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President U Win Myint casts advance vote in Nay Pyi Taw



President U Win Myint casts advance vote in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020. PHOTO:MNA

PRESIDENT U Win Myint cast his advance votes for the 8 November General Election at the election sub-commission office of Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

He cast his ballots for the Hluttaw candidates who represent the constituen-

cy of his permanent residence in Tamway Township in Yangon.

The President also signed Form 15 for voters outside their constituencies and the voting record register. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi casts advance vote in Nay Pyi Taw



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi signs Form 15 for voters outside constituencies and voting record register in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi cast her advance votes for the 8 November General Election at the election sub-commission office of Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

She cast her ballots for the Hluttaw candidates from the Bahan Township constituency in Yangon.

The State Counsellor also signed Form 15 for voters outside their constit-

uencies and the voting record register.

A total of 482 eligible voters filed Form 15 applications for advance voting outside their permanent constituencies to the election sub-commission office of Zabuthiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw. Among them, 117 persons have already voted earlier and 22 persons registered for advance voting yesterday.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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Announcement for political party supporters

1. The Union Election Commission is making efforts to hold the 2020 General Election successfully, and all the people need to adhere to the regulations.
2. In the Notification 173/2020 dated 6-9-2020, the UEC announced rules in conducting election rallies and campaigns for the 2020 General Election 8 November.
3. The Ministry of Health and Sports issued Order 101/2020 dated on 6-9-2020 that says that gatherings and election campaign activities may have a maximum of 50 people, depending on the size of the site and its location, while conducting in line with the Standard Operating Procedure for the 2020 General Election; a distance of 6 feet must be maintained between each person; the location must have good ventilation; an area of 36 sq ft for each person must be arranged and other COVID-19-related guidelines must be followed.
4. However, it was seen that some election rallies and campaigns of political parties and candidates exceeded the number of people allowed to gather, some people failed to adhere to the “social distancing rule”, and some supporters neglected to comply with the Ministry of Health and Sports guidelines. Therefore, the UEC issued Notification 199/2020 dated 24-10-2020 to call on all campaigners to adhere to the relevant orders and guidelines and to supervise to ensure that party members and supporters adhere to those directives.
5. Therefore, political party supporters should abide by the directives and instructions related to the election campaign and health guidelines. Groups of more than 50 people are not allowed on any vehicle including motor vehicles, boats and trishaws in the campaigns and the people must adhere to the social distancing rules in order to prevent unwanted incidents, and those who fail to adhere to the rules shall face legal actions.

Union Election Commission

COVID-19 medical devices from China reach Myanmar by 8 more flights on 29 Oct



COVID-19 medical devices imported from China arrive at the Yangon International Airport on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA



COVID-19 medical devices imported from China arrive at the Mandalay International Airport on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA

MYANMAR is importing medical devices from China for COVID-19 prevention in the 2020 General Election.

KN95 masks and boots were carried by 5 special flights to Yangon and by 3 special flights to Mandalay

yesterday. More medical devices will be imported from China until 3 November. —MNA

Section 58 (d) in Hluttaw Election Law



IN accordance with section 58 (d) of the Hluttaw Election Law, no one is allowed to give speeches at meetings, instigation, writing, distribution of using posters or attempting by other means to disturb the voting or election. Anyone who is found guilty of or abet this act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or with fine not exceeding K100,000 (one hundred thousand Kyats), or with both.

1,331 more new cases of COVID-19 reported on 29 October, total figure rises to 50,403

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rise to 50,403 after 1,331 new cases were reported on 29 October according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 50,403 confirmed cases, 1,199 died, 30,007 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 29 October 2020



Daily Death toll until 8 pm 29-10-2020

27

Ministry of Health and Sports

2020 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION



Advance voting process for local voters outside their constituencies in 2020 General Election

- Heads of trainings, schools, hospitals and jails are to contact the sub-election commissions to get documents of Form 15.
- They must return these documents to sub-commission of respective townships by 26 August 2020 after the documents are filled by the voters.
- Sub-election commission of respective townships must send ballot papers and envelopes for advance voting to the trainings, schools, hospitals and jails by 7 October 2020.
- Advance voting must be organized at trainings, schools, hospitals and jails on their appropriate day from 8 October 2020 to 21 October 2020.
- The envelopes containing ballot papers must be sent back to sub-election commission of respective townships by 4 pm on 8 November 2020.

2020
General Election
Sunday, 8 November 2020



Campaign speeches of two political parties for 2020 General Election will be broadcast for second time

CAMPAIGN speeches of Party for People and Union Farmer-Labour Force Party for 2020 General Election will be broadcast on MRTV, Hluttaw Channel, Myanmar Radio and MRTV Facebook page at 7 pm on 30 October for the second time. — MNA

Union Chief Justice, Constitutional Tribunal Chairman, UEC Chairman cast advance vote in Nay Pyi Taw

CHIEF Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo and wife Daw Aye Aye Thein cast their advance votes together with Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt and wife Daw Htay Yi, and Chairman of the Union Election Commission U Hla Thein and wife Daw Aye Thidar in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

They arrived at the election sub-commission office of Ottarathiri Township at 9:30 am and signed in the record book to cast votes in accordance with the health guidelines of COVID-19.

Some eligible voters cast their early votes at the polling stations in Ottarathiri, Pobathiri, Zeyarhithi and Tatkon townships of Ottarathiri District on the same day.

There is a total of 419,157 eligible voters in four townships of Ottarathiri District.— MNA

Translated by Khine Thaz-in Han



Chief Justice of the Union U Tun Tun Oo and wife Daw Aye Aye Thein cast advance votes in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt and wife Daw Htay Yi cast advance votes in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



UEC Chairman U Hla Thein and wife Daw Aye Thidar cast advance votes in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

Section 59 (g) in Hluttaw Election Law



IN accordance with section 59 (g) of the Hluttaw Election Law, no one is allowed to vote more than once in any election for a Hluttaw constituency in which he or she has the right to vote. Anyone who is found guilty of or abetting this act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or with fine not exceeding K100,000 (one hundred thousand Kyats), or with both.

"People are the key"

MoC discusses trade promotion for broader market

THE Ministry of Commerce held a coordination meeting virtually in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning, with focus on the promotion of trade for broader market by producing value-added products which have competitive norms in terms of value and quality.

In his remark, Union Minister Dr Than Myint said the ministry is making for the development of trade volume and national interests. Although the foreign trade deficit showed US\$5.5 billion in 2015-2016FY, the trade deficit now reduces by \$1.4 billion in 2019-2020FY due to the efforts of ministry.

The Union Minister also discussed preparations and arrangements to increase the trade volume as it might face some impacts of COVID-19 in 2020-2021 even though it can suppose that sector has less COVID-19 impact, CERP, fully online system for import/export licences, the reduced licence fees and Myanmar TradeNet



Union Minister Dr Than Myint participates in the virtual meeting on promotion of trade for broader market on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA

2.0 including work plans for the development of SEZs and appointment of 15 Economic Counsellors in 12 foreign countries to uplift the trade sector

and bilateral cooperation with the trading partners.

He continued saying that it needs to make efforts to increase the exports by comply-

ing with the State's economic policies, to gain broader market without relying on a single market, as well as to produce value-added products which are

competitive in price and quality.

Then, the Deputy Minister discussed the use of the internet and online system for the growth in trade, capacity building training, organizing of consumer protection committees, procurement of emergency reserve rice, purchasing of paddy for the interest of farmers, National Export Strategy, the establishment of Help Desk and International Trade Centre, enactment of the law for international trade and establishment of a market-oriented economic system with the help of private sectors.

The Permanent Secretary, the Directors-General of the relevant departments and the heads of border trade camps respectively presented the work plans, and the Union Minister concluded the meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

MoEA donates refrigerator, air-con, meal box to hospitals in Nay Pyi Taw

MINISTRY of Ethnic Affairs donated K3 million worth of a refrigerator and four air conditioners to the COVID-19 intensive care unit at the 1000-bedded General Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw.

The families of the MoEA also donated meal boxes and canned foods to the medical staff and patients in 1000-bedded General Hospital; 300-bedded General Hospital, the Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat Hospital and Dental Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw.

The donation ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Naing Thit Lwin and wife Mi Kyin Than, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe and wife Dr Nan Khan Mine, Deputy Ministers Dr Mya Lay Sein and U Hla Maw Oo, the Permanent Secretaries,

Directors-General, Hospital Superintendents, doctors and officials.

Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Naing Thit Lwin and wife Mi Kyin Than presented K3 million worth of one refrigerator and four air-cons for COVID-19 ICU at 1000-bedded General Hospital to Dr Aung Lin Aye, the Deputy Superintendent of the hospital.

The Union Minister and wife also handed over K3.3 million worth of meal boxes and canned foods produced by Sein Hin Thar Co., Ltd for the medical staff and patients at the Eye.ENT hospital and Dental Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA

Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung

Ministry of Ethnic Affairs donates refrigerator and air conditioners for 1000-bedded General Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA



Chinese Embassy donates medical supplies to MoHS

CHINESE Embassy in Yangon donated viral nucleic acid extraction test kits and viral transport kits to the Ministry of Health and Sports yesterday morning.

Director-General of the Medical Research Department Prof Dr Zaw Than Tun received US\$78,572 worth of donation items from Minister Counsellor from the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar Mrs Li Xiaoyan and returned the certificate of honour. —Zaw Min Latt (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Director-General Prof Dr Zaw Than Tun (R) accepts the donations presented by Minister Counsellor from the Chinese Embassy Mrs Li Xiaoyan (L) in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA

we are making arrangements for greater participation by private sector hospitals and medical clinics in the COVID-19 containment efforts

As we have experienced the second wave of the COVID-19 disease, the Ministry of Health and Sports has achieved a greater level of understanding as to how to confront, how to overcome this challenge, how to take care of the new positive cases and provide them with treatment. As their knowledge and understanding reach a higher level, they are now able to give more effective care and treatment. At this time, we are making arrangements for greater participation by private sector hospitals and medical clinics in the COVID-19 containment efforts. This is to make it possible for people to have a choice. If they wish to go to a private medical clinic or a private hospital, whether it is for COVID or any other underlying health problem or any other disease, they can do so according to their own choice. As they make their own choice, the Ministry of Health and Sports has prescribed rules and regulations in coordination with the private medical clinics and hospitals for the safety and comfort of the people, hospitals and the general public. In this way, people can make their own choice, and this gives some relief to the government hospitals. We believe that this would help us in our efforts to confront the COVID-19 disease.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's reports on containment measures against COVID-19, on 27 October 2020)



MoLIP donates cash for Nay Pyi Taw Residential Nursery

UNION Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population and wife Daw Mya Theingi handed over the collective cash donation of officials and staff members to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday afternoon.

The cash donation is aimed for the childcare centre established in Nay Pyi Taw by the Association for Prevention, Care and Protection of Abandoned Children.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye expressed thanks for the donation that will be used for early childhood care and development services of the Social Welfare Department including protections for single



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye accepts the cash donated by Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 October 2020.

PHOTO: MNA

mothers and the abandoned children.

At the ceremony, Daw

Mya Theingi, wife of MoLIP Union Minister, presented K10 million for one cash endow-

ment to the Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and received the certificate of honour.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Advance voting for 2020 General Election begins in Nay Pyi Taw

ADVANCE voters, in compliance with COVID-19 preventive guidelines, cast their ballots for 2020 General Election at the respective ward/village-tract election sub-commission offices in Nay Pyi Taw

yesterday.

The advance voters included those outside their constituencies, civil service employees performing duties outside their constituencies, those cannot come to the poll-

ing stations on the Election Day and elderly persons aged 60 and above.

They voted at the respective ward/village-tract election sub-commissions in the townships of Zabuthiri,



An older woman casts advance ballot in Lewe on 29 October 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



An elderly woman casts advance vote in Pynmana on 29 October 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Elderly persons cast advance votes in Ottarathiri on 29 October 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

Pobbathiri, Dekkhinathiri, Ottarathiri, Zeyathiri, Tatkon, Pynmana and Lewe.

Election officials, taking body temperature, providing hand sanitizer and face masks, conducted voting processes in line with COVID-19 preventive guidelines.

The election sub-commissions have managed home-based methods of voting for the elderly persons aged 60 and above from 29 October to 5 November.—Myo Thwin Kyaw

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Notification on social security benefits

The Union Government is implementing the social security assistance programmes for the elderly aged 85 and above to promote health, nutritional development and income security and to reduce vulnerability of their families.

Each elderly person receives K30,000 every three month—K10,000 for each month under the cash assistance programme.

They need to apply for the social security benefits at the social security board offices of respective township/ ward/village and Region/State/Township with their ID cards or Household Certificate Form 66/6 as an evidence for their ages.

Those who have none of these evidences can apply for cash assistance with the recommendation letter with four-levels of eligibility.

For more information, suggestions and complaints relating to the social security benefits for the elderly aged 85 and above, the Social Welfare Department can be contacted at 067-3404077, 067-3404222 and 067-3404999.

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

Elderly persons start advance voting in Yangon Region

ELDERLY persons in Yangon Region cast their advance votes for 2020 General Election in home-based method voting in Yangon yesterday.

Chairperson of Dawbon Township Election Sub-Commission U Myo San said, "Advance voting in Dawbon Township began at 8 am today by using mobile ballot boxes from home to home of the elderly persons. A member of ward election sub-commission and head or deputy head of polling station were included home-based voting method from 8 am to 6 pm. There are some 70,000 voters including nearly 10,000 elderly voters in Dawbon Township."

The senior voters could cast their ballots through mobile ballot boxes until 5 November.

Seventy-three-year-old voter U Kyin Aye of Myoma (South) Ward from Thanlyin Township said, "Officials from ward election commission came to home for advance voting. To prevent from COVID-19, I wear a face mask when they come. All of the election officials also wear masks and gloves. I want to ask other persons to vote not to lose their precious voting rights."

U Khin Maung Aye from Sit-



Elderly persons in Thanlyin Township cast advance ballots for 2020 General Election on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: YE HTUT, THAN WIN

toung Yeikmon Housing of Dagon Myothit Seikan Township, Yangon Region, said, "I cast ballots at the designated polling station this evening. I took my voting number and ID card when I went to the polling station. The voting process is transparent. Face masks and gloves were worn to prevent from COVID-19."

Advance voting of the people from quarantine centres and elderly persons began at the desig-

nated places and at houses with mobile ballot boxes.

Relevant election sub-commissions provided COVID-19 preventive supplies for the voters.

Chairperson of Election Sub-commission in Dawbon Township said, "To prevent from COVID-19 infection, the advance voters were asked to wear masks and to wash their hands with hand sanitizers. Election officials also wore gloves, face masks and



face shields".

A total of 5,809 polling stations were set up, and over 50,000 election officials were assigned in Yangon Region for 2020 General Election.

There are 295 Pyithu Hluttaw candidates, 69 Amyotha Hluttaw candidates, 295 Hluttaw candidates for Constituency 1, 277 Hluttaw candidates for Constituency 2, 7 Hluttaw candidates for Kayin Ethnic Affairs, 6 Hluttaw

candidates for Rakhine Ethnic Affairs, and 32 independent Hluttaw candidates who will contest in 2020 General Election.

Yangon Region Election Commission has recorded 5.6 million eligible voters in the region for the upcoming elections, increased by nearly 600,000 voters in comparing with the figures of 2015 General Election.—Min Thit (MNA) (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Myanmar seamen, citizens fly back home from Egypt, Japan



THE relief flight of Myanmar National Airway organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Cairo landed at the Yangon International Airport bringing back a total of 140 Myanmar seamen after they were stranded in Egypt due to the suspension of international flights, yesterday morning.

Another MNA relief flight organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo also brought back a total of 157 Myanmar nationals from Japan yesterday evening.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health

and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged 7-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries to bring back the citizens and Myanmar seamen by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), —MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Myanmar returnees queue for immigration service at the Yangon International Airport on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA

Japan provides 113,000 bottles of indelible ink for 2020 General Election in Myanmar

A total of 113,000 bottles of indelible ink supported by the Japanese government and its people arrived in Yangon by a special flight from Kuala Lumpur of Malaysia yesterday afternoon.

The assistance was given under the 'Election Assistance

Programme' of the Japanese government to Myanmar.

On behalf of Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr Takimi Kazuyuki, Counsellor of the Embassy of Japan, handed over the bottles to U Kyi Myint, Chairperson of Yangon Region Election



Indelible ink bottles provided by the people of Japan arrive at the Yangon International Airport on 29 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA



People of Japan provide Myanmar with indelible ink bottles under the 'Electoral Assistance Programme'.

PHOTO: MNA

Sub-Commission at the airport. Funded by the Japanese government and its people, the UNDP will organize the three flights for transporting the electoral ink bottles. Japanese Ambassador Mr Ichiro Maruyama said that Japan also supplied the indelible ink bottles in 2015 General Election in Myanmar; the first batch of bottles this year were

worth about US\$1.7 million, and their assistance would be useful for free and fair elections. The Japanese Embassy in Yangon has also issued a statement that the upcoming General Election on 8 November is a milestone in Myanmar's progress in the democratization process; the Government of Japan will fully support Myanmar's democratic

nation-building and will dispatch an Election Observation Mission headed by Mr Yohei SASAKAWA, the Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar, and will also support the conduct of free and fair election through this grant project.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Italy provides UNFPA Euro400,000 to women, girls programme in Myanmar

Ms Alessandra Schiavo, Italian Ambassador to Myanmar and Mr Ramanathan Balakrishnan, UNFPA Representative for Myanmar signed an agreement for a grant of Euro400,000. This funding is to support UNFPA Women and Girls First Programme - Phase II (2020 - 2022).

The funding allows UNFPA to continue critical interventions

to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV), ensure access to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services for women, girls, young people in conflict affected areas, including elderly women, women and girls with disability, LGBTQIA+ and marginalized

groups. Bridging the humanitarian, peacebuilding and development nexus, the Women and Girls First Programme is benefitting targeted population across Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Mon, Kayin and Kayah States.

Mr Ramanathan Balakrishnan said, "Italian Funding for Women and Girls First Programme is coming at the right

time. The contribution enables us to ensure continuity of UNFPA support on critical services of GBV and MHPSS to meet the essential needs of conflict-affected women, girls and young people through the programme."

UNFPA, United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency, continues to deliver critical and life-saving GBV, MHPSS and SRHR services for the most vulnerable women and girls through 33 Women and Girls Centres and mobile and static clinics in Rakhine, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon and Shan States.

"Italy intends to contribute to a better future for all women and girls in this Country. The positive results achieved during the first phase of its implementation made Women and Girls First one of the flagship programs in Myanmar for promoting the advance-

ment of women's right. I am truly honoured to sign this agreement and work in this direction," said Ms Alessandra Schiavo, Italian Ambassador to Myanmar.

"The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) is fully aligned to the 2030 Agenda. Through this initiative AICS is reaffirming its commitment to end violence against women and girls, reinforcing the peacebuilding component in the humanitarian and development nexus, and also responding to the current health crisis," affirmed Mr Walter Zucconi, Head of Office at AICS Yangon.

Italy provided Euro800,000 Euro to Women and Girls First Programme Phase I during 2016-2019. The Women and Girls First Programme is supported by Australia, the EU, Finland, Germany, Italy and Sweden. —GNLM



UNFPA Representative for Myanmar Mr Ramanathan Balakrishnan.



Ms Alessandra Schiavo, Italian Ambassador to Myanmar and Mr Walter Zucconi, Head of Office at AICS Yangon

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre (phone number 2019) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 9 am to 5 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

Over 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers from the Myanmar Medical Association totally 60 workers have been working at the centre since 8th April.—MNA

Expanding export market is called key to reviving economy in post-COVID-19 period

NO COUNTRY is emerging unscathed from the Covid-19 pandemic, but the impact on the world's poorest countries is especially severe.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) warned last month that economies across Asia will contract this year for the first time in nearly six decades but recovery will resume next year, as the region starts to emerge from the economic devastation caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Myanmar had witnessed that its trade promotion efforts had narrowed the deficit from US\$ 5.5 billion in 2015-2016 fiscal year to US\$ 1.4 billion in 2019-2020 fiscal year.

The impact from the COVID-19 pandemic on the trade sector in the current fiscal year is not as severe as we expected. However, we need to be well prepared for reviving the economy in the post-COVID-19 period as our country's trade sector is expected to be hit by the sufficient quantities of food.

Expanding our foreign markets with the rest of the world, without relying on sole market, and producing quality value-added products meeting international standards will be critical to igniting economic growth in the post-COVID era.

Expanding our foreign markets with the rest of the world, without relying on sole market, and producing quality value-added products meeting international standards will be critical to igniting economic growth in the post-COVID era.

Meanwhile, we must implement the CERP plan effectively to mitigate risks from the COVID-19 pandemic as a prolonged pandemic remains as a downside risk to our region's growth outlook this year and next year. "Most economies in the Asia and Pacific region can expect a difficult growth path for the rest of 2020," said ADB Chief Economist Yasuyuki Sawada. "The economic threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic remains potent, as extended first waves or recurring outbreaks could prompt further containment measures."

Consistent and coordinated steps to address the pandemic, with policy priorities focusing on protecting lives and livelihoods of people who are already most vulnerable, and ensuring the safe return to work and restart of business activities, will continue to be crucial to ensure the region's eventual recovery is inclusive and sustainable.

It is worth noting that the Ministry of Commerce has relaxed trade restrictions including reducing licence fees and transformed its export and import licence issuing to an online system. Besides, MyanmarTradeNet 2.0 is expected to launch soon.

Hence, we are confident that our country could revive the economy in the post-COVID period by promoting exports and associated imports.



Maintaining sustainable food system during COVID-19 pandemic

By Than Oo (Lay Hmyet Hnar)

FAO MEMBER countries, including Myanmar, have made sincere efforts to gain significant achievements in promoting productivity in the agricultural sector in the past decades. However, famine, obesity, environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, food waste, weakness in the security of the life of workers in the food production chain, and the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic on food supply chains and food systems are continuing.

Despite increases in the production of food globally, an estimated 2 billion people throughout the world did not have regular access to safe, nutritious and sufficient quantities of food. An estimated 135 million people in 55 countries around the world are facing acute levels of hunger, and the COVID-19 pandemic could nearly double the number of people suffering from serious hunger. Therefore, the Food and Agriculture Organization has announced that there is an urgent need to provide assistance for food, nutrition and securing proper livelihoods for the people.

The FAO's statement said the global population is projected to reach 10 billion by 2050. According to this estimate, the supply for the world's food security would significantly increase, and if we can not change current food systems, we might suffer by 2050 due to the weakened security of food supplies and increased malnutrition. Good nutrition plays an important part in leading a healthy life. To ensure receiving essential nutrients, we need to eat fish, meat and vegetables. During the past decades, diet practices and food styles of human beings changed significantly. Due to unhealthy foods and lifestyles, preventable diseases are occurring, not only

in developing and poor countries, but also in developed ones. On the other hand, vegetables, meat and poultry production sectors are suffering from natural disasters, due to climate change and over-use of chemicals, such as fertilizers and pesticides in the agricultural sector, which has caused damage to the health of consumers. Meanwhile, the world's countries have experienced the impact of global warming and climate change for over a decade. Due to environmental degradation and the decreasing biodiversity, the world is facing the impact of the disease on meat and poultry production. Efforts to control diseases with the use of chemicals have caused significant challenges for the safety and nutrition of food, and we are tackling these problems today. These facts have been pushing us to change our food systems.

It is known to all that while experiencing and tackling annual floods, drought, landslides and outbreaks of diseases on vegetables and meat, the world's countries are facing the global pandemic of COVID-19, posing a threat to the lives of human beings.

During this time, every country needs to lay down short-term and long-term plans, and to implement them in response to the pandemic, depending on the situation in their respective countries. In response to the pandemic, the governments of the world's countries, balancing the loads they can shoulder and their capabilities, have to take measures to provide emergency food aid to those people who are suffering from the pandemic, to provide assistance which can ensure sustainable agricultural production, to adopt required policies and rules and orders, which can ensure sustainable food systems and cooperation

PHOTO: AUNG MOE



PHOTO: AUNG MOE

from foreign countries.

Though we are experiencing an ongoing crisis during these difficult times, we must make efforts to ensure we do not deviate from our ultimate goal, "To end all forms of hunger and malnutrition". To feed the increasing population of the world and to bring sustainability and prosperity to the world, the world's people, including us, must work together to establish a sustainable food system through the production of different kinds of vegetables with appropriate nutrition.

Therefore, I want to let you know that the Food and Agriculture Organization designated the theme, "Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together: Our actions are our Future" for this year's World Food Day.

As Myanmar, our country, is an agro-based country, we laid down policies for the agriculture sector; a strategy for the agriculture sector; and short-term and long-term plans to produce good, nutritious and safe food for our people's daily consumption.

Understanding that producing crops with different varieties plays an important role in leading to the conservation of the natural environment and producing food with sufficient nutrition, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation laid down the National Seed Policy and has implemented it to obtain quality strains of seeds, including hybrid species of local strains.

With the aim of sustainably

producing safe agricultural produce offering superior nutrition, the ministry announced the Good Agricultural Practice-GAP Guidelines, in line with the ASEAN GAP guidelines, to ensure flourishing Good Agricultural Practice-GAP and organic practices in our country, and has been making efforts for growing new crops.

Myanmar's livestock sector has the potential to produce

... Myanmar's livestock sector has the potential to produce enough meat for the country's population, but it is required to disseminate GAHP knowledge to farmers to ensure that they expand their manageable livestock farming, if they are to meet current commercial requirements.

enough meat for the country's population, but it is required to disseminate GAHP knowledge to farmers to ensure that they expand their manageable livestock farming, if they are to meet current commercial requirements.

Similarly, in the poultry and fish farming sectors, measures are being taken to produce meat and fish, in accordance with the Good Animal Husbandry Practice-GAHP and Good Aquaculture Practice-GAqP.

With the aim of producing safe food with sufficient nutrition, earning extra incomes from selling surplus vegetables, and

necessary measures to ensure operation of producing and services in which many industries, including agriculture and livestock producers, are involved due to the consequences of travel restrictions and delays in the flow of trade, in response to the COVID-19 outbreak since March 2020.

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation spent K92.61 billion on raising awareness about COVID-19 for workers in the agriculture and livestock industries and farmers, in response to the COVID-19 virus, assisting farmers in receiving inputs for 100,000 acres of paddy seed production for rain-fed farms under the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan-CERP, in an effort to reduce damage to crops, fish and meat production due to COVID-19, establishing the Village Revolving Fund Project in 1,710 villagers for rural people, implementing Cash for Work projects, providing cash assistance and loans to small and medium livestock farmers to supply inputs for their farms, distributing fingerlings to inland fish farmers, conducting rounds of training for 10,000 fish farmers, providing harvesting services to 2,000 acres of rain-fed paddy fields in seven regions, including the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, making arrangements for selling agricultural machinery to farmers on instalments and conducting marketable vocational training.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, in co-operation with international organizations including Food and Agriculture Organization-FAO, is always working to abide by its three main responsibilities: for food security, for the safety of food and for development of rural areas, in accordance with the directives and guidelines laid down by the Union Government. Our efforts, in line with this year's theme of World Food Day, have resulted in producing safe food with good nutrition for the country's people, including residents in rural areas, and sharing our surplus with the world's countries, and due to these benefits, we solemnly believe that we can support the building of a prosperous world.

While remaining true to the theme of this year's World Food Day, let us work together for sustainable development of our earth through producing diverse crops which are safe and offer superior nutrition.

(Translated by AMS)



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 29th October, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over North and Southwest Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy elsewhere over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 30th October, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region, fairly widespread in Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Kayin, Mon States, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago Regions and Southern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of scattered to fairly widespread rain or thundershowers in Naypyitaw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Southern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th October, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th October, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th October, 2020: Likelihood of Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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Over 5,400 cases of YBS rules violation reported in 10 monthsYBS buses in downtown Yangon before the outbreak of COVID-19. **FILE PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

By Nyein Nyein

WITH taking of legal action against YBS buses for violation of the rules, more than 5,400 YBS cases were reported in the past ten months, said U Hla Aung, joint secretary of the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA). The Traffic Regulatory Teams are checking and taking action against YBS bus lines that broke the rules and regulations. From 1 January to 26 October, the teams took action against

4,312 buses, while 1,094 letters of complaints were received from passengers and 35 cases of buses crossing of other areas were reported, he added. Although the YBS, the primary provider of public transport for Yangon's inner-city commuters, has now completed a term of over three years, some YBS drivers are still breaking the rules: they do not stop at the bus stops. They are collecting bus fares instead of letting passengers put the busfares in the slot machines. However,

the number of violation cases has declined compared to that of former All Private Bus Lines Control Committee (Ma-Hta-Tha), he explained. "The situation of the YBS drivers has changed. Earlier, there are drivers and bus conductors onboard on the buses. So, people are always seeing the drivers and conductors together as one is bad, and the other is bad too. Previously, public transport was based on private bus lines. Now, we are running buses with the company system. Some of

the drivers are earning nearly ten thousand kyats daily. It is legal. Earlier, they had to take the money without knowing the bus owners. Some are asking the extra fare from the passengers," he added.

Therefore, the transport authority has issued smart cards to YBS drivers so that it will have personal information on every driver. The YRTA is hoping that will make it easier for the authorities to deal with the complaints or take action against the undisciplined bus drivers. Currently, more than 9,000 drivers have been issued with smart cards.

YBS special driver training courses were first opened in July 2017 to reduce traffic accidents and ensure compliance with the traffic rules and regulations. Most of them are currently employed in YBS bus lines, according to YRTA. Earlier, those holding a five-year (E) (Nga) driving licence could attend the YBS driver training, and now those who have a three-year driving licence can apply for the courses.

The Yangon Bus Service was launched on 16 January 2017. Before the pandemic outbreak, more than 100 bus lines were running 4,500 buses on 135 routes, along with the airport shuttle and the city transit. The number of daily commuters has reached almost 1.8 million.

*(Translated by Hay Mar)***Two more cars added to YGN farmers' mobile market**

YANGON farmers' mobile market (Taungthu Zaykar) will increase the number of vehicles from three to five in a few days, according to Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association (MFVP).

At present, three Taungthu Zaykars are going around the townships in Yangon region to enable the people to buy things quickly and cheaply in COVID-19

period as well as to ensure the stable market. Now, Taungthu Zaykar is planning to run two more vehicles in its mobile sale.

The Taungthu Zaykars are going around such townships as Latha, Lanmadaw, Pabedan, Kyauktada, Pazundaung, Botahtaung. Also, Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) granted permission to Taungthu Zaykars to sell in the remaining townships.

Taungthu Zaykars are making arrangements not to keep them in touch with the buyers. People are not allowed to purchase vegetables if they do not wear masks. The buyers need to drop the money in the cash box, and there will be no change, according to MFVP.

The association has also invited other partner organizations and the local farmers to cooperate. Those farmers

wishing to sell their products are needed to be members of the association and to register themselves with the Taungthu Zaykar management team.

The farmers' trucks will sell the vegetables in the restricted areas of the said townships, making arrangements for the people to buy the vegetables safely. —Aye Maung

*(Translated by Hay Mar)***MAB to reopen suspended branches starting from 3 November**

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMA Apex Bank (MAB) will resume the operation of its suspended MAB branches starting from 3 November in line with the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) procedures in COVID-19 period, according to MAB.

On 28 September, MAB in

Yangon region suspended the operation of its bank branches, and now its branch banks will provide regular bank services.

These suspended branch banks are Bogyoke Aung San market branch, U Chit Maung road branch, Tamway (Kyarkwetthit branch), Sanchoung-1 Kyuntaw branch, Thiri Mingalar market branch, Saw Bwar

Gyi Gone branch, Nyaungpinlay market branch, South Okkalapa branch and Kyimyindaing branch.

Moreover, the MAB banks in Mandalay such as Mandalay branch-4, 7 and 11 will operate as usual. During the suspension period of MAB branches, these branches are cleaned daily with pesticides, restricting

people from coming into and out of the banks and practising the COVID-19 guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Sports, according to the announcement of the MAB. For further information about MAB bank services, people can contact the MAB 24-hour call centre: 01-8610612.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Growers urged to cultivate black-eyed bean instead of black bean, pigeon pea

By Nyein Nyein

FOLLOWING the uncertainty in markets of black bean and pigeon peas, which are primarily sent to India, Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association (MPBSSMA) suggested that the growers cultivate black-eyed bean more.

Myanmar can produce black-eyed bean with the lowest level of pesticide compared with other foreign markets. As a result of this, it is highly demanded by European countries. The FOB price of the Special Quality bean is US\$1,000 per tonne. There is potential that they will require higher during the harvest time next year and the price remains the same," market observers shared their opinions.

At present, Myanmar has to export black bean and pigeon peas under a quota system and limit period. Consequently, there is no guarantee that we could get the prevailing market price next year, they guessed.

Since 2017, India has been setting import quota on beans, including black bean and pigeon peas. Therefore, the growers face difficulties to export their beans to India market. On 22 May, India rapidly changed the import period of black bean (400,000 tonnes) to three months by August-end 2020 from the earlier set deadline of March 2021, prompting Myanmar's bean body to call for an extension of the deadline, as per its official notice. Although the bean body asked to extend the August-end deadline, India still

has not responded to the request.

On 1 October, India issued a notification to purchase 150,000 tonnes of black beans instead, and the import deadline is March 2021. The licence will be equally granted for India's companies.

The black bean was priced higher at K1,135,000 per tonne in the local market on 29 October, on the back of demand by India.

Consequently, the association advised the growers to utilize the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) to produce the black-eyed beans of exceptional quality that European market eyes.

Furthermore, those who have difficulty in importing the pedigree black-eyed bean seeds can contact the association.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Merchants evaluating the quality of beans and pulses.

PHOTO: AUNG PHYO KYAW

Yangon Region endorses 2 foreign firms in manufacturing sector

THE Yangon Region Investment Committee (YRIC), at a video-conference held on 28 October, endorsed two foreign projects from Singapore and China in the manufacturing sector.

Those projects are to bring in an estimated capital of US\$2.65 million. Those enterprises will create 607 jobs. They will execute the manufacturing of bags, footwear and garments on a Cutting, Making, and Packing (CMP) basis, YRIC stated.

Between 1 October and 30 September of the previous financial year 2019-2020, Yangon Region stood at the first place with 137 foreign enterprises (with the capital of \$308.768 million), followed by Bago Region with 18 foreign projects (\$72.645 million) at the second place and Ayeyarwady, with nine at the third place (\$19.614 million).

Additionally, foreign direct investments also flow into the Taninthayi Region from two projects worth \$1.397 million, Magway Region from two worth \$0.991 million, Mon State from two worth \$1.664 million, Mandalay Region from one business valued \$4.6 million, Sagaing Region from one worth \$3 million, Kachin State from one worth \$1 million, Shan State from one worth \$4.13 million and Nay Pyi Taw Council from one valued \$5.862 million.

In the last FY, the respective investment committees of

Kayah, Kayin, Rakhine and Chin states did not endorse foreign enterprise at all, the DICA stated.

The region and state investment committees endorsed a total of 175 foreign enterprises with an estimated capital of \$423.671 million in the last FY.

The endorsed enterprises are to be engaged in the manufacturing, hotel and tourism, other services, power and agricultural sector.

Of them, the majority of the investment goes into the manufacturing sector, followed by other services sector and hotels and tourism sector.

The manufacturing sector has also attracted the most foreign investments in Yangon Region, with enterprises engaging in the production of pharmaceuticals, vehicles, container boxes, and garments on a Cutting, Making, and Packing (CMP) basis.

To date, foreign investments from China, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Viet Nam, India, China (Taipei), Malaysia, the British Virgin Islands and Seychelles are arriving in the region. To simplify the verification of investment projects, the Myanmar Investment Law allows the region and state Investment Committees to grant permissions for local and foreign proposals, where the initial investment does not exceed K6 billion, or \$5 million. — GNLM
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar regulatory body asks microlenders to suspend two-month loan repayment until April 2021

Microfinance Supervisory Committee has asked the microfinance institutions (MIs) not to collect the loan repayments from borrowers in November and December, and that two-month repayment amount will be suspended until April 2021.

However, the borrowers from COVID-19 stricken Yangon and Bago regions and Rakhine State are entitled to this relaxation only, according to the decision of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19 meeting held on 23 October 2020.

The committee stated that the lenders are asked not to collect the interest rate during the suspension time and the repayment to be made between May

and October 2021 in instalment.

The State-owned Myanma Economic Bank will give loan (equals to two-month repayment amount of the borrowers) to the MIs, with zero interest rate instead. Otherwise, the government pay the loan repayment to the MIs on behalf of those borrowers. It is one-year grace period. The

MIs must collect the loan in the second half (six months) from their borrowers and repay the government's loan.

The MIs are experiencing difficulties in collecting the loans from borrowers hit hard by the COVID-19 during the coronavirus crisis.

The committee also notified that the MIs not to collect the

loan repayments from borrowers by force.

In 2011, the Microfinance Law was enacted to promote rural development, and the MIs play a pivotal role in financing firms for rural people. MIs can help support Myanmar's small businesses as SMEs constitute 90 per cent of companies in Myanmar and plays a crucial role in creating jobs.

There are 4.6 million borrowers from the microfinance institutions across the country.

Additionally, the government is providing the loan from the COVID-19 funds to ease the economic burden faced by the virus-stricken businesses.

— GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

MoC to increase trade service charges when Myanmar Tradenet 2.0 launched on 1 November

By Nyein Nyein

THE Ministry of Commerce will scale up the trade service fees when Myanmar Tradenet 2.0 will be officially launched on 1 November.

To facilitate the National Single Window, have a single entry in trading and digitize the licencing system and related businesses, the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce will officially launch Myanmar Tradenet 2.0

portal on 1 November.

The first one is to sign up Myanmar Tradenet member, and export/import and related business licences will be carried out digitally.

The trade service fees for online licencing including Myanmar Tradenet 2.0 portal will be raised from 1 November. The annual membership fees of Myanmar Tradenet 2.0 will increase to K15,000 from K13,000. Similarly, online service will also cost K3,000 instead of

K2,500, the trade department stated.

Furthermore, the department hiked up the fees for extension of export/import licence and the licence amendment to K5,000 within eight days to one month after the expired date. It will be charged K10,000 for more than one month after the due date.

Nevertheless, other fees will remain unchanged, the trade department notified.
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

PEOPLE UNDER LOCKDOWN

Sri Lanka capital to go into lockdown after coronavirus surge

SRI Lanka's capital will go back into lockdown from Friday (Oct 30) following a surge in coronavirus cases, the authorities said on Thursday.

The South Asian island nation of 21 million people has reported more than 9,200 Covid-19 infections, with over half detected in the past three weeks after more than a thousand garment factory workers tested positive. There were 19 deaths recorded in the country.

Around 5.5 million people living in the capital Colombo and two neighbouring districts would be allowed to move around only for essential services, health officials said.

The lockdown for three days could be extended depending on the pace of infections, they added.

"The curfew comes into effect from midnight, but we are trying to discourage any non-essential travel across



The lockdown for three days could be extended depending on the pace of infections. PHOTO: AFP

provincial borders from today," police spokesman Ajith Rohana told AFP. Soldiers carried out random temperature checks

on pedestrians and motorists in Colombo on Thursday. Sri Lanka imposed a three-month lockdown until the end of June,

with the authorities lifting the restrictions after declaring that there was no community transmission of the virus.

GLOBAL INITIATIVE

200 mn Covid vaccine doses pledged for 'equitable' use

DRUGMAKERS Sanofi and GSK said Wednesday they would set aside 200 million doses of a future coronavirus vaccine for a global initiative to ensure equitable distribution, including in poor countries.

There has been great concern about fair access to COVID-19 vaccines as rich countries have bought up billions of doses long before a jab has even been approved.

Several dozen vaccine candidates are in clinical trials and ten are in the most advanced "phase 3" stage involving tens of thousands of volunteers.

The French and British drug giants said they had signed a statement of intent with the Gavi alliance, which administers the Covax plan for fair vaccine distribution.

"Both companies intend to contribute to Covax's ambition

to ensure successful COVID-19 vaccines reach those in need, whoever they are and wherever they live, once they obtain appropriate approvals," a statement said.

On Sunday, the World Health Organization warned against "vaccine nationalism" and underlined that global protection can only be attained with widespread vaccination.

More than 180 countries

and economies have signed up to the Covax plan, which seeks to "equitably allocate and deliver" two billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines by the end of 2021. Last month, Gavi said 200 million vaccine doses had been secured for delivery to poor countries.

It had also signed up with AstraZeneca for access to another 300 million doses of its candidate vaccine, but those would be made available to all participants in Covax, not just poorer countries.

"Gavi is seeking to secure doses of the most promising vaccine candidates—so that the 184 participants involved in the Covax Facility can make sure their most at-risk groups ... have rapid access to doses of a safe and effective vaccine," the initiative's CEO Seth Berkley said.

"That is the world's best chance to end the acute stage of this pandemic, and we encourage other vaccine manufacturers to work with us towards that shared global goal."

Sanofi and GSK said they hope to start Phase 3 trials before the end of the year.

SOURCE: AFP



Lab technicians prepare stainless steel tanks for manufacturing vaccines at French pharmaceutical company Sanofi's world distribution centre in Val-de-Reuil on July 10. PHOTO: JOEL SAGET/AFP

DIGGING INTO THE ACCOUNT

Facebook derails deception campaign ahead of US election

FACEBOOK on Tuesday said it derailed a fledgling deception campaign aimed at the US that was trying to gain momentum ahead of the presidential election next week.

The effort orchestrated from Mexico posted in English and Spanish on topics including racial injustice; feminism and the environment, using a small bit of content posted in the past by the Russian Internet Research Agency.

Facebook did not link the campaign to Russia, saying it had so far only traced control to unspecified people in Mexico. The network began creating accounts in April, hiding identities and intent of those involved, according to Facebook head of security integrity Nathaniel Gleicher.

It had only grown to two Facebook Pages and 22 Instagram accounts, according to Facebook.

Those managing accounts or pages used in the "coordinate inauthentic behavior" campaign claimed to work for what appears to be a fictitious Polish firm.

"Some of these accounts posed as Americans supporting various social and political causes and tried to contact other people to amplify this operation's content," Gleicher said. It was one of three small deception campaigns taken down today at Facebook and Instagram, according to the social network and the latest in a series of efforts by the social network to block efforts to deceptively boost a political candidate or movement.

Each of the networks had few accounts and negligible numbers of followers in what Gleicher said was a sign of Facebook's success at catching such campaigns quicker.

Catching coordinated deceit efforts faster has triggered a shift in tactics to trying to create a false impression that interference in voting or politics is more pervasive than it actually is, according to Gleicher. Recent tactics were said to include posing as media outlets or tricking legitimate news agencies into amplifying concerns about social ills or election security.

SOURCE: AFP

Japan automakers' global output rise 1.7% in September

TOTAL global output by eight major Japanese automakers rose 1.7 per cent in September from a year earlier to nearly 2.42 million units amid signs of the Chinese and U.S. markets' recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, data showed Thursday.

The increase, compared with a 12.1 per cent fall in August, was propelled by Toyota Motor Corp., whose global production grew 11.7 per cent from a year earlier to 841,915 vehicles, marking the first increase in nine months.

Backed by a 48.5 per cent surge in China, the world's biggest car market, and robust sales of new models, such as the Harrier, a sport utility vehicle sold in Japan, the production figure was the highest level on record for September.

Toyota's global output has been gradually trending toward a recovery after tumbling 54.4 per cent in May amid the global health crisis. It reported a 6.7 per cent fall in August and a 10.2 per cent drop in July.

Subaru Corp., which has its sole overseas plant in the United States, also logged a 13.0 per cent rise in global output to 96,231 units, also an all-time high for September.

SOURCE: Kyodo

GROWTH EXPECTATIONS

China expects GDP to exceed 100 trillion yuan in 2020

CHINA'S Communist Party expects the nation's gross domestic product to exceed 100 trillion yuan (\$14.9 trillion) in 2020 despite the novel coronavirus pandemic, according to a communique of its four-day key gathering through Thursday, carried by state-run media.

The ruling party,

headed by President Xi Jinping, also shared the view that China "has seen its economic growth beat expectations, people's living standards ensured, and the overall situation of society maintained stable," the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

At the fifth plenary session of the 19th Central Committee of the

Communist Party, China's top brass adopted proposals for a new five-year economic plan and long-term goals through 2035.

The next plan, covering between 2021 and 2025, is the first to be crafted by the ruling party since the Chinese economy has been hit by the virus outbreak, first

detected late last year in the central city of Wuhan, a major business and transportation hub.

With Sino-U.S. tensions escalating over several economic and security issues as well as the virus spread dragging down both external and domestic demand, China's economy faced a severe downturn in the

first quarter of this year.

The economy has recently been on a recovery track on the back of a rebound in investment and industrial production, although consumer sentiment has remained lackluster as the employment situation has been worsening at home following the pandemic.

SOURCE: Kyodo

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO LUNG VOY. NO. (103N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO LUNG VOY. NO. (103N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-10-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of TMIT/MIP 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 CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BANDA VOY. NO. (200N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BANDA VOY. NO. (200N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-10-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TRIESTE TRADER VOY. NO. (042S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TRIESTE TRADER VOY. NO. (042S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-10-2020 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 MCC TRANSPROT (S'PORE) PTE LTD

LANGJOKULL ICE CAP

Giant metallic 'steed' traverses Iceland's threatened glacier



The glacier mega bus is named Sleipnir after the mythical eight-legged horse ridden by the Norse god Odin. **PHOTO: AFP**

INSTEAD of a slow slog on snowshoes, a giant bus sweeps passengers at up to 60 kilometres an hour across Iceland's second largest glacier, which scientists predict will likely be nearly gone by the end of the century.

The red glacier mega bus is 15 metres (50-foot) long and fitted with massive tyres for traction across the powder snow of western Iceland's vast Langjokull ice cap.

The glacier formed around 2,500 years ago and, with melting and refreezing, glaciologists

believe the oldest ice of the glacier to be 500 years old.

From its highest point, at about 1,450 metres, the spectacular view takes in other snow covered peaks, including the Okjokull, the country's first glacier officially lost to climate change in 2014.

With its 850-horsepower engine, the tour bus -- resembling something out of a science-fiction movie -- smoothly traverses the icy terrain on eight wheels, each two metres in diameter.

It has been named "Sleipnir" after the mythical eight-leg-

ged horse ridden by the Norse god Odin.

As strong winds whip up the fresh snow on an October day, the bus -- created by keen mechanic Astvaldur Oskarsson, 59, who runs a specialised storage company -- climbs higher to emerge from the low cloud into bright blue skies.

An Italian couple are among the few travellers to have braved the double Covid-19 test and five-day quarantine required on arrival in Iceland.

SOURCE: AFP

DESPERATE SEARCH

21 dead, dozens missing in Vietnam after typhoon brings destruction

Twenty-one people have been killed and dozens more were feared dead on Thursday after a typhoon tore through central Vietnam, triggering landslides and causing some of the worst destruction seen in years.

Typhoon Molave hit villages

as it made landfall a day earlier, tearing roofs from homes and bringing heavy rain to an area already badly affected by weeks of flooding.

Hundreds of rescuers were desperately trying to reach survivors after several landslides, but

many were hampered by thick mud and fallen trees.

"My two daughters were pulled out from the mud by neighbours," Ho Thi Ha told AFP as one of her girls, four-year-old My, screamed in pain from an injured leg. "But my father is dead and now I have nothing. Everything is buried in the mud," the 28-year-old said. Nineteen bodies had so far been pulled from the mud across three hard-hit villages in Quang Nam province, state media reported. Authorities said another 45 people were believed to be buried in the area.

Soldiers were among a search team using heavy bulldozers and excavators to better access two of the villages.

Two people were killed earlier as they tried to protect their homes from the typhoon, Vietnam's fourth storm this month.

SOURCE: AFP



Hundreds of rescuers were desperately trying to reach survivors after several landslides but were blocked by thick mud and fallen trees.

PHOTO: AFP

CONSERVATION

Indonesian activists slam 'Jurassic Park' plan for Komodo dragon habitat

INDONESIAN conservationists have slammed plans to turn the home of endangered Komodo dragons into a Jurassic Park-style attraction, after a viral photo showing one of the giant reptiles sparked an online backlash over the development.

Nearly 3,000 of the world's biggest lizard species live on a

cluster of islands east of Bali, where they grow to around three metres (10 feet) in length and weigh up to 90 kilogrammes (200 pounds). Authorities last month unveiled a proposal to build a tourist development on one of the islands, dubbed "Jurassic Park" after architects published a promotional video of the project set

to music from the film franchise.

But environmentalists warned then that it would threaten the already at-risk species. This week a picture of a Komodo dragon in the path of a truck carrying construction supplies renewed debate over the project, after it was shared widely online.

SOURCE: AFP

EXPORT MARKET UPHEAVAL

Last major Aussie bank ditches coal, in fresh blow to sector

Australia's ANZ became the country's last major bank to walk away from thermal coal investments Thursday, delivering a fresh blow to a sector facing export market upheaval and widespread public hostility.

The bank said that from 2030 it would no longer finance thermal coal mines or coal-fired power stations, joining Australia's other "big four" banks who have already made similar commitments.

Coal has long been a mainstay of the country's resource-dependent economy.

Exports were worth almost US\$50 billion in 2018 -- or more than three per cent of gross domestic product, according to central bank research.

But despite heavy government support, the coal industry's foundations appear increasingly wobbly.

In the last few months major customers -- most notably China, Japan and South Ko-

rea -- have all vowed to reach net-zero carbon emissions by the middle of this century.

That is likely to mean reduced dependence on fossil fuels, particularly coal, which accounts for almost half of global carbon dioxide emissions.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison's conservative government has slow-peddled measures to tackle climate change, conspicuously avoided any national commitment to being carbon neutral and vowed continued support for fossil fuels -- including greenlighting new coal mines -- despite strong public opposition.

After historic bushfires and prolonged drought, a poll released this week by The Australia Institute showed four in five Australians are concerned by climate change and only 12 per cent back Morrison's plans for a gas-led Covid recovery.

SOURCE: AFP



Coal has long been a mainstay of Australia's resource-dependent economy, but the industry's foundations appear increasingly wobbly. **PHOTO: AFP**

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Algeria to vote on a constitution dismissed by protest movement

ALGERIANS are set to vote Sunday in a constitutional referendum the government touts as heralding a “new republic”, but a long-running protest movement rejects the exercise as window-dressing.

Observers see the constitution as the centrepiece of now-hospitalized President Abdelmadjid Tebboune’s strategy to neutralize the Hirak movement, which staged vast demonstrations last year and forced his predecessor from office.

Despite Abdelaziz Boutef-

lika’s fall from power, the Hirak has failed to achieve its goal of a full overhaul of Algeria’s sclerotic political system, in place since independence from France in 1962.

In a key setback for the protest movement, Tebboune, widely seen as the army’s preferred candidate, was elected in a December 2019 presidential poll, despite the Hirak urging root-and-branch reform ahead of any elections.

Then it was forced to suspend its protests in March as the coronavirus pandemic struck.

But Tebboune, who took

power after a poll marred by record low turnout, has sought legitimacy by ostensibly reaching out to the Hirak.

He has promised a new constitutional settlement he presents as meeting the movement’s demands.

But the lack of radical change in the document, which strengthens the president and the army, has left many sceptical.

“The referendum will have no impact in terms of offering a political alternative or a change in how the country is governed,”



Algerian activists and journalists have been rallying to demand the release of their colleague Khaled Drareni, who was handed a three-year jail term over his coverage of the mass protest movement that toppled Abdelaziz Bouteflika. PHOTO: AFP

said Louisa Dris-Ait Hama-douche, a political science professor at the University of Algiers.

Algeria, with a population of 44 million on the doorstep of

Europe, has escaped the violence and severe repression triggered by most of the 2011 Arab uprisings.

SOURCE: AFP

BRENNER BASE TUNNEL

Setback for Austro-Italian Brenner rail tunnel project



In May, Austria’s public auditor said it expected work to take until 2030 due to disputes between the companies involved.

PHOTO: BBT SE/AFP

THE project to build the world’s longest rail tunnel under the Alpine Brenner Pass between Austria and Italy suffered a setback Wednesday after the company overseeing the work cancelled a contract with a consortium building a major stretch of the tunnel.

The BBT SE company said in a statement that it was “putting an end to its contractual relationship with ARGE H51”, an Austrian-Italian consortium.

In 2018, ARGE H51 began work on a stretch of the tunnel between the Austrian village of Pfnos and the Italian border.

BBT SE said it had “regret-

tably been forced” to take the decision due to a “definitive refusal to provide contractually agreed services and a loss of trust”.

It added that there had been “no constructive collaboration with ARGE H51 since the awarding of the contract”.

BBT SE did not indicate how Wednesday’s decision might impact on the timetable for construction, which has already suffered delays.

The tunnel was initially slated to open in 2025 but the current projected end date is 2028.

In May, Austria’s public auditor said it expected work to

take until 2030 due to disputes between the companies involved.

Austrian construction giant Porr, one of the companies involved in the ARGE H51 consortium, said in a statement that in its opinion BBT SE’s decision was “plainly unlawful and therefore the contract remains valid”.

BBT SE’s decision “makes a further multi-year delay to this critical European infrastructure project inevitable, along with cost increases in the millions,” the statement said. Porr added that it “will take every step necessary to protect its rights”.

SOURCE: AFP

ALL SAINTS’ DAY

Drones to enforce virus rules at Madrid cemeteries

MADRID city hall said Wednesday it will deploy drones at two of the largest cemeteries in the Spanish capital on All Saints’ Day to ensure virus restrictions are respected.

Spanish families traditionally visit the graves of loved ones on the November 1 holiday but this year, capacity at cemeteries in Madrid has been reduced to half because of the pandemic.

Groups of visitors will be limited to no more than six and they must respect social distancing rules.

To ensure people keep to

the rules, up to 300 municipal police will be deployed daily at cemeteries in the Spanish capital over three days from October 30, city hall said. The figure is 20 per cent higher than last year.

Officers will be backed up by drones at two of the city’s largest cemeteries, one of which is La Almudena, where famous Spaniards like flamenco legend Lola Flores and Nobel-winning neuroscientist Santiago Ramon y Cajal are buried.

The other is the Carabanchel cemetery.

SOURCE: AFP

DEADLY KNIFE ATTACK

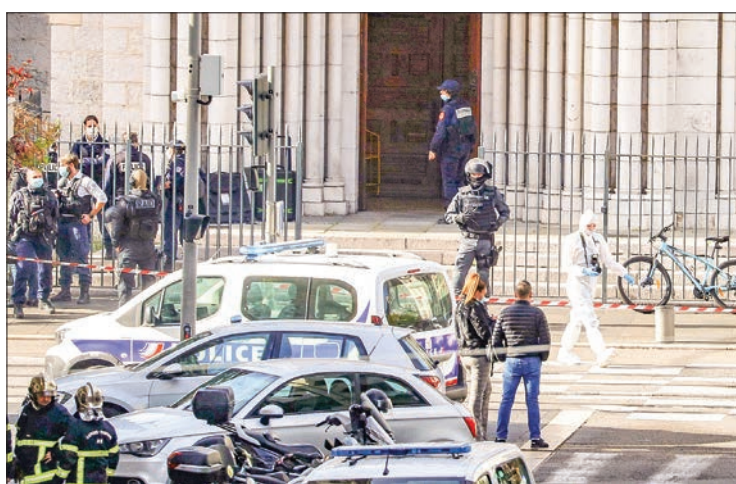
Knifeman kills three in suspected terror attack at French church

A man wielding a knife at a church in the French city of Nice killed three people, slitting the throat of at least one, and injured several others before being apprehended by police, officials said Thursday.

French anti-terror prosecutors have opened an inquiry into what the city’s Mayor Christian Estrosi called an “Islamofascist attack.”

“He (the attacker) kept repeating ‘Allahu Akbar’ (God is Greater) even while under medication” after he was injured during his arrest, Estrosi told journalists at the scene.

Two victims died at the Basilica of Notre-Dame, in the heart of the city on the Mediterranean coast, while a third person died



French members of the elite tactical police unit RAID enter to search the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Nice as forensics officers wait after a knife attack in Nice on October 29, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

of injuries after seeking refuge in a nearby bar, a police source told AFP. “The situation is now under

control,” police spokeswoman Florence Gavello said.

SOURCE: AFP

Aung La N Sang to defend ONE Middleweight title tonight

Myanmar's sports legend Aung La N Sang will defend his ONE Championship Middleweight World title against undefeated Netherland's fighter Reinier De Ridder in the main event of the ONE named "Inside The Matrix" tonight in Singapore.

Being a king fighter of the Championship with two-division belts, the 33-year-old Aung La has said about his outstanding performances with full of confidence.

"I see this bout ending with a thrilling finish. Reinier is crafty on the ground. He wants to take you to the ground, and he wants to look for submissions," Aung La N Sang said.

"This will be a clash of styles, but I won't say it's striker versus grappler because I can grapple as well. But he's going to lean toward grappling, and I'm going

to lean toward striking", Aung La added.

The 30-year-old De Ridder, who owns black belts in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and judo, is undefeated yet in ONE Championship history.

The 6 feet 1-inch-tall Aung La N Sang also reviewed the strength and weakness of his opponent De Ridder, who is 3 inches taller than Aung La.

"He's going to look for the takedown. He's going to look for the submission. He's going to want to grapple, but I have that skill set, as well as the striking. I know for a fact that I'm superior in the striking department, so for this matchup, I'm going to be looking to finish him on the feet," Aung La confirmed.

"He's a high-level grappler, and he's got some slick sub-

missions, but I don't think he's a high-level wrestler. So, I think he's going to have a hard time taking me down, and I don't believe his ground game is much better than mine. If it does go to the ground, I'll be fine.

"And, as an undefeated fighter, he has never been pushed to his limits. He's never taken shots like the ones that I'm going to be throwing at him, so we'll see how he fares with that," Aung La added.

The ONE: "Inside the Matrix" main bouts will be broadcast live on free-to-air channels: MNTV and Channel ME at around 8:00 pm tonight and also streamed live free at the same time via ONE Championship mobile application and ONE Championship YouTube channel.

— Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Aung La N Sang (left) is ready to defend his ONE Championship middleweight title against De Ridder (right) in the ONE: Inside The Matrix event in Singapore on 30 October. PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP



Paris return? Rafael Nadal celebrates winning the French Open at Roland Garros earlier this month. PHOTO: ANNE-CHRISTINE POUJOLAT AFP/FILE

French green light for pro sport to continue despite second lockdown

PARIS—Professional sports tournaments in France can continue despite the country being ordered into a second national lockdown, said sports minister Roxana Maracineanu early Thursday.

"Top athletes and professional athletes will be able to continue training. And they will also be able to continue to compete since travel for professional reasons is allowed," said Maracineanu.

Her announcement came just hours after French President Emmanuel Macron said a new coronavirus lockdown would be introduced until at least December 1.

A second wave of cases has sent the death toll in France to nearly 35,000.

Maracineanu's speech to the country's National Assembly was an immediate boost for the Paris Masters tennis event due to be staged in the French capital from Monday.—AFP ■

German league football ordered back behind closed doors

BERLIN—Chancellor Angela Merkel's government on Wednesday ordered Bundesliga football and professional sport in Germany back behind closed doors as part of a string of measures to curb record-high numbers of the coronavirus.

The latest measures will come into effect from November 2 until the end of the month after Germany announced a record high Wednesday of 14,964 new cases in the last 24 hours.

Since the 2020/21 Bundesliga season started in mid-Sep-

tember, Germany's football clubs had been allowed to host small numbers of fans for home games, providing each local health authority granted permission.

One noticeable exception is European champions Bayern Munich, who have had to play all their home games at the Allianz Arena behind closed doors since the pandemic first hit Europe in mid-March on advice of the local health authority.

But from Monday all professional sport in Germany will

go back behind closed doors after Merkel and the regional leaders of Germany's 16 states agreed to the new measures.

Borussia Dortmund's Champions League home match against Zenit Saint Petersburg on Wednesday must also take place without fans on site.

The health authority in North Rhine-Westphalia rejected an application to allow 300 fans into the 81,000-capacity stadium for the European game.—AFP ■



All Bundesliga football and professional sport in Germany will be played behind closed doors from Monday, under new measures announced Wednesday. PHOTO: HEINZ BUESE/POOL/AFP/FILE