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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Development and upgrade of transport infrastructures stepped up in Chin State

TRANSPORT always plays an important role in the regional development sector of a country. The Department of Highways and, Department of Rural Road Development under the Ministry of Construction and Department of Progress of Border Areas and National Races are working together in respective regions and states including Chin State to promote the transport sector.

The Chin State is a mountainous region and the Chin people are



An aerial view of one of the earth roads in Falam.



The Bway Nuu River-crossing Bridge is seen in Haka.

scattered throughout the mountains according to their tradition and culture. There are about 30 per cent of the population living in the urban area and about 70 per cent living in rural areas. The Chin State Rural Road Development Department was organized on 1 July 2017 to implement proper transport in the state. Before that formation, the Department of Rural Development and

Department of Progress of Border Areas and National Races jointly worked to develop the rural roads in the state previously. Therefore, the Rural Development Department transferred the roads that they paved to the Rural Road Development Department.

Currently, there are 3 districts – Haka, Falam and Mindat districts and nine townships and the Chin State Rural Road Devel-

opment makes a plan to establish Matupi District.

The department also makes efforts in upgrading roads for more than 70 per cent of Chin population like upgrading the road for motorcycles to roads for vehicles, from soil road to tar road, concrete road, macadam road and gravel road, from the bamboo bridge, wooden bridge and suspension bridge into truss bridge and so on.

Upgrade of roads

The Chin State DRRD also keeps upgrading the roads to reduce the gap between rural and urban living standard and gain proportionate growths – (50/6) miles of tar road, (1/0) miles of concrete road, (168/4) miles of gravel road, (1573/3) miles of road for motorcy-

cles and (2,947/3) miles of earth road with above 8 feet in the 2020-2021 FY.

Moreover, between the 2017-2018FY and 2019-2020FY, the department implemented (0.1.288) mile of concrete road, (29/0) miles of tar road, (112/3) miles of gravel road, (414/4) miles of dirt road and (621/3) miles of road expansion for rural residents.

Similarly, they also completed 585 bridges including 33 concrete bridges, 10 wooden/suspension bridges, 1 bailey bridge and 541 Box Culverts.

Important roads in southern Chin State

The officials constructed Kyin Dway-Phone Twi Kyin-Shin Taung-Myaung-Yan Se- Ma Gwe Ing Nuu

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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.

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Announcement of Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
6th Waning of Waso 1383 ME
29 July 2021

AS it is necessary to continuously control infection of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), it is hereby announced that public requests, orders, notifications and directives (except for easing the restrictions) released by the Union-level organizations and Union ministries up to 31 July 2021 have been extended until 31 August 2021 for prevention, control and treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Development and upgrade of transport infrastructures stepped up in Chin State

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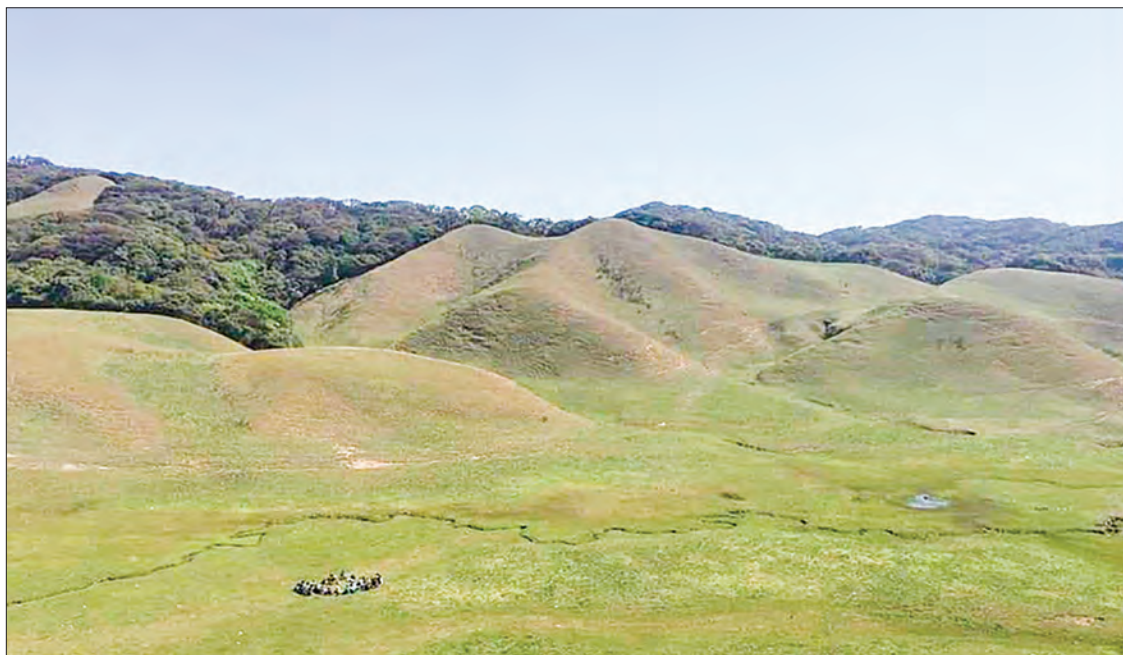
(44/0) miles in Kanpetlet Township and completed Ma Kwi Ing Nuu (9/0) miles linking from Ma Gwe Ing Nuu to Mindat township. Therefore, the residents can use that inter-district road while going from Kanpetlet to Mindat easily. Moreover, the DRRD paved Mindat-Matupi (16) miles road, Pan Sakan-Kin Hli- Ma Htar Ing Nuu- Ma Kwi Ing Nuu (57/0) miles in Mindat township and Matupi-Paletwa (9) miles road, An Sway-Mardu-Wai Luu road (26/3) miles in Matupi Township. They are linked with Htein Khaung-Lone Duu of Paletwa Township and Ma Gwe Ing Nuu of Kanpetlet Township and can be used as a road network for four townships.

The Samee-Barwa-War Tain-Dayal Chuang- Saung Wa- Wah Te- Har Htone Kone Lan (30/2 miles) in Paletwa Township is a major road linking to the villages in the northern part of Samee Township and benefits to a total of 17,120 people of 3,343 houses in 81 villages.

Important roads in northern Chin State

The Haka- Aing Ve- Van Har-Yun – Taung Khayan road in Haka is (53/0) miles long and it connects with Haka and Taung Khayan of Gangaw Township. It is useful for 2,125 people of 471 households in 10 villages.

The 33/0-mile-long Ha Yein Khan-Thi Ki- Mon Har- Bontlang road in Thantlang Township links with Sarsi Chauk where India border camp to be established. It is also an essential one for 4,204 people of 926 households in 10 villages.



An aerial view of the Lenupa (or) Buannel (or) Shu Khin Thar Mountain in Falam district.

The Saat- Thee Kyi- Mon Hlwa- Kyawt The- Hlan Hnar-Reed road (21/6 miles) in Falam Township is the place where Lenupa (or) Buannel (or) Shu Khin Thar Taung is located. It is about 5/0 miles from Mon Hlwa village. The officials paved 18 feet wide to 4/0 miles from Mon Hlwa Village and the remaining 1/0 mile was left as the natural road for the travellers to trek enjoying the natural beauty.

The agriculture products of these villages are transported to Champhai of India via Rih and the visitors from Champhai and Aizawl of India are also interesting to pay a visit to Lennupa (or) Buannel (or) Shu Khin Thar Taung. There are many hills, creeks and various flora at Lenupa (or) Buannel (or) Shu Khin Thar Taung. The place is such a pleasant site full of trees, Taung Zalat, Cherry and Orchid. Moreover, wild animals like deer, Sus scrofa, Barking Deer and Jungle

Fowl can be seen there. The place is crowded with visitors between November and June yearly. It benefits a total of 1,554 people of 327 houses in 8 villages.

The Zaung Kaung- Lay Dot-Mwar Ben road (26/0 miles) in Tiddim Township is the place where the Sial Lum Fort is located. It benefits 7,127 people of 982 houses in 9 villages.

The Zam Pee-Hlaung Al-Twee Man-Vine Vet- Lain Htoke-Haing Kyin (36/4 miles) road paved from Tonzang-Cikha road section in Tonzang Township benefits 10,001 people of 1,573 houses in 25 villages.

Important bridges in southern Chin State

The Mone Creek and Myittha River are flowing in the southern part of Chin State while Manipur River, Bway Nuu River, Tio Creek, Palatar Creek and Hman Lone Creek are in the northern part. Therefore, the government

has built river-crossing bridges and creek crossing bridges for the residents.

The officials launched 260 feet long Mone Creek concrete bridge project between Ohn and Kin Hli in the 2019-2020 FY and it will complete in the 2020-2021FY.

The 350ft long Mone Creek concrete bridge between Kyin Dway- Phone Twi Kyin was constructed in 2019-2020FY and slated for completion in the 2021-2022FY.

Another 390 feet long Mone Creek concrete bridge between MaYi- Chaung Yine was built in the 2019-2020FY and will be completed in the 2021-2022FY. It is located on Kanpetlet – Samee-Paletwa road section.

The Myittha Bridge, which is 240 feet long and located on Taddim-Yay Saw- Htalsi- San Set-Khwar Bway-Dakyone- Ramsi route (between Dakyone and Ramsi), was constructed in the 2020-2021FY, and will complete in

the 2021-2022FY. The bridge will link Matupi Township to Gangaw Township.

If the bridges are completed, the socio-economic status of the residents of Kanpetlet, Mindat, Matupi and Paletwa townships can be improved.

Important bridges in northern Chin State

The 170 feet Bway Nuu river crossing bridge between Lout Lone-Li Char of Haka Township was completed in the 2019-2020FY.

The project of 360 feet Palatar river crossing bridge in Tiddim township from Tiddim-Thine Ngin road (25 kilometres-26 kilometres) to Twee Sout-Twee Bywal-Syaung Dot- Daw Lwin- Mwar Zan- Htan San- Mwar Nwan road section was launched in the 2020-2021FY and slated to complete in the 2022-2023FY. The bridge will connect Tiddim Township to Kalay Township.

The 420 feet Mhan Lone concrete bridge on Tonzang-Finetu-Lone Tat-Twee Khein Zan- Yazagyo road in Tonzang Township was started in the 2020-2021FY and to be completed in the 2022-2023FY. It will connect Tonzang to Kalay Township.

There are 784 villages in the areas of Chin State DRRD. Of them, 65 villages can be reached at any season and 719 villages can be reached only in the dry season.

The Chin DRRD is implementing the department's strategic goal by 2030 to provide 80 per cent of all villages in Myanmar and 90 per cent of the country's rural population with all-season roads. – Chin State DRRD/ GNLM

5,234 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 29 July, total figure rises to 289,333

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **289,333** after **5,234** new cases were reported on 29 July 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, **4,241** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **8,552** after **342** died. —MNA

Public participation is of crucial significance

WE should carry out the COVID-19 preventive measures without any impacts. Public participation plays a key role. Nothing can stop the disease as we cannot see or hear or smell it. During this situation, all should cooperate with us.

(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 18 July 2021)

People over 65 vaccinated in Amarapura Township

ELDERS above the age of 65 were vaccinated against COVID-19 at Amarapura Public Hospital in Amarapura Township of the Mandalay Region yesterday.

Officials injected vaccines to a total of 357 people over the age of 65 in that township on 25, 26 and 27 July. Health workers vaccinated people starting yesterday morning in four groups following the COVID-19 health rules.

“We granted tokens to the 65-year-old people for vaccination one day in advance via the ward/village administrators. Next, they received the vaccines. We issued tokens to 155 people today. We haven’t seen any allergic reactions to the vaccine so far. We have to divide the people into groups. We will give vaccines to Parahita organizations and social welfare teams, government employees, hotel, motel and guest house staff, Sayadaws, nuns and the work-



The inoculation programme for the above 65-year-old elders is underway in Amarapura Township yesterday.

ers of hospitals and factories. We will conduct such vaccination plans soon. Therefore, the people should contact the township hospitals for the vaccine. Public participation plays a key role to control the infection rate. The

people should follow the COVID-19 health rules,” said Amarapura Township administrator U Thi Han Soe.

U Maung Kyaing, who received the vaccine also said, “I would like to say thank you to

the officials for vaccines. I am glad that I receive the vaccine amid the high infection rate. I also want to urge those who do not receive the vaccine so far to get vaccinated without fail. I pray for the end of the COVID-19

pandemic.”

Another person said, “I am 66 years old. I have been waiting for the day to get vaccinated. I felt so happy when the authority informed me that I would get the vaccine. I feel safe after I get the vaccine. I heard that the officials ordered the vaccines from other countries. Therefore, the people who do not receive the vaccine should get it as quickly as possible. I urge the people to get vaccinated.”

Before the Sinopharm vaccination, the health workers check the body temperature, blood pressure and oximeter and give vaccines to the people with normal conditions.

The COVID-19 vaccination plan for people over the age of 65 was conducted in seven townships of Mandalay district starting 25 July. The health workers give vaccines to 50 people at one forum of each township per day. — Maung Aye Chan/GNLM

S’pore to send 200 oxygen concentrators to Myanmar to help fight COVID-19

SINGAPORE will send 200 10-litre oxygen concentrators to support people from Myanmar in this third wave of COVID-19 pandemic, the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) announced.

The 10-litre oxygen concentrators will be conducted through the Singapore Red Cross, which will work with the Myanmar Red Cross Society to distribute them to the affected communities. The latest contribution supplements Singapore’s earlier contributions of polymerase chain reaction machines, diagnostic tests, surgical masks, hand sanitizers and other medical supplies, said MFA. Besides, Japan government will donate about 700 oxygen concentrators

to Myanmar through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the embassy of Japan in Myanmar said on 21 July.

In addition, 14 ambulances will be delivered to healthcare centres across the country. Those ambulances will be used to provide emergency transport to patients infected with COVID-19, the embassy of Japan in Myanmar announced.

Infections have rushed since June, and the country set its highest daily records of new cases and deaths in July. Myanmar has reported about 284,099 COVID-19 cases, with 8,210 deaths and 197,994 recoveries as of 29 July. — ACM/GNLM

Thailand International Cooperation Agency donates lab commodities, protective equipment for Myanmar’s COVID-19 response

THE TICA (Thailand International Cooperation Agency) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs donated the medical laboratory equipment and other protective materials to Myanmar through the Thai Embassy in Myanmar for effective response to COVID-19. The materials arrived at the National Health Laboratory of Yangon via the Mae Sot-Myawady entry/exit point yesterday evening.

The donated medical equipment to NHL included Real-Time PCR, Automatic Nucleic Acid Purification Instrument, Vortex Mixer, High-Speed Centrifuge, Biological Safety Cabinet Class II- Type A2, PCR cabinet, Autoclave, Pipet Research Plus, DNA/RNA Extraction Kit, Bio indicator and PPE.

The agency once donated the COVID-19 diagnostic equipment and other lab commodities as part of the Thai-Myanmar

COVID-19 response and preparedness project to NHL (Yangon) and Myawady General Hospital in March 2021.—MNA



An official of the National Health Laboratory in Yangon is receiving the donation of Covid-related devices from the Thailand International Cooperation Agency.

21st ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime continues

THE third-day meetings of the 21st ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (21st SOMTC) continued yesterday. The meetings were held with Canada, New Zealand and the European Union (EU), separately.

At the meeting of SOMTC and Canada, co-chaired by the Deputy Chief of Myanmar Police Force and the leader of the delegation from Myanmar, two parties exchanged views on possible areas for cooperation in the fight against transnational crime during the COVID-19 pandemic and discussed the status of the ASEAN-Canada Action Plan on Combatting Terrorism and Transnational Crime 2019-2022 and the new projects.

At the SOMTC-EU meeting, co-chaired by Singapore and the European Union, My-



anmar discussed the need for the SOMTC-EU Action Plan 2022-2024 to include the steps to increase technical cooperation on cybercrime that will become a haven for extremists

and suggested that the actual situation of the countries and the real news should be known and acted upon.

At the meeting, co-chaired by the leader of the Laos del-

egation and the leader of the United States SOMTC delegation, the Myanmar representative also said exchange information on terrorists and fugitive criminals and the

transfer of defendants and evidence to the judiciary needs to be carried out under the laws of the countries.

He urged to effectively prevent the support and the granting of asylum to terrorists and criminals, adding Myanmar is ready to sign MoU with ASEAN nations, including the United States to combat transnational crime, in accord with the existing law.

The 21st SOMTC was hosted by Brunei Darussalam from 27 July through videoconferencing and the discussion from the meetings will be included in the implementation of transnational crime prevention plans in the ASEAN region and will be submitted to the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Combatting Transnational Crime. — MNA

Yangon plans to start COVID-19 vaccination in early August

THE Ministry of Health and Sports conducts COVID-19 vaccination programmes across the nation under the guidance of the State Administration Council Chairman. The vaccination will be implemented in Yangon Re-

gion in early August, according to the regional health office.

“We carry out the vaccination plan for Yangon Region in line with the procedures in the third wave of COVID-19. We gave vaccines to inmates of Insein

prison recently. The township administrative officials compile the lists for the vaccination. After this process, we will start the vaccination. We receive the vaccines currently. We will conduct as fast as possible in Yangon



Inya COVID-19 Centre



Inya COVID-19 Centre

Region. We make efforts to start the plan in early August,” said Dr Tun Min, head of the region public health department.

Elders over the age of 65, health workers of the Ministry of Health and Sports, who did not receive vaccines previously, private health workers, volunteers serving at COVID-19 treatment centres, government employees, who did not receive vaccines the first time, will be prioritized for vaccines in Yangon Region. The township general administrative offices collect the lists of

each township, and the regional health department will allocate the vaccines.

That is the second vaccination plan conducted in Yangon Region, and the first was conducted early last year. Sinopharm vaccines will be used this time in Yangon Region, and more than 300,000 vaccines are estimated for Yangon. Currently, more than 4,500 patients, including monks, are receiving treatments at 51 hospitals and centres until 27 July in Yangon Region. — Myint Mo/GNLM

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Sixth Meeting of ASEAN Supreme Audit Institutions continues

THE last day of the 6th ASEAN Supreme Audit Institutions (ASEANSAI) Senior Officials' Meeting was held yesterday with a videoconference hosted by Malaysia.

The meeting was attended by representatives led by senior officials from ten ASEAN countries.

Permanent Secretary, Director-General, Deputy Permanent Secretary and relevant officials joined the virtual conference from the meeting hall of the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, the date for the 6th ASEANSAI Summit of the Office of the Auditor-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was approved by the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union which will chair the ASEANSAI for the next two years.

Next, senior officials from each member country discussed the appointment of the Vice-Chairman of the Office of the Auditor-General, for the next two



years, and the role of the chairmen who will head the various committees.

Then, officials discussed financial statements for 2020 and 2021 (draft), appointing an

auditor to audit these financial statements, budget plan for the next two years, financial auditing as per International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAI) and compliance check.

To be able to carry out operational inspection effectively, officials exchanged views on cooperation with partner organizations such as the World Bank and the German International Cooper-

ation Agency, European Union, Office of the Auditor-General of Sweden, which provides financial and technical assistance and office of the Auditor-General of Norway INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI) respectively.

In the afternoon, the Director-General of the Office of the Auditor-General of Malaysia Dr Sayed Alwee gave an introductory speech and Principal Assistant Director Mrs Azizah Daud shared her experiences and suggestions as a chair of ASEANSAI.

Afterwards, officials from the Secretariat explained the roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Auditor-General, Office of the Secretary-General and Office of the Secretary-General, respectively.

During the 6th Meeting of the ASEANSAI, Senior officials from the member states agreed on the next date of the 6th Summit of the Office of the Auditor-General of Southeast Asia and also discussed the future plan. — MNA

COVID-19 vaccines distributed to Lashio by Tatmadaw helicopter



COVID-19 vaccines for the people in northern Shan State arrived in Lashio by Tatmadaw helicopter yesterday evening. Commander of the North-East Command Maj-Gen Naing Naing Oo and department officials received them.

The vaccines will be distributed to the townships in the northern Shan State from 30 July and provided to the people based on priority selection for the COVID-19 vaccines.

According to the District COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment committee, vaccination to people over the age of 65 will be conducted starting from 30 July, at 8 am, at the Lashio Public Hospital, Sin Shwe Li Home for the Aged, Ashay Khar Yoe Monastery and Pan Ote Monastery, respectively. — Ohnmar Cho/GNLM

COVID-19 vaccines for southern Shan State arrive in Taunggyi



SOME 26,400 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines arrived in Taunggyi yesterday morning for Shan State (South).

The vaccines will be provided to people over the age of 65 from 8 am to 4 pm at Pa-O Self-Administered Zone Hall, Home for the Aged and the

Basic Education High School in Danu Self-Administered Zone and Town Hall in Kalaw Township, respectively.

The vaccines were transported from the People's Republic of China to prevent and control the third wave of COVID-19 in Myanmar. — Maung Maung Than (Taunggyi)/GNLM

CBM allows taking out of cash amount beyond the limited for COVID-19 measures

ACCORDING to the letter sent by the Central Bank of Myanmar to the banks in the country on 28 July stated that cash can be delivered for COVID-19 measures, depending on the remaining cash amount in line with the policy of respective banks, beyond the restriction that allowing each person to take out K2 million and each company and organization, K20 million from respective banking accounts on a

weekly basis. The statement signed by the Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar was distributed that the COVID-19 rapidly spreads in Myanmar. If those wishing to take out the cash submit the firm evidence to purchase medicines, oxygen, oxygen plants and accessories for giving treatment of COVID-19 to the people and cost the expenses for hospitals, clinics and

quarantine centres, systematically scrutiny must be undertaken, and that cash can be issued depending on the remaining cash amounts in line with the respective banking policies beyond the restriction that allowing each person to take out K2 million and each company and organization, K20 million from respective banking accounts on a weekly basis, referred to letter MaBaBha/FIS (28/2021) dated 1-3-

2020 of the Central Bank of Myanmar. The statement was distributed to State-owned banks, private banks, foreign banks, bank branches and subordinate banks. "As now is the time of breaking out COVID-19, taking out of cash from the banks are allowed beyond the restrictions," said Vice-Governor Daw Than Than Swe of the Central Bank of Myanmar. —Maung Dhana/GNLM

State Administration Council

Press Release

Re-invitation to Myanmar citizens who reside in various regions for many reasons

1. Some student youths, State service personnel and citizens, with worries, have evaded to areas of EAOs and foreign countries due to the incitements and intimidation of NLD members, extremist followers, unlawful associations and terrorist groups such as CRPH and NUG, stimulation of CDM, and persons and organizations at home and abroad not wishing to restore peace and stability of the State since Tatmadaw assumed the State responsibilities on 1 February 2021.
2. They are further worried about the dictatorship statement and speeches of unlawful association and terrorist group CRPH and NUG, and some relevant persons. As they face no security guarantee and difficulties in socio-economic life in those areas, they wish to return to their native lands.
3. **The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.**
4. As those who evade their native areas are also citizens, the State Administration Council will arrange their returns from the evaded areas to various parts of Myanmar.
5. As such, the information was released that if those who evaded to various areas, except for persons who committed any kinds of crime, wish to return to their native lands in Myanmar of their own accord due to multiple worries, the citizens abroad can contact nearby ward, village, township and district administration bodies and relevant embassies, military attaché offices and consulates in accord with the easing restrictions under the law.

Information Team
State Administration Council

The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.

MoC conducts faster import process for anti-Covid-19 devices



THE Ministry of Commerce keeps coordinating with relevant departments to facilitate faster importation of Covid-19 protective equipment during current public holidays.

Relevant departmental officials are working together to facilitate importation processes in line with the SOP. Online registration for import licences during current public holidays from 26 July to 1 August also runs smoothly.

On 28 July (yesterday), 8,201 oxygen concentrators and 30,300

test kits from Yangon International Airport and 39 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 23 tonnes of the liquid oxygen tank, 9,191 home oxygen concentrators, and 72 tonnes of masks via Muse, Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti, Kengtung, Kawthoung, Myawady, and Tachilek trading posts were successfully imported.

The items earlier mentioned were imported by 88 vehicles from 39 companies. From 12 to 28 July, 670 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 517 tonnes of oxygen cylinders, 114 tonnes of oxygen gas, 53,875

home oxygen concentrators, 306,078 test kits, 369 tonnes of masks, five oxygen plants, and nine oxygen generators were allowed to import as officials are giving priority to disease control of the Covid-19.

The Ministry of Commerce steps up cooperation with relevant departments in order to facilitate the importation of Covid-19 disease prevention and control equipment by arranging direct contact with officials from trade centres concerned if assistance is needed. — MNA

Oxygen plants to be constructed in Haka, Matupi townships in August

UNDER the arrangement of the Chin State Administration Council, oxygen plants will be constructed in August with an aim to produce 200 oxygen cylinders, containing 40 litres in each, daily in Haka and Matupi townships.

The oxygen plants installed in Chin State public hospitals have reduced their oxygen production capacity. And, people in Chin State are facing many difficulties that they are filling up their oxygen cylinders to fulfil their oxygen requirements in Pakokku, Monywa and Mandalay towns.

Upon completion of the oxygen plants project in Haka and Matupi towns, it will be able to produce about 200 40-litre oxygen containers per day.

An RC (30x60x15-foot) building will be built to keep those oxygenators. Once the construction projects are completed, people from Falam and Thantlang town-

ships will fill up oxygen in Haka town, while people from Paletwa township will engage the oxygen in Matupi townships.

Besides, the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease provided ten 10-litre permanent oxygen concentrators for Paletwa township and one 25 kVA generator each for Paletwa and Samee towns. Those donated devices will arrive in Paletwa town in a short period.

Under the supervision of the Chin State Administration Council, the 300 40-litre oxygen cylinders have been ordered to fulfil the oxygen requirement in the state and it will be shortly transported, according to the Chin State Administration Council Office. — Chine State (IPRD)/GNLM



Power sector tops FDI line-up as of June-end

THE power sector is ranked first with the largest foreign direct investment in the past nine months (October-June) of the current financial year, according to statistics provided by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

During the October-June period, FDI of over US\$3.76 billion, including expansion of capital and investments in the Special Economic Zones, has flowed into the country. MIC and the investment committees of states and regions gave the green light to 44 enterprises to invest in the country. The quantum of investment in power is higher than in any other sector this year, with an estimated capital of over \$3 billion.

In May, Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) permitted one large project from the UK with capitals of US\$2.5bn for the



The power sector received the largest FDI of \$3.12 billion from six projects and the livestock and fisheries sector attracted six projects worth \$19.2 million.

construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) power plant.

The electricity generated by this project will be sold domestically and is expected to support the goal of 100-per-cent nationwide electricity from the national

grid by 2030.

Of 44 foreign enterprises permitted and endorsed by MIC and the respective investment committees between 1 October and 30 June of the current FY, 23 enterprises pumped FDI into

the manufacturing sector with an estimated capital of \$256 million. The power sector received the largest FDI of \$3.12 billion from six projects and the livestock and fisheries sector attracted six projects worth \$19.2 million. Other

service sectors drew five projects (\$103 million) while the agriculture sector pulled two projects (\$9 million) and one foreign enterprise each entered industrial estate with capital of \$81 million and the hotel and tourism sectors bringing in the capital of \$28 million.

Additionally, the existing enterprises raised capitals of \$133.5 million in the transport and communications sector and \$8 million in the real estate sector as of end-June.

MIC ensures to approve the responsible businesses by assessing environmental and social impacts. The commission is working together with the relevant departments to screen the projects. The Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations has been inviting responsible businesses to benefit the country. — Htet Myat/GNLM

External trade exceeds \$23.6 bln as of 9 July

MYANMAR'S external trade between 1 October and 9 July in the current financial year 2020-2021 was US\$23.6 billion, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the same period in the previous FY, the trade stood at \$29.2 billion, according to data released by the ministry.

Over the past nine months, Myanmar's export was worth over \$11.98 billion, which plunged from \$13.86 billion registered a year-ago period. Meanwhile, the country's import was valued at \$11.6 billion, showing a significant decrease of \$3.7 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 the border posts came to an abrupt stop amid the COVID-19 resurgence in Myanmar.

At present, the traders have transaction problems triggered by the restriction of the private banks. Furthermore, the pandemic triggered the cargo ship-

ping 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. However, the suspended trade in the border checkpoints and the cancellation of orders from the western countries amid political changes exacerbate the export sector for now.

The Ministry of Commerce is focusing on reducing the trade deficit, export promotion and market diversification.

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

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Let's help urban and rural people

TODAY'S people are so pitiful. Despite residing in urban areas, they miss the chance of enjoying a good living standard.

Pharmacy shops shut down. Most of the civil clinics closed operations. Bakeries halted production. Snack shops display nothing.

The urban people do not have any ways and means to receive medical treatments even if they suffer from cough. Even if they suffer from headaches, they cannot search the clinics. Even if their body temperature is high, they cannot search the pharmacy shops to purchase paracetamol tablets.

Pharmacy shops have shortages of medicines. They cannot purchase the drugs from the wholesale shops again because

the prices of drugs are too high. It is unsure to sell these pharmaceuticals to the people. So, they shut their shops. One day when household medicines can be produced at home, the prices of drugs will decline. If so, the pharmacy shops are expected to reopen.

For the time being, our urban people need to overcome the challenges in all aspects. We don't dare to think about the lives of rural people how they solve health problems and how they overcome the daily challenges. We pray their lives are not to go with the winds.

In monsoon, DHF and any rainy season diseases are ready to give trouble to the people. Most of the people are weak in suffering from fever. Drains in the community are waiting for cleaning. Whenever heavy rain hits, the drains are full of water where mosquitoes are happy. Who will save the people? Who will cure the people? Who will help the daily needs of the people? Who will.....?

Please suspend the heavy projects. Please halt the mega plans. Now, the public health problem is the most important. We should seek the best ways and means how to save the

lives of people from urban and rural areas.

Now, there are many healthy and fit people. So, authorities need to join hands with those people in undertaking the public welfare tasks. You all need to reduce the burdens from the back of the people. Your helping hand must be invaluable. Your smiles must be drugs for the patients. Your words of encouragement must be vitamins for the people. All your moves must be the golden future for the people.



COVID-19 infections rise, Delta variant spreads to 132 countries

"Regionally, South-East Asia also reported an increase in new infections, albeit at a much lower rate of three per cent, compared to the previous seven days. The number of new deaths increased in all regions apart from Europe, where fatalities were similar to the previous week."

COVID-19 infections rose eight per cent last week to more than 3.8 million, the UN health agency reported on Wednesday.

Latest data from the World Health Organization (WHO) showed a "substantial" uptick in the Americas and the Western Pacific, which jumped 30 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively.

This contributed to a sharp rise in the number of coronavirus deaths overall, which climbed by 21 per cent compared with last week, to more than 69,000.

If these trends continue, WHO noted that the cumulative number of cases reported globally could exceed 200 million in the next two weeks.

Regional overview

Regionally, South-East Asia also reported an increase in new infections, albeit at a much lower rate of three per cent, compared to the previous seven days.

The number of new deaths increased in all regions apart from



People walk in front of a child playing music on her electric keyboard in central Bangkok on 24 July, 2020. PHOTO: MLADEN ANTONOV / AFP

Europe, where fatalities were similar to the previous week.

WHO said that over the seven days, the highest number of new cases was reported in the United

States, which saw more than half a million new infections, representing a skyrocketing 131 per cent increase.

This was followed by Brazil

- 324,334 new cases; Indonesia - 289,029 new cases; the United Kingdom - 282,920 new cases; and India - 265,836 new cases.

The global total of 194,608,040

confirmed COVID-19 includes 4.1 million deaths.

As of Monday, almost 3.7 billion vaccine doses have been administered.

Variants update

Of the four COVID-19 mutations that WHO has designated "variants of concern", the UN agency said that the Alpha variant is present in 182 countries, Beta is in 131, Gamma in 81 and after reaching eight new countries in the past week, the Delta variant is now in 132 countries.

On the issue of vaccine effectiveness against the coronavirus, WHO cited several laboratory studies showing that transmission to household members were reduced by approximately half when the infected person was vaccinated with at least one dose, compared to someone who hadn't had any job.

The UN agency added that the risk of transmission fell further, seven to 14 days after people had been given two vaccines.

WHO noted that the majority of the 90 studies on vaccine efficacy carried out to date had come from just three countries that had introduced early vaccination campaigns: Israel, UK and the United States.

Vaccine efficacy

Addressing the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines against the four variants of concern, WHO referred to studies that had shown "a several-fold reduction in neutralization".

"Overall, vaccine efficacy against severe disease, hospitalization and death has been higher than against non-severe symptomatic disease, with vaccine efficacy estimates for these more serious outcomes to be above 80 per cent for AstraZeneca-Vaxzevria, Moderna-mRNA-1273, Pfizer BioNTechComirnaty, and Sinovac-CoronaVac, the WHO report stated.

SOURCE: UN



UK to begin global vaccine rollout to Commonwealth, Asian nations

Britain has committed to sharing 100 million Covid-19 vaccine shots by the middle of next year through the Covax programme -- which aims to ensure fair distribution of jabs -- and directly to individual countries.

BRITAIN announced Wednesday it will begin donating millions of coronavirus vaccine doses around the world, including to various Commonwealth countries, following its pledge to provide 100 million jabs globally by next June.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said the ramped up rollout of an initial nine million inoculations, to get under way Friday, will go to Kenya, Jamaica and several Asian nations.

"They will go to countries, vulnerable places like Laos and Cambodia, partners like Indonesia, Malaysia (and) a range of Commonwealth countries from Kenya to Jamaica," he said.

"This demonstrates we're not

just doing it because it's in our own interest. It shows global Britain as a life-saving force for good in the world."

Through the Covax programme

Britain has committed to sharing 100 million Covid-19 vaccine shots by the middle of next year through the Covax programme -- which aims to ensure fair distribution of jabs -- and directly to individual countries.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson will formally agree an initial offer of 817,000 doses for Kenya when he meets President Uhuru Kenyatta later on Wednesday.

The pair are due to host a fundraising summit in London

on Thursday -- attended by other world leaders as well as business, charity, education and youth representatives -- focused on global education efforts.

Around half of the donated AstraZeneca vaccine doses will be dispatched to Nairobi this week, Downing Street said ahead of the meetings.

"As friends and allies, we are sharing UK vaccine doses to support Kenya's fight against the pandemic," Johnson added in a statement.

IMF growth boost

The UK commitments stem from G7 pledges, unveiled at a UK-hosted summit in June, to provide at least one billion doses

internationally through sharing and financing schemes.

The United States has said it will donate 500 million jabs to 92 poorer nations, while European Union members have agreed to donate at least 100 million by the end of 2021. Richer countries, in particular Britain, have faced criticism for failing to start donating to poorer countries which are lagging far behind in their vaccination drives. The UK has fully jabbed more than 70 per cent of adults, and the government lifted all remaining pandemic curbs on day-to-day life in England last week.

Daily infection rates in Britain appear to be in decline -- boosting hopes of a strong economic recovery. The International Monetary



The UK has fully jabbed more than 70 per cent of adults, and the government lifted all remaining pandemic curbs on day-to-day life in England last week. Commuters wear masks on a London Underground train. PHOTO: AFP

Fund on Tuesday forecast that Britain's economy would grow by seven per cent this year, the joint

fastest of any G7 country alongside the United States.

SOURCE: AFP



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Thursday 29 July 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 30 July, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, fairly widespread in Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Northern Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Rakhine State and isolated heavyfalls in Chin, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35-40)m.p.h. Wave height will be about (8-11)feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Moderate to strong monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 July, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 July, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 July, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 12:00 hrs M.S.T on 29-7-2021)

Flood condition of Sittoung River

According to the (11:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Sittoung River at Madauk has exceeded by about (5) inches above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (1) day.

Flood condition of Taungyin River

According to the (11:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Taungyin River at Myawady has exceeded by about (7) feet above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (3) days.

Flood condition of Thanlwin River

According to the (11:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Thanlwin River at Hpaan has exceeded by about (1/2) foot above its danger level. It may remain above its danger level during the next (1) day.

Advisory

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Hpaan Township, to take precaution measure.

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World cities uprooting the urban jungle

FROM lettuces farmed on New York's skyline to thick corridors of trees occupying once desolate Colombian roadsides, green initiatives are running wild in cities around the world.

At a time when coronavirus lockdowns have amplified the need for nature in urban areas, AFP has gathered images and footage of projects optimizing precious city space. Replanting initiatives have sprouted up since the start of the 21st century as urban development goals have shifted and alarm about global warming has grown.

And they've had an impact.

In nine cities in the world, thanks to planting schemes on walls and roofs, the temperature

during the warmest month in so-called street canyons -- flanked by high-rise buildings on either side -- can be reduced by 3.6 to 11.3 degrees Celsius at the hottest time of day, according to a report by the French Agency for Ecological Transition. Green spaces have also been shown to improve health and wellbeing, including by reducing stress, anxiety and depression, improving attention and focus, better physical health and managing post-traumatic stress disorder, said Stephanie Merchant of Bath University's department for health. "However, it's about where they are created in relation to the needs of the local communities," she added. So, are all urban replanting projects



Singapore's Gardens by the Bay has giant plant-covered "trees" and massive greenhouses with rare plant species. **PHOTO: AFP**

worthwhile?

For a scheme to be seen as "virtuous", it must fulfil as many functions as possible, economist and urban planner Jean Haent-

jens, who co-authored the book "Eco-urbanisme" ("Eco-Urbanism"), told AFP.

In addition to lowering the temperature, he said it should

also preserve biodiversity, improve wellbeing, raise awareness, be appealing to residents and suitable for its social context.—**AFP ■**

'We need more people': Exhausted firefighters battle Siberia blazes



Fuelled by summer heatwaves, wildfires have swept through more than 1.5 million hectares (3.7 million acres) of Yakutia's swampy coniferous taiga, with more than a month still to go in Siberia's annual fire season. **PHOTO: AFP**

As thick clouds of smoke billow across the vast Siberian region of Yakutia, Yegor Zakharov and his team are racing to stop its smouldering forests from burning even more.

Members of Russia's Aerial Forest Protection Service, his team spent a recent July evening patrolling a five-kilometre (three-mile) trench they had dug at the edge of the village of Byas-Kyuel to keep an approaching wildfire at bay.

Wearing respirators against the acrid smoke, the men lit strips of rubber tyre they hung from sticks, then tapped them onto the dry forest floor on the other side

of the trench to start a controlled burn.

The team has lost track of how many blazes they have tackled since late May -- mostly successfully, sometimes not -- as Yakutia suffers through yet another ever-worsening wildfire seasons.

"We held one property for eight days but it burned in the end because the tractors never got to us," Zakharov said, explaining that in such cases they use shovels to dig trenches instead.

But even more than equipment, the 35-year-old brigade leader has another urgent plea: "We need more people."

Fuelled by summer heatwaves, wildfires have swept through more than 1.5 million hectares (3.7 million acres) of Yakutia's swampy coniferous taiga, with more than a month still to go in Siberia's annual fire season.

Vast areas of Russia have been suffering from heatwaves and droughts driven by climate change in recent years, with numerous temperature records set.

It is the third straight year that Yakutia -- Russia's coldest region and bordering the Arctic Ocean -- has seen wildfires so vicious that they have nearly overwhelmed the forest protection service.—**AFP ■**

France's 1960s nuclear tests in Algeria still poison ties

MORE than 60 years since France started its nuclear tests in Algeria, their legacy continues to poison relations between the North African nation and its former colonial ruler.

The issue has come to the fore again after President Emmanuel Macron said in French Polynesia on Tuesday that Paris owed "a debt" to the South Pacific territory over atomic tests there between 1966 and 1996.

The damage the mega-blasts did to people and nature in the former colonies remains a source of deep resentment, seen as proof of discriminatory colonial attitudes and disregard for local lives. "Diseases related to radioactivity are passed on as an inheritance, generation after generation," said Abderahmane Toumi, head of the Algerian victims' support group El Gheith El Kadem.

"As long as the region is polluted, the danger will persist," he said, citing severe health impacts from birth defects and cancers to miscarriages and sterility. France carried out its first successful atomic bomb test deep in the Algerian Sahara in 1960, making it the world's fourth nuclear power after the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain.—**AFP ■**

UNESCO awards Gabon's Ivindo park World Heritage status

GABON'S Ivindo National Park was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on Wednesday in recognition of the nation's success in defending biodiversity and challenging climate change.

The park is the second nature reserve -- after Lope Park in 2007 -- to be listed in this small central African country, which is 90 per cent covered by forest and known for efforts to preserve its natural heritage.

"A great day," tweeted President Ali Bongo Ondimba, adding that the inclusion "rewards Gabon's efforts to protect its forests, which play a key role in the fight against global warming".



Rangers stopping pirogues to check they do not transport weapons or other forbidden goods, on a stretch of the Ivindo river in the Ivindo National Park in Gabon on 12 Nov, 2015. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

At the end of June, Gabon became the first African country to be paid by international funds

to continue its efforts against deforestation on its territory.—**AFP ■**

Tokyo logs record 3,177 COVID-19 cases, casting pall over Olympics

TOKYO confirmed 3,177 daily COVID-19 cases on Wednesday, setting a record high for the second consecutive day as the Olympic host city's hospitals come under increasing strain.

The surge in infections comes amid the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant of the coronavirus and as people in the capital tire of restrictions under a state of emergency.

The record high comes just a day after Tokyo logged 2,848 daily COVID-19 cases, exceeding the previous record of 2,520 cases on Jan. 7.

With the virus also spreading rapidly elsewhere, the nationwide tally of daily infections reported on Tuesday eclipsed 7,000 for the first time since May 12, nearing its all-time high of about 8,000 marked in early January.

Olympic organizers have pledged to implement adequate



Tokyo confirmed 3,177 daily COVID-19 cases on Wednesday, setting a record high for the second consecutive day as the Olympic host city's hospitals come under increasing strain. PHOTO: KYODO

COVID-19 countermeasures for a "safe and secure" games, and stressed that the number of infections among athletes and oth-

ers associated with the sporting extravaganza is very low.

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga on Tuesday de-

nied the possibility of cancelling the Olympics, which opened Friday without spectators at almost all venues.—Kyodo ■

GSK's Walmsley battles hostile investors and Covid slump



The factory of pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline in Wavre, Belgium, on 8 Feb, 2021. PHOTO: KENZO TRIBOUILLARD / AFP

THE head of the British pharmaceutical giant GSK, Emma Walmsley, will present the

company's quarterly results on Wednesday as criticism mounts over ineffective management

and delays in Covid-19 vaccine production.

She is one of a small number of women to lead a large UK company and has become a fixture of global business circles after boosting GSK's research efforts.

The 52-year-old Briton was appointed to the helm of the pharmaceutical heavyweight in 2017 and has navigated it through the storm of the global pandemic, during which time it has fallen behind in the development of a vaccine.

GSK (GlaxoSmithKline) has said it hopes to launch its own jab, developed by France's Sanofi, at the end of 2021, trailing in

the wake of Anglo-Swedish firm AstraZeneca, which was an early mover in the market despite having little prior experience in vaccine development.

As the company faces Covid-19 headwinds, Walmsley has said she aims to completely reshape it with the creation of a "new GSK", separate from its over-the-counter and drugstore business.

It will refocus on infectious diseases, oncology and respiratory diseases, promising its shareholders increased sales and profitability under the plans.

GSK's financial performance has slumped during the pandemic.—AFP ■

Turkey's catering sector calls for mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for customers

REPRESENTATIVES of Turkey's catering sector on Monday called on the government to only allow customers receiving two doses of COVID-19 vaccine to enter restaurants and cafes.

Kaya Demirer, chairman of the Turkish Restaurant and Entertainment Association, said in a written statement that the restriction should also cover such

places as nightclubs, gyms, cinemas, and concert and wedding halls so as to combat the surge of the pandemic.

"Vaccination is a social responsibility, not a choice. We believe that individual freedoms can only be protected through social gains," Demirer said.

He noted that the strict quarantine measures have



A worker stands behind a counter in a partially empty restaurant on famous Istiklal Avenue in Istanbul, Turkey, 15 Dec, 2020. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

brought a standstill in the industry and some facilities have remained close for a long time,

and hence vaccination is essential for the operation of the businesses.—Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Depression increased among German teens during first lockdown

ACCORDING to analysis by the German Federal Institute for Population Research, the number of young people with signs of depression increased significantly in the first Covid lockdown last year. In the age group of 16 to 19, the proportion increased from ten per cent to around 25 per cent, the institute announced on Wednesday in Wiesbaden, referring to a study it wrote on the virus exposure of children and parents.

According to projections, the total number of young people affected nationwide rose accordingly to around 477,000, the institute reported. For its study, which also dealt with the effects of school closings on the level of education and families, it used data from the so-called family panel dating back to early summer in 2020.

The Federal Institute also pointed out that the values were based on the adolescents' self-assessments of typical depressive symptoms. Not all those affected are suffering from depression. Nevertheless, the results indicated that the consequences of school closings on the mental health of children and adolescents are "obviously more serious" than previously assumed. Keeping schools open must have "priority".—AFP ■

UK may end quarantine for US/EU vaccinated arrivals

THE British government is set to allow people who have been vaccinated in the EU and US to enter the country without the need to quarantine.

Currently, only people who have been jabbed on the NHS may re-enter the country without needing to quarantine.

However, there has been repeated pressure on ministers to extend the measure to include travellers who are fully vaccinated regardless of where the jab was administered. Heathrow Airport has also completed a trial to demonstrate how simple it would be to check vaccination status for arrivals, with 99% of documents correctly verified during the 10 day trial.

An official announcement on travel is expected later on Wednesday.—AFP ■

US Senate votes to advance huge infrastructure bill

THE US Senate voted to advance a historic, trillion-dollar infrastructure package late Wednesday, a breakthrough after weeks of often-bitter negotiations on a bill that President Joe Biden said could “transform America”.

The deal, if passed by Congress and signed into law, would pump historic levels of federal funding into fixing US roads, bridges and waterways, ensuring broadband internet for all Americans and expanding clean energy programmes. The bipartisan measure passed 67-32, with 17 Republicans joining all 50 Democrats to formally begin debate on the bill. The plan, part of Biden’s sweeping domestic

agenda, includes some \$550 billion in new spending. It came together despite a near collapse of the volatile talks, which Biden and his Democrats wanted to see concluded before Congress breaks for its August recess. The legislation’s language has yet to be written, but because the bill itself is just a shell, the Senate can advance it before voting on the final text. That scenario caused Republicans to balk at beginning debate last week, and some are still warning it could sink the plan.

‘Do big things’

“Until this bill is actually written, and we have a chance to review it, including all the details,



Traffic flows through a construction area near the Bay Bridge in Annapolis, Maryland on 21 May, 2021. PHOTO: JIM WATSON/ AFP

the costs, the pay-fors... I will not support it,” Senator John Cornyn said on the Senate floor.

“And I imagine the majority of my Republican colleagues will

feel the same way.”

The deal will create millions of good jobs and make the US economy more robust, sustainable, resilient and just, the White

House said in a statement.

Biden called it “the most significant long-term investment in our infrastructure and competitiveness in nearly a century”.

“This deal signals to the world that our democracy can function, deliver, and do big things,” he said, adding that the plan had the potential to “transform America and propel us into the future.” The deal will make the largest-ever federal investments in public transit and drinking and waste water infrastructure; the largest funding of passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak; and the largest investment in bridges since creation of the nation’s highway system.—AFP ■

Road to ruin: Double tax and bandits on the Pakistan-Afghan trade route



Trucks carrying goods destined for Afghanistan’s second biggest city line up near Chaman, in Pakistan, waiting to cross the border. Traders say they are being taxed by the Taliban as well as Afghan government officials, and also face extortion or robbery from highway bandits. PHOTO: AFP

THE Taliban’s capture of a key Afghan-Pakistan border post has sent trucking costs soaring, with insurgents and government officials separately taxing traders, and bandits demanding bribes to allow safe passage of goods.

Thousands of vehicles cross

daily from Chaman in southwestern Pakistan to Spin Boldak on the other side, carrying goods destined for Kandahar, Afghanistan’s second-biggest city.

On the way back they usually ferry agricultural produce bound for Pakistan’s markets or

ports. The bilateral trade – worth hundreds of millions of dollars a year if not more – ground to a halt earlier this month after the Taliban seized the dusty border town, but resumed this week with the insurgents seemingly firmly in charge. They have captured a vast swath of the country since early May after launching a series of offensives to capitalize on the final stages of the withdrawal of foreign troops.

While they have not yet taken any provincial capitals, they have captured a string of key border posts – with Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Pakistan – which provide vital revenue from customs duties on goods arriving in the landlocked country.

“We loaded grapes in Kandahar and on the way we have been extorted at least three times,” trucker Hidayatullah Khan told AFP at Chaman.—AFP ■

Ever Given finally arrives in Rotterdam after Suez block

THE giant container ship MV Ever Given steamed into Rotterdam port early Thursday, more than four months after it got stuck in Egypt’s Suez Canal, blocking shipping in one of the world’s busiest waterways.

The ship, almost as long as New York’s Empire State building is tall, entered Europe’s port at around 0300 GMT, an AFP correspondent saw.

“It was a great relief to see her and a special moment,” said Hans Nagtegaal, the Rotterdam port’s director of containers.

“Finally we can get the job done offloading and hopefully get her back to a normal sailing routine,” he told AFP.

Nagtegaal said the Ever Given will remain in Rotterdam until Monday, when she’s expected to sail for Felixstowe in Britain, before going to into

a dry dock in Dunkirk in France for a further inspection.

The MV Ever Given, which blocked the Suez Canal for six days in late March, finally steamed out of the waterway three weeks ago after Egypt and the vessel’s Japanese owners signed a compensation deal.

The nearly 200,000-tonne container vessel became wedged in the canal during a sandstorm on 23 March, blocking a vital artery from Asia to Europe that carries 10 per cent of global maritime trade and provides Egypt with vital revenues. After a round-the-clock salvage operation to dislodge it, Egypt seized the ship and demanded compensation from owners Shoeni Kisen Kaisha for lost canal revenues, salvage costs and damage to the canal.—AFP ■

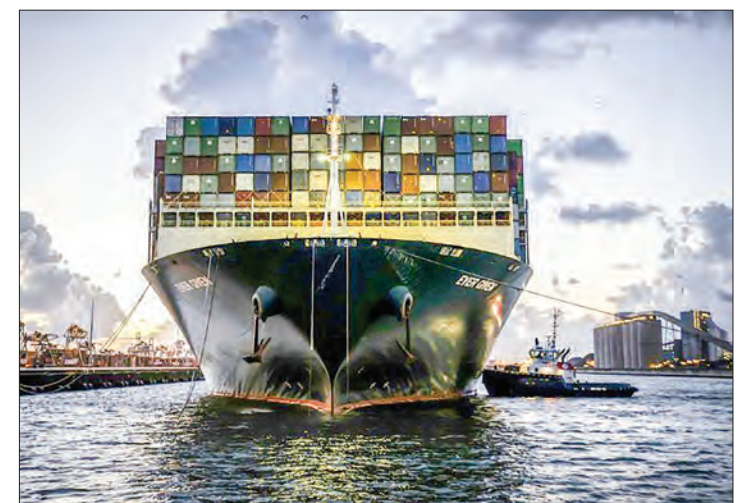
China tries to ease investor fears over crackdown: report

BEIJING scrambled to calm investors after a crackdown on some of China’s biggest firms rattled markets with regulators calling bankers in for a last-minute call Wednesday night, Bloomberg reported. The call hosted by the China Securities Regulatory Commission included executives of international investment banks, Bloomberg added.

The business models of private tutoring firms were obliterated

by a shock announcement on Saturday that they must become non-profits, sending stock prices crashing. A source with knowledge of the call on Wednesday told Bloomberg that bankers were given the impression that the sudden edicts for education companies were not going to ripple out to other industries. The crackdown on the sector is the latest in a series of new rules for industries ranging from education

to e-commerce. Proposed new cybersecurity checks on internet firms planning foreign IPOs have been followed by shelved listings, recently. Authorities have moved to calm spooked markets this week. Multiple local media outlets on Wednesday night republished a commentary from the official Xinhua news agency that declared “the foundation for China’s capital market development is still solid”.—AFP ■



The container ship Ever Given, seen here arriving in the port of Rotterdam on Thursday, was wedged in the Suez Canal for six days, blocking traffic through the key shipping route. PHOTO: ANP/AFP

Sumitomo Bakelite to boost chip encapsulant output in China

SUMITOMO Bakelite Co. will achieve a 1.5-fold rise in production capacity of semiconductor packaging materials at its Suzhou subsidiary in China by installing new manufacturing equipment to meet growing demand.

Sumitomo said Wednesday it will invest about 2.5 billion yen (\$22.8

million) to build new production facilities for encapsulation of semiconductor devices at Sumitomo Bakelite (Suzhou) Co. in Jiangsu Province. The new investment will raise the Suzhou unit's monthly production capacity from 1,200 tonnes to 1,800 tonnes as the new production facilities start operations early next year.

The Tokyo-based firm said it may further raise its production capacity in China depending on potentially rising demand.

Sumitomo estimates that its global market share in epoxy molding compounds for semiconductor sealing is about 40 per cent.

Sumitomo started

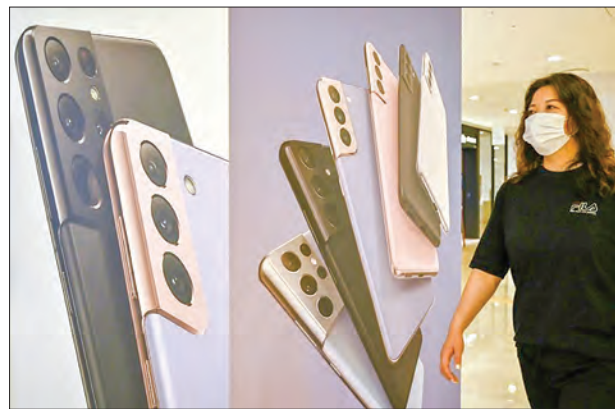
chip encapsulant production in China in 1997.

The spread of COVID-19 infections has led to the strong popularity of teleworking and a surge in demand for semiconductors for personal computers and peripheral equipment as well as home appliances, Sumitomo said. —Kyodo ■



Photo shows Sumitomo Bakelite (Suzhou) Co., a Chinese subsidiary of Sumitomo Bakelite Co. PHOTO: BAKELITE CO./NNA/KYODO

Samsung reports surge in profit on pandemic-led demand for chips



Coronavirus-driven working from home has boosted demand for devices powered by Samsung's memory chips. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

SAMSUNG Electronics' net profits surged more than 70 per cent in the second quarter thanks to higher memory chip prices fuelled by pandemic-led demand, the South Korean tech giant reported Thurs-

day. Coronavirus-driven working from home boosted demand for devices and appliances powered by Samsung's memory chips. The company said that "memory shipments exceeded previous guidance

and price increases were higher than expected".

The world's biggest smartphone maker saw net profits rise 73.4 per cent year-on-year to 9.6 trillion won (\$8.4 billion) for April-June, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Operating profit increased 54.3 per cent to 12.6 trillion won a year earlier, more than half of which came from the firm's semiconductor business.

The strong results come despite an on-quarter decline in Samsung's earnings from its smartphone business because of supply chain problems that disrupted global produc-

tion. Samsung Electronics is the flagship subsidiary of the giant Samsung group, by far the largest of the family-controlled empires that dominate business in South Korea, the world's 12th largest economy.

The conglomerate's overall turnover is equivalent to one-fifth of gross domestic product.

Analysts say the chip unit's proportion of the firm's profit is likely to grow in the months ahead. "Samsung will benefit from memory chip prices that are likely to go higher in the third and fourth quarter," Park Sung-soon, an analyst at Cape Investment & Securities, told AFP.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Toyota retains crown as world's best-selling automaker in Jan.-June

TOYOTA Motor Corp. remained the world's best-selling automaker with a record 5.47 million vehicles sold for the first six months of 2021, outpacing German archrival Volkswagen AG, the Japanese company's data showed Thursday.

It is the second year in a row that Toyota has been the world's top automaker in the first half, underscoring its sharp recovery from the initial fallout from the coronavirus pandemic and relative resilience despite a global chip crunch.

Toyota's previous record sales for the first half of a year was set in 2019 with about 5.31 million units sold globally.

Toyota has enjoyed robust sales in its key markets such as the United States and China. A Toyota official said the automaker has been able to "limit" the impact of the global semiconductor shortage.

In the January-June period, Toyota sold 5,467,218 vehicles globally, up 31.3 per cent from a year earlier. The figure includes those sold by its minivehicle-manufacturing subsidiary Daihatsu Motor Co. and truck maker Hino Motors Ltd.—Kyodo ■

VW lowers car deliveries outlook over chip woes

GERMAN carmaker Volkswagen posted strong first-half profits on Thursday but cut this year's forecast for car deliveries over a worsening shortage of semiconductor chips.

The 12-brand group -- including Porsche, Audi, Seat and Skoda -- nevertheless lifted its profit target for 2021 after high-end vehicles drove a "record" performance over the first six months.

VW said it was now targeting an operating return on sales, a closely-watched measure of performance, of 6.0 to 7.5 per cent. The previous goal had been 5.5-

7.0 per cent.

Adjusted operating profits, before special items, reached 11.4 billion euros (\$13.5 billion), higher than the 10 billion euros achieved over the same period in pre-crisis 2019 -- the year before coronavirus lockdowns pummeled the auto industry.

VW chief executive officer Herbert Diess welcomed "the record result".

"The premium segment performed especially well with double-digit returns," he said in a statement. But while the group said it had managed to contain the impact from



Volkswagen is betting its future on electric vehicles, like this ID 3. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

the global shortage of semiconductors so far, the fallout would likely be "more pronounced" in the third quarter.

Like other carmakers, VW has recently been

forced to trim production at some plants because of a supply crunch of the crucial computer chips, fuelled by a pandemic-driven surge in demand for home electronics.—AFP ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION ENTERPRISE
GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR POWER
PROJECTS IN MYANMAR
(Tender No. EPGE PV 02/2021-2022)

In accordance with section 8.2 "AMENDMENTS" of Request for Proposals (RFP) of EPGE PV 02/2021-2022, EPGE herewith would like to announce that Bid Submission Date shall be amended as 10th September 2021 and the Addendum No.1 shall be issued.

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Malaysian PM urged to quit after rare royal rebuke

MALAYSIA'S embattled leader was accused of treason and urged to quit Thursday after the king denounced his crisis-hit government for misleading parliament, a rare public rebuke from the revered monarch.

Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin leads a scandal-plagued coalition that seized power last year without an election, but his government is on the verge of collapse after allies withdrew support. Parliament convened this week after a months-long suspension under a virus state of emergency, which critics said

was a bid by Muhyiddin to cling on to power. On Monday, the law minister announced the emergency would end on August 1 and that several regulations enacted under it were being cancelled.

But rival MPs were furious, claiming Muhyiddin was just seeking to dodge a debate -- and it was not clear the monarch had agreed to revoke the emergency laws, as is required under the constitution.

On Thursday the royal palace confirmed the king, Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, had not given his consent, and

said that he expressed his "great disappointment". The announcement about cancelling the regulations was "inaccurate and confused the members of parliament", said a statement from the palace. It "did not just fail to respect the principles of the sovereignty of the law ... but it undermined the functions and powers of his majesty as head of state," it said. It is unusual for Malaysia's constitutional monarch, who is widely revered in the Muslim-majority country, to speak out so forcefully against the government. —AFP ■



Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin leads a scandal-plagued coalition that seized power last year without an election, but his government is on the verge of collapse after allies withdrew support. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

NEWS IN BRIEF

China court jails billionaire Sun Dawu for 18 years for 'provoking trouble'

A Chinese court sentenced agricultural tycoon Sun Dawu to 18 years in jail on Wednesday for a catalogue of crimes including "provoking trouble" after the outspoken billionaire and grassroots rights supporter was tried in secret.

The court in Gaobeidian near Beijing said Sun was found guilty of crimes including "gathering a crowd to attack state organs," "obstructing government administration" and "picking quarrels and provoking trouble," a catch-all term often used against dissidents.

He was detained by police in November along with 20 relatives and business associates after his firm was embroiled in a land dispute with a state-owned competitor.

The charismatic Sun built one of China's biggest private agriculture companies with his wife from a few chickens and pigs in the 1980s.

He has also been a vocal champion of rural reforms and a whistleblower during a devastating swine fever outbreak in 2019, posting photos of dead pigs online after local officials were slow to respond to the disease.

Sun was also fined 3.11 million yuan (\$475,000) by the court on Wednesday.

The hearing began at Gaobeidian People's Court in northern Hebei province on 15 July, according to his lawyers, who said in a statement that the secrecy of the trial "violated legal guidelines and did not protect the defendant's litigation rights." — AFP ■

Japan court upholds jail sentences for US duo over Ghosn escape

Tokyo District Court told AFP on Thursday a "decision for the couple was set for July 28".

As Kyodo News reports, both Taylor and prosecutors relinquished their right to appeal within two weeks of the July 19 ruling.

Ghosn, now an international fugitive in Lebanon, fled Japan with Taylor's help while on bail following his 2018 arrest on financial misconduct charges.

Taylor arrived in Tokyo in March after losing the battle against extradition from the United States.

At their first hearing, in June, prosecutors described the almost-Hollywood details of the operation—in which Ghosn was hidden in a larger case, in which air holes were drilled to slip past security at an airport ... A third man, identified as Jorge Antoine Zayek, is also alleged to have been involved in the escape, but remains at large. — AFP ■

Thailand forest park gets World Heritage nod despite indigenous rights warning

A vast forest complex in Thailand has been added to UNESCO's World Heritage List, despite the UN's own experts warning of human rights violations against indigenous people in the area.



Protesters play instruments during a land rights demonstration held by members of the Karen indigenous community outside the Government House in Bangkok on 15 February, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

The Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex in western Thailand is rich in biodiversity, including the critically endangered Siamese crocodile, UNESCO said Monday in its listing announcement.

But it is also home to an indigenous community of ethnic Karen people, who have long accused the Thai government of using violence and harassment to push them off their land.

Thailand had lobbied for years to get World Heritage status for the complex, and Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha praised UNESCO's decision, vowing to protect the forest according to "international standards".

"From now on, the government will ... restore the forest together and promote the livelihood development and human rights of locals," he said in a Facebook post on Tuesday.

"Everyone will be part of co-management so they will feel a sense of ownership." —AFP ■

Iran's Khamenei says experience shows 'trusting West does not work'

IRAN'S supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Wednesday that the outgoing government's experience of engaging with world powers including the United States shows that "trusting the West does not work".

President Hassan Rouhani's signature diplomatic achievement, a 2015 nuclear deal with major powers, gave Iran some relief from international sanctions in exchange for limits on its nuclear programme.

But it was torpedoed in 2018 by then US president Donald Trump, who unilaterally withdrew from the agreement and

reimposed punishing sanctions. "Future generations should use this experience. It was made clear during this government

that trusting the West does not work," Khamenei told outgoing President Hassan Rouhani and members of his cabinet. —AFP



Iranian women wait for a train in a subway station in the capital Tehran. PHOTO: AFP

Peru's new president promises constitution change



Thousands of police were deployed in the streets of Lima as Castillo fans gathered to show their support. **PHOTO: AFP**

LEFTIST Pedro Castillo was sworn in as Peru's fifth president in three years Wednesday on the 200th anniversary of the country's independence, promising an end to corruption and a new constitution.

The 51-year-old rural schoolteacher, who has vowed to upend a quarter-century of neo-liberal government, enters the job with a lengthy to-do list: tame the coronavirus epidemic, reactivate a flagging economy and end years of political turmoil.

"I swear by the people of Peru for a country without cor-

ruption and for a new constitution," he declared before Congress, coming back to a campaign promise to change Peru's free market-friendly founding law.

The existing charter is a relic of ex-president Alberto Fujimori, serving jail time for corruption and crimes against humanity, and father of Castillo's main presidential rival, right-wing populist Keiko Fujimori. Insisting Peru could not "remain a prisoner" of the 1993 constitution, Castillo said he would send a bill to parliament with a view to organizing a referendum on replacing it.

Castillo's Free Peru party does not enjoy a majority in a fragmented congress, holding 37 of the 130 seats.

He was declared the election victor on July 19, more than six weeks after a runoff race against Fujimori, whose allegations of voter fraud then had to be reviewed by an electoral jury. For her part, Fujimori said on Twitter that her Popular Force party "will be a firm wall against the latent threat of a new communist constitution." "We will make a responsible democratic defence," she added.—AFP ■

Turkey courts Biden with Kabul airport offer

TURKEY is offering to protect Kabul's strategic airport after US forces leave in what experts view as a high-risk bid to improve Ankara's strained ties with Washington. Keeping the air hub safe from advancing Taliban forces became a major issue after US President Joe Biden called an end to Washington's 20-year involvement by ordering all troops out of Afghanistan by the end of next month. Hamid Karzai Inter-

national Airport offers the safest route for embassy staff and humanitarian aid to reach the war-torn country. Its fall could leave Afghanistan largely cut off from the world.

Ankara's surprise proposal gave Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan a chance to build a rapport with Biden during their first meeting at a NATO summit in June. The offer meets two of the Turkish leader's objectives: warm

chilly ties with Western allies and avert an influx of refugees by keeping aid routes open. "Turkey has a vested interest in Afghanistan's stability," said Magdalena Kirchner, Afghanistan country director at German foundation Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Turkish officials play down the diplomatic aspects of the mission and stress the importance of relieving the suffering in Afghanistan.—AFP ■



Ankara's surprise proposal to protect Kabul's strategic airport after US forces leave Afghanistan gave Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan a chance to build a rapport with US President Joe Biden during their first meeting at a NATO summit in June. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Tunisian presidency sacks head of national TV channel

THE Tunisian presidency fired the head of the national television channel on Wednesday after two guests were briefly banned from entering its studios to take part in a programme.

The dismissal of Wataniya's CEO comes after president Kais Saied suspended parliament and sacked the prime minister on Sunday, in what opponents have labelled a coup.

On Monday, Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera said police had forced its Tunis office to close, adding to fears that civil liberties and press freedom were at risk in the fledgling democracy.

The sacking of Wataniya's president Lassaad Dahech came hours after a journalism union representative and an activist were blocked from entering the channel's offices on Wednesday.

Amira Mohamed, vice-president of the SNJT union, said she was stopped at the entrance by a security agent who was waiting



Tunisian police barricade the Habib Bourguiba avenue in Tunis on 27 July, 2021. **PHOTO: FETHI BELAID/AFP**

for authorization from the channel's management to allow her in.

Human rights activist Bassem Trifi, who was also stopped from entering, said he had been told it was not Wataniya's decision. "The CEO of Wataniya told me he had received instructions from a military official to not let guests enter the television studios," he said.

But the ministry of defence and the president's office said they had not given any such instructions.

A few hours later, a statement from the president's office said Saied had issued a decree relieving Dahech of his responsibilities and instructing Awatef Dali to take over the role temporarily.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

China names 'Wolf Warrior' diplomat as new ambassador in Washington

ONE of China's most prominent "Wolf Warrior" diplomats was on Wednesday announced as his nation's new ambassador to the United States.

The hawkish Qin Gang, a close confidante of President Xi Jinping, has arrived in the US at a time of high tensions between Washington and Beijing, and is expected to deliver a combative message.

He gained prominence during two previous stints as foreign ministry spokesman, issuing barbed responses to foreign reporters and pioneering an aggressive style of defending China in the press and on social media dubbed "Wolf Warrior" diplomacy.—AFP ■

Taliban surge poses 'existential crisis': US watchdog

THE Afghan government faces an "existential crisis" after the Taliban doubled their attacks following the February 2020 US deal with the insurgents, a watchdog report said Thursday.

The report said Taliban attacks on Afghan targets surged from 6,700 in the three months up to the Doha agreement to 13,242 in the September-November 2020 period.

Attacks have stayed above 10,000 in each subsequent three-month period, according to the report by the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR). While the rise in attacks had long been clear, data had not previously been available to demonstrate how intense the rebels' offensive had become.—AFP ■

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.

Japanese judoka Wolf wins gold in men's under 100 kg at Tokyo Olympics

JAPAN'S Aaron Wolf emerged the winner of the men's under 100 kilogramme final, defeating Cho Gu Ham of South Korea at the judo tournament at the Tokyo Olympics on Thursday.

Wolf's victory gave the Japanese men a record-high five top podium spots in six days of the Tokyo judo competition. Wolf is the third judoka from Japan to win the Olympic title at under 100 kg and first since Kosei Inoue achieved the feat in 2000.—Kyodo ■

Dressel crowned sprint king as Chinese women smash world record

US superstar Caeleb Dressel flew faster than Kyle Chalmers to add the Olympic 100m freestyle crown to his two world titles Thursday, as China's women sparked a huge upset with a new world record to win the 4x200m relay.

American Dressel missed out on the sprint medals at Rio

in 2016, but he has since exploded, winning an incredible 13 titles over the past two world championships to be an imposing force. He was in front at the turn in Tokyo but had to dig deep to hold off a storming Chalmers and hit the wall in a new Olympic record time of 47.02sec. — AFP ■



US superstar Caeleb Dressel flew faster than Kyle Chalmers to add the Olympic 100m freestyle crown to his two world titles Thursday, as China's women sparked a huge upset with a new world record to win the 4x200m relay. PHOTO: AFP

It's a make-or-break battle for me: Aung La N Sang



Former two-division ONE World Champion Aung La N Sang. PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP

"IT'S a make-or-break battle for me," the former two-division ONE World Champion Aung La N Sang said ahead of his thrilling fight against Brazilian starfighter Leandro Ataides in the ONE middleweight clash on 30 July (tonight).

"But I know the work that I've been putting in, and I'm confident in my team. They've trained me good, and I'm very confident that I'll come out on top in this bout, Aung La N Sang continued. Losing both World Titles made some sad feelings for Aung La N Sang but he has admitted to shining again on the stage.

"It is sad and depressing, but you got to analyze how the match went and analyze how you can improve and grow," Aung La N

Sang says. "My mindset is more of a growth mindset, so I really had to work on the things in the match that didn't go well. It's a learning experience for me, and it's fine. As depressing as it is, as sad as it is, I take it as a lesson in life."

"I focus on improving in my bad positions, focus on making sure I fight through every bad position, and just focus on the little details of where the head position is and implement my game plan instead of being worried about somebody else's game plan and somebody else's strengths," he says. "Ataides has some holes in his striking," Aung La N Sang says. "I think he's very, very head-on in his wrestling and grappling as well, and I tend to do better with people like that."

"I believe I do better on the feet, and I think I can negate his grappling and his wrestling," Aung La N Sang says. "I see this bout being won on the feet. I see this bout being won with my movement and my speed. I see this bout being done with a knockout." "I don't doubt in my mind that I'm going to get my middleweight belt back," Aung La N Sang says.

"I've done it once, and I'll do it again. I'll get my belt back, the Burmese Python admitted. Aung La N Sang vs Leandro Ataides fight will be in the fifth bout of the ONE: Battleground event which will launch tonight in Singapore starting from 7 pm of Myanmar Standard Time.—Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM