in the back of our minds, even previously playing other games this has always been the one that everybody has looked at," said Scotland midfielder Kenny McLean.—AFP



Andy Robertson is hoping to lead Scotland to a first international tournament since 1998. PHOTO: AFP

Messi to put Barca drama behind him as Argentina seek fast start

BUENOS AIRES — Superstar footballer Lionel Messi will take a break from his Barcelona soap opera as he bids to fire Argentina to the World Cup in Qatar and what will probably be his last chance to try to win the coveted trophy.

The 33-year-old, a record six-time winner of the Ballon d'Or, has won everything in the club game with Barcelona several times over but his inter-

national trophy cabinet looks bare in comparison. "The only goal I have now is to win the World Cup with the national team," he has said.

The closest he has come so far was as losing finalist against Germany in 2014.

Thursday's clash with Ecuador gives him the chance to start building towards one last tilt at that goal.—AFP

Nadal to face Schwartzman in 13th Roland Garros semi-final

PARIS — Rafael Nadal reached his 13th Roland Garros semi-final early Wednesday, defeating Italian teenager Jannik Sinner in a high-quality clash which ended just before 01:30 in the morning, the latest ever finish at the tournament.

Nadal, the 12-time champion, won 7-6 (7/4), 6-4, 6-1 to clinch his 98th victory in his 100th match at the French Open.

The 34-year-old will now face Argentina's Diego Schwartzman, who knocked out third seeded US Open winner Dominic Thiem, the runner-up in Paris to Nadal in the last two years, for a place

in Sunday's championship match.

It will be Nadal's 34th semi-final at the majors.

Nadal takes a 9-1 lead over Schwartzman into that match although the Argentine won their most recent clash in Rome on the eve of Roland Garros.

World number 75 Sinner, bidding to become the first man to make the semi-finals on debut since Nadal in 2005, was left to rue his missed chances.

The 19-year-old led with breaks in both of the first two sets, even finding himself just two points away from taking the opener.—AFP



Spain's Rafael Nadal. PHOTO: ROLAND-GARROS/TWITTER/AFP