

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

## Only when infection rate actually declines can health restrictions be eased: Senior General



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the tenth coordination meeting on COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

**O**FFICIALS at different levels need to supervise necessary medical examination and protection for returnees from foreign countries in order to plummet the infection rate of COVID-19 in border areas as well as the whole country, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Provisional

Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the 10<sup>th</sup> coordination meeting of COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities at Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

In his opening address, the Senior General stressed that the infection rate of COVID-19

accounted for 40.82 per cent on 23 July and 40.07 per cent on 25 July. Efforts were made to decline a half down of the infection rate in August for the first stage. On 29 August, 3,166 persons of 29,127 persons were approved as the positive patients in medical examination, accounting for just 10.87 per cent. It was satisfactory

for plunging the infection rate into less than 20 per cent the government expected. Such success was based on the cooperation of the people and management of organizations.

Local ethnic people from Kachin, Shan, Kayin and Mon States and Taninthayi Region who did not present reports to authorities about their return

to home from China, Laos and Thailand were infected in their native lands. Officials at different levels need to supervise necessary medical examinations and protection for the returnees from foreign countries in order to plunge the infection rate of COVID-19 in border areas as well as the whole country.

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
Order No 176/2021

8<sup>th</sup> Waning of Wagaung 1383 ME  
30 August 2021

**Reformation of Union Ministry**

THE State Administration Council has reformed the Union Attorney-General Office as the Ministry of Legal Affairs in accord with Section 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By Order,

**Aung Lin Dwe**  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary  
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
Order No 177/2021

8<sup>th</sup> Waning of Wagaung 1383 ME  
30 August 2021

**Appointment and Duty Assignment of  
Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Un-  
ion Attorney-General**

THE State Administration Council has appointed and assigned Dr Thida Oo to the duties of the Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Attorney-General of the Union in accord with Section 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By Order,

**Aung Lin Dwe**  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary  
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
Order No 178/2021

8<sup>th</sup> Waning of Wagaung 1383 ME  
30 August 2021

**Appointment and Duty Assignment  
of Deputy Minister for Legal Affairs and  
Deputy Attorney-General**

THE State Administration Council has appointed and assigned U San Lwin to the duties of Deputy Minister for Legal Affairs and Deputy Attorney-General in accord with Section 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By Order,

**Aung Lin Dwe**  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary  
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council  
Order No 255/2021

8<sup>th</sup> Waning of Wagaung 1383 ME  
30 August 2021

**Extension of public holidays for further  
prevention, control and treatment over  
infection of COVID-19**

THE State Administration Council has set successive public holidays for the sixth time to head off the infection chains of COVID-19 for the people to adhere to the restricted disciplines during the public holidays. In order to soonest reach the normal situation by controlling the infection of COVID-19, the notification was announced that the period from 1 to 10 September 2021 was further set as the successive public holidays (except for the Central Bank of Myanmar and its subordinate government banks and private banks under the specific situation) in accord with Section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act.

By Order,

**Aung Lin Dwe**  
Lieutenant-General  
Secretary  
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
**Public Announcement of Central Committee  
on Prevention, Control and Treatment of  
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

8<sup>th</sup> Waning of Wagaung 1383 ME  
30 August 2021

Due to the current situation, it is necessary to continue controlling the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Thus, all basic education schools, (including private schools and monastic schools,) will be temporarily closed from 1-9-2021 to 10-9-2021.

**3,583 new cases of COVID-19 reported on  
30 August, total figure rises to 395,883**

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 395,883 after 3,583 new cases were reported on 30 August 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 348,682 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 15,287 after 104 died.

**Daily newspapers available online**

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

# Preventive measures taken for damage and overflow of water from the dams

LAST year's drought caused shortages of drinking water in the country. This year's rainfalls can remove such worries of water scarcity. However, it is necessary to take preventive measures of damage and overflow of water from the dams.

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

## Only when infection rate actually declines ...

### FROM PAGE-1

With regard to the arrival of COVID-19 vaccines and the vaccination process, the Senior General said: "A total of 6.5 million units of vaccine have arrived in Myanmar from China till yesterday. Of them, 2.5 million units were donated and we bought 4 million units, totalling 6.5 million units. India donated 1.7 million units of vaccine and we bought 2 million units. So vaccine units totalled 10.2million units. I ordered the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Defence to transport these vaccines which arrived yesterday to regions and states as quickly as possible, depending on the climatic conditions. Primarily, when the vaccines arrive, regions and states need to

to arrange the distribution of vaccines in real-time. I'd like to note that one day earlier vaccination will benefit the people better. According to the statements of global countries, vaccinated persons have better immunity than non-vaccinated persons. It is not totally said that vaccinated persons will never be infected. But they have lesser potential for suffering from the disease. Otherwise, they may suffer from the least impact of the disease. For example, even severe diseases may affect them with lesser impacts. They will have more convenience with oxygen and medicine supplies."

Not only China and India but other friendship countries Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam donated COVID-19 vac-



The State/ Region Chief Ministers attend the 10<sup>th</sup> coordination meeting online.

cy of oxygen in regions and states. Officials need to share knowledge with the people for avoiding the loss of lives in the unsystematic use of oxygen. Hence, it is necessary to manage the availability of oxygen as well as other medical supplies in all parts of regions and states. Public healthcare services need to consider the long-term preparations to meet international standards.

Due to restrictions in the outbreak of COVID-19, prices of goods were high due to the increased production costs but dangerous situation on shortages of foods will not happen in Myanmar. As such, it is necessary to manage the better process of food supplies for the people in regions and states.

The Senior General stressed the need for chief ministers in regions and states to encourage the farming tasks of the people. Successful agricultural tasks can produce agricultural products for enabling the people to have a better process of food supplies and increased

income, contributing much to battling the COVID-19.

Then, the meeting participants discussed implementation of home-at-stay programme in some townships with high rate of infected patients and easing the restrictions in some townships with declining the infection rate, systematically medical examination for those who returned from foreign countries via border gates and preventive measures against infection of variant virus of the disease, arrangements for arrival of about 10 million units of vaccines in September and October, health care for infected health staff and provision of aid for them, creation of contacts with ASEAN countries, neighbouring countries and international community to donate COVID-19 vaccines, related medicines and accessories, vaccination to people from border areas, daily requirement of oxygen, undertaking of spot check in 53 townships at high infection

rate among 129 stay-at-home townships, findings of actual infection rate—2,071 infected persons among 6,292 persons on 27 August at 17 per cent, 1,478 infected persons of 17,930 people on 28 August at 8.24 per cent and 1,764 infected one of 3,507 people on 29 August at 5.44 per cent, running of domestic flight, water transport, vehicles and trains, import of anti-COVID-19 medical devices and accessories, sending of telephone message on health awareness, broadcasting of information and educative programmes on prevention, control and treatment activities for COVID-19, distribution of masks, hand gel and disposable needles from Tatmadaw factories and workshops, supply of household medicines from State-owned and private pharmaceutical factories, vaccination, control and treatment of the disease on WHO website, and sales of medicines from pharmacy shops across the nation, vaccination at IDP camps.

SEE PAGE-4

The Senior General stressed the need for chief ministers in regions and states to encourage the farming tasks of the people. Successful agricultural tasks can produce agricultural products for enabling the people to have a better process of food supplies and increased income, contributing much to the battling the COVID-19.

hand over them to townships and grassroots levels under the management of the region and state governments. If you need heavy machinery, give requests to us. We'd like

cines to Myanmar. ASEAN pledged to send the medical supplies to Myanmar soon. As oxygen supply plays a crucial role in treatment, efforts were made to ensure the sufficient

# Only when infection rate actually declines ...

## FROM PAGE-3

In his response to the reports, the Senior General said that relevant ministries need to bring back Myanmar citizens from Malaysia by relief flight. It is necessary to supervise the vaccination process with the use of a newly-arrived vaccine at one unit for five doses. Research and tests must be conducted for the production of the COVID-19 vaccine. Relevant departments need to cooperate among them in the prevention of malpractice in the import of medicines under the FDA approval, and import-substitute foodstuffs must be sold at fair prices to the people.

In his concluding speech related to sales of basic med-

icines at fair prices and vaccination process, the Senior General said: "Myanmar Chamber of Commerce for Pharmaceutical & Medical Device (MCCPMD) and some companies directly sell the medicines. Pharmacy shops are allotted at a site to sell the medicines in Yangon. Price list of important medicines is expressed in daily newspapers. So, people are convenient to some extent in buying the medicines. So, I thank the association for its arrangement. Those from the association arrange the sales of medicines with goodwill for the people, rather than their interests. Everybody wishes to do business for having benefit. But the association

focuses on sales of medicines at correct prices to the people without focusing on the benefit. They do it with goodwill. So, I thank them for their efforts.

It was reported that infection of the disease declines. We check the figure of infection, the number of people under medical examination and infection percentage. It is because it is necessary to take care not of leaving the fields. Such a process was included in the discussions of the Union Minister for Health. They are contact persons and some of the persons who were related to the patients. Some of them return home. So, I have told it earlier. For example, some people return to their

villages in regions and states without reporting to the authorities. When the infection rate was higher, findings of medical examination showed that some of the people did not report to the authorities for their returning and officials did not check them. So, it is necessary to closely supervise inspection tasks. It is important that inspection arenas should not be left. Only when we know the correct results from medical checkups, will the control of the disease be benefited. So, we need to check many persons."

Health staff need to have patience in performing medical checkups on people in a systematic matter. Health aware-

ness must be raised to avoid careless travelling as the current variant virus causes high and speedy infection with a high death rate. Symptoms of the disease must be disseminated to the people. Only when the infection rate actually declines can the health restrictions be eased. At present, factories and workplaces are allowed to systematically operate production under the disciplines. The infection of the disease must be monitored to ease the health restrictions. Not only the Tatmadaw and Myanmar Police Force but the people must carry out the security of the health staff. As oxygen can be produced at home, it is necessary to import oxygen as a reserve if necessary. —MNA

## MRTV should make efforts to show modern broadcasting programmes: Union Information Minister

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn inspected the broadcasting programmes, studios, newsrooms and national symphony orchestra at MRTV (Myanma Radio and Television) on Pyay Road of Yangon yesterday.

The Union Minister first met the MRTV staff officers. At the meeting, he highlighted the department role that dutifully serves its historical responsibilities and holds the motto: to inform, educate and entertain the public for the State amid changing political landscapes of the country.

He also said the ministry is working hard via the media sector in implementing the five-point roadmap and nine objectives of SAC. It cannot be applied to the traditional ways. It should also adopt modern and creative innovations based on the traditions, opinions and standards of Myanmar people, including the developing techniques.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the media and television broadcasting industries are constantly innovating based on digital technologies, and the MRTV reaches its diamond jubilee.

He then excerpted some words of the Prime Minister of the State made at the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diamond jubilee of MRTV, "MRTV could not only inform, educate and entertain but also to motivate the people. As the fourth estate, the media industry plays an important role, so it must act correctly. It should be a reliable MRTV eternally for the country and people."

The Union Minister continued that cooperation works are required in media like broadcasting programmes that can create a peaceful community lack of any hate or anxiety. Such doings the public can have the correct knowledge and thoughts, and it can benefit the government and interests of the country.

He also urged the staff to



The MoI Union Minister views around the broadcasting news studio.

cooperate with the ministry in easing the difficulties of people from various media sectors during the outbreak of COVID-19.

Then, MRTV Director-General U Ye Naing reported on the work programmes of the station. The Union Minister inspected

the practice section of the national symphony orchestra and modern music bands, storage of records and broadcasting programmes.

The Union Minister also held a meeting with the executive members and veteran musi-

cians of the Myanmar Music Association (Central) at noon and discussed COVID-19 vaccination programmes for the artistes. He presided over another meeting with the officials of FM radio station that jointly broadcasts with MRTV in the evening. — MNA

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

### ADVERTISING & MARKETING

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

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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

## Statement called for fight against terrorism, for rewarding whistle-blowers, informants

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

Central Committee on Counter Terrorism

## ASEAN launches youth development index phase II

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khine attended the online launching ceremony of ASEAN Youth Development Index Phase II yesterday.

ASEAN Secretary-General Dato Lim Jock Hoi said, in his greeting speech, the youths are the new generations having differences and similarities according to the regional location. Currently, all are facing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ASEAN YDI Phase I

was launched in 2017 while the ASEAN YDI Phase II measured in three major domains for all youths, and the youth development programmes will be also implemented in the future. Then, the Ministers for Youth Affairs in ASEAN countries respectively made remarks on ASEAN Youth Development Index Phase II.

Afterwards, Union Minister Dr Thet Thet Khine appreciated the efforts in launching the ASEAN YDI Phase II, adding Myanmar participated in

programmes for ASEAN YDI Phase I.

The expert team conducted the systematic survey of the opinions of university students on ASEAN for ASEAN YDI Phase II.

The report will benefit the youth development in ASEAN countries. The ASEAN YDI Phase I looked at four domains of education, health and well-being, employment, participation and engagement while the ASEAN YDI Phase II studied awareness, values and identity.



A total of 1,582 students and 151 Myanmar experts and students participated in data collection programmes of ASEAN YDI Phase II. — MNA

## International flight restrictions extended until 30 September

THE Ministry of Health has issued a directive on the temporary restriction of international commercial passenger flights to Myanmar since it is crucial to control the spread of COVID-19 disease in Myanmar.

With the permission of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), "Temporary Measures to Prevent Importa-

tion of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel" was revised as "Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel Issue-2" on (31-12-2020) till 23:59 hours on (31-8-2021) of Myanmar Standard Time.

Until now, the prevalence of the COVID-19 epidemic has risen in most parts of the world. With the permission of the Central Committee on Prevention,

Control and Treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the effective period of the above directive has been extended to 23:56 hours of Myanmar Standard Time on 30 September 2021 to further prevent the risk of COVID-19 transmission via international air passengers into Myanmar.

Ministry of Transport and Communications

## Four armed men hold up Global Treasure Bank in Yangon

A gang of four armed men threatened employees of the Global Treasure Bank and took stacks of money on the floor and counter from the bank.

The bank robbery happened yesterday morning at the Global Treasure Bank located on Thamine Myo Haung 8<sup>th</sup> street in No (1) ward, Mayangon Township, Yangon Region. It is reported that the bank robbers fled in a vehicle (Mark II) with about K100 million towards Hlinethaya (East) Township, and security forces are conducting a detailed investigation to arrest the robbers under the law. — MNA

# The Sixth Month of the State Administration Council

By Kanaung

**J**ULY marks the sixth month of the State Administration Council and the month when the country was hit by the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. The government, together with public health service personnel, is making strenuous efforts to prevent, manage the pandemic, and provide medical treatment. Myanmar starts another round of vaccination against COVID-19 from the end of July. Those over the age of 65, health workers, COVID volunteers, monks, nuns and others on the priority list are scheduled to be vaccinated. The Tatmadaw medical corps and volunteers are also working on the frontline of the pandemic as there continues to be a shortage of health workers due to the government health staff who had abandoned their patients and their positions due to the civil disobedience movement.

National and subnational coordination meetings were held on COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities. These led to policy decisions, such as those on the systematic implementation of lock-down measures, such as the closure of offices and schools, the provision of medical oxygen to meet the needs of the country, the establishment and expansion of quarantine centres for medical treatment, and vaccination programmes to control the transmission of infection.

## Policy guidance by the Head of State

Chairman of the State Administration Council Senior General Min Aung Hlaing has taken the key role of leading the country's efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic through mechanisms set up for this purpose. Various structures and entities have been set up from community level up to State and Region, and at the national level. COVID-19 committees involving both government representatives and civil society actors have also been set up in large cities. These are all overseen and coordinated by mechanisms in each State and



State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is addresses the fourth coordination meeting on the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 July 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

Region, which take their policy guidance from the national level coordination body.

At the first national coordination meeting on the COVID-19 emergency held on 9 July, the State Administration Council Chairman emphasized health education of the public, provision of treatment and health care, and cooperation with social welfare organizations and volunteers. He also underscored that no limits would be placed on budget. The meeting also discussed effective actions to provide the required oxygen, transport patients to facilities and conduct COVID-19 vaccination.

The second national coordination meeting on the COVID-19 emergency held on 12 July focused on systematic planning and preparation for the large numbers of quarantined cases, the preparation of isolation facilities, the provision of medical oxygen and other health care system needs for the public.

At the third national coordination meeting on the COVID-19 emergency on 18 July, the State Administration Council Chairman highlighted his appreciation of the high level of preparedness of the systems for coping with the surge of COVID-19. There were now 1,934 facilities for more than 69,000 people at military and public

hospitals, and another 1,114 facilities for 46,000 positive patients. The efforts by the public to follow COVID-19 public health rules and regulations were also appreciated since participation by the public is needed to combat the third wave of COVID-19 and reduce infection rates. The meeting also discussed the prevention of infections among health workers and government employees, and the provision of medical services, oxygen and other medical supplies in the remote areas of the country.

At the fourth national coordination meeting on the COVID-19 emergency on 23 July, the State Administration Council Chairman spoke about health personnel who had joined the civil disobedience movement. He noted that these doctors and nurses had not returned to their positions although he had invited them and requested them to help in the country's response to combat the pandemic and that this should cut across all political divides. Some had taken up the government's offer and returned to public service, but others had not. He again issued a request to all doctors and nurses to cooperate with the government. He also urged the social welfare organizations to cooperate in the acceleration of vaccination programmes.

The fifth national coordina-

tion meeting on the COVID-19 emergency on 26 July took up the issue of rolling out vaccination programmes systematically according to the pre-defined priority groups, the opening of new COVID-19 centres, treatment centres, and provision of medical oxygen supplies. At another meeting held on 27 July, the SAC Chairman discussed measures to accelerate the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment efforts, the preparations for the arrivals of vaccines, and messages to the public to maintain good health and nutrition throughout this period.

## International relations

On 6 July, Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin attended the Special ASEAN-Russia Foreign Ministers' Meeting. He presented Myanmar's efforts to make progress towards the sustainable development goals, the work undertaken in cooperation with partners to revive the economy, notably through the development of the tourism industry, and other future plans.

Myanmar media interviewed Associate Professor and expert on Myanmar Affairs Ms Kseniya Alexandrovna Efremova from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), one of the top universities in Russia, Central and Eastern Europe, and Vice

-Chairman Mr Bulochnikov Anatony Mikhinovich of the Russia-Myanmar Friendship Association. They spoke about the current political affairs of Myanmar, good bilateral relations with the Russian Federation, and potential socio-economic cooperation on Myanmar state media.

The government has also been active in all ASEAN-led initiatives. The Union Minister for Foreign Affairs joined the ASEAN-US Foreign Ministers' Meeting held through virtual channels on 14 July. During the meeting, the Union Ministry expressed appreciation for the support of the United States in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. He urged all parties to continue to support the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI).

The Union Minister for International Cooperation attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on 21 July and pledged to fully cooperate under the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Framework. Government officials from the concerned ministries concerned attended the 54<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Tourism Authority Meeting and relevant meetings, the ASEAN Supreme Audit Institution Senior Officials' Meeting, and the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transna-

tional Crime and other international meetings.

### Rejection of attempts to intervene in domestic affairs

Over the past few months, the government has been setting out in public the evidence of the NUG's support for the bombing, maiming and killing of innocent civilians. Nonetheless, the UN and some western embassies have ignored government statements and continue using fake news on social media and promoting the NUG terrorist group.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement pertaining to the baseless remarks made by Mr Stephane Dujarric, Spokesperson for the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on 29 June 2021. These remarks were apparently based on the UN Country Team in Myanmar, who have not even verified the real facts and take as their source the unsubstantiated accusations and fake news on social media. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also objected to the recognition of the website of the terrorist group NUG. It called on the UN not to release one-sided remarks without verification and to take a balanced approach towards the verification of sensitive information with the relevant ministries before issuing statements.

Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released another press statement on 9 July that objected to the proceedings in the Interactive Dialogue

ference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.

Myanmar also issued a press release on 13 July, which again categorically stated that U Kyaw Moe Tun had been terminated from his position as Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations since February 2021. Therefore, any statement or participation by U Kyaw Moe Tun at the various forums of the United Nations is neither official nor representing the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. He has been charged with high treason and official letters to this effect have been sent to the relevant countries and organizations not to recognize him as the Permanent Representative of Myanmar.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also issued a statement to reject the resolution A/HRC/47/L.11 tabled by the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Organization (OIC), entitled "The situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar." The Myanmar government disagrees with this resolution, which was adopted by the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of Human Rights Council in Geneva on 12 July.

On 7 July, the Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemned the assertions made by Zaw Wai Soe from the terrorist group NUG in an interview with France 24

making such remarks, and trying to instigate further violence, since the NUG-supported terrorists are currently targeting civilians in killings, bombings and attacks. Zaw Wai Soe will be prosecuted in accordance with the laws on terrorism. France 24 TV should not promote such attempts to solicit funding for NUG.

On 30 July, the ministry released a statement condemning the efforts to sow divisiveness and attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of Myanmar while the country is fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic together with the people like other international countries. At the Arrria formula meeting on Myanmar held at the initiative of the United Kingdom on 29 July, participants engaged in discussions with members of the terrorist group NUG. Myanmar strongly condemned these discussions based on one-sided information.

### Peace and the Rule of Law

The Tatmadaw extended its unilateral declaration on the suspension of military operations across the country from 1 to 31 July, and again from 1 August to 30 September. The suspension of military operations across the nation will apply except to cases where the security and administrative machinery of the government and national defence measures are being threatened or sabotaged.

The Special Appeals Court, together with the Chief Justice

proceedings in those would be dropped and the defendants must be released. Altogether, a total of 4,297 defendants were released.

### Investigations by the Union Election Commission

The Union Election Commission released its findings on the voter lists and ballot papers used in the November 2020 elections for four townships of Kachin State and one township of Kayin State on 5 July, another 18 townships of Kachin State on 6 July, and seven townships of Kayin State on 7 July.

In its statement of 8 July, the Union Election Commission cited its findings of massive electoral frauds committed at polling stations in the 315 townships where the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Multiparty General Election was conducted and also noted that the voting irregularities were identified as intentionally committed fraud by the previous authorities. Investigations showed that in total, there were 11,305,390 names in the voter lists that are potentially fraudulent. This represents 29.54% of the total voter lists provided by the former Union Election Commission. On 10 July, the Union Election Commission issued the statistics of the voter lists finalized by the previous Union Election Commission of those who allegedly voted in the 2020 General Election. This included so-called voters without any citizenship scrutiny card, so-called voters who appeared

ers of age 100 years and above.

From 23 July onwards, the Commission released its findings of the respective regions and states in July. Subsequently, on 26 July 2021, the present Union Election Commission issued Announcement No. (2/ 2021) on the Annulment of Results from the 8 November 2020 Multiparty General Election, based on the evidence that the said General Election was not in compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Union Election Commission Law and the respective Hluttaw Election Laws, and that the 2020 General Election was not a free and fair election.

### COVID-19 prevention and response

As Myanmar struggled with skyrocketing new infections, the State Administration Council advanced a raft of new coronavirus prevention measures in July, including acceleration of immediate response, preparations for COVID-19 centres, implementation of stay-at-home measures in respective regions and states, granting import licence exemptions for COVID-19 medical supplies and facilitating their import at border trade points daily.

Throughout the month of July, responding to disease patterns, the government issued stay-at-home orders progressively for the residents of 85 townships in regions and states as well as in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, in order to break the



The MoRAC Union Minister, the Yangon Region Administration Council Chairman and the Commander of the Yangon Region Command are paying tribute to the Martyrs after laying wreaths at the Martyrs' Mausoleum to commemorate the 74th Martyrs' Day on 19 July 2021.

with the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar at the 7<sup>th</sup> regular session of the UN Human Rights Council, held in the absence of the representative of the country concerned, Myanmar also rejects the statement made by the Special Rapporteur as inter-

TV channel on 1 July. In that interview, Zaw Wai Soe had requested international countries to provide the necessary assistance to the Myanmar people for "self-defence". This shows that he is defending terrorist acts against innocent civilians by

of the Union, passed judgement on four exceptional criminal appeal cases and heard four special civil appeal cases on 5 July. Moreover, the State Administration Council released an order to withdraw some ongoing criminal cases. Following this, court

in the voter list three times and above with the same citizenship scrutiny card number, so-called voters included in the voter lists twice with the same citizenship scrutiny card number, voters of age under 18 years, implausibly large numbers of so-called vot-

chain of COVID-19 transmissions. Public announcements were broadcast throughout neighbourhoods to urge the people to abide by the health guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health.

**TO BE CONTINUED**

## Consider things how to improve Myanmar's agricultural arena

MYANMAR possesses an abundance of land, water and human resources as well as the strength of entire farmers in the agriculture sector which plays a crucial role in the development of the State. It is because the agricultural sector fulfils the basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter of the people and creates job opportunities.

The successive governments have been striving for transforming manual farming into mechanized farming for many decades. So far, the country has partially transformed the agricultural farming system with the use of modern agricultural machinery being skillfully operated by Myanmar farmers.

On the other hand, distribution not only of the quality seeds of crops but also of the modern agricultural techniques contributes

a great deal to mechanized farming. Utilizing the agricultural machinery benefits the farmers to cut time of soil preparations, ploughing, sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting and threshing before milling.

Meanwhile, the local authorities overview the agricultural sector in their respective areas to provide necessary assistance for farmers on how to construct the manufacturing roads for easing the transport barriers of crops and how to irrigate the farmlands through dams and river water pumping stations.

The manufacturing roads must be constructed between the paddy and crop fields to emerge drains on both sides along the roads. So, farmers can use the manufacturing roads to transport crops by saving time without any barriers and the drains to irrigate their farmlands in an easy manner. Moreover, the systematic measurement of farmlands and croplands can be shaped thanks to the construction of the manufacturing roads.

Only when the agricultural sector improves, will the large volume of agricultural products be exported to earn incomes and will the

local people consume food sufficiently. Hence, mechanized farming must be implemented together with systematic agricultural systems so as to boost the per-acre yield of crops.

If the modern agricultural techniques and relentless efforts of farmers combine, it is sure that Myanmar can see a larger volume of agricultural products and increased income from agricultural export items in a few years.

As such, the authorities and farmers should always consider things how to improve the agricultural sector, how to uplift their living standard through benefits of the sector and how to completely implement mechanized farming not only for the State but for the new generations.

As such, the authorities and farmers should always consider things how to improve the agricultural sector, how to uplift their living standard through benefits of the sector and how to completely implement mechanized farming not only for the State but for the new generations.

## Delta variant doubles hospitalization risk in comparison to Alpha: study

Researchers analyzed data from 43,338 Covid cases in England from 29 March to 23 May of this year, including vaccination status, emergency care, hospital admission

THE Delta variant of the virus that causes Covid-19 doubles the risk of hospitalization compared to the Alpha variant it has supplanted as the dominant strain worldwide, researchers reported Saturday in *The Lancet*.

Only 1.8 per cent of the more than 43,000 Covid cases assessed in comparing the two variants were in patients who had been fully vaccinated.

Three-quarters were completely unvaccinated, and 24 per cent had only received one jab of a two-dose vaccine.

"The results from this study therefore primarily tell us about the risk of hospital admission for those who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated," said co-lead author Anne Presanis, a Senior Statistician at the University of Cambridge's MRC Biostatistics Unit.

Researchers analysed healthcare data from 43,338 COVID-19 cases in England

from 29 March to 23 May of this year, including vaccination status, emergency care, hospital admission and other patient information.

All virus samples underwent whole genome sequencing, the surest way to confirm which variant had caused the infection. Just under 80 per cent of the cases were identified as the Alpha variant, and the rest were Delta. Around one in 50 patients were admitted to hospital within 14 days of their first positive COVID-19 test.

After accounting for factors that are known to affect susceptibility to severe illness — including age, ethnicity, and vaccination status — the researchers found the risk of being admitted to hospital was more than doubled with the Delta variant.

'Excellent protection' Since these samples were taken, Delta has surged and now accounts for over 98 per-

cent of new Covid-19 cases in Britain, the authors said.

Multiple studies have shown that full vaccination prevents infection with symptoms and hospitalization, for both Alpha and Delta variants.

"We already know that vaccination offers excellent protection against Delta," said Gavin Dabrera, another lead author and a consultant epidemiologist at the National Infection Service, Public Health England.

"It is vital that those who have not received two doses of vaccine do so as soon as possible."

An earlier study from Scotland also reported a doubling in hospitalisation risk with Delta over Alpha, suggesting that Delta causes more severe disease.

The Delta variant was first reported in India in December 2020 and early studies found it to be up to 50 per cent more transmissible than the Alpha variant, which was first iden-



People wait to get vaccinated for COVID-19 at a baseball game in Springfield, Missouri, U.S., on 5 Aug 2021. PHOTO: AFP

tified in England in September last year.

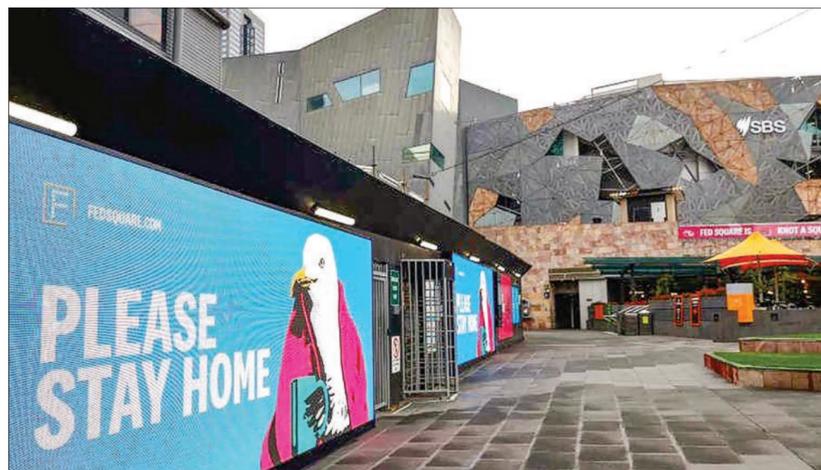
Nearly 4.5 million deaths worldwide have been attributed to Covid-19, though the final

tally is likely to be higher once "excess deaths" are calculated over the pandemic period.

In some countries — and some states in the United States

— hospitalisation and death rates are the highest they have been since the first cases reported at the beginning of 2020. Source : AFP

## Australia embroiled in fierce debate on COVID-19 exit strategy



Signs tell Australians to stay at home in Melbourne. PHOTO: CON CHRONIS/ AFP

AS various Australian states and territories grapple with vastly different COVID-19 circumstances, the nation remains locked in a politicised debate as

to the safest and yet most expedient way out of its crippling health, economic and social morass. One side of the debate is that the array of lockdowns and strict border

controls between states should

finally be lifted once particular vaccination levels are reached. Proponents of that view, painfully aware of the astronomical costs

of the lockdowns and restrictions, include Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Premier of the state of New South Wales (NSW) Gladys Berejiklian.

Their attitude can perhaps best be summed up by Morrison who this week likened lockdowns to staying "in the cave," suggesting that it is time to emerge and "deal with the challenges of living in a different world."

"Lockdowns are not a sustainable way to deal with the virus and that's why we have to get to the 70 and 80 per cent marks, so we can start living with the virus," said Morrison. Such vaccination benchmarks are based on the government-backed report last month by the prestigious Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity.

The report proposed that restrictions be relaxed once 70 per cent of Australians aged over 16 were vaccinated. Once vaccination

coverage reached 80 per cent, only "highly targeted lockdowns" would be necessary and vaccinated Australians would be free to travel interstate.

The opposing argument is that the all-important sign for re-opening borders would be when the daily new cases of COVID-19 reach a figure close to zero. Notable supporters of that view include Queensland Premier Annastacia Paaszczuk and Western Australia (WA) Premier Mark McGowan. Both of these states have so far stamped out any outbreaks of the highly infectious Delta variant. McGowan, for instance, has gone on the record to say he wanted his state to try to "crush and kill" the virus, which would mean blocking outsiders from entering WA.

Queensland's leaders have also made it clear that their state may remain off-limits to NSW even when the 80-percent vaccination rate is achieved. On Friday, there

were 882 new local COVID-19 cases recorded in NSW, bringing the state's overall caseload to 15,684.

That figure is by far the nation's highest. In stark contrast, Queensland that day had just one new case while WA recorded no new cases. Another state currently battling a COVID-19 surge is Victoria which recorded 79 new cases on Friday.

Despite the almost exponential growth in NSW, Berejiklian announced this week that fully vaccinated people would soon be given a reprieve in some of their restrictions as the state had hit its target of 6 million jabs.

She further announced on Friday that schools would return to in-person learning from 25 October and promised further freedoms would follow for those who had their two jabs when NSW reached its vaccination targets of 70 to 80 per cent of the adult population.

Source : Xinhua

### Myanmar Gazette

#### Confirmation and Appointment of Heads of Service Organizations

1. THE State Administration Council has confirmed U Thint Myat Thu, Director-General of Department of Transportation Planning, Ministry of Transport and Communications, after his one-year probationary period.
2. The State Administration Council has appointed the following persons as the Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(a) U Win Naing Oo General Manager Myanma Economic Bank Ministry of Planning and Finance	Managing-Director Myanma Economic Bank Ministry of Planning and Finance
(b) U Ye Nyunt Deputy Director-General National Archives Department Ministry of Planning and Finance	Director-General Department of Pension Ministry of Planning and Finance
(c) Dr Thida Hla Deputy Director-General (Medical Services) Department of Medical Services Ministry of Health	Rector (Medical Superintendent/ Medical Services) Yangon General Hospital Ministry of Health

### Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 30 August, 2021)

**BAY INFERENCE:** Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 31 August, 2021:** Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Magway Regions and Northern Shan State, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago, Ayeyawady Regions and Kachin, (Southern and Eastern) Shan and Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Upper Sagaing, Mandalay Regions and Kachin, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Weak monsoon.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31 August, 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31 August, 2021:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31 August, 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

#### Flood Warning

(Issued at 09:00 hrs M.S.T on 30-8-2021)

According to the (08:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyawady River at NyaungU is observed as about (½) foot below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next (2) days.

According to the (08:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyawady River at Seiktha, Hinthada and Zalun are observed as about (1) foot below their respective danger levels. It may reach their respective danger levels during the next (3) days.

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas at NyaungU, Seiktha, Hinthada and Zalun Townships to take precaution measure.

# MoC conducts import processes for COVID-19 protective equipment daily

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

On 30 August (Yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products including oxygen plants and concentrators were imported by 18 companies and transported by 28 vehicles, including three bowsers vehicles.

A total of 59 tonnes of oxygen (liquid) carried by three bowsers, four tonnes of liquid oxygen, 4,900 empty oxygen cylinders, six oxygen plants, one oxygen generator, 388 home oxygen concentrators, 3,000 sets of Covid-19 test kits, 2,500 sets of PPE suits, and 13 tonnes of masks were imported via Muse, Chinshwehaw,



Myawady and Tachilek trading posts and Yangon International Airport.

Three vehicles carrying liquid oxygen plus six oxygen plants to Yangon and one oxygen plant to Mawlamyine were transported respectively.

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is co-

ordinating with relevant departments, facilitating the importation of essential medical supplies required in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website — [www.commerce.gov.mm](http://www.commerce.gov.mm). — MNA



The Lorries carrying oxygen tanks and COVID protective equipment are transporting them to the needed places and areas.

## Price list of medicines commonly used against COVID-19 till 6 pm on 30 August

No	Product Name	Pack Size	Price in Kyats (Retail)	Company Name
<b>Supportive</b>				
1	PO - Pantocid	10x10's / Box	7,000	PL
2	PO Omeprazole	10x10's / Box	1,650	Shwe Htay Min
3	Injection Pantocid	1g/Vial	1,500	Aorta
4	Injection Omeprazole	1g/Vial	1,050	Aorta

<b>Antibiotics</b>				
5	PO - Azithromycin 500 mg	5x3's	4,000	Rammawaddy
6	PO - Cefalexin 500 mg	Box of 10x10's	6,100	Aorta
7	PO - Levofloxacin 500 mg	Box of 10x10's	7,000	Shwe Htay Min
8	PO.Cefixime	Box of 3x10's	3,600	Aorta
9	PO Amoxicillin+ Clavulanic Acid	Box of 1x6's	1,800	Aorta
10	Injection - Levofloxacin 500 mg	1x1	3,000	Yadanar

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

## YGEA urges members to manage gold market volatility

YANGON Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) urged its members to regulate trade in order to deal with market volatility.

Last 28 August, YGEA made five decisions, including the strategic trade control, at the monthly meeting.

At present, along with the Kyat depreciation and the gold price gain in the international market, the precious pure gold metal stands at K1,688,000 per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogramme).

The global gold price stood at only US\$1,815 per ounce at present, while the US dollar exchange rate is worth above K1,700.

Despite the domestic gold price staying in the upward trend, the market is pretty sluggish, according to the YGEA.

Earlier, about 50 viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg) were daily traded. At present, the market sees sales of only 5-10 viss.

On 12 May, the gold hit an all-time high of K1,709,000 per tical in history.

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). Last month, it fluctuated between K1,562,300 (26 Jul) and K1,587,000 (K1,587,000), the 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 priced 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



Despite the domestic gold price staying in the upward trend, the market is pretty sluggish, according to the YGEA.

## Myanmar corn export exceeds \$490 million in Oct-June period



Myanmar is the second-largest exporter of corn among regional countries. At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions.

MYANMAR'S corn exports to foreign countries generated revenue of more than US\$490 million in the past nine months (October-June) of the current financial year 2020-2021, Myanmar Customs Department's statistics showed.

The prices of Myanmar's corn are climbing up in the Mandalay market on the back of strong demand by Thailand, coupled with the growing demand in the domestic market, traders from Mandalay depot said.

Prior to Thingyan Festival in April, the corn fetched only K28,000 per three-basket bag. Both the foreign demand and domestic demand prompted the sellers to raise the prices starting from the first week of May. Following a gradual upward trend, the corn was priced above K32,900 per bag in early June and the price surged to above K36,700 per bag in August, the Soe Win Myint depot from Mandalay stated.

Myanmar has been delivering corns to the neighbouring countries Thailand and China via the land borders. The ship-

ment to Singapore, Malaysia and Viet Nam abruptly stopped owing to zero demand, he added.

At present, Myanmar is conveying corn to Thailand through land borders, with a tonne of corn fetching up to about 8,000 Thai baht.

Thailand gives the green light to corn imports through Mae Sot under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August.

Thailand has granted tax exemption on corn imports between February and August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn import to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand, as per the notification of the World Trade Organization regarding corn import of Thailand, said a corn exporter.

With the local corn consumption growing, Myanmar's corn export to foreign markets is expected to reach 1.6 million tonnes this year, the association stated.

Myanmar is the second-largest exporter of corn

among regional countries. At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons – cold season, summer and monsoon. The country yearly produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn.

The corn crop is mostly demanded by the feedstuff processing business. Therefore, it is a potential business for both domestic and external markets, said an official of the Ministry of Commerce.

During last FY 2019-2020 ended 30 September, the country exported 2.2 million tonnes of corns to the external market, with an estimated value of \$360 million, the Ministry of Commerce's data showed.

As per data from the Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar exported 1.5 million tonnes valued at \$270 million in the 2018-2019FY, 1.4 million tonnes of corn worth over \$290 million in the 2017-2018FY, 1.2 million tonnes of corn worth \$250 million in the 2016-2017FY, and, 1.1 million tonnes of corn worth \$300 million in the 2015-2016FY. — MM/GNLM

## Singapore placed Myanmar's second-largest importer

SINGAPORE is the second-largest importer of Myanmar with an estimated value of \$2.14 billion, the Ministry of Commerce data showed.

Between 1 October and 30 June of the current financial year, the value of Myanmar's bilateral trade with Singapore in maritime

trade and border trade topped \$2.3 billion.

The Ministry of Commerce reported that imports surpassed exports in trade with Singapore, with exports reaching \$166.9 million and imports valued at over \$2.14 billion.

Myanmar trade deficit in

goods with Singapore was estimated at US\$1.97 billion in the past nine months (October-June) of the current financial year 2020-2021, the statistics issued by the Central Statistical Organization under the Ministry of Planning and Finance indicated.

Singapore is Myanmar's sec-

ond-largest trading partner in the region, after Thailand.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, footwear, textiles and clothing, minerals, and animal products to Singapore. It imports plastics, fuel oil, capital goods, intermediate goods, consumer products, metals, and chemicals.

Myanmar's bilateral trade with Singapore has registered \$3.5 billion in the last financial year 2018-2019, \$1.99 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period, \$3.83 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$2.96 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$3.69 billion in the 2015-2016FY. — KK/GNLM

## “3-D” crosswalk debuts near Kyoto school to prompt cars to slow down



Photo taken on 30 August 2021, shows students of an elementary school in Kameoka, Kyoto Prefecture, traversing a specially-painted crosswalk made to appear as if it is three-dimensional to catch the attention of drivers and get them to slow down. The stripes of the crosswalk, at which there are no traffic lights, are painted not just in white but also dark red and appear to the eye to be floating in the air. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

A specially-painted crosswalk made to appear as if it is three-dimensional to catch the attention of drivers and get them to slow down was declared open near an elementary school in Kyoto Prefecture on Monday as the school restarted after the summer vacation.

The stripes of the crosswalk, at which there are no traffic lights, are painted not just in white but also dark red and appear to the eye to be floating in the air. It was the brainchild of Kyoto Sangyo University students.

In a ceremony to mark

the opening, a police officer explained how the “3-D” crosswalk was developed to pupils at Chiyokawa Elementary School in Kameoka city. The pupils traversed the crosswalk greeting officials who held up placards warning drivers against speeding.

Kohei Yamashita, 21, one of the university students who devised the unique crosswalk, said, “We used examples from overseas as a reference. Seeing the children actually crossing at the crosswalk, I think it will be quite effective.”

Hiroki Matsuda, head of the traffic section at the

Kameoka Police Station, said, “This is a fresh idea that only students can come up with,” adding he hopes it will help raise awareness among drivers that pedestrians should take priority. Many cars do not stop at crosswalks in Japan, although they are required by law to do so and can be fined.

According to a 2020 survey conducted by the Japan Automobile Federation, the average rate of cars stopping at crosswalks without traffic lights was 21.3 per cent nationwide, while the figure stood at 19.9 per cent in Kyoto Prefecture. — Kyodo News ■

## China bans exams for six-year-olds as Beijing retools education system

BEIJING on Monday banned written exams for six- and seven-year-olds, as part of sweeping education reforms aimed at relieving pressure on pupils and parents in China’s hyper-competitive school system.

China’s exam-oriented system previously required students to take exams from first grade onwards, culminating in the feared university entrance exam at age 18 known as the gaokao, where a single score can determine a child’s life trajectory.

“Too frequent exams ... which cause students to be overburdened and under huge exam pressure,” have been axed by the Ministry of Education, according to new guidelines released Monday.

The ministry said the pressure on pupils from a young age “harms their mental and physical health.”

The regulations also limit exams in other years of compulsory education to once a term, with mid-term and mock examinations allowed in junior high school.

The measures are part of wider government reforms of China’s education sector, which include a crackdown on cram schools — seen by parents as a way to inflate their children’s educational fortunes.

In late July, China ordered all private tutoring firms to turn non-profit, and barred

tutoring agencies from giving lessons in core subjects at weekends and holidays, effectively crippling a \$100 billion sector.

The aim is to reduce China’s education inequality, where some middle-class parents willingly fork out 100,000 yuan (\$15,400) or more per year on private tutoring to get their children into top schools.

Many also snag property in schools’ catchment areas, driving up house prices.

“There is no other country that has such a strong tutoring culture (as China),” said Claudia Wang, partner and Asia education lead at Shanghai-based consulting firm Oliver Wyman.

With population growth at its slowest in decades, Chinese authorities lifted a two-child birth limit earlier this year and wish to increase incentives for parents to have more children.

Beijing city authorities last week announced that teachers must rotate schools every six years, to prevent a concentration of top talent at some schools. Education officials on Monday reiterated a ban on schools setting up “priority” classes for gifted students.

The Ministry of Education also banned written homework for first- and second-graders earlier this year, and limited homework for junior high students to no more than 1.5 hours per night. — AFP ■

## Ukraine pins hopes on Gulf visitors for pandemic-hit tourism

SAUDI tourists ride horse-drawn carriages, pose for portraits by street artists and play chess on benches with locals in Lviv, a city in Ukraine more accustomed to hosting European guests.

But with strict Covid-19 travel restrictions still in place across Europe, travellers from the Middle East — especially Saudi Arabia — now rank among the top visitors to the ex-Soviet state. The trend has given hope to the country’s pandemic-hit tourism industry.

“We need to seize the moment,” says Bogdan Gets, a tour guide on a sightseeing train that ferries tourists along cobbled streets in central Lviv, a city in western Ukraine known for its Renaissance architecture. For Gets and his colleagues at “Chudo Tour” (Wonder Tour), the un-



Middle Eastern tourists sit in a street cafe in Lviv, some 540 km west of Kiev on 15 August 2021. **PHOTO: SERGEI GAPON / AFP**

expected influx of tourists from the Middle East is a chance to recover after a string of lockdowns that put pressure on Ukraine’s struggling economy.

In the first half of 2021, the

number of Saudi tourists alone visiting Ukraine skyrocketed to 14,000 compared to just 350 in the same period last year, according to the country’s state tourism agency. — AFP ■

## Benin’s rare swamp forest ‘at risk of disappearing’

IN the freshwater swamp forest of Hlanzoun in southern Benin, majestic trees hum with chirping birds and playful monkeys. Home to once bustling flora and fauna, experts now warn that the fragile environment, one of the last of its kind in the West African country and accessible only by canoe, is at risk of disappearing.

The 3,000 hectares (7,400 acres) of forest, which takes its name from the river Hlan, is home to 241 plant and 160 animal species including the rare red-bellied monkey, the marsh mongoose and the sitatunga, a swamp-dwelling antelope. Perched at the top of a gigantic

tree squawks a hornbill — a big bird known for its long, down-curved and colourful bill, similar to toucans. “Hornbills feed on insects and fruits. They like to follow monkeys around because they force insects to come out when they move around, making it easier for hornbills to catch,” explains Vincent Romera, a French ornithologist and photographer. With his binoculars, Romera admires a family of monkeys jumping from tree to tree, while keeping a clear distance. “The animals here have become fearful,” he says. He’s considering using camera traps to try to photograph them, but also to count

the forest’s animal population. “The numbers are in freefall,” he says. Sometimes, the forest’s noisy concert is interrupted by gun shots, he says, probably from poachers.

### Logging

Communities living around the forest “need money, so those who can shoot go and kill animals,” explains Roger Hounkanrin, a local tourist guide.

Despite steady economic growth in recent years, poverty is widespread in Benin, especially in rural areas, and 40 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line according to World Bank data. — AFP ■

## European stocks steady after reassurance from US Fed

EUROPEAN stocks nudged higher at the open Monday following US Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell's cautious comments on potential withdrawal of its massive stimulus programme later this year.

Germany's DAX index of leading shares was close to flat soon after 9:00 am (0700 GMT), at 15,856.71 points, while the Paris-based CAC 40 index added 0.1 per cent to 6,690.28.

Trading was closed in London due to a public holiday.

On Friday, Powell had said that "it could be appropriate to start reducing the pace of asset purchases this year" from the current \$120 billion per month pace at the US central bank.

But any move to slow asset purchases would still leave a large amount of stimulus in

place, and would not be a signal that an increase in the benchmark lending rate would soon follow, he added.

"Powell kept his much-awaited remarks in Jackson Hole to a minimum... he went on tip-toes" which has reassured markets, said analyst Veronique Riches-Flores of Riches Flores research.

Later Monday, eyes will turn to August inflation data for Germany, the eurozone's largest economy, ahead of a next week's meeting of European Central Bank policymakers.

ECB chief Christine Lagarde last month promised sustained support for the single currency zone, saying that the impact of the Delta variant on the economy justified keeping stimulus in place until at least early next year. — AFP ■

## France's Covid relief spending hits 240 bn euros: minister



(From L to R) French Labour Minister Elisabeth Borne, French Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire, French Junior Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises Alain Griset and French Junior Minister in charge of Tourism Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne attend a meeting concerning the helps for the economic sectors amid the Covid-19 pandemic, at the Economy ministry in Paris, on 30 August 2021. PHOTO: ERIC PIERMONT / AFP

THE French government has extended 240 billion euros (\$283 billion) in financial aid to businesses hammered by the coronavirus pandemic since March

2020, mainly in the form of state-guaranteed loans, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire announced Monday. President Emmanuel Macron vowed to protect

French companies and their employees "whatever the cost" after many were forced to close during three nationwide lockdowns since the outbreak began.

"The bill for 'whatever the cost' stands at 80 billion euros in subsidies, and 160 billion euros in loans," Le Maire told France Inter radio.

The aid will now be limited to only the hardest-hit sectors such as tourism and leisure, whose representatives are to meet with Le Maire and other officials later Monday.

The government expects economic growth to hit six percent this year after France and other countries plunged into recession last year.

France's recovery "is going to continue," Le Maire said, in large part thanks to higher consumer spending that is helping the economy operate "at 99 per cent of its capacities." — AFP ■

## Asian markets track Wall St record as Powell soothes taper fears

ASIAN markets mostly rose Monday following a record-breaking close on Wall Street after Federal Reserve boss Jerome Powell indicated the central bank would be cautious in winding down its ultra-loose monetary policy and was in no hurry to lift interest rates.

In a closely watched speech Friday, Powell said the world's top economy was well on the road to recovery from last year's

pandemic-induced collapse, with millions of jobs recovered and growth at its strongest in decades. The Fed's bond-buying programme — and colossal government spending worth trillions of dollars — provided crucial support and helped drive an equity market rally for more than a year. But traders have for months been debating when the crutch will be removed in order to prevent inflation from spiralling out

of control and the economy overheating.

And Powell, in a speech to the Jackson Hole symposium of central bankers, soothed concerns about the bank's approach, saying "it could be appropriate to start reducing the pace of asset purchases this year".

But he added that would not be a signal for an increase in borrowing costs to follow soon after, instead taking into account the impact of the Delta variant

on the recovery. "As widely expected, Fed Chair Powell's Jackson Hole speech did not provide a definitive answer to the... tapering decision," said National Australia Bank's Rodrigo Catril.

"But his dovish undertones on his views on inflation as well as the emphasis on decoupling the rate hike decision from... tapering resulted in a risk positive market reaction." — AFP ■



Traders work in front of a board displaying Germany's share index DAX (background) at the stock exchange in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany, on 27 August 2021. PHOTO: DANIEL ROLAND / AFP

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### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CTP MAKASSAR VOY.NO. (232N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CTP MAKASSAR VOY.NO. (232N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31-8-2021 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT 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.

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Myanma Port Authority

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### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MAERSK NARVIK VOY.NO. (133W)

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

# Hurricane Ida pummels Louisiana, knocks out power in New Orleans



A truck is seen in heavy winds and rain from hurricane Ida in Bourg, Louisiana on 29 August 2021. Hurricane Ida struck the coast of Louisiana Sunday as a powerful Category 4 storm, 16 years to the day after deadly Hurricane Katrina devastated the southern US city of New Orleans. -- Mark Felix / AFP

**POWERFUL** Hurricane Ida battered the southern US state of Louisiana and plunged New Orleans into darkness Sunday, leaving at least one person dead 16 years to the day after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city.

Ida slammed into the Louisiana coast as a Category 4 storm but had weakened to a Category 1 by early Monday.

The storm knocked out power for all of New Orleans, with more than a million customers across Louisiana without power, according to outage tracker PowerOutage.US.

"We have now lost power, citywide! This is the time to continue to remain in your safe places. It isn't a time to venture out!!," New Orleans mayor LaToya Cantrell

said on Twitter.

Electricity provider Entergy said it was providing back up power to New Orleans Sewage and Water Board, which operates the pumping stations used to control flooding.

The National Weather Service issued warnings of storm surges and flash floods for several areas, including the town of Jean

Lafitte, just south of New Orleans, where mayor Tim Kerner said the levees had been breached by rapidly rising waters.

"Total devastation, catastrophic, our town levees have been overtopped," Kerner told ABC-affiliate WGNO.

"We have anywhere between 75 to 200 people stranded in Barataria," after a barge took out the swing bridge to the island.

"The winds are still too strong, we can't put boats in the water to get to them," he told WGNO.

"We have a small group trying to take out the people in the most imminent danger," Kerner said. "This is a very dangerous situation. I've never seen so much water in my life."

President Joe Biden, who described Ida as "a life-threatening storm," declared a major disaster for Louisiana, which gives it access to federal aid.

One person was killed by a falling tree in Prairieville, 60 miles northwest of New Orleans, the Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office said. — AFP ■

## 'Desert': drying Euphrates threatens disaster in Syria

SYRIA'S longest river used to flow by his olive grove, but today Khaled al-Khamees says it has receded into the distance, parching his trees and leaving his family with hardly a drop to drink. "It's as if we were in the desert," said the 50-year-old farmer, standing on what last year was the Euphrates riverbed.

"We're thinking of leaving because there's no water left to drink or irrigate the trees." Aid groups and engineers are warning of a looming humanitarian disaster in northeast Syria, where waning river flow is compounding woes after a decade of war. They say plummeting water levels at hydroelectric dams since January are threatening water and power cutoffs for up to five million Syrians, in the middle of a coronavirus pandemic and economic crisis.

As drought grips the Mediterranean region, many in the Kurdish-held area are accusing neighbour and arch-foe Turkey of weaponizing water by tightening the tap upstream, though a Turkish source denied this.

Outside the village of Rumayleh where Khamees lives, black irrigation hoses lay in dusty coils after the river receded so far it became too expensive to operate the water pumps.

Instead, much closer to the water's edge, Khamees and neighbours were busy planting corn and beans in soil just last year submerged under the current. The father of 12 said he had not seen the river so far away from the village in decades. "The women have to walk seven kilometres (four miles) just to get a bucket of water for their children to drink," he said.

### 'Alarming'

Reputed to have once flown through the biblical Garden of Eden, the Euphrates runs for almost 2,800 kilometres (1,700 miles) across Turkey, Syria and Iraq.— AFP ■

## UK government blasted over Afghan exit as hundreds left behind

THE UK government on Sunday faced a torrent of criticism after its hurried withdrawal from Afghanistan ended, leaving hundreds eligible for relocation behind. Prime Minister Boris Johnson hailed a mission "unlike anything we have seen in our lifetimes" after the UK airlifted over 15,000 people in the last two weeks. Troops landed back at

Brize Norton airbase in southern England on Sunday after Britain was forced to withdraw following the decision of its ally the United States to end its 20-year presence.

Johnson praised the evacuation efforts in "harrowing conditions" and assured the military that decades of deployment "were not in vain" after the Taliban retook control.

But current and former officials slammed government failings, suggesting many more Afghans could have been rescued.

The Observer leftwing broadsheet cited a whistleblower as saying thousands of emails from MPs and charities to the foreign ministry highlighting specific Afghans at risk from the Taliban takeover went unopened.

Foreign Minister Dominic Raab has already been strongly criticized for not immediately leaving a beach holiday when the Taliban took control. The Observer said it saw evidence that an official email account set up by the Foreign Office to receive such pleas regularly had 5,000 unopened emails last week. — AFP ■

## Rockets fired at Kabul airport as US troops pull out

ROCKETS were fired at Kabul's airport on Monday where US troops were racing to complete their withdrawal from Afghanistan and evacuate allies under the threat of Islamic State group attacks. President Joe Biden has set a deadline of Tuesday to withdraw all US forces from Afghanistan, drawing to a close his nation's longest military conflict, which began in retaliation for the 11 September attacks.

The return of the hardline Islamist Taliban movement, which was toppled in 2001 but took back power a fortnight ago, triggered an exodus of terrified people

aboard US-led evacuation flights.

Those flights, which have taken more than 120,000 people out of Kabul airport, will officially end on Tuesday when the last of the thousands of American troops pull out. But US forces are now focused chiefly on flying themselves and American diplomats out safely.

The Islamic State group, rivals of the Taliban, pose the biggest threat to the withdrawal after carrying out a suicide bomb attack at the perimeter of the airport late last week that claimed more than 100 lives, including those of 13 US troops.



A Taliban fighter investigates a damaged car after multiple rockets were fired in Kabul on 30 August 2021. PHOTO: WAKIL KOHSAR / AFP

Biden had warned more attacks were highly likely and the United States said it carried out

an air strike on Sunday night in Kabul on an IS-prepared car bomb. — AFP ■

## Teachers should be priority group for Covid jabs: WHO

TEACHERS and school staff should be among the groups prioritized for Covid-19 vaccinations so that schools in Europe and Central Asia can stay open, the World Health Organization (WHO) and Unicef said on Monday.

Measures to ensure that schools can stay open throughout the pandemic “include offering teachers and other school staff the Covid-19 vaccine as part of target population groups in national vaccination plans,” the UN agencies wrote in a statement.

The recommendation, already made by a group of WHO experts in November 2020 before the vaccination roll-out, should be done “while ensuring vaccination of vulnerable populations,” the statement said.

As schools reopen after the summer holidays, the agencies said it was “vital that classroom-based learning continue uninterrupted,” despite the spread of the more contagious Delta variant of the virus.

“This is of paramount im-

portance for children’s education, mental health and social skills, for schools to help equip our children to be happy and productive members of society,” the director of the WHO European region, Hans Kluge, said in the statement.

“The pandemic has caused the most catastrophic disruption to education in history,” he added.

The agencies urged countries to vaccinate children over the age of 12 who have underlying medical conditions that put them at greater risk of severe Covid-19 disease.

It also recalled the importance of measures to improve the school environment during the pandemic, including better ventilation, smaller class sizes, social distancing and regular Covid testing for children and staff.

According to the WHO’s recommendations published in early July, testing of children in risk groups who display Covid-19 symptoms should be a priority. — AFP ■

## North Korea appears to have restarted nuclear reactor: UN agency

NUCLEAR-ARMED North Korea appears to have restarted its plutonium-producing reprocessing reactor in a “deeply troubling” development, the UN atomic agency has said, a possible sign Pyongyang is expanding its banned weapons programme.

The development on the 5-megawatt reactor in Yongbyon — North Korea’s main nuclear complex — comes with nuclear talks between Pyongyang and Washington at a standstill.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un offered to dismantle part of the Yongbyon complex at a second summit with then US president Donald Trump but not other sites, in exchange for sanctions relief, and his offer was rejected.

North Korea is under multiple sets of international sanctions over its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, which have seen rapid progress under Kim.

“Since early July, there have been indications, including the discharge of cooling water, consistent with the operation of the reactor,” the International Atomic Energy Agency said in



(FILES) This file satellite handout image provided by GeoEye on 22 August 2012 and taken on 6 August 2012 shows the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Centre in North Korea. Nuclear-armed North Korea appears to have restarted its plutonium-producing reprocessing reactor in a “deeply troubling” development, the UN atomic agency has said on 30 August 2021, a possible sign Pyongyang is expanding its banned weapons programme. PHOTO: HANDOUT / GEOEYE SATELLITE IMAGE / AFP

its annual report.

The Yongbyon reactor appeared to have been inactive from December 2018 until then, added the report dated Friday.

IAEA inspectors were kicked out of North Korea in 2009, and the agency has since monitored it from outside. — AFP ■



(COMBO) This combination of pictures created on 30 August 2021 shows (L to R) Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas during a diplomatic meeting in Ramallah in a handout photo provided by the Palestinian Authority’s press office (PPO) on 1 August 2021; and Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz giving a press conference at his party’s office in the Knesset in Jerusalem on 7 June 2021. PHOTO: MENAHEM KAHANA, THAER GHANAIM / AFP / PPO

## Palestinian president, Israeli defence minister hold rare talks

ISRAEL’S defence minister has met Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas for a rare high-level meeting, but a source close to Prime Minister Naftali Bennett insisted Monday his government had no plans to reboot peace talks.

Defence Minister Benny Gantz met Abbas in Ramallah for what were reportedly the first direct talks between an Israeli cabinet member and the 86-year-old Palestinian leader in several years. The meeting, which Gantz’s office said focused on “security policy, civilian and econom-

ic issues”, came just hours after Bennett returned from Washington where he met US President Joe Biden. Biden said he would urge Bennett to find ways “to advance peace and security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians.” According to a defence ministry statement, Gantz told Abbas that Israel “seeks to take measures that will strengthen the PA’s economy”.

“They also discussed shaping the security and economic situations in the West Bank and in Gaza,” and agreed to “continue communicating further;” it added.

A source close to Bennett said the meeting that he had approved focused on “issues between the defence establishment and the Palestinian Authority”. “There is no peace process with the Palestinians nor will there be,” under Bennett’s leadership, said the source who requested anonymity.

The Gantz-Abbas meeting included the head of the Israeli military branch responsible for civil affairs in the Palestinian territories, Ghasan Alyan, senior PA official Hussein Al Sheikh and Palestinian intelligence chief Majid Faraj. — AFP ■

## Russia calls on US to release Afghan reserves

RUSSIA on Monday called on the United States to release Afghan central bank reserves that Washington blocked after the Taliban’s takeover of Kabul earlier this month. “If our Western colleagues are actually worried about the fate of the Af-

ghan people, then we must not create additional problems for them by freezing gold and foreign exchange reserves,” said the Kremlin’s envoy to Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov. The United States must urgently unfreeze these assets, he said on the state-

run Rossiya 24 network, “to bolster the rate of the collapsing national currency”.

Kabulov added that without doing so the new Afghan authorities will turn to “the trafficking of illegal opiates” and “sell on the black market the weapons” aban-

doned by the Afghan army and the United States. The Afghan central bank’s gross reserves totalled \$9.4 billion at the end of April, according to the IMF. The majority of these funds are held outside of Afghanistan. Washington has indicated that the Taliban

will not have access to assets held in the United States, without specifying the total amount there. Afghanistan has long been the world’s largest producer of opium and heroin, with profits from the illicit trade helping fund the Taliban. — 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 team stands tenth place in Asia this month

THE Myanmar women's national football team is currently among the top ten Asian teams, with 46<sup>th</sup> world ranking and tenth place in Asia level, according to an announcement of the FIFA ranking this month.

Myanmar has taken 45<sup>th</sup> position in the world ranking last year, and now has decreased one ranking to 46<sup>th</sup>, with 1511 total points.

Also, two ASEAN football teams, Viet Nam and Thailand, are included in the top ten list.

Team Viet Nam is currently in sixth place among the best Asian teams, with a 32<sup>nd</sup> world ranking and 1,657 total points, while Team Thailand is following Viet Nam in seventh place, collecting 1,596 total points and 39<sup>th</sup> in the world ranking.

Australia is the second-best team in Asia, with 11<sup>th</sup> world ranking, while Japan is the third-best Asian team, with a world ranking of 13<sup>th</sup>.

North Korea's team is currently the best among Asian

teams, with 9<sup>th</sup> world ranking, and China's team is the fourth-best in Asia, ranking 17<sup>th</sup> in the world.

Meanwhile, South Korea is in fifth place, ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the world, and Chinese Taipei is in eighth place in Asia, ranked 40<sup>th</sup> in the world.

Uzbekistan team is above team Myanmar with ninth place and has garnered 43<sup>rd</sup> in the world and 1,537 points.

—GNLM ■



Myanmar women's national football team is currently at tenth place in Asia. **PHOTO: MWL**

## IPC chief says Tokyo Paralympics exceeding expectations amid pandemic

THE president of the International Paralympic Committee said Monday the ongoing sporting event for athletes with disabilities in Tokyo has exceeded his expectations since starting

about a week ago despite being held amid the coronavirus pandemic. "It's been really fantastic so far; we are providing a safe environment to the athletes; we are also protecting

the Japanese population at the same time," Andrew Parsons said at a press conference to mark the halfway point of the 13-day Paralympics.

While some COVID-19 cases have been reported among participants and workers related to the games, Parsons said the organizers have been taking adequate measures to prevent the virus from spreading, adding that the "key" is to track infections and isolate those who test positive from others. Toshiro Muto, CEO of the organizing committee, also said the Paralympics have been "generally going smoothly" since they opened on 24 August following a one-year postponement. — Kyodo News ■



Toshiro Muto (L), CEO of the committee organizing the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, and International Paralympic Committee President Andrew Parsons (C) attend a press conference in Tokyo on 30 August 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

## Europe's top 30 clubs account for half of global transfer spend

FOOTBALL clubs worldwide splashed out \$48.5 billion (41.1 billion euros) on international transfer fees over the past decade, almost half of which was spent by the top 30 clubs, FIFA revealed in a report published Monday.

The report charted the number of international transfers and loans concluded between FIFA's 200 member associations, totaling 133,225 such moves over the period from 2011 to 2020. Transfer market activity rose steadily from 11,890 in 2011 to a peak of 18,079 in 2019, with Brazilian nationals (15,128) the most frequent movers to foreign clubs.

The number of clubs conducting international transfers increased by more than

30 per cent over the past decade, from 3,167 in 2011 to a high of 4,139 in 2019. However the 30 top-spending clubs all came from Europe, led by England with 12. Spain and Italy had five each with Germany (three), France and Portugal (both two) and Russia (one) completing the list. This group of clubs alone forked out \$22.8 billion on transfer fees, representing 47 per cent of the global total over the decade.

FIFA also highlighted the growing commissions paid to agents, which soared from 131.1 million in 2011 to 640.5 million two years ago. Agents pocketed \$3.5 billion in commission on overseas deals over the course of the decade. — AFP ■