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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.

## Only when water inlet channels must be inspected for prevention of dryness in lakes will the inflow of water be proper: Senior General



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Hsinlan Dam in PyinOoLwin in Mandalay Region on 16 September 2021.

**C**HAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by members of the State Administration Council, Union ministers, senior military officers and officials, yesterday

morning inspected the Hsinlan Dam and the National Kandawgyi Garden in PyinOoLwin of Mandalay Region.

The Senior General and party arrived at the Hsinlan Dam, 2.5 miles north of Hsinlan Village of PyinOoLwin District

where they were welcomed by officials.

At the briefing hall, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi and officials reported to the Senior General on the cultivation of

more crops, implementation of the dam project to prevent the flooding and greening of the region, inspection for maintenance of the dam, daily supply of drinking water, and rainfalls.

In his response, the Senior General stressed the need to al-

ways inspect the strengthening of the dam for long term existence as it was built to supply drinking water to the area near PyinOoLwin. He called for the effective prohibition of cultivation of crops in the dam area,

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### State Administration Council Press Release

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

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

Information Team  
State Administration Council

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### Press release

BOTH K5,000 and K10,000 notes issued by the Central Bank of Myanmar are not revoked or abolished. The subsection (e) of Section 36 of the Constitution states “the Union shall not demonetize the currency legally in circulation.” Therefore, there is no reason to revoke or abolish the currency notes, and the information and contents spreading outside are just rumours. So, the people are urged to keep their trust in the currency notes issued by the CBM.

Central Bank of Myanmar

### 1,790 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 16 September, total figure rises to 440,741

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 440,741 after 1,790 new cases were reported on 16 September 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 391,268 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 16,869 after 85 died.

## Shwesettaw Manchaung elephant camp to welcome tourists in post-COVID

SHWESETTAW Manchaung Elephant Camp, located in the Padaung-Pyawbwe Kyo Pyin protected public Forest in Minbu (Sagu) Township, was opened on 9 February 2019. The camp is 700-acre-wide and under the Myanma Timber Enterprise's Minbu District timber extraction area.

Shwesettaw Manchaung Elephant Camp was opened to develop tourism based on elephant conservation, to create jobs opportunities for staff and local people, to develop community-based tourism and ecotourism, as well as to generate revenue for the State through green business.

As the elephant camp is only 2 miles far from Shwesettaw Pagoda, pilgrims are attracted to ride the elephants from the camp by enjoying the natural beauties along the Mann creek. There are 11 elephants in the camp and the ride costs 10,000 kyats each for foreigners and K5,000 each for locals. During the Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival held from the

month of Tabodwe for three months, pilgrims from across the country also visited the elephant camp.

Since the elephant camp also provides the guests with bungalows, Manchaung Elephant Camp will become a tourist destination in the post-COVID-19 period for those who want to take a bath in the cool and clean water of the Mann creek, and those who enjoy the magnificent natural landscapes. — Zeya Htet (Minbu)/GNLM



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## Need to narrow development gap between urban and rural areas

HE has stressed the need to narrow the development gap between urban and rural areas with the wish to ensure equal development of all areas. All ministries need to comprehensively consider the measures of all over the country for fulfilling the requirements.

*(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)*

## Only when water inlet channels must be inspected for prevention ...



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hears the reports on the effect of deforestation on lesser water resources and previous experience of dryness of lakes at the National Kandawgyi Garden in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

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cutting of firewood and production of charcoal through raising public awareness as deforestation causes water sources. As seasonal crop plantations cause damage to the soil of the watershed, special emphasis must be placed on the conservation of trees and forests in the dam area. He pointed out that the technical estimations should be done to store the larger volume of water in the dam if water demand of local people is higher in addition to inspection of strengthening of the dam, and urged officials to systematically supply water to the people.

The Senior General and party inspected the storage of water in the dam and supply of water along the water pipelines and left necessary instructions.

They viewed round the route linking the Hsinlan Dam and PyinOoLwin by car and viewed round possibility to do regional development without damage to the environs, and situation to carry out road transport.

At the National Kandawgyi Garden, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Tin Htut Oo and officials presented reports on lesser water sources for the depletion of trees and forests, dryness of lakes in the garden due to stopping of springs and a lesser volume of water leading

to the inlet channels, resumption of inflow of water from the inlet channels due to necessary repairing of inlet channels and underground drains, and opening of the garden under the prevention, control and treatment measures of COVID-19.

The Senior General said as the National Kandawgyi Garden

and PyinOoLwin which are inseparable contribute much to regional development, special emphasis must be placed on beautifying the garden and conservation for long term existence. Only when the water inlet channels must be inspected for prevention of the dryness in the lakes will the inflow of water be

proper. The Forest Department needs to do substitution of depleted plants with new ones. Forest depletion was based on the cultivation of Ayeikmei coffee plants in PyinOoLwin. Settlement of people in the allotted cultivable lands without cultivation, paving of concrete roads and construction of buildings without drains cause loss of water sources. Hence, it is necessary to systematically enforce disciplines for the residents. The Senior General stressed the need to coordinate the prevention of leaking of water from the lakes in the garden and depletion through technological measures.

The Senior General and party inspected the National Kandawgyi Garden in a motorcade.

In the afternoon, the Senior General and party inspected the natural spring, which is an inlet channel of water to the garden, near Nyaungni Village of PyinOoLwin Township and other water inlet channels along the circular road of the garden and gave guidance on needs of prevention for damaging the water inlet channels. —MNA



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views around the water inlet channels of the National Kandawgyi Garden in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

# Development gap between rural and urban areas must be narrowed as much as possible for development of the country: Senior General



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets members of Mandalay Region and PyinOoLwin Township Administration Councils, departmental personnel and town elders at the Township Hall of PyinOoLwin yesterday.

**E**FFORTS must be made for the development of PyinOoLwin area through the tourism industry, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with members of Mandalay Region and PyinOoLwin Township Administration Councils, departmental personnel and town elders at the township hall of PyinOoLwin yesterday morning.

Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Maung Ko and officials reported on the progress of the social, economic, health and regional development sectors of Mandalay Region.

In his speech, the Senior General said as the infection rate is high in PyinOoLwin District, it has been inserted into the list of stay-at-home programmes since July. Several COVID-19 infected persons hit more than 430,000 on 15 September with a less infection rate than the previous month. PyinOoLwin dubbed as Flower City, Travel City and Education City faced halting of business triggered by infection of the pandemic. Only when the infection rate declines will the restrictions be eased.

As the third wave of the disease was high with the infection rate in June and July, the Senior General himself led the central management measures for taking the preventive, containment and treatment measures in or-

der to control the rapid infection rate and effectively undertake prevention, control and treatment tasks. Consequently, a decline in infection rate can be seen to some extent at present. Hence, supervision and inspection must be done in all sectors. It must be an actual decline but data.

Although the emphasis was placed on the prevention of COVID-19 in the early year, effective measures could not do due to a shortage of health staff. Public service personnel must stay away from party politics and must have knowledge about the difference of staff duties from party politics. Health staff members were invited to re-join the workplaces through announcements.

The State Administration Council especially emphasizes the purchase of vaccines for prevention and control of the disease. Thanks to the earnest efforts of the government, vaccines purchased from foreign countries arrive in Myanmar one batch after another with the plan to complete vaccination for 50 per cent of the total population of the country at the end of this year.

The Senior General called for the implementation of modern agriculture and livestock farming in the Mandalay Region. The whole country has 15 million acres of monsoon paddy to ensure food sufficiency for the 100 million population. Mandalay Region with some 700,000

acres of paddy has 50.30 per cent of food sufficiency for its 6 million population. Hence, it is necessary to widen the scope of farmers to raise the per-acre yield of crops. Only when the region produces regional products, will the region have richness, contributing to the wealth of regions and states and then the country. River water pumping projects must be implemented to irrigate the farmlands. As Mandalay Region implements the solar system, such kind of solar system should be applied in pumping up the water from the rivers. The solar system is crucial for environmental conservation. He called for undertaking systematic agriculture and livestock farms.

The Senior General urged officials to strive for achieving success in the breeding of chicken, pig, goat, cow and fish in the region. The livestock farms must be improved to produce value-added products. It is necessary to consider the ways to distribute milk and dairy products in addition to frozen products to the domestic market as well as foreign market. As Mandalay Region has good potential to successfully engage the breeding of dairy cows, emphasis must be placed on undertaking such a kind of business.

If high quality and nutritious foods can be produced in the region, local people can consume them to have good immunity. If so, shortages of agri-

cultural and livestock products are unacceptable. That is why it is necessary to ensure food sufficiency as the first priority. Moreover, the Seintalone mango of Mandalay and edible oil products are marketable in foreign countries. Hence, efforts should be made for the systematic production of fruits and agricultural products.

The Senior General instructed officials to supervise the decline of commodity prices for the basic foodstuffs caused by unbalanced supply and demand.

It is necessary to consider water sufficiency and utilization, enhancement of education qualification, health facilities and proper public transportation in drawing the urban development projects. The construction of roads must meet international standards. The future plans should comprise electric bus service, electric circular train service and subway service for the people. The current government, temporarily serving the responsibilities, is prioritizing the solving of public difficulties and infection of COVID-19.

The Senior General stressed the need to shape PyinOoLwin as a health city with health care and services based on a green environment. It is necessary to provide aid to local people for manufacturing value-added products via basic agricultural and livestock farms. Then, the Senior General urged them to emphasize systematic

farming, effective utilization of lands under the prescribed rules and widening the market for domestic products.

PyinOoLwin is crowded with foreign tourists as it stores green and pleasant flowery plants all year round. Efforts must be made for the development of the PyinOoLwin area through the tourism industry. Road areas must be expanded with clean and neat measures for the visits of travellers.

The Senior General expressed his satisfaction with the improvement of the education sector in PyinOoLwin and Mandalay Region. At a time when the infection rate can be reduced as expected, schools will be reopened. Likewise, plans are underway to enhance the standard of the sports with the upgrade of football grounds and sports fields where selected players can take training.

The development gap between rural and urban areas must be narrowed as much as possible for the development of the country. If efforts can be made to ensure a better economy and the creation of jobs for the rural people, population density can be reduced in the urban area. He called for serving the interests of the State and the region to improve social, economic, health and development tasks of the regions they serve duties.

Later, the Senior General cordially greeted the attendees at the meeting. —MNA

# Thailand hosts 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference

THAILAND hosted the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference through Video Tele-Conference (VTC) yesterday.

Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Maung Maung Kyaw joined the meeting together with the other nine ASEAN Member States' Air Chiefs virtually.

Firstly, Air Chief Marshal Airbull Suttiwan of Thailand made an opening speech and Group Captain Supachai Upan clarified the decisions made at the ASEAN Air Forces' Education and Training Working Group - 8<sup>th</sup> AAFET-WG meeting.

Then, the ASEAN Air Chiefs continued the discussion under the theme of "OPTIMIZING CAPABILITY AND COOPERATION AGAINST NEW CHAL-

LENGES."

The leaders then approved the outcomes of the meeting, and the Chairmanship of 19<sup>th</sup> AACC was handed over to Brigadier General Khamlek Sengphachanh of Laos via the Lao Military Attaché to Thailand.

Moreover, the coordination meeting on ASEAN Air Forces' Education and Training was held between 31 August and 1 September, and two officers of Tatmadaw (Air) joined the event.

— MNA

The Commander-in-Chief (Air) joins the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Air Chiefs Conference online yesterday.



# Honorary dinner held to praise security forces for quick arrest of AYA bank robbers in Bago



The Bago Region Chief Minister presents cash rewards and the certificate of honour to the security forces.

A dinner in honour of the security forces who managed to identify and arrest the perpetrators of the Ayeyawady Bank (AYA Bank) robbery within 9 hours was held at Bago City Hall on 15 September.

Bago Region Chief Minister U Myo Swe Win praised the members of Tatmadaw, military affairs security forces from the Southern Command, and members of the Bago Region Police Force, who worked tirelessly to identify and arrest the robbers of AYA Bank's vehicle in Bago within 9 hours.

The Chief Minister presented a certificate of honour with K4.5 million to the Tatmadaw members and a certificate of honour with K2 million to the military affairs security forces

from the Southern Command respectively. Commander of the Southern Command Brig-Gen Htein Win presented K3.5 million with a certificate of honour to the members of the Bago Region Police Force. The Police Lieutenant Colonel of the Bago District Police Force expressed words of thanks on behalf of the honoured members.

A Hiace carrying about K4 billion was robbed by the PDF terrorist groups near Milestone No. (25/5) on Mandalay-Yangon Highway, Buleinn village-tract in Bago Township on the afternoon of 13 September, and due to the cooperation of responsible citizens and the security forces, the perpetrators were arrested within 9 hours, it is reported. — MNA

# Tokyo-Myanmar relief flight to be operated on 8, 15 October

THE Tokyo-Myanmar relief flight for Myanmar nationals returning to Myanmar from Japan will be operated on 8 and 15 October, according to the statement from the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo.

Myanmar nationals in Japan wishing to board the relief flight will be required to purchase only a single ticket for Narita-Yangon direct flight, and transit air tickets purchased from other countries will not

be accepted. All Nippon Airways tickets can be purchased at ANA-International Flights Booking/ ANA Official website, as well as at the ANA office in Yangon, phone numbers (95-1) 9255100, (95-1) 9255101, (95-1) 9255102, between 9 am to 5 pm.

After purchasing the ticket, travellers are required to fill the attached file and submit a copy of the ANA flight ticket that includes the reservation code and the ticket number, copy of

passport and Zairyuu Card (Residence Card) to flight@myanmar-embassy-tokyo.net no later than 4:00 pm on 22 September.

The Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo and ANA headquarters will review the list of Myanmar nationals who will board the 35<sup>th</sup> relief flight departing on 24 September, and check-in-counter information and flight departure time will further be released, according to the statement. — Nyein Thu(MNA)/ GNLM

# Heroin, stimulant tablets worth over K1.89 billion seized

A joint team of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force searched a six-wheel truck driven by Hla Soe Oo (alias) Hla Oo, 38-year-old near Oriental Toll Gate, Muse-Mandalay Road, Nawngyio Township on 14 September.

A search of the six-wheeled vehicle turned up 118.34 kilograms of heroin and 240,000 stimulant tablets worth 1.98 billion kyats in 38 bags covered in old papers.

According to the investigation, Kyaw Zay, 43-year-old,

and Aung Soe, 31-year-old, were arrested along with a Honda Airwave vehicle for transporting drugs near Wetwun village, PyinOoLwin Township at 5:30 am.

The seized drugs will be transported from Hsipaw Township, Northern Shan State to Mandalay, according to the investigation. The three suspects are being charged under the Law and investigations are underway to capture the rest of the suspects, Myanmar Police Force said. — MNA

# SAC Information Team Leader dispels rumours of demonetization

A fake notification was spreading on the social network that K5,000 and K10,000 notes issued by the Central Bank of Myanmar were declared illegal yesterday starting 2 pm. Concerning the issue, Major-General Zaw Min Tun, leader of the Information Team of the State Administration Council clarified as follows: -

"Section 36 of the 2008 Constitution clearly states about the economy of our country. The State Administration Council is a government that abides by the 2008 Constitution as an existing law.

"Therefore, subsection (e) of Section 36 of the 2008 Constitution states that it shall not demonetize the currency that is in circulation

legally. We will strictly follow that stipulation now and also in the future.

"Then, subsection (d) adds it shall not nationalize economic enterprises. We will follow the Constitution.

"The terrorist groups — NUG and CRPH not only commit destabilization but also spread rumours of unrest in the country.

"There have been similar incidents in the past that K10,000 notes are abolished. So, what I want to say to the people is that the State Administration Council strictly abides by the 2008 Constitution. As such, the legally issued notes would not be demonetized according to subsection (e) of Section 36. The people should not believe in such rumours and chaos. - MNA

A fake viral piece of information circulating amongst the public.



## MoC conducts daily import process for anti-COVID-19 devices



A bowser is transporting medical aids to the needed areas.

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 16 September (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products, including oxygen plants and concentrators, were imported

by nine companies and transported by eight vehicles, including two bowzers.

A total of 38 tonnes of oxygen (liquid) carried by two bowzers, 940 empty oxygen cylinders, one oxygen plant, 256 oxygen concentrators for home use, 500,000 PPE suits, and 17 tonnes of masks were imported via Muse, Myawady, Tachilek and Chinshwehaw trading posts, ports, and Yangon International Airport.

Two vehicles carrying liquid oxygen were transported to Yangon and Mandalay and one oxygen plant was transported to Kawa, Bago Region, officials said.

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 med-

ical supplies required in the 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](http://www.commerce.gov.mm). — MNA



A lorry is carrying and transporting anti-Covid devices to the needed places.

## Prices list of medicines commonly used against COVID-19 till 16-9-2021 September

No	Product Name	Pack Size	Price in Kyats (Retail)	Company Name
<b>ANTIBIOTICS</b>				
1	PO Amoxicillin+ Clavulanic Acid	Box of 1x6's	1,800	Aorta
2	Injection - Levofloxacin 500mg	1x1	3,000	Yadanar
3	Injection - Ceftriazone 1G	1's	700	KCL
4	Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 1G	Vial	4,900	Ready Medicine
5	Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 2G	Vial	9,300	Ready Medicine

6	Injection - Meropenam	1g/Vial	10,000	AA Medical
<b>ANTI-INFLAMMATORY</b>				
7	PO Dexamethasone	Box of 10x10's	1,450	JDS
8	PO Prednisolone	Box of 10x10	2,000	Aorta
9	Injection - Dexamethasone	Vial	160	Aorta
<b>ANTIVIRAL</b>				
10	PO Favipiravir 400 mg	2x10 Tablet	50,000	AA Medical

PLEASE visit the Website ([www.mccpmd.org](http://www.mccpmd.org)) and Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/323302521392189/posts/1720802588308835/?d=n> to know the prices of other medicines.)

## CBM sells \$8 mln on 15 September

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US\$8 million on 15 September 2021 at an auction market rate, bringing a total number of sales of \$23 million in September.

About \$8 million were sold at an auction exchange rate of K1,750 per US dollar. The bank reportedly sold \$15 million on 13 September in the auction market.

In addition, it sold \$5 million at its foreign auction rate on 25 August. The bank has sold about \$28 million in total in August seven times, according to the figures released from the CBM. This

CBM's move is aimed at governing the market volatility and strengthening the local currency value. The bank sold \$3 million on 2 August, \$2 million on 3 August, \$3 million on 4 August, \$2.5 million on 9 August, \$2.5 million on 12 August, \$10 million on 23 August and \$5 million on 25 August.

In July, the CBM reportedly sold \$6 million on 8 July and \$3 million each on 5, 6, 7, 14, 15, 16, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 July in the auction market, totalling \$39 million which is the largest amount sold in the past six months.

The CBM is conducting an

auction for foreign exchange to reduce the fluctuation of foreign exchange rates in a short-term period and fulfilling the needs of foreign exchange reserves.

Rules and directives have been set out for the CBM's auctions. Following these rules and directives, the CBM is trading the foreign currency with three State-owned banks, 19 local private banks and 13 foreign banks, which are holding authorized dealer-AD licences.

The local forex market's data showed that the dollar exchange rate touched the maximum of

K1,345 and the minimum of K1,327 in January 2021. The rate moved in the range of K1,335-1,465 in February. It reached the lowest of K1,420 and the highest of K1,550 in March. The rate fluctuated between K1,550 and K1,610 in April. The rate fluctuated between K1,585 and K1,730 in May and it moved to the maximum of K1,595-1,620 in June. The rate stood at K1,625-1,645 in July.

In 2020, the exchange rate moved in the range of K1,465-1,493 in January, K1,436-1,465 in February, K1,320-1,445 in March, K1,395-1,440 in April, K1,406-1,426

in May, K1,385-1,412 in June, K1,367-1,410 in July, K1,335-1,390 in August, K1,310-1,355 in September, K1,282-1,315 in October, K1,303-1,330 in November and K1,324-1,403 in December.

In 2019, the rates are pegged at K1,508-1,517 in July, K1,510-1,526 in August, K1,527-1,565 in September, K1,528-1,537 in October, K1,510-1,524 in November and K1,485-1,513 in December.

On 20 September 2018, the dollar exchange rate hit an all-time high of K1,650 in the local currency market. — Aye Maung/GNLM

## Ginger price drops due to surplus arrival



Although one viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg) of ginger was sold for over K1,000 in the market in August, the ginger price plummeted to K850 per viss on 16 September. The downward trend began during the first week of September.

HEAVY arrivals in the market have led to a steep decrease in the price of ginger, according to the local traders.

Although one viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg) of ginger was sold for over K1,000 in the market in August, the ginger price plummeted to K850 per viss on 16 September. The downward trend began during the first week of September.

Besides, the price of potatoes, one of the essential cooking items in households, are keep rising in the market, it is learnt.

The potato was priced at only K1,200 per viss in the market in August, whereas it dramatically rose to K1,300 per viss on 16 September.

The price of garlic (Htoo Nga), one of the kitchen utensils, stood at K2,900 per viss in the end-August, but it went up to K3,200 per viss on 16

September. The remaining garlic species such as Htoo Lay and Kyukok fell in the market.

The price of garlic (Htoo Lay variety) was approximately K2,600 per viss at the end of August, whereas now it is only K2,500 per viss on 16 September.

The price of garlic (Kyukok) dropped from approximately K4800 per viss to K4,600 per viss on 16 September.

Further, the onion prices remained stable in the market and the price move in the range of K470-K500 per viss depending on varieties and sizes on 16 September.

Therefore, the traders said that it is difficult to predict the price of basic foodstuffs price due to the depreciation of Myanmar Kyat and the current political situation, it is learnt. — NN/GNLM

## Over 1,700,000 acres of monsoon paddy grown in Sagaing this year

FARMERS in the Sagaing region have cultivated about 1,798,000 acres of monsoon paddy, according to Region Agriculture Department.

In the 2020-21 financial year (FY), the department targeted to grow 1,825,000 acres of monsoon paddy in 11 districts of the Sagaing region.

The monsoon paddy is started growing in the third week of June. So far, about 1,798,003 acres of monsoon paddy have been grown in the region.

"This year, we targeted to grow over 1.8 million acres of monsoon paddy in the Sagaing region. We have cultivated over 1.7 million acres of monsoon paddy so far. The remaining acres of paddy will be cultivated as soon as possible," said U Aung Kyi Win, the deputy head of the Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

This year, the department grew 33,471 acres of paddy in Sagaing district, 63,326 acres in Monywa district, 97,203 acres in Yinmabin district, 672,773 acres in Shwebo district, 182,633 acres in Kanbalu district, 163,503 acres in Katha district, 199,823 acres in Kawlin district, 179,510 acres in Kalay district, 67,240 acres in

Mawlaik district, 49,472 acres in Tamu district, 63,369 acres in Hkamti district and 25,680 acres in Naga Self-administered zone.

In the 2019-2020FY, the Sagaing region grew over 1.7 million acres of monsoon paddy in 11 districts, the deputy head of the Sagaing Region Agriculture Department. — Lulay/GNLM



The monsoon paddy is started growing in the third week of June. So far, about 1,798,003 acres of monsoon paddy have been grown in the region.

## 51 roads, 116 bridges completely constructed in Sagaing this year

SAGAING region has completely constructed 51 production routes and 116 bridges this year, said U Myo Aung, the Assistant Director of Sagaing Region Department of Rural Development.

As roads and bridges are infrastructures for rural development, the Sagaing region carried out construction of 51 roads and 116 bridges in early January 2021. Now, it is completed 100 per cent.

"Currently, the construction of 51 roads and 116 bridges are finished this year. The main purpose is to make rural peo-

ple easier to produce their local products. Also, the roads and bridges we constructed are to transport agricultural products to the town on time. The roads are of high-tech and more convenient than those previously built.

The equipment required to upgrade the roads and bridges are also high-tech so those will be of better quality and longer-lasting," said U Myo Aung.

In the 2020-21 financial year, a total of 51/78 miles of roads were constructed at 32 townships of the Sagaing region with

K2,827.5 million from the Union/Region budget while 116 bridges were constructed in 23 townships with K1,202.58 million from the Union/Region budget.

"The value of farmland has risen sharply. There will be also lower production costs. In the past, we had to carry from one field to another with oxen. Now, we loaded onto the trucks and oxcarts on the side of the road, which saves on production costs. It will also be of great benefit to them as they can destine their products to the market rapidly," he added. — Lulay/GNLM

# Take physical exercises for body fitness to fight COVID-19

EVERYBODY wishes to have longevity. A healthy body of humans needs proper fitness and immunity for ensuring longevity. To have such facilities, everybody should take physical exercises on a daily basis.

They all need to take such exercises as light sport training in the early morning so as to breathe the fresh and cold air. The atmosphere is free from smells and smokes in the early morning because human and living beings are yet to wake up from sleeping. Hence, the environment is clean with smells and sounds.

Those taking the physical exercises must have them concentrate on their moves. They have to take physical exercises with the swing of hands and legs for ensuring smooth flow of blood circulation in the body to support the health of the heart and other inner organs. Such blood circulation can contribute much to arteries in the brain as well as other organs to work regularly.

The people need to take the exercises not only in the single place by standing but in the vast areas for moving here and there as walking. They have to use moves of hands and legs as well as moves of all parts of the body. Likewise, they may take moving exercises on the roads or the plains while taking up walking or jogging in the chosen areas with the body postures as swinging the hands, turning the head and bending the waist.

Primarily, they need to move all parts of the body organs in the exercise while carefully breathing

the breezing air in order to regularize the circulation of blood and operation of inner organs to improve the health conditions. But all the moves must be light sports without facing exhaustion to be able to prevent the mitigation of immunity. It is because the COVID-19 pandemic is ready to attack all the humans whoever is weak in immunity.

In fact, physical exercises help people have good health conditions and prevent undesirable expenses of receiving medical treatment. Such a daily exercise will contribute much to the people to have the capability to fight against the pandemic. Hence, all people should take physical exercises daily for the improvement of their health conditions with high immunity to have the capability for fighting COVID-19.



# Unlocking Investment Promotion and Facilitation of Myanmar

By Maung Thitsar (Yankin)

THE escalating trade tensions, the slow advancement of multilateralism, serious challenges for global and regional level political and economic activity posed by the COVID-19 pandemic have severely impacted FDI flows to and from the Asia Pacific region. The countries including those in the ASEAN region are taking various initiatives to mitigate the impact through policy developments and recovery measures as their forward-looking agenda in response to the Pandemic. These initiatives include a range of measures: financial incentives through establishing recovery fund; non-financial incentives; tax incentives and non-tax incentives like exemption of land and building lease fees. Over and above, the procedures are intensively simplified and streamlined as a pivot to investment facilitation.

Among them, Indonesia is an appreciable champion that vigorously strikes for investment facilitation, improving the overall ease of doing business, particularly for investors as well as increasing competitiveness and creating jobs. Aiming to simplify and reduce requirements of business licensing, Indonesia has enacted the Omnibus Law as integrated breakthrough legislation covering the labour law, the economic zone law, land law, public management law, research and innovation law, investment development law, criminal and penal code and so on. The Law came into force in November 2020.

Likewise, Myanmar is in the need to step up efforts to create the post-COVID economic recovery by establishing an enabling business environment along with the supportive measures of investment promotion and facilitation.

The business community often highlights the challenges in obtaining business-related licences, permits and recommendations from line agencies. The challenges are outlined as below: -

- (a) being lack of transparency, simplification and consistency in procedures;
- (b) taking long duration and several steps in getting those licenses & permits and recommendations;
- (c) requiring a lot of documents to be submitted;
- (d) acquiring comments and recommendations that are not directly related to the business; and
- (e) being delay process of collecting documents with a manual system.

Consequently, the State Administration Council gave the guidance of removing those barriers in ease of doing business for the private sector. In line with the guidance, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations has made a preliminary review on the timeframe, steps of procedures associated with the relevant laws and regulations, regarding obtaining these licences & permits and recommendations permitted or issued by the 16 ministries and agencies that deal with businesses and investors. The preliminary review has figured out a total of 299 different types of licences & permits and recommendations from these ministries and agencies whereas there were 177 kinds of licences that are directly related to the permits/endorsements issued by the Myanmar Investment Commission.

Moreover, it is observed that the formation of Review Team is required to have the way forward on the delays and procedural difficulties in obtaining the necessary licences, permits and recommendations for setting up the investment-related businesses by coordinating with the relevant departments and agencies.

Therefore, the Review Team on the licences, permits and recom-

mendations was formed with the Notification No. 108/2021 dated 12-4-2021 by the State Administration Council. The team, headed by the Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, is composed of a total of 16 members including the high-ranking officials such as the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Deputy Director-General, Joint Secretary from the line Ministries and the City Development Committees.

The Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) is acting as the secretariat office of this review team. DICA spares no effort in accomplishing the tasks such as organizing the consultation meetings collectively or individually with the business-related departments, agencies and development committees, reviewing the licences, permits and recommendations issued by these agencies, seeking and assessing the comments within one month. The relevant officials from these agencies actively participated in streamlining the procedures for granting the approval.

The outcomes of and the coordinative efforts are as follows: -

- (a) Reducing time
- (b) Reducing documents to be submitted
- (c) Fully online services or hybrid
- (d) Approval with Package System in cooperation of the departments under the Ministry or between the Ministry and the Agencies for the businesses with the same nature)

### Reducing Time

Among the assessed 177 different types of licences, permits and recommendations, the length of time for applying the 99 kinds of licences, permits and recommendations can be reduced from a minimum of 1 day to a maximum of 335 days. For example, the time taken to obtain the permit for fishing and selling of oysters by domestic investment was previously 365 days but as an outcome of the negotiation of the review team, it will take only 30 days. Likewise, the required time to get the permit for the private hospital/ special clinic was 90 days but now, it will take less than 30 days.

### Reducing the documents

On the other hand, the number of documents required for the 42 different licences and permits can be reduced from 1 to 14. For example, currently, a total of required documents to be attached for the liquor license (22 kinds of retails/ wholesales) are 13 documents out of 27 documents and so 14 kinds of documents can be reduced. Also for the private industrial registration certificate, the documents can be reduced from 14 to 4 and so the total number of the required documents is only 10.

### Fully Online or Hybrid System

The Ministries and Committees will extend their services for the application and approval of licences and permits by means of fully online or Semi Online (Hybrid). For 39 kinds of licences and permits, the functions of the 6 Ministries will be performed online within two years.

Approval process with Package System in Cooperation of Departments under the Ministry or between Ministry and Agencies

Based on the nature of work, some licences/permits can be applied simultaneously by an investor while they can be scrutinized and approved by respective departments in a collective way. Therefore, a Package System will be introduced in approving such licences/permits. The following table provides examples of the package system:

Sr. No.	Ministry	Licences/Permits approved with the package system
1.	Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issuance of Fire Safety Instruction before starting construction work</li> <li>- Issuance of Fire Safety Certificate</li> <li>- Issuance of Private Industrial Registration Certificate</li> <li>- Issuance of Boiler Usage Certificate</li> <li>- Issuance of Electricity Safety Certificate</li> <li>- Inspection for Generator and Issuance of Registration and Usage Certificate for Generator</li> </ul>
2.	Ministry of Industry, and Regional Tourism Working Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Elevator Usage Permit</li> <li>- Escalator Usage Permit</li> <li>- Pre-permit of Hotel Building and Modification</li> </ul>
3.	Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pharmacy Import Permit Certificate</li> <li>- Pharmacy Sales Licence</li> </ul>
4.	Mandalay City Development Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building Permit</li> <li>- Fencing Permit</li> </ul>

According to the outcomes mentioned above, the reduction of time and documents, the transformation of an online system, and the approval process with the package system will definitely support strengthening business continuity or resilience in the new normal period.

In addition, ministries and committees will continue the implementation of investment facilitation measures that need a longer timeframe such as electronically applying for and approving licences, permits and recommendations. Internet Banking System will be developed by connecting Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB) and private banks for online payment by the applicants.

At present, it is required for an investor to obtain a licence from two different departments/agencies if the types of licences have a very similar nature. Therefore, in such cases, we will ensure the single application procedure for an investor; and clearly define the roles and responsibilities among the government agencies. In addition, legal reform measures will be undertaken for the improvement of licencing procedures.

Besides, reform measures will be undertaken to amend the inconsistencies among business-related laws and to reduce the bureaucracy burden in exportation and importation.

"The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the business-related ministries" was adopted for ease of doing business, transparency and predictability. Similarly, "the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Regional and State offices" are to be published in terms of decentralization of the ministries and organizations to the Regional and State offices.

Among the series of activities or measures for the economic recovery during and after the post-COVID period, regulatory reform has been initiated. So, it reflects that Myanmar has started the significant step to move forward in investment promotion and facilitation of the nation.



## Mass personal data theft from Paris Covid tests: hospitals

HACKERS stole the personal data of around 1.4 million people who took COVID-19 tests in the Paris region in the middle of 2020, hospital officials in the French capital disclosed on Wednesday.

Hospital officials said they filed a complaint with the Paris prosecutor's office on Wednesday after confirming on 12 September that such a cyber attack took place over the summer.

Stolen were the identities,

social security numbers and contact details of people tested as well as the identities and contact details of health professionals who dealt with them, along with the test results, the hospital organization said.

But no other health information was stolen, they said.

In all, "the stolen files concern 1.4 million people, almost exclusively for tests taken in the middle of 2020" in the Paris region, the hospitals organisation

said in a statement.

Those affected "will be notified individually in the coming days", they said.

The facts of the case were also reported to France's data watchdog, the CNIL, and the

French National Agency for the Security of Information Systems (ANSSI).

The CNIL said it had "opened an investigation into this violation".

SOURCE: AFP



## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(ISSUED at 7:00 pm Thursday 16 September 2021)

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 17 September 2021:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Sagaing Region and Northern Shan, Rakhine States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway Regions and Kachin, Rakhine, Kayin, Mon States. 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 17 September 2021:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 September 2021:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 September 2021:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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## Sino-Myanmar bilateral trade totals US\$8.3 bln this FY

**T**HE value of trade with Myanmar's main trade partner China through maritime and sea trade channels crossed US\$8.3 billion in the past ten months (October-July) of the 2020-2021 financial year, including \$4.4 billion worth of export and \$3.89 billion of import, according to the data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar primarily exports agro products to China through the border gates. However, trad-

ing in agricultural products is frequently halted on account of China clamping down on illegal trade in border posts. Furthermore, China has been stepping up border control measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 since April-end, hindering the border trade. At present, China has banned all the border posts in the wake of the COVID surge in Myanmar.

The value of bilateral trade with China stood at \$12 billion in the 2019-2020FY, \$11.36 billion

in the 2018-2019FY, \$6 billion in the past mini-budget period, \$11.78 billion in the 2017-2018 financial year and \$10.8 billion in the 2016-2017FY, respectively.

Rice, various types of peas, sesame seeds, corn, fruits and vegetables, dried tea leaves, fishery products, rubber, minerals and animal products are exported to China, whereas machinery, plastic raw materials, consumer products and electronic tools flow into Myanmar. - KK/GNLM

## Myanmar ships \$128 mln worth over 190,000 tonnes of pigeon peas this FY



Myanmar's pigeon peas are primarily shipped to India and also exported to Singapore, the US, Canada, Pakistan, the UK, and Malaysia. But, the export volume to other countries rather than to India is extremely small.

MYANMAR exported more than 191,963 tonnes of pigeon pea to the foreign trade partners between 1 October 2020 and 3 September 2021 in the current financial year 2020-2021, generating an income of US\$128 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce's trade data.

At present, the price of pigeon pea in India is rising following the relaxation on bean import quota by India.

The pigeon pea fetch around K1,405,000 per tonne, according to Bayintnaung wholesale centre's price data.

Myanmar's pigeon pea is primarily shipped to India and also exported to Singapore, the US, Canada, Pakistan, the UK, and Malaysia. But, the export volume to other countries rather than to India is extremely small.

The domestic bean market is positively related to the law of supply and demand, said an official of Myanmar Pulses, Beans

and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

India set an import quota on beans including black gram and pigeon pea starting from 2017. Myanmar earlier had to export black bean and pigeon pea under the quota system and limit period.

On 15 May 2021, India's Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare approved not only black gram but also other pulses being imported from Myanmar that have the bill of lading up to October-end 2021, with relaxation of conditions regarding clearance consignment extended up to 31 December 2021.

Additionally, Myanmar can export 250,000 tonnes of black gram (urad) and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon pea under the G-to-G (government to government) pact during the April-March period between the 2021-2022 financial year and the 2025-2026FY, as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of

Commerce and India's counterpart signed on 18 June.

This year, the G-to-G pact ensured a strong market next five years, along with other relaxations on import quota, Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce stated. Myanmar's agriculture sector is the backbone of the country's economy and it contributes to over 30 per cent of Gross Domestic Products.

The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, various pulses and beans. Its second-largest production is pulses and beans, counting for 33 per cent of agro products and covering 20 per cent of growing acres. Among them, black gram, pigeon peas and green gram constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage. Other beans, including peanut, chickpea, soy pea, black-eyed bean, butter bean and rice bean are also grown in the country. - KK/GNLM

## Agriculture Dept completes over 149,700 sowing acres of sugarcane in Sagaing Region



During the 2020-2021 growing season, Sagaing Region Agriculture Department targeted 170,200 acreages of sugarcane in the region.

SAGAING Region Agriculture Department implemented 149,774 acres of sugarcane cultivation in the region this year, said U Win Hlaing Oo, head of the region department.

During the 2020-2021 growing season, Sagaing Region Agriculture Department targeted 170,200 acreage of sugarcane in the region.

The department commenced sugarcane cultivation in December 2020 and 149,774 acres have been planted so far, the region department's data showed.

"The sugarcane cultivation is primarily found in Katha, Htigyaing and Kanbalu areas. The growers in Katha and Htigyaing conduct commercial farming for the sugar mills. The growers discuss with the millers to boost production and meet the demand. They

also utilize high yielding variety in farming. The sugar mills also provide financial assistance or make a deposit or advance payment," said U Win Hlaing Oo, head of the region department.

"The sugarcane cultivation costs approximately K600,000-700,000 per acre. The sugar millers from Htigyaing and Kanbalu townships purchases the sugarcane.

"The residents also buy them to make sugarcane jaggery. Meanwhile, the growers from Ayadaw township of Monywa District prioritizes sugarcane juice," said Daw Moe Hmi Tin, deputy head of the region department.

Sagaing Region Agriculture Department mostly utilizes high yielding varieties such as K-95/84, Nawaay-4, Phawmozar and Sinshweli. - Lu Lay/GNLM

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# US industrial production returns to pre-pandemic level: Fed

PRODUCTION by US factories, mines and utilities in August surpassed the level seen before the pandemic caused an unprecedented collapse, according to Federal Reserve data released Wednesday.

Industrial production increased 0.4 per cent in August, but it could have been 0.3 percentage points higher had it not been for the effects of Hurricane Ida, which caused flooding and destruction in parts of Louisiana and the northeastern United States.

The monthly increase was in line with analysts' expectations and put it 0.3 per cent above its level in February 2020, the last month of normalcy before the



Workers stand under the wing of a Boeing 737 MAX airplane at the Boeing Renton Factory in Renton, Washington. PHOTO: JASON REDMOND/AFP

Covid-19 pandemic caused industrial output to contract sharply.

While the recovery was a "milestone," Oren Klachkin of

Oxford Economics warned the sector was struggling with ongoing supply chain issues, as indicated by a nearly flat increase in

motor vehicle production as the sector struggles with shortages of crucial semiconductors.

"Our base case is that rising domestic and external demand keep the industrial sector on a solid growth trajectory, though gains will be capped by enduring supply chain and hiring constraint," Klachkin wrote.

Manufacturing rose 0.2 per cent last month despite plant shutdowns caused by the hurricane, while mining fell 0.6 per cent due to the storm disruptions to oil and gas production, the Fed report said.

Utilities climbed 3.3 per cent due to demand for air conditioning with the weather still warm, according to the data.—AFP ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### European Union: Donation of 200 mn more vaccine doses to low-income countries

THE European Union is to donate another 200 million Covid-19 vaccine doses to low-income countries, more than doubling its present pledge, the bloc's chief said on Wednesday.

The extra doses announced by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen come on top of 250 million shots the EU has already promised to give to other countries, particularly ones in Africa.

"I can announce today that the commission will add a new donation of another 200 million doses until the middle of next year," she told the European Parliament in her annual State of the European Union address.

Von der Leyen told the Strasbourg assembly the donation is "an investment in solidarity, and it is an investment also in global health".—AFP ■

# France gets tough on vaccine rule for health workers



Tens of thousands of health workers and carers remain unvaccinated despite an ultimatum from President Emmanuel Macron to get the job or face suspension without pay. PHOTO: AFP

THE French government faces a stand-off with tens of thousands of health workers and carers

Wednesday over a new rule requiring them to receive a Covid-19 vaccine or face suspension

without pay.

Starting Wednesday, hospital staff, ambulance drivers, retirement home workers, private doctors, fire service members and people caring for the elderly or infirm in their homes — some 2.7 million people in total — must be able to prove they have had at least one shot of a vaccine.

President Emmanuel Macron issued the ultimatum two months ago, but tens of thousands of carers remain unvaccinated.

One of France's biggest public sector unions, the hardline CGT, has warned of a "health catastrophe" if the government suspends large numbers of

health workers and bars private-sector doctors from practising.

Defiant health workers have joined opponents of a new coronavirus "health pass" required for entry to restaurants, cafes and museums at weekly protests held across France in the past two months.

On Tuesday, a few hundred people attended a union-led demonstration outside the health ministry in Paris.

"Whether we're vaccinated or not, we're against making it compulsory," Valerie, a 57-year-old nursing assistant, who did not wish to give her surname, told AFP.—AFP ■

### Approaching Delta wave peak but virus expected to become endemic

THE latest coronavirus wave in the United States driven by the Delta variant could soon peak, but experts warn against complacency and expect the virus will be part of everyday life for years to come.

The seven-day-average of daily cases as of Monday was 172,000, its highest level of this surge even as the growth rate is slowing and cases are headed down in most states, according to data compiled by the Covid Act Now tracker.

But more than 1,800 people are still dying a day, and over 100,000 remain hospitalized with severe Covid — a grim reminder of the challenges authorities have faced in getting enough Americans vaccinated in the face of misinformation and a polarized political climate.

Bhakti Hansoti, an associate professor in emergency medicine at Johns Hopkins University and expert in Covid critical care told AFP she saw the US following a similar trajectory to India.—AFP ■

# UK government raps Nicki Minaj over vaccine claims

A coronavirus briefing in Britain took an unexpected turn when the country's buttoned-up chief medical officer and prime minister found themselves talking about Nicki Minaj, vaccine hesitancy and her cousin's friend's supposedly swollen testicles.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his chief medical officer Chris Whitty were drawn into a debate about the global rap superstar after she revealed to her 22.6 million Twitter followers she had not yet been vaccinated.

Being jabbed was a requirement for attendance at this week's glamorous New York fashion event the Met Gala, she

said, indicating she was doing her own research on jabs.

Minaj then shared a story about a cousin in Trinidad who refused to be vaccinated because his friend got jabbed, became impotent and got swollen testicles.

Whitty, 55, the face of Britain's coronavirus response not previously known for his knowledge of celebrities, did not skip a beat when he was asked about Minaj's comments at a Covid question and answer session on Tuesday.

"There are a number of myths that fly around, some of which are just clearly ridiculous," he told reporters.—AFP ■



US rapper Nicki Minaj revealed to her 22.6 million Twitter followers she had not yet been vaccinated. PHOTO: AFP

## Wealthy Germany's not so equal



Just one per cent of the country's population controls 35 per cent of its wealth, according to a study published in 2020 by the German economics institute DIW. A woman walks past shop windows of a closed hairdresser in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, southern Germany, amid the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic. **PHOTO: AFP**

PHARMACEUTICAL dynasty heir Antonis Schwarz is a millionaire. And he wants Germany's next government to tax him more.

The 33-year-old is a founding member of "Tax Me Now!", an initiative bringing together 47 of the wealthiest names in Austria and Germany that wants to put social justice at the top of the agenda in Europe's biggest economy's election campaign.

Schwarz has given 500,000 euros (\$590,780) to the ecologist Greens, offering strong backing for the party that wants to bring back wealth tax, and reform inheritance tax.

The current economic system "pushes money upwards"

into the hands of a few people, he said in an interview with public broadcaster ZDF, urging fairer distribution across the population.

As Chancellor Angela Merkel prepares to leave the political scene after September 26's elections, a glance back at the socio-economic record of her 16-year reign offers a mixed picture.

Under her watch, Germany has regained its spot as Europe's economic engine, today fully rehabilitated from the "sick man of Europe" image that plagued it in the 1990s and early 2000s.

From 1995 to 2001, Germany grew on average 1.6 per cent a year, almost a whole percentage point lower than the rest of the

EU at the time, as it absorbed the costs for reunification, and in 2003 it suffered a recession.

But its fortunes turned around, and a yawning gap in well-being between east and west has narrowed, even if differences still persist.

GDP per head in the ex-communist east outside Berlin, under 40 per cent of the German average in 1990, was closer to 75 per cent in 2021, according to a report by the economy ministry.

But the relative prosperity belies other inequalities that have only worsened in the coronavirus pandemic.

Just one percent of the country's population controls 35 per cent of its wealth, according to a study published in 2020 by the German economics institute DIW.

### Deep-rooted poverty

With the pandemic heaping unprecedented economic turmoil on the population, calls have grown for a fairer redistribution of wealth in the country.

Besides the Greens, both the poll-topping Social Democrats and the far-left Linke party are in favour of a return of the wealth tax, struck out of the statute books in 1997, or a reform of inheritance tax.

In comparison, Merkel's conservatives have opposed raising taxes.—AFP ■

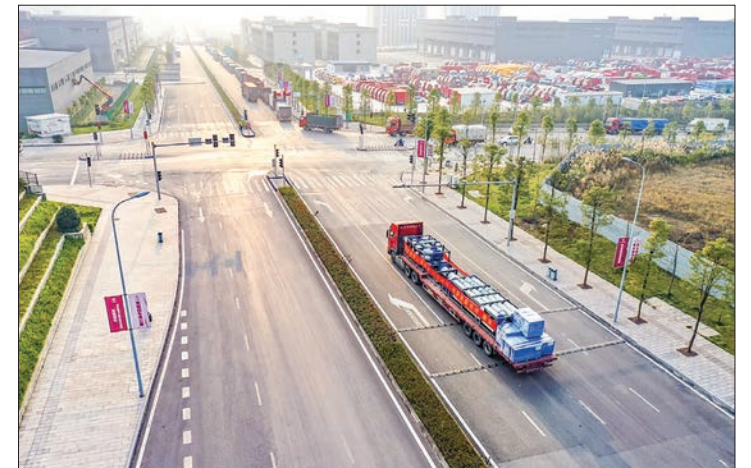
## New highway freight service links China, Vietnam

SOUTHWEST China's Chongqing Municipality has launched a new highway-based cross-border freight line with Vietnam, local authorities said.

Travelling about 1,400 km, trucks from Chongqing can pass through the Longbang Port in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region before arriving at their destinations in Vietnam in around two days.

The new line will provide safe and timely delivery of goods, thus further promoting trade between west China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Chongqing launched the cross-border highway freight service in 2016. So far, more than 7,400 trucks have transported goods to countries including Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand and Uzbekistan. Chongqing, an inland city on the fast track of China's new round of opening up, saw its foreign trade increase by 31.6 per cent year on year to 442.45 billion yuan (about 68.67 billion US dollars) in the first seven months of this year, customs data showed.—Xinhua ■



Aerial photo taken on 17 November 2020 shows a cross-border highway regular lorry for Kazakhstan leaving the Nanpeng Highway Bonded Logistics Centre in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality. **PHOTO: XINHUA/HUANG WEI**

## New Zealand posts strong second-quarter growth

NEW ZEALAND'S economy surged 2.8 per cent in the second quarter, official data showed Thursday, although analysts said the country's latest Covid-19 lockdown had likely stalled momentum.

The growth figure for the April-June period was more than double market forecasts, partly boosted by the opening of a short-lived travel bubble with neighbouring Australia.

The latest figure follows growth of 1.4 per cent in the previous quarter, revised down from 1.6 per cent, Statistics New Zealand said.

On an annual basis, the economy grew more than 17 per cent in the 12 months to the end of June, including a one-off 13.9 per cent boost in the July-September quarter after New Zealand lifted its initial



Despite a second-quarter GDP surge in New Zealand, analysts have said the country's latest Covid-19 lockdown has likely stalled momentum. **PHOTO: AFP**

lockdown.

Kiwibank chief economist Jarrod Kerr said the opening of a quarantine-free travel bubble between Australia and New Zealand helped "supercharge"

some sectors of the economy.

"Fewer Covid restrictions and the trans-Tasman travel bubble opening provided a boost to transport and retail activity," he said.—AFP ■

## 'We only have each other': Bangladesh's trans entrepreneurs create safe work spaces

SIMRAN Snigdha was begging when a chance encounter helped get her off Bangladesh's streets and realise her artistic dreams — one of a growing number of trans people securing formal employment as the government boosts support for the marginalized community.

The conservative Muslim-majority country's roughly 1.5 million transgender people have long faced discrimination and violence.

Kicked out from homes and communities, cut off from education, and shunned by many employers, they often turn to begging, the sex trade, or crime.

"I didn't get the opportunity — I had to extort people — and did prostitution," Snigdha told

AFP at a garment factory in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka.

But in recent years the government has implemented new laws, such as tax breaks for firms hiring transgender people, helping pave the way for their integration into society.

Snigdha now works for a firm owned and run by another transgender woman, while pursuing her dreams of being a painter.

"I can now pursue my favourite work," the 32-year-old said as she painted.

While she has found safety, Snigdha said there were scores more transgender artists in need of help. "I pray they don't go back to begging even for another day."—AFP ■

# 4 Japanese firms to conduct hydrogen supply chain study in Australia

LIQUEFIED hydrogen supplier Iwatani Corp. and three other Japanese firms will partner with two Australian companies to carry out a feasibility study for a green liquefied hydrogen supply chain project in the state of Queensland.

Iwatani, Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd., Kansai Electric Power Co. and major trading firm Marubeni Corp. signed a memorandum of understanding with two local energy infrastructure companies — Stanwell Corporation Ltd. and APT Management Services Pty Ltd. — on Wednesday to conduct the feasibility study.

The six parties said the Central Queensland hydrogen project calls for mass producing hydrogen using renewable energy and liquefying it at Gladstone Port in Queensland and exporting the liquefied hydrogen to Japan.

The six parties aim to produce more than 100 tonnes of hydrogen per day around 2026 and raise daily output to 800 tonnes from 2031.

The project follows a concept study on the production of green liquefied hydrogen and its export to Japan by Iwatani and Stanwell, an electric power firm owned by the Queensland government, from 2019 to



Image shows a rendering of hydrogen production facilities envisaged under a project by six Japanese and Australian companies in the Aldoga district of Queensland State in Australia. PHOTO: IWATANI CORP./NNA/KYODO

2020.

Iwatani will operate as the Japanese-side coordi-

nator; Kawasaki Heavy will study hydrogen liquefaction and loading terminals,

Kansai Electric will provide information on hydrogen's potential utilization and

Marubeni will study a commercialization model.

Stanwell will coordinate overall project development while APT Management will be responsible for advising on the construction of hydrogen pipelines and hydrogen production plants and overall infrastructure including electricity and water.

The project participants anticipate an expansion of renewable energy generation such as solar power because Australia's northernmost state enjoys favorable weather conditions for more than 300 days a year, lowering hydrogen production costs in the long run. — Kyodo ■

# 'Dieselgate' trial opens in Germany without ex-VW boss

THE trial of four former Volkswagen managers accused of fraud in the "dieselgate" emissions-cheating scandal began on Thursday in the absence of the group's ex-boss. The defendants allegedly organized commercial fraud and tax evasion in relation to the scandal which rocked the global car industry in September 2015, when Volkswagen admitted tampering with millions of diesel vehicles to dupe pollution tests.

Last week, the court decided to split proceedings, delaying the trial of

Martin Winterkorn, the group's former CEO, for reasons of ill health.

Winterkorn, 74, was initially meant to stand trial alongside the other four executives but recently underwent an operation, leaving him unable to appear. The hearing in Brunswick, not far from Volkswagen's corporate seat in Wolfsburg, is the second significant criminal trial in relation to the dieselgate scandal. Another, involving Rupert Stadler, the former boss of Volkswagen subsidiary Audi, began a year ago



Four former Volkswagen managers are accused of organizing fraud and tax evasion in connection with the Dieselgate scandal. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

and is still ongoing. Judges will hope to pinpoint, among the company's engineers and directors, who was aware of the emissions-cheating software,

when they knew, and who gave the green light to the plan involving "9 million vehicles sold in Europe and the US", according to the indictment.—AFP ■

# Shanghai's pure electric passenger vehicle exports soar 14.3 times in Jan-Aug



Photo taken on 10 August shows an electric bus delivered by Chinese automaker BYD to public transport operator Nobina for use in Helsinki. PHOTO: MATTI MATIKAINEN/XINHUA

THE export value of Shanghai's pure electric passenger vehicles came in at approximately 20.68 billion yuan (3.22 billion U.S. dollars), up 14.3 times year on year, in the first eight months of 2021, local customs said Thursday.

From January to August, the city's automobile exports reached nearly 35 billion yuan, up 247.8 per cent compared with the same period last year.

During the period, pure electric passenger cars, also known as battery electric passenger vehicles, accounted for nearly 60 per cent of Shanghai's total automobile export value, showing the rapid momentum of the new energy vehicle industry in Shanghai, according to the local customs. Meanwhile, the city's auto parts exports hit 30.17 billion yuan, up 31.2 per cent year on year. — Xinhua ■

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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# Canada's tight election heads into final stretch



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is in a fight for political survival after calling snap elections. **PHOTO: AFP**

TENSIONS are mounting four days ahead of Canada's legislative elections as Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called on citizens to "vote strategically" to block a Conservative surge as he faces a potential defeat at the hands of rookie Tory leader Erin O'Toole. According to polls, the two major parties that have ruled Canada since its 1867 confederation are in a statistical dead heat, each garnering the support of 32 per cent of respondents, while the leftist New Democratic Party trails far behind.

If the numbers hold, Canada

could see a repeat of the 2019 general election in which Trudeau's once-mighty juggernaut party was reduced to a minority government. "The fight is escalating between the two political parties," pollster Jean-Marc Leger told AFP. And as none of the party leaders "seem to have made an impression on voters, it looks like it will be a vote by elimination rather than a vote based on convictions," he said. When Trudeau pulled the plug on his government at the beginning of August in order to force snap elections, he was riding high in the polls.

Canadians were strongly supportive of his pandemic response, which saw hundreds of billions of dollars doled out to support workers and businesses through the crisis. And the nation's Covid vaccine rollout was going well, despite initial missteps. It seemed a good time to try to regain a majority in a third term. Trudeau remains Canadians' top choice for prime minister; but scandals and ethics lapses have tarnished his golden boy image, while his administration is showing signs of wear after six years in office. —AFP ■

## EU announces defence summit, more aid after Afghan collapse

EUROPE will seek to boost its own military capacity after the collapse of the US-backed government in Afghanistan, EU chief Ursula von der Leyen said Wednesday, announcing a defence summit.

"It is time for Europe to step up to the next level," von der Leyen told the European Parliament, in her annual State of the European Union address.

France's President Emmanuel Macron will convene the

"summit on European defence" during France's six-month presidency of the bloc, starting at the New Year, she said.

Paris has been leading the push for the 27-nation union to develop more autonomous military capacities alongside the Western alliance, which is traditionally led by the US.

And the rapid collapse of Afghanistan's government at the end of the 20-year-old US-led mission in Afghanistan has

intensified debate in Brussels' about the EU's role.

But most EU nations are also members of the NATO alliance and some, particularly eastern states more exposed to threats Russia, do not want to undermine ties with the United States.

"Witnessing events unfold in Afghanistan was profoundly painful for the families and friends of fallen servicemen and servicewomen," von der Leyen said.

"We have to reflect on how



EU chief Ursula von der Leyen pledged an additional 100 million euros in aid to Afghanistan. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

this mission could end so abruptly. There are deeply troubling questions that allies will have to tackle within NATO.

"But there's simply no security and defence issue where less cooperation is the answer." —AFP ■

## China hosts first multinational peacekeeping exercise

CHINA wrapped up the country's first multinational peacekeeping exercise on Wednesday, demonstrating the extent of its military might on a huge training ground ringed by mountains.

China's defence spending is the second largest in the world after the US, and tensions have dramatically increased between rival powers as Beijing has poured trillions of yuan into the modernization of its military.

But the country has repeatedly sought to allay fears over its military intentions, projecting itself as a peaceful counterpoint to what it calls the "bullying, hegemonic behaviour" of Washington.

Troops from Thailand, Mongolia and Pakistan joined China's armed forces for the 10-day exercise dubbed "Shared Destiny 2021" at the military base in Queshan county in central Henan province.

Senior Colonel Lu Jianxin told journalists invited to the base

that the exercise "demonstrates China's support for the multilateral system centred on the UN" as Beijing sought to put its defence diplomacy on full display.

Blue-helmeted soldiers took turns role-playing various scenarios: civilians and refugees caught up in a brawl, or armed militants attacking UN forces.

Dozens of armoured vehicles, bulldozers, helicopters and tanks — all bearing the UN logo — were mobilised for the event.

As of the end of July, China was the eighth-largest contributor to peacekeeping troops, with 2,158 military personnel engaged around the world, according to UN data.—AFP ■



Troops from Thailand, Mongolia and Pakistan joined China's armed forces in its country's first multinational peacekeeping exercise. **PHOTO: AFP**

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### UN withdraws Gabon peacekeepers from Central Africa over sex abuse claims

THE United Nations on Wednesday ordered the withdrawal of Gabon's 450-strong peacekeeping contingent from the Central African Republic over sexual abuse allegations, a scourge that has long tarnished UN interventions.

The UN said it has now received a total of 32 allegations of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation against troops from Gabon, which are part of an international peacekeeping force numbering thousands in the CAR. Gabon said it had opened an investigation following the UN decision to withdraw Gabon's contingent to MINUSCA, the UN mission in CAR.—AFP ■

#### TikTok star Jagmeet Singh courts youth vote in Canada election

AS soon as his news conference ends, Jagmeet Singh pulls out his phone, gathers the crowd for an Instagram video and leads them in song, jumping and spinning in place while filming.

As he campaigns ahead of next week's snap elections, Singh, the 42-year-old leader of Canada's leftist New Democratic Party (NDP), is looking to embody a new way of doing politics.

And by relying heavily on social media he hopes to woo young voters who once helped propel Prime Minister Justin Trudeau into office. A few hours later, he appears dancing to rap music on TikTok, where his videos typically get in excess of one million views.—AFP ■

## Australians squirm as Biden calls PM 'fellow Down Under'

AUSTRALIANS squirmed Thursday as US President Joe Biden thanked their prime minister for joining a major new defence alliance -- but appeared to forget his name.

Instead of being feted by name for his role in the US-Britain-Australia agreement, Prime Minister Scott Morrison was initially relegated to being "that fellow Down Under".

At a televised White House announcement, Biden was flanked by large video displays

of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Australia's Morrison, who each took part remotely.

"Thank you, Boris and... and I want to thank that fellow Down Under. Thank you very much, pal. Appreciate it, Mr Prime Minister," Biden said as he revealed an agreement that will equip Australia with nuclear-powered submarines.

Biden seemed to recover as he then turned to his formal remarks and correctly identified the Australian leader, who

had earlier responded to the apparent gaffe with a smile and a thumbs up. But it was too late for some.

"Thanks pal": Biden appears to forget Morrison's name," ran a headline in the Cairns Post.

The defence deal "may not have got off to the shining start for which Morrison hoped, of course, when US President Joe Biden appeared to forget his name at the crucial moment", said an analysis by the Sydney Morning Herald.—AFP ■



US President Joe Biden participates in a virtual press conference on national security with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson (R) and Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC. PHOTO: AFP

## Australian nuclear subs will be banned from New Zealand waters: Ardern



French President Emmanuel Macron (2nd L) and former Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull (3rd L) stand on the deck of a Collins-class submarine in Sydney in May 2018 — reports say that an expected security deal with the United States and Britain could derail Australia's plans to purchase French submarines. PHOTO: LUDOVIC MARIN POOL/AFP

NEW ZEALAND will not lift a decades-long ban on nuclear-powered vessels entering its waters in the wake of key ally Australia's decision to develop a

nuclear submarine fleet, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Thursday.

Ardern said her Australian counterpart Scott Morrison

had briefed her on Canberra's plan to develop nuclear-powered submarines with the help of the United States and Britain. She described the deal as "primarily around technology and defence hardware", playing down implications for the so-called "Five Eyes" partnership of the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

"This arrangement in no way changes our security and intelligence ties with these three countries, as well as Canada," the New Zealand leader said in a statement.

But she also said New Zealand would maintain a ban on nuclear-powered vessels that dates back to 1985, meaning Wellington will not allow the prized naval asset being developed by Australia into its waters.—AFP ■

## Putin's unpopular party slated for election win

WHEN polls open Friday in Russia's parliamentary elections, few voters would bet against an easy win for the ruling United Russia party, even though it is more unpopular now than ever before. The party was founded by President Vladimir Putin after he came to power in 2000, with the aim of translating his personal appeal into a dominant parliamentary force. But after benefitting from the economic boom in Putin's early years, it has become a target for Russians' grievances and is



Vladimir Putin's United Russia party in recent years has become an easy target for voters frustrated by the country's struggling economy. PHOTO: AFP

now polling at under 30 per cent. "Everything that is unpopular is associated with United Russia," said independent political analyst Valery Solovoy.

Still, it is expected to win.

During a lacklustre campaign, the authorities with nearly unlimited resources have gone to lengths to clear obstacles from United Russia's path to victory.—AFP ■

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Philippines' Duterte will not cooperate with ICC drug war probe

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Duterte will not cooperate with the International Criminal Court's probe into the Philippines' drug war, his lawyer said Thursday, after its judges found the crackdown could be a crime against humanity.

ICC judges authorised Wednesday a full-blown investigation into Duterte's anti-narcotics campaign, which rights groups estimate has killed tens of thousands of people, saying it resembled an illegitimate and systematic attack on civilians.

Duterte "will not cooperate since first of all, the Philippines has left the Rome Statute, so the ICC no longer has jurisdiction over the country", chief presidential legal counsel Salvador Panelo told local radio DZBB.

"The government will not let in any ICC member to collect information and evidence here in the Philippines. They will be barred entry."

Duterte pulled Manila out of the Hague-based court after it launched a preliminary probe, but the ICC said it had jurisdiction over crimes committed while the Philippines was still a member.

Rights groups, lawyers and relatives of people killed in the drug war welcomed the ICC decision. "I'm glad because this might be a way for us to get justice for the deaths of our loved ones," said Corazon Enriquez, who blames Duterte for the killing of her son during a police raid on their home in 2016.—AFP ■

#### French forces kill IS Sahel jihadist leader wanted by US

THE head of Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, who was wanted for deadly attacks on US soldiers and foreign aid workers, has been killed in an operation by French troops.

Adnan Abu Walid al-Sahrawi was "neutralized by French forces", President Emmanuel Macron tweeted early Thursday.

"This is another major success in our fight against terrorist groups in the Sahel," Macron said, without giving the location or details of the operation.

Defence Minister Florence Parly said Sahrawi died following a strike by France's Barkhane force, which battles jihadists in the Sahel.

"It is a decisive blow against this terrorist group," she tweeted. "Our fight continues." The jihadist leader was behind the killing of French aid workers in 2020 and was also wanted by the United States over a deadly 2017 attack on US troops in Niger.

Sahrawi in 2015 formed Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), which is blamed for most of the jihadist attacks in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso.

The flashpoint "tri-border" area is frequently targeted by ISGS and the Al-Qaeda-affiliated Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (GSIM).—AFP ■

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

### 1. Political affairs

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

### 2. Economic affairs

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

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

### 3. Social affairs

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

## Host country to be changed for Asian Cup U-23 Qualifiers Group I

THE host country for the 2022 Asian Cup U-23 Qualifiers Group I involving Myanmar has been changed and the host country will be confirmed next by the Asian Football Confederation.

Three teams: Vietnam, Myanmar and China Taipei

men's national football teams are participating in Group I of the Qualifiers, and the China Taipei team was originally allowed to host the event but it withdrew from the tourney previously.

Myanmar has not applied to host the group stage before,

and thus Vietnam is the only country left to host the tournament.

If the Vietnam Football Federation does not want to host the event, the AFC may have to do so in another country with a lower incidence of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Group stages of the AFC U-23 Qualifiers will be held from 25 to 31 October and will be divided into 11 groups.

The Myanmar team is already preparing for the tournament and is headed by Bulgarian coach Velizar Popov.

According to the Qualifiers

format, 11 top teams in each group and the top four teams in total, 15 teams in total, will qualify for the next stage.

All the Asian Cup U-23 Qualifiers will be held in the last week of October. – Ko Nyi Lay /GNLM

## Nadal ready for 'difficult' recovery from foot injury



Rafael Nadal admitted on Wednesday he faces a "difficult" and "painful" recovery from the foot injury that forced the 20-time Grand Slam champion to miss Wimbledon, the Olympics and the US Open.

PHOTO: AFP

RAFAEL Nadal admitted on Wednesday he faces a "difficult" and "painful" recovery from the foot injury that forced the 20-time Grand Slam champion to miss Wimbledon, the Olympics and the US Open.

Nadal ended his season in August due to injury and has said his foot is still a "little

sore" in a presentation of a documentary about his tennis academy.

The 35-year-old said he is "looking forward to improving and facing a process that will be difficult in some ways and painful in others but that I have to go through to fight for what I want again".

Nadal published a photo of himself on Instagram on Saturday holding crutches with his left foot bandaged. He announced he had been in Barcelona "to receive treatment on my foot that will require a few days rest and a few weeks off the court."

After playing his last match of the year in Washington at the start of August, when he lost to South African Lloyd Harris, Nadal then pulled out of Wimbledon, Tokyo 2020 and the US Open.

The Spaniard holds the joint record for Grand Slam victories in the men's game, tied on 20 with both Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic, who lost in the US Open final on Sunday to Daniil Medvedev.

"Over the years, things get more and more complicated because you have to be realistic, time doesn't stop for anyone, but I am still excited," Nadal concluded in the presentation of the documentary, which premieres worldwide on Friday. — AFP ■

## Liverpool spoil Milan's Champions League return in five-goal thriller

JORDAN Henderson's stunning strike ensured Liverpool came from behind to beat AC Milan once more with a pulsating 3-2 victory at Anfield to get their Champions League campaign off to a winning start.

The Reds famously came from 3-0 down to beat the Italian giants on penalties in the 2005 Champions League final in Istanbul, but should have made far easier work of disposing of Stefano Pioli's men on their return to top level European football.

Seven-time winners Milan were playing their first Champions League match for seven years and were given a rude awakening to the step up in class but for a two-minute spell before half-time that threatened to take the game away from Liverpool.

Fikayo Tomori's early own goal was scant reward for the home side's early dominance as Mike Maignan saved Mohamed Salah's penalty.

But goals from Ante Rebic and Brahim Diaz turned the game on its head completely against the run of play.

Salah levelled the scores once more before Henderson's thunderous finish proved a deserving winner 21 minutes from time.

"It was a brilliant game," said Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp. "Very exciting, very entertaining with 10-15 minutes where we lost the plot."

A 0-0 draw between Atletico Madrid and Porto means Liverpool end the night on top of Group B and Klopp underlined the importance of a winning start in such a tough section.

— AFP ■