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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Monday, 23 November 2020

## Gyobyu, Theington power sub-stations in Taikkyi Tsp opened

**Y**ANGON Region Government inaugurated Gyobyu and Theington power sub-stations in Taikkyi Township yesterday, taking a step forward in meeting 100 per cent electrification in the region by December 2020.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, Deputy Speaker U Lin Naing Myint, Yangon Region Minister for Electricity, Industry, Transport and Communication Daw Nilar Kyaw, Yangon Region ministers, Pyithu Hluttaw representatives, Region Hluttaw representatives, Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation's chairman, officials and staff, invited guests and local people attended the opening ceremony of the power sub-stations.

Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, and Region Hluttaw representative-1 U Tin Shein first unveiled the stone plaque

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Power lines of 33/11kV, 5MVA Gyobyu power sub-station are pictured in Taikkyi Township, Yangon Region on 22 November 2020. PHOTO: MNA

## Myanmar nationals stranded in foreign countries return by relief flight



Myanmar returnees from foreign countries arrive at the Yangon International Airport on 22 November 2020. PHOTO: MNA

A TOTAL OF 129 Myanmar nationals who were stranded in Taiwan (Chinese Taipei) because of suspension of commercial flights — 120 seamen and other 9 nationals — returned home yesterday morning by the 7<sup>th</sup> relief flight of China Airlines organized by the Consulate-General of Myanmar in Hong Kong.

Moreover, a total of 109 Myanmar seamen also returned home in the same evening by a relief of Myanmar Airways International organized by the Embassy of Myanmar in Seoul and Myanmar Maritime Workers' Federation. They are 82 from the Republic of Korea, 15 from Doha, 2 from UAE, 1 from Taiwan, 6 from Egypt and 3 from Turkey.

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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.

## Paddy harvested at model farmlands in Kyaukhtu

Paddy harvesting begins at a model farmland in Kyaukhtu Township, Gangaw District, Magway Region on 22 November 2020. **PHOTO: KYAW THAN SWE**

THE Kyaukhtu Town's Department of Agriculture supervised harvest of paddy, grown with

subsidy under state-funded CERP programme, at model farmlands in Tay and Leasaw

villages in Kyaukhtu, Gangaw District, Magway Region, yesterday morning.

Sinthukha paddy strain was harvested at a 10-acre model farmland in Leasaw Village and at a one-acre model farmland in Tay Village. Both of the farmlands are owned by Daw Win Mar. The officials who supervise the harvest are U Kyaw Min Thant, Assistant Director of Gangaw District's Department of Agriculture; U Kyaw Myint, Head of Kyaukhtu Town's Department of Agriculture; and U Nyo Win, official of the Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics.

According to the harvest records of Sinthukha paddy grown under the CERP Programme on the model farmlands in Kyaukhtu area, yields range from 110 to 125 Tin (1 Tin = 40.9148 L) per acre.— Kyaw Than Swe

*(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)*

## Masks, face shields distributed to people in Buthidaung

OFFICIALS distributed free masks and face shields to people at the Myoma Municipal Market in Buthidaung Town in Maungtaung District, Rakhine State, yesterday morning as a COVID-19 response effort.

Buthidaung Township COVID-19 Committee Chairperson and Township Administrator U Shwe Hla Aung and committee members, Township Public Health Department official Dr Saw Min Thein and other relevant officials distributed free masks, face shields, hand sanitizer and COVID-19 information leaflets to the sellers and buyers outside U Oattama Hall in the town.

The group of officials gave the people 2000 masks, 600 face shields, and sanitizer and 1,500 informational leaflets free of charge.

In Buthidaung, a total of

Officials and nurses deliver face masks and face shields to the people at the Myoma Municipal Market in Buthidaung, Rakhine State on 22 November 2020. **PHOTO: HLA KYAW (IPRD)**

158 people have tested positive for COVID-19. Out of them, 142

people have recovered, one has died and 15 are hospitalized.

—Hla Kyaw (IPRD) *(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)*

## DoCA receives over 1,100 consumer complaints last FY

THE Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA) received over 1,100 consumer complaints in the 2019-2020FY, with the majority of service sector complaints, the DoCA stated. The department received a large number of complaints in the 2019-2020FY compared with the previous years.

The consumers are mostly dissatisfied with the service provided in the telecommunication, online shop and electricity sectors. Mandalay Region Consumer

Affairs Department received nearly 250 consumer complaints in the 2019-2020 financial year, with over 100 complaints regarding service, said U Zaw Min, head of Mandalay Region Consumer Affairs Department.

Over 30 complaints in the 2016-2017FY, over 40 in the 2017-2018 budget year and nearly 200 in the 2018-2019FY were reported, accumulating a total of 500 complaints. The department has already handled the complaints

in each FY, Mandalay Region Consumer Affairs Department stated. The department is protecting consumer rights and benefits by looking forwards to food safety and consumer product safety and trying to improve the quality of goods and service. The consumers can file a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the service or products or false or misleading advertising that harms the rights of consumers under the Consumer Protection

Law. The department firstly tries to resolve the cases by mediating the situations. However, legal action is taken in some instances under the Consumer Protection Law. The consumers can file the complaints to the Department of Consumer Affairs through Facebook Page or DoCA Myanmar mobile app or [www.doca.gov.mm](http://www.doca.gov.mm), or dial through 067-3430468, 067-3430459, 067-3430207.—Htet Myat*(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*



## Arrangements are being made for payment moratorium

Another matter is that we heard that some people are facing problems in matters related to getting small loans. They obtained small loans. So, they need to repay. Microfinance organizations also have their own rules. According to their rules, they have to demand repayment of the loans in due course. It can be very frustrating for the people who cannot repay the loans during the COVID-19 crisis. They have to worry. But they are not able to repay.

According to the financial situations of our country, we cannot provide financial assistance to all the people in the entire country. But we have selected one state and two regions where COVID-19 outbreaks are intense and have large populations. They are Rakhine State and Bago and Yangon Regions.

In coordination with the microfinance organizations, the government has begun making arrangements for payment moratorium. By the way, some people received loans from more than one place. They obtained loans from two, three or four microfinance organizations, so their debts became a heavy burden.

*(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's report on COVID-19 situation amid containment measures, on 17 November 2020)*



## Gyobyu, Theingon power sub-stations in Taikkyi Tsp opened

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first unveiled the stone plaque of the 33/11 kV, 5MVA Gyobyu Power sub-station in Taikkyi Township, and inspected the power sub-station.

The Chief Minister and party then attended the opening ceremony of 33/11 kV, 5MVA Theingon Power sub-station in Okkan, Taikkyi Township.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of Theingon Power sub-station, the Chief Minister said a total of 13 power sub-stations were built in Yangon Region during 2019-2020 FY. Of them, 6 power sub-stations are in northern Yangon District.

Out of the six stations, the two power sub-stations of Yekyaw and Warnet Chaung in Hmawbi Township, and another two of Kyutaw and Theththikyun in Htantabin Township have been commissioned into service, and the last two of Gyobyu and Theingon were



Picture shows 33/11kV, 5MVA Theingon Power Sub-station in Okkan Town, Yangon Region in November 2020. PHOTO: MNA

opened yesterday. All of the sub-stations are 33/11 KV, 5 MVA.

There was only one power sub-station in Taikkyi Township in the past, and the opening of the two new power sub-stations will benefit 800

households in 12 villages, he added.

Yangon Region Hluttaw representative U Lwin Soe Min expressed thanks for opening of the power sub-station.

Afterwards, Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Hluttaw

Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, and Region Hluttaw representative U Lwin Soe Min unveiled the stone plaque of 33/11 kV, 5MVA Theingon Power sub-station, and inspected inside the power sub-station. — MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

## Myanmar nationals stranded in foreign countries return by relief flight

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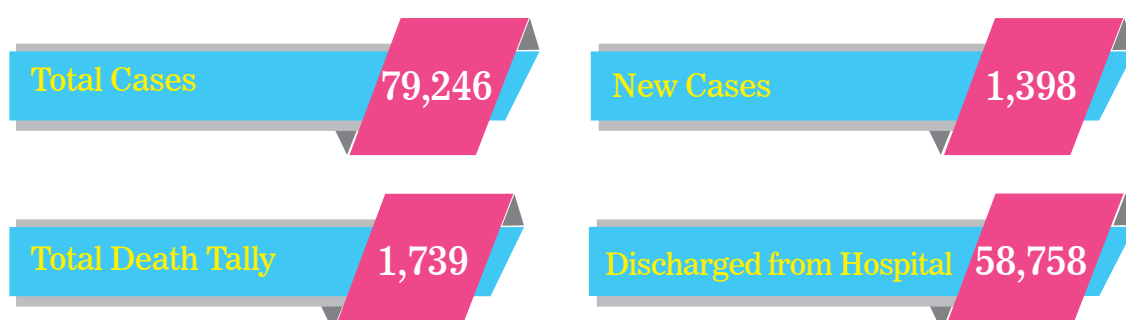
The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged 7-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is working with the relevant ministries, its missions in foreign countries and shipping companies and organizations for the repatriation of citizens abroad in accordance with the guidelines of the National-Level Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19. — MNA

## 1,398 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 22 November, total figure rises to 79,246

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rise to 79,246 after 1,398 new cases were reported on 22 November according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 79,246 confirmed cases, 1,739 died, 58,758 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 22 November 2020



Daily death toll until 8 pm 22-11-2020

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Ministry of Health and Sports



# Natural gas exports top \$3.5 bln last FY



Natural gas export of Myanmar has fetched US\$3.5 billion in the past financial year. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

MYANMAR'S exports of natural gas in the past financial year 2019-2020 amounted to US\$3.5 billion, the Commerce Ministry's data showed.

The figures plunged from \$3.88 billion registered in the FY2018-2019, as per Commerce Ministry data.

Natural gas is included in the list of major export items of Myanmar. Over 10 per cent of the country's total export earnings come from the sale of natural gas.

There are 53 onshore blocks and 51 offshore blocks, totalling

104 blocks. A total of 25 onshore blocks and 31 offshore blocks are operating under foreign investment. Natural gas extraction is being made at the Yadana, Yedagun, Shwe, and Zawtika offshore blocks as well as onshore drilling blocks. Yearly extraction is elevated to cubic feet in 670.36 billion from 600 billion this year, according to the fourth-year performance statement of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

The Shwe natural gas field, located offshore from Rakhine State, was discovered in 2014. Natural gas extracted from the

area is exported to China.

The Yadana natural gas project is being carried out by the TOTAL Company, with its pipeline supplying natural gas to Thailand. Natural gas is also

extracted in Yedagun, located offshore from Taninthayi and discovered in 1992. The Zawtika Project in the Gulf of Moattama mainly supplies natural gas to neighbouring Thailand.

Production at Yadana and Yedagun is declining, and those projects will be halted in the coming years.—Ko Htet

*(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

## Annual inflation rate keeps 5.8% dropping in September

THE annual rate of inflation in Myanmar, based on the Consumer Price Index, continued dropping to 5.8 per cent in September 2020 owing to demand slump triggered by the COVID effects, according to a report released by the Central Statistical Organization under the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry.

The US dollar against Myanmar kyat is relatively weak in September, with a fall of about K35 than the previous month and a sharp drop of K176 against a year-ago period. However, the gold price significantly rose in September on the back of global cues. The imported oil price dropped against August's rate, causing the price index in the transportation group to slump.

Nevertheless, there was a remarkable increase in CPI for the food group, household goods and maintenance, other commodities, clothing, education services, recreation, culture and non-food. The price index of education, telecommunication and non-food groups is stable amid the COVID-19. The price of transportation and tobacco and beverages dropped, the report stated.

Starting from August 2019, the consumer price index rose, and the inflation rate has remained above 8 per cent since June 2019. It reached a peak of 8.61 per cent in September and dipped in November. It touched the highest level at 8.81 per cent in December 2019 because of the high season.

Afterwards, despite the drop in fuel oil price and gain in local currency, power tariff hike led to higher inflation rate up

to 9.2 per cent in February 2020. Then, it gradually declined due to the coronavirus outbreak in March.

The inflation rate has registered at 8.35 per cent in May 2020, and so, the month of June with 7.91 per cent. The coronavirus impacts triggered the drop in the consumer price index, and it gradually inclined to 7.14 per cent in July, and the rate extended its slide to 6.43 per cent in August. It continued slipping to 5.81 per cent in September 2020. The annual rate of core inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, was 11.23 per cent in September 2020, the inflation data indicated.

In September, Ayeyawady Region recorded the highest inflation rate at 10.83 per cent, followed by Mandalay Region at 9.54 per cent, and Nay Pyi Taw at 7.48 per cent. The rate fluctuated with a maximum rate of 5.53 per cent in Nay Pyi Taw and a minimum rate of -2.8 per cent in Mon State.

Earlier, the inflation rate was calculated based on a 2006 survey. The base year has later changed to 2012. The Central Statistical Organization conducted a Household Income and Expenditure Survey in 82 townships in November 2012. Based on policies on finance, currency, trade, and foreign currency control, the concerned authorities have been making efforts to reduce the inflation rate in keeping with the second five-year National Development plan (2016-2017FY-2020-2021FY). — Htet Myat

*(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

## Value of Myanmar pharmaceutical imports soars to \$678 mln in 2019-2020FY

THE import value of Myanmar pharmaceutical products soared to US\$678.24 million in the previous financial year 2019-2020, the Central Statistical Organization's trade statistics indicated.

The figure rose from \$525.9 million registered in the corresponding period (October-Sep) of last FY, the statistics showed.

Myanmar imports 90 per cent of medicine and medical products through foreign markets, Myanmar Chamber of Commerce for Pharmaceutical & Medical Device (MCCPMD) stated.

India is the leading supplier of Myanmar. Also, they are imported via Bangladesh, China, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, China (Taipei), Thailand, US and Viet Nam.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the international countries prioritized local sufficiency. Some countries restricted exports of medical products. China suspended its exports. India also controlled exports of medicines, PPE and ventilators. As a result of this, most of the local people are concerned about the shortage of medicines in the local market and stored many stocks. The MCCPMD has already asked its members not to hike the price. Yet, it cannot control non-members — wholesalers and retailers, the MCCPMD stated.

The government has already urged people not to make panic buying on medicines. The large purchases by consumers have contributed to the price rise in the local market.

The ministry launched the online

licencing system for export and import businesses starting from 1 April, intending to reduce the person-to-person contact and mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Of the items, available online licencing system, medicines and raw materials for the pharmaceutical industry are exempted import licence fee and the number of things is not restricted.

The MCCPMD held its 18<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting through videoconferencing on 10 October. Dr Myint Htwe, Union Minister for Health and Sports, delivered a remark at that virtual meeting that he was delighted at the performance of the MCCPMD in the pharma industry. It contributed to the efforts in the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities. Additionally, the Ministry of Commerce will also support the pharma industry with the relaxation for the ease of doing business, Dr Than Myint, Union Minister for Commerce addressed.

The Myanmar Chamber of Commerce for Pharmaceutical & Medical Device (MCCPMD) was founded on 2 April 1999 as a non-governmental organization (NGO) under the guidance of the Union of the Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCD), to enhance healthcare services for people, abide by the national drug regulations, and improve the corporation amongst the members' businesses in uplifting public healthcare collectively. MCCPMD members are owners of local companies, foreign-owned companies, individuals and entrepreneurs. —Ko Khant

*(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*



GLOBAL COVID UPDATE

# COVID-19 : Latest information from around the World

THE novel coronavirus has killed at least 1,381,915 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December

At least 58,165,460 cases of coronavirus have been registered. Of these, at least 37,053,500 are now considered recovered.

The tallies, using data collected by AFP from national authorities and information from the World Health Organization (WHO), probably reflect only a fraction of the actual number of infections.

Many countries are testing only symptomatic or the most serious cases.

On Saturday, 9,021 new deaths and 580,396 new cases were recorded worldwide. Based on latest reports, the countries with the most new deaths were United States with 1,503 new deaths, followed by Italy with 692 and Mexico with 550.

The United States is the worst-affected country with 255,905 deaths from 12,090,469 cases. At least 4,529,700 people have been declared recovered.

After the US, the hardest-hit countries are Brazil with 168,989 deaths from 6,052,786 cases, India with 133,227 deaths from 9,095,806 cases, Mexico with 101,373 deaths from 1,032,688 cases, and the United Kingdom with 54,626 deaths from 1,493,383 cases.

The country with the highest number of deaths compared to its population is Belgium with 134 fatalities per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Peru with 108, Spain 91, Argentina 82.

China -- excluding Hong Kong and Macau -- has to date declared 86,431 cases, including 4,634 deaths and 81,481 recoveries.

Latin America and the Caribbean overall has 433,865 deaths



Protesters rally against county's shelter-at-home order at Los Angeles City Hall, California, U.S. PHOTO: AFP

from 12,431,882 cases, Europe 369,144 deaths from 16,253,491 infections, and the United States and Canada 267,302 deaths from 12,414,386 cases.

Asia has reported 187,681

deaths from 11,869,395 cases, the Middle East 73,549 deaths from 3,106,525 cases, Africa 49,433 deaths from 2,059,651 cases, and Oceania 941 deaths from 30,131 cases. As a result of corrections

by national authorities or late publication of data, the figures updated over the past 24 hours may not correspond exactly to the previous day's tallies.

SOURCE: AFP

'INAPPROPRIATE AND TASTELESS'

## German FM slams corona protesters for Nazi victim comparisons



Protests against anti-virus measures continued Sunday in Berlin. PHOTO: TOBIAS SCHWARZ AFP

GERMAN Foreign Minister Heiko Maas on Sunday lashed out at anti-mask protesters comparing themselves to Nazi victims, accusing them of trivialising the Holocaust and "making a mockery" of the courage shown by resistance fighters.

The harsh words came after a young woman took to the stage at a protest against coronavirus restrictions in Hanover Saturday saying she felt "just like Sophie Scholl", the German student executed by the Nazis in 1943 for her role in the resistance.

A video of the speech has already been viewed more than a million times on social media, with many sharply condemning the speaker.

"Anyone today comparing themselves to Sophie Scholl or Anne Frank is making a mockery of the courage it took to stand up to the Nazis," Maas tweeted.

"It trivialises the Holocaust and shows an unbearable forgetting of history. Nothing connects the corona protests with the resistance fighters. Nothing!"

In the clip, a steward is seen interrupting the woman on stage to hand over his orange high-visibility vest, saying her words amounted to "minimising the Holocaust".

"I'm not working security for such nonsense," he is heard saying before being escorted away.

The young woman, who identified herself as 22-year-old

Jana, then bursts into tears before dropping her microphone and leaving the stage.

'Inappropriate and tasteless'

In another incident last week, an 11-year-old girl addressed an anti-mask demo in the western city of Karlsruhe, likening herself to Jewish teenager Anne Frank because she had to celebrate her birthday quietly to avoid the neighbours hearing that they had invited friends over.

Frank, whose diary written while in hiding in the Netherlands has been read by millions, was eventually betrayed and perished in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945.

The comparison drew outrage, with Karlsruhe police calling it "inappropriate and tasteless".

Germany has long prided itself on confronting its Nazi past and acknowledging its "eternal responsibility" for the Holocaust, in which six million Jews were murdered. The far-right AfD party has in recent years however challenged Germany's remembrance culture, senior figures openly calling for the country to stop atoning for Nazi crimes.

SOURCE: AFP

PERCEIVED AS A PLACE OF WAR, INSTABILITY

## DR Congo hoteliers bet on luxury in troubled east

THE new five-star Serena Hotel in the city of Goma, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, has more than 100 luxury rooms and all of the amenities: a conference centre, restaurants, spas and a gym.

The upscale hotel stands out in the capital of North Kivu province, better known as a stronghold for dozens of armed groups than as a tourist destination. It is the latest project in the region to come to fruition as DR Congo and a local business magnate are eager to turn the page on the country's insecurity and attract investors.

"Generally people perceive this place as a war place, a place of instability. Everything negative," said the hotel's Kenyan manager, James Nzavwala.

Serena Group, which is 45 percent owned by the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development, is betting on a business clientele and the tourism potential of the nearby Virunga National Park, famed for its volcanoes and critically endangered mountain gorillas. The construction of the Serena Hotel took 10 years and was made possible thanks to investment by the most influential businessman in Goma: Vanny Bishweka.

The 55-year-old former hardware dealer is already an investor in another hotel on the shores of Lake Kivu, and is a partner in Tunisian firm EPPM which exploits the lake's methane gas.

Security concerns

A single room for 250 dollars (210 euros) a night is the price of entry to the first five-star hotel in town. The guest rooms in the palatial premises opened in September offer a fine view over the swimming pool and the lake, on which Goma lies at the northern tip.

On the border with Rwanda, close to Uganda and Tanzania, Goma is also at the heart of the two provinces of North and South Kivu, where armed groups have been fighting for control of land, minerals and timber since the two Congo Wars in 1996-2003.

Spared direct militia incursions since 2012-2013, Goma faces problems of security in outlying districts far from the residential areas near the shore of the lake, which host non-governmental organisations and part of the United Nations mission in the country, MONUSCO.

SOURCE: AFP



## UNITED KINGDOM

## End of one, beginning of another

BRITISH Prime Minister Boris Johnson will confirm that coronavirus lockdown restrictions across England are to end on December 2, his office said Saturday.

The lockdown will be followed by a return to a three-tiered set of regional restrictions as part of the government's "COVID Winter Plan", it added in a statement.

The official announcement is expected to be made on Monday.

The statement quoted a spokesperson for 10 Downing Street as saying that current England-wide restrictions have "helped bring the virus back under control" and "eased pressures on the NHS (National Health Service)". However, the government has also cautioned that without regional restrictions the virus would wreak havoc before plans for vaccine distribution and mass testing have had time to take effect.

SOURCE: AFP



Shoppers walk at a near-deserted city centre in Leeds, Yorkshire on October 31, 2020, as the number of cases of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 rises. PHOTO: .AFP/FILE

## LIMITED STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

## Factory workers exempt from California's new virus curfew

TESLA factory workers in California will be exempt from new coronavirus restrictions taking effect Saturday in the state because they are considered essen-

tial, after CEO Elon Musk feuded with authorities over an earlier shutdown.

"The limited stay-at-home order does not apply to employ-

ees deemed essential workers – manufacturing is listed as an essential workforce," said California's Department of Public Health, specifying in particular transport products and equipment.

The exemption will allow Tesla's auto assembly plant to avoid a new curfew across much of California while continuing to abide by a health plan already in place.

The 10:00 pm to 5:00 am stay-at-home order, apart from essential activities, will take effect Saturday evening and remain in force through December 21.

Some 94 percent of the population is affected by the curfew, including residents of Alameda, where the electric car manufacturer's plant is located.

In May, Musk feuded with authorities over the reopening of the California plant and threatened to move his headquarters and future projects to Texas or Nevada.

He at one point announced the restart of production on Twitter and challenged authorities to stop him.

Last month, Tesla said profits in the previous quarter more than doubled as the electric car giant forecast deliveries hitting 500,000 this year.

Covid-19 infections have spiked nationwide in the United States, prompting a number of states to take measures to try to slow its spread.

US case numbers surpassed 12 million on Saturday.

SOURCE: AFP



Workers at Tesla's factory in Alameda County in California have been exempted from a new curfew because they are deemed essential. PHOTO: AFP

## CANADA

## Virus swells Montreal's homeless camps as winter comes

ALL along the edges of a long boulevard in Montreal stretches an unprecedented sight in this city: hundreds of tents that have sprung up in a brand new homeless camp since the end of summer, with many of the people thrown out of their homes because of the pandemic.

"Welcome to the trendy encampment of Notre-Dame!"

quipped Jacques Brochu, dubbed "the mayor" by his neighbors.

At 60, Brochu said he found himself homeless and living in a tent on Notre-Dame Street after losing his affordable housing, which was repossessed by its owner.

Like his new neighbors, he is preparing for a cold Quebec winter, where temperatures of-

ten plunge to minus 20 Celsius (minus four degrees Fahrenheit).

"I manage to heat my tent very well," Brochu said, showing off his small candles. A tarpaulin covering the shelter does the rest.

In the camp in Hochelaga, once a working-class neighborhood in eastern Montreal that is undergoing gentrification, the

long-term homeless rub shoulders with people who have recently lost their jobs, as well as students and workers who have lost their homes.

Guylain Levasseur, 55, who has been homeless for six years and lives in a small caravan, is considered the encampment's "manager."

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS  
IN BRIEF

## SCOTLAND

## "Unpalatable but necessary"

Swathes of western and central Scotland prepared to enter a three-week period of restrictions on Friday evening.

From 6:00 pm (1800 GMT) non-essential shops, hospitality, gyms and beauty salons will shut in 11 council areas including the most populous city of Glasgow.

Schools are to remain open under the measures, also in place until December 11.

Earlier this week, Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said the new curbs were "unpalatable but necessary".

England comes out of a partial lockdown in December. The UK as a whole has been one of the worst hit by the outbreak, with nearly 54,000 deaths from some 14 million cases.

SOURCE: AFP

WORLD: NEWS  
BULLETINKey US Senate  
race candidate  
quarantining after  
possible Covid  
infection

A US Republican senator contesting a closely watched runoff election in Georgia was quarantining on Saturday after possibly being infected with Covid-19, her campaign said.

Kelly Loeffler had campaigned with Vice President Mike Pence on Friday as well as David Perdue, another Republican Georgia senator up for re-election in the January 5 runoff vote.

The election will decide whether Republicans or Democrats control the Senate, with both facing Democratic challengers.

Loeffler's campaign said in a statement that she took both a rapid test and a PCR test on Friday morning.

"Her rapid test results were negative and she was cleared to attend Friday's events," the statement said.

SOURCE: AFP



GLOBAL ACCESS TO VACCINE

# G20 grapples with vaccine rollout, \$4bn shortfall

G20 nations emphasised the need for global access to coronavirus vaccines at a Saudi-hosted virtual summit Saturday dominated by efforts to tackle the pandemic and the worst global recession in decades.

World leaders, including US President Donald Trump who is refusing to concede a bitter election, popped up in multiple windows across a flickering screen, in a high-stakes webinar held amid the raging pandemic.

The leaders are huddling online for the two-day gathering as international efforts intensify for a large-scale rollout of coronavirus vaccines after a breakthrough in trials, and as calls grow for G20 nations to plug a \$4.5-billion funding shortfall.

“Although we are optimistic about the progress made in developing vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics tools for COVID-19, we must work to create the conditions for affordable and equitable access to these tools for all people,” said Saudi King Salman, the summit’s host.

“We have a duty to rise to the challenge together during this summit and give a strong message of hope and reassurance to our people by adopting

policies to mitigate this crisis,” he told world leaders in opening remarks.

Chinese President Xi Jinping spoke of the need to build a “global firewall against COVID-19” as he called on G20 nations to help distribute vaccines “fairly and efficiently”, according to state news agency Xinhua.

And French President Emmanuel Macron said the health crisis was “a test for the G20”, stressing there “will be no effective response to the pandemic unless it is a global response”.

As the trailblazing event got under way, there had been some early quirks, with someone heard telling King Salman that “the whole world is watching” before the event started and Xi apparently having to call for technical help.

With Saudi hopes for a grand coming-out parade dashed due to the pandemic, the event has been reduced to brief online sessions of what observers call “digital diplomacy”.

Despite having to abandon much of the usual summit pageantry, Saudi Arabia launched the meeting with an aerial acrobatics display over Riyadh.

Along with Xi and Macron,



Saudi Arabia opened the G20 summit on November 21 in a first for an Arab nation. PHOTO: AFP

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan also addressed the summit, where sources said climate change was among the issues topping the agenda.

Trump, who continues to reject his election defeat, was briefly dialled into the meeting and “spoke about the aggressive actions and safety measures the United States took to protect the vulnerable, pioneer groundbreaking treatments, and develop vaccines and therapies at record-setting speed, which will save millions of lives,” according to a White House statement. He then went golfing.

Mr Trump was accused

of tweeting about the election result during the Saudi King’s opening remarks.

Many G20 leaders have already congratulated his rival, President-elect Joe Biden.

### Funding gap

G20 nations have contributed more than \$21 billion to combat the pandemic, which has infected 56 million people globally and left 1.3 million dead, and injected \$11 trillion to “safeguard” the virus-battered world economy, organisers said.

But the group’s leaders face mounting pressure to help stave off possible credit defaults across developing nations.

Last week, its finance ministers declared a “common framework” for an extended debt restructuring plan for virus-ravaged countries, but campaigners say the measure is insufficient.

The ministers had extended a debt suspension initiative for developing countries until June next year but UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has pushed for a commitment to push it until the end of 2021.

International Monetary Fund managing director Kristalina Georgieva has warned that the global economy faces a hard road back from the COVID-19 recession, even as vaccines are now in sight.

G20 nations must help plug the \$4.5-billion funding gap in the so-called ACT-Accelerator, Norway’s prime minister, South Africa’s president and the heads of the European Union and the World Health Organisation demanded in a joint letter to the group.

The programme promotes an equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines including poor countries to rein in the pandemic.

SOURCE: AFP

NORTHERN IRELAND

# New Restrictions



Northern Ireland shops, pubs and restaurants will shut for two weeks in efforts to curb the coronavirus. PHOTO: AFP

NORTHERN Ireland shops, pubs and restaurants will shut for two weeks in efforts to curb the coronavirus, the British province announced, on the eve of Friday’s partial reopening of businesses.

Cafes, hairdressers and beauty salons were permitted to unlock their doors on Friday as five weeks of limited “cir-

cuit-breaker” restrictions in the province expired.

But starting on November 27, they will have to close again.

Pubs and licensed restaurants which had been slated to reopen on that same date will also remain shuttered for a further two weeks until December 11.

Non-essential retail outlets

will close and there will also be limits on household gatherings with citizens told to stay home and work from home “if at all possible”.

Schools across Northern Ireland, which is home to 1.9 million, are to remain open under the plan agreed by assembly ministers in Belfast on Thursday evening.

Northern Ireland’s First Minister Arlene Foster said the region faced “the sobering prospect of our hospitals becoming overwhelmed within weeks”.

“It is clear that a tough, carefully timed, intervention is required to give us the best chance to have a safe and happy Christmas and further into the new year period,” she added.

There have been 901 deaths from the coronavirus in Northern Ireland, according to latest official data.

SOURCE: AFP

FRANCE

# Stores poised to reopen

FRANCE is preparing to reopen stores for the crucial Christmas shopping season, encouraged by new data suggesting the country is past the worst of its second wave of infections.

Thanks to curfews and partial lockdowns, confirmed

new infections dropped by 40 percent last week, admissions to hospital fell by 13 percent, and the number of new intensive care patients was down by nine percent, according to the national health agency.

SOURCE: AFP



France is preparing to reopen stores for the crucial Christmas shopping season, encouraged by new data suggesting the country is past the worst of its second wave of infections. PHOTO:AFP/FILE



# Keep faith, take perseverance in fight against COVID-19

WITH the winter season approaching in our country, the cooler weather threatens to aggravate the situation of coronavirus infection if we let our guards down.

Why? researchers believe cooler temperature and humidity play roles in how well the virus can survive in the air, and thus make its way into your body.

The COVID-19 virus becomes a little more active and multiplies a little bit faster in cold weather. Meanwhile, seasonal influenza occurs in changing season period. That is why we need to be more careful as the cold weather sets in.

The co-circulation of seasonal influenza and COVID-19 in the winters may present challenges for health systems and health facilities, since both diseases present many similar symptoms.

Many of the same measures that are effective in preventing COVID-19 are also effective for preventing influenza, including physical distancing, hand hygiene, covering coughs, ventilation and masks.

We have areas where the weather is very cold in winter. It's worth noting that the Ministry of Health and Sports has been broadcasting physical exercise programmes to motivate the people through physical exercises in the winter in the fight against the COVID-19. We would like to urge our to take interest in these programmes.

Another point of view is that cooler weather is likely to worsen the coronavirus' spread because of the virus' biology and the people's behaviour. Scientists say the latter may matter more. As it gets colder, people spend more time indoors, and that will increase their risk of exposure to the virus.

In this winter, we must continue to take responsibility as individuals of the need to maintain physical distance, hand hygiene, cough etiquette and wear a mask when and where needed. People must remember the three Cs - avoid crowded places, avoid closed settings and avoid confined and enclosed spaces with poor ventilation.

What seemed to matter most in slowing transmission rates, the study found, were nonpharmaceutical interventions. In other words, keep wearing a mask and limiting indoor gatherings.

Meanwhile, the people's relentless efforts need to continue with more vigor as the government has been making concerted efforts scaling up capacities for timely detection, testing, tracing contacts, isolating the affected and providing hospital care to those who need it. In sum, people must keep faith and take perseverance in the fight against COVID-19.



## THE NEED TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY, SECURITY AND PROPER DESTRUCTION OR DELETION OF ANY DATA

# UN agencies uphold human rights considerations in COVID-19 data collection

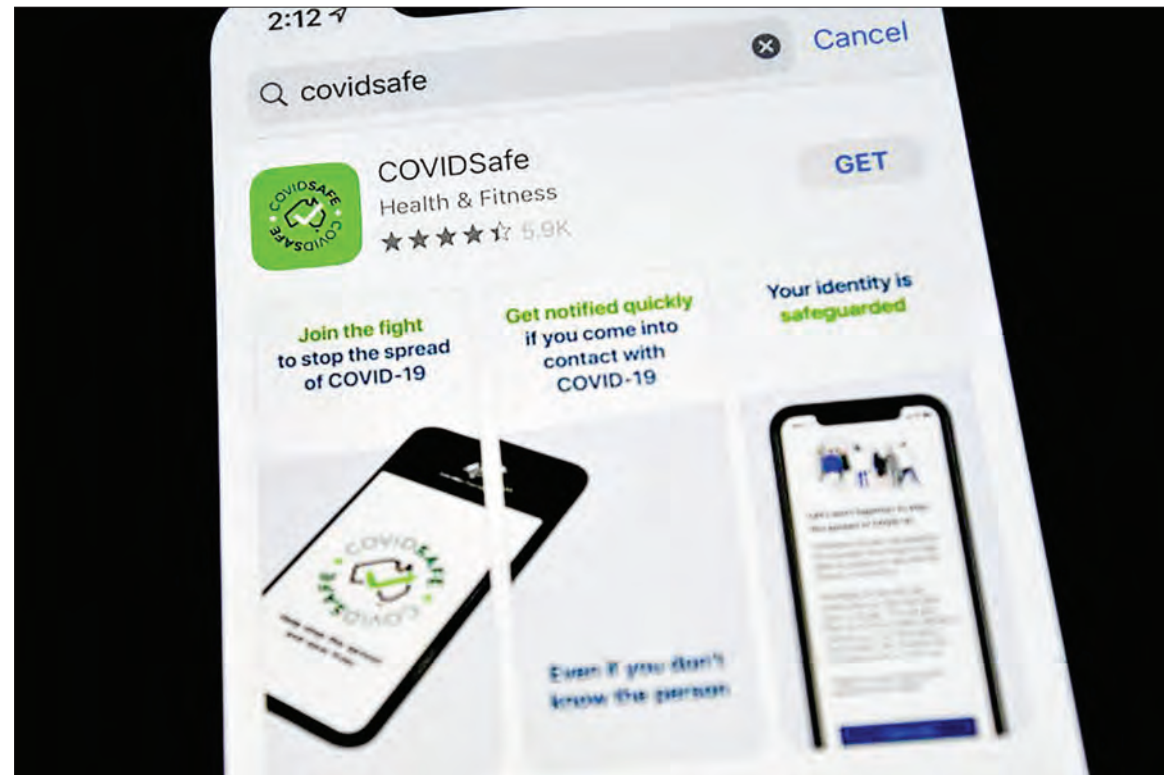
The United Nations and 15 of its agencies have underlined their support for data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic which respects the right to privacy and promotes development.

MOBILITY data derived from phones, emails and social media, for example, can assist in both monitoring the spread of the virus and in implementing activities the UN is mandated to carry out, according to their joint statement issued on Thursday.

However, they warned that vast amounts of sensitive data, both personal and non-personal, can be collected through digital contact tracing and general health surveillance.

"This could have significant effects beyond the initial crisis response phase, including, if such measures are applied for purposes not directly or specifically related to the COVID-19 response, potentially leading to the infringement of fundamental human rights and freedoms", they said.

"This concern is especially pressing if some emergency measures introduced to address the pandemic, such as digital contact tracing, are turned into standard practice."



A coronavirus trace and track app is displayed on a mobile phone screen. PHOTO: AFP

ly pressing if some emergency measures introduced to address the pandemic, such as digital contact tracing, are turned into standard practice." **Critical role of human rights**

In May, the UN Secretary-General issued a policy brief highlighting how human rights are critical to shaping pandemic response, as they put people "centre-stage" while also preserving human dignity.

The UN entities stressed that in the context of the pandemic, any data collection by the UN system should be rooted in human rights and applicable international law, data protection and privacy principles.

"Any measures taken to address the COVID-19 pandemic should also be consistent with the mandates of the respective UN System Organizations and take into account the balancing of relevant rights, including the right to health and life and the right to economic and social development", they said.

**Data collection precedent**

In this regard, they outlined

five points, including that data collection should be lawful, limited in scope and time, and necessary to specified legitimate purposes for pandemic response.

They also underscored the need to ensure confidentiality, security and proper destruction or deletion of any data.

"A coordinated and inclusive global UN-wide response rooted in solidarity is necessary to contain the pandemic and minimize its negative impact across the world," the UN partners said.

Although the statement addressed the challenges of the current pandemic, they suggested that it may serve as a precedent for using data to respond to any future crises.

**SOURCE: UN News**

## TO MAINTAIN URGENCY, PUBLIC SUPPORT, POLITICAL MOMENTUM AND VISIBILITY OF THE ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE CHALLENGE

# COVID cases surge amid growing threat from antimicrobial resistance - WHO chief

More cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the past four weeks than in the first six months of the pandemic, the UN health agency chief told journalists on Friday as he launched a new report on the threat posed by antimicrobial resistance.

"ACROSS Europe and North America, hospitals and ICU units are filling up or are full", Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) said at a regular press briefing in Geneva.

While sharing "more good news from vaccine trials, which continues to give us hope of ending the pandemic", he upheld the need to continue to "use the tools we have to interrupt the chains of transmission and save lives". **Unwinding 'century of medical progress'**

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of the "intimate relationship between humans, animals and the planet we share", the WHO chief said. "We cannot protect and promote human health without paying attention to the health of animals and the health of our environment".

This is particularly relevant

when considering antimicrobial resistance, according to Tedros, who called it "one of the greatest health threats of our time".

Antimicrobial resistance threatens the efficacy of the antibiotics that are key in combatting HIV, malaria, neglected tropical diseases and many other illnesses.

And while antimicrobial resistance may not seem as urgent as a pandemic, it is not only just as dangerous but threatens to "unwind a century of medical progress and leave us defenseless against infections that today can be treated easily", he warned.

**Combatting resistance**

Aligning with World Antimicrobial Awareness Week, which kicked off on Wednesday, the WHO chief launched a new report —along with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Organization for Animal Health — that exam-



Good hygiene on farms can help stem the rise of antimicrobial resistance that comes from the over-reliance of antibiotics. PHOTO: FAO/GIULIO NAPOLITANO

ines international rules governing antimicrobial practices, and identifies gaps in regulations governing their use on humans, animals and plants.

The report, based on data from 136 countries, reveals that

while almost 90 per cent of States have national action plans for antimicrobial resistance, only 20 per cent have identified funding for their implementation.

"To help address that gap, together we have established a

million in funding - the first round of support for eleven countries, and to generate more global coherence in their use.

**New leadership group**

Against the backdrop that increased political commitment at the highest levels of government was "one of the most important ways" to achieve that goal, the WHO chief announced the One Health Global Leaders Group, which will bring together prominent leaders from government, the private sector and civil society organizations "to advocate for urgent action to combat the threat of antimicrobial resistance".

It also involves participants from agriculture, health, development and other relevant areas "to maintain urgency, public support, political momentum and visibility of the antimicrobial resistance challenge".

trust fund to support low and middle income countries to develop a truly 'One Health' approach to addressing antimicrobial resistance", Tedros asserted, thanking Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom for \$13

**SOURCE: UN News**



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“Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!”



## Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 22 November, 2020)

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observations at (18:30)hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over the Southwest Bay of Bengal still persists and it may further intensify into a depression during next (24) hours. Weather is partly cloudy over the North Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 23 November, 2020:** Rain or thundershowers are likely to be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, scattered in Kachin State and isolated in Upper Sagaing and Ayeyawady Regions, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of slight increase of night temperatures in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23 November, 2020:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23 November, 2020:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23 November, 2020:** Generally fair weather.

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## "GO TO TRAVEL" SUBSIDY PROGRAM

## Japan to unveil travel campaign suspension details in upcoming days



Japan's economic revitalization minister Yasutoshi Nishimura meets the press in Tokyo on Nov. 22, 2020. The government plans to unveil in the next few days the specifics of how its "Go To Travel" subsidy program will be suspended in areas with high numbers of coronavirus cases. **PHOTO: KYODO**

JAPAN will try to unveil in the next few days the specifics of how its "Go To Travel" subsidy program will be suspended in areas with high numbers of coronavirus cases, a senior government official said Sunday.

"After deciding on a course of action in the upcoming days, we will implement (the new policy) by working with prefectural governors," Yasutoshi Nishimura, minister in charge of the government's coronavirus response, said on public broadcaster NHK, a day after the partial suspension of the program aimed at promoting domestic tourism was announced.

The policy flip-flop came after record numbers of infections in many parts of the country and rising criticism of Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's slow response to the recent resurgence of novel coronavi-

rus cases.

Suga and government officials, however, have not said when the suspension of the travel campaign will begin and in which areas.

The decision, made without working out the details in advance, has led to disarray among local authorities and the tourism industry as well as the public.

Medical experts and opposition party lawmakers have criticized Suga's government for putting priority on reviving the economy rather than preventing the further spread of the virus.

On Saturday, Japan reported more than 2,500 new daily cases of infection, marking a record high for the fourth day in a row.

Although the number of new confirmed cases in Tokyo

on Sunday declined to 391 from the previous day's record of 539, there are signs that the uptrend will most likely continue for some time.

When announcing the policy reversal on Saturday, Suga also said the government would ask prefectural governors to consider stopping the issuance of "Go To Eat" discount coupons aimed at encouraging dining out at restaurants.

Appearing on the same TV program as Nishimura, Tokushima Gov. Kamon Iizumi, who heads the National Governors' Association, said the "Go To" subsidies could be suspended in areas with a high concentration of infections on a city-wide rather than prefectural basis, removing "Sapporo in the case of Hokkaido, or Nagoya in the case of Aichi Prefecture."

**SOURCE: KYODO**

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCOURGE

## Microplastics even on the roof of the world

TRACES of microplastics have been found close to the top of Mount Everest, a study showed Friday, likely originating from equipment used by the hundreds of climbers who summit the world's highest peak every year.

Fluorescent tents, discarded climbing equipment, empty gas canisters and even frozen excrement have long littered the well-trodden route to the 8,848-metre (29,029-feet) high summit, earning it the name of "the highest dumpster in the world".

But in the first study of microplastics on Everest, by a research team part of the 2019 National Geographic and Rolex Perpetual Planet Everest Expedition, the tiny pollutants were found as high as 8,440 metres above sea level, although concentration levels were higher at the mountain's base camp.

The findings, which reveal the potential threat to Everest posed by plastic pollutants, were published in the environmental journal *One Earth* on Friday.

"The samples showed significant quantities of polyester, acrylic, nylon, and polypropyl-

ene fibres," author Imogen Napper, a National Geographic explorer and scientist based at the University of Plymouth in Britain, said in a statement.

"It really surprised me to find microplastics in every single snow sample I analysed. Mount Everest is somewhere I have always considered remote and pristine. To know we are polluting near the top of the tallest mountain (in the world) is a real eye-opener."

**Environmental scourge**

A majority of outdoor clothing worn by trekkers and climbers on Everest is made of synthetic fabrics. Tents, climbing ropes and other gear also use the materials.

"We highly suspect that these types of items are the major source of pollution rather than things like food and drink containers," Napper said, referring to the trash accumulation on the peak after decades of commercial mountaineering.

Last year, a 14-member team spent six weeks scouring for litter at Everest base camp and at Camp 4 -- nearly 8,000 metres up.

**SOURCE: AFP**

## THE PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

## France to punish 'eco-cide' with prison up to 10 years

FRANCE will make serious intentional damage to the environment punishable by up to 10 years in prison as part of planned "eco-cide" law, government ministers said in remarks published Sunday.

The law was one recommendation from a Citizens' Convention for the Climate, a group created by the government a year ago, bringing together 150 people from the French population to discuss the environment.

An "eco-cide" offence would be sanctioned by up to 4.5 million euros (\$5.3 million) in fines or up to 10 years in prison in cases of "intentional violation" of environmental laws, Justice Minister Eric Dupont-Moretti and Ecological Transition Minister Barbara Pompili told the JDD weekly.

"We are going to create a general pollution offence," Dupont-Moretti said. "Punishment will be staggered according to a perpetrator's intentions."

The aim was to fine violators of environmental laws "up to 10 times the profit they would have generated by throwing waste into the river", he said.

The French constitution did not allow the qualification of such actions as "crimes", just



France will make serious intentional damage to the environment punishable by up to 10 years in prison as part of planned "eco-cide" law, government ministers said in remarks published Sunday. **PHOTO: UNSPLASH / AFP**

offences, Dupont-Moretti said.

France will also add an offence called "endangering the environment" to its statute books, Pompili said, under which potential offenders could be punished even before committing acts of illegal pollution.

Environmental expertise within the French judiciary will be beefed up to allow courts to improve their handling of pol-

lution cases and civil claims, including by creating special environmental jurisdictions, Dupont-Moretti said.

The citizens' convention has submitted 149 proposals to cut greenhouse gas emissions to President Emmanuel Macron, who said he would convert 146 of them into government policy.

**SOURCE: AFP**



ASSISTANCE OF THE G20

## Indonesia calls on G20 to help developing countries recover from economic downturn

INDONESIAN President Joko Widodo has called on the G20 economies to help developing countries and underdeveloped ones recover from the pandemic and economic downturn.

In the company of Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, the Indonesian head of state made the remarks when attending the first day of the G20 Summit virtually from the presidential palace in Bogor, West Java, on Saturday evening.

“The president reminded the UN Secretary General’s statement regarding the need for strong solidarity for developing countries. Without the assistance of the G20 countries, developing and underdeveloped countries will not easily recover from the pandemic and economic downturn,” the president was quoted

by the foreign minister as saying.

The Indonesian president also conveyed the importance of debt restructuring assistance for low-income countries, especially from large debt-giving countries, in support of the world economic recovery, the minister said.

According to the head of state, Marsudi said, the debt restructuring must be accompanied by improved debt management or sound debt organizing.

“The president said that the UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) has requested financial support of 2.5 trillion U.S. dollars so that developing countries are able to get out of the economic downturn. Developing countries need fiscal space for economic recovery,” Marsudi said.

SOURCE: AFP



Lion Air aircraft are parked on the tarmac at Juanda International airport in Surabaya, East Java on April 24, 2020. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

A BURGEONING THIRD WAVE

## S. Korea to tighten coronavirus prevention measures as cases spike

THE South Korean government on Sunday announced that it would strengthen coronavirus prevention measures in the capital Seoul as it tries to contain a fast-growing third wave of the

pandemic in the country.

Eating and drinking in restaurants after 9 p.m. is prohibited in the densely populated metropolitan area, while cafes will be limited to takeout and delivery

orders only. Attendance at religious gatherings and sporting events will be capped.

Entertainment facilities, such as clubs, must stop business entirely. After two weeks, depending on the infection rate, a determination will be made on whether to extend the new restrictions.

South Korea reported 330 new daily coronavirus cases as of midnight on Saturday, the fifth straight day of more than 300 cases.

The government is calling the latest spike the third wave following those in February-March and August.

South Korea has reported 30,733 cases of infection with 505 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

SOURCE: KYODO



Workers wearing protective gear spray disinfectant as part of preventive measures against the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus, in a courtroom at Suwon High Court in Suwon, South Korea PHOTO: AFP/FILE

FEMALE ASSASSINS

## The women who served as a deadly duo for the Taliban

FEMALE assassins who lured an Afghan security official to his death with promises of sex before shooting him and dumping his body at a cemetery are among thousands of Taliban criminals freed as part of a fragile peace plan.

While the ultra-conservative Islamists ban women from many

areas of life — often forcing them to stay home and barring them from most jobs — they are not above using them as killers.

Muzghan and her aunt Nasreen walked free from jail in September after confessing to being members of the Taliban’s ultra-violent Haqqani network.

The two women had been on

death row after several killings, including the murder of an Afghan intelligence agent at their home.

They had used Nasreen’s daughter as bait “under the pretext of selling her body”, on the orders of a Taliban commander, a security official told AFP.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS

IN BRIEF

A BEACH POPULAR WITH TOURISTS

## Man killed in shark attack in Western Australia

A man has died after being bitten by a shark at a beach popular with tourists on Australia’s northwest coast, authorities said on Sunday (Nov 22).

Police were called to a Cable Beach in the morning after reports of the attack.

The man was pulled from the water and given medical treatment but later succumbed to his injuries.

“Police can confirm that tragically the man has died,” Western Australia police said in a statement.

Shark attacks are rare on Cable Beach, a 22km stretch of pristine white sand next to the town of Broome.

But authorities are generally forced to close the beach once or twice a year when deadly saltwater crocodiles are spotted nearby.

The man’s death marks the eighth fatal shark attack in Australian waters this year.— SOURCE: AFP

TRADE BALANCE DATA

## Laos trade deficit reached US\$34mil in October

LAOS recorded a trade deficit of over US\$34 million in October 2020, according to the latest information from the Lao People’s Democratic Republic Trade Portal website.

Laos’ exports during October were worth US\$347 million, while the value of imports was \$382 million, according to the report.

The country’s leading exports included copper ore, pulpwood and waste paper, copper and copper products, bananas, corns, sugars, clothing, electrical equipment and appliances, along with gold bars and camera parts. The main imports included mechanical equipment (excluding motor vehicles), electrical equipment and appliances, steel and steel products, diesel, land vehicles excluding motorcycles, plastic products, vehicle spare parts including mirrors and chains as well as fertilizers.— SOURCE: XINHUA



CLOCK IS TICKING

# Trump hit with new blow in bid to overturn vote results

A Pennsylvania judge on Saturday threw out Donald Trump's claims of widespread electoral fraud there, dealing a new blow to the Republican's bid to overturn his loss in the US presidential election.

The decision -- announced in a scathing judgment which excoriated the Trump team's legal strategy -- paves the way for Pennsylvania to certify Democrat Joe Biden's victory there, which is scheduled to take place Monday.

With the clock ticking down to Biden's January 20 inauguration, Trump's team has focused on trying to stop battleground states from certifying election results, in addition to his numerous legal challenges that have so far failed.

Judge Matthew Brann wrote in his ruling that Trump's team had presented "strained legal arguments without merit and speculative accusations" in their complaints about mail-in ballots



Supporters of US President Donald Trump cheer as he passes in the motorcade after golfing in Sterling, Virginia on November 21, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

in Pennsylvania.

"In the United States of America, this cannot justify the disenfranchisement of a single voter, let alone all the voters of

its sixth most populated state," Brann wrote.

"Our people, laws, and institutions demand more."

Biden won the state-by-state

Electoral College votes that ultimately decide who takes the White House by 306 to 232.

SOURCE: AFP

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

# Kyrgyz protest over proposed constitution empowering president



Japarov has spoken in favour of the constitution and is widely believed to be its driving force. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

HUNDREDS took to the streets in Kyrgyzstan Sunday to protest a proposed constitution that critics say would empower the presidency and damage freedom of speech.

Constitutional amendments

currently undergoing public discussion would return cabinet-forming powers to the president and allow incumbent leaders to run for office.

Initiators say the draft constitution should be put to a ref-

erendum on January 10, the same day that the ex-Soviet country is holding presidential elections.

In October, Sooronbay Jeenbekov became the third Kyrgyz leader since independence to resign over political unrest -- this time over a disputed parliamentary vote.

Disarray in the Central Asian country has caused concern for key allies Russia and China.

Several hundred protesters who gathered in the centre of the capital Bishkek held up signs decrying a "Khanstitution" -- a reference to the absolutist rulers who dominated Central Asia for centuries.

Some chanted against Sadyr Japarov, who this month resigned as acting president and prime minister to compete in a presidential election set for January

10, which he is tipped to win.

Japarov has spoken in favour of the constitution and is widely believed to be its driving force.

He called naysayers "shameless fools" in a statement relayed via media on Friday, and promised to "unmask the true opponent" of the changes next week.

Daniyar Amanaliyev, a businessman who attended the Sunday protest, told AFP that the aim of the constitutional reform was to "push the educated people out of the country and leave only those who are toadying to the new khan."

Banur Abdiyeva a 53-year-old who also works in business called the proposed constitution a "rollback" to the era of the country's first two presidents, both of whom were overthrown.

SOURCE: AFP

CONTESTED RE-ELECTION

# Thousands march in Belarus opposition rally in Minsk

TENS of thousands of Belarus opposition protesters took to the streets on Sunday, the latest large-scale rally against President Alexandre Lukashenko's contested re-election.

For more than three months

Belarus has been gripped by historic weekly opposition rallies following Lukashenko's reelection to a sixth term in August, which Western governments have refused to recognise.

Tens of thousands of protest-

ers marched through different neighbourhoods in the capital Minsk on Sunday, chanting "Long live Belarus" and waving red and white flags of the opposition, an AFP reporter at the scene said. Security forces deployed heavily

around the city with armoured vehicles and water cannons before the rally. Around 70 demonstrators were arrested by the police, according to the Viasna centre for the defence of human rights.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS  
IN BRIEF

AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY

## Saudi confident of 'friendly' ties with Biden: official

SAUDI Arabia expects no major change in its relationship with the US under Joe Biden, a senior official told CNN, despite the president-elect pledging to turn the kingdom into a "pariah".

OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia, a close ally of President Donald Trump, has appeared wary of Biden after he promised a stern stance against the kingdom for its human rights failings. But Adel al-Jubeir, the Saudi minister of state for foreign affairs, dismissed the notion. "We deal with the president of the United States as a friend, whether he's Republican or Democrat," Jubeir told CNN, in an interview released over the weekend.

SOURCE: AFP

SEASONAL BIRD FLU

## Dutch cull 190,000 Chickens after bird flu outbreaks

DUTCH authorities have culled some 190,000 chickens after a highly contagious strain of bird flu broke out at at least two poultry farms, the agriculture ministry said Sunday.

Health workers slaughtered around 100,000 hens at a poultry farm at Hekendorp outside Gouda while 90,000 chicks were culled at Witmarsum, in northern Friesland.

In both cases "a highly contagious strain of the H5 variant" was suspected, the ministry said in a statement. There were no other poultry farms within a one kilometre radius of the outbreaks, it added. "Both farms were cleared to prevent further spread of the disease," the ministry said. Seasonal bird flu has been detected at various farms around the Netherlands since October, blamed mainly on migratory birds. Dutch Agriculture Minister Carola Schouten on 23 October imposed preventative indoor containment on all commercial poultry farms after two dead swans were discovered carrying the highly contagious H5N8 variety of bird flu. -- SOURCE: AFP



FAIR SUPPORT

# G20 to back 'equitable' access to coronavirus vaccine

G20 leaders will pledge to "spare no effort" in ensuring the equitable distribution of coronavirus vaccines worldwide and reaffirm support for debt-laden poor countries, according to a draft communique seen by AFP Sunday.

The leaders also struck a unified tone on supporting "multilateral" trade as well as the global fight against climate change, but the closing document lacks firm details on many of the issues dominating the virtual summit hosted by Riyadh.

The two-day gathering that began Saturday comes as international efforts in-

tensify for a large-scale rollout of coronavirus vaccines after a breakthrough in trials, and as EU and other leaders call for G20 nations to plug a \$4.5-billion funding shortfall.

"We have mobilised resources to address the immediate financing needs in global health to support the research, development, manufacturing and distribution of safe and effective Covid-19 diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines," the draft document said.

"We will spare no effort to ensure their affordable and equitable access for all people, con-

sistent with members' commitments to incentivise innovation."

The communique offered no details on how the effort will be funded.

There could be changes in the final version of the document, which will be released later Sunday by the Saudi hosts.

In a comment echoed by other world leaders, French President Emmanuel Macron said Saturday the coronavirus crisis was "a test for the G20", stressing there "will be no effective response to the pandemic unless it is a global response".

SOURCE: AFP



Saudi Arabia hosts a G20 summit in a first for an Arab nation, with the virtual forum dominated by efforts to tackle the coronavirus pandemic and the worst global recession in decades. PHOTO: POOL/AFP/FILE

THE BENEFITS FROM RCEP

## RCEP to promote Indonesia-China economic ties, help Indonesia climb out of recession: experts



People visit a new China Town in Pantjoran PIK, Jakarta, Indonesia, Nov. 18, 2020. The new China Town in north Jakarta opened this month. PHOTO: XINHUA/DU YU

THE Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is expected to play a large role in promoting economic and trade relations between Indonesia and China, Indonesian experts said.

"We've just fallen into recession and if RCEP is successful in improving economic relations, Indonesia will perhaps be able to climb out of recession through cooperation with China and other bigger

economies," Indonesian economic expert Nadhila Ichsan said.

According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS), the state's economic growth experienced a 3.49 percent contraction in the third quarter of 2020, which brought the country's economy to a recession for two consecutive quarters. In quarter two, Indonesia's economy grew at a rate of -5.32 percent.

Although the coun-

try's economy continued to contract, there was a significant rebound in exports, especially those to China. The data of BPS showed Indonesia's largest non-oil and gas exports in October 2020 were to China. Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati at a press conference said, "The worst is over" and "All components of economic growth, both from the expenditure side and the production side, have increased."

Murpin Josua Sembiring, an economic scholar, opined that the benefits from RCEP include creating opportunities for the Indonesian industry to take advantage of regional value chains, increasing high-quality telecommunication services, and triggering Indonesian investors to invest in the RCEP area.

SOURCE: AFP

### Notice for Change of Pesticides Trade Name

The foreign manufacturer AgriGate CropSciences Pte., Ltd will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board Changing trading name.

No.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	A.I	Reg: Type	Reg: No.
1	Popular 37.5 EC	Cyclone Pro 37.5 EC	Lambda-Cyhalothrin 1.5% + Profenofos 36% EC	Full	F2017-1520

It is therefore announced to come and reject within 14 days to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address- Myanma Awba Group Co., Ltd  
No.(95-A), Kyaik Wine Pagoda Road, 8<sup>th</sup> mile, Mayangone Township, Yangon Region, The Republic of Union of Myanmar.

### MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER

1. MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WILL SELL TEAK & HARDWOOD ROUND LOGS AND SAWN TIMBER BY ONLINE SYSTEM DECEMBER OPEN TENDERS IN US DOLLARS. PARTICULARS OF THE OPEN TENDER SALES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- (A) DATE & TIME
  - (4-12-2020) (09:00) A.M
  - (EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT) YANGON & EX-SITE TEAK/HARDWOOD (LOG AND CONVERSION)
  - TEAK LOGS ABOUT (700) TONS
  - THIRD QUALITY & UP TEAK CONVERSION ABOUT (88) TONS
  - 2019-2020 EXTRACTION YEAR - HARDWOOD LOGS ABOUT (5348) TONS
  - PYINKADO, IN, KANYIN, HTAUKYANT, THITYA, INGYIN, THINWIN
  - (WOOD BASED INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT) ABOUT (163) TONS
- (B) DATE & TIME
  - (29-12-2020) (09:00) A.M
  - TEAK LOGS ABOUT (700) TONS
  - THIRD QUALITY & UP TEAK CONVERSION ABOUT (100) TONS
  - 2019-2020 EXTRACTION YEAR - HARD WOOD LOGS ABOUT (5000) TONS
  - PYINKADO, KANYIN, (OTHER HARD WOOD LOGS INCLUDING)
- (C) PLACE
  - TAW WIN HALL, GYOGONE, INSEIN TOWNSHIP, YANGON.

2. FOR FUTHER DETAILED INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE HEAD OFFICE AND ALSO VISIT MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE WEB-SITE (www.mte.com.mm)

Contact; Office Ph: 09-5148901, 09-5053865, 09-5129148  
dgmmarketing.export@gmail.com

OPEN TENDER COMMITTEE  
MYANMA TIMBER ENTERPRISE

RECESSION BROUGHT ON BY VIRUS

## Spanish banks seek mergers as outlook darkens

A wave of mergers is sweeping across the Spanish banking sector as lenders face up to a pan-

demic-induced recession, ultralow interest rates and growing competition from financial technology start-

ups. CaixaBank, Spain's third-largest bank, and Bankia, its fourth-largest, approved a merger in Sep-

tember which will create the nation's biggest domestic lender with around 664 billion euros (\$788 billion) in

assets in the country.

And BBVA, the country's second-largest bank, announced Monday it was

in talks with Banco Sabadell, Spain's fifth-largest bank, over a possible tie-up.

SOURCE: AFP



Bungalows built with pine wood for tourists in Kanpetlet Old city in Chin State. Kanpetlet town situated 6,000 feet above the sea.



# Natma Hill national park, ASEAN heritage of Chin State

By Maung Thinn Pyant  
PHOTOS: ZWE MANN

**T**HERE are many kinds of honourable symbols in Chin State including Natma Hill national park (Mount Victoria) recognized as ASEAN heritage site located in Kanpetlet Township. Rih Lake and Natma Hill in Kanpetlet Township are also symbols of Myanmar. Kanpetlet takes a position at an altitude of 4,560 feet. Natma Hill (Mount Victoria) is 10,500 feet high. Saw is 12 miles to Kanpetlet and 17 miles to the apex of Natma Hill in Kanpetlet. The warden office of the national park under the environment and wildlife conservation department can be seen on 6,000 feet high site in Kanpetlet. Hotel zone formed with neat and tidy bungalows built of pine wood takes a position

in old Kanpetlet city at 6,200 feet high area. The route from hotel zone leads to the apex of Mount Victoria where a gilt, magnificent pagoda can be seen. Visitors can enjoy chilling breeze and view panoramic scene of grass, pine forest and ASEAN heritage national park.

### Recognition

Misty mountain ranges in Chin State catch attention of travellers for paying visits to the national park. Misty scenes can be seen in November and December. In remaining seasons, all parts of Mount Victoria are under rain drops and mist with difficulties for stay of travellers. The apex of the mountain may be 32° centigrade in maximum and

3° centigrade in minimum. The area receives 65 inches of rainfall on the average on a yearly basis. Cold breeze blows the apex of the mountain under the sunray for unprecedented weather for travellers in the first week of March. Natma Hill national park is under management of the environment and wildlife conservation branch of the Forest Department. Conservation of the park started in 1995 so as to have recognition of a significant hilly area with habitation of rare bird species in Southeast Asia.

### Rare species of plants and animals

Natma Hill national park was recognized as an ASEAN heritage site in September 2012,



Great-Hornbill

catching attention of foreign travellers. It is a home to rare birds,

rare orchid species and living biodiversity and thriving plants. As Number of tourist arrivals has been increasing in the national park as of 2012-13 financial year, environmental conservation can green hilly and forestry areas with creation of job opportunities for local people while earning income of foreign exchange in tourism industry. White-browed Nuthatch, a rare bird species across the world can be seen in Natma Hill national park only in Myanmar. Such kind of bird can attract international bird enthusiasts. The park was also home to rare animal species such as tiger, leopard, clouded leopard and wild



A Chin ethnic woman winnowing rice.



A Chin ethnic woman weaving cloth.





mar's Ginseng stands the fourth positions across the world. Japanese conducted observation at the park for the second time and ended in December 2013. The research team collected data on more than thousands of plant species from the park and estimated over 2,500 species in the park. Over ten species of herbal Dendrobium orchid can be seen in the park. China and Thailand purchase such kinds of orchid species to produce tonic drug. Among them, Chin's red orchid can attract travelers. So, visitors from France and England ob-



A herbal orchid in Natma Hill National Park.



cat in past 15 years. Now, there remain some rare animal species such as western hoolock gibbon, southern serow and Chinese goral in the park. Travellers are interested in observing birds and record wildlife along the route. Another attraction of the park is thriving rare plant species.

#### Most of travellers come from France and UK

Researchers remarked Natma Hill national park is full of plant species. White and yellow Rhododendron are domestic species. Those from Japan's MGK botanical garden found valuable herbal plants in the park. Myan-

serve such orchid species.

#### Recommendation

The orchid garden from the national park office opens a learning centre for local people for getting business opportunities in conserving orchid species and techniques of plant propagation. Winter Bergenia is herbal plant thriving on the hilly area at an altitude of 7,000 feet. Foreigner experts are conducting research in the area but are worried about environmental degradation caused by human. As local people rely on environment, it is necessary to raise awareness about environ-

mental conservation. As Natma Hill national park is an ASEAN heritage site, not only host Myanmar but also ASEAN countries need to conserve it. By creating economic opportunities for the local people residing in the hilly areas based on traditional culture can reduce risks to harming the environment and contribute to existence of biodiversity and botanical species. Natma Hill national park is dubbed as South Island located on the highest mountain in Chin State. As such, foreign travellers give advice to carry out regional development tasks without harming the environment as the park is full of plant species and greening with natural forest.

#### Regional development in earning increased income

Four model villages in Kanpetlet Township were designated as bio horticultural villages and provided seeds of coffee, tea, elephant foot yam and avocado



Chin ethnic women.

for local climatic conditions. If they grow these plants on a commercial scale, they will have to earn increased income. Due to good transportation, the area enjoys high arrivals of foreign tourists as well as improvement of business products. As such, the area can attract travelers as the second PyinOoLwin.

Local review that the na-

spectabilis, cherry and Artocarpus chaplasha plants from ever green forest and herbal orchid species and other herbal plants are thriving in the national park. A total of 552 species of butterflies have been recorded. In fact, Natma Hill (Mount Victoria) is a watershed of Myittha and Lemyo rivers, Mone, Maw and Yaw creeks.



Pine wood bungalows in Kanpetlet Old city in Chin State.

by the Forest Department for cultivation of these plants all the year round. Growing these plants can give good practices to the local farmers so as to prevent deforestation based on slash and burn farming system. Seeds were distributed to local farmers from Okpo, Makyaukah, Yelaungpan and Sawlaung villages to grow the plants under close supervision of foresters in order to ensure long term existence of Natma Hill national park with concerned efforts by the environment and wildlife conservation section. Some local people grow tea and elephant foot yam plants suitable

tional park can show rare animal species and butterflies in cages, it can earn incomes from entrance fees of foreign and local travellers.

#### Significant location

Bontalar waterfall near Mohti Hill is parked with travellers to take a rest in summer. Chin chameleon, landscaping and potentilla species are attractive to globetrotters, biologists and botanists. Plants from hilly ever green forest, hilly pine forest and hilly grass, oat species, sweet chestnut species, Rhododendron, cinnamon, fig, bonmeza, drooping fig, Abies

#### Prestige for the country

Myanmar possesses natural beauties not only on hilly areas but in plains. Myanmar joins hands with regional countries in enhance of environment conservation and tourism industry. Natma Hill national park is included on the list of 21 natural parks of the country. Improving eco-tourism site in Natma Hill national park can contribute to social economic status of the local people by earning foreign exchange for the State.

(Translated by Than Tun Aung)





## Myanmar to compete Asian Cup Qualifiers next year

MYANMAR national football teams and junior football teams will compete in the five Asian Cup qualifiers which are scheduled to hold in 2021, according to the football authorities.

Myanmar men's national football team will play in the remaining matches of 2022 World Cup Qualifiers and 2023 Asian Cup Second Round Qualifiers and women's national team will play in the Asian Cup Women's Football Championship Qualifiers.

Next, The U-23 men's national football team will participate in the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers, and U-20 women's team will join the Asian Cup U-20 Women's Qualifiers.

In the meantime, U-17 women's team will also compete in the AFC U-17 Women's Champion-

ship Qualifiers.

The remaining matches of the 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup Second Round are scheduled to hold in March and June 2021.

The first round of the Asian Cup U-20 Women's Championship Qualifiers will be held from 13 to 21 March.

The second phase of the qualifiers is also planned to hold in August 2021.

The first rounds of the Asian Cup U-17 Women's Championship Qualifiers are scheduled to hold in April 2021 and the second phase will be held in September 2021. The AFC authorities will reconfirm the fixtures of the tourneys, depending on the COVID-19 condition, according to the AFC.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



Myanmar U-19 women's team Captain San Thaw Thaw (white jersey) runs with the ball at the Group B match of the AFC U-19 Women's Championship 2019 in Chonburi, Thailand on 3 November 2019. PHOTO: MWF

## Australian Open decision 'soon' says tournament chief



Australian Open chief Craig Tiley said Sunday he expected "decisions soon" on arrangements for the tournament after reports said it could be shifted from its usual January slot, while Rafael Nadal urged players to be patient. PHOTO: AFP

MELBOURNE — Australian Open chief Craig Tiley said Sunday he expected "decisions soon" on arrangements for the tournament after reports said it could be shifted from its usual January slot, while Rafael Nadal urged players to be patient.

Tiley had originally wanted players to start arriving in Australia from mid-December so they could undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine before playing traditional warm-up events before the Grand Slam.

But that plan was thrown into doubt by Victoria state Premier Dan Andrews, particularly since Melbourne only recently emerged from a months-long lockdown to eliminate a second wave of Covid-19. Andrews

reportedly only wants players to arrive from early January, which would make it all but impossible to hold the high-profile ATP Cup and other tournaments before the scheduled start of the Open on January 18. It also remains unclear whether players will be allowed to train during quarantine.

"Tennis Australia is doing everything we can to finalise the summer of tennis as soon as possible," Tiley said in a statement. "We are working closely with the Victorian government on a plan that takes into account the needs of the players, fans, our partners and staff, and is of major benefit to the Victorian and Australian economy.—AFP ■

## Medvedev beats Nadal to set up Thiem title match at ATP Finals

LONDON — Daniil Medvedev sent Rafael Nadal packing after a gruelling slugfest at the ATP Finals in London on Saturday to set up a title match against Novak Djokovic's conqueror Dominic Thiem.

The Spanish world number two, who has never won the elite event in his illustrious career,

faltered when serving for the match in the second set and was beaten 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-3.

Earlier, US Open champion Thiem recovered from 4-0 down in the third-set tie-break against Djokovic to win 7-5, 6-7 (10/12), 7-6 (7/5).

Russian giant Medvedev -- who has won nine matches in a

row -- put Nadal's serve under intense pressure in the early stages of their evening match at the empty O2 Arena.

But he was unable to make his chances count and a drop in his level allowed the Spaniard to break to love to lead 5-3 before he served out for the set.—AFP ■

## May at the double as England down Ireland in Nations Cup

TWICKENHAM — Jonny May scored two tries as England beat Ireland 18-7 in an Autumn Nations Cup international at Twickenham on Saturday.

The result meant Six Nations champions England had won both their opening two Pool A matches, with his victory their fourth win in a row over Ireland. England dominated the opening 40 minutes but still only led 12-0 at half-time thanks to dashing wing May's double, with one try converted by captain Owen Farrell -- the son of Ireland coach Andy Farrell.

But two Owen Farrell penalties early in the second half at a once again eerily quiet Twickenham, with this match being played behind closed doors because of the coronavirus, gave England breathing space.

By the time Ireland replacement Jacob Stockdale scored a 73rd-minute converted try, England had the game won after their defence had repeatedly denied the Irish a score.

Both teams kicked off on the back of decisive home pool wins, England thrashing Georgia 40-0 in a dour, forward-dominated display last week when Ireland overwhelmed Wales 32-9.—AFP ■



At the double - England wing Jonny May (L) kicks ahead to score his second try against Ireland at Twickenham on Saturday. PHOTO: ADRIAN DENNIS AFP