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State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing replies to queries raised by RIA news agency of Russian Federation

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The Fourth Month of the State Administration Council

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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4. Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

## Murta mat production industry of Pantanaw Township contributes to socio-economy of local people

**P**ANTANAW Township in Ayeyawady Region, which was once named Pan Kya Naw as a pagoda was built there while Princess Ohmar Dandi dropped her flower from her head while trying to escape from the princes.

The township is famous for its traditional mat weaving industry (Murta mat).

Although there are many mat makers in the Ayeyawady Region, about 80 per cent population of Pantanaw Township mainly run the mat making industry. Therefore, people at any age



ing the hands and legs and the wage is also different depending on such procedures.

“The wage is different. It depends on the processes. I get K8,000 or K10,000 per day. The rate does not remain the same. I can get the wage as far as I can sew,” Ko Soe Han added.

Only the vicinity areas of Pantanaw Township buy the Murta mats in the past, but now the mat becomes popular among the people living across the nation. Currently, not only the woman but also the man makes the mat as their career.

There are 40 members of Pan Ayeya Industry Cooperatives, which was organized by the people with united desires in Pantanaw Township of Ayeyawady Region, and one member hires at least three or four workers to run their business. The 40-member association produces about 360 mats including double mats, single mats and normal mats per month.

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Only the vicinity areas of Pantanaw Township buy the Murta mats in the past, but now the mat becomes popular among the people living across the nation. Currently, not only the woman but also the man makes the mat as their career.

understand how to make mats.

“You can go any villages in Pantanaw Township. Almost every house operates mat making. Some run their private industry and some weave as daily wage workers,” said Ko Soe Han,

daily wage worker of Pan Ayeya Production Cooperatives Limited while making the mat.

There are different processes in the Murta mat making industry like slicing, peeling, yarning, weaving and sewing us-



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Black gram exports top \$335.67 mln as of 18 June

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#### LOCAL BUSINESS

Total border trade value exceeds \$7.4 bln

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#### LOCAL BUSINESS

External trade drastically drops by \$5.69 bln as of 18 June

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## Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

### Ministry of Health and Sports

#### Order No 270/2021

7<sup>th</sup> Waning of Nayon 1383 ME

1 July 2021

THE Ministry of Health and Sports hereby announced the order by exercising the authority stipulated in Sub-Section (b) of Section 21 of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports has taken preventive measures against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in real-time. Therefore, people from some townships of the Bago and Mandalay regions need to stay at home due to the number of confirmed patients on the rise in these townships.

2. Hence, the people residing in the following townships in Bago and Mandalay regions are involved in the Stay-at-Home programme.

(a) Bago Region

- (1) Thayawady Township
- (2) Minhla Township

(b) Mandalay Region

- (1) Chanmyathazi Township
- (2) Chanayethazan Township

- (3) Pyigyidagun Township
- (4) Mahaaungmye Township
- (5) Aungmyethazan Township
- (6) Patheingyi Township
- (7) Amarapura Township

3. The people inclusive of the Stay-at-Home programme of the township need to abide by the following disciplines:

- (a) Reside at their homes only (except for the persons going to government departments, organizations, companies, factories and workplaces for serving duties);
- (b) Arrange only one person from each house to go out shopping;
- (c) Arrange only two persons per house to go to hospitals and clinics;
- (d) Wear masks if they go outside the houses;
- (e) Allow ferries and registered vehicles only to transport returnees from workplaces to pass the wards;

(f) Allow one person only in addition to the driver in a vehicle for shopping in the ward and two persons except for the driver to go to hospitals or clinics;

(g) Abide by the standard operating procedures (SOP) for trucks to ensure smooth flow of commodities in the township;

4. People need to inform the relevant ward administration bodies about seeking approvals to go outside the houses if they have reasons to raise the limited number of participants in the measures and other emergency issues mentioned in sub-paragraph (b), (c) and (f) of Paragraph 3. The relevant administrative bodies need not allow ingoing and outgoing persons, except officials and those returnees from duty.

5. Action will be taken against those who fail to abide by the order under the existing laws.

6. The order came into force at 4 am on 2-7-2021.

*Dr Thet Khaing Win*  
Union Minister

## Murta mat production industry of Pantanaw Township . . .

### FROM PAGE-1

“The workers are not the members of the association. Some are working as daily wage workers. Some families weave at their homes. If so, they can get extra income. Everyone can make rough Murta mats. There is a worker shortage problem as not all can make finished mat (smooth mat) for its detailed arts,” said Daw Tin Tin Khine, secretary of Pan Ayeya.

The mats like the double mat, single mat including prayer mats produced from Pan Ayeya have a firm place in the current Murta mat market.

The local and foreign travelers like to buy the souvenirs such as hats, shoes and wallets made of Murta strips.

“The Murta has been here since before we were born. They were not used in widespread at that time. But now, we have a proper transportation system and the people across the nation use the products and so the transactions become high,” said U Win Maung from Myo Kwat Thit (1) of Pantanaw Township.

Pantanaw Township has a Murta making industry and a total of 34 village-tracts of the township operate 10,526 acres of Murta plantation. Moreover, the raw materials of Murta plants are also transported to Danubyu, Maubin, Nyaungdon, Wakema, Einme, Kyonpyaw, Hinthada, Kyaunggon townships and Sagaing and Mandalay Region. Therefore, Murta cultivation is a successful industry of these townships.

“There are more than 10,000 acres of Murta. We can fall them once every three years. So, we

“We take K20 million loan from co-operative union to buy the raw materials. Then, we share them with the team members. We have to give K0.25 million of interest per month. Now, we try hard to repay the capital, Pan Ayeya Chairman continued.

can buy the raw materials as much as we want. There would be no shortage of raw materials as we can buy the needed materials from those who store the dried Murta even in the rainy season,” said U Win Maung, mat-weaving entrepreneur.

It would not be wrong to say that it is the handcraft industry that needs a lot of time, production costs and labour force from the beginning to the end of the mat weaving processes.

“Murta mat making industry benefits to the workers, planters and mat makers. They get suitable wages depending on their workload. Some people can meet the cost of living and some get rich,” said U Hlaing Win, chairman of Pan Ayeya.

The association also provides the needed capital, technique and proper market to other associations like Pan Ayeya to improve the income of families in the region.

U Saw Andrew Pan from Region Cooperatives Union said, “We give the suggestions when they need. We also provide financial assistance. We hold meeting with BOD if they want loans. We do not grant loans to those who break the terms and conditions of

the agreement. The Co-operative grants more than K300 million to SMEs in Ayeyawady Region.”

Moreover, the region SME Department cooperates with Pact Myanmar and PGMF micro-finance institutions for SME loans and conducts training courses to produce more skilled workers.

“Our department cooperates with other ministries concerned for the development of Pantanaw areas and job opportunities for the locals. We carry out the other arrangements for capital and loans,” said U Soe Naing Htoo, region head of SME Department.

Even the industries in world countries face various difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic and so Myanmar’s handicraft industry like mat weaving industry also badly hit by the pandemic especially in production costs, la-

bour costs and sales. Not only the mat entrepreneurs but also the families relying on this industry face hardships.

“The industry was badly hit by COVID-19. The workers cannot come to the work sites. The business came to a complete standstill. But the Co-operative temporarily suspended our repayment. It helped ease the pain for us. Currently, some market analysts make the orders again,” said Pan Ayeya Chairman U Hlaing Win.

Daw Cho Cho Khine, mat maker said, “I get about K6,000 per day. I kept doing my work in the outbreak of COVID-19 as we are living hand-to-mouth. But there were not many orders. I have been back to work for three months.”

The Pan Ayeya association earns about K8.4 million profit per year from Murta mat production sales and estimates K1.5 million for the welfare of association members and K1 million as stipends for the children.

Moreover, the Pan Ayeya takes a K20 million loan from the region co-operative union at K1.25 per cent of interest rate to expand the industry. Moreover, it shares the profits, funds and esti-

mated budgets with the decision of BOD and members. It also focuses on quality mat production.

“We take K20 million loan from co-operative union to buy the raw materials. Then, we share them with the team members. We have to give K0.25 million of interest per month. Now, we try hard to repay the capital, Pan Ayeya Chairman continued.

Moreover, the mats are sold by opening shops on normal days or International Cooperatives Day and distributed to other Co-operatives unions of states and regions where do not have Murta mat. They are even sold at the pagoda festivals of countryside areas.

U Htay Myint Aung, region head of Cooperative Department said, “The government combines the Cooperatives Department and Rural Development Department into the Ministry of Cooperative and Development of Rural Areas. Therefore, it can carry out the better things for the society and economy of the rural and urban people.”

Murta mat, the real artworks of Myanmar crafted in detail, is suitable with the climate of Myanmar and essential things for novitiation and wedding ceremonies, creates job opportunities for locals.

Daw Tin Tin Khine, a local of Pantanaw and member of Pan Ayeya said, “I am proud that my town is best known for the Murta mat. It is such a traditional business and so I want to keep doing that industry to be more successful, no matter how difficult it may be.”—Seinn Khet

... region head of Cooperative Department said, “The government combines the Cooperative Department and Rural Development Department into the Ministry of Cooperative and Development of Rural Areas. Therefore, it can carry out the better things for the society and economy of the rural and urban people.”

## Gentlemen agreements were sought from ethnic armed organizations

SINCE the country started walking on the path to the multiparty democracy in 2011, it has not yet restored the cent per cent peace in its democratization process amid armed conflicts. Hence, the invitation was extended to hold dialogues on peace in 2011, and the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA was signed in 2015. Before signing the NCA, gentlemen agreements were sought from ethnic armed organizations.

*(Excerpt from the speech to the State Administration Council meeting made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 25 May 2021)*

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

6<sup>th</sup> Waning of Nayon 1383 ME  
30 June 2021

1. The Tatmadaw formed the State Administration Council and adopted the five-point roadmap and nine objectives, striving for the development of all sectors such as political, economic and social affairs of the State with might and main in addition to a further suspension of military operations for effectively realizing the successful restoration of perpetual peace and beefing up the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19.
2. As the outbreak of COVID-19 generates variant strains in a long time because of finding the variant COVID-19 in some neighbouring countries, the State Administration Council is carrying out continuous monitoring, control and inspection for the outbreak of COVID-19. The State Administration Council further suspended the military operations of the Tatmadaw from 1 to 31 July 2021 except the period of committing encroachment and attacks on security and administrative machinery of the government in addition to State defence and administrative measures to enable the ethnic armed organizations to continuously hold the dialogues until the perpetual peace could be restored successfully and to smoothly undertake the peace process.
3. As such, the organizations and persons involved in the peace process are urged to strive for achieving perpetual peace through negotiation during the period of further suspending the military operations of the Tatmadaw for ensuring the peace and tranquillity of the Union, improvement of socio-economic life and correct democratization that all the entire ethnic people aspire.

*Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services*

## Condolence letter signed for demise of former Philippines President Benigno S. Aquino III



U AUNG MYINT, Director-General of the Department of Strategic Studies and Training of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, signed in a condolence book on the demise of former Philippines President Benigno S. Aquino III at the Philippines Embassy to

Myanmar in Yangon yesterday.

The late former President died on 24 June 2021.

The former President of the Philippines, who served as the 15<sup>th</sup> President of the Philippines from 2010 to 2016, has died at the age of 61. — MNA

## MoHS discusses COVID-19 preventive measures



UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Thet Khaing Win attended the virtual coordination meeting on COVID-19 preventive measures yesterday.

The Union Minister discussed matters in connexion with the plans to impose stay-at-home order in certain townships with the rapid increase in COVID-19 cases, measures to conduct for people to follow health rules without imposing stay-at-home order, system-

atic use and procurement of COVID-19 protective gears, the assistance of departments concerned to provide liquid oxygen in general hospitals, treatment for the patients with severe COVID-19 at the public hospitals of Yangon and Mandalay regions, installation of an Oxygen plant and RDT testing.

He then talked about the reagents at Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1,000-bed), prop-

er COVID-19 preventive measures not to affect the trade flows, mask campaigns in respective regions and states and preparations for COVID-19 vaccination programmes in the places with high infection rates and for the targeted groups.

Then, the respective regions/states health department officials reported on their work plans, and the Union Minister concluded the meeting. — MNA

# State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing replies to queries raised by RIA news agency of Russian Federation

CONTINUED FROM  
YESTERDAY

**Q: I understand only when the newly-formed UEC has conducted the inquiry, will the election be held. How about time for examining the errors of tens of millions of voter lists? How do you estimate when the process will be completed?**

**A:** The inspection process has been completed by some 90 per cent. We have a plan to officially clarify such an issue in the late July or the first week of August.

**Q: At a time when all the compulsory processes have been completed with readiness to hold the election, can all political parties in Myanmar compete in the election?**

**A:** Yes. They can. They have the rights to compete in it. But it prescribes the disciplines. For example, competition in the constituencies is set for each political party. If their competitions conform with the disciplines, they all have the right to compete in the election.

With regard to one more point, rules and disciplines were adopted for the formation of political parties. They must conform with rules and disciplines for their formation as well as rules and for competing in the election. Any political party in conformity with such two points can compete in the election.

Ordinary protests were transformed into terror acts. Now, such terror acts are not too much. Its tempo is remarkably down. But, there are some cases of attacks with home-made grenades and ambush attacks. It means committing public panic and tarnishing the image of Myanmar in the international arena that the government cannot effectively perform the rule of law functions. Their intention may dull the image of our position.

And, they may set aims to encourage their supporters with the aim of speeding up the attempts. But, the people do not accept it. No one accepts terrorism. Most of the terror acts could be combatted.

They expect that these ter-



State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is answering the questions raised by the RIA news agency of the Russian Federation.

ror acts might have greater momentum. If so, our response might be violent. At this juncture, they will have to expect the chances of the international community interfering in the internal affairs of Myanmar. But, they may not reach such a situation. It is my highest estimation. It is my estimation only.

**Q: As you say they attempt to emerge the supporters to the terror acts, does it mean political supporters or financial contributors?**

**A:** There are many financial contributors under the leadership of political supporters. Leaders are those who politically oppose us. When they order someone to do so spending the money, they who get money follow their orders. So, those followers implement the orders due to getting money, not for politics. Leaders of such works are leading the issues in the political ground. But, those leaders do not dare to commit terror acts. So, they order other persons to do terror acts.

**Q: At present, what will international organizations of the global society and that of the Southeast Asian region assist Myanmar in restoring peace and stability? What kinds of as-**

**sistance will Myanmar accept?**

**A:** For the first point, it is necessary to understand Myanmar's political culture. They need to understand the political related culture. For one more point, they need to understand Myanmar's laws. They need to understand the political changes in Myanmar. If they take a leading role after understanding these issues, we think it will be more effective.

Without understanding these issues, they make conclusions based on various information items as they wish. These information items are prepared by organizations from western countries to have the trend they wish. As they post the information based on the aforesaid trends, other countries analyze such information. But, their commitments are different in real-time.

It is necessary to know the real situation of internal affairs. If so, cooperation will be better. We, Myanmar, have internal affairs. But, we may have the situation to cooperate with the international community in any arena. For example, we don't have any plan not to accept constructive acts.

We don't live in isolation in the international community.

Anyhow, we must do cooperate. Now, we cooperate with Russia and China as well as neighbouring countries. We realize relations with all countries. It needs to understand as it is important.

**Q: You told me Myanmar cooperates with Russia and China. In this regard, both partner countries help Myanmar restore peace and stability. What are their arrangements to assist?**

**A:** We have such cooperation. They try to understand the real situation of Myanmar and clarify the political situation of Myanmar in the international arena. It is their cooperation.

**Q: In raising questions related to Myanmar, there is a compulsory question at present. Does Myanmar have the capacity to prevent and contain COVID-19 while the globe is facing the infection of COVID-19? I'd like to know your difficulties and achievements.**

**A:** In the first wave of the disease, the number of positive patients was not too much. But, such a number was remarkably high in the second wave of disease. We could control

it. At that time, the vaccines emerged. So, we strived for giving vaccination to the people. First, we got vaccines from India. Then, India suspended the sale of vaccines to us due to its internal problems.

At that time, we received the vaccines from Russia. Now, we are using the vaccines from Russia. We held coordination to extend the purchase of more volumes of vaccines from Russia. Likewise, China sent their vaccines to us. We have used it. Furthermore, we will coordinate with China to purchase the vaccines.

We find infection rate of disease in the third wave is slightly quicker. The percentage of positive patients reaches about 10 per cent on a daily basis. Such amount slightly declined in some days. The finding of 10 per cent in patients is slightly higher than in the past.

However, the infection rate in Myanmar is not too much in comparison with that of the international arena. If we, the people strictly abide by the disciplines, it is the situation under the control. We are performing the prevention and control of the disease as much as we can. **SEE PAGE-5**

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**Q: Let me know how many amounts of vaccines you will import from Russia.**

**A:** At present, we plan to buy 2 million units of the vaccine. Then, we have one more plan to purchase seven million units of the vaccine but it is under negotiation. Depending on export items, we calculate the plans to wait for them. I know as Russia distributes vaccines across the world, it cannot meet our demand at

the same time.

**Q: There are three allowed vaccines in Russia. Among them, Sputnik V only is interesting. These are Sputnik V and Sputnik Light. During your trip to Russia, while in Moscow, you attended the 9th international security conference. What do you attend any other? Please tell me it roughly.**

**A:** I held a meeting with the General Secretary of the Se-

curity Council as well as the Minister of Defence, I went to the Military University of the Defense Ministry and accepted the degree of honorary professor. I visited some significant places in Moscow. And I have more plans to visit other sites. And, I visited the Theravada Buddhist Monastery in Moscow and performed sharing of merits gained for the ordination hall. I'd like to say it is a venue to contribute to the Buddhists in Moscow

and Russia.

**Q: May I know your plans to pay visits to other towns. Where will you visit?**

**A:** It is sure to pay visits to significant towns in Russia. I'll go to Kazan and Novosibirsk. Everybody says Novosibirsk is very beautiful.

**Q: As you will continue the trip, it is not yet complete. But, I'd like to know your feeling till today.**

**A:** It is a good trip. Whatever it

may be, I'd like to remark my trip is successful.

**Q: Thank you so much for your patient replies.**

**A:** OK! I know today is the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of your RIA news agency. I take special pride in your successful performance for 80 years. I pray for you to have more and more success in the future. May you all have success.

## Announcement

1. It is found that some foreign correspondents based in Myanmar express the current government of the State Administration Council as military council or military junta or junta in their news stories and exaggerate their news quoting rootless sources and false news related to Myanmar.
2. The State Administration Council just controls various State duties in line with the provisions of the state of emergency under the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and it has been clearly announced that the government is not a coup d'état government.
3. The United Nations and global countries have recognized the State Administration Council as the legal government of Myanmar.
4. Especially, some foreign news agencies need to express news in line with news media ethics instead of quoting and exaggerating inaccurate and uncertain news and undermining the country by disseminating false news to global people.
5. The government emphasizes the holding of press conferences and the correct and quick replies to queries so as to ensure the correct and swift flow of information.
6. The announcement was hereby issued that some foreign news agencies were warned not to further apply the usage of military council/military junta/junta for the government in the future and not to quote and exaggerate the false news, and action will be taken against them under the existing laws if they apply wrong usages, quote and exaggerate fake news and disseminate false information.

*Ministry of Information*

## Myanmar Press Council Announcement 6/2021 1 July 2021

1. Myanmar Press Council is constantly striving for the development of the media and the social security of ethical journalists.
2. Myanmar Press Council gladly welcomes the inclusion of journalists in the more than 2,000 prisoners released on 30 June 2021.
3. As the released journalists, it is necessary to improve the quality to continue to stand as the ethical media resources needed for the development of the fourth pillar.
4. Therefore, journalists are urged to uphold media ethics and standards and refrain from engaging in unethical activities. It is announced that Myanmar Press Council will hold media quality training courses for the ethical gathering of information, reporting and news writing in order to prevent any undue consequences.

*Myanmar Press Council*

## Health and Sports Ministry opens COVID-19 call centre

THE Ministry of Health and Sports opens the COVID-19 call centre at its office in Nay Pyi Taw as of 8 am on 22 June for the reply to queries on health awareness about COVID-19 and facts for abiding by the restrictions to the people on time.

The people can dial the following telephone numbers from 8 am to 9 pm on a daily basis for facts about the COVID-19 disease.

Contact numbers: (1) 067-3411508  
(2) 067-3411509

(3) 067-3411144  
(4) 09-882557991

(5) 09-882557992  
(6) 09-882557993

## 2,070 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 1 July, total figure rises to 159,347

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 159,347 after 2,070 new cases were reported on 1 July 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 136,992 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 3,347 after 13 died. —MNA

## The Fourth Month of the State Administration Council

By Kanaung

### Overview

The Government of the State Administration Council has now passed the four-month mark since it was established under a state of emergency in line with the 2008 Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. This is the very Constitution through which the previous two governments were elected and the same Constitution that the previous two governments took an oath to uphold.

In the past four months, the State Administration Council has been working hard. Security forces exerted untiring efforts to protect innocent civilians, civil servants, children and schools from arson attacks, bombings and cruel intentional murders by terrorists paid for by the so-called National Unity Government (NUG) formed by the National League for Democracy (NLD) politicians and supporters. This has now been proved without the shadow of a doubt in public confessions made by some of the terrorists of their own free will, clearly not under duress. The evidence makes this clear. Foreign media are invited to contact the State Administration Council's Information team for further information.

At the same time, all sectors under the leadership of the State Administration Council as well as the Regional Administration Councils have been implementing a multitude of projects and programmes. Throughout, the government health systems have been struggling to cope with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as well as other diseases. These public hospitals have been affected by the many doctors who have unethically abandoned their patients to protest against the new government. While Tatmadaw hospitals have stepped in to help meet the needs there is not yet a full complement of staff in public hospitals, although the situation is gradually improving.

### Policy directions provided at State Administration Council Meetings

At the sixth meeting of the State Administration Council, held on 6 May, the Chairman of the Council emphasized the need to promote agriculture given that 70 per cent of the country's population are rural, the importance of the country's land policy, the need to ensure qualified young people are working in the right



place, the need to increase domestic production, and the need for quality civil servants who can perform well.

At the seventh meeting of the State Administration Council on 20 May, the Chairman highlighted the fact the State Administration Council only sets the policy, and that ministries implement it and need to cooperate with one another. He also urged ministry officials to let their own department employees know about the findings of the Union Election Commission and the electoral fraud committed during the 2020 general election.

The meeting also discussed plans to revitalize local industries, such as state-owned garment factories, cotton ginning factories and pharmaceutical factories, plans to reduce foreign currency spending, the inspection of factories leased to the private sector and whether they are keeping to the original contract, natural disasters and water resources management, the public transport system, renewable energy, prevention of electricity wastage and non-revenue electricity losses, and timely collection of electricity tariffs.

The tenth meeting of the SAC held on May 10 discussed the need to ensure transparency and expose voter fraud, the need to watch COVID-19 infections as the COVID-19 infection rate was rising in neighbouring countries, and COVID-19 vaccination programme, which to date had ensured vaccinations for more than 1.9 million people in Myanmar. Despite improvements in the security situation, banks were becoming the targets of economic sabotage and therefore, the gov-

ernment was keeping the political activities affecting the banks under constant surveillance. The Council Chairman also emphasized the importance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and cooperatives, especially for the agro-industry sector. SMEs and manufacturing should be promoted in each region and state, and encouraged to sell the products directly through cooperatives. The Chairman condemned the acts of violence aimed at preventing the opening of schools and stopping children from going to classes, adding the imperative to prevent such vicious acts from destroying the country.

The 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the State Administration Council, held on 24 May, discussed the unrest and the acts of terrorism, which are being driven by the illegal CRPH, NUG and PDF. Members of these groups had attended explosive training courses provided to them in areas controlled by armed insurgents. The meeting stressed the need for the Myanmar Police Force and administrative bodies to cooperate in ensuring public safety. The meeting also empha-

sized that the State Administration Council was committed to maintaining peace and stability and to enhancing food security and rural livelihoods. Priority was being given to reduce disparities in wealth between states and regions and promote rural businesses. The meeting also focused on the importance of gaining people's trust in banks and improving cash flow, complying with laws on the tax system, developing human resources, speeding up the media's response and ensuring peace and security for children's education.

The first meeting of the National Natural Disaster Management Committee was held on 27 May. The Chairman of the Committee, Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council, Vice-Senior General Soe Win addressed the meeting. The Chairman of the Committee emphasized the need for full cooperation between the military and government departments, the involvement of local communities, and timeliness in responding to disasters.

The first meeting of the Cen-

tral Committee for Statistical Accuracy and Quality Assurance was held on 28 May. The Committee had been established since 2013. The current Chairman of the Committee, Vice-Senior-General Soe Win noted that ongoing projects would need to be accelerated, and that the Committee should step up its activities. Collecting quality data would require full cooperation among all stakeholders.

### International and regional relations

The 24<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Plus 3 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting was held from 3 to 5 May through videoconferencing. Representatives from the Myanmar government were able to present plans to address economic challenges. The meeting was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy (Fiscal) of Brunei Darussalam and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Korea. The meeting was attended by the President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Director of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), the Secretary-General of ASEAN, and the Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The government is continuing to implement the return of Bengali displaced persons from Bangladesh to Myanmar, in keeping with the bilateral agreement made between the two countries. On 22 May, those displaced persons who voluntarily decided to return to their homes in Myanmar decided to do so through the auspices of the Union Enterprise

The Council Chairman also emphasized the importance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and cooperatives, especially for the agro-industry sector. SMEs and manufacturing should be promoted in each region and state, and encouraged to sell the products directly through cooperatives.

for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine/ Committee on Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development. To date, 790 people have returned to Myanmar from Bangladesh and have been issued with national verification cards, which are a first step in obtaining national identification documents.

On 11 May, the Asia-Pacific Joint Group (AP JG) on Money Laundering held a meeting to assess progress. Myanmar representatives discussed the progress in Myanmar's efforts at Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT). The meeting discussed the progress on coordinating meetings with regulatory authorities to understand the risks of money laundering, the issuance of risk-based guidelines for Designated Non-Financial businesses and professions, the licensing and supervision of foreign remittance services, the implementation of the Financial Investigation Force, the investigation of money laundering crimes, the confiscation of money and property from criminal activities, and fresh developments in line with UN Security Council resolutions to combat terrorism financing and combat the spread of deadly weapons.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar attended the 49<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Asian Clearing Union's Board of Directors through videoconference on 24 May. The meeting discussed reports on trade activities between member countries, the importance of non-bank financial institutions, and the challenges and solutions.

### Meeting the needs of regions and states

The Chairman of the State Administration Council met with members of the Mandalay Region Administration Council and department officials on 17 May and discussed requirements and plans to improve and modernize the city, increase agricultural yield, and enhance education. On the same day, the Chairman of the State Administration Council and party inspected the Artillery Museum, Tomb of King Mindon, Coin Mill and Mya Nan San Kyaw Golden Palace, and also the carriage factory for Myanmar Railways in Amarapura Township. They also took a short trip by special train from Myitnge station in Amarapura to Ywa Htaung station in Sagaing.

On 28 May, the Chairman of the State Administration Council

inspected the proposed upgrading of the green spaces and park areas around Mingalar Lake in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory. He noted that Nay Pyi Taw, as the capital city of Myanmar, must be a model of cleanliness.

The Chairman of the State Administration Council met the members of the Kayin State Administration Council and departmental staff on 31 May. He explained the ongoing work of the State Administration Council and its policies. The Union Ministers who accompanied the Chairman on that tour engaged with the relevant Kayin State officials to inspect and guide ongoing projects in the education sector, health and sports sector, and the construction sector.

### The role of Tatmadaw

The Chairman addressed the soldiers, officers and trainees from the Advanced Military Training Depot located on the grounds of local battalion in Thabeikkyin on 17 May. He un-

derlined the primary duty of the Tatmadaw, which is to protect the country and he noted that skills and training appropriate to each rank are being provided in various training schools to improve the capacity of every member of the Tatmadaw.



The Senior General and party are looking around inside the Myawady Media Centre on 2 May 2021.

### Investigations by the Union Election Commission

The Union Election Commission conducted field-level investigations of voter lists and ballot papers used in the November 2020. From 1 to 10 May, investigations were conducted in Taze, Kyunhla, Kanbalu and Wetlet townships in Sagaing Region; Mawlamyine, Kyaikmaraw, Mudon, Ye, Chaungzong and Thanbyuzayat townships in Mon State; Tiddim and Falam townships in Chin State; Myothit and Myaing townships in Magway Region; and Dawei, Taninthayi, Kawthoung, Bokpyin, Kyunsu and Launglon townships in Taninthayi Region.

dered the primary duty of the Tatmadaw, which is to protect the country and he noted that skills and training appropriate to each rank are being provided in various training schools to improve the capacity of every member of the Tatmadaw.

During the meeting with officers, soldiers and their families in the local battalion in Mandalay, Central Command, the Senior General explained the need for Tatmadaw members to be conscientious and dutiful while the Tatmadaw is undertaking the role of caretaker government, in accordance with prevailing laws under the Constitution, with the end goal being a strong, vibrant multiparty democracy desired by the people. He added the need to remain vigilant in the present situation with loyalty to the country and Tatmadaw.

During a meeting with of-

icers, soldiers and their families of local battalion in Hpa-an on 31 May, the Senior General said national defence duty means not only defence and peace building, but also contributing to national efforts to maintain political stability, prevent natural disasters, and implement measures to counter the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 11 to 20 May, the Union Election Commission conducted investigations in Taunggyi, Nyaungshwe, Kalaw, Ywangan, Pinlaung, Kunlong and Tangyan townships in Shan State; Pakko, Minbu, Pwintbyu, Ngaphe, Sedoktara, Salin and Mindon townships in Magway Region; and Myanaung, Kyangin, Maubin, Pantanaw, Nyaungdon, Kyaiklat, Dedaye, Myaungmya, Einme, Wakema, Labutta, Mawlamyinegyun, Pathein, Kangyidaunt, Ngapudaw, Thabaung, Kyaunggon, Yekyi, Kyonpyaw, Pyapon, Bogale, Hinthada, Danubyu, Laymyethna, Ingapu and Zalun townships in Ayeyawady Region.

sat, Mongyan, Mongnai, Hsenwi, Kyaukme, Nawngkhio, Mongmit, Mabein, Metmung, Mongton, Muse, Kutkai, Mongkhat, Kengtung, Mongyai, Hsihseng, Namhsam, Mongpyin, Hopong, Loilem, Yaksawk, Tachilek and Mongphyat townships in Shan State; Haka, Falam, Mindat, Matupi and Paletwa townships in Chin State; Kalay, Htigyaing, Wuntho, Bamauk, Pinlebu, Katha, Indaw, Hkamti, Homalin, Leshi, Lahe, Nanyun, Mawlaik and Phyaungpyin townships in Sagaing Region; Myeik, Pulaw, Thayetchaung and Yebyu townships in Taninthayi Region; and Lashio, Langkho, Laikha, Hopang, Namhkam, Laukkai and Mongyaywng townships in Shan State.

The Union Election Commission have disseminated and made public their findings to date on the voting conditions and the violations of Election laws, rules, and regulations during the 2020 November elections in 45 townships in Yangon Region on 13 May; 10 townships in Mon State

On 14 May; eight townships in Rakhine State on 14 May; seven townships in Kayah State on 16 May; and 25 townships in Magway Region on 24 May.

### Socio-economic activities

The Chairman of the State Administration Council sent a message to the event held to commemorate Worker's Day on 1 May. He called for cooperation among the government, employers and employees for the long-term development of the country. He emphasized adherence to rules and regulations, the need to work hard for the country's development, and the need to make joint efforts for the country's economy to recover and lead to socio-economic progress for all citizens.

The Moe Kaung Treasure Maternal and Child Hospital and Myawady Media Centre in

Yankin Township, Yangon were inaugurated by the Chairman of the State Administration Council on 2 May. The hospital had been built to meet the needs of the people for quality health care services. By providing health care meeting international standards of quality. The hospital fills a gap for local people who cannot afford to travel overseas for health care.

At the opening ceremony of the Myawady Media Centre, the Chairman observed that the media, the fourth pillar of democracy, is a force that can greatly contribute to national culture and national interests, play a key role in promoting freedom of expression, democracy, and transparency, and in educating the public. The new Myawady Media Centre will make it possible to use or rent high-tech filming and recording studios in one place, and artists and media people from all walks of life will be able to come together. The Media Centre will aim to improve the standard of broadcasts to international levels.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement provided cash assistance to charity organizations, persons with disabilities and senior citizens in respective states and regions. In addition, a coordination meeting was held on 19 May on the development of draft guidelines for the screening of convicted children in training schools. The guidelines will ensure that the best interests of the child are taken into account when dealing with such cases.

At the Myanmar Fire Brigade Day celebrations on 5 May, the Chairman of the State Administration Council presented a cash prize of Kyats 10 million and essential food items as tokens of appreciation for firemen and their families.

Under the guidance of the State Administration Council, various states and regions continued implementing the "Pan Khin" project, which aims to issue national identification cards to every Myanmar citizen and update their household data.

On 12 May, a meeting was held on the issue of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Myanmar and Thailand, in order to protect children affected by migration. Standard operational procedures will be further drafted to systematically speed up cooperation between the two countries after the signing of the MoU. Myawady, Mae Sot, Kawthung and Ranong have already been selected as sites for pilot projects.

**TO BE CONTINUED.**

# Open the mind to recruit new ideas for improvement of societies

**B**UILDING a new society or improving the society needs new ideas which can shape the society to be wonderful and pleasant for residents. The opened mind means the mind or soul with nothing, especially a grudge against others. They must bear the white souls. Their concept and attitude must be appropriate to their minds. So, the minds of the people can appreciate the advancement of the world which can be adapted for the relevant societies. On one hand, societies have the

chance to apply the best ideas in their interests. To do so, it is necessary to recruit new ideas from the world.

Everybody needs to open their minds to be ready to recruit new ideas. The open mind or soul can be filled with everything. For example, a drum filled with water cannot be added anymore but the empty drum can be filled with everything till the brim. Hence, the opened minded persons can recruit ideas of others to apply the modern knowledge and techniques in their interests.

The world is home to various kinds of societies in their respective countries. Every society is marching forward with its own ways and techniques. Some societies are applying the good ideas, some societies the better one and someones the best ideas. Hence, societies with an open mind are easy to recruit ideas from all societies.

These ideas can be applied for the improvement of relevant societies. These ideas can be applied as tools to rebuild societies. The open mind can analyze various kinds of ideas recruited from other societies what kinds of ideas are appropriate for them.

Actually, it is not easy to open the minds because it needs tolerance and patience for all. The people from societies with open minds need to have capabilities for enduring blames, attacks, misunderstanding, rude speech, hate speech, misconducts, assault, quarrel, etc., committed by others. Whenever faces attacks and assaults, those with opened mind must uphold tolerance and patience.

When the minds have been prepared to be opened, participants of the society or the whole society will have to enjoy the happiness. A happy society is the goal of the process for the opened minds.



# COVID-19 impact on tourism could deal \$4 trillion blow to global economy: UN report

*The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism could result in a more than \$4 trillion loss to the global economy, UN trade and development body UNCTAD said on Wednesday in a report issued jointly with the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).*

**T**HE estimate is based on losses caused by the pandemic's direct impact on tourism and the ripple effect on related sectors, and is worse than previously expected.

Last July, UNCTAD estimated that the standstill in international tourism would cost the global economy between \$1.2 trillion and \$3.3 trillion.

The steep drop in tourist arrivals worldwide in 2020 resulted in a \$2.4 trillion economic hit, the report said, and a similar figure is expected this year depending on the uptake in COVID-19 vaccines.

Global vaccination plan crucial "The world needs a global vaccination effort that will protect workers, mitigate adverse social effects and make strategic decisions regarding tourism, taking potential structural changes into account," said Isabelle Durant, the UNCTAD Acting Secretary-General.

"Tourism is a lifeline for millions, and advancing vaccina-



The crash in international tourism due to the coronavirus pandemic could cause a loss of more than \$4 trillion to the global GDP for the years 2020 and 2021. PHOTO: FABIEN/UNCTAD/UN

tion to protect communities and support tourism's safe restart is critical to the recovery of jobs and generation of much-needed resources, especially in developing countries, many of which are highly dependent on internation-

al tourism," the UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili added.

### Developing countries hit hard

International tourist arrivals declined by about 1 billion, or 73

per cent, last year, while in the first quarter of 2021 the drop was around 88 per cent, the report said.

Developing countries have borne the brunt of the pandemic's impact on tourism, with estimated

reductions in arrivals of between 60 per cent and 80 per cent.

They have also been hurt by vaccine inequity. The agencies said the "asymmetric roll-out" of COVID-19 vaccines has magnified the economic blow to the tourism sector in these nations, as they could account for up to 60 per cent of global GDP losses.

### Rebound amid losses

It is expected that tourism will recover faster in countries with high vaccination rates, such as France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States.

However, international tourist arrivals will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2023 or later, due to barriers such as travel restrictions, slow containment of the virus, low traveller confidence and a poor economic environment.

While a tourism rebound is anticipated in the second half of this year, the report expects a loss of between \$1.7 trillion and \$2.4

trillion in 2021, based on simulations which exclude stimulation programmes and similar policies.

### Likely outcomes

The authors outline three possible scenarios for the tourism sector this year, with the most pessimistic reflecting a 75 per cent reduction in international arrivals.

This scenario sees a drop in global tourist receipts of nearly \$950 billion, which would cause a loss in real GDP of \$2.4 trillion, while the second reflects a 63 per cent reduction in international tourist arrivals.

The third considers varying rates of domestic and regional tourism. It assumes a 75 per cent reduction in tourism in countries where vaccine rates are low, and 37 per cent reduction in countries with relatively high vaccination levels, mainly developed countries and some smaller economies.

SOURCE: UN

# Covid vaccine from Germany's CureVac just 48% effective

*Germany's CureVac said Wednesday that final trial results showed its coronavirus vaccine had an efficacy rate of just 48 per cent, far lower than those developed by mRNA rivals BioNTech/Pfizer and Moderna.*

**T**he outcome had been expected after poor interim data were released earlier this month.

The company in part blamed "the unprecedented context of 15 strains circulating" among the trial volunteers, as well as varying responses across age groups.

The Covid vaccines developed by Germany's BioNTech in partnership with US giant Pfizer and by US firm Moderna -- based on the same novel messenger RNA technology -- were approved earlier on in the pandemic after showing around 95 per cent efficacy.

Their trials only had to contend with the original strain of the virus. But recent studies in-

dicating that both vaccines also offer strong protection against the newer, more contagious variants.

CureVac said its jab, known as CVnCoV, did slightly better among people aged 18 to 60 than among older ages, with efficacy climbing to 53 per cent. Among that same 18-60 age group, the vaccine offered 100-percent protection against hospitalisation and death. In a statement, chief executive officer Franz-Werner Haas said "CVnCoV demonstrates a strong public health value" for people aged 18 to 60 "which we believe will be an important contribution to help manage the Covid-19 pandemic and the dynamic variant spread".

### 'No safety concerns'

CureVac's late-stage Phase 2b/3 trial involved some 40,000 people in 10 countries in Europe and Latin America. Of those, 228 contracted the coronavirus.

CureVac said in May that independent analysis "found no safety concerns" with its two-dose vaccine. The Tuebingen-based company has shared its data with the European Medicines Agency (EMA), which will now decide if the vaccine is good enough to be greenlit. CureVac said it would give further details at a press conference on Thursday. Its share price fell by nearly 10 percent in after-hours trading.

The European Union has secured up to 405 million doses of the

CureVac vaccine should it receive regulatory approval.

Despite being a laggard in the vaccine race, CureVac believes it has advantages over mRNA competitors. CureVac's product can be stored at standard refrigerator temperature, unlike the first-generation Pfizer and Moderna vaccines which require super-cold freezers. CureVac's vaccine also requires a lower dosage of just 12 microgrammes, compared to 30 microgrammes for BioNTech and 100 for Moderna, allowing for faster and cheaper mass production. These factors could possibly give CureVac an edge in poorer or warmer countries.

### 2nd-generation vaccine in



CureVac said in May that independent analysis "found no safety concerns" with its two-dose vaccine. PHOTO: AFP

### development -

Scientists have said the weaker-than-hoped results may be down to the lower dosage, or

even CureVac's recipe, which unlike its rivals uses an unmodified form of messenger RNA.

SOURCE: AFP

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"Rebuild Better Together"

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နေပြည်တော်

## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 1 July, 2021)

**BAY INFERENCE:** Monsoon is moderate over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 2 July, 2021:** Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Magway Regions and Northern Shan State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Mandalay Regions and Kachin and Chin States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of regionally heavy falls in Rakhine State and isolated heavy falls in Upper Sagaing and Ayeyawady Regions and Kachin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (6-8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Weak to moderate monsoon.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 July, 2021:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 July, 2021:** Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 July, 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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**Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Anti-Terrorism Central Committee  
Declaration of Terrorist Groups  
Notification No 2/2021**

12<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu 1383 ME  
8 May 2021

The Anti-Terrorism Central Committee has issued this order with the approval of the State Administration Council in exercising sub-section (e) of Section 6 and sub-section (b) of Section 72 of the Counter-Terrorism Law.

1. Unlawful Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw-CRPH and National Unity Government-NUG formed by CRPH constantly incited Civil Disobedience Movement-CDM participants to commit violent acts. Many riots occurred in many places of the country due to their incitements. They perpetrated bombing, arson, manslaughter, and intimidation to disrupt the state administrative machinery due to the influence of the leaders of CRPH and NUG. Moreover, NUG established People Defence Force-PDF. Violent acts occurred in the name of regional defence forces instigated by NUG and PDF. It is found that their acts to join CDM, threatening non-CDMs, inciting students and teachers not to go to schools, supporting terrorist acts and perpetrating such terrorist acts violate Section 3 (b) and Sub-section 13 of the Counter-Terrorism Law – acts with the intent to cause fear in public, to force Government or any internal and external organization to do an illegitimate act or to refrain from doing a lawful act, and other acts, stipulated by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law No 23 on 4 June 2014.
2. Therefore, unlawful associations – Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw-CRPH, National Unity Government-NUG, People Defence Force-PDF and all their subordinates have been declared as terrorist groups.

*Chairman  
Anti-Terrorism Central Committee*

## Tatmadaw provides treatments to over 263,000 outpatients

TATMADAW keeps providing healthcare services for patients at the military hospitals and temporary treatment hospitals in the townships of regions and states.

Tatmadaw medical teams, which comprise Tatmadaw doctors, specialists, medical assistants and nurses, have given medical treatments to the people to solve their difficulties in health-

care services. A total of 263,209 outpatients and 76,650 inpatients reached these hospitals from 5 February to date.

Senior medical experts, medics, medical assistants and nurses have conducted 12,230 major operations and 6,430 minor operations. The senior doctors gave intensive treatments to the severe cases.

These hospitals managed for the birth of 14,998 babies to date. Of those, 6,176 cases are done in the caesarean section and 8,822 cases in ordinary delivery.

In addition to providing medical care to patients in need of hospitalization, Tatmadaw is making arrangements for the well-being of hospitalized patients and caregivers. — MNA

## Terrorists attack civil servants, civilians with homemade bombs



A woman was wounded by a homemade mine in Sangyoung.



Two suspects arrested for homemade bomb blast in Thanlyin.

TERRORISTS threw a homemade bomb from a white car at the security forces checking vehicles near Aungthukha traffic light on Shukhintha Road, Thanlyin Township, Yangon at around 8 pm on 30 June, and ran away when security forces opened fire.

The search operation was launched and two men were

detained together with their vehicle that was found with two bullet wounds on the right side and the rear windshield was shattered near No (1) Thanlyin bridge in Thanlyin Township, at around 10:10 pm.

Similarly, there was a homemade mine explosion at

the traffic police station under the Myaynigone flyover on Pyay Road, Sangyoung, yesterday morning and one girl was injured.

It is reported that security forces are working to arrest the perpetrators under the law. — MNA

## One man killed while planting homemade mine on public road in Myingyan



A man was killed while planting a homemade mine on Bogyoke road in Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region yesterday morning.

Win Kyaw Kyaw and a man were planting two homemade mines connected to keypad phones and Win Kyaw Kyaw was killed at the scene when one of the mines exploded. The body was left on a street near his house by a man.

According to the report, security forces went to the scene and found the planted

homemade mine which was later deactivated by them.

Similarly, two men were found with wounds in the face, neck, chest and arms during the investigation of an explosion in the Industrial Zone Ward in Monywa yesterday morning. It was reported that they were wounded due to an explosion during making homemade bombs in the “Moe Kaung Kin” Lathe workshop in the same ward.

Although the owner of the workshop was not found, related items used in the terrorist attack were found and confiscated from the workshop.

The wounded persons were taken to a nearby hospital for medical treatment and security forces are still working to identify and arrest their accomplices. — MNA



# Black gram exports top \$335.67 mln as of 18 June

MYANMAR shipped over 431,264 tonnes of the black gram to foreign countries as of 18 June, generating an income of US\$335.67 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Strong local demand boosted the price of the black gram to K1,105,000-1,240,000 per tonne on 1 July. Black gram fetched only K880,000 per tonne in April-end, Bayintnaung Wholesale Market data showed.

The bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Myanmar and India ensured a strong market next five years, along with other relaxations on import quota, Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar can export 250,000 tonnes of black gram (urad) and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas under the G to G (government to government) pact during the April-March period between the 2021-2022 financial year and the 2025-2026 FY. The bilateral nego-



In May 2021, India's Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare approved not only black gram but also other pulses being imported from Myanmar that have the bill of lading up to October-end 2021, with relaxations of conditions regarding clearance consignment.

tiations for the G-to-G pact started in 2016 and the two countries signed an MoU on 18 June 2021.

Additionally, this G-to-G pact will not relate to India's yearly quota on bean import. Therefore, Myanmar exporters can ship

them under the yearly quota as well.

In May 2021, India's Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare approved not only black gram but also other pulses being imported from Myanmar that

have the bill of lading up to October-end 2021, with relaxations of conditions regarding clearance consignment. India experienced some damages to their farms due to erratic weather, resulting in a yield drop. The demand in India

has risen amid the impacts of the global pandemic and the low supply. Consequently, India's ministry gave green light to the relaxations of conditions for imports of pulses from Myanmar. The number of bean acreage is expected to increase in the coming season following the relaxations, said a market observer.

India set an import quota on beans including black gram and pigeon peas starting from 2017. Myanmar earlier had to export black bean and pigeon peas under the quota system and limit period. The local growers were battered by quota and price manipulation in the previous years.

Myanmar shipped over 1.6 million tonnes of different varieties of pulses, especially mung beans, with an estimated worth of US\$1 billion, to other counties in the FY2018-2019. During the last FY2019-2020 ended September 30, the country delivered 1.6 million tonnes with an estimated value of \$1.195 billion. — MM/GNLM

## Total border trade value exceeds \$7.4 bln

THE total land border trade value at 18 trade camps exceeded US\$7.4 billion till 18 June 2021, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

From 1 October to 18 June of the 2020-21FY, the total border trade value amounted to \$7.434 billion, down \$806 million compared with the same period last year.

The country conducts border trade with neighbouring China through Muse, Lwejel, Kampaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung, with Thailand via Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung

and Meisei land border crossings, with Bangladesh via Sitway and Maungtaw, and with India through Tamu and Reed land border checkpoints, respectively.

Muse trade camp in Myanmar-China border reached \$3.75 billion, down over \$616 million with the same period last year.

Myanmar's major export items are farm, animal, marine, forest, mining, CMP and other products. The country mainly imports capital goods, industrial raw materials, personal goods and CMP raw materials. — ZYA/GNLM



Myanmar's major export items are farm, animal, marine, forest, mining, CMP and other products. The country mainly imports capital goods, industrial raw materials, personal goods and CMP raw materials.

## External trade drastically drops by \$5.69 bln as of 18 June

MYANMAR'S external trade between 1 October and 18 June in the current financial year 2020-2021 plummeted to US\$21.48 billion, a sharp drop of 5.69 billion compared with the corresponding period of the FY2019-2020, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the same period in the previous FY, the trade stood at \$27 billion, according to data released by the ministry.

Over the past eight and half months, Myanmar's export was worth over \$10.6 billion, which plunged from \$12.8 billion registered a year-ago period. Meanwhile, the country's import was valued \$10.8 billion, showing a significant decrease of \$3.5 billion compared with the last FY.

Both sea trade and border trade dropped amid the coronavirus impacts. The neighbouring countries tightened the border security and limit the trading time to contain the spread of the virus.

At present, the traders have transaction problems triggered by the restriction



Myanmar's external trade between 1 October and 18 June in the current financial year 2020-2021 plummeted to US\$21.48 billion, a sharp drop of 5.69 billion compared with the corresponding period of the FY2019-2020.

of the private banks. Furthermore, the pandemic triggered the cargo shipping crisis, a market observer shared his opinion.

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

The Ministry of Commerce is focusing on reducing the

trade deficit, export promotion and market diversification. Since 2011, the Ministry of Commerce has adhered to its reform policy.

A series of moves to liberalize and open the economy have been introduced through policy development to improve the trade environment.

The external trade stood at \$36.73 billion in the 2019-2020FY, \$35.147 billion in the 2018-2019FY, \$18.728 billion in the 2018 six-month interim period, \$33.578 billion in the 2017-2018FY and \$29.209 billion in the 2016-2017FY, respectively, as per the Commerce Ministry's statistics. — KK/GNLM



## China has achieved “moderately prosperous society in all aspects”: Xi

CHINESE President Xi Jinping declared on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese

Chinese President Xi Jinping (top) gives a speech during an event to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in Beijing on July 1, 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Communist Party Thursday that his country has successfully built a “moderately prosperous society”, where all citizens can enjoy comfortable lives.

“On mainland China, a moderately prosperous society has been built in all aspects” and “the absolute poverty problem has been solved historically,”

Xi said in a speech at an event to celebrate the landmark anniversary.

Xi’s leadership had pledged to attain the goal of building a moderately prosperous society, defined by Beijing as doubling its 2010 gross domestic product and per capita income by 2020. —Kyodo ■

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### US urges delay to EU digital tax plan

THE United States is urgently requesting the EU delay a bloc-wide digital tax, warning it could torpedo international talks to overhaul global taxation, according to a US diplomatic document seen by AFP on Wednesday.

The argument has been made over recent days in a discreet but strongly argued diplomatic outreach by Washington to a handful of EU capitals, diplomats said on condition of anonymity. The EU levy, due to be announced by the European Commission on July 14, “threatens the work being undertaken via the OECD/G20 process,” said the US document. “We urge you to work with the European Council and the European Commission” to delay its release, the document added, referring to the European institutions that will carry through the EU’s plan. Its timing “would risk entirely derailing the negotiations at a sensitive juncture,” the US added.

Negotiations involving 139 countries are currently under way at the OECD in Paris to strike an important preliminary deal on global taxation in time for a meeting of G20 finance ministers in Venice on July 9. Talks would then continue with hopes for a final deal later in the year.

Diplomatic sources told AFP the request by the US was delivered to ministries in several EU countries, including Germany, the Netherlands and Nordic countries, although authorities refused to confirm the lobbying effort on the record. Along with Ireland, the countries approached by Washington were behind the demise of a previous plan for an EU digital tax that would have seen taxation increase for US tech giants. — AFP ■

## OECD to hold online talks over int’l tax issues, duties on big tech

THE Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development will hold an online meeting Thursday in which 139 countries and regions will discuss an international minimum corporate tax rate and duties on global technology giants.

The working-level talks come as momentum has been building for the development of universal taxation rules for firms operating across borders amid criticism that digital giants such as Google LLC and Apple Inc. book profits in low-tax jurisdictions to minimize their tax contributions. The Paris-based club of 38 mostly wealthy nations is expected to release a document after the meeting, according to sources close to the matter.

If the participants agree on some sort of future rules for cross-border taxation, it is highly likely to be a basis for discussions at an in-person gathering of finance ministers and central bank governors from the Group of 20 major economies scheduled for July 9-10 in Venice, Italy.

At next week’s meeting, the G-20 finance chiefs aim to reach a broad agreement on the international taxation issues as Group of Seven finance chiefs did last month.

In June, finance ministers from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States plus the European Union agreed on a Washington-proposed global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15



The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development will hold an online meeting Thursday in which 139 countries and regions will discuss an international minimum corporate tax rate and duties on global technology giants. **PHOTO: AFP**

percent at talks in London. But the OECD could face difficulty finding common ground in ne-

gotiations on the minimum corporate tax rate given opposition from some nations.—Kyodo ■

## Mitsubishi Estate to join huge urban development project in Jakarta



This image shows a rendering of the Oasis Central Sudirman complex project in Jakarta to be undertaken by Mitsubishi Estate Co. **PHOTO: MITSUBISHI ESTATE CO./NNA/KYODO**

MAJOR Japanese real estate developer Mitsubishi Estate Co. will join a large-scale urban

development complex project in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta in anticipation of economic

recovery in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic.

Mitsubishi Estate on Wednesday announced its participation in the 52.1 billion yen (\$470 million), 33,000-square-metre Oasis Central Sudirman complex project, its biggest undertaking in the Southeast Asian country.

The project features a 75-story building housing offices, serviced apartments and other commercial facilities and a 65-storey condominium building, the Tokyo-based company said.

The 75-storey building will be about 340 metres high and become one of the nation’s largest skyscrapers.

Construction will begin in early 2024, and the project is scheduled for completion

around 2028.

Mitsubishi Estate said PT Oasis Central Investment, its joint venture with local developer PT Benhil Property, will jointly carry out the project with PT Taspen Properti Indonesia, a real estate subsidiary of the state-run PT Taspen social insurance enterprise for civil servants.

The joint venture holds 70 percent of shares in PT Central Sudirman Development, a company set up to implement the project, and PT Taspen Properti the remaining 30 per cent.

Mitsubishi Estate foresees continued growth in the real estate market in Indonesia, backed by resilient economic strength, a Mitsubishi Estate official in Tokyo told NNA. — NNA/Kyodo ■

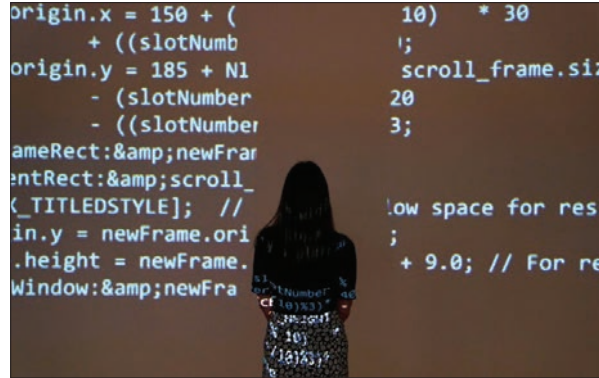
# World Wide Web source code NFT sells for \$5.4 mn

TIM BERNERS-Lee's source code for the World Wide Web sold Wednesday for \$5.4 million in the form of non-fungible token (NFT). Sotheby's in New York organized the week-long sale of the programme that paved the way for the internet we know today more than 30 years after its creation. The lot included an animated version of Berners-Lee's nearly 10,000 lines of code and a letter from the British-born computer scientist himself. "Ten years ago, we wouldn't have been able to do this," said Cassandra Hatton, vice-president at Sotheby's, referring to the recent boom in NFTs.

Hatton said this work is unique because of its importance for the creation of the World Wide Web.

"That changed every aspect of your life," Hatton said. "We don't even fully comprehend the impact that it has on our lives, and the impact that we will continue to have on our lives." In 1989, physicist-turned-computer-scientist Berners-Lee envisioned a system of information sharing that would allow scientists to access data from anywhere in the world.

At the time, he was an employee of the CERN Data Centre -- originally the European Council for



Tim Berners-Lee's source code for the World Wide Web was sold as an NFT by Sotheby's. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Nuclear Research, now the European Organization for Nuclear Research -- in Geneva. He named the new network the World Wide Web (WWW). In 1990 and 1991, he wrote the program that created the first internet browser, laying the

practical foundations for the current web. In the process, he also invented the URL -- internet address--, HTTP -- which allows users to find a site -- and HTML -- the standard coding language for creating websites.—AFP ■

## Pandemic lifts sales of wearable gadgets

EARPHONES embedded in pearl earrings, a smartwatch that measures body temperature, a diamond ring that monitors sleep patterns: The wearable gadgets market has boomed as the pandemic boosts interest in health monitoring and working from home.

While worldwide sales of smartphones slumped last year, a record 527 million wearables were sold in 2020, up from 384 million in 2019, according to research firm Strategy Analytics. It was the first time that global wearable sales topped half a billion and analysts expect the trend to continue, with the firm forecasting the devices will overtake smartphone sales by the end of the decade. The surge in wearables sales was in focus at the four-day Mobile World Congress, the telecom industry's biggest annual gathering, which wraps up on Thursday in Barcelona. Ear-worn devices such as earbuds, which can be used to make calls and listen to music, accounted for nearly two-thirds of global wearable sales last year as people working from home upgraded their headphones for video calling.—AFP ■

## Nordic banks to merge mobile payment apps



A customer making a payment via a mobile phone. Vipps will serve 11 million users and over 330,000 shops and web shops in Europe. PHOTO: LLUIS GENE /AFP

A group of banks in Denmark, Finland and Norway said on Wednesday they plan to merge their mobile payment apps to create one of the biggest services of its kind in Europe.

Denmark's Danske Bank said in a statement that it will merge its Mo-

bilePay app with Vipps, which is operated by a consortium of Norwegian banks, and Pivo, which is owned by Finnish financial services provider, OP Financial Group.

"Serving 11 million users and over 330,000 shops and web shops, the

company will be one of the largest bank-owned mobile payment providers in Europe," Danske Bank said. The combined company, with a workforce of 500 and headquartered in Oslo, will be 65 per cent owned by the Norwegian banks behind Vipps, 25 per cent by Danske Bank and 10 per cent by OP Financial Group, the statement said. Vipps chief executive Rune Garborg will head the joint venture. "To be competitive in a global payment market we need to make more of an impact, and the merger will give us the competitiveness we need," Garborg said.—AFP ■

### TRADEMARK CAUTION

Damkjær Holding A/S, a company incorporated and existing under the laws of Denmark with company registration number (20017775), and having its registered office at Anslet Landevej 10 DK-6100 Haderslev, Denmark, hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole proprietor of the following Trademarks:

ROBERT



The above Trademarks are used in respect of "Canned chicken sausages; Canned chicken frankfurters; Canned chicken cocktail sausages; Canned beef luncheon meat; Canned beef frankfurters; Canned beef cocktail sausages; Canned turkey luncheon meat; Canned turkey meat sausages; Canned turkey frankfurters; Canned lamb meat; Canned lamb sausages; Canned frankfurter sausages; Dried raw beef salami; Dried turkey salami; Dried chicken salami; Refrigerated chicken luncheon meat; Frozen chicken luncheon meat; Chilled beef sausages; Frozen beef sausages; Chilled lamb sausages; Frozen lamb sausages; Chilled turkey sausages; Frozen turkey sausages; meat and meat products" in Class 29.

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Daw Yee Mon Aung, (Advocate)

For Damkjær Holding A/S  
c/o Baker & McKenzie Limited  
Level 18, Unit 18-03, Sule Square,  
221 Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township,  
Yangon, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.  
Dated: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V THERESA AGRACE

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V THERESA AGRACE VOY.NO. (04-21) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-7-2021 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of WILMAR 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 WILHELMSSEN SHIPS SERVICE(S) PTE LTD

### No Objection Advertisement

Distribution of following (2) pesticides registered by Jingbo Agrochemicals Technology Co.,Ltd is transferring from Myanmar Golden Byter Co.,Ltd to Anawrahta Production Co.,Ltd. Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board within 14 days.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration No.
1	Sunlight 500 WDG	Kresoxim-methyl 50% WDG	Provisional	P2020-4837
2	Multi-Healing 250 SC	Azoxystrobin 25% SC	Provisional	P2019-4585

Myanmar Golden Byter Co., Ltd

သတင်းစာ မှာယူလိုပါက ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါတယ်

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NEWS  
IN BRIEF

Nearly 200 unmarked graves found at Canada indigenous school as churches set ablaze

ANOTHER 182 unmarked graves were discovered at a third former indigenous residential school in Canada as two Catholic Churches went up in flames on Wednesday, with anger mounting over the mushrooming abuse scandal.

The Lower Kootenay Band said experts using ground-penetrating radar mapping located what are believed to be the remains of pupils aged seven to 15 at the former St Eugene's Mission School near Cranbrook, British Columbia.

Some of the graves are as shallow as three to four feet (.9 to 1.2 metres), it said. They are believed to be the remains of members of bands of the Ktunaxa nation, which includes the Lower Kootenay, and neighbouring indigenous communities.—AFP ■

## 112-year-old Puerto Rican becomes world's oldest living man

Mr Emilio Flores Marquez from Puerto Rico has become the world's oldest living man at an age of 112 years and 326 days old, Guinness World Records announced on Wednesday (June 30).

Mr Marquez, who was born in Carolina, east of the Puerto Rican capital of San Juan in 1908, was recognized by Guinness and awarded a certificate at his home just a few kilometres from his birthplace.

Asked about his longevity, Mr Marquez - known as "Don Milo" to his friends - said the secret to his advanced years lay in compassion.

"My dad raised me with love and taught me to love everyone. He always told me and my brothers and sisters to do good, to share everything with others. Besides, Christ lives in me," Guinness quoted him as saying.

The second-oldest child of 11 siblings and his parents' first-born son, Mr Marquez worked on the family's sugarcane farm and received only three years of formal schooling.—AFP ■

## Queen to host Germany's Merkel during UK visit



The Queen, who has met the chancellor several times during Merkel's 16 years in power, will host the German leader at Windsor Castle, west of London. **PHOTO: AFP**

QUEEN Elizabeth II will host German Chancellor Angela

Merkel when she visits Britain this week, Buckingham Palace said on Wednesday.

The Queen, who has met the chancellor several times during Merkel's 16 years in power, will host the German leader at Windsor Castle, west of London.

Merkel's visit is expected to be her last to Britain after the announcement she will retire from politics after the upcoming legislative elections.

The chancellor was also among leaders hosted at this month's G7 summit in Cornwall, southwest England, which the 95-year-old Queen attended.

On Friday, the German leader will meet with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson at his Chequers country retreat northwest of London.

The pair are expected to discuss Britain's fractious post-Brexit relationship with the European Union, which overshadowed discussions at the G7.

Checks on goods between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK under a protocol signed separately from the Brexit trade deal agreed in December, has proven a particular point of contention between London and other European capitals.—AFP ■

## Rumsfeld, cocksure architect of Iraq war, dead at 88

DONALD Rumsfeld, the cocksure and unrepentant defence secretary who led the United States into war in Iraq and Afghanistan, has died, his family announced Wednesday. He was 88. In charge of the US military for most of George W. Bush's presidency, Rumsfeld was stubborn and brash, famously dismissing widespread looting after US troops captured Baghdad by quipping, "Stuff happens."

For millions who took to the streets to denounce the war in Iraq, Rumsfeld and vice

president Dick Cheney were emblematic of what was seen as excesses in Bush's "war on terror," including the indefinite detention of suspects in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the abuse of Iraqis by US jailers at Abu Ghraib prison.

The former congressman's brand of hawkish politics eventually fell from favour as politicians from both sides turned on "forever wars," and the troops he first sent to Afghanistan after the September 11, 2001 attacks will make their final withdrawal



US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld walks the grounds of the Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad in May 2004. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

weeks after his death.

His family said that Rumsfeld - who after resigning in 2006 not only spent years defending his legacy but also dabbling in

software and even releasing a solitaire app - died in Taos, New Mexico, and described "the integrity he brought to a life dedicated to the country."—AFP ■

## 15 killed in suspected revenge attacks in Haiti: police



Haitians demonstrate on 10 December, 2020, in Port-au-Prince, on the occasion of International Human Rights Day, demanding their right to life in the face of an upsurge in kidnappings perpetrated by gangs. **PHOTO: AFP/VALERIE BAERISWYL**

At least 15 people, including a journalist and an opposition activist, were killed in Haiti in overnight violence suspected to be revenge attacks after the death of a police officer, offi-

cials said Wednesday.

Photographs of reporter Diego Charles lying dead on the ground and of political activist Antoinette Duclair dead in her car circulated on Haitian social media.

"In reaction to the assassination of Guerby Geffrard (the police officer killed), his allies concocted this morning's shootings which resulted in the death of 15 peaceful citizens," national police chief Leon Charles told a press conference.

Charles said an investigation into the violence in the capital Port-au-Prince had been opened "to trace all the perpetrators and co-perpetrators of the crimes committed."

Geffrard, spokesperson for a police union that is in open conflict with the police force, was shot hours before the shooting spree in the same city district.

Charles' statements sparked criticism from journalists and civil rights organizations, who doubt their truth.

"To come out and simply say, 'We know the double murder of Diego Charles and Antoinette Duclair came from this union,' we think that is acting with great haste and above all great casualness," said Marie Rosy August Duceña of the National Network for the Defence of Human Rights, a non-governmental organization.—AFP ■

# Xi hails 'irreversible' rise of China at 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of Communist Party



Students in Beijing celebrate the party's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. PHOTO: AFP

PRESIDENT Xi Jinping hailed China's "irreversible" course from colonial humiliation to great-power status at the centenary celebrations for the Chinese Communist Party on Thursday, in a speech reaching

deep into history to remind patriots at home and rivals abroad of his nation's -- and his own -- ascendancy.

Speaking above the giant portrait of Mao Zedong which dominates Tiananmen Square,

from the podium where the famous chairman proclaimed the People's Republic of China in 1949, Xi said the "era of China being bullied is gone forever" praising the party for raising incomes and restoring

national pride.

Drawing a line from the subjugation of the Opium Wars to the struggle to establish a socialist revolution in China, Xi said the party had brought about "national rejuvenation" lifting tens of millions from poverty and "altered the landscape of world development".

Xi, wearing a Mao-style jacket, added the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation has entered an irreversible historical course" and vowed to continue to build a "world-class" military to defend national interests.

In the summer of 1921 Mao and a clutch of Marxist-Leninist thinkers in Shanghai founded the party which has since morphed into one of the world's most powerful political organisations.

It now counts around 95 million members, garnered over a century of war, famine and turmoil, and more recently a surge to superpower status butting up against Western rivals, led by the US.—AFP ■

## US eases gender selection on passports to promote freedom, dignity, equality

THE US State Department on Wednesday made it easier for citizens to choose their gender on passports in the latest effort by President Joe Biden's administration to support LGBTQI rights.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced that US passport holders would be able to decide for themselves whether to describe them as male or female. Previously, Americans were required to have medical certification if they wanted to

mark a different gender on their passports than on their birth certificates or other documents.

"The State Department is committed to promoting the freedom, dignity and equality of all people, including LGBTQI+ individuals," Blinken said in a statement. But he said a major goal of LGBTQI rights activists — allowing a third, non-binary option for gender on passports — will take time.

"The process of adding a gender marker for non-binary, in-



Earlier medical certification was needed to mark a gender on passports different from birth certificates. PHOTO: AFP

tersex and gender non-conforming individuals to these documents is technically complex and will take time for comprehensive system updates," he said.

He said allowing a non-bina-

ry option was the ultimate goal and committed to making the "travel experience as smooth as possible for the passport holder" until the changes were implemented.—AFP ■

## House approves committee to probe US Capitol assault

THE US House of Representatives voted along party lines Wednesday to investigate the deadly Capitol insurrection of January 6, green-lighting a Democratic-controlled select committee after Senate Republicans blocked an independent, 9/11-style commission.

Only two Republicans joined Democrats in the 222-190 vote to

create the panel, which House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said will report on "conclusions and recommendations for preventing any future assault."

Pelosi and others have described the attack on the citadel of American democracy by supporters of then-president Donald Trump as a day of darkness for the nation.

While Democrats have pushed for a thorough investigation, many Republicans have warned against the process becoming politicized.

In May, 35 of the House's 211 Republicans joined Democrats in support of the commission that was to be modeled after the panel convened in the wake of the September 11 attacks of 2001

and which had strong bipartisan backing.

But Senate Republicans then stopped the commission in its tracks during a procedural vote, arguing the panel would have been a purely partisan exercise that adds nothing to the Department of Justice and congressional investigations already underway.—AFP ■

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Putin accuses US of involvement in UK warship incident

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday accused Washington of involvement in an incident involving a British destroyer off the coast of Moscow-annexed Crimea.

Last week, Russia said it fired warning shots to ward off the British navy's HMS Defender as it passed near the Crimean peninsula in the Black Sea in what it said was a violation of its territorial waters.

"This, of course, was a provocation -- that is completely obvious," Putin said during his annual televised phone-in.

"It was complex and was carried out not only by the British, but also by the Americans."

As his evidence, Putin said that before the UK ship entered waters claimed by Russia last week, an "American strategic reconnaissance aircraft" had taken off from a NATO military airfield in Greece. He did not provide any more details.—AFP ■

#### Hong Kong silenced as China celebrates party centenary

POLICE were out in force across Hong Kong on Thursday, ready to stamp down on any sign of dissent as China's Communist Party celebrated its centenary, in a vivid illustration of how the once-outspoken finance hub has been successfully muzzled.

The grand celebrations in Beijing coincided with the 24th anniversary of Hong Kong's 1997 handover to China by colonial Britain.

Since 2003, Hong Kongers have regularly filled the streets each handover anniversary with marches and rallies.

But protest has been all but banned in Hong Kong as China carries out a sweeping crackdown against its opponents after huge and often violent pro-democracy rallies convulsed the city two years ago.

More than 10,000 officers -- one third of the city's force -- were deployed to prevent any public gatherings, local media reported, as officials warned that any attempt to protest would

## Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

### 1. Political affairs

- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

### 2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.

- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

### 3. Social affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
- (c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

## Video Assistant Referee to be used for Asian Qualifiers

THE Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system will be used for the final round of the AFC Asian Qualifiers, scheduled to be held in September, said AFC officials.

The utilization of the VAR system will be the very first time for the football confederation in the Asian Qualifiers.

“The VAR system, which aims to provide minimum interference with maximum benefit, is limited to four game-changing decisions or incidents, specifically – goal or no goal, penalty-kicks, direct red cards and mistaken identity decisions,” AFC officials said.

“The VAR was first adopted in Asia from the Quarter-final stage of the AFC Asian Cup UAE 2019 before it was implemented across 32 matches at the AFC U23 Championship Thailand 2020.

“Last season, the VAR was also used from the Quarter-final stage of the AFC Champi-

ons League, the first time in AFC club competition history, and it will make a return from the same stage in 2021.

“Additionally, the VAR system will also be used for the first time in the 2021 AFC Cup final,” football authorities added. —GNLM



Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard on Thursday were both absent from Belgium's final training session before their Euro 2020 quarter-final against Italy. PHOTO: AFP

## History favours Spain as Switzerland seek repeat Euro 2020 coup

SWITZERLAND will try to follow up their shock elimination of world champions France at Euro 2020 against Spain on Friday after reaching the quarter-finals of a major tournament for the first time in 67 years. Vladimir Petkovic's side recovered from two goals down to force extra time against much-fancied France and prevailed on penalties as 2018 World Cup hero Kylian Mbappe missed the decisive spot-kick.

Now the Swiss hope to spring another surprise against a Spain team that has scored 10 times in two games after a slow start to the group stage. Alvaro Morata's redemptive strike helped secure a 5-3 extra-time win over Croatia, but Spain will need to cut out the errors if they are to contend for a record fourth European Championship.

The Juventus forward and his family had been subjected to abuse by fans in Seville after he missed a series of chances in the group stage.

History is on Spain's side



Haris Seferovic (L) has been a key player for Switzerland at Euro 2020, while Sergio Busquets returned to captain Spain after missing the first two games with Covid-19. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

against Switzerland, having lost just once in 22 meetings, a 1-0 defeat in South Africa that sparked their run to the 2010 World Cup title. Sergio Busquets, the Spain

captain, is the lone survivor from that team, while the Barcelona midfielder and Jordi Alba are the only two players in the squad left from their Euro 2012 triumph.

The win over Croatia was Spain's first in a knockout fixture since they beat Italy 4-0 to claim the second of back-to-back European crowns. — AFP ■

## De Bruyne, Eden Hazard absent from Belgium training ahead of Italy clash

KEVIN De Bruyne and Eden Hazard on Thursday were both absent from Belgium's final training session before their Euro 2020 quarter-final against Italy.

Captain Hazard and midfielder De Bruyne both hobbled off during Belgium's 1-0 last-16 win over Portugal last weekend. De Bruyne is struggling with an ankle ligament injury while Hazard has a hamstring problem, although the Real Madrid forward did participate in part of training Wednesday, according to Belgian media. On Monday, coach Roberto Martinez said both players were “50/50” to feature against Italy in Munich on Friday. — AFP ■