

NATIONAL

Horse-cart riding businesses face financial hardship in Bagan-NyaungU

PAGE-7

NATIONAL

Htan Pyinnyar cave inspected to explore new tourism destination in Nawnghkio Tsp

PAGE-11

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 292, 6th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm, www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Tuesday, 2 February 2021

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office of the President Order Number (1/2021) 1 February 2021

- On 8 November 2020, the general election of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was conducted under the authority of the Union Election Commission (hereinafter referred to as "UEC"). The "UEC" had not only failed to properly perform their duties but also neglected to ensure free, fair and transparent election.
- The sovereignty of the power of a nation MUST be derived from the citizens, but the failure of the free and fair electoral process can cause the national sovereignty of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the power of people.
- Refusal to address the caverns raised by several political parties, ethnic groups, and the Tatmadaw, and subsequently calling Pyi Thu Hluttaw (Lower House) and Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House), as well as (Union Hluttaw) are violations of Article 417 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. According to Article 417 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, "the wrongful forcible means" of taking power shall cause of the loss of the sovereignty of Myanmar and the unity of the ethnic nationalities in Myanmar. There are many people, whom dissatisfied with the necessitous performances of the "UEC" have conducted peaceful protestation over the performance of the "UEC".
- As the Government and "UEC" both failed to address the causes, it is the Tatmadaw's undeniable duty to exercise Article 417 of the "Supreme Law of the Myanmar" – the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to declare "State of Emergency" in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of the Union.
- In order to address the concerned of voters, Government of Myanmar decided to utilize Article 418 (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, which mandates the transferring of "Legislative, Judicial and Executive Powers" to the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services.
- In conjunction with the Article 417 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, this emergency declaration shall remain in force for (one year), effective from today February 1, 2021.

Myint Swe
Pro Tem (President)
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

National Defence and Security Council of Republic of the Union of Myanmar holds meeting

THE National Defence and Security Council (NDSC) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar held a meeting at the President House yesterday morning.

Present at the meeting were Acting President U Myint Swe, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win and members of the NDSC.

In presenting the national situation, the Senior General said the Tatmadaw always keeps in the fore the motto "People are the Parents" when it comes to the people. People aspire a multiparty democratic system. So, the Tatmadaw adopted the political culture of conducting democracy transition process through negotiations and legal measures and in peace and stability.



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents the national situation at the National Defence and Security Council meeting at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw on 1 February 2021. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

SEE PAGE-3

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
Notification No. 1/2021

5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
(1 February, 2021)

1. The Union Election Commission failed to address a large difference over the voting list used in the multiparty general election held on 8 November 2020. Although the request was made to call for the special session of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, it was failed to do so. The President refused the submission for two times to hold the National Defence and Security Council meeting.
2. The Union Election Commission will be re-constituted to continuously take appropriate measures, including checking the voting lists in accord with the law.
3. Prevention of the current outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic will be effectively carried out with momentum.
4. Efforts will be made to recover the businesses caused by COVID-19 pandemic as quickly as possible.
5. Emphasis will be placed as much as possible on restoring eternal peace all over the country in accord with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
6. When these tasks have been completed in accord with the provisions of the State of Emergency, a free and fair multiparty general election will be held, and then, the assigned duty of the State will be handed over to the winning party meeting norms and standards of democracy.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
Statement on Ceasefire and Eternal Peace

(5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME)
(1 February 2021)

1. The Tatmadaw has already issued a news release on the further suspension of all military operations of the Tatmadaw except State defence and administrative measures from 1 to 28 February 2021 so as to achieve enduring eternal peace after a nationwide ceasefire and continue peace dialogue by making best of use of the extended ceasefire periods.
2. Moreover, the Peace Talks Committee of the Tatmadaw was formed with four persons led by Lt-Gen Yar Pyae as chairman on 9 November 2020 in order to continue peace talks more effectively.
3. As it is the mandatory process to achieve the eternal peace for the State, the Peace Talks Committee of the Tatmadaw has been reconstituted with following persons in order to continue the peace talks as quickly as possible with the armed organizations which have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and the ethnic armed organizations that have yet to sign the NCA.

(a) Lieutenant-General Yar Pyae	Chairman
(b) Lieutenant-General Sein Win	Member
(c) Lieutenant-General Ye Aung	Member
(d) Lieutenant-General Tin Maung Win	Member
(e) Lieutenant-General Min Naung	Member
(f) Lieutenant-General Aye Win	Member
(g) Lieutenant-General Aung Lin Dway	Secretary
4. The Peace Talks Committee of the Tatmadaw is hereby tasked with continuing talks with the NCA signatories in accord with the NCA provisions to further the peace process as well as with the NCA non-signatories until they sign the agreement and eternal peace is achieved.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Banks continue providing services for customers

The Tatmadaw True News Information Team has issued an announcement that the banks in the country are still open to provide customer services.

The announcement said that rumours have spread in social networks about the closure of banks and suspension of services; the services were, instead, delayed due to disconnection of internet and phone communications in the morning; at present, internet services have reactivated and banking services are running regularly.—MNA

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

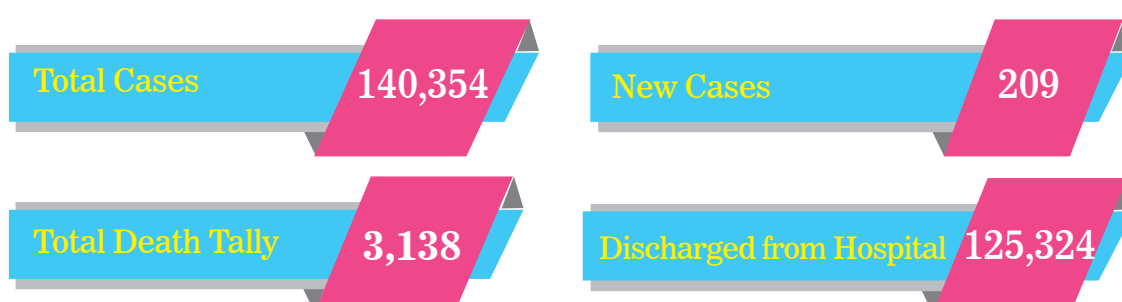
In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre (phone number 2019) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post 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

209 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 1 February, total figure rises to **140,354**

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **140,354** after **209** new cases were reported on 1 February 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these **140,354** confirmed cases, **3,138** died, **125,324** have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 1 February 2021



Daily death toll until 8 pm 1-2-2021

7

Ministry of Health and Sports

National Defence and Security Council of Republic of the Union of Myanmar holds meeting

FROM PAGE-1

Then, the country successfully held the 2010 multiparty general election, the 2015 multiparty general election and 2012 and 2017 by-elections. There were no major disputes at the elections. Only minor ones occurred, and they were settled by the relevant election commissions and officials in accord with the law. A free and fair election is the life of multiparty democracy, and only a free and fair election will reflect the true public desire. Section 4 of the Constitution (2008) states, "The Sovereign power of the Union is derived from the citizens and is in force in the entire country." The people have to directly or indirectly elect the government, the Hluttaws and the Union and region/state level bodies that will exercise the sovereign power of the State. The true aspiration of the people will be reflected, and the Sovereign power of the Union will be derived from the citizens only through a free, clean and fair election.

In scrutinizing the official voter list issued by the Union Election Commission, the results showed the number of 10,482,116 votes (more than 10.4 million votes) which may cause vote-rigging, in the 2020 multiparty general election. According to the official announcement of the Union Election Commission, the number of eligible voters was 38 million, and it is found that of them over 10 million might cause vote-rigging, and it might be over one-fourth (over 25%) of eligible voters. The entire people can know it is not a minor fault or a minor questionable case. The Tatmadaw has officially issued tables on the findings for 30 times, statements on its stance for two times before the election and four times after the election, totaling six. At the Tatmadaw press conferences, the case was explained in the presence of over 50 local and foreign media outlets with firm evidence through transparent means.

The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services had repeatedly dealt with the matter of ensuring a free and fair election which is the foundation of multiparty democracy and an open political process before the election. The decision to certify a "free and fair election" cannot be made in a day. It must be rechecked whether there was freeness and fairness and cleanness during the canvassing period, election period and post-election peri-



Acting President U Myint Swe declares the State of Emergency and hands over legislative, executive and judicial powers of the State to the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services on 1 February 2021. PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES

od and whether they were free from any kind of suspicion. The recent election was questionable in connection with freeness and fairness and cleanness in all the said three periods. Hence, up to this day, 20 political parties issued 26 statements calling for the postponement of the third Hluttaw sessions until the matter of voter lists that might cause vote-rigging has been settled. As regards the performance of the UEC, the expressions of desire were held for 124 times in 99 townships during the period from 10-11-2020 to 29-1-2021.

Tatmadaw, in accordance with Constitution (2008) and existing laws and without overstepping the legal provisions designed to ensure a "free and fair election", issued statements on 2-11-2020 to the government and the UEC, about the situation in the run-up to multiparty democracy elections, various UEC's instructions that violated existing laws, and irregularities in early voting. The Tatmadaw issued another statement on 2-11-2020, urging ethnic armed organizations not to threaten local ethnic people and allow campaigning of political parties in their territories, in order to ensure a free and fair election. On 30-11-2020, the Tatmadaw issued a statement requesting the UEC to provide copies of election documents under Sections 74 and 76 of the Evidence Act, so as to resolve electoral disputes and recognize free and fair voting without suspicion. As the UEC rejected the Tatmadaw's request, the Tatmadaw issued a statement

on 10-12-2020, urging the UEC again to provide the documents as its request was made in line with the legal rights of a citizen to cast ballots and raise an objection. After the proposal of 203 Hluttaw representatives from the Tatmadaw and political parties to convene a special session at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in line with the Constitution was rejected on 11-1-2021, the Tatmadaw released a statement on 14-1-2021, calling for a review of if the rejection was in compliance with the Constitution. In its statement on 20-1-2021, the Tatmadaw asked the UEC to consider the issue, saying it had released its findings on the voting and voter list errors that could have led to fraud because it wanted to recognize without suspicion the results of the free, fair and transparent general election. It also asked either the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw or the government or the UEC to address the issue, in the interests of the State and its citizens, because the Tatmadaw and other political parties would accept the election results in accordance with the wishes of the people if the election results could be proved credible. Besides releasing those statements, the Tatmadaw also requested the government to convene the National Defence and Security Council meeting in order to resolve those issues.

The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services continued to say that the Tatmadaw issued statements, urging the Union Election Commission which is directly concerned with the elec-

tion in accord with law and procedures to solve the problem on the first step. When the Union Election Commission refused to solve the problem, efforts were made to solve the problem through the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. When the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw refused to call the special session of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw demanded in accordance with the law, the Tatmadaw requested one of the government, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the Union Election Commission to seek the way for current situations. When they all refused it, the Tatmadaw urged them to call a meeting of "the National Defence and Security Council" representing the civilian and military sides led by the President who is mainly responsible for the National Defence and Security Council. The Tatmadaw performed its tasks on steps in accord with procedures and laws.

The Tatmadaw is abiding by Section 4 of the Constitution which states that "The Sovereign power of the Union is derived from the citizens and is in force in the entire country", Section 6 (d) and Section 7 which stipulate "flourishing of a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system" and Section 6 (f) mentioning "enabling the Defence Services to be able to participate in the National political leadership role of the State". The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services said that officials at different levels did not solve the problems for 10,482,116 (more than 10.4 million) numbers of voters which might cause vote-rigging in the 2020 general

election, but respective Hluttaws were summoned with attempts to form the government. It would be acts or attempts to take over the sovereignty of the Union by insurgency, violence and wrongful forcible means mentioned in Section 40 (c) and Section 417 of the Constitution (2008).

After reviewing the report of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, the Acting President of the State declared the State of Emergency in accord with Section 417 of the Constitution (2008) and handed over legislative, executive and judicial powers of the State to the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services in accordance with Section 418 (a).

Afterwards, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services continued his report, saying that the Tatmadaw will carry out all duties of the State handed over by the Acting President as of today by abiding by provisions of the Constitution (2008). In discharging the State duties, the Tatmadaw will follow the provisions of the Constitution (2008) and existing laws which are not beyond the Constitution. The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services pledged to practise the genuine and discipline-flourishing multiparty democratic system in a fair manner. Upon completion of the tasks in accord with the provisions of the State of Emergency, the free and fair general election will be held, and assigned duty of the State will be handed over to the political party which won in the election.—MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (1/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of Union
Chief Justice and Supreme Court Justices

The incumbent Union Chief Justice and Supreme Court Justices are assigned, in accordance with the right to exercise the powers under Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, to continue their existing duties.

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (2/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of Chief
Justices and Judges of Region/State High Court

The incumbent Chief Justices and Judges of Region/State High Court are assigned, in accordance with the right to exercise the powers under Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, to continue their existing duties.

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (3/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of
Members of Anti-Corruption Commission

The incumbent members of Anti-Corruption Commission are assigned, in accordance with the right to exercise the powers under Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, to continue their existing duties.

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (4/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of
Chairman, Vice-Chairman and members of
Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

The incumbent Chairman, Vice-Chairman and members of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission are assigned, in accordance with the right to exercise the powers under Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, to continue their existing duties.

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Property sales booming in suburbs of Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw

DESPITE the COVID-19 crisis, real estate sales are booming in the suburbs of Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw in 2021, with the apartmental rental market declining slightly, according to senior real estate agents.

Land sales in Shwepyitha, Dala, Hlegu townships and four Dagon townships, which are outside the downtown area of Yangon, are booming. Similarly, land sales in newer suburbs of Mandalay are booming too, according to Myanmar Real Property Development Association Chairperson U Tin Maung.

“Earlier in the COVID-19 crisis period, the real estate market was a bit dull. Over the past two months, the numbers of sellers and buyers of real estate have increased,” said U Tin

Maung. “This is especially true in newer suburbs.”

“The rental market falls a bit. Businesses are not very good these days. The businesses are dull, so the rental market is down,” said U Tin Maung. “During the COVID-19 crisis, many business rooms have been closed for a long time, and some people could not afford to pay the rent, so they returned the rooms to their landlords.”

Speaking about proper licence in the real estate sector, the Myanmar Real Property Development Association said that if real estate businesses are controlled by licences, various issues such as tax evasions and fraudulent sales can be eliminated.—Pwint Thitsa (*Translated by Maung Maung Swe*)



Picture shows the condominium in Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region. PHOTO: SOE MYINT AUNG

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (5/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

Duty Termination from Deputy Ministers

The Deputy Ministers with their names shown against each of their respective Union Ministries are terminated from their duties.

- (1) U Khin Maung Tin Ministry of Office of State Counsellor
- (2) U Min Lwin Ministry of Office of State Counsellor
- (3) U Tin Myint Ministry of Office of Union Government
- (4) U Maung Maung Win Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry
- (5) U Set Aung Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry
- (6) Dr Min Ye Paing Hein Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry
- (7) U Bharat Singh Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations
- (8) U Hau Do Suan Ministry of International Cooperation
- (9) U Aung Hla Tun Ministry of Information
- (10) U Kyi Min Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture
- (11) U Hla Kyaw Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
- (12) U Kyaw Myo Ministry of Transport and Communications
- (13) U Thar Oo Ministry of Transport and Communications
- (14) Dr Ye Myint Swe Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
- (15) Dr Tun Naing Ministry of Electricity and Energy
- (16) U Khin Maung Win Ministry of Electricity and Energy
- (17) U Aung Htoo Ministry of Commerce
- (18) U Myint Kyaing Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population
- (19) U Win Maw Tun Ministry of Education
- (20) Dr Mya Lay Sein Ministry of Health and Sports
- (21) U Kyaw Lin Ministry of Construction
- (22) U Soe Aung Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement
- (23) U Tin Latt Ministry of Hotels and Tourism
- (24) U Hla Maw Oo Ministry of Ethnic Affairs

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (6/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment
of Union Ministers

The following persons are assigned to the duties of Union Minister shown against each of their respective ministries in accordance with the right to exercise the powers under Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

- (1) U Wunna Maung Lwin Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- (2) Lt-Gen Soe Htut Ministry of Home Affairs and Office of Union Government
- (3) General Mya Tun Oo Ministry of Defence
- (4) Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung Ministry of Border Affairs
- (5) U Win Shein Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry
- (6) U Aung Naing Oo Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations
- (7) U Ko Ko Hlaing Ministry of International Cooperation
- (8) U Chit Naing Ministry of Information
- (9) U Ko Ko Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture
- (10) U Myint Kyaing Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population
- (11) Dr Thet Khaing Win Ministry of Health and Sports

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (7/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

The following persons are terminated from their duties

- (1) Chairman and members of Nay Pyi Taw Council
- (2) Chairman and members of Union Civil Service Board

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Order No (8/2021)
5th Waning of Pyatho, 1382 ME
1 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of
Chairman of Union Civil Services Board

U Than Swe is appointed as the Chairman of Union Civil Service Board in accordance with the right to exercise the powers under Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Sd/
Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

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Circulation order is in easier way.

HOTLINE
09-45237515

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
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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.

Security forces rescue sinking boat in sea near Hainggyikyun

SECURITY forces rescued a sinking boat in Myanmar water near Hainggyikyun Township of Ayeyawady Region, and it was transferred to the local officials.

The local fishing boat, namely Yan Myo Naing-4, was found dipping into the sea at about 7 nautical miles from the south of Tha Mee Hla Island at 8:10 pm on 31 January, and the patrol security forces could retrieve it together with 7 boat workers.

They were taken to the res-

cue boat and transferred to the local authorities after conducting medical tests, according to the report of Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

Members of security force check the health condition of a crew of Yan Myo Naing-4 fishing boat that sank in Hainggyikyun Township. **PHOTO: MNA**



Professional photographers resume their business at U Bein bridge



Professional photographers at U Bein bridge. **PHOTO: NWE NADI (MYITNGE)**

LOCAL professional photographers at U Bein bridge in Amrapura Township of Mandalay Region have returned to their works as many visitors are flocking to the historical bridge since early January this year.

The scenic view on the

bridge and landscape view in the sunflower field near the bridge are the options for most of the visitors for the photo taken.

A professional photographer said that he earned about K7,000 to K10,000 from the business although

many visitors used their mobile phones in taking their photos.

He also said that the photographers secure regular income due to the increasing number of visitors during the holidays and weekends.

Each beauty photo is

charged K1,000 for small size, K1,500 for medium size and K3,000 for large size.

There are over 50 professional photographers at the U Bein bridge.—Nwe Nadi (Myitnge)

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Trapped wild elephant released in Kawthoung

A male elephant was found trapped near a creek in Bankhun village of Pyigyimandine Township, Taninthayi Region on 31 January.

A combined team of local forest officers, the police officer and the veteran gave medical treatments to the injury on the fore-

limb of a giant creature, and was released into the forest.—Myo Lwin (IPRD)

Trapped wild elephant was given treatments. **PHOTO: MYO LWIN (IPRD)**



Trade deficit shrinks to \$237 mln as of 22 January

MYANMAR'S trade gap has significantly narrowed to US\$237.385 million in the financial year 2020-2021 from just \$698.157 million registered in the corresponding period of the 2019-2020FY, according to the commerce data.

Between 1 October and 22 January in the current FY, Myanmar's external trade drastically plunged to \$9.7 billion from \$12 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

While exports were estimated at \$4.7 billion, imports were valued at \$4.768 billion this FY. Compared to the FY2019-2020, exports showed a drop of over \$1 billion, while imports fell by \$1.47 billion.

Myanmar witnessed a slump in exports triggered by the coronavirus pandemic. Moreover, the country cannot hold jade emporiums. As a result of this, export income plummeted, according to Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

Both sea trade and border trade dropped amid the coronavirus impacts. The neighbouring countries tightened border security and limited trading time to contain the virus's spread. Pandemic-induced container shortage pushed up the freight rates to almost triple in Myanmar, causing delays for traders.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it

imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The country mainly imports essential goods, construction materials, capital goods, hygienic material and supporting products for export promotion and the import substitution.

Myanmar's trade deficit was pegged at \$1.3 billion in the 2019-2020FY, \$1.14 billion in the 2018-2019FY, \$1.3 billion in the previous mini-budget period (April-September, 2018), \$3.9 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$5.3 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$5.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY, according to statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization.

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

Moreover, a series of trade liberalization and openness for policy development have been introduced for enhancing a more viable trade environment. The private sector plays a prominent role in Myanmar's market-oriented economic system. The ministry is highlighting free and fair trade, ensuring product safety and quality goods and services.—GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Horse-cart riding businesses face financial hardship in Bagan-NyaungU



Tourists ride horse-carts in Bagan. PHOTO: PHAY LEIN (BAGAN), KO KHANT

THOSE residents engaged in horse-cart riding businesses in Bagan cultural heritage zone are experiencing adversities to keep the businesses afloat in hard times due to the lack of travellers amid the COVID-19 restrictions, Bagan-NyaungU Horse-cart Riders Association stated. The feedstuff for horses is expensive. It costs approximately K3,000 per horse a day and totals about K90,000 a month. They are struggling to keep the business alive owing to the burden of feedstuff cost, said Ko Thaug Lwin, a horse-cart rider from Taungbileyar village of Bagan.

"Earlier, we made feedstuff using corn cobs, stalks, soybean and bran. At present, the owners scaled-down the feedstuff cost of horses using only corn cobs and stalks. It will, however, cause nutritional requirements for the

horses. Before the pandemic, there were about 240 carts in the town. Some sold their horse for the livings, and now only 210 are left," he added.

The local people relying on that business are struggling for livings, said U Myo Han, a horse-cart rider.

We like to call for the government's contributions and those concerned in the tourism industry to maintain this traditional business model in the cultural region, Chair U Myat Thu of the association stressed.

Bagan cultural heritage zone, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was eerily empty due to the tight restrictions of the COVID-19.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the historical temples in the ancient city were packed with a large number of pilgrims and tourists throughout the

year. They used to visit Bagan to observe the temples and stupas and view the sunset. The horse-riding businesses, motorcycle and electric bike rental businesses, hotels, motels, and guesthouses were earning well in the high season, along with souvenir businesses. Those businesses created jobs for residents, allowing the local people making a healthy income.

COVID-19 batters the local tourism industry and those engaged in local transportation rental business (three-wheel, boat, horse-riding, car, e-bike, cycle, motorcycle), hotels and guesthouses, restaurants and souvenir shops are suffering from this. The businesses relying on tourism are nearly closed amid COVID-19 negative impacts.—Phay Lein (Bagan), Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

500 watermelon trucks stuck in border amid trade suspension

THE flow of goods came to a halt in the Muse 105th zone on the morning of 1 February 2021.

About 500 trucks of watermelons are stuck in border areas amidst trade suspension.



Trucks seen at the 105-mile trade zone in Muse, northern Shan State. PHOTO:MYO WIN TUN/HTET MYAT

The exporters expect the regular trade at the soonest, especially during high demand season by China, traders from Muse stressed.

According to Muse Fruit Wholesale Centre, as Chinese New Year is approaching, watermelons and muskmelons demand rising in recent days.

In January-end, a watermelon fetched up to 7,000 Yuan per tonne, and the growers received a handsome profit. The melon price hit a seven-year record high. Nevertheless, the price is fluctuating depending on the political climate and market demand at present.

About 300 trucks of water-

melon and muskmelons were earlier traded a day. This year, the growers raised the concerns over the melon market amid the COVID-19 crisis. Consequently, the number of melon growers sharply fell, and so, the acreage did. Only 50-60 trucks enter the Muse market every day during the pandemic. The market is expected to remain more robust as the demand exceeds the supply, Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association stated.

During the previous financial year, the growers and the traders suffered the loss due to the price instability and trans-

portation difficulties triggered by the COVID-19.

Myanmar's watermelon market earlier relied only on China. Myanmar shipped 45 tonnes of seedless watermelon to Dubai market in the past two months, the association stated.

After the country achieves success on the Dubai market, Myanmar plans to expand its market to Hong Kong SAR, the UAE and Qatar, the association stated.

Myanmar yearly exports over 800,000 tonnes of watermelon and about 150,000 tonnes of muskmelons to China, the association stated.—Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Climate change is a 'global emergency'

UN Development Programme (UNDP)'s "People's Climate Vote" poll also showed that people supported more comprehensive climate policies to respond to the challenges. The survey covered 50 countries with over half the world's population.

"The results of the survey clearly illustrate that urgent climate action has broad support amongst people around the globe, across nationalities, age, gender and education level," Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator said in a news release.

The poll also showed "how" people want their policymakers to tackle the climate crisis.

UNDP said that the poll was the world's biggest survey ever of public opinion on climate change. It was conducted as countries prepare for negotiations at November's COP26, the 26th session of Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The survey asked respondents if climate change was a global emergency and whether they supported 18 key climate policies across six action areas: economy, energy, transport, food and farms, nature, and protecting people.

Its target audience of 1.2 million included over half a million people under the age of 18, a key constituency on climate change that is typically unable to vote yet in regular elections. Innovations, such as distribution across mobile gaming networks, were used to ensure that the young audience were reached.

According to UNDP, polling experts at the University of Oxford weighted the huge sample to make it representative of the age, gender, and education population profiles of the countries in the survey, resulting in small margins of error (+/- 2 per cent).

The results showed that people supported "broad climate policies", beyond the current situation, UNDP said.

The survey also found a direct link between a person's level of education and their desire for climate action, according to UNDP.

There was very high recognition of the climate emergency among those who had attended university or college in all countries, from lower-income countries such as Bhutan (82 per cent) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (82 per cent), to wealthy countries like France (87 per cent) and Japan (82 per cent).

Findings also revealed that while younger people (under 18) were more likely to say climate change is an emergency, other age groups were not far behind, with 65 per cent aged 18-35; 66 per cent aged 36-59; and 58 per cent over 60, expressing affirmation.

This illustrated how widely held this view has become," said UNDP.

Realizing the global electric-vehicle revolution for reducing pollution

(By - Mg. Han Tin)

TRANSPORT is a major source of unsustainable energy use owing to a nearly complete dependence on liquid fossil fuels. Owing to 94% reliance on oil, transport is the second largest source of CO2 emissions at 6.3 GtC or 24% of the total, compared with power generation (40%), industry (16%), buildings (12%) and agriculture and non-energy use (8%). At present, the transport sector accounts for 27% of global final energy consumption and is expected to increase 50% by 2035.

Hence, reducing transportation emissions is one of the most vital steps in fighting global warming. To cut GHG emissions drastically, and maximize renewable energy adoption, we have to replace the gasoline-powered internal combustion engine (ICE) with plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) and battery electric vehicles (BEVs). PHEVs typically run on electricity for shorter ranges—currently up to about 40 miles—then switch over to ICE when the battery is depleted. BEVs run only on electricity; they typically travel up to 100 miles on a single charge, and high-end models can reach up to 250 miles.

There are two general categories of vehicle emissions: direct and life cycle.

Direct emissions are emitted through the tailpipe, through evaporation from the fuel system, and during the fueling process. Direct emissions include smog-forming pollutants (such as nitrogen oxides), other pollutants harmful to human health, and greenhouse gases (GHGs), primarily carbon dioxide. PHEVs are more efficient than comparable conventional ICE vehicles,

but they still produce fewer tailpipe emissions even when relying on gasoline.

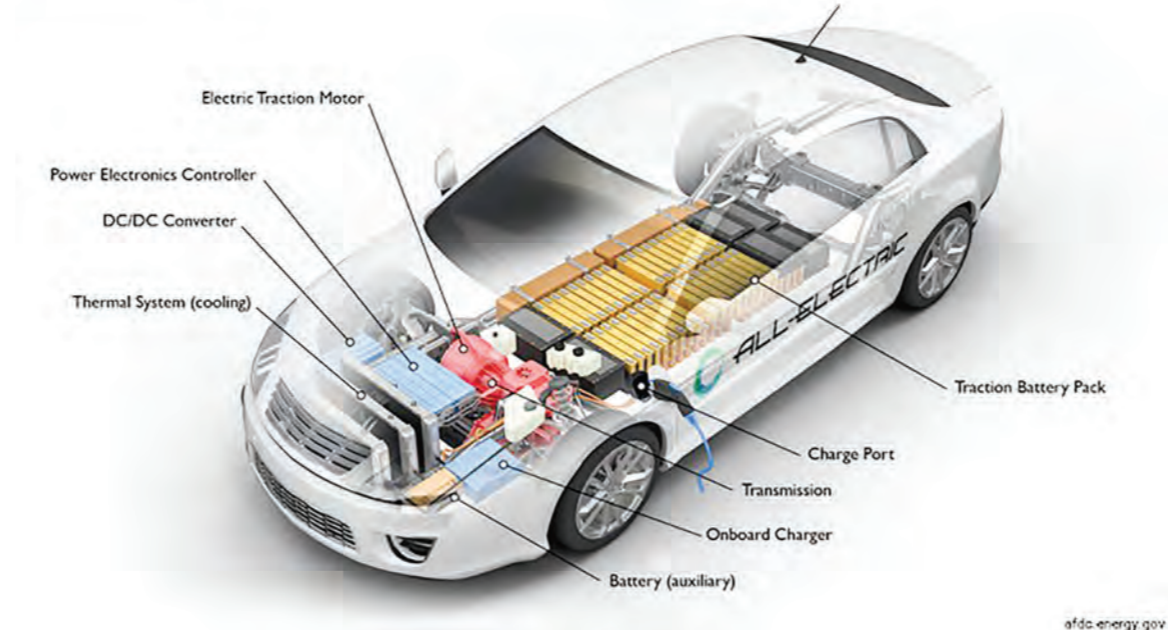
Life cycle emissions include all emissions related to fuel and vehicle production, processing, distribution, use, and recycling/disposal. For example, for a conventional ICE vehicle, emissions are produced when petroleum is extracted from the ground, refined to gasoline, distributed to stations, and burned in vehicles. Like direct emissions, life cycle emissions include a variety of harmful pollutants and GHGs.

BEVs produce net-zero direct emissions, which specifically helps improve air quality in urban areas. By flipping the switch to electrified transportation, we can drive climate solutions. BEVs are cleaner than ICE vehicles and are seen as a promising solution to global warming. BEVs can further minimize their life cycle emissions by using electricity generated by non-polluting renewable sources like solar and wind.

A BEV is a vehicle controlled by an electric motor and is run utilizing the power put away in the batteries. Like an automatic car, they have a forward and reverse mode. When placed in gear and press on the accelerator pedal these things happen:

- Power is converted from the DC battery to AC for the electric motor.
- The accelerator pedal sends a signal to the controller which adjusts the vehicle's speed by changing the frequency of the AC power from the inverter to the motor.
- The motor connects and turns the wheels through a cog.
- When the brakes are pressed

All-Electric Vehicle



or the car is decelerating, the motor becomes an alternator and produces power, which is sent back to the battery.

The key components of a BEVs are: - Electric motor - Inverter - Battery - Battery charger - Controller - and Charging cable.

Electric motor installed in BEV uses AC power. Three phase induction motors are widely used because of high efficiency, good speed regulation and absence of commutators. As speed of rotor is different (less) than speed of revolving field (synchronous speed), these motors are also called as an asynchronous motor.

An Inverter is a device that converts DC power to the AC power used in an electric motor. The inverter can change the speed at which the motor rotates by adjusting the frequency of the alternating current. It can also increase or decrease the power or torque of the motor by adjusting the amplitude of the signal.

The controller is like the brain of a vehicle, managing all of its parameters. It controls the rate of charge using information from the battery. It also translates pressure on the accelerator pedal to adjust speed in the motor inverter.

A battery pack is made up of a number of cells that are grouped into modules. However, the advancements in battery technology have made BEVs a potentially important strategy to decarbonize transport. Once the battery has sufficient energy

stored, the vehicle is ready to use. Current EV batteries are lithium based.

Nowadays, Lithium-ion batteries (LIBs) are currently the most suitable energy storage device for powering BEVs owing to their attractive properties including high energy efficiency, lack of memory effect, long cycle life, high energy/high power density, and environmental friendliness. These advantages allow them to be smaller and lighter than other conventional rechargeable batteries such as lead-acid batteries, nickel-cadmium batteries (Ni-Cd), and nickel-metal hydride batteries (Ni-MH).

A LIB contains two electrodes, the cathode and the anode, separated by the ion-conductor and electron-insulator nonaqueous electrolyte. Existing Li-ion batteries use graphite as one electrode, into which the lithium ions are pushed to store charge. But when these are rapidly charged, the ions get congested and can turn into metal and short circuit the battery. The breakthrough technology replaces the graphite anode which causes problem with semiconductor nanoparticles into which ions can pass more quickly and easily. These nanoparticles are currently based on germanium, which is water soluble and easier to handle in manufacturing. But it is now planning to use silicon, which is much cheaper. It may not only solve this problem but also reduces costs. The new cutting edge technology of LIBs can deliver 100 miles of charge in five

minutes. (The average BEV requires 30 kilowatt-hours to travel 100 miles - the same amount of electricity an average American home uses each day to run appliances, computers, lights and heating and air conditioning.) High-end models can reach up to 250 miles.

As the demand for LIB powered BEVs continue to increase around the world, their involvement in traffic accidents and fire incidents is likely to rise. This can damage the LIB and subsequently pose a threat to occupants and responders as well as those involved in post-crash operations. To use LIBs safely means to keep the cells within a defined voltage and temperature window. These limits can be exceeded as a result of crash or fault conditions.

Recently, in 2020, due to defects in LIBs which pose the risk of a short circuit or fire, Hyundai Motor Co recalled over 76,564 units of its Kona EVs globally and General Motors Co also recalled its 2017-2019 model year Chevrolet Bolt EVs 68,677 units due to fire risk reported five incidents.

The primary reason for the current high prices of BEV is the expensive battery. Batteries account for a third of the cost of building a BEV. Costs for LIBs have plummeted from \$750 per kWh in 2010 to \$350 per kWh in 2016, a 65% reduction. By 2020, battery costs are likely to fall to \$100 per kWh, or less than half of present levels. From there, costs

will continue to decline. These costs, alongside technological innovations, have a direct correlation with the BEV pricing. For example, the base price of the Tesla Roadster in the US was \$109,000 in 2010 while the price of the upcoming Model 3 is targeted at \$35,000, signifying a steep drop in vehicle price with battery costs.

The battery charger converts the AC power available on our electricity network to DC power stored in a battery. It controls the voltage level of the battery cells by adjusting the rate of charge. It will also monitor the cell temperatures and control the charge to help keep the battery healthy. The types or levels of charging infrastructure are commonly defined as Level 1, Level 2, and direct current (DC) fast chargers. The infrastructure for electric-vehicle charging continues to expand. In 2019, there were about 7.3 million chargers worldwide, of which about 6.5 million were private, light-duty vehicle slow chargers in homes, multi-dwelling buildings, and workplaces.

To be charged in five minutes would require much higher-powered chargers than it is using today. Therefore the charging stations and the electric power grids that supply them need their technology to be upgraded. Today existing stations will be obsolete if they don't repurpose them for charging. The requirement of electric car charging stations connected to the National grid and charging machine capacity will be increased in the future due to the higher penetration of electric vehicles and their different types of applications.

Modern BEVs are, however still suffering from performance barriers (range, charging rate, lifetime, etc.) and technological barriers (high cost, safety, reliability, etc.), limiting their widespread adoption. Besides range and cost, some other crucial factors that influence the extensive market penetration of BEVs require further improvement including battery lifetime (at least 10 years), safety, and reliability, and charging infrastructure. A worrisome encounter for drivers is running out of charge during a journey.

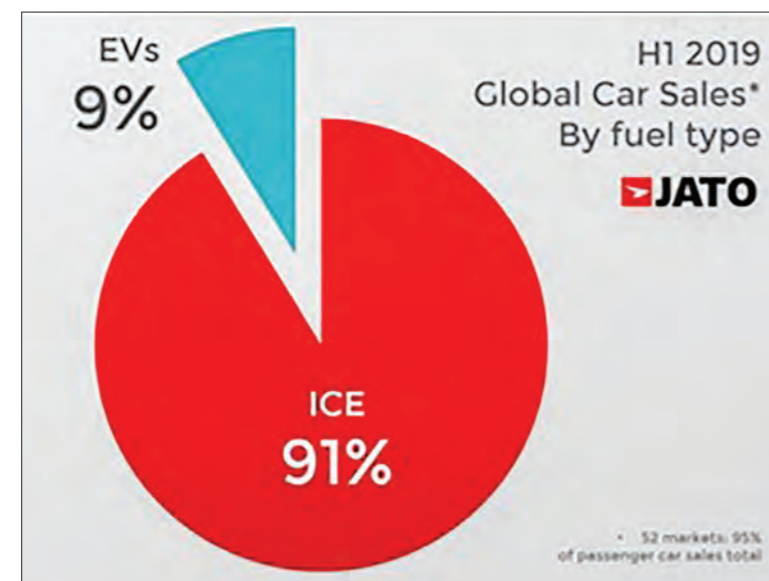
SEE PAGE-10

Union Day Objectives 74th Anniversary of Union Day - 2021

1. To work on the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong, till the success of the internal peace process is achieved.
2. Development of the socio-economic life of the ethnic nationalities.
3. To work for the emergence of a constitution that is in alignment and harmony with the Democratic Federal Union.
4. All ethnic nationalities to work for the preservation and protection of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national unity, and perpetuation of national sovereignty.
5. To nurture and develop new generations endowed with high skills and capabilities imbued with strong Union spirit.

Union Day slogans for 2021 (74th Anniversary)

1. Equal opportunities and equal responsibilities, living in a peaceful, prosperous and stable Union.
2. Unity is strength, solidarity is power
That is the heart of the Union.
3. Many fruits sprouting from one stem,
this is our brotherhood of the Union.
4. Our Union built with brotherhood,
Never forget Union day.
5. Drinking the same water, living on the same land,
we are Union nationals of the same blood.



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Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 1 February, 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and a few cloud elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 2 February, 2021: Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Shan, Kayin, Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Generally fair in the whole country.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 February, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 February, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 February, 2021: Generally fair weather.

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Realizing the Global Electric-Vehicle Revolution for Reducing Pollution

FROM PAGE-9

The technologies being used for BEVs are relatively new compared with technologies used to produce ICE vehicles, which have been evolving and improving for more than a century. For more than 100 years the ICE dominated vehicle design, bringing with it large increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. For example, in 2015, the number of fossil fuel-propelled cars in the United States rose to 113 million up from just 8,000 in 1900. Any major technological transformation, transitioning to an electrified transportation system will not be easy or cheap. A century of public and private development led to the existing fleet of ICE vehicles, complemented by more than 100,000 gas stations, and a vast network of service stations and dealerships. ICE vehicles counted for over 90% of global car sales in 2019. It is estimated that there are approximately 2 billion ICE vehicles being used all over the world in 2019. Only about 17 000 EVs were on the world's roads in 2010. By 2019, that number had swelled to 7.2 million. That is about 0.36% of the ICE vehicle.

From 2011 to 2013, US oil

production surged almost 50% due to fracking of shale oil. In that situation, OPEC countries would typically control their production to keep prices high. But OPEC declined to do that, which led to an oversupply and a fall in oil prices. After a brief recovery in 2015, prices kept going down, eventually under \$30 a barrel. What precipitated all this was about 2 million barrels a day of surplus supply, over and above demand. In 2019, electric vehicles in operation globally avoided the consumption of almost 0.6 million barrels of oil products per day. When that happens in

a long run, a large volume of oil will go unused. And long before global oil use declines in large absolute terms, it will decline enough to substantially affect the oil prices.

Despite BEVs provide a cleaner alternative that not only reduces GHG emissions, but also provides local air quality, noise reduction, and national security benefits, the production and purchase of BEVs is a classic chicken-and-egg problem. Manufacturers do not want to produce BEVs if no customers exist, and consumers cannot buy BEVs if vehicles are not



available that meet their expectations. Besides the required improvement of battery technology, the mass adoption of electric automobiles also depends on government incentives (such as registration tax exemption) and consumer attitudes and behaviors.

Although BEVs have an important role to play, they will face increasing market competition from advanced-fuel vehicles and should not necessarily be viewed as a panacea to decarbonize transport. Even if all cars were replaced with electric models, this wouldn't be a catch-all solution. While emission-free at the point of use, electric cars still create some carbon emissions due to manufacturing and maintenance im-

pacts. They also still contribute to congested roads. In order to get to net-zero by 2050, we would need nearly a 60% reduction in car mileage, even if all cars were low emission, by 2035. Many believe electric vehicles are the only future of road transportation. Equally, many are confident they will never replace internal combustion engines—not entirely, anyway. The electric vehicle revolution has turned out to be more of an evolution, with the industry making slow and steady progress. No one can tell what the future holds; Hopefully, I pray for the best that the evolution to revolution will meet the dead-line target of 2050 in time without delay.

Reference:- Internet

Technology

Pandemic payoff continues for Nintendo as profit soars

JAPANESE gaming giant Nintendo reported bumper results Monday, with unprecedented demand soaring as virus lockdowns boost the sector.

While fresh waves of infections have dashed economic recovery hopes in many industries, tightened restrictions have helped extend a run of good fortune for gaming companies.

Nintendo hiked its full-year forecast again on the strong results, including the runaway success of its Switch console and blockbuster pandemic hit game “Animal Crossing”.

The firm said global sales of the Switch for October-December rose to their highest level since the wildly popular console launched in March 2017.

Net profit for April-December hit a record 376.7 billion yen (\$3.6 billion), up 91.8 per cent from the same period a year earlier, while sales climbed 37.3 per

cent to 1.4 trillion yen, it said.

Nintendo, which revised its annual forecasts up last quarter, said it was further upgrading its net profit outlook to 400 billion yen for the fiscal year to March, from an earlier estimate of 300 billion yen.

Full-year sales are now projected at 1.6 trillion yen, compared with the 1.4 trillion yen forecast in November.

“Although it has not released major titles recently, software sales were also strong,” said Hideki Yasuda, an analyst at Ace Research Institute in Tokyo.

He told AFP the company “appears to have sailed through the crucial Christmas season in style”.

“The pandemic was a key factor, but the current strong performance underscores the Switch’s high popularity.”

Nintendo shares have surged more than 50 per cent



A general view of a Nintendo store is pictured in Tokyo on February 1, 2021 as the company announced a gain of 2.51 percent. PHOTO: AFP

over the past 12 months and closed up 3.4 per cent ahead of the earnings release.

Fourth-year ‘jinx’

Since it first hit stores nearly four years ago, the Switch has become a huge global seller, helped by innovative, family-friendly titles such as “Animal Crossing” that have wowed

critics and gamers alike.

In 2019, Nintendo released a scaled-back, cheaper version called Switch Lite.

Nintendo’s new console sales have tended to peak in the third year after release, and then taper off, but the Kyoto-based company is hoping to break the fourth-year jinx, counting on

continued strong demand for the Switch.

Analysts said investors were shifting their focus towards signs that a new version of the Switch may be unveiled, as sales may start to decline for the next fiscal year.

“Without a Switch Pro and suite of new games such as a sequel to “Zelda Breath of the Wild”, Nintendo’s 2020 will mark the high watermark as the Switch cycle wanes,” said Bloomberg Intelligence analysts Matthew Kanterman and Jitendra Waral.

It will also be difficult to match this year’s performance “as 2020 results were significantly boosted by Covid-19 demand”, they added.

Rival Sony, which launched its much anticipated PlayStation 5 late last year, is scheduled to release its third-quarter earnings this week.—AFP

Htan Pyinnyar cave inspected to explore new tourism destination in Nawngkhio Tsp

A team led by officials of Shan State Tourism Committee and deputy township administrator U Htay Lin Aung observed Htan Pyinnyar cave to explore a new tourism site in Nawngkhio Town-

ship of northern Shan State on 30 January.

That natural cave is located six miles away from Nawngkhio Township. The opening of the cave is 15 feet wide. The cave



Travellers are seen at the entrance of the Htan Pyinnyar Cave in Nawngkhio, Shan State. PHOTO: HTWE NGE (NAWNGHKIO IPRD)



Travellers holding the sticks of fire are seen inside the Htan Pyinnyar Cave in Nawngkhio Township, Shan State. PHOTO: HTWE NGE (NAWNGHKIO IPRD)

is 200 feet wide and about 700 feet long. The team studied the cave with torches. The cave has enough oxygen, and it is free from wild animals. The natural cave is boasted with stalactite

and other cave formations. The beautiful nature of the cave was discovered during the study trip.

Htan Pyinnyar cave will be designated as an eco-tourism site, and the tour route will be

planned together with Glass Bridge near Goke Hteik viaduct, which will be built. The local news sources are also observing the site.—Htwe Nge (Nawngkhio IPRD) (Translated by HMTW)

Rare gibbons species need to be conserved: FFI

SPECIES of gibbons, which are rare in the world, need to be conserved for their survival because they support the survival of forests, said U Ngwe Lwin, Programme Manager for Fauna and Flora International (FFI).

There are 20 gibbon species in the world, and four species have been found in Myanmar.

All of the gibbon species found in Myanmar are listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

“Gibbons have a habit of swallowing seeds when eating ripe fruits, which are dumped with their faeces along their path, causing the seeds to spread into the forest and cause new plants to grow,” said U Ngwe Lwin.

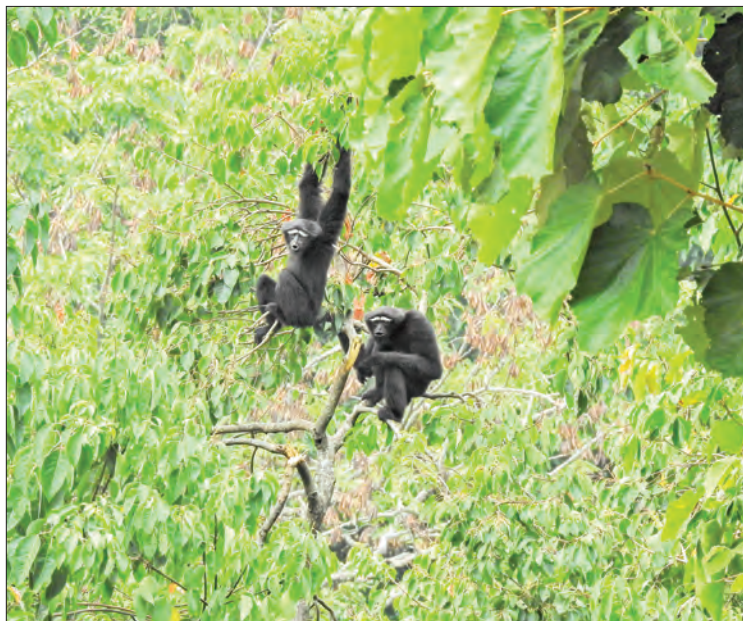
The gibbon species are endangered because of deforestation, forest fragmentation and poaching.

Under the leadership of the

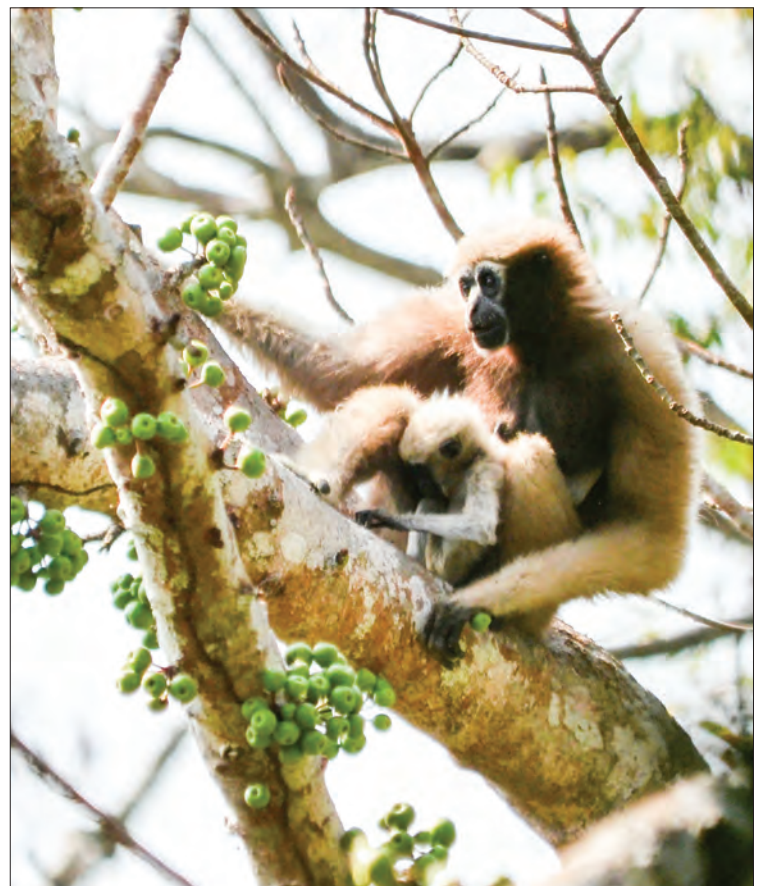
Forest Department, the WCS (Myanmar Program), Friends of Wildlife (FoW), Myanmar FFI, NCC and Waplaw are cooperating with local people and local organizations in Kachin State, Sagaing Region, Magway Region,

Rakhine State, Kayin State and Taninthayi Region, where the gibbons are found, in order to observe the gibbon species.— Pane Zaloat - Thein Nyunt

Translated by Maung Maung Swe



Out of the 20 gibbon species in the world, its four species are found in Myanmar. PHOTO: PANE ZALOAT - THEIN NYUNT



University of Foreign Languages to conduct online courses

YANGON University of Foreign Languages under the Department of Human Resource Development will conduct Level-1 courses on Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Myanmar (only for

foreigners). Registration for the courses and payment of training fees can be done at www.yufl.edu.mm. The course fee for foreign languages is K60,000. As for Myanmar language course, foreigners will have to pay US\$200. Tuition fees must be paid through

KBZPay or AYAPay.

The applicants must attach their academic certificates and their photos in their applications.

On 1 February, online applications for English language course were accepted. Applications for courses on Chi-

nese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Myanmar languages will be accepted on 2 February.

The list of eligible candidates for the 10-week courses will be announced on the official website

of the University of Foreign Languages on 8 February.

Those who want to apply for the courses can visit YUFL Facebook Page and write email to ssc@yufl.edu.mm Phone (01515236) (09254032744) for inquiries.—Aung Thu Ya

UPDATE

Coronavirus: Latest global developments

HERE are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis:

More Pfizer for EU

BioNTech and Pfizer say they will ramp up their vaccine deliveries to the European Union, pledging to send up to 75 million extra doses to the bloc in the next few months after Brussels clashes bitterly with rival vaccine supplier AstraZeneca.

UK job milestone

The National Health Service (NHS) says all eligible elderly people living in English care home have been offered their first injection.

Lockdown hero positive

British war veteran Captain Tom Moore, aged 100, who raised millions of pounds for the NHS by walking around his garden during the first lockdown, is hospitalised with the virus.

Ex-French PM has it too

Edouard Philippe, who is half Captain Tom's age, also tests positive with the Le Havre mayor's entourage saying he is "doing well".

More Valneva jabs

The British government buys 40 million additional doses of Valneva, a French-Austrian vaccine under development that is easier to ship and store than jabs by Pfizer and Moderna, which

require special cooling.

Restaurant rebellion

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire says restaurants opening illegally during lockdown will have relief payments cut after two dozen in Paris alone were caught serving in secret -- including one opposite police headquarters.

Republicans offer less

Ten Republican senators write to US President Joe Biden with a \$600-billion alternative to his massive \$1.9 trillion virus relief plan, saying their approach could garner bipartisan support.

India spends

India unveils a massive spending plan with \$30.6 billion for health schemes including \$4.8 billion for the country's immunisation drive, with plans to vaccinate 300 million by July.

Puppies please!

Australian Open organizers reveal bizarre requests by tennis stars during their two-week hotel quarantines, including requests for puppies and kittens.

Look at 'long Covid'

The World Health Organization is meeting to study "long Covid" at a seminar that aims to define the condition and launch standardised data collection methods for monitoring patients.



Students wearing facemasks attend their assembly prayer after the schools for classes 9th and 10th reopened nearly ten months after the spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus in Hyderabad on February 1, 2021.

PHOTO: AFP

Italy, Poland reopen

Most regions of Italy are now allowing bars, restaurants and museums to open during the day.

Poland is reopening museums, libraries, galleries and shopping malls.

Kazakhstan jab campaign

Kazakhstan begins its vaccination campaign with top health officials receiving Russia's Sputnik V shot.

Airlines fall

Budget Irish carrier Ryanair

warns it will suffer a record annual loss of almost one billion euros (\$1.2 billion) citing the impact of UK travel bans.

Japan Airlines also forecasts a larger-than-expected annual net loss of nearly \$2.9 billion.

Nintendo soars

Japanese giant Nintendo reports bumper results with unprecedented demand for games and consoles as new lockdowns boost the sector.

More than 2.2 million dead

The coronavirus has killed more than 2,227,605 people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to an AFP tally based on official sources. The countries with the most deaths are the US with 441,331, Brazil with 224,504 and Mexico with 158,536.

The global death toll, calculated from official daily figures published by national health authorities, is an underestimate. It does not include later revisions by statistics agencies.

SOURCE: AFP

GERMANY

Merkel hosts vaccine 'summit' as impatience mounts



A medical assistant wearing protective mask, gloves and garment processes a sample from a rapid antigen test for the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) at the reception of the nursing home for seniors 'Schmallenbach Haus' in Froendenberg, western Germany, on 22 January 2021. PHOTO: AFP

PHARMACEUTICAL giants scrambled Monday to announce ramped-up production and deliveries of vaccines hours ahead of talks called by German Chancellor

Angela Merkel as fury grows in the EU over a sluggish inoculation campaign.

Merkel has come under criticism over her decision to let

the European Commission take the lead in securing vaccines for the bloc, as delays have dogged both procurement and rollout of the jabs across the 27-nation bloc.

With impatience mounting, last week she called a "summit" bringing together top members of her cabinet, the key pharmaceutical manufacturers as well as the EU commissioners for the internal market and health for a telephone conference.

Health Minister Jens Spahn said ahead of Monday's meeting that Germans should keep their expectations in check for now.

"A summit alone won't be enough to produce more vaccines," he said late Sunday, noting the complexity of the manufacturing process.

"That's why it can't just happen in three or five weeks."

Fresh pledges

But as political pressure mounted on the pharmaceutical companies, which received millions of euros in public investment to produce the vaccines, they unleashed a flurry of new pledges for quicker deliveries.

BioNTech and Pfizer, the first firms worldwide to announce a successful vaccine, promised to send up to 75 million extra doses to the bloc in the spring thanks to progress at key manufacturing sites. European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said Sunday that AstraZeneca would finally deliver 40 million doses in total in the first quarter -- nine million doses or 30 per cent more than it had previously said it could.

An EU source said the first deliveries would start in the second week of February. And chemicals giant Bayer announced

that from 2022 it would produce a coronavirus vaccine that fellow German pharmaceuticals company CureVac is developing. CureVac CEO Franz-Werner Haas said his company would also produce several hundred million doses of its own vaccine by the end of 2021. CureVac's mRNA vaccine has yet to receive the green light from regulators, but Spahn said it was "on its way to approval in the coming weeks". French pharma group Sanofi agreed last week to help produce 125 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

'Where government can help'

As fatigue from shutdown measures to curb the spread of the virus grows, Merkel last month pledged to make jabs available to everyone in Germany who wants one by late September.

SOURCE: AFP

UK MARKET

Global equity markets rally; silver soars

ASIAN and European stock markets bounced higher Monday following last week's blood-letting as bargain-buyers moved in, while silver prices soared to an eight-year peak after it became a new target of chatroom-driven retail buying, dealers said.

In Europe, London stocks charged 1.2 per cent higher at midday while Paris and Frankfurt each added 1.3 per cent in early afternoon eurozone deals.

"European stock markets were broadly higher ... as investors try to arrest a decline over the last fortnight," said Markets.com analyst Neil Wilson.

Dealers remain on edge as surging infections and a stuttering vaccination rollout offset long-term hopes for the economic recovery.

Worries about online retail investors' attack on Wall Street short traders



A journalist poses while looking at a computer screen with the Bloomberg display showing a three-day view showing the rise and fall in the value of the pound sterling against the US dollar in London on October 17, 2019 with a spike (R) at the moment of the announcement of a draft Brexit deal. PHOTO: AFP

was still causing angst on trading floors, with fears they are being forced to sell some equities to cover their backs.

'Herding into silver'

Silver, the latest target, zoomed to an eight-year peak at \$30.10 per ounce in early Monday morning deals, before

paring gains.

The precious metal has now soared by more than 16 per cent since Thursday.

"Silver prices jumped... as investor interest turned on the metal due to expectations Reddit traders will attempt to squeeze prices higher," added Wilson.

"Retail traders are herding into silver in the same way they have driven the likes of GameStop over the last week."

Traders have also been rattled by the soaring price of some companies that have been targeted by amateur investors who have organized over Reddit and other

online forums.

Their huge buying spree of firms led by video-game store GameStop and cinema chain AMC has hammered short selling hedge funds who had bet their price would fall.

Global markets were a sea of red last week due to a combination of issues including rising virus cases, problems with countries' immunization programmes and worries about high valuations following a months-long rally.

New York's three main indexes all ended Friday with steep losses and there is talk that equities will see a correction.

Still, the new week started on a positive note in Asia, with Hong Kong and Seoul up more than two per cent, while Tokyo jumped more than one per cent and Shanghai won 0.6 per cent.

Data out of China at the weekend showed

growth in economic activity appeared to have slowed in January as officials imposed fresh containment measures to counter new virus clusters in parts of the country.

Spotlight on Washington

The spotlight was also still on Washington with lawmakers urged to approve new stimulus for the struggling US economy.

There is a feeling that Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion plan will be whittled down as Republicans look to lower the cost, while a group of 10 senators from the party have proposed an alternative package, which they say could win the bipartisan support Biden has said he wants.

Senator Susan Collins, a moderate, said the group would release details of their plan Monday. SOURCE: AFP

OMAN

BP part sells Oman gas field to Thai group for \$2.6bn

BRITISH energy giant BP on Monday said it had sold a 20-per-cent stake in Oman's block 61 gas field to Thailand's state-controlled PTTEP for \$2.6 billion.

BP, which like its peers has been hit hard as coronavirus lockdowns slash energy demand, will retain a 40-per-cent stake

and continue to operate the block, it added in a statement.

"We are committed to BP's business in Oman," said BP chief executive Bernard Looney.

"This agreement allows us to remain at the heart of this world-class development while also

making important progress in our global divestment programme."

Under Looney, who took over the reins at BP a year ago as the pandemic began taking hold worldwide, the group is looking to raise \$25 billion from asset sales by 2025.

SOURCE: AFP

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(31/2020-2021)

- Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective Service in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	MOGE-C001/2021	3D Seismic Data Interpretation, Reservoir Characterization, Geological Study and Potential Evaluation Services for Onshore Block RSF-1	Ks
- The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from 1 February 2021 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
- The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **12:00 pm on 1 March 2021**.
- Tender Closing Date & Time - **1-3-2021, 12:00 pm**

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 - 411206

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V WARNOW MASTER VOY. NO. (100N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V WARNOW MASTER VOY. NO. (100N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **2-2-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MATHU BHUM VOY. NO. (272W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MATHU BHUM VOY. NO. (272W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **1-2-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NORDCLAIRE VOY. NO. (104W/105E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NORDCLAIRE VOY. NO. (104W/105E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **2-2-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.

UKRAINE

Zelensky asks Biden why Ukraine still not in NATO

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky said in an interview released Monday that he would like the new US leader Joe Biden to tell him why the ex-Soviet country was still not a member of NATO.

In an interview with HBO's documentary news programme *Axios*, Zelensky said that if he had a chance to ask the US president a question, he would focus on Ukraine's relationship with the US-led military alliance.

"I have a very simple question: Mr President, why are we still not in NATO?"

The 43-year-old president spoke to HBO on January 23 and the full transcript of the interview was released by his office on Monday.

Since 2014, Kiev has been

fighting against Russian-backed separatists in the east of the country in a conflict that has claimed more than 13,000 lives.

Zelensky said that if Ukraine were part of NATO "there would be no escalation in the east of Ukraine."

Russia can attack "any European country" and even the United States, Zelensky said, adding that in the east Ukraine's army was defending Europeans, not just Ukrainians.

Ukraine's pro-Western leadership closely cooperates with NATO and in 2019, the ex-Soviet country adopted constitutional changes spelling out its aspirations to join the military alliance as well as the European Union.

Kiev sees NATO accession as a key way to bolster its defenc-

es against Moscow, which has accused the alliance of seeking to make inroads in its traditional sphere of influence.

Months after winning Ukraine's presidential election in the spring of 2019, former comedian Zelensky became the central figure of a US political scandal under Biden's predecessor Donald Trump.

Trump's administration published the transcript of a controversial phone call between Trump and Zelensky in 2019.

In the phone call, Trump tried to coerce Ukraine into launching an investigation into Biden, whose son used to be a board member of a Ukrainian gas company.

Zelensky told HBO he would like Ukraine and the United



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy holds a joint news briefing with his Polish counterpart as part of their meeting in Kiev on 12 October 2020. PHOTO: AFP

States to enter a "new phase" in relations under the Biden administration.

Asked if he was "a little bit" angry with Trump, Zelen-

sky quipped: "A little bit?" and laughed.

"These are personal things," Zelensky said. "I would have never allowed it."—SOURCE: AFP

PROTESTS

Russian prosecutors back request to imprison Navalny

RUSSIAN prosecutors on Monday backed a request to imprison opposition leader Alexei Navalny for several years on old charges, after police detained a record number of anti-Kremlin protesters across the country.

On Sunday, demonstrators defied government warnings and rallied across the country — including in Moscow and Saint Petersburg where authorities enforced unprecedented lockdowns of the city centre — in a second weekend of mass protests over the arrest of President Vladimir Putin's most prominent opponent.

The protests — stretching from the Pacific port of Vladivostok to the northwestern city of Pskov — came ahead of a high-profile court hearing that could see Navalny imprisoned for several years.

Navalny's detention and the crackdown on protesters has sparked an outcry in the West.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell is expected to press the Kremlin to free Navalny when he



(FILES) In this file photo opposition leader Alexei Navalny appears on a screen set up at a hall of the Moscow Regional Court via a video link from Moscow's penal detention centre Number 1 (known as Matrosskaya Tishina) during a court hearing of an appeal against his arrest, in Krasnogorsk outside Moscow on January 28, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

heads to Moscow on Thursday.

Navalny, 44, is facing charges of violating the terms of a 2014 suspended sentence for embezzlement and could be jailed for two-and-a-half years.

The General Prosecutor's Office said in a statement on Monday that it backed a request by the prison service to change the

suspended sentence to jail time.

"This motion is considered lawful and justified," the statement said.

Navalny was detained at a Moscow airport in mid-January after flying back to Russia from Germany where he was recovering from an August poisoning.

He blames the attack with

the Novichok nerve agent on Putin and the FSB security agency.

Batons and tasers

The anti-corruption campaigner is being held in a high-security detention centre and faces years of jail time in several different criminal cases, despite calls from Western governments for his release.

Navalny's team has urged his sympathisers to gather in front of Moscow's Simonovsky district court on Tuesday to show support for the opposition politician.

In recent years, Navalny has served a number of brief jail stints but never a long prison term.

On Sunday, thousands of people rallied across Russia to demand freedom for Navalny and changes to Russia's tightly-controlled political system.

OVD Info, which monitors arrests at opposition protests, said more than 5,400 people had been detained — a record in the history of modern Russia.

SOURCE: AFP

TRAVEL

French police block passengers as new Covid rules kick in

FRENCH border police turned away some passengers bound for non-EU destinations Monday as new rules came into force banning flights to and from countries outside the bloc.

Prime Minister Jean Castex announced the measure Friday as part of new efforts to contain Covid-19 infections and avoid another nationwide lockdown.

Travellers must also present proof of a recent negative Covid test.

Only urgent reasons for travel are accepted and border police require written proof before allowing passengers to board, as Toure, a Malian national, found out when he tried to leave France for Bamako without the necessary document.

"I said that my mother, whom I hadn't seen in a while, was ill but they told me I needed proof," Toure, who withheld his last name, told AFP in the 2E terminal at Paris's main airport Roissy-Charles-de-Gaulle.

After being turned away Toure, who works for a French public works foundation, managed to get hold of his mother's doctor in Bamako who sent him a barely legible note by WhatsApp. He tried again, and this time was waved through.

SOURCE: AFP

CPTPP

UK applies for membership of Asia-Pacific free trade bloc

BRITAIN on Monday formally applied to join the Pacific free trade bloc, just a month after quitting the European Union's single market.

"I have just formally notified CPTPP nations of our intent to join," tweeted International Trade Secretary Liz Truss.

She said membership would put Britain "at the heart of some of the world's fastest-growing economies", and help "create high value jobs across the country".

Truss made the request for Britain to be admitted to the Comprehensive and Progressive

Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) in meetings with ministers from Japan and New Zealand.

The bloc represents a market of half a billion people and roughly 13.5 per cent of the global economy.

The move comes a year after

Britain left the EU, ending more than 40 years of membership, and after five years of complex trade discussions with Brussels. A year-long transition deal that saw Britain trade as part of the EU's single market and customs union ended on New Year's Day.

SOURCE: AFP

WHO'S VISIT TO WUHAN

WHO team to visit Wuhan lab where coronavirus rumoured to be released

A team from the World Health Organization is scheduled to visit later this week a laboratory in China's Wuhan, from which the novel coronavirus is rumoured to have accidentally released, sources close to the matter said Monday.

On the same day, the WHO group, composed of 10 experts, observed for more than four hours a provincial disease control center that dealt with the virus spread in its initial stage.

The centre with a high level of research equipment has analyzed the genetic code of the virus, local media said.

On Sunday, meanwhile, the WHO team conducted a one-hour investigation into a market in the central Chinese city, where many people were confirmed to have contracted the virus in the early days of the outbreak in late 2019. But it remains uncertain whether the probe would help identify the origins of the virus, as more than a year has passed since the first infection case was

spotted in Wuhan, a business and transportation hub with a population of around 11 million.

The Wuhan market, at which wild animals such as bats and snakes were sold alongside seafood, has been closed since January 2020 and been apparently sanitized thoroughly by the Chinese authorities.

The possible investigation into the research laboratory may become key to tracing the source of the virus that causes the COVID-19 disease, some medical experts say.

Last year, then U.S. President Donald Trump said he was confident the virus had originated from the infectious diseases lab and threatened to punish China for what he perceived as its lackluster response that allowed it to spread worldwide.

The WHO team had initially planned to visit China early last month, but its arrival was delayed after it took the experts longer to gain permission to enter the country.



Members of the World Health Organization's team investigating the origins of the coronavirus pandemic arrive at an infectious disease prevention centre in Wuhan, China, on 1 February 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO**

After quarantining for two weeks, the WHO experts began a full-fledged probe in late January. They are likely to complete the investigation in Wuhan by the Feb. 11 start of the weeklong Lunar New Year holidays, the sources said. Although the WHO sent a small group of experts to China for a preliminary probe in July last year, they did not visit

the market or the laboratory in the city at that time.

Since first being detected in Wuhan, the virus erupted into a pandemic that has infected over 100 million people and caused more than 2.2 million deaths across the globe, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University.

SOURCE: KYODO NEWS

POLITICS

Twitter blocks India accounts on government order over farm protests

TWITTER on Monday blocked scores of accounts and tweets in India at the government's request, including those of a prominent news magazine and farmers staging mass protests in the capital.

An IT ministry source told AFP the government had directed the social media giant to act against about 250 Twitter accounts and tweets which posed a "grave threat to public order".

Tens of thousands of farmers have been protesting since November 26 in camps on the outskirts of New Delhi against the deregulation of the agriculture sector.

One rally last week turned into a deadly rampage. Since then, police have detained dozens of farmers and a journalist who writes for Caravan magazine.

Caravan, some farmers activists and unions, some opposition leaders, an actor and an economist were among those whose Twitter accounts were blocked inside India.

A Twitter spokeswoman said "it may be necessary to withhold access to certain content in a particular country from time to time" if "a properly scoped" request is made.

A spokesman for the farm-

ers said their accounts "had not done anything wrong" apart from supporting the long-running protests.

Global media watchdog Reporters Without Borders slammed the suspensions, which it called a "shocking case of blatant censorship".

"By ordering these blockings, the Home Affairs Ministry is behaving like an Orwellian Ministry of Truth who wants to impose its own narrative about the farmers' protests," the group said.

Since the violence last Tuesday, at least five cases have been registered against journalists

and an opposition politician, accusing them of sedition and criminal conspiracy over their reporting and tweets on the rally.

India regularly uses internet shutdowns, most recently at the farmers' protest sites, to limit information sharing during disturbances.

It blocked broadband internet in Kashmir for several months after cancelling the disputed region's semi-autonomy in 2019.

On Reporters Without Borders' 2020 press freedom index, India ranks 142nd out of 180 countries.

SOURCE: AFP

COURT

Owners of Tokyo Olympic Village condos seek damages over delay

TWO dozen owners of apartments due to be converted from the Olympic Village after the Tokyo Games filed a compensation request on Monday over the event's postponement, their lawyer said.

The buildings, designed to house more than 10,000 Olympic athletes and officials, will be transformed into thousands of

luxury bayside condos after this summer's Games.

Around 900 of the units -- some carrying a price tag of 170 million yen (\$1.6 million) -- were sold before Tokyo 2020 was pushed back to 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

A group of 24 owners is seeking damages from the developers of the complex for being

forced to delay their move by at least a year.

"Many of them also sold their old apartment to take out a loan for the new one," lawyer Hironobu Todoroki told AFP.

The buyers have requested arbitration from the Tokyo District Court -- seeking compensation from 10 developers, including real estate firm Mitsui

Fudosan, without setting a price.

Todoroki said the buyers may bring the case to a formal trial if the companies decline to talk.

"We have requested to hold talks but they said there was no need," the lawyer said.

Immediate comment from the developers was not available.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Pakistan receives 500,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses from China

PAKISTAN is set to launch its COVID-19 vaccination campaign this week as it received on Monday the first batch of a novel coronavirus vaccine developed by China.

Health Minister Faisal Sultan announced the news on Twitter saying, "the first batch of Sinopharm vaccine has arrived! Grateful to China and everyone who made this happen."

SOURCE: KYODO NEWS

Japan Airlines projects higher losses over pandemic

JAPAN Airlines said Monday it forecasts a larger-than-expected annual net loss of nearly \$2.9 billion, as the aviation industry continues to struggle from the fallout of the coronavirus pandemic.

Japan's second-largest carrier said it projected a net loss of 300 billion yen for the year ending March 2021, up from its previous forecast of 240-270 billion yen.

SOURCE: AFP

China begins to donate coronavirus vaccines to developing nations

CHINA said Monday that it has started to donate novel coronavirus vaccines to developing countries in Asia and Africa, as one of the world's major power is believed to be trying to boost its global clout through "vaccine diplomacy".

Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told reporters that China has so far planned to offer vaccines to 52 nations such as Brunei, Myanmar, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, adding Beijing's first batch of donated vaccines arrived in Pakistan on Monday.

SOURCE: KYODO NEWS

Dagon FC to compete in Myanmar National League II

DAGON Football Club will compete in the Myanmar National League II for the 2021 season, according to an official statement with the Myanmar National League.

Dagon FC qualified for the Myanmar National League I in the 2019 football season and withdrew from the competition after being relegated at the end of the season.

Thus the football club will compete again in Myanmar National League II in the upcoming 2021 foot-

ball season.

During a Myanmar National League committee meeting which was held last month, Dagon FC chairman Khin Maung Soe presented a proposal for the football club to compete in the 2021 Myanmar National League-2 football season, and it was approved by the league committee.

Dagon Football Club was established in 2009 and has been a regular participant in the Myanmar National League II football

tournament since 2013, and after the 2018 football season, it was promoted to the MPT Myanmar National League I.

Dagon team did their best in the 2019 MPT Myanmar National League I tourney with five matches won and three matches were drawn, and 18 points collected.

The team dropped out of the competition after being relegated to League-II together with Chinland FC at the end of the season.

—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



Dagon Football club players pose for a group photo before a 2020 season match of Myanmar National League. PHOTO: MNL

Liverpool expected to boost defensive options on transfer deadline day



Liverpool's German manager Jurgen Klopp speaks to the media during the English Premier League football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Liverpool at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London, on 28 January 2021. PHOTO: AFP

LIVERPOOL are expected to sign Ben Davies from Championship side Preston to ease their defensive crisis before a quiet January transfer window closes late on Monday.

The Premier League's leading clubs have been unusually restrained this month, with the coronavirus and new Brexit rules dampening the market after a big summer spend.

The January window, which closes at 2300 GMT, is typically regarded as a seller's market and often a time for stopgap measures but Liverpool have been forced to act.

The champions are missing all of their senior central defenders, with Virgil van Dijk, Joe Gomez and Joel Matip out of action. First-choice back-up Fabinho recently joined the in-

jured list.

It is understood that Liverpool have agreed a fee with Preston for the 25-year-old Davies.

A medical was scheduled for Monday, with 19-year-old Dutchman Sepp van den Berg likely to head the other way on loan for the rest of the season.

Liverpool are also reportedly interested in Marseille centre-back Duje Caleta-Car but the Ligue 1 side's struggle to find a replacement at short notice could scupper any potential move.

Klopp, whose side are third in the Premier League table, admitted on Friday that no club would be prepared to sell him an "£80 million (\$110 million) centre-back" in the final days of the transfer window.—AFP ■

'Our history': modest Doha stadium far cry from World Cup venues

Away from the lavish air conditioning and hand-manicured turf of Qatar's World Cup Stadiums, two of which will host the world's best clubs from Thursday, sits Doha Sports Stadium.

The modest ground, the first in the Gulf with a grass pitch, nestles in the heart of the old city flanked by low-slung concrete villas, Doha's modest inventory of dive bars, and a bus station.

Despite its deceptively simple exterior of low walls it has hosted footballing titans including Pele as well as boxer Muhammad Ali, known as Cassius Clay until 1964, since opening its doors in 1962.

"This stadium means a lot to me. I grew up in this stadium. My start was on this stadium with the big stars," said retired Qatar and Al-Sadd star Hassan Mattar. "It started here very beautifully at that time."

Four floodlights tower above the modest neighbourhood which is a far cry from the skyscraper hotels and office blocks clustered together on the opposite side of the West Bay.

A vintage yellow post box speaks to the district's history, a stone's throw from the coast and a dhow harbour as well as the Bidda area which has served as the ruling Al-Thani dynasty's seat of power.

The venue is open-air except for a small pavilion containing the VVIP toilets reserved for the great and the

good of the emirate and beyond.

'A huge difference'

By contrast, 60,000-capacity Al-Bayt stadium which will host World Cup matches in 2022 features hotel suites with views of the pitch and balconies in the stands.

"This was the main stadium in Qatar, and in those days the fans filled the stands," Mattar said of Old Doha Stadium's 4,000 capacity. "I have fond memories. This stadium was the only grass planted in the Gulf countries."

Mattar said that seeing the likes of Pele on his home turf had inspired him and many other Qataris, leading to the country's modern day infatuation with football.

Maintaining grass pitches is an arduous, water-heavy challenge in the country where

summer temperatures routinely exceed 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit).

At the Khalifa Stadium 15 kilometres (10 miles) west, which opened in 1976 and will host World Cup games in 2022, groundsman would "touch up" the turf with green paint to help overcome the brutally hot Gulf summers.

"Switching from this stadium to the new stadiums, yes, there is a huge difference," said Mattar. Now Doha Sports Stadium wants for nothing and has received the support of Qatar's former ruler, the Father Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani according to those involved in the venue.

Its lush green surface is nowadays used to train Qatari FIFA-level referees as well as hosting smaller youth and exhibition matches.—AFP ■



A model of the Al-Gharrafa stadium is displayed during a tour by FIFA officials who are inspecting Qatar's 2022 World Cup hosting bid in Doha on 16 September 2010 as the Gulf country tries to convince the FIFA inspectors that it can overcome the scorching heat by cooled carbon neutral stadiums. PHOTO: AFP