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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.

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

10th Waning of Tawthalin 1383 ME
30 September 2021

AS it is necessary to continuously control the infection of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), it is hereby announced that public requests, orders, notifications and directives (except for easing the restrictions) released by the Union-level organizations and Union ministries up to 30 September 2021 have been extended until 31 October 2021 for prevention, control and treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Only when vaccination has been completed will students, teachers and parents have mutual trust for teaching and learning: Vice-Senior General

IT is necessary to fully vaccinate COVID-19 vaccines to all middle and high school students when the schools have been reopened, said Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the coordination meeting to give COVID-19 vaccines to middle and high school students above 12 of Basic Education Department under the Ministry of Education at the hall of Bayintnaung Villa, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday afternoon.

Speaking at the meeting, the Vice-Senior General said Myanmar is facing an 8.3 per cent infection rate of COVID-19 based on the 29 September data. So, efforts are being made to decline the infection rate from less than five per cent to the non-infection stage in line with the guidance of the Chairman of the Central

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State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win speaks at the coordination meeting to give COVID-19 vaccines to middle and high school students above 12 years of age, in Nay Pyi Taw on 30 September 2021.

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Natural gas export tops US\$2 bln in ten months

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MoC keeps allowing daily imports of anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products

THE Ministry of Commerce is making efforts to ensure people have access to the essential medical supplies that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, by arranging continuous importation through trading posts, international airport and seaports with standard operating procedures.

On 30 September (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products including oxygen plants and concentrators were imported by three com-

panies and transported by five vehicles.

A total of 20 tonnes of oxygen (liquid) carried by one bowser, and 1,340 empty oxygen cylinders, three oxygen plants, 199 oxygen concentrators, 20,000 PPE suits, and 0.17 tonne of gloves and one tonne of masks were imported via Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti, and Myawady trading posts, seaports and Yangon International Airport.

One liquid oxygen tanker was transported to Yangon, and one oxygen gas bowser to Pyay respectively. Three oxygen plants were also transported to Yangon,

officials said.

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

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments, facilitating the importation of essential medical supplies required in prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA



Anti-Covid equipment and medical supplies are imported daily via border trade zones.

Over 15,000 people in Kyaukpyu vaccinated with 1st dose of COVID jab



A local receives the first shot of Covid vaccine in Kyaukpyu.

PHOTO: PHYO WAILIN

A total of 15,295 people have been vaccinated against the 1st dose of COVID-19 vaccine (second batch) in Kyaukpyu, Rakhine State, officials said.

The vaccination programme was conducted at designated priority groups at the sandalwood hall at No3 Basic Education High School in Kyaukphyu yesterday.

Healthcare workers, members of the fire brigade, and volunteers assisted in the vaccination

programme and transportation for the vaccinated people were arranged after the vaccination.

During the vaccination, healthcare workers and officials made records for the vaccinated people.

Next health officials measured the body temperature, blood pressure and monitoring oxygen level before the vaccination.

Vaccines were given systematically to the local people, and

only those with normal health conditions are vaccinated, officials said.

After resting for about 30 minutes after being vaccinated, people were allowed to leave, officials said.

In Kyaukpyu Township, the second batch of the vaccine (first dose) has been given since 18 September.

As of 29 September, a total of 15,295 people had been vaccinated, and the rest were being vaccinated in priority groups.

The vaccination was administered by the chairman of the district administration and officials from various departments, District and Township Women's Affairs Committee members and Maternal and Child Welfare Association members inspected and gave words of encouragement to the vaccinated people. — Tin Htun Oo/GNLM

Officials arrange transportation for 142 returnees from Thailand

A total of 142 returnees from Thailand who have tested negative for COVID-19 came back home through the Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge (2), Tachilek, Shan State (East) on 30 September (yesterday).

Officials arranged free transportation for all the returnees by vehicle to reach their respective states and regions yesterday morning.

Those returnees were extradited from Thailand on 25 September.

With the supervision of the Prevention, Control and Treatment Committee for COVID-19 in Tachilek District, the returnees were diagnosed by RDT Rapid Test Kit for the first time.

On the third day of quarantine at Wamlone Centre, nasal and palate samples of the returnees were taken and sent to Taunggyi for a second diagnosis.

According to the test results, the COVID-19 virus was detected in 57 repatriat-

ed people and they will stay in Wamlone COVID-19 Centre to receive further medical treatment.

Next, officials underwent a second medical examination and a total of 142 people – 78 males and 64 females—tested negative for COVID-19. Officials distributed food to the returnees and provided necessary assistance and provided free transportations to reach their respective places. — Yar Say (IPRD)/GNLM

Over 30,000 people vaccinated with 1st dose of COVID jab in Kyaikto

THE second batch (first dose) of COVID-19 Infectious Disease vaccines have been administered to the people in Kyaikto Township starting 15 September.

U Myo Min Soe, Chairman of Township Administration Body and members, Dr Khun Maung Oh Head of Township Public Health Department, officials from Township-level departments from Kyu Chaung Village, Bo Yar Gyi Village, Kyai-katha Village, Sittoung Village and Kim Mon Chaung village in Thein Zayat Town assisted in the vaccination programme.

Vaccinations were given to

volunteers, monks and nuns, people over the age of 18, including civil servants and private healthcare workers, bank employees, industrialists and workers, hotels, motels, and guesthouses employers and staff, workers in the transport industry, vendors, waiters and waitresses and handicapped person, officials said.

The vaccination programmes were launched between 15 to 29 September and a total of 30,990 people were vaccinated in the township, officials added. — Win Maung (Kyaikto)/GNLM



Inoculation drive is underway in Kyaikto.

1,468 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 30 September, total figure rises to 464,076

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 464,076 after 1,468 new cases were reported on 30 September 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 418,329 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 17,735 after 53 died.

Need to narrow the development gap between urban and rural areas

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

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

Only when vaccination has been completed will students, teachers ...

FROM PAGE-1

Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19 Chairman of the State Administration Council and the WHO. A plan was adopted to complete vaccination for 50 per cent of the people above 18 years at the end of December 2021.

Meetings are being held to emphasize the reopening of schools beyond the long October holidays with the aim of enabling the students to be free from infection of COVID-19 and learning education with health. It is necessary to fully vaccinate COVID-19 vaccines to all middle and high school students when the schools have been reopened. Only when vaccination has been completed will students, teachers and parents have mutual trust for teaching and learning.

Coordination is being conducted to produce the vaccines in the country through a ready-to-fill system to be able to produce them

by 2021. Vaccinations can be given once six months without worries, and infection will be prevented to some extent. A plan is underway to raise cooperation among the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Red Cross Brigades, maternal and child welfare associations and women's affairs organizations in the vaccination programme. Relevant region and state governments need to make preparations for vaccination programmes and to arrange the soonest vaccination through cooperation.

The Union Minister for SWRR, the Deputy Minister for Education and the Deputy Minister for Health discussed the plan to give assistance for vaccination, enrolment and attending of basic education students across the nation and the plan on vaccination of Sinovac vaccine.

In his response, the Vice-Senior General said data of the Ministry of Education must



be adjusted with that of regions and states for vaccinating the students before reopening the schools. It is necessary to notify the parents of vaccinating the students and mention the notification at the vaccination centres. Departments need to coordinate with each other to compile the list

of students without citizenship scrutiny cards.

In his concluding speech, the Vice-Senior General stressed the need to submit the reports on strength of students, enrolment numbers and attending students in regions and states. The Tatmadaw and Myanmar

Police Force need to systematically form the forces to take the security measures for the vaccination programmes. Region and state authorities need to review the completion of vaccination, remaining of vaccines and further plans depending on accepting the vaccine.

Delta variant of COVID-19 in the third wave infected some children in some countries. Vaccination of Sinovac manufactured by China can protect the children against the virus and effectively reduce the severe impacts of the pandemic by minimizing side effects. So far, the Sinovac vaccine has been administered to the children and youths — 63 million children and youths between the aged 3 and 17 in China, more than 1.1 million children and youths between the aged 12-17 in Chile and over 350,000 children and youths between aged 6-17 in Cambodia. — MNA

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International flight restrictions extended until 31 October

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 the COVID-19 disease in Myanmar.

With the permission of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), "Importation 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) as of 23:59 hours 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 23:59 hours of Myanmar Standard Time on 31 October 2021 to further prevent the risk of COVID-19 transmission via international air passengers into Myanmar.

Ministry of Transport and Communications

Union Chief Justice attends 11th International Legal Forum of Asia-Pacific Region through videoconferencing

UNION Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo attended the 11th International Legal Forum of the Asia-Pacific Region, which was organized by the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation through videoconferencing yesterday afternoon from the Supreme Court of the Union, Nay Pyi Taw.

First, as the host, Mr Vyacheslav Lebedev, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation made his welcome speech. Then, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, together with the Chief Justices of the Asia-Pacific Region and the Heads of Delegate attended the Forum, delivered speeches respectively.

And then, the Union Chief Justice took part in the session of the Forum under the topic of 'Economic Dispute Resolution Procedures in Asia-Pacific'. In his discussion, the Union Chief Justice said the role of justice sector institutions has a huge effect on economic performance. The Myanmar Judiciary enhances the dis-



The Union Chief Justice joins the 11th International Legal Forum of Asia-Pacific Region online yesterday.

pute resolution mechanisms for judicial and non-judicial (ADR) to be compatible with increasing foreign investment and trade. According to the Arbitration Law enacted in 2016, both foreign and local companies can resolve their disputes by arbitration and domestic and foreign arbitral awards are now enforced in

competent courts. The Supreme Court of the Union of Myanmar always seeks the possible ways to bring about the mutual benefits of the judiciaries in the region. In 2020 the Memorandum of Guidance (MoG) as to Enforcement of Money Judgment between Myanmar and Singapore judiciaries was signed. As the court

dispute resolution mechanism for commercial disputes, the Supreme Court of the Union of Myanmar is making a feasible study on the commercial court and specialized benches. And the Case Study Book on International Transaction is issued for judges to learn the international best practices.

The Union Chief Justice

also discussed that, at present, Myanmar courts try commercial cases within their jurisdiction and the commercial judgments are available for court users and the public on the website. Also, the Court-Led Mediation System has been introduced in 2019 to settle the disputes in a time and cost-efficient manner by consensus of the parties. With significant results and good feedback, the system is to expand nationwide by 2022 and try to have a suitable amendment of legislation in the Code of Civil Procedure. In addition, the Union Chief Justice concluded that the Myanmar Judiciary has been cooperating with other judiciaries regionally and internationally by signing bilateral memorandums of understanding, participating in judicial conferences, seminars and training.

Also present at the Forum together with the Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo were the Justices of the Supreme Court of the Union and officials concerned.—MNA

15th ASEAN ministerial meeting on transnational crimes and related meetings continue online

THE 15th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crimes (AMMTC) of the ASEAN's Political-Security Community and its Related Meetings chaired by Brunei Darussalam continued yesterday through videoconferencing.

The meetings were attended by AMMTC Leaders/Ministers and Senior Officials from the 10 ASEAN member states, ASEAN's dialogue partner states, China, Japan and Korea, and officials from the ASEAN Secretariat. Senior Officials led by Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut, the AMMTC Leader of Myanmar, joined the meetings from Nay Pyi Taw.

The meetings focused on non-traditional security issues, the fight against extremism and the financing of terrorism; financial, technical and training assistance programmes from the dialogue partners; cooperation in potential sectors in combating transnational crimes

in the post-COVID-19 period.

At the 8th AMMTC+ China coordination meeting co-chaired by Union Minister Lt-Gen Soe Htut and Permanent Deputy Minister for Public Security of China Mr Du Hangwei, the Union Minister called for further discussion and implementation of the establishment of a national focal point to facilitate effective and speedy coordination between ASEAN member states and law enforcement authorities in China for non-traditional security issues in the region. He also discussed matters related to the fight against money laundering and illegal flow of money and to increase border management activities to eliminate illegal drug trafficking. The Union Minister also said about capacity building in the prevention of violence, human trafficking, wildlife trafficking and cybercrimes as these have a significant impact on regional stability and socio-economic de-



Myanmar delegation led by the MoHA Union Minister attends the continued AMMTC online yesterday.

velopment of the region. He also said the need to provide mutual assistance in the judiciary, and ways to enhance cooperation in the exchange of information on criminal cases.

At the 11th AMMTC+3 (China, Japan and South Korea) meeting, the Union Minister said cooperation among the countries needs to be enhanced

as telecom fraud and online gambling are spreading to more than one country. He urged the partner countries to assist in the implementation of the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2396 to prevent the movement of terrorists, including foreign terrorists, in advance. He said he expects to discuss in person

at the 12th AJCTD to be held in Myanmar in 2022, and Myanmar will continue to cooperate for the successful implementation of the ASEAN+3 sectors.

The 16th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crimes and its Related Meetings will be chaired by Cambodia in 2022, it is reported.—MNA

Crucial role of fourth pillar highlighted in meeting local, foreign media: MoI Union Minister



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn of the Ministry of Information meets local and foreign media persons in Nay Pyi Taw on 30 September 2021.

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn met with local and foreign media who attended the press conference No (9/2021) yesterday morning.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint, the Permanent Secretary and officials, media persons from Myanmar National Post, To-

morrow, Silent Talk, Lu Htu Yin Phwint Than, Power, VOA, Fuji Television, Asahi Shimbun, AFP, Myanmar Public Press, Myanmar Than Daw Sint, Tae Pyaw Media, MNP, Sky Net,

Myanmar Hard Talk, Thuriya Nay Wun, the Standard Times, New History for People, Voice of Myanmar, 97 Media, Eleven media, One News Agency, Myanmar Nation, Golden Hand, Who News, Up to Date, Union Daily and Xinhua.

During the meeting, the Union Minister spoke about the current situation of the nation, the role of media, conditions for providing accurate information for the State and the people, the Prime Minister's emphasis on the importance of the media as the fourth pillar, the ability of the state-owned and private media to work for the benefit of the people, cooperation for the peace, stability and development desired by all the people, rights of journalists under the provisions of the News Media Law, the compliance of the media code of conduct, mutual-understanding between

the state-owned and private media, the ability to address difficulties and limitations in media affairs, coordination for the vaccination of media persons, formation of a Viber Group to provide timely information, increasing the number of spokespersons to provide the public with accurate information.

He added the necessity to work following the media code of conduct without any ideology. He cordially discussed that the difficulties of the news media will be coordinated in line with the law. Media persons present at the meeting spoke about the prevention of the flow of misinformation, strengthening of private media, the difficulties encountered in obtaining information and improving the qualification of journalists, and the Union Minister coordinated necessary matters. — MNA

Ceremony held to commission two new tugboats, marking World Maritime Day

THE Myanma Port Authority organized a ceremony to commission two new tugboats ordered to be built by China into service and the World Maritime Day Ceremony at Kyan Mar Yay jetty in Pansodan of Yangon Region yesterday.

Union Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe, Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe, other officials of the ministry, Managing Director of Myanmar Port Authority, officials of UMFCCI and Brother Associations, importers and exporters attended the event.

During the ceremony, the Union Minister highlighted the important role of maritime trade in the global economy and Myanmar economy. He then said Yangon port is the main entry/exit gate of international maritime trade.

Of the total trade value of over \$36.7 billion in the 2019-2020 financial year, Myanmar's maritime trade volume exceeded \$26.8 billion and the percentage is 73 per cent. Therefore, it needs to upgrade the jetties, provide the freight-handling scales,



MoTC Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San speaks on the occasion of the World Maritime Day in Yangon on 30 September 2021.

gather the human resources and apply the techniques effectively like the international countries.

Currently, due to the cooperation work between the government and Public-Private Partnership, the country has 45 jetties where the large international cargo ships can dock at the same time.

Then, the Managing Director of Myanma Port Authority reported on the two new tugboats and played the video clips of the construction of these tugboats.

The Union Minister and attendees cut the ribbons to open

the ceremony that the two new tugboats commissioned in the services, and they inspected the tugboats.

The two new tugboats were built at the cost of \$13.563 million in China.

After that, the Union Minister and party joined the World Maritime Day (2021) ceremony held at the meeting hall of Myanma Port Authority (head office).

A total of 56 representatives from 20 countries including the Consultant of International Maritime Organization, officials of International Maritime Law In-

stitute (IMLI), India Ocean MoU Secretariat, IMO-IPECA GISEA, ASEAN's maritime authorities, US coast guard, the Philippines coast guard, Oil Spill Response Limited (OSRL) and students of World Maritime University of Sweden joined the ceremony via a virtual platform.

During the ceremony, the Union Minister talked about the holding of World Maritime Day yearly under the leadership of IMO to ensure the safety and security of the maritime environment. Myanmar also participates in today event with the

theme of "Seafarers: at the core of shipping's future". The UN General Assembly urged the member countries to recognize the seamen as key workers and provide needed assistance for crew change and repatriation. The government provided crew change services for more than 10,000 Myanmar seamen to date. Moreover, the country prepared healthcare services for foreign seamen and officials of the maritime sector.

He also appreciated the efforts of seamen for trading amid the COVID-19 pandemic. —MNA

SAC Information Team meets media at press conference 9/2021

THE Information Team of the State Administration Council held the press conference No 9/2021 at the Ministry of Information yesterday afternoon.

Leader of the Information Team Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun, member of Union Election Commission U Khin Maung Oo, spokespersons of departments and representatives of departmental information teams replied to queries raised by media.

First, Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun explained the plans of the government to forge the Union Spirit and enhance the peace process as a gesture of hailing the Diamond Jubilee Union Day which falls on 12 February 2022, arrangements being made to adopt three-step procedures to be laid down the tasks for further strengthening the Union Spirit, form the organizing committees formed with ethnics, and implement the tasks and history on efforts of the Tatmadaw for ceasing the internal armed conflicts and ensuring the perpetual peace in successive eras since the country has regained the independence.

He also clarified issuance of the statements for ceasefire and perpetual peace from 21 December 2018 to date and ceasing the attacks, current situation to extend the further five-month suspension of military operations of the Tatmadaw from 1 October



The SAC Information Team holds the 9/2021 press conference in Nay Pyi Taw on 30 September 2021.

2021 to 28 February 2022 except the period of encroachment and attacks on security and administrative machinery of the government in addition to defence and administration tasks of the State across the nation for effective undertaking of prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19 and further promotion of peace process as a gesture of hailing the Diamond Jubilee Union Day, implementation of the two-point guidance given by Chairman of the State Adminis-

tration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing during his inspection tour of PyinOoLwin, Myitkyina and Lashio that the government set a political vision to firmly build the democracy in accord with the wish of the people in building the nation, and that priority is being given to ensure prosperity and food sufficiency of the nation.

Further clarifications comprised increasing number of incidents that terrorist groups called NUG to commit planting

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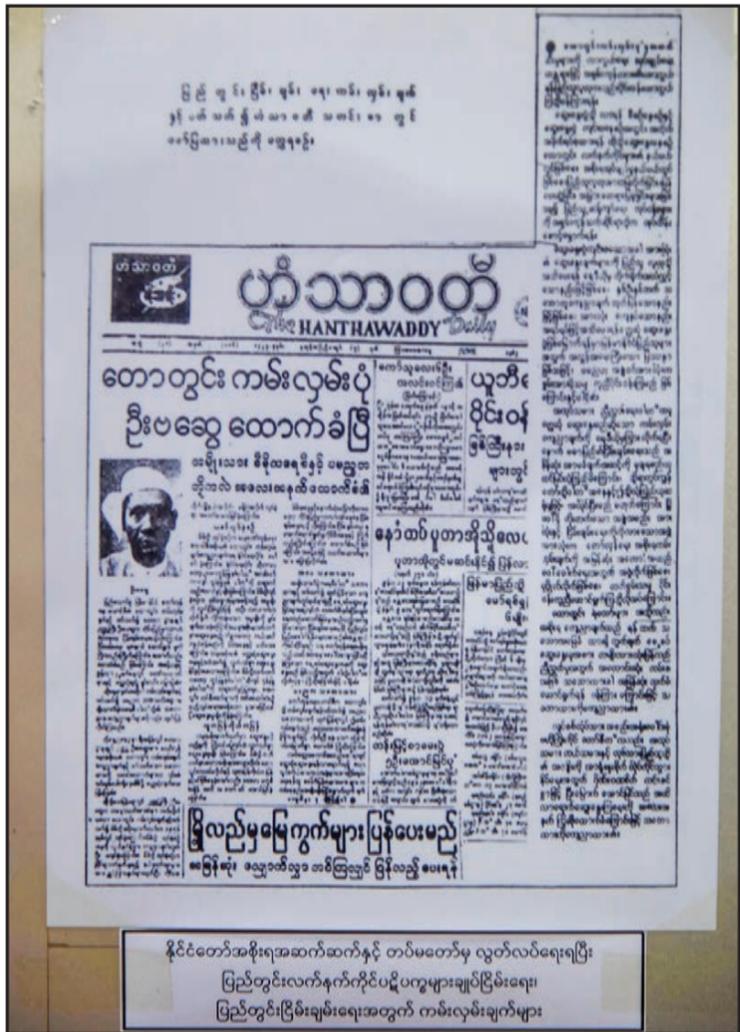
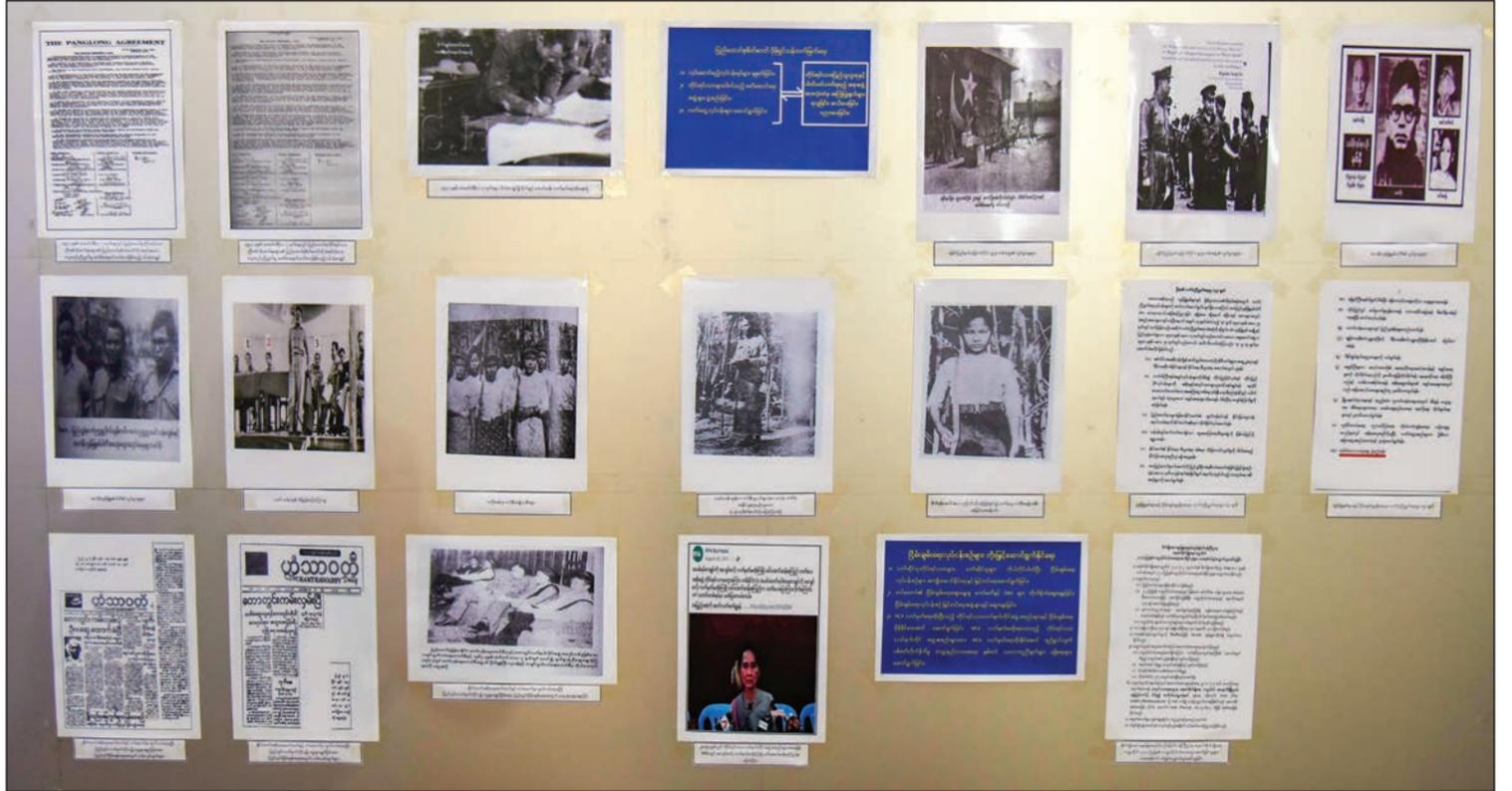
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Panel displays arrestees committing terrorist acts and seized weapons and ammunition in connexion with murders, arsons, and bombing attacks.

of mines, the explosion of mines, bomb attacks and murdering the innocent people accused of informers in some towns and areas after an incitement was raised to cause the terror acts on 7 September, terrorist PDF groups setting targets on public roads, offices, COVID-19 vaccination centres and communication towers in their destructive acts, incitements to urge the children to commit crimes, arresting of terrorists in some townships including Yangon and Mandalay along with arms, ammunition and related accessories, and confession of the arrestees with the use of PowerPoint presentation and video clips.

UEC member U Khin Maung Oo explained announcements on findings in the inspection of



A newspaper cutting of the past experience in Myanmar.

election in regions, states and Union Territory, issuance of the announcement on cancelling the results of the multiparty democracy general election held on 8 November 2020, and future tasks of the UEC.

Then, Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun,

UEC member U Khin Maung Oo and officials replied to queries raised by media.

The press conference was attended by members of the Information Team of the State Administration Council, representatives of ministries, officials

from the Tatmadaw Information Team, and reporters from local news agencies, daily newspapers, local TV channels and local-based international news agencies. The full text of the Q & A session of the press conference will be mentioned. — MNA



An act of sabotage by blocking leaves in the pitot probes of the Air KBZ aircraft.



A board shows the photo records on electoral fraud.

Investigation process going on into the political parties.

Carefully monitor daily casualties in the COVID-19 crisis

RELEVANT authorities contact the pharmaceutical farms abroad to purchase COVID-19 vaccines to be given to the people in time while the third wave of the pandemic is still spreading in Myanmar.

It was reported that ten million units of COVID-19 vaccines will arrive in Myanmar in the coming October for sharing with the entire people to continue the vaccination. As the Sinovac vaccine manufactured by China can be injected into children above 12, arrangements are being made to give it to the students when the schools are reopened.

Now, the infection rate of COVID-19 in Myanmar is declining day by day together with a lesser death rate. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic cannot disappear from the world at all, all the people are expecting the result of mitigating the infection and death rates to enable the people to safely live together with the pandemic in the new normal situation.

Both the Pfizer and Moderna jabs are already being administered to adolescents over 12 in several countries. England, Scotland and Wales became the latest to join the list of nations vaccinating younger teenagers, rolling out jabs for 12 to 15 year-olds.

As world's giant pharmaceutical companies give guarantees for their jabs of anti-COVID-19 vaccines. Hence, the government arranges to provide the students with 2-million-unit anti-COVID-19 vaccines donated by the People's Republic of China.

The government is striving for reopening of the schools at a time the infection rate of the pandemic will decline to less than 5 per cent. That is why the schools will be closed till 24 October for the safety of the children in their learning.

Now, the infection rate of COVID-19 in Myanmar is declining day by day together with a lesser death rate. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic cannot disappear from the world at all, all the people are expecting the result of mitigating the infection and death rates to enable the people to safely live together with the pandemic in the new normal situation.



In Covid's shadow Eastern

In a Bucharest back street, drug addicts rush towards an ambulance handing out free syringes. While the eyes of the world focus on the Covid-19 pandemic, the fight against HIV has slowed down in Eastern Europe.

Three times a week, Alina Schiau and colleagues from the Romanian anti-AIDS Association (ARAS) go out to the rougher parts of the city to hand out syringes and bandages to injecting drug users, and condoms to sex workers.

But their funds are running low and stocks dwindling. Come November, their ambulance might have to stay in the garage.

“What’s cheaper? To buy a syringe and thus focus on prevention? Or to treat a patient for years?” says social worker Ada Luca, indignant at government inaction.

Bulgaria and Romania are both former Eastern bloc countries, and in 2019, 76 per cent of AIDS cases diagnosed in Europe were in the East, according to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

“It is obvious that the number of contaminations has increased since the start of the pandemic”,



Ms Alina Dumitriu (left) and a volunteer sorting anti-HIV medication pills to a table in Romania, on 7 September 2021. PHOTO: AFP

Schiau told AFP.

As coronavirus took hold, hospitals closed to non-Covid patients, says Davron Mukhamadiev, Regional Health and Care Coordinator for Red Cross Europe (IFRC).

Quarantine requirements, travel restrictions and reduced access to rapid testing and diag-

nostic services all undermined efforts to roll back HIV/AIDS, he said.

‘We are abandoned’

UNAIDS data shows 140,000 new infections in Eastern Europe and Central Asia in 2020, compared with 170,000 in 2019, which experts

From mines to Covid: Cambodia

CAMBODIAN anti-landmine authorities are training dogs to sniff out Covid-19, hoping the sharp-nosed canines normally used to detect underground explosives can keep the virus on a tight leash.

Cambodia has won praise for a swift vaccine drive, with the health ministry saying over 98 per cent of the adult population has received at least one dose.

Now they are embarking on a new strategy to spot Covid cases.

12 Belgian Malinois dogs

Joining the fight will be 12 Belgian Malinois dogs the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) has trained to nose out unsuspecting patients who might be carrying the virus.

In the longer term, the centre hopes to use the dogs at major events, including sports matches, director general Heng Ratana

told AFP.

“Dogs are more efficient than other tools,” he said.

The University of Health Sciences provided samples of volatile organic compounds — organic chemicals that emit odours — from Covid-19 patients to the demining agency’s facility in Kampong Chhnang province.

The dogs, bred in Cambodia, have so far proven to be very good boys. “After two and a half months, our dogs are in an early stage of success (so) they could sniff out the scent of Covid-19,” dog trainer Khom Sokly told AFP.

Four are now able to detect Covid-19 placed in a one-metre tube in less than a minute, he said, while the other eight are training to root out the scents in an open space “at any location”.

“In the future, I hope the dogs could take part in preventing or reducing Covid-19 because

they are fast,” Khom Sokly said.

CMAC staff said the budding virus-hunters have a few months left in their training regime.

Nearly three decades of civil war

Nearly three decades of civil war and US bombing starting in the 1960s left Cambodia one of the most heavily bombed and mined countries in the world.

The kingdom has vowed to clear all mines and unexploded ordnance by 2025, with several organisations working with veteran deminers, sniffer dogs and even rats to reach the goal.

Other countries deploying dogs in the fight against Covid include Ecuador and Italy, where there is a programme in a Rome hospital for training canines to detect the virus in human sweat.

Cambodia largely avoided a mass outbreak during the

COVID-19, HIV on march in Europe



Medicine sent to patients in Bucharest,

Regional health centres were “overwhelmed and hardly ever did any HIV testing during Covid,” said Alexander Milanov, programme director at the country’s National Patients’ Organization.

The pandemic has disrupted supply chains and the transport of medicines, exacerbating historic shortages in countries such as Romania despite huge scientific strides that have dramatically improved outcomes for HIV patients in rich nations. Alexandru Tantu, a 28-year-old, HIV positive IT specialist, has seen first-hand how other European countries treat patients better, and how in Romania, it is a daily struggle to get the required drugs.

“We came to realise that we are abandoned,” he told AFP. “Hence all the anger and the fear that tomorrow we might not have our treatment.”

Still, with his stable job, he regards himself as relatively “privileged”. In his advocacy work, he says, he receives calls from patients who are considering suicide.

‘Fear in the stomach’

The HIV/AIDS crisis in Romania dates back to the communist years.

Around 11,000 children born in the 1980s under the communist regime of Nicolae Ceausescu were infected as a result of contaminated or unsterilised syringes or transfusions with untested blood.

Today, several doctors told AFP that hospitals have yet to receive funds from the health ministry following a budgetary correction — and in Romania, patients can only get the medication they need from hospitals, not pharmacies. Romania’s health ministry did not respond to an AFP request for a comment.

Volunteers do everything they can to fill the gaps in care.

Alina Dumitriu and her “Sens Pozitiv” campaign group have been helping patients for 16 years, relying on donations.

Between phone calls and texts from desperate patients, Dumitriu sorts out HIV pills, worth thousands of euros, from a red plastic bag. “There are months when I help up to 30 patients, while also sending some tablets to hospitals,” she explains.

“These patients still live with fear in their stomachs, not knowing if the next day they will still have medication,” she says.

SOURCE: AFP

attribute to a dramatic slowdown in screening, not a drop in cases.

In 2020, for example, Romania managed to screen only 234,420 people for HIV/AIDS — down nearly a third from 334,410 the previous year.

It is a similar story in neighbouring Bulgaria.

India dogs train to sniff out virus



Cambodia’s landmine detection authorities are training dogs to sniff out Covid-19. PHOTO: TANG CHHIN SOTHY/AFP

pandemic last year, but cases surged from the 20,000 mark in

May to a total of 110,000 cases in late September and more

than 2,200 deaths.

SOURCE: AFP



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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSON

“ သာတူညီမျှ ဒစ်ဂျစ်တယ်ကဏ္ဍ သက်ရွယ်မရွေး ပါဝင်ကြ ”
“ Digital Equity for All Ages ”

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နေပြည်တော်



World Teachers' Day

5 October 2021



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(ISSUED at 7:00 pm Thursday 30 September 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay of Bengal. Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 1 October 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region and Southern Shan, Chin States, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago, Yangon Regions and Kachin, Eastern Shan, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about (4 – 7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of thundery activities in the Deltaic areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 October 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 October 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 October 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Information Working Committee on IDPs Resettlement and Closure of IDP Camps holds first coordination meeting

THE Information Working Committee on IDPs Resettlement and Closure of IDP Camps organized the 1/2021 coordination meeting at Ministry of Information yesterday.

During the meeting, Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint, Chairman of the committee, made an opening remark.

He said the government provides necessary things to the IDPs regarding their keeps, education, health and social-related matters while they are at the camps. There are also international assistance and local aids. The officials also make arrangements for the IDPs to ensure

their food and accommodation when they return to their regions.

The respective state and regional governments rebuild their homes, provide rations and other commodities to them. Therefore, it is important to provide information to local people and the international community regarding such activities. The media should share the real activities as some spread fake information.

Then, the secretary and members of the committee presented the news coverage on the resettlement of IDPs and closure of IDP camps and work plans to conduct education programmes. — MNA



The first coordination meeting of the Information Working Committee on IDPs Resettlement and Closure of IDP Camps in progress yesterday.

Myanmar-India border trade increases this FY



The border trade during the period increased by \$105 million compared with the same period of the previous FY. During the same period last year, India-Myanmar bilateral trade was \$91.55 million in total.

BILATERAL trade between Myanmar and India hit US\$ 197 million as of 17 September 2020-2021 ending 30 September, said a statistical report of the

Ministry of Commerce.

The border trade during the period increased by \$105 million compared with the same period of the previous FY. During the same period last year, India-Myanmar bilateral trade was \$91.55 million in total.

The Myanmar-India total border trade during the period was shared by Myanmar's export of \$195 million and its import of \$1.77 million.

The two countries mainly carry out border trade through Tamu, Reed and Thantlang cross-border trade camps, while a major part of bilateral trade is delivered through ships.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, the total border trade volume from the Tamu border trading post in the 2020-2021 FY was \$34 million with exports valued at \$33 million and import \$0.89 million. Total trade volume via the Reed border trade post in the same period was \$163.4 million with exports valued at \$162.5 million and imports \$0.88 million.

Myanmar mainly exports to India fruits and vegetable, fishery and forestry products, while importing from India medicines, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials. — Zwe/GNLM

Domestic corn feed highly demanded during new harvest season

DOMESTIC corn feed mills are highly demanding the corn feeds during the new harvest season, said, U Min Khaing, chairman of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Currently, the monsoon corns are started harvesting and the domestic corn price is not much altered from the price that foreign counties purchase, he added.

"This is newly corn harvested season and the time to get a reasonable price to buy the corn. The feed mills from Myanmar started purchasing the corn in September, October, November and December. Myanmar hasn't exported the

corn a lot in this time because the domestic feed millers are offering a reasonable price to purchase the corn," said U Min Khaing.

This year, the price of corn is above K600 per viss in the Yangon market while the corn price is ranging K580-K600 per viss in the Mandalay market. Last year, the corn fetched K450-K500 per viss. The corn crop is mostly demanded by the feedstuff processing business.

Besides, the domestic corn consumption in Myanmar is also less than a half of the previous year. It is only 400,000 tonnes a year, according to the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Last FY, domestic demand for corn was between 800,000 and 900,000 tonnes.

The domestic demand for corn dropped because of reduced livestock production and the high cost of livestock feed, which is impacted as a result of COVID-19, said U Min Khaing.

Currently, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. There are about 1.12 million acres of corn in Myanmar and it has three corn seasons — cold, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn annually. — NN/GNLM

Palm oil distributed at reasonable prices

THE Ministry of Commerce and the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association imported the palm oil at the CBM reference rate and sold it at fairer prices for the public beginning 20 September. A total of 3,567,300 visses of palm oil that are equal to 5,829 tonnes have been sold in Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, Bago and Magway regions and Shan State to date.

The officials arrange oil tankers to sell in the wards of Yangon and also will provide trucks in regions/states.

The palm oil wholesalers will have to resell the oil not more than 2 per cent of net profit at retail outlets and the wholesalers/retailers can contact Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association (No. 104/108, Strand Street, Lutlat Yay Quarter, Ahlon Township) at 09-444437295 and 09-401527049 and Department of Consumer Affairs, Yangon Region at 01-250270 and 09-43666668 to buy the palm oil. — MNA

Natural gas export tops US\$2 bln in ten months

MYANMAR'S exports of natural gas are estimated at US\$2.194 billion in the past ten months (October-July) of the current financial year 2020-2021, the Commerce Ministry's data showed.

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

There are 53 onshore blocks and 51 offshore blocks, totalling 104 blocks. A total of 25 onshore blocks and 31 offshore blocks are being operated under foreign investment. Natural gas extraction is being made at the Yadana, the Yedagun, the Shwe, and the Zawtika offshore blocks as well as onshore drilling blocks, according to the statement of

the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

The Shwe natural gas field, located offshore from Rakhine State, was discovered in 2014. Natural gas extracted from the field is exported to China.

The Yadana natural gas project is being carried out by the TOTAL Company, with its pipeline supplying natural gas to Thailand. Natural gas is also extracted in Yedagun, located offshore from Taninthayi Region and discovered in 1992. The Zawtika Project in the Gulf of Mottama mainly supplies natural gas to neighbouring Thailand.

Production at Yadana and Yedagun is declining, and those projects will be halted in the coming years.



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

Myanmar's exports of natural gas stood at \$3.5 billion in the 2019-2020FY, \$3.9 billion in

the 2018-2019FY, \$3.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$3.116 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$3.445

billion in the 2015-2016FY, as per Commerce Ministry data. — KK/GNLM

Myanmar mineral exports decrease by over 50% this FY



Myanmar's mineral exports have shown a marked increase in the previous FY2019-2020, touching \$1.87 billion, an increase of \$405.48 million compared with the year-ago period.

MYANMAR'S mineral exports climbed down by more than 50 per cent in the current financial year 2020-2021.

The value of Myanmar's mineral exports drastically sank to US\$828.156 million as of 17 September 2021 since 1 October 2020, reflecting a severe drop of \$911 million as against a year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce's data indicated.

The mineral exports hit over \$1.8 billion in the corresponding period of last FY.

The coronavirus-related disruptions led to the slump in mineral exports this FY. The heightened COVID-19 measures also shut down the events like gem emporium and expo last year, a trader said.

Additionally, Lonkhin, Phakant, Mawlu and Mawhan gems and jade mines in Kachin State will be temporarily suspended from 1 October 2021 to March-end 2022 with a view to supporting sustainable resource extraction, and ensuring safe and efficient operation of jade and gems mines, according to the Myanmar Gems Enterprise.

So far, excavation of over 1,250 mining blocks has been permitted on a manageable, small, medium, and large scale, mostly in Mandalay and Sagaing regions, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Due to the limited extraction of natural resources, exports of forest products and minerals had

dropped significantly in the previous years. Permits for mining blocks were suspended in 2016, but after a period of two years, Myanmar's mining sector has now been opened to local and foreign investors, according to the ministry. The Myanmar Mines Law was enacted on 24 December 2015, but the law came into force when the rules were issued on 13 February 2018.

Under the new regulations, foreign firms can invest in large blocks which cover up to 500,000 acres (about 202,000 hectares), while local firms can invest in all kinds of blocks. Investors can seek a permit to mine for minerals such as gold, copper, lead and tin. The permits cover prospecting, exploration, and production.

Myanmar's mineral exports have shown a marked increase in the previous FY2019-2020, touching \$1.87 billion, an increase of \$405.48 million compared with the year-ago period, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Oil and natural gas are included in the list of major export items of Myanmar. About six per cent of the country's total export earnings come from the sale of natural gas. About 80 per cent of mineral products are shipped to external markets through sea trade, while 20 of them are sent to neighbouring countries through border trade channels. — KK/GNLM

Hteekhee border trade falls by \$738.57 mln in 2020-2021FY

BILATERAL trade between Thailand and Myanmar through the Hteekhee border over the past eleven and half months reflected a decrease of \$738.57 million as against a year-ago period.

Between 1 October and 17 September in the current financial year 2020-2021, the figures sharply fell to US\$1.29 billion from \$2 billion registered in the previous financial year, according to data from the Commerce Ministry. The surge in coronavirus cases in Myanmar led Thailand to limit the working hours of truck drivers at the border posts. Consequently, the trade via land borders between Myanmar and Thailand sharply fell in the current FY.

Exports of natural gas from the Taninthayi Region have contributed to the enormous

increase in trade through the Hteekhee border during the previous years, the Ministry of Commerce stated. The border trade between Myanmar and Thailand through the border areas: Myeik, Kawthoung, Mawtaung, Hteekhee and Meisei posts declined as of 17 September, whereas trade via Tachilek and Myawady posts rose due to the corn exports.

Myanmar primarily exports natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, corns and bamboo shoots to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, and consumer goods such as cosmetics and food products from the neighbouring country. — KK/GNLM



The surge in coronavirus cases in Myanmar led Thailand to limit the working hours of truck drivers at the border posts. Consequently, the trade via land borders between Myanmar and Thailand sharply fell in the current FY.

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Economists expect Delta variant to slow U.S. economic growth in 2021 to 5.6 pct

ECONOMISTS expect the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant of the coronavirus to slow US economic growth this year to 5.6 per cent, CBS News reported Monday. Citing a survey released Monday by the Washington-based National Association of Business Economists (NABE), CBS said the forecast for full-year economic growth of 2021 has been revised from 6.7 per cent to 5.6 per cent.

NABE's survey also predict a higher inflation rate of 5.1 per cent this year, CBS reported, adding that "consumer prices over the past 12 months have risen 4.2 per cent — the biggest 12-month increase since the 4.5 per cent seen in January 1991."—Xinhua ■

China factory activity shrinks for first time since February 2020

CHINESE factory activity contracted in September for the first time since the height of its initial coronavirus outbreak in February 2020, official data showed Thursday, as it faces waves of power outages and fears for the real estate sector.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)—a key gauge of manufacturing activity in the world's second-largest economy—slipped to 49.6 from 50.1 in August, the National Bureau of Statistics said. Any figure below the 50-point mark represents contraction, while above it indicates growth.

It is the first time China's PMI has contracted since Covid first began spreading around the country, forcing the government to impose lockdowns that led factories to shut and battered the world's number two economy.

But now authorities are struggling to tackle an energy crunch caused by tight coal supplies and sky-high prices, leading to factory suspensions and power blackouts in at least 17 provinces in recent months.

The growing power crisis, exacerbated by local government restrictions on factories to cut energy use, has led some major banks to lower their annual growth forecast for China, while there are also concerns about the impact on supply chains for global firms such as Apple and Tesla.—AFP ■

Advertorial



NongHyup Finance Myanmar Co., Ltd, the subsidiary of NongHyup Financial Group from South Korea donated Covid 19 Protection Supplies, cash and other necessary gifts at Myin Thar Myo Oo Child Development & Monastic Education School, Yangon on Thursday, 30 September 2021.

Japan's Aug. industrial output falls 3.2%, view downgraded

JAPAN'S industrial output in August fell 3.2 per cent from the previous month on weak auto production amid a global chip shortage and disruption in supply chains, government data showed Thursday, with its basic assessment revised down for the first time in 16 months.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said the recovery in industrial production "has paused" compared with the view upheld from August last year through July that output is "picking up." It is the first downgrade

of the assessment since April 2020. The seasonally adjusted index of production at factories and mines stood at 95.0 against the 2015 base of 100, down for the second straight month, the ministry said in a preliminary report. Production in the auto industry fell 15.2 per cent from the previous month, affected by the global semiconductor shortage as well as factory shutdowns in Southeast Asia amid the spread of COVID-19 that disrupted supply of auto components, a ministry official said. Output of electrical

machinery and information and communication electronics equipment, such as laptop comput-

ers, was also down 10.6 per cent due to the crunch in chip and other component supplies.—Kyodo News ■



Production in the auto industry fell 15.2 per cent from the previous month, affected by the global semiconductor shortage as well as factory shutdowns in Southeast Asia amid the spread of COVID-19 that disrupted supply of auto components. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

UK risks social crisis as jobs support scheme ends

BRITAIN'S furlough scheme that has kept millions of private-sector workers in jobs during the coronavirus pandemic ends Thursday, with predictions of a spike in unemployment and a slump in living standards. Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative government has spent almost £70 billion (\$96 billion, 82 billion euros) on paying the bulk of wages for staff stuck at home, helping to keep the official unemployment rate relatively low. "Despite this success, significant challeng-

es remain in the labour market," the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) said in a report Thursday. "These include additional



Commuters, some wearing face coverings, walk outside Victoria Station in central London on 7 June.

PHOTO: AFP

job losses when the furlough scheme ends, low re-employment rates for those made redundant, and high levels of vacan-

cies in some sectors."

Some 12 million people have been on furlough, with some one million workers still supported up until its end. Of those remaining, more than 25 per cent work in construction and manufacturing.

'Low-living standards'

"These people are susceptible to persistently low living standards should they be made unemployed," the IFS said, citing the fact that many were the only adult wage-earner in their household.—AFP ■

Algeria-Morocco standoff threatens Spain gas supplies

ALGERIA pumps huge volumes of gas through Morocco into Europe, but with Algiers and Rabat at loggerheads as a pipeline agreement nears expiry, experts say the taps could soon be turned off. That would hit Spain's gas supplies just as prices soar across Europe and with winter approaching, and Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares was due in Algeria on Thursday to discuss the issue, his office told AFP.

Algeria, Africa's biggest natural gas exporter, has been using the Gaz-Maghreb-Europe

(GME) pipeline since 1996 to deliver several billion cubic metres (bcm) per year to Spain and Portugal.

But the GME contract is due to expire at the end of October—just over two months after Algiers severed diplomatic ties with Rabat over "hostile actions". And in August, Energy Minister Mohamed Arkab told Spanish ambassador Fernando Moran that Algeria was ready to deliver all its Spain-bound gas exports via an alternative undersea pipeline, bypassing Morocco.—AFP ■

Tokyo Game Show kicks off with virtual experience for gamers of world

THE Tokyo Game Show started Thursday east of the capital, with a physical exhibition open to a select group of guests for the first time in two years and a virtual setup for game enthusiasts who wish to attend remotely.



The Tokyo Game Show opens at the Makuhari Messe convention center in Chiba on 30 September 2021.

PHOTO: KYODO

The annual gaming extravaganza, one of the world's biggest shows of its type, attracted media and game influencers to Chiba's Makuhari Messe convention center, allowing them to try out new titles on display and interview exhibitors. The event was held entirely online last year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

In the four-day event through Sunday, about 350 companies from Ja-

pan and abroad, including local gaming giants Capcom Co. and Bandai Namco Entertainment Inc., exhibit their latest titles. Those interested can watch presentations online for free.

Among content to be streamed is the latest information about popular series such as Square Enix Co.'s "Final Fantasy" and Capcom's "Monster Hunter," the organizer said.

At the new virtual space set up, featuring some 40 booths, fans can log in to peruse exhibitions using avatars through a virtual reality terminal, the organizer said.

General visitors can buy access to visit booths online, tour the venue, join events and communicate with other participants.

"The event was held entirely online last year but we received a lot of requests from the general public saying they wanted to try out the games and learn more about them," said Yoshihiko Yoshimoto, a spokesman of the Tokyo Game Show management office.—Kyodo News ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Walmart to hire 150,000 US workers ahead of holiday season

WALMART announced Wednesday it will hire 150,000 more workers in the United States, joining other large companies in staffing up ahead of the holiday shopping season.

The nation's biggest private employer, Walmart said "most" of the new positions in its home market would be permanent, full-time roles spread across the country.

The number comes on top of a previously announced plan to add 20,000 workers in supply chain roles. Walmart has 1.6 million employees in the United States.

Other large companies, including Amazon, FedEx and Macy's have also announced huge hiring campaigns this fall as the pandemic accelerates a push towards greater e-commerce activity.

Walmart in recent years has invested heavily in programs to deliver goods to customers, or provide curbside pickup of groceries outside stores.

The latest recruitment drive "will ensure we're ready to help customers shop however they want, whether they're in a store, using curbside pickup or shopping online," Walmart Chief People Officer Julie Murphy said in a news release.

But a tight labor market has emerged as a challenge to employers this year, pressuring wages in an economy still navigating Covid-19.—AFP ■

Havana reopens its beaches — but masks are required

BEACHES and pools in the Cuban capital Havana, as well as the famed Malecon seafront promenade, were reopened on

Wednesday, officials announced, after being shut for nine months due to the coronavirus pandemic.

A formal notice in

state media, citing Havana governor Reynaldo Garcia Zapata, said beaches and pools would be open at half-capacity for now, and

that all virus prevention measures needed to be respected.

"In pools and in beach areas, wearing a mask is mandatory, except when swimming," the announcement said. Exercise in public places is also once again allowed.

The Malecon is a popular meeting spot for capital residents, who go there to jog, fish or just sit and chat with friends — all banned since January due to the pandemic. Last week, restaurants, bars and other public places reopened in eight of Cuba's 15 provinces with limited capacity — a relief for Cubans after nine months of closures.—AFP ■



General view of Varadero beach, in the Cuban province of Matanzas. PHOTO: STR/AFP

China urges banks to avoid housing speculation to curb Evergrande risk

CHINA has urged banks to steady the housing market and avoid speculation as fears mount that Evergrande's debt crisis could spill over into the property sector.

Saddled with more than \$300 billion in liabilities that it is struggling to repay, the Chinese property developer's potential collapse poses

systemic risks for the national and global economy.

At a Wednesday meeting, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) said the country's financial sector must meet the goals of "stabilizing land and housing prices" and "insist on not using real estate as a short-term economic stimulus,"

according to an online statement.

The central bank also stressed that "houses are used for living, not speculation". The readout of the meeting with the banking and insurance regulatory commission did not specifically mention Shenzhen-based Evergrande.—AFP ■

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၄။ တင်ဒါပေးသွင်းရမည့်နေရာ - ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ၊ တင်ဒါလက်ခံရေးနှင့် စိစစ်ရေးကော်မတီ၊ မြန်မာ့ဆေးဝါးလုပ်ငန်း၊ စက်မှုဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ရုံးအမှတ် (၃၇)၊ နေပြည်တော်။

၅။ တင်ဒါပုံစံနှင့် တင်ဒါစည်းကမ်းအသေးစိတ်အချက်အလက်များကို အောက်ဖော်ပြပါဌာနတွင် စုံစမ်းမေးမြန်းနိုင်ပါသည်-

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| စက်မှုဝန်ကြီးဌာန | ၀၆၇၃-၄၀၈၃၅၄ |
| ရုံးအမှတ်(၃၇)၊ နေပြည်တော်။ | |

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NEWS
IN BRIEFUK police officer
murdered woman
after false coronavirus
arrest: court

A serving British police officer kidnapped a woman as she walked home, handcuffing her in a false arrest for breaking coronavirus restrictions, before raping and murdering her, a court was told on Wednesday.

The disappearance of Sarah Everard during a national lockdown in March was one of Britain's most high-profile missing person investigations and sparked protests and a debate about women's safety on the streets.

Wayne Couzens, 48, who served with the elite diplomatic protection unit of London's Metropolitan Police, admitted her kidnapping, rape and murder in July.

Everard, who had been visiting a friend in Clapham, south London, was strangled then set on fire, with her remains found in woodland.

At a two-day sentencing hearing, prosecutor Tom Little said Couzens targeted the 33-year-old marketing executive on 3 March, and accused her of breaking coronavirus rules. —AFP ■

Russia vows
retaliation after
YouTube blocks
German RT accounts

RUSSIA has threatened retaliatory measures after YouTube blocked the German-language channels of state broadcaster RT for violating coronavirus disinformation rules.

The US video-sharing platform told German media on Tuesday that it had issued a warning to RT for violating its coronavirus disinformation guidelines and then shuttered two channels for breaching user terms.

The move comes amid an escalating standoff between foreign tech companies and the Kremlin, which accuses them of interfering in Russian politics, including by hosting content supportive of jailed opposition leader, Alexei Navalny.

Russia's foreign ministry accused YouTube of an "unprecedented act of media aggression" which it said was likely aided by German authorities.

"The adoption of symmetrical retaliatory measures against German media in Russia — seems not only appropriate, but also necessary," the ministry said in a statement. — AFP ■

France's right seeks champion to fight Macron

WITH the clock ticking down to France's presidential elections in April, conservatives have yet to select a candidate from a crowded field of hopefuls who aim to beat the far-right to set up a final against Emmanuel Macron.

Half a dozen current or former members of the main right-wing party, The Republicans (LR), are vying to run against the centrist Macron as he seeks re-election.

But with other parties already in full campaign mode, the LR has only now decided how to choose the candidate: not through a primary as previously mooted and where anyone with right-wing views can vote, but in a congress where only party members have a voice, as late as 4 December.

The candidate will have to reinvigorate a party which sees itself as the guardian of the values of postwar leader Charles de Gaulle, but remains scarred by the disastrous 2017 candidacy of former premier Francois

Fillon who was felled by a graft scandal for which he was later convicted.

France's last right-wing president Nicolas Sarkozy — who remains wildly popular among some of the LR faithful — was himself convicted and sentenced this year for cor-

ruption and faces a verdict in a second graft trial on Thursday.

The party will also want to avoid the fate of right-wing counterparts in Germany, the CDU, whose share of the vote plummeted to historic lows in elections on Sunday in the face of a resurgent left.

"The right has an electorate, it controls the majority of large cities, departments and regions in France, but LR remains a party incredibly weakened and traumatized by the Fillon episode," political scientist Pascal Perrineau told AFP. — AFP ■



Most analysts see the two-round election process heading to a repeat of the 2017 final-stage duel between Macron and far-right leader Marine Le Pen. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

Virgin Galactic cleared to launch
after US security investigation closes

SpaceShipTwo attached to the mothership, WhiteKnightTwo, at Mojave Space Port in Mojave, California. PHOTO: AFP

VIRGIN Galactic said on Wednesday it was cleared for space flights after the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) concluded an investigation into a security "incident" related to its high-level mission in July putting featuring company founder Richard Branson.

The FAA told the company it had accepted its proposed remedies related to the flight, which saw the SpaceShipTwo vehicle fall below its assigned airspace as it descended to its runway at Spaceport America in New Mexico.

Virgin Galactic will update its calculations for future flights and request more airspace, and has promised real-time communication with the FAA during

flight operations, the company said.

"Our entire approach to spaceflight is guided by a fundamental commitment to safety at all levels, including our space flight system and our test flight programme," CEO Michael Colglazier said in a statement.

"We appreciate the thorough review of this investigation by the FAA. Our test flight programme is uniquely designed to continually improve our processes and procedures."

The FAA grounded Virgin Galactic earlier this month after an investigative report in the New Yorker said the flight experienced irregularities that could have compromised the mission. — AFP ■

Last of 39 trapped Canadian miners
climb out, all safe

THE last of 39 miners trapped underground in eastern Canada for nearly three days climbed to the surface early Wednesday where they were greeted by family, officials said.

Brazilian mining company Vale congratulated rescuers in a statement for "bringing our 39 employees home safe and healthy."

"This was tremendous news flowing from very difficult circumstances," said company chief executive Eduardo Bartolomeo, who met with miners and rescuers in Sudbury, Ontario.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford also tweeted that all 39 "have been successfully rescued from the Totten Mine."

"We are all very relieved

that you're safely above ground and uninjured," he said.

Shawn Rideout of Ontario Mine Rescue, who led the operation, told public broadcaster CBC the last of four miners who made their way to the surface on Wednesday exited at 4:45 am local time (0845 GMT). "They were met by their spouses and their children. It was hugs and kisses and a lot of tears," he said.

The miners became trapped Sunday afternoon after an accident damaged their transport system, cutting off access to the main exit.

Vale said a heavy scoop bucket had detached from and collided with the conveyance system, rendering it unusable. — AFP ■



The last of 39 miners trapped underground in eastern Canada for nearly three days climbed to the surface early Wednesday where they were greeted by family, officials said. PHOTO: 123RF.COM/AFP

Putin praises 'useful' Erdogan talks

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin and Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan lauded three-hour talks as "useful" and "productive" as they met to discuss the Syrian conflict.

It was their first face-to-face talks in 18 months.

The Russian leader hosted Erdogan at his Black Sea residence in the resort of Sochi after two weeks in self-isolation following a coronavirus outbreak among aides.

The two men, who did not address reporters after the talks, had been expected to discuss northwestern Syria where regime troops and Moscow have ratcheted up airstrikes in recent weeks.

On Tuesday, Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar had said Ankara hoped the talks would result in a return to "a peaceful situation according to our agreement."

In a warm post-negotia-



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan held their first face to face talks in 18 months. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

tion exchange, that included a discussion of their coronavirus antibody levels, Putin thanked Erdogan, calling the visit "useful and informative."

"We will be in touch," he added.

Writing on Twitter, Erdogan called the talks "productive".

Russia and Turkey have

historically had complex relations, balancing regional rivalries with finding common ground on economic and strategic interests.

In recent years, the two powers have clashed in particular in Syria, where Moscow and Ankara support opposing camps in the civil war.—AFP ■

Israel foreign minister lands in Bahrain on landmark visit

ISRAEL'S Foreign Minister Yair Lapid began a landmark visit Thursday to Bahrain where he will open the Israeli embassy one year after the US-brokered normalization of ties.

The Israeli top diplomat touched down at Manama airport, where a Gulf Air plane was due to take off for the first commercial flight between the two countries shortly afterwards.

Lapid is making Israel's first bilateral ministerial visit to Bahrain, part of a thaw in regional relations after the United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Sudan also established ties last

year under agreements known as the Abraham Accords.

However, anger simmers in some quarters over the move, which broke with decades of Arab consensus that there would be no relations with Israel while the Palestinian question remains unresolved.

Protesters burned tyres on the outskirts of Manama early Thursday, sending clouds of black smoke into the air, and the hashtag #BahrainRejectsZionists in Arabic was circulating on social media.

Extra security was stationed on the route to the air-

port and no Israeli flags were visible on main roads. Opposition activists have called for further protests later on Thursday.

Memorandums of understanding on technology and the economy will be signed during Lapid's visit, along with agreements involving Israel's national water company and Sheba hospital, Israeli officials said.

The Arab countries involved in the Abraham Accords have stressed the economic benefits of ties with Israel, with half a billion dollars in trade already reported with the UAE.—AFP ■



Manama, Bahrain's capital, has been labelled a "Healthy City 2021" by the World Health Organization (WHO) — the first Middle East capital to earn the distinction. **PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/AFP**

Hopes grow Japan's new PM may pave way for talks with N. Korea

HOPES are growing that Japan's former Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, the country's de facto next prime minister, can pave the way for talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and contribute to stability in East Asia.

As the novel coronavirus pandemic has choked North Korea's trade with its major economic ally of China and natural disasters have devastated the agricultural sector, Kim could try to get closer to Japan to receive aid to rebuild the sluggish economy, analysts said.

While former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and outgoing Yoshihide Suga have failed to resolve the long-standing issue of North Korea's abduction of

Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s, Kishida might grasp a clue to how to negotiate about it with Kim, they added.

Expectations are also rife that Kishida, if he succeeds in alleviating tensions between Tokyo and Pyongyang, could lay the groundwork for the resumption of Kim's talks with leaders of South Korea and the United States, a close security ally of Japan.

The upcoming election of Kishida as Japan's prime minister in parliament "represents both continuity and change in foreign policy towards the Korean Peninsula," said Stephen Nagy, a senior associate professor at International Christian University in Tokyo.—Kyodo News ■



A pedestrian reads an extra edition newspaper reporting Fumio Kishida, former foreign minister, being elected as the new leader at the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) presidential election, in Ginza district of Tokyo on 29 September 2021. **PHOTO: PHILIP FONG/AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kim vows to restore inter-Korean communication lines from October

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un has pledged to restore cross-border communication lines with South Korea in early October in a bid to build peace on the divided peninsula, state-run media reported Thursday, amid a severe downturn in the nation's economy.

But in a speech on Wednesday at a session of the country's top legislature, the Supreme People's Assembly, Kim also continued to criticize the United States for maintaining its "hostile policy" toward North Korea, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

Kim's remarks were reported alongside several personnel decisions at the ongoing legislative session, most notably the by-election of Kim Yo Jong, the influential younger sister of Kim, as a new member of the State Affairs Commission, the country's highest governing body.

The communication lines were reactivated in July after a 13-month shutdown, but Pyongyang stopped engaging in regular contact with Seoul through the lines when the United States and South Korea carried out joint military drills in August over its objections. US-North Korea talks over denuclearization and sanctions relief have been at a standstill for around two years, but the U.S. government under President Joe Biden denies having hostile intent toward Pyongyang and says it is ready to meet with the North Korean side.—Kyodo News ■

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 golfer Ye Htet Aung is seen in action at the Singha-SAT TDT Phuket 2021 Golf Tournament, in Thailand on 29 September. **PHOTO: THAILAND PGA**

Ye Htet Aung wins third prize in Singha-SAT TDT Phuket 2021 Golf Tournament

MYANMAR'S golf player Ye Htet Aung won the third prize in the Singha-SAT TDT Phuket 2021 Golf Tournament, held at Blue Canyon Country Club (Lakes Course) in Thailand on 28 and 29 September,

Ye Htet Aung hit 69 strokes on the first round of the competition. On the second round, he struck 66 shots with 135

shots in total and shared the third prize with two other Thai golfers.

A total of 96 golfers, including golfers from host Thailand and Ye Htet Aung from Myanmar, competed in the tournament.

At the end of the competition, Pol Kemarat (Thailand) won first place, while Chayo-

dom Chanjaruphong (Thailand) took second place and Nattapong Putta (Thailand) and Siri Siricharoen (Thailand) shared the third prize with Ye Htet Aung.

Ye Htet Aung is competing in professional competitions in Thailand and abroad, and in 2019 he competed in the Asian Tour. —Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

No overseas fans allowed at 2022 Beijing Olympics

NEXT year's Winter Olympics in Beijing will be held without spectators from overseas with tickets restricted to fans living in China because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the International Olympic Committee said Wednesday.

The IOC said only fully vaccinated participants would be exempt from a 21-day quarantine. Athletes who can provide a "justified medical exemption" will have their cases considered.

All attendees will enter a strict bubble upon arrival that covers Games-related areas and stadiums as well as accommodation, catering and the opening and closing ceremonies.

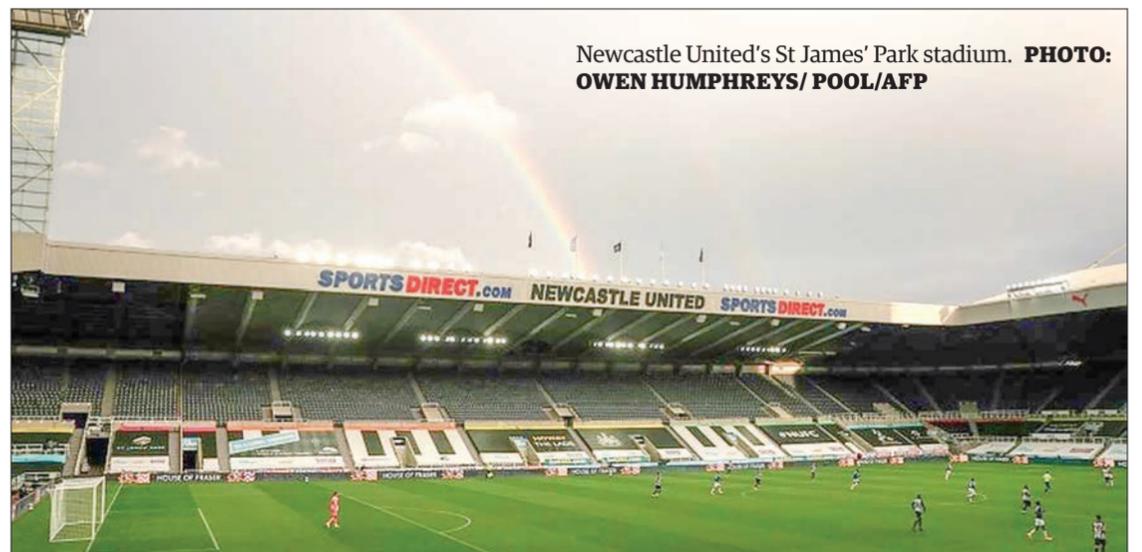
The decisions, announced by the IOC but taken by Chinese organizers, are a foretaste of a package of measures to be released in October designed to prevent the Games from turning into a source of contamination.

Spectators were banned from almost all venues at the Tokyo 2020 Games after it was delayed a year by the global health crisis.

All domestic and international Games participants and workforce in the bubble, known as the "closed-loop management system", will be tested daily.

The 2022 Beijing Olympics is scheduled for February 4-20. — AFP ■

Premier League 'improperly influenced' blocking of Newcastle takeover



Newcastle United's St James' Park stadium. **PHOTO: OWEN HUMPHREYS/ POOL/AFP**

THE Premier League was "improperly influenced" by other English top-flight clubs and media group beIN in coming to a decision that effectively blocked the Saudi takeover of Newcastle United, a tribunal was told Wednesday.

The "active lobbying" by the clubs and beIN, which owns the broadcast rights for the league in the Middle East and north

Africa, "distorted the Premier League's fair and objective application of the rules" in relation to the proposed deal, it was argued. The league is a defendant in a Competition Appeals Tribunal (CAT) claim brought by St James Holdings Ltd (SJHL), a company wholly owned by Newcastle owner Mike Ashley — an unpopular figure with many fans of the northeast club, who are

angered by what they see as his failure to invest in the team.

A consortium featuring Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund, Amanda Staveley's PCP Capital Partners and the Reuben Brothers withdrew its £350 million (\$460 million) offer for Newcastle in 2020 following a long wait for the Premier League to approve the deal. — AFP ■