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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Natural gas export tops US\$2.17 bln in nine months

MYANMAR'S exports of natural gas are estimated at US\$2.175 billion in the past nine months (October-June) of the current financial year 2020-2021, the Commerce Ministry's data showed.

The figures indicated a sharp drop of over \$1 billion compared to the year-ago period.

Natural gas is included in the list of major export items of Myanmar. About six per cent of the country's total export earnings come from the sale of natural gas.

There are 53 onshore blocks and 51 offshore blocks, totalling 104 blocks. A total of 25 onshore blocks and 31 offshore blocks are being operated under foreign investment. Natural gas extraction is being made at the Yadana, the Yedagun, the Shwe, and the Zawtika offshore blocks as well as onshore drilling blocks. Yearly extraction is elevated to cubic feet in 670.36 billion from 600 billion last year, according to the statement of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

The Shwe natural gas field, located offshore Rakhine State, was discovered in 2014. Natural



Natural gas is included in the list of major export items of Myanmar. About six per cent of the country's total export earnings come from the sale of natural gas. The MNA file photo shows one of the platforms in Yadana Gas Field in the Andaman Sea.

gas extracted from the field is exported to China.

The Yadana natural gas project is being carried out by the TOTAL Company, with its pipeline supplying natural gas

to Thailand. Natural gas is also extracted in Yedagun, located offshore Taninthayi Region and discovered in 1992. The Zawtika Project in the Gulf of Mottama mainly supplies natural gas to

neighbouring Thailand. Production at Yadana and Yedagun is declining, and those projects will be halted in the coming years. Myanmar's exports of natural gas stood at \$3.5 billion in the 2019-2020FY,

\$3.9 billion in the 2018-2019FY, \$3.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$3.116 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$3.445 billion in the 2015-2016FY, as per Commerce Ministry data. — KK/GNLM

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Public Notification on buildings where terrorists involved in terrorist attacks are permitted to stay temporarily or to take refuge

TERRORIST organizations such as CRPH, NUG, PDF, and their affiliates have been carrying out terrorist acts and arson attacks across the country to disrupt the cooperation of the people and the ethnic nationalities with the State Administration Council which has set future roadmaps for the development, stability and security of the State. In doing so, it is found that they have rented apartments and houses to hide while committing destructive acts in the country.

For example, on 8 June 2021, 25 assorted weapons, 72 hand grenades, 71 fuses, 14 assorted bullets, 156 TNT cartridges, 540 detonators, 4 boxes including 2 bullet belts, 27 12mm cartridges (without ammunition), 25 12mm cartridges (with ammunition), 3 bullet belts, 3,285 assorted bullets, were found and seized from a one storey house rented by terrorists in Ywaysu (west) Village, Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region.

At around 8:15 am on 22 June, according to the report, security forces inspected the house rented by terrorists at No 116/Pha-19, 54th street and 111 (E) road, Htun-tone ward, Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay. While inspecting, the security forces were attacked by home grenades and guns from the house, and some members of the security forces were killed/injured and 6 terrorists were killed. A total of 8 armed terrorists were arrested with a large number of weapons and ammunition.

Similarly, at around 4:15 pm on 14 August, members of security forces on the Insein circular train were attacked while the train arrived between Ahlon station and Pan Hlaing station. Due to the armed attack by the terrorists, 5 members of security forces were killed and one was injured. The terrorists who took 4 guns and some ammunition were arrested in houses and apartments temporarily rented by them in Yangon.

The above incidents were investigated and it was discovered that terrorists conspired to commit acts of violence by temporarily renting houses or apartments. Therefore, landlords are required to report the accurate information of the tenants with complete documents under Section 17 of the Ward/Village-Tract Administration Law, and to cooperate by notifying the relevant authorities in a timely manner if they find that their tenants are suspicious.

As landlords will be responsible if their tenants are found to have committed acts of violence, and no tenants list and information had been lodged with the relevant ward/village tract administration office while renting the apartment, please be informed that they will be taken action under the existing law. In addition, the rented house or apartment will be confiscated as evidence under the Counter-Terrorism Law and will be confiscated as State Treasury as a result of the investigation.

Anti-Terrorism Central Committee

Imports of anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products 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, by arranging continuous importation with standard operating procedures.

On 15 September (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products including oxygen plants and concentrators were imported by six companies and transported by eight vehicles.

A total of 5,087 empty oxygen cylinders, seven oxygen plants, two oxygen refilling machines for hospital use, 96 oxygen concentrators for home use, 477 sets of COVID-19 test kits, two tonnes of gloves, and 10 tonnes of masks were imported via Chinshwehaw trading posts, ports, and Yangon International Airport.

Seven oxygen plants, three from the port and four from the Chinshwehaw border post were imported yesterday.

Four oxygen plants were transported to Yangon, and one each to Pakokku, Aunglan and

Maubin respectively.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for better importation.

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



Anti-COVID devices and medical aids are daily imported via land borders and transported to the needed regions.

202 returnees from Laos undergo COVID-19 test in Tachilek

A total of 202 Myanmar nationals repatriated from Laos were examined for swab tests at the Wang Lone Quarantine



Health staff examine the returnees for COVID tests.

Centre on 14 September.

It was conducted by the Tachilek District COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment committee under the guidelines set by the Ministry of Health. It is reported that their swabs will be sent to Taunggyi from Tachilek to be tested for the COVID-19 virus.

The returnees came back from Laos through Wampong Port in Tachilek on 11 September and their swabs were tested with Rapid Test Kits for the first time, and it is the second time for them. — Zin Zin (IPRD)/GNLM

Myanmar accepts returnees at various border crossings

MYANMAR nationals from abroad are being welcomed back through various land borders, officials said.

On 14 September, a total of 22 returnees: nine males and 13 females came back home from Muse, northern Shan State.

Similarly, nine returnees: seven males and two females also returned to Myanmar via Chinshwehaw and two female returnees came back home from Laukkai, respectively.

Healthcare officials from relevant public hospitals and members of the Tatmadaw Medical Corps conducted COVID-19 tests

and provided quarantine entry documents for the returnees.

Next, officials explained instructions of the Ministry of Health to the returnees and departmental officials provided necessary assistance.

Then, the returnees were transported to their respective places by passenger vehicles provided by the township administration bodies.

The COVID-19 positive patients are being kept in separate areas and the necessary medical and administrative matters are being coordinated, officials said. — MNA

It is necessary to ensure edible oil sufficiency

IT is necessary to ensure edible oil sufficiency. Oil palm plants are grown in Taninthayi Region whereas edible crops are grown in Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway and Ayeyawady regions and Shan State. Efforts must be made for increasing the per-acre yield of cotton to be able to cut the import volume of cotton.

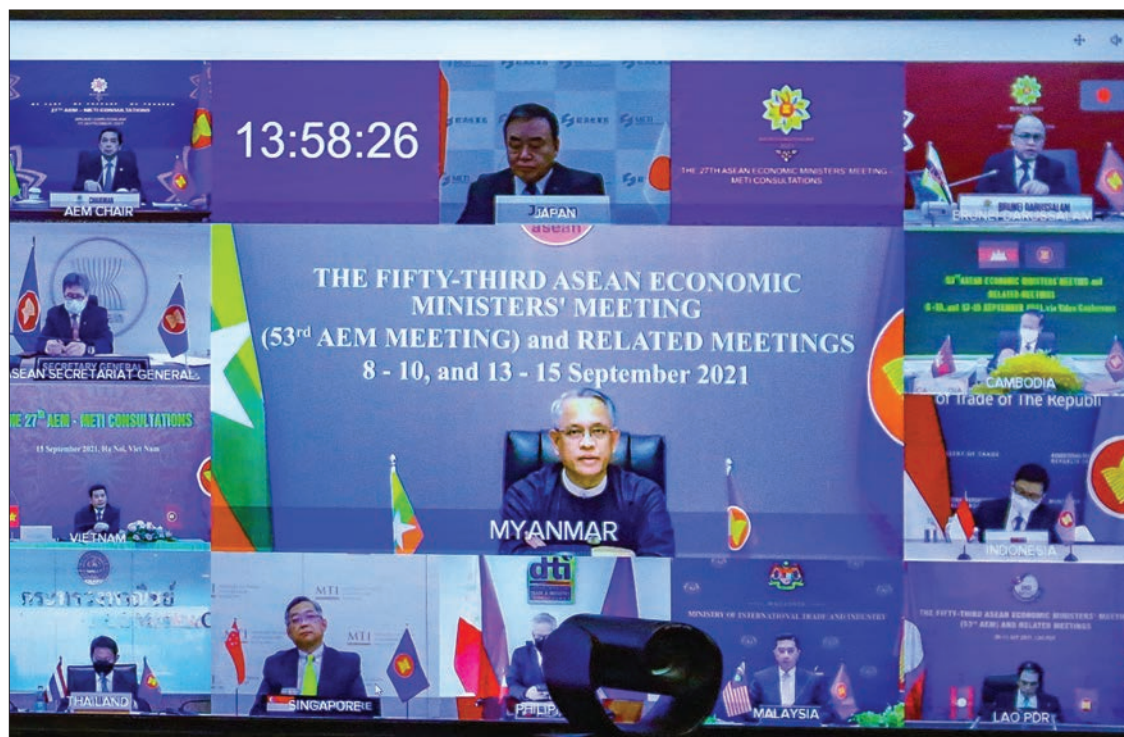
(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting 2/2021 of the Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar made by Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 7-9-2021)

ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meetings with Australia, New Zealand, Japan, United Kingdom Economic Ministers, 9th EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting held

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Aung Naing Oo joined the 26th AEM-CER Consultations, the 27th AEM-Japan Consultations, the 1st AEM-United Kingdom Consultations and the 9th EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting which were held via videoconferencing starting at 9:00 am from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Meetings were attended by the Economic Ministers from ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, Korea, United Kingdom, and United States, ASEAN Secretary-General and senior officials. The Meetings were co-chaired by Dato Dr Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II of Brunei Darussalam and Economic Ministers from the respective dialogue partners.

The 26th AEM-CER Consultations was held in the morning. Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment of Australia and Phil Twyford, Minister of State for Trade and Export Growth of New Zealand and ASEAN Economic Ministers exchanged views on the matters of implementation of the agreement establishing the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Area and upgrade negotiation for this agreement. Moreover, the Ministers discussed the matters of Chile's interest in joining the AANZFTA



Agreement.

At the Meeting, the Union Minister expressed that the public-private collaboration should be enhanced for promoting the utilization of the AANZFTA Agreement in the region. In addition, he encouraged us to make efforts in the finalization of upgrading the negotiations of the AANZFTA Agreement by September 2022. He also welcomed Chile's interest to join the AANZFTA Agreement and extended appreciation for the support of Australia and New Zealand in the economic cooperation support programme.

The 27th AEM-Japan Consultations was also held in the afternoon. At the Meeting, KAJI-YAMA Hiroshi, Minister of Econ-

omy, Trade and Industry of Japan and ASEAN Economic Ministers exchanged views on the implementation of the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership, economic activities in 2021 and Japan's proposal on "ASEAN-Japan Priority for Innovative and Sustainable Growth".

In his intervention, Union Minister welcomed the progress of the ASEAN-Japan 10-Year Strategic Economic Partnership Cooperation Roadmap (2016-2025) and ASEAN-Japan economic cooperation including the Japan-ASEAN Economic Resilience Action plan. He also welcomed Japan's proposal on "ASEAN-Japan Priority for Innovative and Sustainable Growth" and highlighted the key areas

under the proposal in the context of post-COVID-19 growth.

At the 1st ASEAN - UK Economic Ministers' Consultation, Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, Secretary of State for International Trade, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and ASEAN Economic Ministers exchanged views on the progress of the ASEAN-UK Economic Cooperation (2020-2021) and endorsed the ASEAN-UK Joint Declaration on Future Economic Cooperation.

In the meeting, the Union Minister welcomed the establishment of the ASEAN-UK Dialogue Partnership and expressed thanks to the United Kingdom for its contribution to mitigating the economic impact

of Covid-19 and towards the resilience, sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the region. He also underlined the potential contribution of cooperation areas under the ASEAN-UK Joint Declaration on Future Economic Cooperation for balancing regional development.

At the 9th EAS Economic Ministers' Meeting, the Economic Ministers from the ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the United States exchanged the views on the impacts of Covid-19 to the regional and global economy and the measures taken by EAS participating Countries to mitigate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, and also discussed on the paper "Supply Chain Resilience and Post Pandemic Recovery in EAS Region" submitted by Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

At the Meeting, the Union Minister shared the view on the importance of the cooperation activities in trade and digital economy and sustainable development under the work programme of the post-COVID-19 economic recovery in East Asia.

The Ministers adopted the Joint Media Statements of the respective meetings.

Deputy Minister and Senior Officials from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations also joined the Meetings.—MNA

2,424 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 15 September, total figure rises to 438,951

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 438,951 after 2,424 new cases were reported on 15 September 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 388,596 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 16,784 after 91 died.

E-Government work committee holds first coordination meeting (1/2021)

THE working committee for the implementation of e-Government held its first coordination meeting (1/2021) at the Ministry of Transport and Communications yesterday afternoon. The meeting was attended by members of the working committee and officials from the relevant ministries, organizations and region/state governments.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San in his capacity as the Chairman of the Working Committee addressed the meeting. He said efforts must be made to provide better services to the people as the e-Government is a never-ending process. He said necessary online services must be continuously provided to the people, adding the governmental departments need to be prepared as more and more



MoTC Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San addresses the e-Government working committee first coordination meeting 1/2021 on 15 September 2021.

people are using the internet in the new normal way of life due to COVID-19.

He called for the speedy enactment of cybersecurity law

and policies and the need to further develop a new Myanmar e-Governance Master Plan.

In addition, Myanmar was benefited greatly from the rap-

id growth of mobile phone and internet access due to the reform of the telecommunications sector, as well as numbers of cybercrimes, online threats to the

public, human trafficking and illegal drug trafficking, terrorism that threatens national security, are increased. He stressed the need to take precautionary measures under the law and to pay special attention to the development of human resources, as skilled workers will be needed to carry out these activities in a systematic manner.

Officials discussed the reorganizations of the 8 e-Government Subcommittees, the drafting status of the Myanmar e-Governance Master Plan (2021-2030), and the development of the Cybersecurity Policy and the Cybersecurity Law (draft).

Afterwards, members of the working committee and those present gave suggestions and the Union Minister added requirements and addressed the meeting. — MNA

Hotels and Tourism Ministry coordination meeting for filming, broadcasting of hotel services held

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung yesterday attended a coordination meeting with general managers from hotels in Nay Pyi Taw and officials from Elite Technology at the Sapphire Conference Hall of the Ministry.

During the meeting, the Union Minister and officials discussed the filming of the hotel services as per the COVID-19 prevention measures and broadcasting on State-owned media and social media coverage for the treatment of tourism-related businesses affected by the pandemic.

At the meeting, the Union Minister said that it was necessary for the ministries and fraternities, including the Myanmar Tourism Federation, to take measures in preventing COVID-19 disease.

“In carrying out the work, it is necessary to comply with the rules and regulations on the protection of COVID-19. Individuals in the service sector need to be aware of and monitor the disease situation and follow it precisely.

“Therefore, the hotels, which play a key role in receiving guests, are required to provide information to the public and the purpose of the film is to make the public awareness of the hotel services provided.

“The film will be broadcast on State-run media. It will be also shown at conferences and meetings.

“Therefore, all must work together to make the filming interesting and attractive to the public,” the Union Minister added.

Next, the Union Minister



The MoHT Union Minister holds talks with hoteliers to film and broadcast hotel and hospitality services for public awareness.

coordinated the necessary work as officials presented the conditions for cooperation in the filming of the hotel servic-

es in line with COVID-19 safety regulations, shooting requirements, filming duties taken by the group of hotels according

to priority departments, and social media copyright and prerequisites, respectively. — MNA



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Clean energy usage focused on 39th ASEAN Ministers Meeting and Associated Meetings

UNION Minister for Electricity and Energy U Aung Than Oo participated in the 39th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) and Associate Meetings on 15 and 16 September in Brunei Darussalam, through video conferencing.

At the 39th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM), the ministers discussed the energy sector development issues for the regional development and clean energy usage in developing the energy sector. The meeting also discussed the cooperation among ASEAN member countries to reduce carbon emission, save energy, increase renewable energy consumption, adapt the energy consumption standards. At the meeting, the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Actions for Energy Cooperation 2021-2025 (APAEC Phase II), and status of implementation and future plans of the sub-sectors of ASEAN Energy Cooperation such as ASEAN Petroleum Council, Coal and Clean Coal Technology Division, ASEAN Electric-Power Sector,



The MoEE Union Minister joins the 39th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) and Associated Meetings online on 15 September.

Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving Sub-Sector, Renewable Energy Sub-Sector, Regional Energy Policy and Management Sub-Sector, Urban Nuclear Power Sub-Sector, Upgrading the ASEAN Energy Policymakers Association Network and the ASEAN Energy Sector were discussed and approved.

The ASEAN Energy Ministers also discussed the potential

cooperation between the ASEAN and the United States with the US Energy Minister at the meeting. The meeting with the International Energy Agency Meeting (AMEM-IEA) was also held to discuss the cooperation for the energy sector between the two parties.

Union Minister U Aung Than Oo also attended the 4th East Asia Energy Forum (4th

EAS Energy Forum) held under the theme “A Low-Carbon Energy Transition in the ASEAN Region” by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA). At the forum, he discussed the status of changing carbon reduction policies of Myanmar, natural gas and renewable energy technologies, Hydrogen, Ammonia and carbon capture technologies,

and ASEAN carbon reduction goals.

The associated meetings of the 39th AMEM: East Asia Summit Energy Ministers Meeting-EAS-EMM; AMEM+3 (Japan, South Korea, China); will be held on 16 September. The meeting will focus on cooperation for low carbon transition, carbon neutrality and hydrogen technology.

The meetings are attended by energy ministers, senior officials and representatives from Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia and the US and officials from the ASEAN Secretariat, and ASEAN Centre for Energy-ACE, as well as international organizations.

The Preliminary Meeting of the 39th AMEM and associate meetings were also held on 13 and 14 September, and Permanent Secretary U Than Zaw led the discussion at the meeting. The meetings held on 15 September were attended by the Union Minister, along with Deputy Minister U Thant Zin and officials. — MNA

Development projects completed in 351 villages in Magway Region



A concrete bridge repair work reaches completion.

MORE than 400 development projects which have been implemented in 351 villages in Magway Region under the Village Development Project (VDP) have been completed, according to the Magway Region Rural Development Department.

The Department has been implementing a total of 419 projects with K4,592.9275 million in the 2020-2021 financial year, and now 100 per cent of the development projects have been completed.

With the Village Development Projects (VDP) Fund K3,510 million and public con-

tribution of K1,082.9,275 million, 199 village road upgrades, 8 bridge repairs, 98 rural water supply projects, 72 rural lighting projects, construction of 6 school buildings, construction of 18 multi-purpose halls, and 8 other development projects were implemented in 351 villages in Magway, Minbu, Thayet, Pakokku and Gangaw districts.

According to U Myo Aung, region director of the Magway Region Rural Development Department, the projects were carried out by the villagers themselves under the close technical support of the

Department of Rural Development.

“Our department started the village development project with the technical assistance of LIFT Fund. From this project, the villagers were able to draw up their own action plans based on the specific needs of the village,” he said.

“The department started with K10 million for the priority project. The rest of the projects are linked to the development plans of township-level departments and other development partners so the village development activities can be easily carried out,” he added.

Similarly, in the 2019-2020 financial year, a total of 374 village development projects were carried out with K3,340 million of VDP Fund, public contributions of K1,384.073 million and Hluttaw Fund K10 million in 334 villages in 22 townships of Magway Region, it is reported. — MNA

K41.175 billion worth of Methamphetamine, Ketamine drugs seized

A joint team of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force inspected an Alphard vehicle driven by Myint Ko, 54-year-old and Daw Mi Mi Aye (aka) Mi Mi Aye Kyaw, 62-year-old onboard and a six-wheeler vehicle named White Tipper driven by Soe Thura, 36-year-old and Min Htin, 52-year-old and Saw Myint, 59-year-old on board at the Mayanchaung Joint checkpoint on the Yangon-Mawlamyine Road, Kyaikto Township, Mon State on 10 September.

A search of the back of the Tipper vehicle turned up 52 bags with 1,000 kilos of Ice (Methamphetamine), valued at K41.175 billion, and 47 kilogrammes of Ketamine and K51.7 million were

also confiscated from the Alphard vehicle. According to the investigation, Kyaw Zaw Win (aka) Thar Thar, who was involved in the drug trafficking, was arrested at Myanmar Plaza, Bahan Township, Yangon on 11 September.

The seized drugs will be transported from Kehsi Township, Shan State to Dawei Township, Taninthayi Region. From Dawei, the drugs will be transported next to Malaysia by sea, according to the investigation.

The six suspects are being charged under the Law and investigations are underway to capture the rest of the suspects, Myanmar Police Force said. — MNA



Confiscated drugs and arrestees.

Myanmar rice body sells food commodities at fairer prices for public in Thanlyin

THE Myanmar Rice Federation in coordination with the Township officials sold staple food, including rice, egg, fish and cooking oil at fairer prices aboard the mobile market trucks near Myoma Market, Phayakone Market and Tarwa Market in Thanlyin Township, northern Yangon District at 9 am on 11 September.

The food commodities were sold at K5,000 per five-pyi sack of low-quality rice, K8,500 per sack of high-quality rice, K1,850 per edible oil bottle (50 ticals) and K1,200 per 10-pcs tray of egg and fishes and meats at affordable prices.

Officials from Township General Administration Department, Township Development Affairs Committee members and officials concerned assisted in implementing the mobile market scheme.

The move is aimed at offering to purchase the food commodities at fairer prices for the locals in the difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said. — District IPRD/GNLM

Consumers are seen buying foodstuffs at more moderate prices in Thanlyin.



Roads linking Mon, Taninthayi upgraded for smoother transportation



THE main roads named Phayagyi-Mawlamyine-Dawei-Myeik-Bokpyin-Kawthoung, which is linking Taninthayi Region and Mon State has been upgraded by continuous efforts of the Highways Department, Ministry of Construction, officials said.

For decades, only speed boats were relied on this voyage. The road is now accessible in a short period, officials added.

The road construction work is also

underway so as not to have blind spots on the road. Local people in the Mon State have now easily access to Dawei, Myeik and Kawthoung townships by using the roads.

On the other hand, the improvement of roads can give better results for socio-economic life of the people in the education, health, and business sectors, officials continued. — Kayan Soe Myint/GNLM

The road construction work is also underway so as not to have blind spots on the road. Local people in the Mon State can now easily access Dawei, Myeik and Kawthoung townships by using the roads.

Oxygen generator plant construction in Mawlaik completed by 75%

THE construction of oxygen generator plant was completed by 75 per cent in Mawlaik township, Sagaing region, said U Wunna Tun, chairman of Mawlaik Township Administration Body.

The project started the construction in Myoma ward-2, Mawlaik town in the last week of July, 2021 and has been completed by 75 per cent, so far.

“Currently, the oxygen plant construction has been completed by 75 per cent. The machines to produce the oxygen have already arrived and it will be operated very soon. The machinery are being installed. We expected to produce the oxygen in the last week of September,” said U Wunna Tun.

The total cost of the construction site is estimated to

be about K150 million. The whole project is being carried out with contributions from the locals and departmental staff.

“In the third wave of COVID-19 period, Mawlaik township has reported over 400 confirmed COVID-19 cases. There are many requirements when the treatment department provided oxygen. We are building an oxygen factory in our town to reduce the need for oxygen in the future, not only for the COVID-19 outbreak,” he added.

The construction project is being carried out by the Mawlaik district committee on control and emergency response to COVID-19 in cooperation with residents and departmental staff.

“At the end of this month,

we will start producing the oxygen. At this moment, the number of people infected with COVID-19 dropped dramatically, but it will take a time to ride the pandemic. There may also be more infection cases. In this situation, the factory could provide oxygen. If product is more than the town needs, we will be able to supply it to the surrounding towns and villages,” he added.

The oxygen plant can produce up to 40 40-litre cylinders per day (24 hours). It will supply the need for oxygen to the patients who are infected with the COVID-19 virus and those who are suffered from other diseases, according to the Mawlaik town oxygen plant implementation committee.

— Lulay/GNLM



The construction project is being carried out by the Mawlaik district committee on control and emergency response to COVID-19 in cooperation with residents and departmental staff. **PHOTO: MAW LAIK IPRD.**

Sagaing grows 51 acres of dry chilli this monsoon season

SAGAING region has grown 51 acres of dry chilli this monsoon season, said U Win Hlaing Oo, the head of Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

The cultivating of dry chilli in the monsoon season started in June 2021 in the Sagaing region. About 51 acres of dry chilli has been grown so far.

“Cultivation of both fresh and dried chilli in the Sagaing region has improved. The chilli from ChaungU and Yinmabin has been planned to export to China. Therefore, we will expand the cultivation of fresh chilli this cold season,” said U Win Hlaing Oo.

This year, about 51 acres of dry chilli have been cultivated, including 17 acres in Mawlaik, 27 acres in Phaungbyin and seven acres in Dabayin townships, according to Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

The staff from the township Agriculture Department is providing technical assistance to chilli growers to improve the yield of chilli and to get market access. — Lulay/GNLM

The cultivating of dry chilli in the monsoon season started in June 2021 in the Sagaing region. About 51 acres of dry chilli has been grown so far.



YGEA to issue gold transport permit for members



The precious pure gold metal is priced at the high of K1,820,000 per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogram) on 15 September, while the global gold price stood at only US\$1,803 per ounce.

YANGON Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) will grant a permit for the members to secure gold transportation to and from gold refineries and holding a large amount of cash, said U Myo Myint, chair of YGEA.

This permit is to secure transportation for precious gold metals and a large amount of cash during the inspection.

“We have to carry scrap gold items to Academy gold refinery located in the North Dagon Industrial Zone and Bathan gold refinery in the Thakayta Industrial Zone. We need to pass the security gate on our way to and from the refineries. Therefore, transport permit is required,” said U Myo Myint.

That permit will include a photo of the gold carrier, national registration card, business name, its contact number and the contact number of YGEA.

The members of YGEA

are encouraged to submit a list to the YGEA, the association stated.

The precious pure gold metal is priced at the high of K1,820,000 per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogram) on 15 September, while the global gold price stood at only US\$1,803 per ounce.

The domestic gold market is facing a bumpy ride. On 11 September the yellow metal hit an-all time high of K1,900,000 per tical. As a result of this, YGEA urged its members to regulate trade in order to deal with market volatility.

To regulate unsustainable rally in the domestic gold market, the association called for the gold retailers to make gold transactions with only immediate payment, avoid the verbal transactions over calls and halt trading outside the Yangon region, according to YGEA. — NN/GNLM

Palm oil market sees record jump in mid-September

THE imported palm oil market hit the highest tracking Kyat weakening and drop in global palm oil supply.

Kyat depreciation in the local forex market adversely impacted the imported edible palm oil market, coupled with the shipment problem amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The prices of imported edible palm oil remained upward trend, the edible oil traders stated.

The price soared to US\$1,185-1,355 per 18-litre can at present. The price may vary depending on the local currency value. The palm oil was priced at over K4,200 per viss in the Mandalay market, Mandalay wholesale market's data indicated.

In early January 2021, production slump in importing countries Malaysia and Indonesia, caused by erratic weather conditions and the COVID-19 impacts, high imports by certain countries under tax reduction, a tax hike on exports in producing countries and the short storage of palm oil in those countries contributed to the rise in edible oil price. The palm oil price stood at \$1,055-1,200 per tonne in the foreign market then.

Myanmar brought in

620 million worth of palm oil in the past nine months (October-June) of the current financial year 2020-2021, according to the Myanmar Customs Department.

“The oil palm trees produce fruits in abundance this time. The price is likely to be in the bull market up to October if any trade barrier will not occur,” Chair U San Lin of the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association said.

Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association is attempting to maintain price stability, prevent market manipulation,

import the palm oil from foreign countries sustainably for self-sufficiency, distribute the edible oil at a fair price to the consumers and ensure that there will be no edible oil shortage in regions and state when there is a rise in imported oil price.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the self-sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported. — KK/GNLM



Kyat depreciation in the local forex market adversely impacted the imported edible palm oil market, coupled with the shipment problem amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The prices of imported edible palm oil remained upward trend, the edible oil traders stated.

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise

Vaccinate the people to prevent and control COVID-19

NOWADAYS, the government is striving for arranging the vaccination for the people without delay amid many difficulties, pressures and disturbances as part of efforts to serve the national cause and the national interests.

Everybody needs to be able to work for ensuring the prosperity of the nation. Only when they are healthy will they be able to work. Currently, it is necessary to place emphasis on staying away from COVID-19 for being healthy. Only when they are free from COVID-19 can they work, do business, learn, meditate and operate the social life as usual. As such, the government is making utmost efforts for providing anti-COVID-19 vaccines to the people as much as it can.

In fact, the vaccination of COVID-19 is arranged with the purpose of a national cause. The vaccination programme is being implemented without dogmatism and personal cult but it creates a chance for the people to participate in the nation-building tasks.

The anti-COVID-19 vaccination programme is inclusive of all the national people of Myanmar. The government does not have any plans to leave anyone in the programme as all are citizens of the nation. So, the people residing in border regions, far-flung areas, internally displaced person's camps, prisons and those from Rakhine State have the right to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Although some ethnic armed organizations break provisions of the NCA, the government contacts them to give the vaccines.

In fact, the vaccination of COVID-19 is arranged with the purpose of a national cause. The vaccination programme is being implemented without dogmatism and personal cult but it creates a chance for the people to participate in the nation-building tasks.

So far, the government has cost US\$169 million for the purchase of vaccines for the fight against the COVID-19 and medical equipment while spending K566 billion on maintenance and construction of hospitals, clinics, COVID-19 centres and social organizations in addition to more than US\$500,000 on general costs. Till today, the government is ready to spend the fund on the prevention of COVID-19.

As State responsibilities, the government arranged the vaccination for 2.1 million units of anti-COVID vaccine to the people for the first time and 2.6 million units for the second time. Thanks to the efforts of the government, 10 million units of anti-COVID-19 vaccine will arrive in Myanmar in September, 10 more million units in October and 10 another million units in coming November. Negotiation is being conducted with the production companies for purchasing the more units of vaccines. If the entire people received the vaccination, they could save their lives to some degree.

The anti-COVID-19 vaccination programme is inclusive of all the national people of Myanmar. The government does not have any plans to leave anyone in the programme as all are citizens of the nation. So, the people residing in border regions, far-flung areas, internally displaced person's camps, prisons and those from Rakhine State have the right to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Although some ethnic armed organizations break provisions of the NCA, the government contacts them to give the vaccines.

6 months' immunity in mild covid patients as antibodies persist: study

Researchers analyzed nearly 130 subjects with PCR-confirmed COVID-19 illness between three and six months after initial infection.

A NEW study has found that most patients with mild COVID-19 infections produce antibodies that persist and protect them from reinfection for up to six months.

The findings of the Michigan Medicine study were published in the journal "Microbiology Spectrum".

Researchers analysed nearly 130 subjects with PCR-confirmed COVID-19 illness between three and six months after initial infection. Three patients were hospitalized while the rest were treated as outpatients and experienced mild infection, with symptoms including headaches, chills and loss of taste or smell.

The results revealed approximately 90 per cent of participants produced spike and nucleocapsid antibody responses, and all but one had persistent antibody levels at follow up.

"Previously, there was a lot of concern that only those with severe COVID-19 produced strong antibody responses to infection," said Charles Schuler, MD, lead author of the paper and clinical assistant professor of allergy and immunology at Michigan Medi-



Free COVID-19 antibody testing is conducted in Inglewood, a city in southwestern Los Angeles County, California, on June 19, 2020. PHOTO: MARK RALSTON / AFP/FILE

cine.

"We're showing that people with mild bouts of COVID-19 did really well after their infection, made antibodies, and kept them," added Schuler.

COVID antibody tests

The prospective study's participants were either Michigan Medicine healthcare workers or patients with a high risk of expo-

sure to COVID-19. Most subjects took part in the same research team's previous study, which found that COVID antibody tests are effective at predicting prior infection.

During the observation period, none of the subjects who produced antibodies were re-infected, compared to 15 antibody-negative patients. Schuler's team also found that the antibodies' ability to neutralize COVID-19 did not differ

significantly from the first visit, which occurred three months after infection, to the second visit at the six-month mark.

"While some studies have suggested antibodies against COVID-19 wane over time, these findings provide strong prospective evidence for longer-term immunity for those who produce an immune response to mild infection," said James Baker Jr, MD, senior

author of the paper and founding director of the Mary H. Weiser Food Allergy Center at Michigan Medicine.

"To our knowledge, this is the first prospective study that demonstrates such a risk reduction for clinical reinfection in this specific type of population," added Baker Jr.

The team of researchers is now analyzing samples of this subject group taken up to a year after infection to further evaluate antibody responses. Meanwhile, they concluded that individuals with COVID-19 can delay vaccination for 90 days after infection ends.

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention recommends those treated with monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma wait 90 days after receiving treatment before getting vaccinated, and others should wait until they have recovered from COVID-19 and "have met the criteria to discontinue isolation."

Additional protection

A study conducted in Kentucky found that unvaccinated people who already had COVID-19 were 2.34 times more likely than

fully vaccinated people to be infected again, suggesting "vaccination provides additional protection against reinfection."

Additionally, the research was conducted between March 2020 and February 2021, months before the highly transmissible Delta variant became the dominant strain of Covid in the United States.

Amid rising cases and hospitalizations, Schuler said, remaining unvaccinated comes with "a high price" for immunity.

"These results are encouraging for those who have already run the gauntlet of COVID-19 infection," he said.

"However, I do not recommend citing this study as a reason not to be vaccinated for those never previously infected. Vaccination decreases infectiousness, the risk of hospitalization and deaths from COVID-19, without having the actual infection. Achieving natural immunity by deferring vaccination in favour of infection is not worth going through the discomfort, risk to yourself and risk to others," he concluded.

SOURCE: AFP

Remote work goes 'luxury', but many may be left out

VIRTUAL reality meetings, \$7,000 all-in-one kits and digital hot desking: Big Tech is rolling out premium tools as the work-from-home era looks set to last well beyond the pandemic.

But experts warn that while top-of-the-line features may benefit privileged Americans, millions of others can barely access remote work tools already available.

Facebook has unveiled online 'workrooms' for users of its Oculus virtual reality gear, and Google showed off interactive conferencing displays, declaring the 'hybrid' mix of in-person and remote work is here to stay.

Yet outside of Silicon Valley and other urban centers, basics like a fast internet connection and proficiency in remote tech is beyond the reach of tens of millions

in the United States.

'For many people, being able to work from home is still a luxury,' said Michelle Burris, a senior policy associate at progressive think tank The Century Foundation. One reason is access to high-speed connections, with advocacy group BroadbandNow saying in a May report that 42 million Americans — about 13 per cent of the population — cannot get broadband internet.

Another problem is equipment as many workers have to buy their own.

Take the example of Patricia McGee in Texas — a 39-year-old mother of four who switched from an Amazon warehouse job to remote customer service work for another company when pandemic lockdowns hit about 18 months ago.

She had to plunk down \$2,000

to get a computer, not to mention the price of internet and the process of installing software and updates.

'Not everybody can afford a computer. So it's taking jobs from people that can't (buy one) or actually don't have the skills (to use one),' she told AFP. Her machine broke a few days ago and because she had exhausted her paid time off, McGee can't work or make money until her computer is back online.

Risk of being left out -

The digital divisions exposed by the pandemic are well-documented with striking examples like families using the wireless internet at fast food restaurants so their children could attend school online.

As schools and workplac-

es have, in many areas, moved gradually back toward in-person activity, some inequalities have been eased. But a percentage of workers have come to appreciate the flexibility and utility of a 'hybrid' mix where they can work from home sometimes.

'It's one of these innocuous seeming things that looks like it's convenience but it can be — unless we really address and acknowledge it — another tool for increasing inequality,' said Monica Sanders, a Georgetown University professor. Sanders noted that this is different than other technological developments, like the latest smartphone or even having a videocassette player when the machines revolutionized home entertainment.

They didn't 'impact your earning power or where you live or how



A file photo of a Facebook employee trying out an Oculus device at the company's headquarters in Menlo Park, California. Facebook has unveiled online 'workrooms' for users of its Oculus virtual reality gear, and Google showed off interactive conferencing displays, declaring the 'hybrid' mix of in-person and remote work is here to stay. PHOTO: AFP

you work,' she said.

The change in how people work has not gone unnoticed for employers, with digital skills for

zoom presentation or remote management tools working their way into job ads.

SOURCE: AFP



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (ISSUED at 7:00 pm Wednesday 15 September 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 16 September, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Rakhine State, fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Ayeyawady Regions and Kachin, Chin, Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Yangon and Taninthayi Regions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about (5- 7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuations of thundery activities in the Northern Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16 September, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16 September, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16 September, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN
BRIEFBandicoot species
'back from the
brink' on Australian
mainland

A small nocturnal marsupial that once roamed the Australian mainland has been brought back from the brink of extinction after a decades-long conservation effort, authorities said Wednesday.

The Eastern Barred Bandicoot populated the grassy plains of Victoria state's southwest until it was all but obliterated by non-native foxes, feral cats and habitat destruction.

By 1989, there were just 150 animals left in the region, mostly scrounging an existence in rusted-out cars at a rubbish dump.

Over the past three decades, multi-million dollar captive breeding and rewilding programmes have revived the mainland Australian population to an estimated 1,500 — bumping it off the state's "extinct in the wild" list.—AFP ■

Kenya's iconic
wildebeest
migration suffers
disruptions amid
climate change

THE sight of brown grassland that greets visitors to the well-known Maasai Mara game reserve in southwestern Kenya reaffirms a growing consensus that dry spells have taken a toll on the pristine haven for iconic wildlife species.

Often regarded as Kenya's jewel thanks to its lush vegetation, idyllic setting and presence of iconic land mammals like elephants and rhinos, the Mara is slowly losing its luster amid climate change induced recurrent droughts. Thanks to depressed rains this year, the normally tall green grass at the Mara has withered, exposing the ground to harsh elements while pushing a huge population of herbivores to the brink of starvation.

In addition, water levels in the Mara River have sunk to historic lows as delayed and suppressed rains became the norm this year in Kenya, with experts blaming global warming for the change.—Xinhua ■

Chevron plans new 'lower
carbon' ventures
but activists not pleased

FACING pressure from environmentalists, Chevron boosted spending Tuesday for "lower carbon" ventures and unveiled plans to reduce emissions from its operations in a pitch that drew shrugs from climate activists.

The US oil giant said it would more than triple spending through 2028 to \$10 billion on its "lower carbon businesses", including on products like aviation fuel made from biofeedstocks instead of crude oil.

"We believe climate change is real and that human activity, including the use of fossil fuels, contributes to it," Chief Executive Mike Wirth said at the outset of an investor presentation.

"We believe the future of energy will be lower carbon and intend to be a leader in that future."

But the strategy — which keeps the vast majority of Chevron's capital budget going to fossil fuels — drew little praise from critics.

Like its US rival ExxonMobil, Chevron has faced intensifying pressure from environmentalists as well as mainstream investors, and shareholders have voted against their recommendations at annual meetings earlier this year. "We're pleased that Chevron finally wants to talk about the energy transition. We're pleased that they're increasing spending on lower carbon energy," said



Chevron plans to boost investment in "lower carbon" energy, while investing primarily in oil and gas. PHOTO: AFP

Mark van Baal, founder of Follow This, a Dutch activist shareholder group. "But this is by far not enough."

Chevron's increased investment in lower carbon energy is "encouraging," but "it's hard to see" how bringing renewable fuels to seven percent of refineries throughout by 2030 "will convince

investors that it's taking climate seriously," Andrew Logan, director of the oil and gas programme at activist non-profit investor group Ceres, said on Twitter.

Many activists view the climate situation as a crisis, arguing that worsening storms and forest fires are proof of the need for immediate action.—AFP ■

Young German activists stage hunger strike for climate



'The climate crisis kills. We are on hunger strike for an unlimited period of time,' say protesters in Berlin. PHOTO: AFP

IN late August, six young climate activists set up tents on a stretch of grass between the Reichstag

and the chancellery in central Berlin, refusing to eat. More than two weeks later, some look pale

and emaciated. One collapsed on Tuesday. Another broke down in tears as medics performed a daily check of their weight and blood pressure. Neither have they achieved their chief objective — a meeting with the three main candidates vying to replace Angela Merkel as chancellor when Germany goes to the polls on 26 September. "The climate crisis kills. We are on hunger strike for an unlimited period of time," a banner strewn across one of the tents proclaims in large red letters. The activists want to meet conservative Armin Laschet, Social Democrat Olaf Scholz and the Greens' Annalena Baerbock. All three parties have made

climate policy a key issue in their campaigning, and the Greens have even pledged to make climate neutrality the top priority of the next government. But the activists say it's not enough. For Jacob Heinze, none of the major parties is prepared "to take the necessary measures to protect us, the younger generation, from the catastrophe" that is unfolding.

'Time bomb'

They also want the next German government to set up a committee of citizens representing the whole spectrum of society to develop measures to protect the environment.—AFP ■

Outcry as Faroe Islands slaughter 1,400 dolphins in a day

THE government of the Faroe Islands, an autonomous Danish territory, faced an outcry on Tuesday over the culling of more than 1,400 white-sided dolphins in a day in what was said to be the single biggest hunt in the northern archipelago.

"There is no doubt that the Faroese whale hunts are a dramatic sight to people unfamiliar to the hunts and slaughter of mammals," a government spokesman told AFP. "The hunts are, nevertheless, well organized and fully regulated," he said.

Traditionally, the North Atlantic islands — which have a population of around 50,000 peo-

ple — hunt pilot whales and not dolphins, the spokesman said.

"There are usually a few of them in the 'grind', but we normally don't kill such a large number," said a local television journalist, Hallur av Rana. The "grindadráp" is a practice whereby the hunters first surround the whales with a wide semi-circle of fishing boats and then drive them into a bay to be beached and slaughtered. "It looks quite extreme and it took some time to kill them all, while it's usually pretty quick," av Rana said.

Photos showing the bloodied corpses of more than 1,000 Atlantic white-sided dolphins on



Traditionally, the Faroe Islands hunt pilot whales and not dolphins. PHOTO: AFP

the beach sparked outrage on social media. According to av Rana, although some 53 per cent of the islands' population are opposed

to the "grind", there no plans to abolish the practice. The authorities insist it is a sustainable way of hunting.—AFP ■

Philippines eases virus lockdown in capital to spur economy

THE Philippines will ease coronavirus restrictions in the capital Manila despite record infection numbers, officials said Tuesday, as it seeks to spur economic activity.

Restaurants, churches and beauty salons in the national capital region will open at lower capacities from Thursday to get tens of thousands more people back to work.

“We should strive for total health and this can only be realized by carefully balancing our COVID-19 response by considering both the health of our people and the economic health of the nation,” President Rodrigo Duterte’s spokesman Harry Roque said.

Virus cases have surged to record levels — more than



A succession of lockdowns has sidelined millions of workers in Manila. **PHOTO: AFP**

140,000 cases in the past week — thanks to an outbreak of the highly contagious Delta variant.

Metropolitan Manila will be placed on the second-highest alert under a new classification

system that replaces guidelines that left many residents and business owners confused about which activities were allowed.

Localized lockdowns targeting specific buildings, streets

or neighbourhoods will be enforced to check the spread of the virus, replacing the current scheme that covers entire cities and regions.

Fully vaccinated customers in the capital region can now be served indoors in restaurants and beauty salons at up to 10 per cent capacity, and at outdoor venues at up to 30 per cent capacity regardless of vaccination status.

Six out of 10 adults in Manila are inoculated, compared to 22 per cent of Filipino adults nationwide, officials said.

Churches will also be allowed to seat 10 per cent of their capacity for services but other indoor group activities, including those that lead to crowding, remain banned.

Cost of lockdown

A succession of shutdowns since the start of the pandemic has sidelined more than two million workers in the food and leisure sectors in the capital alone, according to Trade Secretary Ramon Lopez.

Millions of children started a second year of remote lessons this week in the Philippines, which has kept schools closed since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

Officials said Tuesday that when the alert level is reduced to the second-lowest, classrooms may reopen alongside indoor entertainment and social events at up to 50 per cent capacity.

Duterte has previously said the country cannot afford more lockdowns.—AFP ■

Thailand’s new COVID-19 cases drop below 12,000

THAILAND on Tuesday reported 11,786 new COVID-19 cases and 136 additional fatalities, according to the Center for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA).

New cases went down again for three days in a row after reporting a spike of over 15,000 cases on Saturday. Out of the new cases reported, 2,788 were found in the capital Bangkok, the

epicenter of the country’s worst outbreak so far.

The CCSA also said that 14,738 COVID-19 patients were discharged from hospitals over the past 24 hours after making a full recovery, nearly 3,000 more than the number of new infections. Since the beginning of the pandemic early last year, there have been 1,406,542 COVID-19 cases and 14,621 cumulative

deaths in Thailand.

A total of 40.9 million COVID-19 vaccines have been administered between 28 February and 13 September out of which 676,669 were injected on Monday.

Roughly 18 per cent of Thailand’s 69-million population have been fully vaccinated so far. The country aims to inoculate 70 per cent of its population by the end of this year. — Xinhua ■



A citizen receives a dose of COVID-19 vaccine in Bangkok, Thailand, 26 June 2021. **PHOTO: RACHEN SAGEAMSAK/XINHUA**

Stars dazzle in defiant fashion at ‘surreal’ Met Gala

NEW YORK is done with dressing down: the splashy black-tie Met Gala returned Monday, with a cohort of Gen-Z’s glitterati hosting the A-list bash famed for its over-the-top panache — and, despite the pandemic, this year the fashion was so fierce one guest wielded a sword.

The crowd of some 400 actors, athletes, poets and performers — all of whom were either vaccinated or had tested negative for Covid-19 — was largely maskless on the cream carpet, defying the global coronavirus pandemic that forced the cancellation of last year’s event. “It’s so surreal,” US rapper Megan Thee Stallion, attending the Gala for the first time and dressed by designer Coach to evoke old Hollywood glamour, told AFP. “I feel like, oh my gosh, Houston, Texas we made it! ... I’m



English tennis player Emma Raducanu, fresh from her US Open win, arrives for the 2021 Met Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on 13 September, 2021 in New York. **PHOTO: AFP**

excited to be here.”

But she did admit that it was “kinda weird” to be around so many people, more than 18 months into the coronavirus pandemic. “I’ve kinda gotten used to being a little introvert like — but I’m back on side so I’m excited to see everybody,” she said. Canadian musician Grimes, who was one of the few wearing a face mask, set Twitter alight by carrying a sword — perhaps to, as one user suggested, “make sure people stay 6 ft away.” US lawmaker Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez added to the revolutionary spirit with a white off-shoulder dress, on the back of which was written in scarlet capital letters: “Tax the rich” — an inflammatory statement at an event where tickets cost \$35,000 apiece and tables were up to \$300,000.—AFP ■

New Zealand house prices hit record high amid COVID-19 lockdown

MEDIAN prices for residential property across New Zealand increased by 25.5 per cent from 677,400 NZ dollars in August 2020 to a record 850,000 NZ dollars in August 2021 amid COVID-19 lockdown, as shortage of houses available for sale continued, according to the latest real estate data recently.

Four out of 16 regions reached new record median prices and 25 districts reached new record median highs, showed data from the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand (REINZ). The median house price for New Zealand excluding Auckland increased by 22.8 per cent from 570,000 NZ dollars in August last year to a new record of 700,000 NZ dollars in August 2021. Jen Baird, chief executive at REINZ said in a statement: “House prices have once again risen across the country, with every region seeing a year-on-year increase from August 2020. This latest lockdown has not dampened demand for, or confidence in, the housing market as we saw in early 2020. We have heard from across the industry that prices achieved on sales completed in the early part of this lockdown continue to illustrate an ongoing excess of demand over supply; prices are still rising.” New Zealand’s house prices hit new record highs in the last several months in a row despite the pandemic, while record low interest rates boosted demand for housing and credit. As the housing demand kept high, the supply touched low. In some regions, inventory levels were at lowest point ever.—Xinhua ■

NEWS
IN BRIEF

China August retail sales growth slowest in a year

GROWTH in China's retail sales sank in August to a 12-month low, data showed Wednesday, as parts of the country were hit by lockdowns and other containment measures to fight the worst Covid outbreak since its initial spread in 2020.

The figures are the latest pointing to a slowdown in the world's number two economy, and observers warned that a fresh flare-up could add to the weakness, adding that a crack-down on private enterprises was also taking a toll.

Retail sales grew 2.5 per cent last month, well short of the seven per cent forecast and sharply down from the 8.5 per cent witnessed in July. The reading was the lowest since August 2020.

Industrial production growth was also slightly below expectations and slower than the month before.—AFP

Republicans withhold support for US debt ceiling increase

REPUBLICAN leaders in Congress on Tuesday continued to withhold support for efforts by the Democratic majority to increase the US debt ceiling.

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen warned last week that the government will run out of money next month unless lawmakers take action, and banking groups have urged Congress to move to prevent "irreparable harm" to the US economy.

Amazon CEO Andy Jassy called for raising the debt ceiling in an interview with CNBC. "I think it's scary for consumer confidence and for confidence in US businesses and potential credit ratings if we don't make sure that we raise that debt ceiling," Jassy said. The Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA), American Bankers Association and other industry groups said in a letter to congressional leaders that defaulting "on our existing obligations would be irresponsible and do irreparable harm to the US economy and taxpayers".—AFP

Malaysia, Thailand setting up system of Qualified ASEAN Banks

BANKING institutions from Thailand and Malaysia have been invited to indicate their interest to be a Qualified ASEAN Bank (QAB) in Malaysia and Thailand, said Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) and the Bank of Thailand (BOT) on Tuesday.

The bilateral arrangement and its commitments form part of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS), they said in a joint statement.

The move followed the bilateral arrangement under the ASEAN Banking Integration Framework (ABIF) between BNM and the BOT which was concluded in April 2019. According to both parties, the QABs are envisioned to facilitate greater intra-ASEAN trade and investment in the region, in accordance with the ASEAN Economic Community

Blueprint 2025 that aims to create an integrated and highly cohesive ASEAN economy.

To ensure the financial stability of both countries, they said, a QAB candidate, whether a new entrant or an existing bank in the host country, must be a strong and well-managed bank that has its interest endorsed by the home country's regulator; and comply with the host country's prudential requirements. According to them, a successful QAB candidate will enjoy market access and operational flexibility accorded under the bilateral arrangement.

BNM governor Nor Shamshiah Mohd Yunus said, this bilateral arrangement signifies the strengthening of economic ties between Malaysia and Thailand, and it is set to benefit the people of both countries where they will



Banking institutions from Thailand and Malaysia have been invited to indicate their interest to be a Qualified ASEAN Bank (QAB) in Malaysia and Thailand, said Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) and the Bank of Thailand (BOT) on Tuesday. PHOTO: THAILANDBUSINESSNEWS/XINHUA

be able to enjoy better banking convenience as well as access to a wider range of banking products.

"We are taking great strides towards creating an integrated and cohesive ASEAN economy, and we are confident that the

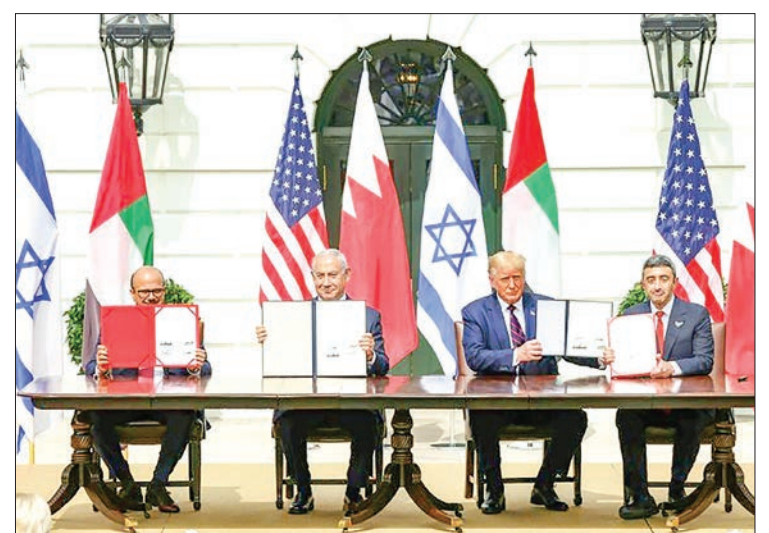
QAB arrangement will foster more business opportunities and economic activities between the two countries to facilitate both our economic recoveries amidst the ongoing pandemic," she said—Xinhua

UAE, Israel eye trillion-dollar prize one year into Abraham Accords

THE United Arab Emirates marks one year since normalizing ties with Israel on Wednesday, a move which drew Palestinian anger but that leaders hope could reap a trillion dollars in economic exchanges. Watched by then US president Donald Trump, the UAE and Gulf neighbour Bahrain formally recognized Israel on 15 September, 2020 in Washington, prompting Palestinian accusations of a "stab in the back". The surprise step, under the US-brokered Abraham Accords, broke with decades of Arab consensus that ruled out formal ties while the Palestinian conflict was un-

resolved.

However, it marked a thaw in the region, with Morocco and Sudan soon following suit and regional power Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil producer, allowing some overflights from the Jewish state. The economic benefits have come quickly for the UAE and Israel, who signed a series of deals ranging from tourism to aviation and financial services. Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid made a landmark visit to the UAE in July, opening an embassy in Abu Dhabi and a consulate in Dubai, while the UAE established an embassy in Tel Aviv.—AFP



The UAE and Bahrain signed the 'Abraham Accords' with Israel at the White House last year. PHOTO: AFP

Billions wiped from Macau casino stocks as city eyes gambling review



Leading casino operators Sands China and Wynn Macau both suffered over 24 per cent drops after the consultation began. PHOTO: AFP

MACAU casino operators saw billions wiped off their value Wednesday as their shares collapsed after officials in the world's biggest gambling city unveiled plans for a crackdown that would tighten their grip on the already beleaguered industry.

Hong Kong-listed operators Sands China and Wynn Macau both plunged around 30 per cent; SJM Holdings and MGM China lost 25 per cent while Melco and Galaxy Entertainment both shed around 20 per cent.

Bloomberg News estimated

the combined losses for the six big operators amounted to some \$14 billion.

The sell-off came after the Macau government announced a 45-day public consultation that included a proposal for direct supervision over the gambling industry, which has faced increasing scrutiny from authorities in recent years.

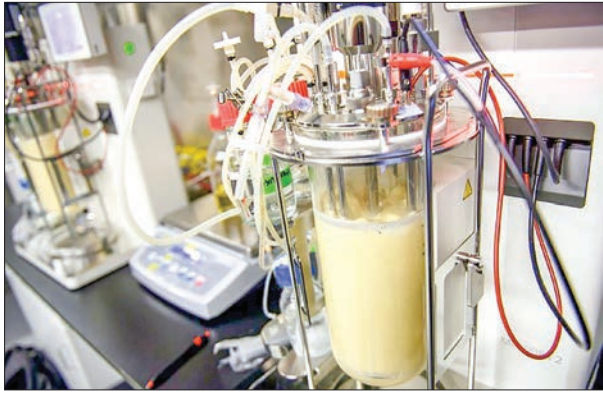
Officials are looking to put government representatives on licensed operators' boards to oversee their operations, and to criminalize underground banking in the industry.—AFP

US startup aims to transform pet food with lab-made chow

CLOUDY liquid bubbling in glass tubes is key to a US startup's hopes of re-making the pet food industry by growing nutritional chow in a lab.

Most pet food includes animal protein, which requires the slaughter of animals and is ultimately a source of planet-warming gases.

Rich Kelleman's Colorado-based Bond Pet Foods, however, is aiming to sidestep both pitfalls by making those same pro-



A US startup is growing nutritional pet food in a lab. PHOTO: AFP

teins in a biotech process. His inspiration comes in part from his own dis-

gust over the treatment of livestock on its way to the food supply.

He was also shocked when he read a study showing that pets in the US consume as many calories sourced from animals as France's population, which numbers more than 65 million.

Livestock's impact on climate change added to his resolve, as raising animals for food is responsible for a whopping 14.5 per cent of human-linked greenhouse gas emissions, according to UN data.—AFP ■

UK delays full post-Brexit border checks from EU

BRITAIN on Tuesday said it would push back its implementation of full post-Brexit border checks on goods from the European Union, as the pandemic, red tape and new immigration rules

fuel supply problems. Plans to introduce full controls in areas such as the import of food and animal products had been due from next month but would now start from January next year under

a "pragmatic new timetable", the government said.

Britain will still introduce full customs declarations and controls on 1 January 2022, as planned. Certification and

physical checks on food and animal goods designed to protect against diseases, pests and contaminants — due to be introduced on 1 January — will now be introduced in July 2022.—AFP ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION ENTERPRISE

Date: September 16, 2021

Invitation to Bid for Comprehensive Operation and Maintenance (including Long Term Service Agreement, LTSA with Original Equipment Manufacturer, OEM) of 118 MW Thahton Power Plant

1. Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) seeks to invite tender for Comprehensive Operation and Maintenance of 118 MW Thahton Power Plant.
2. The Operation and Maintenance period shall be **25 years (twenty-five)** years from commercial operation date (COD).
3. The Tender Document can be purchased at Procurement Department, Electric Power Generation Enterprise, Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw, and No.39, Kanner Road, Ahlone Power Plant, Ahlone Township, Yangon, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar within office hour from the tender announced date. The Tender Form fee is three hundred thousand (300,000) Kyat.
4. The bid submission date is October 15, 2021 at [14:00] hr. Myanmar Standard Time.
5. The bidders shall prepare the proposals in accordance with the Tender Document. Bidder's Proposals must be submitted at the following address on time. Any late proposal shall be rejected.
6. The necessary information of this tender can be inquired within office hour.

Electric Power Generation Enterprise
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw
Ph +95 67 8104282, +95 9 989330333

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL TRUST VOY.NO. (2160S/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BLPL TRUST VOY.NO. (2160S/E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **16-9-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V GUANG PING VOY.NO. (041N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V GUANG PING VOY.NO. (041N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **16-9-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HALUS VOY.NO. (KHLU0184N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KOTA HALUS VOY.NO. (KHLU0184N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **16-9-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MAERSK NESNA VOY.NO. (137W/138E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MAERSK NESNA VOY.NO. (137W/138E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **16-9-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OLIVA VOY.NO. (135X)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V OLIVA VOY. NO. (135X)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **16-9-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CL CENTURY V.13

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CL CENTURY VOY.NO. (13)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-9-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **WILMAR** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S WILHELMSSEN SHIPS SERVICE(S) PTE LTD

Pope calls for 'integration' for poverty-stricken Slovak Roma

POPE Francis on Tuesday visited a dilapidated housing estate inhabited by ethnic Roma in eastern Slovakia, calling for "integration" for the marginalized community.

The 84-year-old Argentine pontiff, who is on his first foreign trip since a colon operation in July, often calls for assistance to the world's poorest communities.

After hearing from Roma at the Lunik IX estate in Kosice, the pope told members of the community that "all too often you

have been the object of prejudice and harsh judgements".

"Marginalizing others accomplishes nothing. Segregating ourselves and other people eventually leads to anger. The path to peaceful coexistence is integration," he said from a podium, as residents watched from apartment blocks.

"Francis, Welcome Among Us," read a sign hanging from one window.

In Lunik IX, nearly 4,500 residents are squeezed into a space meant to accommodate

half that number.

Many blocks have no electricity, heat, gas or running water as utilities were cut because of unpaid bills.

"Marginalizing others accomplishes nothing. Segregating ourselves and other people eventually leads to anger. The path to peaceful coexistence is integration," he said from a podium, as residents watched from apartment blocks.

"Francis, Welcome Among Us," read a sign hanging from one window.—AFP ■



The leader of the world's 1.3 billion Catholics also met with 25,000 young people in a stadium in Kosice. **PHOTO: AFP**

Singapore news site suspended, critics fear censorship



Singapore ranks 160th out of 180 countries and territories in Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index. **PHOTO: AFP**

A Singaporean news website often critical of authorities had its licence suspended Tuesday for failing to declare funding sources, regulators said, with a rights group slamming the move

as "unacceptable censorship".

Critics frequently accuse the tightly-regulated city-state of curbing media freedoms, and The Online Citizen (TOC) had long been in the government's

crosshairs.

One of Singapore's few alternative news sources, it often ran stories more critical of the authorities than those in the pro-government mainstream media.

The city-state's media regulator said it had suspended the company's licence to operate its websites and social media channels as it had not fully met obligations to declare funding.

Sites such as TOC "are required to be transparent about their sources of funding", the Infocomm Media Development Authority said in a statement.

"This is to prevent such sites from being controlled by foreign actors, or coming under the influence of foreign entities or funding."—AFP ■

Qatar won't take 'responsibility' for Kabul airport without Taliban agreement



Qatari special forces arrive at Kabul airport where the Gulf emirate has been supporting operations. **PHOTO: AFP**

QATAR warned Tuesday it would not take responsibility for

Kabul airport without "clear" agreements with all involved,

including the Taliban, about its operations.

Doha has become a key broker in Afghanistan following last month's withdrawal of US forces, helping evacuate thousands of foreigners and Afghans, engaging the new Taliban rulers and supporting operations at Kabul airport.

"We need to make sure that everything is addressed very clearly otherwise — we are not able to take any responsibility of the airport (if) all these things are not addressed," Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said at a press briefing.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Biden to host India, Japan, Australia leaders

JOE Biden will host the prime ministers of India, Japan and Australia for an in-person summit on 24 September, the first-ever White House gathering of the "Quad" grouping, the president's office said on Monday.

"The Quad Leaders will be focused on deepening our ties and advancing practical cooperation on areas such as combatting COVID-19, addressing the climate crisis, partnering on emerging technologies and cyberspace, and promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific," White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said in a statement.

The diplomatic grouping, seen as a counter to China's growing influence, held online leaders' talks in March, and ministers from the four countries have also held in-person discussions.

The White House meeting is expected to be one of the final international summits for Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, who has decided not to stand for re-election.

He will be replaced as head of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party on 29 September ahead of general elections slated for October or November.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia will also attend the White House summit.

Any talks between the four countries would likely touch on the situation in Afghanistan, as well as present a united front between the allies before a G20 meeting in Rome in October, Japanese media said last week.—AFP ■

Facebook shields VIPs from some of its rules: report

FACEBOOK exempts certain celebrities, politicians and other high-profile users from some of its own rules for posts as part of a programme launched as a quality-control mechanism, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday.

The programme, referred to as "cross check" or "XCheck," shields millions of elite users from rules that Facebook claims to apply equally at the social network, according to a report citing internal documents.

Facebook spokesman Andy Stone in a series of tweets defended the programme, but noted the social media giant is aware its enforcement of rules is "not perfect".

"There aren't two systems of justice; it's an attempted safeguard against mistakes," Stone tweeted in response to the Journal report.

"We know our enforcement is not perfect and there are tradeoffs between speed and accuracy."

The article cites examples of posts from high-profile people, including one from soccer star Neymar showing nude images of a woman who accused him of rape and that Facebook subsequently removed.

A double-standard regarding content moderation would defy assurances Facebook gave to an independent board set up as a final arbiter of disputes regarding what is allowed to be posted at the leading social network.—AFP ■

North Korea fires two ballistic missiles: South's military

NORTH Korea fired two ballistic missiles into the sea on Wednesday, according to the South's military, as China's foreign minister visited Seoul and days after Pyongyang said it had successfully tested new long-range cruise missiles.

Beijing is the North's key diplomatic ally and main partner for trade and aid, although Pyongyang is under a self-imposed blockade after closing its borders early last year to protect itself against the coronavirus pandemic.

The nuclear-armed North

had fired "two unidentified ballistic missiles" from its central inland area into the sea off its east coast, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

"South Korean and US intelligence agencies are conducting detailed analysis," they added, without immediately giving details of the missiles' range.

The launch came as Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi visited Seoul for talks with his South Korean counterpart.

Beijing is the North's key diplomatic ally and main part-



North Korea celebrated the 73rd anniversary of its founding with a parade earlier this month in Kim Il Sung Square in Pyongyang. PHOTO: KCNA VIA KNS/AFP/FILE

ner for trade and aid, although Pyongyang is under a self-imposed blockade after closing its borders early last year to protect itself against the coronavirus pandemic.

Speaking before the news emerged, Wang hoped that all

countries would help "peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula", Yonhap news agency reported.

"For example, not only the North, but also other countries are engaging in military activities," he added.—AFP ■

Spain PM in Barcelona to reopen Catalan separatist talks



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez (l) and Catalan leader Pere Aragonès meeting last July. They will hold fresh talks on Wednesday but expectations are low. PHOTO: LA MONCLOA/AFP

SPANISH Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez visits Barcelona Wednesday to resume dialogue

with Catalonia's separatist leadership on resolving the political crisis triggered by the region's

2017 failed independence bid.

"I will lead this negotiation on behalf of the Spanish government," Sanchez said late Monday, confirming he would meet Catalan leader Pere Aragonès on September 15 for talks on the region's political situation.

Since the crisis of October 2017, Catalonia has been a dominant theme in Spanish politics and one which Sanchez's government has vowed to tackle through negotiations.

"The situation in Catalonia is very different, much more stable than in 2017 or in 2019," the prime minister said of the huge

violent protests that followed Spain's jailing of nine separatist leaders exactly two years after the failed breakaway bid.

In January 2020, Sanchez agreed to open talks after ERC — Catalonia's oldest and largest separatist party — offered crucial parliamentary support that got his minority government approved.

Initial talks began at the end of February 2020 but were soon suspended as the pandemic took hold. Expectations of success this time are low, with both sides coming to the table with radically different expectations.—AFP ■

Haiti PM sacks prosecutor who accused him of links to president's murder

THE investigation into the assassination of Haitian president Jovenel Moïse descended into confusion Tuesday, as the Caribbean island's prime minister sacked a prosecutor who had accused him of links to the killing.

The decision by Prime Minister Ariel Henry to fire prosecutor Bed-Ford Claude exposed the infighting at the highest levels of what is left of Haiti's government, more than two months after Moïse was slain in his home by gunmen.

Henry's move came hours after Claude asked the judge investigating Moïse's murder to charge the prime minister with involvement in the case. "I have



Haiti's Prime Minister Ariel Henry (C), seen here attending the funeral of slain President Jovenel Moïse on 23 July, 2021, in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, fired a prosecutor who accused him of links to the killing. PHOTO: AFP

the pleasure of informing you that it was decided to terminate your post," Henry told Claude in a

publicly distributed letter. Henry was named by Moïse as prime minister days before the presi-

dent's murder. He was sworn in after the killing, on 20 July, pledging to improve the country's dire security situation and to organize long-delayed elections. Haiti currently has no president and no functioning parliament.

But Claude had begun pointing the finger at Henry, based on alleged phone conversations that the prime minister had with one of the main suspects in the hours after the killing. "There are sufficient compromising elements that form (my) conviction on the appropriateness of prosecuting Mr Henry and requesting his outright indictment," wrote Claude in an official letter addressed to a Port-au-Prince court.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Stench of death: villagers flee site of Ethiopia mass killings

BODIES of rebel fighters dot the roads and fields leading to Chenna, a village in the mountains of northern Ethiopia that this month saw one of the most gruesome reported incidents in the country's 10-month-old war.

Last week, the government accused the rebels, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), of massacring as many as 200 civilians in Chenna, including women and children. Medics put the death toll at 125 but told AFP it could climb.

The TPLF rejected the allegations, while accusing Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of sending "priests, women and children" into battle as cannon fodder.

Chenna is located in Ethiopia's Amhara region which lies south of Tigray, where fighting broke out last November between pro-government forces and the TPLF.—AFP ■

Kosovo war crimes court begins first case

THE first case at a special court probing Kosovo's 1998-1999 independence conflict begins on Wednesday in The Hague, with the war crimes trial of a former rebel leader.

Salih Mustafa, 49, a commander in the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), faces charges of murder, torture, cruel treatment and arbitrary detention that date back to the war with Serbia. Mustafa, who was arrested last year while working as an adviser at Kosovo's defence ministry, is alleged to have mistreated prisoners at a detention compound in Zilash, a village east of the capital Pristina, in April 1999.

The case is the first to go to trial at the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, an EU-backed court set up in the Netherlands in 2015 to probe alleged atrocities by the separatist KLA.

The head judge will formally open the trial on Wednesday and then read out the indictment to Mustafa, the court said in a statement.—AFP ■

Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing to compete in US Symetra Tour

MYANMAR young female golfer Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing will compete in the Symetra Tour's Guardian Championship golf tournament in the United States.

The tournament will be held from 17 to 19 September at the Capitol Hill Golf Club in Prattville, Alabama.

Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing won the PGA WORKS Collegiate Championship Women's Individual Tournament, which was held from 3 to 5 May 2021, and was allowed to directly compete in the Symetra Tour Guardian Championship Golf Tournament without having to play qualifiers.

The Symetra Tour is a competition under the division of the LPGA Tour. It is the highest women's golf tournament in the United States for young female golfers.

Golfers invited from the US universities competed in the PGA WORKS Collegiate Championship Women's Golf Tournament this year in May



Myanmar young female golfer Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing. PHOTO: SYMETRA TOUR

and Phoo Pwint won the with 218 strokes on three rounds, two more than the par.

Phoo Pwint is a student at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) in the United States, occasionally competing in golf tournaments in the United States and winning the 2019 CAA Women's Golf Cham-

pionship.

A total of 120 players will compete in the upcoming Guardian Championship golf tournament.

A total of \$175,000 in cash award will be awarded, with Phoo Pwint Yati Khaing competing as an amateur. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

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.

Hundreds of sports allowed, Taliban promise — if you're a man



Afghanistan's new director general for sports and physical education Bashir Ahmad Rustamzai (C) served as the wrestling federation chief when the Taliban were last in power. PHOTO: AFP/BULENT KILIC

FROM swimming to soccer, running to horse riding, Afghanistan's new sports chief said Tuesday that the Taliban will allow 400 sports — but declined to confirm if women can play a single one. "Please don't ask more questions about women,"

Bashir Ahmad Rustamzai told AFP, from an armchair where Afghanistan's Olympic Committee president had sat until he fled the country last month.

Rustamzai, a heavily-built former kung fu and wrestling champion with a bushy black

and white beard, was appointed by the hardline Islamist group to be Afghanistan's director-general for sports and physical education.

Once the wrestling federation chief when the Taliban were last in power, Rustamzai then worked with the Western-backed government, before falling out with them because of "their widespread corruption," he said.

'We will not ban any sport'

Dressed in a black turban typical of the Taliban, Rustamzai repeatedly ducked questions on the issue of women's sports.

During the extremists' brutal and oppressive regime from 1996 to 2001, women were completely banned from playing any sport while men's sport was tightly controlled. Women were also largely banned from education and work.—AFP ■

Man Utd dealt shock Champions League loss as Lukaku boosts Chelsea

MANCHESTER United slumped to a shock 2-1 loss at Young Boys despite a goal from Cristiano Ronaldo in their Champions League opener on Tuesday, while Chelsea kicked off their title defence by beating Zenit.

Robert Lewandowski struck twice for Bayern Munich as the German heavyweights inflicted a 3-0 defeat on Barcelona at Camp Nou in their first European game since the departure of Lionel Messi.

Ronaldo, the leading scorer in Champions League history, bagged his 135th goal in the competition after 13 minutes in Bern, but Swiss champions Young Boys hit back after the sending-off of Aaron Wan-Bissaka.

The United defender saw red for a dangerous tackle on Christopher Martins before half-time. Nicolas Moumi Ngamaleu equalized in the second half before Jordan Siebatcheu snatched the winner with the final kick.

"It's the first game in the group. We've got many games to bounce back and we must do," said United captain Harry Maguire. "We'll try and pick up three points in our next game and build momentum from there."

United host Villarreal in two weeks. The Spaniards, who beat Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's men in last season's Europa League final, drew 2-2 at home to Atalanta in the other Group F match.—AFP ■