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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Independence Day ceremony would be held at the national level with essence, says Vice-Senior General



State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win addresses the second coordination meeting of the Central Committee on Organizing the 74th Anniversary of Independence Day 2022 in Nay Pyi Taw on 5 November 2021.

THE Central Committee on Organizing the 74th Anniversary of Independence Day 2022 held the second coordination meeting at the meeting hall of the Chairman of the State Administration Council in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with an address by Chairman of the Central Committee Vice-Chair-

man of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

The Vice-Senior General delivered an opening address.

Chairpersons and officials from the different subcommittees discussed the progress of their assignments.

The Vice-Senior General instructed officials to systematically take security measures for successfully holding the ceremony with essence, hold the ceremony in line with the COVID-19 restrictions, prepare the tasks to prevent the danger of fire in launching fireworks and organize

sports events and festivities to mark the Independence Day under the disciplines of COVID-19.

In his concluding remarks, the Vice-Senior General said he saw the progress of works at the meeting and subcommittees need to go on more implementation of tasks. As the Independence Day

ceremony would be held at the national level with essence, those from respective subcommittees need to supervise the functions in conformity with the national-level celebration. Officials must systematically take the security measures for all ceremonies with a conscience. — MNA

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Aungban tomatoes fetch good prices

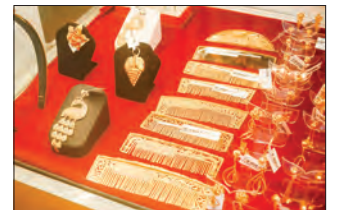
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LOCAL BUSINESS

Domestic gold price rises up to over K1.8 mln per tical

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Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.
2. The ACC used SMS on the mobile phone to ask the public who seek services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No “1111” for feedbacks, including the Public Feedback Programme-PFP.
3. According to the PFP, the right replies of the citizens via Short Code No “1111” will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.
4. Therefore, the public should make a reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at Short Code No “1111” and such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission

Answer “1111” to fight against corruption

Answer “1111” to improve services

Let's work together to eliminate corruption towards prosperity

MoC oversees daily import processes for anti-COVID-19 equipment



Chinshwehaw

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 airports and seaports with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

On 5 November, anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products, including masks and oxygen generators, were imported by two companies using two vehicles.

A total of five tonnes of liquid oxygen carried by one bowser; three oxygen generators and

seven tonnes of masks were imported via Chinshwehaw and Myawady trading zones and Yangon International Seaports.

One bowser transported liquid oxygen to Mawlamyine via the Myawady trading zone.

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

Healthcare centres give medical services to COVID-19 confirmed patients

MILITARY hospitals in various areas of the military commands is setting up Covid centres to provide healthcare services to COVID-19 confirmed patients, according to the Tatmadaw.

Preparations are underway at local training schools, military accommodation camps, and healthcare services are being provided at the completed sites.

In addition, quarantine centres are being prepared in the relevant townships in collaboration with responsible officials from the Ministry of Health and other departments, and charitable organizations.

As of 7 pm yesterday, 84 men and 77 women who were tested positive for COVID-19 were quarantined at Nay Pyi Taw Transit Centre.

Local medical teams and officials at the respective military bases are providing healthcare services and accommodation for the COVID-19 confirmed patients, Tatmadaw stated.

In addition, Deputy Commander of the Western Command Brigadier-General Aung Kyaw Min and officials yesterday visited the COVID-19 centres in An Township and coordinated necessary works. —MNA

Myanmar welcomes more returnees at different land borders

MYANMAR nationals returned from abroad are being welcomed at various land borders this month.

On 4 November, a total of 61 returnees — 22 males and 39 females — came back home through Chinshwehaw.

Similarly, 11 returnees, including six males and five females, came back home through Laukkai and 496 returnees — 249 males and 247 females — returned to Myanmar through Myawady respectively.

Healthcare officials from relevant public hospitals and members of the Tatmadaw Medical Corps conducted COVID-19 tests and provided quarantine entry documents for the return-

ees.

Next, instructions of the Ministry of Health were explained systematically and departmental officials provided necessary assistance.

The township administra-

tion bodies then escorted them to their respective places in passenger vehicles, and the infected people were kept in separate places to facilitate the necessary medical and administrative matters, officials said. —MNA



Returnees from Thailand are seen waiting for the reception process.

1,057 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 5 November, total figure rises to 505,038

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 505,038 after 1,057 new cases were reported on 5 November 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 475,450 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 18,783 after 17 died.—MNA

Gather the raw materials at home and produce export-quality products

BASED on a cooperative system, efforts must be made for the development of the rural area. Moreover, it is necessary to gather the raw materials at home and produce export-quality products. The Senior General also stressed the need to improve motor roads and railways for the development of public transport.

(Excerpt from the Message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Chairman of the National Unity and Peacemaking Central Committee Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to mark the Sixth Anniversary of signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA on 26 October 2021)

UEC discusses electoral reform with political parties

THE Union Election Commission organized an electoral system meeting with the representatives of political parties at the Yangon Region Government office yesterday.

The meeting was attended by UEC Chairman U Thein Soe, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe, UEC members, region government ministers and attorney-general and officials of region government, representatives of political parties and the people who are interested in the election.

First, the UEC Chairman said that most of the parties discussed at the meetings between the UEC and political parties in February and May 2021 to change the electoral system that suits Myanmar. The 16 political parties also sent papers on the PR system and so the talk on the current electoral system was held as per the decision made in the previous coordination meeting held in May.

The representatives and those who are interested in this case will read the papers regarding the suitable electoral



The Union Election Commission meets the representatives of political parties in Yangon on 5 November 2021.



systems that should be adopted accordingly to the current trend for the coming election.

The Chairman also highlighted two fundamental electoral systems for various political election and voting systems of the world countries such as FPTP and PR, the use of FPTP system in the previous elections of Myanmar according to 1947, 1974 and 2008 Constitutions, thoughts of people that most of the democratic countries would adopt that system as the can-

didates who receive the most votes win, refusal of many countries as that system is no longer suitable with the current situation and adoption of PR system.

He also discussed the differences between the two electoral systems, and then clarified the advantages of the PR system.

He added the principles of the 2008 Constitution to follow the genuine, disciplined democratic system, holding of two general elections according

to the 2008 Constitution, the victory of just one great party that formed the government, advantages of multiparty to conduct check and balance and the electoral reform.

Then, UEC member U Than Soe reported on the use of PR system and plans to be conducted under the Constitution, including proportional constituencies of three Hluttaws in detail. U Htay Kyaw of the Myanmar People's Democratic Party agreed with the discus-

sions while Dr Myo Sett Thway of PPP suggested introducing the Closed List and re-change to Open List after two terms of the election period.

Moreover, the representatives of the respective political parties provided their proper suggestions during the meeting.

The second-day meeting will hold today and a total of 113 persons – 93 from 53 political parties and 20 civilians — joined yesterday's event.—MNA

Notification of COVID Vaccination Fund Management Subcommittee

FROM 1-11-2021 to 5-11-2021, local/foreign donors contributed K0.250 million to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund Myanmar currency account OA 013733 and foreign currency account EDC 600012 opened at the Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw). The status of the fund account as of 5-11-2021 is as follows: -

COVID-19 Vaccination Fund OA-013733 List

	KYAT
ACCOUNT opening balance on 29-10-2021	226,280,225,142.53
RECEIVED amount of money from (+) 1-11-2021 to 5-11-2021	250,000.00
(-) Transferred amount for USD 5.800 million to EDC-600012	10,453,400,000.00
CLOSED balance on 5-11-2021	215,827,075,142.53

COVID-19 Vaccination Fund EDC 600012 List

	USD
ACCOUNT opening balance on 29-10-2021	962,349.53
RECEIVED amount of money from (+) 1-11-2021 to 5-11-2021	-
(+) Transferred amount from OA-013733	5,800,000.00
(-) Payment for buying Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine	6,700,000.00
CLOSED balance on 5-11-2021	62,349.53



Ongoing vaccination in Kawthoung.

COVID-19 vaccination continues in Kawthoung Township

HEALTHCARE officials administered COVID-19 vaccines to local people at Badminton Court in Kawthoung Township, Taninthayi Region yesterday morning.

The vaccination was arranged out by the Kawthoung District and Township Administration bodies with the efforts of the Tatmadaw Medical Corps and health workers from the Kawthoung Township Public Health Department.

A total of 5,425 people, including monks and nuns, district and township-level staff in Kawthoung Township have been vaccinated twice

with the Covishield vaccines from India in June 2021.

China-made COVID 19 vaccines, Sinopharm, is now being given to people over the age of 18, who have been vaccinated once for more than 32,000 people and twice for more than 25,000 people.

Vaccination is given to anyone in the township who is registered to be vaccinated and will be vaccinated by vaccination teams regularly in urban areas and villages. —Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)/GNLM

Second-day vaccination launched for above 12-year-old students in Nanyun Township

THE officials used Sinovac COVID-19 vaccines to vaccinate the middle and high school students aged 12 and above in Nanyun Township in Naga Self-Administered Zone of Sagaing Region yesterday.

Township administration officer U Arkar Tin Oo, township education officer U Kyi Tun, headmaster U Aung Hlaing Win and teachers participated in the vaccination programmes.

On the first day of vaccination conducted

on 1 November, a total of 254 students — 197 middle school students and 157 high school students received the vaccine while 82 students—56 middle school students and 32 high school students on the second day of vaccination, yesterday. Therefore, a total of 442 students received the vaccines yesterday, according to Nanyun High School Headmaster U Aung Hlaing Win. —Han Kam (Nanyun)/GNLM



Covid immunization programme for students aged 12 plus in Naga Self-Administered Zone.



Over 7,000 people in Maungtaw get 1st dose of COVID-19 jab

HEALTH officials administered the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines to local people at designated places in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State yesterday.

Vaccination activities were documented by the General Administration Department followed by measuring body temperatures, blood pressure, and monitoring oxygen levels by healthcare officials.

Vaccines were given systematically to the local people, and only those with normal health conditions were inoculated. Waiting for about 30 minutes after being vaccinated, people were given healthcare education and then allowed to leave.

As of 5 November, 450 people had been vaccinated with the first dose of the COVID vaccines, and thus a total of 7,055 people had been double jabbed by 5 November accordingly to the guidelines of the Ministry of Health. —Thet Lwin Soe (District IPRD)/GNLM

Inoculation drive in progress in Maungtaw, Rakhine State.

Terrorists threaten lives of education staff

THE terrorist groups CRPH and NUG organized the PDFs to kill innocent people and conduct mine and arson attacks on the homes in some regions of the country.

Currently, they intentionally killed the education staff, including teachers to affect the education sector while the schools are reopened.

The SAT Daw Hla Hla Than from (D) Ward of North Okkalapa Township of Yangon Region was shot to death by a terrorist while she was on a taxi that she hired to No (2) B.E.H.S of Dagon Myothit (East). The victim died

on the way to the hospital due to a gunshot wound. The police sized two bullet shells and one bullet at the incident place.

Similarly, U Khin Maung Than, deputy staff officer of Natmauk Township education office of Magway Region lost on the way to his home on 1 November and the dead body was found in the field near Kyu Aing village on the morning of 4 November.

Moreover, the terrorists conducted arson and bomb attacks on the schools to threaten the students, teachers and parents.

On 4 November, two terrorists riding motorcycles threw bombs into the basic education school at the corner of 82nd street and Sagaing street of Tampawady Ward in Chanmyathazi Township of the Mandalay Region and ran away. The bomb did not explode and the security members seized the bomb.

Similarly, the unscrupulous person conducted a bomb attack on B.E.H.S (Yway) in Kangyidaunt Township of Ayeayawady Region. The school caught fire and the teaching aid materials and windows of the



The high school teacher, Daw Hla Hla Than, was shot to death in North Okkalapa Township of Yangon Region.

classroom were destroyed. The police seized materials including 7 pvc pipes near the school.

The terrorists intentionally attack the schools to threaten teachers, students and parents

to affect the learning opportunities of new generations. Therefore, the public should cooperate with the security forces to fight terrorism.—MNA

Aing Sant village of Lisu hill tribe

THE Aing Sant Village located in the misty mountains is such a quiet place. The village is the home to Lisu people and so their daily life, their styles and their social life are interesting things. Currently, the government makes a plan to implement community-based tourism in that village which hopes to offer many interesting things to the travellers.

The village is situated in Pain Chit Village-tract of Loikaw Township in Loikaw District of Kayah State. It is about only 18 miles from Loikaw Township. There are four villages of CBT in Kayah State — Pan Pet Village (Kayah village), Hta Nee La Leh Village (Kayah Village), Daw Ta Ma Gyi Village (Kayah Village) and Hte Kho Village (Kayaw Village).

There are not many houses on the hilly regions and most of them are not well-constructed ones. They are built just on the hills or mountains

and the ethnic people build simple houses. The majority of ethnic people live on the hilly regions and so they make livelihood activities like hunting and farming.

There are 46 houses with about 100 Lisu people in Aing Sant Village. Most of their houses are roofed with iron sheets while some use the leaves of *Dipterocarpus tuberculatus* with bamboo poles. Some of the houses are long-legged ones and the people stay under the house in the daytime. The strange thing is that some houses are built using teak poles with a single roof.

Some people use bamboo matting, bamboo poles, iron sheets and leaves of *Dipterocarpus tuberculatus*. They use these materials to withstand the strong wind and rain. They live in stand-alone houses. Some people operate manageable-scale banana plantations.

The structure of the vil-



lage is clean and there are also wide shortcut roads in the village. There is a public reservoir in the middle of the village and it is easy to use the water even for washing with the taps.

There is also a golden pagoda and a two-storey monastery on the hill of the village. There are four caves under the pagodas and four surrounding corner stupas. The pagoda compound is clean and it looks sublime with the mountain in the background.

The ethnic people living in Aing Sant Village grow various crops mainly maize. Some run small-scale poultry and pig farming. But the Lisu people living in that village grow only the maize. Therefore, if the CBT develops there, they want to run other businesses after their post-harvest period.

The Lisu people live in Khote Law and Hta Naung Nyunt villages in addition to Aing Sant Village of Loikaw

Township. There are about 480 Lisu people in these three villages, according to the records.

The Lisu living in Aing Sant Village wear the traditional costume of ancient Lisu people mostly with pink striped and colourful clothing. Therefore, the foreign tourists who want to study the traditional culture of Lisu pay a visit to Aing Sant Village, the residents said.

Currently, the village has access to electricity but it still needs to provide some infrastructure. If there is a better transport system than now, it can be easily reached in a short while by cars from Loikaw Township. If so, it can hose more domestic or foreign travellers and the people can know the daily social life of Lisu ethnic people in the peaceful village any time.

If the CBT is well implemented in Aing Sant Village, it can promote the socio-economic

status of Lisu ethnic people and rural development with better roads, access to electricity and drinking water.

The visitors can see their traditional music instruments, annual special occasions and farmlands and the appearance of Lisu women who wear colourful turban, clothes and knee-length gowns.

The Lisu people are the hill tribes and they do not live below 4,000 feet or 5,000 feet. Most of the Lisu people have fair complexion and they won't marry the ones from the same sub-groups.

The unique and interesting Lisu village, Aing Sant is located in the middle of the mountain range of Kayah State, so it is quiet and full of misty mountains. If you want to know about the daily life of the Lisu people, traditional music and social life, you should not miss the peaceful and quiet Aing Sant Village. — La Yaung Wai/GNLM



Myanmar ships over 112,000 tonnes of various pulses as of 29 Oct

MYANMAR conveyed US\$96 million worth of 112,367.68 tonnes of various pulses to foreign trade partners as of 29 October in the current mini-budget period (October 2021-March 2022), according to statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce.

More than two million tonnes of various pulses and beans were delivered to foreign markets in the previous financial year 2020-2021 (October 2020-September 2021), with an estimated value of US\$1.57 billion, the Commerce Ministry's data indicated.

During last FY, the country shipped \$966.4 million worth of 1.24 million tonnes of pulses and beans to foreign markets through the sea route, and \$604.3 million valued at 786,920 tonnes were sent to the neighbouring countries through land borders.

During the FY 2019-2020 ended September 30, the country delivered 1.6 million tonnes with an estimated value of \$1.195 billion. This being so, the pulses and beans exports grew year over year.

India is the main buyer of Myanmar beans, especially black beans, green grams and pigeon peas. Besides India, Myanmar's beans are purchased by Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, UAE, Malaysia, Indonesia, China



(Taipei), Japan, and European countries. But, the volume of demand by those countries is small, according to the domestic beans market.

The prices of pulses and beans drop tracking the Kyat revaluation on US dollar in the local forex market in late October, according to the traders from the Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Centre.

The price of black gram hit an all-time high of K2 million per tonne on 29 September following

Kyat weakening against the US dollar. At present, the exchange rate of a US dollar dipped below K2,000. The price of black beans (Fair Average Quality) plummeted to K1.4 million per tonne. Similarly, the price of pigeon peas decreased slightly to K1.18 million per tonne.

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

period.

On 15 May 2021, India's Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare approved not only black gram but also other pulses being imported from Myanmar that have the bill of lading up to October-end 2021, with relaxations of conditions regarding clearance consignment up to 30 November 2021.

According to this statement, the previous notifications dated 19 March 2021 and 26 March 2021 were cancelled.

Additionally, Myanmar can export 250,000 tonnes of black gram (urad) and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas under the G-to-G (government to government) pact during the April-March period between the 2021-2022 financial year and the 2025-2026FY, as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Commerce and India's counterpart signed on 18 June.

At present, the demand for green gram slips due to border trade restrictions amid the COVID-19, with an estimated value of around K125,000 per three-basket bag.

Myanmar's agriculture sector is the backbone of the country's economy and it contributes to over 30 per cent of Gross Domestic Products. The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, various pulses and beans. Its second-largest production is the pulses and beans, counting for 33 per cent of agro products and covering 20 per cent of growing acres. Among them, black beans, pigeon peas and green grams constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage. Other beans, including peanut, chickpea, soybean, black-eyed beans, butter beans and rice beans are also grown in the country. — KK/GNLM

Aungban tomatoes fetch good prices



Aungban tomatoes are seen at the market in Myothit Township of Magway District.

THE tomatoes produced from Aungban of southern Shan State fetch good prices in

Myothit Township of Magway District, according to a local merchant.

The six-wheel tomato trucks usually enter the municipal market of Myothit once every five days and the prices are also high. The tomato prices were between K700 and K1,000 per viss about two weeks ago and now the price becomes K1,400 per viss, said Ma Htay Oo, a tomato trader.

"We order the tomato from Aungban and so the number of tomatoes from other regions is fewer. Therefore, the prices rise and we get good prices. This is also because of high fuel prices in the transport sector," she added. — Than Win Tun (IPRD)/GNLM

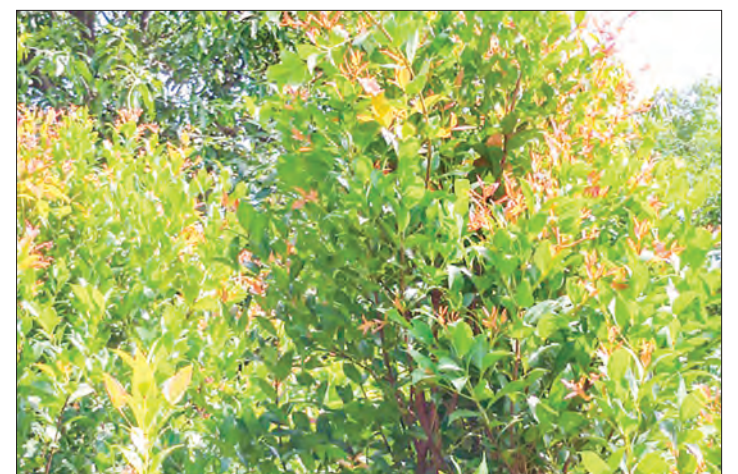
Eugenia sells well in Kyaukse Township

THE eugenia growers are happy with their eugenia selling well in Kyaukse Township of Mandalay Region. The price for a bunch of eugenia containing three branches with 10 tendrils is K300.

By growing five feet and six feet apart between them, the eugenia plants can get good inflow and outflow of wind with easy watering, generate beautiful branches and brighten

colours, said Ma Thida Aye, growers of 200 eugenia plants from Pintalei Village.

Growing eugenia is not like that of other fruit plants. It requires less labour and input costs. Therefore, the eugenia plants should be cultivated because they can earn daily income on a manageable scale. — Thet Maung, (Kyaukse) /GNLM



Eugenia is seen growing well in Kyaukse Township.

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals
Enterprise

Domestic gold price rises up to over K1.8 mln per tical

THE price of domestic gold bar rose up to above K1.8 million per tical (approximately 16.33 grammes), according to Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA).

The price of domestic gold is high right now because of the depreciation of the Myanmar Kyat in the local foreign currency market.

Currently, a US dollar exchange rate mounted up to the highest of around K1,980 per dollar in the local foreign market, while the domestic bar gold gained up to K1,820,000 per tical in the market.

On 28 September, the exchange rate on the US dollar hit an all-time high of over K3,000 in the domestic exchange market, while the price of a pure gold metal jumped accordingly to a record high of K2.22 million per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogramme), according to the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA).

However, it gradually dropped to around K1,800 per dollar by the end of October and



Gold jewellery at one of the gold outlets.

the local bar gold price also fell to K1,750,000 per tical.

In January 2021, the gold price was ranged between the minimum of K1,316,000 per tical (28 January) and the maximum of K1,336,000 per tical (6 January). It reached an all-time high of K1,410,000 per tical on 3 February and hit the minimum of K1,340,000 per tical on 2 February.

In March, the rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,391,000 (25 March) and the lowest of K1,302,000 (4 March). The price was registered the highest of K1,455,000 (30 April) and the lowest of K1,389,000 (1 April). The price reached an all-time highest of K1,709,000 (12 May) and the lowest of K1,447,000 in May. The price moved in the maximum of

K1,575,500 (11 June) and the minimum of K1,543,000 (19 June). It fluctuated between K1,562,300 (26 July) and K1,587,000 (9 July). The price of gold reached the lowest of K1,572,800 (3 August) and the highest of K1,698,000 (31 August). The price of pure gold metal hit a fresh peak of K2,220,000 per tical (28 September) and it was priced the lowest of K1,703,500 per ti-

cal (1 September). Last month, the rate fluctuated between the highest of K2,030,000 (1 October) and the lowest of K1,750,000 (27 October), gold traders said.

According to gold traders, the local gold reached the lowest level of K1,310,500 (2 September) and the highest level of K1,314,000 (1 September). In October, the rate ranged between K1,307,800 (30 October) and K1,316,500 (21 October). The rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,317,000 (9 November) and the lowest of K1,270,000 (30 November). In December, the pure yellow metal price moved in the range of 1,280,000 (1 December) and 1,332,000 (28 December).

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs in 2019, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 5 August), climbing to over 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching a record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September 2019. — NN/GNLM

Chinese demand via sea route pushes up sesame prices

MYANMAR'S sesame prices remain high as China is purchasing them through maritime routes, as per Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

The price of black sesame seeds stood only K145,000 per three-basket bag in July, whereas it increased up to K240,000 in early November; the Soe Win Myint pulses depot in Mandalay stated. Additionally, the price of black sesame seeds is likely to keep the upward trend owing to the short supply, a trader from Mandalay market shared his opinion.

Both raw sesame seeds and value-added sesame seeds are conveyed to China. When the COVID-19 cases fall and transport barriers are eased, the sesame market will raise its head again for sure, a depot owner from the Bayintnaung wholesale market said. Myanmar's sesame seeds export earned US\$292.28 million in the past eight months (October-May) of the previous financial year 2020-2021, according to data released by the Myanmar Customs Department.

Normally, Myanmar exports about 80 per cent of sesame production to foreign markets. China is the main buyer of Myanmar sesame, which was also shipped to markets in Japan, South Korea, China (Taipei), the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, and Poland among the EU countries.

The EU markets prefer organic-farming sesame seeds from Myanmar. Japan prefers Myanmar black sesame

seeds, cultivated under good agricultural practices (GAP), and purchases them after a quality assessment. Black sesame seeds from Myanmar were previously exported to South Korea and Japan.

China usually purchases various coloured sesame seeds from the country, yet, the trade is quite sluggish amid the restriction measures to contain the COVID-19 disease. This year, Japan has not purchased Myanmar's sesame yet.

Sesame is cultivated in the country throughout the year. Magway Region, which has gained a reputation as the oil pot of Myanmar, is the main producer of sesame seeds. The seeds are also grown in Mandalay and Sagaing regions.

Of the cooking oil crops grown in Myanmar, the acreage under sesame seed is the highest, accounting for 51.3 per cent of the overall oil crop plantation. About 600,000-800,000 tonnes of sesame seeds are yearly produced.

The volume of sesame exports was registered at over 96,000 metric tonnes, worth \$130 million, in the financial year 2015-2016; \$100,000 tonnes, worth \$145 million, in the FY2016-2017FY; 120,000 tonnes, worth \$147 million, in the FY2017-2018; 33,900 tonnes valued \$43.8 million in the 2018 mini-budget period, 125,800 tonnes, worth \$212.5 million in the FY2018-2019 and over 150,000 tonnes of sesame, worth \$240 million in the FY2019-2020, the trade data of Central Statistical Organization indicated. — KK/GNLM

Chilli growers in Pwintbyu get great revenue by high yield

THE locals from Pwintbyu township are growing Thamo chilli with the use of irrigated water from the Mezali Dam. The chilli plantations have a high yield and the chilli sells well in the local market, according to the chilli growers from Than Man Yin village in Pwintbyu township.

"The residents in Than Man Yin village are engaged in agricultural business on a commercial scale with the use of water irrigated from Mezali Dam. This year, the Thamo chilli plantations with irrigated water are earning the growers a higher

profit. This Thamo chilli is popular among the customers and it is selling well in the local market. We have to grow the seeds for one month to move them into the nurseries. We can pick up the chilli two months later. For the first time, I have picked up the chilli of around 250-300 visses and earned around K2,400 or 2,500 per viss for early yield. The price of chilli went down recently, earning us only K1,700 per viss. The seeds of Thamo chilli are sold for K4,500 per can in the market. Our township has a sufficient supply of irrigation water and it is

good to grow the crops. Our local planters are happy to grow the Thamo chilli this year because it is earning them handsome profit," said Ko Kyaw Zin Win, a local Thamo chilli grower from Than Man Yin village in Pwintbyu township.

The local farmers in Pwintbyu township are also growing other crops such as paddy, sesame, chickpea, green gram, butter bean and corn with irrigated water annually. Besides, the local people also cultivate chilli, long bean, arum plant and bitter gourd on a manageable scale. — Zin Yaw Aye/GNLM



The locals from Pwintbyu township are growing Thamo chilli with the use of irrigated water from the Mezali Dam. The chilli plantations have a high yield and the chilli sells well in the local market.

Don't keep libraries under lock and key

READING is a key to opening the treasury of knowledge for the youths because they are premature to learn education and seek knowledge in their steps of lives. Books are the best friends of readers. These books can be searched at bookstores or libraries. Of them, readers spend any costs on reading the books at the libraries. In fact, libraries are like universities for readers. They can search books on various subjects to be able to apply their knowledge in the practical fields.

In Myanmar, most of the basic education schools especially basic education high schools have been facilitated with libraries.

But many schools lock up the libraries, just for showing the books without opportunities for the students to read. Various kinds of books are stored at stands but these are unreachable for any student youths.

In fact, school officials need to encourage the students to read the books and share knowledge with them on how to select the good literature in the books. Even though the students pass the examinations at different grades till the matriculation examination, locks at the doors of these libraries have remained unchanged.

Books are doors to open the knowledge banks for the people. Locking these libraries is like keeping the books under detention. To be able to avoid these acts, officials from both schools and communities need to establish libraries for new generation youths. They can seek help for books from the Myanmar Libraries Foundation.

Youths will have the chance to take knowledge about the essence of literature created by renowned authors from the reading. Despite the advancement of social media platforms, anyone should not discard books. It is because social media cannot express comprehensive presentations on knowledge yet.

Books on various subjects can bear the significant knowledge, evolution of literature in successive eras, historical pieces of evidence for the research process, subjects of miracle expressions and wonderful creation in the past years as well as the current era's knowledge, science and arts subjects, tactics and strategic warfare and so on.

That is why the authorities need to emphasize the opening of the locks at the libraries for the youths to have a wider scale of knowledge and the skills how to apply knowledge from the reading and how to modernize the critical thinking and initiatives based on reading in the practical fields.



COVID-19: Europe and Central Asia, epicentre of new rise

About 22 months since the first cases of COVID-19 were reported, and almost a year since the first vaccines were approved, reported cases and deaths from the virus are increasing again.

THE warning came from WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, speaking to journalists in Geneva on 4 November.

More than 5 million deaths have now been reported, and WHO believes the real number is higher. More than 50,000 people are losing their lives every week.

In the last seven days, 56 countries, from all regions, reported an increase in deaths of more than 10 per cent.

Tedros highlighted reports about lack of intensive care unit beds, lack of supplies, overwhelmed health workers, and hospitals deferring other needed procedures.

"Let me be very clear: this should not be happening", he said. "We have all the tools to prevent COVID-19 transmission and save lives, and we continue to call on all countries to use those tools."

More vaccines
On Wednesday, WHO added yet another new tool, with the Emergency Use Listing of Covaxin, the 8th vaccine to receive WHO validation.

On that topic, Tedros kept pointing out the inequality in the distribution of vaccines, saying



Medical workers escort a COVID-19 patient to an evacuation plane at Nimes-Garon Airport in Saint-Gilles, France. PHOTO: PASCAL GUYOT/AFP/FILE

that most low-income countries are relying on the UN-backed international COVAX initiative. According to him, the initiative has the money and the contracts needed, but "manufacturers haven't played their part."

"No more vaccines should go to countries that have already vaccinated more than 40 per cent

of their population, until COVAX has the vaccines it needs to help other countries get there too", he argued.

He stressed that no more boosters should be administered, except to immunocompromised people, and repeated his call for a moratorium on the extra shots.

53 countries of the WHO European Region is "of grave concern."

According to Dr Hans Kluge, cases are once again approaching record levels, with the more transmissible Delta variant continuing to dominate transmission.

Over the past 4 weeks, the continent has seen increase in new cases greater than 55 per cent. Last week, Europe and central Asia accounted for 59 per cent of all cases globally and 48 per cent of reported deaths.

"We are, once again, at the epicentre," Dr Kluge said, adding that hospitalization admission rates due to COVID-19 more than doubled in one week.

There are increasing trends across all age groups, but 75 per cent of fatal cases are in people aged 65 years and above.

One estimate predicts that, if the countries stay on this trajectory, there could be another half million deaths in Europe and Central Asia, by 1 February next year.

According to WHO's Regional Director, there are two reasons for this surge: insufficient vaccination coverage, and relaxation of public health and social measures.

"Despite near-record COVID-19 cases, new deaths are at

approximately half the peak levels. This reflects the life-saving effects of vaccines and the Herculean task of health authorities, the health workforce and communities, to develop, administer and accept vaccines," Mr Kluge said.

So far, one billion doses have now been administered in Europe and central Asia.

Countries of Europe and Central Asia are, however, at different stages within the pandemic. On average, only 47 per cent of people have completed their vaccination. While eight countries have now exceeded 70 per cent coverage, in two countries, the rate remains below 10 per cent.

"The vaccines are indeed doing what they were intended to do: preventing severe illness and death," Mr Kluge assured.

Regarding public health and social measures, he said that testing, contact tracing, ventilation in indoor spaces, and physical distancing, remain part of the defensive arsenal.

"These are tried and tested measures that enable lives to continue while controlling the virus and avoiding widespread, damaging lockdowns," he argued.

SOURCE: UN

Covid-hit India cinemas bet on delayed blockbusters to revive crowds

BOLLYWOOD action flick "Sooryavanshi" -- starring top names Akshay Kumar and Ranveer Singh -- is the first marquee Bollywood film to be released on the big screen in 18 months.

Delayed since the start of the pandemic, Kumar stars as an anti-terrorism chief working to stop an attack in Mumbai. Its performance at the box office will be seen as a litmus test of whether audiences will flock back to cinemas in the world's most prolific movie market.

"This film is very crucial for the film industry," Rajender Singh Jyala, chief programming officer for the country's second-largest cinema chain INOX, told AFP. "The buzz is also very good."

'The biggest films'
India is currently celebrating Diwali, the country's biggest Hindu festival and

traditionally what film distributor Akshaye Rathi said was a "very lucrative time" for the sector. "Traditionally it's when the biggest films release," he told AFP.

Also debuting this week will be "Eternals", the latest instalment in Hollywood's Marvel franchise, and the colourful drama "Annaatthe" featuring Tamil superstar Rajinikanth.

Fans excited about "Annaatthe" sprayed milk on posters displaying Rajinikanth's face in Tamil Nadu's Madurai city on Thursday as a sign of respect for the actor, who inspires an almost god-like adulation in the state.

As the industry gets back on its feet, India's largest multiplex operator PVR is also opening an open-air, rooftop drive-in cinema -- pegged as a world first -- in Mumbai on Friday.

SOURCE: AFP



Fans take selfies with a billboard showing Bollywood star Rajinikanth ahead of the release of his film 'Annaatthe'. PHOTO: AFP

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Head of Service Organization

THE State Administration Council has appointed Dr Myint Myint Than, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Public Health under the Ministry of Health, as Director-General of the same department on probation from the date she assumes charge of her duties.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 5 November 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and Eastcentral Bay of Bengal and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 6th November, 2021: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be fairly wide spread in Taninthayi Region and scattered in Shan State and isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4 - 6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Region.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 6 November, 2021: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 6 November, 2021: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 6 November, 2021: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Yangon Regions.

The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Coal workers feel pain of France's climate goals

THE Gardanne smokestack is the highest in France at 295 metres (975 feet) but the mood at the power station beneath the once-proud chimney has reached an all-time low.

Gardanne is one of the last remaining French coal-fired stations. Ever since the government announced the closure of its coal plants three years ago to help meet climate goals, anger and despair has spread across this community of 20,000, half an hour's drive northeast of Marseille.

Many have lost their jobs, and they are furious with the government, which they say is not helping them find a place in a post-coal future.

"What good is the ecological transition if it leads to mass un-



Tension between the union and management is high.

PHOTO: NICOLAS TUCAT /AFP

employment?" asked Nadir Hadjali, boss of the hard-left CGT union at the power plant that went into operation in the 1950s.

'Fighting for our jobs'

France has vowed to shut three of its four remaining coal plants by next year, and the last one in 2024 as it moves towards its goal of reaching carbon neutrality

by 2050.

China, India and some European countries still rely heavily on coal for electricity, but France's dependence on the highly polluting fossil fuel has been declining for decades, with nuclear power accounting for more than two-thirds of its electricity mix.

Still, about 1,400 jobs are — directly or indirectly — threatened by the last French closures, according to the environment ministry, including 220 at Gardanne, and the nearby Fos-sur-Mer port which handles coal imports for the plant. "We're fighting for our jobs, the power station will live," said a banner put up at the site's entrance by workers. But that wish has so far proved elusive.—AFP ■

'Extremely low' wine production this year: trade body



Climate change is seen as being behind the bad grape harvests this year in the world's top three wine producers: Italy, Spain and France. PHOTO: AFP

BAD weather in Europe's top wine-making countries means

2021 will be an extremely low year for wine production, the In-

ternational Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) said on Thursday.

The Paris-based industry body said that world wine production volume is expected to come in at around 250 million hectolitres, a drop of four per cent from last year and seven percent below the 20-year average.

"The 2021 wine production can be considered extremely low, only slightly above the historically small production of 2017," said the OIV.

"This is the result of unfavourable climatic conditions that severely impacted the major wine-producing countries in Europe this year," it added.

Italy, Spain and France are Europe's leading wine producers and account for 45 per cent of the total. They saw their output plummet 22 million hectolitres thanks to spring frosts, hail storms and deluges of rain.—AFP ■

Beijing shuts roads, playgrounds amid heavy smog after coal spike

HIGHWAYS and school playgrounds in Beijing were closed Friday due to heavy pollution, as China ramps up coal production and faces scrutiny of its environmental record at make-or-break international climate talks.

World leaders have gathered in Scotland this week for COP26 negotiations billed as one of the last chances to avert catastrophic climate change, though

Chinese President Xi Jinping made a written address instead of attending in person.

China — the world's largest emitter of the greenhouse gases responsible for climate change — has ramped up coal output after supply chains in recent months were roiled by an energy crunch owing to strict emissions targets and record prices for the fossil fuel. A thick haze of smog



Vehicles run on the second ring road in Beijing, capital of China, 30 April 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA/CHEN ZHONGHAO

blanketed swathes of northern China on Friday, with visibility in some areas reduced to less

than 200 metres (yards), according to the country's weather forecaster.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Africa pins hopes on 'breakthrough' malaria vaccine

A ground-breaking vaccine against malaria has stoked hopes in Africa of rolling back a disease that claims hundreds of thousands of lives a year, many of them youngsters.

Since 2019, Ghana, Kenya and Malawi have immunised more than 800,000 children under a pilot programme using the RTS,S vaccine.

It is the first to show significant protection against the parasite-borne disease, cutting the risk of severe malaria by 30 per cent, trials have shown.

On 9 October, the World Health Organization (WHO), after sifting through the results of the pilot scheme, recommended the vaccine for children aged above five months in locations with malaria risk.

Some 260,000 children under five die from malaria each year in Africa, which accounts for about 90 per cent of the global caseload.—AFP ■

Delhi wakes to post-Diwali smog

NEW Delhi woke up to a thick blanket of toxic smog on Friday after an overnight barrage of firecrackers for the Hindu festival of Diwali in the Indian megacity, despite a ban on selling them.

At various hotspots, levels of harmful PM 2.5 particles topped 400 on average on the air quality index.

The figure is more than 15 times higher than the safe daily limit set by the World Health Organization.

India's top court has banned the sale of firecrackers in Delhi and the local government urged people to celebrate Diwali without them. But many of the capital's roughly 20 million residents still got hold of them, setting them off all over the city until the early hours of the morning for the annual Festival of Lights. Firecracker smoke combines with industrial and vehicle emissions and farm fires to create a putrid grey-yellow soup that envelops Delhi and other Indian cities in winter.

Sandeep, a Delhi resident, told AFP on Friday he did not think the government was doing enough to counter the pollution challenge.—AFP ■

Vaccine mandates are working in US, but are still divisive

WHEN vaccine mandates were announced in the United States, there were dire warnings they would cause mass layoffs or walk-outs. But they didn't. In fact, figures show they are working.

There are pockets of resistance to rules requiring employees be protected against Covid-19, notably among police and firefighters, but they have nudged more people towards getting the jab. "Mandates, so far, seem to be the most effective thing we have to overcome the vaccine hesitancy," Bradley Pollock, professor of Public Health Sciences at the University of California at

Davis, told the Sacramento Bee last month. "It's more than good; it's very good."

Around 58 per cent of the total US population was fully vaccinated as of early November, up from half in August as mandates began to be announced.

President Joe Biden on Thursday set a January 4 deadline for employees in large companies to be fully vaccinated — a rule the administration says will affect more than two-thirds of the country's workforce.

"Vaccination is the single best pathway out of this pandemic," he said. "Businesses have

more power than ever before to accelerate our path out of this pandemic, save lives, and protect our economic recovery."

Private sector

The government rules follow mandates announced by several major employers — to impressive effect.

They included United Airlines, which told its 67,000 US-based staff to get the jab or face termination.

By Thursday, 2,000 had sought medical or religious exemptions and all but a handful of the rest had complied.—AFP ■



Workers at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and their supporters protest on 1 November 2021 at JPL in Pasadena, California against a government mandate requiring federal employees to receive the Covid-19 vaccine. PHOTO: AFP

Germany hit by record surge in Covid cases



Countries across Europe have been reporting rises in coronavirus infections, prompting debate over whether to reintroduce restrictions and how to persuade more people to get vaccinated.

PHOTO: UNSPLASH/AFP

GERMANY on Thursday saw its biggest daily rise in Covid-19 cases since the pandemic began, figures from the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) health agency showed.

The country recorded 33,949 new cases in the past 24

hours, the RKI said, beating the previous daily record of 33,777 on 18 December 2020.

Cases have been rising sharply over the past few weeks, with Health Minister Jens Spahn warning on Wednesday that a fourth wave was raging

"with exceptional force".

Ministers have blamed Germany's relatively low vaccination rate for the surge, with just 66.9 per cent of the population fully inoculated as of Thursday, according to official figures.

Health professionals say unvaccinated people account for the majority of patients in intensive care, with numbers rising rapidly.

"We are currently experiencing mainly a pandemic of the unvaccinated and it is massive," Spahn said on Wednesday, warning that "in some regions in Germany intensive care beds are running out again".

The Covid surge comes as Germany is in political limbo following September's general election, with the winning Social Democrats hoping to have a new coalition government in place by early December.—AFP ■

Spain tourist numbers up but still short of pre-Covid levels

TOURIST arrivals in Spain leapt in the first nine months of 2021 compared with a year earlier, but remained far below pre-Covid levels, official data showed on Wednesday.

During the period, Spain welcomed 19.7 million tourists, an increase of 17.2 per cent over the figures for same period in 2020, the National Statistics Institute (INE) calculated. Prior to the pandemic — when Spain was

the world's number-two tourist destination and the sector accounted for some 12 per cent of its economy — nearly 70 million people visited in the first nine months of 2019, the INE said.

Although the data point to an improvement in the tourism sector, they fall far short of the government's forecast for some 45 million visitors this year — approximately half that of 2019.

The figures "confirm that the

recovery of international tourism is under way and that in 2022 we could return to pre-pandemic levels," said Tourism Minister Reyes Maroto.

In September, tourist arrivals stood at 4.7 million, an increase of more than 300 per cent from the same month in 2020. Maroto said Spain was hoping to welcome between "10.7 and 10.9 million" visitors in the last three months of the year.—AFP ■

In Ukraine, vaccine scepticism drives deadly Covid surge

A young woman sobs and comforts her mother on a bench in a courtyard at Kiev's Hospital Number Four.

"Daddy died this morning," she says through her tears — a scene becoming more and more frequent as Ukraine suffers through a devastating Covid-19 wave spurred by distrust of vaccines.

In the hospital's morgue, rows of bodies in black plastic bags testify to the deadly surge in infections.

"Five of our patients have died since yesterday," hospital director Tetiana Mostepan, whose 455 Covid beds are 70 per cent full, tells AFP.

Among those hospitalized, "only three to four per cent" were vaccinated, she says.

One of Europe's poorest countries, Ukraine has been hit by a huge rise in infections

with the coronavirus' more contagious Delta variant.

The country of around 40 million reported 720 new daily Covid deaths on Wednesday, the third-highest number in the world after the United States and Russia.

New daily cases hit a pandemic record of 26,870 last week and were at more than 23,000 on Wednesday.

Ukrainians have access to three vaccines — AstraZeneca, Pfizer and the Chinese-made CoronaVac — with around 180 vaccination centres in Kiev alone, including in shopping malls and at the main train station. But so far only 7.6 million people in Ukraine have been fully vaccinated — less than 20 per cent of the population — despite a strong government push and restrictions on the unvaccinated.—AFP ■



Authorities in the country of around 41 million initially struggled to source vaccines and convince Ukrainians to inoculate themselves. PHOTO: AFP

Japan gov't panel to propose support for local digitalization



People visit Tokyo's Asakusa area on 25 October 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

AN economic policy panel of Japan's government will propose promoting efforts to digitalize local areas through a significant amount of subsidies as part of fresh stimulus to revitalize the coronavirus-hit economy, a draft document showed Friday.

In its "urgent proposals" toward realization of Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's signature "new capitalism" vision, the panel will also urge the government to encourage businesses to raise wages through such incentives as tax breaks and subsidies, according to the document obtained by Kyodo News.

"To embody 'the national concept of digitalized garden cities,' the government will run a large-scale subsidy programme, supporting regional voluntary efforts utilizing digitalized measures," the paper said.

Some specific suggestions by the panel include legislation to set rules for safer and easier use of drones and robots to deliver food and commodity items in rural areas with limited public transportation services.

The panel is expected to make the proposals possibly on Monday, government sources said. Kishida last week instruct-

ed the body to come up with the suggestions.

On the pay hike policy, the government is expected to consider setting up a subsidy scheme for companies that raise wages for employees, since the current tax break system does not cover businesses that post deficits and do not pay taxes.

"While trying to narrow the (income) gap, the government, along with the private sector, needs to play a role in building capitalism that will be sustainable over the long term," the document said.—Kyodo News ■

Historic English port weathers supply storm



A shortage of lorry drivers, caused in part by post-Brexit entry requirements for foreign truckers, has led to delivery delays. **PHOTO: AFP**

FROM backlogs in shipments to shortages of lorry drivers, Britain has been facing a worsening supply chain crisis sparked by Brexit and Covid.

Resurgent demand from reopening global economies has created supply bottlenecks, while tougher immigration rules and bureaucracy for foreign workers have led to crippling staffing

issues. But the management at Portsmouth International Port say they are weathering the storm, stepping in to help ease congestion at bigger, snarled up deep-sea ports.

For the director of the port on England's south coast, Mike Sellers, the situation is unprecedented in his decades-long career in the sector. "I've been in the port

industry for 30 years and I have never experienced such a perfect storm," he told AFP against a mountainous backdrop of neatly stacked containers.

"It's a combination of rare factors," said Sellers, as vast cranes silently shifted containers between lorries and ships. Portsmouth is weathering the crisis because operators are seeking to save time after unloading cargo at nearby Southampton or further east at Felixstowe and not taking on empty containers for the return voyage.

"Portsmouth has benefited from the logjam... by repatriating empty containers," said Sellers, estimating that some 10,000 have been sent back to Asia via Europe. "These would usually be loaded back onto the deep sea container ships. But due to vessels waiting to berth at the deep sea ports they are not filling them back up with empty containers to save time."—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dutch top court rules on \$50 bn Yukos oil row with Russia

THE Dutch supreme court will on Friday hand down its judgment in a \$50-billion battle pitting former shareholders of the dismantled oil giant Yukos against the Russian government.

Moscow was ordered to make the record payout by a Hague-based arbitration tribunal in 2014, but it has challenged the case for the past seven years through the Dutch courts.

The ex-shareholders were awarded compensation for the break-up of Yukos after its former owner, the Kremlin critic and ex-tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, was arrested in 2003.

But even if they win on Friday, it could be difficult to enforce the judgment, with years more legal action around the world likely needed to seize Russian assets.

"We look forward to the ruling, confident in the outcome," Jonathan Hill, a spokesman for the former Yukos shareholders, told AFP.

The Russian government gave no comment before the verdict, which is due at 0930 GMT.—AFP ■

US trade deficit hits record \$80.9 billion

The Commerce Department reported Thursday that the September deficit topped the previous record of \$73.2 billion set in June.

Exports plunged three per cent to \$207.6 billion in September, as imports rose 0.6 per cent to \$288.5 billion.

The politically sensitive trade deficit with China also rose 15 per cent in September to \$36.5 billion. During the first nine months of this year, the U.S. deficit with China reached \$255.4 billion, an increase of 14.9 per cent from the same period in 2020, according to the AP.

The overall trade deficit through September hit \$638.6 billion, which is a 33.1 per cent increase over the same period in 2020.

The huge jump reflects the current surge of the U.S. demands for imports compared to 2020, when many parts of the economy were shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.—AFP ■

Brazil opens 5G tender, seeking \$9 bn in investment

BRAZIL opened an international tender Thursday to build one of the world's biggest 5G data networks, seeking \$9 billion in investment for Latin America's largest economy.

Calling it a "historic" moment, President Jair Bolsonaro opened the tender in Brasilia with a symbolic bang of the auctioneer's hammer, kicking off bidding by 15 companies that officials said could last through Friday.

The final overall sum raised will be announced on Friday at the end of the tender, but Com-

munications Minister Fabio Faria said the figure already reached 43.7 billion reais (\$7.9 billion) by the end of Thursday.

"The first day of the tender was a success, it exceeded all expectations," tweeted Faria.

The sprawling South American country is looking to leverage so-called fifth-generation mobile technology to accelerate the development of its industrial and agribusiness sectors — as well as bring super-fast internet to the cell phones of its 213 million people.—AFP ■



Brazil, a nation of more than 213 million people, intends to build one of the world's largest 5G mobile data networks. **PHOTO: AFP**

Singapore's retail sales grow 6.6 pct on year in September

THE Department of Statistics (DOS) of Singapore announced on Friday that Singapore's retail sales grew by 6.6 per cent year on year in September, a reversal from the 2.8 per cent year-on-year decrease recorded in August.

The DOS said that the year-on-year increase in September was partly attributed to the computer and telecommunications industry, which recorded

higher sales of mobile phones due to new product launches.

The estimated total value of retail sales in September was about 3.4 billion Singapore dollars (about 2.51 billion U.S. dollars). Of these, online retail sales made up an estimated 15.2 per cent, compared to the 14.1 per cent recorded this August.

Retail sales in September continued to be

below pre-pandemic levels, according to the authority.

The DOS also reported that the sales of food and beverage services increased by 4.4 per cent year on year in September, compared to the 6.7 per cent decrease in August. On a seasonally adjusted month-on-month basis, Singapore's sales of food and beverage services grew by 12.1 per cent in

September.

The sales value was estimated at 669 million Singapore dollars in September, of which the proportion of online sales hits an estimated 34.5 per cent, lower than the revised 39.3 per cent recorded this August.

Food and beverage sales value continued to be below pre-pandemic levels, the DOS added. — Xinhua ■



The estimated total retail sales value in September was \$3.4 billion. People dine at a restaurant in a shopping mall in Singapore on 14 May 2021, ahead of tightening restrictions over concerns of a rise in Covid-19 cases. PHOTO: AFP/ ROSLAN RAHMAN

Electric air taxis planned to fly above potholes of Rome



The Volocopter displayed in the Piazza San Silvestro in central Rome on 4 November. PHOTO: AFP

WITH streets filled with potholes, buses erupting in flames and soul-crushing traffic on the ground in the Eternal City, some say the only way is up.

A new electric air taxi could be transporting passengers from Rome's Fiumicino Airport to the

city centre within three years, according to German company Volocopter, Rome's airport operator ADR and transportation infrastructure holding company Atlantia.

The project, called VoloCity — which is also planned for Paris and

Singapore — promises to whisk people from the airport to the city in 20 minutes, with no traffic and zero emissions, travelling at a maximum speed of 110 kilometres per hour.

Initially, the taxi will carry the pilot plus one passenger, "until the aircraft will fly completely autonomously," when it will be able to take two passengers, read a joint press release announcing plans.

Still required for the Fiumicino project is the development of "vertiports" to allow the taxis to take off and land vertically.

In Rome on Thursday, the gleaming white Volocopter flying taxi was

parked in a square near the Trevi Fountain where curious onlookers were allowed to board.

"I would have liked them to have thought more about the railway system before going up into the sky," said 32-year-old Giuseppe, who declined to give his last name. Still, he conceded: "This is a leap into the future. We talk about going to Mars, so this is the least we can do." Local news reports put the price of the planned 20-minute ride from Fiumicino to the city centre at 140 euros (\$161), compared to a taxi, which costs 48 euros, or a 32-minute train for 14 euros.—AFP ■

Nintendo lowers Switch sales outlook due to chip shortage

NINTENDO Co. on Thursday lowered its sales forecast for its Switch game console to 24 million units, down 1.5 million units, in the current business year through March due to a prolonged global semiconductor shortage.

However, supported by strong demand for games on the popular console, Nintendo upgraded its net profit forecast for fiscal 2021 even though the first half result through September was 19.4 per cent lower than a year earlier at 171.83 billion yen (\$1.5 billion) on sales of 624.27 billion yen, down

18.9 per cent.

Referring to the chip crunch, Nintendo President Shuntaro Furukawa said the Japanese gaming giant "cannot produce enough to meet the anticipated demand" for the game console in the year-end shopping season. "We expect the harsh situation to continue as there are no signs of improvement" Furukawa said in an online press conference.

The company expects a net profit of 350 billion yen for the full year. It compares with 340 billion yen initially projected in May, which represents a 27.1

per cent fall from a year earlier.

Its operating profit is projected to fall 18.8 per cent from a year earlier to 520 billion yen, but up from

the earlier estimate of 500 billion yen. The sales forecast remains unchanged at 1.6 trillion yen, down 9.0 per cent from a year earlier.—Kyodo News ■



A man (L) buys the new model of the Nintendo Switch game console at an electric appliance store in Osaka, western Japan, on 8 Oct 2021, its launch day. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Airline giant IAG slashes losses on Covid recovery

BRITISH Airways owner IAG said Friday that third-quarter losses shrank sharply on the lifting of Covid travel curbs, and expressed hope of a return to profit next year.

The loss after taxation hit 574 million euros (\$664 million) in the three months to September compared with 1.8 billion euros a year earlier, IAG said in a statement, while revenues more than doubled on strong long-haul demand.

The group's star performer, Spanish carrier Iberia, meanwhile bounced back into profitability.

The European travel conglomerate, whose portfolio also includes Aer Lingus, Level and Vueling, added that it flew 43.4 per cent of its pre-pandemic 2019 capacity.

IAG expects this figure to reach 60 per cent in the fourth quarter.

'Significant recovery underway'

"There's a significant recovery underway," said Chief Executive Luis Gallego.

"We continue to capitalise on surges in bookings when travel restrictions are lifted.

"The full reopening of the transatlantic travel corridor from Monday is a pivotal moment for our industry."

IAG shares however sank more than three per cent in early trade on the London stock market. "As such, the company remains firmly in the camp of a recovery play, which in turn has attracted the attention of investors still keen on IAG's prospects," noted Interactive Investor analyst Richard Hunter.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (221S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (221S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **6-11-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINES

China says US report on nuclear arsenal 'full of prejudice'



A formation of Dongfeng-17 conventional missiles attends a military parade during the celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Beijing, capital of China, 1 Oct 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA/PAN YULONG

BEIJING hit back Thursday against a US report on China's expansion of its nuclear arsenal, calling it "full of prejudice", and accused Washington of overhyping the threat.

The Chinese foreign ministry's comments came after the Pentagon said that China was growing its nuclear weapons much more quickly than anticipated, narrowing the gap with the United States.

The US report said China could have 700 deliverable nuclear warheads by 2027, and top 1,000 by 2030 -- an arsenal two-and-a-half times the size of what the Pentagon predicted only a year ago.

But it noted Beijing was likely not seeking a capability to launch an unprovoked atomic strike on a nuclear-armed adversary.

"The report released by

the US Department of Defense, like previous similar reports, ignores facts and is full of prejudice," said Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin.

He added that Washington was using the report to "hype up talk of the China nuclear threat", and described the United States as the "world's largest source of nuclear threat".—AFP ■

Rebel march on Ethiopia capital to worsen humanitarian crisis: US

ETHIOPIAN lawmakers on 4 November endorsed a state of emergency after rebels advanced on the capital, sparking a US warning that an aid crisis that has already plunged hundreds of thousands into hunger could worsen further.

A year to the day since Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed deployed troops in the northernmost region of Tigray, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) rebel fighters are now just a few hundred kilometres from Addis Ababa.

Abiy's government has been locked in a war for the past year with the TPLF, which dominated national politics before he took office in 2018.

The 2019 Nobel Peace laureate promised a swift victory, but by late June the rebels had retaken most of Tigray and ex-



Legislators approved the state of emergency, which opens the way to conscription. PHOTO: AFP

panded into the neighbouring regions of Afar and Amhara.

The TPLF announced late Wednesday it had reached the town of Kemissie in Ethiopia's Amhara region, some 325 kilometres (200 miles) northeast of the capital.

Spokesman Getachew Reda said the TPLF was working in the area alongside the Oromo Liberation Army rebel group, which on 3 November predicted Addis Ababa could fall in a matter of weeks.—AFP ■

Australia police charge suspect in Cleo Smith abduction

POLICE on Thursday charged a 36-year-old man with the abduction of four-year-old Australian girl Cleo Smith, hours after they released an audio recording of the touching moment she was rescued.

Smith disappeared from her family's tent in remote Western Australia last month, sparking a frantic air, land and sea search.

She was missing for 18 days until being rescued in a night raid on an empty home in the coastal town of Carnarvon — just a short drive from where she went missing.

A 36-year-old man was arrested nearby and appeared in Carnarvon Magistrate's Court on 4 November.

Police confirmed he was charged with various offences, including one count of forcibly taking a child under 16.

He was not required to enter a plea and was remanded in custody until December 6 when he will next appear.

The charges had been delayed after the man sustained unspecified injuries in custody that required hospital treatment.

Lead investigator, detective superintendent Rod Wilde said police alleged he "acted solely alone" in abducting the little girl.

Many had feared the search for Cleo Smith would end in tragedy, but the discovery of her "alive and well" sparked nationwide elation, with police admitting "seasoned detectives" were "openly crying with relief".

The force on Thursday released audio recording of the rescue, in which officers can be heard urgently trying to affirm her identity.—AFP ■



The man suspected of abducting Cleo Smith is believed to have 'acted alone', police say. PHOTO: WESTERN AUSTRALIAN POLICE FORCE/AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Taliban leader warns against infiltrators in the ranks

THE supreme leader of the Taliban warned Thursday against the danger of turncoats and infiltrators in the movement that has taken charge of Afghanistan.

Reflecting the seriousness of the threat, the reclusive Haibatullah Akhundzada issued a rare written public statement to urge Taliban commanders to purge their ranks.

In it he says "all those elders of their groups must look inside their ranks and see if there is any unknown entity working against the will of the government, which must be eradicated as soon as possible.

"Whatever wrong happens, the elder will be responsible for the consequences of the actions in this world and in the afterlife," he warned, in a statement tweeted out by multiple Taliban accounts.

The Islamist militant movement seized power in August after overrunning the capital and ousting the collapsing US-backed government, declaring a new Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

But after 20 years of guerrilla warfare, the Taliban has been forced to expand their ranks rapidly by recruiting former foes, allied Islamist militants and young madrassa students.

Now that it is the government, the movement faces attacks in its turn from hardline factions like the Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K).

The groups are now bitter rivals, but there has been movement between them over the years and they both employed tactics like suicide bombings and civilian massacres to destabilize the former regime.—AFP ■

Kishida to be reappointed as Japan PM in Diet session on Wednesday

JAPAN'S ruling and opposition parties agreed Friday to hold a special parliamentary session for three days from Wednesday, with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida set to be reappointed as Japan's leader.

The special session follows Sunday's general election, in which Kishida's Liberal Democratic Party and its smaller partner Komeito retained a comfortable majority in the House of Representatives.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno formally conveyed the Diet schedule to the ruling and opposition parties in the morning. On the first day of the session, a new lower house speaker will be chosen from the LDP, likely former Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda, who leads the largest faction in the major ruling party.

A vice speaker will be picked from the main opposition



Lawmakers representing various political parties and groups meet in the parliament on 5 Nov 2021. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

and second largest party, the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan. The party's current leader, Yukio Edano, is expected to step down on the last day of the parliament session after his

party lost a number of seats in the lower house election.

The government plans to separately hold an extraordinary Diet session within this year as it seeks to pass a supple-

mentary budget for fiscal 2021 that incorporates new economic measures aimed at helping Japan recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.—Kyodo News ■

US House to vote Friday on giant twin bills at centre of Biden agenda

DEMOCRATIC leaders announced the US House would vote Friday on President Joe Biden's \$3 trillion blueprint to

transform transport networks and expand the welfare safety net.

House Democratic leaders

had been hoping for a procedural vote on Biden's \$1.75 trillion Build Back Better social spending plan and to rubber-stamp the Senate-passed \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package on Thursday but outstanding differences among lawmakers on the details forced a delay.

"This Build Back Better agenda, along with the bipartisan infrastructure bill, as we have said, is transformational, and it's historic, and it's important to get this done," White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters.

"And so the president is going to continue to work with

members in Congress to make that happen." A green light from the House on infrastructure would pave the way for a history-making upgrade of the country's crumbling roads, bridges, waterways and broadband network. The social spending package doesn't have Senate blessing, however, and is some way from becoming law.

The lower chamber going full-speed ahead on the larger bill after months of delays caused by infighting is largely a pressure tactic to light a fire under senators in hopes a House-passed bill spurs them into action in the coming month—AFP ■



US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi is pushing for a swift vote on both parts of the White House's agenda. PHOTO: AFP/NICHOLAS KAMM

Vietnam says in talks with Iran over seized oil tanker

VIETNAM said Thursday it was working with Iran to resolve the fate of an oil tanker seized in the Gulf that sparked diplomatic squabbling between Washington and Tehran.

Iran and the United States gave sharply differing accounts of what happened to the MV Sotys, a Vietnamese-flagged vessel, in the Sea of Oman last week.

Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) said they thwarted an attempt by the US Navy to seize the vessel carrying its oil.

But US defence officials rejected that account, and said that Iran seized the tanker and took it into their waters.

Vietnam's foreign ministry told reporters Thursday that it would "work closely with Iranian competent authorities to resolve this issue".

It said the tanker's captain confirmed to the Vietnamese embassy in Tehran on 27 October that all 26 crew members were in good health and being treated well. — AFP ■



This video grab of footage broadcast by Iranian state TV on Wednesday reportedly shows Iranian Revolutionary Guards navy units observing a US warship (left) and a Vietnam-flagged oil tanker (right), in the Gulf of Oman. PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Honduras presidential candidate arrested on murder, drug-trafficking charges

HONDURAN authorities on Thursday arrested presidential candidate Santos Rodriguez over accusations of money laundering related to drug-trafficking and homicide, including the murder of a DEA informant.

His arrest comes less than a month ahead of presidential elections in which the main candidates all face accusations of either corruption or drug trafficking.

Outgoing President Juan Orlando Hernandez has himself been accused of drug-trafficking, while his brother Tony Hernandez was in March sentenced to life in prison in New York for the same crime.

Rodriguez, a retired army captain, was not among the favourites for the 28 November election.

According to the public ministry he is wanted for "money laundering."

A protected witness also alleged that when Rodriguez found money or drugs while carrying out operations in his army role, he "did not declare them in their entirety, keeping part of what was seized and the confiscated weapons were taken to a criminal group".

"According to witnesses he is also involved in the death of many people including an informant" for the US Drug Enforcement Agency, said the ministry.—AFP ■

US Justice Department sues Texas over controversial voting law

THE US Justice Department filed a lawsuit on Thursday against the state of Texas over a recently passed law the federal government says will unfairly restrict voting.

The suit filed in federal court in San Antonio challenges the law known as SB1, which was passed in September to revamp voting and elections in the southwestern state.

However the Justice Department says the measure, which prohibits drive-in voting and institutes several other restrictions on hours and mail-in ballots, violates federal voting and civil rights laws.

Supporters say the law makes elections safer by protecting against fraud, but critics have said it disproportionately affects minorities' ability to vote, especially Black Americans, who tend to back Democrats.—AFP ■

Myanmar squad to play three friendly matches in Turkey

THE Myanmar national team, which is training in Turkey for the 2020 ASEAN Suzuki Cup to be played later this year, will play three friendly matches, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

The Myanmar squad has been training in Antalya, Turkey since the end of October and will play three friendlies this month, football authorities said.

The Myanmar national team will play one match against Indonesia national team and two friendlies against Turkey football clubs.

The team Myanmar match against Manavgatspor FC will be held on 9 November and the match against Burundi FC on 13 November.

On November 25, the Myanmar squad will take on the Indonesian national football team.

Myanmar head coach Antoine Hey has selected 25 preliminary players for the Suzuki Cup, which will be finalized after the tour.

Coach Hey has named some of the players who competed in the AFC U-23 Cup based on the squad for the 2022 World Cup

qualifiers in the middle of this year including players who are playing for foreign clubs.

After playing the friendlies, the Myanmar squad will travel directly to Singapore to compete in the Suzuki Cup, officials said.

The 2020 ASEAN Suzuki Cup, which has been postponed due to the epidemic, will be held from 5 December 2021 to 1 January 2022. Myanmar is placed in the same group as Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore and a winner of the Suzuki Cup Qualifiers (Timor-Leste or Brunei). —Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Failure to land Emery exposes cracks in Newcastle's lofty ambitions



Newcastle fans celebrated the arrival of the Saudi-backed consortium despite concerns from human rights groups. **PHOTO: AFP**

A month on since a takeover from the Saudi sovereign wealth fund sparked scenes of wild celebration at St. James' Park, Newcastle fans are still waiting for their windfall.

Without a win in the Premier League after 10 games and rooted in the relegation zone, six points adrift of safety, questions are already being asked of the

club's ambitious new project off the field.

Villarreal boss Unai Emery rejected the chance to become the Magpies' new manager this week, despite a public courting by Newcastle's new owners and the riches on offer.

The former Paris Saint-Germain and Arsenal manager was reportedly wary of joining the

project in its infancy without a clear structure of how to make the club's new wealth pay on the field.

"No matter how much noise there was yesterday in another country, within the club there was transparency and loyalty," said Emery in declaring his intention to remain in Spain on Wednesday. —AFP ■

West Ham through to Europa League knockout stages, but Leicester frustrated

WEST Ham qualified for the Europa League knockout stages despite Tomas Soucek's own goal costing them victory in a 2-2 draw at Genk on Thursday, but Leicester have work to do after being held 1-1 at home by Spartak Moscow. Celtic gave their chances of reaching the last 32 a boost by beating Ferencvaros 3-2 in Hungary, while

Rangers also have it all to play for in the final two games after coming from behind to draw 1-1 away to Brondby. West Ham are on the brink of guaranteeing top spot in Group H which will book their place in the last 16, but needed Said Benrahma to score twice in Belgium to preserve their unbeaten record in Europe.—AFP ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

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

2. Economic affairs

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

3. Social affairs

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

Fritz sets up Djokovic clash, Medvedev and Zverev dig deep in Paris

TAYLOR Fritz departed the French Open in a wheelchair this year but his return to Paris is proving a far happier experience as he reached the Paris Masters quarter-finals after beating Cameron Norrie 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) on Thursday.

The 24-year-old American's reward for ousting the 14th seeded Briton is a meeting with world number one Novak Djokovic, who beat Fritz in five sets at this year's Australian

Open.

Djokovic will have had mixed feelings about how he got to the Masters last-eight as he came to Paris saying he needed match practice after seven weeks off. However, his third round opponent, the mercurial Frenchman Gael Monfils, withdrew before their match due to a groin injury he suffered in his three-set win over compatriot Adrian Panatta on Wednesday. —AFP ■



Taylor Fritz is enjoying his return to Paris more than his last visit when he left the French Open in a wheelchair as he beat Cameron Norrie to set up a Paris Masters quarter-final with Novak Djokovic. **PHOTO: AFP**