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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.

Two million doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines arrive

A total of two million doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines, purchased from the People's Republic of China, arrived at Yangon International Airport yesterday evening.

The vaccines were received by the team led by the Yangon Region Public Health Department Head at the airport and stored at the Central Storage Facility for Vaccine in Yangon.

The newly-arrived COVID-19 vaccines will be distributed to respective regions and states via roads and with the help of Tatmadaw aircraft under the necessary temperature. The Ministry of Health has been administering the COVID-19 vaccines in states/regions as per the national priority programme.—MNA



Sinopharm vaccines, purchased from China, arrives in Myanmar yesterday.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19

- Wear a mask
- Clean your hands
- Keep a safe social distancing



Sterilized by UV Disinfects masks
STAR MASK
 DISPOSABLE PROTECTIVE FACE MASK
 WITH OUTLET VALVE

There are 8 colors to choose from, including a "Maroon Color Mask" specially designed for monks.

FDA Certificate 2312 MDML 007

Yangon PH:09-30860180 09-263147385 09-671443555 09-662443555	Mandalay PH:09-661702244 09-661702255 09-661702277	Sales Department PH:-09-694027866 Nay Pyi Taw PH:09-693407494 09-693235737
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Statement called for fight against terrorism, for rewarding whistle-blowers, informants

1. Terrorist groups, including the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw-CRPH, National Union Government-NUG and the People's Defence Forces-PDF groups, which were formed under various names, are committing terrorist acts every day to disrupt the government administrative machinery to prevent it from implementing the five-point roadmap of the State Administration Council and to gain the support of the people by intimidating them.
2. As acts of violence are threatening the social security of the people and raising concerns, as well as degrading the dignity of the country and the people, it is essential for the people to work together to eradicate it.
3. Not only terrorists who involve in the terrorist acts personally, but also those who commit one of the following acts will be considered as terrorists and will be taken action under the Anti-Terrorism Law.
 - (a) Urging people to take part in terrorist activities, involved in recruitment, propaganda and mobilization.
 - (b) Hiding and letting a member of the terrorist group in the property in order to prevent them from being arrested.
 - (c) Allowing a terrorist or a member of a terrorist organization to use a building or a place to gather, to hold a meeting, to conduct terrorist training courses, as well as arranging transportation.
 - (d) Providing financial support, collecting, accepting, transferring money, and participating in instructing to do so.
4. Under the Counter-Terrorism Act, the money and property of the accused will be confiscated and if convicted, it will be confiscated as a State treasury.
5. As information is crucial in fighting against terrorism, people are requested to inform respective police stations or security organizations about terrorists and terrorist organizations and social media users who spread fake news; Responsible citizens who report such information will be provided as follows: -
 - (a) Informant can report without mentioning name and address.
 - (b) Informant will be kept strictly confidential and will not be questioned or witnessing.
 - (c) Informant and related persons will be provided with security.
 - (d) Depending on the accuracy of the information, the informant and whistle-blower will be rewarded with a disclosed amount of money.
6. Therefore, in order for the people to have full security in their social life and to be free from fear, please identify members of any terrorist group around them.

Central Committee on Counter Terrorism

Imports of COVID-19 protective equipment, medical supplies continue daily

THE Ministry of Commerce is making efforts to ensure people have access to the essential medical supplies that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, arranging continuous importation on public holidays.

On 28 August (Yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products, including oxygen plants and concentrators, were imported by nine companies and transported by 22 vehicles, including four bowzers.

A total of 74 tonnes of oxygen (liquid) carried by four bowzers, 6,200 empty oxygen cylinders, 21 oxygen plants, two oxygen generators, 759 home oxygen concentrators, 4,104 sets of COVID-19 test kits, 20,630 sets of PPE suits, and two tonnes of gloves and 49 tonnes of masks were imported via Muse, Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti, and Tachilek trading posts and Yangon International Airport.



Four vehicles carrying liquid oxygen were transported to Mandalay, and 21 oxygen plants to Yangon, respectively.

In August, 1,359 vehicles carrying 1,031 tonnes of liquid oxygen bowser, 360 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 74 tonnes of oxy-

gen gas, 16 storage containers, nine liquid oxygen distributors, 18,000 empty oxygen cylinders, 82 oxygen plants, three hospital oxygen generators, 22 oxygen generators, 90,000 oxygen concentrators for home use, 190,000 test kits, 760,000 PPE set, 103 tonnes of gloves and 1,761 tonnes of the mask were allowed to be imported.

In the same month, a total of 68 oxygen bowzers were allowed to be transported. Among the 68 vehicles, 54 vehicles were transported to Yangon, five to

Mandalay, three to Nay Pyi Taw, two to Mawlamyine, another two to Bago, one each to Monywa and Thanbyzayat.

Next, a total of 82 oxygen plants were allowed to be transported.

Out of 82 oxygen plants: 41 oxygen plants to Yangon, seven to Mandalay, four to Lashio, another four to Bago, four to Myitkyina, three to Kyauk Padaung, two to Monywa, another two to Pakkoku, two to Hpa-An and one each to Taunggyi, Nay Pyi Taw, Myitta, Moegaung, Magway, Myingyan,

Kyauktaga, Wakhema, Thanbyzayat, Dawei, Kungyan Gone, and Sittway were successfully transported.

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments, facilitating the importation of essential medical supplies required in prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

Scrutinize the spending of budget

The income of the government obtained from levying the tax was lesser because of COVID-19 impacts. So, ministries need to scrutinize the spending of budget as well as to systematically consume drinking water and electricity.

(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting 1/2021 of the Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar made by Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 11 August 2021)

Union Information Minister inspects Sarpay Beikman, calls for developing critical thinking of young people

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn inspected the bookstore and library of Sarpay Beikman under the Printing and Publishing Department in Yangon yesterday.

The Union Minister also met the Sarpay Beikman's editorial team. During the meeting, he said the Ministry of Information plays a key role in running the state media, and the media sector should not be carried out in a traditional way but in a modern and active way in accordance with the trend for news nationwide coverage.

He also highlighted the five-point roadmap and nine objectives of the Provisional Government, the emergence



The MoI Union Minister views around the Sarpay Beikman Library in Yangon yesterday.

of a genuine and disciplined democratic nation and duties

of the media sector in these operations.

He also discussed the instructions of the Prime Minister

to make efforts for the public to be able to read and develop the literature including the cooperation work for the youths to achieve the right knowledge and proper success.

He then said the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs was established for the development of youths, and in the activities carried out by Sarpay Beikman, the procedures based on the development of youths must be changed. They should provide self-improvement books or literature that can provide critical thinking skills or vocational guidance books for the youths.

Moreover, it should adopt the digital library system and improve public services. — MNA

Gwachaung Bridge project completed 87%

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Construction, 87 per cent of the Gwachaung Bridge construction, which was begun in November 2019, has been completed.

The bridge construction is implemented on Gwa-Kyaung Chun road of Gwa Township in Thandwe District of Rakhine State. The special team (8) of Road Department under the Ministry of Construction led the project which will connect Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State using a total of K8,980 million budget of the Union Government and Rakhine State government. Moreover, 21 skilled engineers and more than 120 workers are deployed in the operation, said project engineer U Kyaw Thura, Deputy Director of Road Department.

The reinforced type 139 feet

and 9 inches long bridge is 24 feet in width with 3 feet and 6 inches wide paths on each side. The waterway clearance is 20 feet in height and 85 feet in width. It would have a capacity to accommodate loads of 75 tonnes, according to the project officials.

The engineers conducted foundation of P0, P1, P2 and P3 in Gwa side and A2 and P13 in Ma Kyay Ngu Village side with K2,500 million budget of the 2019-2020FY. Currently, they continue PC Girder and deck operations with K5,400 million budget of the 2020-21FY.

The residents of Ma Kyay Ngu and Kyaukchun villages have to use boats to travel for their keeps or health care services to Gwa Township. Therefore, the locals including the students face

difficulties and so the government constructs Gwachaung Bridge, said the locals.

When completed, it will benefit the residents of Ayeyawady

Region and Rakhine State and will help to develop the social status, economy, health and education sectors including the tourism industry. The bridge construction

was implemented on 18 November 2019 and was slated for completion by March 2022, according to the ministry. — Pwint Thitsar/GNLM



The construction site of the Gwachaung Bridge. PHOTO: SOE MYINT AUNG

2,932 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 28 August, total figure rises to 389,134

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 389,134 after 2,932 new cases were reported on 28 August 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 343,668 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 15,077 after 109 died.—MNA

Union Minister U Myint Kyaing, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe inspect condition of factories under COVID-19 prevention guidelines

UNION Minister for Labour U Myint Kyaing and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe visited Handa (Yangon) Garment Co., Ltd (Sport wears garment factory) in Shwelinpan Industrial Zone in Hlinethaya Township in Yangon yesterday morning and inspected the condition of the factory under the guidelines of COVID-19 preventive measures set by the Ministry of Health.



At the meeting with the officials of the factory, the Union Minister said his Ministry is coordinating with Nay Pyi Taw Council and respective region and state governments to supervise and allow the operation of factories and workplaces following the COVID-19 preventive and control guidelines. If factories and workplaces have

to be closed due to the outbreak of COVID-19, it may harm the interests of the employers and employees, and affect the pro-

ductivity of the country which will further weaken the economic development of the country, he continued.

He clarified that to improve the working relationship of the people, any issue should be resolved constructively and

peacefully within the factory under the law.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak in Myanmar from March 2020 to August 2021, factories, workshops and departments were inspected by joint inspection teams led by the Ministry of Health under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Nay Pyi Taw Council/Region/State governments. A total of 6,348 factories/workplaces/departments in the Yangon Region were inspected whether they were operating under the guidelines of the Ministry of Health to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus among the employees.

Since 19 October 2020, a total of 206 factories/workplaces have been inspected via the Zoom application. — MNA

Mon Chief Minister inspects construction site of Banyar Dala affordable housing project, multi-purpose stadium

MON State Chief Minister U Zaw Lin Tun inspected the Banyar Dala affordable housing project in Kyar Inn Village of Mawlamyine Township yesterday.

During the visit, the State Chief Minister instructed for completion of project in time, sales of units at fair prices and other measures to ensure fire danger, garbage and drainage

systems.

The housing project includes 16 four-storey buildings, with 256 rooms, measuring 650 square feet per room. Every room will have one master bedroom, one bedroom, living room and kitchen. It was implemented by the Department of Urban and Housing Development on Mawlamyine-Mudon road us-

ing K5168.11 million of allocated budget in the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019FYs.

Then, the Chief Minister and party inspected the construction site of a multi-purpose stadium (120ftx90ft) built by Sone Yay company limited in the Technological University of Mawlamyine with a K349.5 million budget of 2020-2021FY. — District IPRD



Price list of medicines commonly used against COVID-19 as of 6 pm on 28 August

No	Product Name	Price in Kyats (Retail)	Company Name
Antibiotics			
1	PO Cefixime	3,600	Aorta
2	PO Amoxicillin+ Clavulanic Acid	1,800	Aorta
3	Injection - Levofloxacin 500 mg	3,000	Yadanar
4	Injection - Ceftriaxone 1G	700	KCL
5	Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 1G	4,900	Ready Medicine
6	Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 2G	9,300	Ready Medicine
7	Injection - Meropenem	10,000	AA Medical
Anti-inflammatory			
8	PO Dexamethasone	1450	JDS
9	PO Prednisolone	2000	Aorta
10	Injection - Dexamethasone	160	Aorta

Please visit the Website page www.mccpmd.org and Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/323302521392189/posts/1720802588308835/?d=n> to know the prices of other medicines.

Chindwin bridge (Htamanthi) construction project completed 12%

THE construction of Chindwin Bridge (Htamanthi) was completed 12 per cent in Homalin township of Khamti District in upstream Chindwin area of Sagaing Region, said U Aung Thiha, a director (Civil) of Bridge Department's Construction Team (2), the Ministry of Construction.

The construction project has started on 19 January 2021 and completed by 12 per cent so far.

"This year's budget is for onshore foundation projects. We have completed only 12 per cent of the project with this year's budget. So far, about 95 per cent of all funding has been implemented. The current bridge project is being implemented with a Union budget. We will try to complete the whole bridge project depending upon the funding available," said U



The project was launched with K2 billion of the Union budget in the 2020-21 financial year. And the Bridge Department's Construction Team (2) is taking responsibility for building Chindwin Bridge (Htamanthi) project in Homalin Township.

Aung Thiha.

The project was launched

with K2 billion of the Union budget in the 2020-21 financial

year. And the Bridge Department's Construction Team (2) is

taking responsibility for building Chindwin Bridge (Htamanthi) project in Homalin Township.

"The bridge is being built to link the Naga area to the mainland of the country. Upon completion of the project, local people will have easy access to the mainland of the country.

The bridge will accomplish the basic requirement of the local people for regional development and transportation," he added.

The Chindwin Bridge (Htamanthi) is being constructed between Htamanthi and Yinma village. The completion of the project is based on the availability of government funds.

The construction of the bridge will be 802 metres long and 9.4 metres wide.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be about K33 billion. — Lulay/GNLM

Onion price rises slightly



At the end of August, the price of Monywa Thar onion stood at K480 per viss in the retail market. However, the Myittha onion touched K520 per viss in the retail market.

THE prices of onions have seen a rise slightly, according to the onion market.

On 1 July, Myingyan Thar onion was priced at K350 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), while the price of Myittha onion was recorded K459 per viss.

At the end of August, the price of Monywa Thar onion stood at K480 per viss in the retail market. However, the Myittha onion touched K520 per viss in the retail market.

The price has been falling

during the COVID-19 period due to traffic congestion and disease prevention measure, which have led to the lower production cost. The onion prices may fluctuate depending on the spreading of the pandemic and restrictions thereof.

Besides, the kitchen crops such as garlic and potato prices are also inching upwards in the local market.

The prevailing prices of garlic move in the range of K2,600-4,800 per viss depending on vari-

eties at the end of August. Due to the closure of the Sino-Myanmar border checkpoints, there has been a shortage of garlic imported from China in recent days.

As a result, the price of the stocked garlic in the retail market has skyrocketed. Further, the tomato price also dramatically surged to K1,100 per viss in the retail market.

The onions are primarily grown in Mandalay, Magway and Yangon regions, Nay Pyi Taw and Shan State. —NN/GNLM

Myanmar-India border trade rises as of 20 Aug

THE trade between Myanmar and India soared to over US\$106 million this financial year 2020-21, said a statistical report of Myanmar's Commerce Ministry.

The border trade between two neighbouring countries hit \$194 million as of 20 August in the current financial year 2020-21 ending March.

The border trade during the period increased by \$106 million compared with the same period of the previous financial year. The Myanmar-India total border trade during the peri-

od was shared by Myanmar's export of \$192 million and its import of \$1.57 million.

The two countries carry out the border trade mainly through Tamu, Reed and Thantlang cross-border trade camps, while a major part of bilateral trade is delivered through ships. Myanmar mainly exports to India fruits and vegetable, fishery and forestry products, while importing from India medicines, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials. — ACM/GNLM



A file photo when taken unknown shows local people enjoy shopping at the Nanphalon market near Myanmar-India border in Tamu Township, Sagaing Region.

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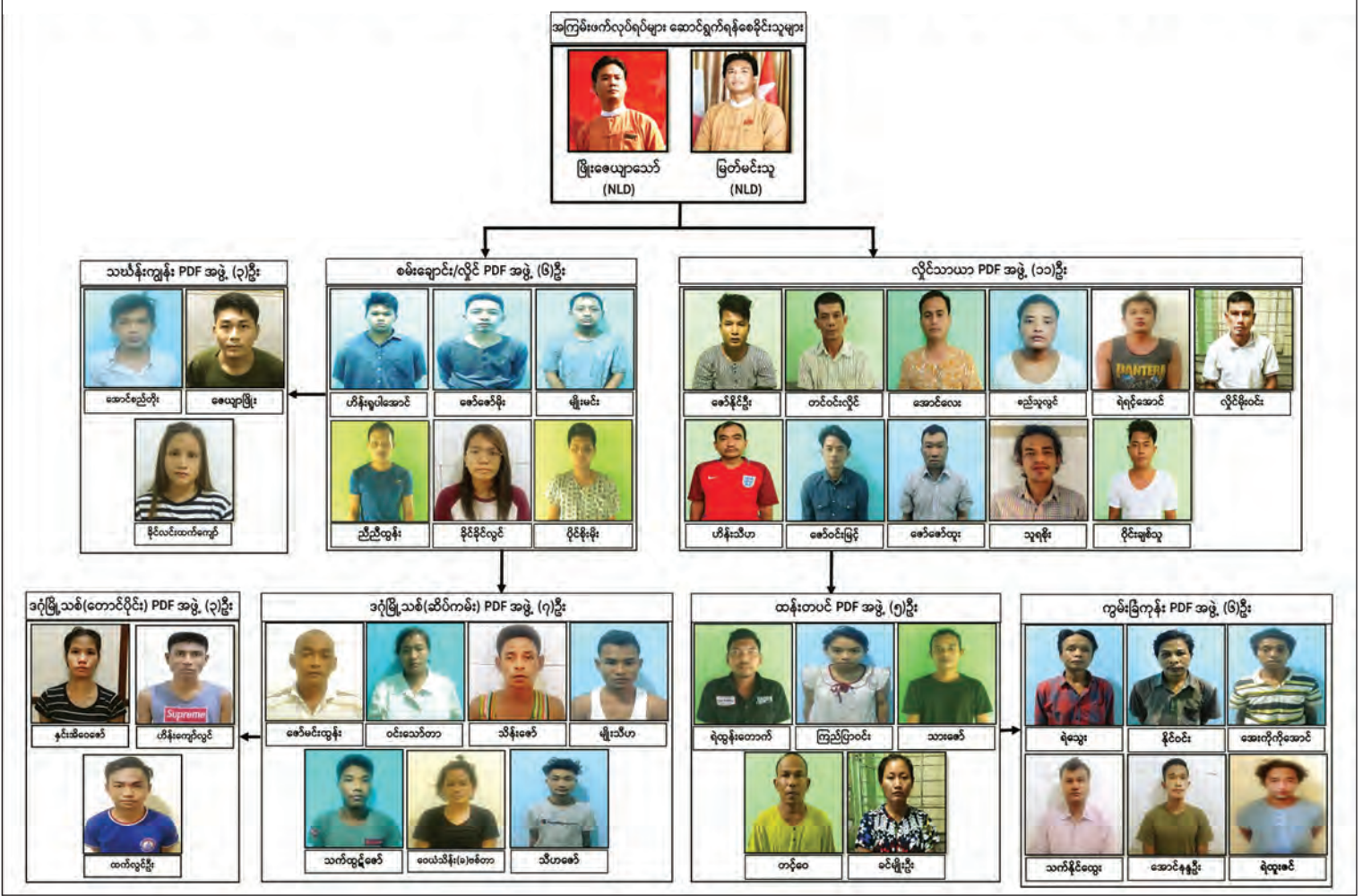
PDF groups responsible for terrorist acts in Yangon arrested with explosives

A total of 41 members of People's Defence Force-PDF, who have been carrying out destructive acts in Yangon, were arrested together with guns, ammunition and homemade mines and bombs between 9 and 23 August.

Security forces have been accelerating investigations on terrorist acts, ensuring the security and safety of the people. On 9 August, a joint security force arrested Zaw Naing Oo, instigator of riots on social media in Hlinethaya (West) Township.

Following his confession, Ye Tun Tung and Kyi Pyar Win were arrested on 10 August in Htantapin Township; Tin Win Hline, Aung Lay, Hline Moe Win, Wine Chitthu on 11 August in Hlinethaya Township (East); Tharzew, Khin Myo Oo and Tint Wai in Htantapin Township; Ye Thway, Nang Win and Aye Ko Ko Aung together with 43 homemade bombs in Kungyangon Town-

ရန်ကုန်တိုင်းဒေသကြီးအတွင်း ဖောက်ခွဲပျက်ဆီးရေးနှင့် လုပ်ကြံသတ်ဖြတ်မှုများ ဆောင်ရွက်နေသော PDF အကြမ်းဖက်အဖွဲ့ဝင်များ ဖော်ထုတ်ဖမ်းဆီးရရှိမှု



ship on 12 August; Hein Thiha in Hlinethaya Township (East) on 12 August.

Security forces confiscated homemade guns and mines and related materials in the farm of Kalargyi (on the run) in Dedanaw village in Kungyangon Township, following the confession of the arrested criminals.

On 14 August, Thet Naing Htwe, Zaw Win Myint and Zaw Zaw Htoo were arrested in Hlinethaya Township and two grenades and ammunitions were confiscated in Shwe La Min Motel where they were staying.

According to the revelation of Aye Ko Ko Aung, Aung Nanda Oo and Ye Htoo Zin were arrested in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 14 August. Ye Yint Aung was arrested with two homemade mines and related materials on 17 August. Following his confession, Myo Min was ar-

rested in Kamayut Township on 18 August; Zaw Zaw Moe, Hein Yupar Aung and Paing Soe Moe were arrested with weapons and ammunition in Sanchaung; Nyi Nyi Tun was arrested in Myaynigone ward and 4 homemade mines were confiscated in Win Ko's home.

According to the confession of Zaw Zaw Moe, Khine Khine Lwin was arrested in Hline Township on 19 August and 13 homemade mines, 11 sound bombs, ammunitions and 6 detonators and related items were seized in her apartment in Kamayut Township.

Ze Ya Phyo and Khine Lin Htet Kyaw were arrested with 1 pistol, 1 bullet case, 50 bullets, 1 grenade, 8 homemade mines and related items on 20 August. According to the confession of the arrested suspects, Aung Si Toe was arrested with 2 icons; Sithu Lwin in Hmawbi Township and Thura Soe in Hlinethaya Township.



Zaw Min Tun, Win Thawtar, Thein Zaw, Myo Thiha, Thet Htut Zaw, Wai Yan Thein (a) Victor and Thiha Zaw, were arrested with weapons and ammunition on 23 August in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township; Hein Kyaw Lwin and Hnin Ei Wai Zaw in Dagon Myothit (South); Htet Lwin Oo was arrested with 1 pistol, 2 bullet cases and 20 rounds of ammunition in Bandoula Housing in Dago Myothit (South). Some of the arrested PDF

members claimed that they attended the terrorist training courses in KNLA territory and carried out a total of 30 explosions in Yangon Region between May and August 2021. The arrested suspects also revealed that they were instructed to carry out terrorist acts by Myat Min Thu from the NLD party (2015 Hlaing Thar Yar (West) Township Constituency Former Hluttaw Representative of Region (2)), Ma Kay from NUG terrorist organ-

ization and Phyo Zeya Thaw from the NLD party (Former 2015 Zabu Thiri Township Pyithu Hluttaw Representative). It is reported that arrested terrorists will be taken action under the law, and the people are requested to work together for the security and safety of the people, by informing on terrorists and related suspects to the relevant authority and they will be secretly rewarded.—MNA

Afghanistan overshadows Iraq summit as Macron warns against IS

THE Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan overshadowed a summit in Iraq Saturday attended by key regional leaders, with French President Emmanuel Macron warning of the threat Islamic State group jihadists pose.

The meeting comes as Iraq, long a casualty of jihadist militancy, also tries to establish itself as a mediator between Arab countries and Iran.

"We all know that we must not lower our guard, because Daesh (IS) remains a threat, and I know that the fight against these terrorist groups is a priority of your government," Macron said, after a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi.

Iraq and France "are key partners in the war against terrorism," Kadhemi replied.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and Jordan's King Abdullah II flew in for the summit, while the foreign ministers of regional foes Iran and Saudi Arabia were also present.

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim



Leaders pose at a regional meeting in Baghdad. PHOTO: AFP

bin Hamad Al-Thani, Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, as well as Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah and Turkey's foreign minister were also present.

More urgent than ever

Iraq is seeking to play a "unifying role" to tackle crises shaking the region, sources close to Iraq's Kadhemi said.

Oil-rich Iraq has been caught for years in a delicate balancing act between its two main allies, Iran and the United States.

Iran exerts major clout in Iraq through allied armed groups within the Hashed al-Shaabi, a powerful state-sponsored paramilitary network.

Baghdad has been brokering talks since April between US ally Riyadh and Tehran on mending ties severed in 2016.

"It was really not easy to put the Saudis and Iranians in the same room," a French diplomatic source said.

But an adviser to Kadhemi said that just the presence of the two foreign ministers together was itself a "success". — AFP ■

Researchers discover world's 'northernmost' island

SCIENTISTS have discovered what is believed to be the world's northernmost landmass - a yet-to-be-named island north of Greenland that could soon be swallowed up by seawaters.

Researchers came upon the landmass on an expedition in July, and initially thought they had reached Oodaaq, up until now the northernmost island on the planet.

"We were informed that

there had been an error on my GPS which had led us to believe that we were standing on Oodaaq Island," said the head of the mission, Morten Rasch from Copenhagen University's department of geosciences and natural resource management.

"In reality, we had discovered a new island further north, a discovery that just slightly expands the kingdom" of Denmark, he added. — AFP ■

LDP's Takaichi seeks Japan's possession of "national defence forces"

SENIOR Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker Sanae Takaichi has advocated amending the Constitution so Japan can possess "national defence forces".

Takaichi made the proposal in an article in the October edition of the magazine Hanada as she expressed her willingness to run in the LDP presidential election set for 29 September in a bid to become the first female prime minister of the country.

Takaichi, a 60-year-old conservative lawmaker known for close ties with former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, suggested making an explicit reference of national defense forces, instead of the Self-Defense Forces, in the Constitution.

The former minister of internal affairs and communications was referring to the LDP's 2012 draft constitutional amendment proposal that called for the possession of "national defence forces".

Article 9 of the Constitution renounces Japan's right to wage

war and stipulates that it will not maintain an army, navy, air force or any other military force.

The constitutionality of the SDF has long been debated in political, judicial and academic circles.

Takaichi suggested Japan procure advanced defence equipment, promote research and development, and increase defence spending so as to better cope China's military buildup and assertive territorial claims, as well as North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes.

As for missile defence, she called for new legislation that will enable Japan to attack enemy bases to temporarily nullify their functions. On economic policy, she pledged to pursue bold fiscal stimulus, placing priority on crisis management and growth investments. To that end, she proposed putting on hold the government's target of bringing its primary balance into the black by fiscal 2025. — Kyodo News ■

Losing steam, Polish government plays immigration card



Poland is refusing to let in a group of around 30 migrants camped out on the border with Belarus. PHOTO: AFP

AS it loses steam in the polls, Poland's right-wing populist government is playing the anti-immigration card that helped it win in 2015, hoping to take back the political initiative, analysts said.

Thousands of migrants — most of them from the Middle East — have crossed from Belarus into eastern EU states, including Poland, in recent months.

The EU suspects the influx is engineered by the Belarusian regime in retaliation against in-

creasingly stringent EU sanctions, with Poland and the Baltic states calling it a "hybrid attack".

Political attention in Poland in recent weeks has focused on a group of around 30 migrants camped out on the border between Poland and Belarus.

Poland is refusing to let in the migrants, said to be Afghans by a charity trying to help them, or give them aid without the consent of Belarus.

"It cannot be ruled out that there will be early elections next year... and it is by no means cer-

tain that the Law and Justice (PiS) party will win a majority or manage to piece together a coalition," said Agata Szczesniak, a political analyst for the news portal OKO.press.

The government lost its formal parliamentary majority earlier this month after the departure of a junior coalition partner.

A recent poll by Kantar also found that PiS had fallen by three points in the polls and is now neck-and-neck with the main opposition grouping, Civic Platform, at 26 per cent.

"To go back up in the polls, PiS is trying to replay what happened in 2015 but even more so. It is focusing public emotion around the image and rhetoric of a war" against migrants, Szczesniak said.

During Europe's migration crisis of 2015, PiS leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski scored electoral points in parliamentary elections that year with his anti-immigration rhetoric, including warnings about the diseases and "all sorts of parasites" that the migrants might bring with them. — AFP ■



Sanae Takaichi speaks to reporters at the Liberal Democratic Party headquarters in Tokyo on 26 August, 2021. PHOTO: KYODO

Take an example from clock to peaceful human society

A CLOCK is a piece of machinery formed with the escape wheel, main wheel, hands for a second, minute and hour, marks for minute and hour, case and dial for serving the humans to know exact time day after day.

The hour hand and the minute hand are slowly moving in the case to indicate the time while the second hand is moving faster than the two without stopping in order to support the showing of time for exact duration. In fact, three hands in the case are moving on the dial as part of serving their duties.

The example unveils a meaningful remark that all the global people joining the secular world cannot live alone but be friends with each other. Hence, we all need to join hands in the society without hatred and with compassion forever similar to the hands of a clock in working together without disturbance to each other.

A clock gives an excellent example to the people so as to correctly look at the secular world. The example unveils a meaningful remark that all the global people joining the secular world cannot live alone but be friends with each other.

Hence, we all need to join hands in the society without hatred and with compassion forever similar to the hands of a clock in working together without disturbance to each other.



Has Delta killed the herd immunity dream?

AS THE Delta variant continues its global surge, experts are questioning whether the long-held goal of achieving herd immunity from Covid-19 through vaccination is still viable.

Herd immunity is achieved when a certain threshold of the global population has either been inoculated against a pathogen or has recovered from infection.

But whether or not it is achievable with Covid-19, with the regular emergence of more infectious strains, is up for debate.

"If the question is 'will vaccination alone allow us to dampen and control the pandemic?' the answer is: no," epidemiologist Mircea Sofonea told AFP.

He said herd immunity hinged on two basic factors.

"That's the intrinsic infectiousness of the virus and the efficacy of vaccines to protect against infection. And at the moment, that efficacy isn't there."

Delta has shown to be roughly 60 percent more transmissible than the Alpha variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and up to twice as infectious as the original strain that emerged in late 2019. The more effective the virus becomes at infecting people, the higher the herd immunity threshold becomes. "Theoretically, it's a very simple calculation to make," said epidemiologist Antoine Flahault. For the original virus, which had a reproduction rate between zero and three -- meaning each



Herd immunity is achieved when a certain threshold of the global population has either been inoculated against a pathogen or has recovered from infection. **PHOTO: ROBYN BECK / AFP/FILE**

infected person infects up to three others—herd immunity could have been achieved with around 66 per cent of people immunized, Flahault told AFP.

"But if the reproduction rate is eight, as with Delta, that puts us closer to 90 per cent," he said.

Were vaccines 100 percent effective at stopping Delta infections, that 90 per cent could

conceivably be possible. Unfortunately, they aren't.

Waning immunity?

According to data published this week by US authorities, the efficacy of the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines at preventing infection has fallen from 91 per cent to 66 per cent since Delta became the dominant variant.

And studies have shown that the vaccine efficacy against infection with Delta falls over time -- one of the reasons why several countries are now readying for an autumn third shot, or "booster", vaccination campaign.

With all this taken into account, absent other health measures such as mask-wearing or social distancing, Sofonea said it would take more than 100 per cent of people to be vaccinated in order to guarantee transmissions end -- an obvious impossibility.

"The Delta variant will still infect people who have been vaccinated and that does mean that anyone who's still unvaccinated, at some point, will meet the virus," Andrew Pollard, director of Britain's Oxford Vaccine Group, told lawmakers this month.

'Mythical'

But even if, as Pollard termed it, the "mythical" aim of herd immunity is no longer in play, experts stressed that getting vaccinated remained paramount.

As with vaccines against other, now-endemic diseases such

as measles and influenza, the Covid vaccines offer excellent protection against severe illness.

"What scientists are recommending is to get the maximum number of people protected" through vaccination, said Flahault.

Eventually, of course, all pandemics end.

Sofonea said it would still be possible that Covid would become another endemic disease over time, "just not with vaccines alone".

He envisioned a near future where "masks and social distancing continue in certain regions" in order to limit transmission and, ultimately, severe illness.

"During the AIDS pandemic, when scientists said we needed to wear condoms, lots of people said: 'OK, we'll do it for a while'," said Flahault.

"And in the end they kept on using them. It could well be that we will continue using masks in enclosed spaces and on transport for quite some time."

SOURCE: AFP

Covid symptoms last a year for many patients: study

FATIGUE and shortness of breath still afflict many patients a year after their hospitalization for Covid-19, according to a new Chinese study calling for a better understanding of the pandemic's long-term health effects.

Around half of patients discharged from hospital for Covid still suffer from at least one persistent symptom -- most often fatigue or muscle weakness -- after 12 months, said the study published in British medical journal The Lancet Friday.

The research, the largest yet on the condition known as "long Covid", added that one in three patients still have shortness of breath a year after their diagnosis.

That number is even higher in patients hit more severely by the illness.

"With no proven treatments or even rehabilitation guidance, long Covid affects people's ability to resume normal life and

their capacity to work," The Lancet said in an editorial published with the study.

"The study shows that for many patients, full recovery from Covid-19 will take more than 1 year."

The study followed nearly 1,300 people hospitalized for Covid between January and May 2020 in the central Chinese city of Wuhan -- the first place affected by a pandemic that has since infected 214 million people worldwide, killing more than 4 million.

The share of observed patients with at least one symptom decreased from 68 per cent after six months to 49 per cent after 12 months.

Respiratory discomfort increased from 26 per cent of patients after six months to 30 per cent after 12 months, it said.

It found affected women were 43 per cent more likely than affected men to suffer from fatigue or persistent muscle

weakness, and twice as likely to be diagnosed with anxiety or depression.

But it said 88 per cent of patients who worked before their diagnosis had returned to their

jobs a year later.

The study adds to previous research that warned authorities in different countries they must be prepared to provide long-term support to health

workers and patients affected by Covid.

"Long Covid is a modern medical challenge of the first order," the editorial said, calling for more research to understand

the condition and better care for patients who suffer from it.

SOURCE: AFP



A medical worker walks along a special COVID-19 ward at a hospital in Bandung on 27 August 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

I say what I see:

By Oung Moug Moug

WE have been seeing and reading news stories and articles in the Myanmar Language and the English Language as well about Covid vaccines both in the printed media and on the social network over these days. We also see some sorts of controversies over getting jabbed against the Covid-19 disease or "No" to inoculation or against vaccination amongst people all over the world. No doubt! Different countries have different situations.

I've read the post on social media by a friend of mine from the United States the other day. Some restaurants prohibit the ones who have not gotten vaccinated yet, with a front sign saying "No entry to restaurants for the unvaccinated", it posted. Only 52 per cent of the population have been fully vaccinated even in the United States of America, which stands at the top of the world's death toll list due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Think of, so pityingly, people

in the poorer countries where the majority do have little or no access to the vaccines!

According to the Ministry of Health in Myanmar, about 1.8 million people are fully vaccinated. This means they have already received both the first and second doses of the Covid vaccines. It also stated that vaccines had also already been administered to over 2.74 million people for the first time, totaling 4.54 million people under vaccination in Myanmar, so far. The health bureau of Myanmar has rolled out its Covid-vaccine inoculation programme effective in January 2021. It's a more encouraging piece of news that two million doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines arrived at Yangon International Airport yesterday evening. That's what Myanmar has purchased from the People's Republic of China.

So, don't be hesitated but go get jabbed against the pathogen as soonest as possible!

I do sincerely wish for you all good health and wealth.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 28 August 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30 hrs MST today, the low pressure area over the Northwest Bay and adjoining Westcentral Bay of Bengal off North Andhra Pradesh-South Odisha coasts still persists. Monsoon is moderate over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 29 August, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Nay Pyi Taw and Magway Region, fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay Regions and (Northern and Southern)Shan, Rakhine, Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Ragions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Sagaing, Mandalay, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Weak monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29 August, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29 August, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29 August, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

NEWS
IN BRIEFOcean surface
climates may
disappear by 2100:
study

Up to 95 percent of Earth's ocean surface will have changed by the end of the century unless humanity reins in its carbon emissions, according to research published Thursday.

Ocean surface climates, defined by surface water temperature, acidity and the concentration of the mineral aragonite -- which many marine animals use to form bones and shell -- support the vast majority of sea life. The world's seas have absorbed around a third of all carbon pollution produced since the Industrial Revolution.

But with atmospheric CO2 levels increasing at a rate unprecedented in at least three million years, there are fears that ocean surface climates may become less hospitable to the species it hosts. US-based researchers wanted to see what effect carbon pollution has already had on ocean surface since the mid-18th century. They also projected the impact of emissions through to 2100. —AFP ■

Indigenous protest
as Brazil high court
hears land case

THOUSANDS of indigenous protesters marched through Brazil's capital Wednesday, dancing to the beat of pounding drums, as the Supreme Court prepared to take up a case that could eliminate reservations on their ancestral lands.

In what organizers said was the country's biggest indigenous protest ever, an estimated 6,000 demonstrators marched to the seat of power in Brasilia, filling the ultra-modern square bordered by the Supreme Court, Congress and the presidency with traditional costumes and chants. The protest aimed to pressure the high court as it began a session where it will consider a case that could remove protected status for some native lands, opening them to agribusiness and mining. The protesters, who hail from more than 170 ethnic groups, were also fighting what they call systematic persecution under far-right President Jair Bolsonaro. —AFP ■

US south coast braces for 'extremely dangerous'
Hurricane Ida

RESIDENTS evacuated high-risk areas and lined up to buy supplies Friday as Louisiana braced for Hurricane Ida, expected to strengthen to an "extremely dangerous" Category 4



Hurricane Ida passed through eastern Cuba on Friday, forcing thousands to evacuate their homes. PHOTO: AFP

storm when it hits the southern United States this weekend.

The National Weather Service is now forecasting a "life-threatening storm surge" when the hurricane makes landfall along the coasts of Louisiana and Mississippi, warning of "catastrophic wind damage" and urging those in affected areas to follow advice from local officials.

"The time to act is NOW. Hurricane Ida is now forecast to make landfall as a category 4 hurricane," the New Orleans branch of the US National Weather Service urged in a tweet.

That level is the sec-

ond-highest on the Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale, with a minimum wind strength of 130 miles (209 kilometres) per hour.

Louisiana has declared a state of emergency in preparation for the storm, forecast to make US landfall Sunday -- 16 years to the day after the devastating Hurricane Katrina first hit the state, which flooded 80 per cent of New Orleans and killed more than 1,800 people.

Officials have already ordered mandatory evacuations outside the levee-protected areas of New Orleans and flood-prone coastal towns on the state's coast such as Grand Isle. — AFP ■

Experts estimate endangered Galapagos pink
iguana population at 211

SCIENTIFIC experts sent to the Galapagos Islands to count a critically endangered lizard species estimate there to be just 211 pink iguanas left, local authorities said Friday.

Around 30 scientists and Galapagos park rangers took part in the expedition this month on Wolf Volcano, in the north of Isabela Island -- the largest on the archipelago.

"In the census, 53 iguanas were located and (temporarily) captured, 94 per cent of which live more than 1,500 metres (4,900 feet) above sea level," said the Galapagos National Parks (PNG) in a statement.

That allowed the experts to "estimate a population of 211 pink iguanas".

The pink iguanas were first discovered in 1986 and identified as a separate species from the Galapagos land iguana in 2009.

They live exclusively in a 25 square kilometre (9.5 square miles) area on the Wolf Volcano, where the PNG has set up cameras to study the iguanas' behaviour and the threats they face.

Prior to the census, Ecuadoran expert Washington Tapia told AFP that there could be as many as 350 pink iguanas.

So far, "no juveniles have been discovered", said Tapia, the director of the American Galapagos Conservancy NGO that took part in the expedition.

In quotes released by PNG on Friday, Tapia said "being re-



Handout photo released by the Galapagos National Park of a group of park ranger monitoring a Galapagos pink iguana at Wolf Volcano on Isabela Island. PHOTO: PARQUE NACIONAL GALAPAGOS/AFP

stricted to one single site makes the species more vulnerable."

"Urgent action is required to guarantee their preservation."

The Galapagos Islands are a protected wildlife area and home to unique species of flora and fauna. — AFP ■

New birth of a mountain gorilla in DR Congo's Virunga park



Virunga National Park's new arrival. PHOTO: VIRUNGA NATIONAL PARK/AFP

DR Congo's famed Virunga National Park announced Friday the birth of a mountain gorilla in this tourist region threatened by armed groups.

The birth of a new baby male occurred on the morning of August 22," the park's communication officer Olivier Mukisya told AFP.

The discovery was made by "a team of eco-guards" during a routine monitoring visit to the home of the gorillas in the Kibumba area of North Kivu in the east of the country, Mukisya explained.

The national park said that the new baby belonged to the Baraka family of gorillas which was 'currently composed of about 18 individuals'.

The Baraka family records its first birth of the year and this last one brings the number to 13 since January 2021," from all the gorilla families in the region, said Mukisya.

Situated on DR Congo's borders with Rwanda and Uganda, Virunga covers around 7,800 square kilometres of the North Kivu province, of which Goma is the capital. — AFP ■

To encourage vaccinations, more US firms turn to incentives and threats

IN the wake of full US approval for the Pfizer/BioNTech anti-Covid vaccine this week, more and more American companies are looking at mandatory vaccinations for employees -- and customers.

CVS Health, Chevron, Disney and Goldman Sachs are among the firms who have since told some or all of their workers that inoculations will no longer be optional, requiring proof of shots within a certain time period.

On social media, some of those firms are coming under attack from users who say requiring vaccinations is a violation of personal freedoms, a value near and dear to most Americans.

One Republican state lawmaker from Florida, Anthony Sabatini, even filed a proposal that would prevent the state's surgeon general from requiring any vaccinations, ever.

But at least so far, amid a surge in coronavirus infections and hospitalizations fuelled by the highly transmissible Delta



The CEO of Delta Air Lines has said employees who decide not to receive a Covid vaccination will be charged an extra \$200 a month for health insurance. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

variant, no public figure is specifically hitting out at corporate America -- at least not yet.

For Mark Hass, a professor who specializes in marketing at Arizona State University, even though the crisis is both medical and political it is impossible for companies to thread the needle between liberals and conservatives on the issue.

"The right way to think about this is what's the right

thing for our employees, rather than worrying about the safety of our reputation," Hass told AFP.

"Almost every company is going with some sort of mandate or requirement or incentive," he said. "I think the lack of criticism of corporations is because most of them have acted responsibly in dealing with the pandemic," Hass added, noting the rise of telework.—AFP ■

New Zealand extends national virus lockdown

NEW ZEALAND on Friday extended a national lockdown sparked by a Delta virus outbreak into next week but warned restrictions would last longer in the infection epicentre of Auckland.

The Delta cluster emerged in Auckland last week, ending a six-month run without local transmission that had made New Zealand one of the world's last Covid-free zones.

While there were 70 new cases reported on Friday, taking the total to 347, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said there were

signs the outbreak would soon peak if stay-at-home orders remained in place.

"We may be seeing the beginning of a plateau in cases," she said. "Our job is to keep up the hard work in order to bend, and then flatten, the (infection) curve." Ardern said a nationwide lockdown imposed on August 17 would now continue until August 31. She said Auckland, where all but 14 cases have been found, and the neighbouring region of Northland, were set to face at least an extra two weeks of hard lockdown.—AFP ■



New Zealand on Friday extended a national lockdown sparked by a Delta virus outbreak into next week but warned restrictions would last longer in the infection epicentre of Auckland. PHOTO: AFP

US ships more than 2 mln more Covid vaccines to Africa



The United States is shipping more than two million doses of Covid-19 vaccines to Algeria, Ghana and Yemen, the White House said Thursday, boosting efforts to combat a third wave of the pandemic across Africa. PHOTO: AFP

THE United States is shipping more than two million doses of Covid-19 vaccines to Algeria, Ghana and Yemen, the White House said Thursday, boosting efforts to combat a third wave of the pandemic across Africa.

The shipments, which a White House official told AFP would land before the end of this week, will be the first donated by the United States to all three countries. They come on the heels of recent deliveries to other countries on the continent,

including Nigeria and hard-hit South Africa last month.

Taken from surplus in the US stockpile, 604,800 doses of Johnson & Johnson will go to Algeria, just over 1.2 million doses of Moderna to Ghana, and another 151,200 J&J doses to Yemen, said the official, who asked not to be identified. All the shipments are being made through Covax, the distributor backed by the World Health Organization and the Gavi vaccine alliance. President Joe Biden, who took office promising

to focus on getting Americans vaccinated after suffering the world's highest toll from coronavirus, has since expanded his goal to make the United States the vaccine "arsenal" internationally.

The "administration understands that putting an end to this pandemic requires eliminating it around the world," the White House official said. Biden has come under fire for authorizing Americans to get booster shots starting in September, but US officials say there is enough capacity, even while maintaining the flow of donations abroad.

The latest shipments will raise the total number of US shots delivered in Africa to more than 25 million, the official said.

Africa is in the grip of a third wave of infections and losing the race to mass vaccination.

Less than two per cent of people across the continent are fully vaccinated, with some countries having to destroy unused shots because they lack the health infrastructure to administer them or have met strong vaccine hesitancy.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Florida governor takes local mask mandates to court

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis on Thursday said he expects his executive order aimed at preventing local mask mandates will be settled in court.

DeSantis said Wednesday "there will be consequences" for school districts that have enacted mask mandates despite his executive order. That order states that parents should be able to decide whether or not their children wear masks at school.

Speaking in Orlando on Thursday, DeSantis said the Florida legislature's recent "parental bill of rights" is a good thing which helps guarantee parents decide whether or not their children wear masks to school. Florida Attorney-General Ashley Moody said disputes about laws need to be settled in court, and said no one has the right to flagrantly disregard the law.—AFP ■

Colombian man gets vaccinated seven times

In Cali, Colombia, authorities are dealing with a bizarre case in which a man was vaccinated against COVID-19 seven times.

The 65-year-old man in question, according to the Ministry of Health, is known to suffer from psychiatric complications, but was able to produce vaccination confirmation tickets for seven first-time shots of the Pfizer, AstraZeneca, SinoVac, and Janssen vaccines.

Authorities say the man has not presented any health complications resulting from the sheer number of vaccinations he went through and have no intention to press charges or punish the man.

Of greater concern to the authorities was how he was able to even do this much, which Cali officials blame on the subpar consolidation of databases across vaccines, allowing the man to access each vaccine without anyone being the wiser that he had already received another one.—AFP ■

NEWS
IN BRIEFFed chief signals
US economy may
be ready for less
stimulus by year
end

The US economy and labour market have healed to the point that the central bank could begin to withdraw its stimulus measures by the end of the year, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said Friday. But the Fed chief stressed that there was no hurry to raise interest rates, arguing that current inflation pressures will be temporary.

When Covid-19 hit the world's largest economy last year, the Fed jumped into action to prevent a major recession, slashing the key lending rate to zero and buying huge amounts of Treasury debt and agency mortgage-backed securities to provide liquidity to the financial system.

The pandemic recession was "the briefest yet deepest on record," Powell said in his highly anticipated speech to the annual Jackson Hole central banking symposium.—AFP ■

Real household
spending in India to
post 8.9 pc growth:
Fitch

Fitch Solutions has forecast real household spending in India to post a growth of 8.9 per cent year-on-year in 2021 following a contraction of 9.3 per cent in household spending estimated over 2020.

This marks the beginning of a recovery in spending with total household spending in real terms forecast to reach Rs 72.6 lakh crore in 2021, below 2019 (pre-pandemic) levels of Rs 73.5 lakh crore.

As a result, said Fitch, the recovery of India's consumer and retail sector will spill into 2022 where it forecast real household spending growth to reach 7.1 per cent.

"In 2022, we project real household spending to reach a total of Rs 77.7 lakh crore. This is 5.8 per cent larger than total spending in 2019, indicating that a full consumer spending recovery will take place in India in 2022."—ANI ■

Petronas returns to black in Q2 with profit
after tax of 2.29 bln USD

This undated handout picture provided by PETRONAS shows their Sabah gas platform off the coast of Sabah, on northern Borneo island. PHOTO: PETRONAS MALAYSIA / AFP/FILE

MALAYSIA'S state-owned oil and gas firm Petronas announced Friday it has returned to the black with a profit after tax of 9.6 billion ringgit (about 2.29 billion U.S. dollars) for the

second quarter of 2021, from a loss after tax of 21 billion ringgit, supported by the recovery in commodity prices following improved economic conditions coupled with lower costs.

Petronas said in a statement, the profit after tax was driven by higher earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) and lower impairment loss.

The group's quarterly revenue also increased by 68 per cent year-on-year to 57.1 billion ringgit from 34 billion ringgit a year ago, mainly driven by the favourable impact on prices for major products and higher sales volume impact for liquefied natural gas (LNG) and petroleum products.

For the first half ended June 30 this year, the group also returned to the black with a profit after tax of 18.9 billion ringgit, from a loss after tax of 16.5 billion ringgit, in tandem with higher EBITDA and lower impairment loss following an upward trend

in prices.

The group's revenue for half year rose 17 per cent year-on-year to 109.6 billion ringgit from 93.6 billion ringgit a year ago, mainly attributed to favourable average realized prices for major products and higher sales volume impact mainly for LNG and sales gas.

The group's capital investments stood at 12.7 billion ringgit, mainly attributed to upstream projects.

While the oil and gas industry has seen a recovery in price and demand following the reopening of key economies globally, Petronas said, the anticipated rise in oil supply and fresh lockdowns triggered by the emergence of new COVID-19 variants may impact the price and demand recovery.—Xinhua ■

US prices rose 4.2% in July from year-ago: govt data

A KEY US inflation gauge continued to climb last month and income shot higher as the economy bounces back from last year's downturn, according to government data released Friday.

The personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index rose at a rapid 4.2 per cent pace in July compared to the same month in 2020, slightly faster than the rate in June, the Commerce Department said.

Meanwhile, income rose 1.1 per cent compared to the month prior, far above expectations, but spending cooled to 0.3 per cent, in what analysts viewed as a consequence of the fast-spreading



The latest high inflation data could up the pressure on the Federal Reserve to roll back its easy money policies. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Delta variant of Covid-19 making some consumers hesitant.

"While pandemic fatigue is

setting in and leading to strong emotional responses, we believe cooler consumer spend-

ing growth is more likely than consumers retrenching and the economy going into reverse," Lydia Boussour of Oxford Economics said. The Commerce Department credited the spike in incomes to government policies like the expanded Child Tax Credit approved in President Joe Biden's March stimulus package, while increases in employee compensation also played a role.

While the US economy is generally on the upswing, the return to normalcy is complicated by supply bottlenecks as well as labour shortages that have pushed some employers to hike wages.—AFP ■

Persian rug makers eye new market in Japan as U.S. sanctions bite

IRAN'S Persian carpet industry is creaking under the weight of U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus pandemic. But its craftsmen may have found a way to innovate their way out of trouble -- weaving miniaturized versions of the traditional rug as substitutes for Japan's ubiquitous "zabuton" floor cushions. Iranian carpet weavers have seen their sales roughly halve in the last few years as rivals in India and Turkey look to grab market share. "We sell 60 per cent of our products to Japan because economic sanctions ban us from exporting them to the United States, which used to be

our biggest market," explained Mohammad Jafari, a 43-year-old weaver at Zollanvari, a long-established carpet company in Tehran. Jafari and other Zollanvari artisans were putting the final touches to a scaled-down version of a Gabbeh rug, a traditional variety of Persian carpet. Measuring roughly 40 square centimetres, or about the size envisioned for a zabuton cushion, the colour scheme is reserved, unlike the brightly coloured products exported to the United States. "The product is the polar opposite (of the carpets exported to the United States)," said Jafari.—Kyodo ■

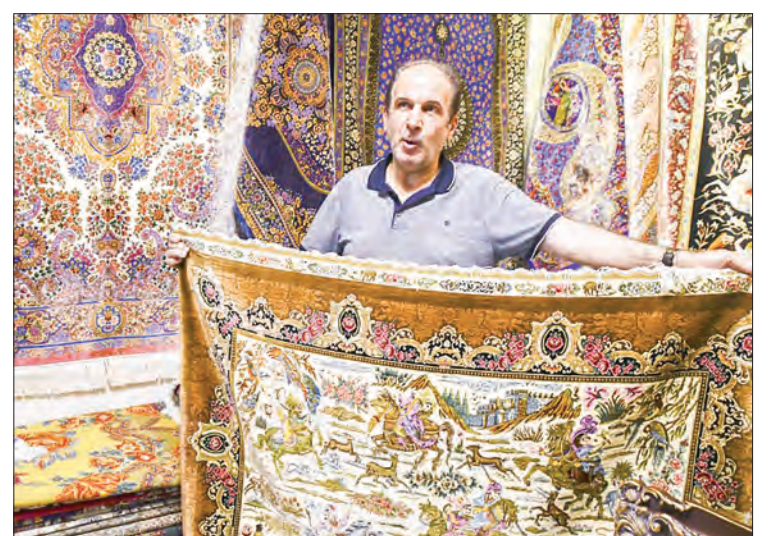


Photo taken on June 22, 2021, shows Ali Jahan holding a traditional Persian rug at a bazaar in Tehran. PHOTO: KYODO

Low-quality semiconductors likely circulating across Japanese market

LOW-QUALITY semiconductors, such as imitations of major manufacturers' products, are likely circulating widely across Japan, a survey by a testing firm has indicated, raising concern over an increase of defective items using such components amid a global chip shortage.

More than 30 per cent of the semiconductors, which Oki Engineering Co. checked upon the requests of over 100 companies, were imitations, used chips passed off as new or defective,

the firm said.

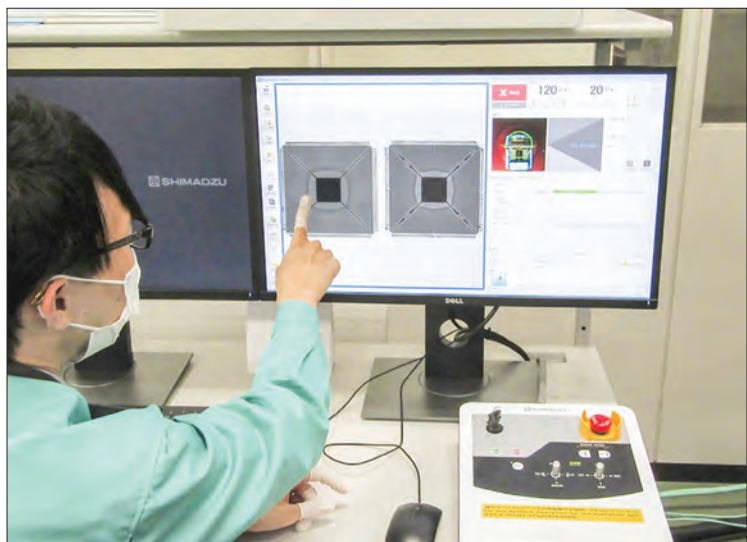
Semiconductor makers had cut output amid the coronavirus pandemic, but demand has sharply rebounded for chips used in a wide range of products from laptops and game consoles to cars, in tandem with a recovery in the global economy. A fire that hit major Japanese chipmaker Renesas Electronics Corp. plant in March further tightened supply.

Amid the crunch, more manufacturers that need chips for their products are obtaining

the components through unconventional supply chains, such as trading companies specializing in handling semiconductors that are no longer in production, according to Oki Engineering.

The subsidiary of Oki Electric Industry Co. started a chip verification service in June on the back of growing demand for quality checks for semiconductors procured from such routes, as it is difficult for assemblers to tell whether their labels are authentic and if they function well.

The most common method is changing the manufacturer's name printed on chips to a major company. Some chips were sold as new despite having been taken from discarded electrical appliances made 10 years before, while others were of such a sub-par level they should have been disposed of. Such semiconductors were used in products including facial massagers, blood-pressure gauges, dashboard cameras, and e-cigarettes sold at stores. Some failed to work straight out of the box, while others caught fire or emitted smoke, according to Oki Engineering.—Kyodo ■



An Oki Engineering Co. worker conducts an X-ray examination on a semiconductor in Tokyo on 18 August 2021. PHOTO: KYODO

Kenya says aquaculture development on course to boost food security

KENYA has partnered with donors and the private sector to establish a robust aquaculture sector in order to boost food security and rural incomes, officials said on Friday.

Lawrence Omuhaka, chief administrative secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives, said that promoting subsistence aquaculture will enable

the country to meet universal goals related to health, poverty eradication, food and nutrition security.

Omuhaka opined that it will provide alternative and healthy diets besides supporting the livelihoods of about one million people who directly or indirectly work as fish farmers, traders and processors.

He spoke in Western Kenyan

county of Siaya during the launch of the Aquaculture Business Development Program that aims to boost the production of fish at the small-holder level. The programme seeks to counter the declining production of fish in large freshwater bodies linked to climatic stresses, pollution and over-exploitation by local and foreign industrial fishing giants.—Xinhua ■



Workers at African Blue Fish Farm tend to the fish cages in Uyawi, Siaya County, Kenya. PHOTO: CGTN/XINHUA

Amazon-backed electric vehicle maker Rivian announces IPO



In this file photo taken on 7 January 2020, Rivian's R1T, an all-electric pick up truck is displayed at the Amazon booth during CES 2020, in Las Vegas, Nevada. PHOTO: AFP

RIVIAN Automotive, the Amazon-backed manufacturer of electric trucks and utility vehicles, said Friday it had filed for a stock market listing as it prepares to ramp up production and delivery.

The California-based firm said it had filed confidentially for an initial public offering, under a provision allowing it to keep its financial data private.

The size and price range for the offering was not disclosed. Rivian has raised more than \$10 billion in funding since its founding in 2009, including from Amazon, which has

pledged to purchase 100,000 electric delivery vans from the startup. Its valuation was pegged at \$26.7 billion earlier this year. In addition to the Amazon delivery vehicles, Rivian is producing electric trucks and sport utility vehicles for consumers with prices starting from around \$70,000.

The news from Rivian comes as governments around the globe, including in the United States, make the development of electric cars a priority and as the global auto sector accelerates EV production.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

TEPCO to help Singapore's SP Group build underground substation

TOKYO Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. and two other Japanese companies have signed a contract to provide consulting services to Singaporean utility SP Group over an underground substation project.

Tokyo Electric Power, known as TEPCO, said the deal is designed to address challenges associated with the construction of Southeast Asia's first 230kV-class below-ground substation in the southern harbour area of Labrador, which is scheduled to be completed in 2024. TEPCO Power Grid Inc., a subsidiary of the utility giant, and electrical engineering firm Kandenko Co. are also involved in the deal sealed last month with SP PowerAssets Ltd. The contract's amount was not disclosed.—Kyodo ■

COVID-19: Shoe exports from Agra begin to increase

AMIDST the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, shoe exports have shot up in the city thereby bringing slight relief to the sellers.

Compared to last year, many of them appreciated the current situation for ensuring smooth exports of shoes.

Speaking to ANI, a shoe exporter in Agra, Shruti Kaul said, "My company, Trishuli creations usually gets a good demand for shoes from various countries. However, since March 2020 last year, the demand for shoes dipped significantly due to the pandemic. Also, the demand in the domestic market declined. It was surely a difficult period for us." "But now, the situation in the market is changing. The situation is beginning to ease as COVID-19-induced curbs are being gradually lifted. In May this year, we got an order from UAE. We have restricted our exports to China. Also, the demand in the domestic market has increased," Kaul added.—ANI ■

Peruvian congress approves president's cabinet after lengthy debate



Peru President Pedro Castillo (centre, wearing hat) accompanies his cabinet to congress awaiting a vote of confidence. **PHOTO: PRESIDENCIA DE PERÚ/AFP**

PERU'S under fire leftist President Pedro Castillo staved off a political crisis on Friday as the right-wing dominated congress approved his first cabinet.

In a bitter debate that began on Thursday, the cabinet headed by Guido Bellido was approved by 73 votes to 50 against.

"Consequently, the question of confidence has been approved," said Maria del Carmen Alva, the opposition legislator that heads congress.

Having survived the first big test of his presidency, that began only a month ago, 51-year-old for-

mer rural schoolteacher Castillo thanked congress on Twitter.

"The quest for consensus allows us to govern together with the people and for the development of public policies of a social character," said Castillo.

Had the vote gone against Bellido, Castillo would have had to name a different cabinet chief.

It would also have prolonged the state of political uncertainty that has gripped Peru since the beginning of the year, when the electoral campaign got under way. Peru has suffered years of political upheaval and a series of

corruption scandals saw three different presidents in office in a single week last November.

Seven of the country's previous 10 leaders have either been convicted or are under investigation for graft.

Castillo's appointment of Bellido, an electronic engineer with no experience in public office, was controversial.

Peruvian media claim Bellido was investigated by prosecutors for an alleged "apology for terrorism" over statements made shortly after taking up his seat last month.—AFP ■

At least 21 killed in Bangladesh boat accident, dozens missing

AT least 21 people were killed and dozens remain missing as a boat packed with passengers and a sand-laden cargo ship collided Friday in a lake in eastern Bangladesh, officials said.

The boat was reportedly carrying some 60 passengers when the incident occurred on a lake in the town of Bijoy Nagar, local government administrator Hayat-ud-Doula Khan said.

The cargo ship's steel tip and the boat collided, causing the passenger vessel to capsize, he said.

"We have recovered 21 bodies including nine women and six children so far," he told AFP, adding that the toll would

likely rise.

Local fire service spokesman Taufiqul Islam said divers were searching the scene of the accident for more bodies, and that reinforcements had been called in from neighbouring towns. Locals also joined the rescue efforts.

Police said at least seven people were taken to a local hospital after they were rescued from the sunken boat.

Survivor Akhi Akter said she was travelling with her son, mother-in-law and brother-in-law in the passenger boat.

"When the accident occurred, I managed to swim back to the bank. But the rest of my relatives are still missing," she said tearfully.—AFP ■



Onlookers gather as others conduct rescue operations for the victims of the boat capsized in Brahmanbaria on 27 August 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

Visually impaired Paralympian hit by self-driving bus

A VISUALLY impaired Paralympian was hit by a self-driving bus in the athletes' village in Tokyo, suffering head and leg injuries, Japanese media said Friday.

Toyota, which developed the autonomous shuttle buses used in the compound, said it had suspended operation of the vehicles

after the accident on Thursday afternoon.

One of its electric buses "made contact with a pedestrian who is visually impaired" on a pedestrian crossing, Toyota said in a statement.

"We deeply apologize for those who suffered injuries. We

are fully cooperating with the police on the case," the company added. Several major local media outlets named the injured pedestrian as Japanese judo athlete Aramitsu Kitazono.

The 30-year-old fell and will need two weeks to recover from his injuries after being treated at the village's clinic, the reports said.

Tokyo 2020 did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Kitazono was due to compete in the men's 81-kilogramme division on Saturday. It was unclear if his injuries meant he could not fight.

Two bus operators -- on board to supervise the autonomous driving -- said they noticed the athlete, but thought he would stop walking as the bus was approaching, according to Japan's Asahi daily.—AFP ■



Self-driving shuttle buses are operating 24/7 in the Village. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Two years on, fallout mounts from Austria's 'Ibiza-gate'

Austria's former vice-chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache was convicted Friday over graft charges linked to the giant "Ibiza-gate" scandal, which is still roiling national politics two years after it broke.

What happened in Ibiza?

The scandals can be traced back to a meeting in 2017 on the Spanish resort island of Ibiza between Strache, then leader of the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ), and a woman posing as the niece of a Russian oligarch.

Strache was filmed promising the woman state contracts in exchange for helping his party to campaign for elections on an anti-migration, anti-Islam platform.—AFP ■

Actress hit with \$46 mn tax fine as China targets celebrity culture

Top Chinese actress Zheng Shuang was hit with a \$46 million tax evasion fine Friday while references to film star Zhao Wei were wiped from video streaming sites as Beijing steps up its campaign against celebrity culture.

Beijing is on a mission to rein in what it calls "chaotic fan culture" and celebrity excess, after a spate of scandals in recent months that have taken down China's biggest entertainers including singer Kris Wu, who was arrested on suspicion of rape earlier this month.—AFP ■

Nuclear test ban would limit development of new weapons, says head

THE new head of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization said the treaty would place a “real limit” on the further development of new weapons by nuclear armed states if it comes into effect and becomes legally binding.

Robert Floyd, who was appointed executive secretary of the preparatory commission for the CTBTO this month, told Kyodo News in a recent interview that having the test ban enter into force would also make it “practically impossible” for any non-nuclear armed states to develop such weapons in the future.

The CTBT, which prohibits countries from carrying out all types of nuclear explosive tests, has been signed by 185 states and ratified by 170 after it was

adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1996. Japan ratified it in 1997.

For the treaty to come into effect, it must be signed and ratified by all 44 countries that had nuclear reactors for research or power generation while the treaty was under negotiation, but eight including China and the United States have yet to do so.

“The CTBT as a treaty enjoys really strong support by the vast majority of states in the world,” Floyd said, adding that the pact is “actually already having an effect” due to the global norm against nuclear testing.

With the CTBTO providing the International Monitoring System, a worldwide system that detects nuclear explosions by collecting seismic data and



Robert Floyd, the new executive secretary of the preparatory commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, speaks to Kyodo News in Vienna, Austria, on 20 August 2021. PHOTO: KYODO

observing radioactive particles among other verification technologies, “nobody can test with- out that being detected, which gives us some benefit already,” Floyd said.—Kyodo ■

US warns ‘credible threats’ to Kabul airlift after IS attack



People disembark from a Royal Air Force military transport aircraft carrying evacuees from Afghanistan in the United Arab Emirates on 19 August. PHOTO: GIUSEPPE CACACE/AFP

THE high-risk Kabul airlift operation to evacuate Americans and Afghan allies still faced “specific, credible threats”, the Pentagon said Friday, one day after a suicide bomber targeted the throng trying to flee Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, killing scores of people including 13 US servicemen.

The blast claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group targeted US forces, but hit hardest the mass of people who had converged on the airport in a desperate bid to escape the Taliban’s feared hardline rule.

At least 72 civilians and 13 American troops were killed, according to various authorities, in an attack that came after a chorus of warnings of an imminent threat to the US-led evacuation effort, with the clock ticking to-

wards an August 31 deadline.

US media reports suggested the toll could be more than double that, but officials in Kabul did not immediately reply to AFP inquiries about the figure.

“We still believe there are credible threats... specific, credible threats,” Pentagon spokesman John Kirby told reporters.

“We certainly are prepared and would expect future attempts, absolutely,” he said.

The Pentagon clarified that there was one explosion Thursday, not two as previously believed. At the White House, President Joe Biden’s press secretary Jen Psaki said the country’s national security experts have said another attack is “likely” and the next few days will be “the most dangerous period to date”.—AFP ■

Future of Kabul airport subject of intense negotiations

WHO will ultimately run the airport in Kabul after US forces leave? That question -- a vital one for Afghanistan’s new Taliban rulers but also for Western nations still hoping to evacuate everyone eligible -- is the subject of intense and complex talks.

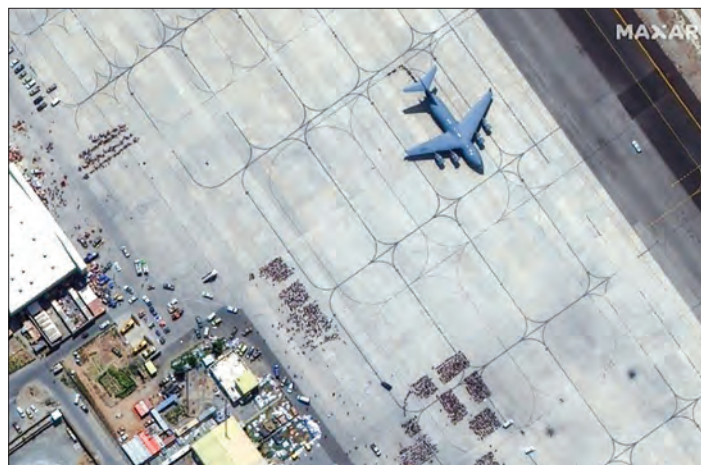
Next week, on 1 September, Hamid Karzai International Airport will be under the control of the hardline Islamists, who already on Friday claimed to have moved into certain areas of the military side of the facility.

“We are departing by 31 August. Upon that date, we are delivering -- we’re essentially giving the airport back to the Afghan people,” State Depart-

ment spokesman Ned Price said Friday, cutting off speculation about the possibility of it falling into international hands.

However, the Afghan government collapsed in the face of the Taliban advance on Kabul, and now the onetime insurgents are in power but still haven’t even formed a government.

“Running an airport is not an uncomplicated piece of business,” Price said. “I think that it is probably unreasonable to expect that there will be normal airport operations on September 1.” The idea that the airport could be temporarily closed was raised on Wednesday by his boss, Secretary of State Antony Blinken.—AFP ■



The Hamid Karzai International Airport in Afghanistan (tarmac pictured in this handout satellite image released by Maxar Technologies) is in a bad state, according to US officials. PHOTO: SATELLITE IMAGE ©2021 MAXAR TECHNOLOGIES/AFP/FILE

NEWS IN BRIEF

Afghan evacuation restarts after IS suicide bombings kill at least 110 - reports

Last-ditch evacuation flights took off from Kabul airport on Friday, a day after twin suicide bombings on crowds trying to flee Taliban-controlled Afghanistan killed scores of people, including 13 US servicemen and two UK nationals.

According to Al Jazeera’s team in Afghanistan, at least 110 people were killed.

Other media outlets have put the death toll at 170.

The blasts, claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group, injected further panic into the final days of an already frenzied US-led airlift.

The attacks targeted US forces, but hit hardest the mass of people fearing life under the Taliban who converged on the airport in a desperate bid to board a flight out.

Kabul resident Abdul Majeed said he saw a few hundred people - dead and alive - brought overnight to hospital, as he searched for his younger brother who had been among the crowds.

“My brother was not among them,” he told AFP.—AFP ■

Bobby Kennedy’s assassin granted parole in California

The man convicted of shooting dead Robert F. Kennedy in a 1968 assassination that rocked the United States was granted parole Friday. Sirhan Sirhan, now 77, has been behind bars for five decades -- despite doubts that he fired the shots that likely changed the course of US politics.

Kennedy, the younger brother of slain president John F. Kennedy, was campaigning for the Democratic nomination when he was gunned down in a Los Angeles hotel.

His murder came just months after the killing of Black civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr, and as a divided America was deep in an unpopular war in Vietnam.

Sirhan was convicted and sentenced to death in 1969 after pleading guilty.—AFP ■

MFF highlights FIFA president statement on its media

MYANMAR Football Federation yesterday highlighted the statement of the FIFA president Gianni Infantino on its official website to show up Myanmar's football world is connecting with the world level.

In the statement, the FIFA president pointed out the struggles of the football world during the pandemic and future plans of football across the globe.

"We have faced global problems together in the past and must continue to

do so in the future. The release of players in the upcoming international windows is a matter of great urgency and importance," FIFA president said.

"I am grateful for the support and cooperation from many stakeholders in the game during this challenging period. I am calling on a show of solidarity from every member association, every league, and every club, to do what is both right and fair for the global game.

"Many of the best

players in the world compete in leagues in England and Spain, and we believe these countries also share the responsibility to preserve and protect the sporting integrity of competitions around the world.

"Together we have shown solidarity and unity in the fight against COVID-19. Now, I am urging everyone to ensure the release of international players for the upcoming FIFA World Cup qualifiers," the FIFA president added. —GNLM

Paralympics: New regime pays off for leaner, meaner Sato



Tomoki Sato (L) of Japan celebrates after winning gold for the men's wheelchair T52 400-meter at the Tokyo Paralympics on Aug. 27, 2021, at the National Stadium in Tokyo. **PHOTO: KYODO**

AFTER taking silver in the men's wheelchair T52 400 and 1,500 meters at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Paralympics, Japan's Tomoki Sato decided to make whatever changes he could to reach the top of the podium.

With a trimmed-down

physique and lighter wheelchair, the 31-year-old set a Paralympic 400 record of 55.39 seconds Friday to win Japan's first athletics gold medal of the Tokyo Games.

Believing even the tiniest weight reduction could make a crucial difference,

Sato installed a new, ultralight magnesium alloy leg rest on his wheelchair, while replacing iron wheel fastenings with lighter titanium. His leaner 70-kilogram body, down 8 kg from Rio, was achieved largely thanks to the efforts of his wife Mayuko, who prepared his meals after spending time studying nutrition.

Sato nevertheless came into the race roughly 20 kg heavier than the reigning Paralympic 400 and 1,500 champion, U.S. racer Raymond Martin, who got off to a much faster start.

But after a furious final stretch, Sato got his nose in front to finish just 0.20 second ahead of Martin, who he will battle again in the 1,500 on Sunday.—Kyodo ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

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

2. Economic affairs

- To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs

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

Svitolina steps up US Open prep by reaching Chicago WTA final

OLYMPIC bronze medallist Elina Svitolina continued her US Open build up with a three-set win over Rebecca Peterson to reach her first WTA final of 2021 at the hardcourt event in Chicago. The top-seeded Ukrainian, who hadn't reached a final since her title run in Strasbourg last September, defeated Sweden's Peterson 6-1, 6-7 (4/7), 6-3 to line up a meeting with ninth-seeded Alize Cor-

net of France. Cornet defeated Russian Varvara Gracheva 4-6, 6-1, 6-0 to reach Saturday's final in one of two WTA events serving as final tune-ups for the US Open that starts Monday in New York. Svitolina fired 29 winners, including seven aces, on the way to a much needed victory. Since earning bronze at the Tokyo Games Svitolina had lost her opening matches in both Montreal and Cincinnati.—AFP ■

Paralympic triathlete who helped Spain fight Covid wins gold

DURING Spain's tough lockdown last year, Paralympic triathlon champion Susana Rodriguez trained furiously at home and helped fight the coronavirus in her job as a doctor.

Rodriguez – who swam, cycled and sprinted to gold in Saturday's PTVI race for athletes with visual impairments – said working in a hospital meant she "knew Covid was very serious, since the very beginning".

In the fraught early days of the pandemic, when she was on the phone lines to assess people with symptoms,

her boss would hold a meeting each morning. "He gave the new data, and things were going really wrong," the 33-year-old told AFP ahead of her competition at the virus-postponed Tokyo Paralympics. "I realised that the Games would not be possible before they said they wouldn't be in 2020." She then put her specialisation in physical medicine and rehabilitation to use by helping patients recover from the most severe infections – while fitting in hours on her treadmill and exercise bike between shifts.

"I was also afraid of catching Covid," said the athlete, who has albinism and is partially sighted, and competes with a guide. "For a blind person, we rely a lot on touching things, and when (the pandemic) started, everything turned to distancing, and touch was not the best idea. So it was difficult, especially in the beginning." Rodriguez, who has competed in para-athletics since she was a child, eventually took a break from her medical career to focus on preparing for victory.— AFP ■



Spanish gold medallist Susana Rodriguez celebrates with her guide. **PHOTO: SARA LOEHR/AFP**