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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## Vice-Chairman of State Administration Council Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets officers, other ranks, their families, cadets in Bahtoo, PyinOoLwin stations



Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win met officers, other ranks, their families and cadets in Bahtoo, PyinOoLwin stations separately and delivered addresses.

Present at the meetings were Lt-Gen Aung Zaw Aye of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), senior officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air), Commander of the Eastern Command, Commander of Central Command and officers, other ranks and families in Bahtoo and PyinOoLwin stations.

At the meetings, Vice-Senior

General Soe Win detailed about the voting fraud in the 2020 General Election with 10.4 million irregularities in voter lists out of over 39.2 million; not taking responsibility by the then Union Election Commission led by U Hla Thein over the irregularities in voting lists though the people and political parties who had grievances from the irregularities demanded the UEC for several times to solve the issue with transparency, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's rejection of the proposal by over 25 per cent of MPs to hold the special meeting in the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to discuss the irregularities in voter lists; President U Win Myint's rejection of the demands for two times for discussing that issue at the

National Defence and Security Council; the president's rejection of the demands by a personal letter for looking into the irregularities in the voting lists with a new UEC and for suspending the convening of the third Hluttaw during the period while the irregularities in voting lists are scrutinized, and the president's failure to act on the aforementioned demands for solving the said issues; situations which was leading to taking over the three branches of the State's power; the emergency situation declared by the Tatmadaw, which has a duty to protect the State's Constitution according to Article 20 of the 2008 Constitution, in conformity with Article 417, 418 of the 2008 Constitution without

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Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets and addresses to officers, other ranks, their families and catdets in Bahtoo station on 13 March 2021.

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## Announcement of Union Election Commission

### 13 March 2021

- Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and the casting of votes of Mingaladon Township in Yangon Region.
- According to the inspection findings, the previous election commission released 288,522 eligible voters in Mingaladon Township of Yangon Region. The list of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in November 2020 showed 150,407 eligible voters who had turned 18. The voter lists mentioned that there were 27,386 citizens, associate citizens, nationalized citizens, and non-identity voters, 790 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 17,482 persons repeated on the voter lists two times.
- Findings in inspection were as follows:

#### Findings on voting list of Mingaladon Township

Sr	Township and numbers of polling stations	Township sub-commission	List from Immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CSC
1	136 polling stations in Mingaladon Township of Yangon Region	288,522	150,407	27,386	790	17,482

- The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Mingaladon Township in Yangon Region, together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrator according to the Hluttaw Election Law Section 53.
- There are a total of 136 polling stations in Mingaladon Township, and of 294,008 ballots, 284,543 were allocated as ward/village tract ballots, 3,007 were township advance ballots and 6,458 were township remaining ballots (reserve).

#### On the ground inspections on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Mingaladon Township

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact Remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballot	284,543	159,649	124,894	107,633	21,522	4,261
2	Township advance ballot	3,007	3,007			-	-
3	Township remaining ballot	6,458	-	6,458	6,458	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>294,008</b>	<b>162,656</b>	<b>131,352</b>	<b>114,091</b>	<b>21,522</b>	<b>4,261</b>

- According to the inspection, the ward/village tract polling stations of Mingaladon Township for Pyithu Hluttaw election took out a total of 284,543 and used 159,649. But it left only 107,633 and so 17,261 ballots were missing without any reasons.
- A total of 3,007 township advance ballots were used and 6,458 township remaining ballots were unused and so there was no difference in numbers.
- The entire Mingaladon township withdrew 294,008 ballots for Pyithu Hluttaw and used 162,656 and 114,091 remained unused.
- The inspection on ballots of each polling station of Mingaladon township for Pyithu Hluttaw were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village-tract	Polling station No	Issued	Findings			Shortage	Extra
				Used	Remaining	Total		
1	Htauk Kyant North Ward	1	2,500	1,537	513	2,050	450	
		2	2,650	1,487	563	2,050	600	
		3	2,600	1,230	521	1,751	849	
2	Ti Law Ka Ward	1	2,200	1,636	620	2,256		56
		3	2,000	1,345	656	2,001		1
3	Ye Su Taung Ward	2	2,500	1,551	805	2,356	144	
		3	2,050	1,162	738	1,900	150	
		4	1,400	763	437	1,200	200	
5	Pa-San Pya Ward	1	500	388	112	500		
6	Htauk Kyant Lan Sone Pine Ward	1	550	494	60	554		4
7	Htauk Kyant Zay Pine Ward	1	800	614	186	800		
8	Bago Lan Ward	1	1,050	810	242	1,052		2
9	Akarit Ward	1	1,800	1,407	441	1,848		48
10	Ywar Ma Pine Ward	1	2,450	1,620	680	2,300	150	
		2	2,150	1,441	809	2,250		100
11	Second-San Pya Ward	1	1,750	1,365	335	1,700	50	
12	Htauk Kyant Toe Chae Ward	1	3,050	1,643	809	2,452	598	
		2	2,400	2,000	1,041	3,041		641
		3	2,750	1,782	884	2,666	84	
13	Htuak Kyant Taung Pine Ward	1	3,050	1,975	1,075	3050		
14	Taw Tike Ward	1	1,800	1,719	81	1,800		
		2	1,750	1,021	429	1,450	300	
15	Pyan Lel Nay Yar Cha Htar Ye Ward	1	2,500	1,371	669	2,040	460	
		2	1,800	1,153	646	1,799	1	
		3	2,400	1,382	824	2,206	194	
		4	2,500	1,415	1,083	2,498	2	
		5	950	725	153	878	72	
		6	1,600	1,158	447	1,605		5
		7	1,300	927	525	1,452		152
		8	1350	861	391	1,252	98	
		9	2,050	1,222	600	1,822	228	
		10	2,550	1,353	858	2,211	339	
		11	1,750	1,135	471	1,606	144	
		12	1,550	531	869	1,400	150	

## Some organizations are being scrutinized for their operations in accordance with rules and regulations or their foreign financial assistance is legal or illegal

OPERATIONS of some organizations are being scrutinized whether they are running their operations in accordance with rules and regulations or whether the foreign finance and assistance they received are legal or illegal. Action is being taken against the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, which is illegally carrying out activities while the new Union Election Committee is launching an investigation into vote-rigging. Domestic tourism, hotels, factories and workshops have been allowed to resume their operations in accordance with COVID-19 prevention rules and regulations. Relevant ministries have been instructed to take action against physicians, specialists and staff who are taking part in the CDM. It is important to take measures not to develop staff housings, special economic zones and industrial zones on agricultural land, to prevent the use of agricultural land for other purposes and to push for rural development.

*(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting of the State Administration Council made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 2 March 2021)*

## Vice-Chairman of State Administration Council Vice-Senior General Soe Win meets officers, other ranks, their families, cadets in Bahtoo, PyinOoLwin stations

### FROM PAGE-1

abolishing the Constitution and taking over the State's power to prevent the attempts to grab the State's branches of power without following the State Constitution; the implementation of the five future tasks of the State Administration Council since 1 February, 2021; instigation and intimidation against the civil service personnel and putting pressure on them to join the CDM; imposing Section 144 of Criminal Procedure to prevent riots; grievances and

damages to the socio-economic lives of families of civil servants due to CDM; transforming from peaceful protests into riots and anarchic mob; tarnishing the image of Myanmar's culture and customs by hanging women's longyis in the roads and using the images of revered monks during the protests despite freedom of religion in the country allowed by Article 361 and 362 of the Constitution; activities which damage the human integrity by shaving eyebrows and haircut as

punishment, putting a placard on detained man as a criminal and tattooing on foreheads and cheeks without respecting the human integrity; attacking the police stations and administrative offices; pouring hot water on security forces and attacked them with sticks, swords, spears, slingshots and response by the security forces to the riots in conformity with the rules of the Riot Manual Law-1956 and the rules of the manual-2015 with the use of minimum forces. The

Vice-Senior General urged the officers, other ranks and families to build and strengthen the unity of the troops while putting on alert themselves on security and taking their responsibilities dutifully, to try hard to be fit and healthy and to observe the rules and keep the disciplines to ensure that the image and integrity of the Tatmadaw are not damaged.

Following his address, the Vice-Senior General presented the foods produced by the factories of the Tatmadaw and gifts

to the officers, other ranks and their families, and cadets from the Bahtoo and PyinOoLwin stations. Following the meetings, the Vice-Senior General Soe Win and party cordially greeted the officers, other ranks and their families, and cadets from the Bahtoo and PyinOoLwin stations.

Besides, Vice-Senior General Soe Win and party enjoyed the lunch together with the trainees of the training school for sergeants in Bahtoo Military Town.—MNA

## Solar water supply system completely implemented in Magway

THE Implementation of the solar water supply system started in the second week of March, with the contribution of the villagers and the interest income from the Myaseinyaung Village Project, Department of Rural Development, has now 100 per cent completed in Phayarkonesu ward, Nyaungpinthar village, Magway Township, Magway Region, according to the Magway Township Department of Rural Development.

In order to supply water directly to the houses in

Nyaungpinthar village, the Department of Disaster Management carried out drilling of boreholes and construction of brick ponds in 2017, and the villagers had to get water on their own.

At present, Mega Global Green Automation Company has been implementing the solar water supply system with Myaseinyaung village project interest income 3 million kyats and the villagers' contribution 7 million kyats, and the project has been completed 100 per cent, said

Daw Tin Tin Soe, Township Director, Department of Rural Development, Magway Township.

In addition, in 2020-2021 FY, the Department of Rural Development has been implementing a water supply system to the prioritized 20 villages that received drinking water due to scarcity of water almost every year, with a total of 305.71 million kyats from the Department of Rural Development Permit Fund and Magway Regional Fund.—Than Lwin (Magway)



An entirely-completed solar water supply system is seen in Magway.  
PHOTO : THAN LWIN (MAGWAY)

## Announcement of Union Election Commission

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Sr	Ward/Village-tract	Polling station No	Issued	Findings			Shortage	Extra
				Used	Remaining	Total		
16	Pyi Taw Tha Ward	1	2,000	977	57	1,034	966	
		2	1,600	990	613	1,603		3
		3	2,750	999	1,505	2,504	246	
17	Pauk Kone Ward	1	2,100	1,308	790	2,098	2	
		2	1,550	1,019	481	1,500	50	
		3	2,700	1,746	955	2,701		1
		4	1,350	950	400	1,350		
		5	1,300	830	468	1,298	2	
		6	3,100	1,705	1,145	2,850	250	
		7	1,600	1,188	415	1,603		3
		8	1,700	1,167	583	1,750		50
		9	2,000	1,062	890	1,952	48	
		10	1,650	1,042	606	1,648	2	
		11	2,500	1,461	1,037	2,498	2	
		12	1,900	668	710	1,378	522	
18	San Gyi Wa Ward	1	1,850	1,044	8	1,052	798	
		2	2,650	1,174	1,078	2,252	398	
		3	2,350	996	904	1,900	450	
		4	1,500	829	473	1,302	198	
		5	1,300	699	399	1,098	202	
19	Tatmadaw San Pya Ward	1	500	408	94	502		2
20	Nwal Khway Village-tract	1	2,150	1,186	514	1,700	450	
		2	3,143	1,652	1,148	2,800	343	
		3	2,650	1,606	1,090	2,696		46
		4	2,450	1,693	807	2,500		50
		5	2,950	1,601	403	2,004	946	
21	Pyinma Pin Village-tract	1	2,000	1,400	645	2,045		45
		2	2,050	1,381	619	2,000	50	
		3	2,450	1,214	36	1,250	1,200	
		4	1,900	1,062	488	1,550	350	
		5	2,400	1,743	656	2,399	1	
		6	1,650	892	360	1,252	398	
		7	3,000	1,307	1,593	2,900	100	
		8	3,900	1,349	2,554	3,903		3
22	No (2) Ka Gyi Ward	1	2,350	1,350	1,000	2,350		
		2	2,950	1,728	1,192	2,920	30	
23	Anan Pin Ward	1	1,700	1,116	585	1,701		1
		2	1,100	758	192	950	150	
		3	1,900	1,909	391	2,300		400
		4	2,250	1,756	491	2,247	3	
24	Kyan Kyin Su Ward	1	1,800	1,370	431	1,801		1
		2	1,450	1,138	315	1,453		3
		3	2,400	1,312	911	2,223	177	
		4	1,950	1,375	580	1,955		5
25	Chit Tee Gone Ward	1	1,200	847	463	1,310		110
		2	2,050	1,260	750	2,010	40	
		3	3,000	1,547	1,661	3,208		208
		4	2,150	1,297	1,055	2,352		202
26	No (3) Ka Gyi Ward	1	1,250	893	407	1,300		50
27	No (3) Kha Khway Ward	1	1,600	1,145	457	1,602		2
		2	2,000	1,510	490	2,000		
28	No (2) Kha Khway Ward	1	2,300	1,571	735	2,306		6
29	Mingaladon Zay Ward	1	1,950	1,000	600	1,600	350	
		2	1,400	1,360	40	1,400		
		3	800	756	44	800		
		4	1,350	1,258	92	1,350		
		5	1,750	1,561	191	1,752		2
		6	1,450	1,287	65	1,352	98	
		7	1,350	1,292	58	1,350		
		8	950	788	145	933	17	
		9	1,450	962	88	1,050	400	
		10	2,250	1,574	77	1,651	599	
30	Thingayun Gyi Village-tract	1	2,850	1,483	1,817	3,300		450
		2	2,400	1,165	1,283	2,448		48
		3	1,950	875	1,025	1,900	50	

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## Announcement of Union Election Commission

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Sr	Ward/Village-tract	Polling station No	Issued	Findings			Shortage	Extra
				Used	Remaining	Total		
		4	2,150	1,026	1,274	2,300		150
		5	1,700	931	969	1,900		200
		6	3,700	1,183	2,517	3,700		
		7	3,100	906	2,344	3,250		150
		8	3,200	1,364	2,036	3,400		200
		9	1,300	824	576	1,400		100
		10	1,800	317	1,783	2,100		300
		11	2,500	1,473	1,029	2,502		2
		12	3,250	1,160	240	1,400	1850	
		13	2,350	249	2,201	2,450		100
		14	1,800	212	1,638	1,850		50
		15	850	550	506	1,056		206
31	Shwe Nantha Village-tract	1	2,300	1,146	1,154	2,300		
		2	2,900	1,740	960	2,700	200	
		3	2,900	1,493	1,057	2,550	350	
		4	2,600	1,628	975	2,603		3
		5	2,450	1,332	1,118	2,450		
		6	2,950	1,479	1,225	2,704	246	
		7	2,500	1,196	1,054	2,250	250	
		8	1,900	682	918	1,600	300	
		9	1,750	702	948	1,650	100	
		10	2,950	1,303	1,647	2,950		
		11	2,900	1,301	905	2,206	694	
		12	1,000	595	305	900	100	
		13	1,850	1009	547	1,556	294	
		14	1,800	774	978	1,752	48	
32	Kone Ta La Paung Village-tract	1	2,900	1,233	1,717	2,950		50
		2	2,800	1,072	1,670	2,742	58	
		3	2,850	1,168	1,732	2,900		50
		4	2,800	981	1,669	2,650	150	
		5	2,550	779	323	1,102	1,448	
		6	2,300	810	1,490	2,300		
		7	3,000	1,063	1,887	2,950	50	
		8	2,900	1,249	1,651	2,900		
		9	2,700	1,202	1,408	2,610	90	
		10	1,400	663	695	1,358	42	
		11	1,900	1040	759	1,799	101	
	Total		284,543	159,649	107,633	267,282	21,522	4,261

Union Election Commission

## Collective cleaning carried out in Kyaukpyu beach



A collective cleaning activity in progress in Kyaukpyu beach. PHOTO: TIN TUN OO

A joint team of the departments carried out a collective garbage cleaning along the beach yesterday morning in Kyaukpyu Township, Rakhine State.

Employees from respective departments led by the Township Administration Council collected litter left on the beach at high tide and

public waste in garbage bags and transported it to designated areas to be burned.

The beach is a family recreation area where people walk in the early morning as well as young people play beach soccer, swimming and kite flying in the evening.—Tin Tun Oo, Phyto Wai Lin (IPRD)

## Rioters attack Thakayta police station; security forces disperse mob

AFTER anti-State rallies had incited on social media to participate in night protests, many groups of people gathered and participated in the night protests in some places on 12 March.

A total of about 1,200 people from the respective directions of the Township Police Station in Thakayta Township violently gathered in front of the police station and attacked with slingshots, rocks and even throwing fire with bottles filled with gasoline to the police station around midnight of the day.

When security forces fired warning shots to scare them away, the rioters were dispersed, and one man (still under investigation) was injured and have been under medical treatment at Tatmadaw hospital.

At the end of the event, two injured men (still under investigation) who were back with the crowd was reportedly dead and an investigation is underway regarding the cause of death, according to the statement of the Myanmar Police Force.—MNA

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# One-month performance of the State Administration Council

## CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY

On 22 February, Vice-Chairman of the Administration Council Vice-Senior General Soe Win discussed the current situations in Myanmar with Vice-Chief of the Defence Force, Vice-Admiral David Johnston AO RAN from Australian Armed Forces over the telephone and explained the questions raised at the online meeting.

At the invitation of the Thai Prime Minister, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin arrived in Thailand on 24 February. He met separately with the Thai Prime Minister, and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

During his visit to Thailand, he met also with the Indonesian Foreign Minister to discuss cooperation between Myanmar and ASEAN and exchanged views on the current political situation in Myanmar.

## Findings of the Union Election Commission within one month

The Union Election Commission (UEC) issued a statement on 16 February, stating findings from the inspection of the results of the 8 November 2020 multiparty democratic general election in eight townships in the Union Territory of Nay Pyi Taw. The previous voter list released by the previous election commission was 906,226. According to the November 2020



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with the UMFCCI members and associates at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 February 2021. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

list of the Ministry of Immigration and Population, 703,546 people over the age of 18 are eligible to vote.

Voter lists include people who do not have certificates of the citizen, associate citizen or naturalized citizen were 108,333. Those who were on the voter list three or more times with the same ID card number were 6,900. Statistics show that 76,222 people were on the voter list two times with the same ID card number.

The Union Election Commission (UEC) also released its findings on 23 February regarding the printing of ballot papers used in the general election.

According to the findings,

138,460,270 ballot papers were printed initially, they were printed 9 times more as required. And according to statistics, the Yangon Region Election Commission printed the ballot papers two times more again upon the instruction on 7 November, one day ahead of the general election.

The Union Election Commission (UEC) issued its third statement on 24 February. The Election Commission (UEC) has released the results of the field inspections on the status of ballots used in the Pyithu Hluttaw Election in each of the eight townships in Nay Pyi Taw.

It was also released that there were differences in the

voter lists on the ground in Sit-tway Township in Rakhine State, Hlinethaya (East) Township in Yangon Region and Taunggyi Township in Shan State.

On 27 February, the Union Election Commission (UEC) issued a press release stating the discrepancies between the voter list and the list of people who actually voted in Waingmaw Township in Kachin State and Magway Township in the Magway Region.

## Activities for peace, stability and national reform

The State Administration Council amended and enacted the necessary laws to prevent any disturbance to the peace

and development of the State, including the law amending the capital punishment; Law amending the Code of Criminal Procedure; Fourth Amendment to the Ward or Village Tract Administration Law and the Amendment to the Protection of Citizens' Personal Freedom and Security Act.

The Electronic Communications Law was also amended. Since from the second week of February, the government issued notices to civil servants who have failed to perform their duties due to various reasons to return to work as soon as possible.

In the third coordination meeting of the State Administration Council, the Chairman of the State Administration Council said the effective action to be taken against those who tell employees to get started with the CDM movement, and there are groups behind the CDM campaign and those who fund the campaign on behind, adding the council will continue to do what it has to do in accordance with the law, and he gave instructions on further activities.

According to the statement released by the State Administration Council on March 5, it stated that the formation of a committee under the name "Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Representative Committee" (CRPH) is not only in accordance with the law but also commits serious crimes. It has stated not to take part in its any direct or indirect action, and those who do so will be taken effective legal action.



Myanmar returnees are seen onboard the Navy vessel when it enters Myanmar maritime waters.

### Implementation of Economic Goals

The Chairman of the State Administration Council met with the entrepreneurs from Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and associated organizations, patrons, Chairman and officials of Myanmar Banks Association, and bankers on 3 and 5 February and discussed to continue the operation of business in a disciplined manner, to boost the country's economic sector and stabilize its financial sector.

The Central Bank of Myanmar has also been able to release press releases in a timely manner to allay public concerns over financial rumors.

It has been found the reopening of airlines to facilitate public travel by adhering to measures to control the COVID-19 outbreak, the expansion of train services and the expansion of bus services.

On 13 February, the exemption of the 2% advance income tax on exports was extended until February 28 as the economic downturn continued due to the COVID-19 crisis, which was one of the measures taken for the country's economy and for the convenience of exporters.

In the third week of February, offshore fishing vessels were allowed to extend their fishing days to provide adequate relief to businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement was also implemented on 19 February.

Negotiations are also underway to continue the implementation of the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan.

From the time the State Administrative Council took office, it can be found the transparency



Pilgrims are seen worshipping at the Shwedagon Pagoda as it reopened on 8 February 2021.

in the use of medical funds for the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment in accordance with financial regulations by releasing statements.

In addition, more than 900,000 pensioners who will receive their pensions were able to withdraw their pensions conveniently on the 21st after the opening day of the bank instead of only on the 21st. Withdrawals were made using the Mobile Money system at nearby mobile agents.

The State Administrative Council Economic Committee Meeting No. (1/2021) was held on 23 February and the chairman of the Economic Committee called for the immediate recovery of the economy, which has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and for the relevant authorities to take immediate action.

### Implementation of Social Goals

Tatmadaw members from respective regional commands conducted collective cleaning in the pagodas across the country



Vaccination programme in progress as it continues to be implemented with added momentum.

including Shwedagon Pagoda, Maha Myat Muni Pagoda, Kyeik Htee Yoe Pagoda and ancient pagodas in Bagan and NyaungU in order to open them in accordance with the COVID-19 rules and regulations and people have been able to pay homage to those

pagodas since 8 February.

### Provision of Healthcare

On 5 February, it was announced that all people will be able to receive free medical treatment at military hospitals as the Tatmadaw is willing to support public health services throughout the country.

As of 28 February, Tatmadaw hospitals have provided healthcare services to 36,133 outpatients, 3550 inpatients. A total of 1,592 patients had major surgery, 780 patients had minor surgery and 2,240 child births were managed by Tatmadaw medical specialists, medics and nurses. In addition, patients were provided foods.

### Social assistance

With the instruction of the State Administration Council, Tatmadaw Naval Vessels brought back a total of 1086 Myanmar nationals who were stranded in Malaysia due to

various reasons on 23 February and arrived to Myanmar on 27 February.

The returnees have been under quarantine in accordance with the COVID-19 protective rules and regulations at Tatmadaw quarantine centres and will be coordinated for going back home and job opportunity.

While the State Administration Council is implementing the objectives of social affairs, the council also sent messages for 74th Shan State Day on 7 February, 74th Union Day on 12 February and 73rd Chin National Day to show the same mindset together with the ethnic nationals.

### Acceleration of COVID-19 activities

The council keeps launch-



One of the local inpatients is seen receiving medical treatment at the military hospital.

By Kanaung

# Sustainable ways key for protecting food resource

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

We would like to call for a plan to offer freshwater fingerlings, fish breeding methods and other courses to the people in rural areas as soon as possible.

ing assistance for food, nutrition and securing proper livelihoods for the people, the regional authorities and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation need to take steps to bring aquaculture in Myanmar in line with international standards by allowing farmland to be used for other purposes.

The farmer can exploit this opportunity only by employing Good Aquaculture Practices (GAqP) because producing safety food and fish and prawn export need to ensure GAqP.

GAqP is aimed at not just producing food for export but also ensuring safe and healthy food for local consumption.

To conserve fish resources and ensure food safety, not only fish farms but also those involved in the food production chain are required to follow the rules and regulations.

All stakeholders in the fish and prawn industries are urged to innovate and create sustainable ways of doing business that does not negatively impact the environment.



A recent report on releasing 400,000 sea prawns fingerlings into a river in Kyaukpyu, Rakhine State, by people of the local fish industries is warning us that our country needs to conserve our fish resource to ensure the sustainability of food for the people.

Besides, the water with abundant fish and prawn resource can create job opportunities for local communities and food sustainability.

As part of an effort to prevent declining ocean fish resources, the regional authorities are urged to control sea fishing in the non-fishing season.

We would like to call for a plan to offer freshwater fingerlings, fish breeding methods and other courses to the people in rural areas as soon as possible.

We hope that freshwater fish breeding will increase significantly within years and will follow the success of fish breeding in other regions.

When it comes to providing assistance for food, nutrition and securing proper livelihoods for the people, the regional authorities and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation need to take steps to bring aquaculture in Myanmar in line with international standards by allowing farmland to be used for other purposes.

# Boost for Covid antibody treatments

**C**OULD treatments using lab-made versions of the body's natural infection-fighting defences become a crucial tool in the pandemic fight, alongside vaccines?

There have been encouraging signs in recent days that synthetic versions of antibodies -- one of the building blocks of our immune system -- can help the body tackle Covid-19.

### What are they?

Our bodies develop antibodies in response to pathogens.

Monoclonal antibodies -- which recognize a specific molecule of the target virus or bacteria -- are synthetic copies of those natural proteins that can be reproduced and administered as a treatment.

This is different from a vaccine, which stimulates the body to produce its own immune response.

Synthetic antibodies are administered to people already infected, to make up for deficiencies in the immune system.

They can help those who are at high risk of severe disease because of weak immunity or underlying conditions.

One synthetic antibody treatment, from US biotech firm Regeneron, was used to treat former US President Don-

ald Trump after he contracted coronavirus last year.

### Is it new?

Not at all.

"Monoclonal antibodies are one of the most powerful tools in modern medicine," says Britain's Wellcome charity.

Over the past three decades, more than a hundred of them have been licensed, it says, adding they are "transforming the way doctors treat, prevent and even cure serious non-communicable diseases".

Until recently, however, monoclonal antibodies have been mainly used for illnesses like cancers and autoimmune disorders, rather than viruses.

But they have "always had enormous potential to directly combat an infection," said British immunologist Alexander Edwards of the University of Reading.

The pandemic may therefore herald a "breakthrough" for this type of medicine as a treatment for viral infection, he added.

### How effective?

There are currently four main developers at advanced stages: British pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and California's Vir Biotechnology; Regeneron in the US;



A scientist works at the mAbxience biosimilar monoclonal antibody laboratory plant in Argentina. PHOTO: AFP

another American firm Eli Lilly; and Celltrion from South Korea.

Celltrion reported favourable results in trials of its regdanvimab antibody in January, followed by Regeneron for its REGN-COV2 treatment, a cocktail of antibodies casirivimab and imdevimab.

This week, the other two released encouraging announcements from their final stage phase 3 clinical trials.

On Wednesday, Eli Lilly said that the combination of two antibodies, bamlanivimab and etesemivab, reduced hospi-

talisations and deaths in high-risk patients recently diagnosed with Covid-19 by 87 per cent in trials.

On Thursday, GSK and Vir said results from their trials showed the monoclonal antibody known as VIR-7831 had an 85 per cent efficacy in reducing hospitalisation or death from Covid-19 compared to a placebo.

### Are they authorized?

So far the only treatments allowed for use are from Regeneron, Eli Lilly and -- only in South Korea -- Celltrion.

Several countries have is-

sued emergency use authorizations, ahead of final results from clinical trials.

The US-based Food and Drug Administration in November approved emergency use of REGN-COV2, experimentally used to treat Trump. In February, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) gave its provisional approval to the treatment for patients who do not require supplemental oxygen and who are at high risk of progressing to severe Covid-19.

Lilly's bamlanivimab meanwhile is authorized in the Unit-

ed States and France for those over 80 years of age.

This week the EMA said it had started a "rolling review" of Lilly's cocktail of bamlanivimab and etesemivab, as well as bamlanivimab used alone.

It has also started evaluating Celltrion's drug.

GSK and Vir have said they will seek authorisation for emergency use of their treatment in the US and other countries.

### What's the downside?

As with other aspects of the pandemic response, the emergence of new variants of the coronavirus has caused concerns.

Sophie Muller, medical director of GSK France, told AFP that their treatment targets a region of the virus' spike proteins -- also called S proteins -- that is "not affected by the current variants of the coronavirus, hence its interest".

But what if future variants are possibly resistant?

With this in mind, some research is focusing on the development of "polyclonal" antibodies, able to identify many more molecules of the virus.

There are more immediate limitations however: price and availability. —AFP ■

# India reviews AstraZeneca side effects after concerns in Europe

**I**NDIA will carry out a deeper review of post-vaccination side effects from the AstraZeneca shot next week although no cases of blood clots have been reported so far, an official told AFP Saturday. New Delhi decided to conduct the review after several countries suspended rollout over blood clot fears even as the World Health Organization said there was no reason to stop using AstraZeneca's Covid-19 jab.

Denmark, Norway and Iceland paused use of the drugmaker's shot as a precaution after isolated reports of recipients developing blood clots.

"We are looking at all the adverse events, particularly serious adverse events like deaths and hospitalisation. We will come back if we find anything of concern," N.K. Arora, a member of India's national task force on Covid-19, told AFP.

India has given at least 28 mil-

lion shots in its vast vaccination programme, most of them AstraZeneca's which are produced at the Serum Institute of India.

New Delhi has also gifted and allowed exports of millions of these jabs to around 70 countries over the last few weeks as a part of its vaccine diplomacy. Arora said there was "no immediate issue of concern as number of adverse events (in India) is very, very low. We are relooking at (adverse events that were reported) to see if there was any issue of blood clotting."

"As of yesterday there were 59 or 60 deaths, and they were all co-incident," the doctor said, adding hospitalisation cases were being re-examined.

"In fact there is a real effort from our side that once complete investigation is done, to put its results in public domain, on the ministry of health website," Arora added. —AFP ■



A medical worker inoculates a municipal worker with a COVID-19 vaccine at a vaccination centre in New Delhi on 22 February, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

## Objectives of 76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Armed Forces Day

**F**OR the Tatmadaw to join hands with the entire nation to safeguard democracy, which is the aspiration of all the nationalities of the country, from deviating from its path, in accord with the basic principles of the Constitution, while observing Our Three Main National Causes, which is the national policy;

To protect the people from all dangers including natural disasters at any time and in any situation and to provide all-round assistance for ensuring social security of the people;

To restore eternal peace based on NCA, without deviating from Our Three Main National Causes, as the cessation of armed conflicts is the principal requirement in realizing democracy;

To build a strong and compact Standard Army, which has the combat prowess and combat power; to effectively safeguard the State peace and stability and sovereignty.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 13 March 2021)

**BAY INFERENCE:** Weather is generally fair over the North and Westcentral Bay and a few cloud to partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 14 March 2021:** Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Bago, Yangon Regions and (Northern and Southern)Shan, Chin, Rakhine 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 (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2021:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2021:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2021:** Generally fair weather.

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# Kawpok-creek-crossing bridge under construction in Bamauk

## Border trade up by over \$19 mln



Now, the Kawpok-creek-crossing bailey bridge is being constructed in Bamauk Township. PHOTO: KHIN MAUNG SWE (MAW LUU)

THE Kawpok-creek-crossing bridge is being constructed on Nyaung Chay Htauk-Butaung Road near Lay Ti village in Bamauk township, Sagaing region.

The construction of the bridge started on 29 November. It is being constructed by U Than Min Zaw, an engineer from the UBF company, which won the tender with K324 million from the Union Budget of 2020-2021 financial year from the Border Areas and National Races Development Affairs Department under the Ministry

of Border Affairs. The bridge is 150 feet in length, 12 feet in width and 20 feet of water clearance height. The bridge includes the two approaching bridges and the two piers in the middle water. The construction of the bridge is targeted to complete not later than the end of July.

The Township Border Areas and National Races Development Affairs Department Assistant Director U Aung Myint Tun and officials inspected the ongoing construction project on 12 March.

“The locals have been expecting the construction of Kawpok-creek-crossing bridge for ten years. Now, they are delighted to hear that the bridge is currently being constructed,” said U Aung Myint Tun.

The Kawpok creek is flooding the town every year in the rainy season. So, the people and the motorcyclists could not get through the bridge, and the residents got an idea to build a wooden bridge on a self-help basis. Although the people and the motorcyclists are safe to pass the wooden bridge, the

trucks and small vehicles need to wait until the water recedes.

Now, the Kawpok-creek-crossing bailey bridge is being constructed in Bamauk Township. Upon completion of the bridge, the people, motorcycles, cars and 20-tonne trucks will be able to cross the bridge. There will also be a smooth flow of goods to 50 villages in Bamauk township. It will also contribute to other businesses, social, education and health sectoral developments of the local villages. — Khin Maung Swe (Maw Luu) /GNLM

THE total border trade value exceeded US\$4.16 billion in the first five months of the current financial year, up over \$19 million compared with the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Till 19 February of 2020-21FY, the total border trade amounted to \$4.16 billion, up to \$19 million compared with the last year's figure of \$4.14 billion. The entire border trade value included \$2.88 billion in export and \$1.28 billion in import.

The trade volume at Muse border trade on the China-Myanmar border exceeded \$2.18 billion, down over \$208 million compared with the same period last year.

Myanmar mainly exports agricultural products, animal products, marine products, minerals, forest products, manufacturing goods and others to foreign trade partner countries. In contrast, capital goods, intermediate goods and consumer goods are imported into the country.

Myanmar has opened 18 border trade camps. The country conducts border trade with neighbouring China through Muse, Lweje, Kampaiti Chinshwehaw and Kengtung, with Thailand via Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese gates, with Bangladesh via Sittwe and Maungtau, and with India through Tamu and Reed border crossings respectively. —Zin Zin

# Chickpea growers in Nyaung-U expect good price in early harvest season

THE growers started harvesting the chickpea grown using Thukaungtae river water in Nyaung-U township. Mandalay region expects a reasonable chickpea price this year, said U Tin Soe, a chickpea grower from Auk Nyan village.

Last year, the chickpea was sold for K26,000 per basket. So, the local growers expect that the chickpea price will not fall this year below that of last year.

The chickpea was started to grow in November in Nyaung-U township and harvested in March. The harvested chickpeas are sold only in the Pakokku market. The crops yielding from Nyaung-U township are sent generally to the Pakokku market.

This year, the chickpeas fetch

K23,000 per basket. Each basket contains 19 visses. The chickpeas are offered to the consumers to pay K23,500 per basket, said U Bo Gyi from the Nilar depot in Pakokku town.

The chickpeas are grown in farmlands with access to the river water so that the growers do not need to add more irrigation water. But, the growers need to spend the labour charges to harvest the chickpeas. It cost K3,000 per person and K20,000 per hour for ploughing fees. After cultivating the chickpeas in the farmland, the growers do not spray the pesticides but add the natural fertilizers such as cow dung, goat manure and leaf compost, according to the chickpea growers. — Ko Htein (KPD)/GNLM



The chickpeas are grown in farmlands with access to the river water so that the growers do not need to add more irrigation water. PHOTO: KO HTEIN (KPD)

## Multilingual telehealth services target foreigners in Japan

WHEN working as a physician at a hospital in Tokyo, Tatsunori Jo often felt it was difficult for foreigners to receive the same level of medical services as Japanese people due to language barriers. Jo, who was born in Japan and grew up in Taiwan, set up Joes Corp. in Tokyo four years ago as a company specializing in medical care and living support for foreigners in Japan.

The coronavirus pandemic prompted Jo, who learned medicine in Taiwan and Japan, to start online medical consultations and examinations in multiple languages. The company launched its Online Home Doctor services in English, Chinese, Vietnamese and Japanese for individuals in January and expanded them this month to cover company employees and foreign trainees brought to Japan under the gov-



Photo shows how to use the Online Home Doctor services launched by Joes Corp. in Tokyo. PHOTO: KYODO

ernment-sponsored technical internship programme. Using the company's service, foreign residents can consult over 10 doctors, who cover internal and respiratory medicine, otolaryngology, pediatrics and dermatology, in the four languages via the Zoom videoconferencing application.

If a medical examination is

required, it can be conducted and paid for by credit card online, with medication directly delivered to the person's home.

There is no charge currently for medical consultations of up to 10 minutes as the company aims to help people amid the coronavirus pandemic. An examination of up to 15 minutes that includes a

prescription costs 1,000 yen (\$9) including tax but not the cost of a medication and its delivery.

Jo said he thinks the internationalization of medical care in Japan has been improving ahead of the Tokyo Olympics, scheduled to be held this summer after being delayed by a year due to the pandemic.—Kyodo News ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Sharp admits sales padded at subsidiary amid pressure to hit targets

SHARP Corp. said Friday one of its subsidiaries had padded its sales by around 7.5 billion yen (\$69 million) through fraudulent accounting and that the illicit acts continued amid pressure from the parent to match business plans.

The Japanese electronics group under the wing of Taiwan's Hon Hai Precision Industry Co. released a report by the investigation committee on the matter, which came to light late last year.

The subsidiary, Kantatsu Co., which makes lenses for smartphone cameras, booked sales despite the possibility of its products being returned from clients starting around July 2018, according to the report. Among other steps, it even recorded sales without orders from clients, which began around January 2020.

After Sharp made Tokyo-based Kantatsu a subsidiary in March 2018, "the pressure to achieve business plans increased," the report said, while noting that funding difficulties at Kantatsu are also attributable to the fraudulent acts.—Kyodo News ■

## China denies mulling near USD1B fine for Alibaba in monopoly case



A pedestrian walks past Alibaba.com advertising in Hong Kong. PHOTO: AFP

CHINA denied yesterday it was planning to hit e-commerce giant Alibaba with a fine of almost USD1 billion for allegedly flout-

ing monopoly rules, as authorities put the screws on the firm as part of a crackdown on the technology sector.

Officials are considering a hefty penalty that could top the USD975 million paid by United States (US) chipmaker Qualcomm in 2015 – the biggest known for anticompetitive practices in China – the Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday, citing unnamed "people with knowledge of the matter".

But the regulator in charge of the case told AFP there was no truth to the story. "If it's not there (on our website), it's not (true)," a spokeswoman for the State Administration for Market Regulation said.

Alibaba, China's largest online shopping portal, has been in the crosshairs of authorities in

recent months over concerns of its reach into the daily finances of ordinary Chinese people.

Its legal troubles began after comments in October by billionaire founder Jack Ma in which he laid into China's convoluted regulatory system. In November, financial regulators pulled the plug on the record USD35 billion Hong Kong-Shanghai initial public offering of Alibaba's online payment subsidiary Ant Group.

A month later, officials opened an investigation into Alibaba's business practices, deemed anti-competitive, and Ma disappeared from public view until mid-January.—AFP ■

## GE sells jet-leasing unit to AerCap for USD30B

GENERAL Electric (GE) announced a deal on Wednesday to sell its aircraft leasing business to AerCap for USD30 billion, establishing a new industry giant amid the pandemic-induced downturn in air travel.

Under the transaction, the GE unit will be integrated into the Irish company. GE will have a 46-per-cent stake in the new entity and will nominate two members to AerCap's board, the announcement said.

The combined company will have more than 2,000 owned and managed aircraft, more than 300 helicopters



File photo of the logo for General Electric at a trading post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. PHOTO: AFP

and more than 300 customers around the world, AerCap said. The airline industry re-

mains in a deep downturn due to the coronavirus pandemic, although progress on vacci-

nation campaigns is expected to lead to a gradual rebound.

"As the recovery in air travel gathers pace, this transaction represents a unique opportunity that we believe will create long-term value for our investors," said AerCap chief executive Aengus Kelly.

GE will receive USD24 billion in cash from AerCap as well as shares in the new company worth about USD6 billion.

The transaction, subject to approval by shareholders and regulators, is expected to close in the fourth quarter of 2021.—AFP ■

### Bitcoin passes \$60,000 for first time

BITCOIN passed the \$60,000 mark for the first time on Saturday, with analysts saying the giant US stimulus package helped boost the world's most popular virtual currency on its record-breaking run.

The cryptocurrency hit \$60,197 at 1234 GMT and continued to hover around \$60,000, according to the website CoinMarketCap.

Bitcoin has tripled in value over the last three months -- it was worth \$20,000 in December -- bolstered by increasing backing from corporate heavyweights.

Markets.com analyst Neil Wilson said that in recent days "Bitcoin went up as investors looked to the imminent arrival of stimulus cheques".—AFP ■

# Cuomo faces impeachment inquiry over harassment claims

EMBATTLED New York Governor Andrew Cuomo found himself under increasing risk of impeachment over allegations of sexual harassment yesterday when the Democratic head of the state assembly – until now a key ally – green-lighted a formal investigation of the claims.

Since the end of February, the 63-year-old Cuomo, whose third term is due to expire in 2022, has been under scrutiny after five women accused him of sexual harassment or inappropriate behaviour.

But on Wednesday, the Times Union – a newspaper in the state capital Albany – reported explosive claims that Cuomo put his hand under the



New York Governor Andrew Cuomo speaks at a vaccination site at the Jacob K Javits Convention Center. PHOTO: AFP

blouse of a female staffer and touched her “aggressively” at the end of 2020 in his private residence.

Aides to the powerful

governor, who made a name for himself last year as a straight-talking pragmatist in the first onslaught of the coronavirus pandemic, were

obliged to notify the police of those claims, a spokesman told AFP.

The allegations prompted 59 Democratic lawmakers from the state assembly – which has a total of 213 members, most of them from Cuomo’s Democratic Party – to join dozens of Republicans who have publicly called for his resignation. After meeting with lawmakers, Democratic assembly speaker Carl Heastie said he was “authorizing the Assembly Judiciary Committee to begin an impeachment investigation” – the first step towards an eventual impeachment. “The reports of accusations concerning the governor are serious,” Heastie said in a statement.—AFP ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Police officer in court over murder that shocked UK

THE police officer charged with murdering a young Londoner who disappeared while walking home from a friend’s house appeared in court on Saturday as organizers cancelled a march in her honour due to coronavirus restrictions.

Metropolitan Police officer Wayne Couzens, 48, appeared in person at London’s Westminster Magistrates’ Court charged with the kidnap and murder of Sarah Everard.

Couzens, a member of the force’s diplomatic protection unit, was charged on Friday with the murder that has shocked the country and raised the issue of women’s safety.

The 33-year-old marketing executive, whose body was identified on Friday, disappeared on the evening of March 3 while walking home from a friend’s flat in a popular neighbourhood south of the capital.—AFP ■

## Russian police detain dozens of opposition deputies at forum

RUSSIAN police on Saturday arrested around 200 opposition politicians and municipal deputies at a Moscow conference as authorities tighten the screws on Kremlin critics ahead of parliamentary elections.

A police raid on an opposition conference dedicated to running for municipal office came after President Vladimir Putin’s top critic Alexei Navalny was jailed for two and a half years last month and more than 10,000 protesters detained across the country.

While Russian police routinely break up opposition protests, the mass arrests of municipal deputies at a conference in

Moscow were unprecedented.

Participants from more than 50 of Russia’s regions had gathered to discuss parliamentary and local elections in September at a forum organized by a project backed by prominent Kremlin critic Mikhail Khodorkovsky.

Forty minutes into the conference police broke up the event and detained the participants. “The ENTIRE forum of Russian municipal deputies has been detained in Moscow!” Khodorkovsky said on Twitter, calling the detentions “unconstitutional”. A number of well-known opposition figures including Yashin, Vladimir Kara-Murza, Yulia



Yulia Galyamina was among the well-known opposition figures arrested. PHOTO: AFP

Galyamina, Yevgeny Roizman and Andrei Pivovarov as well as journalists have been detained.

“A very symbolic end to a

short forum: deputies in police vans, and masked police are twisting people’s arms,” Yashin said on Facebook.—AFP ■

### US city to pay George Floyd’s family \$27 million

THE family of George Floyd, the Black man who died while being arrested by a white police officer in Minneapolis, has reached a \$27 million “wrongful death” settlement with the Minnesota city, lawyers for the family announced Friday.

The settlement is the “largest pre-trial settlement in a civil rights wrongful death case in US history,” the lawyers said in a statement.

Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin is currently on trial facing murder and manslaughter charges in connection with Floyd’s May 25, 2020 death, which was captured on video by bystanders and seen around the globe.—AFP ■

## Car bomb kills eight, wounds 47, in western Afghanistan

A powerful car bomb in western Afghanistan killed at least eight people and wounded dozens more, authorities said Saturday, as the United Nations condemned attacks on civilians in the country.

The blast targeted a police headquarters in the city of Herat around 10 pm on Friday, damaging dozens of houses and shops,

Jailani Farhad, the spokesman for the Herat provincial governor, told AFP.

“The death toll from a car bomb in the city of Herat increased to eight, and 47 others are wounded,” he said, adding that women, children and security personnel were among the dead.

The interior ministry spokesman, Tariq Arian, confirmed the death toll, adding that 54 had been wounded.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the blast in Herat had no links to their group.

However, the group’s insurgents are active in the western province and have carried out

recent attacks against Afghan government forces.

President Ashraf Ghani blamed the Taliban, adding in a statement the group “continued their illegitimate war and violence against our people” and “showed once again they have no intention for peaceful settlement of the current crises”.—AFP ■

## For French wine pros, Covid smell loss is an ‘amputation’

NO-ONE likes to lose their sense of smell or taste – a common symptom of Covid-19 – but for the sommeliers and other wine professionals of France, it is particularly traumatic. “It’s very hard to admit that we’ve lost these senses,” said Sophie Pallas, director of the Union of French Oenologues. “I was very affected as an individual because wine is the central passion in my life”. She caught Covid-19 in January, and said she was still in the middle of her recovery. “When we are robbed of these senses, our experience of pleasure and desire is amputated. I lost my

appetite and totally lost my desire to drink wine,” she said. As her senses have gradually returned, she said, the process has at least been interesting from a scientific point of view.

“It’s very interesting to rediscover the world of aromas. As a professional, I’ve been able to look at it very analytically.” With guidance from experts at the University of Bordeaux, she has been rebuilding her brain’s internal database of smell associations that guide our ability to recognize odours – testing her nose multiple times a day. — AFP ■

## Year after COVID first hit, Italy faces new wave: PM



Italy was the first Western country to enforce a national lockdown last year. PHOTO: AFP

ITALY is facing “a new wave” of coronavirus infections, Prime Minister Mario Draghi warned as his government prepared to tighten restrictions across most of the country. “More than a year af-

ter the start of the health emergency, we are unfortunately facing a new wave of infections,” Draghi said on Friday, during a visit to a new vaccination centre at Rome’s Fiumicino airport. “The memory of what

happened last spring is vivid, and we will do everything to prevent it from happening again,” he said. Schools, restaurants, shops and museums are expected to close from Monday in the majority of

regions, after Italy recorded almost 26,000 new Covid-19 cases and another 373 deaths on Thursday. Such figures, which show an almost 15 percent increase in infections over the past week, require the “utmost caution” to limit deaths and pressure on health services. Draghi’s office earlier confirmed that all of Italy would be classified in the highest risk “red zone” over Easter weekend, between April 3 and 5. Along with nationwide measures, Italy calibrates restrictions in its 20 regions according to a four-tier colour-coded system (white, yellow, orange and red) based on infection levels and revised every week. —AFP ■

## Austrian chancellor claims some EU states have ‘secret’ vaccine contracts

AUSTRIA’S chancellor Sebastian Kurz on Friday suggested that some European countries may have signed “secret contracts” with vaccine companies to receive more jabs than they were entitled to based on EU rules.

EU members have agreed that vaccines should be distributed among countries based on population size, but Kurz said that after comparing the total procurement figures of member states, it became clear that “deliveries do not follow the per capita quota system”.



Austria, with a population of just under 9 million, tested 3 million last week alone. PHOTO: AFP

“There are clues that point to so-called bazaars where additional agreements between member states and pharmaceutical companies were made,” Kurz said.

“Malta will receive three times as many doses per capita as Bulgaria until the end of July,” he said.

“The Netherlands would not only receive more doses of vaccine per

capita until the end of June than Germany, but almost twice as many as Croatia,” Kurz said.

“This is in clear contradiction to the political goals of the EU,” he said.

Reacting to the comments coming out of Vienna, Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov said he supported the Austrian Chancellor’s initiative “for a close examination of the way in which the vaccines ordered by the European Commission are delivered and distributed”. —AFP ■

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.  
Dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021  
hh@kcyangon.com

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY. NO. (108S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY. NO. (108S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-3-2021** 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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE., LTD.

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TAI PING SHAN

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TAI PING SHAN VOY. NO. (21015)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-3-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT-2** 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: 2301928

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S GLOBAL MARS SHIPPING

# Thailand delays AstraZeneca vaccine rollout



The kingdom was scheduled to start administering the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine on Friday, with Premier Prayut Chan-O-Cha expected to be filmed receiving the first injection. **PHOTO: AFP**

THAILAND abruptly delayed its rollout of the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine on Friday, stopping Premier Prayut Chan-O-Cha from getting the first jab as several European nations suspended their programmes over blood clot fears.

The kingdom was scheduled to start administering the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine on Friday, with Prayut expected to be filmed receiving the first injection.

But by 8:30 am (0130 GMT) the gruff former general was nowhere to be seen, the event was abruptly cancelled, and a press conference with health officials was called.

“Vaccine injection for Thais

must be safe, we do not have to be in a hurry,” Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn, an adviser for the country’s Covid-19 vaccine committee, told a press conference.

“Though the quality of AstraZeneca is good, some countries have asked for a delay. We will delay (as well).”

Denmark, Norway and Iceland suspended the use of the Oxford/AstraZeneca jab the day before.

Austria on Sunday stopped using doses from one batch, after a 49-year-old nurse died of “severe blood coagulation problems” days after receiving an anti-Covid shot.

However, there is still no

established link between the vaccine and blood clots, and Denmark stressed that its move was merely precautionary as it examined the risks more closely.

Thai virologist Yong Poovarawan said the kingdom was waiting for other European countries to “make a conclusion”.

“We are delaying to let others prove (the side effects) of whether or not it is because of the vaccine or if it is only on that specific batch,” he said, adding that the batch Thailand received was made in a factory in Asia.

Prayut said Friday afternoon that he had been prepared to be vaccinated but then was told to refrain from it. —AFP ■

## Double births at ‘all-time high’ globally

MORE twins -- one in every 42 children born -- are coming into the world than ever before, according to new research citing the rapid rise in medically assisted reproduction as a key factor.

Some 1.6 million twins are born each year, about a third more than four decades ago, according to a study Friday in Human Reproduction.

“The relative and absolute numbers of twins in the world are higher than they have ever been since the mid-twentieth century and this is likely to be an all-time high,” said lead author Christiaan Monden, a professor at the University of Oxford.

The rise of assisted reproductive technology (ART) in developed countries since the 1970s, especially the United States and Europe, has contributed significantly to the rise in multiple births, the study found.

Mothers giving birth at an older age -- when twinning rates

are higher -- is also a factor, as are increased use of contraception, women choosing to start families later in life and lower overall fertility.

Researchers gathered data from 165 countries from between 2010 and 2015, covering 99 per cent of the global population.

For 112 of those nations twinning rates were also avail-

able for the period 1980 to 1985, making it possible to track changes over time.

In three quarters of the countries with data for both periods, twin births increased by at least 10 per cent, the study found.

In Asia, the rate at which twins were born went up 32 per cent, and in North America it jumped by 71 per cent. —AFP ■



A study found the rise of assisted reproductive technology has contributed to the rise in multiple births. **PHOTO: AFP**

## ‘Green pass’ likely only for EU authorized jabs

THE EU’s planned digital “green pass” showing the status of vaccinated people will probably only take into account jabs authorized by the bloc’s medicines regulator, a top official said on Friday.

The European Medicines Agency has so far authorized four Covid vaccines - from BioNTech / Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson - so, unless this changes, the pass might not record a jab with Russia’s Sputnik V, for example.

“What we would like to create is a digital certificate where you can have your negative PCR test or prove that you have antibodies or that you have been vaccinated by a vaccine that has been approved by EMA,” the EU commissioner for home affairs, Ylva Johansson, told journalists.

The European Commission is to unveil its proposal for the green pass next Wednesday, with legislation to be sent to the European Parliament. —AFP ■



The EU’s planned digital “green pass” showing the status of vaccinated people will probably only take into account jabs authorized by the bloc’s medicines regulator. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Large asteroid to pass by Earth on 21 March: NASA

THE largest asteroid to pass by Earth this year will approach within some 1.25 million miles (two million kilometres) of our planet on 21 March, NASA said Thursday.

The US space agency said it will allow astronomers to get a rare close look at an asteroid.

The asteroid, 2001 FO32, is estimated to be about 3,000 feet in diameter and was discovered 20 years ago, NASA said.

“We know the orbital path of 2001 FO32 around the Sun very accurately,” said Paul Chodas, director of the Centre for Near Earth Object Studies. “There is no chance the asteroid will get any closer to Earth than 1.25 million miles.” That is roughly 5.25 times the distance of the Earth from the Moon but still close enough for 2001 FO32 to be classified as a “potentially hazardous asteroid.” NASA said 2001 FO32 will pass by at about 77,000 miles per hour faster than the speed at which most asteroids encounter Earth. “Currently, little is known about this object, so the very close encounter provides an outstanding opportunity to learn a great deal about this asteroid,” said

Lance Benner, principal scientist at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

NASA said astronomers hope to get a better understanding of the asteroid’s size and a rough idea of its composition by studying light reflecting off its surface. “When sunlight hits an asteroid’s surface, minerals in the rock absorb some wavelengths while reflecting others,” NASA said.

“By studying the spectrum of light reflecting off the surface, astronomers can measure the chemical ‘fingerprints’ of the minerals on the surface of the asteroid.” Amateur astronomers in some parts of the globe should be able to conduct their own observations.

“The asteroid will be brightest while it moves through southern skies, Chodas said. “Amateur astronomers in the southern hemisphere and at low northern latitudes should be able to see this asteroid using moderate size telescopes with apertures of at least eight inches in the nights leading up to closest approach, but they will probably need star charts to find it.” —AFP ■

# Germany expects J&J jobs only in April

HEALTH Minister Jens Spahn said Friday that Germany would have to wait until “mid-to-late April” for the newly approved Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine, adding that the EU is querying the company over the delays.

Johnson & Johnson’s single-dose COVID vaccine became the fourth jab to be authorized for use in the European Union Thursday, but Spahn warned that Germany would have to wait at least another month to receive the first doses from the US firm.

“It’s a pain with Johnson & Johnson. We have a European authorization, but the deliveries will only be there from mid-to-late April at the earliest,” said the minister at a weekly press conference in Berlin.

He added that the European commission was in talks with the company over the problem.

“We made an advance payment of 300 million euros for production and signed a contract in October, so we of course have to ask what has happened,” he said.

He said that Germany and the EU were now working on



It is the second time in less than 12 months that Germany has tightened travel restrictions on the French border. PHOTO: AFP

“short-term solutions” to the problem such as setting up production facilities in Germany.

Yet he pointed the finger at vaccine producers, saying that short-term solutions wouldn’t be needed if “they had organized things months ago when the contracts were signed.”

The EU has been struggling with a disappointing vaccination rollout that started in January and faltered because of a shortage of doses produced by the three suppliers so far.

On Friday, Spahn said that

while Germany expected to receive nine million doses from BionTech in April, other producers had been less reliable. “With AstraZeneca and Moderna, the planning periods and the question of whether there will be adjustments is a little more volatile, which has to do with production processes,” he said.

“It all depends on whether and to what extent producers are able to keep to their delivery commitments.”

Problems with supplies have contributed to a stuttering

inoculation rollout that has left EU nations trailing behind the likes of the United States, Britain and Israel. The head of the EU’s vaccine supply task force, Thierry Breton, said on Tuesday the EU’s “bumpy” vaccine strategy should be augmented by the addition of the Johnson & Johnson jab, despite reports of production shortfalls in the US.

“Do not believe that because one company has a problem that overall it will jeopardize the whole programme,” he said.—AFP ■

## Disneyland Paris postpones re-opening again



Disneyland Paris, Europe’s biggest tourist attraction, said Friday it will not be able to reopen as planned on April 2 because of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis. PHOTO: AFP

DISNEYLAND Paris, Europe’s biggest tourist attraction, said Friday it will not be able to reopen as planned on April 2 because of the ongoing Covid-19 crisis.

The park, which employs 17,000 people, closed between March 13 and July 15 last year, and has been shut again since October 30.

Initially, Disneyland Paris had hoped to re-admit visitors in February, before setting

April 2 as its new target date, depending on health conditions improving.

This time, the theme park held off from giving any new estimate for a reopening.

“We are optimistic that we will be able to reopen soon, and we will share updates when possible,” it said on its website’s homepage.

Anyone with bookings would be able to reschedule or ask for a refund, it said.—AFP ■

## Portugal to reopen nurseries, primary schools on Monday

PORTUGAL will reopen nurseries and primary schools on Monday, the prime minister said. Some businesses considered non-essential such as bookstores and hair salons will also reopen Monday as will libraries.

Secondary schools, outdoor seating for cafes and restaurants and monuments and museums will follow two weeks later.

High schools, universities, theatres and indoor dining limited to four people per table will reopen in mid-April.

Large events with certain restrictions will be permitted from May 3.

Other aspects such as home working and limitations on travel between cities will remain in place for now.—AFP ■



A tram goes through a street in Lisbon on March 11, 2021 as Portugal announced it will start to ease restrictions due to a decrease in coronavirus cases. PHOTO: AFP

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Sanofi to start human trials of its second Covid vaccine candidate

FRENCH pharmaceutical firm Sanofi on Friday announced the launch of human trials of its second Covid-19 vaccine, with its first still in the testing phase after having fallen behind in development.

Sanofi and US company Translate Bio are developing the vaccine based on messenger RNA technology. Messenger RNA technology is also used in the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, already authorized in the European Union, the United States and elsewhere.—AFP ■

### Hungarian hospitals feel strain as Covid third wave swells

HUNGARY on Thursday reported record numbers of both Covid-19 infections and patients requiring hospital treatment as a surging third wave of the pandemic threatens to overwhelm hospitals.

Officials said coronavirus hospital patient numbers reached a record high of 8,329, while a record 8,312 new infection cases was also posted. Around 16,500 Hungarians have died in total due to the coronavirus since the pandemic began, with another 172 deaths recorded on Thursday.—AFP ■

### Serbia to start producing Chinese Sinopharm vaccine

SERBIA will become the first European country to produce the Chinese Sinopharm coronavirus vaccine, the Balkan country’s President Aleksandar Vucic said Thursday.

Vucic announced that a deal concerning the construction of a “vaccine factory” will be signed in the next two weeks, and it will be built with support of China and United Arab Emirates. Although an EU-candidate country, Serbia has kept close diplomatic and economic ties with Moscow and Beijing, and has used the delicate balance to become continental Europe’s fastest vaccinator.—AFP ■

## AFC announces venues for AFC Champions League 2021

THE Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has recently confirmed the venues for the AFC Champions League 2021 Group Stage matches, according to a previously released statement of the football confederation.

The West Region matches are scheduled to take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, between

April 14-30,

Meanwhile, Group B matches will be held in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, while India, whose representative FC Goa are poised to mark the nation's debut in Asia's premier club competition, will host Group E, according to the AFC.

The Preliminary and Play-

off matches of the AFC Champions League 2021 (East) are also postponed and will be played in centralized venues of their respective Group Stage matches, AFC has stated. Upon the AFC confirmation for the tourney's venues, Dato' Windsor John, the AFC General Secretary, said: "On behalf of the

Asian football family, I would like to thank all our Member Associations for their interest in hosting our club competitions and commitment towards ensuring we continue to place the safety and wellbeing of our players, teams, and officials at the forefront of all our priorities.

"The AFC is most grateful for the support of the AFC Competitions Committee and our commercial partners, and we will continue to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders as we strive to ensure a safe and successful 2021 club football season," the AFC General Secretary added.—GNLM ■

## 'Feel good' Westwood leads Fitzpatrick at Players Championship

VEDRA BEACH (Florida) — England's Lee Westwood, feeling "calm and in control," fired six birdies in a six-under-par 66 on Friday to seize a one-shot lead over compatriot Matthew Fitzpatrick in the US PGA Tour Players Championship.

The 47-year-old, who was the 54-hole leader at the Arnold Palmer Invitational last week on the way to a runner-up finish behind Bryson DeChambeau, said he'd carried his confidence from Bay Hill to TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida.

"I've regrouped," Westwood said. "I've still got the memories of last week, of playing well and hitting good shots when I needed to, but there's no hangover from last week.

"It's a feel-good experi-

ence for me this week, and I've carried that into the first two rounds."

On a course where some of the game's best were struggling -- defending champion Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland was among those who missed the cut -- Westwood was rarely in danger on the way to a nine-under-par total of 135.

Westwood opened with back-to-back birdies at the 10th and 11th. He moved atop the leaderboard with a run of three straight birdies at the second, third and fourth, rolling in a 30-footer at the par-three third.

After a tricky downhill five-footer to save par at the eighth, he rolled in a five-foot birdie putt at the par-five ninth.

—AFP ■

## Lewandowski on brink of next goal-scoring milestone

BERLIN — Robert Lewandowski can reach another milestone today in his quest to better Gerd Mueller's all-time record of 40 goals in a Bundesliga season.

The Bayern Munich striker bagged a hat-trick in last weekend's 4-2 win over Dortmund in Germany's 'Klassiker' to leave him on 31 league goals this campaign.

The result keeps the champions two points clear at the top of the Bundesliga.

With 10 league games left, Lewandowski is nine goals short of Mueller's stunning record set in 1971/72, which many assumed would never be bettered.

At Werder Bremen on Saturday, Lewandowski needs just one more to equal Klaus Fischer's tally of 268 Bundesliga



Robert Lewandowski can reach another milestone today in his quest to better Gerd Mueller's all-time record of 40 goals in a Bundesliga season. **PHOTO: AFP**

goals.

Only Bayern legend Mueller scored more in Germany's top-flight with 365 in 427 league games.

Fischer, who played for 1860 Munich, Schalke, Cologne, and Bochum between 1968 and 1988, backs Lewandowski to better Mueller's record. —AFP ■

## Germany to face Latvia in tune-up for Euros



Germany head coach Joachim Loew will lead his side in a friendly against Latvia on June 7. **PHOTO: AFP**

BERLIN — Germany will host Latvia on Jun 7 in a friendly ahead of the European Championship, the German FA announced Friday (Mar 12).

Joachim Loew's team will face Latvia in Duesseldorf eight days before Germany play world champions France in their opening group game in Munich.

The friendly will be part of Germany's pre-tournament training camp and another warm-up game is also expected to be announced.

On Tuesday Loew confirmed he will step down as head coach after the finals, which run from Jun 11 to Jul 11. Germany have also been

drawn alongside holders Portugal and Hungary in Group F. Germany are currently ranked 13th in the world after being routed 6-0 by Spain last November in the Nations League, while Latvia are down in 136th place.

All football matches in Germany are currently being played behind closed doors due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Germany team director Oliver Bierhoff hopes spectators will be allowed back into stadiums by early June.

"We would really like to have fans back, especially for the last match before the tournament," said Bierhoff in a statement. —AFP ■