

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VIII, No. 176, 7th Waxing of Thadingyut 1383 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Tuesday, 12 October 2021

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Law Amending the Code of Civil Procedure
State Administration Council Law 58/2021

6th Waxing of Thadingyut 1383 ME
11 October 2021

THE State Administration Council hereby enacted this law under Section 419 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

1. This law shall be named the **Law Amending the Code of Civil Procedure**.
2. The following section shall be inserted as Section 89-a, under Section 89 of the Code of Civil Procedure: —

“MEDIATION

- 89 A. (1) The Court may make mediation to a dispute in the case which has civil nature pursuant to this section.
- (2) The Court may refer the following cases to mediation:
- (a) cases which are prescribed to be mediated by any law or by any notification issued by the Supreme Court of the Union; and
 - (b) cases that are voluntarily referred to mediation by disputant parties.
- (3) The proceedings of mediation shall be confidential. Any communication, statement and admission made during the mediation process shall not be admissible in any subsequent hearing of the same suit or any other proceedings.
- (4) Where the parties to mediation reach an agreement, the parties shall apply the Court to verify the agreement. The Court shall pass an order or a decree, as it thinks fit, under the relevant provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure.
- (5) The Supreme Court of the Union may issue notifications, orders, directives, procedures and manuals relating to mediation under this section as may be necessary.

Explanation - Mediation in this section is a dispute resolution process involving a mediator assigned by the Court who facilitates the parties to reach a mutually agreeable solution.”

I hereby signed it under Section 419 of the Constitution.

Sd/Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Chairman
State Administration Council

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.

Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek road section to be upgraded

OF 30 roads in eastern Shan State, the Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek road section is the international gateway — ASEAN Highway (AH) and National Highway (NH 27). The 113/3 miles long road was constructed under the supervision of the Ministry of Construction and Highway Department of Shan State (East), while 99/7 miles section was conducted by Road Special Task Force (3) and 11/3 miles by Kengtung District Highway Department.

In the 2020-2021FY, Road Special Task Force (3) and Kengtung District Highway Department implemented 8 types of work plans, including AC paving programmes for 1/1.2 miles (18 feet), paving of tar road for 2/5.2 miles and expansion of mountain road spaces for 4/6.3 miles using K4.5 billion, and the operations are almost complete.



An aerial view of the Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek road section.

According to the master plan of the Highway Department, the officials will upgrade the road to a 23 feet wide asphalt concrete road. — Kayan Soe Myint/GNLM

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

MoI hands over 13 State-owned cinemas to Yangon region government

PAGE-3

NATIONAL

Ministerial Meeting of Least-Developed Countries takes place in Bhutan

PAGE-4

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar aquaculture exports down by 8.6% in 2020-2021FY

PAGE-7



Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Interpretation Law
State Administration Council Law 59/2021
6th Waxing of Thadingyut 1383 ME
11 October 2021

THE State Administration Council enacted this law under Section 419 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

1. (a) This law shall be named the Interpretation Law.
(b) This law shall take effect from 5 May 2021.
2. The word “the General Administration Department, the Ministry of Union Government Office” involved in the existing laws, bylaws, rules and regulations, notifications, statements, orders, directives and procedures shall be changed with the word “the General Administration Department, the Ministry of Home Affairs”, and the word “the General Administration Department, the Ministry of Union Government Office” with the word “the General Administration Department, the Ministry of Home Affairs”.
3. The word “the Ministry of Union Government Office” related to the General Administration Department involved in the existing laws, bylaws, rules and regulations, notifications, statements, orders, directives and procedures shall have been amended as the word “the Ministry of Home Affairs”.

I hereby signed it under Section 419 of the Constitution.

Sd/Min Aung Hlaing
Senior General
Chairman
State Administration Council

Four exceptional civil appeals passed judgement and 6 cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union U Myo Tint, U Myo Maung, U Khin Maung Kyi, and Daw Khin May Yi, was convened yesterday morning

at the Supreme Court of the Union and passed judgements for four exceptional civil appeals, No. 100/2019 (Taninthayi), 101/2019 (Mandalay), 102/2019 (Mandalay) and 104/2019 (Yangon).

In addition, a total of

six special appeals, special appeal No. 5/2020 (Mandalay), 9/2020 (Kachin), 10/2020 (Mon), 1/2021 (Yangon), 2/2021 (Yangon) and 3/2021 (Mandalay) were heard under the COVID-19 prevention and control guidelines. —MNA

1,197 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 11 October, total figure rises to 479,848

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **479,848** after **1,197** new cases were reported on 11 October 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **432,457** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **18,162** after **28** died.

Mandalay Region Rural Road Development Dept to construct 35 roads, 22 bridges under mini-budget 2021-2022

MANDALAY Region Department of Rural Road Development will implement 35 roads and 22 bridges in 23 townships under the six-month mini-budget 2021-2022 (October-March).

This rural road infrastructure will be carried out in 23 townships of seven districts in the region, spending K2.9

billion allocation of the Union Budget and K3.9 billion of the regional budget. The tar roads, gravel roads, concrete roads and concrete bridges and box culverts will be constructed, said U Myo, director of Mandalay Region Department of Rural Road Development.

“The department will invite tender to build the roads



and bridges. Our department will build upgrades, builds and repairs roads and bridges to facilitate rural people. This road infrastructure is helpful in the all-around season. It is essential for the socio-economic development of the rural

residents, alleviating poverty and narrowing the gap between urban and rural people. It will also help transport the vegetables to the markets. It will enhance tourism, small and medium-sized enterprise, education and health sectors,”

he said.

This project will be undertaken in 23 townships in Mandalay, Kyaukse, NyaungU, PyinOoLwin, Myingyan, Meiktila and Yamethin districts. — Min Htet Aung (Mdy Sub-Printing House)/GNLM



People aspire to the democratic election

THE general election is a very important process for a democratic nation, and those persons attempted to secure the victory in the election by turning a blind eye to the election process. The Tatmadaw emphasizes the desire of the people. But, they need to follow the disciplines. Although they can do anything in unison if their acts are not in line with the law, such acts cannot be done. All things must be done under the law.

(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting 1/2021 of the Union Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 27-9-2021)

MoI hands over 13 State-owned cinemas to Yangon region government

THE signing ceremony of the Deed of Assignment for 13 State-owned cinemas, under the Ministry of Information, in Yangon Region was held yesterday morning at the Yangon Region Government Office.

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe, officials from the Ministry of Information and the Yangon Region government, and business owners who rent State-owned cinemas.

At the ceremony, Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn said of the private cinemas across Myanmar, a total of 181 were nationalized in 1968. With five new cinemas and the handover of the “Thamada Cinema” from the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of Information, the number of cinemas became 187.

Due to the emergence of video studios for Myanmar movies since 1986, scarcity of international film and the decline in film

the private, have been supervised by the region/state governments after the management of these cinemas were handed over to the respective region and state governments in 2018. The Union Minister said he believes the Ministry of Information, the region government and the business owners who rent the cinemas will work together for the development of the film industry in the Yangon Region.

The State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister also frequently speaks about the development of cinema and film sectors development, and they are often guided to develop film arts, he added. In line with the theme of “Film for the people”, the role of cinema is important in entertaining the people and it is necessary to work together for the upgrading and development of cinemas, the Union Minister said.

He said artistes are resuming filming under the COVID-19 rules and regulations, and the



Union Information Minister U Maung Maung Ohn looks around the library at the Bahan Community Centre yesterday.

Of 27 State-owned cinemas under the management of the Ministry of Information, 26 were handed over to the respective region and state governments, and the Ministry continues to manage Wazira Cinema in Kyauktada Township to hold State-level cinema events and international film festivals.

In the afternoon, the Union

township, the flow of information between the Government and the public should be focused. He added that people are receiving information more on social media platforms rather than traditional media, and unscrupulous people are misleading the public with fake news on social media. He said it is necessary to carry out public relations activities so that

the public will work together with the Government to fight against the spread of false news on social media.

The Union Minister also urged the attendees to focus on youth development activities and youth-centred programmes in the community-based centres and provided gifts and cash assistance. — MNA



The Union Minister addresses the signing event to hand over 13 State-owned cinemas to the Yangon regional government.

production, the cinema industry has declined. In order to operate the film industry independently during that time, cinemas were leased on a short term/long term or sold with the permission of the Privatization Commission since 1995. A total of 27 State-owned cinemas run by the Information and Public Relations, and 94 of the cinemas sold permanently to

people will be able to enjoy their artwork in cinemas in near future. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe discussed the resumption of the State-owned cinemas and the cinemas sold permanently under conditions in line with the COVID-19 guidelines. Afterwards, officials and the business owners signed the deed assignments.

Minister inspected the Community Centre in Bahan and met district/township officials in Yangon Region. During the meeting, the Union Minister said it is necessary to accelerate the activities as the Prime Minister has made the Department of Information and Public Relations (IPRD) restructured and expanded. As the IPRD offices are opened in every



At the children library. The Union Minister views around the mini-museum at the Bahan Community Centre. (Top Photo)

Ministerial Meeting of Least-Developed Countries takes place in Bhutan

BHUTAN, host country of UNFCCC and LDC, presided over the Ministerial Meeting of Least-Developed Countries online yesterday. The meeting was attended by Union Minister U Khin Maung Yi of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation and other Environmental Ministers and Superior Officials of 46 member countries.

Foreign Affairs Minister of Bhutan Dr Tandi Dorji and other leaders respectively made opening speeches. Then, the ministers of LDCs discussed the objectives and priorities to be highlighted at the November 26th Conference of the Parties (COP-26).



The online LDC Ministerial Meeting in progress.

At the event, the Union Minister said it is very important for the LDCs to cooperate in combatting climate change as it is a major threat to socio-economic development and survival together with the spread of COVID-19. The NDC of Myanmar

aims for agriculture, forest, land management, renewable and energy-saving sectors has been submitted to UNFCCC. As one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, climate resilience and adaptation are the priorities of the country.

The developed countries should contribute \$100 billion yearly to carry out climate change projects starting 2020, provide assistance for the losses due to climate change and, implement the poverty reduction and long-term sustainable fund.

The Union Minister also added that the country totally agrees with the Thimphu Call for Ambition and Action and expressed hopes that the meeting would expose the main objectives of LDCs in the coming COP-26.

The meeting also focused on the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting global temperature at 1.5°C, annual \$100 billion contributions, capacity-building and technical support, NDC of LDCs, improvement of climate resilience, sufficient fund for the impacts of severe weather conditions, drafting of carbon market rules, carbon emission and net-zero emission in 2050 and proposals for COP-26. — MNA

MoU signed among ASEAN countries to have Compulsory Motor Insurance



A signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Minis-

try of Planning and Finance, Myanmar Insurance and insurance organizations in other

ASEAN members to introduce the ASEAN Compulsory Motor Insurance (ACMI) system for

all ASEAN member countries was held virtually at 1:30 pm yesterday.

The ACMI aims to achieve easier and faster cooperation between ASEAN countries on the acceptance of compulsory third party liability insurance and compensation for cross-border vehicles.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Win, Managing Director of the Myanmar Insurance Dr Sandar Oo and officials attended the virtual event.

ASEAN Secretariat Mr Herminio Jr. Cortez Runas from Finance Integration Division gave an opening speech, during the virtual ceremony.

Next, ASEAN Insurance Council Secretary-General of the Council (AIC) Mr Chris-

tian W. Wanandi and ASEAN Chairman of the Council of Bureaux (COB) Mr Michael F. Rellosa and Secretary-General of the Office of the Insurance Commission of Thailand Dr Suthiphon Thaveechaiyagarn delivered keynote addresses.

By signing the MoU, cross-border vehicles entering Myanmar could get the insurance premiums and compensation for third party liability insurance will be available for deaths and injury cases of road accidents.

The system will give a better flow of goods in line with economic integration among the ASEAN countries

Thanks to the MoU, ASEAN countries could have better and smoother trade and financial cooperation. — MNA

12th ASEAN Tourism Competitiveness Committee Meeting held online

THE 12th ASEAN Tourism Competitiveness Committee Meeting-ATCC was hosted by Viet Nam via videoconferencing yesterday.

The Philippines, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam also presided over the meeting and the leaders of the ASEAN Tourism Authority, representatives of ASEAN member countries, the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN tourism marketing officers and representatives of the marketing agency and Director-General of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar joined the meeting online.

The meeting discussed implementation of ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (2016-2025) by the respective leading coun-

tries in 2021, ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy (2021-2025), conditions for the implementation of certification programme according to the ASEAN Common Health and Safety Guidelines drafted for the safety of those who work in the hotels and tourism industry in ASEAN regions, ASEAN Tourism Recovery Plan to be conducted in the post-COVID-19 period together with ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (2016-2025), motions for new projects to be carried out in 2022, work plans for 2022-2023 and programmes to select the committee chairperson and vice-chairperson.

The other ASEAN Tourism Committee meetings will be held until 14 October.—MNA



Daily imports of anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products continue

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 through trading posts, international airport and seaports with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

On 11 October (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products, including oxygen

plants and concentrators, were imported by five companies using by 13 vehicles. A total of 20 tonnes of liquid oxygen carried by bowser, 33,450 PPE suits, and 64 tonnes of masks were imported via Chinshwehaw and Myawady trading posts, and seaports. One oxygen bowser was transported to Yangon, officials said.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) including online registra-

tion for the import process.

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments, treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

Lorries are seen ready to transport the imported anti-Covid medical aids to regions/states.



Myanmar's COVID-19 death toll reports nearly 300 in Oct first week

THE COVID-19 pandemic caused nearly 300 deaths in Myanmar in the first week of October, with around eight per cent of cases reported, the Ministry of Health stated.

The COVID-19 testing positivity rate was recorded at 7.83 per cent on 1 October, 6.67 per cent on 2 October, 8.3 per cent on 3 October, 7.68 per cent on 4

October, 8.41 per cent on 5 October, 8.42 per cent on 6 October and 7.44 per cent on 7 October, respectively.

The tally of COVID-19 casualties reached a total of 299 people in Myanmar, including 54 people on 1 October, 46 on 2 October, 48 on 3 October, 38 on 4 October, 36 on 5 October, 41 on 6 October and 36 on 7 October,

respectively.

The number of COVID-19 deaths reported in the country at the end of September decreased as compared to early September, with a total of 2,346 deaths.

The number of COVID-19 cases has risen up again in Myanmar since 27 May. Daily infections have also significantly increased around 100-1,500 cases

in Myanmar in June when the third wave of COVID-19 begins.

More than 2,000 to 6,000 people were approximately infected daily in July. The infection and death rates have dropped. But it has not declined significantly. Some are treating themselves at their homes covertly. Many people died in every region and state due to the suspicion of

COVID-19, according to philanthropic organizations.

The death toll from COVID-19 in Myanmar dropped after 5 August, but the infection rate is still around 30 per cent, according to the Ministry of Health.

Myanmar reported 478,651 COVID-19 cases with 18,134 deaths as of 11 October 2021. — Aye Maung/GNLM

Over 15,000 people receive COVID vaccines in Hsihseng Township

HEALTHCARE officials gave COVID-19 vaccines to local people at eight rural health centres in Hsihseng Township, northern Shan State at 9 am on 10 October.

The vaccination campaign began on 19 September in Hsihseng Township.

A total of 3,068 doses of vaccines, including 826 first doses (second batch), 1,242 first doses (third batch) and 1,000 first doses (fourth batch) were available for Hsihseng Township.

A total of 15,430 local people from Hsihseng Township, Parlaw Parkae Village, Sightkaung Village, Banyin Village, Tabat Village, Taung Shae Village, Naung Kyawt Village, Naung Mon Village and Lweput Village received the COVID-19 vaccines.



Locals receive Covid jabs in Hsihseng Township, Shan State (North).

Members of the fire brigade, township administration staff and volunteers also assisted in the vaccination campaign where necessary.

The rest of the population will be vaccinated, officials said. — Myo Myat (Hsihseng)/GNLM

Over 9 mln people vaccinated against COVID-19 in Myanmar as of 8 Oct

MYANMAR has vaccinated over 9.574 million people against COVID-19 as of 8 October 2021, the Ministry of Health stated.

Up to 8 October, there are 4.083 million people who completed full doses of vaccine and about 5.49 million people received single doses of Covid jab, according to the ministry.

Fifty per cent of the total population is expected to get vaccinated at the end of this year. The country has already received 18 million doses of vaccine until 9 October, including two million doses of Covishield vaccine, 14 million doses of Sinopharm vaccine and two million doses of Sinovac vaccine. Myanmar has also accepted over six million doses of COVID-19 vaccines from China, India and Russia,

according to the ministry.

Besides, Myanmar has already purchased 24 million Sinopharm vaccines from China under the contract system. As soon as vaccines arrive, Myanmar will administer them to 12 million people aged between 40 and 64.

The Ministry added that it plans to vaccinate 20 per cent of the adult population by end of September, 50 per cent of the adult population by the end of 2021, and 70 per cent of the adult population by mid-2021. The adult population includes any persons who are 18 or older.

So far, about 9.574 million adults have received two doses of the Covid-19 vaccines, while 36.9 million adults are vaccinated with one dose. — Aye Maung/GNLM

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

www.gnlm.com.mm
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com



CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 454237515

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

gnlmnews@gmail.com
www.gnlm.com.mm
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

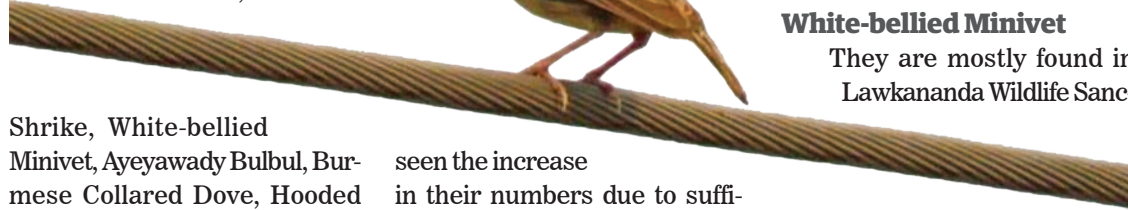
Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aunghthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

Bagan to promote bird watching tour with seven species of rare birds out of nine species that can be only seen in Myanmar

MYANMAR is home to nine rare bird species—White-throated babbler, Burmese



Shrike, White-bellied Minivet, Ayeyawady Bulbul, Burmese Collared Dove, Hooded treepie, Burmese Prinia, White-browed Nuthatch and Burmese Tit that can be found only in Myanmar among the world. The bird lovers and zoological students can study the nature of seven species out of nine in Bagan-NyaungU ancient cultural zone, said U Shwe Htay Aung, warden of Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary.

Among these nine bird species, the seven species such as White-throated babbler, Burmese Shrike, White-bellied Minivet, Ayeyawady Bulbul, Burmese Collared Dove, Hooded treepie and Burmese Prinia can be found in Lawkananda garden and Bagan ancient cultural zone, and the remaining two species like White-browed Nuthatch and Burmese Tit can be found only in Natma Hill National Park of Southern Chin State, he added.

There has been a significant increase in bird populations in Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary and Bagan ancient cultural zone.

Burmese Shrike

They live in Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary and it can be

seen the increase in their numbers due to sufficient food and proper security. They are mostly found in an open field with plenty of bushes and they lay their eggs there. They live far from the houses and sit out on the power lines and trees. When it rains, they are just happy in the breeze according to their nature. The locals call them Moe Khaw Hnget. A faculty member of Yangon University conducted a field study since 2016 in Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary and Bagan and completed her PhD course. According to her study, the numbers of White-throated babblers are between 900 and 1,000 outside the sanctuary area and between 30 and 50 in the sanctuary area.

White-throated babbler

They live in Lawkananda Wildlife Sanctuary and it can be seen the increase in their numbers due to sufficient food and proper security, and they also can be found near the homes as they are tame. According to the study of U Shwe Htay Aung and department staff, there are about 500 White-throated babblers. A faculty member of Yangon Uni-



versity conducted a study for the thesis of PhD course. It is absolutely essential to conserve the birds.

White-bellied Minivet

They are mostly found in Lawkananda Wildlife Sanc-

tuary and Bagan ancient cultural zone especially in the open field. They live far from their homes. They can be seen in small groups of six to eight birds, said U Shwe Htay Aung.

Burmese Collared Dove

They are found at every place of the sanctuary and in Bagan ancient cultural zone.



They search for food near the-homes and most are found in pairs. They also live together with other same bird species of Doves of Columbidae.

Ayeyawady Bulbul

They are found everywhere in Bagan-NyaungU ancient cultural zone. They make their nests near the houses. There are about 300 Ayeyawady Bulbuls just in Lawkananda garden. They live together with Burmese Red-vented and Blanford's olive

bulbul. The teachers also conduct field studies there.

Hooded treepie

They do not inhabit just one place and only a few numbers of them have been found in Lawkananda wildlife sanctuary and Bagan ancient cultural zone for about five years. The two hooded treepies were recorded on the top of the tree in the early days and a small group of six birds were put in the record in 2018.

Burmese Prinia

They do not always in Lawkananda wildlife sanctuary but mostly in fields near the Bagan-NyaungU area. They live in flocks with not more than 10 birds. A PhD degree holder said she recorded only four or five birds out of all birds (from 2017-2020) during the period of the thesis, U Shwe Htay Aung said.

If the bird lovers pay a visit to Bagan-NyaungU cultural zone, it can create many job opportunities for the locals and preserve the endangered bird species. Currently, the officials of Lawkananda wildlife sanctuary and the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan Branch) jointly conduct bird watching tours. The tour to Lakananda garden offer the star-tortoises, Asian brown Tortoise and rare seven bird species and the travellers will also see the huge trees grown in a 100-acre wide wildlife sanctuary.— Ko Htein (KPD)/GNLM



Myanmar aquaculture exports down by 8.6% in 2020-2021FY

THE value of Myanmar's aquaculture exports in the financial year 2020-2021 (October-September) dramatically dropped to US\$784.889 million, showing a decrease of 8.6 per cent compared to the previous FY2019-2020, as per the statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The figures fell short of \$74 million to reach the value recorded during the year-ago period.

Myanmar shipped \$858.95 million worth of fishery products to the external market in the corresponding period of last FY.

Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) is attempting to grow fishery export regardless of the COVID-19 disruption on maritime trade, closure of land borders and fuel oil price instability.

Despite the open season of offshore fishing, Myanmar's fishery export industry is facing a series of challenges such as the oil price hike, surge in container shipping rate, the closure of border posts, disruption on maritime trade and the COVID-19 negative impacts. Consequently, it will harm the export sector somehow in the long term.

"If the border posts resume the trade activity, the trade will go smoothly. The closure of the border posts is triggered by the COVID-19 threats. The cross-border between Myanmar and Bangladesh is still open for trade. The federation is planning to export fishery products to Bangladesh.



To meet international market standards, fishery products must be sourced only from hatcheries that are compliant with GAQP. The MFF is working with fish farmers, processors, and the Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation to develop the GAQP system.

Myanma Port Authority is also ensuring smooth freight flow with non-stop operation. The federation is attempting to tackle these fishery export hurdles," said Dr Toe Nanda Tin, senior vice-president of the MFF.

The price of fish fell by half. The high input cost such as fishing net, oil price posed another burden for the industry, coupled with the devaluation of Kyat in the forex market, Mawlamyine Commodity Centre stated.

The marketable fish products, especially fish, shrimp, eel and crab from Taninthayi and

Ayeyawady regions and Rakhine state are primarily exported to foreign markets.

The federation is turning to the Bangladesh market with export potentials. MFF is working together with the stockholders in the supply chain to have sustainable export growth

The fishery exports through the Sino-Myanmar border has ground to a halt following the consequences and safety measures on the imported seafood amid the COVID-19 pandemic, traders stressed.

Myanmar's fishery export

was experiencing a downturn due to the import restrictions triggered by the detection of the COVID-19 on fish imports in China. Chinese market constitutes about 65 per cent of Myanmar's fishery exports.

China accounted for US\$254 million out of overall fishery export value of over \$850 million in the past financial year 2019-2020.

At present, China shut down the border areas in the wake of the COVID surge in Myanmar.

Myanmar Fisheries Federation stated that only a G2G pact can tackle problems being faced

in the export of farm-raised fish and prawns and ensure smooth freight movement between countries to bolster exports.

Myanmar exports fisheries products, such as fish, prawns, and crabs, to markets in 40 countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, the US, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, and countries in the European Union.

The MFF is making concerted efforts to increase fishery export earnings by developing fish farming lakes that meet international standards and adopting advanced fishing techniques.

To ensure food safety, the foreign market requires suppliers to obtain Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) and Good Aquaculture Practices (GAQP) certificates.

To meet international market standards, fishery products must be sourced only from hatcheries that are compliant with GAQP. The MFF is working with fish farmers, processors, and the Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation to develop the GAQP system.

Processors can screen fishery products for food safety at ISO-accredited laboratories under the Fisheries Department.

There are 480,000 acres of fish and prawn breeding farms across the country and more than 120 cold-storage facilities in Myanmar. — KK/GNLM

Over 10,000 tonnes of palm oil sold at fairer prices within 22 days

THE Department of Consumer Affairs under the Ministry of Commerce stated that more than 10,000 tonnes of palm oil were sold at fair prices of K3,700 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) within 22

days, in coordination with the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association.

The volume of palm oil that was sold at the subsidized price beginning from 20 September is equivalent to the amount that

the oil importers directly purchased the foreign currency from the Central Bank of Myanmar. The MoC sold a total of six million visses (10,000 tonnes) of palm oil as of 11 October.

"The scheme was implemented in Yangon at the wholesale price of K3,700 per viss of palm oil. About six million visses (10,000 tonnes) have been distributed to the wholesalers and retailers," said an official of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

This plan proceeded to Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing and Bago regions and Shan State. The wholesalers and retailers must also resell them to the consumers with a gross profit of less than two per cent.

Under the plan of the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, palm oil is sold at K3,800 with the mobile market trucks.

Those wholesalers and retailers who want to buy them can come and buy at the association's office located at No 104/108 on Strand Road, Ahlon Township through the contact numbers (09444437295 and 09401527049 of the association and 01250270 and 0943666668 of the Yangon Region Consumer Affairs Department.

The price of palm oil hit a peak of above K5,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6kg) in the market, the association stated.

The price hike is attributed to the depreciation of the local currency in the forex market, traders stressed.

Additionally, the association notified the consumers not of worrying over the supply of the edible oil on 15 July.

The association is also making concerted efforts with the organizations concerned

and the related departments to secure the edible oil sufficiency and offer a reasonable price to the consumers, as per the statement.

The association is trying not to occur unnecessary issues regarding edible oil amid the global pandemic impacts.

Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association is attempting to maintain price stability, prevent market manipulation, import palm oil from foreign countries sustainably for self-sufficiency and distribute the edible oil at fairer prices to the consumers.

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



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

Rationally analyze acts of status on social media

ALL the events, movements, behaviours and bodies are combined with centres, edges and extreme edges on the length and breadth of both sides. In fact, these extreme edges depend on users as well as doers. So, everybody needs to look at the extreme edges in all events but to avoid and remove them from the scenes without applying them.

The clarification may be complicated to some degree. For example, most of the global people apply a kind of social media. Most of the mature users understand the nature of such social media on which various kinds of status may be seen.

Such social media is responsible for controlling the statuses of users without bias. If social media stands tall on the right track, it will be the most reliable as a good media platform for the global people.

Social media are just platforms for users. Social media choose dangerous options for harming the lives and nature of children, public safety, privacy and democracy. Indeed, both users and the social media authority commit extreme actions without controlling themselves to post the statuses related to terrorism and violent acts. They both sides hold up the right of expression freedom but they need to abide by social media ethics.

Actually, users take advantage of social media as a platform in which they post any statuses they wish without correct consideration of the loss of others. Likewise, social media always puts blame on users for posting hate speeches, terrorism, porn sites, sabotage and many others but its authority fails to scrutinize and ban the inappropriate posts. Practically, social media one-sidedly removed the posts against its interests and images. Such social media is responsible for controlling the statuses of users without bias. If social media stands tall on the right track, it will be the most reliable as a good media platform for the global people.

Otherwise, social media does not have the responsibility for criticizing the events of edges from both sides and for putting blames on those from one side the social media does not prefer. Whenever the edges of all events cannot be removed and dropped out, social media will be a platform for the users from the edges of every viewpoint. Hence, those from both sides need to be calm down from their attacks and encroachment on any others so as to build a peaceful and prosperous society.

Pandemic saviors, food delivery apps now under fire

MEAL delivery services became essential during the pandemic, when millions of Americans were under lockdown and restaurants were shut to visitors.

But these days the platforms are increasingly finding themselves under fire, with politicians seeking to regulate the industry and restaurateurs accusing the likes of DoorDash, Grubhub and Uber Eats of freeloading. And they are looking for ways to do without them.

In just the first nine months of this year, DoorDash has likely filled over 1 billion orders, most of them in the US, where the company is the market leader.

But Mathieu Palombino, founder of the New York-based pizza chain Motorino, calls the boost provided by delivery apps a "big illusion" because more orders don't bring bigger profits to restaurants.

"When you receive thirty or forty orders a day, you are happy. But the problem is that it does not translate into profits," Palombino told AFP.

Food delivery services can charge restaurants fees of up to 30 per cent of the bill for a meal, according to their web sites.

To address that problem, in August the New York city council passed a law, capping third-party delivery fees at 15 per cent.

"Small businesses should not be pressured into accepting these fees in order to remain viable and competitive," said New York City Councilman Francisco Moya, who initiated the bill. A similar law was passed in San Francisco in June.

Food delivery giants have challenged the laws in courts, and some analysts think they have a point.

"We believe DoorDash will have a strong legal case against the permanent fee caps," Bank of America said in a research note last month.

DoorDash, Grubhub and Uber Eats argue that the cap is unconstitutional and that restaurants are free to negotiate their commissions with delivery platforms.

The delivery giants also say they have made huge investments during the pandemic that led millions of customers who had never ordered meals online to get started.

And DoorDash says that restaurants that used its platform during the pandemic had a survival rate eight times higher than

the industry average. The company also says that even before the laws were passed it already offered a 15% fee formula.

Put Palombino, the pizza chain founder, is unconvinced.

"The problem is that they have become so established that there no longer is a way back," he said. "If you're not on Seamless (one of the most popular delivery services in New York), you no longer exist."

As for the 15 per cent commission, Palombino said that a successful restaurant can "only hope" for a profit margin of 15 or 20 per cent.

"So at the end of the day, they take it all."

"The only real solution"

In court, the food delivery platforms have argued that the cap will trigger higher fees for consumers, who have been relatively spared for now.

Collin Wallace, managing director of the marketing firm ZeroStorefront and former head of innovation at Grubhub, says that so far it's the restaurants who have had to bend.

"The only way to get this resolved is going to be by the technology platforms, using the same



"At the end of the day, they take it all," says one restaurant owner about delivery services' commission fees.

PHOTO: AFP

engineering and innovation they used to get their companies to this point," Wallace said.

Some businesses are already trying to get around the all-powerful delivery apps by creating their own platforms.

One such start-up, ChowNow, helps restaurants launch their own order-taking applications, so as not to have to pay any commissions at all.

Another company, LoCo, creates delivery cooperatives owned by restaurants, where they get to choose their own commissions, often half of what delivery giants charge, said LoCo founder Jon Sewell.

Sewell, himself an owner of a restaurant in Iowa, added that this arrangement also allows restaurants to keep their clients' data to themselves.

LoCo has launched franchises in Virginia, Nevada, and Nebraska and is looking to expand further.

But Sewell admits that the concept is not easy to sell.

"It's difficult to get the people convinced that they need to start to work as a collective."

But, Sewell added, "to me, that's the only real solution."

SOURCE: AFP

Italy starts offering COVID-19 booster shots to people over-60



The third dose will be offered as an option, since vaccination against coronavirus remains strongly recommended but not mandatory in Italy. PHOTO: AFP

ITALY on Saturday began administering booster shots of COVID-19 vaccines to people over the age of 60, a day after the procedure was authorized by the Health Ministry.

The decision followed the official green light earlier this month by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), which stated the booster shot could be considered for all people over 18 after six months from their second dose.

"In the light of EMA's latest deliberation, we can go ahead with the third vaccine dose to people of all ages with a fragile immune system and to all people over 60, always six months after the second dose," the Italian ministry said.

In late September, Italy had started administering third doses — of either Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna vaccines — to immuno-compromised people such as transplant patients, elderly people over 80 and residents in care homes, and healthcare workers.

The third dose will be offered as an option, since vaccination against coronavirus remains strongly recommended but not mandatory in Italy.

Meanwhile, the pandemic situation appeared "under control," and the curve of coronavirus cases kept decreasing gradually, according to the latest weekly monitoring by the country's National Health Institute (ISS) updated to 3 October.

The incidence stood at 34 cases per every 100,000 inhabitants. The data for hospital bed occupancy were also encouraging, according to Giovanni Rezza, Director of the Infectious Diseases Department at the ISS.

"We register a 4.9 per cent and 4.2 per cent of bed occupancy in normal COVID-19 wards and intensive care units, respectively, which is well below the critical thresholds," Rezza explained in a video statement.

So far, the vaccination campaign in Italy has reached 79.9 per cent of the target population (over 12), with over 43 million people fully immunized, official data showed.

To date, Italy has registered over 4.6 million COVID-19 cases, including more than 131,000 deaths, and over 4.4 million recoveries.

SOURCE: XINHUA



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 11 October 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the North Bay and Eastcentral Bay and monsoon is moderate to strong over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 12 October 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, and Northern Shan states, scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, and Magway regions and Chin and Rakhine states, fairly widespread in (Southern and Eastern)Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Magway, and isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago and Taninthayi regions and Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8 - 10) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (5-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of rain in Taninthayi Region and Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 12 October 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 12 October 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 12 October 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

The Global New Light of Myanmar

Order Now

www.gnlm.com.mm

PLEASE CALL

Myanmar's long-running & most circulated English Daily Newspaper



09 454 237 515

အထူးစာ မှာယူလိုပါက ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါသည်

09 454 237 515

Thousands evacuated and coal mines shuttered as floods hit north China



This aerial photo taken on 10 October 2021 shows a flooded area after heavy rainfalls in Jiexiu, in Jinzhong city, China's northern Shanxi province. **PHOTO: STR / AFP**

MORE than 120,000 people have been evacuated, coal mines shut and crops destroyed after unseasonably heavy rainfall flooded

north China's Shanxi province over the weekend, state media reported Monday, with more rain forecast.

The deluge comes just months after record floods hit the country's central Henan province in July — killing more than 300 people — and raises fears about ensuring the supply of energy ahead of the winter.

Many parts of Shanxi, a landlocked province that generally has dry weather, saw record-breaking rainfall over the past week, according to the provincial government, which ordered coal mines to take flood-proofing measures and make emergency plans to be “activated immediately in case of grave danger”. At least 60 coal mines in the province — one of China's top coal-producing regions — have suspended operations due to the floods, according to a local government statement,

even as the country faces a power supply crunch. Beijing recently ordered coal mines to spare no costs to increase production and ensure supply, as well as said it will allow higher electricity prices in a bid to boost generation. Analysts have warned the move could add to inflation concerns.

China has been hit by widespread power cuts amid record coal prices, state electricity price controls and tough emissions targets that have squeezed the power supply. More than 1.75 million residents have so far been affected by the floods in Shanxi, which state news agency Xinhua reported had received more than three times the average monthly rainfall for October in just five days last week. — AFP ■

Still no decision on whether IMF chief keeps her job

THE International Monetary Fund said Sunday it still had not decided whether its embattled chief would keep her job, with the lack of clarity over Kristalina Georgieva's future threatening to overshadow the body's fall meetings this week. An investigation by a law firm has concluded that the Bulgarian managing director manipulated data in favour of China while in a senior role at the World Bank.

The IMF board met again with representatives of the firm, WilmerHale, and with Georgieva over the weekend.

The board said in a statement published

late Sunday that it made “further significant progress today in its assessment with a view to very soon concluding its consideration of the matter”.

It added: “The Executive Board has consistently expressed its commitment to a thorough, objective, and timely review.”

The 24-member board — which usually makes decisions by consensus — could meet again Monday, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

The week-long fall meetings of both the IMF and the World Bank are also scheduled

to start Monday, when Georgieva, 68, is due to speak during a roundtable, as well as give a press conference Wednesday.

The storm at the top of the fund could pull focus from topics nominally at the top of the agenda, such as threats to global economic growth and helping countries bounce back from the Covid-19 pandemic.

WilmerHale's controversial findings centre on the drafting of the 2018 and 2020 editions of the World Bank's report ranking countries according to their ease of doing business. — AFP ■

Sri Lanka president admits ‘not delivering’ as prices soar

SRI LANKAN President Gotabaya Rajapaksa admitted his government is “not delivering” as shortages persist of food, medicines and other essential items because of a dire foreign exchange squeeze.

“The people may have a sense of displeasure towards me and the government for not delivering as they expected,” Rajapaksa's office quoted him as saying on Sunday.

“I accept that. Not only me, but all ministers and Members of Parliament should accept it,” he told troops in a speech marking the 72nd anniversary of the military's founding.

A shortage of foreign currency has hindered the ability of the island nation of 21 million people to import goods, prompting the government to declare a state of emergency and impose rationing.

On Friday, the government

removed price restrictions on essential foods in a desperate bid to end hoarding of staples such as rice, sugar, lentils and milk powder.

Within hours of Rajapaksa's remarks on Sunday, the government also announced an 85 per cent hike in the price of liquified petroleum gas used in cooking stoves, starting Monday.

The prices of wheat flour and cement were also increased by nearly 10 per cent.

The state-run Petroleum Corporation said it was asking the government to substantially increase retail prices for all fuels to offset losses of \$350 million in the first eight months of this year.

Private economists and international rating agencies say Sri Lanka's economic woes predate the pandemic.

Foreign reserves were \$7.5 billion when Rajapaksa took office



Workers load sugar into a container truck at a private warehouse after Sri Lankan officials seized the stocks as part of a crackdown on hoarding in Wattala, outside Colombo on 1 September 2021, a day after Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency over food shortages as private banks ran out of foreign exchange to finance imports. **PHOTO: ISHARA S. KODIKARA / AFP**

in November 2019 but had fallen to \$2.5 billion by the end of September, raising concerns about Colombo's ability to service its huge foreign debt.

Soon after coming to power,

Rajapaksa slashed sales taxes by half and drastically reduced taxes on corporate profits and personal income, hoping it would boost investments and strengthen the economy. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Austria gets new leader after graft crisis claims chancellor's job

AUSTRIA'S top diplomat Alexander Schallenberg takes over as chancellor on Monday as the ruling party tries to emerge from a corruption scandal that cost the job of one of Europe's youngest leaders.

Sebastian Kurz, a 35-year-old once feted as a “whizz kid”, said late Saturday he was quitting the top job after being implicated in a corruption scandal.

Schallenberg, 52, will be sworn in by President Alexander Van der Bellen at 1:00 pm (1100 GMT).

Kurz's centre-right People's Party (OeVP) and their junior Green coalition partners are hoping to move on from the scandal and serve out the rest of their term until 2024.

However, the fallout from last week's events may continue to reverberate. — AFP ■

Iraq arrests IS finance chief wanted by US: prime minister

IRAQ has captured the alleged finance chief of the Islamic State group, Sami Jasim al-Jaburi, who was sought by the United States, Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi announced Monday.

Jaburi, also the suspected former deputy to the late IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, was arrested by intelligence services “outside the borders” of Iraq, Kadhemi said on Twitter.

He did not specify the location but said Jaburi was captured in a “complex external operation”. The US had offered a reward of up to \$5 million for the capture of Jaburi.

The US Rewards for Justice programme said Jaburi within IS had “reportedly served as the equivalent of... finance minister, supervising the group's revenue-generating operations from illicit sales of oil, gas, antiquities and minerals”.

In September 2015, the US Treasury Department labelled Jaburi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. — AFP ■



Industry minister Koichi Hagiuda (R) and Fukushima Gov. Masao Uchibori hold talks at the Fukushima prefectural government office on 10 October 2021. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Hagiuda vows to promote scrapping of Fukushima plant as top priority

INDUSTRY minister Koichi Hagiuda pledged to promote the decommissioning of the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant and recovery of the area as a top priority during his first visit Sunday to the northeastern Japan prefecture since assuming office.

Hagiuda also told Fukushima Gov. Masao Uchibori and the mayors of municipalities hosting the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant that his ministry will make its “best efforts” to release treated radioactive water from the facility hit by a massive earthquake and tsunami in March 2011.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is also arranging a trip to the Fukushima Daiichi complex over the next weekend as part of his first visit to the Tohoku region as leader of the country, government sources said.

Uchibori requested in his meeting with Hagiuda at the pre-

fectural government office that the central government tackle issues such as the lifting of an evacuation order for residents near the crippled power plant.

Futaba Mayor Shiro Izawa and Okuma Mayor Jun Yoshida later jointly asked the minister that the state take effective measures against the reputational damage associated with the planned discharge of treated water.

The mayors also warned Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc., the operator of the plant, against sloppy management of radioactive waste at the power facility.

“The state, instead of TEPCO, will lead the decommissioning of (Fukushima Daiichi) reactors,” Hagiuda told reporters after the meetings.

Japan is planning to begin discharging treated water into the sea from around the spring

of 2023.

Water pumped into the ruined reactors at the Fukushima plant to cool the melted fuel, mixed with rain and groundwater that has also been contaminated, is treated using an advanced liquid processing system, while a low level of tritium remains in the water.

TEPCO Chairman Yoshimitsu Kobayashi, who accompanied Hagiuda on his tour of the power plant, met with Uchibori on Monday as part of his first visit to Fukushima since assuming his post in June.

Local fishermen remain opposed to the planned discharge of treated water as it could harm the reputation of Fukushima seafood, and Kobayashi told reporters after the meeting that he will “hold further dialogue (with locals) to enhance their understanding toward the safety steps.” — Kyodo News ■

Low turnout mars oil-rich Iraq’s early election

PRELIMINARY turnout figures Monday showed many citizens boycotted Iraq’s parliamentary election, held a year early to appease protestors, in an oil-rich country riddled by corruption and beholden to armed factions.

In what was the fifth election since the 2003 US-led invasion that ousted dictator Saddam Hussein with the promise of bringing freedom and democracy, preliminary turnout was just 41 per cent, based on results from 94 per cent of voting stations, the electoral committee said.

The vote was brought forward from 2022 as a rare concession to a protest movement that erupted in 2019 against graft, unemployment and poor public services, but which fizzled out amid major intimidation and the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi’s future hangs in the balance, with few observers

willing to predict who will come out on top after the usual political haggling between factions that follow Iraqi elections.

“Get out there and vote, change your reality, for Iraq and for your future,” said Kadhemi, casting his ballot. He later tweeted that he had “kept his promise and done his duty by organising fair elections”.

Polls closed at 1500 GMT on Sunday, with electoral commission chief Jalil Adnan saying preliminary results would be known within 24 hours.

The preliminary turnout falls below even that recorded in 2018, when 44.5 per cent of eligible voters cast ballots.

Viola von Cramon, who heads a team of EU observers, had late Sunday lamented the turnout, as partial data emerged.

“This is a clear political signal, and one can only hope that it will be heard by the politicians and by the political elite of Iraq,” she said. — AFP ■



Iraqi election officials conduct a manual count of votes on a ballot box picked at random, as part of the verification process for the electronic count, at a polling station in the capital Baghdad during the early parliamentary elections on 10 October 2021. PHOTO: AFP

Southwest Airlines cancels 1,000-plus flights Sunday



A baggage handler pushes a bag near a Southwest Airlines airplane at Hollywood Burbank Airport in Burbank, California, 10 October 2021. PHOTO: AFP

SOUTHWEST Airlines cancelled more than 1,000 flights Sunday, part of a major weekend service disruption that the carrier attributed to weather and air traffic control issues.

The carrier cancelled 1,085 flights and counting on Sunday, or about 29 per cent of its schedule — by far the highest rate of any airline — and delayed more than 900 others, according to airline tracker FlightAware.

More than 800 Southwest flights were scrapped Saturday, FlightAware said.

Southwest said in statement that the weather challenges began at Florida airports at the start of the weekend, and were compounded by unexpected air traffic control issues that triggered delays and prompted significant cancellations.

“We’ve continued diligent work throughout the weekend to reset our operation with a focus on getting aircraft and crews repositioned to take care of our customers,” the airline said.

The Southwest Airlines Pilots Association sought to

refute speculation that some pilots or other Southwest staff were participating in a work slowdown as a way to express opposition to the company’s decision to require its employees to be vaccinated against Covid-19.

“SWAPA is aware of operational difficulties affecting Southwest Airlines today due to a number of issues, but we can say with confidence that our Pilots are not participating in any official or unofficial job actions,” the group said Saturday. — AFP ■

IEA chief pleads for ‘real global action’ on climate

AS head of the organization that advises countries on energy policy, Fatih Birol has a blunt message to governments ahead of a crucial climate summit: He wants “real global action”, not just words.

“I want to see a plan,” Birol, the executive director of the International Energy Agency, told AFP.

In an interview, he discussed his hopes for the two-week COP26 meeting that will be held in Scotland from 31 October.

What do you expect from the summit?

“There are three major outcomes I hope to see. The first one is: when we look at the countries today, who made commitments for net zero (emissions) by 2050, even if those commitments were to be fulfilled, we are far from



Protesters take part in a demonstration against climate change in Brussels, on 10 October 2021, ahead of the COP26 climate summit. The COP26 climate summit is held from 31 October to 12 November 2021. PHOTO: KENZO TRIBOUILLARD / AFP

reaching our climate goals. Therefore I would hope to see a reinforcement of those commitments.

“Number two, and for me it’s

the fault line of the entire climate debate, it is financing clean energy investments in emerging countries. More than 80 per cent of the emissions in the next 20 years will

come from emerging countries, and only less than 20 per cent of the clean energy investments go to emerging countries. It is the reason why it’s urgent that the advanced economies, including the G20 countries, should make sure that the financing of clean energy investments in emerging countries are one of the key outcomes coming from COP26 meeting.

“The third one is a political one. The government leaders attending the COP meeting should give an unmistakable signal to the investors around the world saying ‘you investors if you invest in the old energy sources, you are going to risk losing money. Because we are determined as the governments of this world to bring the world in a clean energy future.’” — AFP ■

Princes Charles urges action, not words at UN climate summit

PRINCE CHARLES, a lifelong environmentalist who has championed organic gardening and runs one of his cars on white wine and cheese, has urged world leaders to turn talk into action at the upcoming UN climate summit.

Queen Elizabeth II’s eldest son and heir, 72, is due to attend events at the two-week COP26 summit in Glasgow starting on 31 October, along with his 95-year-old mother. But in an interview with the BBC broadcast on Monday, he said he worried that world leaders would “just talk”, adding: “The problem is to get action on the ground.”

The UN summit will try to persuade major developing economies to do more to cut their carbon emissions, and get the rich world to cough up billions more dollars to help poorer countries

adapt to climate change.

When asked if Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s UK government was doing enough itself against climate change, Charles replied: “I couldn’t possibly comment.” The Prince of Wales expressed sympathy with climate protesters, who have been blocking roads in Britain for several weeks as part of a campaign to make homes more environmentally efficient.

“I totally understand the frustration,” he said, as the government tries to get tough with the demonstrators, who have caused gridlock to rush-hour traffic with sit-down protests and by glueing themselves to tarmac.

“All these young people feel nothing is ever happening so of course they’re going to get frustrated,” he added, stressing:



Britain’s Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, known as the Duke of Rothesay when in Scotland, reacts during his visit to Johnnie Walker Princes Street in Edinburgh on 1 October 2021, where he to officially opened the new global visitor whisky experience. PHOTO: JANE BARLOW / POOL / AFP

“But it isn’t helpful, I don’t think, to do it in a way that alienates people. “So I totally understand the frustration, the difficulty is

how do you direct that frustration in a way that is more constructive rather than destructive.” — AFP ■

Blue Origin delays William Shatner’s space flight

BLUE Origin announced Sunday it was delaying an upcoming flight set to carry actor William Shatner to space due to anticipated winds.

Shatner, who played Captain James T. Kirk in the cult classic TV series “Star Trek,” is due to become the first member of the iconic show’s cast to journey to the final frontier as a guest aboard a Blue Origin suborbital rocket.

His history-making flight was scheduled for 12 October.

But “due to forecasted winds on Tuesday, 12 October, Blue Origin’s mission operations team has made the decision to delay the launch of NS-18 and is now targeting Wednesday, 13 October,” a spokeswoman said in a statement.

The new flight is scheduled for 8:30 am (1330 GMT).

Shatner, 90, will be the oldest person ever to go to space. His trip will take him and the NS-18 rocket crew just beyond the Karman line, 62 miles (100 kilometres) high, where they will experience four minutes of weightlessness and gaze out at the curvature of the planet.

Blue Origin’s decision to invite one of the most recognizable galaxy-faring characters from science fiction for its second crewed flight has helped maintain excitement around the nascent space tourism sector.

For fans, the 10-minute hop from a West Texas base back to Earth will be a fitting coda for a pop culture phenomenon that inspired generations of astronauts. — AFP ■

Key UN biodiversity summit to open in China

A key UN summit tasked with protecting biodiversity officially opens in China and online Monday, as countries meet to tackle pollution and prevent mass extinction weeks before the COP26 climate conference.

Beijing, the world’s biggest polluter, has sought to position itself in recent years as a world leader on climate issues after Washington’s withdrawal from international commitments un-

der the Trump administration.

The online session that begins Monday afternoon — setting the stage for a face-to-face meeting in April — will see parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) working out the details of a new document that will set targets for protecting ecosystems by 2030.

Up for debate are the “30 by 30” plan to give 30 per cent

of lands and oceans protected status — a measure supported by a broad coalition of nations, as well as a goal to stop creating plastic waste. China has not yet committed to the “30 by 30” plan.

This year’s COP15 gathering, hosted in the southwest city of Kunming, was originally set for 2020 and postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Around one million animal and plant species are threatened

with extinction amid human encroachment on habitats, over-exploitation, pollution, the spread of invasive species, and climate change. The CBD has been ratified by 195 countries and the European Union — although not the United States, the world’s biggest historical polluter — with parties meeting every two years.

Division over targets

China said on Friday it has

“given high priority to the protection of biodiversity by establishing a network of protected areas and national parks.”

And this week Beijing is expected to unveil a statement known as the Kunming Declaration, which would set the tone for its environmental leadership. But sharp divisions remain over the targets for urgent action over the next decade. — AFP ■

Kishida to seek economic growth before redistributing wealth

PRIME Minister Fumio Kishida said Monday he will seek to achieve economic growth in Japan before redistributing wealth during questioning by opposition lawmakers over his policy speech last week ahead of a House of Representatives election.

Kishida underscored that he will not immediately seek to raise the tax rate on capital gains or other financial assets. He had earlier said changing the tax would be an option, leading to sharp falls in Tokyo stocks last week.

“Unless there is growth there is nothing to distribute. It is important to seek growth first, and I will do my utmost to realize it,” Kishida said in response to questions by Yukio Edano, head of the main opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, in the lower house. Kishida vowed in his policy speech on Friday to realize a virtuous cycle of economic growth and redistribution of its success.

The envisioned raising of the tax on capital

gains and dividends is a major pillar of Kishida’s policy to redistribute wealth and address income disparities. But he toned down his remarks on the issue after his position apparently hurt investor sentiment.

This forced Kishida to make clear in a television program on Sunday that he is not considering changing the tax for the time being, and that there is a widespread misunderstanding about it.

The question session in the Diet will be held

through Wednesday, and Kishida is set to dissolve the lower house on Thursday for an election on 31 October.

Edano also criticized the government’s coronavirus response, ascribing the slew of deaths of COVID-19 patients forced to recuperate at home due to a shortage of hospital beds in the fifth wave of infections this summer to “the failure of the government of the Liberal Democratic Party,” now led by Kishida. — Kyodo News ■



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida (2nd from L) and Seiko Noda (L), the minister in charge of gender equality and children’s policies, are pictured before a parliament session to listen to questions from party leaders in Tokyo on 11 October 2021. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Asia markets mostly up as traders keep eye on inflation



Pedestrians walk past an electronic quotation board displaying share prices of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo on 5 October 2021. PHOTO: KAZUHIRO NOGI / AFP

MOST Asian markets rose on Monday to extend last week’s rally after US lawmakers averted a painful debt default, but another jump in oil prices added to inflation concerns as the Federal Reserve prepares to taper its ultra-loose monetary policy.

A big miss on US jobs creation last month did little to change expectations that the Fed will start winding back its massive bond-buying programme as it looks to keep a cap on price rises just as the global recovery shows signs of slowing.

The US Labour Department said just 194,000 new posts were taken up

last month, less than half what was forecast, owing to weakness in the service sector, though there was an upward revision to gains in the previous two months.

“Notwithstanding the soft payrolls headline, the inner strength in the report suggests the numbers have passed the Fed’s test for a ‘reasonable enough’ report to allow for a... tapering announcement in November,” said National Australia Bank’s Rodrigo Catril.

Wall Street’s three main indexes ended in the red, but Asia fared much better in early exchanges on Monday.

Tokyo was boosted

after new Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said he was not considering hiking capital gains tax any time soon, soothing investor worries that the government was planning such a move.

A rise in the dollar to a three-year high against the yen — on expectations for tighter US monetary policy — provided added support.

Hong Kong jumped two per cent with tech firms enjoying some much-needed buying after China fined food delivery giant Meituan less than expected over monopolistic practices. The firm ended up more than eight per cent, ecommerce giant Al-

ibaba climbed 7.9 per cent, while gaming firm XD put on more than nine per cent.

Singapore, Mumbai and Manila also enjoyed gains, though Bangkok, Sydney and Wellington dipped. Shanghai was flat.

London and Paris rose in morning trade, but Frankfurt slipped.

Stagflation worries

The broad advances built on Friday’s positive performance that came in the wake of news that Democrats and Republicans had agreed a deal to lift the US debt ceiling to avoid an economically catastrophic default.

Attention will be on the release of inflation data out of China and the United States this week, with the surge in prices across the world becoming increasingly problematic for governments as economies reopen and demand for goods returns with supplies limited.

The issue has raised speculation that the global economy could be heading for a period of stagflation as inflation surges and growth stays tepid, especially with crude still marching higher to sit at multi-year highs.

However, Kerry Craig at J.P. Morgan Asset Management remained positive. — AFP ■

US holiday purchases to be hit by delays, price hikes: Fed official

DELAYS and price hikes are anticipated in the United States for holiday merchandise, a Federal Reserve official warned Sunday, calling for more to be done to boost the workforce.

“Right now, we see consumers trying to get out early and spend their money to get their goods before they run out,” Mary Daly, head of the San Francisco branch of the US central bank, told CBS. When shopping for the upcoming holidays, “people are buying it now and they’re being told oftentimes they can’t get it until after the holiday has passed,” she said.

“So there are going to be delays,” as well as “some pressure on holiday item prices,” the Fed official said. To address this, it will be necessary to “get more supply to the labour market, to the goods market.” In other words, to speed up the flow and production of goods, people who have left the labor market because of the coronavirus pandemic and now cannot return due to constraints such as childcare or health concerns, must be enabled to return to work. — AFP ■

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

AS the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 19th OCTOBER 2021 to 21st OCTOBER 2021 (Thadinkyut Public Holiday), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

MYANMA Port Authority “NOTICE of High Tide”

EXCEPTIONALLY high spring from 20.05 feet to 20.08 feet high above the chart datum are expected to occur in Yangon River during the period of October 21st to October 22nd, 2021. Please be noted that it is not serious level of tide because the highest tide level have reached up to 22 feet above the chart datum in year 2014 and 2015, and this notice is normally issued whenever high tide of Yangon River is expected to reach over 20 feet high above the chart datum in order to take precautionary measures to the public living near river foreshore area of Yangon City.

Vaccines prevent severe Covid, even from Delta: study



A medical worker administers a dose of the Pfizer vaccine against the Covid-19 coronavirus to a school student at a vaccination centre in southern Thailand's Pattani province on 7 October 2021. **PHOTO: TUWAEDANIYA MERINGING / AFP**

VACCINATION is highly effective at preventing severe cases of Covid-19, even against the Delta variant, a vast study in France has shown.

The research published Monday — focusing on prevention of severe Covid and death, not infection — looked at 22 million people over 50 and found those who had received jabs were 90 per cent less likely to be hospitalized or die.

The results confirm observations from the US, the UK and Israel, but researchers say it is the largest study of its kind so far.

Looking at data collect-

ed starting in December 2020, when France launched its jab campaign, the researchers compared the outcomes of 11 million vaccinated people with 11 million unvaccinated subjects.

They formed pairs matching an unvaccinated individual with a vaccinated counterpart from the same region and of the same age and sex, tracking them from the date of the vaccinated person's second jab to 20 July.

Starting 14 days after a second dose, a vaccinated subjects' risk of severe Covid was reduced by 90 per cent, according to the research conducted by Epi-Phare,

an independent medicines safety research group that works closely with the French government.

Vaccination appears to be nearly as effective against the Delta variant, with 84 per cent protection for people 75 and older and 92 per cent for people 50-75.

That estimate, however, is only based on a month of data, since the variant became dominant in France only in June.

"The study should be followed up to include results from August and September," epidemiologist Mahmoud Zureik, the head of Epi-Phare, told AFP. — AFP ■

US, UK warn citizens of threat to Kabul hotels

THE United States and Britain warned their citizens on Monday to avoid hotels in Afghanistan, days after dozens were killed at a mosque in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group.

The Taliban, which seized power in August and declared an Islamic emirate, are seeking international recognition and assistance to avoid a humanitarian disaster and ease Afghanistan's economic crisis.

But, as the hardline Islamist group transitions from a rebel

army to a governing power, they are struggling to contain the threat from the Afghanistan chapter of IS. "US citizens who are at or near the Serena Hotel should leave immediately," the US State Department said, citing "security threats" in the area.

"In light of the increased risks you are advised not to stay in hotels, particularly in Kabul (such as the Serena Hotel)," Britain's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office added.

Since the Taliban takeover,

many foreigners have left Afghanistan, but some journalists and aid workers remain in the capital. The well-known Serena, a luxury hotel popular with business travellers and foreign guests, has twice been the target of attacks by the Taliban. In 2014, just weeks before the presidential election, four teenage gunmen with pistols hidden in their socks managed to penetrate several layers of security, killing nine people, including an AFP journalist and members of his family. — AFP ■



Afghan children selling tea and water wait for customers at Nadir Khan hilltop in Kabul on 10 October 2021. **PHOTO: WAKIL KOHSAR / AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fukuoka declares bid to host G-7 summit in 2023

THE Fukuoka prefectural and city governments in southwestern Japan said Monday they hope to host the 2023 summit meeting of the Group of Seven industrialized nations. The local governments want to host the annual meeting in the city of Fukuoka as part of efforts to boost its image overseas and attract more tourists and businesses, according to officials.

"It would be a great opportunity to send a message to the world about Fukuoka's strengths," Fukuoka Gov. Seitaro Hattori told a press conference. Fukuoka Mayor Soichiro Takashima, who also attended the conference, said that urban redevelopment projects that are currently underway will make the city suitable for the international summit. — Kyodo News ■

More than 1,000 migrants cross Channel to UK in two days

BRITAIN has rescued or intercepted a total of 1,115 migrants attempting to cross the Channel over just two days, the country's interior ministry said on Sunday.

Rising numbers of Channel crossings by migrants in small boats have contributed to growing tensions between the UK and France following Britain's departure from the EU at the start of this year.

On Saturday, British authorities said they had recovered 491 people in 17 operations and 624 people in 23 operations on Friday, while French authorities prevented 414 migrants from reaching Britain over the same two days.

On Sunday the French authorities said they had rescued a further 342 migrants who were attempting the crossing. — AFP ■

US couple arrested for selling nuclear warship data

A US couple has been arrested in the state of West Virginia for allegedly selling information on nuclear warships to what they believed was a foreign state, the Justice Department said Sunday. Jonathan Toebe, 42, who worked as a nuclear engineer for the US Navy, and his wife Diana, 45, were arrested by Federal Bureau of Investigation agents on Saturday and charged with violating the Atomic Energy Act in a criminal complaint, the Justice Department said in a statement.

For nearly a year, the couple "sold information known as restricted data concerning the design of nuclear powered warships to a person they believed was a representative of a foreign power", the statement said, adding that the recipient of the information was in fact an undercover FBI agent.

US nuclear-powered submarines were at the centre of a major diplomatic crisis between Paris and Washington last month, when Australia scrapped a large contract to buy submarines from France.

Toebe, who was based in Annapolis, Maryland and had access to restricted data on nuclear-powered warships through his work, collaborated with his wife to exchange data on submarine nuclear reactors for around \$100,000 in cryptocurrency, the complaint affidavit alleges.

When Toebe first tried to establish contact with the foreign government — 44 which was not identified in the affidavit — he wrote, "I apologize for this poor translation into your language. Please forward this letter to your military intelligence agency," according to the

complaint. "I believe this information will be of great value to your nation. This is not a hoax."

The affidavit says Toebe in April 2020 mailed a package to the foreign government "containing a sample of restricted data and instructions for establishing a covert relationship", according to the statement. According to the complaint, the FBI intercepted the package, and the undercover agent posed as a representative of the foreign government in order to establish a relationship with the couple.

The agent sent Jonathan Toebe, who used the pseudonym "Alice", an email offering him a gift as thanks for the data. But Toebe responded with caution, asking instead to set up a "dead drop" location and to be paid in cryptocurrency. — AFP ■

New Zealand health workers, teachers told 'no jab, no job'

NEW Zealand announced Monday a sweeping "no jab, no job" policy for most healthcare workers and teachers to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

"We can't leave anything to chance so that's why we are making it mandatory," said Covid-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins, who is also the education minister.

Doctors, nurses and other frontline health workers must be double-jabbed by 1 December while everyone working in the education sector who has contact with students must have their two doses by 1 January.

The Royal New Zealand Col-

lege of General Practitioners backed mandatory vaccinations with president Samantha Mutton describing it as a "bold, but necessary call" to make.

Secondary schools will also be required to keep a register to show the vaccination status of students.

"Vaccination remains our strongest and most effective tool to protect against infection and disease," Hipkins said.

The order includes home-based educators and parents volunteering at schools, but no decision has been made on whether vaccination will be mandatory in the tertiary education

sector.

Before the arrival of the Delta variant in August, New Zealand had won widespread praise for its Covid elimination policy, which had largely protected the country from the pandemic.

Residents enjoyed a near-normal domestic life alongside tight restrictions on international borders.

However, the "Covid Zero" strategy fell apart when Delta was detected in Auckland, New Zealand's most populated region, and has since spread to the surrounding Northland and Waikato provinces.

Prime Minister Jacinda



People visit a Covid-19 testing station during a nationwide lockdown in Wellington on 18 August 2021. PHOTO: MARTY MELVILLE / AFP

Ardern said the highly transmissible Delta variant had proved a "game-changer" that could not be eliminated. — AFP ■

Sydney ends coronavirus lockdown after 106 days

RELATED Sydneysiders celebrated the end of almost four months of coronavirus lockdown on Monday, putting behind them a period of "blood, sweat and no beers" in Australia's largest city.

Sydney's more than five million residents were subjected to a 106-day lockdown, designed to limit the march of the highly transmissible Delta variant.

With new infections now falling — New South Wales state recorded 496 cases on Monday — and more than 70 per cent of over-16s fully vaccinated, the city is dusting off the cobwebs.

From midnight pubs, restaurants and cafes began throwing open their doors to anyone who could prove they were vaccinated. They included 32-year-old



Commuters walk through a turnstile at Town Hall train station on 11 October 2021, as Sydney ended their lockdown against the Covid-19 coronavirus after 106 days. PHOTO: STEVEN SAPHORE / AFP

Garth Diemer and his team of high-spirited construction workers who were making the most of a rain day.

"We knew the pubs were

going to be open about 10 am 'cause it's Freedom Day, so I thought I'd take the blokes down for a couple of schooners," he told AFP. — AFP ■

Japan fighter loses 90-kg canopy in mid-flight, no injuries reported

AN Air Self-Defence Force fighter jet lost its cockpit canopy weighing about 90 kilogrammes while flying over mountainous areas in southwestern Japan on Sunday, but there were no reports of any injuries or property damage from the incident, according to the Defence Ministry.

The F-2 fighter jet's canopy fell off the aircraft during a scramble mission in response to a possible violation of Japan's airspace by a foreign plane, leaving the pilot exposed to the air in mid-flight, the ministry said.

The Self-Defence Forces have been searching for the can-

opy, measuring about 150 centimetres in length, 90 cm in width and 80 cm in height, which was believed to have fallen in Asakura, Fukuoka Prefecture.

The fighter made an emergency landing at Tsuiki Air Base in the prefecture, where it is stationed, after the incident took place at around 12:50 pm Sunday. Another plane was deployed to replace the F-2 fighter jet for the scramble mission, the ministry said.

The fighter also lost a ladder weighing about 480 grammes, with which the aircraft was equipped. The ASDF decided to

conduct inspections of all aircraft and to see if any other parts have fallen from the F-2 fighter.

"We are sorry for causing concern to local residents and the general public," the ministry said. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said Monday the incident was serious as it could have posed great danger to local people. Yoshitomo Aoki, an aviation expert, said that such a loss of a canopy is rare but that loosening or defective parts could cause such an incident. But the loss of the canopy would not affect an aircraft's flight functions, he added. — Kyodo News ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

S Korea ruling party picks governor as presidential candidate

THE ruling Democratic Party on Sunday picked Gyeonggi Gov. Lee Jae Myung as its candidate in the March presidential election, after the party outsider decisively won in its primaries. Lee will face an opposition conservative candidate in the election held to choose the successor to liberal President Moon Jae In, who will end his single five-year term in May.

In the 11 rounds of contests held across the nation since early September, Lee won 50 per cent of all votes, while his biggest rival, former Prime Minister Lee Nak Yon, got 39 per cent. "I will definitely win on 9 March, and two months later, I will be standing at the inaugural ceremony, firmly holding President Moon Jae In's hand," Lee said after winning the party's nomination. The newly minted nominee lost to Moon in the 2017 primaries.

In his speech, Lee pledged to make South Korea the first country to introduce a universal basic income, or fixed cash payments for all, so that everyone's basic life quality would be ensured, while promising to stand up for the disadvantaged to secure fairness. — Kyodo News ■

Fire breaks out at Lebanon fuel storage facilities

A fire erupted at key fuel storage facilities in southern Lebanon Monday, an AFP photographer and the National News Agency said, sparking alarm as the country grapples with dire hydrocarbon shortages. "A huge fire broke out in one of the tanks at the Zahrani facilities containing petrol," the National News Agency said.

"The cause is not yet known."

There was no immediate report of casualties at the facilities some 50 kilometres (30 miles) south of Beirut.

An AFP photographer saw flames lick up above the tank that was on fire, and huge plumes of dark smoke billow into the sky.

The army closed off roads leading to the facilities, including the main highway linking Beirut to the country's south, and cordoned off the area, he said.

Fire trucks worked to put out the fire, and prevent it from reaching nearby tanks. A worker in a plantation near the facilities told AFP he had heard a loud bang before the fire broke out.

The Zahrani facilities also include the power plant of the same name, and provide 15 per cent of the country's fuel oil.

The Mediterranean nation is battling one of the planet's worst economic crises since the 1850s, and has in recent months struggled to import enough fuel oil for its power plants.

In recent months, Lebanese have only received one or two hours of state electricity a day. The fire comes after the electricity grid went offline on Saturday. — 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.



Myanmar women's footballers and coaches are seen under PPE suit at Yangon International Airport yesterday as they are leaving for Kyrgyzstan to compete in AFC Women's Cup Qualifiers. **PHOTO: MFF**

Myanmar team leaves for Kyrgyzstan to compete in AFC Women's Cup Qualifiers

MYANMAR women's football team left for Kyrgyzstan yesterday morning to compete in the 2022 AFC Women's Cup Qualifiers. The Myanmar women's national football team consists of 10 members of football managers and coaching staff and 23 players.

Head Coach U Tin Myint Aung will handle the team.

Goal Keepers are May Zin Nwe, Zuu Latt Nadi, and Khaing Zar Win.

Defenders of the team include Aye Aye Moe, Chit Chit,

Khin Myo Win, Phyu Phyu Win, Khaing Thazin, Zun Yuya Oo, and Nant Zuu Zuu Htet.

Midfielders in the team comprise Thin Thin Yu, Khin Mo Mo Tun, Khin Marlar Tun, Pont Pont Pyae Maung, Win Win, Naw Htet Htet Wai, and Shwe Yi Htun.

Strikers are Win Theingi Tun, San Thaw Thaw, Khin Moe Wai, Myat Noe Khin, July Kyaw and May Phoo.

The current squad also includes senior players from U-19 and U-16 Myanmar teams.

Myanmar is falling in Group D with Lebanon, UAE and Guam.

According to the fixtures, Myanmar will play against Lebanon on 18 October, Guam on 21 October and the UAE on 24 October, respectively.

The tournament has been divided into eight groups and only the top team in each group will win the Tournament.

Myanmar team needs to get first place in the group to advance to the next stage. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Japan boss vows to fight for World Cup place against Australia

JAPAN are not out of the 2022 World Cup qualification picture yet, manager Hajime Moriyasu said Monday, as the embattled Asian giants prepared to host Australia in a crunch match.

From their opening three games in Asian qualifying Group B, Japan have taken only three points, leaving them in real danger of missing the World Cup for the first time since 1994. Moriyasu's side slumped to a 1-0 home defeat against Oman before beating China 1-0 away, then lost 1-0 to Saudi Arabia in a dismal performance last Thursday in Jeddah.

Japan have their backs to the wall going into Tuesday's game in Saitama against an Australian side that last week became the first team ever to win 11 straight games in the same World Cup qualifying campaign.

"Of course, we're aware we're in a difficult situation,"

said Moriyasu, who Japanese media have speculated could lose his job with anything less than a win.

"But we knew before the qualifiers that it would be a tough campaign, and we're still in with a chance. We'll go into tomorrow's game fighting for a place at the World Cup."

Moriyasu admitted his team have struggled to get up to speed physically, and there was "a gap between what we've wanted to do and what we've been capable of doing".

Japan would have to "read the game and play smart" against Australia, said Moriyasu, who played alongside Socceroos manager Graham Arnold with Sanfrece Hiroshima in the J-League.

Australia top Group B on goal difference ahead of the Saudis, with Japan currently out of the automatic qualification spots for Qatar 2022 in third place. — AFP ■

Deschamps hails 'improved' Benzema's maturity after Nations League triumph

DIDIER Deschamps heaped praise on Karim Benzema after the once-exiled forward played a key role in France's Nations League triumph. Benzema scored France's equaliser in a 2-1 win over Spain which handed the world champions the trophy, and Deschamps was delighted with his striker. "Karim is a crucial player and he has proved over two matches that he has very obvious talent, it's there for all to see," Deschamps told reporters.

"He has improved in different areas, he's clinical, he plays his part in the build-up." Real Madrid

forward Benzema had been banished from the national team for over five years but was recalled by Deschamps ahead of Euro 2020.

He performed impressively in the Nations League Final Four in Italy, pulling a goal back with France two down in their 3-2 win over Belgium on Thursday and levelling the scores on Sunday night with a sumptuous curling shot just after Mikel Oyarzabal had put Spain ahead. "From a personal perspective he's no longer the same person," he's matured. — AFP ■



Japan's players attend a training session at Saitama Stadium in Saitama on 11 October 2021, ahead of their FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Asian qualification football match against Australia. **PHOTO: CHARLY TRIBALLEAU / AFP**